

3rd Place Ossip: “Bright Lights” by Jake Jezyk

FY Seminar: Writing the Body, Instructor: JC Lee

The committee is thrilled to award the third place prize in the Ossip Award category to “Bright Lights” by Jake Jezyk. Jake’s essay belongs to a subgenre of nonfiction we might call the literature of divergent bodies: bodies that our society deems, for whatever reason, “different.” “Bright Lights” is a profound meditation on one-handed life, both its frustrations and its triumphs. With vivid description and careful introspection, Jake’s essay explores the questions raised by the author’s experiences: What does it mean to desire normalcy? How can one make peace with one’s own body? And what lies on the other side of acceptance? Committee members also praised the essay for its confident voice, its powerful vulnerability, and its attention to sensory detail. We are eager to read more work from this excellent young author in the future.