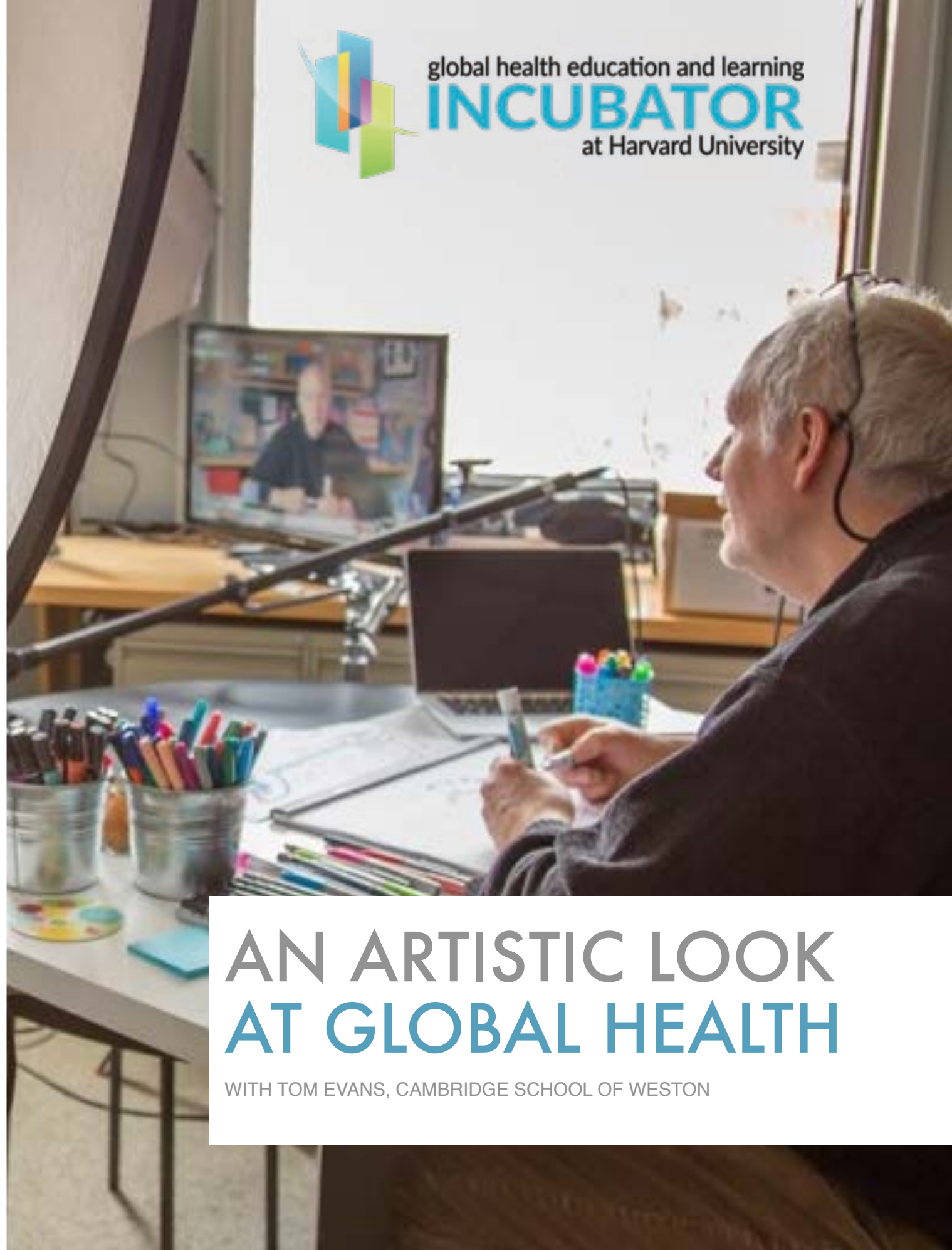




global health education and learning  
**INCUBATOR**  
at Harvard University



# AN ARTISTIC LOOK AT GLOBAL HEALTH

WITH TOM EVANS, CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON



# INTRODUCING THE PARTNERSHIP

In 2015, the Global Health Education and Learning Incubator (GHELI) began a collaboration with the Cambridge School of Weston (CSW), when GHELI Director Sue J. Goldie offered a series of evening modules to a group of CSW faculty; these classes explored world health challenges from local and global perspectives while also using varied pedagogical approaches. Through several trainings and working meetings, GHELI introduced CSW teachers from various disciplines to an interdisciplinary framework that explores the interconnections between health conditions and the conditions for health—social determinants that exist outside the health sector but which influence the health of individuals and societies. Within the context of this framework, participants inquired, examined, and imagined how to tackle these challenges, both from within and outside the health sector. GHELI also coached CSW teachers on how to leverage curated resource collections that included qualitative and quantitative data for the construction of lesson plans and activities that could be integrated into their curricula.

CSW's integrated studies curriculum provides an exceptional opportunity to foster interdisciplinary thinking among students. As one teacher remarked, "An integrative studies class is like baking a cake. Something comes from the blend of ingredients that enables our students to expand how they learn and solve problems."



# CSW GLOBAL HEALTH COURSE

Using interdisciplinary teaching methods, CSW science teacher Marilyn DeDonno, in concert with mathematics teacher Agnes Voligny and art teacher Tom Evans developed an integrated studies course that incorporated global health concepts, ideas, resources, and tools with biological science, mathematics, art, and literature.



“It would be an amazing accomplishment if each student left the course with a global perspective—understanding why this topic matters to me, my larger community, the world, and even the planet. I want each student to be able to envision how he or she can make a difference in global health, no matter what path they take.”

- Sue J. Goldie





## INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

For the final assignment as part of the global health class at the Cambridge School of Weston, Tom Evans asked his students to choose a single word that described for them what global health encompassed. Then using that word, a large piece of white paper and a piece of chalk, the students were asked to create a meaningful, evocative black and white image that represented what global health signified for them.

Tom sat down with Sue at the GHELI to reflect on the class, the students, [the assignment](#) and the [pairing of global health and art](#). A description of the resulting videos from those discussions and the student's artwork follows.



## DECISIONS

Students had looked at policy and at diseases and had listened to lectures by Sue over the course of five weeks. They were asked to think about all they had learned about global health in those weeks and once they had chosen a single word to use to think about how they wanted to draw that word so that it made a visual impact. They had to consider such things as typeface and composition as they put chalk to paper. "If their word was PEOPLE, how did they want to draw the word PEOPLE and how did they want it to make a lot of impact."

"I wanted them to take all that they had learned and boil it down to a single word. What was the most important word about global health for them."





The word this student chose was ACCESS. They chose to draw it behind a white picket fence which perhaps symbolizes countries with a lot of wealth while people who need to access wealth are trapped behind it.



**“Some countries are so focused on themselves”**

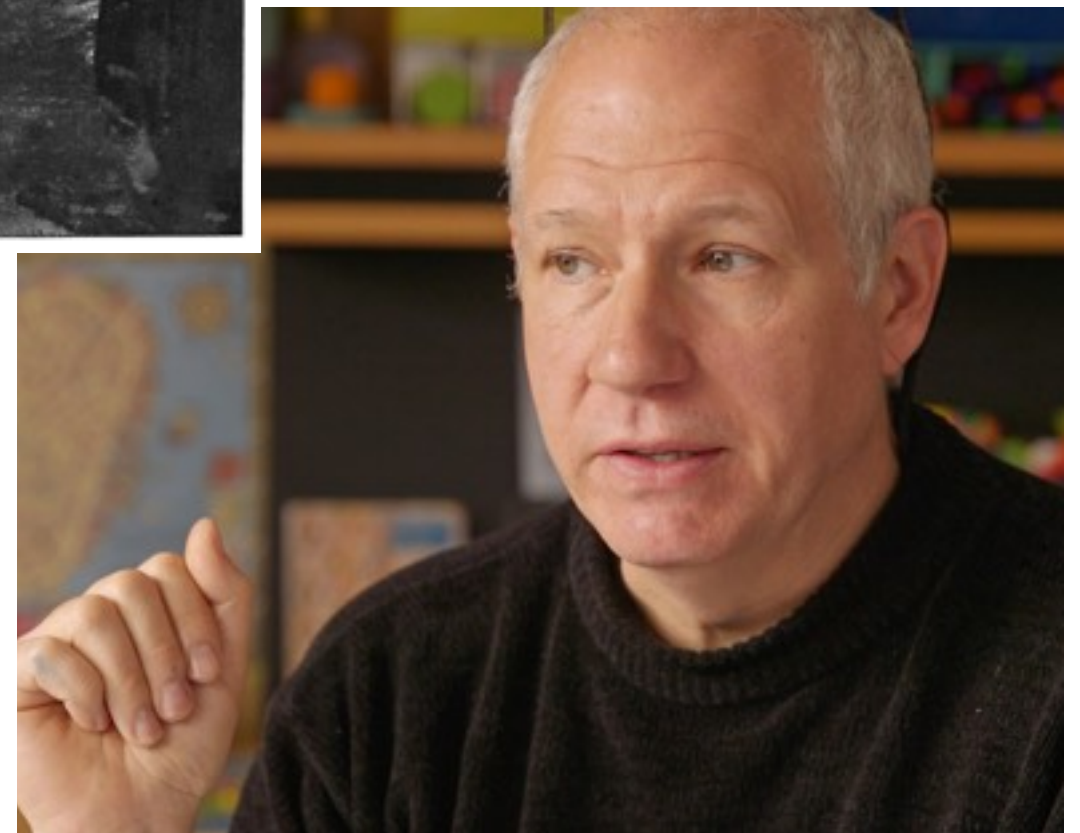
The title of this image is ME AND YOU. On the left, you see a big bold, bright “ME” with arms encircling it in a heart shape. On the right you can just make out the word “YOU”. For this student, the biggest issue for them in global health was that some countries are so focused on themselves that they don’t notice what is happening in other countries.





HEMORRHAGE: The student thought a lot about how she wanted to draw this word. It starts out reasonably with the H-E-M and then it starts to deform as the letters go on so that by the end the G and E are almost unreadable. It creates a visceral impact of the word hemorrhage. You can really feel that things started out in control and then went completely out of control becoming bleak and dark. This student was very interested in maternal health and she felt the word “hemorrhage” is a good way to symbolize the issues in that field.

“It has not just an intellectual message but a real emotional message”





This one is titled DISPARITY and is about the issues of when access, health supplies and education are not equitably distributed.

The image itself is quite dramatic: the page and the letters are strikingly divided into half black and half white.



"The finger tips are reaching up, hoping to get some of the goods in an inequitable world."



This student chose the word LUCK. She was adopted from another country and had a personal sense and awareness that luck had been important for her. In the image, you can see the L, U, and C are balancing uncertainly on top of a fairly unstable K. The K represents a table that all of luck is on and its precariousness represents how quickly luck can change; how fleeting it is.



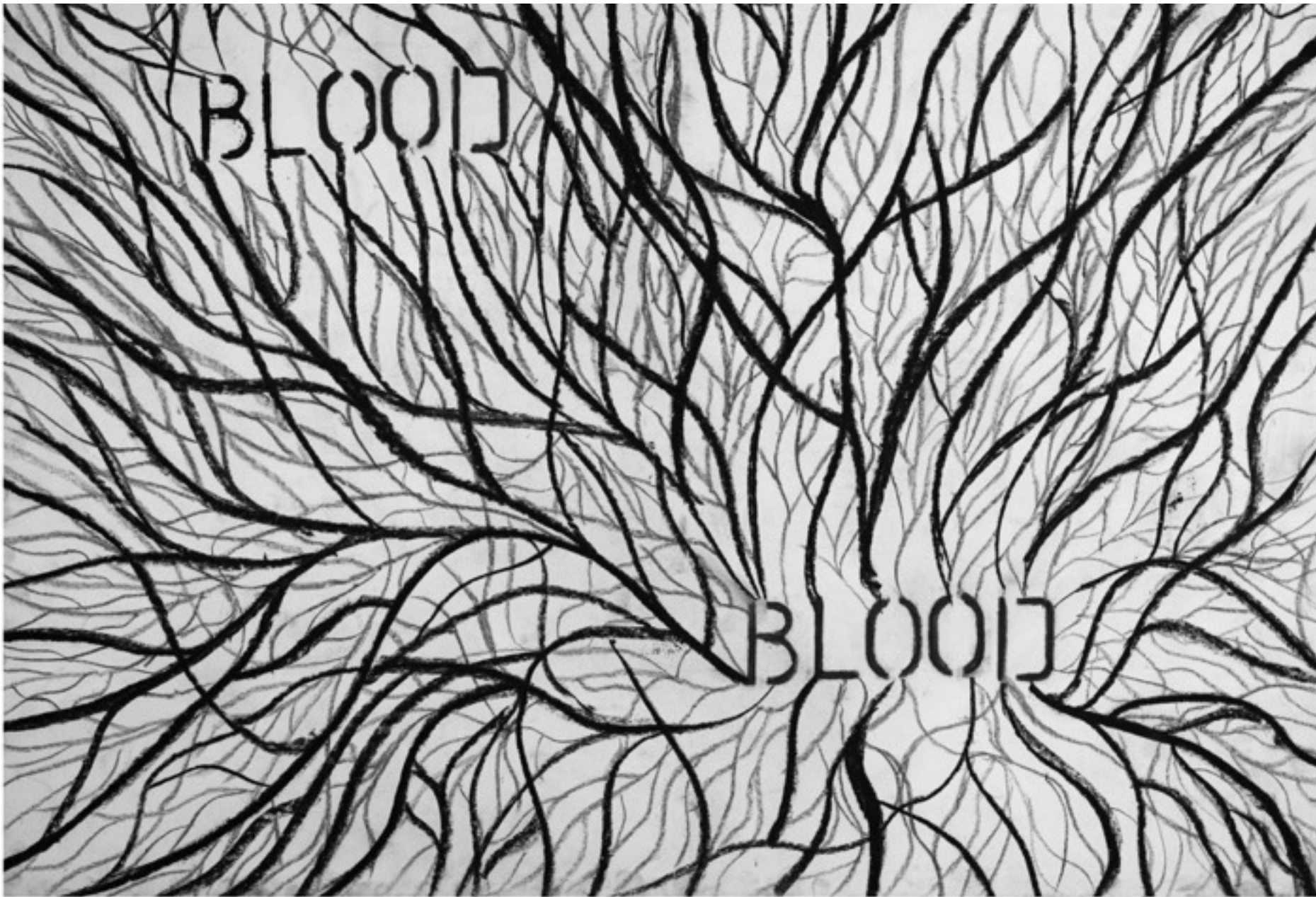
“Global health is a lot about luck:  
where you are born”



“What does that  
check box  
mean... it’s very  
open ended”

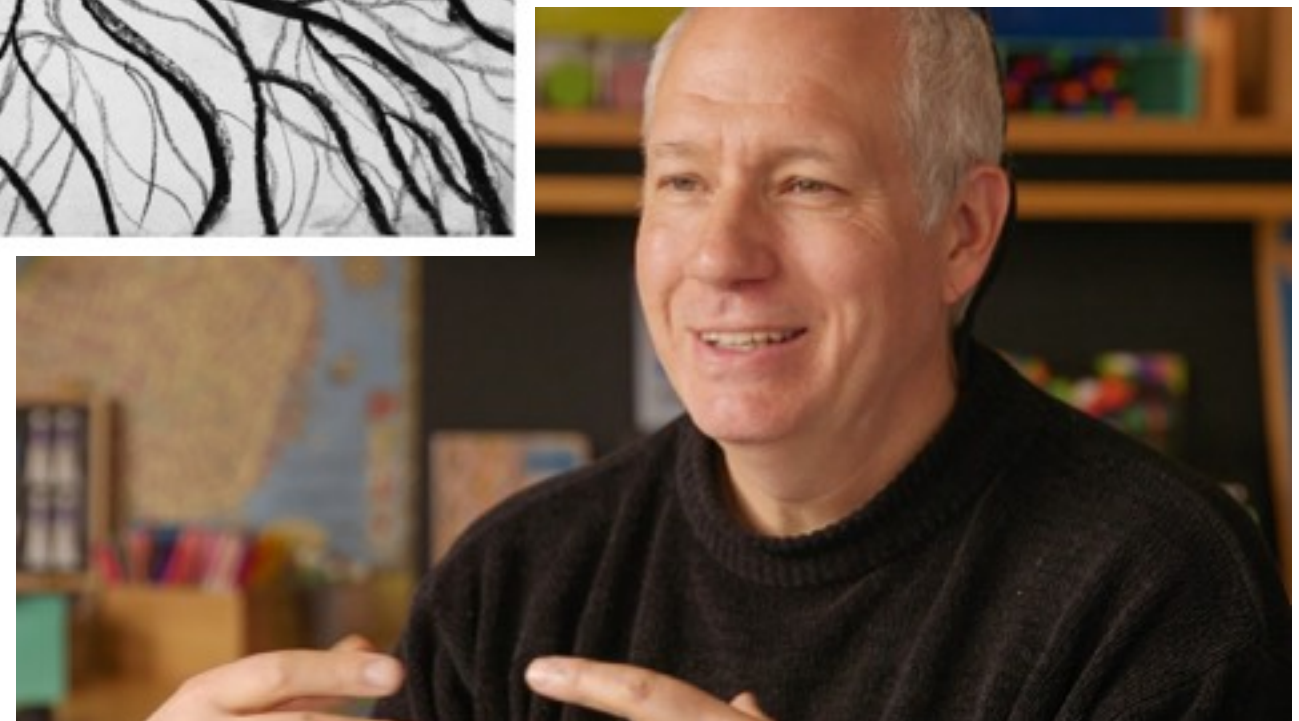
The student who created this was very invested in the open ended meaning behind the image. The CHECKED BOX could represent a number of policy related issues: checking a box (“Ok we did it, we went to the country, we gave them vitamins, we’re done”) or it could mean voting (“let’s change policies, let’s get out to vote for those”).



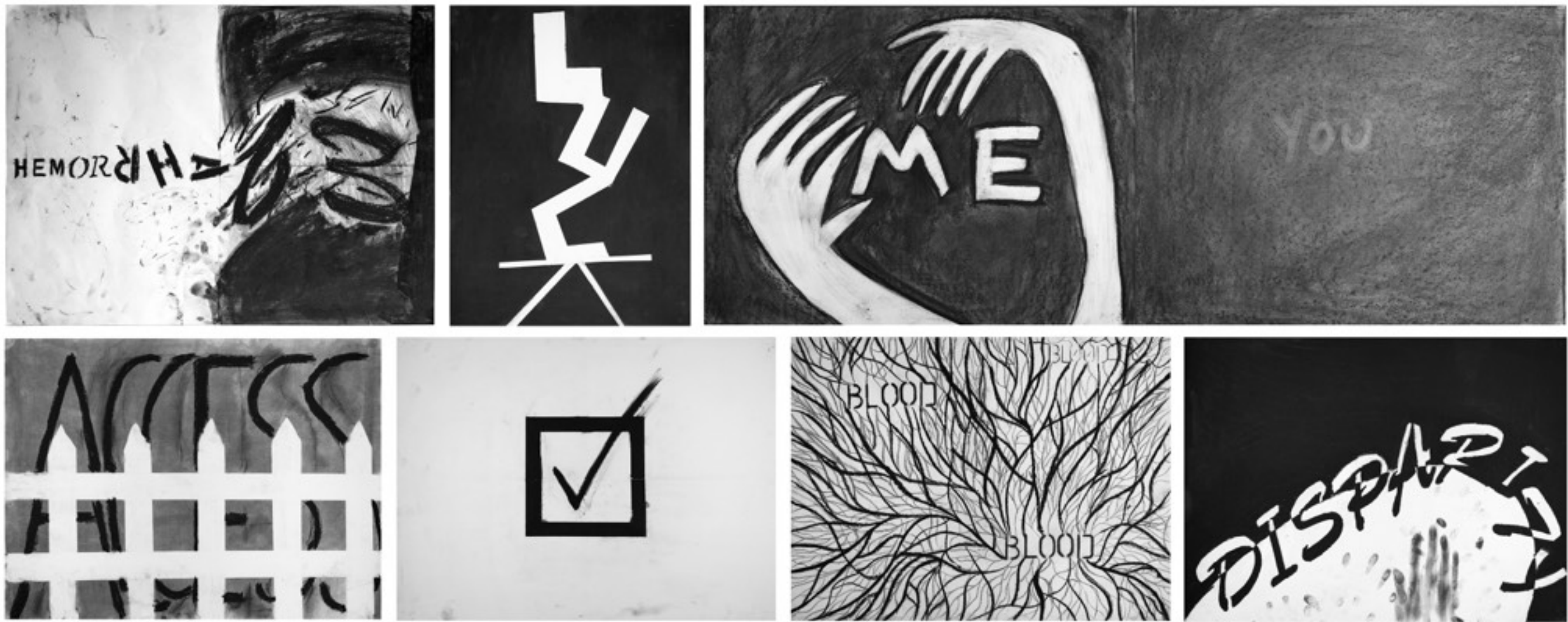


This last image, BLOOD, is quite strong graphically. For the student it had a double meaning: in part it represents the importance of blood in global health while also depicting blood and veins as a metaphor for a social network.

"Everything is connected."







“Trying to decide  
how they would go  
out into the world.”

Students wrapped up the class with an in depth discussion that asked them to compare and contrast the graphically compelling images in a thoughtful manner. This discussion was Tom's favorite part.

iBook created by Megan Harding  
Exhibit videos created by Camilla Finlay

Artwork produced by juniors and seniors at  
the Cambridge School of Weston

created by the

# **Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University**

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