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A Trope for Learning

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A Trope for Learning

To my father on his 80th birthday

by Linda Chown



All little, my patent leathered feet
 pad to meet your stride.
 Your long powerful legs unreachable,
 I flutter in an intensity
 to keep the pace you set.
 Now, pictures show us, me,
 all skinny with bobbed hair
 and a crookedly intense wince of a frown
 and you, all long and fervent
 with lanky motion, intermittent twinkle.

Somehow this groping towards
 has marked me well.
 In this striving to join, to meet,
 to walk apace,
 is a trope for learning shared:
 we hold our own in the present,
 being completely there.

Paul S. Chown (Oct. 28, 1916 — June 15, 1997)



Linda Chown, associate professor of English, came to Grand Valley in 1989. Originally from California, she is currently writing a book on Modernist women novelists and studying different forms of narration, such as travel narratives, Post-Colonial fiction, and novels written in the first person.