

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



UPDATE from the City Manager for Sunday, August 2, 2020

**Portsmouth Protection Plan:
Do your part. Wear a mask.**

**Deaths to date from COVID-19:
In the US: 158,207. In NH: 416.
In Rockingham County: 95.
Cumulative cases in US: 4,770,817.
Cumulative cases in New Hampshire, 6,613.
Cumulative, Rockingham County: 1,629.
Current cases in Rockingham County: 108.
Current cases in Portsmouth: 12.
For the complete, NH Department of Health &
Human Services dashboard
<http://www.nh.gov/covid19>**

I have been surprised at how few of the local kids I've worked with know how to fish. Children who grow up in this town should be familiar with the tradition, and August is a perfect time to teach a kid to fish.

Teach a Girl to Fish and You Feed Her for a Lifetime

At about the age of eight
my father gave me a fishing pole.

A girly one, pretty, like an accessory.
Bright blue stripes - how I loved it!

He did not teach me how to fish.
As is my way, I tried to teach myself.

My very first cast, caught up
in an immovable mess I couldn't fix.

Snagged onto something in the blackness,
cranking the reel, willing it to work.

I stood alone, on the mucky edge
of the brook for what felt like forever.

Insects swarming, two men watching
from a distance, sizing up my situation,
big brown eyes pleading for help.

Later, I'd climb the steep hill home
with one hand. Careful not to damage
my pretty pole with a newly snapped line.

No catch to carry, nor the contented whistle
of Opie. Just the memory of that morning
which comes to me often, a metaphor of my life.

Even on my father's birthday. Even on this day,
when I will buy a slab of salmon, grill it
on a cedar plank with my own organic herbs,

and try to taste the perfection
of another man's catch.

-- Tammi J Truax

*Portsmouth Poet Laureate 2019-2021
Maine Beat Poet Laureate 2018-2020*