

ERDEM TAŞDELEN / from *A Petition of the Left Hand*

Philadelphia, 1779
by Benjamin Franklin

A Petition of the Left Hand TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF EDUCATION

I address myself to all the friends of youth, and conjure them to direct their compassionate regards to my unhappy fate, in order to remove the prejudices of which I am the victim. There are twin sisters of us; and the two eyes of man do not more resemble, nor are capable of being upon better terms with each other, than my sister and myself, were it not for the partiality of our parents, who make the most injurious distinctions between us. From my infancy, I have been led to consider my sister as a being of a more elevated rank. I was suffered to grow up without the least instruction, while nothing was spared in her education. She had masters to teach her writing, drawing, music, and other accomplishments; but if by chance I touched a pencil, a pen, or a needle, I was bitterly rebuked; and more than once I have been beaten for being awkward, and wanting a graceful manner. It is true, my sister associated me with her upon some occasions; but she always made a point of taking the lead, calling upon me only from necessity, or to figure by her side.

But conceive not, Sirs, that my complaints are instigated merely by vanity. No; my uneasiness is occasioned by an object much more serious. It is the practice in our family that the whole business of providing for its subsistence falls upon my sister and myself. If any indisposition should attack my sister, -- and I mention it in confidence upon this occasion, that she is subject to the gout, the rheumatism, and cramp, without making mention of other accidents, -- what would be the fate of our poor family? Must not the regret of our parents be excessive, at having placed so great a difference between sisters who are so perfectly equal? Alas! we must perish from distress; for it would not be in my power even to scrawl a suppliant petition for relief, having been obliged to employ the hand of another in transcribing the request which I have now the honour to prefer to you

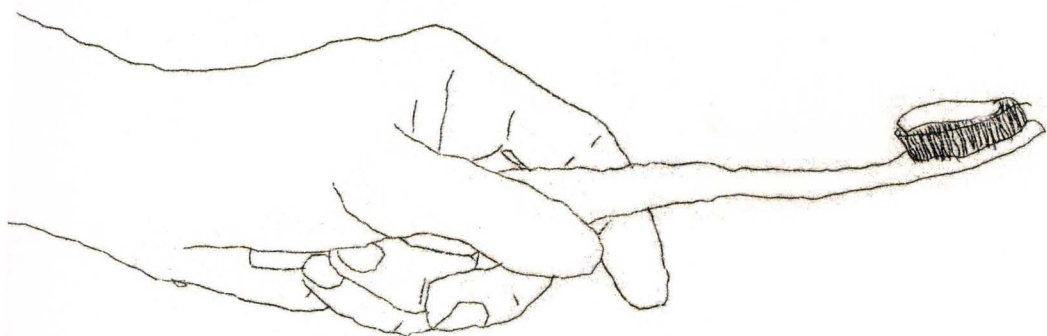
Condescend, Sirs, to make my parents sensible of the injustice of an exclusive tenderness, and of the necessity of distributing their care and affection among all their children equally. I am, with a profound respect, Sirs, your obedient servant,

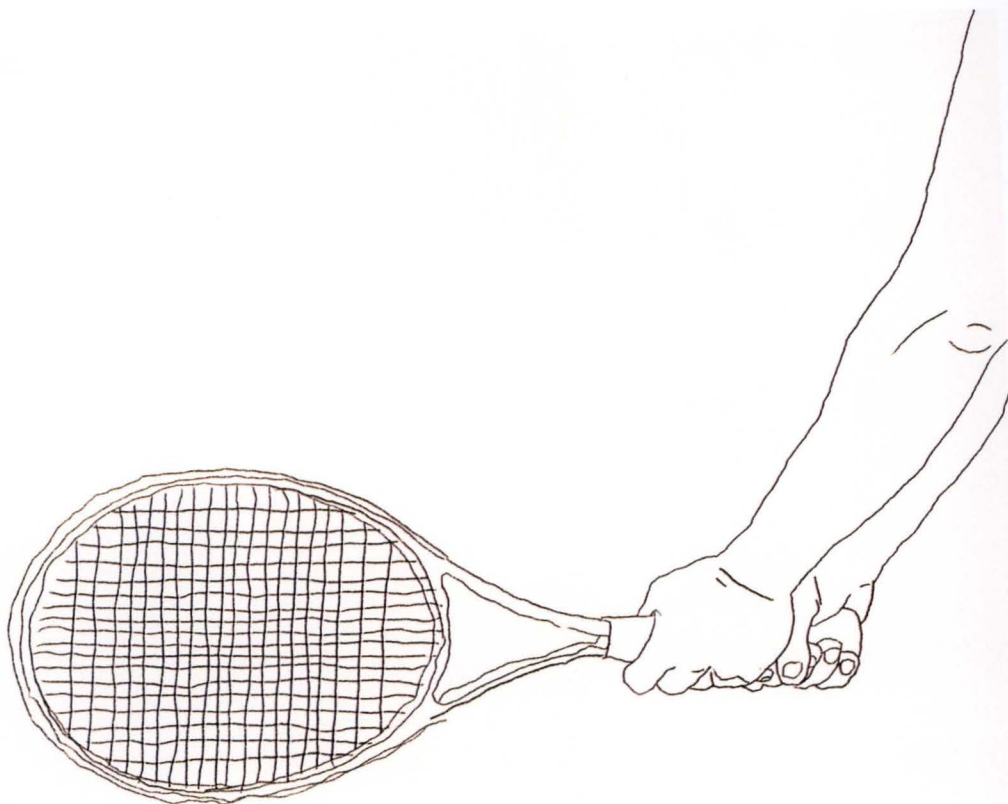
THE LEFT HAND.

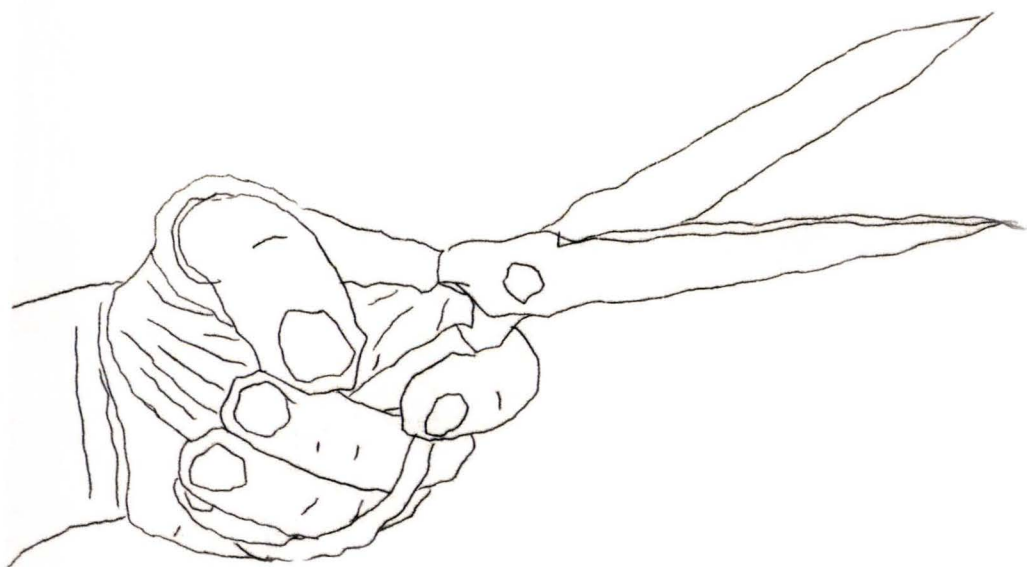
A Petition of the Left Hand, found text by Benjamin Franklin on letter size copy paper.

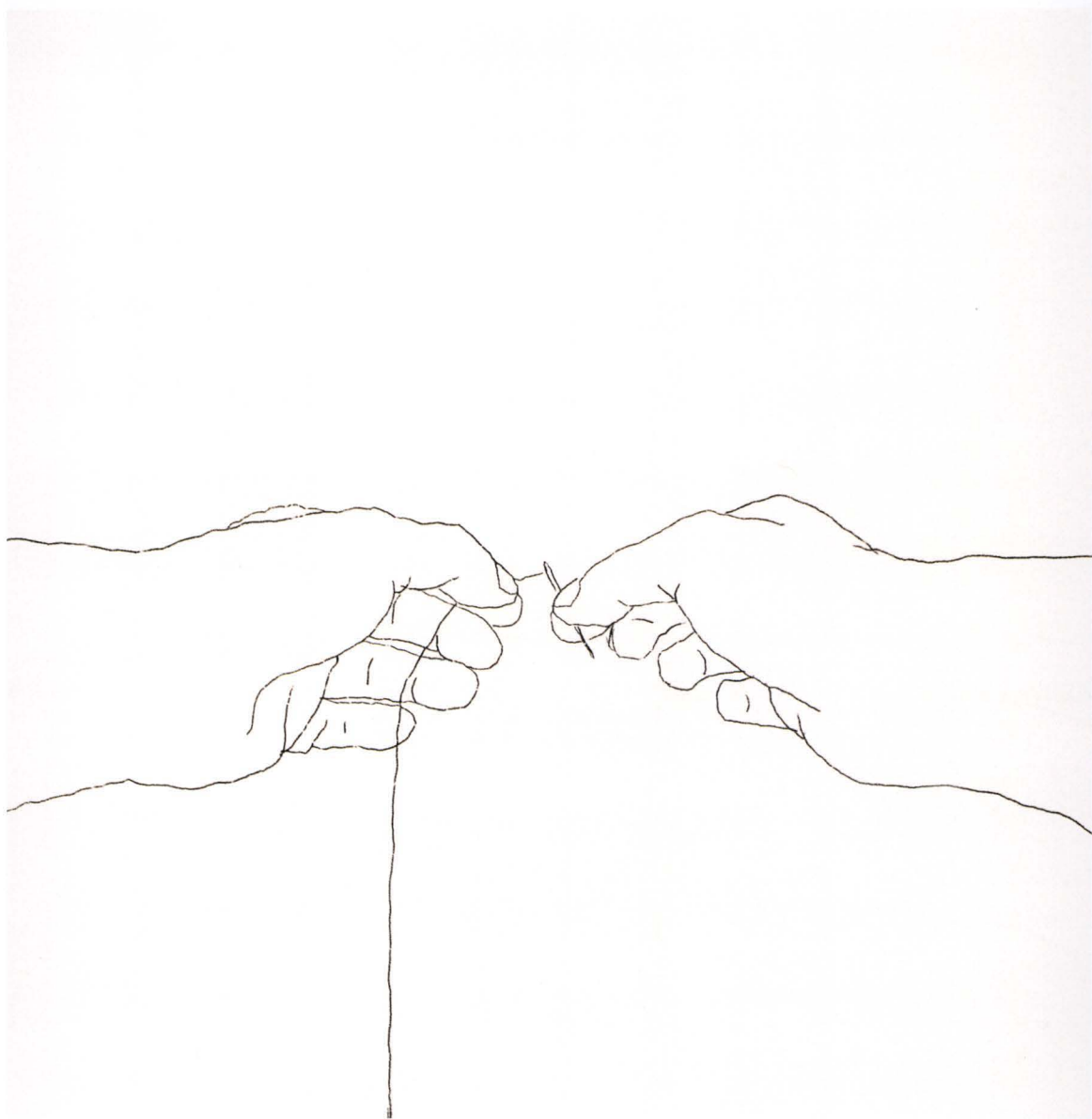
A number of activities, in which you can use either your left or your right hand, are specified below. Indicate which hand you usually use for these activities. Visualize the activity in question, if you are not immediately sure of an answer. If you don't have a clear preference, indicate that you use both hands.

*The Dutch Handedness Questionnaire, 2014, series of 17 drawings
with graphite on archival paper, 14" × 14" each. Private collection.*

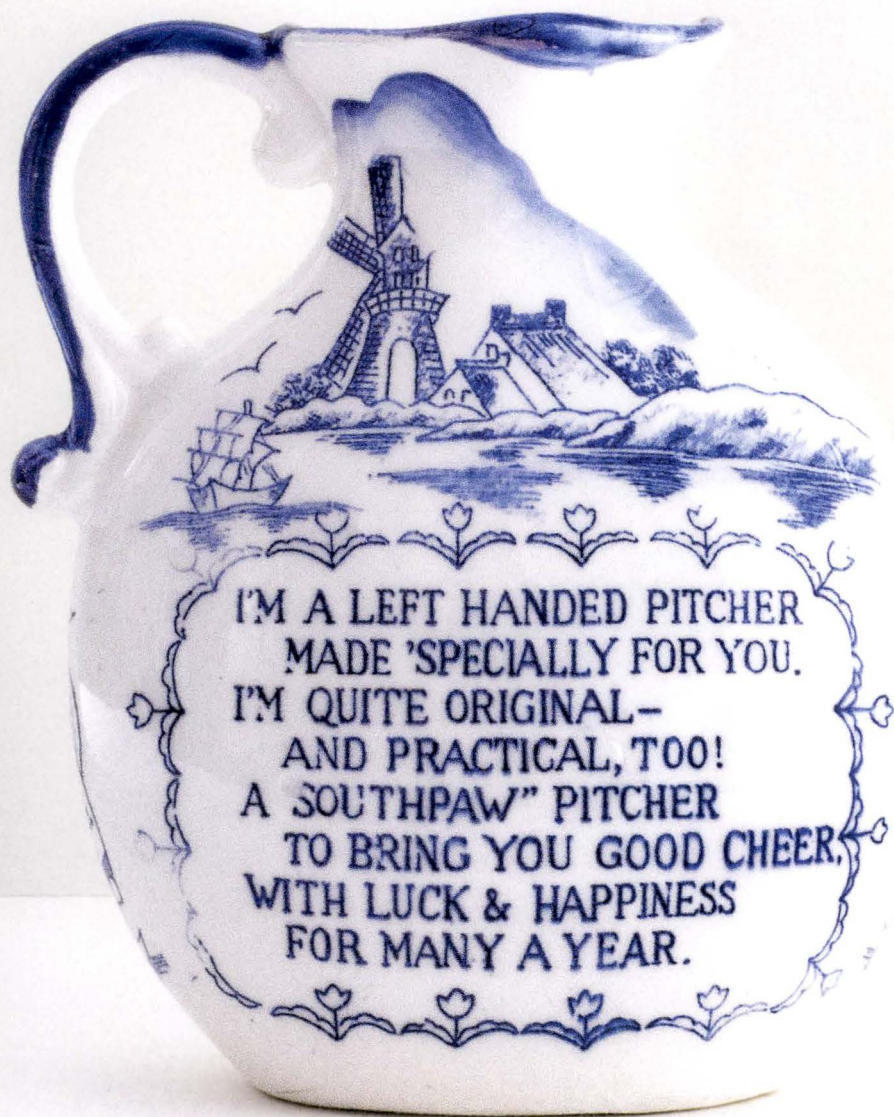








OPPOSITE: A 'Southpaw' Pitcher, found miniature ceramic jug, 4.75" × 4.50" × 4".





My Father's Left Hand, 2014, cast bronze, 9" × 4.25" × 3.50".



*All The
Decisive
Blows*

A book of quotes
on the left hand

THIS PAGE AND FOLLOWING PAGE: *All the Decisive Blows*,
2014, artist book (289 pages, edition of 500), 6.25" x 4.25".

These are the days when no one should rely unduly on his competence. Strength lies in improvisation. All the decisive blows are struck left-handed.

Walter Benjamin

After urination, one must first wash the anus if it has been soiled by the urine; then one must press three times with the middle finger of his left hand on the part between the anus and the base of the penis; then one must put his thumb on top of the penis and his index finger on the bottom and pull the skin forward three times as far as the circumcision ring; and after that three times squeeze the tip of the penis.

Ayatollah Khomeini

Everybody remembers the first time they were taught that part of the human race was Other. That's a trauma. It's as though I told you that your left hand is not part of your body.

Toni Morrison

The left-handed are precious; they take places which are inconvenient for the rest.

Victor Hugo