

Medicine 447C-82:

Practitioners and Patients:

American Clinical Medicine since 1900

Oct 16 through Dec 4, 2024; 5:15-7:15 pm

Introduction

How has the relationship between medical practitioners and patients changed over time, and what are its possibilities for the future? This class will consider these questions using a variety of sources including medical memoirs, patient narratives, short stories, and other media. We will identify the critical historical processes (scientific, social, and cultural) that account for the structure of medical practice today, as well as examine the ethical tensions and controversies that have resulted.

In addition to understanding how the structures and values of mainstream medicine have changed over time, we'll also try to assess the various reform movements that have sought to transform clinical practice, and consider some of the individuals (often "outsiders") who have challenged the dominant establishment.

A third thread is that of how medical racism has played out in American history. Each week will include discussion of an episode from the soon-to-be-released podcast UNHEALED

Location: Conference Room, Trent Center for Bioethics, Humanities, and History of Medicine, Room 108 Seeley G Mudd Building (Medical Center Library). Parking is available in Bryan Neuroscience Parking Garage after 5 pm.

Objectives:

- 1) Identify the most important events and trends of 20th century American medicine, and why they must be understood in social context
- 2) Identify examples of important historical figures who have resisted dominant structures of power and knowledge
- 3) Understand why history- particularly local history—must be confronted prior to addressing medical racism
- 4) Reflect on the implications of historical imagination for your own identity, professional and beyond

Resources:

- 1) All reading and assignments will be posted on the course Canvas web site. <https://dukemed.instructure.com/>
- 2) Readings marked optional are not required but may be of interest (or may be featured in make up assignment)
- 3) Each class includes one or two clips from the upcoming podcast *UNHEALED: A Story of Race, Memory, and a Teaching Hospital* (hosted by Dr. Damon Tweedy and Dr. Baker). It is the result of a project examining the history of racism at Duke Hospital, centered on one story in particular: the death of 24 year old army veteran in 1950 following a car accident, after being turned away from Duke Hospital.

The podcast has not been released to the public but can be accessed here:

[UNHEALED](#)

Evaluation and Grading:

Grading is pass/fail. Individual evaluation will be provided for all students at the end of the course. Do not stress.

Expectations:

- 1) Attendance is expected at all classes unless specifically excused.
- 2) Complete all assigned preparation (may be text, video, etc) before class, and participate in discussion
- 3) By Tuesday midnight, post at least one discussion reflection (under 500 words)
- 4) Agents of Change Presentation: In teams of two, students will lead a 30-minute discussion (weeks 4,5,6, or 7) on a person or group associated with medical reform (see below).
- 5) Submit a final reflection at the end of the course, due Friday Dec 6. Details below.
- 6) Up to two missed classes can be made up by completing a 2-page reflection (under 750 words) per the instructor

Weekly Schedule:

(Classes run 5:15 to 7:15 pm unless otherwise indicated. The final two classes may take longer- will provide food!)

Week 2 (Oct 23): New Beginnings: 1900-1930

Assignments:

- Choose your agent of change project and partner
- EC Halperin, JA Perman, EA Wilson, "Abraham Flexner of Kentucky, His Report *Medical Education in the United States*, and the Historical Questions Raised by the Report, *Academic Medicine* 85 (2010): 203-210
- Lewis Thomas, *The Youngest Science: Life of a Medicine-Watcher* (Bantam Books, 1983), Chapters 2, 5 (pp 2-18,36-50)
- UNHEALED Episode 1: The Past is Present [UNHEALED](#)
- *Are You Fit to Marry?* (Silent Film, produced by Dr Harry Haiselden, 1917). 90 minutes but can be easily watched in under 30 minutes using "fast forward." Try to watch at least the first 10 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEh2kz26T1k>

Week 3 (Oct 30): Professionalism, Power, and the State: 1930-45

Assignments:

- AJ Cronin, *The Citadel* (Boston: Little, Brown: 1937): 3-29 (First chapter of the most popular "doctor novel" of its day—which helped inspire the British National Health Insurance). A young doctor faces a typhoid epidemic and discovers social medicine
- UNHEALED Episode 2: How Two Stories became One [UNHEALED](#)

In class:

- American Medical Association, *Men of Medicine—1938* (16 minute film produced by AMA in response to proposed New Deal legislation establishing National Health Insurance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOhrQbcN0_g&t=7s)

Optional:

- JH Warner, "The Art of Medicine: *The Doctor* in early Cold War America," *The Lancet* 2013; 381: 1452-53

Week 4 (Nov 6): American Medicine's Golden Age? 1945-65

Assignments:

- A. *The Polio Crusade* (American Experience, 50 minutes), <https://vimeo.com/29504165>
- B. One of these two photo essays:
 - W. Eugene Smith photo essay, "Country Doctor," Life Magazine 1948
<https://www.life.com/history/w-eugene-smiths-landmark-photo-essay-country-doctor/>
 - E. Eugene Smith photo essay, "Nurse Midwife," 1951
<https://time.com/26789/w-eugene-smith-life-magazine-1951-photo-essay-nurse-midwife/feed/>
- C. UNHEALED Episode 3: A Family's Story [UNHEALED](#)

In Class:

- American Medical Association, "Ronald Reagan Speaks Out on Socialized Medicine," (1961; 11 minutes),
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYrIDlrLDSQ&t=212s>

Week 5 (Nov 13) : Crisis of Authority 1960-90

Assignments;

- "Deadly Deception" (Nova, 1993—documentary on US Public Health Syphilis Study in Tuskegee)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I3vPgJNFwg>
 -
- *Time* Magazine articles (Right to Die, IVF)
- *Unhealed* Episodes 4-5: No Room at the Inn; Invisible Racism [UNHEALED](#)

Agents of Change Report Groups 1, 2

Optional:

- Carl Elliott, "Tuskegee Truth Teller," *American Scholar* Dec 4, 2017
- <https://theamericanscholar.org/tuskegee-truth-teller/>
- Samuel Shem, *The House of God*, chapter 3

Week 6 (Nov 20): Consolidation and Corporatization: Medicine since 1990

Assignments:

- Atul Gawande, “Big Med: Restaurant chains have managed to combine quality control, cost control, and innovation. Can health care?” *New Yorker* Aug 13, 2013
- Unhealed Episode 6: Invisible Racism [UNHEALED](#)

Agents of Change Reports, Groups 3, 4

Nov 27: Thanksgiving Break- NO CLASS

Week 8 (Dec 4): Agents of Change Reports

- *Unhealed* Episode 7: Why Remember the Past? [UNHEALED](#)
- *Agents of Change Reports: Weeks 5, 6, 7*

Agents of Change Project:

This is a chance to learn about people who have “pushed back” on the dominant paradigm, individuals or groups who came together to effect change—whether from within the system (reform) or outside (revolution). What can we learn from their stories? What made them able to stand apart? How did they not become overwhelmed by obstacles? Were they lone individualists or parts of communities? Why is this story important to remember?

Choose a partner and plan to lead a 30 minute discussion on a particular individual or group that in some way challenged the system. Try to pick not just an innovator (someone who developed, say, a new therapy within the currently existing paradigm), but a person who in some way pushed back

more fundamentally. Spend about 15 minutes telling the most important parts of their story, and be prepared to lead a class discussion for another 15 minutes. For the first part, either a short handout or VERY short set of slides can be used. Identifying themes and questions is more important than covering all the facts. Do identify your sources.

Since this is a history elective, explore, if you can, the individual's self-understanding in terms of history. What story, or stories, are they part of? Do they have a "foundational story" that enables them to stand above their contemporaries' assumptions? If they are somehow "outsiders," did this have a positive side?

Here are some suggestions—you can choose others but please run past Dr Baker:

- Brenda Armstrong—Duke admissions director, activist
- Sara Josephine Baker—early 20th century pediatric pioneer, investigated "typhoid" Mary
- Henry Beecher—"whistleblower" on research ethics
- Charles Drew—First African American director of Red Cross blood bank
- Anthony Fauci- key role with regard to HIV, long before COVID
- H. Jack Geiger—civil rights activist, founder Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Alan Hart—TB physician, Trans identity, early 1900s
- Jocelyn Elders—US Surgeon General
- Paul Farmer, Jim Yong Kim—Global health activists
- Aaron Moore- Durham's first Black physician, founded Lincoln Hospital
- Cicely Saunders—founder of hospice movement
- George Simkins, Lawsuit Simkins v Cone, ended hospital segregation 1963

Deadlines:

- Choose partner and possible "agent of change" (due Oct 23); give 2-3 choices

- Presentations: Weeks 5,6,7

Final Reflection:

The moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre famously stated that before you can answer the question, what should I do?, you need to first be able to answer the prior question, of what story, or stories, am I a part? The big picture behind this class is to give you a chance to stop and identify the stories that YOU are a part of. This includes the story of medicine (which can be narrated in different ways), as well as the stories that are more foundational for you- perhaps drawn from your deeper beliefs, community, friends, etc.

Write a final reflection (due last day of classes, Dec 8) about how this class has spoken to you, as you work out your own vocation and identity, as both a future physician and a fully-realized person. There will be no letter grade, but I will return with my own thoughts. Hopefully it will be a useful piece for you to keep.

Keep under 5 pages (1500 words), double spaced.