NEWS AND RESOURCES:

Previously, we noted an article about use of social media in graduate-level medical humanities courses (Use of social media in graduate-level medical humanities education: two pilot studies from Penn State College of Medicine, Med Teach 2011;33:e429-434). A brief post on other aspects of social media and medical humanities is worth looking at (http://humanitiesandhealth.wordpress.com/2011/07/17/all-heart-matters-james-borton-introduces-a-blog-of-heart-surgery-narratives/). This post emphasizes a significant role for social media to utilize narrative in promoting healing and understanding. There are several excellent blogs that use various aspects of narrative in a thoughtful way. One of the best is by James Borton (http://www.allheartmatters.com). This excellent blog has links to several others that deal with narrative and aspects of medical humanities.

A few articles of interest (attached as PDFs)

- Illness as a condition of our existence in the world: on illness and pathic experience. Martinsen and Solbakk. Journal of Medical Humanities, 2012 (online first).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The Neuroscience of Enlightenment
Monday, March 5, 6:00 - 7:30pm
NYU School of Medicine, 550 1st Avenue, Farkas Auditorium
Brief reception following the presentation. Presented by the Office of Student Affairs.
RSVP HERE! For more information call (212) 263-6088 or email joseph.oppedisano@med.nyu.edu

The quest for enlightenment has occupied mankind for millennia. From the depictions we’ve seen—meditating monks, nuns in prayer, shamans communing with the universe—it seems that this elusive state is reserved for a chosen few. Joining the long-separated worlds of science and spirit, Dr. Perlmutter will explore the exciting phenomena of neurogenesis, neuroplasticity and mitochondrial health, as well as spiritual practices in a presentation focused on the goal of making enlightenment available to all.

David Perlmutter, MD, FACN, ABIHM is a Board-Certified Neurologist and Fellow of the American College of Nutrition. He received his M.D. degree from the University of Miami, School of Medicine where he was awarded the Leonard G. Rowntree Research Award. He is the author of: The Better Brain Book, Raise a Smarter Child By Kindergarten, and Power Up Your Brain - The Neuroscience of Enlightenment.

Writing in Water – A film on the social life of calligraphy
Tuesday, March 6, 6:00pm
NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Department of Cinema Studies
721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Michelson Theater
*Free and open to the public.* Seating is limited and is available first-come, first-seated.

What does it mean to take up calligraphy in a fast-moving world where people often no longer recall the stroke order of unusual words, but can look them up on cellphones? How does it feel being alone, together, spending long hours training your body to write while slowly mulling over your life with others? *Writing in Water* follows a calligraphy teacher, and that teacher's teacher, in Tuanjiehu Park, Beijing, where they write on the plaza every day. With their students they connect past to present, master to pupil, friend to friend, making a community, making Chinese characters that slowly materialize, and that last long after the water has evanesced into air. (In Chinese with English subtitles.)

Preview Screening, followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker.
42 min., Angela Zito, director
*Angela Zito* teaches in Anthropology and Religious Studies at NYU, where she co-directs the Center for Religion and Media, and co-curates Reel China, a Documentary Biennial with Zhang Zhen of Cinema Studies. [http://www.angelazito.com/](http://www.angelazito.com/)

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**The Psychology of Drugs & Risk**
Friday, March 9, 6-9pm
CUNY Grad Center, Fifth Ave & 34th Street, Rm 6304
*This event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Rachel Liebert, rliebert@gc.cuny.edu*

Following the thalidomide disaster in 1962, we put a series of protections in place – patent products for drugs, prescription-only status and randomized controlled trials (RCTs). These protections are now fueling an epidemic of drug-induced deaths, with treatment related death now the 4th leading cause of death and in some branches of medicine the leading cause of death. With Alice it seems the Risks of Drugs have stepped through the Looking Glass - despite increasing evidence for instance that antidepressants double the rate of birth defects, and miscarriages and lead to mental handicap, prescriptions for these drugs in pregnancy are soaring. The protections we have put in place to save ourselves from Drug Risks as so often happens have become the source of an even bigger set of problems. This is particularly the case with RCTs and Prescription-only Status for Medicines. There are a well-known set of biases stemming from RCT methodology and company publication strategies for studies that compromise clinical practice, but this lecture moves beyond these to an unrecognized set of biases inherent in RCTs that make them unsuitable for assessing adverse events. These biases conspire to make medicines appear safer and safer at a cost of making doctors riskier and riskier. If unchecked these biases threaten an end to the professional status of medicine. Treating the growing crisis in medicine will require remedies targeting one or more of these factors. In the meantime, anyone who wants to speak up for those being injured by treatments will have to cope with the appearances of being against ‘science’ and the question for each of us is whether we can manage to cope with the crisis of identity this will cause.

David Healy, MD, author of many books analyzing and challenging the pharmaceutical industry, has another one just coming out, *Pharmageddon* (University of California Press, 2012). Best known for *a series of provocative and influential books such as* Let them eat Prozac: The unhealthy relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and depression, The Creation of Psychopharmacology, Mania (A
Seeing Ourselves
Opening reception: Saturday, March 10, 7-10pm
Exhibit runs March 6-April 14
MUSECPMI Museum, 580 Eighth Avenue, 7th Floor (at 38th St.)
http://www.musecpmi.org/currentexhibition.html

“Seeing Ourselves” is a unique exhibit in which world class art will be combined with cutting edge science to leave viewers inspired by the beauty and capabilities of the human brain. While many scientific advances have inspired artists over the years, art and medicine have a special area of overlap in the desire to represent the human mind and body. As demonstrated in two groundbreaking articles in the March, 2010 issue of Radiology, new MRI technology allows us to see details in the living brain that were previously seen only through the lens of a low-powered microscope. This important step has excited the scientific world, but has not yet been shared with the art world or with the general public. High-resolution MRIs will be displayed side-by-side with the artwork they have inspired, allowing viewers to marvel at both the structural beauty of the brain and the creative potential housed inside of it.

Featuring art by more than 50 artists, including Laura Ferguson, whose works come directly out of her artist residency at NYUSOM and the access she had to the 3D Imaging Lab and the Anatomy Lab. (www.lauraferguson.net/news-exhibitions)

Bellevue Literary Review Poetry & Prose Reading
Sunday, March 25, 5pm
Bellevue Hospital – Rotunda, 462 First Avenue (at 28th St)
http://blr.med.nyu.edu/news/events/

Please join us on March 25th for an evening of poetry and prose to celebrate the Spring issue of the Bellevue Literary Review. The reading will take place at Bellevue Hospital—perhaps the most unique venue for great literature in New York City. Featured readers include Lauren Schmidt (winner of the 2012 Marica and Jan Vilcek Prize for Poetry), Sally Lipton Derringer, Naomi Lore, and Ilya Lyashevsky.

The Bellevue Literary Review recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Over the past decade, the BLR has become a prominent voice in the field of narrative medicine and in the literary magazine community at large. NewPages.com recently said of BLR: “The offerings here are extremely satisfying literature, well worth your attention because you’re human—and good writing heals.”

This is Your Brain on Politics: Why people believe what they want to believe, and deny science selectively
Thursday, March 29, 6:30-8:30pm
NYU Bookstore, 726 Broadway near Astor Pl.
Free and open to the public. Co-sponsored by the Bellevue Literary Press.
http://www.bookstores.nyu.edu/events/

Jonathan Haidt is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Virginia. He’s the author of The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion (Pantheon, 2012) and The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom (Basic Books, 2006).

S. Matthew Liao is Director of the Bioethics Program, Associate Professor in the Center for Bioethics, and Affiliated Professor in the Department of Philosophy at New York University.

PREVIOUSLY HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS:

Thursday, March 15, “WHACK’ed…and then everything was different”: Portraits of Traumatic Brain Injury Survivors
6-8pm, (Opening Reception), NYU Langone Medical Center, 550 First Avenue, NY – MSB Gallery (Medical Science Building – 1st Floor)
(show runs March-April 2012)
RSVP to: TBIportraitgalleryopening@biausa.org
A solo exhibition by Eliette Markhbein. In the artist’s words: “My show, WHACK’ed ... and then everything was different, honors traumatic brain injury survivors who changed perceptions of TBI and disability in general and became role models for millions of others. The series of large scale portraits personify the various causes of TBI as well as the diversity of people it affects.”

Friday, March 23, Interdisciplinary Conference at NYU – Structural Competency: New Medicine for the Institutional Inequalities that Make Us Sick
Conference 10:00am-5pm, Film Screening 5-6pm.
NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, 20 Cooper Square, NY, NY, 10012
http://structuralcompetency.org/
This meeting is free and open to the public but space is limited. RSVP to structuralcompetency@aol.com
This one-day working conference will assemble multidisciplinary practitioners and theorists to explore a new paradigm, Structural Competency, that proposes that a host of clinical disorders (e.g. hypertension, obesity, smoking, medication “non-compliance,” post-traumatic syndromes, depression, psychosis) must be addressed as the downstream implications of upstream decisions (e.g. food delivery systems, housing discrimination, urban infrastructure failure, biocapitalism, diagnostic codes). Structural competency extends beyond cultural competency to address the pathologies of institutions and policies that result in maladaptive behaviors and biologies of individuals.
Jonathan Metzl, MD, Ph.D. and Helena Hansen, MD, Ph.D., Organizers
Speakers include Ernie Drucker, Mindy Fullilove, Bruce Link, Jo Phelan, Dalton Conley, Philippe Bourgois, Jack Geiger, Marc Gourevitch, Rayna Rapp, Emily Martin, Kim Hopper, Alondra Nelson and Brad Lewis.

Through March 31, 2012 – Shadow and Substance: African American Images from The Burns Archive
The 113 images in Shadow and Substance include portraits, snapshots and photographs documenting industries, property and events related to the African American experience from the beginning of photography to today.
New York State Museum: Cultural Education Center, Madison Avenue, Albany, NY
http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/exhibits/special/shadowandsubstance.cfm
March 30 - April 1, 2012 – 2012 Bioethics Conference: The Moral Brain
New York University, NYU Center for Bioethics
http://bioethics.as.nyu.edu/object/bioethics.events.20120330.conference
Part I: “The Significance of Neuroscience for Morality: Lessons from a Decade of Research”
Part II: "Can Moral Behavior be Improved or Enhanced?"

This message is being sent to the NYU Division of Medical Humanities listserv in our efforts to share news of interest to the community. Please feel free to forward these emails to colleagues who may be interested. If you would like to be removed from the email list, please contact Stacy Bodziak (stacy.bodziak@nyumc.org).