**Division of Medical Humanities | Department of Medicine**

**February 22, 2013**

**News and Resources:**

**Visual Arts & Perception**

- **“Why Even Radiologists Can Miss a Gorilla Hiding in Plain Sight”**
  
  “Drew wondered if somehow being so well-trained in searching would make them immune to missing large, hairy gorillas. ‘You might expect that because they're experts, they would notice if something unusual was there,’ he says.

  He took a picture of a man in a gorilla suit shaking his fist, and he superimposed that image on a series of slides that radiologists typically look at when they're searching for cancer. He then asked a bunch of radiologists to review the slides of lungs for cancerous nodules. He wanted to see if they would notice a gorilla the size of a matchbook glaring angrily at them from inside the slide.

  But they didn't: 83 percent of the radiologists missed it, Drew says.”
  

- **“The Art of Perception”**
  
  Harvard Medical School professor of neurobiology Margaret Livingstone uses art to understand how we perceive and process visual stimuli, and HMS professor of pediatrics Charles Nelson employs noninvasive techniques to measure the brain activity of children while they look at faces. For supplemental information, listen to an extended interview (mp3) with Margaret Livingstone as well as an extended interview (mp3) with Charles Nelson.
  
  [http://hms.harvard.edu/podcasts/art-perception](http://hms.harvard.edu/podcasts/art-perception)

- **Other Readings (attached as PDFs):**
  

**NYU Medical Student’s Essay Explores Grief and Celebrates a Patient's Life**

Second-year medical student Robert Spencer recently published his essay “Portrait of an Artist” as part of *JAMA*’s “A Piece of My Mind” column. The essay explores his connection to a patient and his reaction to her death: “I do believe your presence in my medical education was a gift, but it is a gift I have difficulty celebrating because I am only part doctor—the rest of me is a human who is grieving.” (The essay is attached as a PDF. Another feature recently appeared on *NYULMC*: [http://nyulmc2.med.nyu.edu/content/portrait-medical-student-essay-shares-grief-patient-and-friends-passing](http://nyulmc2.med.nyu.edu/content/portrait-medical-student-essay-shares-grief-patient-and-friends-passing), which is accessible through NYULMC’s network.)

**Updates from the Master Scholars Program in Humanistic Medicine**

The Master Scholars Program in Humanistic Medicine (MSPHM) at NYU School of Medicine is dedicated to promoting humanistic values in medical education among young physician scholars. Through innovative seminars, colloquia, and activities, the MSPHM enables students to pursue their creative and
intellectual interests not necessarily covered in the core curriculum. By approaching questions in medicine through the alternative lenses of the arts, humanities, and social sciences, the MSPHM emphasizes the shared humanity of all those involved in the delivery and receipt of health care. As a component of the Office of Student Affairs, the mission of the MSPHM is to empower students to become humanistic clinicians, scientists, leaders, and advocates. While some of our programmatic activities are intended for medical students only, others are open to all members of NYU as well as the public.

Spring 2013 Humanistic Medicine Seminars
Our Spring 2013 Humanistic Medicine Seminars, which are open to the wider NYU community, are in full swing! This semester’s offerings include: Art and Anatomy, Literature and Addiction, CHEF: Cook Healthy, Eat Fresh, and The Art of Seeing. For full seminar descriptions, visit: http://school.med.nyu.edu/humanisticmed/seminars

Spring 2013 Humanistic Medicine Colloquium
The MSPHM hosts semesterly colloquia with speakers of national and international prominence. You are warmly invited to join us for our Spring 2013 Humanistic Medicine Colloquium, Physicians as Writers: Oliver Sacks in Conversation with Danielle Ofri, on April 3, 2013 from 6-7PM, with a reception and book signing to follow. This event is free and open to the public; however, registration is required in order to attend. Please see the attached flyer for additional details. To RSVP, go to: http://school.med.nyu.edu/humanisticmed/events

Spring 2013 Dialogues: Student-Faculty Lunches
As part of our mission to foster mentoring relationships as well as contribute to the professional and personal development of our students, the MSPHM sponsors Dialogues: Student-Faculty Lunches. This is a series that offers small groups of interested students a unique opportunity to meet with faculty members in an informal setting over the lunch hour to discuss various themes in medical humanities and humanistic medicine. These sessions provide valuable opportunities to connect with faculty around topics of shared interest and learn about their career and life trajectories. Sample session topics include: “Ethics of Humanitarian Aid in Developing Countries,” “How Physicians Process Death and Dying,” “Lessons from Unusual Patients,” and “Narratives in Medicine.” Dialogues are open to NYUSOM medical students only. NYUSOM students and faculty with suggestions for topics, please contact: katie.grogan@nyumc.org

Master Scholars Program in Humanistic Medicine
Allen Keller, M.D., Director
Katie Grogan, D.M.H., M.A., Program Coordinator
Lynn Buckvar-Keltz, M.D., Associate Dean for Student Affairs
Joseph Oppedisano, Director of Student Affairs

UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES:

Without Limits – A Day About Access and Ability
Tuesday, February 26, 11:00am-2:45pm at NYU Langone Medical Center (Alumni Hall B and Breezeway)
Friday, March 1, 11:00am-2:30pm at Hospital for Joint Diseases (Loeb Auditorium)
How can we understand disability as a social construct; what do we need to ask, learn and consider about our patients’ individual experiences? What does this mean in holistically caring for patients with physical and/or hidden disabilities?
Co-sponsored by NYULMC’s Accessibility Council and Rusk Rehabilitation
See attached flyer for details and scheduled events.

What is Wrong With Markets to Obtain Organs for Transplantation?
Wednesday, February 27, 8:30am-10am
Translational Research Building, 227 East 30th St. (Between 2nd & 3rd Ave) - 6th Floor, Conf Room 619
RSVP not required ~~ Breakfast will be served
**The Oregon Experience in Physician-Assisted Suicide**

Friday, March 1, 4:00-6:00 p.m. | 5 Washington Place, Room 101
Reception to follow | RSVP required | Sponsored by the NYU Center for Bioethics

The role of the physician in the passage of a dying patient can take various forms—simple observation and symptom control, actively causing the death of the patient without the patient’s explicit participation—or true euthanasia, and physician assistance to patients electively pursuing suicide. In 1994, Oregon passed and implemented the first physician-assisted suicide program for terminally ill patients in the U.S. Distinguishing the Oregon experience from traditional notions of physician-assisted dying is the statute’s full acknowledgement of patient autonomy and consent. Predictions by critics anticipating the failure of the program have been discredited by eighteen years of experience and clinical data. Oregon has not become the “suicide destination” of the country, the program has attracted very few patients with detectable psychiatric disease, and the creation of “death panels” devolving into government-directed euthanasia in order to reduce public health care expenditures has not materialized. The process by which this program was successfully instituted had much to do with the demographics of Oregon, the careful education of a voting public by medical and legal experts, and the allying of seemingly disparate groups to lend political support.

**Dr. Peg Brand** is adjunct instructor in the Competition Not Conflict (CNC) program of sports conflict resolution at the University of Oregon School of Law where she also teaches bioethics in the Robert D. Clark Honors College. She continues her affiliation with the Philosophy Department at IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University - Indianapolis) as adjunct associate professor. Most recently, she is editor of *Beauty Unlimited* (Indiana University Press, 2013).

**Dr. Ed Weiser** is a gynecologic oncologist who retired in 2007 after more than 30 years of practice and 13 years of active duty in the US Navy. He has consulted for Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the National Cancer Institute of the NIH, and served on the faculty at Emory University School of Medicine and the National Naval Medical Center. He has published on women's reproductive health in various journals including *Gynecologic Oncology* and *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

**Cross Cultural Medicine Workshop**

March 1-3, 2013, Washington, DC

The Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) and the AAMC are partnering to sponsor a Cross Cultural Medicine Workshop in Washington, DC, March 1-3. The workshop provides physicians, faculty, medical students, health care professionals, and others with greater understanding of Western and Traditional Medicine to enhance their cultural competence. [http://tinyurl.com/a8ka64h](http://tinyurl.com/a8ka64h)

**The Fred Hersch Ensemble performing My Coma Dreams**

Saturday, March 2, 3pm and 8pm performances
Miller Theatre, Columbia University Campus, 2960 Broadway, New York, NY
Information: [www.millertheatre.com](http://www.millertheatre.com), or call 212.854.7799

Based on the personal experience of pianist/composer Fred Hersch, who survived a two-month medically induced coma, *My Coma Dreams* is an extraordinary jazz theater piece that explores the dividing line between life and death. *The New Republic*’s David Hajdu called the piece “serious, profoundly moving and sometimes disturbing, a work of dream art as elegant as Stravinsky’s ‘Petit Concert’ and as memorable as ‘Yesterday.’”

**ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival Screenings**

March 8, 2013, 3:00 - 8:00pm | 3-5PM: 550 1st Avenue, Alumni Hall B / 6-8pm: 721 Broadway

Presented with *ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival, March 7-12*, a showcase of award-winning films by and about people with disabilities. For more information, please visit: [www.reelabilities.org](http://www.reelabilities.org)

3-5PM: NYU Medical Center, 550 1st Avenue, Alumni Hall B
Dr. Arthur Caplan will discuss the films that are shown at the NYUMC portion of the evening. Co-hosted by the Division of Bioethics.

- **WILLOWBROOK**, Directed by Ross Cohen (USA, 2012, USA, 16 min, Narrative): In 1964, a young pediatrician begins his residency at Willowbrook State School in Staten Island, only to discover that the institution is conducting Army funded experiments on developmentally disabled children. Based on true events.

- **FLYING ANNE**, Directed by Catherine van Campen (Netherlands, 2010, 21 min, Documentary): Eleven-year-old Anne is the kind of beautiful girl you can’t take your eyes off. The longer you look, the more you see her ‘tics’ from her Tourette’s syndrome – she suddenly spins or licks something. Anne is afraid of being teased at school and tries to keep her tics in check though she prefers ‘flying’ through life, so no one notices her tics.

6-8PM: Michelson Theater, 721 Broadway, 6th floor

- **HABANA MUDA**, Directed by Eric Brach (France/Cuba, 2011, 61 min, Documentary): Chino, who is deaf-mute, works on a farm, and is debating leaving Cuba to join Jose, a gay Mexican who has fallen in love with him and is prepared to help him obtain Mexican work papers. Jose ponders if Chino loves him or is just using him so he can move to Mexico and make money to send back to his wife and children.

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**The Examined Life Conference: Writing, Humanities, and the Art of Medicine**

April 11-13, 2013 at Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa

The University of Iowa Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine will host a three-day conference focusing on the links between the science of medicine and the art of writing. Sessions include “From the Page to the Bedside: The Role of Narrative Medicine in Improving Patient Care” and “Narrative Palliative Care: Storytelling for Healing.” For more information, visit: [http://www.medicine.uiowa.edu/theexaminedlife/](http://www.medicine.uiowa.edu/theexaminedlife/)

**Pulse: Art and Medicine**

Through April 13, 2013 | [www.strathmore.org](http://www.strathmore.org)

DC/MD area: Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD 20852-3385

Imagine the place where art, science and the human body intersect: that’s the idea behind Pulse: Art and Medicine, the fascinating exhibit that presents a multimedia investigation of medicine as an inspiration for new artworks and art forms. Germs as art? Well, that’s part of it. According to Strathmore Fine Art curator Harriet Lesser, “From before DaVinci’s Vitruvian Man, areas of medicine have influenced aesthetic perceptions. This show, from Luke Jerram’s blown glass bacteria to Bruce Peebles’ wooden double helix installation to Satre Stuelke’s X-Ray scans of common objects, Pulse presents an ever-expanding scope of how something so essential to our daily lives can also be a source of artistic inspiration.”

Online Features:

- Click here for a video example of sound sculptures by Bruce Peebles two brand-new sound sculptures just for this exhibit!
- See a preview of the work at [http://www.lauraferguson.net/pulse/](http://www.lauraferguson.net/pulse/)

**A Narrative Future for Healthcare: Launch of the International Network of Narrative Medicine**

June 19-21, 2013 at King's Guy's Hospital Campus, London

Co-Sponsored by the Centre for the Humanities and Health at King's College London and The Program in Narrative Medicine, Columbia University, New York

For information about the program, call for abstracts, and registration, visit: [www.narrativemedicinenetwork.org](http://www.narrativemedicinenetwork.org)

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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).

Division of Medical Humanities website: [http://medicine.med.nyu.edu/medhumanities](http://medicine.med.nyu.edu/medhumanities)

Archive of Past Newsletters: [http://medicine.med.nyu.edu/medhumanities/medical-humanities-newsletter-archive](http://medicine.med.nyu.edu/medhumanities/medical-humanities-newsletter-archive)