Overview

This course considers broad theoretical and conceptual issues in U.S. healthcare. We unpack the organizing models of contemporary medical research, practice, and education. We look at the problems with today’s dominant biomedical model and the possibilities of alternative conceptual frames. And we consider how much contemporary “healthcare crisis” symptoms—unsustainable cost, limited access, high medical side effects, social difference problems, and patient dissatisfaction—arise from the underlying model of healthcare.

Our inquiry will be interdisciplinary and we will draw from medicine, philosophy, history, psychology, literary theory, anthropology, sociology, gender studies, disability studies, cultural studies, poetry, drama, and documentary. In addition, Katie Grogan, Associate Director Master Scholars Program in Humanistic Medicine (NYU), will be with us for several classes to further develop our insights.
Objectives

1.) Understand the underlying biomedical model of healthcare and its limits.
2.) Develop a working knowledge of “narrative medicine” approaches to healthcare.
3.) Be able to articulate and organize the many variables beyond “biology” that impact human morbidity and mortality.

Texts

Edson: W; t
Jones, Wear, Friedman: Health Humanities Reader (marked by chapter number in the syllabus)
Dumit: Drugs for Life

Class Schedule

1.) 9/8: Introduction
   In Class: W; t (start)

   Death, be not proud

   John Donne (1572-1631)

   Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
   Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
   For those whom thou think'est thou dost overthrow
   Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
   From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
   Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
   And soonest our best men with thee do go,
   Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
   Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
   And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
   And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
   And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
   One short sleep past, we wake eternally
   And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

2.) 9/15: Biomedical Model
   Edson: W; t
   Flexner: Medical Education in the U.S.
   Griffiths: 5 Minute Medical Consultation: Ovarian Cancer
Reiser: Becoming a Doctor
Campo: “Technology and Medicine”

In Class: W:t (continue)

3.) 9/22: **Reform Efforts: Biopsychosocial Model and Patient-Centered Care**
Peabody: Care of the Patient
Engel: The Need for a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine
Engel: The Clinical Application of the Biopsychosocial Model
Cassel: The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine
McWhinney: Are we on the brink of a major transformation of clinical method?

In Class: W:t (finish)

4.) 9/29: **Bioethics, Health Humanities and Narrative Medicine**
Jonsen, Siegler, Winslade: *Clinical Ethics* (excerpts)
Charon: Narrative and Medicine
Lewis: Narrative Medicine and Health Care Reform
Egnew: Suffering, Meaning, and Healing: Challenges of Contemporary Medicine

Suggested: Husserl: The Crisis in the European Sciences (first published 1936)

5.) 10/6 **Health Humanities and Narrative Medicine**
Intro Health Humanities: The Why, What, and How of Medical/Health Humanities
Frank (ch1): Being a Good Story: The Humanities as Therapeutic Practice
Flood (ch2): Illuminating the It, The, and We of Disease and Illness
Haddad (ch11): Second Degree Block
Bleakley (Ch45): The Medical Humanities in Medical Education

Guest Speaker: Annie Robinson, Center for Narrative Practice

Legislative day 10/13: Monday classes run on Tuesday

6.) 10/20: **Psychotherapy and Healthcare**
Greenberg: *Psychological Impact of Acute and Chronic Illness* (selections)
Viorst: *Necessary Losses* (selections)
Marcus: Illness Counseling

In Class: *Escape Fire* (start)
7.) 10/27: **Patient-Centered Care, Primary Care, and Integrative Healthcare**
   Rosenthal: The Medical Home
   Clark/Brody/Hester (Ch13)—Medical home/Medical Humanities
   Syderman and Weil: Integrative Medicine
   Maizes, Rakel, and Niemiek: Integrative Medicine and Patient-Centered Care

   In Class: *Escape Fire* (cont) and Dean Ornish

***Turn in first paper*** First Paper Topic (8 pages): Please develop a commentary on *Wit* using the references from the first half of our class. The big idea is to get beyond a “character analysis” to consider the ways that Jason and Kelekian are symbolic (if extreme) representations of the current biomedical model. Then begin to work through some of the lost, or marginalized, opportunities in Vivian’s care. By marginalized, I mean the ways in which Suzie picked up some of the lost opportunities in her work with Vivian.

8.) 11/3: **Gender and Racial Difference**
   Garden (Ch 12): Social Studies
   *Our Bodies, Our Selves* excerpts from first edition
   Ratcliff: *Women and Health* excerpts
   Passau-Buck: “Caring vs. Curing”
   Grainger-Monsen (Ch 27): “The Rooms of Our Souls”

   In Class: *Business of Being Born*
   Grainger-Monsen *Worlds Apart*

9.) 11/10: **Disability Studies**
   Holmes (Ch 5): Disability in Two Doctor Stories
   Straus (Ch 6): Music and Disability
   Davis: Constructing Normalcy
   Taylor and Butler: Interdependence
   Iezzoni (Ch 8): Standout (very short)

   In Class: Examined Life—Sunara Taylor and Judith Butler

10.) 11/17: **Disability Studies**
   Linton: Reassigning Meaning
   Garland-Thomson: Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory
   Edwards: Hearing Aids are Not Deaf
   Couser: Disability, Life Narrative, and Representation
   Wade: “I Am Not One of the” and “Cripple Lullaby”
In Class: Disability Culture Rap [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j75aRfLsH2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j75aRfLsH2Y) 
*Sound and Fury* (excerpt)

11.) 11/24: **Medical Sociology/Public Health**
- Farmer: On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below
- McKinlay and McKinlay: Medical Measures and the Decline of Mortality
- Starfield: Is U.S. Health Really the Best in the World?
- Goldberg (Ch 26) Law’s Hand in Race, Class, and Health Inequalities
- Campo: “Ten Patients and Another”

In Class Documentary: Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick

12.) 12/1: **Healthcare Costs and Cultural Studies**
- Gawande: The Cost Conundrum
- Callahan: Healthcare Costs and Medical Technology
- Lewis: High Theory/Low Culture
- Dumit: *Drugs for Life* (Introduction, Ch 1)

In Class: Joseph Dumit lecture [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdGT7EBLz34](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdGT7EBLz34)

13.) 12/8: **Healthcare Costs and Cultural Studies**
- Dumit: *Drugs for Life* (Ch 2, Ch 3, Ch4, Ch 6, Conclusion)

In Class: Joseph Dumit lecture (cont)

14.) 12/15: **Religion and Spirituality**
- Barfield (Ch 36): Spirituality and Religion
- Garces-Foley: Buddhism, Hospice, and the American Way of Dying
- Giles and Miller: *The Arts of Contemplative Care* (selections)
- Lewis: Narrative Medicine and Contemplative Care at the End of Life
- Lu: Personal Transformation…a Study of… *Ikiru*

In Class: Exerpts *Ikiru*

***Final paper due on 12/17 in my box by 4 PM***

Final Paper topic: Please further develop your *Wit* commentary using the second half of the course readings.
Course Requirements

Grades are based on three parts: attendance/participation (1/3) and 2 papers (1/3 each). Late papers are graded down. There will be an opportunity to rewrite the first paper if you desire. The attendance/participation grade is composed of weekly class readings, participation, and attendance. There can be one excused absence for the class. After that, I drop a letter grade from your attendance/participation grade for each missed class.

Class will generally begin with a short presentation on the material for that week. Class discussion will be initiated by your selections from the material. To prepare for class discussion, please type a quote for each week’s reading (include author and page numbers so we can find your quotes). Follow each quote with a sentence or two commentary explaining why you picked the quote. We will go around the class in random order reading and discussing the quotes selected. The quotes are then passed in at the end of each class.

Papers are 8 pages type written, double spaced. Please use the material from the class to develop a topic I hand out (or a similar topic of your own making). Back up your thesis with arguments and examples from the class readings. Please include internal citations with page numbers and a reference list at the end. A good paper demonstrates that you have integrated the material from the readings and class discussions and can use it to analyze your topic. Use the bulk of your energy reading closely and thinking seriously about the materials you have (rather than doing outside research). Also, be sure and give your paper a title.

The grading scale for the papers will be as follows: A+ (98), A (95), A- (91), B+ (89), B (85), B- (81), C+ (79), C (75), C- (71), D (65), and F (number below 65).

The grading scale for the class will be as follows: 93-100% (A) 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-86 (B), 80-82 (B-), 77-79 (C+), 70-76 (C), 63-69 (D), and below (F).

Academic Integrity

“As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating.” For more information, please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website (http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html)