

# GLOBAL HEALTH HUMANITIES

Beyond Medicine, Beyond Borders

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# What are “Medical Humanities”?

## A (very) short history

- Doctors as humanists
- The devil in the detail (18<sup>th</sup> century)
- The rise of specialties (19-20<sup>th</sup> century)
- The price of success
- Humanities and Stem diverge
- Fixing a Problem we didn't know we had

## Doctors as Humanists

# Medical Humanities

### Doctor and Patient, 1509

[Sick man in bed and around him from head to foot, woman with a plate of food, a priest holding a book, a doctor holding a urine flask, sacristan holding monstrance and woman reading a prayer book.]

- Early medical care was a marriage of religion, philosophy, history, superstition, cookery, and more

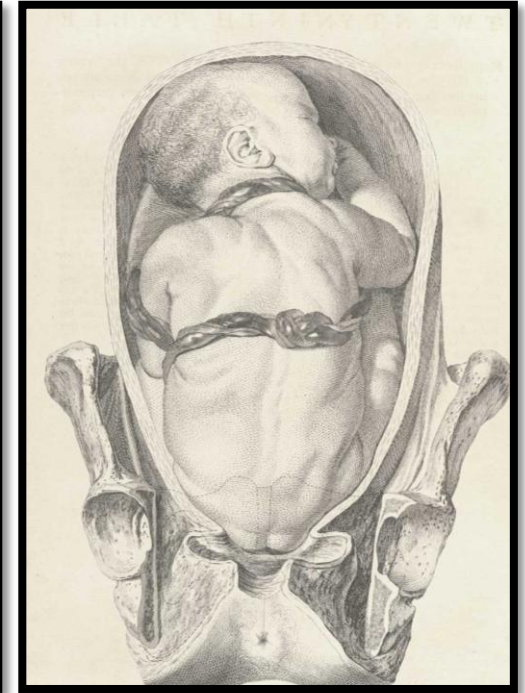


## Devil's in the Details

# Medical Humanities

Julius Casserius, *Casserius Tables*, 1627  
William Smellie, *Anatomical Tables*, 1788

- “The British empirical tradition in the 18th century [...] intended to guarantee detailed realism [and] argued for a plain style adapted to the needs of teaching and surgery.” –Martin Kemp
- The move toward parts and away from the whole driven by market practice, emergent social identities, emergent public spheres, and empiricism



Rise of Specialties/ Price of success

## Medical Humanities

1890-1930. The bag and its contents originally belonged to Professor John Hill Abram.

- Doctor's practice became far less general, their scope of work narrowed
- The greater the focus upon specialty, the harder it is to see the larger picture
- The price of our success has been a flirtation with tunnel vision

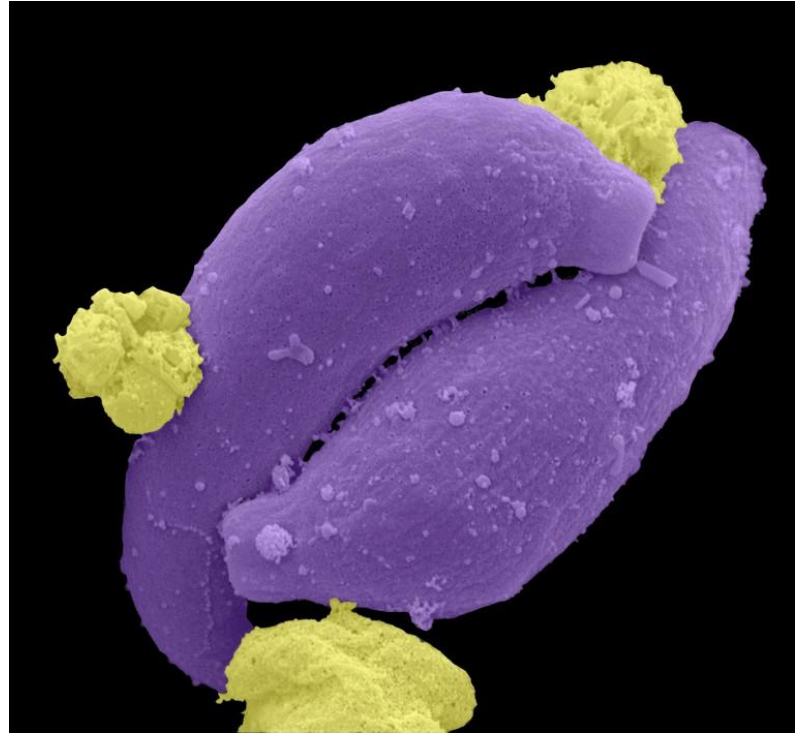


Humanities and STEM diverge

## Medical Humanities

Plasmodium ookinetes, malaria parasite life cycle, SEM. Credit: Leandro Lemgruber, University of Glasgow

- From Germ Theory to modern medicine, attention to the very small guides discovery
- Medicine becomes at home among STEM, while Humanities are pushed to the fringes
- Our very success means medical students/doctors are overburdened



# medical humanities

## MEDICAL HUMANITIES

- First developed as a response to a problem “we didn’t know we had”
- Affinities/divergence with Bioethics
- Two “types” of medical humanities
- Affinities/divergence with Medical training
- The Global impact of “Critical” medical and health humanites

# “Global” and “Critical” Health Humanities

## Reaching Beyond Borders

What do we mean by Global?

*To often, Global means “those nations we personally collaborate with” or, alternatively, “those nations who are most unlike us.” GLOBAL should mean all of us in constructive communication with each other, learning together.*

What do we mean by Critical Medical/Health humanities?

*Critical medical and health humanities offer a perspective from humanities disciplines. It looks back at medicine, systems, public health, and critically analyses how these systems do or do not work, how it serves or inhibits justice, and whether it considered the human as a whole. It should be a conversation with and among Humanities/medicine/STEM.*



# Medical Humanities



## What it means in Practice:

### Case 1: Medical Humanities Practicum

- The use of poetry to help doctors/students come to terms with medicine's ambiguity
- The use of narrative and theatre to teach ethics or explore patient agency
- The use of "story" in healing practices with patients
- The use of philosophy and history to ground surgical training

### Case 2: Critical Medical Humanities

- An anthropological perspective on post-partum narratives
- A collaboration among cardiologists, historians, and psychologists on heart transplant
- A critical discourse analysis of the therapeutic role of companion animals
- Representing disability in South Africa

## Vision

# Medical Humanities

### Journal:

- High quality research
- International scope
- Critical perspectives
- 60/40 humanities + md
- Real world impact

### Blog:

- Essays w/ research
- International scope
- Conversational
- Includes arts, prose
- #ECR, student, and global platform

### Podcast:

- Interviews in context
- International scope
- Public, Political, edgy
- Broadest MH topics
- Most public-facing outreach

# Medical Humanities

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Medical Humanities blog homepage. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://blogs.bmj.com/medical-humanities/>. The page features a navigation bar with the following links: [About](#), [Submissions](#), [Top Categories](#), [Latest](#), and [Journal](#). The main content area includes a featured article titled "Medical Humanities and Global Outreach" by Brandy Schillace, dated February 26, 2019. The article text reads: "As Medical Humanities prepares for its March Issue, we wanted to share this year's focus (and video) on expanding Global Health Humanities. We hope you will join the journal (at the website and podcast as well as the blog), and continue to expand the reach of medical and health humanities. Want to be part of [...]" A "Read More..." button is located at the bottom right of the article. To the right of the article is a search bar and a "CATEGORIES" dropdown menu. Below the categories is a "MEET THE STAFF" section featuring three staff members: Anna McFarlane, Ayesha Ahmad, and Brandy Schillace. An "Uncategorized" tag is visible at the bottom left of the article. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date and time as 1:00 PM on 3/8/2019.

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Medical Humanities and Global Outreach  
Posted on February 26, 2019 by Brandy Schillace  
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## CHALLENGES

# Medical Humanities

Global Threats

[Colour screenprint by Rajlich Design, 1995]

- The White Old West
- Standards and Review
- Hearing from and speaking With
- Starting the Conversation
- Combining Perspectives



# Medical Humanities



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