Philosophy of Healthcare:
An Interdisciplinary Approach

Spring 2011 Course K20.1294
Thursday 3:30-6-10 1 Wash Pl, Room 601
Bradley Lewis, MD, PhD
Phone: 212-998-7313 Email: bl466@nyu.edu
Office: 715 Broadway, #609
Office hours: Tues (11:00 to 12:30), Thursday (11:00 to 12:30),
and Friday (1:00 to 4:00) please schedule in advance

Overview
This course considers broad theoretical and philosophical issues in U.S.
healthcare. We unpack the underlying concepts and principles that organize
contemporary medical research, practice, and education. We look at the problems with
today’s dominant models of medicine and the possibilities of alternative conceptual
frames. And we consider how much the contemporary “healthcare crisis” comes from
cultural and conceptual issues as much as the more obvious financial and administrative
problems. Our inquiry will be an interdisciplinary approach that draws from medicine,
philosophy, history, psychology, literary theory, anthropology, sociology, gender studies,
disability studies, cultural studies, poetry, drama, and documentary.

Texts
Biomedicalization: Adele Clarke, et al
W;t, Margaret Edson
The Truth About Drug Companies, Marcia Angell
The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, Anne Fadiman
The Disability Studies Reader Lennard Davis

Class Schedule

PART I: Humanizing Healthcare

1.) Jan 27—Introduction
   Suggested:
   Marcum: An Introductory Philosophy of Medicine (preface and intro)
   Marcum: Reflections on Humanizing Biomedicine

2.) Feb 3—Biomedical Model
   Clarke et. al.: Biomedicalization Chap 1 and 2
   Flexner: Medical Education in the U.S.
   Reiser: Becoming a Doctor

3.) Feb 10—Biomedical Model Continued
   Donne: “Death be not proud”
   Edson: W;t
In class: Film: *Wit*
Campo: “Technology and Medicine”

4.) Feb 17—Biopsychosocial Model, Patient-Centered Care, and Family Practice
   Engel: The Need for a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine
   Cassel: The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine
   McWhinney: Are we on the brink of a major transformation of clinical method?
   Stephens: Family Medicine as Counterculture

In Class: Bill Moyers: Dying (Hospice Excerpt)
Marcus Welby Pilot: A Matter of Humanities

5.) Feb 24—Gender Studies
   Boston Women’s Health Collective:
     *Our Bodies, Our Selves* excerpts from first edition
     *Our Bodies, Our Selves* excerpts on Child-bearing
   Passau-Buck: “Caring vs. Curing” in *Socialization, Sexism, and Stereotyping: Women’s Issues in Nursing*
   Lewis: BPS and Pragmatism

In Class: *Business of Being Born*

6.) March 3—Contemporary Scene: Narrative medicine, PCMH, and Alternative Health
   Lewis: Narrative Medicine and Health Care Reform
   Egnew: Suffering, Meaning, and Healing: Challenges of Contemporary Medicine
   Stange et al: Context for Understanding the National Demonstration Project and the PCMH Movement
   Rogers: Assembling PCMH—The Care Principles
   Rogers: The PCMH Movement—Promise and Peril for Family Medicine
   Easthope: Alternative Medicine

In Class: Continuum for Health and Healing Practice Website
   [http://www.healthandhealingny.org/center/about.asp](http://www.healthandhealingny.org/center/about.asp)
   PCMH Video
   House, M.D.

**PART II: Social, Cultural, and Political Issues in Healthcare**

7.) March 10—Cross Cultural Encounters

***Turn in first paper***

Fadiman: *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*
Kleinman: Culture, Illness and Care

In Class: Siko (excerpts)

**March 17 SPRING BREAK**

8.) Mar 24—Sociology/Public Health
   McKinlay and McKinlay: Medical Measures and the Decline of Mortality
   WHO Report 1995: Bridging the Gaps
   Weitz: Expense of Healthcare
   Starfield: Is U.S. Health Really the Best in the World?
   Farmer: On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below

   In Class: Campo: “Ten Patients and Another”

9.) March 31—Pharmaceutical Industry
   Angell: Truth About Drug Companies
   Sismondo: Ghost Management
   Elliott: Making a Killing

   In class film: *Big Bucks, Big Pharma*

10.) April 7—Biomedicalization
    Biomedicalization: Body as Image
    Biomedicalization: Making of Viagra
    Biomedicalization: Breast Cancer
    Lewis: High Theory/Mass Markets: Newsweek Magazine and the Circuits of Medical Culture

11.) April 14—Global Health
    Biomedicalization: Epilogue
    Lewis: The New Global Health Movement: Rx for the World?
    Applbaum: Marketing Global Health: The Practices of Big Pharma
    Sheper-Hughes: The Ends of the Body
    Eckersly: Is Modern Western Culture a Health Hazard

    In Class: *Rx for Survival* (excerpts)

    Suggested: Eckersly: A New World View Struggles to Emerge

12.) April 21—Disability Studies
    Davis: Constructing Normalcy (ch 1)
    Lane: “Constructions of Deafness” (ch 6)
    Padden and Humphries: Deaf People: A Different Center (ch 29)
    Edwards: Hearing Aids are Not Deaf (ch 30)
In Class: Film: *Sound and Fury*

13.) April 28—Disability Studies
   Davis: The End of Identity Politics (ch 23)
   Wendell: Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability (ch 25)
   Garland-Thomson: Integrating Disability (ch 26)
   McRuer: Compulsory Able-Bodiedness (ch 28)

   In Class: *Vital Signs: Crip Culture Talks Back* (pt 1—Wade and Fries)

14.) May 5—Disability Studies
   Davidson: Universal Design (ch 10)
   Charlton: Dimensions of Disability Oppression (ch 11)
   Linton: Reassigning Meaning (ch 17)
   Shakespeare: Social Model of Disability (ch 20)
   Couser: Disability, Life Narrative, and Representation (39)

***Final paper due on Monday May 9th (5 PM my office)***

Course Requirements
Grades are based on three parts: attendance/participation (20%) and 2 papers (40% 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 attendance and participation.

On the days we do not have a film, class will begin with a short lecture on the material for that week. We then break up into small groups to select quotes we wish to discuss further. To prepare for this part of the class please type two quotes from the week’s readings which you have questions or comments (include page numbers so we can find your quotes). The last part of the class we spend discussing the quotes selected.

The papers are 7 pages type written, double spaced. Please use the material from the class to develop the topic question I hand out. Back up your thesis with arguments and examples from the class readings (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 class discussions and readings 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 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).

**Paper Topic One:**
Based on our research, what are your reflections on humanizing healthcare?

**Paper Topic Two:**
Considering the broad social, cultural, and political issues we discussed, how do you see the “crisis in healthcare?”