Race | Violence | Justice: The Need For Narrative
A Basic Narrative Medicine Workshop
April 7-9, 2017

Beth Ackerson
Beth Ackerson M.D. Internist 19 years in Maine, patients my extended family, teaching medical students and residents; 2005 medical trip to Haiti, developed meningoencephalitis with multiple sequelae, “The Many Faces of Traumatic Brain Injury,” began Buddhist meditation practice and study, helped family and friends facing chronic illness and death, having seen both sides of medicine now, committed to the medical humanities, heart of medicine, published poems in “The Healing Art of Medicine,” attended multiple national conferences. Strong enough now to focus on racial justice, a call to action, much to learn, hope to take teachings and encourage mindful seeing and reflective writing with Tufts medical students and residents at Maine Medical Center.

Mita Banerjee
Born in Mainz of Indian-German descent, Mita Banerjee teaches American Studies at the University of Mainz, Germany. She is co-director on the Research Training Group “Life Sciences, Life Writing,” which explores the ways in which experiences of illness and disability have been narrated both in the life sciences and in autobiographical texts. In her research, she has explored how questions of race and ethnicity may inform concepts of national identity, both in Germany and the US.

Marie Barnett, PhD
I am a clinical psychologist working with children and families at Columbia University Medical Center in the Division of hematology, oncology, and stem cell transplant. I actively listen to families as they develop their understanding and narrative of a disease and live with, through, and beyond a diagnosis. With a background in visual arts and music, I often look for the process, the metaphor, and parts of human experience that do not fit into words but still exist as an integral part of our narratives.

Merri Biechler
Merri Biechler is the Assistant Director of Ohio University's School of Dance, Film, and Theater. Her ten year collaboration with OU’s Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine explores the places where theater and medicine converge. She trained with the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science and hopes to share their theatrical improvisation techniques with healthcare students.

Giovanni Biglino
I have a background in biomedical engineering (Imperial College London; Brunel Institute for Bioengineering) and biostatistics (Harvard Medical School). I am a lecturer in cardiovascular bioinformatics and medical statistics at the Bristol Heart Institute. I have a strong interest in arts-and-science collaborations and work with artists in my practice. I have published two short novels and written more.

Paul Browde
I am a storyteller, a couples’ guide and a psychiatrist. I have spent the last 20 years immersed in the practice of listening and of telling my own personal story. I live with my amazing husband of 30 years, Simon. We are honored with being caretakers of Abby, our fourteen month old Goldendoodle who keeps us focused on what’s really important.

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Lois Butcher-Poffley
Lois Butcher-Poffley, M.Ed., PhD, CC-AASP, is a sport and exercise psychology consultant who works primarily with athletes, musicians, and singers. She is on faculty in the Kinesiology Department at Temple University where she is also the director of the undergraduate pre-health professional program.

Amanda Caleb
Amanda Caleb is an associate professor of English and director of the Medical and Health Humanities program at Misericordia University. Although trained in Victorian literature, medicine, and science, she is interested in how narrative can enhance empathetic thinking.

Lissette Cano
I am a health educator for a clinic in the South Bronx. Empowering patients to make the best decisions for their health is my passion.

Rose Cano
Rose Cano is a Spanish-language diabetes navigator working in the Interpreter Services Department (ISD) at Harborview Medical Center/UW Medicine in Seattle, WA in the role of navigator for a grant-funded initiative aiming to improve Spanish and Somali patients’ management of diabetes. As a playwright/actor/director, she enjoys blending the worlds of healthcare and theatre through bilingual performances, storytelling, readings, community dialogues (“Dialogues on Dignity”) and community arts events. Her play Don Quixote & Sancho Panza, Homeless in Seattle focused on the intersection of mental illness and substance abuse among homeless Latinos was presented at Harborview Medical Center, shelters, tent cities, and in Seattle theatres.

Sharon Casapulla
Sharon Casapulla, EdD., is the Director of Research and Education for the Office of Rural and Underserved Programs and the Director of the Rural and Urban Scholars Pathways (RUSP) program at the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine at Ohio University. Her background is in education and educational research. She teaches classes on qualitative research methods and participates in collaborative research on health in rural communities in Ecuador. Her research interests include protective factors and resilience.

Bronwyn Cooper
My name is Bronwyn Cooper and I am an anesthesiologist in Massachusetts. I am also going to school to get my MEd. Someday I would like to teach Narrative Medicine to premed and medical students. I also enjoy writing poetry and memoir.

Annie Kelly Cormier
I currently work at Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine as a Patient Relations Coordinator managing the complaints and grievances from our patients. I have my masters in Film Production from Boston University and previously worked in our film production community. As a filmmaker, I’ve always known “it’s all about the story”. Working with patients has reinforced the need to ensure their stories get the chance to be heard by clinicians in the context of their treatment.

Jessica Villegas Couch
My name is Jessica Villegas Couch, and I’m a senior STS (Science, Technology, and Society) and Neuroscience double major at Vassar College. Aside from my passion for exploring the role of narrative in public health policy, I hope to use this workshop to better inform my STS thesis— provisionally entitled, “An American Gunplay: Performances of Race, Gender, and Nationalism in the West”— which investigates how gun owners

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from various backgrounds communicate, challenge, and reinforce aspects of their social identity (individual and national) through their use of firearms. Through interviews with groups such as The Huey P. Newton Gun Club, Black Guns Matter, and The Pink Pistols, I have sought to highlight voices often left out of the mainstream debate.

Natasha Dachos
Natasha Dachos, LMSW, is the Director of the Office of Professional Excellence (Continuing Education & Support to the Online Campus) at the Columbia School of Social Work. She was worked in engineering, philanthropy and with refugees. Outside of work, Natasha is honored to provide contemplative care to those who are dying. Natasha is grateful for the many joys in her life including her husband, son and two cats.

Tilman David-Walek
The last years I worked as a senior partner at our private out-patient clinic for internal medicine at Kiel, Germany, caring for patients with chronic renal disease, metabolic disorders and atherosclerosis. Family and friends, outdoor activities and interests in literature and arts occupy my time when not working. I approach questions of health and illness in the same way as I understand my work and private life as parts of one life.

Brett Davidson
Brett Davidson is Director of the Media & Narratives Division of the Open Society Public Health Program, working with grantees to build their communications capabilities and to change long-held social narratives that impact public health. He is very interested in the role of listening and storytelling in advocacy, and in breaking down prejudice and stigma and building bridges between people.

Aimée Dawson
Originally from Alabama, I direct a university dental clinic in Quebec City, Canada that provides free treatment to people who lack access to care. I would like to get my dental students reading and writing about their experiences to better understand the meaning of this work from both a social justice and a person-centred care perspective.

Raygine DiAquoi
Raygine DiAquoi, EdD, is the Director of the Office of Diversity, Culture, and Inclusion and an Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. A sociologist of education, her research is grounded in Critical Race Theory. She is interested in the racial socialization practices of Black families, particularly the strategies used to prepare children for racial discrimination.

Olivia DiLeonardo
My name is Olivia DiLeonardo, and I am a medical librarian at Nemours Children’s Hospital in Orlando, FL. I am also a medical education instructor at the University of Central Florida College of Medicine, where I lead narrative medicine instruction for students and faculty.

Patrick A. Dolan Jr.
Patrick earned a PhD in English Renaissance Literature from the University of Iowa in 1994. He teaches in the Rhetoric Department, and Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies. Patrick’s teaching interests include writing, early modern literature, desire, consent and sex, literature, narrative, hospice, death and dying. He is the advisor for GWSS’s new major in Social Justice, which begins in the Fall of 2017. His research interests include Thomas More, early modern literature, literary representations of coercion, and literary representations of pain, disease, and death. He is also interested in medical and social work research on narrative, hospice, death and dying, as well as chronic/terminal illness.
Fabian Engelbertz
After growing up in a multinational household and completing medical school in Germany, Dr. Fabian Engelbertz moved to the US to pursue his specialty training in pediatrics. He enjoys working with children and their families of all walks of life, has worked in primary care and pediatric emergency medicine on 3 different continents, and continues to participate in medical missions in Honduras and Ecuador. Dr. Engelbertz lives with his husband in Westchester and strives to provide all encompassing pediatric care to this patients in Westchester and the Bronx, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

Miesha Etheridge
My name is Miesha Etheridge and I currently work at CUNY School of Medicine. I have a background in social services and mental health, having worked in mental health shelters, outpatient addiction facilities, and a rape crisis center. I have participated in Narrative Medicine session conducted at CUNY SOM, and my hope is that through this workshop I will further expand my skills of narrative understanding to enable me to be an effective and competent leader.

Caroline Fisher
I am a Clinical Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Stanford School of Medicine, sub specializing in Glaucoma and Cataract Surgery. I recently became Director of the Stanford Belize Vision Clinic, which we are building through Belizkids.org and Stanford Global Health. My interests are in resident education and literature and medicine. I am a Bay Area native who went to Stanford for undergrad and medical school. My husband is a New Yorker, and I have had the pleasure of doing my residency in NYC. I am very excited to be back for this workshop.

Michael Gallea
My name is Michael Gallea, and I am a third year medical student at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver, BC, Canada). I have had a longstanding interest in the medical humanities, and I am eager to see how the study of narrative medicine can (and will) inform my training and practice. This will be my first time in New York City, so look out, Big Apple - here I come!

Sara Gooding-Williams
Before illness overtook me, I worked as a health economist, analyzing how and why the U.S. medical system neglects so many patients. I have studied, taught and strategized within ivy league universities, small community health centers, colossal insurance companies, and bureaucratic public heath departments; have interviewed hundreds of patients, doctors, hospital CEOs, insurance brokers and public officials; have been concerned throughout my career to help drive our broken healthcare system towards better care for disenfranchised patients. Yet I have learned most about our skewed medical system from being myself a lifelong "complex patient", and after fifty years of many diverse and ineffective treatments, finally receiving a rare diagnosis (glycogen storage disease) and the complicated medical care I need to be well.

Naomi Gorfinkle
Naomi Gorfinkle is a third year medical student at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She is passionate about primary care as an avenue for social justice advocacy, as well as medical education as an avenue for improving LGBTQ-inclusive healthcare.

Howard A. Greller
I am an emergency medicine physician and medical toxicologist working in the South Bronx, and co-host the
weekly Emergency Medicine show on Sirius/XM Doctor Radio, channel 81. I strive to improve communication and education amongst healthcare providers and patients, and to prevent harm from drugs and poisons. And I really, really like 1, 3, 7-trimethylxanthine.

Nicole Gudzowsky
Nicole Gudzowsky is senior director of content and narrative at Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing and community development organization, where she is a member of the nonprofit’s Advancing Racial Equity Working Group. A resident of Baltimore, Nicole serves on the Patient Family Advisory Council at Johns Hopkins Hospital. In completing a master's degree in journalism from the University of Maryland, she wrote a thesis on press coverage of the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision.

Aditi Gupta
Aditi Gupta is a currently in her first year of residency in the department of Pediatrics at the University of California, Davis Medical Center. As an undergraduate student, she studied English literature and biology and is continuing to marry these two great fields as she defines her career. She is convinced in the power of stories to change hearts and minds and looks forward to bring back lessons learned from this conference to her colleagues, friends, and families back home in California.

Katharine Haake
Katharine Haake is the author of five works of fiction, including the eco-dystopian science fiction fable, The Time of Quarantine; the hybrid prose lyric, That Water, Those Rocks; and three collections of stories. Also widely published in creative writing theory and pedagogy, she teaches at California State University, Northridge.

David Haase
David attended medical school in Jamaica then moved to Canada in to pursue postgraduate training in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases. He is passionate about the health of African Canadians and medical education.

Jennifer Morey Hawkins
Jennifer Morey Hawkins (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) is an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Her research and teaching focuses on health communication within interpersonal and/or intercultural contexts with interests in underrepresented populations and sensitive health topics. Jennifer’s goal is to understand how communication impacts the healthcare experience and encourage communication applications and techniques that may prove beneficial to health and healing.

Jan Jahner
Jan Jahner, RN-BC, CHPN, PMO Jan has over 33 years of nursing experience, primarily serving the seriously ill, and is a palliative care nurse at St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe. She provides leadership in program development, education and community outreach. Jan loves poetry, has been published, leads writing workshops has presented nationally and locally on various aspects of whole person care. She completed a two-year chaplaincy program through the Uapya Zen Center and Institute, mentored chaplain trainees and serves as associate faculty for Being With Dying Professional Training.

Kanako (Kana) Kitamoto
Please call me Kana. I am a physician from Japan; deeply interested in humanistic care for people living together with chronic illness. My husband is a researcher at Colombia University, and we’ve just started our life in the States at the end of this March.

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Gauri Kolhatkar
Gauri is a pediatrician, wife and mother, and proud U.S. immigrant living in Los Angeles. She is of South Asian heritage, was born in the U.K., and grew up in Quebec, Canada and then in Colorado, U.S. She currently serves children and families involved with the child welfare system. This work has deepened her awareness of the structural inequities that she wishes to address in future work redesigning systems and policies toward life course health, dignity and rights for children and families—with a specific emphasis on child maltreatment prevention. She looks forward to this opportunity to explore narrative as a tool serving that mission.

Jacqueline Kolosov
Jacqueline Kolosov is the Director of Creative Writing and Professor of English at Texas Tech University and is in the process of establishing arts programming within medical communities and among at-risk populations including veterans and teens. She has published several young adult novels, 3 collections of poetry, and is seeking a home for her lyric memoir which focuses on grief and self-transformation through art, community, and horses. Originally from Chicago, Jacqueline earned her degrees from the University of Chicago (BA, MA) and New York University (PhD). She is a committed horsewoman, yoga practitioner, amateur artist, passionate environmentalist, and lives with her family and a menagerie of animals, in Lubbock, Texas.

Michael Krasner
I am a mid (not late) middle aged father of three young adults, and a primary care internist in Rochester, New York. I am a lover of stories, especially stories of adventure, romance and the search and discovery of meaning. I am blessed to be a small part of so many true stories, and hope to stay in these stories in a way that continues to provide me with meaning, and provide the others with my attention, service, and presence.

Katy Kropf
Katy Kropf is a family medicine physician in Athens, Ohio, an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, and a mom to her 9 month old daughter, Piper Jubilee. Her practice interests are broad – from transgender care to lifestyle medicine – but are unified by an emphasis on empowering people to live their best lives. Most recently she has been working with medical students to create a space for them to better articulate and share how racism affects their lives.

Susan Lilienfield
I participated in a narrative therapy workshop 15 years ago and the robust intent and skill set guiding the work went deep in my bones. It opened up resonant pathways in my psychotherapy practice and my consulting work in medical settings. I am so looking forward to this experience which will further thicken the warm and wise ideas I have applied on my own and with my colleagues in Detroit.

Ateaya Lima
Born in Bangladesh, immigrating to Queens, New York at age 8, I am currently a fourth year psychiatry resident at the Nassau University Medical Center serving as the Chief Resident of Emergency Psychiatry/ Crisis Team. I am pursuing a fellowship in Psychosomatic Medicine after residency, with special interest advocacy for the mentally ill.

Patricia Lück
I live in London, UK but am currently in Rochester, NY to teach a mindfulness program. I am a palliative care physician and medical educator, and am in the process of moving more into the medical humanities. I trained and worked many years in South Africa. Having lived on five continents, and worked on four, I continue to find that it is through stories that our voices are heard and allow us to connect to each other and to our common
humanity.

**Guido A. Macchiavello**

your work: I am a physician – Internist – I do primary Care.
your background: I am Ecuadorian and I have been living in New York City for the past 10 years
your art: Well, I love movies and building Legos, collect sneakers
science: I love astrology, even thou is not a formal science
goals: be better at everything I do.

**Debbie Malina**

Debbie Malina is the Perspective Editor at the New England Journal of Medicine. In her last incarnation, she studied narrative theory and wrote a doctoral dissertation/book on the narrative construction of the subject. Although she is not a health care practitioner, she is always looking for resonant narratives to feature in NEJM -- and recognizes the value of true, moving, personal stories for communicating the urgency of matters of equity and social justice.

**Daniel Marchalik**

I’m a urologist in Washington, DC. I run the Literature and Medicine Track at the Georgetown University School of Medicine and write a monthly literature and medicine column for The Lancet.

**Karen Melikian**

I am a social worker and psychotherapist from Boston. I work with children and adults in a private practice and am on the supervisory and training staff of a child and adolescent in patient psychiatric unit. My hope is to keep learning how to better facilitate a work environment that makes social justice and equal opportunities a priority for a higher quality of care for patients and clinicians.

**Amy Millios**

My interest in narrative medicine stems from a desire to work towards improving the doctor/patient relationship, and is a direct result of my often frustrating experience as a patient with chronic illness. I am currently a graduate student at Dartmouth College working on my MA thesis, a memoir that explores the day to day reality of the chronically ill patient as well as the link between childhood experience and illness in adulthood. Much of my research thus far has focused on women and chronic illness, and my oral history project “Making the Invisible Visible: Women’s Stories of Living With Ankylosing Spondylitis” was published in the Fall 2015 edition of The Dartmouth College Oral History Reader—a project I hope to expand upon in the future.

**Dennis Murphy**

I am a physician who always did things the hard way: majoring in English (Villanova) when that was cool but not favorably looked upon by medical schools. I graduated from med school (St George’s in Grenada x 2 yrs with transfer to Georgetown for 3) 10 years after graduating from undergrad. Finished my internal medicine residency and with 3 kids went directly into private practice, and then, unconventionally, returned to academics @ Georgetown where I have been for 16 years (8 as Division Chief of GIM). I facilitate a monthly medical humanities Resident-Student-Faculty conference and I’m also the faculty co-director of the Literature and Medicine Track for medical students. I serve on a 4 physician hospital-wide “Communication Committee” which supports better physician–patient interactions with personal coaching, etc. I’m also a Gold Humanism member and I’m very interested in promoting the concept of restoring joy and meaning in Medicine by means of mindfulness-based practices.
Erika Nelson
I am a professor of German and lover of poetry, life, and new possibilities. I’m particularly thrilled to be here with a small cohort from Union College, a small liberal arts college in Schenectady, NY, where I teach German Studies. My academic research focuses on transnational identity, poetry (especially Rilke), spa culture, and modern retellings of myths. I also have a background in meditation, massage and energy work, hospice, family constellation work, and alternative therapies. In recent years, I’ve spent many hours in oncology wards, watching caregivers do great work with my husband, currently in remission from multiple myeloma, who continues to inspire me in his pursuit to live a fully fabulous and contributive life.

Anastasia Netrunenko
Anastasia Netrunenko is currently a senior at Union College where she is working toward a B.A. in English and Science, Medicine, and Technology in Culture. Her thesis is focusing on Narrative Medicine and its integral role in the current health-care system. Most recently, she is continuing her research and collaborating with Professor Erika Nelson-Mukherjee to develop a course in said discipline.

Sarah Nurkanovic
I am a phd student and research assistant at the American Studies department of the University in Düsseldorf/Germany. I am also a cancer and chemotherapy survivor, who was not cured by modern medicine (but is cured nonetheless).

Aaron N. Oforlea
Aaron N. Oforlea is currently an Associate Professor in the English Department at Washington State University where he publishes in African American Literature and Folklore. Presently, he is working on a manuscript exploring the intersections of Narrative Medicine and African American Literature and Folklore.

Maria Olson
My name is Maria Olson and I am working as a Nurse at kungälvhospital in Sweden. We have started to implement Person Centred Care in our Clinique and we have also begun to look a little bit at narrative medicine, there have been a work shop in narrative medicine at the hospital which I unfortunately couldn’t attend to. Me and a college (another Nurse) have had been given this wonderful opportunity to go to New York and attend to this work shop, so my expectations are that I will learn more about it and see how I can work with narrative medicine in my daily work as a nurse in a medical ward. The only cloud in the sky is that I am a little afraid that my skills in the English language won’t be enough for this curse, but hopefully I will pick up something!!

Priya Panday
I am a second year medical student at the Sophie Davis Biomedical Education Program/CUNY School of Medicine aspiring towards improving the lives of underserved populations by advocating for social justice. I am interested in understanding how narratives play in the way individuals and society conceptualize and experience illness, and how that affects public health policy.

Rita Patel
Rita Patel is an artist and founder of Experiments in Beautiful Thinking™. She designs bespoke projects for organizations and communities to foster personal and collective agency by tapping into each person’s creative force aimed to shift perspectives, transcend boundaries and imagine new narratives. Currently, Rita holds the positions of Executive Director at Michigan Wellness Council and Public Health and Wellbeing Expert and Graphic Illustrator at Mission Throttle (social impact investing firm).
Marie Pervik
I live in Gotenburg, in Sweden. I am a psychotherapist who works in a hospital meeting patientes, their families and even health professionals. For example I have special groups with all the interns were they can talk about their meetings with the patients. Beside my job I like reading, running and spending time with my family, husband and two daughters.

Ross Prager
My name is Ross Prager I am a 3rd year medical student at the University of British Columbia on the beautiful west coast of Canada. Prior to medical school I worked as a paramedic and really enjoy being able to help people in their own homes and communities. I am excited to learn more about narrative medicine and how I may be able to integrate it into my future practice.

Crystal Pristell
Crystal Pristell is a first year medical student at Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cleveland Campus. She is dedicated to incorporating racial competence in medicine and is here at the conference to engage conversation on how race, violence, and justice affect disparities in health.

Nagesh Rao
Nagesh Rao is a teacher, storyteller, dancer, listener, statistician, poet, and a proud father of two daughters. His many marginal experiences, first as a Kannadiga in the state of Tamilnadu in India, as an East Indian in Mississippi and Michigan, and then returning to India for six years after two decades in the United States, give him a wealth of stories and theories about discovery of self and others, and on how to use communication and culture to create healthy communities around the world. His work title is Special Advisor, Faculty & Academic Planning, Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, Ohio University.

Anders Juhl Rasmussen
I’m a postdoctoral fellow in Narrative Medicine at the University of Southern Denmark. My background is a master’s degree in Danish literature and Philosophy, followed by a PhD project on modern Danish literature based on narrative theories. I teach narrative medicine, and I’m the coordinator of The Nordic Network for Narratives in Medicine, http://www.sdu.dk/en/om_sdu/institutter_centre/ikv/forskning/forskningsprojekter/nnm

Michele Reimer
I am a family psychologist and a professor at Swarthmore College where I teach classes on social contextual influences on mental health and clinical care. As a teacher, I am interested in how aspiring clinicians learn unbiased attentiveness, reflective self-awareness, and empathy. As a therapist, I am still working on these same things: how to be fully present in the face of pain, how to hold simultaneous awareness of the other and myself, and how to create space for the important stories to be shared.

Joy Richards
My name is Joy Richards, and I am an Educational Specialist at The CUNY School of Medicine. My professional and educational background is cognitive psychology and mental health. My passion is to help students who are traditionally under-represented in the medical field achieve their career goals through knowledge, academic support, counseling and mentoring.

Rosemary Riel
I use she/her/hers pronouns. I am Filipina-American, grew up in Columbus, OH and moved to Baltimore, MD in 2003 for a job supporting public health projects overseas. I am an applied anthropologist and currently work at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. As a global health educator, my understanding of social justice
and the critical impacts of gender, race, and class inequities on health outcomes has deepened. I am interested in Narrative Medicine approaches that may strengthen my aspiration to nest solidarity narratives within community health inquiry, collective action, and social change.

Lindsay Rutherford
Lindsay Rutherford is an acute care physical therapist at a community hospital in the Seattle area. She holds a MA in Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania and a DPT from Temple University and has recently returned to writing poetry and fiction as a creative outlet and a way to understand more deeply what she encounters at work. Her interests include dementia and identity, end-of-life care, and how race and gender shape patients’ and providers’ experiences in health care settings.

Kaliris Y. Salas-Ramirez
Kaliris Y. Salas-Ramirez, PhD is a neuroscientist, born and raised in PR but later attended graduate school in Michigan. Since coming to NY in 2008 and becoming better versed in the issues of equity and excellence, I have wanted to continue to explore these issues. I am a neuroscientist by training studying cognitive decline and consider myself an education activist and advocate for students.

Sara Saylor
I am a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas at Austin, where I run a writing support program for graduate students across disciplines. I completed my PhD in English at UT in 2015, focusing on religious and medical concepts of repentance in English Renaissance literature. My interest in this Narrative Medicine workshop stems from my experience working as a caregiver for a woman with autism and teaching a Rhetoric of Medicine course to undergraduates.

Janet Shapiro
I have been a pulmonary/critical care attending physician for the past 25 years and I have recently focused on areas of end of life care and quality and safety. I have been interested in areas of communication and understanding patients since taking the Physician-Patient Relationship course with Dr Charon and her colleagues during my first year of medical school in 1981.

Tracy Shaub
Tracy Shaub, DO, is an Associate Professor and Chair of Family Medicine at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, with added certifications in Hospice and Palliative Medicine and Mind-Body Medicine. Storytelling and narrative are keys for my practice in end-of-life care as well as my educational role in training medical students. We are hoping to add narrative and reflective practices to our new curricular revision for our medical school and are seeking innovative practices to achieve this.

Katherine Shwetz
Katherine Shwetz is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto. Her dissertation focusses on representations of contagious disease in post WWII Canadian literature, with a particular focus on how narratives about contagious disease communicate both new frameworks of illness and also broader social anxieties about Canadian identity. She works and teaches in the areas of health humanities and Canadian literary criticism.

Ron Silvis
Ron Silvis Ed. D. in educational leadership from Drexel University. Ron is a former middle school teacher whose dissertation looked at the relationship between white teachers and students of color in a suburban middle school setting. Currently the curriculum specialist for the CUNY school of Medicine at The City College of New York.
Janet Singer
I am a nurse midwife who teaches med students and Ob-gyn residents at Brown. My professional focus is on abortion, encouraging complex conversations among residents of all beliefs.

Maria Skalsky
My name is Maria Skalsky and I’m a staff nurse from Sweden. I’m participating in this workshop due to that at our department we try to work person centered with our patients. I hope this workshop will help me identify some tools in how to strengthen the patients position in the care we provide, which sometimes tends to be too scientific and focuses too little on the person seeking care.

Susan Steigerwalt
I am a hypertension specialist and nephrologist who has practiced for thirty five years, mostly in Detroit. I became interested over the years in how my patients looked at the world, their stories, and how those stories and beliefs impacted their care and their interaction with me and our fragmented healthcare system. A colleague and dear friend opened up the world of narrative medicine to me. We are at this conference together. I am anxious to learn more, practice Narrative Medicine better myself, and disseminate tools and the concepts to younger physicians with whom I work and teach.

Samantha Stein
Samantha is a freshman at Drexel University studying interdisciplinary solutions for medical inequality. As a citizen of the world she seeks to promote universal eudaemonia. She enjoys researching and writing with her lizards beside her.

Nicoletta Suter
As for my education, I got a Master Degree in Nursing Science, a specialization in Counselling Skills and a another in Narrative Approaches and Writing for health and educational settings (University of Bicocca, Milan). I attended the Narrative Medicine basic and advanced workshops at Columbia University. I am the Director of the Medical Education Centre in a Research Oncologic Institute in Italy (www.cro.sanita.fvg.it) and a teacher at Nursing Degree – University of Udine and Trieste (focused on nurse – patient therapeutic relationship). In my Institute I collaborate in a multiprofessional group committed to develop a new culture about narrative medicine, to enhance health caregivers’ narrative skills as well as patients’ empowerment. I am the co-promoter of 6 Narrative Medicine conferences in my Institute (2011-2017); I am really engaged as a Narrative Medicine teacher in themed workshops (communication, languages, patient’s dignity, hope, human caring etc.) and I feel committed to spread this culture and tools in my country, through the Italian Narrative Medicine network.

JD Tamucci
In undergrad, I majored in Spanish and focused on the short stories of Jorge Luis Borges, and am currently doing my MS at UCONN in Biophysics in Dr. May’s lab where I’m computationally modeling the molecular dynamics of a short peptide to understand its therapeutic role in treating Barth Syndrome. In my free time, I enjoy developing learning resources for a freshman biology course, bouldering with friends, writing short stories, and annoying my neighbors while I sing in the shower.

Marina Tsaplina
Marina Tsaplina is a performing artist, patient advocate and Founder, CEO and Creative Director of THE BETES Organization whose mission is to employ the performing arts to help people with chronic conditions form a flourishing relationship with their health.
A Scholar in the Medical Humanities at the Penn State College of Medicine - Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine, her work is dedicated to bringing artistic intervention into health care in order to achieve a more inclusive culture that elevates the patient and artist voice. Through BETES growing programming, she brings the unique power of arts-based research to chronic illness care to serve patients young and old, caregivers, and to strengthen the clinician-patient relationship. She has lived with Type 1 diabetes since she was two years old. She studied puppetry in Germany, France, and the U.S. and has always been driven to investigate interdisciplinary applications of the arts in order to deliver transformative social impact.

"Artists hold a key value proposition for our current health care system. Amidst automation and advanced technological innovation, there is still a deep need to nurture the human spirit of the person who lives within a body that is in some way not well. This is the space for artistic practice to thrive and serve the entire ecosystem of care."

Julia Traylor
My name is Julia, and I’m a pain management therapist in Austin, TX. My usual patients are either in recovery from surgery or attempting to avoid it, and my usual practice ranges from massage and yoga therapy to talk therapy. I also completed a Masters in English at UT Austin in 2013, specializing broadly in postmodern ethics and contemporary American fiction. I left the English PhD program in 2015 to open a wellness clinic where we now offer services in massage therapy, yoga therapy, meditation coaching, acupuncture, and psychotherapy.

Aimee Burke Valeras
Aimee Burke Valeras, PhD, LICSW is faculty with the NH Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency and the Leadership Preventive Medicine Residency at Concord Hospital Family Health Center. She received her undergraduate and Masters of Social Work degrees from Boston College and her Doctorate in Social Work from Arizona State University. Dr. Burke Valeras recently coedited the book Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care: Evaluating the Evidence, Identifying the Essentials. She has presented nationally and internationally on the topics of integrated behavioral health and primary care, disability and illness identity, and qualitative research methodology. She lives in Concord, NH with her husband and three young children and enjoys creative writing and hiking.

Marta Lucia Vargas
Marta Lucia Vargas is a poet, educator and founding member of Aster(ix) journal, where she serves as poetry editor. She practices critical pedagogy in the teaching of language arts and literature. Marta Lucia holds an MFA in Poetry from Drew University and an M.S. in Education from Hofstra University. She lives in New Jersey with her family and two dogs.

Michael Vitez
I spent 30 years at The Philadelphia Inquirer, winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1997 for a series of stories on the challenges and choices at the end of life. I believe in the power of stories to heal, inspire, build community and change the world. I left the Inquirer after a career of writing what I would call medical narratives and came to the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University one year ago to build a narrative medicine program. I’m trying to promote a culture of stories, writing myself, encouraging students and doctors to write, teaching electives. But I have so much to learn, and wanted to immerse myself in the Columbia experience.

Allison S. Walker
Allison S. Walker received her MFA in creative writing from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 2004 and currently teaches interdisciplinary writing courses at High Point University. Inspired by the groundbreaking work of the Graduate Program in Narrative Medicine at Columbia University, she founded HPU LifeLines, a service
learning program designed to unlock the inner poets of elder adults, particularly those suffering from Alzheimer’s and dementia, by engaging them in communal poetry writing to aid memory, reduce feelings of isolation, and elevate overall physical and psychological well-being. In her spare time, Ms. Walker likes to harvest honey from her backyard bees.

Elizabeth Walmsley
Elizabeth Walmsley, MSS, LSW graduated with her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Western Australia with a double major in Anthropology and European Literature, and then also her Master’s degree in education. 10 years later in Philadelphia she graduated from Bryn Mawr GSSWSR with the Master’s degree of Social Service. She now works on the Palliative Care Team at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia.

Michele Weston
I’m Michele Weston and I live in NYC with my schnauzer, Master Beardsley. After spending almost 18 years in the magazine world, my Narrative Medicine interest rests in my consulting work as a Patient Advocate & Wellness Navigator for clients seeking to move thru our complex healthcare system searching for more patient-centered integrative care. My expertise lies in the person’s journey via bariatrics|weight-loss & also for women with chronic neurological conditions. I'm completing my Bioethics/Health Policy graduate courses through Loyola University-Chicago and finishing my Nutrition/Wellness Certification with Shaw Academy, U.K.

Iwona Wieżel
Iwona Wieżel, Ph.D (from Poland) is a classicist and narratologist. Research interests are in natural and medical narratology, (recently) medical humanities, and specifically narrative medicine.

Wallis Wilde-Menozzi
Wallis Wilde-Menozzi, an American writer who has lived in Italy for forty years, has published two memoirs, a novel, a book of essays, and two books of poetry. Living in another language, translation has become a metaphor: a way of empathising, a means of reading another point of view. She has taught for Columbia, Sarah Lawrence, NYU, Boston college as well as universities in Europe. She is at work on a new book. Website: walliswilde-menozzi.com

Susan Winnett
I have a PhD in comparative literature and am a professor of American Studies at the University of Duesseldorf in Germany. I’ve worked extensively on narrative, women’s studies, and African American studies and have been teaching Narrative Medicine to literature students since attending my first NM workshop at Columbia in 2013. Together with Tilman David-Walek, a nephrologist, and Sarah Nurkanovic, a PhD student in my department who brings both expertise in literary studies and extensive experience as a patient, I am interested in examining the ways in which NM can be taught and practiced in Germany.

Marygrace Zetkulic
I am a practicing General Internist who has been active in medical education for about 17 years. 10 months ago I joined Hackensack University Hospital to start their internal medicine residency program and work on the new medical school at Seton Hall University. The application for both the residency and the medical school finally went in this month. I have been involved with FAIMER (foundation for international medical education and research) which has given me the chance to work with amazing medial educators in Egypt, Ethiopia and Ghana.