Narrative Medicine Workshop: Participant Bios
November 10 - 12, 2017

Elisabeth Abeson
After a career in International Business, International Affairs and International Development, Elisabeth’s life literally came to a halt when she was immobilized by sero-positive erosive Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). Thanks to a combination of Allopathic medicine, classical Ayurveda, writing & art therapy, she is in remission. Inspired by responses of the medical and patient community to her recently-published healing journey, she believes deeply in the power of the arts to help heal our ailing healthcare system in addition to the suffering of individuals worldwide.

David Aguirre
Born and raised in Bogotá, Colombia. Major in Philosophy and Literature. Passionate about teaching, world religions, meditation, evolution of consciousness and humanistic approaches.

Christina Andersson
I am a 50-year-old young woman who has worked as the head of nursing and an assistant nurse of a medical ward since 1999. Before that, I worked as a nurse for eleven years. I have, of course, experienced a lot during this time and have among other things participated in a large change with the way we round our patients. At the same time, we changed the way our staff, the doctors, nurses and assistant nurses, were seated in the ward. They nowadays sit together, belonging to the same room. So doctors, nurses and assistant nurses share a room. Rita Charon has been to our hospital twice. The first time, to see for herself how it works with our rounds. This also includes taking the patient in to this room were the nurse and doctor have and do their rounds. The second time she was in our hospital was a year ago, when she led a course in Narrative Medicine for three days, our first time in Sweden. I suppose it’s similar to the one we are fortunate to go to in your university. I found it very interesting, and also gives me a lot of thoughts. I have also, unfortunately, a lot of experiences from hospitals as a patient which gives me a wider look of life, I have to say.

Molly Arnn
Molly Arnn received her B.A. in psychology from Vassar College, and was the inaugural research assistant in the Stanford Social Neuroscience Lab, where she studied empathy and prosocial behavior. After years of hard work to gain admission into a clinical psychology Ph.D. program, she completed the first semester and realized that it wasn’t what she wanted to spend her life doing. To seek a broader perspective on these questions of body and mind, she received her 200 hour RYT certification, and is currently combining her love of humanities and sciences at NYU Gallatin, and expects to earn her M.A. in Individualized Study in 2019.

Carla Barkman
I am an academic family physician but poetry is my true love. I am finishing an English degree and am starting to teach a bit of narrative medicine to our medical students and residents. My introverted nature makes teaching a challenge though. I would prefer just to read and write in silence every day, all day.
Jessica Barnhill
Present: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Program in Integrative Medicine, University of North Carolina
Past: Family physician, spent ten years working in community health centers
Future:?
Interests: Narrative Medicine! The art of healing. How can we measure what matters most?

Hasshan Batts
Hasshan Batts, DHSc, LCSW, CADC (www.coachbatts.com) is a survivor, healer, son, father, brother and friend. Hasshan is a healthcare and community development consultant that emphasizes, “Healing occurs within relationships and within the context of community”.

Jean-Michel Benattar
I’m a gastroenterologist with a 30-year private practice in Nice, South of France. A few years ago, I started seeing chronic disease and psychoanalysis. I am trying to introduce Narrative Medicine in Nice in the association La Maison de la Médecine et de la Culture in Diplôme de l’Art du Soin, and soon, in an intensive course of Narrative Medicine in French at Nice from Feb 28th 2018 to March 3 2018 with Maria Cabral, Antonio Barbosa, Nuno Proenca from Lisboa University (Film Wit and debate will close the cursus). I will realize an old dream to participate in that workshop. The Balint Group, The Montreal Model, Books: Honoring the stories of illness Rita Charon, Devenir medecin Céline Lefève, Le Chœur des femmes Martin Winckler, L’épreuve du savoir Katrin Solhdju, Films Barberousse Kurosawa… Animating Narrative Medicine workshops at Paris Descartes to medical students with Francois Goupy during two years.

Sarah-Taïssir Bencharif
Sarah-Taïssir Bencharif is a freelance journalist and family medicine resident physician at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. She completed her Doctor of Medicine at Queen’s University after her Master of Journalism at Ryerson University. Sarah-Taïssir loves stories—and the people in them. She has written for The Walrus, the Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, and worked at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). She hopes to use her skills as a physician-journalist to advocate for better patient care and public policy.

Katarina Bernhardsson
Katarina Bernhardsson, lecturer in Medical Humanities at Lund University, Sweden, with a special concentration on literature. My PhD thesis (2010) was on illness in contemporary Swedish fiction, and I teach at the medical school in Lund on different levels, bringing in perspectives, materials and methods from the humanities. This is a new position, created at the university this year. I am also part of initiatives like The Nordic Network for Narratives in Medicine and a research group at Tromsø University, Norway. My research interests includes among other things Scandinavian pathographies.

Cinnamon Bradley
I am currently the Program Director for the Internal Medicine Residency Program at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA. I became interested in Narrative Medicine through my love for writing about health related issues—usually in the form of poetry. I attended a Narrative Medicine workshop at the ACGME conference last Spring and I thought it would be a great tool to introduce at my medical school. I am interested in further training and exposure to Narrative Medicine and other forms of reflective practice involving writing and literature.

#fallNMworkshop
@NarrativeMed /ColumbiaNarrativeMedicine @narrative_medicine linked.in/narrativemedicine
Christine Bryson
I have worked in hospital medicine for over 14 years. I have multiple roles including Medical Director for the Hospital Medicine Program and Associate Program Director for our Internal Medicine Residency. I also practice Palliative Care. I’m hoping to learn more about Narrative Medicine to share with the physicians and residents I work with.

Antoinette Bumekpor
Antoinette Bumekpor is currently pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Columbia University's School of the Arts. Since having her studies interrupted during the Spring 2017 semester with the need for emergency surgery, Antoinette has been thrust into the field of Narrative Medicine. Her current poetry project seeks to write the body and give language to what gets destroyed through the pain experience.

Bruce Campbell
Bruce Campbell is a head and neck cancer surgeon and director of the medical student Global Health Pathway at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). He has published in a variety of genres and venues, including creative non-fiction in JAMA, Narrative Inquiry in Bioethics, and the Journal of Clinical Oncology, humor and fiction in The Examined Life Journal, and poetry in the Creative Wisconsin Literary Journal. He hopes to develop a richer understanding of narrative to share with the good people at MCW. He blogs at Reflections in a Head Mirror (www.froedtert.com/reflections).

Lisa Cashion
I am a therapist in Charlotte, North Carolina, with a special interest in working with families to enhance communication, build mutual empathy, and improve functionality. I also am a chaplain specialist at Mercy Hospital, part of Carolinas Healthcare Systems. In addition to my degrees in Divinity and Counseling, I have a master's degree in Educational Psychology which has enhanced my awareness of how people learn and communicate, and of how these factors affect relationships and overall wellbeing. I have been married for 23 years and have three children, ages 16, 18, and 20.

Sióbhán Cassidy
Sióbhán Cassidy, LMSW, RYT is a practicing psychotherapist, certified yoga instructor, and the Director of Professional Development for the non-profit Project Presence that has a mission to co-create healthy, meaningful, and supportive relationships through PRESENCE in day-to-day lives. I have experience working with individuals in the mental health, substance use, and oncology populations. I use integrative approaches in clinical psychotherapy and group practices to ensure a holistic plan of action. I hope to expand my knowledge and competency in narrative medicine as a mind-body approach to integrative holistic healing for the Whole patient.

Eunsuk Chang
Dr. Eunsuk Chang is a flight surgeon of Republic of Korea Air Force and a practicing family physician in South Korea. He is MPH candidate (’19) of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, studying Environmental Health Sciences with a certificate of History, Ethics and Law.
Jennifer Cohen

I am a second-year student in the Bioethics Master’s program at Columbia. I graduated from Brown University in 1986 with a degree in English. My first job was as a Health Policy Program Assistant at The Commonwealth Fund here in New York City. I then went to St. John’s University Law School and practiced litigation for about 4 years. I returned to graduate school to get a Master’s in Religion at Yale Divinity School and then taught religion, philosophy and ethics at a local community college for 10 years. I am on my local hospital’s ethics committee and hope to put my bioethics training to use in clinical ethics/patient advocacy. I have written a few pieces for Columbia’s online ethics journal, *Voices in Bioethics* and am planning to write my master’s thesis on cardiac transplantation ethics.

William (Bill) Connell

I am an Australian gastroenterologist who is director of a large hospital Inflammatory bowel disease service. The health care needs associated with this chronic, complex, multisystem disease are challenging, onerous, and expensive. Traditionally, the principles of evidence-based medicine underpin the treatment objectives of this condition, but increasingly, I have come to appreciate the limitations and shortfalls of this paradigm, and its capacity to comprehensively optimize an individual’s physical and emotional well-being. Although I have little personal expertise in narrative medicine, I am attracted to its principles in health-care generally, and want to explore the possibility of how it could be developed to complement the role of evidence based medicine for the specialty in which I work. At the same time, I suspect the exercise may be of interest in my own personal, life-long journey of self-discovery and self-improvement.

Gretchen Henry Connelly

I am taking this workshop as part of my search for meaningful work after raising three kids in Los Angeles and then looking after my aging parents in Northeastern Vermont. I have a small business creating and officiating at personalized nondenominational ceremonies called True North Ceremonies (memorials, baby welcomings, anniversaries etc.) but am looking to supplement that with other work, ideally something that uses some of the same skills - the ability to supportively “walk with,” listen receptively and help people to articulate their insights and inspirations during important stretches of their lives.

Venusia Covelli

Venusia Covelli, Psychologist, Ph.D. in Psychology (Catholic University of Milan, Italy). Researcher and professor of Health Psychology and Communication Psychology at the e-Campus University (Como, Italy). Qualitative research collaborator at the Neurological Institute C. Besta IRCCS Foundation of Milan, Scientific Directorate - Neurology, Public Health and Disability Unit. I am specialized in the study of illness experiences of patients with brain disorders (like migraine, dementia, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, stroke) and their caregivers.

Gaurav Datta

I am a postdoctoral researcher in HIV and Neurological disorders at the University of North Dakota, trying to understand and relate to the life experience of mental illness through visual imagery. For this, I experiment with both science and art: microscopic analysis under laboratory conditions, photography, ethnography and journalistic investigation.
Eva De Clercq

Eva De Clercq is a part-time postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Biomedical Ethics of the University of Basel (Switzerland) where she works on a project on end-of-life decision-making in pediatric oncology. She is a lecturer in philosophy at the University Istituto Internazionale Lorenzo de’ Medici in Florence (Italy). Her research interests and expertise include: pediatric palliative care, capacity and decision-making; vulnerability, embodiment and lived-experience and gender related issues. She likes to go to the theatre and to the movies and is fond of Agatha Christie and Simenon. She lives in Florence with her husband Marco and her cat Bobo.

Michelle Dedeo

I am a practicing critical care nurse and an assistant professor of nursing at Linfield College in Portland, OR. I have practiced in critical care for 15 years and completed my Doctorate of Nursing Practice at the University of Washington in 2014. As a former travel nurse, I am originally from Wisconsin and have worked across the country from Boston to Alaska, including here at Columbia. I have a deep appreciation for hearing and telling the patient story and work to instill that passion in my students.

Sheba DMani

Sheba DMani is a lecturer at the International Medical University, Malaysia. She teaches literature and art to medical and dentistry students.

Alexis Drutchas

My name is Alexis, I am originally from Detroit and grew up overseas in Japan and Hong Kong as well. I am a Family Medicine Physician in Boston at Fenway Health, and also work in inpatient medicine at Beth Israel. I love to write both short non-fiction prose and poetry, and also create multimedia art pieces.

Amélie Du Pont

Amélie Du Pont (MD, PhD) is a neonatologist from the Sainte-Justine Hospital in Montreal. She is also a clinical ethicist, responsible for the clinical ethics consultation team in her hospital. More recently, she has become an executive member of the Clinical Ethics Bureau at the Montreal University and is in charge of developing a new and innovative curriculum in ethics for the medicine program.

Lars Eklund

I’m a 60-year-old Swedish Cardiologist, Chief of Staff, together with Hematologist Valdemar Erling we have reorganized two medical wards, giving room for the patient’s story. We are deeply inspired by Rita Charon/Narrative Medicine in our work at Kungälvs sjukhus (see wardround.net). Coming to NY for the workshop and to visit my daughter Ida living in NY.

Alexander (Alex) El Sehamy

I am a 4th year MD student at SUNY Downstate College of Medicine, currently applying to residency in Psychiatry. My goal is to pursue Narrative Medicine in order to inform my clinical work as well as encourage future physicians to exercise their creativity as they enter the field. As a longtime musician, creativity has been a very important outlet for me!
Valdemar Erling
Valdemar Erling, MD, Specialist in Internal Medicine & Hematology at Kungälvs hospital in Sweden. Father of four children. Music, reading and philosophy are my interests. I think that Bob Dylan was a good choice for the Nobel Prize. During the last ten years our hospital has worked with a new model for person-centered ward rounds as an attempt to maintain and reinforce patient integrity, giving room for the patient’s story. In a team based working model we try to narrow the gap between the different health professions (www.wardround.net). I am the chairman for the Swedish Society of Narrative Medicine.

Alexandra (Alex) Farag
Alex is a Palliative Care Fellow from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. She loves good jokes, red wine and meaningful conversations. She hopes that this workshop will give her the tools to honor the stories of patients as she starts her career.

Patricia J. Ferreira
Patricia J. Ferreira, Ph.D., teaches literature courses that engage race, ethnicity, and culture at Norwich University in Vermont where she is a Professor of English. Her forthcoming book, Merchant Princess & Abolitionist: Isabel Jennings’s Story, will be published by Cork University Press. She became interested in Narrative Medicine as a curative to both personal trauma and what she witnesses as a reader in the literature classroom. She will teach an interdisciplinary course on Narrative Medicine, during Spring 2018, aimed at engaging nursing students in narrative approaches to their professional studies. When she’s not at the university, she can be found in her apiary, keeping three colonies of bees, or in Burlington’s municipal pottery studio, where she’s an aspiring ceramicist.

Ingrid Flanders
Currently a visiting Assistant Professor of Nursing at Linfield College School of Nursing in Portland, Oregon. In addition to teaching, I have an active primary care practice in Family Medicine as a Family Nurse Practitioner. My work career has spanned 33 years including clinical work, Public Health, and care of the underserved, and in all that time I have felt the patient story is key to improved health. Hearing the story is key to providing quality care. The idea of eliciting the story and sharing it to provide care in order to grow in our role as nurses and practitioners, drew me to Narrative Medicine.

John Fotheringham
I grew up mainly in remote northern communities in northern Canada and Alaska. I studied psychology and philosophy at McGill University for my undergraduate degree. I then worked in a gold mine in Newfoundland for a number of years before moving to Boston for love. I worked as a psychiatric rehabilitation counsellor there for eight years. My basic life plan was to spend my twenties trying to find a calling in which I could create something new and uniquely personal. Having either failed at that, or perhaps just realizing I was trying to pick a chicken by looking at eggs, went to my backup plan and returned to Canada where I attended medical school at Queens University and have worked in rural and remote family medicine since, in Northern Ontario and Saskatchewan doing basically everything and anything which suits me as I am easily bored and am more comfortable when I am occasionally terrified. I work a lot with First Nations. I am recently married and fantastically happy because I finally understand what love is. I like dogs better than most people. I love to write but hate to type. I continue to be ambivalent about what is actually meaningful.
Lindsey Grubbs
Lindsey Grubbs is a doctoral candidate in English at Emory University, where she is also completing the Program in Bioethics. Her research analyzes the relationship between psychiatry and literature from the late eighteenth century on.

Michael Gruter
My name is Michael Gruter and I’m 24 years old. I am in my final year of Dental School in The Netherlands. Currently, I participate in a student exchange program between Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, New York, and the Academic Center for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA). I am looking forward to this workshop.

Magdalena Horodeńska
Psychologist, psychooncologist and clinical communication skills teacher. Deputy National Representative of Poland in Steering Committee of EACH International Association for Communication in Healthcare. The main focus of scientific interests is psychooncology, clinical communication and narrative psychology. Clinical experience in palliative care. Since 2015 in the Department of Didactics and Medical Simulation, Medical University of Lublin.

Alicia Kachmar
I am a teacher, freelance writer, crochet designer, nurse, and doctoral nursing student at the University of Pennsylvania. My interest in narrative medicine and the health humanities stems from my background as a writer and a patient—as someone with a chronic disease, I turn to illness narratives to help me process what I go through on a daily basis, as both a nurse and a patient. My PhD focus is pediatric critical care, with a particular interest in quality of life, cognitive outcomes, and how socioeconomic status factors affect these.

Saman Karimi
My name is Saman and I’m a third-year medical student currently completing my core rotations. My hobbies include yoga, cooking, interior design and traveling.

Cavenaugh Kelly
Cavenaugh Kelly is an occupational therapist, assistant professor at Husson University in Bangor, Maine, and a short writer. He has practiced OT for twenty years, taught for the past four years, and his stories have been published in literary magazines throughout the country. His doctoral research is on the training of healthcare students through literary stories.
Aldina Vazão Kennedy

Aldina Vazão Kennedy is a poet and essayist. Currently, she writes about her family’s battles with disability and identity; currently her father, who was disabled when he first immigrated to America, has Alzheimer’s disease. Kennedy won a Pulitzer for spot reporting in 1992 for her contribution to Newsday’s coverage of the Union Square subway crash. She worked as an editor at Time Warner and the Pfizer drug company. She won BRIO fellowships from the Bronx Council on the Arts in 2010 for nonfiction, and in 2005 for short stories about her family’s history in Portugal. Kennedy co-directed the 2010 Sarah Lawrence College Poetry Festival, the largest free poetry festival in New York State. Her poetry appears in Underwater New York, an online anthology, and she composed and performed poetry for an exhibition at Yeshiva University Museum. She majored in foreign policy and diplomacy at Brown University, and earned a Masters Degree in teaching from Quinnipiac College as well as a Masters in Fine Arts (writing) from Sarah Lawrence College.

Judy Kleppel

Hello, workshoppers, I am Judy Kleppel, a physician in the field of rehabilitation medicine with an interest in recovery after catastrophic trauma looking at ‘what does it take to recover, come back, from catastrophic events?’ I have a multidimensional public health focus and a music and body awareness focus and look for others who share similar interests and concerns. I work and play in Philadelphia. I have some interest to recover some of the magic stories I have shared with others in clinical work, but mostly I want to live this forward and build skills to create possibilities with others.

Rachel Kolb

Rachel Kolb is a current third-year PhD student in the English department at Emory University, whose work focuses on 19th and 20th century American literature, in particular how American culture has understood normalcy and disability, as well as the communicative potential of deafness and sound. She is also pursuing a graduate certificate in bioethics, and her public work on deafness, communication, and ethics has been published in venues ranging from the New York Times to the Atlantic and the San Francisco Chronicle.

Kelly Cronin Komatz

I am a practicing pediatrician and also board certified in pediatric palliative care. I have been practicing for over 25 years in Jacksonville Florida although I am originally from New York State, having been born in Kingston. I attended Binghamton University and Upstate Medical Center. My interests include yoga, doing different art projects and scuba diving. My current work centers on caring the most Medically Complex Children and their families in Jacksonville. These families all carry their stories and I desire to learn more about how to capture these moments to share with them and others.

Yukie Kurihara

I am a clinical social worker and educator, working in the field of Palliative/End of Life Care. I have been doing workshops on grief and bereavement, communication, and self-care/contemplative care for patients/families as well as health care professionals. I am also a first-year student of M.S. program of Narrative Medicine and enjoy every minute of it. I am also happy to be back to NYC where I studied and worked back in the ’90s, bringing back all the fond memories.

#fallNMworkshop

@NarrativeMed /ColumbiaNarrativeMedicine @narrative_medicine LinkedIn/narrativemedicine
Kimberly La Force
My name is Kimberly La Force, a Registered Nurse who has worked in Home Health and Community Health for the past eight years in NYC. I gravitated to working in the community because of the very personal and holistic care that I was able to establish with my patients. The home and community tell a story of their own, one that in other settings, still remains largely unknown. What I love most about the community, was the comprehensive knowledge it gave about the US medical system. When I decided to pursue higher education, I wanted a degree that could help me merge different aspects of myself, the creative side, the medical and scientific knowledge garnered, my experiences and knowledge of architecture that I earned in a community college on the small Caribbean island of St. Lucia, where I was raised. I entered the Masters Program in Narrative Medicine at Columbia University and found its curriculum everything I was looking for and more.

Marisa Lam
My name is Marisa. I am a social worker from Toronto. I like to travel to learn about different cultures. I am also interested in parliamentary procedure.

Stephanie Larson
Stephanie Larson is a doctoral candidate in English with a certificate in bioethics whose research explores the intersection of disability studies, medicine, twentieth-century American literature, and public health. Her dissertation uses the hookworm campaigns of the early twentieth-century to propose a symbiotic exchange between literature and public health. After completing her PhD in English Stephanie plans to attend medical school with the goal of becoming a practicing physician.

Jennifer Lawson
I am a general pediatrician at Duke Children’s Primary Care. I find myself seeking ways to hold on to the humanity of medicine in the contemporary environment of box clicking, thus my interests in integrative medicine, the medical humanities, and the Theology, Medicine and Culture fellowship in which I participated last year. I appreciate the opportunity to work with learners in this space and look forward to deeper engagement with Narrative Medicine during this workshop.

Jess Libow
Jess Libow is a PhD student in English at Emory University, where she studies nineteenth and early twentieth century U.S. literature. Her work focuses on representations of disability, gender, and the history of health and exercise science.

Samuel (Sam) Lim
I’m a psychiatry resident with an interest in how personal narratives and stories can be used to promote empathy between people and resilience within them. Outside of work I have a deep enduring love of the outdoors and am currently trying to start a band called “The Basement Psychiatrists.” I do in fact work in a basement.
Linda Lindmark

Born in Lapland in 1967, moved to Gothenburg in the west coast of Sweden as soon as I could to play music with my best friends. We did well, I have since been working in the music business for 20 years before applying for Med school in 2006. I love working as a child and adolescence psychiatrist, doing my residency at the moment in the ER. I have two grown up kids, one grandchild and I have recently bought a summer house so fixing that up would be my favorite waste of time at the moment.

Gina Lutz

I am a family medicine resident preparing to do a narrative medicine project in Cuba, where I attended medical school. I have an interest palliative care and social justice.

Sarah Massoud

Finishing my family medicine residency at McGill, I am a washi-tape enthusiast who loves nothing more than to curl up with tea and a blanket and spend hours reading and re-reading my favourite novels in the company of my cat. I live with my husband in Montreal and we travel frequently to the East Coast to visit the ocean and our families. I am so excited about the opportunity to meld my two favourite things: literature and medicine, and using words to make medicine more compassionate. I hope to one day complete the certificate program and work clinically in inner city medicine.

Katie McCreary

I am a third year Family Medicine resident at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. I primarily work with an underserved population at a Federally Qualified Health Center. I have heard some amazing stories from patients, and I am hoping to further develop my abilities to gather, listen to, incorporate and learn from patient stories.

Ala Mejaddam

My name is Ala Mejaddam and I have only recently embarked on the journey of becoming a specialist in Internal medicine. I am a Swedish Libyan raised in the suburbs of Sweden’s capital, Stockholm. Today however, I work and live in Sweden’s second largest city, Gothenburg. I am most happy when the end of a day is one in which I get to sit down with friends and family chatting about the latest episodes of The Daily Show with Trevor Noah or rereading one of J. R. R. Tolkien creations.
Lars Midbøe

Born in Oslo, the capital of Norway, I moved with my parents to the middle of Sweden at an early age. In the rural areas where I grew up I met many fairytails and mysterious stories. The self-conceived destiny for my life was to become a minister as my father, but the rebellious years around 1970 put me on other paths. Returning to Sweden after a year as exchange in Connecticut, I started to work in a mental hospital. Some years later I became a registered nurse and have worked in different parts and positions in Swedish health care since then. The last ten years before my retirement, I worked with eHealth and patient safety issues at the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Listening to stories people tell has always been important to me, as a professional as well as privately. I realized that better listening is a key to improving patient safety and healthcare quality. In September 2014, I had the opportunity to participate in a Narrative Medicine workshop at Columbia and since then, I’ve been a part of the growing "Narrative Medicine Movement" in Sweden. I also work with Medical Informatics, where I see a great need to recognize the importance of narrative information. I’m married, proud father of two and grandfather of four. I like to sail on lakes in Sweden, and in the fabulous archipelago of Stockholm. Walking in our forests, mountains and on the Camino to Santiago de Compostela is also a passion.

Srilakshmi Mitta

Dr. Mitta currently works as an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Brown University Medical School under the Clinician Educator track. She divides her time between clinical work involving the Medical Care of Pregnant Women and medical education across the spectrum from medical students to fellows. She would like to see a change in peoples’ understanding of themselves and how this can help improve self-empathy and resilience in their lives going forward. She has a particular soft spot for pregnant/postpartum women and medical trainees as they are confronting and working through large life events and she would like to use narrative medicine as one approach to help them through this struggle.

Anna-Karin Moberg

My name is Anna-Karin Moberg, 44 years old and live in Sweden with my husband and two children. I work as a manager of nurses and assistant nurses at a health care department. I used to work as a nurse for 12 years before I became manager. Before that, I worked with children with special needs. Last year we had the pleasure of having a narrative workshop at our hospital. It was two very inspiring days in many ways. We also have worked a lot with the patients’ story at our ward, how we can take care of the stories and provide good care according to that. I’m really looking forward to learning more about narrative medicine at this workshop in November.

Jessica Morgan

I am pursuing a Masters of Social Work at Stony Brook University’s School of Social Welfare. I also have a Bachelor of Art’s in Women’s Studies from SBU. I work as a Case Manager in mental health housing in Suffolk County, NY and I am an intern for a community development organization, Project Presence. I am passionate about traveling abroad, cooking, dancing, and writing!
Trina Muncy
I’m a recent graduate of Rollins College with an English degree. My love for narrative medicine began officially in my medical expository writing class, but my passion for helping others, listening to their concerns, and bearing witness to their plights extends back to when I started my career as a massage therapist. Through body intuition and a keen understanding of what it means to be an empathetic healer, I was able to connect with patients and provide healing through touch. I believe this had less to do with my skills as a therapist than with my ability to listen—and allow the body to do what it naturally does: heal itself.

Peggy Murphy
My name is Peggy Murphy and I am Social Worker, an LCSW with a certification in oncology. I have always worked in and been drawn to health care. I am a voracious reader and like working with patients and their families around the use of metaphor when managing serious illness and or end of life issues. I also work with people who are managing neurological diseases such as MS. I have been drawn to narrative medicine long before I knew that it was a specialty/degree. I have always been fascinated by how people tell their illness story and how they integrate illness into their personal story. I am excited to participate in this workshop.

Marie-Alix (Delphine) Paltzer
My name is Marie-Alix (Delphine) Paltzer. I grew up in Switzerland and upon High School graduation, I left for the U.S. to pursue my Bachelor degree at the University of Virginia. I was heavily involved in the Polo community (with horses not water!). Majored in Media Studies, minored in Philosophy. Moved to New York after graduation and worked for a Venture Capital firm as their Office & Events Coordinator. I am moving back to Switzerland in December to pursue a career in Counseling & Mental Health! Excited to meet everyone.

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).

Rochelle (Shelley) Peck
Insatiably curious ophthalmologist (now mostly retired) involved with the Columbia University General Studies alumni board and program committee, the Penn/Columbia program committee, the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom, and other political/cultural groups. Love movies, skiing, travel (Egypt and Jordan in 3 weeks), cooking and eating ethnic foods and becoming serious about wine.

John Pennington
John Pennington is a second-year medical student at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He previously attended Hendrix College, a small private liberal arts institution in Arkansas, where his passion for engaging the humanities and valuing others’ unique stories began. When John is not studying, he enjoys cooking, baking, watching Netflix, reading, tasting wine, going to coffee shops, and stressing about Step 1.
Jennifer Pien

Jennifer Pien, MD is the Editor-In-Chief of the forthcoming The Pegasus Review, a journal of medicine and literature and will be joining the Stanford School of Medicine’s affiliated faculty as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the fall of 2017. For the last nine years, she has specialized in caring for individuals with developmental disabilities. Jennifer is working on her first novel set in historical Hong Kong.

Avani Prabakhar

I am a physician practicing palliative medicine as part of inpatient consultation service at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Michigan. I got interested in this workshop as it was recommended at AAHPM’s (American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine) national assembly meeting last year where I attended a session on similar topic. My goal is to improve my writing skills as practicing physician.

Martin Risenfors

MD, PhD, Cardiologist, working in clinical cardiology and with education of medical students at Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Gothenburg, Sweden. Interested among other things in music (classical and jazz mainly) and play guitar in a soul-band.

Hollis Roth

I am a second year Family Medicine resident in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. I was fortunate to be introduced to narrative medicine through an elective course during medical school and aim to incorporate narrative competence into my practice daily. I am currently planning on pursuing further training in Palliative Care.

Emily Rubin

Emily Rubin is the author of the novel STALINA (Mariner Books 2011), a winner in the Amazon Debut Novel Award Contest. Her other fiction and essays have been published in the Red Rock Review, Confrontations, HAPPY, NY Observer, and Poets and Writers. She was the first recipient of the Sarah Verdone Writers Award, a finalist in the International Literary Awards, and a Pushcart Prize nominee. A cancer survivor, Rubin founded Write Treatment Workshops at Mount Sinai Hospital where she runs creative writing workshops year round. The Write Treatment Anthology Volume I, writings by cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers was published in 2017. Rubin also founded Dirty Laundry: Loads of Prose, a reading series that takes place in laundromats around the country. She has an MFA from the Writer’s Foundry of St. Joseph’s College and is working on novel set in the East Village in the 1980’s. Rubin is a member of PEN and the Directors Guild of America. She lives in New York City and Columbia Country, NY.

Shyla Shrinath

I am an internist in my 24th year of practice. I love reading, traveling, listening to old (and new) Bollywood music and find any chance to get together with family and friends. I love listening to my patients tell their stories and I believe history taking is the most important part of the medical exam. I am particularly interested in narrative medicine because I believe it will give me a deeper understanding of my patients and their unique concerns.

Georgia Smith

My name is Georgia Smith. I am a writer and a current applicant for admission to graduate school in psychotherapy. I hope to incorporate the art of the personal narrative in my future work as a therapist.
Jette Stenberg

I was born in Denmark in 1969 but live for 23 years in Sweden with my husband and our 2 daughters. I graduated as a nurse in Denmark in 1993 and have since then worked at Kungälvs hospital as a RN at different units. The last 8 years, I have worked mostly as an assisting head of unit at the outpatient clinic, where a large part of my time have been working with development.

Francisca Stutzin

My Name is Francisca Stutzin, I am from Santiago de Chile and currently live in London, UK. I am a clinical psychologist with a particular interest the subjective experience of people living with chronic illness and the psychological issues these illnesses often raise. The last few years, I have developed an interest in how patient’s experience of illness makes its way into public health policy and have recently begun MPhil/PhD studies in Health Humanities to explore this line of research.

Peter Sultan

I am an art school dropout who for the last 11 years has been a social work supervisor in the HIV service at New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical Center. Prior to that I worked as a psychotherapist in East Harlem for 5&1/2 years, during which I earned my certificate in psychodynamic psychotherapy from ICP (Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy).

JD Tamucci

In undergrad, I majored in Spanish Literature and focused on the short stories of Jorge Luis Borges. I am currently doing my MS in Biophysics at the University of Connecticut, where in Dr. May's lab, 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 swing dancing, bouldering, singing, and painting album covers. I hope to attend medical school in Fall 2019.

Ann Törnell

I am directing the Department of Internal Medicine at Kungälv hospital. For many years we have improved the ward round to make it more person-centered. The basis for this is the patient's story. To enable doctors and nurses to develop their ability to listen to the patient's story, I need to understand narrative medicine on deeper level. I also need to develop my ability to actively and curiously listen to my co-workers' stories.

Eva J. Usadi

I am the Founder and Executive Director of Trauma and Resiliency Resources, Inc. and the creator of TRR's Warrior Camp®, a 7-day intensive clinical treatment program designed to heal Combat Trauma in Active Military and Veterans of all eras. I am an expert in Military and first responder trauma and in defining, identifying and repairing Moral Injury. I am the daughter of a WWII U.S. Army Veteran and the mother of a First Responder. Narrative Writing is a modality utilized at TRR's Warrior Camp®. The other modalities used are EMDR, Yoga and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy.
Guy Weissinger

Guy Weissinger is a therapist, nurse and researcher who works with people with serious mental illness in all of these capacities. His research focuses on health disparities of people with serious mental illness, especially psychosis. He hopes to work on how narratives of hospitalization experiences can be used to teach about how to improve the healthcare system.

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.

Ellen Wild

I grew up in the NY/NJ area and moved to Minnesota to attend college. I have lived in Mankato, about 75 miles south of Minneapolis for 43 years. I am a wife, mother, sister and friend. I have been a nurse for more than 3 decades and I am currently a palliative care nurse at the Mayo Clinic. I am excited to participate in this workshop… to get out of my comfort zone and challenge myself.

Gregory (Greg) Winston

Greg Winston is a Professor of English at Husson University in Bangor, Maine. His research takes historical and environmental approaches to Irish and British modernism. He is author of the book Joyce and Militarism (University Press of Florida, 2012). His work in narrative medicine includes serving as scholar-facilitator for the Maine Humanities Council Literature and Medicine discussion series and developing medical humanities courses for Husson University.