



International Conference on Medical Humanities

14-15 March 2026

Birkbeck, University of London / Online

Programme

organised by

London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research

under the patronage of Studio Legale

Prof. Avv. Gianluca Sardi

Saturday, 14 March
(In-person Sessions, Birkbeck)

9:15-10:30 Session 1A (Room G14): Metaphors, Modernity and Meanings of Illness

Chair: Florian Lützelberger

Andrew Dickinson, Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry (UK)

Illness and Metaphor, Metaphor and Illness

Elena Nistor, London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (UK)

‘An Island of Strangers’: on Illness, Care, and the Theoretical Undoing of Nationalist Isolation

Clea Butcher, University of Edinburgh (UK)

Tuberculosis and Tragic Modernity: Dymphna Cusack’s *Say No to Death* (1951)

9:15-10:10 Session 1B (Room G13): Art, Memory and Institutional Critiques of Medicine

Chair: Chunxi Liu

Megan Voeller, Thomas Jefferson University (USA)

Diagnosing Medicine: Health Justice in Contemporary Artists’ Institutional Critique

Sofia Bourantoni, University of Cambridge (UK)

Rethinking the Role of Monuments in Medical Humanities Research

10:30-10:50 Tea / Coffee

10:50-12:20 Session 2A (Room G14): Gendered Bodies, Reproduction and Narrative Resistance

Chair: Franziska Gygax

Franziska Gygax, University of Basel (Switzerland)

Gender Differences in End-of-Life Narratives

Orlagh Woods, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

“The one that matters”: Reproductive Loss, Silence and Narrative Resistance in Emilie Pine’s *Notes to Self* (2018)

Florian Lützelberger, University of Oxford (UK) / University of Bamberg (Germany)

Fragmented Bodies, Relational Voices: Autofiction and the Politics of Abortion and Reproductive Loss in Contemporary European Women’s Writing

Anne-Bénédicte Damon (France)

To Eat or Not to Eat – Anorexia Nervosa in Children and YA Literature

10:50-12:20 Session 2B (Room G13): Medical Ethics, Authority and Clinical Practice

Chair: Jay Sinclair

Gianluca Sardi, LCIR (UK) /University of Teramo (Italy)

Medical Malpractice. The Challenges of the Latest Reforms in the Italian Scenario

Chunxi Liu, Johns Hopkins University (USA)

The Method-Function of Medicine: Epistemic Gatekeeping in Clinical Discourse

Chad Emerson Childers, Indiana University (USA)

Can Narrative Save The Advance Directive?

Vivienne Nguyen, Eilidh Mulhern, Yvonne Moulds, Euan McKenzie, Amy Cater, Linda Bell, NHS Ayrshire and Arran / University of Glasgow (UK)

Creative Reflection: Teamwork Within Emergency Medicine

12:20-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:15 Session 3A (Room G14): Artistic Bodies: Poetry, Performance and Anatomical Knowledge

Chair: Aadi Shri Gupta

Mila Daskalova, University of Glasgow (UK)

Poetic Therapeutics in the Nineteenth-Century Treatment of Mental Illness

Bronwen McVeigh, Northeastern University (USA)

Music and Madness in Pre-Risorgimento Italy: Innocent and Guilty Bodies in Romani and Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* (1830)

Tabby Carless-Frost, Brunel Univeristy (UK)

A Body of Work: Dissecting Anatomical Histories and Re-membering Anna Morandi Manzolini

13:00-13:50 Session 3B (Room G13): Digital Health, Technology and Embodied Identity

Chair: Joana Almeida

Māra Grīnfeldē, Rīga Stradiņš University (Latvia)

Digital Care: Embodied Perspective on Baby-Tracking and Monitoring Technologies

Merrie Woodcock, University of Sheffield and Queen Mary's University London (UK)

Neoliberalism, Absurdism and Autonomy: Challenging Modern Perceptions of Bodily Control through the Work of Daniil Kharms

14:00-14:30 Tea / Coffee

14:30-16:00 Session 4A (Room G14): Empathy, Bias and Reflection in Medical Training

Chair: Andrew Dickinson

Anna Maria Joseph, University of Kerala (India)

Humanizing Medicine: The Role of Literary Study in Developing Empathic Clinicians

Aadi Shri Gupta, Elizabeth Davies, King's College London (UK)

Rhymes for Resilience: A Scoping Review of Group Poetry Interventions in Cancer Care

Madeleine McKernan, NHS Ayrshire & Arran (UK)

Using Reflective Practice as a Tool for Undergraduate Medical Students to Identify Bias in Practice

Michael Sinka, University of Bristol (UK)

Learning Through Discomfort: Autoethnographic Vignettes from a Medical Elective in Ghana

14:30-16:00 Session 4B (Room G13): Care, Health and Medical Inequalities

Chair: Eilidh Mulhern

Jay Sinclair, Durham University (UK)

Hormonal Experiences of Endocrine Disruption in Teesside, UK

Yasmin Zhuang-Mackie, Durham University (UK)

Medicalisations of Race and Culture: Relations of Care in Organ Donor Activism

Joana Almeida, Nicolás Giudice, University of Bedfordshire (UK)

Mark Pedder, Karen Hibbert, Keech Hospice (UK)

The 'Caring on the Edge' Project: Ethical Challenges and Critical Reflections

Min Young Tak, University of Bedfordshire (UK)

Unpaid Caregiving for Older People in South Korea

Sunday, 15 March
(Online Sessions, Zoom)

10:00-11:30 Session 5: Institutional Histories and Illness Narratives

Chair: Miriam Sette

Yasmin Shafei, Center for Economic, Legal, and Social Studies and Documentation (Egypt)

Reading Resistance and Agency: Family Narratives and Institutionalization in 19th Century Egypt

Joy Eyisi, Covenant University (Nigeria)

Digital Memory and Cultural Futures: Health Narratives, Language, and Identity in Nigeria

Eeva Savolainen, Universities of Stirling and Glasgow (UK)

The Abnormal Patient: Diagnostic Stigma in *The Lifted Veil*

Sofia de Melo Araújo, Porto Polytechnic/CETAPS (Portugal)

The Ethical View of the Body: Iris Murdoch's 'Attention' and Illness in Literature

11:45-13:00 Session 6: Pain, Desire and the Medicalised Body in Literature and Film

Chair: Yasmin Shafei

Ewelina Suszek, University of Applied Sciences in Tarnow (Poland)

The Hand as a 'Point of Contact' Between Lover's and Maladic Discourse. Pawlikowska – Poświatowska – Mikołajewski

Ramisha Nabila, Independent Scholar

Chronic Pain, Recognition, and the Politics of Disbelief in Kate Weinberg's *There's Nothing Wrong with Her*

Marta Miquel-Baldellou, Universitat de Lleida (Spain)

Revisiting the Monstrous-Feminine on the Dissecting Table: The Patriarchal Medical Gaze and the Female Body as Abject in André Øvredal's *The Autopsy of Jane Doe*

13:15-14:30 Session 7: Doctors, Disease and Ethics Across Literary Traditions

Chair: Eeva Savolainen

Ana Isabel Correia Martins, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain)

The Doctor's Role in *Collectanea Moralis Philosophiae* (1571)

Anastasia Logotheti, The American College of Greece (Greece)

Disease and Recovery in Graham Swift's Short Fiction

Monika Šincek Bregović, University of Zadar (Croatia)

Vaccination and Eugenic Thought in G. B. Shaw's "The Doctor's Dilemma"

14:45-16:00 Session 8: Cultural Narratives of Illness, Belief and Inequality

Chair: Annabel Kay Ruiz

Maggie Kelly, Elon University (USA)

Reading Blood: Examining Medical and Social Bias Through Literature

Gordana Galić Kakkonen, University of Split (Croatia)

Medicine and Religion in Lawrence Scott's *Night Calypso*

Gideon Kiptoo, Pennsylvania State University (USA)

Narrating Illness, Disability, and Death in Margaret Ogola's *I swear by Apollo*

16:15-17:30 Session 9: Creative Practices in Healing and Health Experience

Chair: Gordana Galić Kakkonen

Minna Chang, Epsom & St Helier Hospital, NHS (UK)

Art in Recovery: Exploratory Study into the Role of Visual Art on an Orthogeriatric Ward – Patient and Staff Perspectives

Antoinette Polito, Elon University (USA)

Moral Panic at the Disco: Dancing and Dying in the Age of AIDS

Maria Beldi Alcântara, University of Sao Paulo (Brazil)

Somatic Solidarities: Community Bodies and the Politics of Healing