

Association for Medical Humanities: Annual Conference 2014

The University of Southampton Faculty of Medicine hosted the Association for Medical Humanities Annual Conference from 7th - 9th July 2014.

The Faculty uniquely offers medical humanities options for all its undergraduate students in year 1 as a vehicle for the exploration of patients' perspectives and experiences through a creative process.

The Art of Compassion

7-9 July 2014

Highfield Campus, University Road, Southampton, SO17 1BJ

The eleventh conference was the first time Southampton has hosted the Association's annual conference and was an opportunity for further interdisciplinary discussion of medical humanities within the context of medical education and patient care after the Francis report. The theme of the conference was 'The Art of Compassion' and aimed to explore and share the extent to which medical humanities can generate understanding and maximise its potential to transform medical practice. It is hoped that the conference will contribute to the current debate around compassion and the development of compassionate practice in healthcare.

The Art of Compassion Venue

"Continue with conferences at this lovely venue, good lecture theatres, leafy surroundings, excellent catering." Attendee - Art of Compassion

Diverse speakers and workshops enabled the conference to consider the nature of compassion from historical, philosophical, cultural and global perspectives as well as probe current issues such as, whether compassion can be taught or learned; how possible or desirable it is to incentivise compassion in a healthcare system and how the challenges of sustaining compassion can be met.

Plenary Speakers & Performers

- Dr Anna Smajdor
- Matilda Tristram
- Professor David Baldwin
- Dr Carlos Hoyos
- Byron Vincent
- Dr Jocelyn Cornwell

Dr Anna Smajdor

Anna Smajdor is a lecturer in ethics at the University of East Anglia. She studied philosophy at Edinburgh University, and medical ethics at Imperial College, London. Her research spans reproductive ethics, research ethics, and institutional ethics. She is co-author (with Baroness Ruth Deech) of *From IVF to Immortality* (OUP 2007) - an exploration of the relationship between law, ethics and regulation in reproductive technology. She is interested in the ethical categorisations that govern the treatment of entities in different settings and contexts: patients/research participants, IVF embryos for implantation/embryos for research, as well as broader moral relationships between institutions and individuals. Aside from her academic work, Anna is an ethics consultant for NHS trusts a role which includes providing ethical analysis of policy development and proposals, and the development of institutional structures and frameworks aimed to support and facilitate ethical practice.

The value of compassion

In February 2013, The Francis Report was published, detailing 'systemic failings' at Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust which brought about the deaths of hundreds of patients, and caused suffering to many more. In response to the Report, David Cameron urged, among other things, that healthcare professionals' pay should be dependent on their ability to demonstrate compassion in their jobs. But is Cameron right to think that incentivising compassion is the right way to go about healing the health service? To answer this, we must think carefully about what compassion is, what role it plays in healthcare and whether it is valuable in itself, or primarily as a means to achieving good healthcare outcomes. I will question our common assumptions about compassion, and suggest that there are profound tensions and contradictions underlying our expectations of 21st century healthcare, which compassion cannot resolve.

Matilda Tristram

Matilda Tristram studied animation at the Royal College of Art, graduating in 2008. Since then she has worked as a children's writer, lecturer and filmmaker. She was co-writer on two animated BBC TV shows for CBeebies with Ragdoll Productions, *The Adventures of Abney and Teal* and *Dipdap*. *Dipdap* won a BAFTA in the short form category. Her short films have screened at over 30 festivals internationally.

The Book - Probably Nothing

At 31, Matilda Tristram was 17 weeks pregnant and looking forward to having her first baby. Then she discovered she had cancer. This touching and hilarious graphic memoir, which is never morose or self-pitying, starts at the moment Matilda was diagnosed and ends when her course of chemotherapy finishes in October 2013. Recording the awkward conversations, the highs and lows of treatment, the mixed blessings of receiving 'Get Well' cards, and the reality of still having to queue too long for croissants, Matilda captures her experiences with characteristic style and warmth. Along the way she cherishes the small details of life, and learns not to sweat the big things. Her beautiful and boisterous son was born without complications and is reliably keeping her up most nights.

Professor David Baldwin

David Baldwin is Professor of Psychiatry and Head of the Mental Health Group in the Clinical and Experimental Sciences Academic Unit of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Southampton in the UK. He leads an NHS Mood Disorders Service based at College Keep in Southampton. He trained in medicine at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, London and then in psychiatry at St Mary's Hospital Medical School and the Maudsley Hospital, London. He is an Honorary Professor in the University of Cape Town in South Africa and Visiting Professor at Suzhou University Guangji Hospital in China.

He aims to improve clinical outcomes in patients with mood and anxiety disorders: by investigating the role of neurobiological and psychological factors in causing and maintaining illness; through improving trial design when evaluating efficacy and tolerability of treatment interventions; by assessing the effectiveness and acceptability of treatment interventions in wider clinical practice; through identifying more accurately those patient groups at particular risk of poor outcomes; and by offering a tertiary referral specialist clinical service to patients with chronic and treatment-resistant conditions. He leads the Anxiety Disorders Research Network, an international multi-centre independent collaborative cross-disciplinary research grouping, with support from the ECNP and European Commission. He is the author of 240 full articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and author or co-author of 9 books and 40 chapters in books. He also has long-standing interests in the porous interface between arts and science, experience and practice.

Abstract - Women under Duress: Water and Wretchedness in Romola and Daniel Deronda

The Victorian writer George Eliot created her art out of a cluster of sometimes disguised rebellions against reigning social, moral, and aesthetic conventions. She may not have formally supported feminist causes, but provided many examples of the subjection of women. In this talk I will consider how Eliot portrayed the emotional state of three young women subject to long-standing adversity but able to draw on only limited support, as they each approach a moment of personal crisis. I will describe her portrayal in *Romola* of the repeated attempts by Romola de' Bardi to escape an unhappy marriage; the depiction of an act which tests the benevolence of fate in determining whether Romola lives or dies; and her ultimate salvation within an unconventional family arrangement. When discussing *Daniel Deronda* I shall consider Eliot's sympathetic account of the childhood abusive experiences reported by Mirah Lapidoth, and insightful approach when describing her attempted suicide: and will comment on the 'commodification' of Gwendolen Harleth and her entrapment within an abusive marriage, and consider the portrayal of her emotions on the voyage which ends in her husband's death.

I will place Eliot's description of the wretched state of these three characters within a brief account of the writer's own life, and of her broader view of the emotional experiences of women under duress. I will also consider how, within a period during which awareness of 'emotions' was increasing, her recurring portrayal of distressed individuals floundering in water provides a metaphor for troubled individuals either being overwhelmed by adversity, or emerging with increased resilience. By doing so, I hope to demonstrate that the insights from literature can enhance our understanding, sympathy and compassion, when attending to distressed patients.

Dr Carlos Hoyos

Dr Hoyos qualified as a doctor in Valencia (Spain), trained as a psychiatrist at the Maudsley and University College London. He specialised in child psychiatry at the Tavistock Clinic in London where he was a Clinical Lecturer for five years.

He is currently working at the Orchard Centre, Southampton's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), where he spends half of his time teaching medical students. He founded the Orchard Film Club in 2009 as a forum for mental health professionals to discuss films. The club has met once a month ever since. In 2010 he developed a Special Study Unit for the medical school and has been watching films with medical students ever since. He recently completed a Master's dissertation in Medical education on how to teach using films.

Teaching Psychiatry with Film

Mental Health is a difficult subject to teach. Students often experience it as theoretical and removed from their own experience, not to mention their medical experience. Teachers often feel that it is impossible to convey the complexity and wonder of the subject without drowning students in detail or sounding pompous. Hollywood has often shamelessly exploited and misrepresented mental health problems. It has contributed to the perpetuation of false and damaging stereotypes and it has often presented professionals and sufferers as clowns or criminals, contributing to the stigmatization of both.

And yet! From the early days of cinema, great artists keep coming back to mine this seam of human interest and drama. Some of them have been able to describe, comment and communicate the effects of pathological psychology on people's lives. They have managed to capture the complexity and interest of the human mind and create dramatic, visual, and narrative works of art that teach more about psychiatry than any lecture ever could. In this session I will set up an experience that will highlight the value of using films to teach aspects of mental health and will also help participants understand the process involved in preparing, watching and discussing a film for the purposes of learning.

Byron Vincent

One of BBC poetry season's New Talent Choices, Byron Vincent is a regular at the nation's most prestigious literary and music festivals. He has performed several times on television and national radio, including Channel 4's Random Acts, Radio 4's Bespoken Word and BBC 3's The Verb. He was poet in residence for the South West of England for Apples and Snake's ground breaking poetry project My Place or Yours. His first collection Barking Doggerel was released May 2010 by Nasty Little Press. He was co-founder, compere, producer and programmer for one of The UK's most highly regarded Spoken Word nights at The Bristol Old Vic. Byron has worked as a writer and performer on several theatre projects including The RSC's Midsummer Night's dreaming. He is also co-creator of bespoke story telling project Made Up, which in its first year won commissions from both MAYK's Mayfest in Bristol and Escalator East in Norwich. Byron is a resident writer at Bristol's Kill Your Darlings alongside Nathan Filer, Molly Naylor, Nikesh Shukla, Chelsey Flood and Tom Clutterbuck. He has recently written for The Guardian and Radio 4's Four Thought.

The Show - Talk About Something You Like

Science says I'm mad. I measure madness in pills. Hospital visits. Spending my life savings on manic whims. Hurting myself and those I love. Feeling like superman. Feeling unbearably frightened. Scribbling martian hieroglyphs on the walls of my flat. I want to look at how psychiatry and neuroscience measure madness, and if there's any correlation in our perspectives. In a society in which mental health diagnoses are becoming ever more common, this show introduces the latex glove of science to the frayed mitten of insanity, and hopes they shake hands.

Dr Jocelyn Cornwell

Jocelyn Cornwell founded The Point of Care programme at The King's Fund in 2007. She originally trained as a medical sociologist and ethnographer and is the author of "Hard-Earned Lives: accounts of health and illness from East London" (1984).

She has worked in academic research, as a senior manager in NHS community health services and in health regulation, first at the Audit Commission and then at the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) where she was responsible for the design of clinical governance review methods.

She is director of The Point of Care Foundation that grew out of the work of the Point of Care programme at the King's Fund, an independent charity working to improve patients' experience of care and increase support for the staff who work with them. The Foundation offers support to organisations that want to run Schwartz Center Rounds which are a practical tool that health and care providers can use to improve the culture of their organisation and support staff. Rounds have been implemented in more than 30 organisations in the UK

She is a visiting professor in the department of medicine at Imperial College, London.



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[Art of Compassion Programme](#)

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[Association for Medical Humanities](#)

[Saving Faces](#)

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