

Call for Papers

“History of Medicine within the Medical Humanities”

Exploratory workshop funded by the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (NOS-HS)

3-4 March 2022, online

Presentation

The first workshop in our series “Changing attitudes towards medical uncertainty in the training of physicians” was held in November 2019 in Helsinki focusing on the theme “Changing attitudes towards medical uncertainty at the research university from the 1880s”. This second workshop will study the history of medicine as a subdiscipline within the medical humanities (and its possible contributions to dealing with medical uncertainty).

The origin of the medical humanities in the United States goes back to the 1960s, when a small group of people started to criticise existing medical education and were committed to change it in the direction of a more open attitude towards the ‘soft’ humanities. The increasing popularity of this field within the Nordic countries is of a much more recent date, and certainly Finland seems to lag a bit behind in this respect, the Research Center for Culture and Health in Turku being one of the only groups currently specialising in this direction.

Against this background, the aim of this second workshop is to study the place of history of medicine within the medical humanities. Even though the medical humanities are by definition an interdisciplinary endeavour, the focus is explicitly on one discipline within this group, yet in close collaboration between historians, medical practitioners, and possibly other representatives of the humanities as well.

Possible topics to focus on are, for instance, but certainly not exclusively:

- the history of ‘history of medicine’ as a subdiscipline or, more generally, of medical humanities;
- the developing place of these disciplines within medical training;
- how ‘history of medicine’ relates to other subdisciplines of the medical humanities, such as medical ethics;
- how to teach ‘history of medicine’ to medical students?;
- and how to raise their interest in a subject of which they do not experience the immediate relevance? (this is a particularly prevalent question also because history of medicine seems to contradict the striving for objectivity and for the reduction of insecurity in the general pattern of their training);
- to what extent and in which way ‘history of medicine’ contributed and still can contribute to a reduction of the intolerance of ambiguity (for instance, among medical students)?;
- how medical uncertainty has been dealt with in the past?;
- and particularly in medical training?

The aim of the workshop is not only to deal with this topic from a theoretical perspective, but also to look for its practical implications and to study concrete examples of good practices. Geographically the primary focus is on the Nordic countries, but certainly not exclusively. In general, we encourage participants to give a wide interpretation to the themes to be discussed in the workshop, as presented above.

The **opening keynote lecture** of the workshop will be given by **Frank Huisman**, professor in the History of Medicine at the University Medical Centre in Utrecht and past-President of the European Association for the History of Medicine and Health (EAHMH).

Practical instructions

Proposals for presentations (approximately 400 words) should be submitted to Pieter Dhondt (pieter.dhondt@uef.fi) before the **31st of January 2022**.

Presentations should be no longer than **20 minutes**, followed by 10 to 15 minutes of discussion.

Given the current situation of the Covid-19 pandemic and how it has been developing recently, the workshop will be organised entirely online, yet it will remain relatively small-scale to enable an easy exchange of ideas. We insist that participants engaging themselves in the workshop, will actively participate during the entire event, also because we hope to continue the possible collaboration after the workshop.

This ongoing cooperation will lead to a common **publication**, assembling the results of the workshop as an edited volume in the series “Routledge Advances in Medical Humanities”. We are very happy that we are able to **offer all participants any kind of financial support** (language-editing costs, translation costs, or any other publication costs). These costs are covered by funding from the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (NOS-HS), even though we will have to respect rather strict deadlines in this regard.

Organising committee: Pieter Dhondt, Sari Aalto and Saara-Maija Kontturi (University of Eastern Finland), Jonatan Wistrand (Lund University).

Scientific committee: Sari Aalto (University of Eastern Finland), Pieter Dhondt (University of Eastern Finland), Eivind Engebretsen (University of Oslo), Anne Katrine Kleberg Hansen (University of Copenhagen), Saara-Maija Kontturi (University of Eastern Finland), Peter Nilsson (Lund University) and Jonatan Wistrand (Lund University).

