Guided Critical Reflection Activities for...

AAMC Seminar
“Legacy of Medicine During the Holocaust and its Contemporary Relevance”
AAMC Jan. 27
International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Hedy S. Wald, PhD and Sabine Hildebrandt, MD

hedy_wald@brown.edu  @hedy_wald  (Twitter)
sabine.hildebrandt@childrens.harvard.edu

Reflections Medicine & Holocaust AAMC 2022
Option 1
Close looking:
Reflection with visual art and writing
The Breath...Intention

“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience”
Head of the Medical Student
Picasso, 1907

Source: MOMA, www.moma.org
Όμως ο Άφθονος καὶ Λόκληττος καὶ Υφαίμως καὶ Παυκέης καὶ Θεός ποντίξας τη
κατά πάσας, ἵστορας τοιούτους, ἑπιτελέον τον θείου
κατὰ δύναμιν καὶ κρῖσιν ἐμφεύ ὁ δικὸν τοῦδε καὶ
ὑπογραφὴν τῇ διδάσκαλοι πυτισθαί μὲν τὸν διδαχατα
καὶ τὴν τεκνυ ταὐτὴν ἡγεῖν ἡγεῖτον ἐνοὶς,
καὶ βίαν ὑποστήθαι, καὶ ἡμέραν ἅρπυζοντι
μεταβόσιν τοποθετοῖν. καὶ γενοῦς το ἐν αὐτῶ
ἀδελφαὶ ἐν τῇ κρίνειν ἀρρέα, καὶ διδαχῇ
τῇ τεκνυ ταὐτήν. ἡ χρυσῆς ἡμεῖς ἄνευ,
ἀνεμὸν καὶ συγγραφῆς, παρογελίης τε καὶ
The Refugee
Felix Nussbaum, 1939

Source: Yad Vashem,
ART & REMEMBRANCE: The Legacy of Felix Nussbaum

Self Portrait with Jewish Identity Card - 1943

Felix Nussbaum, 1943

Source: Yad Vashem,
https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/felix-nussbaum.html
Reflect on your experience, including emotional experience of today’s seminar on legacy of the role of medicine during the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance.

1) How does the content relate to your being and becoming a physician? If relevant, discuss how the content relates to any professional experience thus far...

OR

2) Write... (on whatever struck you related to content of today’s seminar)
“Echoes of the Holocaust”

truth in science, resource allocation, lives “worthy” of living?...

What do fairness and justice mean, our ethical obligations within severe times. Moral distress?
“Indifference, for me, is the Epitome of Evil”  Elie Wiesel

Equipped with & Sustaining a Moral Compass for Inevitable Dilemmas/Tensions...

HOW DO YOU LIVE A COMMITMENT TO...

--Science & Truth
--Monitor Competing/Dual Loyalties
--Achieve Appropriate Distance in the Physician-Patient Relationship
--Use Power/Hierarchy Appropriately in Teams, the Physician-Patient Relationship, etc., avoiding abuse of power

--Maintain Humanistic Person-Centered Care & Moral Leadership
--Guard Against Indifference with ETHICAL VIGILANCE
--ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE OTHER
Option 2
Historical case-based written reflections
The Breath...Intention

“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience”
Libertas Haas-Heye & Harro Schulze-Boysen
1935

https://www.dhm.de/emo/bestand/objekt/f71_256
“As a last wish I have asked that my ‘material substance’ be left to you. If possible, bury me in a beautiful place amidst sunny nature.”

last letter to her mother, Libertas Schulze-Boysen
22 December 1942
A letter from Charlotte Pommer, MD who was assistant to Professor Hermann Stieve, Chair of Anatomy Berlin:

“On 22nd of December 1942 eleven men were hanged and five women decapitated. Fifteen minutes later they were laid out on the dissection tables in the anatomical institute.

[She] lay on the first table, [...] on the third table the big lifeless body of her husband [...] 

I felt paralyzed and could hardly assist Professor Stieve, who – as always – carried out his scientific exploration with great care and uncommon diligence [...] 

After the impressions of that night, I resigned from my position.”

(Pommer 1967/1981: Letters to Alexandra von Alvensleben, IFZ ED162)
Hermann Stieve’s research

Chair, Department of Anatomy
University Berlin 1935-1952, not NSDAP member

Dissected several hundred bodies of the executed

- Before 1920: animal research on the influence of the nervous system and stress on the male and female reproductive system
- 1920s: Interpreted the situation of death-row inmates as reflection of his animal experiments (imprisonment and fear of execution as stressors)
  Research on executed men
- from 1935 on executed women: effect of severe psychological trauma on menstruation patterns and morphology of reproductive organs

What role does each individual play in this narrative?
Select one individual from this narrative and write for 3-5 minutes in the first-person from their perspective.

Share with a partner for 10 minutes.
What made you choose the person you wrote about?  
What do you think motivated these three to their behavior?  
What insights or themes came up?
Epilogue

Charlotte Pommer remained the only anatomist who changed her career after encountering the bodies of Nazi victims and became a clinician. She joined the Nazi resistance fighters, was jailed but was able to escape.

After the war she briefly tried once more academic medicine, but then worked for the rest of her life in global non-government medical relief organizations.
Option 3
Collaborative group reflection
The Breath...Intention

“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience”
We can best honor the victims of Nazi doctors by not only documenting the actions of those doctors, but by confronting the conditions of **malignant normality** that produced them.

- Robert Lifton, 2017
Reflecting on the history of perpetrators as well as those who exhibited moral courage/resistors, how might you think about the moral courage you bring to inevitable moral challenges and complexities in the practice of medicine?

Within this, you may wish to consider clinical practice, research, public health policy, and healthcare leadership in general.

How might the history of medicine during the Holocaust inform your advocacy and activism as a healthcare practitioner and/or as a global citizen?
“Formative learning is about socializing students around values; its purpose is to produce professionals. Transformative learning is about developing leadership attributes; its purpose is to produce enlightened change agents.”

(Frenk et al, 2010, Lancet, “Health professionals for a new century: transforming education to strengthen health systems in an interdependent world”)

Reflect on the quote above and how this may resonate with you as a healthcare trainee or professional.

Medical students McDermott et al (2019, JGIM) encourage increasing recognition of a professional role identity as a “change agent” early in medical school. How might we support such initiatives in health professions education and practice?
How does the history of medicine during the Holocaust inform the discourse, moral courage, and ethical actions regarding contemporary medicine in domains such as:

-- informed consent
-- beginning or end of life issues
-- potential abuse of power in the name of science for the public good
-- power hierarchies in medical teams
-- dual loyalties
-- conflicts of interest
-- influence of economic or political issues in our work
-- challenge of genomics and technology expansion
-- balance between societal needs and the rights of the individual
-- balance between scientific advancement (research) and human dignity
-- health inequities
-- societal anti-racism and anti-Semitism efforts

How does this history inform our social contract with society or what has been termed a “covenant” with society?
THANK YOU!

References:


Additional Resources from the “Legacy of Medicine” Seminar

Related articles by Hedy Wald, Phd


Wald, HS. Medicine and the Holocaust in Medical Education. reflectivemeded.


Wald, HS. In the Here and Now. JAMA. 2008; 299(6):613-614.


Wald HS, Rubenfeld S, Fins JJ. Holocaust as End Stage Disease: Medical Education as a Moral Imperative. Hektoen International.
Bibliography, US History of race, racism, anatomy

Compiled by Sabine Hildebrandt, updated 2022

  - Throughout: references to the Holocaust

Barbash, Ilisa; Rogers, Molly; Willis, Deborah. 2020. *To make their own way in the world: the enduring legacy of the Zealy Daguerreotypes*, New York – aperture Peabody Museum Press
  - Chapter 8: Sinha, Manisha: Of scientific racists and Black abolitionists: the forgotten debate over slavery and race

  - Chapter 6: Postmortem: death and ghost values, 148-193


Henderson, Charlotte Yvette; Cardoso, Francisca Alves (eds.). 2018. *Identified skeletal collections: the testing ground of anthropology?* Oxford: Archaeopress
    o P169: impact of structural inequalities [structural violence] on health; Farmer 2004; Bioanthropologists “frame the lived and post-mortem experience of individuals in US-based anatomical collections. This is because the acquisition, autopsy and dissection of individuals for teaching and research was informed by their locations on the social and economic margins of the societies in which they lived.”

Kenny, Stephen:
  - (2016) 'Medical racism’s poison pen: the toxic world of Henry Ramsay,’ Southern Quarterly [special double issue, ‘Health in the South’], vol. 53, no.3 and 4, pp.70-96.

- Chapter 5: historical black superbodies and the medical gaze, 108-123

- Whole book

- Chapter 5: Race Realists – making racism respectable again, pp71 ff

- Chapter 9: Blacks as medical specimens, 281-309; black bodies for research on the living and dead.

- Chapter 18: Abraham Flexner and the Black Medical Schools, 252-266. Before the Flexner report 1910, there were 7 black medical schools. Only Howard and Meharry “survived” Flexner, all others were closed by 1923, p.259.

- Chapter 5: The restless dead: Anatomical dissection and display, 115-142

Wilder, Craig Steven. 2013. Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities

- Comparison of Nazi Germany, India caste system and US racism
CONTENTS

EDITORIAL
313 Race reconciled II: Interpreting and communicating biological variation and race in 2021
Jennifer A. Raff and Connie J. Mulligan

PERSPECTIVES
316 Understanding racism in physical (biological) anthropology
Michael L. Blakey
326 Biological anthropology's critical engagement with genomics, evolution, race/racism, and ourselves: Opportunities and challenges to making a difference in the academy and the world
Agustin Fuentes
339 Historical overview, current research, and emerging bioethical guidelines in researching the New York African burial ground
Carter K. Clinton and Fatimah L. C. Jackson

RESEARCH ARTICLES
350 "[This] system was not made for [you]." A case for decolonial Scientia
Rachel J. Watkins
363 Leveraging genetic ancestry to study health disparities
Ken Batal, Stanley Hooker, and Rick A. Kittles

PERSPECTIVES
376 The constraints of racialization: How classification and valuation hinder scientific research on human variation
Tina Lasisi

RESEARCH ARTICLE
387 How White nationalists mobilize genetics: From genetic ancestry and human biodiversity to counterscience and metapolitics
Aaron Panofsky, Kushan Dasgupta, and Nicole Iturriaga

PERSPECTIVE
399 Systemic racism can get under our skin and into our genes
Connie J. Mulligan

WILEY
RESEARCH ARTICLE

406  Skin deep: The decoupling of genetic admixture levels from phenotypes that differed between source populations
Jaehee Kim, Michael D. Edge, Amy Goldberg, and Noah A. Rosenberg

PERSPECTIVES

422  Uncloaking a Lost Cause: Decolonizing ancestry estimation in the United States
Elizabeth A. DiGangi and Jonathan D. Bethard

437  Skin color and race
Nina G. Jablonski

448  Race, eugenics, and the canceling of great scientists
Adam Rutherford

453  Janus-faced race: Is race biological, social, or mythical?
Adam Hochman

RESEARCH ARTICLES

465  No support for the hereditarian hypothesis of the Black–White achievement gap using polygenic scores and tests for divergent selection
Kevin A. Bird

477  Us and them: From prejudice to racism. An original analysis of race and racism
Evelyne Heyer and Carole Reynaud-Pailgott

486  Use of cranio metric data to facilitate migrant identifications at the United States/Mexico border
M. Katherine Spradley

497  Geographic and temporal diversity in dental morphology reflects a history of admixture, isolation, and drift in African Americans
Jessica M. Gross and Heather J. H. Edgar

NEWS AND VIEWS

506  Tips for scientists writing about race and genetics for the general public
Lizzie Wade

On the cover: Socially diverse multicultural and multiracial people on an isolated white background. Credit: vector_s/Getty Images.