



"Medical ethics deals with transplants and gene therapy, but not with whether I greet you in a friendly enough manner."

**WS 297M : Does the Doctor Know Best?
Debating Medical Ethics with Television's Dr. House M. D.**

Spring 2012

Tu, Th, 9:30 -10:45, Bartlett 202

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"Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of well and in the kingdom of the sick. Although we all prefer to use only the good passport, sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a spell, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place."

Susan Sontag, Illness as Metaphor

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the field of medical ethics using the television show House M. D. In the show, Dr. House is presented as a cantankerous, renegade yet brilliant doctor who constantly defies ethics rules and professional norms; he treats his patients and colleagues with little trust or humanity. And yet, the show presents Dr. House as a deeply intuitive, brilliant doctor who ultimately gets it right. The course examines the show to explore the constructions of doctors and medicine as well as ethical guidelines in the practice of medicine. Using the tools of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, the course investigates the real life practices of doctors and the U.S. health care system. What ethical and professional guidelines do, don't or should doctors follow? The outrageous practices of Dr. House show both the strengths and limitations of strict bureaucratic guidelines, ones that can sometimes get in the way of diagnosis and treatment. Using the show House M. D., this course debates some of the key issues in medical ethics to explore the need for sound ethical principles in the practice of medicine as well as contemporary debates in the field. Some of the issues explored include: the politics of health care, medicalization of childbirth, doctor/patient confidentiality, racial categories in medicine, the binary sex/gender system, disability, genetic testing, abortion, organ transplant, vaccination and more.

II. TEXTS

There is no text book for the course. However, during spring break and the week after, we will read and discuss the following book. We recommend that you buy the book for the course. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot Available at Food for Thought Books in Amherst. Support local business!

Most of the course readings are available on E-reserves and/or Spark as follows:

E-Reserves: Readings are available online through the library electronic reserves. Enter the password: "drhouse." EReserves can be accessed through SPARK as well.

Web Articles: URLs are on the syllabus. All Web Articles will also be accessible through SPARK

SPARK: We will use SPARK throughout the course. Surprise extra credit assignments, news and information will be posted on SPARK. Once you register for the course, you will automatically be added to the course on SPARK. Use your OIT username and password to sign into the course. Please contact OIT if you have any problems.

Medical Ethics in the News! We will email and post on SPARK news stories that pertain to the themes of the class. In addition, you are also required to post articles on the discussion board.

Watching House M. D each week: House M. D. is a current show. We ask that you watch the show House M. D. each week. We will discuss the show during the class.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class involves television clips, course readings as well as systematic debate and dialogue around medical ethics. It is essential that you complete the readings and reflect upon them before coming to class, and be prepared to contribute to the discussion. Every class will focus on the readings assigned for that class as stated in the syllabus. Your attendance and participation are required for the entire session of each class meeting. The format of the class will be primarily a group discussion focused on the themes of the readings. The issues we will be discussing this semester have both academic and personal implications. Throughout the course, we encourage spirited and respectful debate. In order to grapple with this material it is vital that you read the assignments carefully and on time, come to class with questions, opinions, and analyses (agreements and disagreements) -- in other words be prepared to participate in an intellectual debate. Study questions will be distributed regularly to guide your preparation.

GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION: During the semester, we will discuss many issues that deal with the complexities of medical ethics. Sometimes, these debates may get heated. In general, we ask that you approach the discussions with openness, curiosity, and respect. Listen--don't speak for others--don't assume a speaker represents an entire group--practice mutual respect. We hope we can create a climate of engaged and intellectual debate without personal attacks.

ATTENDANCE: Your attendance & participation is **required** for the entire session of each class. More than 3 unexcused absences will reduce your grade by at least one letter grade.

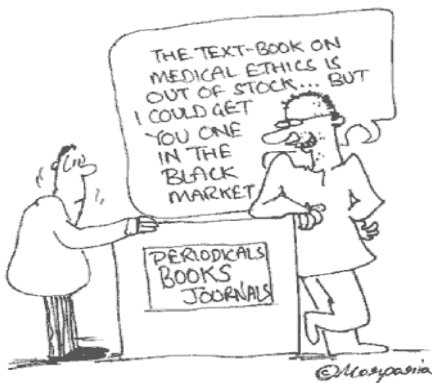
GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS: In your writing for this class, you will be asked to respond to the issues and topics we are studying. We want BOTH your opinion and your analysis based on the readings and the class discussions:

- **In-Class Writing (10%):** We will periodically have brief in class writing assignments based on the readings assigned for the class and the class discussion. Your 2 lowest scores will be dropped.
- **Two Analytic Papers (15% each):** Pick any of the "Medical Ethics in the News" articles posted on SPARK and analyze the article using class readings and discussion. Each paper should be 2-3 pages long (double spaced, standard margins). You must refer to course readings in this paper. Details in class and posted on SPARK. The first analytic paper is due by February 2, and the second by March 29.

- **Final Project (20%):** A final project, 8-10 pages (details in class and SPARK) is due on April 27. The project will require you to do analytic work focusing on the material you have read for this course, rather than doing library research on topics not addressed in class. The paper is due in class on April 24. The paper will count for 20% of your grade and the evaluation 10% of your grade. A topic and brief abstract are due on April 10.
- **Peer Evaluation (10%):** You will exchange your final project paper with someone else in the class and write a 2 page critical reflection on the paper. The original paper and your evaluation of the paper are due in class on May 1.
- **Class Participation (20%):** Class participation (quality not quantity!) counts for 20% of your grade.
- **Medical Ethics in the News (10%):** Three times during the semester, you are required to post a story from the news connecting the world outside the classroom to the course materials during that week on SPARK. The post can be in the form of the following: a short personal experience, a video, a photograph, an article from a magazine or newspaper, a news event, an advertisement, or even a description of an artifact that you want to bring into the discussion. Include a brief explanation/comment. **Do at least one posting and two responses prior to spring break. Each of these posts counts for 2% of your final grade.** You should respond to someone else's posting at least 4 times during the semester; each of your postings counts for 1% of your final grade. More details on SPARK.
- **Extra Credit:** Throughout the semester, we will post events in the five colleges relating to the concepts and ideas of the course. You can attend an event, write a 2 page summary for a 2% extra credit. The summary must be turned in within one week of the event. You can earn up to 6% in extra credits for the semester.

ACCOMMODATION POLICY STATEMENT: The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS) or the Center for Counseling and Psychological Health (CCPH), please notify us within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. Accommodations will not be made after the fact. For more information, please contact Disability Services at: <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC HONESTY: The course will strictly follow the university policy on Academic Honesty: See the University Academic Honesty Policy: http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/



<i>Summary of Final Grade Computation:</i>		
In Class Writing		10%
Response Paper 1 (due by Feb 21)		15%
Response Paper 2 (due by March 29)		15%
Final Project (Abstract, April 10, paper April 24)		20%
Peer Evaluation (due May 1)		10%
SPARK Discussion Board Postings		10%
Class Participation		20%
Extra Credit	<i>up to</i>	6%

IV: SCHEDULE

Week I: Setting the Stage – Feminism, Medicine, and Television

#1 Tuesday, January 24: Introductions & A Discussion of Medical Ethics in the News

#2 Thursday, January 26: *How We Got Here - Change in Medical Practices over Time*

- [E-Reserves] Mark Wicclair, "The Pedagogical Value of House M. D: Can Fictional Unethical Physician Be Used to Teach Ethics?" *American Journal of Bioethics*, 8(12): 16-17, 2008.
- [E-Reserves] Howard Trachtman, "The Medium Is Not the Message," *American Journal of Bioethics*, 8(12): 9-10, 2008.

Week II: Social Construction of Medicine

#3 Tuesday, January 31: *Social Location- Why Race/Gender/Class/Sexuality Matters*

- Video: *In Sickness and in Wealth*
- [E-Reserves] Margaret Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins, "Conceptualizing Race, Class, and Gender." In *Race, Class and Gender*, Margaret Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins eds., 5th edition. Thomson, Wadsworth, 2006: 75-98.
- [E-Reserves] Ronald Munson, "Foundations of Bioethics: Ethical Problems, Moral Principles and Medical Decisions," In *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 739-766.

#4 Thursday, February 2: *Race, Gender and the Practice of Medicine*

- [E-Reserves] Catherine Sartin, "If the End Doesn't Justify the Means, Then What Does?" In *House and Philosophy: Everybody Lies*. Henry Jacoby ed. Wiley, 2009, 164-173.
- [E-Reserves] "A Renewed Call to 'Do No Harm'", *Johns Hopkins Newsletter* October 2011
- [Web] Gardiner Harris, "As Physicians' Jobs Change, So Do their Politics," *NYT*, May 30, 2011.
- [Web] Karen Sibert, "Don't Quit This Day Job," *NYT*, June 11, 2011.

Week III: Normative, Normal and Normality

#5 Tuesday, February 7: *What is Normal?*

- [E-Reserves] Ruth Chadwick and Mairi Levitt, "Genetic Technology: A Threat to Deafness. In *Bioethics: An Anthology*, Helga Huhse and Peter Singer eds., Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies, 2nd ed, 2006, 137-144.
- [Web] Darshan M. Sanghavi, "Wanting Babies Like Themselves, Some Parents Choose Genetic Defects" *NYT*, Dec 5, 2006:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/05/health/05essa.html?scp=1&sq=Wanting%20Babies%20Like%20Hemselves&st=cse>
- [E-Reserves] Kathleen Arnos, "Genetics and Deafness: Impacts on the Deaf community," *Sign Language Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2002, 150-168.

#6 Thursday, February 9: *Disability, and Disability Rights*

- [Web] Harriet McBryde Johnson, "Unspeakable Lives," *NYT*, February 16, 2003:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/16/magazine/unspeakable-conversations.html?sec=health>
- Case Presentation: *Baby Owens: Down Syndrome and Duodenal Atresia*. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 630-639.
- [E-Reserves] Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg, "Enabling Disability: Rewriting Kinship, Reimagining Citizenship," *Public Culture* 13(3), 2001: 533-556

Week IV: Re-Constructions of the Body

#7 Tuesday, February 14: *The Limits of a Binary Sex/Gender/Sexuality System*

- [E-Reserves] Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender," In *Lessons from the Intersexed*, Rutgers University Press, 2002.
- [Web] Jessica Pauline Ogilvie, "The Debate of Circumcising Baby Boys," *LA Times*, July 11, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jul/11/health/la-he-pro-con-circumcision-20110711>
- [E-Reserves] Judith Lorber and Lisa Jean Moore, "Introduction: Key Terms and Issues," In *Gendered Bodies: Feminist Perspectives*. Roxbury, 2007: 1-7.
- Video: 1/2000

#8 Thursday, February 16: *The Limits of a Binary Sex/Gender/Sexuality System*

- Video: *Diagnosing Difference*
- [E-Reserves] [E-Reserves] Dean Spade, "About Purportedly Gendered Body Parts" : <http://www.deanspade.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Purportedly-Gendered-Body-Parts.pdf> and <http://genderqueer.tumblr.com/post/413622885/dean-spade-on-body-modification-and-resistance>
- [Web] The Ethics of Breast Implants: <http://ethicist.www50.a2hosting.com/?p=327>
- [Web] Gynecomastia: <http://www.gynecomastia.org/>
- [Web] Mireya Navarro, "The Most Private of Makeovers," NYT, Nov 28, 2004: <http://www.urogyn.org/articles/TheMostPrivateofMakeovers.pdf>
- [Web] Dean Spade: "Resisting Medicine, Re/Modeling Gender," <http://www.deanspade.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/resisting.pdf>

Week V: Medical Interventions on the Body

#9 Tuesday, February 21:

RESPONSE PAPER #1 DUE BY THIS DATE

- [E-Reserves] Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, "Science and the Ascent of the Experts," In *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of Expert's Advice to Women*. Anchor Press, 1978: 69-98.
- [Web] Andrew Goldman, "Extreme Birth" *New York Magazine*, March 22, 2009: <http://nymag.com/news/features/55500/>
- Video: *The Business of Being Born*

#10 Thursday, February 23: *The Politics of Childbirth: Evolving Practices*

- [E-Reserves] Katherine Beckett, "Choosing Cesarean: Feminism and the politics of childbirth in the United States." *Feminist Theory*. 6, 2005, 251-275.

Week VI: Doctor/Patient Relationship: Confidentiality/Informed Consent/Disclosure

#11 Tuesday, February 28: *The Doctor/Patient Relationship*

Guest Speaker: Kathleen M. McGraw, M.D., Medical Director, Hospital Medicine, Baystate Franklin Medical Center, Greenfield, MA

- [E-Reserves] Walter Glannon, "The Patient- Doctor Relationship," In *Biomedical Ethics*, Oxford University Press, 2005: 23-46.
- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: Stopping Letrozole Trial: A Case of "Ethical Overkill"? In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 29-30.
- [E-Reserves] Renee Kyle, "'You Care for Everybody': Cameron's Ethics of Care," In *House and Philosophy: Everybody Lies*. Henry Jacoby ed. Wiley, 2009, 125-136.
- [Web] Feminist Bioethics: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-bioethics/>

#12 Thursday, March 1: Physicians, Patients and Others

- [Web] Margaret Talbot, "The Placebo Prescription" *New York Times Magazine*, January 9, 2000
<http://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/09/magazine/the-placebo-prescription.html?scp=3&sq=placebo%20knee%20surgery&st=cse&emc=eta1>
- [Web] Simon Wein, "Is House, M.D. Always Right?" *Palliative and Supportive Care*, 7, 2009, 1-2
http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FPAX%2FPAX7_01%2FS1478951509000017a.pdf&code=2e3f5ce4d8757c03d563057d88374391
- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: The Vegan Baby. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 116-117.
- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: The Death of Robyn Twitchell and Christian Science. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 123-125.

Week VII: Abortion/Reproductive; Genetics/Eugenics

#13 Tuesday, March 6: The Morality and Politics of Abortion

- [E-Reserves] Rosalind Petchesky, "Morality and Personhood: A Feminist Perspective." In *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance, and Behavior*, Rose Weitz, ed., Oxford University Press, 1998, 253-269.
- [E-Reserves] Gregory Pence, "The McCaughey Septuplets: God's Will or Human Choice?" In, *Bioethics: An Anthology*, Huhse and Singer eds., Blackwell Phil. Anthologies, 2nd ed, 2006, 87-89.
- [E-Reserves] Monica Casper, "Heroic Moms and Maternal Environments: Pregnant Women on the Final Frontier," In *The Making of the Unborn Patient: A Social Anatomy of Fetal Surgery*, Routledge, 1998, 168-203.

#14 Thursday, March 8: Politics of the Embryo

- [E-Reserves] "Case Presentation: Savior Sibling". In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 389-390
- [E-Reserves] Sally Sheldon and Stephen Wilinson, "Should Selecting Savior Siblings be Banned?" In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th ed, 2008: 416-22.
- [E-Reserves] David King, "Why We Should Not Permit Embryos to be Selected as Tissue Donors," In *Bioethics: An Anthology*, Helga Huhse and Peter Singer eds., Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies, 2nd ed, 2006, 158-161.

Week VIII: Race Based Medicine

#15 Tuesday, March 13: Film Clips: Miss Evers' Boys

- [Web] Shankar Vedantam, "Racial Disparities Found in Pinpointing Mental Illness" *Washington Post*, June 28, 2005:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2005/06/27/AR2005062701496.html?referrer=emailarticle>
- [E-Reserves] Anne Fausto Sterling, "Refashioning Race: DNA and the Politics of Healthcare," *differences*, Volume 15, Number 3, Fall 2004, pp. 1-37.
- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: Bad Blood, Bad Faith: The Tuskegee Syphilis Study. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 212-215.

#16 Thursday, March 15

- [Web] Lundy Braun *et al*, "Racial Categories in Medical Practice: How Useful Are They?" *PLoS Medicine*, Sept 2007, Vol. 4, Issue 9, 1423-1428..
<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.0040271>
- [E-Reserves] Jonathan Kahn, "Ethnic Drugs," In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 241-42

☺ TUESDAY, MARCH 16 – MARCH 18 – SPRING BREAK ☺

Week IX: Gender, Race and Ethics in the Practice of Science

#17 Tuesday, March 27: Book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot

Note: The author Rebecca Skloot will speak at Smith College, Campus Center 106, at 7 pm March 28.

#18 Thursday, March 29: Book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot

RESPONSE PAPER #2 DUE BY THIS DATE

Week X: Genetic Testing

#19 Tuesday, April 3: Preimplantation Genetic Testing

- [E-Reserves] Baruch et al, "Genetic Testing of Embryos: Practices and Perspectives of US IVF clinics," *Fertility and Sterility*, vol 89, no 4, May 2008: 1053-1058.
- [Web] Ruth Hubbard & Stuart Newman, "Yuppie Eugenics," *Z Mag* 2002
<http://www.zcommunications.org/zmag/viewArticle/18020>
- [EReserves] Silja Samerski, "Genetic Counseling and the Fiction of Choice: Taught Self-Determination as a New Technique of Social Engineering." *Signs*, Vol 32, No 4, 2009: 735-761.
- [Web] Ruth Padawer "The Two-Minus-One Pregnancy", *New York Times Magazine*, August 14, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/14/magazine/the-two-minus-one-pregnancy.html?emc=eta1>

#20 Thursday, April 5: Genetic Testing – Adult Onset

- [E-Reserves] "Case Presentation: Huntington's Disease: Genetic Testing and Ethical Dilemmas." In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th ed, 2008: 303-6.
- [Web] Gilbert Welch and Wylie Burke, "What's in Your Genes? You don't want to know – Yet." *Washington Post*, May 11, 2008: <http://www.ashg.org/pdf/newsclip/Washington%20Post%20-%205.11.08.PDF>
- [E-Reserves] Garland Allen, "Science Misapplied: The Eugenics Age Revisited." *Technology Review* 29, Aug/Sep 1996, pp. 23-31.
- [Web] Amy Harmon, "Facing Life with a Lethal Gene," NYT< March 19, 2007:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/18/health/18huntington.html?scp=1&sq=facing%20life%20with%20a%20lethal%20gene&st=cse>

Week XI: Epidemic/Contagion/Public Health/Vaccines

#21 Tuesday, April 10:

ABSTRACT OF FINAL PROJECT DUE

- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: The Willowbrook Hepatitis Experiments. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 38-39; 44-51.
- [Web]"Refuse Vaccines and Risk Dismal by Doctor," Anita Manning, USA Today, updated 11/14/11. <http://yourlife.usatoday.com/health/story/2011-11-14/Refuse-vaccines-and-risk-dismissal-by-doctor/51204016/1>
- [E-Reserves] Symposium, Liability for Exercising Personal Belief Exemptions from Vaccination, *Michigan Law Review First Impression*, January 2009, Vol. 107:90-114.

#22 Thursday, April 12: HPV:

- [E-Reserves] James Colgrove, "Ethics and Politics of Compulsory HPV Vaccines," *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dec 7, 2006, 2389-2391.
- [E-Reserves] Laura Carpenter and Monica Casper, "A Tale of Two Technologies: HPV Vaccination, Male Circumcision, and Sexual Health," *Gender and Society*, vol. 23, No. 6, December 2009, 790-816.

Week XII: Organs and Transplantation

No class Tuesday, April 17, Monday schedule

#23 Thursday, April 19: Organ Transplants

- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: The Prisoner Who Needed a Heart. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th edition, 2008: 455-456.
- [E-Reserves] Mark Kuczewski, "The Gift of Life and Starfish on the Beach: The Ethics of Organ Procurement," *American Journal of Bioethics*, Vol 2, No 3, Summer 2002, 53-55.
- [Web] Anne Griffin, "Iranian Organ Donation, Kidneys On Demand" *British Medical Journal*, March 10, 2007. <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/reprint/334/7592/502?eaf>
- [Spark] Ronald Munson, *Intervention and Reflection*, 9th Edition, "Did Steve Jobs Cheat" case presentation, page 621-23
- [Web] Ronald Munson, "The Donors Right To Take A Risk," *New York Times*, January 29, 2002. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/19/opinion/the-donor-s-right-to-take-a-risk.html?scp=1&sq=The%20Donor%27s%20Right%20to%20take%20a%20risk&st=cse>

Week XIII: Politics of HealthCare

#24 Tuesday, April 24:

FINAL PROJECT PAPER DUE

Guest: Dr. Jonathan S. Klate, Licensed Acupuncturist; practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine

- [E-Reserves] Wendy Kline, "Please Include This in Your Book: Readers Respond to Our Bodies, Ourselves," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 79: 2005, 81-110.
- [E-Reserves] Mathew Wynia, "The Short History and Tenuous Future of Medical Professionalism: The Erosion of Medicine's Social Contract." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, Volume 51, Number 4, Autumn 2008, pp. 565-578

#25 Thursday, April 26: Accessible Health Care:

- [E-Reserves] Case Presentation: Robert Ingram: Dilemma of the Working Poor. In Ronald Munson's *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 8th ed, 2008: 510-11.
- [E-Reserves] Peter Singer, "Why we must ration health care," July 15, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/19/magazine/19healthcare-t.html?_r=3&hpw
- [Web] Theresa Brown, "Physician, Heel Thyself," NYT, May 7, 2011

Week XIV: Wrap Up and Conclusion

#26 Tuesday, May 1: Conclusion and Summary

FINAL PAPER & PEER EVALUATIONS DUE