

Health/Medical Humanities: Investigating New Avenues While Staying Grounded In Clinical Practice

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Health/Medical humanities must be evaluated within the context of the ongoing medical crisis and the pervasive issue of dehumanization in healthcare. A critical examination of the history of medical/ health humanities prompts us to ask: Can interdisciplinary approaches between the humanities and medicine truly mitigate dehumanization? This fundamental inquiry is poised to become a central focus within the field of medical humanities.

Health/ Medical humanities must strike a delicate balance between practical clinical experience and a deep understanding of the theoretical foundations of medicine. An overemphasis on either aspect can lead to a divergence from the field's core mission of improving patient care and promoting community health. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the dangers of prioritizing clinical medicine and individual health over broader public health concerns. Medical humanities should therefore dedicate equal attention to both individual and public health, a balance that has been historically overlooked.

A significant threat to health/ medical humanities is the prevalence of dilettantism among healthcare professionals who engage with literature, art, and philosophy superficially as a hobby. While these individuals may have the potential to be receptive to medical humanities and its application in patient care, if the field is reduced to such casual pursuits, its impact will be limited.

Introducing medical humanities into physicians' and other healthcare providers' continuing education reframes health humanities as a form of self-care for medical professionals, rather than solely a tool for medical critique. Additionally, the relationship between health humanities and clinical reasoning is significant. The link to health journalism and communication is essential for the effective dissemination of

health/ medical humanities.

Several years ago, when Farzad Goli, Karl Schaidt, and I spent developing the idea of International Journal Mind, Body, and Culture, we intentionally focused on health humanities as a key area of the journal. It is immensely gratifying that Scopus has recently recognized this journal's contributions to the field by assigning a Q2 ranking for health humanities articles. To further solidify our position as a leading journal in this area, it is essential that we prioritize research from underrepresented domains within health humanities, which are briefly mentioned in this editorial.

Conflict of Interests

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