

# THE WATERMARK



Newsletter of the Librarians, Archivists  
& Museum Professionals in the History  
of the Health Sciences



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## Submissions For the Watermark

The Watermark encourages submissions of news and stories about events, collections, catalogues, people, awards, grants, publications, and anything else of professional interest to the members of LAMPHHS. Please submit your contributions in a timely way to the editors, as e-mail attachments. Visuals should be submitted separately as jpegs with a resolution of at least 300 dpi if possible. Copyright clearance for content and visuals are the responsibility of the author.

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## Cover Image

Photographs by Stéphan Ballard. Clockwise:  
Osleriana, Osler Library of the History of Medicine,  
McGill University, 2023  
Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library,  
Yale University, 2024  
The "All Star" operation, Johns Hopkins Hospital,  
1904, From the Medical Historical Library, Harvey  
Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale  
University  
Dr. Jeffery Alan Hall, Robot-assisted neurosurgery,  
Stereotactic insertion of depth electrodes, The  
Montreal Neurological Institute, 2024

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## Editor's Message

Happy Fall LAMPHHS Members!

October marks two big celebrations for many of our members: National Archives Month & National Medical Librarians Month! We as LAMPHHS members know how important our repositories and collections are in the history of medicine; October is our month to really showcase and celebrate our work. The editing team hopes these October celebrations are inspiring for you and we invite members to share stories and recaps of any successful celebratory events with *The Watermark*.

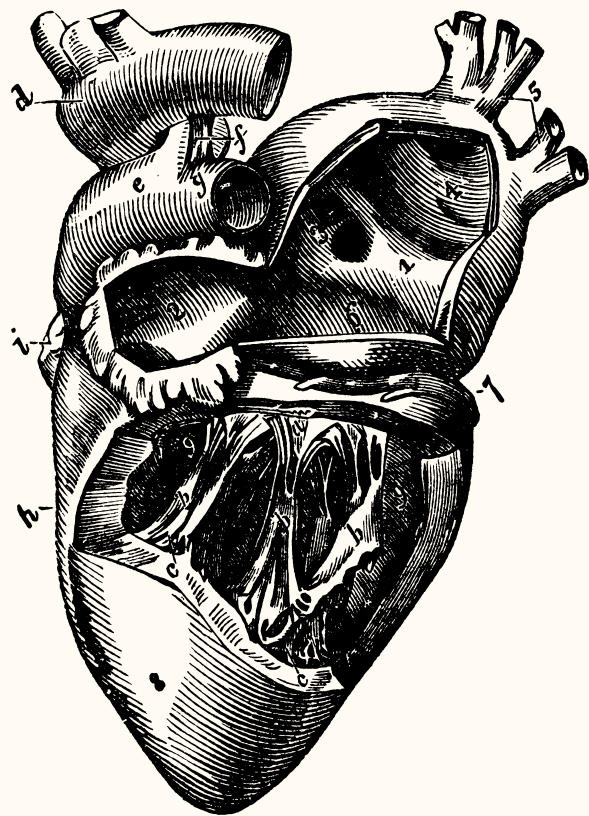
This issue features a repository profile from the Lilly Library at Indiana University, Bloomington as well as a unique reflection on the Cushing and Osler Libraries from a former Osler Library Artist-in-Resident and Fellow for the Study of Medical Photographic History. This issue also includes a highlight on a new Special Collections Registry for finding aids at Ohio State's Medical Heritage Center.

Finally, the editors would once again like to thank Stephen Greenberg for his photographs from the 2025 meeting that were featured in the Summer 2025 issue. Stephen has performed the duties of unofficial LAMPHHS photographer for years and we could not capture the history of the meetings without his help.

We hope you enjoy this Fall issue!

Sincerely,

Bob Vietrogoski  
and Tara Wink



*Left Side of the Heart by Vintage Illustration, Canva.*

## From the President

Autumnal Greetings!

Although the weather remains summer-like, pumpkin-spice lattes, Halloween decorations, and the NFL season are in full swing; Fall is just around the corner. And, with the change of seasons comes a new semester. Here at the University at Buffalo, the students have returned to campus bringing with them renewed energy and enthusiasm. As I work with these students, I am reminded just how lucky I am to be able to introduce eager minds to the history of the health sciences, to the varied resources in my collection, to educate and (hopefully) inspire forthcoming professionals interested in history, art, medicine, etc.

On a similar inspiring note, just last week, I had the opportunity to travel to Ingolstadt, Germany for the International Association of Medical Museums and Collections (IAMMC) conference, the theme: “Material Matters.” Hosted by Dr. Marion Maria Ruisinger of the Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum, it was an incredible experience. I relished the opportunity to meet and learn with a global group of colleagues hailing from Europe, Africa, North America, and Australia. In fact, Shelley McKellar, who also attended, and I are planning to develop a piece for the *Watermark* to provide a glimpse into the week. We’ll be filling you in soon on some of the highlights!



*Our Fearless Leader*

Very much like our own organization, the IAMMC serves as a nexus for those working in special collections and museums. However, unlike our own, it is in the early stages of its development, working towards incorporation, the filling of key cabinet positions, etc. All of which made me consider how lucky we are as a well-established organization with generations of connections among our institutions and those in charge of their day-to-day functioning. Things like the planning and implementation of conferences or identifying committee members and volunteers for key leadership positions just seem to flow in organizations like ours. They do, however, still take an incredible amount of effort. Collegial bonds and goodwill may inspire members to devote their time to our organization’s needs, but it is the hard work and dedication of each volunteer that makes our endeavors such a success!

For all that you do as members of LAMPHHS, a hearty thanks! Wishing you a wonderful autumn!

**Keith C. Mages**  
LAMPHHS President



*The Lilly Library, on the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana*

## Repository Profile: The Lilly Library

The Lilly Library is the rare books and special collections library on the campus of Indiana University, Bloomington. The library is named for the Lilly family of Indianapolis and for Josiah Kirby Lilly Jr. (1893-1966), who donated his magnificent collection of approximately 20,000 rare books and 18,000 pieces of manuscript to IU in the late 1950s. J.K. Lilly Jr. was the grandson of Colonel Eli Lilly and served as the president of Eli Lilly & Company from 1948 until 1953. He remained chairman of the board of directors for the firm until his death in 1966. Under the visionary direction of

former university president and chancellor Herman B. Wells, the library opened its doors in 1960.

When J.K. Lilly Jr. turned his focus to science and medicine in the 1940s, he modeled his collection after the library of the Royal College of Surgeons, which he considered “the best of its kind in this country.” Mr. Lilly wanted to assemble a collection that told a complete story as he worked to acquire both major and minor works in these areas. His scientific collection ultimately totaled approximately 500 volumes that spanned five centuries.

Since 1960, the collection has grown significantly. The Lilly Library is now

home to over 500,000 rare books and more than 8.5 million manuscripts. In addition to the extensive holdings in the history of medicine, the library's strengths are myriad, including world-renowned collections of British and American literature, Latin Americana, children's books, incunabula, medieval manuscripts, comic books, and much more.

### Collection Highlights

The Lilly Library upholds a commitment to access, welcoming users from all over the world. Although IU students, faculty, and staff are frequent visitors to the reading room, anyone and everyone is encouraged to make an appointment. The library's unofficial motto continues to be "everyone is special enough for special collections."

Visitors to the Lilly Library's reading room may request to peruse some of the greatest bibliographic landmarks in the history of medicine, including Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543), Harvey's *De Motu Cordis* (1628), Gersdorff's *Feldbuch der Wundarzney* (1517), and a copy of John Snow's *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera* (1849) complete with the author's inscription. These notable volumes are just the beginning of a collection that includes thousands of books, manuscripts, and objects.

The Lilly Library also holds one of the finest collections of printed



The first printed image of an amputation from Hans von Gersdorff's *Feldbuch der Wundarzney* (1517).

historical dermatological materials. Dr. Rebecca Bushong and Dr. Charles Beasley donated their collection to the library in 2008, which continues to grow. The inaugural Silver-Norman Curator of Dermatology, General Medicine, and Science joined the library in 2024. This position, generously endowed by the Bushong-Beasleys, ensures that dermatology as well as the broader disciplines of medicine and science remain a priority when it comes to research, teaching, and collecting for years to come. The curator represented the Lilly in March of 2025 at the annual meeting of the History of Dermatology Society in Orlando, Florida where

attendees were delighted to learn about the library's holdings of major bibliographic works in dermatology by Girolamo Mercuriale, Anne-Charles Lorry, Daniel Turner, Robert Willan, Thomas Bateman, Jean Louis Alibert, and Ferdinand Ritter van Hebra, to name only a few. A striking chromolithograph plate from van Hebra's *Atlas der Hautkrankheiten* is currently on exhibit in the Lilly Library's South Gallery as part of an exhibition titled *The Big Picture: Great Moments in Document(ed) History*.

Notable recent acquisitions include:

- Two early works by the Haitian physician François Fournier-Pescay (1771-1833), the first person of color to have practiced medicine and surgery in Europe.
- Tibetan anatomical drawings depicting bloodletting and moxa points on the body.
- A small yet remarkable archive of manuscript material and original watercolors made by French physician and anatomist Pierre François Olive Rayer (1793-1867).

## Reference

The Lilly Library's Teaching and Research department fields from 50 to 100 reference questions per week, tackling bibliographic and archival inquiries on all manner of subjects. Users often decide to take advantage of on-demand photoduplication services through the library's digitization department.



*The Silver-Norman Curator of Dermatology, General Medicine, and Science shows the 1543 Vesalius to a group of MBA students from the Kelley School of Business.*

## Teaching and Outreach

Approximately 100 class sessions convene at the Lilly Library each semester. These include both library science courses that meet weekly at the library and one-off class sessions during which IU instructors bring their students to work with primary source materials related to their coursework.

Lilly librarians use the library's medical books and other historical medical materials when teaching students in the health sciences as well as for classes focusing on studio art, book history, the history of science, informatics, art history, global and international studies, and



*Dr. Erin Welsh and Dr. Erin Allman-Updyke, hosts of This Podcast Will Kill You, exclaim with excitement upon seeing Die Aetiologie, der Begriff und die Prophylaxis des Kindbettfiebers (1861) by Ignaz Semmelweis*

medieval studies. Through these kinds of sessions, hundreds of IU undergraduate and graduate students learn from these materials each year.

The library also regularly hosts events, including the annual Ruth C. Engs Lecture on Public Health. This lecture series was paused for several years while the library was closed for a major renovation and for the COVID-19 pandemic, but 2025 saw its successful return. In March 2025, the library welcomed speakers Dr. Erin Welsh and Dr. Erin Allan-Updyke, hosts of the

popular epidemiology podcast, *This Podcast Will Kill You*. The Erins, as they call themselves, spoke about their approach to science communication and the role that primary source materials play in their work. The event also featured a pop-up exhibition of library materials related to public health, including manuscript letters from Benjamin Waterhouse and Benjamin Rush concerning disease outbreaks and inoculation efforts, a 1473 xylographic plague sheet, and disinfected postcards sent by patients residing in tuberculosis sanatoriums.

## Exhibitions

As part of the 2020-2021 building renovation, the Lilly Library installed new exhibition cases in both its North and South Galleries. These new cases present more options for engaging and dynamic exhibition layouts and accommodate larger numbers of materials in general.

The current exhibition in the North Gallery, which will remain installed through December 2025, is titled



*Museum Exhibition Specialist, Jenny Mack, works on exhibit installation for Love in the Library (2024).*

*The Lilly Legacy and Collecting for the Curious: The Lilly Library Today and Tomorrow.* This bipartite exhibition examines J.K. Lilly Jr.'s foundational collecting strategies and priorities as well as acquisitions from the last decade that highlight new goals for teaching and research. One of the cases highlights new acquisitions in science and medicine, featuring a manuscript in Japanese and Chinese on tongue diagnosis and an exquisite 1626 copy of Augustinus Wichmans's *Apotheca Spiritualium Pharmacorum Contra Luem Contagiosam Aliosque Morbos* in a blind-tooled calf binding. The latter is just one example of the many materials in the collection that provide opportunities for collaboration between the new Silver-Norman Curator of Dermatology, General Medicine, and Science and the new Curator of Religious Collections.



Robert Willan's *On Vaccine Inoculation* (1806) on display for the 2025 Ruth C. Eng's Lecture on Public Health

Past exhibitions featuring highlights from the Lilly Library's historical medicine collections include *Medicine: An Exhibition of Books Relating to Medicine and Surgery from the Collection formed by J. K. Lilly* (1966), *Notable Medical Books From The Lilly Library, Indiana University* (1976), *Une Affaire de Gout: A Selection of Cookbooks, 1475 to 1873, from the Library of Dr. and Mrs. John Talbot Gernon* (1983), and *Visualizing Disease* (2013). An upcoming exhibition on public health and quack medicine is planned for 2028.

For questions or help accessing the collections, email Erin Chiparo at [echiparo@iu.edu](mailto:echiparo@iu.edu) or contact the reference department at [liblilly@iu.edu](mailto:liblilly@iu.edu).

**Erin Chiparo**

Silver-Norman Curator of Dermatology, General Medicine, and Science  
The Lilly Library  
Indiana University Bloomington



*Osleriana, Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, 2023  
Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University, 2024*

## The Pristine and Time Machines: A Reflection on A Full Circle Creative Process at Yale and McGill Residencies

*Editor's Note: The following piece reflects on the creation of a photo book celebrating the field of Surgery, which took the author to both the Cushing and Osler Libraries.*

As I journeyed back through the Adirondack Mountains, I reflected on my path to Yale, the Cushing Medical Historical Library, and the fortunate opportunity of the Stanley B. Burns, MD Fellowship for the Study of Medical Photographic History.

Before this journey, the Michèle Larose-Osler Library artist residency deepened my knowledge of historical medicine through access to the esteemed books of the Osler Library.

Osler and Cushing's legacy provided opportunities that further nurtured my book project, *Operating Theater*, a photographic tribute to the intimate and transformative space of surgical practice, where I witnessed and photographed surgeons' precise, life-changing work.

Still imbued with the in-situ experience of both libraries, I felt a visceral connection between Harvey Cushing and William Osler. The story goes that young Cushing was mentored by Osler into a love of books and a mission to leave a library as a legacy for the new generation of medical students.

Just as the Osler Library came together after Sir William Osler's death, Yale's Medical Historical Library was built after Cushing's passing. The great neurosurgeon's presence was strongly felt in his reconstructed office within this grandiose setting. Discreetly accessible behind a side door, one

will discover, through the alchemy of his personal belongings—his famous Wanderjahr notebooks, framed pictures, and memorabilia—that what Osler would quote, “To be in sympathetic touch with these friends of the spirit” is here truly manifest.

Having the fortunate chance to walk and feel both places, the experience of being on site feels as if the space between the libraries is fused like conjoined twins, as if there is a secret portal behind a bookshelf that would permit you to be back in Montreal in a matter of a step or two.

Of course, I've taken the car back home, needing time to think. Traveling through the scenic landscapes provided a tangible perspective on the vast influence of these two men.

Also, thinking of the project, *Operating Theater*, about its value. A surgical operating theatre was, first, by all means, a public or a

semi-public space, akin to a university lecture hall. A place of social knowledge and progress that steadily, in stages, disappeared and was replaced by a video feed.

So, what was lost in translation? Part of the answer is the physical presence of the viewer. To bear witness through one's cognition of the paradoxes of the operative experience. For example, to feel the vertigo created by the overwhelming technological presence of hyper tools, which equally celebrates our ingenuity and initial limitation.

In the operating room, my first impression on the macro scale was the beauty of the team's body posture and synchronized choreography. The view of this dance, led by an invisible partner and moving to an inaudible hymn, provoked a sense of awe that ignited the project—a harmony explained by the in-sync movements of a well-learned procedural algorithm.

Secondly, at the micro-scale,



*The “All Star” operation, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1904, From the Medical Historical Library, Harvey Cushing / John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University*  
*Dr. Jeffery Alan Hall, Robot-assisted neurosurgery, Stereotactic insertion of depth electrodes, The Montreal Neurological Institute, 2024*

assisted with surgical loupes, you would witness the dance of a duo, trio, or quintet of surgeons' hands working in perfect symbiosis.

The photograph, composition, and post-technique would reveal to the viewer this harmony at play; however, since the operating theater has disappeared, I'll share some personal insights about being at ground zero. It's something you can't see but can feel. Accurately recalled from my on-site experience, it guides my choices of color, shape, and form. It animates and permeates the entire project. This unifying scent flows through the images.

I named it "the pristine." It originates from the sum of all parts among the team. It is a tangible density, an atemporal high-pitched intellectual frequency, exposed to all near the opening of the body. One sympathetic effect, whatever your role, is to push yourself to the edge of your capabilities. It commands you to be nothing less than your best.

But there's something more. It is said that passing through the vortex of time is beyond what we can feel. The operating theater offers a unique point of view on this topic. My perception of tempo starts with my preparation, which is almost ritualistic before an operation. I verify all the camera equipment, lenses, filters, parameters, and more. I call it the "rush," while others refer to it as preparation for

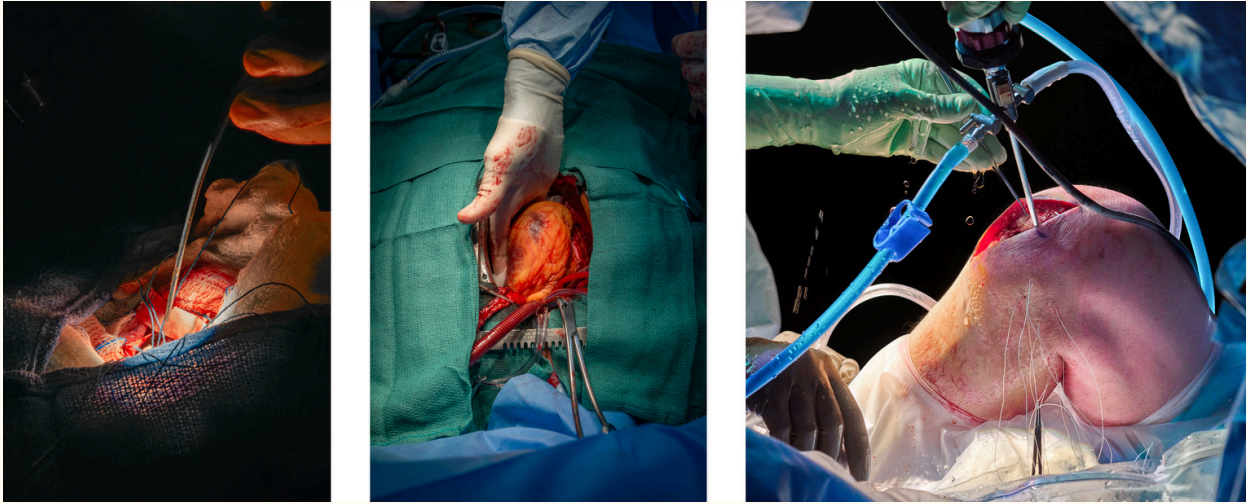
the state of "Flow" or eustress – a beautiful word that translates to positive stress. So far, the average of 300 pictures per hour during a 5-hour intervention dictates my purchase of memory cards, which still holds up.

Exposure to the opening of a human body creates a perceptual shift in space as it unfolds, which equally affects our perception of time, perhaps by an inescapable sympathetic relation to our own body as it witnesses what is naturally hidden. But there is an interesting detail about this in vivo phenomenon.

A surprise awaited me after completing orthopedics, cardiology, and neurosurgery. Although the surgeries lasted around five hours each, my perception of time varied significantly depending on the type of surgery. Time dilation was in full effect, with an approximate ratio of 1:1 for orthopedics, 1:2 for cardiology, and 1:4 for neurology. In short, brain surgery felt like it was finished almost as soon as it started compared to orthopedics!

Unseen yet felt, the revolving team around the opening is affected by a new clock, which follows a unique rhythmic pattern produced by each organ — from bones to the heart to the brain — establishing its own time zone in harmony with the Pythagorean ratio.

In sum, do our organs generate time? Have we opened a time



*Dr. Kevin Petrecca, neurosurgery; Dr. Yoan Lamarche, cardiac surgery; Dr. Marie-Lyne Nault, orthopedic surgery*

machine? Food for thought, now let's zoom out.

43,800 days

Through Osler's legacy, I've been introduced to the history of medicine and our modern lineage from Johns Hopkins Hospital, with Osler being one of the founding fathers.

Through Cushing's legacy, my time as a fellow at Yale, studying their vast collection of historical medical photography, allowed me to encounter a synchronistic moment: immortalized on a silver print was a surgeon with a particularly expressive body posture, stretching forward to receive a tool.

I realized later that it was part of a famous photo session celebrating the opening of the new operating room at Johns Hopkins, featuring the All-Star team: Halsted, Finney, Cushing, and Young.

Wilder Penfield later trained under

Cushing at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital and the Neurological Institute of New York, where he began his groundbreaking work in neurosurgery.

The same expressive body posture stretching forward to receive a tool coincides with a picture taken 43,800 days later, from October 1904 to October 2024, at a photo session of a neurological intervention by Dr. Hall and his team at the historical operating room designed by Penfield at the hospital he founded, the Montreal Neurological Institute, commonly referred to as "The Neuro."

Juxtaposing the two synchronistic photographs that show the same overlapping gesture through time highlights the continuous dance of progress passed down from the pioneers of modern medicine: Osler, Cushing, and Penfield, from Johns Hopkins to the Montreal Neurological Institute.

As the surgeons' hands move closer to the center, time stands still; past, present, and future unite; well and alive, "the pristine" remains the same.

### **Stéphan Ballard**

Stanley B. Burns MD Fellowship for the Study of Medical Photographic History, 2024

Michele Larose – Osler Library Artist-in-Residence, 2023

## **Finding Aid Project Increases Access to Medical Heritage Center Collections**

Over the course of 2024 and 2025, the [Medical Heritage Center of The Ohio State University Health Sciences Library](#) has worked to publish updated and new finding aids for archival collections online in The Ohio State University Libraries [Special Collections Registry](#). We started the project with 42 finding aids online and now have over 300 finding aids published. This represents most of our archival collections. The Registry is a database of archival collections found in special collections and archives across the Ohio State campus. To see only the Medical Heritage Center's finding aids, scroll down to our icon on the bottom of the page and click on "[Browse Collections](#)." The browsing list provides the title and unique identification number for each collection. Collections are listed in numerical order by their

identification numbers. The search function at the top of the page searches words in the titles of collections.

An exciting feature of the Special Collections Registry is that it can connect related archival collections located in different repositories on the Ohio State campus. For example, a physician that was also an Ohio State professor or administrator may be represented in both the Center's collections and the [Ohio State University Archives](#). Medical facilities, such as [The James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute](#), can also have historical records in multiple places. To search finding aids for related collections, look in the upper right-hand corner of the Registry's main page and click on "[View All Collections](#)." Like the browse and search page for the Medical Heritage Center's collections, the search box is at the top with the collections listed below.

A significant group of finding aids that are now online as part of this project are records of the COVID-19 global pandemic from March 2020 through May 2023. When the COVID-19 virus began spreading around the globe, the Medical Heritage Center staff realized the situation was rapidly evolving and records of the pandemic that were largely born-digital were in danger of being lost if they did not quickly and proactively begin collecting documentation. They started to save emails, newsletters, policy documents and press releases that

recorded how The Ohio State University and the Wexner Medical Center changed operating procedures to limit spread of the virus, continue education and treat patients. This material now comprises [The Medical Heritage Center's Ohio State University COVID-19 Records](#).



*Unopened package of face masks that The Ohio State University Health Sciences Library received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; part of the Medical Heritage Center's COVID-19 Mask Collection.*

Medical Heritage Center staff also recognized that individual people and communities had widely different experiences of the pandemic. Three collections record these varied experiences, including the COVID-19 Community Collection, COVID-19 Project Collection, and the Voices in Humanism Collection.

The Medical Heritage Center's [COVID-19 Community Collection](#) is comprised of essays, photographs, poems, and artwork created by people to share their thoughts, feelings, and how their lives changed as a result of the pandemic. This archive also contains a survey of over 700

anonymous, self-selected individuals collected by Center staff. Questions included basic information about survey participants and open-ended questions about their lives during the pandemic.

The [COVID-19 Project Collection](#) was created by a photographer in Delaware, Ohio to record events as they unfolded in her town. She captured images of the largely closed town, how services adapted, and a series of "Front Porch Portraits" depicting Delaware families who found themselves at home gathered on their porches.

The Medical Heritage Center staff collaborated with The Ohio State University College of Medicine to create the [Voices in Humanism Collection](#). [Voices collected visual artwork and writing created by members of the Ohio State health care community](#). Medical Heritage Center curator Kristin Rodgers shared many submissions through the Center's [Historical Reflections blog](#).

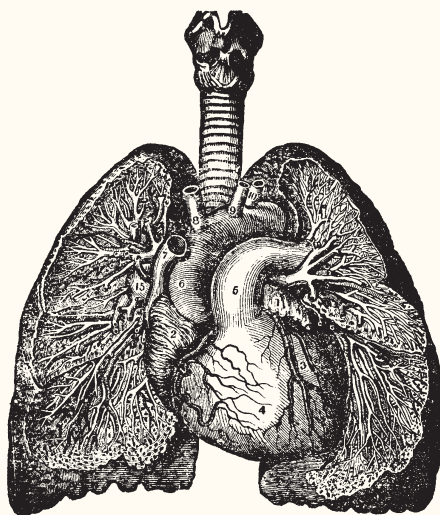
Two COVID-19 pandemic related collections that include physical materials are the [Medical Student Portrait Collection](#) and the [COVID-19 Mask Collection](#). The Portrait Collection is a series of medical students captured by artists and fellow medical students Elizabeth Auckley and Phillip Anjum during the pandemic. The mask collection contains a variety of child and adult size masks, including an unopened package of white cloth masks that

the Health Sciences Library received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The label on the package states, “Do Your Part: Help Stop the Spread.”

We hope you will have the opportunity to visit the Special Collections Registry to review the finding aids for the Medical Heritage Center’s COVID-19 related collections and the many others that have been recently updated or published. New and updated finding aids will be added to the [Special Collections Registry](#), so bookmark this page and check in now and then. If you have questions or would like to use Medical Heritage Center collections, please contact curator Kristin Rodgers at [mhcmal@osumc.edu](mailto:mhcmal@osumc.edu).

### Lisa Wood

Archivist  
Medical Heritage Center  
The Ohio State University



*Bronchia and Veins of the Lungs by  
Vintage Illustrations, Canva.*



## News from the National Library of Medicine

Become a guest author on [Circulating Now](#).

Are you undertaking and/or have you completed historical research in NLM’s collections? Would you like to share it freely with a wide audience? Featured in the [Washington Post](#), *Circulating Now* circulates widely to its subscriber base of nearly 6,000 individuals, so your contribution will be widely read and appreciated! If you would like to write about your research in our collections, please send an email proposing your topic to Beth Mullen, managing editor, at [elizabeth.mullen@nih.gov](mailto:elizabeth.mullen@nih.gov). If you do not already subscribe to *Circulating Now*, please do—just look for the “Follow us via email” box on the right-side of the [homepage](#).

## Chicago Area Medical Archivists Medical History Symposium (Hybrid)

Join the Chicago Area Medical Archivists (CAMA) for the annual medical history symposium on Thursday, November 13

from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm (Central Time), hosted at the International Museum of Surgical Science, 1524 N. Lake Shore Drive in Chicago, Illinois. The symposium will again be offered in a hybrid format.

Since October 2002, CAMA has sponsored a medical history symposium on topics related to medical history in the Chicago area. Past symposia have featured institutional exhibits; roundtable discussions; facility tours; and presentations by archivists, librarians, physicians, and nurses.

Programs are deposited in the institutional repository, Prism: [Search Chicago Area Medical Archivists](#) (CAMA). View the programs from the first twenty years (2002-2022) in the [Internet Archive](#).

Registration: [2025 Chicago Area Medical Archivists \(CAMA\) Medical History Symposium Registration](#)

Event details will follow via email, including program information/schedule and zoom link.

Questions? Contact Kelly Reiss at [kelly.reiss@rosalindfranklin.edu](mailto:kelly.reiss@rosalindfranklin.edu).

## **W. Bruce Fye Medical History Research Travel Grant**

The W. Bruce Fye Center for the History of Medicine is pleased to announce its annual W. Bruce Fye Medical History Research Travel Grant.

The grant is available to physicians, historians, medical students, graduate students, faculty members, and independent scholars who wish to use archival and library resources at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The grant (up to \$1,500 in one calendar year) may be used for transportation, lodging, food, and incidental expenses relating to the research project. It is available to residents of the United States and Canada who live more than 75 miles from Rochester.

The W. Bruce Fye Center for the History of Medicine houses archival collections that contain official records of the Clinic and its administrative offices, official and unofficial publications, departmental annual reports, committee minutes, photographic and moving images, sound recordings, personal papers, and memorabilia relating to the Mayo Clinic, its mission, programs, and people.

To search our archival holdings, please visit the [Mayo Archives Explorer \(MAX\)](#).

The W. Bruce Fye History of Medicine Library is a specialized library housing important collections in the history of medicine and allied sciences. Several thousand volumes of rare medical classics (from 1479) and early journal literature (from 1665) comprise the core collection of primary literature on all aspects of medicine and allied fields. More recently published histories, biographies, facsimiles, and other

support materials comprise the remainder of the collection of some 23,000 total volumes. Special strengths include anesthesiology, cardiology, dermatology, immunology, ophthalmology and neurology. The library also has a large collection of Mayo physician bound reprints. To search the library catalog, please visit our [library website](#).

Applicants should send by e-mail as attachments the items listed below to Dr. Heather Stecklein:

- Abstract of your project (250 words) stating the general scope and purpose
- How historical resources at Mayo Clinic will further your research
- Abbreviated curriculum vitae (3 pages or less)
- One letter of reference that includes comments on your project

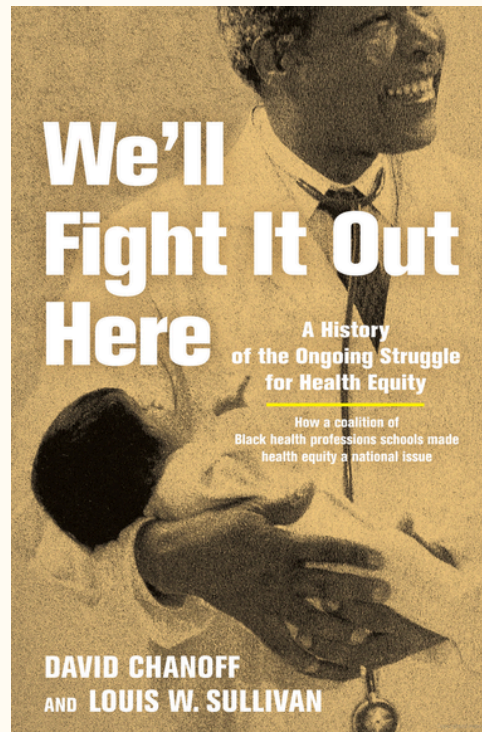
Timeline for 2025 grant:

- Application deadline (all materials): November 1, 2025
- Successful applicant(s) will be notified by December 31, 2025
- Visit(s) to Rochester must be completed by December 15, 2026

### Contact information:

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of Medicine  
Mayo Clinic Archives  
(507) 266-5185  
[stecklein.heather@mayo.edu](mailto:stecklein.heather@mayo.edu)

## Book Reviews



David Chanoff and Louis W. Sullivan. *We'll Fight It Out Here: A History of the Ongoing Struggle for Health Equity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022. 280 pages. \$24.95. ISBN: 9781421444642

As the subtitle of *We'll Fight It Out Here: A History of the Ongoing Struggle for Health Equity* indicates, health care for Black patients in America remains inequitable. However, David Chanoff and Louis W. Sullivan remind readers that inspiration can be found by looking to the hard-won triumphs of the past.

The American healthcare system has been a pivotal battleground for racial justice. An overarching theme of *We'll Fight It Out Here* is that America is a nation of lofty principles, but one that has rarely

followed through with equal opportunity for all. Sullivan, a former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and founding dean of the Morehouse School of Medicine, and Chanoff, a distinguished author in his own right, detail the ugly history of health disparities in the United States and explain how the fight for health equity has transformed the fields of medicine, education, and law. Central to this history is the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools (AMHPS). The AMHPS, an extant coalition of historically Black medical, dental, pharmacy, and veterinary schools, was established in 1976.

Though the AMHPS was founded much later, *We'll Fight It Out Here* begins in the 18th century with the story of Primus Manumit, a freed slave and physician, and ends in the 2020s with the aftershocks of COVID-19 and the murder of George Floyd. With this long breadth of historic moments in America, Chanoff and Sullivan succeed in writing an organizational history that is relevant outside of the organization, a common pitfall of the genre.

The tone of *We'll Fight It Out Here* is generally optimistic, but the story is not a steady upward climb of progress. Rather, it is filled with setbacks and plateaus. A well-documented setback for Black health education, although long before the founding of the AMHPS, came with the *Flexner Report* of 1910. Along with many white

medical schools across the United States and Canada, Black medical schools were harshly derided in the report. Only two of the seven Black medical schools in the United States that were open prior to the *Flexner Report* survived until 1930. The *Flexner Report* marks a pivotal moment in the broader history of American medicine, and Chanoff and Sullivan are wise to include it as a touchstone for readers well-versed in medical history.

*We'll Fight It Out Here* acknowledges that Flexner's work had some benefits for the professionalization of medicine, but they leave a gap of over 40 years in the narrative to show just how profoundly the report stymied Black medical education.

After this gap, *We'll Fight It Out Here* begins the AMHPS's history. A strength of the narrative from this point forward, Chanoff and Sullivan highlight both notable and lesser-known figures and tell their individual stories. The authors pay tribute to physicians and researchers, as well as politicians and lobbyists who furthered the cause. Although only the afterword and acknowledgements are written in first-person, Sullivan's own story, naturally, is an integral component of the book.

Chanoff and Sullivan do not shy away from the political. Sullivan and Newt Gingrich, both with deep Georgia roots, enjoyed a warm personal relationship during Sullivan's tenure as Dean of the Morehouse School of Medicine, but

nearly an entire chapter is dedicated to the later “dark Gingrich days” (165) during which American politics underwent a surge of partisanship, creating massive obstacles for the AMHPS and other minority-focused advocacy groups. Despite the hurdles, the Minority Health Disparities Research and Education Act was passed in 2000, establishing the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The Center remains in existence and has bolstered AMHPS member schools in many ways.

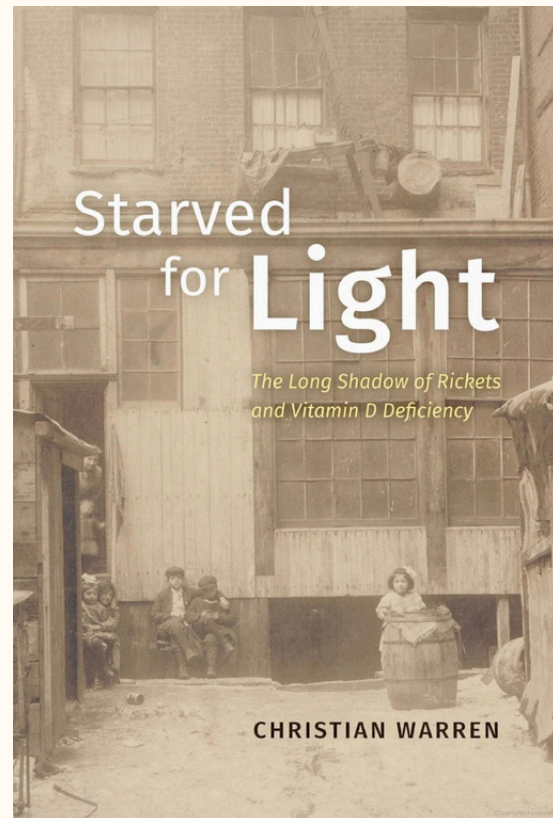
To date, AMHPS continues to thrive, with abundant legislative accomplishments and marked improvement in minority healthcare. The coalition has managed to land on its feet throughout numerous political challenges, yet Chanoff and Sullivan acknowledge that all organizations have a life cycle and may “succumb to the centrifugal forces that fray their bonds and sap their vitality” (211). The authors have hope that AMHPS will rise to face new challenges.

*We'll Fight It Out Here* is a worthwhile read for anyone studying health equity, the history of health professions, and the broader scope of systemic injustice in the United States. It is easy to become jaded with the bevy of committees, associations, and bureaucratic institutions fighting for our bandwidth and support. *We'll Fight It Out Here* makes a compelling case for the AMHPS. The need for improved Black health care is great,

but the AMHPS has the track record and the reputation to find solutions.

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**Christian Warren, *Starved for Light: The Long Shadow of Rickets and Vitamin D Deficiency*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2024. 301 pages. \$30. ISBN: 9780226151939 (cloth).**

*Starved for Life* is an ambitious and fascinating book. It is a wide-ranging survey of rickets and vitamin D in the United States, and the first book-length treatment of the subject.

Rickets has been present since the beginning of humanity. Francis Glisson, who wrote the first book on rickets in the seventeenth century, gave it the medical name “rachitis” to go with the English term rickets, already in some use. Originally seen as a disease of the well-off because physicians like Glisson had well-to-do patients, rickets eventually became associated with class in Great Britain and race in the United States. Warren examines the representations of deformities of rickets in popular culture in Britain and the United States. Gradually, the cultural references to bowlegs and knock-knees in the United States referred predominantly to Black people and were stigmatizing.

Though there is a general progression from past to present in the course of the book, Warren often shifts back to an earlier period to begin the history of another thread or provide the history of a current argument. When he examines research in the United States and Great Britain on rickets, he follows all the strands, not just those leading directly to the present. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were two major lines of research on the causes of rickets, one focusing on environmental causes and the other on nutritional deficiencies. Later, these lines were mostly narrowed to sunlight and cod liver oil. By the 1920s, rickets was a major area of research because the condition was nearly epidemic, especially in industrial cities.

First, Warren examines the dominant line of nutrition research, then goes back in time later to review research on aspects of the environment as causes of rickets, and the history of cod-liver oil as a folk remedy and a commercial product. After considerable research on animals by nutrition scientists, Elmer McCollum at Johns Hopkins isolated an antirachitic fat-soluble factor from cod liver oil in 1922 that he named vitamin D. Either exposure to sunlight or foods containing vitamin D, such as cod liver oil, prevented rickets. These seemed to be two different things.

In 1924 Harry Steenbock at the University of Wisconsin brought cod liver oil and sunlight together by inventing a process of irradiation of foodstuffs with ultraviolet (UV) light, which created vitamin D in the food. The process was patented by Steenbock in 1928, with the patent under control for a time by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF). WARF leased the patent to food and pharmaceutical companies. There were numerous choices on how to deliver vitamin D to the population. Many foods might have served as a vehicle for vitamin D. Milk, supported by health professionals and lobbied for by dairy companies, was chosen as the primary way to provide vitamin D. All infants were presumed to drink milk. Raw milk provides calcium but little vitamin D. How was vitamin D going to be added to milk? The dominant method in the 1930s became irradiating the milk with UV

light. But other methods involved irradiating cows or feeding cows irradiated yeast.

One dairy company introduced a cod liver oil extract. Cod liver oil experienced its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s, even as milk companies were slowly beginning production of vitamin D milk. Major pharmaceutical companies patented modifications to cod-liver oil. In the twenty-first century, it is still sold to a niche market.

By the mid-twentieth century, cases of rickets declined precipitously. Though doctors and journalists claimed that rickets had been conquered, Warren shows that rickets persisted. By the end of the century, there was a resurgence of rickets because fewer people were drinking milk or spending much time outdoors. Warren prescribes a return to sunshine and a rethinking of milk as the major delivery vehicle for vitamin D.

A major focus of the book is rickets and race. Black people have been historically more susceptible to rickets than white people. Warren argues that other factors, including cultural, environmental, and economic factors, were much more important than skin color in accounting for the difference in statistics. He returns to race in the latter part of the book when he discusses the problems and politics of setting a norm for vitamin D deficiency in a mixed population. The norm, he claims, is skewed

white. In the last chapter before the epilogue, Warren takes the reader back to the early dispersal of humans from Africa and the rise of populations with different pigmentations and different ways of synthesizing vitamin D in the body. He reviews and attempts to refute theories in recent decades suggesting that Black people living in temperate climates are more susceptible to rickets because of their pigmentation or melanin in relation to vitamin D.

Warren pays much attention to the many forms of marketing of vitamin D in foods and pharmaceuticals. Corporate advertising promoted an amazing variety of vitamin D enhanced products. The book is illustrated with examples of such advertisements, including “Schlitz with Sunshine Vitamin D” (124).

Medical ethics is another area of concern. Warren’s brief survey of human studies on rickets in the 1920s and 1930s reveals examples of dubious medical ethics that would not be tolerated today. In particular, Warren points to one Philadelphia study in 1934 in which a group of Black infants was deliberately deprived of sunlight and consequently developed signs of rickets.

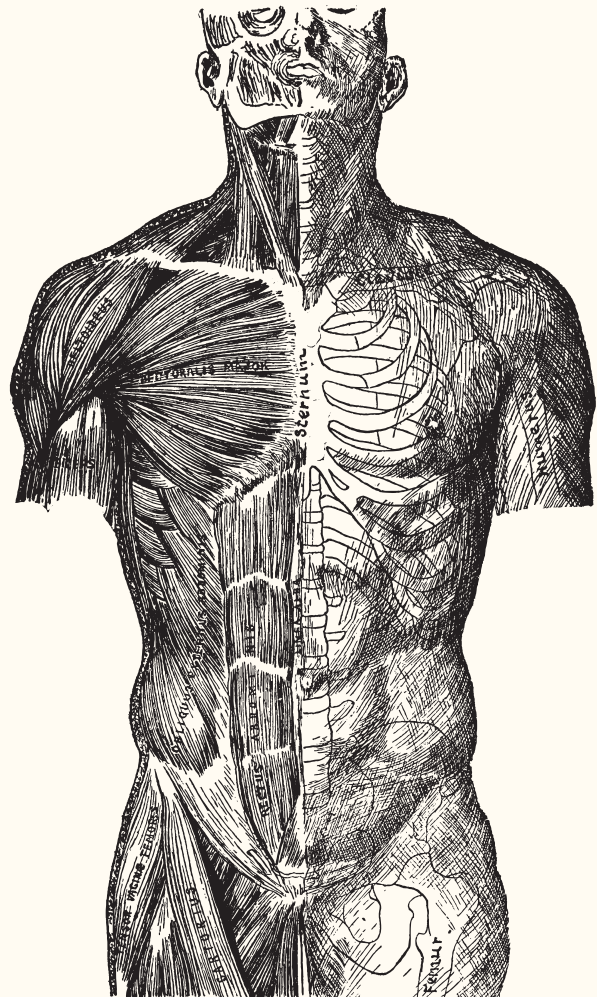
Rickets played an important role in the development of at least three areas of modern medicine. The first is nutrition research on the causes and treatment of rickets, which led to vitamin D and the discovery of the

functional equivalent of UV radiation and vitamin D. The efforts to repair skeletal deformities caused by rickets advanced the field of pediatric orthopedics. Finally, Warren contends that rickets played a major role in the development of obstetrics in the seventeenth century. When discussing the mid-century myth of the conquered disease, Warren notes that the aftereffects of childhood rickets could be observed in deformed pelvises in obstetric wards. He then shifts back to seventeenth-century England to bring in the invention of forceps and the beginning of the male midwife. He argues that childhood rickets led to deformed pelvises in women and difficulty in giving birth. The growth of obstetrics at a time when rickets was prevalent was a response. Warren also suggests that the many operations for vesicovaginal fistulas in the nineteenth century may also have been related to rickets.

*Starved for Light* contains a wealth of research and engaging stories. Weaving all these stories together is a difficult task that Warren handles fairly well. The book is a well-researched, fun to read, and highly original contribution to the history of diseases in broad contexts.

**Toby A. Appel**

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