How arts-based research is informing and enriching health care

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Staff News Writer

Researchers have long recognized that music, dance, photography and other artforms are healing. The arts can supply insights that cannot be expressed, documented or shared in other ways.

The July issue of AMA Journal of Ethics® (@JournalofEthics) explores what medicine can learn from and contribute to the arts, and vice versa. The themed issue includes case commentary, original research and personal narratives incorporating paintings, poetry, calligraphy and photography.

The issues includes the following articles.

1. “How a Medical Orchestra Cultivates Creativity, Joy, Empathy and Connection.”
   This qualitative research has implications for designing arts-based wellness activities for clinicians and scaling them nationwide.

2. “Activating Empathy Through Art in Cancer Communities.”
   An undergraduate visual art course at the University of Texas at Austin enhances art students’ awareness of cancer’s impact.

3. “Is a Video Worth a Thousand Words?”
When clinicians engage surrogates in video calls showing the patient’s body, several competing ethical questions must be considered.

One of the most recognized paintings of Western medicine, Luke Fildes’ The Doctor challenges us to think about what good doctoring is.

Listen and learn

The journal’s July issue features two “Ethics Talk” podcasts. In one, artist and researcher Mark Gilbert, PhD, associate professor of art and art history at the University of Nebraska Omaha, discusses arts-based research: what it is, who it’s for, and why we should pay closer attention to it as a method of clinical inquiry.

In the other, Michaela Chan, a graduate student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, talks about her own comic-making practice, the challenges of representing ethical concepts visually, and how comics disrupt expectations in academic settings.

The July issue also features 11 author-interview podcasts. Listen to previous episodes of the “Ethics Talk” podcast or subscribe in iTunes or other services.

Also, CME modules drawn from this month’s issue are collected at the AMA Ed Hub™ AMA Journal of Ethics™ webpage.

The offerings are part of the AMA Ed Hub™, an online learning platform that brings together high-quality CME, maintenance of certification, and educational content from trusted sources, all in one place—with activities relevant to you, automated credit tracking and reporting for some states and specialty boards.

Learn more about AMA CME accreditation.

A look ahead

Upcoming issues of the journal will focus on inequity and iatrogenic harm, what is owed to low-wage health care workers, and health care waste. Sign up to receive email alerts when new issues are

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