

*Writing
Doctors*

Conference Call for Papers

Writing Health from the Eighteenth Century to the Twenty-First 3-5 June 2020

Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Northumbria University, in connection with a three-year Leverhulme Trust-funded major project, is organising a two-day conference focusing on writing by and about doctors and other health practitioners, encompassing everything from physicians and apothecaries to midwives and cunning women. The aim of the conference is to give scholars the opportunity to explore the phenomenon of writing doctors and its wide social effects, whether it be representations of medical practitioners in literature and art, or creative works written by medical people. The interdisciplinary nature of the subject invites work on cultural, economic and gender history, as well as literary, visual and performing arts.

Plenary Speakers

Michelle Faubert, Associate Professor of English, University of Manitoba and Visiting Fellow, Northumbria University; **Pratik Chakrabarti**, Professor in the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, University of Manchester; **Tita Chico**, Professor of English, University of Maryland.



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The movement of medical writing from Latin to English in the Early Modern era opened up knowledge previously monopolised by an elite readership. Medical practitioners of both genders recognised the potential to build up their brand by catering to a burgeoning market of eager new readers. Publishers and booksellers capitalised on increased literary rates and greater purchasing powers amongst the public to produce ever-growing quantities of scientific texts – further fuelling public fascination with health and wellbeing, especially that of women. Practitioners, in entering this marketplace, were laid increasingly open to public ownership, as a personality behind the prose, either for better or worse. The full social, economic and political implications of this radical shift in the dissemination of information in the medical field have only just begun to be uncovered by scholars. This conference aims to open up discussion regarding all elements of this topic ca. 1660 to the present day.

Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Representation of, and writing by, medical practitioners in literary, visual and performing arts
- Medical self-fashioning
- The role of gender in medicine (e.g. female apothecaries, midwives, cunning women, etc.)
- Definitions of medical writing and the role of genre
- European, Trans-Atlantic, Asian, and colonial medicine
- Satire – in all its forms – directed at medical practice, both lay and professional, including by medical people themselves
- Discourse and correspondence between practitioners, and practitioners and their patients
- The nature of medical publishing

We welcome proposals from researchers across a range of disciplines and stages of career, including early career and student scholars. Please send proposals of no more than 300 words, accompanied by a short biography, to writingdocs18@gmail.com by **Friday 15th November 2019**. Papers will be invited on a wide variety of relevant topics from within the period. A selection of revised papers is expected to be published as part of the project outputs.



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Medical Representation and Personality, ca. 1660-1832

A Northumbria University and Leverhulme Trust Project