

Medical Ethics and Humanities in Utah

Fall 2019

Half-Day Ethics Training for Hospital Ethics Committee Members

by Jim Tabery and Natalia Washington



Armand H. Matheny Antommara, MD, PhD, FAAP, Director, Ethics Center, Lee Ault Carter Chair of Pediatric Ethics, Cincinnati Children Hospital, speaks at Half-Day Ethics Consultation training, June 1, 2019

Hospital ethics committees are tasked with evaluating some of the most difficult cases that arise in medicine. When a transgender child seeks transitioning medical treatment and one parent consents to the procedure while another parent does not consent, how should the healthcare team proceed? When an elderly and very sick patient has deteriorated into a persistent vegetative state and the patient’s spouse wants to maintain mechanical ventilation while the healthcare team deems mechanical ventilation futile, what should the hospital do? The ethics committee members who are challenged with actually working through such cases typically are not medical ethicists and may not even have any explicit training in medical ethics; rather, they are typically nurses, chaplains, physicians, social workers, and community members who are simply passionate about the ethical practice of medicine and willing to volunteer their valuable time to help the people involved in difficult medical issues work towards a resolution. On Saturday, June 1, the Program in Medical Ethics and Humanities hosted its first Half-Day Ethics Training event focused specifically on hospital ethics committee members. Program staff reached out to hospitals from across the Salt Lake Valley and invited members of their ethics committee members to attend. Roughly 30 members from St. Marks Hospital, the University of Utah Health, Intermountain Healthcare, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Primary Children’s Hospital participated in the event. The purposes of the training session was to create sense of community across ethics committees spread out across the valley, to learn about how different ethics committees are organized, to share and evaluate difficult ethical cases drawing

on principles and ideas from medical ethics and to discuss ways to improve the quality of ethics committees.

Attendees participated in several short discussion sessions over the course of the training. Peggy Battin, with Brian Zenger, led the group in thinking through some of the main principles of medical ethics—for instance the distinction between beneficence, doing good for patients, and nonmaleficence, refraining from doing harm, and Jeff Botkin also lent his considerable experience in thinking about issues of informed consent. Teneille Brown, Jim Ruble, Suzette Goucher, and Scott Smith helped in demarcating the scope of ethics committee issues from adjacent conflicts like accusations of misconduct handled in a legal capacity, or patient advocacy handled by dedicated advocates. Finally, guest speaker Armand Antommara, visiting from Cincinnati Children’s Hospital where he is the Ethics Center director, led a capstone session, reviewing several case from his personal experience.



Brian Zenger, MD/PhD student and co-director of No One Dies Alone (NODA) with Peggy Battin, MFA, PhD, speak at Ethics Consultation Training June 1, 2019

Here it was emphasized that much of the structure and function of ethics committees varies institutionally, and how these structures may benefit from explicit, thoughtful consideration and planning. For instance, how ethics committees brand themselves, whether they are accessible from a hospital’s website, and whether they market themselves as providing ‘mediation’, ‘arbitration’, or ‘recommendation’ will have an effect on both the types of cases the committee is presented with,

and the source of those calls (for example from nursing staff or patient families). Since many ethics committee members have additional roles at the hospital, it is also worth considering conflicts of interest, and the tradeoffs associated with different organizations of services.

Using this pilot as a model, the PMEH plans to expand future annual trainings to hospitalists and other clinician team-members interested in ethics education.



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Evening Ethics Discussions



These informal, multidisciplinary discussions about current issues in medical ethics take place approximately bi-monthly or as ethical issues arise. A PMEH member facilitates discussion. Guided by the topic, we invite people with relevant expertise and experience and informed opinions to join us. Generally about 15-40 people from a variety of disciplines, including healthcare, public policy, philosophy, law, and business attend. We distribute short, timely articles from the nation's most thoughtful newspapers, journals, and magazines to the group in advance of our discussions. CME and light refreshments are offered.

Being White in Healthcare: Exploring Biases, Privilege, and Outcomes

With Amy Cowan, MD
And Susan Sample, PhD, MFA

*Tuesday, September 10, 2019
5:30pm-7pm, Research
Administration Building, 1st floor
conference room*

This discussion is intended to recognize how pervasive systemic racism is in our society, shaping our lives. We will explore what we do to support racism and how we can interrupt it. In medicine, *white* is the default, considered the "norm"; often being white is never mentioned. Our discussion will flip the script, exploring what it means *to see* white. Participants will view photographs from Myra Greene's work, *My White Friends*, as an entry point for discussion. Can surroundings, spaces and environments like the hospital, be white? And why does talking about being white make us uncomfortable? Focusing on the healthcare setting, data on under-represented students in medical school and residency, as well as current pay discrepancies among women and people of color, we will discuss how our biases play a role and what happens to our patients.

Suggested Background Readings:

- JAMA The Unicorn <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2720731>
- NEJM Racist Like ME – A call to self-reflection and action for white physicians https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1814269?page=2#article_reference
- Podcast. Scene on Radio – Seeing White. John Biewen. Duke University <https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/> (Any episode)

Also, a book, you may find of interest: DiAngelo, Robin. White Fragility: Why it's so hard to talk to white people about racism



Going Blind: Coming out of the dark about vision loss

A film screening and Q&A with
Film Director, Joseph Lovett

*Tuesday, October 1, 2019
5:00pm-7pm, Moran Auditorium*

Going Blind is a unique documentary film by Peabody Award-winning producer/director Joseph Lovett that increases public awareness of sight loss and low vision issues profoundly affecting the lives of more and more people around the world. It tells the stories of everyday people and how they live successfully in today's world with vision loss. Each has a fascinating story about dealing with the vision loss caused by sight-robbing diseases, infections, and accidents. The film looks at each aspect of vision loss, detecting, treating, and coping, from the point of view of the patient.

In a review of the film, the British Journal of Ophthalmology describes the film as "an uplifting documentary...that instills inspiration to lead a productive life" and the Washington Post stated, "Going Blind encourages and inspires people to take action to preserve, prolong, and maximize the precious gift of sight..."

About Joseph Lovett: Joseph Lovett is an award-winning filmmaker, whose films have informed, engaged and inspired people into action. Joe's film, *Going Blind*, and its Outreach Campaign, *Going Blind and Going Forward*, have ignited a global movement of individuals, grassroots organizations and medical professionals sponsoring screenings to raise awareness and to improve access to vision enhancement services.

This Evening Ethics is presented in collaboration with the Center for Disability & Access, Disability Studies Program, Moran Eye Center, National Center for Veterans Studies, and the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library (EHSL).

Misfits between the law and people with opioid use disorders

With Leslie Francis, PhD, JD
And Teneille Brown, JD

**PARCKA Parleys:
POLICY emphasis**

*Tuesday, October 15, 2019
Noon-1pm, Research Park,
383 Colorow, #204*

**Evening Ethics:
ETHICS emphasis**

*Tuesday, October 22, 2019
5:30pm-7pm, Research
Administration Building, 1st floor
conference room (#117)*

These two sessions will discuss some of the ways in which current federal and state law do not mesh well with the treatment needs of people with opioid use disorder. Professor Teneille Brown will explain how drug court functions, the advantages of drug court for people who are charged with non-violent offenses and who suffer from addiction, and some of the constraints on the drug court process. Professor Leslie Francis will discuss problems with employment discrimination and housing discrimination law because current drug use is not considered a disability and people may lose housing subsidies if they or their relatives plead no contest to charges involving drugs.

This Evening Ethics is presented in collaboration with the Division of Epidemiology's Program for Addiction Research, Clinical Care, Knowledge, and Advocacy ([PARCKA](#))

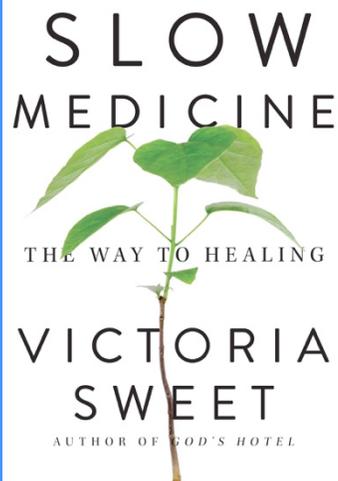
The noon-1PM PARCKA Parley session will have a policy emphasis; a week later, the 5:30pm-7:00pm Evening Ethics session will have an ethics emphasis. Each session will stand alone, but build on each other, so that you can attend one or both.

Welcome to Natalia Washington, PhD, our newest PMEH faculty member



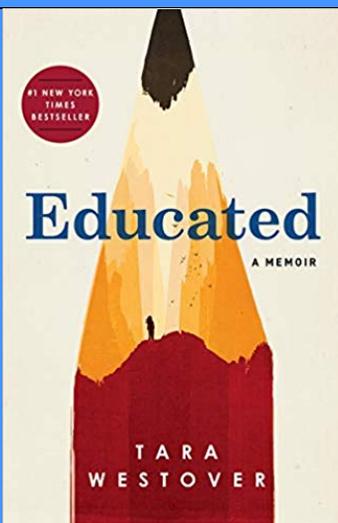
Natalia Washington is an assistant professor in the [Philosophy Department](#) at the [University of Utah](#) and now adjunct faculty in the Department of Internal Medicine and a core member in the PMEH. Specializing in philosophy of psychiatry, cognitive science, and mental health, she is also a member of the [Moral Psychology Research Group](#), an interdisciplinary working group that aims to bring together theoretical and empirical perspectives on moral and ethical thinking and the human psychology behind it. Originally from Chicago's south side, she completed her B.A. in Philosophy with honors in the major at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2010, and earned her PhD in philosophy at Purdue University in 2015 under the direction of [Daniel Kelly](#). From fall 2015 to spring 2017 she was a McDonnell Postdoctoral Fellow in the [Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology](#) program at

Washington University in Saint Louis, after which she spent a year working with renowned artificial intelligence platform [Cyc](#), in Austin, Texas. Washington's research is situated within the scope of empirically informed philosophy of mind, psychology, and cognitive science. Using the conceptual and critical tools of philosophy, she seeks to understand how human minds are both shaped by and integrated with our physical and social environments. Ultimately, she believes that appreciation of these perspectives—what are sometimes called 'externalist' or 'ecological' viewpoints—and their normative implications can inform and improve human lives. As an ecologically-minded philosopher, she has had the opportunity to explore several interconnected research questions, including work on implicit racial biases and social cognition, culture and the construction of psychiatric diagnoses, as well as on agency and well-being. In the future, she plans to extend her work by building a rigorous understanding of the concept of mental health that makes room for individual differences in values and what is in our best interest when it comes to the quality of our mental lives.



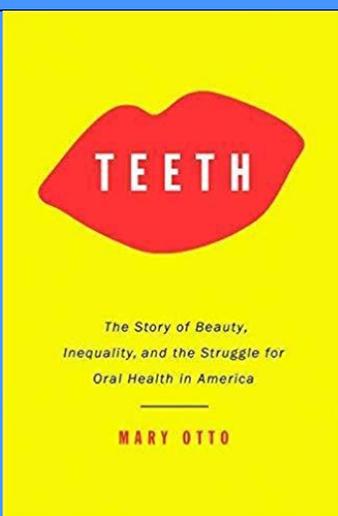
Wednesday, Wed, Aug 14, 2019
University of Utah Hospital Large Conference Room #W1220
6:00-8:30pm, Facilitated by Gretchen Case, PhD, MA
***Slow Medicine: The Way to Healing* by Victoria Sweet**

After reading *God's Hotel* in 2013, we return as a group to the thoughtful prose of physician and historian Victoria Sweet with her 2017 book *Slow Medicine: The Way to Healing*. As the title suggests, Sweet addresses the fast pace of modern medicine and how it might not be as efficient or effective as a more thorough—albeit slower—approach to working with patients and colleagues. She calls us to attention through carefully crafted stories of her own family and of the patients she has encountered as a physician. She asks us to consider the consequences of hurrying, intensifying, and commodifying medical treatment. Perhaps controversially, she considers the place of prayers and perceived miracles in her approach and proposes “no” as an appropriate form of slow medicine when a patient or family asks that “everything” be done.



Wednesday, September 11, 2019
University of Utah Hospital Large Conference Room #W1220
6:00-8:30pm, Facilitated by Rachel Borup, PhD
***Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover**

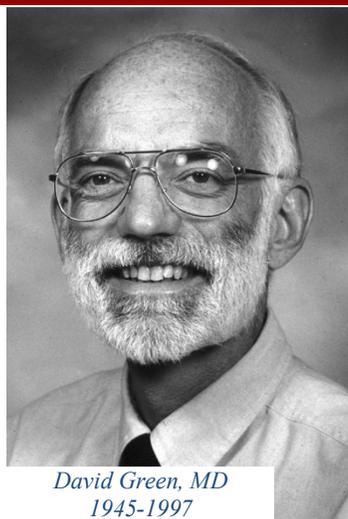
Educated, the best-selling debut memoir by Tara Westover, tells the story of Westover's upbringing in a family dominated by her violent survivalist father. Westover grows up in a rural community near the Utah/Idaho border. Her family's roots are in Mormonism, but her father distorts their faith to justify his personal paranoid beliefs about medicine, education, government and “the illuminati.” Because of their geographic and social isolation, Westover grows up knowing of the larger world only what her despotic father will allow. Despite the physical and emotional abuse she endures as a young person, Westover senses there is a larger world beyond her family's compound and is determined to discover it. Her quest for education takes her first to Brigham Young University and ultimately to a PhD in history at Cambridge. Her astounding and inspiring story of survival has been praised by people as diverse as Barack Obama and Bill Gates. Please join us to discuss this important book.



Wednesday, October 9, 2019
University of Utah Hospital Large Conference Room #W1220
6:00-8:30pm, Facilitated by Mark Matheson, D. Phil.
***Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America* by Mary Otto**

In *Teeth*, author and veteran health journalist Mary Otto exposes the silent oral health crisis that pervades America. Otto reveals important connections, sometimes hidden, sometimes overlooked or ignored, between oral disease and inequalities in our society. Millions of people with chronic oral health problems, disproportionately the elderly and people of color, suffer poor job prospects, low education, stunted social mobility, and a problematic public health system. Otto describes how historically, despite evidence that oral health and general bodily health are closely related, dental health became separated from mainstream medicine. This book sparks a reflective conversation we invite you to join about unsettling truths in our unequal society, why our teeth matter, and the extent and meaning of this oral health crisis.

David Green Memorial Speaker



*David Green, MD
1945-1997*

Thirty years ago, in 1989, David Green, MD, pediatrician, was a founding member of the Department of Internal Medicine’s Division of Medical Ethics, now known as Internal Medicine’s Program in Medical Ethics and Humanities in the Division of General Internal Medicine. From 1983 through 1997, David was a faculty member in the Department of Pediatrics. David was Director of Adolescent Medicine in the Division of General Pediatrics. At the University Hospital, he developed the Adolescent Unit and at the time of his death was Co-Medical Director of the hospital’s Adolescent/Pediatric/Community Medicine Unit. For 17 years, David was Medical Director of the Utah State Development Center. He also was the course director and principal architect of the medical ethics course, required for many years for fourth-year medical students, and he chaired the University Hospital Ethics Committee from



*Armand H. Matheny
Antommara, MD, PhD,
2019-20 David Green
Memorial Speaker*

1985 until his death. David Green was known as a skilled consultant and teacher of medical ethics, who, with sensitivity and insight, appreciated the complexity of individual cases. His memory lives on with us as we continue the important work to which he so faithfully dedicated himself. The Department of Pediatrics, the Program in Medical Ethics and Humanities, and Intermountain Interprofessional Continuing Education work together each year to bring a speaker who instantiates the values of David Green to Utah. We gratefully acknowledge the Medical Staff Office at Primary Children’s Hospital for their support of the Annual David Green Memorial Lecture. [Armand H. Matheny Antommara, MD, PhD, FAAP](#), Director, Ethics Center, Lee Ault Carter Chair of Pediatric Ethics, Cincinnati Children Hospital, Attending Physician, Division of Hospital Medicine, Associate Professor, University of Cincinnati Department of Pediatrics, will be our 23rd Annual David Green Lecturer. Please save the dates: **December 4, 2019, 5:30-7:00PM:** Evening Ethics with Armand H. Matheny Antommara. **December 5, 2019, 8:00-9:00AM:** David Green Memorial Lecture.

PMEH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p>*The Physicians Literature and Medicine Discussion Group 6:00-8:00 pm U of U Hospital Large Conference Room #W1220 <i>Slow Medicine: The Way to Healing</i> by Victoria Sweet, Facilitated by Gretchen Case, PhD, MA <i>Educated: A Memoir</i> by Tara Westover, Facilitated by Rachel Borup, PhD <i>Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America</i> by Mary Otto, Facilitated by Mark Matheson, D.Phil.</p>	<p>Wed. Aug. 14 Wed. Sept. 11 Wed. Oct. 9</p>
<p>Resident Ethics Conferences 12:30-1:15 pm When, How, and Why We Evaluate Patient Competence UUHosp 4th floor SOM, Cartwright Rm: Leslie Francis, PhD, JD & Phil Baese, MD VAMC: 2nd floor Tsagaris Rm.: Leslie Francis, PhD, JD & Phil Baese, MD Privacy & Confidentiality: Leaky Boundaries between Patients and Physicians: Media, Empathy, and Humor UUHosp 4th floor SOM, Cartwright Rm: Leslie Francis, PhD, JD & Gretchen Case, PhD, MA VAMC: 2nd floor Tsagaris Rm.: Leslie Francis, PhD, JD & Gretchen Case, PhD, MA</p>	<p>Tues. Aug. 20 Tues. Aug. 27 Wed. Sept. 11 Wed. Sept. 25</p>
<p>PARCKA Parleys: Research Park, 383 Colorow, #204 12:00-1pm Misfits between the law and people with opioid use disorders (policy emphasis) Leslie Francis, PhD, JD and Teneille Brown, JD</p>	<p>Tues. Oct. 15</p>
<p>*Evening Ethics Being White in Healthcare: Exploring Biases, Privilege, and Outcomes—Amy Cowan, MD, and Susan Sample, PhD, MFA facilitating: 5:30-7:00pm, RAB 1st floor conference room Screening of Documentary Film, Going Blind & Q&A with Director Joseph Lovett : 5:00-7:00pm, Moran Eye Center Auditorium Misfits between the law and people with opioid use disorders (ethics emphasis) —Leslie Francis, PhD, JD and Teneille Brown, JD facilitating: 5:30-7:00pm, RAB 1st floor conference room</p>	<p>Tues. Sept.10 Tues. Oct. 1 Tues. Oct. 22</p>

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PROGRAM MEMBERS ON THE ROAD AND IN PRINT

• **Sam Brown** published a perspective piece, [The Number Needed to Mourn](#), in *Intensive Care Medicine* (June 2019) and joint-authored [Long-Term Functional Outcome Data Should Not in General Be Used to Guide End-of-Life Decision-Making in the ICU](#) in *Critical Care Medicine* (February 2019).

• **Gretchen Case**, along with Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell of the Department of Theatre, were awarded one of only 15 research grants nationwide by the National Endowment for the Arts. Their project uses theatre techniques in a new training method for difficult conversations in medical settings

• **Peggy Battin** attended a meeting of Research Fellow alumni at the Brocher Institute, near Geneva, Switzerland, in late June, and delivered a brief account of her work while there. She'll be giving a talk at the meetings of the European Society for Philosophy of Medicine and Health Care (ESPMH) in Oslo, Norway, August 9, and a plenary talk at the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH) meetings in Pittsburgh, October 26, an exploration of three thought experiments titled "Death & Sex."

• **Leslie Francis** was at the meeting of the International Society for the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy in Lucerne, Switzerland this July. She is the elected Secretary-General of the organization and presented a paper on inequities in health surveillance. The theme of the conference was human dignity.

