

# Literatim

## *Essays at the Intersections of Medicine and Culture*

Howard Markel

# CONTENTS

Introduction	1
--------------	---

## PART I. Medical Literature

1. "I Swear by Apollo": The Hippocratic Oath	9
2. The Death of Dr. Samuel Johnson: A Historical Spoof on the Clinicopathologic Conference	15
3. Charles Dickens' Work to Help Establish the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London	25
4. The Medical Detectives: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Case of Robert Koch's Lymph	31
5. The Last Alcoholic Days of F. Scott Fitzgerald	35
6. Blowing the Whistle: The Internship of William Carlos Williams, M.D., and His Abrupt Resignation From the New York Nursery and Child's Hospital	41
7. Sinclair Lewis' <i>Arrowsmith</i> : The Great American Medical Novel of Medicine	49
8. Living (and Practicing) in the Shadow of the House of God	57

## PART II. Medical Texts

9. The Stethoscope and the Art of Listening	65
10. "Experiments and Observations": How William Beaumont and Alexis St. Martin Seized the Moment of Scientific Progress	69
11. On John Snow	75
12. Dr. Osler's Relapsing Fever	79
13. The Extraordinary Dr. Biggs	83
14. Sigmund Freud's Long Line of Cocaine: Part I. Carl Koller	87

15. Sigmund Freud's Long Line of Cocaine: Part II. The Accidental Addict 91
16. Exploring the Dangerous Trades With Dr. Alice Hamilton 95
17. *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*: How a Textbook, a Former Baptist Minister, and an Oil Tycoon Shaped the Modern American Medical and Public Health Industrial-Research Complex 101
18. Onward Howard Kelly, Marching as to War 107
19. April 12, 1955: Tommy Francis and the Salk Vaccine 111
20. John Harvey Kellogg and the Pursuit of Wellness 115

### PART III. Medical Performances

21. Grasping at Straws: Eugene O'Neill, Tuberculosis, and Transformation 121
22. *Men in White*: The Operating Room's Debut Into Popular American Culture 127
23. Not So Great Moments: The "Discovery" of Ether Anesthesia and Its "Re-Discovery" by Hollywood 133
24. "Calling Dr. Kildare": The Literary Lives of Frederick Schiller Faust, a.k.a. Max Brand 139
25. "Gotta' Sing! Gotta' Diagnose!" A Postmortem Examination of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Medical Musical *Allegro* 143
26. Cole Porter's Eventful Nights and Days 149
27. Physician, Heal Thyself: Arthur Miller, Henrik Ibsen, and the Enemies of the People 153

### PART IV. "A Certain PBS-ness of the Soul"

28. George Gershwin's Too-Short Life Ended on a Blue Note 161
29. Elvis' Addiction Was the Perfect Prescription for an Early Death 165
30. How a Strange Rumor of Walt Disney's Death Became Legend 167
31. A Symphony of Second Opinions on Mozart's Final Illness 171
32. Marilyn Monroe and the Prescription Drugs That Killed Her 173
33. Did Lou Gehrig Actually Die of Lou Gehrig's Disease? 177

34. The "Home Run King": How Babe Ruth Helped Pioneer Modern Cancer Treatment	181
35. Remembering Ryan White, the Teen Who Fought Against the Stigma of AIDS	185
36. The Day Judy Garland's Star Burned Out	189
37. How <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> Author Lorraine Hansberry Defined What It Meant to Be "Young, Gifted and Black"	193
38. Edgar Allan Poe's Greatest Mystery Was His Death	197
39. The Medical Mystery That Helped Make Thomas Edison an Inventor	201
40. How a Hotel Convention Became Ground Zero for This Deadly Bacteria	205
41. The Brilliant Brothers Behind the Mayo Clinic	209
42. How Walter Reed Earned His Status as a Legend and Hospital Namesake	213
43. Dr. Alzheimer and the Patient Who Helped Reveal a Devastating Disease	217
44. Diagnosing Vincent Van Gogh	221
45. How Poet John Keats Met His Early End	225
46. The Infectious Disease That Sprung Al Capone from Alcatraz	229
47. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, a Renowned Medical Missionary with a Complicated History	231
48. How Playing with Dangerous X-Rays Led to the Discovery of Radiation Treatment for Cancer	235
49. How Medicare Came to Be, Thanks to Harry S. Truman	239
50. How to Save a Dying Heart	241
51. C. Everett Koop's Rise from "Dr. Unqualified" to Surgeon-in-Chief	243
52. A Hormonal Happy Birthday	247
53. For Dostoevsky, Epilepsy Was a Matter of Both Life and Literature	249
54. The Death of Oscar Wilde: The Wittiest Man Who Ever Lived	251
55. April 23, 1616: The Day William Shakespeare Died	255

56. But What Caused Houdini's Mysterious Death? 259
57. September 29: The Tylenol Murders of 1982 263
58. The Day Doctors Began to Conquer Smallpox 267
59. In 1850, Ignaz Semmelweis Saved Lives with Three Words:  
Wash Your Hands 271
60. "Goodbye, Farewell and Amen": The Final Episode of *M\*A\*S\*H*,  
February 28, 1983 275
61. Louis Pasteur's Risky Move to Save a Boy from Almost  
Certain Death 279
62. "I Have Seen My Death": How the World Discovered the X-Ray 281
63. How a Boy Became the First to Beat Back Diabetes 283
64. Alfred Nobel's Spirit of Discovery 285
65. The Real Story Behind Penicillin 287
66. The Day Scientists Discovered the "Secret of Life" 291
67. The Surgeon General's Famous Report That Alerted Americans to the  
Deadly Dangers of Cigarettes 293
68. The Publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous*: One of the Most Influential Books  
in the History of Medicine and Public Health 297
69. Presidents Get Sick and Die: What Happens Next Hasn't  
Always Been Clear 301
70. December 14, 1799: The Excruciating Final Hours of President  
George Washington 305
71. The Dirty, Painful Death of President James A. Garfield 309
72. When a "Secret President" Ran the Country 313
73. The "Strange" Death of Warren G. Harding 317
74. Franklin D. Roosevelt's Painfully Eloquent Final Words 319
75. How Florence Nightingale Cleaned up "Hell on Earth" Hospitals and  
Became an International Hero 323
76. Celebrating Rebecca Lee Crumpler, First African American  
Woman Physician 327
77. How Elizabeth Blackwell Became the First Female Doctor in the  
United States 329

78. Clara Barton's Crusade to Bring the Red Cross to America	333
79. Happy Birthday to the Woman Who Revolutionized Endocrinology	337
80. The Quarantine of "Typhoid Mary" Malone	341
81. How Nellie Bly Went Undercover to Expose Abuse of the Mentally Ill	343

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	347
------------------------	-----

<i>Index</i>	349
--------------	-----