Health Care Reform, 1966: This Essex County Medical Society meeting poster is a reminder of the continuous changes in health care and health insurance legislation over the past half-century. At this particular meeting, local doctors could hear directly from a top Washington administrator, Robert M. Ball (1914-2008), one of the architects of a new government health program – Medicare. The tag line tells potential attendees: “If you have any gripes about Medicare, here is your chance to get them off your chest.”

From Essex County Medical Society records, 1816-2009; UMDNJ – Special Collections.
THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL MORRIS SAFFRON LECTURE

The spring meeting of the Medical History Society of New Jersey will be held on Wednesday, May 5th, at The Nassau Club in Princeton. Independent filmmakers Sandra Longo and Debra Higgins will present the 31st Annual Morris Saffron Lecture, a discussion and screening of excerpts from their award-winning documentary, “Snake Hill: Buried But Not Forgotten.” This film tells the stories of some of those who lived and died in the municipal complex located at this Hudson County landmark, “the last stop for thousands of indigents, criminals, ‘lunatics’, and victims of contagious diseases.” MHSNJ past president Frederick C. Skvara, M.D. will display medical philately related to the program. Registration begins at 3:30 pm, and the program begins at 4 pm.

MHSNJ Business Meeting
Election of Officers
David L. Cowen Award
Karen Reeds, Ph.D., President

Ellis P. Townsend and his Brave Little Medical Journal:
The Country Practitioner Comes Home
Sandra Moss, M.D., M.A.

The Civil War Chain Saw: How a Revolutionary Tool Attempted to Change the Old Saw that “War is Hell”
R. Scott Johnson, J.D., UMDNJ-NJMS
Kenneth E. Swan, M.D., UMDNJ-NJMS, Department of Surgery (mentor)

Beyond the Graves: Learning History Through Thyroid Eponyms
Douglas Beach, M.D., UMDNJ-RWJMS
Vijay Rajput, M.D., UMDNJ-RWJMS, Cooper Hospital (mentor)

The Early Days of New Jersey Medical School:
Soundbites from a Oral History
Karen Reeds, Ph.D., Outgoing President, MHSNJ

Cocktails and Dinner (6-7:30 pm)

Medical Stamp Exhibit – Frederick C. Skvara, M.D.

Thirty-First Saffron Lecture:

Snake Hill: Buried But Not Forgotten
Sandra Longo, B.A., Producer, Writer, Director
Debra Higgins, B.A., Producer
Members, students, and friends are invited to attend the dinner meeting. Cost is $50/members, $58/guests; advance registration is required. For information, contact MHSNJ, c/o UMDNJ Special Collections, G.F. Smith Library, 30 Twelfth Avenue, P.O. Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709 or contact vietrora@umdnj.edu or sandra.moss3@verizon.net.

**MEMBERS IN THE NEWS**


Dr. Norman Ertel was selected to receive the honor of Mastership in the American College of Physicians, and was inaugurated at the Annual Meeting of the American College of Physicians in Toronto in April 2010. Congratulations!

Gerald Grob, Ph.D., recently published *Diagnosis, Therapy, and Evidence: Conundrums in Modern American Medicine* (Rutgers University Press, 2009), with co-author Allan V. Horwitz. The book uses historical and contemporary data and case studies to examine tonsillectomy, cancer, heart disease, anxiety, and depression, and to identify differences between rhetoric and reality and the weaknesses in diagnosis and treatment. Professor Grob also conducted a Grand Rounds Presentation, “Deinstitutionalization: Policy Failure or Success?” for the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA, in February 2010.

Dr. George Hill’s recent lectures have included “History of the Essex County Medical Society: The First 150 Years – 1816-1966,” at the Essex County Medical Society Founders Day Banquet, November 2009; “Toxic Edison: The Contradictory Legacy of the Great Inventor” to the Dunworkin Club in Upper Montclair, January 2010; “The History of Medicine and the Influence of Health on Human Affairs,” an introductory lecture for the Mini-Med Course, New Jersey Medical School, February 2010; and “Nautical Medicine and Naval Intelligence in the Late 18th Century,” the keynote address to the Annual Meeting of the South Jersey Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, Cherry Hill, NJ, March 2010.

Dr. Steven Lomazow’s book *FDR’s Deadly Secret*, written with Eric Fettman, was published in January 2010 by PublicAffairs Books. A related blog presents further discussion of the book’s provocative sources and controversial conclusions: http://fdrsdeadlysecret.blogspot.com. The book was widely reviewed in major publications such as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Dr. Lomazow also discussed his book on Glenn Beck’s television show, Dr. Mehmet Oz’s radio program, and in numerous other settings, including the UMDNJ – Smith Library History of Medicine Lecture Series in March 2010.
Ellen Mandel, D.M.H., M.P.A., PA-C, presented “The Hidden Curriculum: Monkey See, Monkey Do?” at the Physician Assistant Educator Association national meeting in Portland, OR, in November 2009, which included an overview of Flexner and historical changes in the medical curriculum. She was also awarded third place in the American Academy of Physician Assistants PAragon awards for her June 2009 article, “Erythema Infectiosum: the Many Faces of Fifth Disease,” which featured a historical overview of the discovery of the Parvo B-19 virus’s role in this common pediatric illness.

Dr. Sandra Moss’s recent presentations include “Arthur Conan Doyle and the White Plague,” to the Red-Headed League of New Jersey; “Homeopaths and Hydropaths: Holistic Health in New Jersey,” at the Institute for New Dimensions, Bergen County Senior Citizen College; “Smooth Operators: New Jersey’s Nineteenth Century Water-Cure Doctors,” at the New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance meeting at Alexander Library in March 2010; and “The Country Practitioner: Medical Practice and Publishing in Nineteenth-Century New Jersey,” at the UMDNJ – Smith Library History of Medicine Lecture Series in April 2010. She also presented a course, “Great Moments in Medicine,” at the Institute for New Dimensions, Bergen County, NJ, in fall 2009. This year she also has served on the Osler Medal Committee, American Association for the History of Medicine. She will be presenting “Brief Encounter: William Thalhimer and the Artificial Kidney” at the American Osler Society meeting in Rochester, MN, this month.

Dr. Michael Nevins will be presenting “Skillman's Dr. Evil and the Eugenics Movement in New Jersey” at the Mary Jacobs Library in Rocky Hill, NJ, on May 11, and “A Country Doctor Calls For Help” at the Pascack Historical Society in Park Ridge, NJ, on May 16.

Brian Regal, Ph.D., Assistant Professor for the History of Science in the Department of History at Kean University, will be offering a new course called Introduction to the History of Medicine (HIST3321) next fall.

Jonathan Reisman, soon to be M.D., who presented “Travels to Pathology Past: An American Medical Student in India” at the previous MHSNJ meeting, has matched to Massachusetts General Hospital in internal medicine and pediatrics. Congratulations!

Helen E. Sheehan, Ph.D., lectured on “Concepts in Traditional Medical Systems in India” for the U.S. Department of Education’s Urdu Language Program at the University of Pennsylvania in July 2009. She also served as an advisor on a grant, “Ethical analysis of obstetric practice in Mumbai,” Centre for Ethics and Rights, Mumbai (India), Wellcome Institute (UK) research grant, 2009-2011.

Dr. Kenneth Swan will be presenting “The Death of General Albert Sidney Johnston at the Battle of Shiloh, 1862” at the American Osler Society meeting in Rochester, MN, this month.

Dr. Allen Weisse will be presenting “A Fond Farewell to the Foxglove” at the American Osler Society meeting in Rochester, MN, this month. His paper of the same title was published in the Journal of Cardiac Failure in January 2010; 16 (1):45-48.
IN MEMORIAM

Robert L. Trelstad, M.D.

Dr. Robert L. Trelstad, a physician and academician who focused his research on cell biology and innovations in medical education, died at home in Princeton on February 15, 2010, at age 69. The cause of death was frontotemporal dementia, diagnosed in 2007.

Dr. Trelstad was a longtime member and supporter of the Medical History Society of New Jersey. He also authored “A Brief History of Medical Education in New Jersey” and “A Brief History of the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and UMDNJ.” These two very useful works may be found at:

http://www2.umdnj.edu/pathweb/njmededhx/index.htm
http://www2.umdnj.edu/pathweb/residency/rwipathsoc.html

Born in Redding, CA, and raised in Salem, OR, Dr. Trelstad graduated from Columbia University in 1961 and Harvard Medical School in 1966, where he worked with many pioneers of cell biology. He completed his residency in pathology at Massachusetts General Hospital, and served at the National Institutes of Health in the U.S. Public Health Service. In 1972, he became an assistant professor of pathology at Harvard Medical School. From 1975 to 1981, he was Chief of Pathology at the Shriners Burns Institute in Boston. In 1981, he joined Rutgers Medical School / Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, serving as Chair of Pathology (1981-97) and as a professor. From 1998 to 2005, he was also Acting Director of the Child Health Institute of New Jersey. He authored 175 publications.

Dr. Trelstad was a pioneering advocate for the use of computers in education and medicine, and he founded Keyboard Publishing, which developed computer-based learning products. He received the National Distinguished Teaching Award in Basic Sciences from Alpha Omega Alpha in 1992, and an Outstanding Medical Educator Award from the Edward J. Ill Excellence in Medicine Association in 2007. For several years he chaired the Health Professions Advising Committee at Princeton University and counseled hundreds of pre-med students. He will be missed.

THREATENED HISTORIC SITE ALERT

For many years, the Old Barracks, Trenton NJ (www.barracks.org) has made reenactments of smallpox inoculation the centerpiece of its very effective public history programs for schools and families. Funding for the museum and its programs has just been eliminated from the proposed New Jersey state budget.

The Old Barracks (a stone’s throw from the New Jersey State House) was built in 1758 for British troops in the French-Indian War and became a Continental Army hospital in the American Revolution. America’s first mass public health action started at the Old
Barracks in 1777 when General George Washington decided that he had to inoculate his soldiers against smallpox.

For more information: [http://www.barracks.org/about/gov_christie_alert.html](http://www.barracks.org/about/gov_christie_alert.html)
(Thanks to Dr. Douglas Eveleigh for the alert.)

**BOOK REVIEW**

By Daniel P. Greenfield, M.D.

**Michael Nevins, A Tale of Two “Villages”: Vineland and Skillman, NJ**  

In this pithy and remarkable book, Dr. Michael Nevins explores the role of his native New Jersey in the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century. Arguing that “...New Jersey was not merely a microcosm of what was happening at the same time elsewhere, but served as a crucial proving ground for validating eugenic theory” (p. xi), Dr. Nevins focuses on the issues and dilemmas inherent in two New Jersey institutions for the care and treatment (and questionable clinical research) of individuals then regarded as mentally ill. These institutions were the Vineland Training School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys in Vineland for the mentally retarded / developmentally disabled (in current parlance), and the Skillman Village for Epileptics in North Princeton.

Nevins begins with a historical overview of the treatment of the mentally ill in the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries. He discusses “Moral Treatment” in Europe and in this country, Dorothea Dix’s efforts, and the rise of large institutions for the mentally ill (the “Kirkbride approach”). Nevins also discusses a unique New Jersey phenomenon, the bizarre work of Dr. Henry Cotton of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital. Cotton dismissed Moral Treatment and “talk therapy” in favor of dental extractions, colectomies, and the wholesale removal of other body parts based on a theory of “focal sepsis” as a significant etiology of mental illness. Between 1916 and 1933 (the year Cotton died), thousands of such procedures were performed under Cotton’s supervision, with relatively little criticism but considerable mortality rates. Dr. Cotton’s surgical bacteriology was an example of “science-gone-wrong,” but was not racially motivated.

Nevins next launches into the main thesis of his book, science-gone-wrong that was racially motivated: the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century. Eugenics began in England with the ideas of Sir Francis Galton, who “…used statistical correlations to study the inheritance of intelligence...” (p. 12). Imbued with the spirit and intellectual foment of evolution as articulated by his cousin Charles Darwin, Galton’s ideas became the basis for the “Two Villages” discussed by Nevins. These institutions were established with the idea of isolating, training, and studying retarded and epileptic persons who required such services, and who needed to be contained and limited in numbers through sterilization. Sterilization would avert the menace “… by cutting off the defective peoples’ capacity to pass their defective genes to their offspring...” (p. 15).
In 1911, responding to public enthusiasm about eugenics, New Jersey became the sixth state to enact a compulsory sterilization law (p. 34). Community and professional ambivalence about sterilization and eugenics followed over the next decade. In 1924, Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., of the U.S. Supreme Court rendered the infamous decision in *Buck v Bell* that “...the principle that sustained compulsive re-vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the fallopian tubes” and that “...Three generations of imbeciles are enough.”¹ A spate of sterilization laws followed, lasting until the 1970s. (p. 42).

In 1910, the Director of Psychological Research at the Vineland Training School, Dr. Henry Goddard, imported the Simon-Binet test from Paris, and began wholesale intelligence (IQ) testing, which spread throughout the world. By the 1920s, his fundamental misapplication of intelligence testing had become virtually cast in stone. As Nevins points out, “Binet had devised the scale as a rough empirical guide for identifying mildly retarded children and not as a device for ranking normal children: They do not define anything innate or permanent. We may not designate what they measure as ‘intelligence’” (p. 18-19). Nevertheless, I.Q. testing by “hereditarians”¹¹ as promoted and expanded by Goddard was widely used. During these years, in Europe and Nazi Germany, in particular, the Eugenics Movement was bootstrapped onto racial attitudes as the scientific underpinning and basis for subsequent racial laws and policies such as Germany’s compulsory sterilization law of 1933: “if the United States led the way in developing and implementing eugenics theory,” Nevins writes, “it was in Germany that the evil outcome of these ideas came to fruition.” (p. 52). In Germany, approximately 600,000 sterilizations were performed between 1933 and 1945, as well as the euthanization of those considered to have “substantial mental infirmity” (p. 58). This, of course, paved the way to the Holocaust. The heavily Nazified medical community participated in the heinous activities under the guise of “humanitarianism”: “...The Nazi approach [to euthanasia] emphasized the state’s right to kill for its own sake” (p. 59).

Nevins next turns to the decline and eventual closure of two institutions, Skillman Village (by then renamed the North Princeton Developmental Center) and Letchworth Village in New York. Both closed in the 1990s because of advances in medical science and pharmacology as well as in response to changes in public policy. Ironically, Nevins points out, the Bethel Institute in Bielefeld, Germany – a facility for epileptics and others with chronic conditions which had been a model for Skillman Village – managed to survive the euthanization of many of its residents during World War II, and thrives today as the largest Protestant charity in Europe (p. 18). Nevins points out that the decline and closure of these “villages” were a reflection of a variety of trends and causes, and in retrospect may be considered an example of the “law of unanticipated consequences” concerning eugenics and eugenicists – that “good intentions can have unanticipated consequences – sometimes leading to shameful results” (p. 82).

In the “Preface” and “(A) Bizarre Epilogue” of this book, Dr. Nevins addresses the uncertain and cautionary tale of Dr. Edwin Katzen-Ellenbogen. He was from a prominent German Jewish family; was possibly a psychologist and reportedly a psychiatrist; was a
clinician and instructor in Massachusetts and a researcher at the Skillman village in 1911, which research involved eugenics and sterilization; had been an immigrant from Germany and later back to Germany; was a collaborator with the Gestapo while he was interred at the Buchenwald concentration camp during World War II; and finally was tried and sentenced as a Nazi war criminal to life in prison, where he died. Although not active or influential in eugenics in New Jersey, Dr. Katzen-Ellenbogen’s story and another recent book about that story inspired Dr. Nevins’s book.

But eugenic attitudes are not gone, and remain a topic of concern. Philip Roth’s 2005 novel The Plot Against America describes an alarming almost-picture of an isolationist and conservative America which very nearly did not enter World War II when it did, and which under the guise of democratic and “melting-pot” principles engaged in subtle ethnic manipulation in order to promote white, protestant America. This lesson is clear: It could happen here. Stephen Jay Gould’s The Mismeasure of Man (also cited by Nevins) discusses at length how intelligence testing, a cornerstone of eugenics, is based on a bogus pseudoscientific construct. And in the other camp, the recent Race Evolution & Behavior by J. Philippe Rushton reads, to this reviewer, like a tract from eugenics works early in the twentieth century. As Dr. Nevins points out more than once, eugenics and its associated sentiments remain with us.

Who among the readers of this newsletter would benefit from reading this book? The answer, quite simply, is everybody. As a historical treatise, this book is scholarly, engaging and well written, and sufficiently both broad and thorough to give the reader a sense of mastery of an important topic. As an account of “science-gone-wrong,” A Tale of Two Villages is detailed, informative, and concise. Supplementing this book with Gould’s The Mismeasure of Man will provide an understanding of the misapplication of questionable science to eugenics theory, and subsequently to public policy. Finally, as a treatment of the unethical use of science, this book is measured but unequivocal in its message that although “we have advanced a long way from events of nearly a century ago... we should never lose sight of where we’ve been – and why...” (p. xii). Historians, clinicians, scientists, policy makers, and politicians, sociologists, and everybody else should read this book!

References:

Page references to A Tale of Two Villages are given in parenthesis in the text.

MEMBERS’ PUBLICATIONS IN THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE, 2009


EXHIBIT ANNOUNCEMENT

Call the Doctor!  Call the Nurse!

History of Medicine in New Jersey 1775 - 1975

Cornelius Low House
Middlesex County Museum

1225 River Road
Piscataway, NJ

May 2, 2010 through June 26, 2011

Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 4:15 pm
Public Hours: Tuesday - Friday & Sunday 1 - 4 pm
Closed: Monday, Saturday & Holidays

School & Group Tours Welcome
Phone: 732.745.4177
TTY users only: 732.745.3888

Offered Without Charge & Funded by: Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission, and New Jersey Historical Commission, an agency of the Department of State. The first floor of the Museum is accessible; the second floor is videotaped. Some visitors may wish to borrow a folding wheelchair for use during their visit. Image: Trephin (cranial saw) from exhibit’s surgical kit.
Thanks to the Cornelius Low House Museum for the following announcement:

**Call the Doctor! Call the Nurse!**  
**History of Medicine in New Jersey, 1775 - 1975**  
Open May 2, 2010 through June 26, 2011

The Cornelius Low House Museum, and Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission announce the new exhibition, Call the Doctor! Call the Nurse! History of Medicine in New Jersey, 1775 - 1975. The exhibit opens on Sunday, May 2, 2010, with a free, public Opening Reception from 2 - 4 pm.

This unique exhibit, spanning 200 years, is dedicated to New Jersey’s rich medical history and its notable contributions to the field of medicine. This exhibit includes the importance of New Jersey in the worldwide scope of the healing arts; research and advancement of Johnson & Johnson; potions, poisons and remedies - the good, the bad and the ugly; epidemics, diseases and how they affected New Jersey society and its soldiers, among them the smallpox epidemic, yellow fever during the Revolutionary War, the Spanish flu epidemic of WWI, and polio and its vaccine trials. The exhibit will also focus on women in the field of medicine as nurses, healers and midwives; herbal and traditional medicines, and the cultural groups that practiced such methods; treatments of the mentally ill from one of the pioneering states in the field; medical contraptions, from medicine bottles to a skull saw; and prominent individuals in medical professions.

New Jersey has, and continues to play a key role in advancements within the field of medicine. Artifacts from doctors, pharmacies, and educational institutions together with a reproduction surgical kit and recorded first-hand remembrances will illustrate New Jersey’s significant medical history.

The Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission and Cornelius Low House Museum would like to thank the following lenders for their contributions to the exhibit: Lake Hopatcong Historical Museum; New Jersey Historical Society; Museum of Early Trades and Crafts; Mount Holly Library; Mütter Museum, College of Physicians of Philadelphia; The Paterson Museum; South River Museum - Old School Baptist Church; Stafford Historical Society; UMDNJ Special Collections; and UMDNJ - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

To register for the Opening Reception, call the Commission, 732.745.4489. Group tours and school field trips can be scheduled by calling the Commission, 732.745.4489. The Museum is free and open to the public from 1 - 4 pm, Tuesday through Friday and Sunday. The Museum is located at 1225 River Road, Piscataway. Call the Doctor! Call the Nurse! is funded in part by Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission and New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.
RESEARCH QUERY

Researching Institutional Influences on Curriculum Change

I am researching the role of institutional influences on the process of curriculum change. By institutional influences, I refer to the role of university structures, processes and policies etc, as well as the role of agencies external to the university, such the AAMC, and federal and state legislators. My work aims to elucidate the dynamics of curriculum change, and to construct a theoretic model or analytic framework in order to better understand and optimize the reform process.

To contextualize my work, and to help explain the roots of the institutional forces at play, I am interested in interviewing Key Informants about the history of medical education in New Jersey. These interviews are completely anonymous and confidential, and IRB approval has been received for this study. If you are interested in participating, please contact Karen Malone, Director of Education, School of Health Related Professions, UMDNJ at malonek1@umdnj.edu or call 973 972 8640.

THE USUAL EDITORIAL FINISH :)

The Newsletter of the Medical History Society of New Jersey is published in May and October by the Society, and is a benefit of membership. Short articles on medical history topics are especially welcome. Please send comments, suggestions, and submissions to:

Medical History Society of New Jersey
c/o UMDNJ Special Collections
George F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences
P.O. Box 1709
Newark NJ 07101-1709
Tel: 973-972-7830
Email: vietrora@umdnj.edu