

**Alicia Puglionesi**

Curriculum vitae

Contact: apuglio1@jhmi.edu

**Education:**

Institute of the History of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD.

PhD, History of Science, Medicine, and Technology, September 2015.

Concentrations in twentieth-century biomedicine, history of the behavioral sciences, medical anthropology, and U.S. history.

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

B.A., English and cognitive science, minor in anthropology and fine arts, 2009.

**Research Interests:**

History of the human sciences; history of the mind sciences; political and social movements in health and medicine; knowledge-making, data, and networks of observation; public science; religion and science; science fiction and speculative fiction; medical humanities; narrative and mystery.

**Scholarly publications:**

*Common Phantoms: An American History of Psychic Science* (Stanford University Press, 2020).

“Echoes down the years: technologies of mediumship and immortality,” in *Media Ventriloquism: How Audiovisual Technologies Transform the Voice-Body Relationship*, edited by Jaimie Baron, Jennifer Fleeger, and Shannon Wong Lerner (Oxford, 2021).

“Drawing as instrument, drawings as evidence: Capturing mental processes with pencil and paper,” *Medical History* 60:3 (2016) 359-387.

“Your whole effort has been to create desire’: Reproducing Knowledge and Evading Censorship in the Nineteenth-Century Subscription Press,” *The Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 89: (2015) 463-490.

### **Teaching Experience:**

Adjunct instructor, Johns Hopkins University, 2016-present, Program in Medicine, Science, and the Humanities.

Adjunct instructor, Johns Hopkins University Summer and Intersession Programs, Medical Humanities, 2012-2018.

Adjunct instructor, Maryland Institute College of Art, 2016-17, Humanistic Studies.

### **Curation and exhibits:**

Curator, “Hopkins and the 19th Amendment,” Chesney Medical Archives of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (Online exhibition launched August, 2020).

Curatorial writer, “The Blue Baby Operation,” Chesney Medical Archives of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (Online exhibition launched November, 2019).

Curator for the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine’s 125th Anniversary exhibition, Johns Hopkins Hospital (July 2018) and Eisenhower Library (September-December 2018).

Curator, Crust Theory, group multimedia installation and performance at St. Charles Gallery, Baltimore, MD, May-June 2017.

Assistant Curator, “Beyond Chicken Soup: Jews and Medicine in America,” an exhibition on medicine and Jewish identity at the Jewish Museum of Maryland curated by Karen Falk, March 2014-January 2016; on display at the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, Cleveland, Ohio, 2017-2018.

Manuscripts and exhibitions assistant to Christine Ruggere, Rare Books and Manuscripts Room, Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, 2012-2016.

**Awards:**

2019 Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award for Nonfiction, \$3000.

2017 History of Science Society Forum for the History of the Human Sciences Article Prize.

2013 Shryock Medal for unpublished graduate student paper, American Association for the History of Medicine.

**Grants and fellowships:**

NEH Postdoctoral Fellowship, Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, 2016-2017.

Museums, Libraries, and Cultural Organizations Implementation Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, 2015-2016. Co-author of implementation grant for the exhibit “Beyond Chicken Soup: Jews and Medicine In America” at the Jewish Museum of Maryland.

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 2014-2015.

History of Medicine Collections Travel Grant, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, June 2014.

Sheridan Libraries’ Special Collections Research Center Graduate Student Summer Fellowship in 19th, 20th, and 21st- century Studies, Summer 2013.

William H. Welch Fellowship, Institute for the History of Medicine, 2009-2013: award for the pursuit of graduate study at Johns Hopkins.

**Selected talks:**

“The borderlands of science and the limits of experience.” Stanford University Cultures, Minds, and Medicines workshop, November 2017.

“Ask the phantoms: Science speaks for the 'silent' objects of pre-Columbian North America.” History of Science Society Annual Meeting, Atlanta, November 2016.

“A Ghost-catching weather bureau': psychical research and meteorology in nineteenth-century America.” History of Science Society Annual Meeting, Chicago, November 2014.

“Drawings as evidence.” Debating Visual Knowledge Graduate Symposium, University of Pittsburgh, October 2014.

“Drawings from the other side.” Paper presented at the 4th International Illustration Symposium: Science, Imagination & the Illustration of Knowledge, Oxford, UK, November 2013.

“The cream puff, the surprise visit, the sudden feeling of danger: relational knowledge-making in psychical research.” Paper presented at Conference on Psychical Research and Parapsychology in the History of the Sciences and Medicine, University College London, January 2013.

**Selected general-interest and literary publications:**

*In Whose Ruins* (under contract, expected publication 2022).

*Krall Krall* (Baltimore: Cars Are Real Press, 2013). Novella.

*Views from the National Forests* (Baltimore: Furniture Press, 2014). Poetry chapbook.

“Proving it: The American Provers’ Union documents certain ill effects,” in Adam Green, ed., *The Public Domain Review: Selected Essays, 2011-2014* (PDR Press, 2014).

“Atmospheric disturbances,” *Real Life*, November 2020.

“No rest,” *Aeon*, August 2020.

“Perfect Medium,” *The Point*, April 18, 2017.

“Lofty Only in Sound,” *Public Domain Review*, April 5, 2017.

**Multimedia work:**

“Baltimore: Fault Lines and Connecting Threads.” Commissioned audio walking tour, produced in collaboration with Jonna McKone.

“In the Basement Kitchen.” Segment for the Undark science podcast from MIT, in collaboration with Jonna McKone.

## **Sample courses:**

### ***Introduction to the History of Medicine***

100-level two-semester survey.

The history of medicine from antiquity to the present, with an emphasis on interpreting primary sources and developing skills in historical thinking and writing. This can also function as a one-semester condensed course.

### ***The Hospital***

100-level introductory course or freshman seminar.

This course explores the hospital's emergence as the nerve center of American health care beginning in the nineteenth century and extending to the present moment. Students analyze ways in which science, technology, and culture transformed medical knowledge and the patient experience. Focusing on the physical spaces of care, this course incorporates films, field trips, and guest speakers to connect historical material with current issues in medicine.

### ***The Costs of Care***

100-level introductory course or freshman seminar

Healthcare can be expensive for those who receive it and those who provide it. In the United States, patients go into debt while doctors suffer from burnout and nurses rush through understaffed wards. This seminar brings together perspectives from history, the social sciences, and literature to put a human face on the American healthcare debate. Alongside lectures covering the development of U.S. healthcare policy, we read poetry, memoirs, graphic novels, and essays. Students debate the government's role in care provision, and what can be learned from a century of contention over healthcare as a human right.

### ***Twentieth-century Biomedicine***

100-level introductory course or freshman seminar.

Explores the cultural, social, political, and ethical dimensions of developments in twentieth-century medicine. Applying the theoretical and methodological tools of science and technology studies, the course traces the ways in which changing technology has shaped our conceptions of what it means to be human.

### ***Healthcare activism in Baltimore and Beyond***

200-level seminar

National struggles over the right to health care, and over the health needs of marginalized groups, have taken distinctive forms in Baltimore City during the past century. This course

dives into the archives of local institutions to understand the work of activists and advocates who connected health, medicine, and social justice. We focus on specific sites, from the segregated wards of Johns Hopkins to the People's Free Medical Clinic on Greenmount Avenue, where demands for equity changed the city's health care landscape. Through interdisciplinary readings and conversations with local organizers, we consider how historical memory can serve as a creative resource for the art and politics of the present.

***Technologies of the Self: History of the Human and Behavioral Sciences***

200- or 300-level seminar.

Beginning with Auguste Comte's eighteenth-century vision for a "science of man" and extending to the quantified, virtual self of today's information technology, this course examines the historical processes through which science and culture produce different kinds of people for empirical study.

***Clues: (Un)reasoning the Medical Mystery***

100-, 200-, or 300-level seminar.

Pioneering authors of detective fiction often used medical doctors and themes in their mystery plots. It's no coincidence that medicine and crime fiction share a vocabulary of clues, evidence, and diagnosis. The mystery genre was integrally tied to the rise of modern medicine as a respected profession. Indeed, classic detective stories modeled the scientific method, showing readers how unsolvable problems yield to the powerful tools of observation and inference. As we study Sherlock Holmes and his modern proteges, such as TV doctor Gregory House, we will examine how "medical mystery" narratives guide both patients' and doctors' expectations about the medical encounter, as well as probing the limits of this paradigm.

***Uncanny Bodies: Horror in Biomedicine***

100-, 200-, or 300-level seminar.

In horror films like "Get Out" and "Shock Corridor," medical procedures become means and metaphors for violent exploitation. Other films make the body itself grotesque, with alien parasites or genetic mutations suggesting that the danger lurks within. These genre tropes convey timeless anxieties that take on new shapes as medical technology evolves. At the core of medical horror are two questions: can we trust the power and authority of science, and can we really know ourselves? This course covers the history of the genre from nineteenth-century "weird tales" to contemporary film, focusing on how ethical concerns about biomedicine are refracted through monsters, mad doctors, and uncanny bodies.

### ***Neurofictions***

100-, 200-, or 300-level seminar.

This course traces attempts to explain and control human consciousness, both in medical history and in science fiction. By placing each period's scientific texts in dialog with contemporaneous science fiction – from Edgar Allan Poe to Ursula K. Le Guin – we discover how theories about the brain can shape society, while at the same time reflecting the cultural values and social structures of their eras. Students today will be significantly impacted by emerging neurotechnologies which promise to make human life better. A critical history of the mind sciences is essential for identifying what is at stake in efforts to manage and augment the brain: what is “better,” and for whom?