Resources: Spring 2019
By Nikita Godbole, SPT and Keenan Whiteside, PT, DPT, NCS

What We’re Watching

How Stigma Shaped Modern Medicine

Over the past few years, awareness has grown about the role the media plays in influencing thoughts and opinions on a variety of subjects, such as politics, business, and culture. In her TED talk, Dr. Nathalia Holt discusses how the media and advertising have also played a pivotal role in changing the negative stigma around diseases like cancer, tuberculosis, and HIV—altering their depiction from that of deadly diseases even doctors and researchers would avoid working with, to common conditions that could affect anyone. Dr. Holt argues that once the stigma was changed, more funding and research went into treating these conditions, thereby resulting in groundbreaking remedies. She further claims that only once these lies and stigmas have been addressed can more effective treatments be developed, and that changing these stigmas is just as important as making discoveries in the clinic or the lab.

What We’re Reading

A Photographer Turns a Lens on His Father’s Alzheimer’s Disease by Stephen DiRado

When photographer Stephen DiRado started noticing signs of forgetfulness in his father, he became concerned that it could be related to something other than normal aging. Once his father was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, DiRado created the photographic project “With Dad” to document its progression. The project begins with photos from Stephen’s childhood,
with his healthy dad, and documents their relationship up until the advanced stages of his father’s disease. DiRado wrote, “Eventually, in the last three or four years of his life, it came down to just being the camera. I became invisible. It was pretty tough stuff.” In this piece, DiRado discusses the bond his photography helped him create with his father, both as an artist and as a son.

**British Doctors May Soon Write Perscriptions for Dance, Art, or Music Lessons** by Tara Bahrampour, *The Washington Post*

In times of rising healthcare costs and increasing dependence on medication, is there something more that can be used to treat disease? Doctors in Great Britain are soon going to be able to participate in “social prescribing”—referring patients to music, dance, or art classes to supplement their medical treatment. Studies have found that patients have improvement in physical symptoms—from decreased dizziness and anxiety, to improved concentration and memory—after participating in these kinds of activities. British Health Secretary Matt Hancock argues that this plan can result in better outcomes for patients while saving money for the government.


America is currently facing an opioid epidemic. In this article, the *New York Times* interviews drug users, their families, and addiction experts to describe the emotions behind the seven stages of addiction, and paint a visual representation of how drugs can affect the brain. The images are used to provide the reader with an understanding of how powerful an effect these drugs can have on the mind, and how they affect the individual both physically and emotionally.
About the Authors

Nikita Godbole is a third-year Doctor of Physical Therapy student at Emory University. Nikita received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, where she developed an interest in sustainability and its relationship to both business and healthcare. Nikita is currently working as the Graduate Editorial Associate for the Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation.

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