



the medical center hour

*Medicine & Society in Conversation*

A program of the Center for Health Humanities and Ethics  
University of Virginia School of Medicine

Wednesday, 24 February 2021

12:00-1:00 pm

A Zoom Webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87684988960> Passcode: 763749

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*Ellis C. Moore Memorial Lecture*

## WHY DOCTORS WRITE: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

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Marcia Day Childress PhD, moderator

Many doctors have also been celebrated writers, from Anton Chekhov, Arthur Conan Doyle, and William Carlos Williams to Perri Klass, Atul Gawande, and Maxim Osipov. The reading public (including other doctors) eagerly devours what doctors write, not least in hopes of glimpsing what makes physicians tick, as persons, as healers. But why do doctors write? In this Medical Center Hour, three of UVA's own accomplished physician-writers respond, in their own inimitable words.

Suggested resources:

1. Becker DM. *2<sup>nd</sup> Chance: Poems*. Western Michigan University: New Issues Press, 2020.
2. Coetzee JM. *Life & Times of Michael K*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.
3. Martin B. COVID-19 and Philip Roth's *Nemesis*. *Vox Populi*, 27 June 2020, <https://voxpopulisphere.com/2020/03/18/ben-martin-covid-19-and-philip-roths-nemesis>
4. Mathieu I. <https://irenemathieu.com/>
5. Mathieu I. *Grand Marronage*. Switchback Books, 2019. <https://www.switchbackbooks.com/irenemathieu>
6. Mathieu I. *orogeny*. Trembling Pillow Press, 2017. <https://www.tremblingpillowpress.com/orogeny/>

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New Dominion Bookshop: <https://ndbookshop.com/>

**Daniel M. Becker MD MPH MFA** is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania (BA), Washington University (MD), Harvard School of Public Health (MPH), and Warren Wilson College Writing Program (MFA). He trained in internal medicine at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami and Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. After six years on faculty at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, he joined the UVA faculty in 1985; he retired in 2018 as Kluge Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for Biomedical Ethics and Humanities (now Center for Health Humanities and Ethics). Dr. Becker has since been rehired for part-time teaching in Foundations of Clinical Medicine; he also sees patients one half day each week in the addiction clinic, supervises residents at University Medical Associates, and administers COVID vaccinations at UVA and community sites. In retirement, Dr. Becker does not play golf, but he does ride a bike, fishes at Beaver Creek Reservoir in a homemade wooden boat, watches birds (while his wife identifies them), walks the dogs as often as they like, and has every intention of becoming a better gardener. Dr. Becker's book of poems, *2<sup>nd</sup> Chance*, won the 2019 New Issues Poetry Prize in a competition judged by poet Jericho Brown. His writing habit, 5:30-7:30 am each day, remains strong.

**Ben Martin MD** holds an AB degree in English and American Literatures from Middelbury College, where he was awarded the Donald E. Axinn Prize for his creative thesis. He graduated from Tufts University School of Medicine and completed an internal medicine residency at UVA. He is a hospitalist and assistant professor of medicine at UVA, where he is also a faculty affiliate in the Center for Health Humanities and Ethics. In addition to his clinical teaching on the wards, Dr. Martin this semester is co-teaching (with Irène Mathieu MD) an undergraduate first-year seminar on representation of health disparities in literature. He is in the process of writing his first book.

**Irène P. Mathieu MD** holds degrees from the College of William and Mary (BA) and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine (MD); she completed her pediatrics residency at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, with emphasis on global health. She is working on an MPH degree at Johns Hopkins University. A general pediatrician and writer, Dr. Mathieu is the author of *Grand Marronage* (Switchback Books, 2019), *orogeny* (Trembling Pillow Press, 2017), and *the galaxy of origins* (dancing girl press, 2014). Her poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Narrative*, *Boston Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Callaloo*, *TriQuarterly*, and elsewhere. She is on the editorial boards of *Muzzle Magazine* and the *Journal of General Internal Medicine's* humanities section. The recipient of fellowships from Fulbright, Callaloo, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, she works as an assistant professor of pediatrics at UVA, where she is a faculty affiliate in the Center for Health Humanities and Ethics. This semester, she is co-teaching a University Seminar with Dr. Martin.

Drs. Becker, Martin, and Mathieu declared no personal/professional relationships with commercial entities producing healthcare goods and/or services related to this presentation. Medical Center Hour planning group members M.D. Childress PhD; R.J. Bonnie LLB; R. Carpenter DrNP; J.F. Childress PhD; M.F. Marshall PhD; J. Mutter MD MA; K. Reid PhD RN FNP-C CNL; L. Shepherd JD have no personal/professional relationships with commercial entities producing healthcare goods and/or services, while R. Dillingham MD MPH reports interests with Gilead and Warm Health Technology Inc. UVA Office of Continuing Medical Education faculty and staff have no personal/professional financial relationships with commercial entities producing healthcare goods and/or services.

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Next Medical Center Hour: Wednesday, 3 March 2021, 12:00-1:00 pm  
*Koppaka Family Foundation Lecture in Health Humanities // Medicine Grand Rounds*  
ELDERHOOD

(REDEFINING AGING, TRANSFORMING MEDICINE, REIMAGINING LIFE)  
with Louise Aronson MD MFA, Professor of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, and Justin B. Mutter MD MSc, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Chief of Geriatrics, and Faculty, Center for Health Humanities and Ethics, UVA

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Medical Center Hour is free of charge and open to the public. For more information, see Center for Health Humanities and Ethics: <https://med.virginia.edu/biomedical-ethics/medical-center-hour/>  
Watch Medical Center Hour recordings at <http://www.youtube.com/uvamch>

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In support of improving patient care, the University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

This activity was planned by and for the healthcare team, and learners will receive 1 Interprofessional Continuing Education (IPCE) credit/session for learning and change.

Learning objectives:

1. Understand both the historical tradition and newer trends involving doctors who are also writers.
2. Learn from three local physician writers about the particular purposes writing has for them.