



Yonder: a diverse selection of primary care relevant research stories from beyond the mainstream biomedical literature

### Oncogeriatrics, binge eating in black women, dissection, and podcasts

**Oncogeriatrics.** As new therapeutic possibilities for treating patients with cancer more safely and for longer have developed, a new subfield of oncology has emerged in the last 20 years focused on the treatment of older patients with cancer, a population that was long neglected. A recent Swiss study sought to understand the moral and social implications of considering older patients with cancer as 'treatable'.<sup>1</sup> They found that older cancer patients consider themselves to be survivors and fighters. Their long trajectory is a result of their successful struggle and tolerance of the treatments allowing them to carry on. The authors note that doctors tends to 'place' patients according to their physical and mental ability to receive chemotherapy, with little discussion about the inevitable ethical dilemmas that such decisions represent.

**Binge eating in black women.** Binge eating disorder (BED) is the most common eating disorder across all racial and ethnic groups in the US. Those from black communities have particularly high rates of BED and some of the lowest rates of access to care. A systematic review recently synthesised 38 individual studies reporting findings about black women with BED.<sup>2</sup> They found that, although black women were more likely to get BED, the research was heavily skewed towards white women, with black women notably under-represented in all studies, including clinical trials. The authors note the linked disparities in obesity and make a compelling argument for more research investment to examine BED in black women. Funding agencies, take heed.

**Dissection.** In an era of haptic technology, 3D visualisation software, and virtual reality, the use of cadaveric dissection for anatomy education is causing vigorous debate in medical schools around the world. Among the arguments proposed by the defenders of dissection is the claim that it teaches much more than anatomical science: it also acts as a crucial formative experience for professional identity. A recent Cambridge study involved the analysis of 119 tributes written by three consecutive cohorts of first-

year medical students to their cadaveric donors.<sup>3</sup> They found that students were in a transitional state between personal and scientific modes of knowledge of the human, which correspond to different models of the subject position occupied by the student. Although their preclinical data set does not permit them to trace how the modes of knowledge established in the dissection room impact on later clinical practice, the authors speculate that the relation to the 'first patient' is likely to be a formative one.

**Podcasts.** As pandemic-related lockdowns around the world have forced populations into social isolation, the impact on education has been profound. It has required a re-examination not only of what is important in terms of content, but additionally of what is possible through virtual platforms. In the medical world, educational podcasts had been growing in popularity even prior to the dramatic disruption to traditional education that has occurred this year. A recent US study explored the motivations and listening behaviours of a group of emergency medicine residents, who described podcasts as easy to use and engaging, enabling both broad exposure to content and targeted learning.<sup>4</sup> They reported often listening to podcasts while doing other activities, which led to challenges retaining and applying the content they learned from the podcasts to their clinical work. Despite listening to podcasts independently, asynchronously, and outside the formal residency curriculum, residents described participating in a 'shared' listening experience that provided a virtual connection to a national community.

Medical education or otherwise, I'm a self-confessed podcast addict, and from next month onwards I'll be giving a monthly podcast recommendation at the end of each Yonder. I hope they'll give you some ideas, whether you're new to podcasting or a seasoned pro.

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