

Countway and Hopkins Receive Mellon Foundation Grant

The Center for the History of Medicine, Countway Library, Harvard Medical School has received a \$202,900 Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, through a program administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) to increase access to critical resources currently unavailable to historical research. Private Practices, Public Health: Privacy-Aware Processing to Maximize Access to Health Collections, proposed on behalf of the Medical Heritage Library (MHL), will allow the Center and its partner, the Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, both MHL principal contributors, to open currently inaccessible public health collections to researchers while developing best practices for enabling access to special collections containing protected health information and other types of restricted records.

The project will open the collections of seven leaders in the field of public health. Those being processed by the Center include the professional papers of Stephen Lagakos (known for his AIDS research and work linking poor water conditions to public health problems), Erich Lindemann (specialist in social and disaster psychiatry and community mental health), and Arnold Relman (a former editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine* who has written on the economic, ethical, legal, and social aspects of health care). Hopkins will process the collections of William and Miriam Pauls Hardy (audiologists who pioneered the screening of children for hearing loss), E. V. McCollum (who discovered vitamins A and D), Frank Polk (early leading AIDS researcher), and Barbara Starfield (known for her work on primary care and health policy). Access to these currently hidden collections will open major primary sources to historians, policy makers, educators, and students to inform both our historical and current understanding of a range of pressing health issues: health equity and access to primary care; health screening and nutrition; community mental health; and the AIDS epidemic.

Contemporary debates in the field of public health, ranging from the possible role of universal health insurance to discourse around fundamental human rights and global health, are products of historical paths that must be contextualized. Through pooling collections and resources, the Center and Hopkins can reveal the national character of concerns ranging from AIDS to the equitable delivery of health services. Grant funding will also enable the Center and Hopkins to address the special collections community's need for best practices to process and describe collections containing restricted records. Whether privacy is legally mandated (as with HIPAA and FERPA), imposed by parent organizations (as governed by an institutional records schedule), or applied per local practice, all repositories maintain records that pose significant challenges to access.

The MHL is a digital curation collaborative among some of the world's leading medical libraries that promotes free and open access to quality historical resources in medicine, the means by which readers and scholars across a multitude of disciplines can examine the interrelated nature of medicine and society, both to inform contemporary medicine and strengthen understanding of the world in which we live. The MHL's growing

collection of digitized medical rare books, pamphlets, journals, and films number in the tens of thousands, with representative works from each of the past six centuries, all of which are available through the Internet Archive.

Project work commenced April 15, 2013 and will continue through April 2014. Kathryn Hammond Baker, Deputy Director at the Countway's Center for the History of Medicine, will serve as Principal Investigator for Countway, and Phoebe Evans Letocha, Collections Management Archivist at the Chesney Medical Archives, will serve as Principal Investigator for the Hopkins part of the collaborative project. Project Archivists are Amber M. LaFontaine (Countway) and Linda Klouzal (Hopkins).

The Project has created a publicly-accessible wiki that may be of interest to archivists and researchers:

<https://wiki.med.harvard.edu/Countway/ArchivalCollaboratives/PrivatePractices>. Look to the wiki for project documentation, bibliographies, calls for participants in project activities, and information about upcoming events. For more information, please contact Kathryn Hammond Baker.