



Finding Facts In Fiction- A Road To Incorporate Systems Based Care In CAP Fellowship Training

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The authors have reviewed the policies on disclosure, and all report no conflict of interest

Background

- ❖ Systems based practice is one of the ACGME's six mandated core competencies.
- ❖ There is a rising emphasis on familiarizing future physicians with applying "**systems thinking**" in a larger context of healthcare.
- ❖ Traditional teaching methods fail to impart the art of applying systems thinking into larger context of patient care.
- ❖ Reasons include: Paucity of research and inadequacy of conventional teaching methods
- ❖ Necessitates novel teaching techniques to accelerate systems based training.
- ❖ The idea of understanding medicine through literature and fiction has gained popularity in recent years.
- ❖ Incorporating literature into medical education not been explored yet as an effective tool to understand and impart systems training to trainees.

Concept

- ❖ We propose to integrate the education of systems based care through reading fiction in a monthly book club, sponsored by the Child Psychiatry Department.
- ❖ Goals: Select, analyze and appraise fictional novels and scrutinize each system found, discussing pertinent clinical cases/challenges encountered.
- ❖ Discussions paired with reader's own real-life experiences with challenging cases and evidence based practices prevalent in that area.
- ❖ Contrast of views amongst participants of different specialties, → triggered debates → allowed for a rich and meaningful understanding of various themes.
- ❖ System-based themes that emerged include:
 - Poverty
 - Crime and juvenile justice
 - Cultural competence and racial bias
 - Education system and aftermath of bullying
 - Foster care and neglect
 - Family system driven care

Developmental Disabilities System

- ❖ Socially awkward and mathematically savant Christopher Boone in "**The Curious Incident Of The Dog in the Nighttime**", depicts a child on high functioning spectrum of ASD, and highlights his unique strengths.
- ❖ "**The Rosie Project**" introduces a genetics professor "Don", unaware that he has Asperger's disorder. Don's struggles with language, social awkwardness, and rigidity foil his success attained by those same attributes.
- ❖ Boo Radley in "**To Kill A Mockingbird**" has a questionable diagnosis of PDD in a time where the disorder was still undefined. Shunned and feared by the neighborhood and "imprisoned" by his own family, his life reflects the emotional abuse, neglect and stigma in that era.



Child Welfare System

- ❖ "**White Oleander**" follows a resilient teenager Astrid who is forced to adapt to a myriad of foster care placements (many of them abusive) until she can live on her own terms as an adult. It takes readers on a sociological tour of Los Angeles's disparate foster care system.
- ❖ Glimpses of foster care life can be seen in both "**Harry Potter**" series and "**The Goldfinch**"

Family Systems

- ❖ "**Ordinary People**" is a family drama based on a privileged middle class white family dealing with death, suicide and dysfunction. The surface calm of the family conceals a real lack of communication, which interferes with the younger son's struggle to come to terms with his older brother's accidental death.
- ❖ "**The Lowland**" spans four generations of a Bengali family, flowing between India and the United States, shifting perspectives from childhood to adulthood, family dynamics, loss, volatile youth idealism and immigrants struggling with lost connections.

Mental Health

- ❖ "**The Pact**" chronicles a teenager struggle with depression and guilt in the aftermath of a suicide pact.
- ❖ "**Silver Linings Playbook**" depicts mania in one of its main character "Pat"
- ❖ "**I Know This Much Is True**" describes the impact of childhood abuse on development, paranoid schizophrenia, family dysfunction and navigating the mental health system.

Education System

- ❖ "**Reconstructing Amelia**" examines the serious consequences of social media, bullying and hazing on a private schooled child and her unsuspecting parent, following an apparent suicide.
- ❖ "**The Outsiders**" follows two rival peer groups in a high school divided by socioeconomic standing, involves gang violence, delinquency, underage drinking, smoking, and suicide, and inspired schools to change how literature is taught.

Historical Perspective

- ❖ "**The Alienist**" weaves a plot of child crime and punishment, in an era where children rights were not yet established, by a perpetrator who was also a victim. Explores the details of tenement life and immigrant experience in NY. Sketches a picture of early child psychiatry centers which contradicted common belief and stigma.
- ❖ "**To Kill a Mockingbird**" is set in a segregated America hit by the Great Depression in the 1930's.

Juvenile Justice System

- ❖ "**We need to talk about Kevin**" is narrated from the perspective of an ambivalent mother, questioning the "Nature vs Nurture" contribution to her son Kevin's sociopathic tendencies and subsequent juvenile prison system involvement following a school massacre.
- ❖ "**Monster**" captures a teenage boy Steve's trial for murder, exploring the intricate details and inconsistencies of juvenile prison systems in America in the background of poverty and racism..

Cultural Competence

- ❖ "**The Bluest Eye**" provides a historical perspective on racism, and portrays eye-opening insights into a young black girl's desire to be white.
- ❖ "**The Kite Runner**" offers an in-depth view of Afghan culture and religion in the backdrop of the political unrest in Afghanistan during the rise of the Taliban regime.
- ❖ "**Americanah**" explores black culture in 3 countries : America, Nigeria and UK and an immigrant's quest of self invention.

Future Directions

- ❖ Identify relevant books to grow resource library
- ❖ Incorporate reading fiction in training curricula e.g carving out didactic time, providing incentives like free food, etc
- ❖ Combine and enhance reading with other enriching experiences e.g watching book based movies, pertinent case discussions, pairing with evidence based articles
- ❖ Create and standardize a tool to evaluate efficacy of this measure in imparting systems based knowledge and development of empathy in trainees

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