

## The Amygdala and the Stethoscope: How Emotions Affect the Practice of Medicine A Lecture by **DANIELLE OFRI**

Monday, September 22, 2014, Mayer Auditorium, Health Sciences Campus

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As part of the Medical Humanities, Arts and Ethics Series, which engages core health issues in society today, we will present an afternoon with essayist and physician Danielle Ofri. Renowned for her use of dramatic stories, Ofri will explore how emotions permeate clinical decisions and provoke physicians, despite their commitment to the scientific method, to act in ways that are not nearly as rational and evidence-based as they may think.

Danielle Ofri, MD, PhD, an associate professor of medicine at New York University School of Medicine, has her clinical home at Bellevue Hospital, the oldest public hospital in the country. She writes about medicine and the patient-physician relationship for the *New York Times* and is the founder and editor in chief of the *Bellevue Literary Review*, the first literary journal to arise from a medical setting. Ofri is the recipient of the John P. McGovern Award from the American Medical Writers Association for “preeminent contributions to medical communication.”

**ROSS SCIMECA** of the USC Libraries has selected the following resources to help you learn more about Dr. Ofri and the topics she will discuss.

### The Amygdala

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According to About.com Biology: “The amygdala is an almond shaped mass of nuclei located deep within the temporal lobe of the brain. It is a limbic system structure that is involved in many of our emotions and motivations, particularly those that are related to survival. The amygdala is involved in the processing of emotions such as fear, anger and pleasure. The amygdala is also responsible for determining what memories are stored and where the memories are stored in the brain. It is thought that this determination is based on how huge an emotional response an event invokes.”

### The Question Presented

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The question that this important lecture discusses is simply this: since all medical doctors are human, and all humans are affected by the amygdala, how do the emotions of a doctor impact the delivery of medical care to the patient? How can a doctor become alert to situations in which emotions might have a negative impact and understand how emotions can exert a positive influence on doctor-patient connection? The examination of these questions is essential for any medical student.

### Books by Dr. Ofri

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#### ***Medicine in Translation: Journeys with my Patients (2009)***

By Danielle Ofri

Available online at [site.ebrary.com/lib/uscisd/docDetail.action?docID=10355634](http://site.ebrary.com/lib/uscisd/docDetail.action?docID=10355634)

#### ***Singular Intimacies: Becoming a Doctor at Bellevue (2003)***

By Danielle Ofri

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