Brandy Schillace, PhD, writes at the intersections of medicine, history, and literature. As a scholar and field researcher, she works to uncover unique and powerful stories, proving truth is stranger (and more fascinating!) than fiction.

Brandy works as Research Associate and Public Engagement Fellow for the Dittrick Museum of Medical History (Case Western Reserve University) and Managing Editor of *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, a cross-cultural medical anthropology journal. Co-PI of NEH-funded digital humanities project, author of DEATH’S SUMMER COAT (E&T UK, Pegasus US), exploring cultural approaches to death and dying, and co-editor of UNNATURAL REPRODUCTIONS (Cambria), a collection on “monstrous” birth across time—and genre.

Brandy’s current book explores the science behind steampunk—that clockwork world of gadgets and gizmos (and Victorian debonair). You can find her TEDx talk at http://www.tedxcle.com/brandy-shillace/. Brandy also writes for Huffington Post, InsideHigherEd, H-net, and Centre for Medical Humanities. She directs and speaks for CONVERSATIONS, a series of then-and-now history of medicine talks, and has been an invited speaker for the University at Buffalo, University College of Dublin, Manchester University, the New York Academy of Medicine, Little Atoms Radio and various podcasts. Across borders, beneath streets, buried in vaults and in the basement of libraries and museums: it’s the stories that matter, the human story at the center of medicine.

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DEATH’S SUMMER COAT
What the History of Death and Dying Teaches Us About Life and Living
BRANDY SCHILLACE

In the tradition of Being Mortal, Brandy Schillace looks at what we can learn from the incredibly diverse ways in which humans have dealt with mortality in different times and places

“Vivid, scholarly, enthralling, and surprisingly touching, Death’s Summer Coat is skillfully stitched together.” —Rupert Callender, editor of The Natural Death Handbook

“A lively, panoramic view of our approach to death and dying that asks essential questions, and offers important insights, into the inevitable.” —Bess Lovejoy, author of Rest in Pieces

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“Schillace’s book opens by lamenting the curtailment of western death culture. She surveys other cultures’ death practices and offers a history of western attitudes to death. But there are hopeful signs that we may be swinging back towards a more personalized, respectful and mutually negotiated model of medical care.” —The Guardian

Death is something we all confront—it touches our families, our homes, our hearts. And yet we have grown used to denying its existence, treating it as an enemy to be beaten back with medical advances.

We are living at a unique point in human history. People are living longer than ever, yet the longer we live, the more taboo and alien our mortality becomes. Yet we, and our loved ones, still remain mortal. People today still struggle with this fact, as we have done throughout our entire history. What led us to this point? What drove us to sanitize death and make it foreign and unfamiliar?

Schillace shows how talking about death, and the rituals associated with it, can help provide answers. It also brings us closer together—conversation and community are just as important for living as for dying. Some of the stories are strikingly unfamiliar; others are far more familiar than you might suppose. But all reveal much about the present—and about ourselves.

Dr. Brandy Schillace is the managing editor of the international health journal Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry and teaches at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Brandy has lectured at the New York Academy of Medicine and writes for The Huffington Post and Inside Higher Ed.

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Publications

NON-FICTION BOOKS

Unnatural Reproductions and Monstrosity: Birth of the Monster in Literature, Film, and Media (Edited collection, co-editor Andrea Wood. 2014, Cambria Press)

Death’s Summer Coat: What Death and Dying can Tell us about Life and Living (Elliott and Thompson, UK; Pegasus, US)

FICTION BOOKS

High Stakes (Book 1 of The Jacob Maresbeth Chronicles April 25, 2014, Cooperative Press)

Villagers (Book 2 of The Jacob Maresbeth Chronicles 2015, Cooperative Press)

The Vatican (Book 3 of The Jacob Maresbeth Chronicles 2016, Cooperative Press)

Brandy Schillace: “Academic acumen, historical analysis [and] warm humanity”
—Richard Littledale

SELECTED ESSAYS

— “Beyond the Walls: Museums, Medical Humanities, and Community Building.” Center for Medical Humanities, Durham, UK
— “Birth Rights: Exploring the Medical Fight Over Labor in the 18th Century” Atlas Obscura
— “Curing “Moral Disability”: Brain Trauma and Self-Control in Victorian Fiction,” Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry
— “‘Temporary Failure of Mind’: Déjà vu, Epilepsy and The Mysteries of Udolpho.” Eighteenth Century Studies
Public Talks | Media

VIDEO

**Steampunk Science: True Tales of Innovation in a Steam-powered Age.** TEDxCLE 2015 // UNTOLD. We celebrate the underground. The uncomfortable.

PODCASTS

**Death’s Summer Coat**: Little Atoms Radio Broadcast, back to back interviews with Brandy Schillace and Caitlin Doughty about changes in the culture of death. 2015

**On Cultural Approaches to Death and Dying**: MOCA: Dirge, Soundcloud, 2014

**Vampires and VD**: Podcast for the *Sick City Project*, Wellcome Collection, London. 2011

Selected Lectures and Public Talks

− “Naissance Macabre,” New York Academy of Medicine, Vesalius 500, 2014
− “Marvels, Mavericks, and Medicine: Cleveland’s Dittrick Museum,” Happy Dog University, hosted by Belt Magazine. 2014.
− “‘Children of the Night’: Dracula, Degeneration and Syphilitic Births at fin de siècle,” Morbid Anatomy Library, New York, New York, 2013
− “The Father of British Midwifery and the Mother of Inventions,” Irish Centre for Nursing and Midwifery, University College of Dublin, Dublin, Ireland, 2011.

CONVERSATIONS (Stimulating Discussions across Time and Space) [Companion Site]

− **Conversation**: “Bodies Wanted—Anatomy and the Dissection Debate” (*lecture free with museum admission*) Cleveland Museum of Natural History; Nov 4th, 2015
− **Conversation**: “Edge of Disaster–Vaccines and Epidemics” Baker Nord Center for the Humanities, Clark Hall 207 January 21st, 2016
− **Conversation**: “It Runs like Clockwork–Automatons, Artificial Hearts, and Machines of Medicine” (*lecture free with museum admission*) MOCA Cleveland (Museum of Contemporary Art) Mar 3th, 2016
− **Conversation**: “The End of the World as We Know it”–PTSD, Shock, and Conflict” Inamori Center for Ethics, Seminar Room May 12th, 2016
− **Conversation**: “Not so “Elementary”—getting from Sherlock to CSI” Cleveland Public Library Downtown, Brett Hall, August 6th, 2016