

# Lecture Outline: Western Medicine – The Professionals

Introduction: The mystique  
of medical professionals

## 1. The Medical Professional:

- Defining medical professionalism
- Medical hierarchies

## 2. Before Biomedical Professionals:

- Role of women
- Home
- Holistic bodies

## 3. Characteristics of Medical Professionalism:

- Organization & culture
- Education & knowledge

## Conclusion: Dismantling the biomedical mystique

- Trust in medical authority
- Patients as consumers
- New professional models?

# Doctor as Hero

# Doctor as Hero: Norman Bethune

Canadian  
Nurse,

1950s

**Doctor as Hero: Norman Bethune**

# Nurse as Heroine

Nurse Edith Cavell, 1865-1915

**Nurse as Heroine**

# Sociological Definitions:

- Autonomous group
- Specialized knowledge
- Professional monopoly
- Restricted entry
- Self-regulating & self-licensing
- Notion of service

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# Women, Home & Healing

Medical students, 1878

Red Cross Nurses,  
Nelson, BC  
1900

# Nurses at Grace Hospital, Winnipeg, 1914

# The Nurse-Doctor Game:

*Nurse:* Mr Brown has been complaining of pains in his legs for more than 6 hours today. He appears to be quite uncomfortable.

*Doctor:* Is this a new symptom for Mr Brown or is it recurring?

*Nurse:* Mr Brown complained of a similar pain last week when he was admitted. He was given xxxx and it seemed to diminish.

*Doctor:* OK. Lets try xxxx. What dosage did he require to get relief?

*Nurse:* 3 m/hour.

*Doctor:* OK. xxxx, 3 m/hour, nurse, please.

*Nurse:* Thank you, doctor.

**Anatomy Class, University of Toronto,  
1958**

## Andrew Steinmetz, *Wardlife: The Apprenticeship of a Young Writer as a Hospital Clerk*

In come a surgery team on rounds. The chief resident leads the way, followed closely by his brood, a mix of junior residents and students hugging clipboards and nibbling Styrofoam cups... Circling the unit, going from room to room, they meet up with another lost patrol... The two chiefs shake hands, receive each other and review notes...

I know most of these doctors, fellows, residents, interns, students, their politics, religion, sexuality, all obvious things. They pass years in the hospital, learning, training, serving. It's a gradual metamorphosis. A brainwash. Sleep deprived and overworked, they earn their stripes like members of some fanatical cult.

# Bio-Medical Knowledge Systems



# Registered Nurse, 1950s

**Trust in medical authority?**

# Medical dominance?

**Trust in medical authority?**

# Complementary & Alternative Therapies (CAM)

# New professional models

# New professional models