

***WHAT YOU
DON'T KNOW CAN
HURT YOU:***

***EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE
AND CONCEPTUALLY
IMPOVERISHED
HEALTH
PROMOTION***

ALISON REIHELD ASSOC. PROF. OF PHILOSOPHY DIR. OF WMST

HIRAM SUMMER SEMINAR

6/7/2018

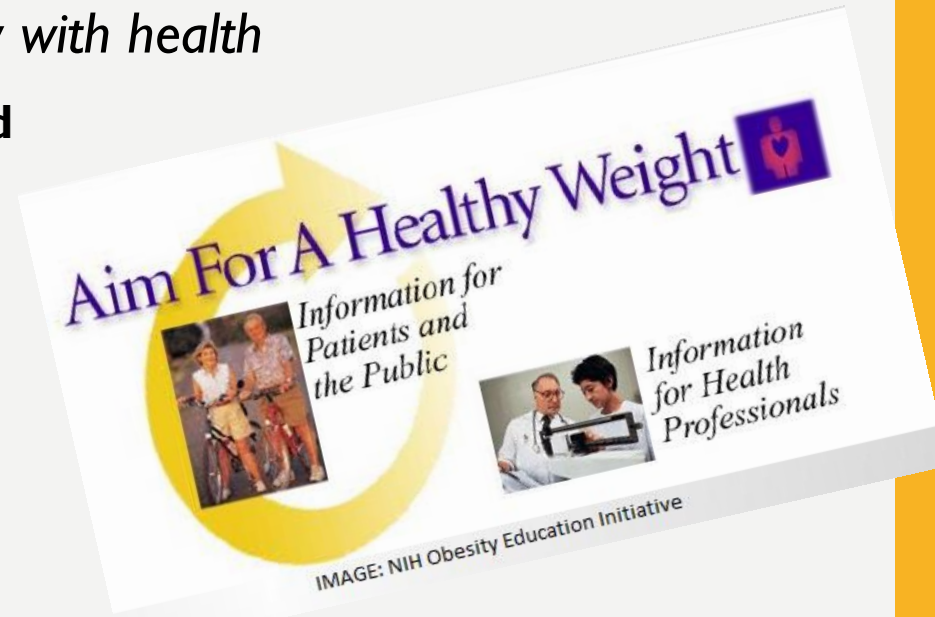
EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE AND ITS HARMS



Public health campaigns and clinical care of obese persons rely on a family of simplistic reductions.

1) *Body size correlates reliably with health*

Big bodies are diseased



2) Obesity is caused by over-eating, and weight gain/loss is a simple calories-in-calories-out equation.



Images: LA County Public Health Portion Control Campaign, 2012

3) *The locus of responsibility for obesity falls upon the individual rather than on systemic features contributing to ill health*



4) Physician diagnosis of fat patients' ills as originating in fatness

Doctors Told Her She Was Just Fat. She Actually Had Cancer.

REBECCA HILES AND MILLIONS OF WOMEN LIKE HER ARE GETTING JUDGED TOO QUICKLY BY THEIR DOCTORS — AND IT CAN MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.



by MAYA DUSENBERY APR 17, 2018

12.4K



A

t 17 years old, Rebecca Hiles came down with bronchitis and walking pneumonia. Three years later, she was still coughing every day. "Doctors said, 'If you lost weight, you wouldn't have this many coughing fits,'" she recalls. One night, she started coughing up blood, but when she went to the ER, her doctors said it was probably just a broken blood vessel and sent her home with an inhaler. "That was the first time I started to think that maybe it wasn't just weight," she says.

 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

[ABOUT APA](#)

[TOPICS](#)

[PUBLICATIONS & DATABASES](#)

[PSYCHO](#)

[Home](#) // [News & Events](#) // [Press Room](#) // [Press Releases](#)

August 3, 2017

Fat Shaming in the Doctor's Office Can Be Mentally and Physically Harmful

Health care providers may offer weight loss advice in place of medical treatment, researchers say

In one study of over 300 autopsy reports, obese patients were 1.65 times more likely than others to have significant undiagnosed medical conditions (e.g., endocarditis, ischemic bowel disease or lung carcinoma), indicating misdiagnosis or inadequate access to health care.

STAT [Sections](#) [Topics](#) [Multimedia](#) [Newsletters](#) [More](#)

[Log In](#) [Subscribe](#)

FIRST OPINION

My sister's cancer might have been diagnosed sooner — if doctors could have seen beyond her weight

By LAURA FRASER / AUGUST 16, 2017



WHAT'S THIS EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE STUFF?



EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE: harm is done to a person (an “agent”) in their capacity as a knower; this harm is unfair (Fricker)

HERMENEUTIC/AL INJUSTICE: when power relations and structural prejudice undermine the knower’s ability to make sense of their own experiences, or to explain their knowledge to others; deprived of the resources they need

NONCOMPLIANT

LAZY

TESTIMONIAL INJUSTICE: knower suffers from a “credibility deficit” in the “credibility economy” and their claims of knowledge are given less weight

Often based on “identity-prejudicial stereotypes”

TESTIMONIAL SMOTHERING: speaker no longer speaks, or heavily edits speech, because they expect the audience to discount them (Dotson)

May also have lost confidence in their own ability to know: self-doubt; low self-esteem; poor self-concept as a knower

TAKEHOME POINTS

Simplistic conceptual frameworks

Epistemic injustice

patient withdrawal from medical care

internalization of individualized responsibility

WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS:

