

**The Faculty of Medicine of Harvard University  
Curriculum Vitae**

**Date Prepared:** Jan 2, 2026

**Name:** Luke Messac

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**Education:**

05/2008	AB	Social Studies	Harvard University Cambridge, MA
11/2016	PhD	History and Sociology of Science (Advisor: Robert Aronowitz)	University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA
05/2018	MD	Medicine	University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA

**Postdoctoral Training:**

2018-2022	Resident	Emergency Medicine	Brown University/Rhode Island Hospital Providence, RI
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**Faculty Academic Appointments:**

2022-Present	Instructor	Emergency Medicine	Harvard Medical School Boston, MA
2025-Present	Lecturer	History of Science	Harvard College Cambridge, MA
2017-2019	Adjunct Faculty	History of Medicine	University of Global Health Equity

**Appointments at Hospitals/Affiliated Institutions:**

2022-Present	Attending Physician	Emergency Medicine	Brigham and Women's Hospital Boston, MA
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**Other Professional Positions:**

Year(s)	Position Title	Institution	Level of effort
2009-2010	Research Assistant to Dr. Paul Farmer	Harvard Medical School Department of Global Health and Social Medicine	
2019-2021	Critical Care Transport Physician	LifePACT Transport Service, Lifespan	

**Major Administrative Leadership Positions:**

**Local**

2017	Course Director, Principles of Global Health Equity	University of Global Health Equity
2019-2020	Journal Club Co-Director	Brown/Rhode Island Hospital Emergency Medicine Residency

**Committee Service:**

**Local**

2013-2018	Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics 2013-2018	University of Pennsylvania Fellow
2024-Present	Patient Experience Committee 2024-Present	Mass General Brigham Department of Emergency Medicine Member
2024-Present	Office of IDEaS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Social Justice) 2024-Present	Mass General Brigham Department of Emergency Medicine Core Team Member
2024-Present	Chair's Committee on the Advancement of Women	Mass General Brigham Department of Emergency Medicine

2024-Present Member

## Regional

2024- Government Affairs Committee Massachusetts Chapter, American College of Emergency Physicians  
2024-Present Committee Member

## International

Year(s)	Name of Committee	Institution/Organization	Title of Role(s)
2013-2018	Lancet Commission on Global Access to Palliative Care and Pain Control	Scientific Advisory Committee Member	

## Professional Societies:

2010-	American Association for the History of Medicine	
	2021-2022	Program Committee, Annual Conference
2010-2015	American Medical Student Association	
	2013-2015	Student Editor, <i>The New Physician</i>
	2013-2015	Board Member
2010-	African Studies Association	
2018-	American College of Emergency Physicians	
2018-	Society for Academic Emergency Medicine	

## Editorial Activities:

- **Ad hoc Reviewer**

*Annals of Emergency Medicine*  
*Bulletin of the History of Medicine*  
*Isis*  
*JAMA Health Forum*  
*JAMA Network Open*  
*Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*  
*New England Journal of Medicine*

• **Other Editorial Roles**

Cases in Global Social Medicine, Co-Editor, *The Lancet*, 2025-2026

**Honors and Prizes:**

Year(s)	Name of Honor/Prize	Awarding Organization	Achievement for which awarded
2007	Truman Scholar	Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation	Scholarship
2008	Hoopes Senior Thesis Prize	Harvard University	Scholarship
2008	Gardner Fellowship	Harvard University	Scholarship
2010	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Gamble Scholarship	University of Pennsylvania	Scholarship
2014	History of Medicine Essay Prize	University of Pennsylvania	Scholarship
2018	Gold Humanism in Medicine Honors Society	University of Pennsylvania	Service
2020	Pasichow Advocacy Award	Rhode Island Chapter, American College of Emergency Physicians	Advocacy
2021	Emergency Medicine Residents' Association 25 under 45	Emergency Medicine Residents' Association	Advocacy and Scholarship
2022	Haffenreffer Family House Staff Excellence Award	Rhode Island Hospital	Clinical Excellence and Scholarship
2025	Excellence in Professionalism Award	Brigham and Women's Hospital	Clinical Excellence

**Report of Funded and Unfunded Projects**

**Past**

2013	Moral Hazards, Moral Economies, and Health User Fees in Malawi GAPSA-Provost Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Innovation, University of Pennsylvania
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PI (\$6,000 — total direct costs)

The goals of this project were to investigate the reasons for the imposition of health care user fees in Malawi, and to measure the impact of these fees on access to care.

2015-2016      Economic Thought in the Formulation of Health Policy in Malawi  
Teece Dissertation Research Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania  
PI (\$5,000 — total direct costs)  
The aim of this project was to evaluate the impact of various theories of economic development on health care financing and delivery in Malawi.

## Current

2024-2028      Developing a Model of “Medical Redlining” Through Financial Barriers to Care that Have Shaped Racial and Class Discrimination at US Hospitals  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
PI (\$365,200 — direct costs)  
This project proposes to develop a historically and econometrically informed model of medical redlining by identifying the financial barriers to care that have shaped processes of racial and class discrimination at hospitals in the United States. Even after the end of *de jure* racial discrimination, disproportionately Black and Latinx low-income patients have been excluded from high-quality hospital care through aggressive medical debt collection. Building on long-term historical investigation as well as a national database of hospital financial assistance policies, I will document racial and socioeconomic differences in patterns of: 1) financial assistance; 2) billing and collections; 3) delayed and forgone care; 4) hospital advocacy for regulations and laws pertaining to the issues listed above; and 5) health outcomes attributable to forgone care due to medical debt.

2023-2027      Differentiating Hemorrhagic from Ischemic Stroke in Settings without Advanced Imaging Using Machine Learning  
Brigham Minority Faculty Career Development Award  
PI (\$100,000 — total direct costs)  
In this study we will train a supervised machine learning algorithm to classify patients as having acute hemorrhagic or acute ischemic strokes for use in settings without computed tomography or other advanced head imaging. The training data includes inputs such as blood biomarkers as well as historical and physical exam elements.

2024-2025      Lancet Case Series in Global Social Medicine  
Pasqual Maragall Foundation  
PI (\$22,950 — total direct costs)  
In this project I am helping to lead a case series on global social medicine to be published in *The Lancet*. This series brings together authors in clinical medicine and social science from around the world to demonstrate the importance of social theory for medical care.

## Unfunded Current Projects

2023- Present	Linking Triage Data to Patient Outcomes to Evaluate Validity of Triage Criteria at Koidu Government Hospital Partnership with Partners In Health in Sierra Leone Co-PI This study aims to determine the validity of the South African Triage Scale (SATS) in predicting in-hospital outcomes for patients with different chief complaints in a government hospital in Sierra Leone.
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## Report of Local Teaching and Training

### Teaching of Students in Courses:

2013	Medicine and Society Medical Students (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania 2 hrs per wk for 10 wks
2013	Introduction to the History of Science Undergraduates	University of Pennsylvania 4 hrs per wk for 12 wks
2014	Health and Societies: Global Perspectives Undergraduates	University of Pennsylvania 4 hrs per wk for 12 wks
2014	American Health Policy Undergraduates	University of Pennsylvania 4 hrs per wk for 12 wks
2014	Health and Social Justice Graduate Students	Harvard University 3 hrs per wk for 12 wks
2023	PY120: Essential of the Profession Medical Students (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	Harvard Medical School 6 hrs per wk for 4 wks
2023	GenEd 1093 Undergraduate Students	Harvard College 1.5 hour lectures (2)
2024	PY120: Essentials of the Profession Medical Students (1 <sup>st</sup> Year)	Harvard Medical School 6 hrs per week for 2 weeks
2024	GenEd 1093 Undergraduate Students	Harvard College 5 hrs per week for 12 weeks

### Formal Teaching of Residents, Clinical Fellows and Research Fellows (post-docs):

2018	Albumin Administration in Emergency Medicine Emergency medicine residents	Rhode Island Hospital 30 minute lecture
2020	Amyopathic Dermatomyositis Emergency medicine residents	Rhode Island Hospital 45 minute lecture
2022	History of Medical Debt Collection Emergency medicine residents	Rhode Island Hospital One hour lecture
2023	Medical Debt Emergency medicine residents	HAEMR Residency, Brigham and Women's Hospital One hour lecture

### **Clinical Supervisory and Training Responsibilities:**

2019-2022	Emergency Department Doctoring Student Preceptor 1 <sup>st</sup> year medical students	Rhode Island Hospital 8 4-hr sessions
2023-	Emergency Department training of residents and medical students	Brigham & Women's Hospital Approximately 200 hrs/year

### **Research Supervisory and Training Responsibilities:**

#### **Formally Mentored Harvard Students (Medical, Dental, Graduate, and Undergraduate):**

2023- present	Imani Fonfield, Harvard College Class of 2025 Supervised research on hospital financial assistance through Faculty Aide Program, co-authored articles in <i>Inquiry</i> and <i>Health Affairs</i> . Supervisor on senior undergraduate History of Science honors thesis on history of Plymouth Hospital in Boston. Awarded summa cum laude and Harvard's Veritas Award (given to a senior who has shown exceptional commitment to intellectual curiosity)
2023-2024	Malaika Zaidi, Harvard College Class of 2024 Supervised senior undergraduate History of Science honors thesis on history of immigration and US welfare reform (awarded Magna Cum Laude)

### **Other Mentored Trainees and Faculty:**

2024- present	Blake Shultz, Harvard Affiliated Emergency Medicine Residency Class of 2026 Co-authored invited series of articles on costs of care and medical debt, published in <i>Journal of Hospital Medicine</i>
2024- present	Ahmed Ahmed, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Internal Medicine Residency

Co-authored invited series of articles on costs of care and medical debt, published in *Journal of Hospital Medicine*

**Formal Teaching of Peers (e.g., CME and other continuing education courses):**

- No presentations below were sponsored by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties/outside entities*
- Those presentations below sponsored by outside entities are so noted and the sponsor(s) is (are) identified.*

**Local Invited Presentations:**

- No presentations below were sponsored by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties/outside entities*
- Those presentations below sponsored by outside entities are so noted and the sponsor(s) is (are) identified.*

2011	Redefining the Possible: The Global AIDS Response. Guest Lecture to Harvard EdX Online Course
	SW25X: Global Health Case Studies from a Biosocial Perspective
2016	When the “Warm Heart of Africa” Turns Hot: Protest Against Corporate Land Alienation in Malawi Amidst Media Indifference (Selected Oral Abstract)
	Gender, Sexuality and Women Studies Graduate Student Conference
	Philadelphia, PA
2018	No More to Spend: Neglect and the Construction of Scarcity in Malawi’s History of Health Care (Invited Presentation)
	Africa Initiative, Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs
	Providence, RI
2023	Book Launch Event for Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine
	Harvard Book Store, Cambridge, MA
2023	No More to Spend: Political Economy of Scarcity in Global Health
	Course Lecture to Harvard GenEd1093: Who Lives and Who Dies
	October 5, 2023
2023	History of Debt Collection in American Medicine
	Course Lecture to Harvard GenEd1093: Who Lives and Who Dies
	November 14, 2023
2023	History of Debt Collection in American Medicine
	Course Lecture to Harvard undergraduate sociology course “Poverty in the United States”
	November 14, 2023
2024	The Transformation of Medical Debt Collection in the United States

	Invited Lecture to Massachusetts Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program Boston, MA October 9, 2024
2024	The Threat of Medical Debt: Hospitals, Patients and the Ends of Care Invited Keynote Lecture to Institute for Healthcare Improvement Leadership Alliance Fall Meeting Boston, MA October 25, 2024
2025	Medical Debt Collection as Administrative Harm Invited Lecture to Conference on Administrative Harm, Professionalism and Teamwork in Medicine Harvard Medical School Boston, MA April 24, 2025

### **Report of Regional, National and International Invited Teaching and Presentations**

*No presentations below were sponsored by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties/outside entities*

*Those presentations below sponsored by outside entities are so noted and the sponsor(s) is (are) identified.*

#### **Regional**

2016	Legacies of Interwar Colonial Health Research in British Africa, 1920-1953. 10 <sup>th</sup> Annual Greater New York Area African History Workshop (Selected Oral Abstract) Philadelphia, PA
2016	From a Trickle to a Flood: Causes and Consequences of the Rise in Attendance at Government Health Facilities in Nyasaland/Malawi, 1953-1980 (Selected Oral Abstract) North Eastern Workshop on Southern Africa Burlington, VT
2023	Book Event for Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine Books on the Square Providence, RI September 9, 2023
2023	Book Event for Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine Yale School of Medicine New Haven, CT November 28, 2023
2024	Advocacy in Emergency Medicine Panel discussion at Brown Emergency Medicine Residency Conference Providence, RI May 24, 2024
2024	The Transformation of Medical Debt Collection and the Financialization of Health Care Delivery Invited Lecture to Consumer Law Course at Brooklyn Law School

	New York, NY
	October 10, 2024
2024	Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine Carlin Foundation Annual Lecture on Healthcare Innovation Jefferson Humanities Forum Sidney Kimmel Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University Philadelphia, PA
	October 29, 2024
2024	Medical Debt, Financial Assistance and Presumptive Eligibility Grand Rounds, Department of Emergency Medicine Rhode Island Hospital/Brown University Providence, RI
	December 11, 2024
2025	The Transformation of Medical Debt Collection and the Financialization of Health Care Delivery Invited Lecture, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai New York City, NY
	February 11, 2025
2025	Medical Debt Collection and the Financialization of Health Grand Rounds, Department of Emergency Medicine Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai New York City, NY
	February 12, 2025
2025	Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine Invited Lecture, William Rhodes Center for International Economics and Finance Brown University Providence, RI
	March 21, 2025
2025	Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine Invited Lecture, Residency Program in Social Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center New York City, NY
	March 27, 2025

## National

2011	Fighting Medical Apartheid at Home and Abroad: ACT UP Philadelphia and Perceived Commonality of Experience in the Global AIDS Treatment Access Movement (Selected Oral Abstract) National Conference for Physician-Scholars in the Social Sciences and Humanities Chicago, IL
2011	Lazarus at America's Doorstep: Elites and Framing in Appropriations for International AIDS (Selected Oral Abstract) American Association for the History of Medicine Philadelphia, PA
2013	Technopolitics and 'Ticky' Charges: User Fees in Malawian History (Selected Oral Abstract) National Conference on Physician-Scholars in the Social Sciences and Humanities

	San Francisco, CA
2014	Far From the Tree: Cambridge Economists, Postwar Development and the Political Uses of National Income Accounting in Southern Africa (Selected Oral Abstract) African Studies Association (U.S.)
	Indianapolis, IN
2016	Counter-Revolutionary Therapeutics: Health as a Political Palliative During the Federation Years, 1953-63 (Selected Oral Abstract) American Association for the History of Medicine
	Minneapolis, MN
2018	From Modernization Theory to Human Capital: Health in International Development Discourse and Practice, 1960-80 (Selected Oral Abstract) Policy History Conference
	Nashville, TN
2016	We Will Have to Wait for Riots and Disturbances: Budget Cuts in a Uniquely Quiet Nyasaland, 1935-1945 (Selected Oral Abstract) African Studies Association (US)
	Washington, DC
2018	Structural Competency in Global Health Education Society for Applied Anthropology
	Philadelphia, PA
2021	The Pathophysiology of Medical Debt Collection / Invited Grand Rounds Department of Emergency Medicine, University of Nevada-Las Vegas
	Las Vegas, NV
2021	Keeping It Professional: Global Health History and Physician Responsibility in the Face of Inadequate Resources (Invited Grand Rounds) Department of Emergency Medicine, University of Pennsylvania
	Philadelphia, PA
2022	Your Money or Your Life: A History of Medical Debt Collection in America (Invited Keynote) National Conference for Physician-Scholars in the Social Sciences and Humanities
	University of California Los Angeles
	Los Angeles, CA
2023	Out of the Shadows: Debt Collectors and Debt Abolitionists in American Medicine HumanisEM Conference on Humanities-Based Approaches to Building Community Department of Emergency Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine May 23, 2023.
2023	Medical Debt and Health Inequity: A Historical Perspective. Plenary Presentation at National Medical Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, July 30-August 2, 2023.
2023	Political Economy of Scarcity: History of Global Health. Lecture to Emer8010 course at Weill Cornell Medical College, October 16, 2023.
2023	Your Money or Your Life. Grand Rounds Presentation at Eastern Carolina University Department of Emergency Medicine, Greenville, NC, November 8, 2023.
2023	Trading in Misery: Debt Collection in American Medicine. Abstract Presentation at American Public Health Association, Atlanta, GA, November 12-15, 2023.
2024	Debt Collection in American Medicine. HumanisEM Invited Speaker Series. Johns Hopkins Department of Emergency Medicine, Baltimore, MD. January 17, 2024.
2024	Book Launch Event for Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine. Penn Book Store. Philadelphia, PA. January 24, 2024.

2024 Untangling the Historical Threads of Medical Debt. Invited Lecture at American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation, Online, May 8, 2024.

2024 Dialogues on Medical Journalism, Talk with Stephen Fried, Columbia University, New York City, NY, April 17, 2024.

2024 The Transformation of Medical Debt Collection and the Financialization of Health Care Delivery, Berkeley Center for Social Medicine, Berkeley, CA, September 17, 2024.

2025 Medical Debt Collection in American Medicine. Grand Rounds, Department of Family and Community Medicine, UC Davis Health, Sacramento, CA, April 1, 2025.

2025 Medical Debt Collection and the Financialization of Care. Center for Health Action and Social Medicine Speaker Series, University of California Davis, April 2, 2025.

2025 The Responsibility to Protect: Medical Debt Collection, Hospital Financial assistance and Patient Outcomes. Grand Rounds, Saint Louis University Emergency Medicine, October 22, 2025.

2025 The Responsibility to Protect: Medical Debt Collection, Hospital Financial assistance and Patient Outcomes. Presentation to the National Clinician Scholars Program, University of Michigan, October 30, 2025.

## International

2013 Moral hazards, moral economies, and the combustible politics of health user fees in Malawi (Selected Oral Abstract)  
Southern African Historical Society  
Gaborone, Botswana

2014 No Opiates for the Masses: International Narcotics Control and the Agnotology of Pain in the Postwar Global South (Selected Oral Abstract)  
Society for the Social Studies of Science  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

2015 Health in the Battle Over the Future of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland / Invited Lecture  
University of Botswana History Department Seminar  
Gaborone, Botswana

2015 Drugs for the *Tengatenga*: The Beginnings of Government Medicine in British Nyasaland's Carrier Service During the First World War (Selected Oral Abstract)  
European Labour History Network Conference  
Turin, Italy

2016 Beveridge's Social Insurance in the Colonial Office: The Fabian Colonial Society, Anticolonial Nationalism and the Welfare State in Postwar British Africa (Selected Oral Abstract)  
Reconsidering Democracy and the Nation-State in a Global Perspective  
Leiden, the Netherlands

2016 From Nutrition to Human Capital: The Role of Health in Development Thought and Practice at the Close of the British Empire (Selected Oral Abstract)  
History of Recent Economics Conference  
São Paulo, Brazil

2016 What is an Economy? Debating Production Boundaries and Women's Work in African National Income Accounting / Invited Online Seminar  
Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET)

2016	Birthing a Nation: The Role of Government Health Care in Hastings Kamuzu Banda's Political Calculus, 1964-1980 (Selected Oral Abstract) African Studies Association (UK) Cambridge, UK
2025	The Sacred and the Profane: The Hospital Corporation of America and the History of Profit in Medicine European Conference on Social Medicine University of Oslo June 20-22, 2025 Oslo, Norway

### **Report of Clinical Activities and Innovations**

#### **Past and Current Licensure and Board Certification:**

2022-	Massachusetts Medical License
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#### **Practice Activities:**

2022-	Emergency department Practice	Brigham and Women's Hospital	429 hrs/year
2022-	Emergency department practice	Faulkner Hospital	143 hrs/year
2022-	Urgent care practice	Foxborough, MA	143 hrs/year
2025	Emergency department practice	Tsehootsooi Medical Center, Fort Defiance, AZ	240 hrs/year

#### **Clinical Innovations:**

Initiative to reduce duplicate laboratory studies ordering, Rhode Island Hospital Emergency Dept (2021)	My collaborator and I created a poster for ED clinical areas that alerted physicians to orders that could be “added on” to laboratory studies they had already ordered, thus obviating the need for repeat blood draws during a critical nursing shortage.
Statement of Principles on Hospital Debt Collection Practices (2024)	I am an adviser to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) on a statement of principles to be adopted by hospitals around the country on more fair and equitable debt collection practices. This work has already resulted in the abolition of debt collection practices at large hospitals, including an end to credit reporting for patient medical debt at Parkland Health in Texas.

Analysis of National database of hospital financial assistance programs (2023-2024)	I conceived and led the largest-ever analysis of hospital financial assistance policies in the United States. By demonstrating wide variability in eligibility criteria for free and discounted care, this database serves as a basis for policy discussions at the hospital, state, and national level on equitable access to care. This analysis was published in <i>Health Affairs</i> and has been cited in the <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> .
Evaluation of Validity of Triage Systems in Resource-limited settings (2022-present)	I conceived and am leading a clinical study linking emergency department triage data to patient outcomes at Koidu Government Hospital in eastern Sierra Leone. This ongoing project is the first to evaluate the validity of the South African Triage Scale (SATS) in adults in a West African setting. This study will evaluate the ability of this commonly used scale to predict in-hospital death and clinical deterioration for a series of common chief complaints.
Using machine learning and blood biomarkers to differentiate hemorrhagic from ischemic stroke (2022-present)	I conceived and am leading a study using physical exam and blood biomarkers to train a supervised machine learning algorithm capable of differentiating ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke in low-resource settings without CT imaging. This work is supported by the BWH Minority Faculty Career Development Award.

### **Report of Teaching and Education Innovations**

Teaching Social Medicine to Clinician-Scholars in Rwanda (2017)	I developed a syllabus for a writing-intensive course on the history and theory of social medicine for masters'-level students in Kigali, Rwanda
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### **Report of Technological and Other Scientific Innovations**

Demonstrated sensitivity of dried blood spot for Hep C diagnosis and quantification (2013-2015)	Through systematic reviews and meta-analyses, my colleagues and I demonstrated the high sensitivity of dried blood spot in the detection, quantification and storage of Hepatitis C RNA in resource-poor settings. This research has been cited in World Health Organization guidelines
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### **Report of Education of Patients and Service to the Community**

*No presentations below were sponsored by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties/outside entities*

*Those presentations below sponsored by outside entities are so noted and the sponsor(s) is (are) identified.*

### **Activities**

2020	COVID Testing in Providence-Area Homeless Shelters Aided in COVID Testing in Homeless Shelters during 2020
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2020	Resident Advocacy for N95s Organized residents at Rhode Island Hospital to Advocate for N95 Mask Procurement by Rhode Island State Government
2023	Volunteer MedicoLegal Expert Testimony Provided expert testimony for Medical Justice Alliance for chronically ill undocumented immigrant facing deportation
2024-	Board Member for Dollar For Serve as board member for nonprofit devoted to helping low-income patients access hospital financial assistance.
2024	I provided expert testimony to the Senate HELP Committee on a hearing devoted to the problem of medical debt in the United States.
2024	I advised the Committee on Interns and Residents (CIR), the largest housestaff union in the United States, on a resolution to include a provision to limit aggressive patient debt collection in contract negotiations with hospitals. This Resolution passed.

### **Educational Material for Patients and the Lay Community:**

#### ***Books, articles, and presentations in other media***

2013	Malawi: health fees empty mission clinic	Author	<i>Pulitzer Center</i> article
2013	Rural Malawi: a hard place to practice medicine	Author	<i>Dowser</i> article
2013	The borders of policy	Author	<i>The New Physician</i> article
2014	The systems doctors	Author	<i>The New Physician</i> article
2016	The other opioid crisis—people in poor countries can't get the pain medication they need	Author	<i>The Conversation</i> article
2017	Masire: the president who left Botswana and the world an enduring legacy	Author	<i>The Conversation</i> article
2018	Women's unpaid work must be included in GDP calculations	Author	<i>The Conversation</i> article
2020	Austerity Myths and the Health of nations	Podcast guest	Rhodes Center Podcast
2020	A lesson in physician activism from Malawi's legendary Dr. John Chiphangwi	Author	<i>STAT</i> article

2021	No More to Spend	Podcast guest	<i>Flip the Script</i> Podcast
2021	The Deep Roots of Vaccine Mistrust	Co-author	<i>Providence Journal</i> op-ed
2022	The Great American Medical Debt Machine	Author	<i>Peste Magazine</i>
2023	Why Americans Have So Much Medical Debt	Expert Interviewee	<i>CNBC Documentary</i>
2023	Doctors are Employees Now	Author	Article in <i>The Nation</i>
2023	History of Medical Debt Collection	Podcast Guest	<i>Current Affairs</i> Podcast
2023	History of Medical Debt Collection	Podcast Guest	<i>An Arm and a Leg</i> Podcast
2023	History of Medical Debt Collection	Podcast Guest	<i>New Books Network</i> Podcast
2023	Medical Debt Forgiveness Drives are Not Enough	Author	<i>Current Affairs</i> Magazine
2023	Medical Debt and Racial Disparities	Podcast Guest	<i>Indebted</i> Podcast
2023	Medical Debt Collection	Podcast Guest	<i>Moral Matters</i> Podcast
2024	History of Medical Debt	Podcast Guest	<i>The Dig</i> Podcast
2024	History of Medical Debt	Radio Guest	<i>The Pulse</i> NPR show
2024	Governments Finally Embraced Debt Jubilees: Why Aren't We Satisfied?	Op-Ed Coauthor (with Astra Taylor)	<i>Washington Post</i>
2024	Medical Debt and Professional Responsibility	People, Power and Health Collective	People, Power and Health Collective Podcast
2025	Medicine and Lucre	Author	Los Angeles Review of Books
2025	The End of Bipartisan Support for Global AIDS Treatment	Author	America: The Jesuit Review

## Recognition:

2011	Publicity of AIDS activism	New York Times
2020	Publicity of AIDS historical scholarship and mentorship by Dr. Anthony Fauci	Boston Globe, NBC News
2024	Interviewed about scholarship on history of medical debt	Forbes, Jacobin

## **Report of Scholarship**

ORCID: 0009-0005-8790-2967

### **Peer-Reviewed Scholarship in print or other media:**

\* Co-first or co-senior author

\*\* Mentee

#### **1. Research Investigations**

- 1) **Messac L\***. Moral hazards and moral economies: the combustible politics of healthcare user fees in Malawian history. *South African Historical Journal*. 2014 Apr; 66(2):371-389.
- 2) Greenman J, Roberts T, Cohn J, **Messac L**. 2015. Dried blood spot in the genotyping, quantification and storage of HCV RNA: a systematic literature review. *Journal of Viral Hepatitis*. 2015 Apr; 22(4):353-361.
- 3) **Messac L\***. No opiates for the masses: untreated pain, international narcotics control and the bureaucratic production of ignorance. *Journal of Policy History*. 2016. 28(2):193-220.
- 4) Lange B, Roberts T, Cohn J, Greenman J, Camp J, A Ishikazi, **Messac L**, Tuailon E, van de Perre P, Pichler C, Denkinger C, Easterbrook P. Diagnostic accuracy of detection and quantification of HBV-DNA and HCV-RNA using dried blood spot (DBS) samples—a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Infectious Diseases*. 2017; 17(Suppl 1): 71-85.
- 5) **Messac L\***. Outside the economy: women's work and feminist economics in the construction of national income accounting. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*. 2018; 46(3): 552-78.
- 6) **Messac L\***. Birthing a nation: population control and social protection in Malawi under Hastings Kamuzu Banda, 1962-1980. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 2020; 46(2): 209-28.
- 7) **Messac L\***. No more to spend: Neglect and the construction of scarcity in Malawi's history of health care. New York: Oxford University Press; 2020.
- 8) **Messac L\***. Your money or your life: Debt collection in American medicine. New York: Oxford University Press; 2023.
- 9) **Messac L\***. Debt collection in American medicine—A history. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2023; 389 (17): 1621-5.
- 10) **Messac L\***, Delaney K, Fonfield I\*\*, Maleki N. The policy alliance between non-profit hospitals and debt collection agencies: Content analysis of public comments on regulations on billing and collections. *Inquiry: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*. 2024 Jan; 61. DOI: 00469580231219410.
- 11) **Messac L\***, Janke A, Becker N, Fonfield I\*\*, Rushbanks E, Walker J, Rogers L, Bai G. US nonprofit hospitals have widely varying criteria to decide who qualifies for free and discounted charity care. *Health Affairs*. 2024 Nov; 43(11): 1569-77.

#### **2. Other Peer-Reviewed Scholarship**

- 1) **Messac L\***, Ciccarone D, Draine J, Bourgois P. The good-enough science-and-politics of anthropological collaboration with evidence-based clinical research: four ethnographic case studies. *Social Science and Medicine*. 2013; 99:176-86.
- 2) Drobac P, Basilico M, **Messac L**, Walton D, Farmer P. 2013. Building a rural health delivery model in Haiti and Rwanda. In: Basilico M, Farmer P, Kim JY, Kleinman K, editors.

Rethinking global health: an introduction. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. p.133-185.

- 3) **Messac L\***, Prabhu K. Redefining the possible: AIDS as a global priority at the dawn of the 21st century. In: Basilico M, Farmer P, Kim JY, Kleinman K, editors. Rethinking global health: an introduction. Chicago: University of California Press, 2013. p. 111-132.
- 4) Suri A, Weigel J, **Messac L**, Basilico MT, Basilico M, Hanna B, Keshavjee S, Kleinman A. Values and Global Health. In: Basilico M, Farmer P, Kim JY, Kleinman K, editors. Rethinking global health: an introduction. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. p. 245-286.
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- 9) **Messac L\***, Knopov A, Horton M. Delayed care-seeking for non-COVID illnesses in Rhode Island. *Rhode Island Medical Journal*. 2020; 103(4): 10-11.
- 10) Shultz B\*\*, Ahmed A, **Messac L\***. Medical debt in America, part I: High prices, few protections. *Journal of Hospital Medicine*. 2025; 20(5): 521-523.
- 11) Shultz B\*\*, Ahmed A, **Messac L\***. Medical debt in America, part II: Financial support for the most vulnerable. *Journal of Hospital Medicine*. 2025; 20(6): 645-648.
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- 13) Holmes S, Rekhis M, Stonington S, Pasquini M, **Messac L**, Raikhel E, Kitanaka J, Macedo V, Sesia P, Pinones Rivera C, Goronga T, Keshavjee S, Mulemi B, Matache M, Marmot M. Translational social medicine for global health: Introducing cases in Global Social Medicine. *Lancet*. 2025; 406(10517): 2306-2307.
- 14) Valasquez Garcia D, Maddox K, **Messac L**. Financial assistance policies to improve post-myocardial infarction care. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* (accepted for publication).

#### **Non-Peer Reviewed Scientific or Medical Scholarship/Materials in Print or other Media**

##### **Reviews, chapters, and editorials**

- 1) **Messac L\***, McLaughlin M, Bogaert K, Mcateer J, Shulman D, Sievers A, Judd A. PIH-DFCI-BWH partnership: Innovative delivery strategies for cancer care in rural Rwanda, Malawi, and Haiti. In: Knaul F, Gralow J, Atun R, Bhadelia A, editors. *Closing the cancer divide: an equity imperative*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 2012. P. 181-3.

## **Professional educational materials or reports, in print or other media:**

- 1) **Messac L.** Emergency rheumatology: Where not all multifocal opacities are COVID. *Brown EM Blog*. January 7, 2022.

## **Dissertation:**

**Messac L.** Dividends of disquiet: popular politics and economic thought in the history of government medical services in Malawi, 1914-1983. University of Pennsylvania, Department of History and Sociology of Science, 2016.

## **Abstracts, Poster Presentations, and Exhibits Presented at Professional Meetings:**

- 1) Zachrison K, Hsia R, Boggs K, Goa J, **Messac L**, Schwamm L, Reeves M, Fung V, Samuels-Kalow M, Carmago C. Racial, ethnic and rural Disparities in Access to Acute Stroke Capabilities Persist Even with Telestroke. AHA International Stroke Conference, Los Angeles, CA, February 5-7, 2025.

## **Narrative Report**

Trained as a historian and an emergency physician, I am an attending emergency physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and I am appointed in the Faculty of Emergency Medicine at Harvard Medical School. My primary responsibilities include clinical service in the Department of Emergency Medicine, original research in the history and political economy of medicine, and teaching and mentoring students. My area of expertise is in Clinical Expertise & Innovation and my significant supporting activity is in Education of Patients and Service to the Community.

### *Clinical Expertise & Innovation*

My clinical work in the BWH Emergency Department and in resource-limited settings informs my research agenda. My early work grew from my doctoral training in history and focused on clinical consequences of limited diagnostic and therapeutic resources in settings of severe resource constraints. My first eight years of archival and ethnographic research in southern Africa resulted in a book, titled *No More to Spend: Neglect and the Construction of Scarcity in Malawi's History of Medicine*, several articles, and conference presentations on four continents.

I have also helped to advance the adoption of models of care, including dried blood spot for the diagnosis and management of hepatitis C and community-based HIV treatment models, through peer-reviewed publications. This work has been cited in clinical guidelines published by the World Health Organization. I served as a scientific adviser on a *Lancet* commission on pain control and palliative care, and as a contributor to a series in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on social medicine. I am the principal investigator on projects related to improving emergency care in resource-limited settings. One such project, supported by the Brigham and Women's Hospital Minority Faculty Career Development Award, uses laboratory data and machine learning to predict stroke type for use in

facilities without CT imaging. Another project, conducted in partnership with colleagues in Sierra Leone, aims to improve the predictive power of triage scores used in hospitals in sub-Saharan Africa.

One of my major focuses in recent years is medical debt in the United States. I was first author on an analysis, published in *Health Affairs*, of the largest ever database of hospital financial assistance policies. I have also published historical research on the economics of medical debt collection in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and in a book, *Your Money or Your Life: Debt Collection in American Medicine*, published by Oxford University Press in 2023. My ongoing research on hospital litigation against patients and on the impact of programs to improve access to financial assistance is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. I have presented my work in testimony before the United States Senate.

#### *Education of Patients and Service to the Community*

I have advanced the education of patients and service to the community through leadership in nonprofit organizations and in publications in the lay press. In addition to my scholarly publications, I have written about the history of medical debt and global health financing for newspapers and magazines, including the *Washington Post* and *The Nation*. I have also been an invited guest on television and radio programs and podcasts, including *CNBC* and *NPR*. I also serve on the board of Dollar For, an organization that has helped low-income patients avoid more than \$50 million in hospital bills by helping them obtain free or discounted care. I have delivered invited presentations to hospital executives through the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Leadership Alliance.

#### *Teaching and Mentoring*

I teach the principles of social medicine to HMS first-year students in PY120: Essentials of the Profession. I also teach medical students and trainees in the emergency department. I have supervised Harvard undergraduates in senior honors theses. I have also co-authored peer-reviewed publications with Harvard students and resident trainees. I am a lecturer in the Department of the History of Science at Harvard, where starting in fall 2025 I will co-direct an undergraduate course on the history of global health. In the next 5-10 years my goal is to establish an interdisciplinary center for health and political economy at Harvard Medical School, one that brings together students, trainees and faculty from economics, history, clinical medicine and other fields to understand the inefficiencies and inequities in our healthcare system and propose actionable solutions.