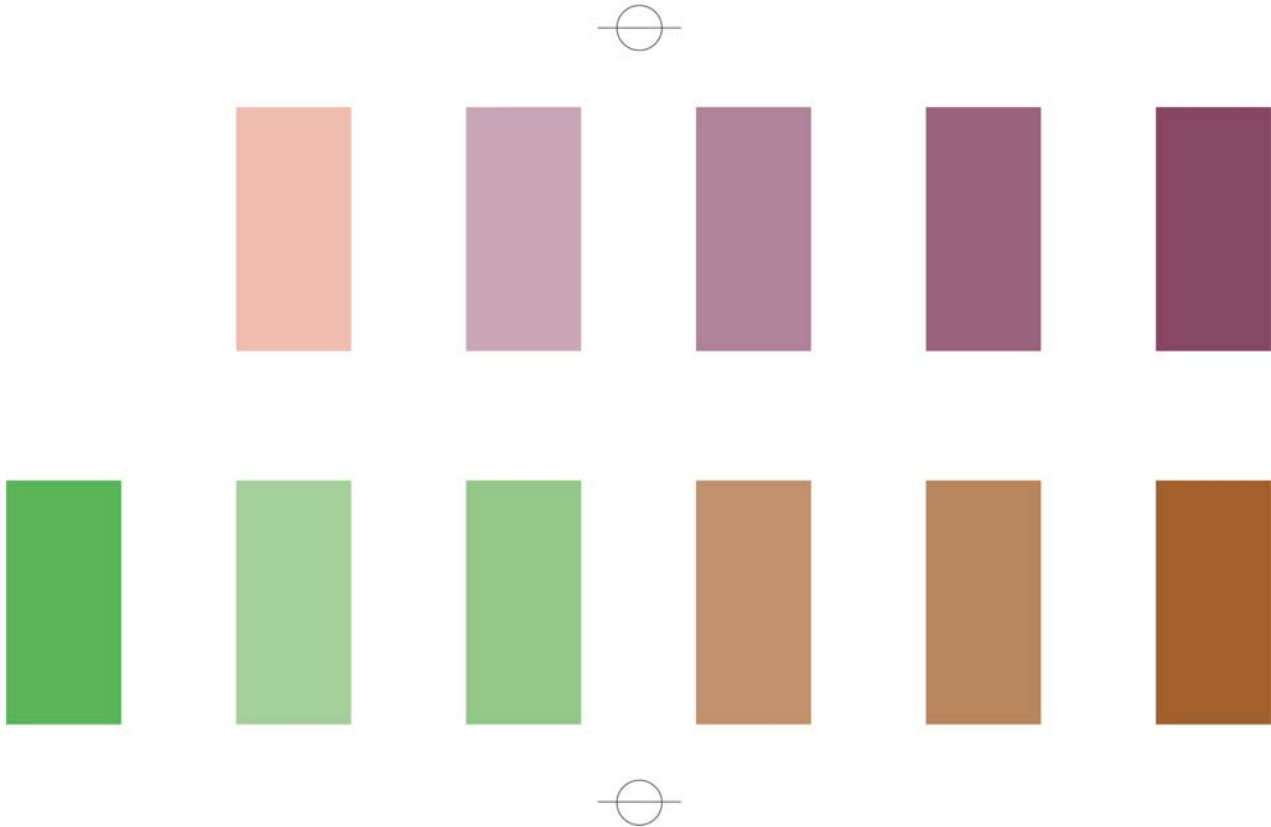




What is Medicine?® Seminar Series

6 November 2008 | 4.00-6.00pm | BPLT



What medicine is

In the social sciences, medicine has figured for decades as something to criticise. It deserved to be unmasked as (behind its helping face) it was really a matter of social control, or a mode of governing through discipline rather than punishment, or otherwise a place where doctors hold power over patients. These days, however, it is time to do something different. No, the point is not to be a better realist and to neutrally (rather than critically) describe medicine as it is. Instead, medicine deserves help. It is in urgent need of words that articulate its specificity in such a way that health care does not get completely colonised by (the logic of) the market (where doctors have products to sell to their customers), the state (that makes laws configuring patients as citizens), the protocol (that presumes that facts precede decisions, which precede actions, which precede evaluations), epidemiology (or rather the version of epidemiology that takes individuals to compose collectives), ethics (in as far as it separates deliberation from practice) and other rationalist endeavours. In my recent book *The Logic of Care* I have tried to provide such words and to articulate some of medicine's tinkering techniques for living with fragile bodies, unruly diseases and unpredictable technologies in complex daily lives. The case that I analysed is that of diabetes care. This allows me to now take up the question of your seminar series 'What is medicine?' as if it has an answer.

Annemarie Mol is Socrates Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Twente. She has published *The Body Multiple. Ontology in Medical Practice*; co-edited *Differences in Medicine* (with Marc Berg) and *Complexities* (with John Law); and authored and co-authored a variety of articles on bodies, techniques and spatialities. In the first week of November, she is in London for a few days, to present her new book, *The Logic of Care*, published in 2008 with Routledge.