



## Howard Markel, M.D., Ph.D.

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**Howard Markel, M.D., Ph.D.** is the George E. Wantz, M.D. Distinguished Professor of the History of Medicine and Director of the Center for the History of Medicine at the University of Michigan. He is also Professor of Pediatrics; Psychiatry; Public Health Management and Policy; History; and English Literature and Language. He was born in Detroit, Michigan on April 23, 1960 and grew up in Oak Park and Southfield, Michigan. Educated at the University of Michigan (A.B., 1982, *summa cum laude*; M.D., 1986, *cum laude eruditionis causa*) and the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Hospital (Intern, Resident and Fellow in General Pediatrics, 1986-1993 and Ph.D., in the History of Medicine, Science and Technology, 1994), he joined the University of Michigan faculty in 1993.

The pre-eminent social and cultural historian of medicine, public health, and epidemics in the world, Professor Markel is the author, co-author, or co-editor of eleven books including the award-winning *Quarantine! East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997; paperback, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) and *When Germs Travel: Six Major Epidemics That Have Invaded America Since 1900 and the Fears They Have Unleashed* (Pantheon Books/Alfred A. Knopf, 2004; paperback Vintage/Random House, 2005).

His book, *An Anatomy of Addiction: Sigmund Freud, William Halsted, and the Miracle Drug Cocaine* (Pantheon Books/Alfred A. Knopf, 2011) garnered wide critical praise and was a *New York Times Best Seller*, a *San Francisco Chronicle Best Seller*, an *ABA IndieBound Best Seller*, an *Amazon Best Seller*, a *Barnes and Noble Best Seller*, and a *New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice*. Sherwin Nuland, in his front-page review of the July 22, 2011 issue of the *New York Times Book Review* called it a "tour de force of scientific and social history". *The New Yorker* reported that "Markel creates rich portraits of men who shared, as he writes of Freud, a "particular constellation of bold risk taking, emotional scar tissue and, and psychic turmoil." Deborah Blum in *The Wall Street Journal* described the book as "incisive... an irresistible cautionary tale"; *The Los Angeles Times* stated it was "terrific... this rich engrossing book reminds us of the strangeness of even heroic destinies;" and Lev Grossman, in *Time*, called it a "rich, revelatory book."

In August 2017, Pantheon Books published Professor Markel's most recent book, *The Kelloggs: The Battling Brothers of Battle Creek*, which was a finalist for the National Critics Book Circle Prize in Biography and a semi-finalist for the PEN America Bograd Weld Literary Prize in Biography. *The Kelloggs* was also named "Best Book of the Month (History, August 2017) by Amazon Books, Best Book of the Summer, 2017 by *Newsday*, Best Nonfiction Book (Biography) of the Year, 2017 by Kirkus Review, and Best Nonfiction Book of the Year, 2017 by *The Boston Globe*. *The Kelloggs* was chosen by the State of Michigan Department of Education and the Library of Michigan as a "Michigan Notable Book for 2018."

*The Kelloggs* was lauded by Terry Gross when she interviewed Professor Markel on NPR's *Fresh Air*. It also garnered critical acclaim from the PBS NewsHour and was featured in an on-air interview as part of their prestigious "NewsHour Bookshelf" series; *The New York Times* ("A compelling yarn and a fascinating window into the genesis of both modern medicine and management... a vivid portrait of the brothers and their era"); *Newsday* ("Markel does an extraordinary job covering the many complex dimensions of this story . . . a rich and satisfying account of the lives, work and enmity of two warring brothers and of a pivotal epoch in American history"); *The National Book Review* ("Insightful and entertaining... A revealing window into America as it evolved from the Civil War to World War II"); *The Chicago Tribune* ("[the book is] lively throughout as it delivers a tale both personal in its intensity and grand in its scope"); *The Dallas Morning News* ("*The Kelloggs* is a serious and in every way commendable book — in its painstaking research, its superb prose and storytelling, and most importantly, its energy and spirit... chapter by chapter, in one finely crafted paragraph after another, Markel holds your interest... *The Kelloggs* is a highly satisfying book, a cultural history in the best tradition"); and *Booklist* (Starred

review,” an amazing amalgamation of biography and history.”) Pulitzer Prize winner [Siddhartha Mukherjee](#) wrote “Markel’s incandescent scholarship and his incisive analysis shine through in this book.” In 2019, *The Kelloggs* was presented as a major portion of the History Channel’s three-part documentary, *The Foods That Built America*.

In December, 2019, Oxford University Press published *Literatim: Essays at the Intersections of Medicine and Culture*, “a collection of the writer’s essays on medicine, American culture, and how their intersections compose the interstitial matter of modern life.” Heralded by OUP as “the first-ever collection from America’s most distinguished historian of medicine and cultural life, Markel’s eye for the unexamined corners of contemporary life align with his singular storytelling ability for a collection that demonstrates how literature, like medicine, can be a portal to better understanding the human condition.” The award-winning novelist-physician Abraham Verghese wrote, “I have been a fan of Howard Markel’s essays, reading them eagerly when they appeared in the most prestigious medical journals. What a treat to have them under one cover. From Dostoevsky to Marilyn Monroe, these pieces wed medicine and fascinating pearls of history, echoing Markel’s professional training in both disciplines. But the writing style is uniquely Markel, combining impish curiosity, incisive observation, a psychoanalyst’s insight, and humor. It is a collection to treasure.”

He is now at work on a history of the structure of DNA, as he documents the lives and work of James Watson, Francis Crick, Maurice Wilkins, Linus Pauling, and Rosalind Franklin. This book is slated to be published by W.W. Norton and Company in 2023.

From 2005 to 2006, Professor Markel served as a historical consultant on pandemic influenza preparedness planning for the United States Department of Defense. From 2006 to 2015, he served as the principal historical consultant on pandemic preparedness for the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. From late April 2009 to February 2011, he served as a member of the CDC Director’s “Novel A/H1N1 Influenza Team B”, a real-time think tank of experts charged with evaluating the federal government’s and President Barack Obama’s influenza policies on a daily basis during and after the outbreak. His historical research has played a pivotal role in developing the evidence base for many community mitigation strategies employed by the World Health Organization, the CDC, the Mexican Ministry of Health, and numerous state, provincial and municipal health departments around the globe during the 2009 influenza pandemic.

In collaboration with colleagues at the University of Michigan and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Professor Markel is Co-Editor-in-Chief of *The 1918-1919 American Influenza Pandemic: A Digital Encyclopedia and Archive*, which was first published in 2012 by the University of Michigan Center for the History of Medicine and the University of Michigan Scholarly Publications Office. Funded by grants and contracts from the CDC, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the digital encyclopedia represents one of the largest collections of historical documents ever assembled on a single epidemic and is accessible on the Internet at: [www.influenzaarchive.org](http://www.influenzaarchive.org). The second edition of the *1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic: A Digital Encyclopedia and Archive 2.0* was released in 2016 and a third edition is now in preparation.

Beginning in 2000, Professor Markel was a frequent contributor to the Science Times, Week-in-Review, Op-Ed, and Book Review sections of *New York Times*. From 2010-2012, he was a regular “on the air” contributor for Public Radio International’s *Science Friday*; his monthly segment, “Science Diction,” discussed the history, evolution and meaning of scientific words. From 2012 to the present, he has contributed a monthly column on important events in the history of medicine for *PBS NewsHour.org*

In addition, Professor Markel has contributed over 500 articles, reviews, essays and book chapters to a wide range of scholarly publications and popular periodicals. His work has appeared in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *American Journal of Public Health*, *The Lancet*, *The American Scholar*, and *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (for which he was a contributing writer from 2007 to 2014), as well as in *The New York Times*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Smithsonian*, *The Detroit News*, *The New Republic*, *The International Herald Tribune*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

From 2013 to 2017, Professor Markel served as the Editor-in-Chief of *The Milbank Quarterly*, a peer-reviewed, health policy and population health journal.

Professor Markel has delivered hundreds of prominent lectures at numerous major universities, museums and libraries across the United States and in Europe as well as U.S. government agencies, departments, and at the White House. He has been a frequently commentator on numerous national radio and television news broadcasts including NPR's *All Things Considered*, *Morning Edition*, *Talk of the Nation*, *Science Friday*, *Here and Now*, *Tell Me More*, *On Point*, *Radiolab*, and *Marketplace*, ABC's *Good Morning America* and *World News Tonight*, NBC's *Nightly News*, PBS's *Nova*, *Frontline*, and *NewsHour*, BBC's *The World* and *World Service*, CNN, MSNBC's *The Cycle* and *All In*, C-SPAN's *Book Notes*, and the History Channel. Professor Markel has also appeared in several critically acclaimed film documentaries including *Murder Hotel: The Story of America's First Serial Killer*, *Dr. H. H. Holmes* (BBC), *Rx for Survival: A Global Health Challenge* (PBS), *We Heard the Bells: The Influenza of 1918* (flu.gov), *Forgotten Ellis Island* (PBS), *The Foods That Built America* (The History Channel), and the Ken Burns and Siddhartha Mukherjee documentary *Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies* (PBS).

Professor Markel's renown as a public intellectual might be exemplified by noting that he is, perhaps, the only person ever to have written a front-page article for the *New York Times* (with Gina Kolata on April 29, 2001), had a book reviewed on the cover of the *New York Times Book Review* (July 22, 2011), uttered the "Quotation of the Day" in the *New York Times* (October 9, 2014) and was quoted in a story on the front page of the *New York Times* (October 19, 2014) and in another front page story of the *Times* on April 23, 2020.

During the Ebola epidemic of 2014, he was a much sought-after expert on the history of epidemics and quarantines. Aside from wide press coverage, in the form of interviews, and his contributing several influential op-eds for the *New Republic* and *Reuters Opinion*, Professor Markel was the lead interview on NPR's *All Things Considered*, BBC *World Service*, CNN/*Sanjay Gupta MD*, and PBS *NewsHour*. Professor Markel's landmark scholarship on the tangled history of stigma, politics and contagion was also lauded on the front page of *The New Yorker*, (Talk of the Town/Comment, November 10, 2014). In the aftermath of the Ebola crisis, in February of 2015, the Presidential (Barack Obama) Commission on Bioethical Issues invited him to consult on the ethical issues surrounding the stigma of epidemic and infectious diseases.

More recently, Professor Markel played a prominent role in evaluating public health and social distancing policies as they played out in China and around the world during the CoVID-19, or coronavirus, epidemic of 2019-2020. His pioneering 2007-2009 research on the use of community mitigation strategies for influenza pandemics was the driving and life-saving force behind the entire global policy to CoVID-19.

On March 11, 2020, Nicholas Kristof, the eminent columnist for the *New York Times* cited Professor Markel and his research team's work as one of the "12 Steps to Tackle the Coronavirus." On April 1, 2020, he was the subject of a *New Yorker* magazine profile, "A Medical Historian on Why We Must Stay the Course in Fighting the Coronavirus." At the National Academy of Medicine CoVID-19 briefing on March 25, 2020, he was "widely credited with coining the term flattening the curve." On April 6, 2020, Google honored the concept of "flattening the curve," which he helped coin and scientifically demonstrate, by making it the first in a series of @GoogleDoodles for CoVID-19, on its masthead, dedicated "to public health workers and to researchers in the scientific community."

On April 15, at a press conference in response to those protesting the state's CoVID-19 social distancing policy, Governor Gretchen Whitmer cited Professor Markel's non-pharmaceutical intervention research as the data-driven approach to re-opening the state: "I want to be very clear that our decision to re-engage sectors is going to be based on the best facts and the best science, and what facts and science have told us is that re-engaging our state too soon or too fast will lead to a second wave of COVID-19 in Michigan. During the flu pandemic of 1918, some cities lifted social distancing measures too fast, too soon, and created a second wave of pandemic." She also cited Professor Markel's work in an op-ed she wrote for the *New York Times* on April 21, 2020: "During the flu pandemic of 1918, some cities lifted social-distancing measures too fast and too soon, and caused a second wave of cases. As a result, many cities were forced back to a quarantine posture for an even longer period of time."

On April 23, 2020, his work was profiled by the *New York Times* in an in-depth, front page article: "The Social Distancing Origin Story: It Started in the Middle Ages" which detailed how "history lessons and some determined researchers to overcome skepticism and make it federal policy."

Professor Markel himself wrote several important opinion pieces during the CoVID-19 crisis; two prominently run “Op-Ed” essays on the Chinese quarantine and containment strategies in Wuhan ran back-to-back in the *Washington Post* (January 26, 2020) and the *New York Times* (January 27, 2020) and were translated into multiple languages overseas, for the Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and Polish press. He discussed the impact of modern technology and connectivity on pandemics in an opinion essay for *WIRED* on March 4, 2020. A highly influential Op-Ed essay on the importance of early school closures as a community mitigation strategy for CoVid-19 appeared online in the *New York Times* on March 6, 2020 and in print on March 9, 2020. Within a few days of its publication, school districts across the nation shut their doors. He also wrote important op-eds on the use of face masks, for *NBC Think* (April 3, 2020); lessons from the 1918 influenza pandemic for *The Washington Post* (April 8, 2020); and on Camus’s *The Plague* and the CoVID-19 pandemic (April 16, 2020) and on the history of “flattening the curve” (April 20, 2020) for the *PBS NewsHour*.

Professor Markel was also extensively interviewed about CoVID-19 for hundreds of stories and updates, nearly each day of the months-long crisis, appearing in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered*, *Here and Now*, *On Point*, and *Short Wave*, *The New Yorker*, *PBS NewsHour*, *TIME Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *CNN Tonight with Don Lemon*, *CNN Newsroom with Fredericka Whitfield*, *CNN Right Now with Briana Keilar*, *CNN International*, BBC-TV’s *World News*, *BBC National Radio News*, *BBC World Service*, *BBC The World at One*, *BBC Horizon*, Britain’s *Channel 4*, *C-SPAN Washington Journal*, *The World/PRI*, Associated Press, *CNN Coronavirus: Fact vs. Fiction with Sanjay Gupta MD*, *Huffington Post*, *CNBC*, *NBC News*, *CNN.com*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the *British Medical Journal*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Detroit Public Television, *Politico*, *ProPublica*, *Vox*, *Bloomberg News*, *Wired*, *People*, *National Geographic*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Gate*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Newsday*, *Seattle Times*, *Houston Chronicle*, *The Hill*, *Montreal La Presse*, *The Daily Beast*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *The Independent (U.K.)*, *The Telegraph (U.K.)*, *The Daily Kos*, *Forward*, *The Sunday Times of Dublin*, Michigan Public Radio’s *Stateside (WUOM)*, *WEMU*, *Detroit Public Radio (WDET)*, *WDIV-TV (Detroit)*, *Boston Public Radio (WBUR)*, *Ann Arbor Observer*, *Ann Arbor News*, *Cadillac (Michigan) News*, *Detroit Free Press*, *Scholastic Magazine*, *Buzzfeed News*, *Business Insider*, *Agence France-Presse*, *O Estado de San Paulo*, the Australian Broadcasting Network’s *Saturday Extra*, and Kaiser Health News.

Professor Markel’s work has been recognized with numerous grants, honors and awards. In 1996, he received the James A. Shannon Director’s Award of the National Institutes of Health, the Burroughs-Wellcome Trust 40th Anniversary History of Medicine Award, and the Robert Wood Johnson Generalist Faculty Scholars Award. In 1998, he was named a Centennial Historian of the City of New York and was an Inaugural Fellow at the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers of the New York Public Library for 1999-2000. He was elected to the American Pediatrics Society in 2001. In 2003 he received the Arthur Visellear Award from the American Public Health Association. In 2006, he was the John Rich Professor at the University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities. In 2007, he received the Theodore Woodward Award from the American Clinical and Climatological Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Health Investigator’s Health Policy Award. From 2009 to 2012, Professor Markel was a senior fellow of the Michigan Society of Fellows. He was elected into the American Epidemiological Society in 2012.

In 2008, in recognition of his scholarly achievements, Professor Markel was elected as a Member of the National Academy of Medicine (of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine), which cited his influenza research as “one of the most novel and potently practical applications of medical history research ever conducted.” In 2011, he was appointed to the National Academy of Medicine’s Board of Population Health and Public Health Practices and from 2012-2013 served as the Vice Chair and from 2013- 2015, as Chair, of the NAM’s Section on Social Sciences.

In April of 2015, he was awarded one of the signal honors of scholarly and creative enterprise, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for demonstrating “exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts.”

In 2016, Professor Markel was inducted into the Johns Hopkins University Society of Scholars. The Johns Hopkins University’s Board of Trustees created the society, the first group of its kind in the nation, in 1967 to honor distinguished former Johns Hopkins postdoctoral fellows and faculty who had formative experiences at the university early in their academic careers. That same year, the University of Michigan Medical School presented Professor Markel with its Distinguished Alumnus Service Award.

In October of 2017, the Rockefeller Foundation awarded Professor Markel with a prestigious academic writing residency at its Bellagio Center in Italy, which over the past 57 years has included Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, leading academics, artists, thought leaders, policymakers, and practitioners recognized for their bold thinking and promise to further change the world for the better and to promote the well-being of humanity.

In 2018, the Regents of the University of Michigan presented Professor Markel with the Regents' Distinguished Public Service Award for his "contributions to the history of medicine and service to Michigan, the nation, and the world."

In 2019, the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine presented Professor Markel with its Distinguished Medical Alumnus Award, the highest honor it "bestow[s] on those whose outstanding professional and personal achievements exemplify the heritage of excellence of Johns Hopkins Medicine."

He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.