



Professor Robert A Aronowitz, M.D.
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Biography:

Robert Aronowitz is a physician and historian of medicine and science. He studies the social history of disease, focusing on the contested meanings researchers, clinicians, and patients often attach to illness.

Aronowitz is professor and chair, History and Sociology of Science, at the University of Pennsylvania. He studied linguistics at UC-Berkeley before getting his M.D. from Yale. He did his internal medicine residency at Pennsylvania Hospital, and practiced internal medicine at Cooper Hospital in Camden. At Penn, Aronowitz directed and co-founded the health and societies major and the Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholars program.

Aronowitz's first book, *Making Sense of Illness: Science, Society, and Disease* explored changing disease definitions and meanings in the 20th century. His second book, *Unnatural History: Breast Cancer and American Society* is a history of breast cancer in American society from the early 19th century on, with special attention to patient and doctor decision making and the experience of disease and risk. He wrote a series of articles, a co-edited book, *Three Shots at Prevention: The HPV Vaccine and the Politics of Medicine's Simple Solutions*, and a third monograph, *Risky Medicine: Our Quest to Cure Fear and Uncertainty*, all related to the history of risk-centered medical practices in 20th and 21st century U.S. and Europe.

Aronowitz's latest project, *Medical efficacy in a highly intervened-in world*, for which he received a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, will explore the history of how Americans have judged the safety and efficacy of medical interventions. He is

especially interested in the ways that the increasing number and novel combinations of medical interventions have undermined the straightforward translation of insights from clinical and laboratory experiments to the care of individuals.

Aronowitz has been a Charles E. Culpeper Scholar in Medical Humanities and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Generalist Physician Faculty Scholar. He received a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Investigator Award in Health Policy Research and has been a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and the Russell Sage Foundation. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine.