

# Trailblazers: Highlighting the Impact of Women in Medicine and Healthcare

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## Background

- Exposure to the history of healthcare and key contributors is limited in our current medical curriculum.
- Further exploration of the evolution of our healthcare system is only found in specific trails like the Bioethics and Humanities trail.

## Purpose

- Assess the value of historical narratives in medical curriculum utilizing the first-person narrative of Beverly Walker, RN, Inaugural Program Director of the Memphis, Tennessee, EMS Paramedic program and historical development of EMS in the United States

## Materials and methods

- Historical research on the origins and evolution of EMS via PubMed and the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.
- Interviews with Beverly Walker June 2025 until February 2026 including personal photographs and articles.
  - Written article and Presentation
- PowerPoint presentation presented to the Bioethics and Humanities cohort.
  - Qualitative feedback was collected via required post-presentation surveys.

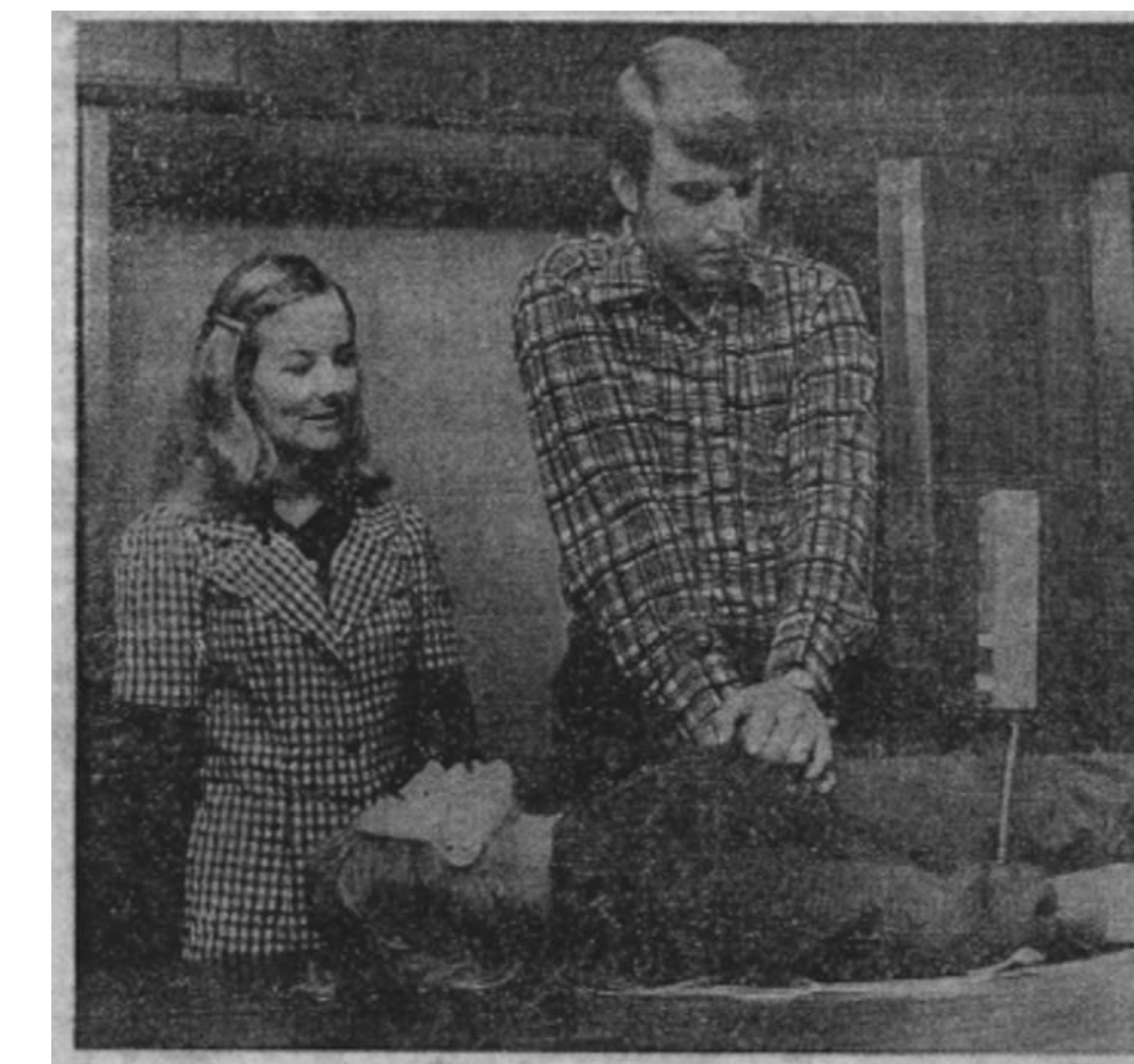
## Results

### EMS Timeline

- **1964:** Regional Medical Programs expanded training for nurses, PAs, and EMTs.
- **1967:** The Freedom House Ambulance Service is founded in Pittsburg
  - 32-week training program for first responders made with Dr. Peter Safar –"The Father of CPR"
- **1970:** EMS Taskforce created
- **1971:** First NREMT-Ambulance Exam
- **1972:** EMS providers recognized
- **1973:** EMS Services Development Act of 1973 designated the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as the lead EMS agency
- **1975:** Pilot paramedic course created, adopting Freedom House's training program
  - Freedom House Ambulance Service ends
- **1977:** National paramedic curriculum
- **1978:** First NREMT-Paramedic Exam
- **1980s:** Intermediate EMS training, AHA standards, EMT Basic training
- **2024:** New York is the 50th state to recognize National Registry of EMTs certification



Beverly Walker, RN during an interview about the EMS program with a news station, Channel 5, 1975.



Beverly Walker, RN beside a student practicing CPR on a Mannikin, 1974.



Beverly's first graduating EMT class posed with their certifications, 1975.

## Conclusions

- Incorporating individual historical narratives into health and society curriculum enhances learner understanding and appreciation of healthcare systems.
- This project supports the inclusion of underrepresented voices in medical history as a meaningful component of Health Humanities curricula.

## Limitations

- Focus on EMS and a single narrative experience.
- A limited cohort of 17 students evaluated the presentation.

## Further information

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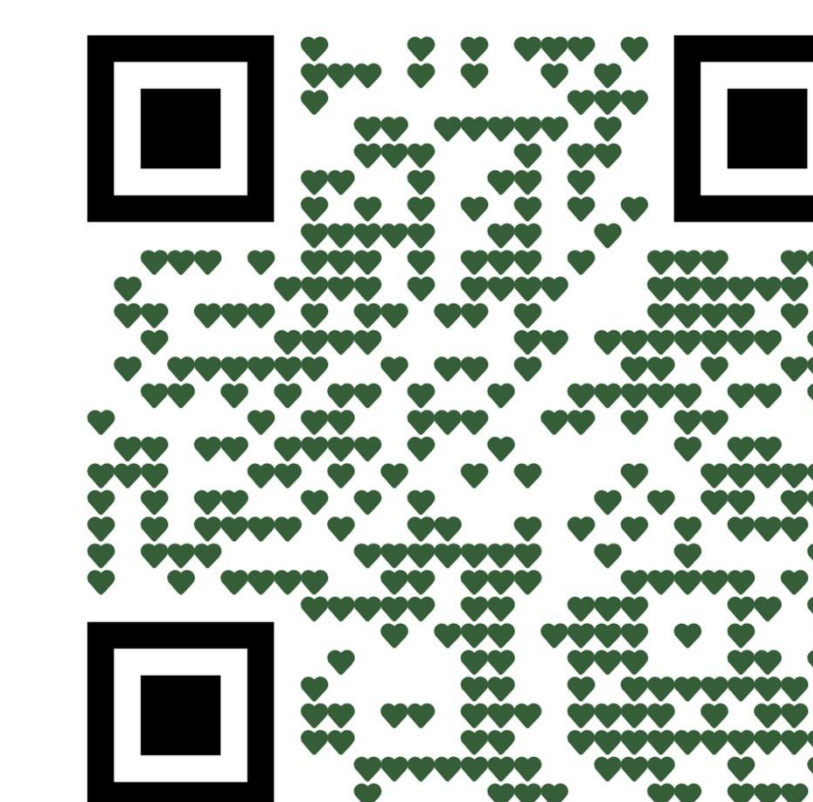
**Acknowledgements:** The authors thank Beverly Walker, RN for her willingness to share her history and personal images as part of this project.

**Conflicts of Interest:** Aliyah Encarnacion is a former coworker of Beverly Walker, RN

## Presentation Feedback

- "...very interesting and humanizing presentation on someone who played a role in the development and improvement of healthcare."
- "...so cool to learn about an influential female in medicine, especially in a time where [there] was not a lot of representation."
- "...a very cool foundation to a key part of medical training and care that we rely on today."

## References



## Beverly's Article

