

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Department of History

HIST 369/669.001
Wednesday 2:10-4:50 PM
Spring 2001

Professor Alan M. Kraut
Office Hours TF 2:15-4:00 PM
McCabe 108

Rx for America: History of Medicine from Smallpox to AIDS

The national debate over health insurance reform has become a perennial. The continuing search for an AIDS cure, the human genome project, and the on-going battles against cancer and heart disease consume both Americans' attention and their dollars. Almost daily, American newspapers and magazines are filled with stories related to medical issues. Whether these articles are about AIDS, a frightening new drug resistant virus, the high cost of medical care, malpractice suits, polluted air, or the health problems of newly arrived immigrants or refugees, reports on health, disease, and medicine make front page news. Americans believe that scientific medicine is boundless in its ability to permit them to lead longer, healthier lives. This faith in the wonders of scientific medicine is a fairly recent phenomenon. However, concern about preserving health, controlling epidemics, preventing disease, and providing medical care to those who need it are not new.

From smallpox, which killed hundreds of thousands of Native Americans in colonial times, to AIDS in today's inner city, diseases and their social constructions have been important barometers of who we are as a people. Health, disease, and the healer's role in American society and culture are the course themes. The perspectives are those of the patient, the physician, and the public health policy-maker. Health dangers posed by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration will be a special focus. Topics include epidemics (including AIDS), the hospital, ethnicity, race, urban health care, controversies in medical ethics, and medical discoveries (e.g. Salk and Sabin vaccines and the "wonder drugs.")

TEXTS (available for purchase at the campus store)

Duffy, John From Humors to Medical Science, A History of American Medicine, 2nd ed
Rosenberg, Charles The Cholera Years
Kraut, Alan M. Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the "Immigrant Menace"
Leavitt, Judith Walzer Brought to Bed, Child-bearing in America, 1750-1950
Thomas, Lewis The Lives of a Cell: Notes of a Biology Watcher
Verghese, Abraham My Own Country, A Doctor's Story
Warner, John Harley and Tighe, Janet Major Problems in The History of American Medicine and Public Health

Many of the course texts are on reserve in the library as well as being available at the campus bookstore. There will also be several items of required reading on two-hour reserve in the Bender Library. This material is NOT available in the bookstore and is marked with an asterisk

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REQUIREMENTS

A. This course requires the submission of a 15-20 page typed paper which explores a specific historical aspect of health, disease and/or medicine in the United States. Because one of the goals of the paper is to permit you to delve into a topic in greater depth than the assignments make possible, undergraduate papers need not demonstrate extensive research in primary sources. The paper should be based on a variety of secondary sources. However, when available and relevant, primary sources may be used. However, graduate papers **must** use some primary sources. You may explore a topic not covered in class if you wish. All paper topics **must** be approved by the instructor prior to beginning the project. Papers will be graded on style as well as content. Proper form for footnotes and bibliography can be found in the The Chicago Manual of Style (13th ed.) or Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations, (most recent ed.).

Wednesday, February 14th (Valentine's Day!) is the deadline for submitting a 3-5 page (word processed) statement of topic and preliminary bibliography for the instructor's approval. The paper will be due on Friday, April 13th by 5:00 PM. The proposal should explain what question you wish to answer in your paper, why it is an important question, what sources are available to address the question, the methodology you will use in analyzing available data, and how you will structure your argument (an outline). The last page of your proposal should be a bibliography. **DO NOT SIMPLY COPY TITLES OFF A WEBSITE.** Go to the library, look at the books and choose those that may truly be helpful because they address the topic.

B. Each student will keep a file folder of newspaper and magazine articles on one issue of contemporary importance to the role of medicine and/or health in society. e.g. a folder on alternate therapies might have articles on Asian pharmacies in Northern Virginia that are selling herbal cures; a folder on the issue of federal funding in medicine might have articles on the debate over national health care and/or articles on federal funding for AIDS research. At the end of seven weeks, each student will submit a two page summary of what has been happening in his or her area of interest as reported in the press. Then for the second half of the semester, the student may select another issue or stick with the same one. A second two page report will be due on the last day of class. The first summary is due on Wednesday, February 28th and the second is due on Friday, March 30.

C. There will be a mid-term examination on Wednesday, March 7th and a final examination on Wednesday, May 9th (2:10-4:40 PM). The final examination will cover the entire semester's work.

D. Graduate students are responsible for the same material as are undergraduates and will meet with the instructor after the first class to discuss supplementary reading and assignments.

E. GRADES:

Mid-Term Examination	approx. 25%
Paper	approx. 30%
Folder reports	approx. 10%

Class Participation	approx. 5%
Final Examination	approx. 30%

All late papers will be penalized ½ grade for each day after the deadline they are submitted including Saturday and Sunday. No extensions, incompletes, or make-up examinations will be given except for medical reasons or other extraordinary circumstances (as defined by the instructor). All medical excuses must be documented with appropriate doctors' notes.

Schedule of Readings:

January 17: **Introduction: Health, Disease and Medicine in the 21st Century**
Sei Met Ko (film in class)

January 24: **Health and Disease in Early America**
 Warner & Tighe, Chapters 1&2
 Kraut, Silent Travelers, pp.1-30.

January 31: **Medicine in the Early Republic**
 Warner & Tighe, Chapters 3-5
 Film: *A Midwife's Tale*

February 7: **Mid-Nineteenth Century Epidemics and Public Health**
 Rosenberg, The Cholera Years

February 14: **Medicine and the Civil War Era**
 Warner & Tighe, Chapter 6
**Guest Speaker: Dr. Robert Joy, Professor Emeritus, Uniformed
 University of the Health Sciences**

Paper Proposal is due.

February 21: **The Immigrant and The City: New Theories of Disease and New Challenges
 for Medicine and Public Health Officials**
 Warner & Tighe, Chapters 7-8.
 Duffy, From Humors to Medical Science, pp.167-202.
 Kraut, Silent Travelers, pp. 30-165.
 Film: "Temple of Moloch"
 "The People's Plague" (in media center)

February 28: **Doctors and Hospitals in Progressive America**
 Leavitt, Brought to Bed (entire book).
 Warner & Tighe, Chapters 9-11.
 Duffy, From Humors to Medical Science, pp.284-312.

First Article Summary is Due

March 7: **Mid-Term Examination**

March 14: **SPRING BREAK**

March 21: **The Inter-War Years: Joseph Goldberger and the War on Pellagra in the South; Alice Hamilton and the War on Occupational Diseases in the North**
Kraut, Silent Travelers, pp.166-196.

*Joann G. Elmore and Alvan R. Feinstein, "Joseph Goldberger: An Unsung Hero of American Clinical Epidemiology," Annals of Internal Medicine, 121(September, 1994); 372-375.

*Paul de Kruif, Hunger Fighters, pp.335-370.

Film: Two short films on Goldberger

March 28: **Medicine in the New Deal Era**

Warner & Tighe, Chapter 12

*Ronald Numbers, "The Third Party: Health Insurance in America"

* Elizabeth Fee, "Henry E. Sigerist: His Interpretations of the History of Disease and the Future of Medicine"

Film: "Deadly Deception"

March 30 (Friday): **Second Article Summary is Due**

April 4: **Health As A Social Phenomenon: 1940s and 1950s**

Warner & Tighe, Chapter 13

and *Harry F. Dowling, "The Field of Battle" and "Penicillin" and "Other Diseases and Other Antibiotics," in Harry F. Dowling, Fighting Infection, Conquests of the Twentieth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977).

*Gerald Grob, "Origins of the DSM-I: A Study in Appearance and Reality," American Journal of Psychiatry 148(April, 1991): 421-431.

Film: "Albert B. Sabin, M.D.: A Life in Science"

"A Paralyzing Fear: The Story of Polio in America."

April 11: **Surgery: From Barbers to the Best and Brightest**

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Dale C. Smith,

Uniformed University of the Health Sciences

Duffy, from Humors to Medical Science, pp.188-202.

Lewis Thomas, "The Technology of Medicine" in The Lives of a Cell, 31-36.

*Gert Brieger, "The Development of Surgery: Historical Aspects Important in the Origin and Development of Modern Surgical Science," from David C. Sabiston, Jr., ed. Textbook of Surgery: The Biological Basis of Modern Surgical Practice (14th ed.).

*Peter D. Olch, "Evarts Graham, The American College of Surgeons, and the American Board of Surgery," Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, XXVII (July, 1972), 247-261.

April 13 (FRIDAY): **RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE!**

April 18: **Medical Ethics**

Warner & Tighe, Chapter 15

Thomas, *Lives of a Cell* (finish volume)

Guest Lecturers: Dr. David Fleming and Dr. Roberto Dell'Oro

Center for Clinical Bioethics, Georgetown University Medical Center

April 25: **Twenty-First Century Medicine: AIDS, Cost, and Culture**

Warner & Tighe, Chapter 14

Verghese, *My Own Country, A Doctor's Story*

May 9: **Final examination** (2:10-4:40).