

# THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

History 379

## FALL 2011 SYLLABUS

**Prof. Stephen Pemberton**

Federated Department of History

New Jersey Institute of Technology and Rutgers University, Newark

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### **Class Meetings**

Central King Building 223, NJIT Campus

11:30 – 2:55 p.m. Wednesdays

### **Office & Contact**

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### **Office Hours**

Mondays, 130-230 p.m., and by appointment on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

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This course examines the history of medicine and public health in the United States of America from the colonial era through the twentieth century.

Readings, lectures and discussion will focus, in part, on the practice of medicine; they will examine healers and patients, therapies and medical innovations, as well as the ways that religion, government, business, and lay people have impacted medicine and public health over the last three centuries. Thus, for instance, we will consider questions such as: Who practiced medicine? How did healers gain legitimacy in the eyes of their patients? How have medical discoveries influenced efforts to combat disease? We will cover such topics as the changing response to epidemic disease in American history, the emergence of the medical profession, the place of alternative health movements, the rise of the modern medical education and the hospital system, and the evolving choices faced by physicians and patients in their efforts to promote health.

Last but not least, the course will explore how politics, cultural beliefs, and religious values have been an integral part of the history of medicine and public health in North America. We will see, for instance, medical and health issues illuminate matters of class, race and gender in America, how social movements have impacted efforts to promote health, how industrialism, big business, and consumerism have influenced medical and public health practice, and how the federal government has developed health care policy (from the 1906 Food and Drug Act through to the passage of Medicare in the mid-1960s).

### **Prerequisites.**

HUM 101 and two from among HUM 102, HUM 211, HUM 212 and HIST 213 or their equivalents.

### **Course Webpage.**

There is a Moodle webpage for this course that the professor and class will utilize throughout the semester. Please consult the website as soon as possible, and familiarize yourself with its contents. It contains the syllabus, assignments, readings, and other features that will enhance your learning experience this semester. Login to the following web address using your UCID number: <http://moodle.njit.edu/>.

### **Readings.**

Two books and several shorter readings assignments make up the required reading for this course. The books are available at the NJIT campus bookstore or through on-line booksellers. Short readings are newspaper or magazine articles, scholarly essays, articles, or book chapters. These will be posted on the course moodle page as pdfs.

The readings for each class day are listed in the semester schedule. They are due to be read and discussed on the day indicated there.

#### **Books**

- John Harley Warner and Janet A. Tighe, eds. *Major Problems in the History of American Medicine and Public Health* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001) ISBN: 0395954355
- James H. Jones, *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment* (Free Press, 1993 revised edition) ISBN: 0029166764

### **Assignments and Grading**

The student will write one paper in this course, contribute two essays to the online discussion forum, and take a mid-term and final exam. All students will be evaluated on their written and oral communication over the course of the semester. Please be mindful that it is a primary goal of this course to promote critical thinking about American medicine and society, both past and present. This requires that you do the reading and writing assignments dutifully.

#### **Assignments and Due Dates**

Participation	15%	
Discussion Forums	10%	Due Sept 21 and Oct 5
Mid-term Exam	25%	Due Oct 19
Essay Two	25%	Due Nov 23

Final Exam	25%	Designated Exam Period, Dec 14-20
Course Grade	100%	

### **Participation Grade**

Participation will count **15%** of your final grade. The class participation grade will reflect both the student's attendance record as well as the student's performance in classroom activities.

Attendance Policy. Missing even a single class is not recommended. However, each student is allowed to miss two full class periods without penalty to his or her participation grade. No excuses are necessary for those two classes. Any class time missed beyond the first two classes will result in substantial reductions in the student's participation grade (as calculated as a percentage of formal contact hours in the classroom for the semester). The professor will consider excusing repeat absences under extraordinary circumstances. Any student who misses more than one class should consult with the professor to determine whether the absence is excusable or not. Attendance accounts for 2/3rds of the participation grade, the equivalent of 10% of the student's final grade.

Classroom Performance. The student's engagement with classroom activities accounts for 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the participation grade, the equivalent of 5% of the final grade. Each student should come to class promptly and regularly, actively listen to the lectures, and be prepared to discuss the readings assigned for the day. Students should respect the learning environment by arriving on time and staying the full term of the session. The student's comprehension of the assigned readings is graded in this course. The professor will evaluate reading comprehension, in part, by taking account of each student's contributions to in-class discussions. Students should promptly communicate any concerns about their ability to meet these requirements with the professor. Students who participate regularly in discussion, and do so constructively, will be rewarded with higher grades in their final participation grade. Merely coming to class does not constitute engagement (because attendance is considered a separate component of participation). The student must contribute to the learning environment to receive credit in this area.

The professor will also consider improvement and other factors in his assessment of each student's participation grade, and reserves the right to award extra credit to students who make substantial contributions to the learning environment.

Students will receive their final participation grades at the final review session on **December 7**, and therefore know how they are doing in the class prior to the final exam.

### **Online Discussion Forums**

In the first few weeks of the course, the professor will evaluate the student's competency at discussing the readings by evaluating his or her contributions to the classes' on-line discussion forums. Each student is expected to post TWO written responses to the Professor's discussion forum questions over the course of the semester. The forums are due on or before **Jan 27** and **Feb 15** with no exceptions. The guidelines for the on-line reader responses are detailed in a separate document that is available on Moodle.

Performance on the discussion forums will count as **20%** of your final course grade (i.e., each forum is worth 10% of your final grade).

## **Exams**

The Mid-term Exam will be given on **Wednesday, October 19**. The mid-term will cover all material covered in the course to that point in the course, and will count **25%** of your final course grade.

The Final Exam will be given during NJIT's regularly scheduled exam week, **December 14-20**. (The NJIT Registrar will announce time and place later in the semester.) The exam will cover the entire course, but will emphasize readings, lectures and discussions since the mid-term exam. This exam will amount to **25%** of your final course grade.

## **Paper**

Each student will write a final paper on a topic related to the assigned book, *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*. The paper counts for **25%** of your final grade, and is due on **Wednesday, November 19**.

### **The Honor Code and Plagiarism**

The honor code and academic integrity are *enforced* in this course. Plagiarism involves using the written or oral work of others without acknowledgement, and/or representing that work as your own. *Plagiarism or any other honor code violations will be reported to the Dean of Students.*

You will be required to submit your final paper to Turnitin.com, an online service used by NJIT instructors to detect plagiarism. Details for using the service will be provided along with guidelines for the writing assignments.

There are two additional web-based resources that you should consult if you have any questions about plagiarism or proper citation. Van Houten Library maintains a web page that explains how to avoid plagiarism. There are links to NJIT's academic integrity website here as well as detailed tutorials that explain what is and is not acceptable academic work. See <http://library.njit.edu/researchhelpdesk/howto/plagiarism.php>. The Library also maintains another web page on how to cite sources in your academic writing. See <http://library.njit.edu/researchhelpdesk/howto/cite.php>. Proper citation will help you avoid plagiarism. Again, all students are expected to abide by the norms outlined in these websites, and will be penalized for failure to do so. Please consult the professor if you have any concerns about plagiarism or its meaning.

### **Respect for Persons and the Learning Environment**

In the interest of an open exchange of ideas and collegiality, everyone participating in the class should strive to respect their classmates as persons. The professor will make every

effort to facilitate a respectful environment for learning, but students should keep in mind their own responsibilities in the classroom.

Students who have special needs or concerns that might impact their learning experience should raise or discuss their situation with the professor. The professor will hold private communication in confidence.

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### **Semester Schedule**

#### **Wed, Sept 7. Introduction: Health & Healing in Early American History**

Lecture on Jamestown Settlement, Colonial Life and Death

In-class reading and discussion

#### **Wed, Sept 14. The Meaning of Epidemics in Colonial America (& the Smallpox Inoculation Controversy of 1721-22)**

Major Problems: Background & Primary Documents (16 pages)

- “Colonial Beginnings: A New World of Peoples, Disease, and Healing,” 26-27
- “Le Page du Pratz, a French Observer in Louisiana, Reports on Natchez Nation Healing Practices, 1720-1728,” 28-30.
- “Cotton Mather, Boston Minister, Proselytizes for Smallpox Inoculation, 1722,” 30-33
- “William Douglass, a Boston Physician, Decries the Dangerous ‘Infatuation’ with Smallpox Inoculation, 1722,” 33-34
- “A Broadside Laments the Death of Fifty-Four in a Hartford Epidemic, 1725,” 35
- “Zabdiel Boylston of Boston Recounts His Experiences as the First Physician to Inoculate Against Smallpox in the American Colonies, 1726,” 36-37
- “A Virginia Domestic Guide to the Diseases of the American Colonies Makes ‘Every Man His Own Doctor, 1734,” 37-39.
- “Andrew Blackbird of the Ottawa Nation Records a Story from Indian Oral Tradition About the Decimation of His People by Smallpox in the Early 1760s, 1887,” 40

Major Problems: Essay (15 pages)

Colin Calloway, “Indians, Europeans, & the New World of Disease and Healing,” 41-48  
John B. Blake, “Smallpox Inoculation Foments Controversy in Boston,” 48-54

#### **Wed, Sept 21. Midwifery & the Medical Marketplace in the Early Republic, 1785-1825**

#### **First Discussion Forum Due**

A Midwife’s Tale: In-class film (excerpts) and discussion

Major Problems: Background & Primary Documents (18 pages)

- “Medical Marketplace in the Early Republic,” 55-57
- “George Washington’s Physicians Narrate His Final Illness and Death, 1799,” 57-58
- Elizabeth Drinker, a Philadelphia Quaker, Recounts in Her Diary the Physician-Attended Birth of Her Daughter’s Sixth Child, 1799,” 58-60.
- “Benjamin Rush Tells His Medical Students at the University of Pennsylvania of the Trials and Rewards of a Medical Career, 1803,” 60-62
- “A Medical Apprentice in Rural South Carolina Records His Daily Life in His Diary, 1807,” 63-64.
- “James Jackson and John C. Warren, Leading Boston Doctors, Solicit Support for Founding the Massachusetts General Hospital, 1810,” 64-67
- “Walter Channing, a Harvard Medical Professor, Warns of the Dangers of Women Practicing Midwifery, 1820,” 67-69

Major Problems: Essays (17 pages)

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “The Medical Challenge to Midwifery,” 73-80

Lisa Rosner, “The Philadelphia Medical Marketplace,” 80-90

### **Wed, Sept 28. “Nature Cures”: Thomsonianism, Jacksonian America, and the Healer as Entrepreneur**

Major Problems: Primary Documents (6 pages)

- “Samuel Thomson, a Botanic Healer, Decries the Regular Medical Profession as a Murderous Monopoly, 1822,” 71-73

Electronic Reading: Essay (23 pages)

John Whorton, “Every Man His Own Physician: Thomsonianism” 25-48

[This article is available as a PDF on the course Moodle page.]

### **Wed, Oct 5. Antebellum Medicine: Race, Slavery, & Southern Distinctiveness**

#### **Second Discussion Forum Due**

Major Problems: Primary Documents (5 pages)

- “Samuel Cartwright, a Medical Professor & Racial Theorist, Reports to the Medical Association of Louisiana on the ‘Diseases & Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race,’ 1851,” 103-106
- “A Tennessee Physician Calls for the Cultivation of a Distinctive Southern Medical Literature, 1860,” 106-107

Major Problems: 2 Essays (4 pages)

Todd Savitt, “Race, Human Experimentation, & Dissection in the Antebellum South,” 120-123

### **Wed, Oct 12. Transformative Experiences in Nineteenth-Century America: The Cholera Years (1836, 1849, and 1866) & the Civil War (1861-1865)**

**\* Half of this class will be spent reviewing for the midterm exam on October 19**

Major Problems: Background & Primary Documents (22 pages)

- “The Civil War, Efficiency, & the Sanitary Impulse, 1845-1870,” 159-160
- “John Griscom, a Physician & Reformer, Reports to the Municipal Government on the Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of New York, 1845,” 161-164
- “World Traveler Harriet Marineau Advises America on Keeping Troops Healthy During Wartime, 1861,” 165-168
- “Kate Cummings, an Alabama Nursing Volunteer Writes in Her Journal About Conditions in the Confederate Army Hospital Service, 1862,” 168-172
- “Medical Editor Stephen Smith Preaches the Gospel of Sanitary Reform During Wartime, 1862,” 172-173
- “Nursing Volunteer Louisa May Alcott Reports to Readers at Home About Her Experiences in the Union Army, 1863,” 173-176
- “Maine Physician Writes to His Wife about His Experiences in the Union Army, 1864,” 176-178
- “Sanitary Reformers Build upon Civil War Precedents to Clean Up Post-War Cities, 1865,” 178-181

Major Problems: Essays (9 pages)

- Suellen Hoy, “American Wives & Mothers Join the Civil War Struggle in a Battle against Dirt and Disease,” 181-189

**Wed, Oct 19. MID-TERM EXAM**

**Wed, Oct 26. Popular Optimism, Germ Theory, & the New Scientific Medicine**

Major Problems: Background & Primary Documents (14 pages)

- “Reconfiguring ‘Scientific Medicine, 1865-1900,” 196-198.
- “Roberts Bartholow, a Philadelphia Medical Professor, Celebrates Experimental Medicine and the Ongoing Therapeutic Revolution, 1879,” 205-207
- “Daniel W. Cathell, M.D., Counsels Physicians on How to Succeed in Business, 1882,” 207-212
- “New York Newspaper Launches Fundraising Campaign for ‘Miraculous’ New Diphtheria Cure, 1894,” 213-215

Major Problems: Essays (9 pages)

- Bert Hansen, “Popular Optimism about the Promise of the New Scientific Medicine: The Case of Rabies Vaccine,” 224-232

Bad Blood: Book Chapters (45 pages)

Read Preface through Chapter 2, pp. i-xv and 1-29

**Wed, Nov 2. The Transformation of American Medicine in the Progressive Era  
(Medical Education, Hospitals, Technology)**

Major Problems: Background & Primary Documents (9 pages)

- “Strategies for Improving Medical Care: Institutions, Science, and Standardization, 1870-1940,” 275-277
- “Educational Reformer Abraham Flexner Writes a Muckracking Report on Medical Schools, 1910,” 277-283

Bad Blood: Book Chapters (60 pages)

Read Chapter 4-7, pp. 45-100

**Wed, Nov 9. Influenza (1918-19) & Venereal Disease Control (1915-1945)**

Major Problems: Documents (23 pages)

- “John E. Hunter, an African-American Physician, Admonishes Antituberculosis Activists to Recognize that Blacks and Whites Must Battle Germs as Their Common Enemy, 1905,” 245-248
- “A Georgia Physician Addressing ‘the Negro Health Problem’ Warns that Germs Know No Color Line, 1914,” 250-253
- “Public Health Service Physicians Publish Their Observations of Untreated Syphilis in a Population of African American Men in Macon County, Alabama, 1936,” 390-392
- “A Tuskegee Doctor in the Field Requests Research Advice from the Public Health Office in Washington, DC, 1939,” 393
- “A.N. Richards, Head of the Office of Scientific Research & Development, Updates the Medical Community on Promising Wartime Science, 1943,” 394-395
- “Public Health Service Physicians Praise Thirty Years of Government-Sponsored Human Subject Research in the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, 1964,” 403-405
- “A Private Physician Raises Questions That Go Unanswered About the Morality of the Tuskegee Experiment, 1965,” 405-406
- “Science Writer Paul de Kruif & Surgeon General Thomas Parran Join Forces to Admonish Women about the Dangers of Venereal Disease, 1937,” 431-435

Major Problems: Essays (7 pages)

- Susan Lederer, “The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment & the Conventions and Practice of Biomedical Research,” 416-422

Bad Blood: Book Chapters (27 pages)

Read chapters 8-10, pp. 113-149

**Wed, Nov 16. The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male, 1932-1972**

Bad Blood: Book Chapter (70 pages)

Read chapters 11-14, pp. 171-241

In-Class Discussion of *Bad Blood*

**Wed, Nov 23. Race & Class in the History of American Medicine**



## **PAPER DUE**

*Major Problems: Primary Document* (3 pages)

- “A Physician-Historian-Activist Explores the ‘Legacy of Distrust’ Fostered by the Tuskegee Study, 1993,” 406-408

*Bad Blood: Book Chapter* (22 pages)

Review Ch. 14, pp. 219-241

In-Class Discussion

### **Wed, Nov 30. Experiments with Public Trust: Polio, For Example**

*Major Problems: Primary Documents* (2 pages)

- “The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis Instructs Parents & Physicians about Human Trials of a New Polio Vaccine, 1954,” 441-443

*Major Problems: Essay* (7 pages)

Allan Brandt, “Polio, Politics, Publicity, & Duplicity: The Salk Vaccine & the Protection of the Public,” 451-457

### **Wed, Dec 7. The American Healthcare System, 1945-2010**

**\* Half of this class will be spent reviewing for the final exam**

*Major Problems: Primary Documents* (13 pages)

- “A Group of Private Citizens Organizes to Investigate & Reform the American Health Care System, 1932,” 428-429
- “President Truman Confronts Congress About the Need for a National Health Program, 1947,” 435-437
- “Journalist ... Offers a Public Tour of the AMA ... and a Glimpse into the Mind of the Medical Profession, 1947,” 437-441
- “Medical Editor Warns About the ‘New Medical-Industrial Complex, 1980,” 461-466
- “Feminists Reclaim Women’s Health Care, 1971,” 501-504

*Major Problems: Essays* (5 pages)

- Rosemary Stevens, “Medicare & the Transformation of the Medical Economy,” 485-489

**Dec 14-20. FINAL EXAM** (Time & place to be announced)