

SOCIAL HISTORY OF AMERICAN MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH SINCE 1800

Graduate Seminar

History 26: 510: 595

Spring 2010 SYLLABUS

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Class Meetings

Cullimore Hall 307
Thursdays 5:30-8:10 p.m.

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Office Hours

By Appointment, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

This course provides an overview of the social history of medicine in the United States from the era of the early republic to the late twentieth century. The readings and discussions will utilize the histories of medicine, health and disease as a window onto a changing American society. Of particular focus will be the enduring roles of class, race, and gender. We will see, for instance, how medical and health issues reflect and illuminate matters of class, race and gender in America, how social movements have impacted efforts to promote health (including Jacksonian populism, 19th-century evangelical Protestantism, women's suffrage, and Civil Rights), how industrialism, big business, and consumerism have influenced medical and public health practice, and how the federal government has invested in medicine and health and developed health care policy. Topics also include the emergence of the medical profession; the relations between medical concepts, therapies, and mainstream social thought; the character of regular and alternative healing movements; the social context of medical innovation, experimentation, and progress; the social history of hospitals and other medical institutions; changing medical responses to infectious and chronic disease; as well as debates about health care in the United States.

In addition to doing the weekly reading assignments, each student will help lead one discussion, write two short response papers, and one longer essay that incorporates their understanding of the course readings.

Requirements:

Readings

There are ten books to read over the course of the semester with a small selection of additional essays. The books are – in most cases – widely regarded as an exemplary work on their subject. In several cases, the book is quite lengthy (over 350 pages). In those cases, I will provide advance notice of the pages that will be our focus. Before coming to class, you should familiarize yourself with the factual content of the work as well as the author's argument and his or her use of sources. In class, I will encourage you to think critically about issues raised in the readings. This goal will only be attainable if you come prepared.

Books for the course can be purchased through the Rutgers University Bookstore (Barnes & Noble). Their contact information: Phone: 973-353-5377; Fax: 973-353-1623; Email: sm409@bncollege.com. Copies of the assigned articles will be available online through the password-protected electronic reserve system for this course. That system will be explained the first day of class. Full citations for the books and articles appear in the attached bibliography at the end of this syllabus.

Attendance and Class Participation

Class participation should involve active listening and engagement. Attendance is both expected and required.

Discussion Responsibility

Each student will lead one book discussion during the semester. In preparation for the discussion, I expect the student to also write a short response essay about the reading (see reading response essays below). During the first class, I will assign responsibilities for leading discussions to each student based on his or her stated preferences. The goal is to facilitate a critical discussion of the reading and topic. In preparing your talking points for the discussion, you should strive for more than a restatement of the reading material. Your discussion should reflect what you have written in your response essay. However, I also expect you to relate your reading of the book in a way that engages other students. A series of questions or a provocative argument are often conversation starters. Areas on which you might want to focus class discussion include: the author's argument/s, the author's use of sources, his or her methodology, the organization of the book and whether or not it works successfully, and/or how the readings for that week relate to the other material we examined during the semester.

Reading Response Essays

At two points in the semester, each student will write a short-response essay to a book assigned in the preceding weeks. The essay should discuss a key matter in the book that you feel compelled to identify and discuss. The idea is for you to engage with a critical issue at stake in the scholarly work, rather than merely summarize the reading material. Beyond that, the three basic requirements follow. (1) The essay need be no longer than 5-6 pages. Less than three is not recommended, more than that is subject to the task you set for yourself – the point you are trying to make. Try to keep it under six pages. (2) One response paper is due on **March 4th**, and the second paper is due the day of your in-class presentation. (3) No later papers will be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances.

Final Essay

Each student will write a final paper of 15-20 pages in length, and will craft her or his paper in consultation with the professor. For this paper, you will identify a theme or subject from a set of assigned readings that interests you. The paper should discuss a minimum of three of the assigned books that speak to that issue, and at least one other scholarly book – to be determined in consultation with the professor – that treats the subject with historical sensitivity. It is fine to write about one or more books that you have discussed in the short-response papers. Indeed, by doing so, you have the opportunity to gain more feedback and (potentially) greater depth into the issues. The final paper is due without exception by on **May 7** at 8 pm. Details about this assignment will be provided over the course of the semester.

Grading

15% for attendance & participation

15% for leading a discussion of a reading

30% for the response essays (15% each)

40% for final essay

Consistent effort and improvement will be weighted heavily in grading.

Semester Schedule

Week 1. Introduction to the History of Medicine and Public Health (Jan. 21)

*Allan Brandt, “Emerging Themes in the History of Medicine” [15 pages]

Week 2. Medicine and Society in the Early Republic (Jan. 28)

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale* [464 pages]

Week 3. The Medical Profession and the Question of Authority (Feb. 4)

Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* [Read Part I., pp. 1-232, Part II. optional]

*John Harley Warner, “Grand Narrative and Its Discontents: Medical History and the Social Transformation of American Medicine” [23 pages]

Week 4. Alternative Medicine in America (Feb. 11)

James Whorton, *Nature's Cures* [384 pages]

Week 5. Race & Medicine in Antebellum America (Feb. 18)

Sharla Fett, *Working Cures* [200 pages]

Week 6. Women Physicians (Feb. 25)

Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science* [464 pages]

Week 7. Midterm Discussion (Mar. 4)

Week 8. Immigrants and Epidemics (Mar. 11)

Alan Kraut, *Silent Travelers* [384 pages]

Week 9. Spring Recess (No Class on Mar. 18)

Week 10. Scientific Medicine and American Culture (Mar. 25)

Bert Hansen, *Picturing Medical Progress from Pasteur to Polio*

Week 11. Polio in Postwar America (Apr. 1)

David Oshinsky, *Polio: An American Story*

Week 12. Race & Medical Treatment in 20th-Century America (Apr. 8)

Keith Wailoo, *Dying in the City of the Blues* [234 pages]

Week 13. Consumerism and the Politics of Health (Apr. 15)

Allan Brandt, *The Cigarette Century* [Parts I-III, pp. 1-315]

Week 14. The Governance of Health: The Case of Big Tobacco (Apr. 22)

Allan Brandt, *The Cigarette Century* [Parts IV-V, pp. 318-505]

Week 15. Discussion of Course Themes (Apr. 29)

Final Paper Due (May 7)

Bibliography

Books

Allan Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product That Defined America* (Basic Books, 2009 1st Reprint Ed.) 600 pages. ISBN: 0465070485

Sharla Fett, *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 304 pages. ISBN: 080785378X

Bert Hansen, *Picturing Medical Progress from Pasteur to Polio: A History of Mass Media Images and Popular Attitudes in America* (Rutgers University Press, 2009) 352 pages. ISBN: 0813545765

Alan Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the Immigrant Menace* (Johns Hopkins University, 1995) 384 pages. ISBN: 0801850967

Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000) 464 pages. ISBN: 0807848905

David Oshinsky, *Polio: An American Story* (Oxford University, 2006) 368 pages. ISBN: 0195307143

Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (Basic Books, Reprint Edition, 1984) 528 pages. ISBN: 0465079350

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (Vintage, Reprint Edition, 1991) 464 pages. ISBN: 0679733760

Keith Wailoo, *Dying in the City of the Blues: Sickle Cell Anemia and the Politics of Race and Health* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000) 352 pages. ISBN: 0807848964

James Whorton, *Nature's Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America* (Oxford University Press, 2004) 384 pages. ISBN: 0195171624

Articles

All article-length readings will be available through electronic reserve system for the course. The starred readings are recommended, but optional.

Allan Brandt, "Emerging Themes in the History of Medicine" *Milbank Quarterly* (1991) 69: 199-214.

*Roger Cooter, "'Framing' the End of the Social History of Medicine" in Frank Huisman and John Harley Warner, eds. *Locating Medical History: The Stories and Their Meanings* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), pp. 309-337.

*Joel Howell, "How Doctor's Read," in *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* (August-October 2004) 29: 781-797.

*James T. Patterson, "Disease in the History of Medicine and Public Health" *Health and History* (1998) 1: 8-28 as anthologized in John Harley Warner and Janet Tighe, ed. *Major Problems in the History of American Medicine and Public Health* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), p. 17-24.

*Susan Reverby and David Rosner, "Beyond 'the Great Doctors'," in Reverby and Rosner, eds. *Health Care in America: Essays in Social History* (Temple University Press, 1979) 3-16 as anthologized in John Harley Warner and Janet Tighe, ed. *Major Problems in the History of American Medicine and Public Health* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), p. 17-24.

*Susan Reverby and David Rosner, "'Beyond the Great Doctors' Revisited: A Generation of the 'New Social History of Medicine,'" in Frank Huisman and John Harley Warner, eds. *Locating Medical History: The Stories and Their Meanings* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), pp.167-193.

John Harley Warner, "Grand Narrative and Its Discontents: Medical History and the Social Transformation of American Medicine," *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* (August-October 2004) 29: 757-780.