

# **HILD 30: The History of Public Health**

Spring 2013

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## **Course description**

Public health concerns and campaigns have always been bound up with the global activities of trade, exploration, war, missionary work, and colonization. This class will examine a series of episodes in the global history of public health, from the invention of vaccines and the first sanitation campaigns, to the diseases of affluence, and beyond. By investigating the political, cultural and economic dimensions of such initiatives, we will attempt to use the lessons of history to pose urgent questions about how public health policies and initiatives work or fail to work across the globe. As we proceed chronologically through the history of public health, each week will focus on a different aspect of public health intervention, examining debates such as the relative importance of social versus biological factors in epidemic disease, the politics of sanitation campaigns, the legacies of colonialism, the definition of progress, and the rights and wrongs of 'soft' power.

## **Requirements**

The class will meet MWF. Attendance is mandatory. There is no textbook for the class, and all readings will be available electronically on TED. Students must complete the assigned readings according to the schedule below, and must come to Friday's class each week prepared to participate in discussion of that week's readings, in response to specific questions that will be posed in Wednesday's lecture. I will be calling on students at random, so come prepared to participate.

There will be two take-home midterm examinations, the first consisting of a short essay (approximately five to eight pages), due on the Friday of fifth week, the second consisting of a research project, due on the Friday of tenth week.

## Schedule of readings and topics

### FIRST WEEK: What is public health? What is global health? Why history?

Declan Walsh and Donald McNeil (2012) 'Female Vaccine Workers, Essential in Pakistan, Become Prey' *New York Times*, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012

'Gapminder' website

### SECOND WEEK: When and why did the gap begin to open?

James C. Riley, *Rising Life Expectancy: a Global History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-57

### THIRD WEEK: The origins of public health and epidemiology

James C. Riley, *Rising Life Expectancy: a Global History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 58-121

### FOURTH WEEK: Hygienic modernity and colonial medicine

Patricia Lorcin (1999) 'Imperialism, Colonial Identity and Race in Algeria 1830-1870: the role of the French Medical Corps' *Isis* 90:4, 653-679

Lenore Manderson (1999) 'Colonialism and the Politics of Prevention' *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 89, issue 1, pp. 102-107

Alexandra Minna Stern, 2006, 'Yellow Fever Crusade: US Colonialism, Tropical Medicine and the International Politics of Mosquito Control, 1900-1920', in Alison Bashford, ed. *Medicine at the Border*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 41-59

### FIFTH WEEK: Universalism and world health

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Theodore Brown, et al., 2006, 'The World Health Organization and the transition from 'International' to 'Global' Health' in Alison Bashford, ed. *Medicine at the Border*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 76-94

### SIXTH WEEK: From decolonization to Alma Ata

Frantz Fanon (1965) 'Medicine and Colonialism' in *A Dying Colonialism*, trans. Haakan Chevalier, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, pp. 121-147

The Declaration of Alma Ata

### SEVENTH WEEK: Neoliberal public health

Gavino Maciocco and Angelo Stefanini 'From Alma-Ata to the Global Fund: the history of international health policy' *Rev. Bras. Saúde Matern. Infant., Recife*, 7 (4): 479-486

James Pfieffer and Rachel Chapman (2010) 'Anthropological Perspectives on Structural Adjustment and Public Health' *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 39: 149-165

### EIGHTH WEEK: Colonial legacies?

Ronald Bayer (1998) 'The debate over maternal-fetal HIV transmission prevention trials in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean: racist exploitation or exploitation of racism?' *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 88, #4, 567-570

Olga Shevchenko and Renée Fox (2008) "'Nationals" and "expatriates": Challenges of fulfilling "sans frontières" ("without borders") ideals in international humanitarian action' *Health and Human Rights* vol. 10 #1

### NINTH WEEK: The War on Terror and other Contemporary Issues in Global Health

Michael Watts (2008) 'Imperial Oil: the Anatomy of a Nigerian Oil Insurgency' *Economies of Violence Working Papers*, #17

A. S. Jegede 2007) 'What Led to the Nigerian Boycott of the Polio Vaccination Campaign?' *PLoS Med* 4(3): e73. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0040073

TENTH WEEK: Diseases of Affluence and the Politics of Pleasure

Kelly Brownell and Kenneth Warner (2009) "The Perils of Ignoring History: Big Tobacco Played Dirty and Millions Died. How Similar is Big Food?" *Millbank Quarterly* vol 87, #1, 259-294