

HISTORY OF MODERN MEDICINE

The making of scientific medicine from the anatomy theatre to the human genome project and beyond

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HSS 4040

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Office hours: Tuesdays 1.30-3.30pm

In the last few decades, medicine and the life sciences have become the locus for some of society's most extravagant hopes and acute anxieties. History of Modern Medicine is aimed at students who would like to uncover the history behind the headlines and take the 'longer view' of some of these questions. We will investigate the origins of aspects of contemporary life familiar to us all, from the vitamins we swallow down with breakfast to giving birth in hospital, bringing a historical perspective to bear on topics such as the storms over American health care reform, the politics of pharmaceutical patents and the emergence of the new genetic determinism.

The textbook for the course is Roy Porter's *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: a medical history of humanity*. In addition there is a course reader with a selection of primary sources.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students should demonstrate:

1. Mastery of the broad outlines of the history of scientific medicine;
2. An understanding of the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources;
3. The capacity to analyze primary sources in their written work;
4. Some historical understanding of contemporary issues;
5. Some improvement in their powers of written expression;
6. A demonstrated grasp of scholarly citation technique.

Course Requirements

Attendance at lectures is required. A sign-in sheet will be passed round on random occasions. There will be a grade penalty for students with two or more unexcused absences.

Students who wish to use laptops in class are respectfully asked to sit in the front few rows. Please switch off other electronic media.

There will be a take-home midterm in which students will analyze three primary sources, in answer to three questions. This will be five to eight pages long, double spaced, in twelve point type, with one to one and half inch margins. This will count towards 40% of the final grade. It will be due on Tuesday of sixth week.

On Tuesday of ninth week, students will come to class with a contemporary primary source of their own choosing, accompanied by a paragraph of explanation of its historical significance, to be turned in to the graders. This assignment will be graded pass/no-pass.

There will be a take-home final, in which students will be asked to incorporate their chosen primary source into a longer narrative about medicine in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This will be nine to twelve pages long, same format, and will count towards the remaining 60% of the grade. This will be due on Wednesday of finals week.

Students are required to comply with the academic integrity rules of this university, and will be required to turn in an electronic copy of their take-home exams to turn-it-in.com, the plagiarism software on the WebCT site. Anyone found to be in violation will be reported to the academic integrity office, with no exceptions.

A note to my students: I get asked to write many letters of recommendation. I only write them for students who excel in my classes, and who make themselves known to me, by visiting my office hours and/or participating in class discussions.

Course Outline and Readings

The class is organized chronologically: first week will be devoted to early modern medicine; week two to the eighteenth century; weeks three, four and five to the nineteenth century; weeks six, seven, eight and nine to the twentieth century. In tenth week we will be discussing contemporary issues.

Lecture 1. Introduction to the course: disease through the ages

Early modern medicine

FIRST WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. VIII, IX

1. Humoral and other medicines

2. The Islamic Hospital and the Renaissance Anatomy Theatre

Eighteenth century

SECOND WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. X, XI

Laennec, René: *On Mediate Auscultation*, excerpts, in *Source Book of Medical History*, pp. 313-330.

3. Enlightenment medicine

4. The Paris Hospital and the stethoscope

The nineteenth century

THIRD WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XIII

Snow, John, *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera* (1855), in Clendening, Logan. 1960. *Source Book of Medical History*. Mineola, NY. Dover Editions, pp. 468-472

5. Public Health and Sanitary police

6. Medical education

FOURTH WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XII

Bernard, Claude, (1865), *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine*, pp. 5-26.

7. Anaesthesia

8. Ghastly kitchens

FIFTH WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XIV, XIX

Pasteur, Louis. 1881. 'An Address on Vaccination in Relation to Chicken Cholera and Splenic Fever. *British Medical Journal*, July to December, 1881, pp. 233-234.

10. Microbes

11. Asepsis

The twentieth century

SIXTH WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XV

Paul Ehrlich (1908) *Experimental Researches on Specific Therapeutics*, pp. 1-22.

12. The industrial roots of drug production

****[MIDTERM DUE IN CLASS]****

13. Imperial Medicine and WWI

SEVENTH WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XX

Van De Velde, T. H. (1930) *Ideal marriage: its physiology and technique*, pp.11-19.

14. Medicalization

15. Racial hygiene

EIGHTH WEEK

Greatest Benefit, Ch. XXI

Bush, Vannevar, (1945) 'Science, the Endless Frontier: a report to the President' pp. 231-239

16. WWII and the war on disease

17. Medical nemesis

NINTH WEEK

18. AIDS, retroviral drugs and the new therapeutic optimism

****[PARAGRAPH ON COMTEMPORARY PRIMARY SOURCE DUE IN CLASS]****

19. Thanksgiving, no class

Contemporary Issues

TENTH WEEK

20. Human Genome Project and the Decade of the Brain

21. Discussion of student primary sources

****[FINAL ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY OF FINALS WEEK]****