

# HISTORY OF MODERN MEDICINE

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

**Instructor: Cathy Gere**

**HSS 4040**

[cgere@ucsd.edu](mailto:cgere@ucsd.edu)

858 534 6051

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3.30-4.50pm

Office hours, after lecture, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5-6pm

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 for note-taking 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 as the midterm, 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.

### Early modern medicine

#### FIRST WEEK

*Greatest Benefit*, Ch. VIII, IX

- 1. Early modern disease and the theory of the humors**
- 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.

## **9. Microbes**

## **10. Asepsis**

### The twentieth century

### SIXTH WEEK

*Greatest Benefit*, Ch. XV

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

## **11. The industrial roots of drug production**

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

## **12. 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.

## **13. Medicalization**

## **14. Racial hygiene**

### EIGHTH WEEK

*Greatest Benefit*, Ch. XXI

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

## **15. WWII and the war on disease**

**16. Medical nemesis**

NINTH WEEK

**17. AIDS, retroviral drugs and the new therapeutic optimism**

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

**18. Human Genome Project**

Contemporary Issues

TENTH WEEK

**19. Frontiers of Neuroscience**

**20. Our Transhuman Future?**

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