

HISTORY OF MEDICINE 507
HEALTH, DISEASE AND HEALING I
Fall, 2006

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This course presents an in-depth survey of medicine and public health from its most remote origins through approximately 1650. There are three principal themes. The first focuses on the evolving concepts of illness, beginning with the ideas of the Hippocratics, who lived during the fifth and fourth centuries b.c. We will study how their ideas were taken up and transformed by later scholars, with particular emphasis being paid to medicine in medieval Islam and the reception of medical science in western Europe after 1100 a.d. We will also pay close attention to the teaching and practice of anatomy in the new universities of Europe beginning in the 13th century. The second theme studies medical practitioners in ancient and medieval societies, focusing primarily on physicians but also paying significant attention to surgeons, apothecaries, midwives and the various others who together comprised the practice of healing in the ancient and medieval worlds. The third theme centers on the evolution of health as a social and political problem. It begins with the emergence of hospitals in Constantinople and Baghdad, two large medieval cities where caring for the sick poor became a matter of pressing concern. We then follow the evolution of public health through the period of the Black Death in the later fourteenth century and beyond, and the significant changes to the idea of caring for the poor that came in with the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.

There are three books that will be used in this course, which are available for purchase at the Underground Textbook Exchange on Lake Street:

Carlo M. Cipolla, *Faith, Reason and the Plague in Seventeenth-Century Tuscany*
Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*
Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*

There is also a required course reader, which costs \$27.00, available in the History of Science office, 7143 Social Science.

Course requirements and grading

Let there be no mistake: This is primarily a seminar-type course. The reading load is heavy - sometimes over 100 pages per week, although I have tried to make it taper off toward the end of the semester, and you will be expected to come to class on Mondays having done the reading and prepared to talk about it. As you will see below, attendance and participation carry a considerable weight in your final grade, and absences for *any* reason from the Monday discussions other than illness or family emergency will count against your participation grade. Your participation grade begins at a "B" and will go up or down from there.

Apart from class discussion, there will be three take-home essay assignments, one after each of the three sections of the course. Students will also be asked to submit at least six reading responses, distributed so that 2 fall in each of the three sections of the course. These responses can consist of one of two forms. Either the student can e-mail a response to me **no later than 6:00 p.m. Sunday night** (later submissions may not count, at my discretion), or they can post a response in the weekly forum set up on the course web site. I will describe these options more extensively elsewhere. Those students who choose to post additional reading responses above the prescribed minimum will receive additional course-participation credit.

Students taking the course for honors will additionally prepare and lead one of the Monday discussion sections, which will involve some additional reading and meeting with me one or more times.

Grading is straightforward:

25% attendance and participation
25% for each of the three essays

Schedule of topics and readings:

Wednesday, September 6 - Course Introduction: On Ancient Medicine Readings for September 11

Hippocrates, *On Ancient Medicine* (reading #1)

Kuriyama, "Interpreting the History of Bloodletting." (reading #2)

WEEK 2 - Basic Concepts of Hippocratic Medicine

Readings for September 18

Hippocrates, *Epidemics*, Book 1 (reading #5)

Airs, Waters, Places (reading #6)

Prognosis (reading #7)

Regimen in Acute Diseases (reading #8)

WEEK 3 - The Social and Cultural Nexus of Greek Medicine

Readings for September 25

Jouanna, "The Physician and the Public," and "The Physician and the Patient."

von Staden, "In a Pure and Holy Way." (reading #11)

Temkin, "The Cult of Asclepius." (reading #15)

Edelstein and Edelstein, "God and Good Fortune: Cures of Apollo and Asclepius."

WEEK 4 - Medicine in the Roman World

Readings for October 2

von Staden, "Anatomy as Rhetoric." (reading #3)

Mattern, "Physicians and the Roman Imperial Aristocracy." (reading #20)

Galen, *On Examinations By Which the Best Physicians Are Recognized* (reading #13)

Celsus, *De Medicina* (reading #12)

Questions for first essay distributed Wednesday, October 4.

First essay due in class, Wednesday, October 11.

WEEK 5 - Medicine in Late Antiquity: Christian and Muslim Responses

Readings for October 9

Leiser, "Medical Education in Islamic Lands."

Savage-Smith, "Attitudes Toward Dissection in Medieval Islam." (reading #4)

Ferngren, "Early Christianity As a Religion of Healing." (reading #22)

Savage Smith, "Islamic Culture and the Medical Arts." See this online exhibition at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/islamic_medical/islamic_00.html#toc.

WEEK 6 - The Establishment of Medicine as a Scholarly Discipline

Readings for October 16

Johannitius, *The Galenic System* (reading #23)

Siraisi, *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine*, chapters 1, 3 & 4.

McVaugh, "The Nature and Limits of Medical Certitude at Early Fourteenth-Century Montpellier." (reading #24)

WEEK 7 - Medical Practice in Medieval Europe

Readings for October 23

Siraisi, *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine*, chapter 2.

Sweet, "Hildegard of Bingen and the Greening of Medicine." (reading #25)

Getz, "The Variety of Medical Practitioners in Medieval England." (reading #26)

Wallis, "Signs and Senses." (reading #27)

WEEK 8 - The Black Death: Perceptions and Consequences

Readings for October 30

McNeill, "Confluence of the Civilized Disease Pools of Eurasia: 500 B.C. to A.D. 1200."

Cohn, "The Black Death: End of a Paradigm."

Horrox, selections from *The Black Death* (reading #28)

Questions for second essay distributed Wednesday, November 1.

Second essay due in class, Wednesday, November 8.

WEEK 9 - Plague and Public Health

Readings for November 6

Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*, chapter 2

Cipolla, *Faith, Reason and the Plague in Seventeenth-Century Tuscany*, pp. 1-85.

Carmichael, "Epidemics and State Medicine in Milan." (reading #30)

WEEK 10 - Medical Humanism and the Paracelsian Movement

Readings for November 13

Pereira, "*Mater Medicinarum*." (reading #29)

Trevor-Roper, "The Paracelsian Movement."

Paracelsus, *Selected Writings*

Debus, "Paracelsianism and the Diffusion of the Chemical Philosophy."

WEEK 11 - Anatomy and the Medical Renaissance

Readings for November 20

Park, "The Criminal and Saintly Body."

French, "Bologna and Padua." (reading #32)

WEEK 12 - Anatomy and Gender

Reading for November 27

Laqueur, "Destiny is Anatomy" and "New Science, One Flesh."

Stolberg, "A Woman Down to Her Bones," Laqueur, "Sex in the Flesh," and Schiebinger, "Skelettedstreit."

WEEK 13 - Medical Care and Poor Relief in Early Modern Europe

Readings for December 4

Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*, chapter 5

Gentilcore, "Cradles of Saints and Useful Institutions." (reading #33)

Pelling, "Healing the Sick Poor." (reading #34)

WEEK 14 - Medicine and the Scientific Revolution

Readings for December 11

Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*, chapter 3

Roos, "Luminaries of Medicine." (reading #37)

Cook, "The New Philosophy and Medicine in Seventeenth-Century England." (reading #38)

Discussion Point: What's in a reading response?

Reading responses are tricky beasts. At their best, they offer students a chance to organize their thoughts about a reading before talking about them in class. For the teacher, reading responses are a chance to see what students are thinking - where they understand the material, where they might be having problems, and so forth. Best of all, as a group a given week's reading responses let the teacher identify those three or four issues that are uppermost in students' minds.

But what makes for a good reading response? Most obviously, it is a response, but of a very particular kind. First of all, a good response does **not** describe your feelings about a reading. It matters not at all to me that you find readings in this course more difficult and less "fun" than what you read on vacation. They are not meant to be "fun" and yes, sometimes they might even be a little boring, although if they are consistently so boring that you cannot even make yourself work through them then you are probably in the wrong course. Instead of reporting your feelings, a good response presents ideas that have come into your mind while doing the readings or after you finished them. They can be questions that you want to raise about the readings: "Why is the author approaching the topic this way?" or "For whom was this reading intended?" are two of many possible questions. Or the response can take the form of identifying the author's main points and criticizing them (but on this see below). Or a response can identify a theme in one week's readings and try to connect it with previous week's readings. In this third case the response almost becomes a brief sketch of what one of the take-essays could look like.

Above all, a reading response is short and to the point. At no time should it be longer than 2 paragraphs. It does not have to be as polished in prose and organization as a take-home essay should be. At the same time, it does have to be more well thought out and organized than whatever happens to enter your head while sitting at the keyboard.

On Criticizing a reading: Most people today use the word "criticism" in an exclusively negative way, as if "criticism" was equivalent to "attack". But the word actually is closer to "analysis." When you criticize a writing you are supposed to analyze it, for example by unearthing the assumptions that went into producing it and inferring its consequences. When doing history - and especially the history of science and medicine - your **first** job in criticizing a primary source (i.e., a source from the historical period itself, not something written later *about* the period) is to understand it and get inside the minds of people who lived in that world of experience. It matters little that nearly all of the documents in this course will express ideas that we do not hold today and which we consider "wrong" or "ignorant". The challenge of reading them is to understand why those ideas made sense to the historical actors, people who possessed fully as much intelligence as ourselves.

