

Revised jan 25
Race, American Medicine and Public Health
Medical History 523/History of Science
MSC 1010
Spring 2010
Mon. Wed, 2:30-3:45

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- FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.



Fig. 748.—BRIDGET McBRUISER.

The problem of the 20th century, wrote W.E.B. DuBois in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), “is the problem of the color-line.” This course considers the issue of the color line in American medicine and public health over the past two centuries. We will be looking at the ways in which skin color (and other elements of “racial identity”) has influenced the experiences of patients, physicians and nurses, and medical researchers, seeking to document and analyze how conceptions of race have shaped the health concerns and health outcomes of Americans in the past two hundred years. Topics include the origins of racial classification, the health and medical care of slaves, the use of blacks as research subjects, especially the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, the history of racial disparities in medicine, the black hospital movement, and the efforts to integrate the American medical profession.

Course Requirements

This course is grounded in active learning. This requires the participation of not only the instructor but the students as well. There will be new material presented in class, as well as the opportunity to engage with the texts—both primary and secondary. This approach requires that you do the reading before class, that you attend class with the goal of raising questions, offering comments, or responding to the readings and the issues they raise. As we are well aware, race is not now nor has it ever been a neutral issue; it continues to provoke controversy and discussion. But, this discussion can be productive.

In addition to informed participation in class discussions, students are encouraged to keep a reading journal in which you record questions or comments about the materials. This will help with the requirement that FOUR times over the course of the semester you submit to the instructor a 2-3 page reflection on a reading or readings. This is an opportunity for more sustained reflection on the reading and I will be looking for your engagement with the materials.

There is an in-class midterm examination on March 3; this will involve both some short answer questions and an essay question.

Finally, students will each write a research paper on some aspect of the history of race, medicine, and public health in America. The paper should be approximately 12-15 pages in length, and must use both primary and secondary sources as evidence. Students must submit a one-page description of their paper topic, their initial sources, both primary and secondary, and a paragraph of why this is a question worth asking. This one-page description is due April 12. The paper is due May 5.

Assessment

Class Participation	20%
Midterm	25%
Reading Journal/Reflections	20%
Research Paper	35%

Required Books

Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939*

Susan Reverby, ed. *Tuskegee's Truths: Rethinking the Tuskegee Syphilis Study*

Keith Wailoo and Stephen Pemberton, *The Troubled Dream of Genetic Medicine: Ethnicity and Innovation in Tay-Sachs, Cystic Fibrosis, and Sickle Cell Disease*

Other readings available on Learn at UW course site.

TOPIC OUTLINE for 523

Jan 20	Introductions and Expectations
Jan 25	Thinking about Race
Jan 27	Colonial America
Feb 1	Scenes of Melancholy Devastation
Feb 3	Medicine and Slavery: Primary Documents
Feb 8	Medical Research and Slave Subjects
Feb 10	Medicine and Slavery Historicized
Feb 15	Reconstructing Health
Feb. 17	Immigrants and Disease
Feb 22	Strangers from Another Shore
Mar 1	The "Yellow Peril"
Mar 3	Midterm Examination (in class)
Mar 8	Medicalizing the Mexican
Mar 10	Medical Education and the Negro
Mar 15	Red, White and Black
Mar 17	Native Americans
Mar 22	The Tuskegee Syphilis Study
Mar 24	Legacies of the Tuskegee Study
Spring Break	
Apr 5	AIDS and Africa
Apr 7	Ebling Library Session
Apr 12	Genetic Medicine— Tay Sachs Disease
Apr 14	Genetic Medicine— Cystic Fibrosis
Apr 21	Genetic Medicine— Sickle Cell Anemia
Apr 26	Alien Health
Apr 28	Affirmative Actions?
May 3	The New Racism in Medicine
May 5	Conclusions

Course Outline

January 20	Introductions and Expectations
January 25	Thinking about Race

Readings:

Jonathan Marks, "Race—Past, Present and Future," in *Revisiting Race in a Genomic Age*, pp. 21-38.

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (excerpt)

Some questions for reflection

What did race mean in the 18th century and how does it differ from 21st conceptions of race?

Why has the race concept been revived in medical research?

Is Thomas Jefferson a racist? What is the source of his information about the physical differences between whites and blacks?

How can one distinguish between the races?

January 27**Colonial America****Readings:**

Margot Minardi, "The Boston Inoculation Controversy of 1721-1722: An Incident in the History of Race," *William and Mary Quarterly* 2004

Benjamin Rush, "Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes is The Leprosy," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 1799, 289-297

Some questions for reflection

How does the emphasis on race alter the understanding of one of the classic historical milestones of American public health, namely the introduction of variolation as a prevention against smallpox?

Why did Benjamin Rush think that the change in skin color was the result of leprosy?

What evidence supports his explanation of changes in pigmentation?

February 1**Melancholy Scenes of Devastation****Readings:**

Matthew Carey, *A Short Account of the Malignant Fever. . .* (1793)

Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Colored People During the Awful Calamity in Philadelphia in the Year 1793; and a Refutation of Some Censures Thrown upon Them in Some Publications.* (pp 48-65)

Margaret Humphreys, "Biology and Destiny," in *Intensely Human: The Health of Black Soldiers in the American Civil War*, pp. 38-56.

Some questions for reflection

Is it legitimate to note that people respond differently to the same diseases?
 Why were so many whites convinced that slaves did not develop yellow fever?
 Do people of African descent respond differently to malaria? Yellow fever?
 Why did Jones and Allen feel it necessary to explain and defend their behavior during the yellow fever epidemic?

February 3 Medicine and Slavery: Primary Documents

Readings:

'Gamma,' "Effects of Mercury on the Constitution of Negroes," *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 1824

J. Marion Sims, "Osteo-Sarcoma of the Lower Jaw," *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* 1846.

Samuel A. Cartwright, "Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race," *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*, May 1851.

Some questions for reflection

How did slave status alter the experience of amputation? What were white doctors concerned about when they treated a slave?
 Is drapetomania a disease? Why? How is drapetomania different than yellow fever?
 How did race influence therapeutic decisions of physicians?
 What evidence supported physicians' interpretations of the differences between white and black people?

February 8 Medical Research and Slave Subjects

Readings:

J. Marion Sims, "Treatment of Vesico-Vaginal Fistula," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* 1852.

J. Marion Sims, *The Story of My Life*. (1884) excerpt.

F. Lee Buxton, "Foreword," *The Story of My Life* (1968)

Some questions for reflection

Should Sims be remembered as a hero of American medicine? How should we judge his conduct of the experiments?

How do you understand the participation of Lucy, Betsey, and Anarcha and the other (nameless) women who aided Sims?

Did Sims treat his female slave patients in the same way as his male slave patients?

February 10

Medicine and Slavery Historicized

Readings:

Stephen C. Kenny, "'A dictate of both interest and mercy'? Slave hospitals in the antebellum South," *J Hist Med Allied Sci.* 2010 1-47.

Howard Jones, "Cinqué of the Amistad a Slave Trader? Perpetuating a Myth" with Comments by Paul Finkelman, "Cinqué and the Historians," Bertram Wyatt Brown, "Mea Culpa," William S. McFeely, "Cinqué, Tall and Strong," *Journal of American History*

Some questions for reflection

What kind of evidence is more compelling—oral tradition or written testimony? What are some of the problems with reconstructing the past using either kind of evidence?

What was the relationship between the medical profession and the "peculiar institution"?

Did slaves receive good medical care in the New Orleans hospitals and infirmaries?

What illnesses merited hospital care?

How did operating a "Negro infirmary" benefit a white physician?

February 15

Reconstructing Health

Readings:

Thomas J. Mays, "Human Slavery as a Prevention of Pulmonary Consumption," *Trans. American Clim. Assn.* 1904

H. Folkes, "The Negro as a Health Problem," *JAMA*, 1910

Tera Hunter, "Tuberculosis as the 'Negro Servants' Disease," in *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War*, 1997

Some questions for reflection

What is a Negro? Who decides?

What is a quadroon? An octaroon? Why were these categories meaningful?

Why were white doctors so convinced that blacks would die off as a race after the Civil War?

What made white employers so concerned about their "negro servants"?

February 17

Immigrants and Disease

Readings:

C. P. Knight, "The Detection of the Mentally Defective Among Immigrants," *JAMA* 1913

Amy Fairchild, "Policies of Inclusion," *American Journal of Public Health*, 2004, pp. 528-539

Howard Markel and A.M. Stern, "Which face? Whose nation?: Immigration, public health, and the construction of disease at America's ports and borders, 1891-1928 *The American Behavioral Scientist*. 1999, 1314-32.

Some questions for reflection

What was medical inspection and what was its purpose?

Is it legitimate to limit the immigration of infectious individuals? Of aliens likely to require social support?

Do immigrants—legal and illegal—merit state financed health care?

February 22

Strangers from Another Shore

Readings:

I.E. Cohn, "The Chinese and their Peculiar Medical Ideas," *Medical Record* 1892

Charles McClain, "Medicine, Race and American Law: the Bubonic Plague Outbreak of 1900," *Law and Social Inquiry*

Some questions for reflection

Do people of different races react differently to pain? Is this a racial characteristic? Do you trust Dr. Cohn's observations? Why or why not?

How and under what circumstances did the Chinese prevail in San Francisco during the plague epidemic?

February 24

The "Yellow Peril"

Readings:

Molina, "Interlopers in the Land of Sunshine: Chinese Disease Carriers, Launderers, and Vegetable Peddlers," in *Fit to be Citizens*, introduction and chapters 1

Some questions for reflection

Why is Molina concerned with the racial hierarchy in Los Angeles?
How were Chinese workers perceived as a health threat?

March 1 Medicalizing the Mexican

Reading:

Molina, *Fit to be Citizens*, chapters 4 and 5 and epilogue

March 3 Midterm Examination (in class)

March 8 Medical Education and the Negro

Readings:

W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Health and Physique of the Negro American*, excerpt 1906,

Abraham Flexner, "The Medical Education of the Negro," *Report on Medical Education* 1910, excerpt

Isabella Vandervall, "Some Problems of the Colored Woman Physician," *Woman's Medical Journal*, 1917.

Some questions for reflection

What obstacles did Negro physicians confront in their search for professional recognition?

How did the Flexner Report influence the medical education of blacks?

Did Flexner support negro medical education? Why or why not?

Why did the AMA treat black physicians the way they did for more than a century?

March 10 Lost Boundaries

Readings:

Walter White, "Death of a Citizen," from *A Man Called White*

Joanne Brown, "Purity and Danger in Colour: Notes on Germ Theory and the Semantics of Segregation, 1885-1915" in *Heredity and Infection* (2000), pp. 101-31.

Spencie Love, "Noted Physician Fatally Injured: Charles Drew and the Legend that Will Not Die," *Washington History*, 1992-93, 4-19.

Some questions for reflection

How did racism affect the care black patients received?

Who was Charles Drew and why is he important in American history?
 Why has the story of Charles Drew's death become so entrenched in the black community?
 Did racism play a role in Drew's death?

March 15 Red, White and Black

Readings:

Lederer, "Lost Boundaries: Race, Blood and Bodies," *Flesh and Blood*, pp. 107-42.

Some questions for reflection

March 17 Native Americans

Readings:

L. Webster Fox, "Trachoma among the North American Indians," *Hygeia*, 1926.

David S. Jones, "The Persistence of American Indian Health Disparities," *American Journal of Public Health*, 2006, 2122-2134.

Some questions for reflection

March 22 The Tuskegee Syphilis Study

Readings:

Reverby, *Tuskegee's Truths*, "Racism and Research," 15-33; "Shadow on the Land," pp. 59-69; "Selected Letters," 73-118; "Tuskegee Syphilis Study in Medical Research," 266-275; "Interview with Nurse Rivers, Nurse Rivers, Neither Victim Nor Villain," 321-364.

Questions for Reflection

Why was Macon County selected as the site for the study of syphilis?
 Was the study ethically or scientifically justified?
 Why did black professionals—doctors and nurses—participate?
 How should we judge the central role of Nurse Rivers?
 Did the introduction of penicillin influence the conduct of the study?

March 24 Legacies of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study

Readings:

Susan Reverby, *Tuskegee's Truths*, "Dangers of Difference," 424-30; "Shadow of Tuskegee," 431-442; "Deadly Medicine," 509-524, "Herman Shaw's Remarks," 572-603.

Sheryl T. Bird and Laura Bogart, "Conspiracy Beliefs about HIV/AIDS and Birth Control among African Americans," *J. Social Issues* 2005

Video: *Prime Time Live* (1992)

Some questions for reflection

Why did the Study last 40 years?

What responsibility, if any, does Nurse Rivers bear for the longevity of the Study?

Why did the apology for the Study come in 1997?

What is the legacy of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study?

March 27 –April 4 SPRING BREAK

APRIL 5

AIDS and Africa

Readings:

Rosalind J. Harrison-Chirimuutu, AIDS from Africa: Western Science or racist mythology" from *Western Medicine As Contested Knowledge* (1997), 46-68

Some questions for reflection

APRIL 7

Ebling LIBRARY SESSION

*****This required session will be held at Ebling Library in the Health Sciences Learning Center.**

APRIL 12

Genetic Medicine—Tay Sachs Disease

Readings:

Wailoo and Pemberton, *Troubled Dream of Genetic Medicine*, intro, chapter 1.

APRIL 19

Genetic Medicine—Cystic Fibrosis

Readings:

Wailoo and Pemberton, *Troubled Dream of Genetic Medicine*, chapter 2.

APRIL 21

Genetic Medicine—Sickle Cell Anemia

Readings:

Wailoo and Pemberton, *Troubled Dream of Genetic Medicine*, chapter 3 and conclusion.

APRIL 26

Alien Health

Readings:

Keith Wailoo, Julie Livingston, Peter Guarnaccia, eds, *A Death Foretold: Jessica Santillan, the Bungled Transplant, and Paradoxes of Medical Citizenship*, pp. 238-296.

APRIL 28

Affirmative Actions

Readings:

Sally Satel, "Race and Medicine," in *PC, M.D.: How Political Correctness is Corrupting Medicine* 2000

Ken DeVille and Loretta Kopelman, "Diversity, trust, and patient care: Affirmative action in medical education 25 years after Bakke," *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 2003, 489-516

Questions for Reflection

How did the Bakke decision alter medical school admissions?

What are the arguments for affirmative action in medicine? Have they changed over time? Are they still necessary?

MAY 3

The New Racialism of Medicine

Readings:

"A Race-Based Heart Remedy," *Newsweek* 2005

Sankar and Kahn, "*BiDiL: Race Medicine Or Race Marketing?*" *Health Affairs*, 2005.

Questions for Reflection

Should we pursue race-specific pharmaceuticals?

What are the risks and benefits of this strategy?
Is there something wrong with race marketing per se?

MAY 5

Conclusions