

AS.100.291 | Fall 2018
TTh 9:00–10:15am, Gilman 400
Professor: Zachary Dorner (zdorner@jhu.edu)
Office hours: TBA, Gilman 330D

Medicine in an Age of Empires, 1500-1800

Description

This seminar examines the broad shifts in European medicine that occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries during a period that saw changing views of the body alongside changing ways of understanding the natural world. This period also saw the extension of overseas empires based on state-sponsored violence and resource extraction using enslaved labor. Such imperial projects shaped and were shaped by medical developments. How, then, did medicine emerge as a distinctive body of knowledge and as a profession? And, how did this kind of medicine sharpen emergent ideas of difference, hierarchy, and superiority that would come to define the modern world? The answers lie in the intertwined experiences of disease, empire, and global commerce. Europeans' suffering at the hands of the plague influenced medical practice, but so too did fears of hot climates far from home. The medial regimes instituted in trading posts, military camps, plantations, and naval hospitals reshaped expectations of what medicine could or should do, for whom, and at what cost. In short, the world would have looked a lot different without the empires of the early modern period. Without them we would not have the same paradigms of medicine we do today.

Themes & Learning Goals

Our focus is situating the history of early modern medicine into its broader contexts. We will blend scholarship on practices and ideas to trace the broad transition from medicines based on the Galenic humors and individualized advice to medicines suitable for a wider range of people across empires. By applying the lenses of race, class, gender, and religion to this history we will uncover the diversity of medical traditions present in the early modern period, as well as the power dynamics that sustained or thwarted them. In so doing, the course emphasizes the importance of key pillars of the early modern world (empire, global commerce, plantation slavery, war) to narratives of medical progress. Seeing these topics as central to the changes occurring in medicine at this time is crucial to better understanding the origins of “modern” medicine.

By the end of the quarter, students will be able to make connections between assigned readings and the broader themes of the course. We will work on how to ask analytical questions about the past and the ways historians have considered it. Students will use primary and secondary sources to interrogate social structures and historical events. They will also be able to use historical context to evaluate social institutions, change over time, and power relationships within social, racial, gendered, and cultural contexts. Assignments and discussion will focus on building comfort with communicating arguments and marshaling evidence in writing and speech.

Requirements

Participation: 40% (includes activity in weekly discussions)

First paper: 10% (2-3 pages)

First exam: 15% (5-7 pages)

Second paper: 15% (2-3 pages)

Second exam: 20% (8-10 pages)

Active, informed participation is expected each week. Be sure to complete the readings before class, noting things you find interesting or about which you have questions. Your participation grade does not depend on mastery of the material, but on consistent and honest engagement with the readings and your peers. It is also important that together we create a respectful community of inquiry where all feel comfortable thinking out loud, trading ideas, and venturing thoughts that may not be fully formed. Respect and courtesy are essential at all times. Outside of class, students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours in advance of class or assignments.

All assignments must be emailed to the instructor by the deadline as Microsoft Word documents (or equivalent format). They must be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and a consistent citation style. The grades of late papers will be lowered one level for each day they are late if prior arrangements have not been made with the instructor.

The two papers take the form of a focused analysis of an historical source (could be a text, image, object, map, or much more). For the first, students will have a choice of several provided by the instructor, and students will identify a source of their choosing for the second. We will discuss the expectations for these assignments in class.

Prompts for the exams will be distributed via email at least 48 hours in advance of the due date listed below. Students will have that period to respond with a creative argument that incorporates ideas and specific examples from course material and discussion. All notes and readings may be used, although collaboration is not permitted.

Policies

Students must attend class each week unless they have a valid medical excuse and notify the instructor before class. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade and multiple absences may result in a failing grade. Please bring the readings and your notes to class either printed or digitally. Laptops are permitted (and often encouraged for looking at primary sources) in class for this purpose, but all non-pertinent browsers and programs must be closed. Texting in class is not permitted.

All students are responsible for understanding and complying with Johns Hopkins's ethics standards. In this course, you are expected to be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic

devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student affairs and/or the chairman of the Ethics Board beforehand. See the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board Web site (<http://ethics.jhu.edu>) for more information.

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Readings

The following books are available at the bookstore and on reserve at the library. Other readings will be posted electronically or distributed via email, and are marked with an asterisk (*) on the schedule. I prefer hard copies of books, but several used in the course are available for free online. Please follow the links provided to find the assigned articles.

Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* **(available online)**

Barbara Duden, *The Woman Beneath the Skin*

Shigehisa Kuriyama, *The Expressiveness of the Body*

Pratik Chakrabarti, *Medicine and Empire 1600-1960*

Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire* **(available online)**

J. R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires* **(available online)**

Patrice Bourdelais, *Epidemics Laid Low*

Schedule

Week 1. From Humors to Specifics

T, Sep 4

Chakrabarti, Pratik. *Medicine and Empire 1600-1960*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. [chap. 1]

Th, Sep 6

Siraisi, Nancy G. *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. [physiological and anatomical knowledge]

Cook, Harold J. “Markets and Cultures: Medical Specifics and the Reconfiguration of the Body in Early Modern Europe.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 21 (2011): 123–145. [\[link\]](#)

Weeks 2-4. Defining the Body

T, Sep 11

Park, Katherine. “The Criminal and the Sainly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1-33. [\[link\]](#)

Linebaugh, Peter. “The Tyburn Riot against the Surgeons.” In *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Douglas Hay et al. (London, 1975): 65-117.*

Th, Sep 13

Siraisi, Nancy G. *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. [disease and treatment]

Henry, Wanda S. "Women Searchers of the Dead in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century London." *Social History of Medicine* 29, no. 3 (Aug. 2016): 445-466. [[link](#)]

T, Sep 18

Duden, Barbara. *The Woman Beneath the Skin: A Doctor's Patients in Eighteenth-Century Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991. [chaps. 2-4, focus on chap. 4]

Th, Sep 20

Schiebinger, Londa. *The Mind has No Sex? Women in the Origins of Modern Science*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989. [chap. 7]*

—First paper due Th by midnight via email—

T, Sep 25

Kuriyama, Shigehisa. *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine*. New York: Zone Books, 1999. [Parts One & Two]

Th, Sep 27

Beukers, H. et al., eds. *Red-Hair Medicine: Dutch-Japanese Medical Relations*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991. ["Anatomy as Underlying Principle" and "Introduction of Acupuncture"]*

Week 5. Plague at Home

T, Oct 2

Defoe, Daniel. *A Journal of the Plague Year* (London, 1722). [[link](#), [link](#)]

Th, Oct 4

Wallis, Patrick. "Plagues, Morality and the Place of Medicine in Early Modern England." *English Historical Review* 121, no. 490 (2006): 1-24. [[link](#)]

Selections from 1665 plague tracts*

Weeks 6-7. The Medical Marketplace

T, Oct 9

Breen, Benjamin. "Drugs and Early Modernity." *History Compass* 15, no. 4 (April 2017). [[link](#)]

Chakrabarti, Pratik. *Medicine and Empire 1600-1960*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. [chap. 2]

Monahan, Erika. "Locating Rhubarb: Early Modernity's Relevant Obscurity." In *Early Modern Things: Objects and Their Histories, 1500-1800*, ed. Paula Findlen (New York, 2013): 227-251.*

Winterbottom, Anna. "Of the China Root: A Case Study of the Early Modern Circulation of *Materia Medica*." *Social History of Medicine* 28, no. 1 (2015): 22-44. [[link](#)]

Th, Oct 11

Cook, Harold J. "Good Advice and Little Medicine: The Professional Authority of Early Modern English Physicians." *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 1 (Jan. 1994): 1-31. [[link](#)]

Porter, Roy and Dorothy Porter. "The Rise of the English Drugs Industry: The Role of Thomas Corbyn." *Medical History* 33, no. 3 (1989): 277–295. [\[link\]](#)

T, Oct 16

Brandt, Susan. "'Getting Into a Little Business': Margaret Hill Morris and Women's Medical Entrepreneurship During the American Revolution." *Early American Studies* 13, no. 4 (2015): 774–807. [\[link\]](#)

Leong, Elaine. "Making Medicines in the Early Modern Household." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 82, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 145-168. [\[link\]](#)

Th, Oct 18

No reading

— First exam due Th by midnight via email—

Weeks 8-9. Empire Abroad

T, Oct 23

Harrison, Mark. *Climates & Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600-1850*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. [chap. 1]*

Kupperman, Karen Ordahl. "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (April 1984): 213-240. [\[link\]](#)

Th, Oct 25

Smith, Billy G. *Ship of Death: A Voyage That Changed the Atlantic World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013. [chaps. 7-9]*

T, Oct 30

Kelton, Paul. *Cherokee Medicine, Colonial Germs: An Indigenous Nation's Fight against Smallpox, 1518-1824*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015. [chaps. 1-2]*

Th, Nov 1

Gomez, Pablo F. "Incommensurable Epistemologies?: The Atlantic Geography of Healing in the Early Modern Caribbean." *Small Axe* 18, no. 2 (July 2014): 95-107. [\[link\]](#)

Voeks, Robert. "African Medicine and Magic in the Americas." *Geographical Review* 83, no. 1 (Jan. 1993): 66-78. [\[link\]](#)

Week 10. Military Medicine

T, Nov 6

Chakrabarti, Pratik. *Medicine and Empire 1600-1960*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. [chaps. 3-4]

Chakrabarti, Pratik. "'Neither of Meate Nor Drinke, But What the Doctor Alloweth': Medicine Amidst War and Commerce in Eighteenth-Century Madras." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 80, no. 1 (2006): 1-38. [\[link\]](#)

Sheridan, Richard B. "The Doctor and the Buccaneer: Sir Hans Sloane's Case History of Sir Henry Morgan, Jamaica, 1688." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 41, no. 1 (Jan. 1986): 76-87. [\[link\]](#)

Th, Nov 8

McNeill, J. R. *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. [chaps. 2, 3, 5]

Week 11. Plantation Medicine

T, Nov 13

Hogarth, Rana. *Medicalizing Blackness: Making Racial Difference in the Atlantic World, 1780-1840*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. [chap. 3]*

Fett, Sharla M. *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002. [chaps. 6-7]*

Th, Nov 15

[Dr. Collins], *Practical rules for the management and medical treatment of Negro slaves in the sugar colonies* (London, 1803). [\[link\]](#)

John Clark, *Observations on the Diseases in Long Voyages to Hot Climates* (London, 1773). [\[link\]](#)

—Second paper due Th by midnight via email—

No class week 12 (Nov 20, 22) for Thanksgiving Recess

Week 13. Reproduction

T, Nov 27

Morgan, Jennifer L. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. [chaps. 3-4]*

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. “‘The Living Mother of a Living Child’: Midwifery and Mortality in Post-Revolutionary New England.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 46, no. 1 (Jan. 1989): 27-48. [\[link\]](#)

Th, Nov 29

Dayton, Cornelia Hughes. “Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an Eighteenth-Century New England Village.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (Jan. 1991): 19-49.

[\[link\]](#)

Schiebinger, Londa. *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004. [chaps. 3-4]

Week 14. Conclusion

T, Dec 4

Bourdelaïs, Patrice. *Epidemics Laid Low: A History of What Happened in Rich Countries*. Translated by Bart K. Holland. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Th, Dec 6

Conclusion, no reading

—Second exam due Th, Dec 13, by midnight via email—