

150.730 Methods in the History of Medicine, Fall 2020

Mary E. Fissell, PhD
mfissell@jhu.edu

In this course we will explore how historians write history, and the varieties of methods historians of medicine have employed. We start by looking at three major types of history-writing: intellectual; social; and cultural; and thus re-trace the history of the discipline over the past 40 years or so. Then we move to a series of topics that showcase a range of themes and approaches. The readings include classic essays and recent works, building upon introductory work accomplished in IHOM. The course develops specific skills, such as note-taking and “gutting” a book. Weekly discussions alternate between Voice Thread and Live Talks on Zoom, and assignments include short papers and Voice Thread assignments.

Learning Objectives:

- Build breadth of knowledge of key scholarship in the history of medicine.
- Recognize the ongoing and provisional nature of knowledge and engage the past on its own terms.
- Develop skills in note-taking and summarizing books and articles.
- Understand multiple tools, methods, and perspectives used to investigate and interpret materials from the past.
- Deploy secondary sources to build an historiographic argument.

The health and wellness of students are of utmost importance to us here at Johns Hopkins. If you are struggling with anxiety, stress, depression, or other wellbeing-related concerns, please consider contacting the Johns Hopkins Student Assistance Program (JHSAP). If you are concerned about a friend, please encourage that person to seek out counseling. JHSAP can be reached at 443-287-7000 or jhsap.org. Additional resources are available at [https:// www.hopkinsmedicine.org/getting-help](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/getting-help).

If you have a disability or any health issue and may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator for graduate students in the School of Medicine: Kristina Nance, GradDisabilityOffice@jhmi.edu, 410-614-3385) to discuss your specific needs.

Course Assessment:

Discussion: Every week we will meet for discussion, either asynchronously on Voice Thread or synchronously in a Live Talk via Zoom. Such discussions are a crucial part of the course; should you need to miss a Live Talk, there is always a make-up assignment available.

Course work: A few short assignments will be posted to Voice Thread; other written assignments will be submitted to Drop Box. Students will read two paired books from a

short list of recent significant works and write a 5-7 page essay comparing and contrasting their methods.

->Weekly office hours will be via Zoom; the time will vary to accommodate schedules.

Week 1: Intellectual History (Aug. 29)

Adrian Wilson, "On the History of Disease-concepts: The Case of Pleurisy", *History of Science*, vol. 38, (2000): 271-319.

Ludmilla Jordanova, "Mapping the Discipline of History" in *History in Practice*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006): 35-58.

Owsei Temkin, "The Role of Surgery in the Rise of Modern Medical Thought", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 25 no. 3, (1951): 248-59.

Charles E. Rosenberg, "What Is Disease?: In Memory of Owsei Temkin", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 77 no. 3, (2003): 491-505.

You may wish to re-read the classic Temkin article we read in Survey 1:

Owsei Temkin, "The Scientific Approach to Disease: Specific Entity and Individual Illness," in *Scientific Change: Historical Studies in the Intellectual, Social and Technical Conditions for Scientific Discovery and Technical Invention from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. A.C. Crombie (New York: Basic Books, 1963): 629-47. Reprinted in *The Double Face of Janus* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977): 441-455.

Assignments:

Select a book from the list at the end of syllabus and order it/borrow it; start reading (you'll be reporting on it in Week 4, and using it for the final paper). Select a (paired) second book for the comparative essay for Week 8; see list; obtain it.

Live Talk Discussion of the readings, Thursday Sept. 3, 7 pm EDT.

Week 2: Social History (Sept. 5)

Erwin Ackerknecht, "A Plea for a 'Behaviorist' Approach in Writing the History of Medicine," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* (1967): 211-14.

Susan M. Reverby and David Rosner, "Beyond the Great Doctors' Revisited: A Generation of the 'New' Social History of Medicine," in John Warner and Frank Huisman, eds., *Locating Medical History: The Stories and their Meanings*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2004): 167-193.

Leslie J. Reagan, "'About to Meet Her Maker': Women, Doctors, Dying Declarations, and the State's Investigation of Abortion, Chicago, 1867-1940," *The Journal of American History* 77.4 (1991): 1240-1264.

John K. Walton, "Casting Out and Bringing Back in Victorian England: Pauper Lunatics, 1840-1870." In *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry*, vol. 2, (London: Tavistock Press, 1985): 135-46.

Tamara Giles-Vernick, Didier Gondola, Guillaume Lachenal and William H. Schneider, "Social History, Biology, and the Emergence of HIV in Colonial Africa" *Journal of African History* 54:1 (2013): 11-30.

Assignments:

Note-taking: See handout on a one-page method of taking concise notes on an article or book. Submit 1 page notes in this format on the Reagan and the Walton essays to Drop Box by 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Sept. 12, and prior to that, post one or the other of your one page notes to the relevant Voice Thread by 11:59 pm EDT Wednesday Sept. 9; then comment on those of your classmates. Voice Thread discussion of the readings.

Week 3: Cultural History (Sept. 12)

Mary E. Fissell, "Making Meaning from the Margins: The New Cultural History of Medicine," John Warner and Frank Huisman, eds., *Locating Medical History: The Stories and their Meanings*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2004): 364-89.

Stephen M. Stowe, "Singleton's Tooth: Thoughts on the Form and Meaning of Antebellum Southern Family Correspondence", *Southern Review* 25:2 (1989): 323-333.

Stephen M. Stowe, "Seeing Themselves at Work: Physicians and the Case Narrative in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century American South", *American Historical Review* 101 (1996): 41-79.

Guido Ruggiero, "The Strange Death of Margarita Marcellini: Male, Signs and the Everyday World of Pre-modern Medicine", *American Historical Review*, 106 (2001): 1141-1158.

Luise White, *Speaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000): 3-55.

Assignment:

Write a 2 page paper comparing and contrasting the methods used in the White and the Ruggiero papers. Submit to Drop Box 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Sept. 19.
Live Talk discussion of the readings, 7 pm EDT Thursday Sept. 17.

Week 4 Point/Counterpoint: Disease (Sept. 19)

Piers Mitchell, "Retrospective Diagnosis and the Use of Historical Texts for Investigating Disease in the Past," *International Journal of Paleopathology*, 1 (2011): 81-88.

Andrew Cunningham, "Transforming Plague: The Laboratory and the Identity of Infectious Disease," in *The Laboratory Revolution in Medicine*, ed. Andrew Cunningham and Perry Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 209-44.

John Arrizabalaga, "Medical Causes of Death in Preindustrial Europe: Some Historiographical Considerations", *Journal of the History of Medicine* 54 (1999): 241-260.

Randall M. Packard, "Break-Bone" Fever in Philadelphia, 1780: Reflections on the History of Disease", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Volume 90, Number 2, (Summer 2016): 193-221.

Assignments:

In pairs/groups, explore the histories of the major English language journals in our field: *Medical History*; *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*; *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*; and *Social History of Medicine*.

Look at 3 years' worth tables of contents (the time interval will obviously vary according to the journal's age) and build a VT slide characterizing each year; if, in the case of more recent journals, 2 slides or even 1 are adequate, that's fine too. Look at what chronological periods, geographical areas, and types of topics and methods are covered in the journal. Please post by midnight Wednesday Sept. 23 so that you can comment on others' slides during the rest of the week. You may choose to do bullet points or to post a "typical" table of contents from a single issue and contextualize it in your comments. Discussion of the readings will be via a separate Voice Thread.

Week 5: Knowledge in Motion (Sept. 26)

James A. Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *Isis* Vol. 95, No. 4 (December 2004), pp. 654-672.

Adriana Petryna, *When Experiments Travel: Clinical Trials and the Global Search for Human Subjects*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009): 89-138.

Ben Breen, "Semedo's Sixteen Secrets: Tracing Pharmacological Networks in the Portuguese Tropics," in Paula Findlen, ed. *Empires of Knowledge: Scientific Networks in the Early Modern World* (Routledge, 2018): 342-363.

Deborah Neill, "Paul Ehrlich's Colonial Connections: Scientific Networks and Sleeping Sickness Drug Therapy Research, 1900-1914" *Social History of Medicine* 22,1 (2009): 61-77.

Anna Winterbottom "Medicine and Botany in the Making of Madras, 1680-1720," in *The East India Company and the Natural World*, eds. Vinita Damodaran, Alan Lester, and Anna Winterbottom, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015): 35-57.

You may wish to review an article assigned in Survey 2: Daniela Bleichmar, "Books, Bodies, and Fields: Sixteenth-Century Transatlantic Encounters with New World *Materia Medica*", in *Colonial Botany. Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*, ed. Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005): 83-99.

Assignments:

VT: Summarize "your" book on a single slide; I suggest you use the note-taking format discussed in Week 2. Post by midnight Wednesday Sept. 30; comment on your classmates' posts.

Start reading Book 2 for your final paper. Begin by reading just the introduction and the notes. What can you learn from just these parts of the book? Make a mental roadmap of which chapters seem most important to you. We'll discuss on the VT.

Discussion of the readings will be via Live Talk, 7 pm EDT, Thursday. Oct. 1.

Week 6: Visual Cultures (Oct. 3)

Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, "The Image of Objectivity", *Representations* 40 (1992): 81-128.

Rebecca Whiteley, "Figuring Pictures and Picturing Figures: Images of the Pregnant Body and the Unborn Child in England, 1540-c.1680", *Social History of Medicine* vol. 32, 2, (2019): 241-266.

Jerome J. Bylebyl, "Interpreting the Fasciculo Anatomy Scene," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 45 (1990): 285-316.

You may wish to re-read an essay assigned in IHOM: Carin Berkowitz, "The Illustrious Anatomist: Authorship, Patronage, and Illustrative Style in Anatomy Folios, 1700-1840," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 89 (Summer 2015): 171-208.

Assignments:

Compare and contrast Bylebyl's and Whiteley's methods in a 2-3 page paper. What are their interpretive goals? Why do they analyze images? Submit to Dropbox by 11:59 pm EDT Saturday Oct. 10. Discussion of the readings will be via Voice Thread.

Week 7: Technologies (Oct. 10)

Stanley J. Reiser, *Medicine and the Reign of Technology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978): 23-44.

Projit Bihar Mukharji, "Akarnan: The Stethoscope and Making of Modern Ayurveda, Bengal, c. 1894-1952", *Technology and Culture*, 60:4, (2019): 953-78.

Alondra Nelson, 2008. "Bio Science: Genetic Genealogy Testing and the Pursuit of African Ancestry", *Social Studies of Science* 38:5 (2008): 759-783.

Lundy Braun, "Spirometry, Measurement, and Race in the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 60 (2005): 135-169.

Margarete Sandelowski, *Devices & Desires: Gender, Technology, and American Nursing*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000): 67-99.

Assignments:

If you haven't finished it yet, get reading Book 2 done for the final paper! Discussion of the readings will be via Live Talk, 7 pm EDT Thursday Oct. 15.

Week 8: Cases (Oct. 17)

Volker Hess and J. Andrew Mendelsohn, "Case and Series: Medical Knowledge and Paper Technologies, 1600-1900", *History of Science*, 48 (2010), 287-314.

Olivia Weisser, "Boils, Pushes and Wheals: Reading Bumps on the Body in Early Modern England", *Social History of Medicine* 22 (2009): 321-339.

L. S. Jacyna, *Lost Words: Narratives of Language and the Brain, 1825-1926*, (Princeton University Press, 2000): 22-52.

G. E. R. Lloyd, "Galen's Un-Hippocratic Case Histories", in *Galen and the World of Knowledge*, ed. Christopher Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 115-31.

Assignments:

Final Paper: In a 5-7 page essay, compare and contrast the methods used by the book you chose for Week 4 and a second book from the list. Submit to Dropbox by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday Oct. 25.

Discussion of the readings will be via Voice Thread.

Books for Weeks 4 and 8 assignments (pairs are for final essay):

Elaine Leong, *Recipes and Everyday Knowledge: Medicine, Science, and the Household in Early Modern England*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).

and

Pablo F. Gómez *The Experiential Caribbean: Creating Knowledge and Healing in the Early Modern Atlantic*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

Projit Bihari Mukharji, *Doctoring Traditions: Ayurveda, Small Technologies, and Braided Sciences*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

and

Lundy Braun, *Breathing Race into the Machine: The Surprising Career of the Spirometer from Plantation to Genetics*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Leslie J. Reagan, *Dangerous Pregnancies: Mothers, Disabilities, and Abortion in Modern America*, (University of California Press, 2010).

and

Johanna Schoen, *Abortion after Roe*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

Susan L. Smith, *Toxic Exposures. Mustard Gas and the Health Consequences of World War II in the United States*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2017).

and

Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner, *Deceit and Denial: The Deadly Politics of Industrial Pollution*, (Berkeley: University of California Press; New York: Milbank Memorial Fund, 2002).