HSCI 1003
Science, Nature and Society: Historical Perspectives
MW 1:30 – 2:45 pm
Kaufman Hall 140

Professor: Kathleen Crowther
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Course Description and Objectives:
In this course we will explore the history of public health from the plague epidemics of the Middle Ages to the AIDS epidemic of the 20th and 21st centuries. We will examine the ways in which people in the distant and recent past understood epidemic diseases – what caused them and what could be done to prevent or cure them. Some of these understandings were "scientific," in the sense that they posited natural causes for epidemic diseases and were based on careful empirical observations of the course of the disease in individuals and populations. These scientific understandings coexisted with religious explanations of epidemics as the "wrath of God." Responses to epidemic diseases were always shaped, not just by scientific and religious understandings of disease, but also by social, political, economic and cultural factors. Public health has been shaped by attitudes toward the poor, beliefs about different racial and ethnic groups, and national pride and identity, to name some of the most important factors.

This course is intended to serve as an introduction to the field of the history of science, technology and medicine. In addition to gaining a basic understanding of the past, present and future of public health, I hope that you will gain a broader appreciation of the complex interactions between science, nature and society. Studying these interactions is central to ALL work in the history of science, not just work in the history of public health. Further, in this course you will develop two key historical skills: the ability to read and analyze primary sources, and the ability to construct historical arguments using primary sources.

Most class periods will be devoted to discussion, which we will do both in small groups and as an entire class. I will do very little lecturing. Readings on the syllabus should be completed the day they are assigned, BEFORE you come to class. Many of the readings are short and will be distributed and discussed in class.

All readings are on D2L.

Grading Policy:
Total points possible (not including extra credit): 1500
A = 900 and above
B = 800-899
C = 700-799
D = 600-699
F = 599 and below
Participation = 500 (20 points per day)
Midterm exam 1 = 100
Midterm exam 2 = 100
Writing assignment 1 = 100
Writing assignment 2 = 100
Writing assignment 3 = 100
Writing assignment 4 = 100
Writing assignment 5 = 100
Final exam = 300
Extra credit = TBA (but will not exceed 60 points)

Schedule:

Week 1
Mon Aug 19. Introduction to course

Reading: Katharine Park, "Black Death," in Kenneth F. Kiple (ed.) The Cambridge World History of Human Disease
In class: Boccaccio, The Decameron, "Introduction" [Note: I will distribute this in class, so you do NOT need to read it ahead of time. However, I have made it available on D2L for anyone who would like to look at it before class.]

Week 2
Mon Aug 26. The Great Plague of London 1665
Reading: Daniel Defoe, Journal of the Plague Year, excerpt

Wed Aug 28. Responses to the Plague
Reading: in class handouts
1) Hieronymus Fracastorius, "What is Contagion" and "The Fundamental Differences in Contagions," from De Contagione et Contagiosis Morbis et eorum Curatione, libri III [1546, 1550, 1554, 1555], trans Wilmer Cave Wright (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930), Book I, ch I and II.

2) A. T., practitioner in physicke, A rich store-house or treasury for the diseased (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1596, fols. 63v – 65v. [74-77]


4) Francis Herring, A modest defence of the caueat giuen to the wearers of impoisoned amulets, as preservatuiues from the plague (London: Printed by Arnold Hatfield for William Iones, 1604), pp. 9-13 [7-9].

5) Stephen Bradwell, A Watch-man for the pest (London: Printed by John Dawson for
George Vincent, 1625), "What bodies are most apt to be infected" to "Who are the most likely to escape," pp. 45-48 [25-27].

6) Johann von Ewich, The duetie of a faithfull and wise magistrate, in preseruung and deliuering of the common [sic] wealth from infection, in the time of the plague or pestilence (London: Thomas Dawson, 1583), "Of building of certaine publike houses, called Plague houses," fols. 60-68v [79-88].

**Week 3**

Mon  Sept 2. LABOR DAY

Wed  Sept 4. Smallpox
   In class handouts:

   2) Simon Kellwaye, A defensatiue against the plague . . . . Whereunto is annexed a short treatise of the small poxe (London: John Windet, 1593), cap. i, fol. 38-39v [44-46].


   5) Ysbrand van Diemerbroeck, The anatomy of human bodies . . . : to which is added a particular treatise of the small-pxox and measles . . . written in Latin by Isbrand de Diemerbroeck . . . ; translated from the last and most correct and full edition of the same by William Salmon . . . (London: Printed for Edward Brewster, 1689), chap 3, pp. 4-7 [357-358].


**Week 4**

Mon  Sept 9. Innoculation/Variolation for Smallpox
   Reading: Cotton Mather, Some account of what is said of inoculating or transplanting the small pox (Boston, 1721)

Wed  Sept 11. Smallpox inoculation (continued)
   Reading: In class handouts
**Week 5**

**Mon**  Sept 16. Smallpox Vaccination  
Reading: Edward Jenner, "An Inquiry into the Causes and Effects of the Variolae Vaccinae, or Cow-Pox"  
In class handouts:  
1) John Addington, *Small pox destroys, vaccination saves, the lives of thousands* [Philadelphia: s.n., 1806]  
2) *Facts and observations relative to the Kine pock drawn up by the medical board of the New York Institution for the Inoculation of the Kine Pock, at the request of the directors addressed to the more indigent part of the community* (New York: Isaac Collins and Son, 1802)  
3) "For Ourselves We Believe That the Decrease of Small-Pox, Which the Advocates of Vaccination Have Claimed for Their System, Has Been Almost Entirely Attributable to the Growth of Cleanliness and Public Sanitation," *The Londoner*, September 4, 1896  
4) "A Very Strong Indictment of Vaccination Is Made by Dr. Alfred R. Wallace in a Pamphlet Published in 1888, and Addressed Mainly to Members of Parliament," *The Clarion*, December 3, 1892  
5) A.K. Gardner, "Small-Pox and Vaccination" *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (New York, NY, 1892)  

**Wed**  Sept 18.  **MIDTERM EXAM 1**

**Week 6**

**Mon**  Sept 23. Tuberculosis  
In class handouts: All excerpts come from William Sweetser, *A Treatise on Consumption . . .* (Boston: T.H. Carter, 1836)  
The first four excerpts deal with CAUSES of consumption:  
1) Hereditary causes, from Chapter IX, pp. 92-95 and pp. 103-105  
2) Diet and air quality as causes, from Chapter X, pp. 106-115  
3) Mental exertions and emotions as causes, from Chapter X, pp. 119-125  
4) Mechanical irritants and contagion, from Chapter XI, pp. 125-130 and pp. 137-140
The next four excerpts deal with TREATMENTS for consumption:

5) Diet, from Chapter XIII, pp. 154-159 and pp. 161-163

6) Exercise from Chapter XIV, pp. 163-169

7) Sea voyages from Chapter XV, pp. 172-178

8) Change of climate, from Chapter XVI, pp. 190-197

Wed Sept 25. Tuberculosis and Germ Theory
Reading: Robert Koch, "The Aetiology of Tuberculosis" (1882)

Week 7
Mon Sept 30. Tuberculosis in the Early 20th Century
Reading: In class handouts
1) "Koch's Great Triumph" New York Times, November 15, 1890
2) "Lymph Called A Failure" New York Times, July 27, 1891
3) TB Don't Cards
5) Florence Harriman, "Fighting Tuberculosis In Our Crowded Tenements" New York Times, October 13, 1913

Wed Oct 2. Tuberculosis Makes a Comeback
Reading: In class handouts

Week 8
Mon Oct 7. Cholera
In class handouts:
1) An account of the rise and progress of the Indian or spasmodic cholera (New Haven: L.H. Young, 1832), pp. 34-39.
2) Orville Dewey, A sermon on the moral uses of the pestilence, denominated Asiatic cholera: delivered on Fast-day, August 9, 1832 ([New Bedford? : s.n.], 1832), pp. 3-12.
3) Sylvester Graham, A lecture on epidemic diseases generally, and particularly the spasmodic cholera: delivered in the City of New York, March, 1832, and repeated June, 1832, and in Albany, July 4, 1832, and in New York, June, 1833 . . . (Boston : David Cambell, 1838), pp. 38-43.
4) "Letter from Mr. George Bond," in Graham, *A lecture on epidemic diseases generally*, pp. 82-87.

**Wed Oct 9. Is Cholera Contagious?**
Reading: In class handouts
4) *Epidemic cholera*, pp. 101-104

**Week 9**
**Mon Oct 14. Public Health and the English Poor Law**

**Wed Oct 16. Cholera and Germ Theory**
Reading: In class handouts

**Week 10**
**Mon Oct 21. Cholera in Haiti**
Reading: In class handouts

**Wed Oct 23. MIDTERM EXAM 2**

**Week 11**
**Mon Oct 28. Pellagra**

**Wed Oct 30. Pellagra**
Reading: In class handouts

Week 12
Mon  Nov 4. Pellagra
  Reading: In class handouts

Wed  Nov 6. Pellagra

Week 13
Mon  Nov 11. AIDS
  Reading: Allan M. Brandt, "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)," in Kenneth F. Kiple (ed.) The Cambridge World History of Human Disease

Wed  Nov 13. AIDS
  Reading: In class handouts

Week 14
Mon  Nov 18. AIDS
  Reading: In class handouts

Wed  Nov 20. AIDS
  Reading: In class handouts

Week 15
Mon  Nov 25. Film: "6000 A Day"

Wed  Nov 27. Thanksgiving Vacation

Week 16
NO CLASS

ALL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND ANY EXTRA CREDIT MUST BE TURNED IN BY FRIDAY DEC 6 AT 5:00 PM

FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 9, 8:00 – 10:00 am

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

General Directions: All essays should be about 1250 words (5 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font) and should include a list of sources. Writing assignments should be turned in to the Dropbox on D2L. The final date to turn in writing assignments is Friday, December 6 at 5:00 pm.
1. Read the novel *Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague* by Geraldine Brooks and critically assess its historical accuracy. Use at least five sources on the plague from the assigned class readings to support your argument.

2. Read the novella *Ship Fever* by Andrea Barrett and critically assess its historical accuracy. Use at least five sources on 19th-century public health from the assigned class readings to support your argument.

3. Drug resistant tuberculosis is a growing problem throughout the world. India now has the largest number of cases of drug-resistant TB. Write an essay in which you discuss the problem of drug resistant TB in India, explaining the factors that have led to the high numbers of cases and the solutions that have been proposed or implemented.

4. AIDS continues to be a huge problem in most African countries. Pick one African country and discuss the current scope and scale of the AIDS epidemic and the solutions that have been proposed or implemented.

5. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has developed a free iPad app called "Solve the Outbreak" that is designed to teach people about epidemiology. It is a game that puts you in the shoes of a member of the Epidemic Intelligence Service and challenges you to find the causes of different epidemics. However, the game only takes biological causes of epidemics into account, not social causes like poverty and racism. Play the game and write an essay in which you discuss how the game would be different if it took social, economic, and political causes into account. [Note: If you don't have a iPad it is possible to borrow one from the University or the History of Science department.]