

**MEDICINE IN HISTORY**  
HSOC0400920 | STSC0400920

Summer Session II: June 29 – August 4th, 2023  
Tuesday and Thursday (12:00 pm- 3.50 pm)  
Mode of instruction: Online and synchronous



Name of Instructor: Arnav Bhattacharya

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Office Hours: T/R 11:00 AM-12:00 PM in the Zoom Room

(Please note that this is a draft syllabus for the class and a tentative one. An updated syllabus will be provided at the beginning of the course. The instructor also reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus during the course to accommodate the needs of the students and the instructor.)

**Course Description:** This course surveys the history of medical knowledge and practice from antiquity to the present. No prior background in the history of science or medicine is required. The course has two principal goals: (1) to give students a practical introduction to the fundamental questions and methods of the history of medicine, and (2) to foster a nuanced, critical understanding of medicine's complex role in contemporary society. The course takes a broadly chronological approach, blending the perspectives of the patient, the physician, and society as a whole--recognizing that medicine has always aspired to "treat" healthy people as well as the sick and infirm. Rather than history "from the top down" or "from the bottom up," this course sets its sights on history from the inside out. This means, first, that medical knowledge and practice is understood through the personal experiences of patients and caregivers. It also means that lectures and discussions will take the long-discredited knowledge and treatments of the past seriously, on their own terms, rather than judging them by today's standards. Required readings consist largely of primary sources, from elite medical texts to patient diaries. Short

research assignments will encourage students to adopt the perspectives of a range of actors in various historical eras.

**Class Structure: Synchronous:** This class will meet via Zoom 2x/week during rostered time blocks for the first half of the session and then in person the second half of the session. Those who cannot attend class will be offered alternative ways to participate. The first half of class time will be devoted to a lecture and then there will be a break and then the second half of class will be focused on discussions, breakout groups, and other community building activities.

**Asynchronous participation:** This course will utilize brief Canvas quizzes on a weekly basis as well as Canvas discussion boards where students will respond to each other about readings and prompts.

**Course Objectives:**

- To appreciate history as a process of both continuity and change over time.
- To interpret primary source documents and objects with attention to historical time and place.
- To develop a sense of historical curiosity and critical scrutiny concerning current-day practices, places, and events.
- To gain a working knowledge of the history of medicine,, both in presentations and written assignments.

**Accessibility:** It is very important to me to create an environment that is inclusive and is attentive to different learning needs. Please contact me if you have specific needs that require accommodations. Online learning is probably new to many of us; it requires different strategies concerning preparation, planning, classroom interactions, and information retention. To assist with this new reality, I encourage every student to visit the Weingarten Learning Resource Center- <https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/>

**Netiquette:** Please be respectful of and considerate to your fellow classmates and your Professor. Each student zooming into class will be expected to have the video on and mic available for participation. Please use the chat function to type complete and thoughtful comments and questions. Come prepared and ready to engage with one another in a scholarly way.

**Plagiarism:** Research is a collaborative activity to advance knowledge. The university is a community dedicated to contributing to this project. To do so, everyone including students must correctly attribute the ideas, words, and data generated by others through proper citation. All course work submitted in this class must be authentically your own. I and the University hold a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism. You will receive a failing grade on a plagiarized assignment and the offense will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Such offenses permanently mark your academic record. Please consult Penn's Code of Academic Integrity: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>

**Course Materials:** All course materials—lectures and readings—will be available on Canvas. Each session has its own module with all materials posted or linked below. The materials have

been posted in the order that I think will be the most accessible and engaging for students. The module for a session will be posted by 5 pm EST the day before class. Please come to our Zoom sessions having read/watched/listened to all materials posted under the module for that day.

### **Grading and Assignments**

- 1) Participation and Quizzes (25%)
- 2) Weekly Discussion Board Posts (25%)
- 3) Midterm: Primary Source Analysis (25%)
- 4) Final Blog Post and/or Op-Ed (25%)

**1) Participation (25%):** Since this is a small seminar, participation is crucial. Please come to our zoom sessions prepared and ready to engage with the assigned reading materials. If you cannot participate synchronously, students working asynchronously will be expected to turn in weekly response responses and check-ins in order to receive a participation grade. All students will be expected to engage in group activities to the best of their abilities; **Weekly Quizzes:** All students will be responsible for taking a short weekly quiz keyed to the course readings. Unless otherwise specified, quizzes will be posted on Canvas and due every Thursday at 11 AM EST. Be sure to allow yourself enough time to complete the Quiz. At the end of the semester, the two lowest quiz grades will be dropped.

**2) Weekly Discussion Board Posts (25%):** All students will be responsible for participating in weekly Canvas Discussion Board posts that are also keyed to the course readings. Unless otherwise specified, posts due every Tuesday by 11 AM EST.

### **3) Midterm: Primary Source Analysis (25%) DUE SUNDAY JULY 23**

Students will complete a primary source analysis between 500 – 700 words in length (at a maximum). I will upload several sources on Canvas and students will pick one source to write about. Analyses of primary sources are the basis of historical research and something that we will be practicing during our synchronous sessions. As much of our reading will be secondary literature, this assignment gives you the chance to critically engage with historical sources. Students will be expected to connect the source to course content, concepts, and theories. Detailed assignment instructions and rubric will be posted on Canvas.

### **4) Final Blog Post and/or Op-Ed (25%) DUE THURSDAY AUGUST 3<sup>rd</sup>**

### **COURSE SESSIONS**

#### **June 29 (Thursday): Medicine in the Ancient World**

*Read:*

- Syllabus

July 4: No Class.

#### **July 6 (Thursday): Medicine in the Ancient and Medieval World**

*Read:*

- [The Hippocratic Oath](#). Translated by Michael North, National Library of Medicine (2002).

#### **PRIMARY SOURCE**

- Nükhet Varlik, [“From Black Death to COVID-19, pandemics have always pushed people to](#)

honor death,” The Conversation, October 26, 2021.

- Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, “[The Florentine Chronicle](#),” 1370s – 1380s. Black Death PRIMARY SOURCE

*Listen:*

- “[The Hippocratic Oath](#),” *Sawbones* Podcast

*Watch:*

- “[The Black Death and Its Aftermath](#),” *Origins Ohio State University* (8 Minutes)
- “[Ancient and Medieval Medicine: Crash Course History of Science #9](#)” (12 Minutes)

### **July 11 (Tuesday): Gender and Sex in Late Medieval and Early Modern Worlds**

*Read:*

- Mary Fissell, “[When the Birds and the Bees Were Not Enough: Aristotle’s Masterpiece](#),” *The Public Domain Review*, August 19, 2015.
- “[Anatomy of Generation](#),” by Kathleen Crowther, *Nursing Clio*

*Explore:*

- Andreas Vesalius, *De humani corporis fabrica*, 1555. PRIMARY SOURCE

*Watch*

- “[Ancient Rome’s Most Notorious Doctor](#),” *TED-Ed* (5 Minutes)

### **July 13 (Thursday): Medicine in the Colonial and Early Modern World**

*Read:*

- “[Dying to Heal: Women and Syphilis in Colonial Lima, Peru](#)” by Kathleen Kole de Peralta, *Nursing Clio*
- Vanessa Harding, “Reading Plague in Seventeenth-century London”, *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 32, no. 2, (May 2019): 267–286.

*Explore:*

- Samuel Pepys’ Diary online (<https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/>); spend 20 minutes browsing as you like through June-Aug. 1665. PRIMARY SOURCE

*Listen:*

- “Hot for Chocolate: Aphrodisiacs, Imperialism, and Cacao in the Early Modern Atlantic,” *Dig: A History Podcast*

### **July 18 (Tuesday): Medicine in 18th Century America**

*Read:* Pick one article to read

- “[Spreading the News of Yellow Fever](#),” *New York Historical Society Blog*
- Erin Blakemore, “[How an Enslaved African Man in Boston Helped Save Generations from Smallpox](#),” February 1 2019.
- “[Vaccines alone aren’t enough to eradicate a virus: lessons from history](#),” by Caitjan Gainty and

Agnes Arnold-Foster, *The Conversation*

- Evan P. Sullivan, “[Misinformation, Vaccination, and “Medical Liberty” in the Age of COVID-19](#),” *Nursing Clio*.

*Explore:*

- [“The Yellow Fever Epidemic in Philadelphia,”](#) *Contagion: Historical Views of Diseases and Epidemics*; spend 20 minutes browsing these primary sources as you like.

*Listen:*

- Maiken Scott, [“Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793,”](#) *NPR*.
- [“Fever \(1793-1820\) - Philadelphia: The Great Experiment,”](#) History Making Productions.

### **July 20 (Thursday): It All Starts with a Pump**

*Read:*

- Projit Bihari Mukharji, “The ‘Cholera Cloud’ in the Nineteenth Century ‘British World’: History of an Object-Without-an-Essence,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 86, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 303 – 332.
- Dora B. Weiner and Michael J. Sauter, “The City of Paris and the Rise of Clinical Medicine,” *Osiris*, 2nd series, vol. 18 (2003): 23 – 40.

*Watch:*

- [“The 1850s map that changed how we fight outbreaks,”](#) *Vox*.
- [“John Snow and the 1854 Broad Street cholera outbreak,”](#) *HarvardX*

### **July 25 (Tuesday): The Professionalization of Medicine**

*Read:* Pick TWO to read

- [“A Short History of Homeopathy: From Hahnemann to Whole Foods,”](#) by Jacqueline Antonovich, *Nursing Clio*
- [“The Blackwell Sisters and the Harrowing History of Modern Medicine,”](#) by Casey Cep, *The New Yorker*
- [“The International History of Women’s Medical Education: What Does Imperialism Have To Do With It?,”](#) by Sarah Pripas, *Nursing Clio*
- [“When Legs and Arms Won: The Culture of Dissection and the Role of the Camera at the Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania,”](#) by Brandon Zimmerman, *Nursing Clio*
- [“Quacks, Plagues, and Pandemics: What charlatans of the past can teach us about the COVID-19 crisis,”](#) by Elisabeth Berry Drago, *Distillations*

*Explore:*

- [Patent Medicine Trade Cards](#)
- [“Medical Education in America: Rethinking the training of American doctors,”](#) by Abraham Flexner, *The Atlantic*, 1910

### **July 27 (Thursday): Germ Theory of Disease, Surgery, and Antisepsis**

*Watch:*

- [Pre-modern surgery,](#) *The Knick*
- [“How a few scientists transformed the way we think about disease,”](#) *Ted-Ed*

*Listen:*

- [“Germ Theory and Popular Culture with Nancy Tomes,”](#) *Infectious Historians*

*Read:*

- Nancy Tomes, “The Private Side of Public Health: Sanitary Science, Domestic Hygiene, and the Germ Theory, 1870 – 1900,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64, no. 4 (1990): 509 -539.
- [“Inside the Operating Theater: Early Surgery as Spectacle”](#) by Rebecca Rego Barry, *JStor*

*Daily*

*Explore:*

- Joseph Lister, “On the Antiseptic Principle in the Practice of Surgery,” 1867.

### **August 1--The “Golden Age” of Medicine?**

*Read:*

- “Introduction” in “Remaking the American Patient: How Madison Avenue and Modern Medicine Turned Patients Into Consumers,” by Nancy Tomes
- “The Black Politics of Eugenics,” by Ayah Nuridden
- “Remembering Nurse Eunice Rivers Laurie, the Black Face of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, and Why She is an Important Figure for Students to Know,” by Ezelle Sanford III in *The Common Reader*

*Listen:*

- “Ezelle Sanford III & Virvius Jones: The Homer G. Philips Hospital Story,” Podcast

*Explore :*

- “Turning People into Paperwork”; spend 20 minutes browsing these primary sources as you like.

### **August 3--Modern Medicine**

*Read:*

- “The Dangers of Ignoring History Lessons During a Pandemic,” by Graham Mooney
- “How to Talk About Freedom During a Pandemic,” by Graham Mooney