

**History 3500: Topics in Global History
Health, Disease and the Body in the British Atlantic,
1600-1800**

Wednesday: 15:35-18:25
MCCAIN ARTS&SS 2102
Professor Justin Roberts



William Hogarth, *A Harlot's Progress*, Plate 5, 1733

Course Description:

What is a healthy body? How should we keep sickness at bay? How should we treat a sick body? In the early modern world, people grappled with the same basic questions about health and sickness that we do today. Obesity scares, health fads, quack doctors and alternative medicines are not recent phenomena. They have a long history. In this course we will explore the fascinating ways in which the inhabitants of the early modern British Atlantic understood both their own body and the diseased and healthy bodies they encountered. Most weeks will begin with a lecture or overview and power point presentation and then we will address the readings and discuss some of the major themes. Students will be introduced to some of the major issues and themes in the field of early

modern medical history. Over the course of the semester, students will develop, research and write a major research paper on a theme or issue from the course.

Contact Info:

roberts.justin@gmail.com

Office Hours: Wednesdays, Noon to 3pm or by appointment

Course Requirements:

Two Cultural Artifact and Analysis Assignments: 15%

For each of these you will choose a cultural artifact that you encounter in your daily life that demonstrates a particular understanding of how bodies work, what diseased or healthy bodies are and how they should be treated. Bring it to class to read or show a representation of it and be prepared to discuss it. It can be a material artifact, an image or a text. Write a short analysis (**approximately 500 words**) of the ways in which that text or artifact or image embodies or reveals a particular set of ideas about health or disease and the body.

Research Paper: 30%

You will choose a topic, research it and write a major research paper (**minimum 15 pages**). The paper must be based on both primary and secondary sources. This paper will be due at the end of the last meeting. You are strongly encouraged to meet with me to discuss the proposed project before you begin writing.

Outline and Annotated Bibliography: 10%

You will be required to submit a one page summary of your proposed research. Include the specific research questions you will address, a summary of your methodology and a discussion of the kinds of sources you anticipate using along with some attention to the biggest problems you anticipate in your research. Include an annotated bibliography showing the primary and secondary sources you plan to use for your paper and a short sentence or two for each one explaining why they are relevant for your paper.

Oral Presentation: 10%

You will be required to give a polished **10 to 15 minute oral presentation** to the seminar of your major paper topic and their research to date. You may use handouts or multimedia presentations but they are not required. A short question and answer period will follow your presentation in which group participation and suggestions will be encouraged.

Response Papers: 15%

During **6 of the 11 weeks of readings** you will review and analyze the major themes and arguments in the readings in **two to three pages**. Engage with the readings. Include some questions that were raised for you in reading this material. When we read multiple works, focus on relating the works to each other. Think

about the major theme for each week. Engage with the ideas and evidence being presented. Be attentive to how the primary sources relate to the secondary sources or to the major issues in the course. To reference specific pages, you may footnote or use parenthetical brackets. You may submit during more than 6 weeks but I will only count your best six.

Attendance and Participation: 20%

You will be expected to come to each meeting prepared to discuss all of the required readings, participate in primary source workshops and respond intelligently to multimedia and oral presentations. During several weeks I will be bringing in short excerpts from primary texts or material artifacts for us to discuss in class. From week four onwards, we will begin to informally discuss as a group your ideas for a research paper, how to frame an historical question and how your research is progressing.

Late Paper Policy

Late assignments submitted without my prior approval will be docked a letter grade per day (i.e. an “A” paper submitted a day late becomes an “A-”). You will be allowed 3 days grace without any excuses necessary on ONE written assignment but you must notify me that you need this extension at least 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Required Textbooks (available at bookstore):

Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America*

Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, The Body and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-16716.*

Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year*

M. E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England*

Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900.*

The required and recommended articles and selections from longer works will be available at the reserve desk and whenever possible on electronic reserve and on 2 hour/Overnight reserve.

Guide to Readings: You must do all of the required readings each week. The other readings are optional. The more of them you do, the better you will understand the major themes of the course and the more prepared you will be to write a paper.

Pandemic H1N1 Influenza Advisory in relation to Academic Continuity

In the event of an escalation of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus, the University may need to authorize Academic Units to change elements of class schedules and/or evaluation plans as outlined in course syllabi. Any change is intended to support the primary goal of reducing the risk of spreading a pandemic influenza among students, faculty and staff.

Although it is difficult to predict the severity of the pandemic, the University is committed to minimizing the impact on student's academic progress. Therefore, every effort will be made to provide students with options for continued learning and for continued fair evaluations.

Changes may include but are not limited to:

- . Adjustments to course assignments;
- . Changes to the dates of exams;
- . Arrangements for alternative evaluations for students affected by H1N1 influenza virus;
- . Adjustments to work terms;
- . Modification of marks awarded for participation;
- . Adjustments to attendance policies.

Any alternative plan made in individual courses may be superseded by University-wide or Government measures to reduce the spread of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus.

Statement on Plagiarism:

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the plagiarism.dal.ca website. ***Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.*** Dalhousie University subscribes to Turnitin.com, a computer-based service which checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarised from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to a

check such as that performed by Turnitin.com. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by Turnitin.com.

Statement on Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodations are encouraged to register as quickly as possible at Student Accessibility Services. To do so you can phone 902.494.2836, e-mail access@dal.ca, or drop in to their office in the Killam Memorial Library building. SAS is moving in August 2008, but will still be in the Killam building. Please check out their information on www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca.

Week 1: (Sept. 16)

Introduction

There will be a lecture and power point presentation on the major themes of the course this week. Then I will explain your assignments and we will get to know each other as a seminar group.

Week 2: (Sept. 23)

Early Modern Conceptions of the Body and Theories of Disease

Required Readings:

Charles E. Rosenberg, "Why Care about the History of Medicine," in Charles E. Rosenberg, ed. *Explaining Epidemics and Other Studies in the History of Medicine* (Cambridge University Press, 1992): 1-8.

Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900* (London, 2001): 15-128.

Recommended Readings:

J.N. Hays, "Disease and the Enlightenment," in *The Burdens of Disease: Epidemics and Human Response in Human History* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1998): 106-134.

William Albury, "Ideas of Life and Death," in W.F. Bynum & Roy Porter, *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 249-281.

Harry M. Marx, "Medical Technologies: Social Contexts and Consequences," in *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine* (London: Routledge, 1992): 1592-1618.

Ludmilla Jordanova, "The Social Construction of Medical Knowledge," in Frank Huisman and John Harley Warner, eds., *Locating Medical History: The Stories and Their Meanings* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 338-363.

Mary Fissell, "Making Meaning from the Margins: The New Cultural History of Medicine," in John Warner and Frank Huisman, eds., *Locating Medical History: The Stories and their Meanings* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2004): 364-389.

First Cultural Artifact and Analysis Discussion

Week 3 (Sept. 30):

Climates, Constitutions and Racialized Bodies in the New World

Required Readings:

Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, The Body and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-1676*: 79-200, 321-326.

Karen Kupperman, "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser. 41 (1984): 213-240.

Primary Sources:

Collins, "On Negro Slaves," in *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves in the Sugar Colonies*. London, 1803: 33-39.

Cartwright, Samuel, "Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race," *Debow's Review* 1.3 (September, 1851): 331-339; <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3106t.html>

Recommended Readings:

Caroline Hanaway, "Environment and Miasmas," in W.F. Bynum & Roy Porter, *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine* (London: Routledge, 1992): 292-308.

Gary Puckrein, "Climate, Health and Black Labor in the English Americas," *Journal of American Studies* 13.2 (1979): 179-193.

Week 4 (Oct. 7):

Vernacular Texts, Traditional Healers and the Professionalization of Medicine

Required Readings:

Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900* (London, 2001): 129-228.

Recommended Readings:

J.N. Hays, "Continuity and Change: Magic, Religion, Medicine and Science, 500-1700," *The Burdens of Disease: Epidemics and Human Response in Western History* (1998): 78-105.

Margaret Pelling, "Medical Practice in Early Modern England: Trade or Profession?" in Wilfrid Prest, ed., *The Professions in Early Modern England*, (London: Croom Helm, 1987): 90-128.

Robert A. Nye, "Medicine and Science as Masculine 'Fields of Honor'," *Osiris* 2nd series 12 (1997): 60-79.

Introduction to Databases and Sources for your Paper

**Week 5 (Oct. 14):
Constructing Sex and Gender**

Required Readings:

Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, The Body and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-1676*: 243-279.

Mary Beth Norton, "Communal Definitions of Gendered Identity in Seventeenth-Century Early America," in Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobel and Frederika Teute, eds, *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America* (Chapel Hill, 1997): 40-66.

T Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex in Eighteenth Century England', *History Workshop Journal*, 41, 1996: 73-88

R Martensen, 'The Transformation of Eve: Women's Bodies, Medicine and Culture in Early Modern England', in R Porter and M Teich, eds., *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science* (London, 1994): 107-33.

Recommended Readings:

T. Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, London, 1990.

**Week 6 (Oct. 21):
Childbirth, Reproduction and Venereal Diseases**

Required Readings:

Mary Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): 1-195.

Recommended Readings:

W.F. Bynum 'Treating the Wages of Sin: Venereal disease and Specialism in Eighteenth-century Britain', in W.F. Bynum. & R. Porter (eds), *Medical Fringe and Medical Orthodoxy, 1750-1850* (1987).

M. Pelling 'Appearance and Reality: Barber-Surgeons, the Body and Venereal Disease in Early Modern London', in A. Beier & R. Finlay (eds), *London 1500-1700 The Making of the Metropolis* (1981).

Patricia Crawford, "Attitudes to Menstruation in Seventeenth-Century England) *Past and Present* 91 (1981): 47-73.

Second Cultural Artifact and Analysis Discussion

Week 7 (Oct. 28): Epidemics and The American Graveyard

Elizabeth Anne Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001): 3-43.

Alfred W. Crosby, "Conquistador Y Pestilencia," in Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, 2003 [1972]): 35-63.

Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (New York, 1996): 166-200.

Primary Source Workshop:

"Cotton Mather, Boston Minister, Proselytizes for Smallpox Inoculation, 1722"

"William Douglass, a Boston Physician, Decries the Dangerous 'Infatuation' with Smallpox Inoculation, 1722;"

"Zabdiel Boylston of Boston Recounts His Experiences as the First Physician to Inoculate Against Smallpox in the American Colonies, 1726;"

"Andrew Blackbird of the Ottawa Nation Records a Story from Indian Oral Tradition About the Decimation of His People by Smallpox in the Early 1760s, 1887,"

All available in John Harley Warner and Janet A. Tighe, eds. *Major Problems in the History of American Medicine and Public Health* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), 30-34, 36-37, 40.

Recommended Readings:

Sheldon J. Watts, "Before the Advent of Acute Epidemic Diseases: Pharonic Egypt and the Pre-Conquest New World," in Watts, *Disease and Medicine in World History* (New York, 2002): 15-30.

Week 8: (Nov. 4)

Witnessing and Recording Disease in the Early Modern World

Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (New York, 2003).

Excerpts from the *Diary of Samuel Pepys* [To be handed out and discussed in class]

Outline and Annotated Bibliography Due

Week 9 (Nov. 11):

REMEMBRANCE DAY- NO CLASS

Meet with me individually to discuss your paper. Spend time researching this week.

Week 10 (Nov. 18):

Food, Health, Exercise and Obesity

Primary Sources:

George Cheyne, *The English Malady* (London, 1733). [Available Through *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*].

Recommended Readings:

Elaine McKay, "'For Refreshment and Preserving Health'" The Definition and Function of Recreation in Early Modern England," in *Historical Research* 81.211 (2008): 52-74

Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge University Press, 2000): 154-209.

Ken Albala, "The Use and Abuse of Chocolate in Seventeenth Century Medical Theory," *Food and Foodways: History and Culture of Human Nourishment* 15.1-2 (2007): 53-74.

Roy Porter, "Reading is Bad for your Health," *History Today* 48.3 (1998): 11-16.

Oral Presentations

Week 11 (Nov. 25): Cleanliness, Filth and the Body

Kathleen M. Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009): 1-97, 195-292.

Oral Presentations

Week 12 (Dec. 2): Health Fads, Quackery and the Medical Marketplace

Required Readings:

Roy Porter, *Health for Sale: Quackery in England, 1660-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989): 1-20, 146-186.

Mary Fissell, *Patients, Power and the Poor in Eighteenth-Century Bristol* (New York, 1991): 16-73.

Recommended Readings:

Gouk, Penelope. "Music, Melancholy and Medical Spirits in Early Modern Thought." in Peregrine Horden, ed. *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity*, (Guilford: Ashgate, 2000): 173-94.

M. MacDonald, "The Career of Astrological Medicine in England," in Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, eds., *Religio Medici: Medicine and Religion in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Aldershot, 1997): 62-90.

Jerome Handler, "Slave Medicine and Obeah in Barbados, Circa 1650 to 1834," in *New West Indian Guide* 74.1-2 (2000): 57-90.

Oral Presentations

Term Papers Due on Dec. 9