DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Themes and Methods in Medical History

Module Handbook 2012/13

Module Convenor: Dr Roberta Bivins
This module introduces taught MA students to two narratives. During the first half of the term, we study key themes in a chronological narrative of the history of medicine: from early modern to contemporary. During the second half of the term, we study critical interventions in-- or 'interruptions' to-- this narrative (that have come from both within and without academia).

These critical interventions are both connected to broader societal debates during the final quarter of the twentieth century as well as reflect a changing of the guard within the history of medicine--a story told by some as "a big fight between doctors and historians" over the field's rightful owners--and rightful authors. Historians win.

In other words, the second half of the module reflects critically on the standard and accepted chronological narrative of the history of medicine by introducing students to key historiographical moments that have shaped the field we inherit and inhabit today.

**Assessment**

Students are assessed on the basis of one 5000-word essay, due at 12 NOON one week after the end of term- see current MA student handbook for the date. This essay is normally based on one of the module’s weekly themes. Students interested in writing on different topics should consult with the module convenor well before the essay deadline. Students are also invited to write an unassessed essay of 2000 words. These essays should normally be handed to the module convenor in Week 7.
October 2

1. Intro session (Roberta Bivins)

Over the past few decades, historians of medicine have regularly taken stock of the field through the medium of the edited volume. This week begins with a trawl through some of the most high-profile recent edited collections (plus one more). Please peruse each of the volumes listed below. Have a look at their introductions and the chapter in each that is most closely related to your own research interest.

- Roger Cooter and John Pickstone (eds.), *Medicine in the Twentieth Century* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 2000)
- Fielding Garrison, *An Introduction to the History of Medicine* (1913)

Except for and Garrison (too old) these are all available in the small reading library in the Centre of History of Medicine -- located off the Graduate Space in H449a--additional copies are in the University Library.

Come to seminar ready to answer the following questions:

1. What do these volumes share in common?
2. What are their important differences?
3. What are the differences in "your" chapter across the texts?
4. What does this tell us about the field?

And an assignment: Draw up a "fantasy football" list of chapters for an edited volume titled "Introduction to the History of Medicine according to [Your Name]."

For substantial extra credit, also peruse the on-line (or paper!) tables of contents for the following journals: Social History of Medicine, Bulletin of the History of Medicine, and Medical History. When did these journals begin? How have they changed? How do they differ from one another?

One more thing to think about: at a job interview I was once asked ‘Other than the people in this room, who would you say are the five outstanding living scholars in your field?’ I think it was the hardest interview question I’ve ever faced. So here’s a thought: write down your top five historians of medicine (living or dead) in the space below. Let’s see if they are the same by the end of the term...

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
Part 1 - Narratives

October 9

2. Medicine and the Enlightenment (Roberta Bivins)

One of the most striking developments in all European states during the period of the so-called Enlightenment is the emergence of medicine in the service of the state. This phenomenon is part of a new technique of power which Michel Foucault labelled ‘biopower’. The term refers to the practice of modern states and their regulation of their subjects through ‘an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations’. In order to provide control medicine developed new methods and practices, which targeted both, the individual and the population as a whole. This seminar deals with one of the most important tools of control, still overly important today, medical statistics.

Readings


Further Readings

- Coleman, William, *Death is a Social Disease: Public Health and Political Economy in Early Industrial France* (Madison, 1982).
• Donnelly, Michael, ‘On Foucault’s Uses of the Notion of Biopower’, in *Michel Foucault, Philosopher* (New York, 1992).
• Hardy, Anne/Magnello Eileen (eds), *The Road to Medical Statistics* (Amsterdam, 2002).
• Jorland, Gerald/Annick Opinal/George Weisz (eds.), *Body Counts: Medical Quantification in Historical & Sociological Perspective* (Montreal, 2005).
• Petersen, Alan/Bunton, Robin (eds.), *Foucault, Health and Medicine* (London, 1997).
October 16

3. Institutions of health (Roberta Bivins)

During seminars in weeks 4 and 5, we explore the creation in the long nineteenth century of the new medical institutions of hospitals and laboratories and of hospitals’ and laboratories’ respective new ways of understanding and treating disease.

Core reading
- Charles Rosenberg, The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995) (Three copies in the main Library: get one while they’re hot – and share or divide up responsibility!)
- Science Museum, Brought to Life: Exploring the History of Medicine (website)
  http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife.aspx

Seminar/essay questions
- What was the ‘Paris hospital’?
- Why does it matter to the history of medicine?
- What are the key features of ‘hospital medicine’?
- According to historians, what style of medicine did hospital medicine supplant?
- ‘Modern medicine begins and ends with the corpse.’ Does it?

Further reading
- E. H. Ackerknecht, Medicine at the Paris Hospital, 1794–1848 (chapters 1–7).
- Michel Foucault, The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception, (esp. Chapters 1 and 8). Any edition
October 23

4. Public Health/Private Practice (Hilary Marland)

Readings to follow
October 30

5. Medicine and science (Roberta Bivins)

Another key invention of nineteenth century modern medicine, the laboratory, made medicine “scientific.” But the relationship between ‘science’ and ‘medicine’, and the histories and historiographies of both science and medicine have remained complicated and intertwined.

Final reading list TBA – see website.

Core reading
Andrew Cunningham and Perry Williams (eds), The Laboratory Revolution in Medicine (Cambridge: CUP, 1992). See especially the introduction and chapters by Lenoir and Kremer

Seminar/essay questions
- Laboratory medicine made medicine scientific. Did it?
- Laboratory medicine allowed doctors to look inside patients’ bodies without cutting them open. Did it?
- In laboratory medicine, the part stood in for the whole. Did it?
- Did Claude Bernard invent scientific medicine?
- What was the ‘pasteurisation of France’?

Further reading
- John Harley Warner, The fall and rise of professional mystery: epistemology, authors and the emergence of laboratory medicine in nineteenth-century America.
- W F Bynum, History of medicine: A very short introduction - chapter on laboratory medicine
- Bruno Latour, The Pasteurisation of France (esp. Introduction and chapters 1-3)
- C. Bernard, An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine (pp. 1–26),
- G. L. Geison’s long Dictionary of Scientific Biography entry on Louis Pasteur
- N. Tomes, The Gospel of Germs (chapters 1, 4 and 5).
Part 2 - Interruptions

November 13

8. Feminist Interventions: The History of Women’s Health and the Critique of Obstetrics (Angela Davis)

Medical intervention in pregnancy and childbirth has a centuries’ long history. Histories of maternity care provided to women during pregnancy and childbirth, both from a medical history approach and feminist reinterpretations, have detailed developments and debates surrounding maternity provision and the inter-professional rivalries between midwives, doctors and others. In this week’s seminar we will therefore consider how childbirth went from being viewed as a traditional, female activity to a medical event and how mothers themselves experienced these developments. We will consider the feminist challenge to orthodox histories of obstetrics; the wider questions raised about gender and health; but also how recent scholarship, which has prioritised the voices of women themselves, has supplemented the critique of medicalised childbirth.

Seminar questions

- Who controls childbirth?
- Is birth a socially constructed event?
- What is meant by a ‘normal’ birth?
- What has been the significance of the medicalisation of childbirth?
- Is the medicalisation thesis still relevant today?

Required reading


Essay questions

- Who has determined where birth takes place and how it is handled?
- How has motherhood influenced the health and well-being of women?
- In what ways has medicalisation shaped women’s experiences of pregnancy and childbirth?

Further reading

• J. Donnison, ‘Medical women and lady midwives: a case study in medical and feminist politics’, Women’s Studies 3 (1976), 229-50.
• J. Donnison, Midwives and Medical Men (1988).
• J.A. Houck, Hot and Bothered: Women, Medicine, and Menopause in Modern America (2006).
• J. Towler and J. Bramall, Midwives in History and Society (1986).
November 20

8. Anti-Psychiatry and the History of Psychiatry (Mathew Thomson)

This seminar introduces students to the historiography of psychiatry. It does so via examination of on the impact of ‘anti-psychiatry’. Although there is a historiography of psychiatry before the explosion of the anti-psychiatric movement in the 1960s and 1970s, sometimes involving psychiatrists as historians, there is a case for arguing that anti-psychiatry has transformed the way that the history of psychiatry has come to be written. Indeed, anti-psychiatry has arguably been more important for the history of psychiatry than for psychiatry itself. However, with the passing of time, the anti-psychiatric movement is itself becoming a subject for historical examination, and this has put the meaning and nature of its ‘anti’-psychiatric credentials under scrutiny. Perhaps more importantly, as historians shift their focus from the story of nineteenth-century to twentieth-century psychiatry, and as anti-psychiatry becomes part of this history, there is a case for arguing that they need to distance themselves from its grip and recognise the limitations of working under its influence. The seminar invites critical reflection on these issues and on the challenges in writing the history of psychiatry in the twenty-first century.

Seminar Questions

- How should we understand the relationship between anti-psychiatry and psychiatry?
- How has anti-psychiatry influenced the way that history of psychiatry has been written?
- Does the history of psychiatry now need to free itself from anti-psychiatry?

Introductory Reading

- Volker Hess and Benoit Majerus, ‘Writing the History of Psychiatry in the 20th Century’, History of Psychiatry, 22 (2011), 139-45: this is an introduction to a special issue of the journal exploring the challenge and limited progress to date in narrating the history of psychiatry in the 20th Century.

Suggested essay question

‘Understanding anti-psychiatry is fundamental to understanding the history of psychiatry.’ Discuss.

Further Reading

- Nick Crossley, Contesting Psychiatry: Social Movements in Mental Health (2006): a pioneering sociological account of anti-psychiatry and its relation to social movements in Britain
• Mark Micale and Roy Porter (eds.), *Discovering the History of Psychiatry* (1994): useful introduction to historiography, and a final section focusing on anti-psychiatry
• Edward Shorter, *A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac* (1997): perhaps the most obvious attempt to date to offer a narrative for the history of psychiatry that extends across the 20th century
November 27
9. The History and Historiography of Chinese Medicine (Howard Chiang)

NOTE: This session will meet from 2-4 pm Thursday, November 29, 2012

Seminar / Essay Question
Identify three to four key historiographical trends in the study of Chinese medicine, and discuss how they are similar to or different from historical approaches to Western biomedicine.

Core Reading

Further Reading
Articles:

Books:
• Marta Hanson, *Speaking of Epidemics in Chinese Medicine: Disease and the Geographic Imagination in Late Imperial China* (Routledge, 2011).
• Yi-Li Wu, *Reproducing Women: Medicine, Metaphor, and Childbirth in Late Imperial China* (University of California Press, 2010).
India was a region with many of its own longstanding medical systems, ranging from the humoral-based systems of Ayurveda, Unani Tibb and Siddha, to various forms of surgery, to herbal remedies and exorcism of evil spirits which were believed to attack people’s health. A highly effective preventive form of vaccination was already used against smallpox. In the early years of contact, Europeans were often prepared to learn from Indian doctors in a number of ways. This situation changed during the nineteenth century, as Europeans became increasingly convinced of the superiority of their own systems of medicine. The links between indigenous forms of practice and religion were deplored. This all formed a part of a general attack on folk medicine by European doctors – which was seen as quackery and unscientific. By the mid-19th century indigenous medical practitioners were being depicted as charlatans, their work even criminalized. This led to a backlash from such practitioners, who began to change their practices in ways that they hoped would legitimise them. The way that this linked up with the Indian nationalist movement will be examined.

Core Reading (* in front of a title means that the work is available in the library)

* David Arnold, Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India (California 1993). Excellent study of British handling of epidemic disease.
* David Arnold (ed.), Warm Climates and Western medicine: The Emergence of Tropical medicine 1500-1900 (Amsterdam 1996).
* C. Bayly, Empire and Information, chapter 7, pp.264-283 is on medical knowledge in India.
* Mark Harrison, Climate and Constitutions: Health, Race, environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600-1850, (New Delhi 1999).
* Anil Kumar, Medicine and the Raj: British medical Policy in India 1835-1911 (New Delhi 1998).
* R. Macleod (ed.), Disease, Medicine and Empire: Perspectives in Western Medicine and the Experience of European Expansion (London 1988)
* Helen Lambert, ‘Plural Traditions? Folk Therapeutics and 'English' Medicine in Rajasthan,’ in Andrew Cunningham and Bridie Andrews (eds.), Western Medicine as Contested Knowledge (1997)

Pati, Biswamoy and Mark Harrison (eds.), *Health, Medicine and Empire: Perspectives on Colonial India* (New Delhi 2001).
