

# **RACE, CULTURE & SCIENCE IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MEDICINE**

History 622

## **SPRING 2012 SYLLABUS**

**Stephen Pemberton, Ph.D.**

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### **Class Meetings**

Cullimore Hall 307, NJIT Campus  
Thursdays 5:30-8:00 p.m.

### **Office & Contact**

Cullimore Hall 323, NJIT Campus  
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### **Office Hours**

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays by appointment

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This graduate seminar in American history examines how race, culture, and science have figured prominently in American medicine and public health in the past two centuries. The particular focus will be on the health status of African-Americans in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the persistent disparities that African-Americans have experienced in health outcomes as they have engaged with American medicine and public health across the decades.

### **Readings**

There are ten books to read over the course of the semester with a selection of additional essays. The books are regarded, in most cases, as an exemplary work on their subject. In several cases, the book is quite lengthy (over 300 pages). In those cases, I will provide advance notice of the pages that will be our focus. Before coming to class, you should familiarize yourself with the factual content of the work as well as the author's argument and his or her use of sources. In class, I will encourage you to think critically about issues raised in the readings. This goal will only be attainable if you come prepared.

Full citations for the assigned books appear in the attached bibliography at the end of this syllabus. There is also a separate bibliography of suggested book-length readings that we will not be able to read together this semester, but that are also useful resources.

These books for the course can be purchased through the NJIT bookstore in the Campus Center. Their contact information: Phone: (973) 596-3200; Fax: (973) 596-2821; Email: [njit@bkstr.com](mailto:njit@bkstr.com). Online booksellers also sell these books.

Copies of any assigned and/or recommended articles will be available online through our course web page (see below).

**Course Webpage.** There is a Moodle webpage for this course that the professor and class will utilize throughout the semester. (Moodle is the NJIT version of Blackboard.) Please consult the website at your first opportunity, and familiarize yourself with its contents. It contains the syllabus, assignments, readings, discussion forums, and other features that will enhance your learning experience this semester. As I post new material, I will alert you. You will need to obtain a UCID number from NJIT to get access to this secure web page. Login to the following web address using your UCID number:  
<http://moodle.njit.edu/>

### **Assignments and Grading**

The primary goal of this course is to promote critical thinking about modern medicine and society, both past and present. All students will be evaluated on their written and oral communication over the course of the semester. In addition to in-class participation, the student will write two short essays and complete a longer historiographical paper for the final grade.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

Class participation should involve active listening and engagement. Attendance is both expected and required.

### **Discussion Responsibility**

Each student will help lead a book discussion during the semester. During the first or second class, I will assign responsibilities for leading book discussions to each student based on his or her stated preferences. The goal of the discussion is to facilitate critical interpretation of the reading and topic. In preparing talking points for the discussion, students should strive for more than a restatement of the reading material. A series of questions or a provocative argument are often conversation starters. Areas on which the student should focus class discussion include: the author's argument/s, the author's use of sources, his or her methodology, the organization of the book and whether or not it works successfully, and how the readings for that week relate to the other material we have examined during the semester. A more detailed outline of discussion responsibilities will be posted on the course moodle page by the second class.

### Two Short Essays

Each student will write two short essays focused on one or more of the readings assigned in the preceding weeks. The essay should discuss a key matter in the reading that you feel compelled to identify and discuss. You should consult with the professor on your topic. The basic idea is for you to engage with a critical issue at stake in the scholarly work, rather than merely summarize the reading material. Beyond that, the basic requirements follow. The essay need be no longer than 5-8 pages. Less than five is not recommended, more than six pages is subject to the task you set for yourself – the point you are trying to make. Try to keep it under eight pages. These short essays are due on **February 16<sup>th</sup>** and **March 22**. No later papers will be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances.

### Final Essay

Each student will write a final historiographical paper of 15-25 pages in length, and will craft her or his paper in consultation with the professor. Details about this assignment will be provided over the course of the semester, well in advance of the due date. The final paper assignment is due without exception by 5 pm on **May 4<sup>th</sup>**.

### Grading

15% for attendance & participation

15% for leading discussion of reading

15% for first essay

15% for second essay

40% for final essay

Consistent effort and improvement will be weighted heavily in grading.

### *Respect for Persons and the Learning Environment*

In the interest of an open exchange of ideas and collegiality, everyone participating in the class should strive to respect their classmates as persons. The professor will make every effort to facilitate a respectful environment for learning, but students should keep in mind their own responsibilities in the classroom.

### *The Honor Code*

The honor code and academic integrity are enforced in this course. Please consult me if you have any questions or concerns about the honor code or its meaning.

Semester Schedule (THURSDAY SCHEDULE)

**Week 1. Jan. 19. Introduction**

**Week 2. Jan. 26.**

Sharla Fett, *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations*

**Week 3. Feb. 2.**

Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South*

**Week 4. Feb. 9.**

Samuel Roberts, *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effects of Segregation*

**Week 5. Feb. 16.**

First Essay Due

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**Sat., Feb. 18 Marion Thompson Wright Lecture Series**

**(Attendance Highly Recommended)**

“Taking Good Care: Health and Medicine in the Black Community”

9:30 am to 3:30 pm. at the Robeson Campus Center. Talks by Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Dr. Sharla Fett, Dr. Dorothy Roberts, and Dr. Priscilla Wald.

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**Week 6. Feb. 23.**

James H. Jones, *Bad Blood, The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*

**Week 7. Mar. 1.**

Susan Reverby, *Examining Tuskegee: The Infamous Syphilis Study and Its Legacy*

**Week 8. Mar. 8.**

Harriet A. Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*

**Spring Break – No Class on Mar. 15.**

**Week 9. Mar. 22.**

Second Essay Due

**Week 10. Mar. 29.**

Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

**Week 11. Apr. 5.**

Jonathan Metzl, *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease*

**Week 12. Apr. 12.**

Keith Wailoo, *How Cancer Crossed the Color Line*

**Week 13. Apr. 19.**

Alondra Nelson, *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination*

**Week 14. Apr. 26. No Class**

**Finals Papers (Due Fri., May 4 by 5 pm)**

## Course Bibliography

### **Required Reading: Books**

- Sharla Fett, *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002) 304 pages. ISBN: 978-0807853788
- James H. Jones, *Bad Blood, The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment* Rev. ed. (Free Press, 1993) 297 pages. ISBN: 978-0029166765
- Jonathan Metz, *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease* (Beacon Press, 2009) 272 pages. ISBN: 978-0807001271
- Susan Reverby, *Examining Tuskegee: The Infamous Syphilis Study and Its Legacy* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009) 424 pages. ISBN: 978-0807833100
- Samuel Roberts, *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effects of Segregation* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009) 336 pages. ISBN: 978-0807859346
- Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (Broadway, 2010) 400 pages ISBN: 978-1400052189
- Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* (Harvard University Press, 2006) 416 pages. ISBN: 978-0674034921
- Keith Wailoo, *How Cancer Crossed the Color Line* (Oxford, 2011) 264 pages. ISBN: 978-0195170177
- Harriet A. Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present* (Anchor, 2008) 528 pages. ISBN: 978-0767915472

### **Supplemental Reading: Books**

- W. Michael Byrd and Linda A. Clayton, *An American Health Dilemma, Vol. 1: A Medical History of African Americans and the Problem of Race: Beginnings to 1900* (Routledge, 2000) 588 pages. ISBN: 978-0415924498
- W. Michael Byrd and Linda A. Clayton, *An American Health Dilemma, Vol. 2: Race, Medicine, and Health Care in the United States, 1900-2000* (Routledge, 2001) 624 pages. ISBN: 978-0415927376
- John Dittmer, *The Good Doctors: The Medical Committee for Human Rights and the Struggle for Social Justice in Health Care* (Bloomsbury Press, 2009) 336 pages. ISBN: 978-1596915671
- Vanessa Northington Gamble, *Making a Place for Ourselves: The Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945* (Oxford University Press, 1995) 296 pages. ISBN: 978-01955078893
- Evelynn M. Hammonds and Rebecca M. Herzig, ed. *The Nature of Difference: Sciences of Race in the United States from Jefferson to Genomics* (MIT Press, 2009) 368 pages. ISBN: 978-0-262-58275-9
- Edward J. Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science: Eugenics in the Deep South* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) 264 pages ISBN: 978-0801855115

- Spencie Love, *One Blood: The Death and Resurrection of Charles Drew* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 400 pages. ISBN: 978-0807846827
- David McBride, *From TB to AIDS: Epidemics Among Urban Blacks since 1900* (SUNY Press, 1991) 254 pages. ISBN: 978-0791405291
- Susan M. Reverby, ed. *Tuskegee's Truths: Rethinking the Tuskegee Study* (UNC Press, 2000) 664 pages. ISBN: 978-0-8078-4852-4.
- Dorothy Roberts, *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century* (The New Press, 2011) 400 pages. ISBN: 978-1595584953
- Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (Vintage, 1998) 384 pages. ISBN: 978-0679758693
- Todd L. Savitt, *Medicine and Slavery: The Diseases and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia* (University of Illinois Press, 1981) 352 pages. ISBN: 978-0252008740
- Todd L. Savitt, *Race and Medicine in Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century America* (Kent State University Press, 2006), 453 pages. ISBN: 978-0873388788
- Susan Smith, *Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: Black Women's Health Activism in America, 1890-1950* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) 288 pages. ISBN 978-0812214499
- Karen Kruse Thomas, *Deluxe Jim Crow: Civil Rights and American Health Policy, 1935-1954* (University of Georgia Press, 2011) 328 pages. ISBN: 978-0820340449
- Keith Wailoo, *Dying in the City of the Blues: Sickle Cell Anemia and the Politics of Race and Health* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000) 352 pages. ISBN: 978-0807848968
- Keith Wailoo and Stephen Pemberton, *The Troubled Dream of Genetic Medicine: Ethnicity and Innovation in Tay-Sachs, Cystic Fibrosis, and Sickle Cell Disease* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) 264 pages. ISBN: 978-0801993262

No history of medicine would be complete without mentioning Andreas Vesalius, a Belgian doctor who more than anyone in European medical science established the truth of many myths that had been held true since Galen in the Roman era. Vesalius had been fascinated by Galen's findings and endeavored to create a complete map of the human body, but in so doing disproved many of Galen's most important hypotheses. XIV The dawn of scientific medicine in the XIX. Century . 266. Sir Charles Bell and his Work ; The Tragedy of Robert Knox Anatomy under Henle and Hyrtl ; Physiology and Physics Pioneer British Physiologists ; The Genius of Claude Bernard Pathology and Bacteriology ; The Birth of a New Science. XV XIX-CENTURY CLINICIANS 290. London and Edinburgh Physicians ; Clinical Medicine in Dublin, Paris, and Vienna ; Medical Pioneers in America , A Bold First Ovariectomist ; The History of Anaesthesia. XVI Early nineteenth-century surgery . 307. XX Journalism, bibliography, and medical. History 393. The Rise of Medical Journalism ; American Medical Journals ; and Medical History ; Conclusion. APPENDIX 4 , 2.