HPSC 2039: Medicine, Disease and History from Antiquity to the Renaissance

Dr. William MacLehose

This course addresses the changes and developments in Western medicine from the Ancient Greek world to 1700. We will discuss ancient, medieval and early modern understandings of the body and illness, the varieties of theory and practice of medicine, and the historical background to premodern medicine. Among the themes we will pursue are the rise of hospitals, developments in anatomy and physiology, religion and medicine, contagious diseases, and the changes in pharmacology.

The objectives of the course are two: first, to become familiar with premodern views of the body, health and illness and second, to be able to think historically and contextualise past practices and theories of medicine.

Previous knowledge of the subject is not required. There are two primary forms of assessment: an essay due on Wednesday, 14 December and a final examination, to be held during the third term.

Lecture schedule

1. Introduction and Archaic Greek medicine
2. Hippocratic medicine: theories of disease
3. Hippocratic medicine: patients and practitioners
4. Natural philosophy and the Hellenistic World
5. Dissection, vivisection and new frontiers
6. Alternate models: Rome
7. Galen of Pergamum
8. The triumph of humoral theory
9. Religion and medicine
10. Islam: inheritance and innovation
11. Western medieval medicine
12. The rise of hospitals
13. Contagious diseases: leprosy and the plague
14. Renaissance medicine
15. The new anatomy: Vesalius
16. Medicine, magic, and Paracelsus
17. Harvey and the circulation of blood
18. Ancients v. Moderns: The New Science of the seventeenth century
19. Life and death in the seventeenth century

There will also be a meeting (date tba) at the Wellcome Library, to view some of the rare materials held in their collection, including papyrus, manuscripts and early printings of materials we will study during the term.

Readings:

There are two basic textbooks we will use for this module. Many copies of each are available just around the corner at the Wellcome Library, 183 Euston Rd. Each has its strengths as well as its faults. They are:

Vivian Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2004.

Lawrence Conrad, Michael Neve, Vivian Nutton, Roy Porter, and Andrew Wear. *The Western Medical Tradition, 800 BC to AD 1800.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Note that Nutton's *Ancient Medicine*, which we will read extensively in the first half of term, is available online via the Wellcome Library. You must register as a reader at the Wellcome (it's free and fairly easy) and then, with your library membership information, you can access the book anywhere at: http://catalogue.wellcome.ac.uk/record=b1586991~S8

Session 1: Archaic medicine

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 3.
Recommended: Kirk, et al., *The Presocratic Philosophers*
James Longrigg, 'Presocratic Philosophy and Hippocratic Medicine', *History of Science*, 27, 1989, 1-38

Session 2: Hippocratic medicine: theories of disease

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, chs. 4 & 5
Recommended: Helen King, *Hippocrates' Woman*, 1998
G.E.R. Lloyd, *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle*, chap. 5.

Session 3: Hippocratic medicine: patients and practitioners

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 6 and The oath and Epidemics selections
Recommended: *Hippocratic Writings* (Penguin edition, ed. G.E.R. Lloyd)
V. Nutton, 'Beyond the Hippocratic Oath', in Wear et al., *Doctors and Ethics*, 10-37

Session 4: Natural philosophy and the Hellenistic World

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 8
Recommended: Plato, *Timaeus*
Longrigg, *Greek Rational Medicine*, ch. 5

Session 5: Dissection, vivisection and new frontiers

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, chs. 9 & 11.
Recommended: H. von Staden, *Herophilus: The Art of Medicine in Early Alexandria*
Celsus, *On Medicine*, vol. 1, 3-35
James Longrigg, 'Alexandrian Medical Science', *History of Science*, 1981, 19: 155-206

Session 6: Alternate Models in Golden-Age Rome

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, chs. 13 & 14
Recommended: Ludwig Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine*, 173-191
Elizabeth Rawson, 'The Life and Death of Asclepiades of Bithynia', *Classical Quarterly*, 1988, ns 32: 358-370

Session 7: Galen of Pergamum

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, chs. 15 &16
Recommended: O. Temkin, *Galenism: Rise and Decline of a Medical Philosophy*, ch.1
R.J. Hankinson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Galen*, ch. 1-2

Session 8: The triumph of humoral theory

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 19

Recommended: O. Temkin, *Double Face of Janus*, ch. 11 and 202-222
Wesley Smith, *The Hippocratic Tradition*, 61-122

Session 9: Religion and medicine

Required: Nutton, *Ancient Medicine*, ch. 18
Recommended: Darrel W. Amundsen, 'Medicine and Faith in Early Christianity', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1982, 56: 326-50
Lindberg, *Beginnings of Western Science*, 149-159

Session 10: Islam: inheritance and innovation

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 93-125
Recommended: P. Pormann and E. Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic Medicine*, ch. 1
Michael Dols: Dols, *Medieval Islamic Medicine*, 1-42

Session 11: Western medieval medicine

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 139-146. 153-168
Recommended: L. Garcia-Ballester, `The New Galen' in K.D. Fischer, ed., *Text and Tradition: Studies in Ancient Medicine and its Transmission, 1998*, 55-83
Danielle Jacquart, 'The Influence of Arabic Medicine in the Medieval West,' in *Encyclopedia of the History of Arabic Science*, ed. Roshdi Rashed. 1996, 3 vols

Session 12: The rise of hospitals

Required: Katharine Park, 'Medicine and Society in Medieval Europe', in Andrew Wear, *Medicine in Society*, 59-90
Recommended: Carole Rawcliffe, 'The Hospitals of Later Medieval London', *Medical History* 28 (1984) 1-21
McVaugh, Michael R. "Bedside Manners in the Middle Ages." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 71.2 (1997) 201-223

Session 13: Contagious diseases: leprosy and plague

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 187-198.
Boccaccio, Decameron: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/decameronintro.asp
Recommended: Samuel Cohn, *The Black Death transformed*
François-Olivier Touati, 'Contagion and Leprosy,' in Lawrence Conrad and Dominik Wujastyk, eds, *Contagion: Perspectives from Pre-Modern Societies*, 2000.

Session 14: Renaissance medicine

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 250-264, 298-310
Recommended: Karen Meier Reeds, 'Renaissance Humanism and Botany', *Annals of Science*, 1976, 33: 519-542
Jean A Givens, *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History*, 2006

Session 15: The new anatomy: Vesalius

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp.264-292
Recommended: O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels*, esp. 17-20, 47-61; ch 6 & 11
Roger French, *Dissection and Vivisection in the European Renaissance*

Session 16: Medicine, magic, and Paracelsus

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 310-325
Recommended: Paracelsus, *Paracelsus: Essential Readings*, introduction
Charles Webster, 'Alchemical and Paracelsian Medicine', in Webster, *Health, Medicine and Mortality*, ch. 9

Session 17: Harvey and the circulation of blood

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 325-340
Recommended: Harvey, *The Circulation of the Blood and Other Writings*
Roger French, *William Harvey's Natural Philosophy*, esp. introduction and ch 1-5
Donald Bates, 'Harvey's Account of his Discovery,' *Medical History* 36 (1992) 361-78

Session 18: Ancients v. Moderns: The New Science of the seventeenth century

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 340-361.
Recommended: Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine 1550-1680*, 2000.
Jon Parkin, Science, *Religion and Politics in Restoration England*, 1999.

Session 19: Life and death in the seventeenth century

Required: Conrad, et al., *Western Medical Tradition*, pp. 215-225, 232-250
Recommended: Roger French and Andrew Wear, *The Medical Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, essays by Cunningham and Wear.
Lucinda Beier, 'In Sickness and in Health: A Seventeenth Century Family's Experience' in Porter and Porter, *Patients and Practitioners.*