

RHODES COLLEGE
FALL 2011
DISEASE AND EPIDEMICS IN HISTORY
HIST 105-04

Prof. Tait Keller
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Office: Buckman Hall 211
Office Hours: MW 10:30-12 Noon and by appointment

Class Days: MWF 1:00 PM

Classroom: Palmer Hall 205

Course Description

This course analyzes the influence of infectious disease on human history. Epidemics are causative (often caustic) agents in shaping society. Society's responses to disease reveal cultural values, social processes, political agendas, and evolving medical practices. Biological invasions of the body politic carry significant consequences on both a local and global scale. We will explore the interactions between humans and parasites, bugs, bacteria and viruses by focusing on a select group of diseases and epidemics, including the bubonic plague, small pox, cholera, influenza, and HIV/AIDS.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades in the course will be based on several components. The first is spirited participation in the discussions, as well as leading one of them. The second component will be three analytical papers. The last component is a research paper on any disease or epidemic that may interest you.

I. Attendance and Participation

The success of the course depends on your active participation, which also happens to make up a big part of your grade. I expect you to come to class prepared, having done the assigned reading and eager to participate in the discussion. Constructive and informed contributions to discussion are essential for satisfactory performance in this course. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your final grade.

You will also be responsible for leading one of the Friday discussions. I ask that you meet with me at some point during the week before the Friday discussion to go over your ideas and the questions you intend to ask.

II. Analytical Papers

The three analytical papers will be based solely on the assigned readings and themes raised in class; no outside research is necessary. I will provide the topics and questions for each paper. The papers will be 1000 words in length, double spaced, and use Chicago-style citations as outlined in Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*. In no event should your essay be longer than 1250 words; I look for cogency, not length.

A writing style guide is available on Moodle to assist you. Be sure to follow the style guide and make note of typical mistakes undergraduates often make in their papers. Your grade will suffer if you commit these mistakes. No, this is not an English course, but you cannot do good history without writing competently.

As part of our focus on writing, the first two papers will go through a blind peer review. I will pair you up for each paper. It will be your responsibility to submit the paper to your reader well ahead to the deadline. At the bare minimum you should give your reader 72 hours to review your paper. And as a reader, you must return the paper to its author in time for her or him to make the revisions. You will then submit to me the draft with your reader's comments together with your revised version. Your grade will be based on your final version, along with the comments you made as a reader. If you do not submit the paper to your reader, you will receive an 'F' on the paper. Likewise, you do not fulfill your responsibility as a reader you will fail the assignment. The due dates for the three papers are **Friday: September 16, October 14, and November 11.**

III. Research Paper

You will write a concise, literate, well-organized research paper on any aspect of any disease or epidemic that interests you. The papers will be 2500-3000 words in length, double spaced, and use Chicago-style citations as outlined in Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*. Additional guidelines for the paper will be posted on Moodle. If you are unsure of a topic, come talk to me and check out *The Cambridge World History of Human Disease*, which will be on reserve in the library. I ask that you meet with me by the week after Fall Break to discuss your ideas. I also ask that you submit an abstract and bibliography to me by **Friday, November 18**. The bibliography should contain at least ten sources, including at least three primary sources. As part of this assignment, you will give a fifteen minute presentation on your research at the end of the semester.

The paper will be due **Monday, December 12**.

The final grade for the class will be established as follows:

Attendance and Participation	25%
Analytical Papers	45%
Research Paper	30%

Grading Scale:

A	Outstanding
B	Above Average/Very Good
C	Average/Good/Satisfactory
D	Below Average/Poor
F	Fail

A (93-100); A- (90-92); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72) and so on. Any number below 60 will be marked as an F

***NOTE:** All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Failure to complete any of the course requirements by **Monday, December 12** may result in a final course grade of F.

Required Texts (in order texts are read)

David Herlihy, *The Black Death and the Transformation of the West*

Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82*

Steven Johnson, *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's most Terrifying Epidemic and how it Changed Cities, Science, and the Modern World*

Alan Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the Immigrant Menace*

Keith Wailoo, *Dying in the City of Blues: Sickle Cell Anemia and the Politics of Race and Health*

Paul Farmer, *Infections and Inequalities*

All of these titles are on sale at the bookstore and on reserve in the library. You can also find all these books used (read: much, much cheaper) at online bookstores, including addall.com, alibris.com, amazon.com, and half.com. You are welcome to read these books in any edition, condition, or language.

Course Policies – read these all carefully

Special Needs and Accommodations: I am strongly committed to accommodating students with disabilities, and ask your cooperation in making sure that I am aware of any such accommodation you might need. All accommodation requests are the responsibility of the student. For more information, please contact Student Disability Services (SDS) to alert them of any needs you may have.

Food, Drink, Tobacco: Drink is permitted in my classroom, but food and tobacco products of all kinds are prohibited.

Moodle: All students in the class are automatically registered for this course on Moodle. When you log on to Moodle and access the site for this course, you will find all course materials, including this syllabus, readings, and guidelines for assignments.

Email: All email correspondence will be sent to your Rhodes email account. It is your responsibility to check this account regularly. Emails are not text messages. When writing me, I expect your emails to be professional.

Cell phones, Blackberries, ipods, and other such devices: Turn them off!

Laptops: The use of laptop computers or other screen-based devices is not permitted during our discussions. If you have a medical reason for needing to use a laptop or other screen-based device, please let me know.

Sleeping in class is not permitted. Those who fall asleep will be subject to a rude awakening.

Honor Code: I believe in the College's standards of academic honesty, and I enforce them vigorously and to the letter. Be aware of those standards, and observe them. Plagiarism and cheating are easy to detect; so are papers pulled off the internet. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized another's work, I will discuss this matter with you. If I am not satisfied, I will report your case to the Honor Council for due process. I always recommend failure for the course when I submit a file. The bottom line is this: do your own work. You are spending your time and money to be here and learn. Don't waste either by plagiarizing or cheating.

A Word on Grading:

Papers will be evaluated on four main criteria: thesis, organization, evidence, and style. In general, a paper that does a very good job in each category is a 'B'. A paper that almost does is a 'B-', and a paper that performs well in each category and goes beyond in one category is a 'B+'. A paper that is satisfactory but weak in one or two categories is a 'C'. A 'D' paper is weak in three or more categories, or omits one criterion completely. Papers without notes crediting sources and location quotations, paraphrases, and allusions will receive, at best, a grade of 'D'. An 'A' range paper performs outstandingly well in each category, and achieves something extraordinary in two or more categories.

Remember that a grade does not reflect process (it does not measure whether you worked hard) and it certainly does not reflect a value judgment about you as a person. A grade constitutes an evaluation of the quality and analytical rigor of the thesis, organization, evidence, and style of a single piece of work.

I will be delighted to discuss your papers with you. Be advised however that grades, once assigned, are not subject to change. I also will not communicate grades over email or the telephone. The most important part of the grading process is not the grade, but the comments you will find on your papers when you pick them up.

I do not give "I" (incomplete) grades. Late work, except in documented cases of bereavement, major injury, or catastrophic illness, will suffer a substantial and progressive reduction in grade. Therefore, please plan ahead and do your work on time.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
(subject to change)

Week/Theme	Day	Date	Lectures, Discussions, Readings, and Papers
WEEK 1: <i>Introductions</i>	Wed	Aug 24	Welcome!
	Fri	Aug 26	Approaching Disease in History <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Rosenberg “Introduction,” in <i>Framing Disease</i> , ed. C.E. Rosenberg and Janet Golden, pp. xiii-xxvi
WEEK 2: <i>Parasites and Civilization</i>	Mon	Aug 29	The Evolution of Humans and Microbes <input type="checkbox"/> William McNeill, <i>Plagues and People</i> , chapter II
	Wed	Aug 31	The Disease Pool <input type="checkbox"/> William McNeill, <i>Plagues and People</i> , chapter III
	Fri	Sept 2	The Loathing of Lepers <input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus chapters 13-15 <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Dols, “The Leper in Medieval Islamic Society,” <i>Speculum</i> 58 (1983): 891-916
WEEK 3: <i>The Great Mortality</i>	Mon	Sept 5	No Class: Labor Day
	Wed	Sept 7	Europe’s Black Death *Writing discussion: style guide
	Fri	Sept 9	Disease and Deadlocks <input type="checkbox"/> Herlihy (all)
WEEK 4: <i>The Plague and Modernity</i>	Mon	Sept 12	The Return of Yersinia Pestis? <input type="checkbox"/> Myron Echenberg “Pestis Redux,” <i>Journal of World History</i> 13 (2002): 429-449
	Wed	Sept 14	The Sick and the State <input type="checkbox"/> Carol Benedict “Policing the Sick,” <i>Late Imperial China</i> 14 (1993): 60-77
	Fri	Sept 16	Plague and Science <input type="checkbox"/> Video: <i>Secrets of the Dead: Mystery of the Black Death</i> (in-class)
<p>First analytical paper – due Friday, September 16 – reading secondary sources against the grain Imagine that you survived one of the plague pandemics. You decide to record your thoughts for posterity, commenting on the disease and its effect on society, culture, and the state. You argue (contrary to Herlihy and others) that the plague was not so beneficial, that it did not bring about progress to that great of a degree. Basing your account largely on the plague readings, but on anything else you may have learned from this course, what arguments would you make?</p>			
WEEK 5: <i>The Pox of Conquest</i>	Mon	Sept 19	Transoceanic Exchanges *Writing discussion: making revisions <input type="checkbox"/> Alfred Crosby, “Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America,” <i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i> 33 (1976): 289-299 <input type="checkbox"/> Fenn, pp. 3-43
	Wed	Sept 21	Microbes and the Military <input type="checkbox"/> Fenn, pp. 44-134; 259-277
	Fri	Sept 23	Class cancelled

WEEK 6: <i>Tropical Maladies</i>	Mon	Sept 26	Yellow Jack and Geopolitics <input type="checkbox"/> John McNeill, <i>Mosquito Empires</i> , selections
	Wed	Sept 28	Southern Fevers <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Humphreys, <i>Yellow Fever and the South</i> , selections <input type="checkbox"/> Marcos Cueto, "Sanitation from Above," <i>The Hispanic American Historical Review</i> 22 (1992): 1-22
	Fri	Sept 30	Tour of Elmwood Cemetery
WEEK 7: <i>Cities and Cholera</i>	Mon	Oct 3	Disease and Social Darwinism <input type="checkbox"/> Erin O'Connor, "Asiatic Cholera and the Raw Material of Race" in <i>Raw Material: Producing Pathology in Victorian Culture</i> , pp. 21-59 <input type="checkbox"/> Johnson, 1-55
	Wed	Oct 5	The Miasma Paradigm <input type="checkbox"/> Johnson, 57-156 <input type="checkbox"/> Film: <i>The Painted Veil</i> (in-class)
	Fri	Oct 7	Pathogens and Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Johnson, 159-256
WEEK 8: <i>Contagions and Migrations</i>	Mon	Oct 10	Protecting the Healthy? <input type="checkbox"/> Nadja Durbach "They Might as Well Brand Us," <i>Social History of Medicine</i> 13 (2000): 45-62
	Wed	Oct 12	The Wretched Refuse <input type="checkbox"/> Kraut, pp. 1-9; 31-77
	Fri	Oct 14	Nationalism and Nativism <input type="checkbox"/> Kraut, pp. 78-165

Second analytical paper – due Friday, October 14 – comparative analysis (pick one)

Choice #1

Elizabeth Fenn and John McNeill discuss the impact of transoceanic disease exchanges and revolutionary movements in the New World. In what ways did smallpox and mosquito borne illnesses shape these conflicts? Did the diseases have the same impact, or did different diseases shape the wars in different ways? Did particular characteristics make some diseases better suited to war than others?

Choice #2

Steven Johnson and Alan Kraut explore the ways that particular groups had been slandered for spreading disease. What relationship does social class have to disease? In what ways does class shape how people view a disease like cholera or tuberculosis? In other words, what is the relationship between disease and discrimination?

Fall Recess Oct 14-18

WEEK 9: <i>Epidemics and Empires</i>	Wed	Oct 19	The Imperial and the Malarial *Writing discussion: the research paper <input type="checkbox"/> Film: Killer Number One (in-class) <input type="checkbox"/> William B. Cohen, "Malaria and French Imperialism," <i>Journal of African History</i> 24 (1983): 23-36
	Fri	Oct 21	Race, Gender, and Germs <input type="checkbox"/> Philippa Levine, <i>Prostitution, Race and Politics</i> , selections

WEEK 10: <i>Soldiers, Sex, and Syphilis</i>	Mon	Oct 24	Men, Women, and War <input type="checkbox"/> Susan Grayzel, <i>Women's Identities at War</i> , selections <input type="checkbox"/> Annette Timm, "Sex with a Purpose: Prostitution, Venereal Disease and Militarized Masculinity in the Third Reich," <i>Journal of the History of Sexuality</i> 11 (2002): 223-255
	Wed	Oct 26	Policing Prostitutes Peruse Venereal Disease Propaganda
	Fri	Oct 28	The Moral Battlefield <input type="checkbox"/> Lutz D. H. Sauerteig, "Sex, Medicine and Morality during the First World War," in <i>War, Medicine and Modernity</i> , ed. Roger Cooter, Mark Harrison and Steve Sturdy, pp. 167-181 <input type="checkbox"/> Michelle K. Rhoades, "Renegotiating French Masculinity," <i>French Historical Studies</i> 29 (2006): 293-327
WEEK 11: <i>Influenza 1918</i>	Mon	Oct 31	Beginnings
	Wed	Nov 2	Pandemic Proportions <input type="checkbox"/> The Great Pandemic
	Fri	Nov 4	Disease, Death, and Memory <input type="checkbox"/> Alfred Crosby, <i>America's Forgotten Pandemic</i> , selections
WEEK 12: <i>The Politics of Epidemiology</i>	Mon	Nov 7	Bodies, Blood, and Disease <input type="checkbox"/> Wailoo, chapters 1 and 2
	Wed	Nov 9	Sickle Cells and Social Constraints <input type="checkbox"/> Wailoo, chapters 3 and 5
	Fri	Nov 11	Race and Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> Wailoo, chapters 6 and 7

Third analytical paper – due Friday, November 11 – design your own question

Several of our readings from the past four weeks have explored how disease has shaped gender and race issues. For your final analytical paper, you will write on one or both of these topics using at least two readings from weeks 9 through 12. You may shape the paper anyway that you see fit. I would encourage you to first discuss your ideas with me.

WEEK 13: <i>The Age of AIDS</i>	Mon	Nov 14	The Arrival of AIDS <input type="checkbox"/> Watch The Age of AIDS (in class) <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer, chapters 3 and 4
	Wed	Nov 16	HIV in the Developing World <input type="checkbox"/> Watch The Age of AIDS (in class) <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer, chapters 5 and 6
	Fri	Nov 18	A Modern Plague? <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer, chapter 10

► **Research abstract (250 words) and bibliography due by Friday, November 18**

WEEK 14:	Mon	Nov 21	
<i>Research</i>	Wed	Nov 23	2x 15 min presentations w/ 10 min discussion each
<i>Presentations</i>	Fri	Nov 25	
WEEK 15:	Mon	Nov 28	
<i>Research</i>	Wed	Nov 30	2x 15 min presentations w/ 10 min discussion each
<i>Presentations</i>	Fri	Dec 2	
WEEK 16:	Mon	Dec 5	
<i>Research</i>	Wed	Dec 7	2x 15 min presentations w/ 10 min discussion each
<i>Presentations</i>			

**Research Paper
Due
Monday, December 12
1 PM**