

HIST 105-03, Disease and Epidemics in History. Fall 2008

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RHODES COLLEGE
FALL 2008
DISEASE AND EPIDEMICS IN HISTORY
HIST 105-03

Prof. Tait Keller
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Office: Clough Hall 317
Office Hours: MW 4-5:30 PM and by appointment

Class Days: MWF 12 Noon

Classroom: Clough Hall 313

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. Our case studies will include the bubonic plague, small pox, tropical diseases, cholera, influenza, syphilis, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. The class meetings will be primarily discussion based on the assigned reading. On a few occasions we may use our time to watch films, go on field trips, or host guest lecturers.

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 four analytical response papers to the weekly readings. The last component is a research paper on any disease or epidemic that may interest you.

I. Attendance and Participation

This is an earned grade. Constructive and informed contributions to discussion are essential for satisfactory performance in this course. I expect you to come to every class prepared, having done the assigned reading and eager to participate in the discussion. One of the most important skills emphasized in this course is learning to say something of substance – something worth listening to or reading. This is a skill necessary for success in college, and for whatever you decide to do after graduation. So not participating is not an option, and 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. Response Papers

The four response papers will be based solely on the required readings and themes raised in class; no outside research is necessary. You may shape the paper as you will, but I am looking for a thoughtful response to the reading. The paper is your interpretation of the reading's significance, not a description of the reading. The papers will be due at the start of class on the Friday that the readings are discussed. The choice is yours as to which weeks you would like to submit your papers, but you must submit the first two response papers by fall break and the last two by Thanksgiving break. You may not submit two papers on the same day. The papers are to be 750-900 words (Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins), double spaced, and follow the guidelines of either the *MLA Handbook* or Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*. In no event should your paper be more than 900 words; I look for cogency not length. A writing style guide is available on Moodle to assist you when you proof-read your papers. 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.

III. Research Paper

You will write a concise, literate, well-organized 8-10 page research paper on any aspect of any disease or epidemic that interests you. 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 submit a 250 word abstract with a preliminary bibliography to me by **Monday, November 3**. As part of this assignment, you will give a 10 minute presentation on your research at the end of the semester. The paper will be due **Saturday, December 13 by 1 PM**.

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

Attendance and Participation	25%
First Response Paper	10%
Second Response Paper	10%
Third Response Paper	15%
Fourth Response Paper	15%
Research Paper	25%

Grading Scale:

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

***NOTE:** All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Failure to complete any of the course requirements by **Saturday, December 13** will result in a final course grade of F.

Required Texts (in order texts are read)

William McNeill, *Plagues and People*

Publisher: Anchor; Updated edition (1998)

ISBN-10: 0385121229

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

Publisher: Harvard University Press (1997)

ISBN-10: 0674076133

Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire*

Publisher: Routledge (2003)

ISBN-10: 0415944473

Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918*

Publisher: Cambridge University Press; 2nd edition (2003)

ISBN-10: 0521541751

Paul Farmer, *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*

Publisher: University of California Press (2001)

ISBN-10: 0520229134

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.

Key to the readings listed on the schedule

Required reading

Recommended reading

Course Policies – read these all carefully

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.

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.

Cell phones: turn them off!

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

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

Honor Code: I believe in the University's standards of academic honesty, and I do my best to 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.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
(subject to change)

<i>Introductions</i>	W Aug 27	Welcome!
	F Aug 29	Approaching Disease in History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Rosenberg “Introduction,” in <i>Framing Disease</i>, ed. C.E. Rosenberg and Janet Golden, pp. xiii-xxvi. <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Pelling “The Meaning of Contagion,” in <i>Contagion</i>, ed. Alison Bashford and Claire Hooker, pp. 15-38.
<i>Parasites and Civilization</i>	M Sept 1	Labor Day Holiday!
	W Sept 3	The Evolution of Humans and Microbes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> McNeill, “Introduction,” and chapter II (chapter I optional)
	F Sept 5	The Disease Pool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> McNeill, chapter III
<i>Scourges of the Ancient World</i>	M Sept 8	The Lepers of Leviticus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus chapters 13-15
	W Sept 10	Pestilence in the Age of Pericles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Thucydides, <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> (moodle) <input type="checkbox"/> Ovid, <i>The Metamorphoses of Ovid</i> (moodle) ■ James Longrigg, “Epidemic, Ideas and Classical Athenian Society,” in <i>Epidemics and Ideas</i>, ed. Terence Ranger and Paul Slack, pp. 21-44.
	F Sept 12	Byzantium’s Splendor and Torment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> J.N. Hays, <i>The Burdens of Disease</i>, pp. 8-17. <input type="checkbox"/> Patrice Bourdelais, <i>Epidemics Laid Low</i>, pp. 6-11.
<i>The Great Mortality</i>	M Sept 15	Traveling Rats on the Silk Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> McNeill, chapter IV ■ John Norris “East or West? The Geographic Origin of the Black Death,” <i>Bulletin of the History of Medicine</i> 51 (1977): 1-24.
	W Sept 17	Europe’s Black Death <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Herlihy, chapters one and two
	F Sept 19	Opening the Seventh Seal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Herlihy, chapter three <input type="checkbox"/> Boccaccio, The Decameron, selections on the Plague (moodle)
<i>The Plague and Modernity</i>	M Sept 22	The Return of Yersinia Pestis? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Myron Echenberg “Pestis Redux: The Initial Years of the Third Bubonic Plague Pandemic, 1894-1901,” <i>Journal of World History</i> 13 (2002): 429-440. <input type="checkbox"/> I. Catanach, “The ‘Globalization’ of Disease? India and the Plague,” <i>Journal of World History</i> 12 (2001): 131-53. ■ David Arnold, “The Indian Ocean as a Disease Zone, 1500-1950,” <i>South Asia</i> 14 (1991): 1-21.
	W Sept 24	Plague and Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video: <i>Secrets of the Dead: Mystery of the Black Death</i> (in-class) <input type="checkbox"/> Samuel K. Cohn, Jr. “The Black Death and the End of a Paradigm,” <i>American Historical Review</i> 107 (2002): 703-38.

- F Sept 26 The Sick and the State
- ❑ Carol Benedict “Policing the Sick: Plague and the Origins of State Medicine in Late Imperial China,” *Late Imperial China* 14 (1993): 60-77.
 - ❑ Ira Klein, “Plague, Policy and Popular Unrest in British India,” *Modern Asian Studies* 22 (1988): 723-755.
- Virgin Soil Epidemics* M Sept 29 The Columbian Exchange
- ❑ McNeill, chapter V
 - ❑ Noble David Cook, *Born to Die*, introduction and chapter one
- W Oct 1 Calculating Calamity
- ❑ Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germans, and Steel* chapters 3 and 11
 - Charles C. Mann, *1491*, pp. 68-124
- F Oct 3 **Class cancelled with my apologies**
- Tropical Maladies* M Oct 6 Caribbean Colonies
- ❑ John R. McNeill, “Epidemics, Environment and Empire: Yellow Fever and Geopolitics in the American Tropics, 1650-1825,” *Environment and History* 5 (1999): 175-184.
 - ❑ Sheldon Watts, *Epidemics and History*, pp. 228-239
- W Oct 8 Guest Speaker: Fever in Memphis
- ❑ Margaret Humphreys, *Yellow Fever and the South*, chapter 2
- F Oct 10 The Political Tremors of Yellow Fever
- ❑ Marcos Cueto, “Sanitation from Above: Yellow Fever and Foreign Intervention in Peru, 1919-1922,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 22 (1992): 1-22.
- Cities and Cholera* M Oct 13 Urban Plights
- ❑ David S. Barnes, *The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-Century Struggle against Filth and Germs*, introduction and chapter 1
- W Oct 15 Proletarian Pathogens
- ❑ Howard Markel, “Knocking out the Cholera: Cholera, Class, and Quarantines in New York City, 1892,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 69 (1995): 420-57.
 - ❑ Nadja Durbach “‘They Might as Well Brand Us’: Working-Class Resistance to Compulsory Vaccination in Victorian England,” *Social History of Medicine* 13 (2000): 45-62.
- F Oct 17 Cholera and Political Change
- ❑ Richard J. Evans, “Epidemics and Revolutions: Cholera in Nineteenth-Century Europe,” *Past and Present* 120 (1988): 123-146.
 - ❑ Charles E. Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years*, chapters VI and VII
- Fall recess begins 5 PM!**
- Contagions and Migrations* M Oct 20 **Fall recess!**
- W Oct 22 Disease and Social Darwinism
- ❑ Erin O'Connor, “Asiatic Cholera and the Raw Material of Race” in *Raw Material: Producing Pathology in Victorian Culture*, pp. 21-59.
- F Oct 24 Nationalism and Nativism
- ❑ Alan M. Kraut, *Silent Travelers*, introduction and chapters 4 and 5

<i>Epidemics and Empire</i>	M Oct 27	The Scramble for Africa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Philip D. Curtin, <i>Disease and Empire</i>, chapter 6 and the picture gallery ❑ William B. Cohen, "Malaria and French Imperialism," <i>Journal of African History</i> 24 (1983): 23-36.
	W Oct 29	Practicing Imperialism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Levine, chapters 2 and 3
	F Oct 31	Race, Gender and Germs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Levine, chapters 8, 9 and 10 (divided among students)
<i>Soldiers, Sex and Syphilis</i>	M Nov 3	Research abstract due Men, Women, and War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Susan Grayzel, <i>Women's Identities at War</i>, chapter 4 ❑ Michelle K. Rhoades, "Renegotiating French Masculinity: Medicine and Venereal Disease during the Great War," <i>French Historical Studies</i> 29 (2006): 293-327.
	W Nov 5	Policing Prostitutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Levine, chapter 6 ■ Judith Smart, "Sex, the State, and the 'Scarlet Scourge': Gender, Citizenship and Venereal Diseases Regulation in Australia during the Great War," <i>Women's History Review</i> 7 (1998): 5-36.
	F Nov 7	The Moral Battlefield <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Mark Harrison, "The British Army and the Problem of Venereal Disease in France and Egypt during the First World War," <i>Medical History</i> 39 (1995): 133-158. ❑ Peruse Venereal Disease Propaganda ■ 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
<i>Influenza 1918</i>	M Nov 10	Beginnings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Crosby, parts I and II ❑ Peruse The Great Pandemic
	W Nov 12	Pandemic Proportions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Crosby, part III
	F Nov 14	Disease, Death and Memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Crosby, parts IV and V
<i>The Politics of Epidemiology</i>	M Nov 17	Poverty and Tuberculosis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Farmer, chapters 7 and 8
	W Nov 19	HIV in the Developing World Watch The Age of AIDS (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Farmer, chapters 3, 5, and 6
	F Nov 21	Persistent Plagues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Farmer, chapter 10
<i>AIDS in America</i>	M Nov 24	Film: <i>And the Band Played On</i>
	W Nov 26	Happy Thanksgiving!
	F Nov 28	

Research M Dec 1
Presentations W Dec 3 **Presentations – schedule to be posted**
F Dec 5

Emerging M Dec 8 **Presentations – schedule to be posted**
Infections W Dec 10 The Once and Future Flu

Research paper due:

**Saturday
December 13
1 PM**