This course takes specific diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis, smallpox, plague, malaria and AIDS, and examines their social and medical impact during the past couple of centuries. It examines the interplay of scientific, clinical, social and moral judgements invested in ‘framing’ a disease.

Previous knowledge of the subject is not required. There are twenty sessions, eleven in the first term and nine in the second term. One essay is due, which carries 30% of the total mark. The exam is in the third term.

(HMED 3010, 1/2 unit)
HMED 3010 Disease in History: Lecture schedule 2007-8

Term 1


**Thurs 8 Nov 2007 Reading week – no lecture.**
8. Thurs 22 Nov 2007 Disease and colonial order: plague.
10. Thurs 6 Dec 2007 Disease and military order: malaria.

Term 2

12. Thurs 10 Jan 2008 Negotiating disease 2: smallpox, compulsory vaccination and the law. **Essay deadline. Your essay must be handed to Dr Barnett in this lecture.**
15. Thurs 31 Jan 2008 Disease as social diagnosis: poverty.
16. Thurs 7 Feb 2008 Mad, bad and dangerous to know?: the medicalisation of genius.

**Thurs 14 Feb 2008 Reading week – no lecture.**
18. Thurs 28 Feb 2008 Disease as deviance: homosexuality.
20. Thurs 13 Mar 2008 Framing AIDS.
HMED 3010: Disease in History: General reading

Most of the books referred to in this handout are available for borrowing in the Wellcome Library Student Loan collection. One copy of each item is also kept as a reference copy for use in the Wellcome Library only. Further copies of most of the books can be found in the UCL Library and University of London Library: these are available for longer loans, and may be useful when revising or writing your essay. Many of the journals are now available online, or in the Wellcome Library journals collection.

Photocopied extracts from some of the books are kept in the Wellcome Library Student Loan collection, arranged alphabetically by the author’s surname in the box-files marked ‘Disease in History’. Take a few minutes to browse through these boxes and familiarise yourself with what is available.

Recommended general texts on this subject – available for loan in the Wellcome Student Loan collection – are:

HMED 3010 Disease in History: Reading for lectures

Each lecture has a list of recommended readings. You are advised to read one or two of these, particularly those marked with a star, in preparation for the lectures. They are also intended to assist you in writing your essays and in revising for the exam.

Term 1


No set reading.


Term 2


- Bynum (1994), chaps 7 and 8.
Macmillan, pp 47-71.


16. Thurs 7 Feb 2008: Mad, bad and dangerous to know?: the medicalisation of genius.

Thurs 14 Feb 2008: Reading week – no lecture.


20. Thurs 13 Mar 2008: Framing AIDS.

HMED 3010: Disease in History: Coursework assignment

Coursework must be submitted in class on the date indicated. Two copies must be submitted – one for Dr Barnett and one for the second marker. Five percent per day will be deducted for late submission. Extensions may be negotiated on presentation of a doctor’s note or equally compelling evidence of need.

Your essay must be typed in 11pt text and double spaced. It must be written in clear, concise prose: no bullet points, note or abbreviations, and no rambling. Please do not sport with Dr Barnett’s patience or attention span by massively exceeding the stated word limit.

Please use your essay as an opportunity to develop and argue a case, rather than relying on mere description. Analysis of the title / question – what it says and what it doesn’t say – is essential to the construction of a good essay. Essays which simply recount the general history of a particular subject are generally dull and unworthy of high marks.

Do not use dubious online sources in preference to the extremely useful texts available in the Wellcome Library. In particular, students who cite Wikipedia or similar will be penalised.

PLAGIARISM

UCL takes plagiarism very seriously. This is particularly important in a history course: you will be heavily penalised for copying out even short statements from someone’s book or article without a reference. If you use another author’s words or ideas you must acknowledge them with a footnote, and at the end of your essay provide a comprehensive list of your sources (including electronic sources, if you have used them). Dr Barnett will give some guidelines on techniques of referencing early in the course, but in general you are recommended to follow the referencing style used in this handout.
This essay must be submitted to Dr Barnett in class at the first lecture of the second term, on Thurs 10 Jan 2008. It carries thirty percent of your final mark for this course.

The essays in Rosenberg & Golden (1992) illustrate some of the ways in which historians have chosen to ‘frame’ diseases in historical terms. Your task is to write an essay for an imaginary second volume of this text. You may write about any disease not already covered by the existing essays in Rosenberg & Golden.

There are a variety of approaches you could adopt – debates about the status of a disease, its treatment, causes, moral implications, experience and so on. Ideally, your essay will pick up on some aspect of contention or debate, one that will allow you to acknowledge the social dimension and explore the range of factors which go into the ‘framing’ of a disease.

If you choose to write about a disease covered in the lectures, your essay should go beyond the contents of the lecture and the required reading list. The Companion encyclopedia contains good introductory essays on the major kinds of disease (nutritional, endocrinological, mental, tropical, sexually transmitted etc). In addition, the Cambridge world history of human disease has articles on many individual diseases. Each of these articles has a bibliography that will guide you to further sources.

Your essay must be properly referenced, with footnotes and a bibliography of sources. It should be three to four thousand words long (roughly twelve to fifteen pages of double spaced 11pt text), not including bibliography and footnotes.