Kevin McQueeney

Black Healthcare History Course Syllabus

***Description***: This class explores the history of Black healthcare in the United States, from the founding of the country through the present. The first section of the course will examine health-related issues for enslaved African Americans and free blacks prior to the Civil War, including folk medicine and nursing services provided by black women; early African American physicians like James Durham, the first black physician in America; and medical care for enslaved individuals.

The second section will explore the post-Civil War period, including the health issues faced by emancipated African Americans, particularly at "contraband camps"; the training of black physicians; private practices established by black physicians; the creation of black medical schools starting with Howard University's College of Medicine in 1868; and the impact of violence on black health and mortality rates.

The third section will address African American healthcare during Jim Crow and Civil Rights periods, including segregation as a cause of significant health problems; major health issues like tuberculosis, infant/maternal death, and syphilis, all leading causes of the high black morality rate; the de jure and de facto segregation of hospitals; the Black Hospital Movement, starting with Provident Hospital in Chicago in 1891; the closing of all but two black medical colleges with the Flexner Report (1910); the training and services provided by African American nurses; and the debate about the building of separate hospitals versus the push for integration.

The fourth section will examine black health in the Post-Civil Rights period, including the effects of integration on black health—one effect being the closing of nearly every black hospital by the 1980s; the growth of the healthcare economy and the impact on the black economy—with an emphasis on the issue of employment and the racial sorting of healthcare jobs, and gentrification of black neighborhoods caused by the spread of hospitals; and contemporary black health issues like sickle cell anemia.

Through this course, we will attempt to provide historical backgrounds to pressing issues for contemporary black healthcare. We will address the following questions: How has the history of medical apartheid, experimentation, and exploitation affected black trust in healthcare? How has a history of exclusion led to a severe under-representation of African Americans in higher-paying positions like doctors and surgeons, and over-representation in lower-paying jobs like home health aides? How have African Americans provided healthcare for themselves?

***Assessment:***

The grade for the course will incorporate the following:

1. Leading and Participating in Class Discussion:

The class will feature extensive class discussion of the course material. Students are expected to complete the reading and participate each week in the discussion. For each class, 1-2 students will serve as discussion leaders. These students will come up with a list of discussion questions that they will circulate to the other students in advance of that week's class. Each discussion leader will also do one additional short reading—an article or book chapter—that they will summarize and share with the class and find one primary source related to the subject matter that we will examine. During the class, the discussion leaders will help facilitate discussion, as well as provide a brief commentary on what they found most striking about the material and the week's subject matter.

1. Midterm and Final Exam: The midterm and exam will be essay questions. I will distribute potential essay questions several weeks in advance of the exam. You will have a choice of essays to respond to, choosing to answer two out of four prompts.
2. Public History Project: As part of this course, we will work on creating a digital history project. We will discuss the matter during the first weeks of the course.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Week 1 Tuesday August 27th Introduction to Course**

Group Exercise:

Group 1: "Black Mothers Keep Dying After Giving Birth"

<https://www.npr.org/2017/12/07/568948782/black-mothers-keep-dying-after-giving-birth-shalon-irvings-story-explains-why>

Group 2: "How Our Identities Shape Health And Educational Success"

<https://www.npr.org/2019/06/03/729275139/people-like-us-how-our-identities-shape-health-and-educational-success>

"The Lasting Harm of Medical Mistrust"

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/commentary/ct-henrietta-lacks-oprah-winfery-cancer-cells-hela-mistrust-physician-perspec-04-20170420-story.html>

Group 3: "Health Disparities in New Orleans"

<https://www.nola.gov/health-department/data-and-publications/reports/health-disparities-in-new-orleans-community-2013/>

Group 4

Racism has devastating effect on children's health (healthcare economy folder)

**Week 2 Tuesday September 3rd The Slave Trade and the Slave Health Deficit**

Readings: Herbert S. Klein, Stanley L. Engerman, Robin Haines, and Ralph Shlomowitz, "Transoceanic Mortality: The Slave Trade in Comparative Perspective," *William & Mary Quarterly*, LVIII, no. 1 (January 2001): 93-118.

Savitt, Todd L. "Black Health on the Plantation: Owners, the Enslaved, and Physicians." *OAH*

*Magazine of History* Volume 19, Issue 5 (September 2005): 14-16.

Harriet Washington, Medical Apartheid, 24-31, 32-51, 54-71

Class Exercise—How to analyze a primary source: 1855 Auction of Enslaved People

<https://archive.org/details/Folio326B384>

Ship Log:

<https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/handle/10822/1055276>

*Primary Sources:*

Thomas Jefferson, Excerpt from "Notes on the State of Virginia" (1788) <https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-early-republic/thomas-jefferson-notes-on-the-state-of-virginia-1788/>

Samuel Cartwright, "Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race" (1851)

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3106t.html>

**Week 3 Tuesday September 10th Slave Hospitals**

*Visit to Louisiana Research Center: Material on Health and Healthcare of Enslaved People*

Readings: Stephen C. Kenny, "Slave Hospitals in the Antebellum South"

Primary Sources:

"Births and Deaths on the plantation of Rev. Charles Colcock Jones" (1834)

List of sickness of enlaved people Nov. 15, 1843-May 6, 1845

Excerpt from Samuel Northup, *Twelve Years a Slave*

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45631/45631-h/45631-h.htm>

\*Excerpts from New Orleans Medical Journal (Experiments on Enslaved)

<https://archive.org/details/neworleansmedica5185unse/page/576> (577-585)

1801 Charity Hospital Inventory 1801

Charity Hospital Board of Administrators Annual Report, 1849

**Week 4 Tuesday September 17th Healthcare by Enslaved Men and Women**

Readings: Herbert C. Covey, *African American Slave Medicine: Herbal and Non-Herbal Treatments* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007)

Read 41-54, 55-71, 73-79, (glance at description of plants herbs 80-123), 147-150

Fett, Sharla M. *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power on Southern Slave Plantations*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

Read: 18-29, 159-167, 169-182, 193-200

In Class Discussion: The WPA and the Slave Narrative Collection

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/articles-and-essays/introduction-to-the-wpa-slave-narratives/wpa-and-the-slave-narrative-collection/>

"The Limitations of the Slave Narrative Collection"

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/articles-and-essays/introduction-to-the-wpa-slave-narratives/limitations-of-the-slave-narrative-collection/>

"Is the Greatest Collection of Slave Narratives Tainted by Racism"

<http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/history/2016/07/can_wpa_slave_narratives_be_trusted_or_are_they_tainted_by_depression_era.html>

**Week 5 Tuesday September 24th Black Physicians in the Antebellum Period**

Readings:

Charles E. Wynes, "Dr. James Durham, Mysterious Eighteenth-Century Black Physician: Man or Myth," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and* *Biography* Vol. 103, No. 3 (July 1979): 325-333.

Thomas M. Morgan, "The education and medical practice of Dr. James McCune Smith (1813-1865), first black American to hold a medical degree," *Journal of the National Medical Association* Vol. 95 No. 7 (July 2003): 603-614.

Michael J. Harris, "David Jones Peck, MD: A Dream Denied," *Journal of the National Medical Association* Vol. 88 No. 9 (1996): 600-604.

National Library of Medicine, "Dr. Rebecca Lee Crumpler Biography," National Institute of

Health, 2013. <https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_73.html>.

Excerpt from Jim Downs, *Sick from Freedom: African-American Illness and Suffering during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): Introduction, Ch. 1, Ch. 2

**Week 6 Tuesday October 1st Black Health and Healthcare During the Civil War and Reconstruction**

Readings: Sick from Freedom Ch. 3-Conclusion

Primary Sources:

Records of the Freedmen's Bureau—Louisiana

[*https://www.freedmensbureau.com/louisiana/index.htm*](https://www.freedmensbureau.com/louisiana/index.htm)

*Freedmen's Bureau Work Contract* [*https://www.freedmensbureau.com/georgia/contracts/georgiacontract.htm*](https://www.freedmensbureau.com/georgia/contracts/georgiacontract.htm)

*Indentured Contract:*

[*https://www.freedmensbureau.com/northcarolina/ncindentures.htm*](https://www.freedmensbureau.com/northcarolina/ncindentures.htm)

**Week 7 October 8th: Black Medical Schools**

***Visit Archives: Amistad Research Center***

Readings:

Todd L. Savitt, “Straight University Medical Department: The Short Life of A Black Medical School in Reconstruction New Orleans,” *Louisiana History* 41 (2000), 175-201.

Todd L. Savitt, "Abraham Flexner and the Black Medical Schools," in Barbara M. Barzansky and Norman Gevitz, eds., *Flexner and the 1990s: Medical Education in the 20th Century* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1992), 65-81.

**Week 8 October 15th *Workshop on Digital History Project***

**Week 9 October 22nd The Black Hospital Movement**

Readings: Excerpts from Gamble, Vanessa Northington. *Making a Place for Ourselves: The Black Hospital Movement, 1920–1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995: Introduction, Ch. 1

Savitt, Todd L. "Entering a White Profession: Black Physicians in the New South, 1880-1920."

*Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. 61(4):507-40, 1987.

Susan L. Smith, Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired Ch. 1 (Black Club Women, Ch. 1)

Primary Sources:

Timeline of Black Hospitals 6873-6876

Black Hospital Listings 6893-6907

Black Hospitals: A Compilation of Available Statistics 1931 6916-6919

Report on First Five Years of Flint's Post Grad Program 2384-2401

Marcus Christian Collection, History of Flint 1776-1996

Woods Directory 1269

**Week 10 Tuesday October 29th Black Public Health**

Samuel K. Roberts, *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effects of Segregation* (UNC Press, 2009): Ch. 1 20-40, 68-86.

Susan L. Smith, Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired, Ch. 2 (National Negro Health Week 25 pages).

Primary Sources*:*

"Health Hazards of New Orleans" 1652-1669

Frederick Hoffman, "Race Traits and the Tendencies of the American Negro" (1896)

WEB DuBois, "The Health and Physique of the Negro American" (1906)

**Week 11 Tuesday November 5th Public Health and Segregation**

Readings:

Nightingale, Carl H. "The Transnational Context of Early Twentieth Century American Urban Segregation," 667-687

Colten, Craig, "Basin Street Blues: Drainage and Environmental Equity in New Orleans, 1890-1930," 237-253

Gamble, Making a Place, Conclusion (183-196)

Beardsley, Edward H. "Good-bye to Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Hospitals."

*Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. 60:367-86, 1986.

Emily Friedman, U.S. Hospitals and the Civil Rights Act of 1964

<https://www.hhnmag.com/articles/4179-u-s-hospitals-and-the-civil-rights-act-of-1964>

Primary Sources:

New Orleans Segregation Ordinance (1924)

New Orleans Comprehensive Plan (1929)

Study of Flint Goodridge by McLean, Murray (1955) 2402-2413

Future of Flint 1967 5617-5623

Expansion Report 1969 6018-6026

Flint Assessment 1972 5736-5749

Black Hospitals and Civil Rights: 6931-6933

**Week 12 Tuesday November 12th The Continued Healthcare Struggle**

Readings: Excerpt from Nelson, Alondra. *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011: Ch. 2-4

Primary Sources:

Sickle Cell Screen Program Flint 5404

Survival of Black Hospitals, Impact of Civil Rights *6935-6941*

Black Hospitals Their Prospects for Survival (1978) 7039-7044

**Week 13 Tuesday November 19th Health Care in the Age of Crisis**

Readings: David McBride, *Caring for Equality*: Ch. 6 & 7

"The Poisoned Generation"

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/the-poisoned-generation/527229/>

Primary Sources:

Timeline of Black Hospitals 6873-6876

Black Hospital Listings 6893-6907

Closings 6948-6949, 6958-6864,

Flint Goodridge Sold Articles 4773-4797

In Class: Watch and discuss documentary "Big Charity"

**Week 14 Tuesday November 26th Digital History Project Workshop**

**Week 15 Tuesday December 3rd Experiments, Exploitation, and Memory**

Readings: Vanessa Northington Gamble, "Under the Shadow of Tuskegee: African Americans and Health Care."

P.R. Lockhart, "New York just removed a statue of a surgeon who experimented on enslaved women," *Vox* April 18, 2018. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/4/18/17254234/j-marion-sims-experiments-slaves-women-gynecology-statue-removal>

Rodney G. Hood. "The 'Slave Health Deficit': The Case for Reparations to Bring Health Parity to African Americans," *Journal of the National Medical Association* Vol. 93, No. 1 (January 2001): 1-5.

**Presentation of Public History Projects**