



THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY  
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

MPH Program

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# History of Public Health

# General reading

General readings are posted on the course website. Most of the class-specific readings should be available on the eReserves website.

- David Arnold. 1993. *Colonizing the body. State medicine and epidemic disease in nineteenth century India*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.
- Frederick F. Cartwright. 1977. *A social history of medicine*. London and New York: Longman.
- John Duffy. 1990. *The sanitarians: a history of American public health*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Steven Feierman and John M. Janzen (eds.) 1992. *The social bases of health and healing in Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- J. N. Hays. 1998. *The burdens of disease. Epidemics and human response in Western history*. New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press.
- Ann. F. La Berge. 1992. *Mission and method. The early nineteenth century French public health movement*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Charles Leslie (ed.). 1976. *Asian medical systems*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Charles Leslie (ed.). 1992. *Paths to Asian medical knowledge*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- A. Hardy. 2001. *Health and medicine in Britain since 1860*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave.
- Mark Harrison. 1994. *Public health in British India: Anglo-Indian preventive medicine, 1859-1914*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Milton J. Lewis. 2003. *The people's health: public health in Australia, 1788-1950*. Westport, Conn. and London: Praeger.
- \* Deborah Lupton. 1995. *The imperative of health. Public health and the regulated body*. London and California: Sage. Especially Chs 1 and 2.
- Leonore Manderson. 1996. *Sickness and the state. Health and illness in colonial Malaya, 1870-1940*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- William H. McNeill. 1977. *Plagues and peoples*. New York: Doubleday.
- Alex Mercer. 1990. *Disease, mortality, and population in transition: epidemiological--demographic change in England since the eighteenth century as part of a global phenomenon*. Leicester, UK and New York: Leicester University Press.
- \* E. Perdiguero, J. Bernabeu, R. Huertas, E. Rodríguez-Ocaña. 2001. History of health, a valuable tool in public health. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, **55:9**, 667-73.
- \* D. Porter. 1993. *Public health*. In W. F. Bynum and R. Porter (eds.). *Companion encyclopedia of the history of medicine. Volume 2*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1231-1261.
- Dorothy Porter (ed.). 1994. *The history of public health and the modern state*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- \* Dorothy Porter. 1999. *Health, civilization, and the state: a history of public health from ancient to modern times*. London: Routledge.
- Roy Porter. 1997. *The greatest benefit to mankind*. London: Harper Collins. Ch 13 and 20.
- Kabita Ray. 1998. *History of public health: colonial Bengal 1921-1947*. K. P. Bagchi and Co.: Calcutta.
- \* George Rosen. 1993 (expanded edn.). *A history of public health*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Susan Gross Solomon and John F. Hutchinson. 1990. *Health and society in revolutionary Russia*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

## Introduction

You will all have your own definition of what public health is; each will be perfectly valid. One of the challenges of this course is for you to grasp how events and processes that took place in the past shape that definition. By developing an historical perspective to public health, hopefully you will be able to reinforce, revise, or debunk your definition. This lecture will provide an introduction to the history of modern public health in general and to the course in particular. We will touch here on public health in antiquity and the middle ages, leading up to the main focus of the course, the modern period. Recurrent themes in the history of public health will be highlighted, such as the relationship between humans and the environment, the role of urbanization, the shifting interpretation of disease causation, the significance of bacteriology, the changing epidemiological panorama, and the problems of measuring the impact of public health on the health status of the population.

### Recommended reading

- Ann. F. La Berge. 1992. *Mission and method. The early nineteenth century French public health movement*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch 1.
- Deborah Lupton. 1995. *The imperative of health. Public health and the regulated body*. London and California: Sage. Ch 1.
- T. McKeown. 1979. *The role of medicine: dream, mirage or nemesis?* Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.
- James C. Riley. 2001. *Rising life expectancy: a global history*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Especially Ch 2.
- Abdel Omran. 1971. 'The epidemiological transition: a theory of the epidemiology of population change,' *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, **49**, 509-38.
- Theodore Tulchinsky and Elena A. Varikova. 2000. *The new public health. An introduction for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. New York: Academic Press. Ch 1.

## Quarantine

Quarantine is a public health policy that can be traced to the Black Death of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Towns and cities developed systems of quarantine to isolated travelers and merchandise that came from places known to be infected. Other urban authorities would erect a *cordon sanitaire* through which individuals could only pass with permission. These forms of control were maintained well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the face of cholera epidemics. As such, they illustrate a number of significant issues in the history of public health. Did the historical priority for public health lie in the protection of people or the protection of trade? What alternatives were there to quarantine? How did quarantine affect the relationship between different parts of the globe, such as Western Europe and Asia, and what was the impact on international co-operation in public health? What does quarantine tell us about traditional notions of person-to-person disease transmission? Did a public health policy such as quarantine shift the blame for an epidemic on to non-indigenous or migrant populations?

#### Recommended reading

- David Arnold. 1993. *Colonizing the body. State medicine and epidemic disease in nineteenth century India*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. Chs 4 and 5.
- Peter Baldwin. 1999. *Contagion and the state in Europe, 1830-1930*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch 2.
- Ann G. Carmichael. 1998. 'Epidemics and state medicine in Fifteenth-Century Milan'. In Roger French et al (eds.). *Medicine from the Black Death to the French Disease*. Aldershot UK: Ashgate, 221-47.
- Carlo M. Cipolla. 1992. *Miasmas and disease: public health and the environment in the pre-industrial age*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Carlo M. Cipolla. 1981. *Fighting the plague in seventeenth-century Italy*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Howard Markel. 1995. 'Knocking out the cholera': cholera, class, and quarantines in New York City, 1892', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, **69:3**, 420-457.
- Guenter B. Risse. 1988. 'Epidemics and history: ecological perspectives and social responses', in Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox (eds.). *Aids: the burdens of history*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 33-66.  
Online version at: <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft7t1nb59n>
- Slack, P. 1985. *The impact of plague in Tudor and Stuart England*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

## The Sanitary Idea

The second quarter of the nineteenth century is widely regarded as the period in which 'state medicine' came of age. Originating in western Europe and inextricably linked with the name of the British lawyer Edwin Chadwick, the basis of the 'sanitary idea' was the creation of a central public health administration which directed local authorities in the provision of drains, sewers, street cleaning and the environmental regulation of housing, nuisances and offensive trades. This lecture will seek to describe the Enlightenment origins and key elements of this public health movement. In particular, your attention will be drawn to the following features: Why was medicine marginalized in this model of public health management? On what mode(s) of disease causation was the 'sanitary idea' based? Was the 'sanitary idea' exported to other nations and other continents and, if so, with what consequences?

#### Recommended reading

- Christopher Hamlin. 1997. *Public health and social justice in the age of Chadwick*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Christopher Hamlin. 1992. 'Predisposing causes and public health in early nineteenth century medical thought', *Social History of Medicine*, **5:1**, 43-70.
- Mark Harrison. 1994. *Public health in British India: Anglo-Indian preventive medicine 1859-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chs 7 and 8.
- Dorothy Porter. 1999. *Health, civilization, and the state: a history of public health from ancient to modern times*. London: Routledge. Part 2.
- Simon R. S. Szreter. 1988. 'The importance of social intervention in Britain's mortality decline c. 1850-1914: a re-interpretation of the role of public health,' *Social History of Medicine*, **1:1**, 1-37.

## World of work

As we observed in an earlier lecture, quarantine implies that the movement of goods and people can carry dangers to the public health and therefore require surveillance. This lecture will turn to other forms of public health surveillance, in other words the monitoring and management of individuals or groups who either have an infectious disease or are suspected of having one. In today's public health world, disease surveillance is associated with a set of sophisticated information technologies that facilitate a rapid-response system to disease outbreaks. There are also in existence—or are in the process of being set up—surveillance systems that monitor, for example, hospital-related infections and the trans-national movements of tubercular patients. This and the subsequent class ask a number of related questions. What does society require of disease surveillance? How did the close management and control of diseased individuals come to be an accepted form of public health intervention? How did infectious disease surveillance operate in a non-technological world? What does public health surveillance tell us about the societies that implement it? What have been the socio-medical costs and benefits of the development of surveillance systems?

Places of work are environments loaded with health risks, from occupational accidents on the one hand to the handling of hazardous materials on the other. This lecture sketches out how occupational health, the regulation of the workplace, and the medical inspection of school children, became legitimate fields of concern for public health.

### Recommended reading

- Allison L. Hepler. 2000. *Women in labor: mothers, medicine, and occupational health in the United States, 1890-1980*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. Ch 3.
- Bartrip, Peter W. J. 2002. *The Home Office and the dangerous trades: regulating occupational disease in Victorian and Edwardian Britain*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi.
- F. La Berge. 1992. *Mission and method. The early nineteenth century French public health movement*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch 5.
- Harrison, Barbara. 1995. The politics of occupational ill-health in late nineteenth century Britain: the case of the match making industry. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, **17:1**, 20-41.
- Harrison, Barbara. 1996. *Not only the 'dangerous trades': women's work and health in Britain, 1880-1914*. London and Bristol, P.A.: Taylor & Francis.
- Holdsworth, Clare. 1998. Dr Thomas Arlidge and Victorian occupational medicine. *Medical History*, **42:4**, 458-475.
- Leonore Manderson. 1996. *Sickness and the state. Health and illness in colonial Malaya, 1870-1940*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch 6.
- McCulloch, Jock. 2002. *Asbestos blues: labour, capital, physicians and the state in South Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Randall M. Packard. 1989. *White plague, black labor: tuberculosis and the political economy of health and disease in South Africa*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. Especially Chs 3 to 6.
- Reich, Michael R., and Goldman, Rose H. 1984. Italian occupational health: concepts, conflicts, implications. *American Journal of Public Health*, **74**, 1031-1041.
- Weindling, Paul (ed.). 1986. *The social history of occupational health*. London and Dover N.H.: Croom Helm.

## Education and mothering

As we observed in the lecture on quarantine, ideas about controlling infected individuals were not new to the nineteenth century, but it was in the modern period that health authorities turned their attention as much to individuals as to the public environment. This class will consider the development of two key areas of public health policy that focused on the health management of individuals in the domestic sphere: education and maternal health. Emphasis here will be placed on how these policies interacted with earlier environmental reforms, the rise of bacteriology, and the collection of statistics and information.

### Recommended reading

- Rima D. Apple. 1987. *Mothers and medicine: a social history of infant feeding, 1890-1950*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.
- David Armstrong. 1993. 'Public health spaces and the fabrication of identity', *Sociology*, **27**, 393-410
- Anna Davin. 1978. 'Imperialism and motherhood', *History Workshop*, **5**, 9-65.
- Bernard Harris. 1995. *The health of the schoolchild: a history of the school medical service in England and Wales*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Leonore Manderson. 1996. *Sickness and the state. Health and illness in colonial Malaya, 1870-1940*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, especially Ch 7, 'Domestic lives: reproduction, the mother and the child', pp. 201-229.
- Graham Mooney. 1999. 'Public health versus private practice: the contested development of infectious disease notification in late nineteenth century Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, **73:2**, 238-67.
- Francis B. Smith. 1979. *The people's health*. New York: Holmes and Meier. Ch 2.
- Nancy Tomes. 1998. *The gospel of germs: men, women, and the microbe in American life*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- John Woodward. 1995. 'The school medical officer before the school medical service; England and Wales, 1850-1908'. In John Woodward and Robert Jütte (eds.). *Coping with sickness*. Sheffield: European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications, pp. 121-146.

## Body spaces: from inoculation to immunization

With no known naturally occurring cases of the disease since 1977, smallpox has been globally eradicated. It is one of *the* most tangible 'successes' for public health. The lecture will provide an overview of the epidemiological significance of smallpox and the role played by immunization in causing mortality from this disfiguring disease to fall. Tracing backwards the steps of this 'triumph', we can in fact see that smallpox immunization has a complicated and contentious history that illustrates the problems that can arise when a public health intervention seeks to penetrate the body itself. Our focus will therefore turn to the popular protests that were made in objection to vaccination in the nineteenth century, and parallels will be drawn with current controversies surrounding the use of MMR vaccines for children.

### Recommended reading

- David Arnold. 1993. *Colonizing the body. State medicine and epidemic disease in nineteenth century India*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press. Ch 3.
- Sanjoy Bhattacharya. 2001. 'Redevising Jennerian vaccines?: European technologies, Indian innovation and the control of smallpox in South Asia, 1850-1950', in Biswamoy Pati and Mark Harrison (eds.), *Health, medicine and empire: perspectives on colonial India*. London: Sangam Books, pp. 217-69.
- Nadja Durbach. 2000. "'They might as well brand us": working-class resistance to compulsory vaccination in Victorian England', *Social History of Medicine*, **13:1**, 45-62.
- Paul Greenough. 1995. 'Intimidation, coercion and resistance in the final stages of the South Asian smallpox eradication campaign, 1973-1975', *Social Science and Medicine*, **41:5**, 633-45.
- Donald R. Hopkins. 1983. *Princes and peasants: smallpox in history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Anne Hardy. 1993. *The epidemic streets: infectious disease and the rise of preventive medicine 1856-1900*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Ch 5.
- C. R. Howard. 2003. 'The impact on public health of the 19th century anti-vaccination movement', *Microbiology Today*, **30**, 22-24.
- Dorothy Porter and Roy Porter. 1988. 'The politics of prevention: anti-vaccinationism and public health in nineteenth century England', *Medical History*, **32**, 231-52.
- Pieter H. Streefland. 2001. 'Public doubts about vaccination safety and resistance against vaccination', *Health Policy*, **55**, 159-72.
- R. M. Wolfe and L. K. Sharp. 2002. 'Anti-vaccinationists past and present', *British Medical Journal*, **325**, 430-32.

## Professionalization and expertise

So, how come you are here? This class considers the importance of professionalization and expertise in cementing—or otherwise—public health's place in the field of medicine.

### Recommended reading

- Robert Beaglehole and Ruth Bonita. 1997. *Public health at the crossroads: achievements and prospects*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Elizabeth Fee. 1987. *Disease and discovery: a history of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, 1916-39*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Elizabeth Fee and Roy Acheson (eds.). 1991. *The history of education in public health. Health that mocks the doctors' rules*. Oxford: Oxford Medical Publications. Ch 1 and Ch 9.
- Kristine M. Gebbie, Linda Rosenstock, and Lyla M. Hernandez. 2002. *Who will keep the public healthy? Educating public health professionals for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Washington DC: National Academic Press.
- Ann. F. La Berge. 1992. *Mission and method. The early nineteenth century French public health movement*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Ch 8.
- Jane Lewis. 1986. *What price community medicine? The philosophy, practice and politics of public health since 1919*. Brighton, UK: Wheatsheaf Books. Introduction.
- Deborah Lupton. 1995. *The imperative of health. Public health and the regulated body*. London and California: Sage. Ch 2.
- Graham Mooney. 1997. 'Professionalisation in public health and the measurement of sanitary progress', *Social History of Medicine*. 10:1, 53-78.

- R. K. Mutatkar. 1995. 'Public health problems of urbanization,' *Social Science and Medicine*, **41:7**, 977-81.
- Alan Petersen. 1996. 'The "healthy" city, expertise, and the regulation of space,' *Health and Place*, **2:3**, 157-65.