SCIENCE, MEDICINE AND SOCIETY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

Center of Latin American and Caribbean Studies.
New York University
53 Washington Square South, 4W
New York, NY 10012
Office: (212) 998-8685
FAX: (212) 995-4163

Visiting Professor: Marcos Cueto

This graduate seminar that will deal with the origins and spread of western science, medicine and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean. Discussions will emphasize the reception, adaptation, response and hybridization of knowledge by local cultures and elites. The course will also seek: to compare Latin America with other regions of the “third world”, to examine the social and cultural contexts in which medical ideas and practices have evolved; to study the use of science and medicine by empires; to analyze the role played by nationalistic ideologies and by the State, and to evaluate scientific and technical change from the perspective of the so-called periphery. The course will be based in historical and anthropological readings. Readings include a consideration of various models and theories concerning the relationship that was established between science in western centers (the metropolis) and in what became colonies and other economic and political dependencies. Special attention will be given to the notions of cultural diffusion, dependency, colonialism, imperialism, and resistance. The course runs on Wednesdays between 6:10 and 8:10 pm.

ASSESSMENT

Evaluation will be as follows: (1) review reading assignments in brief but critical (1-page) weekly papers, which will provide the basis for your contributions to discussion (2) make at least one presentation, based on a 10-page paper to be handed in during the term (3) submit a 20-page paper by the end of the term.

Students must choose a research subject for their semester work that can either be an in-depth study in the history of science, technology or medicine in Latin America in a certain country or a cross-country discussion in a relevant issue. Students must hand in and discuss with the teacher an outline of the paper before the Spring break.

There will be no incompletes on this course. If you are having trouble meeting deadlines, speak to us as soon as possible.

TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

The prescribed books are:


Nancy Leys Stepan. The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender and Nation in Latin America. Itaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991

The readings for each week should also be consulted. The attached bibliography contains references that should assist you in your research work for this course and elsewhere.

Week One. 17 January.

Visions of science and development. Diffusion, periphery, imperialism and adversity.


Week Two. 24 January.
Precolumbian traditions


Week Three. 31 January.

Colonial Science and Medicine.


Angela T. Thompson, “To save the children: smallpox inoculation, vaccination, and public health in Guanajuato, Mexico, 1797-1840” The Americas XLIX 4 (1993): 431-455


Cooper, Donald. Epidemic Disease in Mexico City Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1965.

Week Four. 7 February.

Continuities and discontinuities during the early 19th CENTURY


**Week Five. 14 February.**

**National and popular traditions in the 19th century**


**Week Six. 21 February.**

**Tropical Medicine in the Americas**


**Week Seven. 28 February.**

**National Traditions in Science**


Week Eight. 7 March

**Medicine and the Rockefeller Foundation**


Birn, Anne-Emmanuelle and Armando Solorzano “Public health policy paradoxes: science and politics in the Rockefeller Foundation’s hookworm campaign in Mexico in the 1920s Social Science and Medicine 49 (1999): 1197-1213


14 March. Spring Break.

Week Nine. 21 March.

**Science, Agriculture and the Rockefeller Foundation**


Week Ten. 28 March.

Popular traditions of science and medicine


Week Eleven. 4 April.

Social Control, Gender and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Teresa Mead, Cultural Imperialism in old republic rio de janeiro The Urban renewal and public health project in teresa mead and mark walker (eds,) science, medicine and cultural imperialism (New York: St. Martin Press, 1991): 95-119.


Week Twelve. 11 April.

Science and the State

Hebe Vessuri, “The Universities, scientific research and the national interest in Latin America,” Minerva 24 (1986): 1-38


Jacqueline Fortes and Larissa Lomintz. Becoming a scientists in Mexico, the challenge of creating a scientific community in an underdeveloped country (University Park, PA Penn State University Press, 1994.

Week Thirteen. 18 April.

AIDS, popular perceptions of disease and health policies


Week Fourteen. 25 April

Present and future challenges


