This class examines the changing place of medicine in the long history of modernity. Focusing on key moments – the birth of the clinic, the colonial frontier, where biomedicine met its therapeutic “others,” the consolidation of medicine as self-governing profession, and the age of genomics and biocapital – it explores the distinctive role of medical knowledge in the making of modernist persons, identities, and social worlds. Readings are drawn from across the social sciences, with material from Africa, Europe, and North America. Part lecture, part discussion, the class will be open to upper-level undergraduates and graduates.

**Course Requirements:** Everyone in the class must do an in-class midterm, which will require answering two short questions, chosen out of four. In addition, students may either write one long research paper (about 15 pages, on a topic to be approved by the instructor) or take an in-class final examination (two questions out of six). Students are expected to come to class ready to raise questions about the assigned readings. Class presence/participation will count for 10% of the overall grade, the midterm for 30% and the final exam or paper, 60%.

**Books ordered at the Coop:**

- Foucault, M. 1975 *The Birth of the Clinic*. Vintage Books
- Thomas, K. 1986 Religion and the Decline of Magic. Scribner’s
**January 29**  
*In what sense is ‘medicine’ a universal category?*


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**February 5**  
*Witchcraft, healing, and moral order*


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**February 12**  
*Healing, ritual, and social reproduction*


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**February 19**  
*Magic and the body politic*


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**February 26**  
*Knowledge on the slab/ the birth of biopolitics*


**March 5 Medicine and Metaphor**


**Bio-Medicine and the Sociology of Health in the Modern West**

**March 12 The Quintessential Profession?**


March 16 - March 24 Spring Recess

**March 26 Madness in the Age of Reason**

Foucault, M. 1976 Mental Illness and Psychology. Harper


**Medicine and the Anatomy of Neoliberalism**

**April 2 Medicine and Biocapital**


APRIL 9  SEXUAL, RACE, BIOPOLITICS (1)


APRIL 16  SEX, RACE, BIOPOLITICS (2)


APRIL 23  MEDICINE, IMPERIALISM, AND THE AGE OF GLOBAL HEALTH


APRIL 30  EP(EDEM)IC INTERVENTIONS AND STATES OF EMERGENCY


IN-CLASS FINAL: MAY X
RESEARCH PAPERS DUE BY 5:00 PM IN AAAS ON MAY 16