

2008

Houston History of Medicine Society 2008-2009 Schedule and Abstracts

Houston History of Medicine Society

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HOUSTON HISTORY OF MEDICINE SOCIETY

www.hhom.org

2008-2009 Schedule & Abstracts

1st Wednesday each month

Onstead Auditorium

2008

September 3 – **Stephen B. Greenberg, M.D.**, Professor of Medicine, Herman Brown Teaching Professor and Senior Vice President and Dean of Medical Education at Baylor College of Medicine. He has been Chief of Medicine at Ben Taub General Hospital since 1990.

The National Library of Medicine and the Continuing Legacy of Michael E. DeBakey, M.D.

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) has had several influential leaders during the 19th and 20th centuries. John Shaw Billings, M.D. and William Osler, M.D. were instrumental in the development of the Surgeon General's Library (the Army Medical Library) and subsequent growth of the library. During the 1940's, 50's, and 60's, Dr. Michael E. DeBakey was an ardent supporter of the Army Medical Library and its conversion to a civilian run National Medical Library. His efforts with key congressional committees led to appropriations for a new NLM building at NIH and the development of a Regional Medical Library system throughout the country. Because of his leadership, the NLM has become the largest medical library in the world and the leading advocate for global dissemination of medical information to both the medical profession as well as to the public.

October 1 – **Robert E. Rakel, M.D.** Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine

The Legacy of William Osler: North America's most famous physician

William Osler is the quintessential physician of our time who had an extraordinary personality, a facile wit, a bibliophilic spirit, and a philosophy of life that permitted him to envision and achieve remarkable goals. Born in Bond Head, Ontario, he survived a tumultuous childhood to become a great teacher of medicine at McGill, the University of Pennsylvania, and Johns Hopkins where he wrote *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, the textbook that made him the best known physician in the English-speaking world. In 1905, at the peak of his fame and under considerable stress from the burdens of teaching and practice, he moved to Oxford, England as the Regius Professor Medicine where he remained until his death in 1919. He continues to be a role model for physicians throughout the world.

November 5

Annual David M. Mumford presentation on the History and Ideals of Medicine

Linda Gray Kelley, Charlton, MA

A LADY ALONE: Elizabeth Blackwell:

First American Woman Doctor

(A one-hour, one-actor play)

When Elizabeth Blackwell applied to medical schools in 1847, she received rejection after rejection, 17 of them in fact. One school, Geneva Medical College in New York considered her application a prank and put her admission to a vote of the male student body. They voted approval, hoping to anger the school's administration, which had passed off the responsibility of saying no. She went on to graduate at the top of her class and founded the New York Infirmary of Women and Children when other hospitals would not accept her as a doctor. The N.Y. Infirmary sponsored a medical school for women that later became incorporated into Cornell Medical School. In 1869 she moved to England and helped establish the London Medical School for Women, the first British medical school for women. Blackwell became interested in medicine after a close friend who was dying suggested she would have been spared her worst suffering if her physician had been a woman.

The play was written by N. Lynn Eckhert, M.D., director of academic programs for Harvard Medical International. This play is brought to life by Linda Gray Kelley who has performed in professional theatre for over 30 years and now heads her own Production Company, Theatre Rising. She also performs “Women of the Bible: The Good Girls and the Bad Girls” about Old Testament women and “Women of the Gospel” about women of the New Testament.

December 3 – **Frank C. Arnett, M.D.** Professor and Elizabeth Bidgood Chair in Rheumatology, University of Texas Health Science Center Houston.

**A Mariner with Crippling Arthritis and Bleeding Eyes:
The Chronic Arthritis of Christopher Columbus**

This presentation will be in the form of a Clinico-Pathological Conference (CPC) which was given formally at The University of Maryland in 2006. It concerns the illness and death of a supposed unknown mariner who clearly is Christopher Columbus. Based on historical records, the patient’s medical history will be presented. The clinician will then develop a differential diagnosis for the type of arthritis from which Columbus suffered and then present the most likely cause and reasons explaining the medical history. There also will be discussion of some of the controversies surrounding the origin of Columbus based on data presented by two eminent historical scholars. This entire discussion has been published in the following reference: Arnett FC, Merrill C, Albardaner F, Mackowiak PA. A mariner with crippling arthritis and bleeding eyes. *Amer J Med Sci* 2006;332 (3):123-130.

2009

January 7 – **Student Essay Contest winners**

First Place: Priti Dangayach

Priti Dangayach is a 2nd year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine. As a native Houstonian, Priti graduated Cum Laude from Rice University with a bachelor of arts in Anthropology. Her interest in caffeine began with her research project on the kinetics of caffeine extraction. Her hobbies include painting, writing and traveling.

Generation C(affeine): A History of Caffeine Consumption and its Medical Implications

Not surprising to most of us, caffeine is the most widely consumed physiologically active substance worldwide. Before its dissemination via trade, the use of this drug was restricted to a few disperse geographic regions. Though initially met with resistance, caffeine is now widely accepted and consumed unchecked.

While medical authorities have attributed much ill-health to the consumption of tea and coffee, scientific interest in this topic has wavered over the years. Concern regarding the health implications of caffeine has been raised as new research shed light on caffeine's effects on the cardiovascular, renal, nervous and gastrointestinal systems. In part, this concern is based on the notion that if caffeine is truly harmful to health, then the cumulative consequences of this socially accepted drug could be tremendous.

This talk explores the history of caffeine consumption across societies, its globalization and impact on the global consumption, and the medical implications surrounding its current use.

Second Place: Philip Boone

Philip Boone is a second-year student. As a (temporary) undergraduate history minor, he wrote papers on Patrice Lumumba, World War I and the Confederate Patent Office. A member of the MD/PhD program, he will begin his PhD work in the genetics department in the fall.

Our Artificial Fitness? Relaxed Selection Leads to Medical Dependence

2) Medical treatments abound. Though disease still rules the lives of many, this is arguably the best time in history to get sick. Myriad treatments allow longer, more comfortable lives, and in some cases may enhance an individual's reproductive fitness. In the case of an individual with a heritable disorder, a medical treatment which enhances fitness may lead to more copies of all of the individual's genes being passed on, including the "disease genes" responsible for the disorder. Extending this scenario to an entire population suggests that the treatment of heritable disorders may increase their prevalence, perpetuating the need for medical intervention to combat them. This paper 1) investigates more fully the theoretical basis for why this situation may occur, 2) provides some evidence that it has occurred in the recent past and continues to do so, 3) describes, in a historical context, thinking on this topic, and 4) provides some historical and modern conceptions of the implications of this modern-day human evolution.

Bryant Boutwell, Dr.P.H., Associate Vice President for Accreditation and International Programs at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and the John P. McGovern, M.D., Professor of Oslerian Medicine at The University of Texas Medical School Houston. A colleague and personal friend of Dr. McGovern's, he delivered one of two eulogies at Dr. McGovern's memorial service held in Houston, Texas on June 7, 2007.

Remembering John P. McGovern, M.D. (1921-2007)

The loss of John P. McGovern on May 31, 2007 was a loss felt around the world. He was an extraordinary physician/scientist who dedicated a lifetime to community service and helping others. He was a gentle soul who cared deeply about health care, education, and above all, the Oslerian traditions of treating the person, not just the disease. Given his founding role in the American Osler Society's history and love of all things Oslerian, this talk represents a timely and personal reflection regarding the author's mentor and friend. For over a decade the author was a privileged listener to this unique individual who has been described by many as a true Renaissance man. He lived a life that paralleled the many wonderful attributes of professionalism that Sir William Osler taught through example. This talk will explore those parallels and provide an insider's look at Dr. McGovern that illustrates a unique and giving life. To understand the many dimensions of John P. McGovern is to understand the very spirit of scholarship, humanism, and mentorship that are to this day core attributes of professionalism in medicine.

February 4 – **Bryant Boutwell, Dr.P.H.** John P. McGovern, M.D. Professor of Oslerian Medicine, Associate Vice President for Accreditation and International Programs
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

Who Was Albert Schweitzer?

Who was Albert Schweitzer? He was a biblical scholar and minister, a musician, a physician. Above all, he was a humanist with a "Reverence for Life" that won him a

Nobel Prize in 1952. This talk will explore the background of Albert Schweitzer and his life's journey from Kaiserberg to Berlin and Paris to the remote jungles of Gabon, Africa. We will explore transitional points in his life that defined his legacy. Moreover, we'll compare his practiced habits of daily living to Sir William Osler, the great Canadian/American physician who had much in common with Dr. Schweitzer. Comparing the positive attributes of Osler and Schweitzer should provide a timeless and valuable exercise in better understanding the meaning of humanism and professionalism in medicine.

March 4 – **Thomas R. Cole**, PhD McGovern Chair in Medical Humanities, UT Health Science Center Houston

Disease, Doctors and the Duty to Treat in American History

The rise of epidemics in America has typically occasioned a courageous, if somewhat conflicted response from physicians and the general public alike. Consistently, physicians have largely responded to epidemics with a recognition of a duty to assist. In the eyes of the general public, however, the duty to treat has been tempered by the physician's *ability* to treat, as seen in the public resistance to quarantine measures which were thought ineffective. This paper will explore the interplay of these two themes through four great American epidemic episodes: The Yellow Fever outbreak of 1793; the Cholera epidemics of the mid-nineteenth century; the Influenza outbreak of 1918; and the ongoing AIDS crisis.

April 1 – **Dayle B. Delancey, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, Institute for the Medical Humanities at UTMB

Vaccinating Freedom: The African-American Experience of Smallpox Prophylaxis in Old Philadelphia, 1723-1923

From early childhood immunization, to influenza and pneumonia prophylaxes for the elderly, African-American vaccination rates lag so far behind those of other 'racial' and ethnic groups as to be a special source of concern and study for the Centers for Disease

Control. To explain this “vaccine gap,” medical researchers and clinicians alike assert that Black Americans’ current vaccination behaviors are the contemporary expression of a historical phenomenon. And yet, historians have devoted little attention to African-American experiences of vaccination and vaccination campaigns. This paper seeks to redress that gap. Focusing upon Black Philadelphians, who from the eighteenth century through the early twentieth century comprised the largest African-American community in the northern United States, this paper explores the Black experience of smallpox inoculation and vaccination. Giving special attention to the ways in which Black Philadelphians themselves wrote and spoke about smallpox inoculation and vaccination from the 1720s, when smallpox inoculation arrived in Philadelphia, through 1923, the year of the city’s last smallpox epidemic, the paper reconstructs an environment in which African Americans not only sought access to and control over smallpox prophylaxis, but also equated doing so with freedom, good citizenship, intellectual sophistication, and social autonomy.

May 6 – **David A. Sears, M.D.**, Professor Emeritus, Hematology – Oncology, Baylor College of Medicine

The Royal Hemophilia

Queen Victoria was a carrier of the hemophilia gene. Intermarriage among the royal families of Europe led to occurrence of the disease among the elite of several countries. Nowhere did it influence the course of history more than in imperial Russia where Tsar Nicholas II and his German wife, Alexandra, rejoiced when they finally had an heir to the throne after four daughters, only to discover that he was afflicted with the severe bleeding disorder. The disease in little Alexei affected the Russian revolution, partly accounting for the influence of the strange Siberian monk, Rasputin. His story and the possibility that daughter Anastasia escaped murder with the rest of the family have been the subject of books and movies. Not until recent years did discovered remains and DNA studies give us what may be the final answers.