

Course of Study:

Any History or Social Science Course – World History, US History, Government, Sociology, or Economics

Unit:

May vary according to teacher needs and curricular goals

Topic:

An Historical View on the Doctor and Medicine – How the view of each informs the debate over health care

Vital Theme(s):

Civilization, cultural diffusion and innovation: The evolution of human skills and the means of exerting power over nature and people. The rise, interaction, and decline of successive centers of such skills and power. The cultural flowering of major civilizations in the arts, literature, and thought. The role of social, religious, and political patronage of the arts and learning. The importance of the city in different eras and places.

Human interaction with the environment: The relationships among geography, technology, and culture, and their effects on economic, social, and political developments. The choices made possible by climate, resources, and location, and the effect of culture and human values on such choices. The gains and losses of technological change. The central role of agriculture. The effect of disease, and disease-fighting, on plants, animals, and human beings.

“Vital Themes and Narratives,” *Building a United States History Curriculum*. Westlake, OH: National Council for History Education, 2005, pp. 10-11.

Lesson:

Using primary sources to understand the view (both positive and negative) of doctors and medicine and how effects the on-going debate over health care

Rationale for lesson and the use of *Vital Themes*:

A study of medicine and doctors through the lenses of **Civilization, cultural diffusion and innovation** and **Human interaction with the environment** will present students with the opportunity to understand the impact competing historical views of both informs the on-gong debate over the proper level of health care. The over-arching goal of the lesson is for students to acquire the reasoned judgment that the historical perspective provides.

This lesson allows teachers the flexibility to use several unique primary sources in *Lapham's Quarterly* to best suit the needs of their students. Students will debate with themselves and others over the impact of opposing viewpoints and read widely and critically to find evidence to support their argument and/or evidence of the viewpoint within the current debate. This lesson can be a part of a much larger look at the issue from the various social sciences such as economics.

Student Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Understand geography as a matrix of time and place
- Evaluate and analyze primary source documents and use those documents as evidence
- Develop an historical perspective on the issue of medicine and doctors
- Research the current health care debate in order to better understand the current debate over appropriate levels of health care in our society

Benefits for Teachers:

- Flexibility to meet curricular demands while teaching students the skills necessary to be historians, rather than passive recipients of information
- Challenge students to find evidence to support their position in a debate
- Challenge students to take a stand in a debate

History's Habits of the Mind:

- Understand the significance of the past to their own lives, both public and private, and to their society
- Acquire at one and the same time a comprehension of diverse cultures and of shared humanity
- Appreciate the often tentative nature of judgments about the past, and avoid the temptation to seize upon particular “lessons” of history as cures for present ills
- Understand the relationship between geography and history as a matrix of time and place, and as a context for events
- Read widely and critically in order to recognize the difference between fact and conjecture, between evidence and assertion, and thereby to frame useful questions

“History’s Habits of the Mind,” *Building a United States History Curriculum*. Westlake, OH: National Council for History Education, 2005, p. 9.

Materials:

- Any document found in the *Medicine* issue of *Lapham’s Quarterly* or on the *Lapham’s Quarterly* website.
 - Some suggested documents and quotes include:
 - 2000: *Key West* – Barbara Ehrenreich confronts the enemy (p. 21)
 - 1964 – quote by Anthony Burgess (p. 28)
 - 1914: *Lambarene: Albert Schweitzer stormed by mosquitoes* (p. 32)
 - 1889: *Collecting Symptoms* – Jerome K. Jerome (p. 36)
 - c. 600 – quote by Alexander of Tralles (p. 39)
 - 1952 – quote by W. Russell Brain (p. 46)
 - 1969 – quote from Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (p. 77)
 - Some suggested images include:
 - 1966 – *Doctors line the hall of a New Jersey laboratory* (p. 29)
 - 1926: *Ubaldo Oppl – Three Surgeons* (p. 36)
 - *Vital Signs: The Modern American Hospital* (p. 45)
 - *Stained glass in the church at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, London* (p. 51)
- ADAPT, Written analysis sheets, and/or Image analysis sheets
- Lab journal directions (if necessary)

Lesson Activities:***Prerequisites:***

- An understanding of the above *Vital Themes*
- A general understanding of the health care debate

Motivation for Student Learning:

Open lesson with a brainstorming activity where students use adjectives to describe doctors and then hospitals. Once list is on the board, have class divide impressions into positive and negative categories. Allow a discussion on reasons for dichotomy. End discussion with a review of the historical perspective and the practice of historians to remind students of their obligations in a history class. A discussion of the relevant *Habits of Mind* would assist in this case.

Activity / Application:

- In small groups or individually, students should have the opportunity to examine any number of the teacher-selected documents (both images and text).

- As students analyze the documents, students should determine whether the image of doctors/medicine presented is positive or negative.

Students could either answer in essay format or use some form of chart or Venn diagram to record their answers.

Assessment:

Students should create an annotated timeline of the documents and images reviewed. Either as a class or follow-up assignment, students should determine if the view of doctors/medicine has changed over time or stayed relatively consistent. If changed, how has it changed and speculate as to why that might be the case.

Alternate Assessments:

Comprehension: Have students choose any document from *Lapham's Quarterly* or the *Quarterly's* website that was not included in the original set of documents. Students should complete an analysis of the chosen document and place it on their annotated timeline.

Analysis and comprehension: Have students complete a lab journal based on one of the *Habits of Mind*. The lab journal allows students to explore not only the topic but also how the historical perspective contributes to their own understanding.

Further research: Based on their readings in the lesson as well as additional research, have students write a position paper on the health care debate. Teachers may want to have students focus in particular on the changing nature of the public's view of doctors and medicine and how that informs the current debate.