



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion

Date:
25.10.2011

Call for papers

The Tenth Bergen Workshop on the History of Health and Medicine

March 22nd and 23rd 2012
University of Bergen

Medical history past, present and future in local, transnational and international settings

The research group Health, welfare and science history at Department of Archeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion (AHKR), University of Bergen/Uni Rokkan Centre is pleased to invite you to attend the tenth Bergen workshop on the history of health and medicine.

The workshop aims at focusing upon the ways in which we conceive the history of health and medicine as on the one hand taking place in specific geographical settings, on the other hand as continuously transgressing both geographical and also disciplinary boundaries. In addition, we would like to use the Bergen workshop's ten-year anniversary to engage in the ongoing debate in several countries over the future of the history of health and medicine. When the local organizers of the Bergen workshop started in 2003, public health and preventive medicine 1800-2000 were conceived main issues – but what are the important issues of the past as seen from 2012? Are the important issues the same in all geographical settings and to all relevant disciplines?

Session One: From local histories to synthesis or general history?

Local history is history related to a specific place or, in our context, to a specific institution or a phenomenon in a specific place. At the Bergen workshop, numerous local histories have been told – be it of institutions or practises – and have they made any of us any wiser? What is there to learn – for researchers and for a general audience – from local medical/health history – and how to make use of it? We invite papers that investigate local and localized histories and their uses as empirical, methodological, theoretical or historiographical studies – and in particular, we invite papers that make connections between local studies and wider contexts.

Session Two: Transnational and international border-crossings

Geo-political borders have a special position within the history of health and medicine; among other things they have made way for important studies of contagion and policies to stop contagion. Not only microbes, though, but also new medical techniques and technologies, useful (or harmful) drugs and models of health policies have crossed the selfsame borders - as have cultures and ways of understanding sickness and health. Medicine itself holds an ambiguous position; in the benefit of mankind it has spoken for closed as well as open borders. Traffic across borders has thus been conceived both as dangerous and beneficial to human beings, and borders have been crossed, closed and opened accordingly. In this session we encourage papers that focus upon the role of borders in medicine, health and health policies – be it at a practical or a more symbolic level.

Session Three: The future of medical- and health history

In recent years there have been several claims about the end of medical history – in particular that of the social history of medicine. The predictions are quite similar to those made about history as a discipline in the 1980s – at that time some authors vigorously argued the discipline was confined to the death-bed. But do medical historians and the history of health and medicine belong to the past? If not, what do we actually try to do with our histories? Are some ways of doing history “out” while others are “in” – and if so, why? We invite papers on all or some of these issues, and the papers presented will be followed by a round-table discussion.

Each speaker will be given 20-30 minutes to present a paper. **Abstracts of no more than 300 words must be submitted by December 1st, 2011 to astri.andresen@ahkr.uib.no**

There is no conference fee, but participants will have to cover travel expenses and accommodation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to use electronic mail (see above) to contact us.