Adventures in Librarianship and Interdisciplinary Education

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Mycobacterium tuberculosis Bacteria, the Cause of TB. National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Wikimedia Commons, 2012.
Overview

• Integrating ACRL’s Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education

• *Microbes Rule The World: Effects of Disease on History*

• *MOOC & Honors 1520*

• My adventures along the way

How I got Involved

• Presentation on MOOC (Massive Online Open Courses)

• Art that deals with disease

• Essays, lecturing, lead discussion, and information literacy instruction

Dr. Craig Oberg, Professor of Microbiology

Dr. Gene Sessions, Professor of History
Approach to the MOOC and the Honors 1520

- Disease left out of historical literature
- Examines the ways disease has dramatically affected history through religion, war, migration, art, and literature.
What can I add?

• Intimidation

• Teaching experience

• How people approach world

• Art gets at this

Photo of me in a vortex at the *Ripley’s Believe it or Not Museum*, San Francisco, CA, 2015.
The Art and Disease Essays

Titles:
“Art and Disease”
Overview
“Smallpox in Art”
(Representations of smallpox from 8th century to 17th century)
“The Art and Religion of Plague”
(Ruben’s The Miracles of Saint Francis Xavier and Bubonic Plague)
“Designing HIV/AIDS Awareness”
(Awareness campaigns in South Africa using murals, dolls, and basketry)
“Painting Tuberculosis”
(Artist Responses to loved ones having Tuberculosis)
Art and Disease Lecture & Discussion

• Lectured on images from overview

• Students receptive to overview & TB essays

• Many hadn’t thought about how disease affects art and artists

• This image really affected them.

Background on the Painting

• Painted in 1940

• Carlos Negrón

• Brother of Jose Negrón, Puerto Rican musician and Neel’s lover at the time

• Advanced TB

Student Response to *TB Harlem*

“In the Alice Neel's painting *TB Harlem* created in 1940 that showed Carlos Negrón suffering from advanced tuberculosis it is *heart-rending* to realise how humans suffered in the past because of lack of knowledge in historical and scientific research.”

-Leila Veronica Hunter-Simms, MOOC Student

“It was nice to see a *psychological* approach to disease and I think that’s what I got out of “Painting Tuberculosis.””

-Daniel Allen, Honors 1520 student
Information Literacy Instruction

• 10 page research papers

• Look at the history of health care the happened right before and up to the creation of the painting

• Incorporate the framework

Information Literacy Framework for Higher Education and The class

- Framework is flexible
- Interdisciplinary voices, sources, & formats
- Create scholarly communication
- Encourages education and understanding of the world
This frame states “communications of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.”
Scholarship as Conversation

• Provides a theoretical scaffolding

• Interdisciplinary courses & design

• Let’s science, art historical, and historical information talk to each other to create understanding about a disease in a time and place

• Students need to learn to do this for papers

“Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.”

The Assignment

Our research question:

How has tuberculosis affected health care in Harlem prior to and leading up to Alice Neel’s painting, *TB Harlem*?
“Searching is often non-linear. . .requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources.”

Can look for websites, books, and journal articles and see where serendipity leads us.

Background Info on Tuberculosis

• *CDC* ‘s “Basic TB Facts”

• Transmission

• Latent TB

• Active TB (advanced)

Tuberculosis

• What is the microbiology behind it?

• TB Bacteria takes nutrients

• Compromises Macrophages

• Replicates and repeats

• American Society for Microbiology Journals
Tuberculosis AND Harlem AND 1940

Search Results: 1 - 1 of 1

1. Captain Consumption and the Collector of Souls.
   Subjects: PAINTING; MAGAZINE covers; TUBERCULOSIS; COMMUNICABLE diseases; NEEL, Alice; NEGRON, Carlos
   HTML Full Text  PDF Full Text (161KB)  Search Weber State Catalog

Tuberculosis AND Harlem

Search Results: 1 - 10 of 29

   Subjects: TUBERCULOSIS – Prevention; HEALTH education; AFRICAN Americans; NEW York (State); NEW York (N.Y.); UNITED States
   PDF Full Text (128KB)  Search Weber State Catalog
“Captain Consumption and the Collector of Souls”

• Discusses Neel’s Painting

• “a historical record of tuberculosis and treatment” (525).

• Thoracoplasty

• Antimicrobial drugs

“Tuberculosis, Race, and the Delivery of Health Care in Harlem 1922-1939”

Factors of substandard health care:

• Segregation

• Racial inequality

• Economic underdevelopment

Frame “Information has value”

Information can be used “as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means of influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world.”
Commodity

“Physicians in Harlem erected sanatoriums to provide tuberculosis care for patients who could afford to pay for treatment there, but these did not begin to meet the needs of all community members” (107).

• Community members & Health care activists

• Harlem Tuberculosis and Health Committee

• Provide the crucial commodity of accurate information
Conclusion

• Interdisciplinary voices & sources in courses like MOOC or Honors 1520

• Scaffolding within Framework

• Take part in scholarly conversation

• Educate and negotiate

• Explore what it means to be librarian
Works Cited

Association for College and Research Libraries. “Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education.”


For Slides & More Information

libguides.weber.edu/artdisease

Contact me!

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