This course will examine women's role in pre-modern European medicine through the reading of medical texts written for and by women. Contrary to stereotypes, women actively contributed to medical literature in pre-modern Europe, and women were also the recipients of medical texts written specifically for them. Early modern medicine developed much interest in the study of the female body, which prompted a new reading of ancient gynecological texts and a new attention to the specificity of female anatomy and to women's diseases. We will locate this new interest in early modern women's social history as well as in the history of medicine, while also trying to understand how all this affected the long-term relationship of women to medicine in European culture to the present day.

The course will include lectures and the reading of primary sources (in translation: no foreign language reading skills will be needed). Active class participation is expected. You will come to class having read the week’s readings (including the listed sources), and ready to participate in their discussion. You will write a research paper (max. 20 pages) on a subject selected among the course topics, preferably using a primary source (or sources). Your paper topic, with preliminary bibliography, should be notified to the instructor on our last meeting before the Spring Vacation, on March 14. You are encouraged to come and consult me about your choice of topic and bibliographical search. Supplementary readings are indicated in the syllabus to help you start on your search. Please pay attention to this part of the syllabus and use it as a first resource when brain-storming about your paper topic. Your paper will be due on the last day of class, May 2. Evaluation will be based on class participation (30%) and on the final paper (70%).

Texts:


**Sources:**


**SYLLABUS**

**Week 1. January 29-31**

**The legacy of Antiquity.**

[Please read the following before our second meeting on Jan. 31]

**Readings:**


**Sources:**

* The story of Agnodice from Hyginus’s *Fables*, 274, online at http://www.theoi.com/Text/HyginusFabulae5.html#274


**Supplementary readings:**

Week 2. February 5-7.

**Women in Monastic Medicine: Hildegard of Bingen (ca. 1098-1179).**

*Background:*

If you have no previous knowledge of Hildegard, the best short introduction is the chapter in Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) pp. 144-201. However, this will not be discussed in class.

As an introduction, we will watch together *Vision*, a historical movie on Hildegard’s life by the German film-director Margarethe von Trotta (2009). We will discuss this movie in class, together with the following:

*Readings:*


*Source:*

* Hildegard of Bingen, *Causae et curae. Holistic Healing*, transl. M. Pawlik and P. Madigan (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994): pp. 15-35. This is the only English translation of Hildegard’s *Causes and Cures* in its entirety. Unfortunately, it was translated not directly from the Latin but from a German translation, so it is not always reliable. If you plan to work on Hildegard, you should use this translation with caution and refer to the recent critical edition, *Beate Hildegardis Cause et cure*, ed. Laurence Moulinier (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003), listed in the Supplementary Readings below. There is also another English translation, but only of selections: Hildegard of Bingen, *On Natural Philosophy and Medicine*, ed. Margret Berger (Cambridge, 1999).

*Supplementary readings and sources:*


**Week 3. February 12-14.**

**A Medieval Transformation.**

*Readings:*


*Source:*


*Supplementary readings and sources:*


* Angela Montford, “Dangers and Disorders: The Decline of the Dominican Frater Medicus”, Social History of Medicine, 16, no. 2 (2003), 169-91


**Week 4. February 19-21.**

**Medicine on and for Women in the Renaissance.**

**Readings:**


**Sources:**


**Supplementary readings and sources:**


* Public record of the labour of Isabel de la Cavalleria (1490), transl. Montserrat Cabre, at http://www.the-orb.net/birthrecord.html


**Week 5. February 26-28**

**Medicine for Women: Medical Practice and Female Patients.**


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Week 6 March 5-7:**

**Medicine by Women? Oliva Sabuco, a Sixteenth-Century Mystery.**
Reading:


Source:


Week 7, March 12-14:

**Women’s Medical Practices in Early Modern Europe**

Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Week 8 March 19-21: Spring Vacation
Week 9 March 26-28:

Women as Medical Authors: Recipe Collections.

Readings:


Further readings and sources:


Week 10, April 2-4:

**Midwifery as Medical Career: The Rule and the Exception.**

*Readings:*


*Supplementary Reading:*

* Hilary Marland, ed., *The Art of Midwifery. Early Modern Midwives in Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994) especially the essays by Teresa Ortiz (on Spain), Nadia Filippini (on Italy) and Mary Lindemann (on Germany) for comparative purposes.

* Monica H. Green and Donald Lord Smail, “The Trial of Floreta d’Ays (1403): Jews, Christians and Obstetrics in later Medieval Marseilles, J. of Medieval History*


Week 11, April 9-11:

**Midwives as Authors.**

*Readings and Sources:*


* Mother and child were saved. The Memoirs (1693-1740) of the Frisian Midwife Catharina Schrader, ed. and transl. Hilary Marland (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), pp. 6-22, 43-86.

*Supplementary Readings:*


**Week 12, April 16-18:**

**Ladies Experimenters at Home and at Court.**

**Readings:**


**Further Readings:**


Week 13, April 23-25:


Readings:


Source:

* *Ars Obstetricia Bononiensis. Catalogo e inventario del Museo Ostetrico Giovan Antonio Galli*, (Bologna: CLUEB, 1988).

[We’ll look together in class at images of Anna Morandi Manzolini’s anatomical models from this catalogue].

Further Readings and Sources:


* *Anna Morandi Manzolini, una donna fra arte e scienza. Immagini, documenti, repertorio anatomico*, ed. Miriam Focaccia (Florence: Olschki, 2008).


Week 14 April 30-May 2:

From the End of the Medical Ancien Regime to the Charge of the Parasols.

Readings:


**Further Reading:**

* Catriona Blake, *The Charge of the Parasols. Women’s Entry to the Medical Profession* (London: Women’s Press, 1990). This is a rather popular account but still useful as a chronicle of English women’s struggle for access to medical education in the 19th century).


* Mary Ann Elton, “‘Run by Women, (mainly) for Women’: Medical Women’s Hospitals in Britain 1866-1948”, in Hardy and Lawrence, *Women and Modern Medicine*, pp. 73-108.


* Jennifer Stanton, “Listening to the Ga: Cicely Williams’ Discovery of Kwashiorkor on the Gold Coast”, in Hardy and Lawrence, *Women and Modern Medicine*, pp. 149-172.