

Jolie Braun

A guide to history of medicine resources

Image collections, podcasts, videos, and more

The history of medicine is a field that draws students and scholars from a diverse range of disciplines: history, philosophy, medicine, and even art history. While there is no shortage of resource lists available on the topic, the goal of this guide is to offer a slightly different scope, and highlights audio-visual collections, podcasts and videos, and blogs. Listed below is a selection of some well-known resources alongside others that are less frequently cited but engaging and valuable.

This article aims to cover history of medicine in its broadest sense. Nearly all of the resources mentioned here are free.

Digital image collections

- **Anatomia 1522 – 1867.** This collection is comprised of more than 4,500 full-page plates and other important illustrations of human anatomy from the University of Toronto's Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. Particularly useful is the "Highlights" section, which provides an introduction to works notable for its scientific or artistic merit. *Access:* <http://link.library.utoronto.ca/anatomia/application/>.

- **Brought to Life.** This beautifully designed site provides access to images of thousands of artifacts and objects from the London-based Science Museum's medical collections. Brought to Life also has content for students and educators, such as interactive features, a historical timeline, curriculum information, and essays on key themes such as "birth and death" and "diseases and epi-

demics." *Access:* <http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife>.

- **Historical Images in Medicine.** Duke University's digital image collection includes 3,000 photographs, illustrations, engravings, and bookplates related to the history of health and life sciences. *Access:* <https://medspace.mc.duke.edu/him>.

- **Images from the History of Medicine.** With more than 70,000 items, this site by the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine is one of the largest digital image collections of its kind. Spanning the 15th to the 21st century, the collection includes photographs, portraits, medical illustrations, and posters depicting the social and historical aspects of medicine. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/ihm/>.

- **The Osler Library Prints Collection.** McGill University Library's collection of 2,500 images provides a look at the history of medicine through the lens of popular imagery. The collection, which includes material from the 17th to the 20th century, is largely comprised of prints of portraits, but also contains photographs, cartoons, drawings, and posters. *Access:* <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/oslerprints/index.php>.

- **Wellcome Images.** The Wellcome Library holds one of the greatest history of

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medicine collections in the world. Its digital collection contains 170,000 images, from an Egyptian prescription on papyrus to contemporary micrographs. There are 100,000 images that are freely available to users under Creative Commons licensing. *Access:* <http://wellcomeimages.org/>.

Digital exhibits

- **Digital Projects of NLM.** The portal to the National Library of Medicine's digital projects, this site offers quick links to an outstanding collection of online resources, including digital collections of anatomical atlases, significant medical texts, profiles of leaders in biomedical research and public health, and early American medical books. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/digitalprojects.html>.

- **Seeing is Believing.** New York Public Library's digital exhibit showcases 700 years of scientific and medical illustration. With hundreds of images from the 13th to the early 20th century, the site provides a special focus on illustration processes and the importance of illustration in the dissemination and advancement of medical knowledge. *Access:* <http://seeing.nypl.org>.

Audiovisual collections

- **Mutter Museum YouTube Channel.** The Philadelphia-based medical museum has an active YouTube page with many enlightening and entertaining videos about artifacts, objects, and curiosities from its collections. *Access:* <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheMuttermuseum>.

- **NLM Moving Image Collection.** The National Library of Medicine collection has more than 100 videos about public health issues and innovations during the 20th century. Topics featured include personal hygiene, drinking water, dental care, and DDT. *Access:* [http://collections.nlm.nih.gov/?f\[drep2.format\]\[\]=Moving+image](http://collections.nlm.nih.gov/?f[drep2.format][]=Moving+image).

- **NLM Oral History Collections.** This collection of oral histories from the 1960s to the present features interviews with physicians, scientists, medical librarians, govern-

ment administrators, and health-business executives on a variety of topics related to medicine and the health sciences. Audio and digitized transcripts are available for many of the oral histories. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/manuscripts/oh.html>.

- **Wellcome Library's Moving Image and Sound Collection.** Wellcome Library's collection is comprised of more than 200 educational and public information films and animated shorts about 20th-century health-care and medicine. *Access:* <https://archive.org/details/wellcomefilm>.

Lectures, podcasts, and online classes

- **C. F. Reynolds Medical History Society Lectures Recordings.** The University of Pittsburgh's Health Sciences Library System site has more than two-dozen videos featuring past speakers from the C. F. Reynolds Medical History Society's annual lecture series. The lectures cover a broad range of subjects, including the history of cystic fibrosis, eugenics, and medieval medicine. *Access:* <http://www.hsls.pitt.edu/histmed/cfreynolds/videos>.

- **Epidemics in Western Society since 1600.** One of the few history of medicine courses freely available in its entirety online, this 2010 Open Yale course provides an "international analysis of the impact of epidemic diseases on Western society and culture from the Bubonic plague to HIV/AIDS and the recent experience of SARS and swine flu." All course materials are available on the website; lectures may also be accessed via YouTube or iTunes. *Access:* <http://oyc.yale.edu/history/hist-234>.

- **The Historical Collections & Archives Lecture Series.** Oregon Health & Sciences University's special collections unit provides access to more than 30 videos from its lecture series. While the talks cover a wide range of subjects, this site is a particularly good resource for lectures on the history of medicine in the Pacific Northwest. *Access:* <http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/library/about/collections/historical-collections-archives/lecture-series/index.cfm>.

- **History of Medicine Seminar Series.**

This site contains more than two-dozen podcasts from a 2012 lecture series at Oxford Brookes University covering subjects such as the plague in early modern Venice and toxicology in 19th-century Spain. Also available on this site is “Moments in Medicine,” a small series of ten-minute podcasts on medical history topics, including midwifery, the origins of forensic medicine, and the vaccination debate. *Access:* <http://www.history.brookes.ac.uk/more/podcasts/history-of-medicine/>.

- **Reynolds Lecture Series.** The Reynolds Historical Library at the University of Alabama-Birmingham has nearly 30 videos available of talks from its history of medicine lecture series. The presentations cover a variety of topics, however this site is a particularly good resource for lectures on the history of medicine in the American South. *Access:* <http://www.uab.edu/reynolds/podcasts>.

Scholarly journals

- **Bulletin of the History of Medicine.**

Published by the American Association for the History of Medicine and the Johns Hopkins Institute of the History of Medicine, this leading journal covers social, cultural, and scientific aspects of the history of medicine. *Access:* http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/bulletin_of_the_history_of_medicine/.

- **Journal of the History of Medicine & Allied Sciences.** This journal provides broad coverage on the history of medicine, with a particular emphasis on the activities, teachings, and impact of medical professionals. *Access:* <http://jhmas.oxfordjournals.org/>.

- **Medical History.** This British journal covers the history of health sciences and medicine. Digitized content may be freely accessed via the link below. *Access:* <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/journals/228/>.

- **Social History of Medicine.** This journal covers all aspects of the history of health, illness, and medical treatment, publishing scholarship from a variety of disciplines. *Access:* <http://shm.oxfordjournals.org/>.

Databases

- **History of Medicine Finding Aids Consortium.** This discovery tool allows users to search more than 3,600 finding aids from 35 American special collections and archives that have history of medicine materials. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/consortium/index.html>.

- **IndexCat.** This NLM site allows users to search the Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon General’s Office, a bibliography containing references to more than 3.7 million items from the 15th century to the mid-20th century, including journal articles, books, dissertations, pamphlets, and reports. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/indexcat/index.html>.

- **Medical Humanities Dissertations.** This site from the University of Pittsburgh’s Health Sciences Library System is updated monthly with recent doctoral dissertations broadly related to medicine and the humanities. Dissertations may be browsed by topic or month of its discovery in the database Dissertation Abstracts. *Access:* <http://www.hsls.pitt.edu/histmed/dissertations>.

- **Medical Heritage Library (MHL).** MHL, “a digital curation collaborative among some of the world’s leading medical libraries, promotes free and open access to quality historical resources in medicine.” Comprised of 60,000 digitized rare books, serials, and films from more than 20 institutions, MHL is an impressive digital collection of history of medicine materials. *Access:* <https://archive.org/details/medicalheritagelibrary>.

- **PubMed.** A leading database for life sciences and biomedical literature, PubMed allows users to search more than 24 million citations. Users interested in history of medicine topics may narrow their search by clicking on “Topic-Specific Queries” under PubMed Tools on the homepage, then clicking on the “History of Medicine” link. *Access:* <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>.

Syllabus and resource lists

- **American Association for the History of Medicine’s (AAHM) Orals Bibliogra-**

phies for Students. This repository of reading lists is intended to help graduate students prepare for qualifying exams related to the history of medicine. Lists have been contributed by student members of AAHM, which is the leading professional organization dedicated to the history of medicine and health in the United States. *Access:* <http://www.histmed.org/resources/orals-bibliographies-for-students>.

• **History of the Health Sciences World Wide Web Links.** Maintained by the History of the Health Sciences Section of the Medical Library Association, this comprehensive history of medicine resource list includes links to organizations, blogs, databases, museums, educational programs, and more. Regularly updated, this site is a good starting point for anyone just beginning to learn about the history of medicine, but may provide those already in the field with new resources, as well. *Access:* <http://www.mla-hhss.org/histlink.htm>.

• **History of Medicine Online Syllabus Archive.** The “world’s largest collection of syllabi in the history of medicine,” this National Library of Medicine site contains college and university syllabi from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s, which may be browsed by subject, institution, professor, or course title. *Access:* <http://www.nlm.nih.gov>

</archive/20120206/hmd/collections/digital/syllabi/>.

Blogs

• **Circulating Now.** This blog by the National Library of Medicine uses highlights from its historical collections as a way to provide thoughtful discussions on a wide array of history of medicine topics. *Access:* <http://circulatingnow.nlm.nih.gov>.

• **H-Sci-Med-Tech.** H-Net Network’s science, medicine, and technology blog is an ideal resource for graduate students, faculty, and scholars wanting to stay current with news and announcements in the field. Typical posts include calls for papers, links to relevant articles, funding opportunities, and book reviews. *Access:* <https://networks.h-net.org/h-sci-med-tech>.

• **Nursing Clio.** An open access, peer-reviewed blog aimed at historians, health care workers, activists, students, and the general public that uses historical scholarship to examine contemporary issues on gender and medicine. *Access:* <http://nursingclio.org>.

• **Remedia.** Updated weekly, this collaborative blog publishes scholarly, yet accessible, articles that connect history of medicine topics with present-day concerns. *Access:* <http://remedianetwork.wordpress.com>. *ZZ*

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