History of Medicine Prelim Exam—February 2015

**Directions:** Please select three (3) questions to answer in essay form. Each of your essays should include **both a discussion of the history (content) and historiography.** Your historiographical discussion may include assessments of the literature and preferably includes titles with publication dates in parenthesis.

Before you begin writing, you may want to take a moment to think about your essay and outline your answer.

1. Compare three diseases, (one of which is syphilis, no other STDs) and analyze how they were talked about, how public health authorities addressed them, and how they were experienced. To what extent were these diseases regarded similarly? If not, why not? Your answer must address both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and consider how race, gender, and other characteristics shape the history of these diseases.

2. What is the relationship between medicine/public health and imperialism? How have historians assessed the impact and consequences of colonial scientific or health interventions? Your answer must consider more than one global empire.

3. Some Americans are inclined to donate their bodies to science or experimentation while others refuse. These responses are not random within the population but come from specific demographic groups. What historical factors have contributed to this trend? Explain this historically and provide examples or evidence from the United States and other parts of the world. Be sure to include a discussion of nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

4. Tell us the history of reproduction from the perspectives of Latina, African American, and other women of color. Is the periodization of this history different from the dominant population of white, middle-class, American women? If so, why? Your answer should include childbirth, birth control, relationship to science/medicine, and public policy. What are the strengths of the existing literature and what remains to be studied?

5. Immunization has recently come under siege, but scientists and public health experts maintain that it remains one of the major victories of public health. A closer look at vaccination, both in the present and the past, indicates that this medical practice has often been rejected and has produced conflict. Explain the history of immunization in terms of its origins, science, practice, public policy, and cultural differences in attitudes towards it. Your answer should go beyond the United States and should include discussion of specific diseases.