



Public Health and the US Military: A History of the Army Medical Department, 1818-1917 (Routledge Advances in American History)

Bobby A. Wintermute

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Public Health and the US Military is a cultural history of the US Army Medical Department focusing on its accomplishments and organization coincident with the creation of modern public health in the Progressive Era. A period of tremendous social change, this time bore witness to the creation of an ideology of public health that influences public policy even today. The US Army Medical Department exerted tremendous influence on the methods adopted by the nation's leading civilian public health figures and agencies at the turn of the twentieth century.

Public Health and the US Military also examines the challenges faced by military physicians struggling to win recognition and legitimacy as expert peers by other Army officers and within the civilian sphere. Following the experience of typhoid fever outbreaks in the volunteer camps during the Spanish-American War, and the success of uniformed researchers and sanitarians in confronting yellow fever and hookworm disease in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the Medical Department's influence and reputation grew in the decades before the First World War. Under the direction of sanitary-minded medical officers, the Army Medical Department instituted critical public health reforms at home and abroad, and developed a model of sanitary tactics for wartime mobilization that would face its most critical test in 1917.

The first large conceptual overview of the role of the US Army Medical Department in American society during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this book details the culture and quest for legitimacy of an institution dedicated to promoting public health and scientific medicine.

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