



Epidemics in Economic History

Syllabus
Winter 2022/2023

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Instructor:	Kalle Kappner	Time:	Mon 8am – 12pm
Email:	kalle.kappner@econ.lmu.de	Place:	Luisenstr. 37 (C) - C 024

Course description: How did historic epidemics shape production and consumption patterns, socioeconomic inequality and labour relations, both in the short and the long run? Did economic development, globalization and urbanization support a slow but steady conquest of infectious diseases, or was their role rather to expose societies to new risks? And what policy lessons can we learn from studying the economic impact of the bubonic plague, cholera, influenza and other scourges of humanity? This seminar introduces students to recent research on the economic history of epidemics, infectious disease and health, with an emphasis on quantitative, empirical evidence.

Organization: Each week's meeting is split into a lecture (8am-10am) and a class (10am-12pm). The lectures introduce students to central concepts, theories, findings and methods in the literature. The classes serve to follow up on open questions and discuss on the required readings. Required readings consist of approximately two full-length papers/chapters or three shorter papers per week. There is a 30 minutes break between lecture and class. The first seven weeks feature a lot of reading, listening and discussion. The following three weeks are "hands-on" classes, where we will analyze the famous Broad Street Incident (no pre-knowledge of Python and GIS assumed). The new year starts with four discussion session that focus on open controversies in the nexus of public health, historical experience, politics and economics. The last meeting concludes and wraps up.

Office hours: On demand. Please write me an email to kalle.kappner@econ.lmu.de.

Prerequisites: There are no formal requirements. Interest in economic history and applied microeconomics is advantageous. This seminar is open to both Master's and PhD students.

Grading policy: Grading is based solely on a term paper (15 pages), to be handed in approximately by the end of March 2023 via email to kalle.kappner@econ.lmu.de. The term paper will be of a quantitative/empirical nature; the topic of the term paper is the same for all students and is fixed by me. Reading the required literature *before* class and active participation in class are essential.

Course outline: You have to prepare the required readings listed below **in advance** of the respective sessions. All readings are available on the Moodle platform.

17.10. Health, Mortality and Epidemics in the Long Run

- Fogel, R. W. (2012) [2004]. *The Escape from Hunger and Premature Death, 1700–2100. Europe, America, and the Third World*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time 38, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapters 1 & 2, pp. 1–42.
- Deaton, A. (2016). The Great Escape: A Review of Robert Fogel’s ‘The Escape from Hunger and Premature Death, 1700–2100’, *Journal of Economic Literature*, XLIV, pp. 106–114.

24.10. Epidemics, Labor and Wages in the Malthusian Era

- Clark, G. (2016). Microbes and Markets: Was the Black Death an Economic Revolution?, *Journal of Demographic Economics*, 82, pp. 139–165.
- Alfani, G., Murphy, T. E. (2017). Plague and Lethal Epidemics in the Pre-Industrial World, *The Journal of Economic History*, 77(1), pp. 314–343.
- Jedwab, R., Johnson, N. D., Koyama, M. (2022). The Economic Impact of the Black Death, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 60(1), pp. 132–178.

31.10. Epidemics and Inequality

- Galletta, S., Giommoni, T. (2022). The Effect of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic on Income Inequality: Evidence from Italy, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 104(1), pp. 187–302.
- Alfani, G. (2022). Epidemics, Inequality, and Poverty in Preindustrial and Early Industrial Times, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 60(1), pp. 3–40.

07.11. Epidemics and the Macroeconomy

- Eichenbaum, M. S., Rebelo, S., Trabandt, M. (2021). The Macroeconomics of Epidemics, *The Review of Financial Studies*, 34(11), pp. 5149–5187.
- Jordà, Ò., Singh, S. R., Taylor, A. M. (2022). Longer-Run Economic Consequences of Pandemics, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 104(1), pp. 166–175.

14.11. Social Distancing and the 1918 Influenza Pandemic

- Correia, S., Luck, S., Verner, E. (2022). Pandemics Depress the Economy, Public Health Interventions Do Not: Evidence from the 1918 Flu, *Unpublished*. Available online at <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3561560>.
- Lilley, A., Lilley, M., Rinaldi, G. (2020). Public Health Interventions and Economic Growth: Revisiting The Spanish Flu Evidence, *Unpublished*. Available online at <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3590008>.
- Correia, S., Luck, S., Verner, E. (2020). Response to Lilley, Lilley, and Rinaldi (2020), *Unpublished*. Available online at <http://scorreia.com/research/pandemics-llr-response.pdf>.
- Velde, F. (2022). What Happened to the U.S. Economy during the 1918 Influenza Pandemic? A View Through High-Frequency Data, *The Journal of Economic History*, 82(1), pp. 284–326.

21.11. Epidemics and the Housing Market

- Ambrus, A., Field, E., Gonzalez, R. (2020). Loss in the Time of Cholera: Long-Run Impact of a Disease Epidemic on the Urban Landscape, *American Economic Review*, 110(2), pp. 475–525.

- Francke, M., Korevaar, M. (2021). Housing Markets in a Pandemic: Evidence from Historical Outbreaks, *Journal of Urban Economics*, 123, 103333.

29.11. Epidemics and Human Capital

- Aassve, A., Alfani, G., Gandolfi, F., Le Moglie M. (2021). Epidemics and Trust: The Case of the Spanish Flu, *Health Economics*, 30, pp. 840–857.
- Brian, B., Ferrie, J., Saavedra, M. (2021). Fetal Shock or Selection? The 1918 Influenza Pandemic and Human Capital Development, NBER Working Paper 24725.

05.12., 12.12., 19.12. Practical: Analyzing the Broad Street Incident

- Please make sure that you are able to access [Google Colaboratory](#).
- Snow, J. (1855). *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, 2nd edition, London: John Churchill, chapters on Broad Street and South London, pp. 38–98.
- Coleman, T. S. (2019). Causality in the Time of Cholera: John Snow as a Prototype for Causal Inference, *mimeo*.
- Coleman, T. S., Vinten-Johansen, P. (2020). John Snow, Cholera, and South London Reconsidered, *mimeo*.

09.01. Discussion: Connectivity, Globalization and Epidemics

- Webb, J. L. A. (2015). Globalization of Disease, 1300 to 1900, in *The Cambridge World History. Volume VI. The Construction of a Global World, 1400–1800 CE, Part 1: Foundations*, Bentley, J. H., Subrahmanyam, S., Wiesner-Hanks, M. E. (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 54–75.
- Adda, J. (2016). Economic Activity and the Spread of Viral Diseases: Evidence from High Frequency Data, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 131(2), pp. 891–941.
- Voth, J. (2020). Trade and Travel in the Time of Epidemics, in *Economics in the Time of COVID-19*, Baldwin, R., Weder di Mauro, B. (eds.), London: CEPR Press, pp. 93–96.

16.01. Discussion: Markets, Governments and Public Health

- Easterlin, R. A. (1999). How Beneficent is the Market? A Look at the Modern History of Mortality, *European Review of Economic History*, 3, pp. 257–294.
- Geloso, V., Hyde, K., Murtazashvili, I. (2021). Pandemics, Economic Freedom, and Institutional Trade-Offs, *European Journal of Law and Economics*, 54, pp. 37–61.
- Koyama, M. (2021). Epidemic Disease and the State: Is there a Tradeoff between Public Health and Liberty?, *Public Choice*, 2021.

23.01. Discussion: Are there Long-Run Benefits to Pandemics?

- Hennock, E. P. (2000). The Urban Sanitary Movement in England and Germany, 1838–1914: a Comparison, *Continuity and Change*, 15(2), pp. 269–296.
- Gallardo-Albarrán, D. (2020). Sanitary Infrastructures and the Decline of Mortality in Germany, 1877–1913, *Economic History Review*, 73(3), pp. 730–757.

- Hamlin, C. (2009). “Cholera Forcing”: The Myth of the Good Epidemic and the Coming of Good Water, *American Journal of Public Health*, 99(1), pp. 1946–1954.

30.01. Discussion: What Can We Learn from the Past?

- Arthi, V., Parman, J. (2021). Disease, Downturns, and Wellbeing: Economic History and the Long-Run Impacts of COVID-19, *Explorations in Economic History*, 79, 101381.
- Beach, B., Clay, K., Saavedra, M. (2022). The 1918 Influenza Pandemic and Its Lessons for COVID-19, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 60(1), pp. 41–84.
- Donaldelli, M., Ferranna, L., Gufler, I., Paradiso, A. (2021). Using Past Epidemics to Estimate the Macroeconomic Implications of COVID-19: A Bad Idea!, *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics*, 57, pp. 214–224.

06.02. Seminar Paper Workshop and Conclusion

- No readings – we will wrap up the course and discuss the seminar paper.

Important Dates:

First session	Oct 17, 2022
Last session	Feb 06, 2023
Term paper deadline	Mar 31, 2023