

Table of Contents

1. Biological Inf(l)ections of the American Dream	1
2. “The Bug Stops Here”: Theoretical Perspectives on Contagious Disease and Narrative Containment	12
2.1 Of “Bug-Passing” and “Buck-Passing”	12
2.2 “Science Is Not Immune to Culture”: The Biocultural Turn and the Cultural Construction of Scientific Facts	13
2.3 “The Silence of the Organs”: Contextualizing Health, Disease and Illness	19
2.4 From “Apollo’s Arrow” to “Typhoid Mary”: Understanding Contagious Disease	25
2.5 “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness”: Epidemics, American Exceptionalism and the Fantasy of Containment	39
2.6 “This Is Not Meant For Us”: Plague Literature as Narrative Containment	55
3. Catching “American Fever”: Yellow Fever, Benjamin Rush, and the American Medical Revolution	59
3.1 “American Fever”	59
3.2 From the Fantasy of Salubrity to the Fantasy of Containment: The 1793 Philadelphia Yellow Fever Epidemic in Perspective	62
3.3 The American Medical Revolution I: Haitian Refugees, Rotten Coffee and the Origin of Yellow Fever ...	67
3.4 The American Medical Revolution II: “Heroic Medicine” as Yellow Fever Treatment	81
3.5 Yellow Fever, American Imperialism and the Struggle for Cuban Independence	99

4. “The Colony Within the Colony”: Leprosy, American Imperialism and the Cultural Politics of Racial Exclusion in Hawai’i	106
4.1 From Cuba to Hawai’i	106
4.2 From <i>Leviticus</i> to the “Vanishing of the Lepers”: Contextualizing Premodern Leprosy	109
4.3 “From Bacteriology to Characterology”: Consolidating U.S. Imperial Power in the Kingdom of Hawai’i....	118
4.4 (Anti-)Imperialism and Epidemic Entertainments in Jack London’s Literary Hawai’i	129
4.4.1 Calming Imperial Anxieties: <i>The Cruise of the Snark</i>	129
4.4.2 “Typhoid Mary” As “Leprous Lucy”: Sexual Exoticism and the Risks of “Going Native” in “Good-by Jack”	134
4.4.3 Erasing the “Mark of the Beast”: Contagious Exposure and Racial Exceptionalism in “The Sheriff of Kona”	138
4.4.4 “A Vanishing Race”: Anti-Imperialist Critique and Imperialist Affirmation in “Koolau, the Leper”	144
4.5 “Ma’i Ho’oka’awale”: Writing Back and Fighting Back	150
5. “Encounters with the White Plague”: From Consumption to Tuberculosis in American Life and Literature	156
5.1 “The Plague of All Plagues”	156
5.2 From Phthisis to Consumption to Tuberculosis	158
5.3 Dying the “Good Death” From Consumption	166
5.4 Beautiful Bodies and Gifted Minds: Tuberculosis and Gender (Re-)Configurations	172

5.5 “How the Other Half Dies”: Tuberculosis as Disease of the Racial and Social Other	186
5.6 The “Return” of the White Plague	200
6. “Epidemic Homosexuality” & “A Homosexual Epidemic”: Heteronormativity and Sexual Difference in the Early AIDS Crisis	203
6.1 From the “Age of Antibiotics” to the “Age of AIDS”	203
6.2 When AIDS Emerged: Biomedical Crisis (Mis)Management	205
6.3 From GRID to WoGS to ACTUP: The Political Response to AIDS	215
6.4 How to Have Literature in an Epidemic	223
6.4.1 AIDS and Culpability: Larry Kramer’s <i>The Normal Heart</i>	224
6.4.2 AIDS and Intentionality: Randy Shilts’s <i>And the Band Played On</i>	235
6.5 After “the End of the Plague”: The Rise of Gay Conservatism and the Criminalization of HIV ...	249
7. “When Epidemic Lost Its Article”: Preemptive Biopreparedness & the Permanent State of Emergency after 9/11	254
8. Works Cited	268