

Institutional Health. Practice and Metaphor in Early Modern Spaces

Deadline: Mar 31, 2023

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We invite contributions to a volume examining the ways in which health shaped institutional spaces and practices in the early modern world from 1400-1800. In the scope of this volume, we consider institutional “health” metaphorically, as in the stability of the body politic, as well as physically, in terms of both individuals and spaces. While such a topic necessarily confronts painful histories of institutionalization, our goal is to expand beyond discourses centered on the top-down disciplining of bodies and, instead, focus on health as a communal issue and cultural reference point that informed decisions across administrative structures.

Recently, there have been significant scholarly contributions to the study of early modern hospital architecture, decoration, and administration in Europe and its colonies. This volume aims to build upon these studies to explore how health affected practices of institutions outside or adjacent to hospitals, such as prisons, universities, asylums, and confraternities. The societal permeation of health concerns instigated relationships across these entities, creating intersections in regulations, statutes, rituals, material culture, and architectural design. While contributions focused on hospitals are welcome, preference will be given to essays that discuss responses to health across institutional boundaries. We recognize that the possible definitions of “institution” are wide-ranging, and for the purposes of this project, we limit our scope to organizations that were tied to and formulated through architecture, which can include individual buildings, infrastructure, and the urban fabric.

Please submit a 500-word abstract and CV to the volume editors, Danielle Abdon and Maggie Bell, by March 31st: danielle.abdon@temple.edu and mbell@nortonsimon.org.

Final essays are expected to be approximately 7500 words and due in July 2023. If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the editors.

Reference:

CFP: Institutional Health. Practice and Metaphor in Early Modern Spaces. In: ArtHist.net, Feb 10, 2023 (accessed Sep 3, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/38523>>.