THE HISTORY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES LECTURE SERIES

REMEMBERING WALTER REED: AN AMERICAN MEDICAL HERO

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Wednesday, March 27, 2002
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Wilhelm Moll Rare Book and Medical History Room
Health Sciences Library Ground Floor

Walter Reed, a United States Army medical officer and a graduate of the University of Virginia Medical School in 1869, led the Yellow Fever Commission to Cuba after the Spanish American War, where in 1900 his team identified the mosquito as crucial in the transmission of yellow fever. Since 1900, and especially after Reed’s untimely death in 1902, Reed has been celebrated as one of America’s great medical heroes. This talk focuses on Reed’s career as a medical hero in the century following his death, and the multiple, overlapping commemorations of his work in newspapers, professional journals, biographies, Boy Scout pamphlets, radio scripts, and on the Broadway stage and the silver screen. The manifold ways in which Americans remembered Walter Reed may tell us little about his epochal research in yellow fever, but it does offer much insight into popular understanding of medical discovery, medical heroes and medical ethics, and their meanings in twentieth-century America.

Faculty, house staff, students, alumni, and the public are cordially invited to attend

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