

2-12-2013

Charitable Revolution

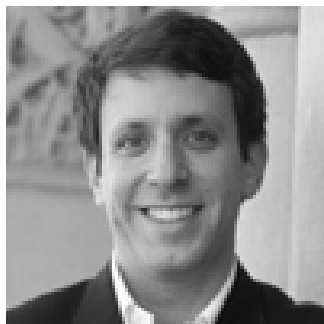
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Charitable Revolution

02.12.2013 | Catholic, Culture and Society, Campus and Community, Service and Giving

In the present age of healthcare reform, it can be easy to forget there was a time when healthcare didn't even exist. An expert on medieval history will speak at the University of Dayton next month about the religious and charitable foundations that gave rise to our modern medical institutions.

Adam J. Davis, associate professor and chair of the history department at Denison University, will speak at the University of Dayton on "The Medieval Culture of Compassion and the Rise of the Hospital" at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 7, in the Science Center Auditorium with a reception to

follow. The event is free and open to the public.

"We are very fortunate to have Professor Davis speaking at UD this spring. One of the top young scholars in his field, Davis' work is of special relevance to our time and place," said University of Dayton history lecturer Bobbi Sutherland. "Questions of social justice, especially as it relates to medical care, are of great interest to many people on our campus, and Davis' work looks at early attempts to address this issue within the Catholic tradition." The history department invited Davis as the speaker for its annual Beauregard-King Lecture.

Hundreds of hospitals, charities and houses for lepers and the poor were founded throughout Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries. Davis will explore the relationship between developments in medieval spirituality, including a growing sanctification of charity, and social and cultural charitable practices.

In probing the reasons for the emergence of a medieval "charitable imperative," Davis will explore what giving meant to medieval people during a pivotal moment in European history, when care for the sick and poor became popularized and institutionalized.

Davis is a historian of medieval Europe with interests in medieval church reform and religious life, preaching, medieval universities and the history of charity. His research explores the interplay between medieval ideas and institutions, social values and practices.

His recent publications include a special issue of *French Historical Studies* he co-edited, "Towards a French History of Universal Values: Charity, Human Rights and Humanitarianism," and an article on "Preaching in Thirteenth-Century Hospitals" in the *Journal of Medieval History*. Davis is currently writing a book about hospitals and the formation of a charitable society in Champagne in the 12th and 13th centuries.

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