

Study Questions on Medicine and Magic in Elizabethan England

Forman: The Making of an Astrologer-Physician (Kassell Chaps 1-3)

1. What were the three hierarchies of medical practitioners in Europe in the 16th century? What were the organizations in London associated with these practices?
2. What forms did pre-18th century writings about the events in one's own or someone else's life take?
3. Describe the six texts which Forman devoted solely to his life.
4. Describe the four episodes in which Forman lost his books.
5. When did Forman start writing about medical, astrological and geomantical subjects? When did he claim to begin to practice medicine?
6. According to Kassell, when is there evidence for Forman's practice of "more explicitly dangerous arts such as alchemy and magic"?
7. Why was the calculation of longitude at sea so difficult?
8. According to Kassell what is significant about the fact that Thomas Hood, Cambridge-trained astronomer and physician and mathematical lecturer to the City of London, took time to criticize Forman's pamphlet on *Longitude*?
9. What did Forman promise in *Longitude* if its method was rewarded?
10. How did Forman's *Heavens* deviate from the typical Renaissance description of the cosmos?
11. What were the Christian and neo-Platonic correspondences that Forman set up for the 8th, 9th, and 10th spheres? What was the Paracelsian dimension he added to this?
12. What roles did the motions of the 8th and 9th spheres play in astrological calculations and magical operations?
13. According to Kassell, what evidence links *Longitude* and *Heavens*?
14. According to Kassell, what was Forman's debt to the *Corpus Hermeticum*?
15. What was Forman's attitude towards book-learning?
16. What was the significance of dreams for Forman?
17. What was the project that Forman engaged in with Richard Napier in 1599?
18. According to Kassell, what does Forman's silence on English astrological manuals suggest?
19. What were the standard objections to judicial astrology?

Plague and the College of Physicians of London (Kassell Chaps 4-5)

1. According to Kassell, what determined the conflicts between Forman and the College of Physicians?
2. Was Forman's advocacy of astrology the reason why the College of Physicians pursued him?
3. What were the causes of plague according to Medieval plague tracts?
4. What was the attitude towards astrology of most Elizabethan plague tracts?
5. How did Elizabethan plague tracts that combined alchemical and Paracelsian medicine differ from Forman's writings on the subject?
6. According to Kassell, did Forman fashion himself as a follower of Paracelsus?
7. What were the three types of plague according to Forman?
8. What were the three types of natural plagues?
9. What were the three types of plagues caused by the devil?
10. What is the distinction between medical and moral plague tracts from early modern England?
11. What were some Galenic influences on Forman's philosophy of medicine? What were some Paracelsian influences?
12. According to Forman, what should a prudent physician do first during a diagnosis, and how should this be done?
13. According to Forman, why was urine deceitful?
14. In addition to judging the true cause of a disease, why did a physician need astrology?

Forman: The Casebooks (Kassell Chaps 6-7)

1. According to Thomas, what were two motivations for belief in astrology in early modern England?
2. According to Thomas, what was the function of the astrologer?
3. What was the function of the astrologer according to McDonald and Sawyer?
4. According to Kassell, why was astrology particularly necessary in dealing with women's diseases?
5. What three questions should the astrologer ask at the beginning of a consultation?
6. In what sense was astrology a "written art"?
7. During a consultation, what happened if the patient initially did not accept Forman's reading of the associated figure?
8. What value did urine analysis have for Forman?
9. According to Forman, what is the true way to "knowe a mans disease"?
10. What was the rhetorical value of Forman's boast that he could make accurate diagnoses when he had seen neither the patient nor her urine?
11. Why was it important for Forman to establish the trust of his patients?
12. What were three reasons why people did not want to take physic?
13. How did Forman frame the diseases of women?
14. What makes Forman's essay "Matrix and paine therof" distinct from his other essays?
15. In what sense does the essay "Matrix..." reveal the boundary between Forman and his female patients?

Alchemy, Magic, and Medicine (Kassell Chaps 8-10, Conclusion)

1. Who was the author of Forman's transcribed treatise "Of Cako"?
2. What did "antimony", "regulus", and "star regulus" refer to?
3. Why was antimony a problem for the medical establishment?
4. According to Kassell, what alterations did Forman make to the original text that resulted in "Of Cako"?
5. What was the implied difference between the "cako of physicians" and "philosophical cako"?
6. According to Kassell, how does Forman's entry for cako in "Principles of philosofi" differ from his "Of Cako"? How does the appearance of this text in "Of appoticarie druges" differ from its previous two appearances?
7. According to Kassell, was antimony a singular remedy for Forman? What does his study of cako illustrate?
8. What was the "Life of Adam and Eve"? What distinguishes Forman's transcription of it?
9. How did Forman view "Life" as a history of disease and healing?
10. According to Forman's genealogy of alchemical knowledge, what were the four types of philosophers' stone?
11. What were some debates among 16th century authors over the origin of alchemical knowledge?
12. According to Forman, how was the art of alchemy analogous to God's creation?
13. What was the "food of the angels"? How did food have a particular bearing on Adam's and Eve's well-being?
14. Why did man need food before the Fall if he was immortal?
15. How did 16th and 17th century theological and alchemical texts view the relationship between the philosophers' stone and the food of angels?
16. In what sense were magic, science, and religion practical, operative activities in Forman's life?
17. What was "spiritual magic"? According to Forman, what was the difference between "astromagic" and "alchemagic"?
18. What was the taxonomy of spirits described in "Of appoticarie druges"?
19. What was the "Ars notoria"?
20. According to Kassell, how does the Ars notoria provide a link between Forman's study of magic and his astrological physic?