

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Martin S. Pernick, Ph.D., professor of history in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2020.

Professor Pernick received his B.A. (1968) degree from Brandeis University and his Ph.D. (1979) degree from Columbia University. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1979, and was promoted to associate professor in 1985, and professor in 1992.

Professor Pernick devoted his professional career to the study of the history of medicine, primarily writing about the history of medicine in the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries, especially the history of disease and disability, the meaning (and control) of pain, gender and medicine, the ethics of medical practice, and the role of health care professionals in the larger society. In addition to his work in the history department, he was a leader in the Inteflex Medical Program, an integrated 6-year B.A./M.D. program. He was the author of many scholarly articles and book chapters that were published not only for historical audiences but also those in public health and public policy. His first book, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of "Defective" Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures since 1915* (1996), explored ideas about race, disability, and eugenics. His next book, *A Calculus of Suffering: Pain, Professionalism, and Anesthesia in Nineteenth-Century America* (1985), is the definitive account of ideas about the use of anesthesia. He also created an innovative collection of rare early motion pictures on health and disease from 1897-1955. Professor Pernick actively engaged with public media, including radio and television, to spread an understanding of history to the lay public. He played a major role in leadership within the Department of History. He was also active in the leadership of national history of medicine organizations, including being the president of the Sigerist Circle. In 2011, he was awarded the honor of delivering the Garrison Lecture at the annual meeting of the American Association of the History of Medicine. His work was supported by local and national funding agencies, including the National Library of Medicine and the National Endowment for the Humanities. A much beloved teacher of the history of medicine and of historical pedagogy, Pernick received several awards for his teaching abilities, including the university's Matthews Underclass Teaching Award in 2015.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and teacher by naming **Martin S. Pernick, professor emeritus of history**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2020