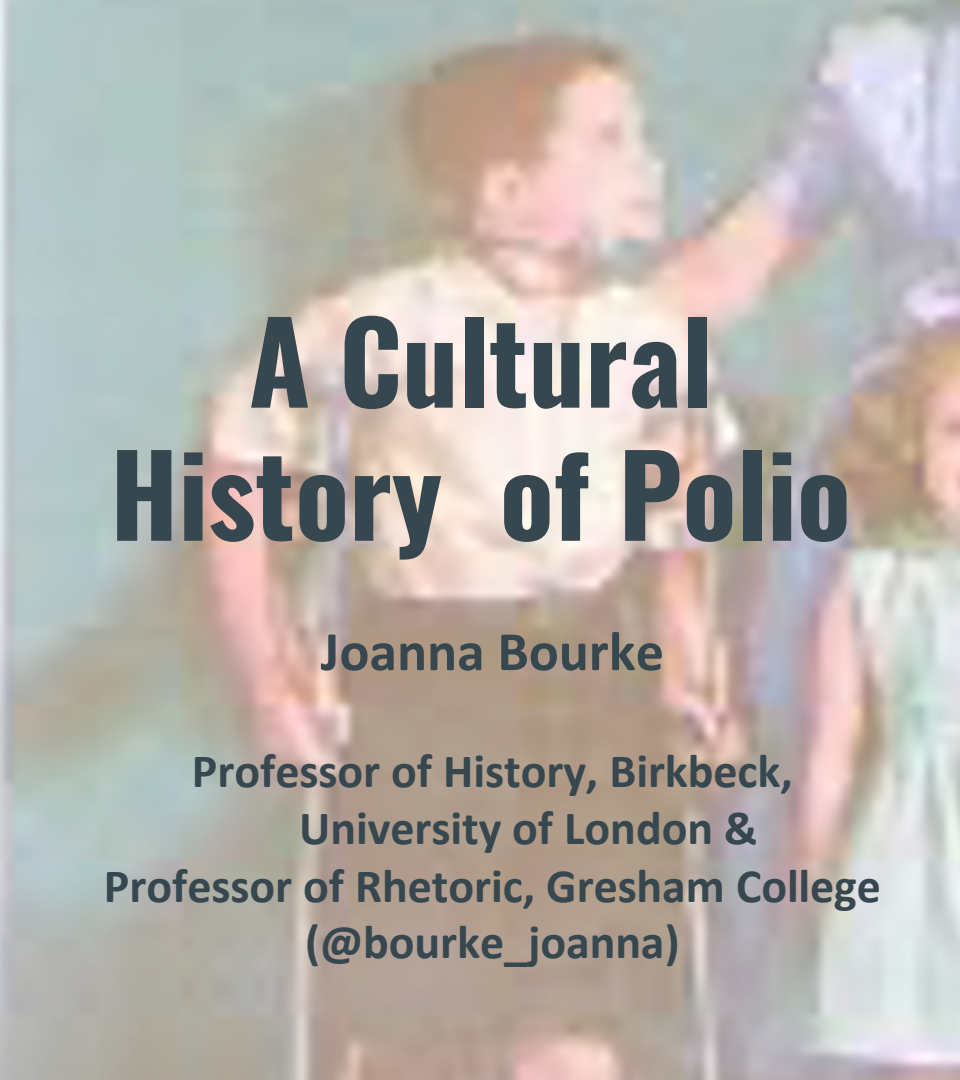




A CULTURAL HISTORY OF POLIO

JOANNA BOURKE

● **LECTURE 2 OF 6**



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

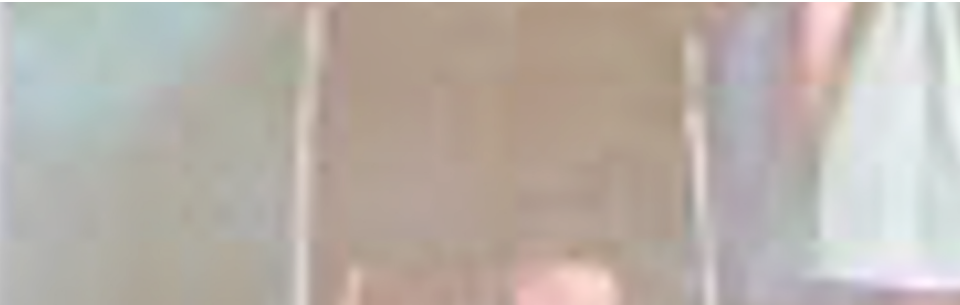
**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**The Great Cat Massacre
of July 1916, New York**

(72,000 cats killed)



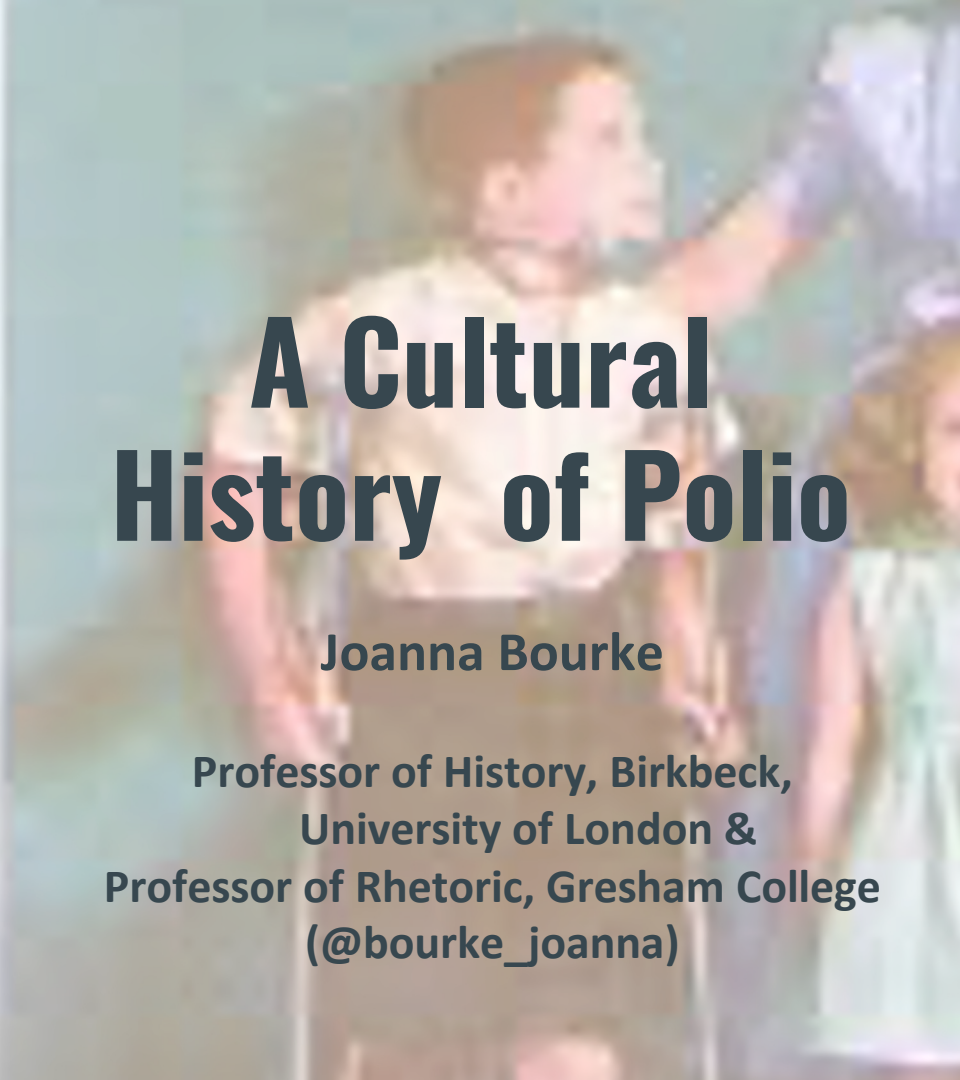
**72,000 CATS KILLED
IN PARALYSIS FEAR**



The Great Cat Massacre of July 1916, New York

(72,000 cats killed)

**Fear of infantile paralysis
or poliomyelitis**



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)

“The Crippler”

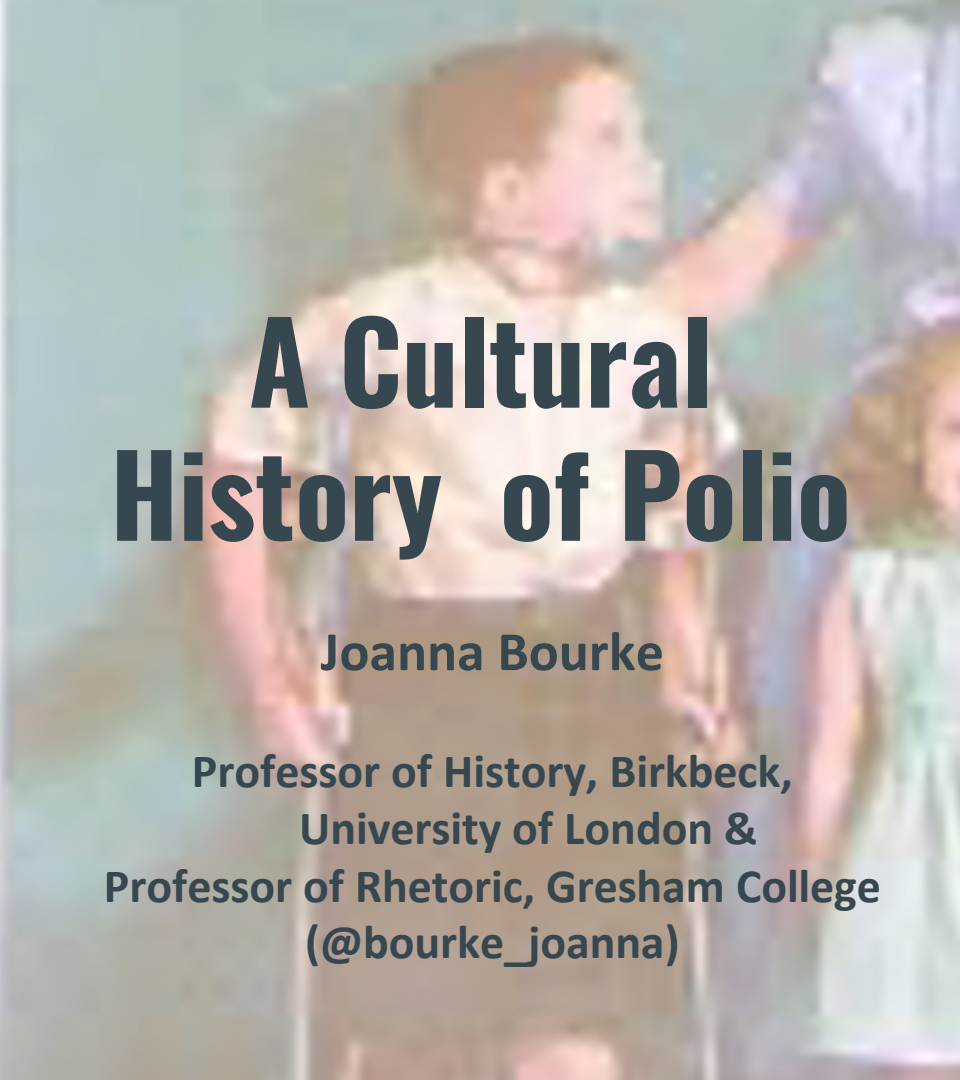
1916 Epidemic:

**more than 27,000 Americans
were infected.**

One third resided in New York.

80% under age five years.

$\frac{1}{4}$ died.



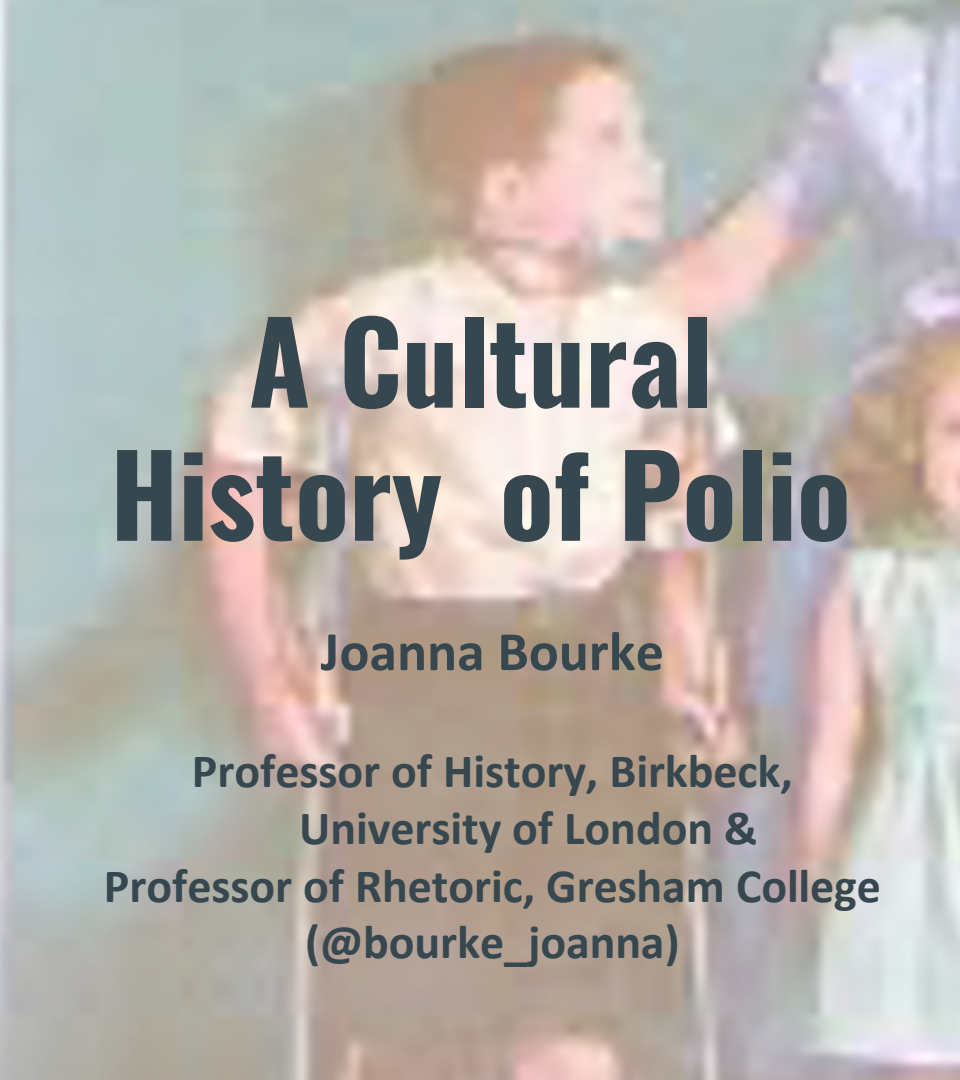
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**The Great Cat Massacre
of July 1916, New York**

(72,000 cats killed)



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

‘Pirate Cats’:

**Leader was Wang,
a ‘tailless mauve cat
from Formosa’**





A Cultural History of Polio



150+ movies referenced polio;
most famous is Hitchcock's "Rear
Window" (1954)

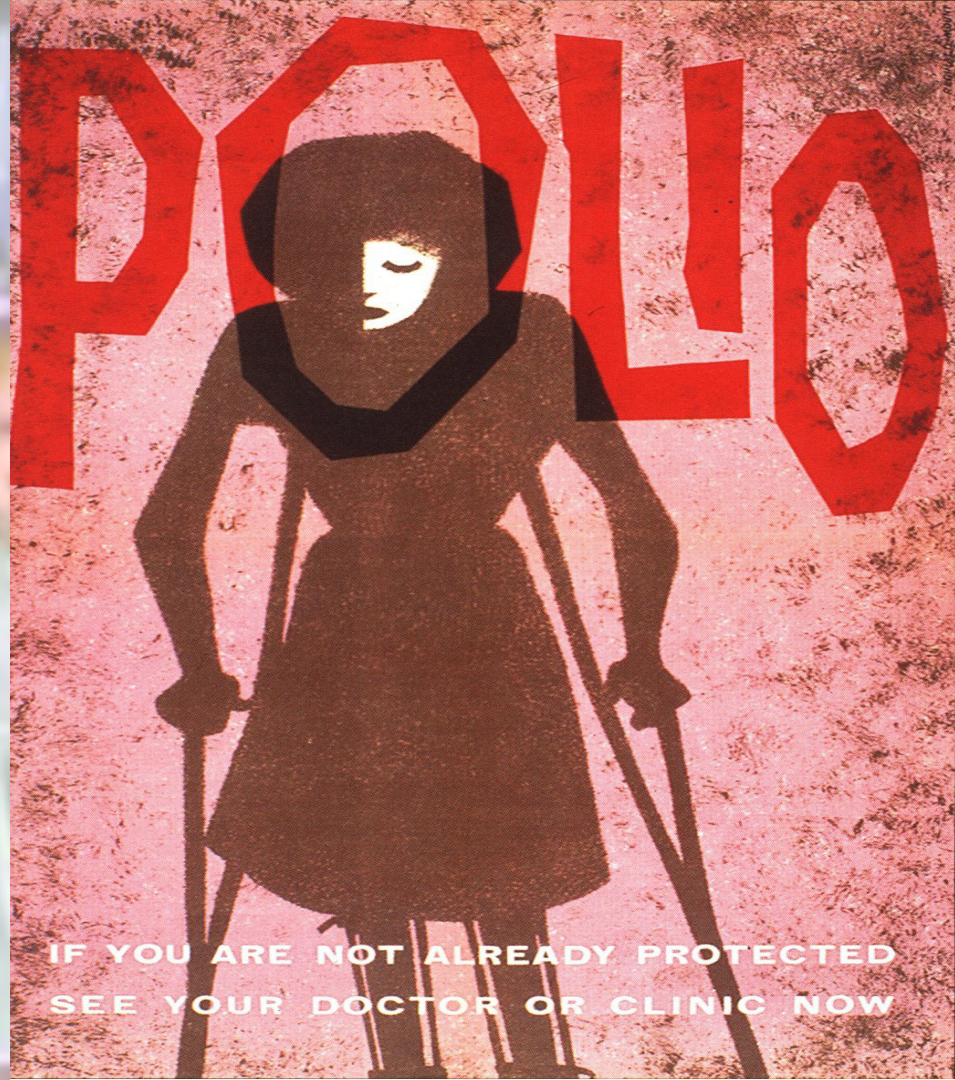




A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



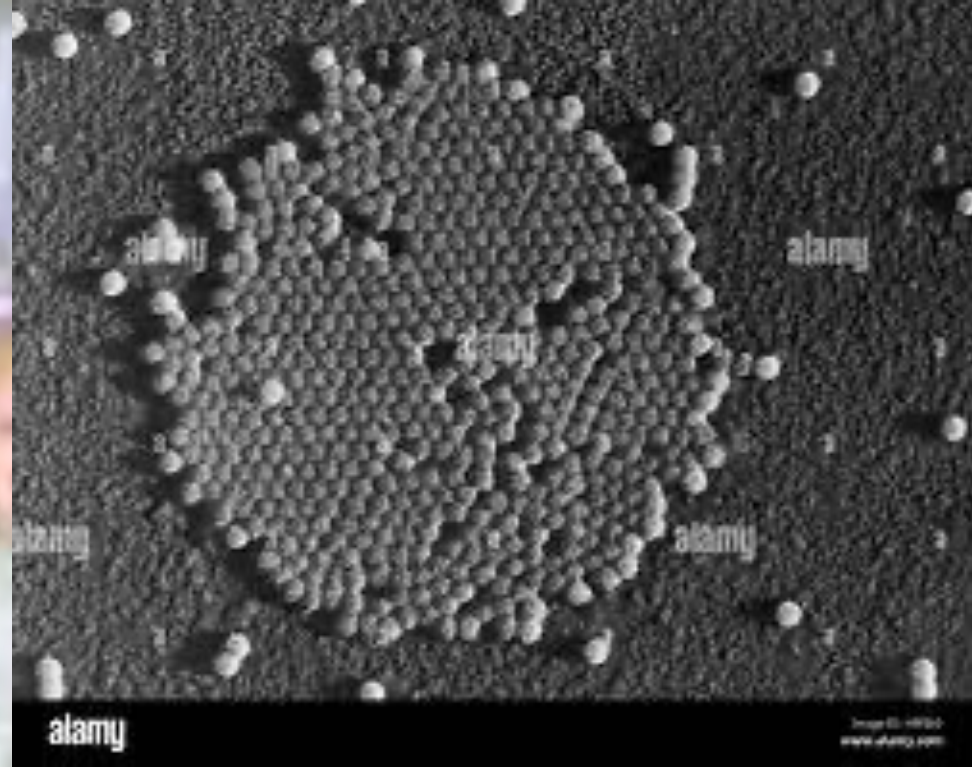
(From the Birmingham Age-Herald.)

KEEP HIM FROM YOUR CHILD.

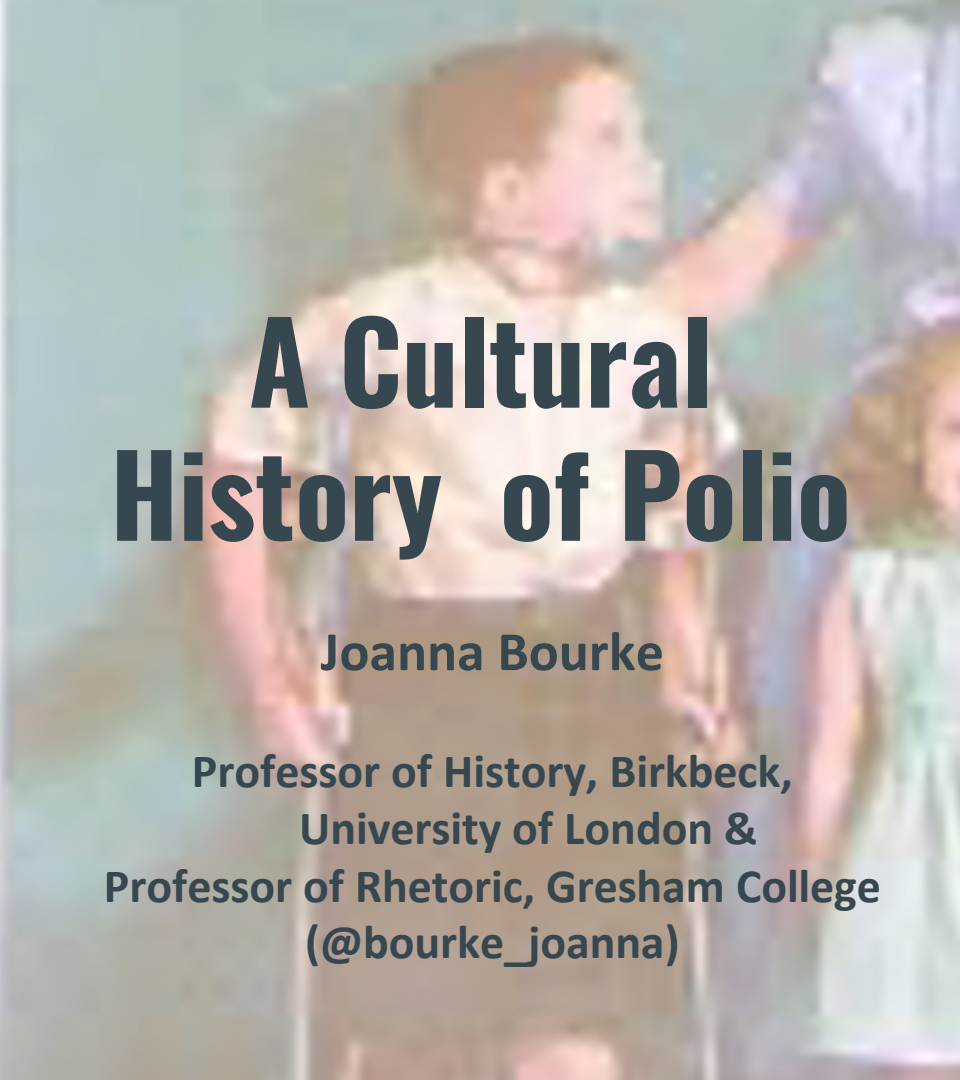
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



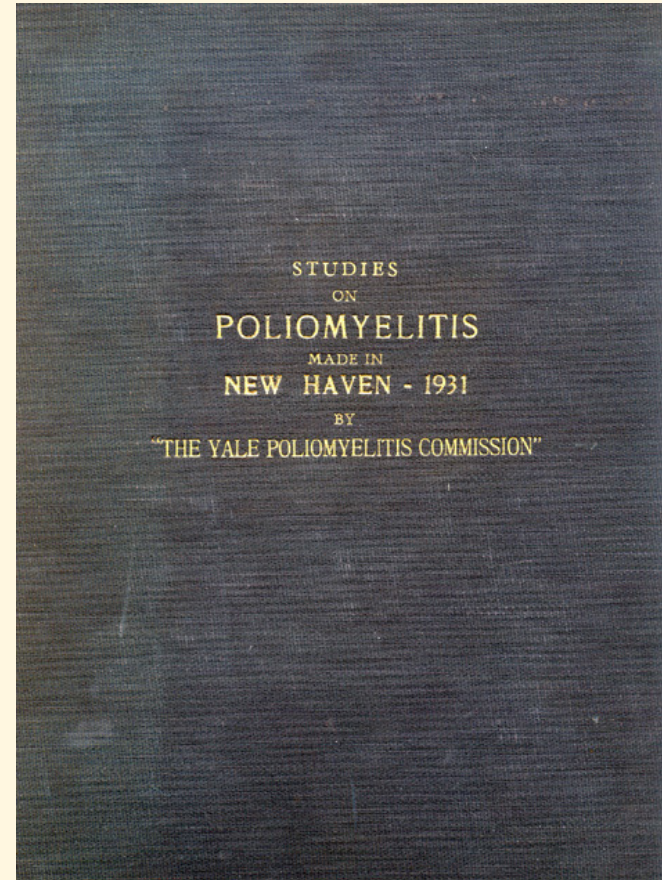
The polio virus



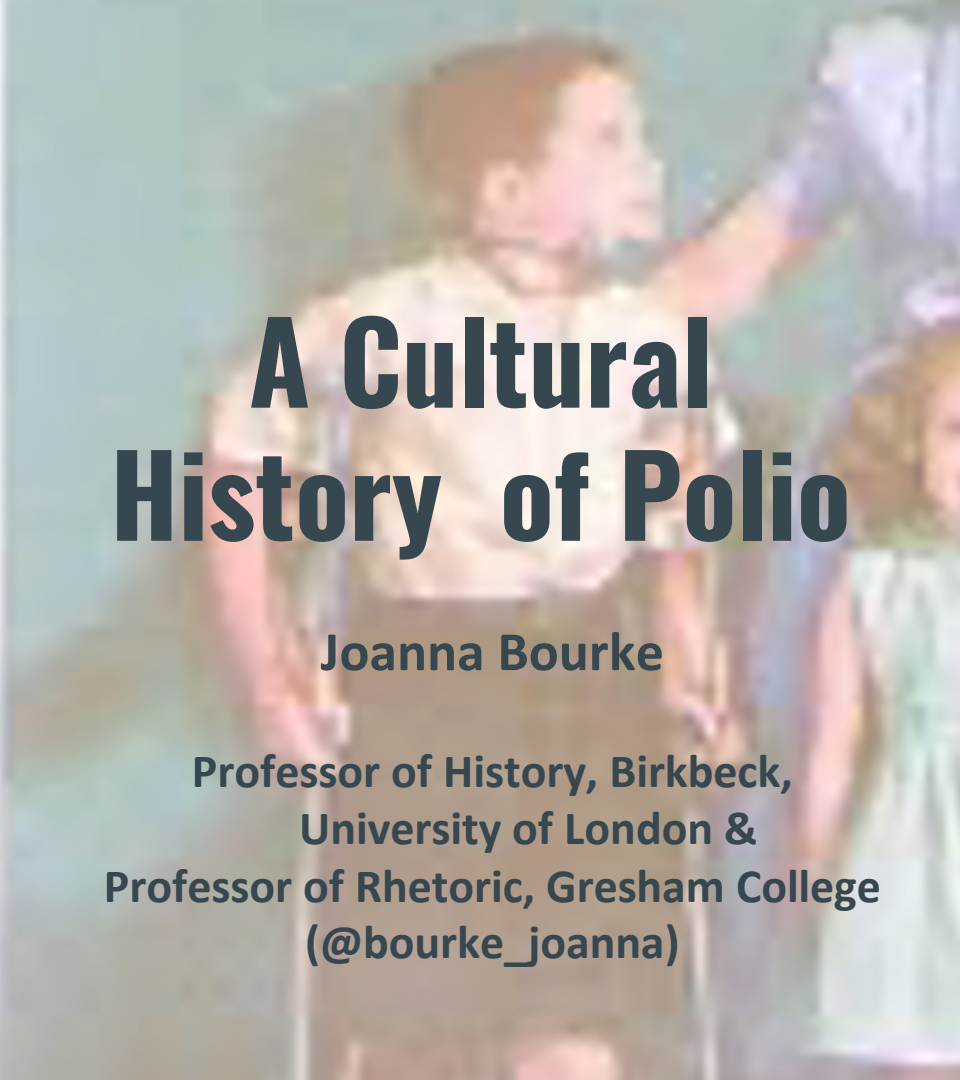
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



John Paul and James Trask



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**Polio outbreaks were a
direct outcome of the
sanitization of homes and
workplaces, making polio a
classic example of a disease
made worse by ‘progress’.**



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

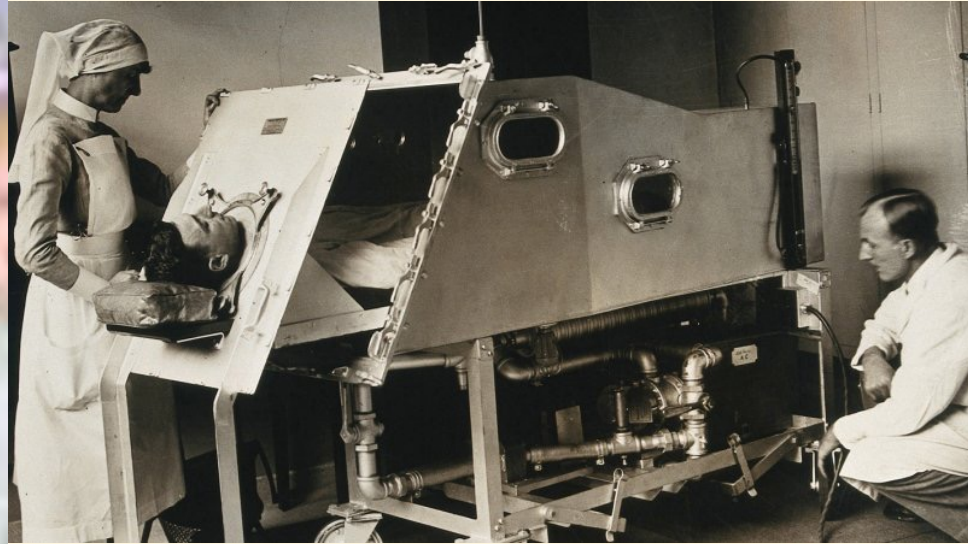
Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



Drinker Tank Respirator

A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



Sister Elizabeth Kenny:
from “deformity” to “disability”



ROSALIND RUSSELL · ALEXANDER KNOX

SISTER KENNY

with DEAN JAGGER

PHILIP MERIVALE · BEULAH BONDI · CHARLES DINGLE

Produced and Directed by DUDLEY NICHOLS • Screen Play by Dudley Nichols, Alexander Knox and Mary McCarthy



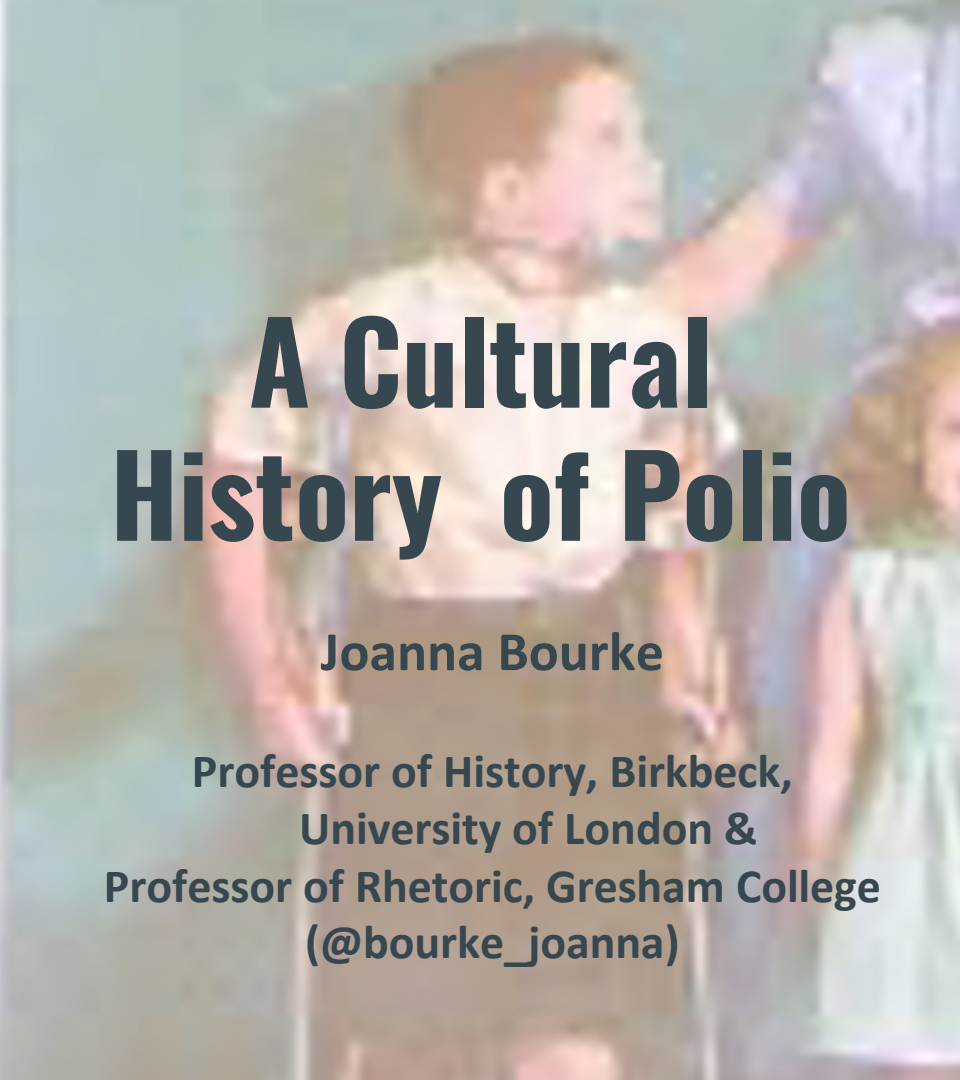
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)







A Cultural History of Polio

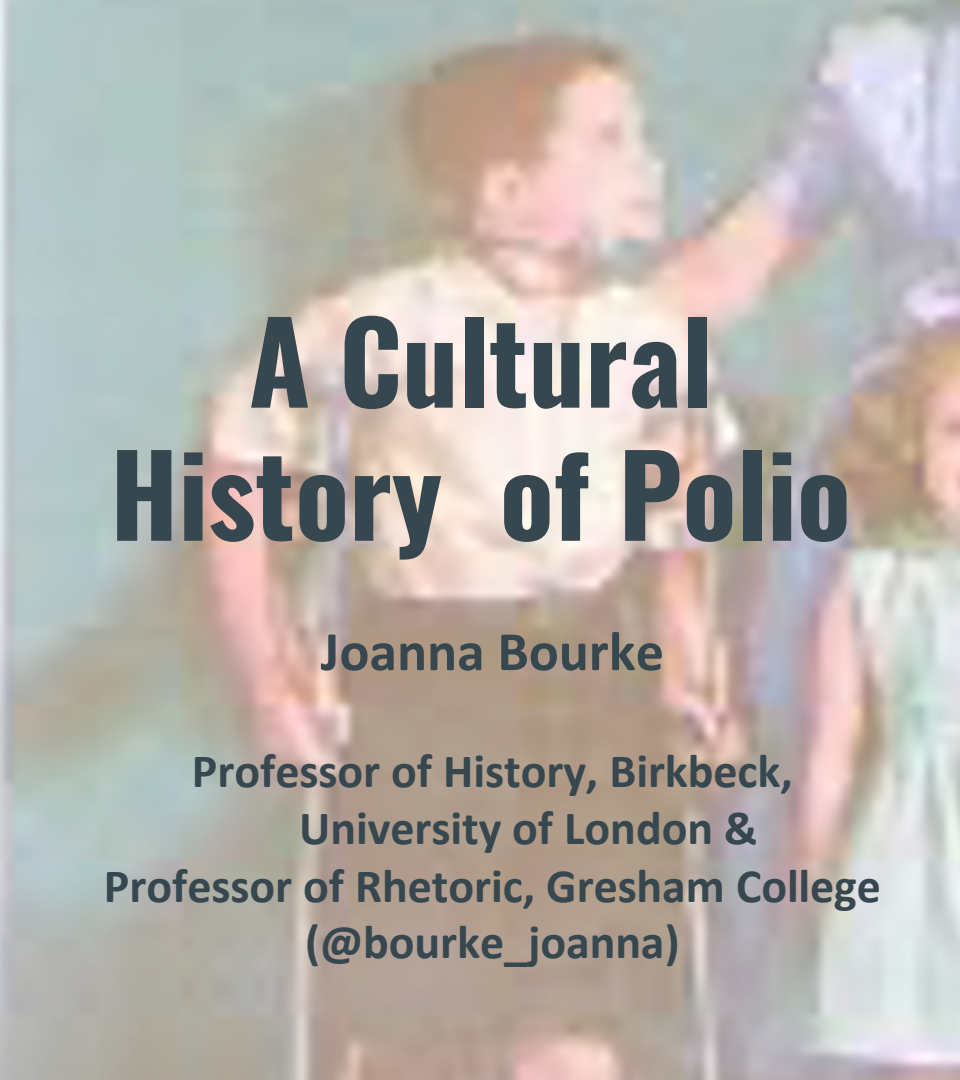
Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

Jim Marugg:

“I am not polio!

**I am bigger than this thing that
has happened to me!”**



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**“Tough love”,
the “right mental attitude”,
& “guts”**

"Look! I can walk again"



*Join the
MARCH
OF
DIMES*



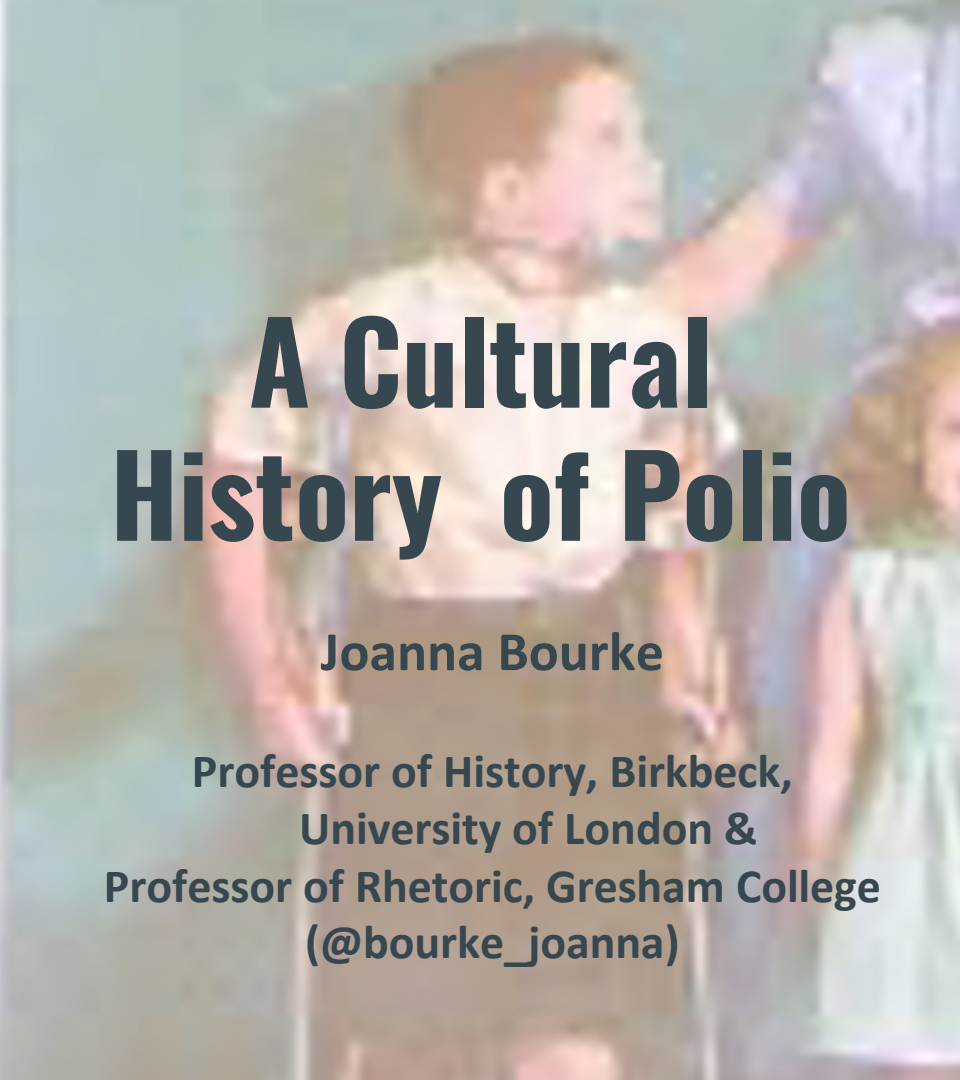
THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR INFANTILE PARALYSIS

COURAGE



STANLEY - KRAMER

AMERICA'S FIGHT AGAINST INFANTILE PARALYSIS



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

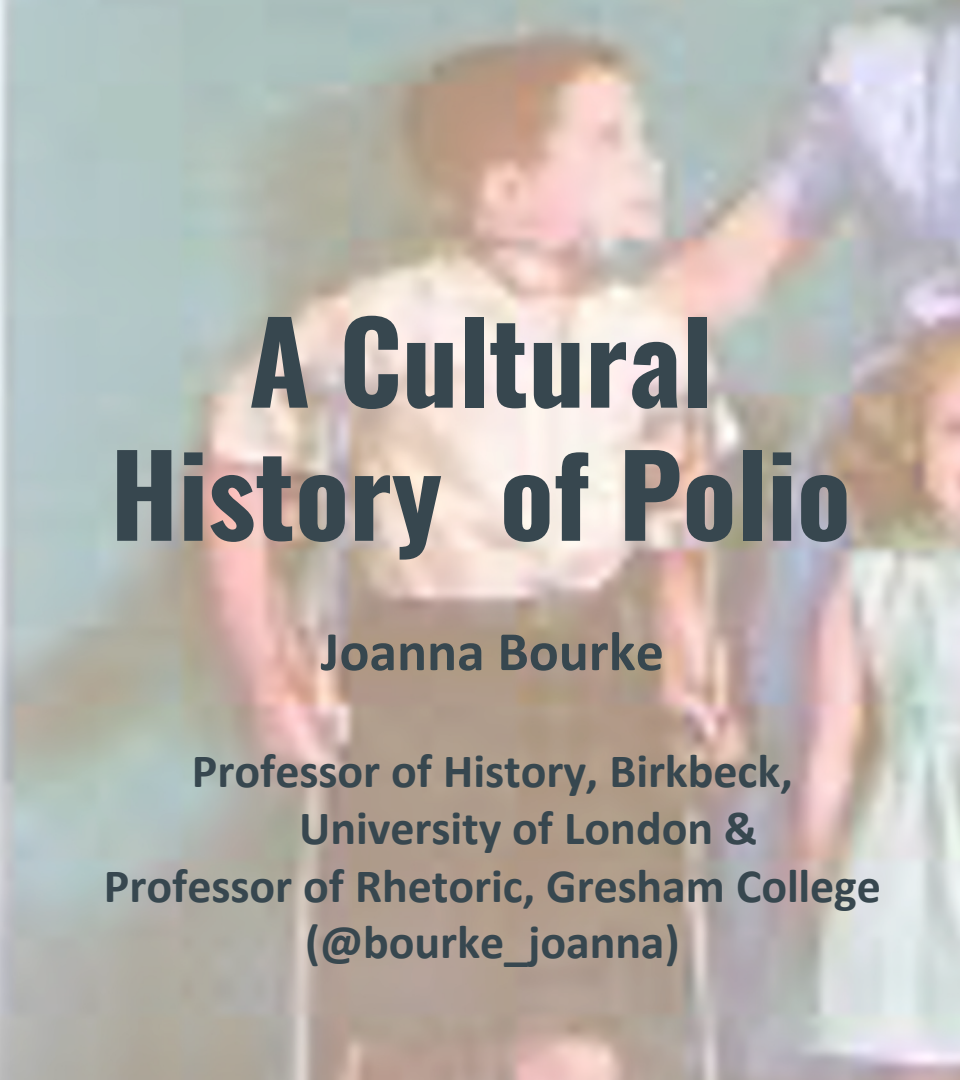
**Suffering is the “furnace”
that makes a person stronger**

A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)





A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**Artist Frida Kahlo (1913),
actress Connie Boswell (1910s),
actress Dinah Shore (1918),
blues singer Brownie McGee (1919),
folk singer Judy Collins (1950),
rock singer Ian Dury (1949),
folk singer Donovan (1949),
rock guitarist Neil Young (1951),
singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell (1951),
the reggae group Israel Vibration (1950s),
and so on**

A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



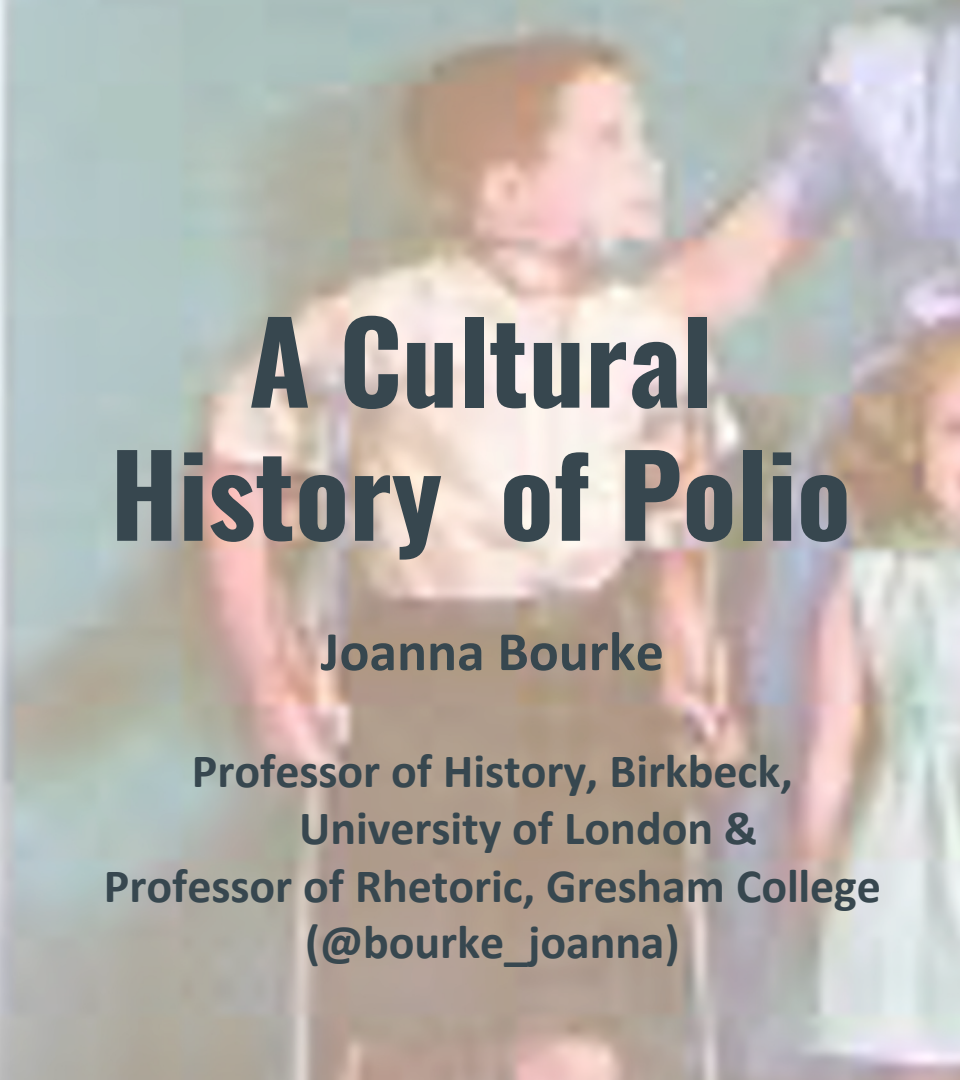
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

A medical drama that drew its oxygen from

- 1) the structure of U.S. health care system,**
- 2) the early growth of virology as a discipline,**
- 3) the politics of the Depression, and**
- 4) the Cold War.**

A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



Isabel Morgan



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)

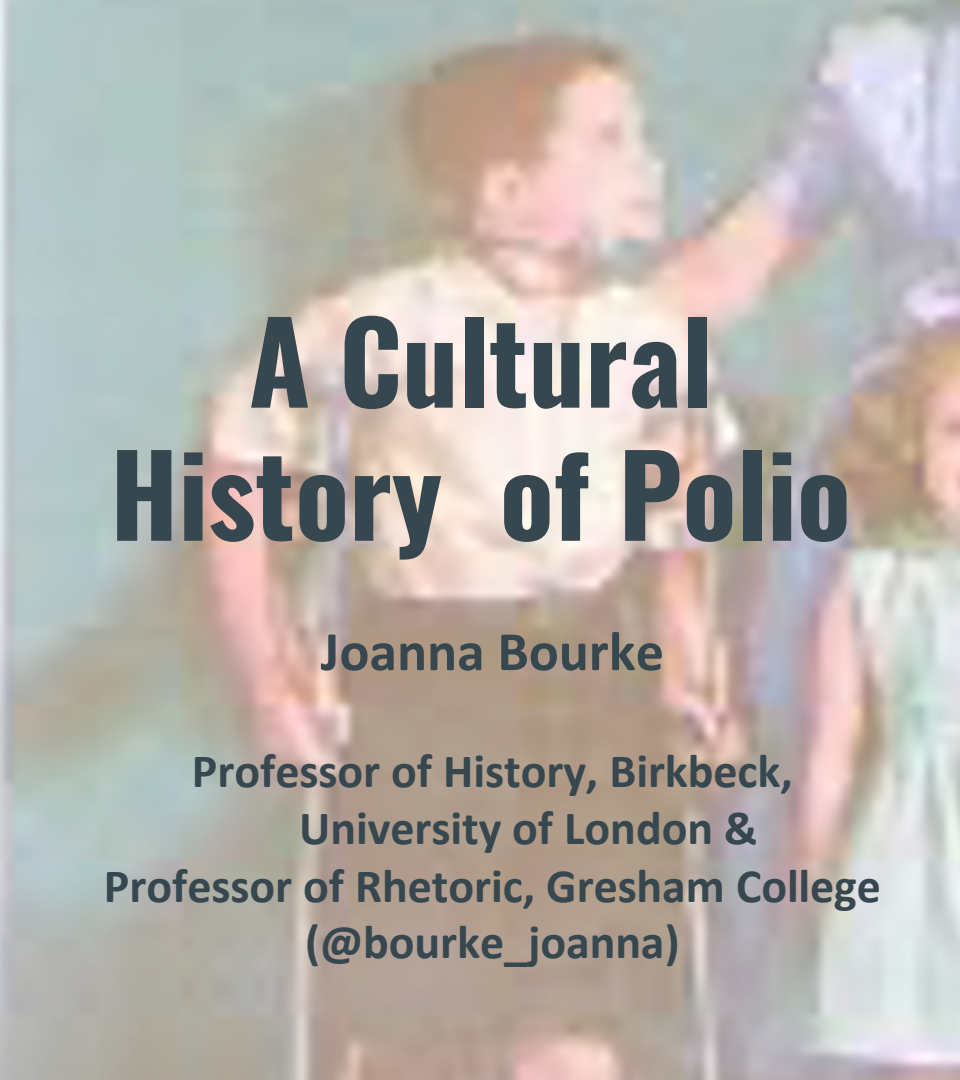


A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)





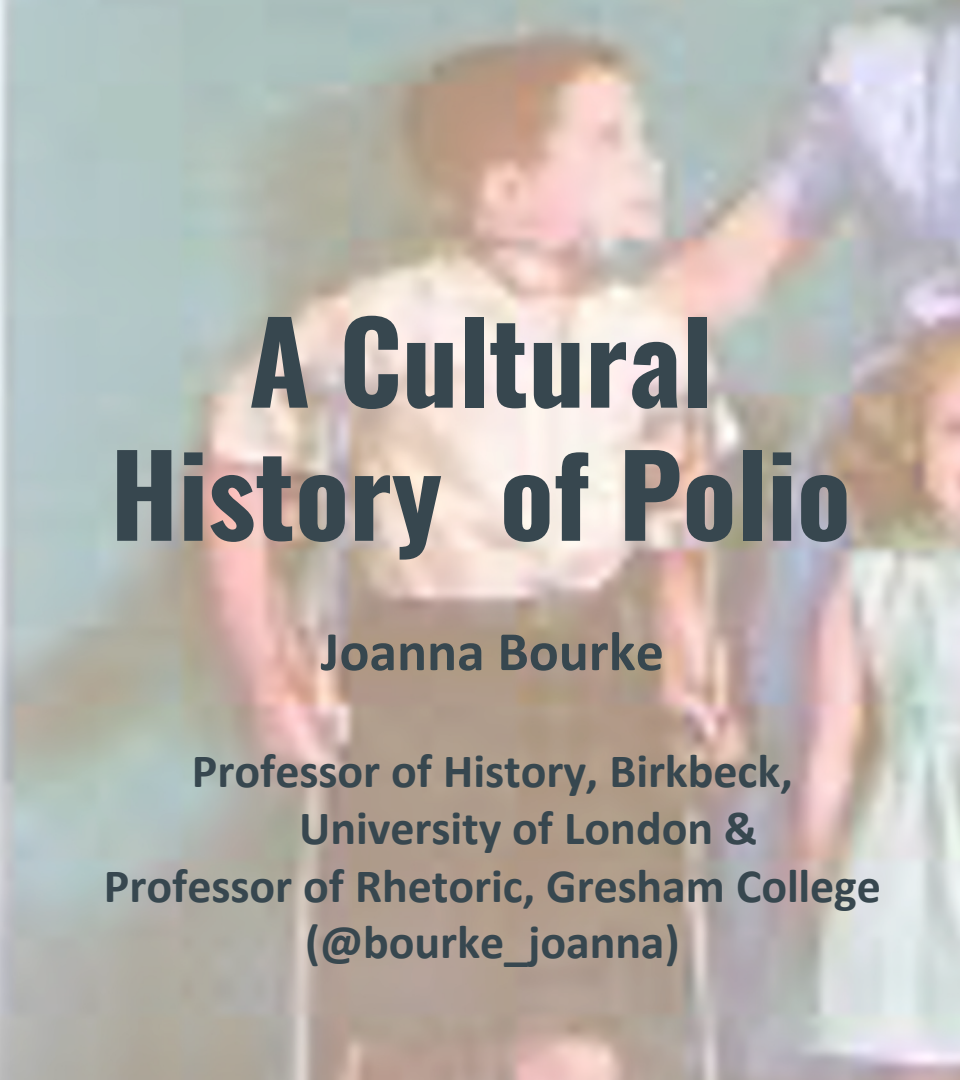
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

Vaccines worked:

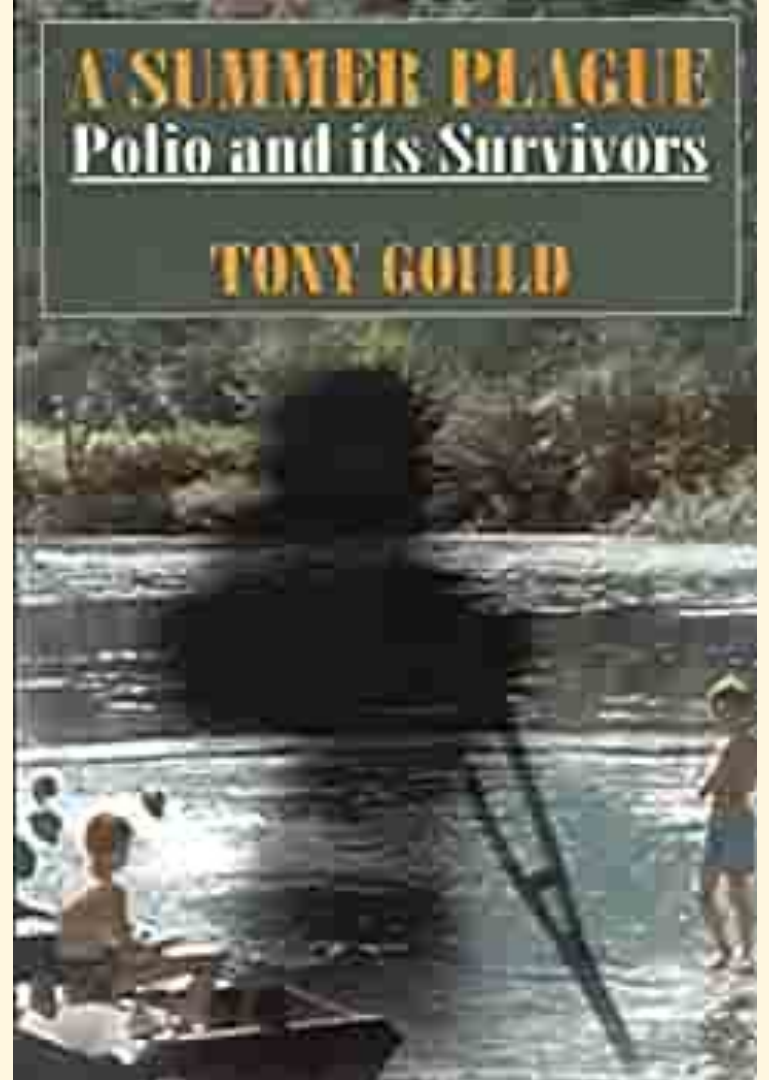
**by 1964, the incidence of polio
was below 0.1 cases per 100,000**



A Cultural History of Polio

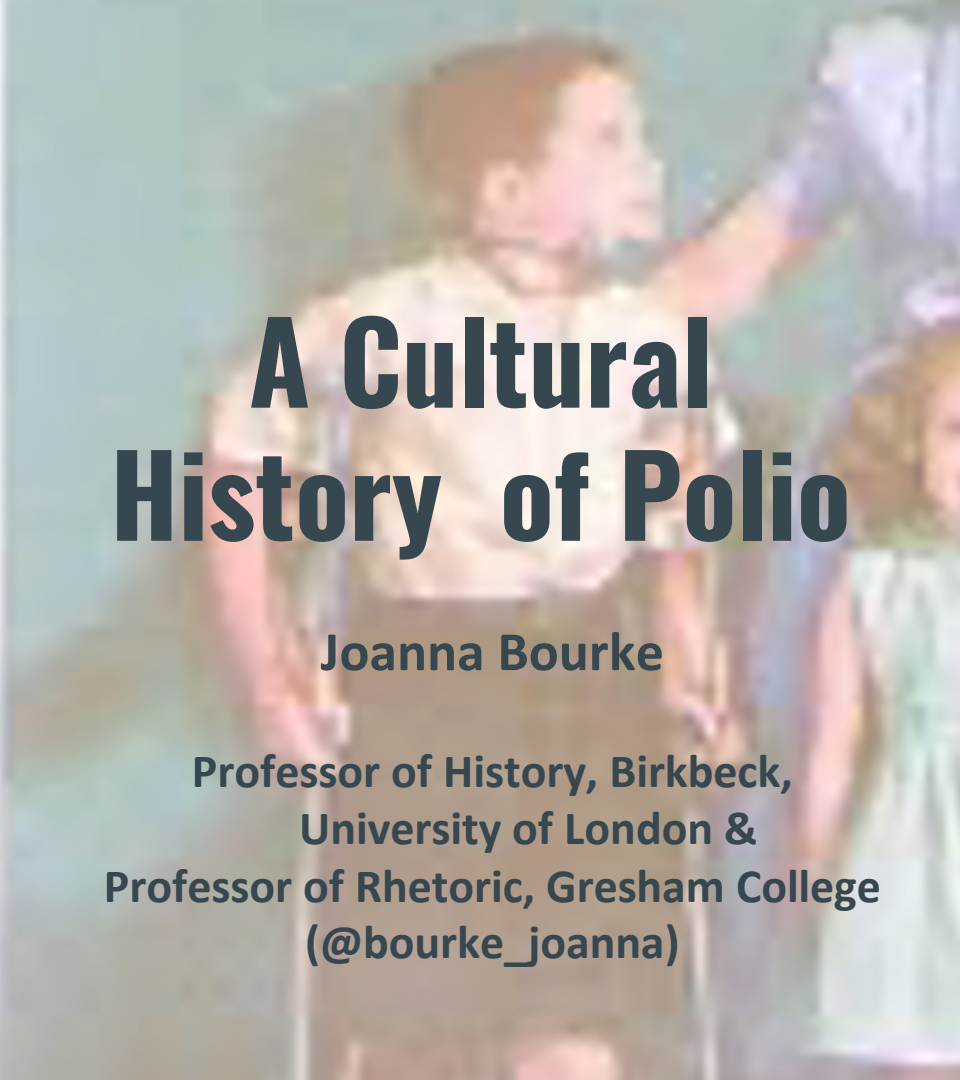
Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



A SUMMER PLAGUE
Polio and its Survivors

TONY GOULD



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**Pathographies
(or illness narratives):**

Too often they are “raced white”

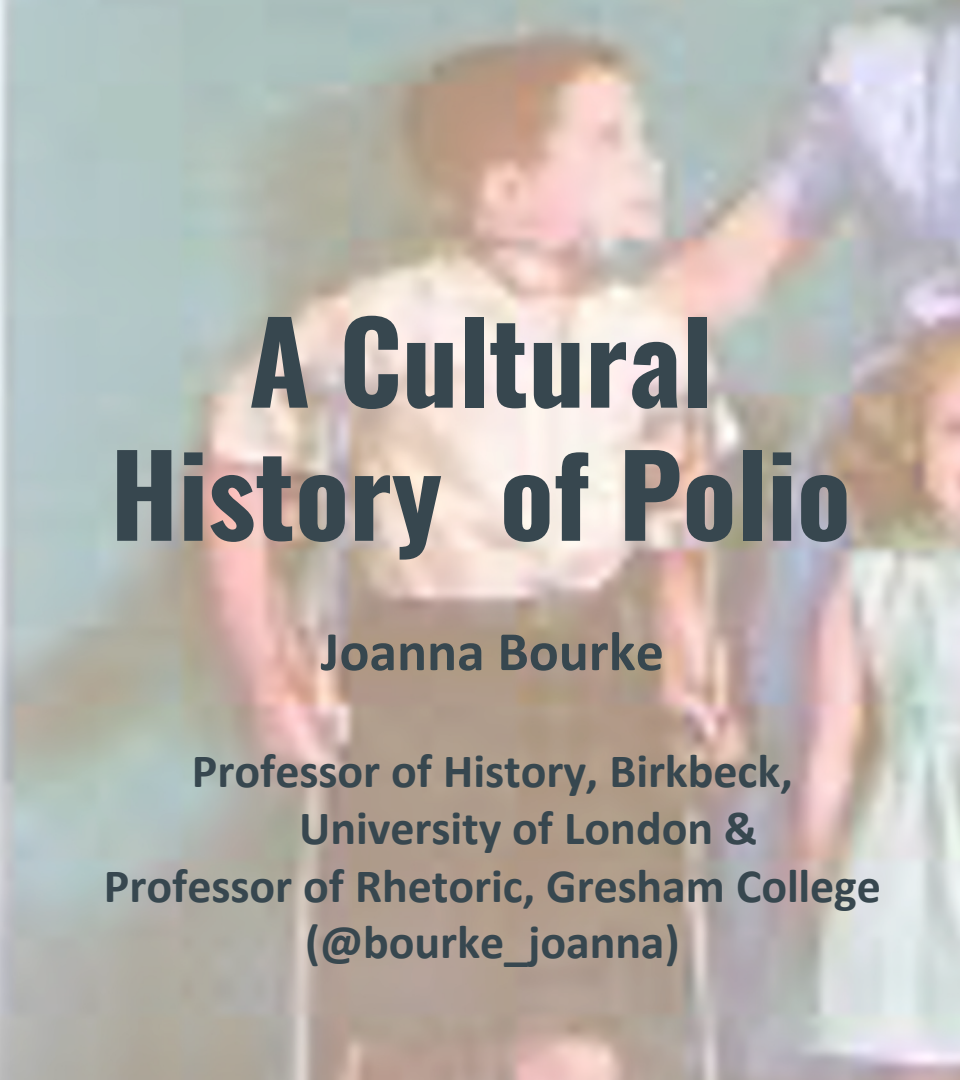
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)



**Segregation: Tuskegee Infantile
Paralysis Center**



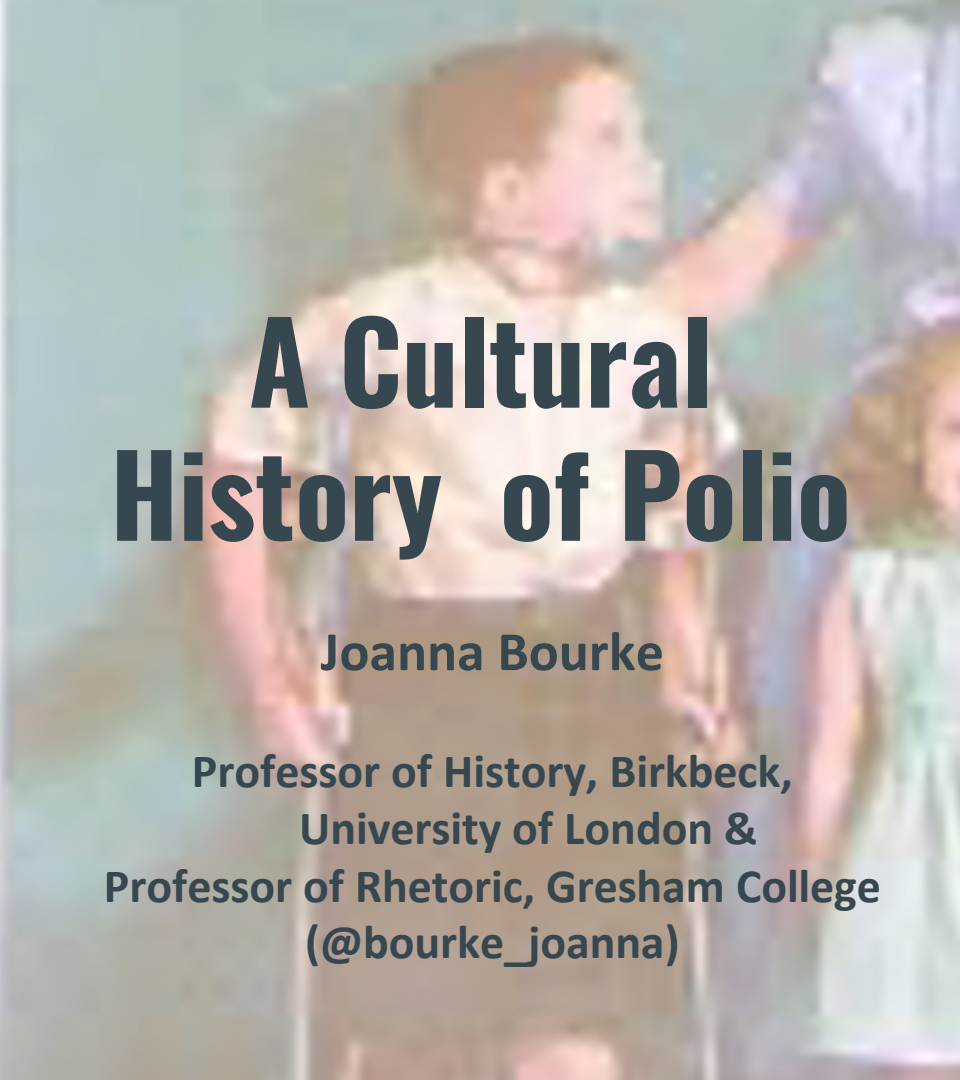
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

Able-ism

**Experiments that did not get
consent from participants**

A vintage, slightly faded photograph of a young boy and a girl. The boy, on the left, is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved shirt and dark shorts. He has a cast on his right arm and is holding a cane. The girl, on the right, is wearing a light-colored dress and is looking towards the boy. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting.

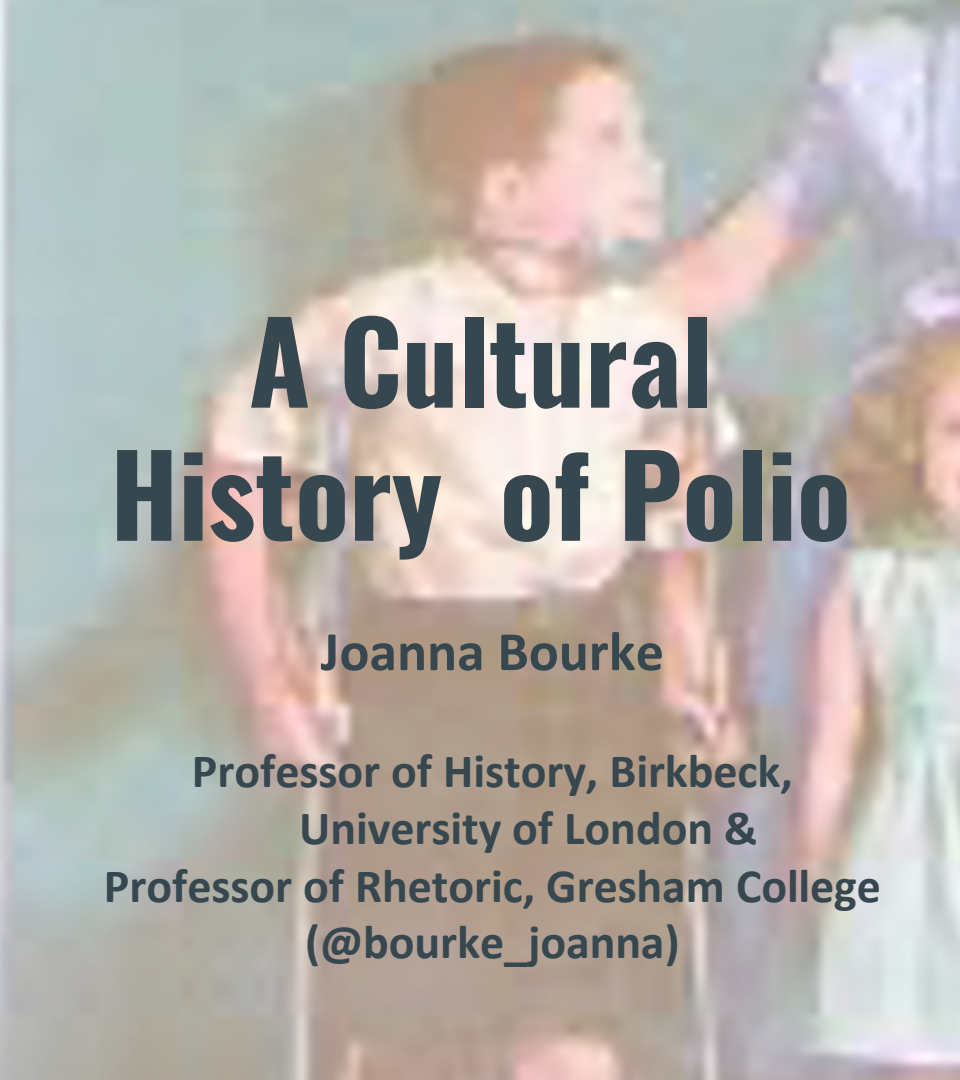
A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

Able-ism

**Disability and Patients' Rights
Movements**



A Cultural History of Polio

Joanna Bourke

**Professor of History, Birkbeck,
University of London &
Professor of Rhetoric, Gresham College
(@bourke_joanna)**

**A virus alone does not create a
‘disability’.**

**Rather, scientific ideologies,
public understandings, and
social policy all interact with the
virus to create a disease,
which is then made into a
‘disability’.**



A CULTURAL HISTORY OF POLIO

JOANNA BOURKE

● **LECTURE 2 OF 6**