



## DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTED USES

### DAVIS & KIDDER'S MAGNETO MACHINE

This early electro-therapeutic device produces alternating current electricity. Changing the cranking speed controls the strength and frequency of the current. A pair of solenoids that spin against the poles of a horseshoe magnet produce the electricity for the device. Gears and pulleys drive the spinning solenoids at a high rate of speed as the crank is turned.

If it had any affect at all could be attributed to the placebo effect. With the electric shocks coursing through his body, the patient felt reassured that "something was being done" about his problem. Electricity was a new and novel force in the 1800s and most patients had no prior exposure to it, adding to its curative mystique.

## SUGGESTED USES

1. When combined with the Dr. Fenner's Medicine bottle, the "Hooping Cough" medicine, and the "Pepto Mangan" Medicine bottle this item provides a more complete picture of "cures" available in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Why were these products dangerous? Why were they allowed on the market?
2. Utilize the artifact in combination with the context support document, "West's Electric Cure." What is the lure of electricity during this period? Does it still exist today? What are the equivalents of these products today?
3. Utilize any combination of the patent cures included on the site to lead into a discussion of the Pure Food and Drug Act. Why is that piece of legislation so important today? How does it protect us?