

Anthropology 349
Medical Anthropology
Hume Room 110
9:30 AM – 10:45 AM T Th
Fall 2011
University of Mississippi

Dr. Kate M. Centellas

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Course Description

How do people define and understand illness? Bodily integrity? Belief and healing? How does technology impact our understanding of these issues? These are some of the questions we examine in medical anthropology. During the semester, we develop & apply anthropological concepts to understand health, illness, and medical healing practices in diverse socio-cultural contexts. These concepts include: ideas of the body; personhood; reproduction; illness; deviance; cosmetic surgery; distrust of public health measures like vaccines; the medicalization of healing; “alternative” medicine; and Western biomedicine and biopower.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Understand the diversity socio-cultural beliefs about illness and medicine
2. Relate these beliefs to global trends and processes
3. Use anthropological concepts to analyze social issues relating to medicine and healing practices
4. Read, analyze, and critique ethnographic writing

Course Units

This course is structured in six units, with each unit lasting 2 or 3 weeks:

- Introduction
- Cultures, Controversies, and Medical Traditions
- Illness, Healing, and Medical Pluralism
- Biomedicine & Biopower
- Reproduction, Globalization and the Self
- Body Politics and Perfectibility

Required Readings

Course materials include full-length ethnographies, an analytic textbook, journal articles, websites, radio programs, and documentary films. You are expected to bring your assigned readings to class for discussion. All articles are available on Blackboard for downloading. Links are also provided to websites, streaming video, and radio podcasts. You can find these in a folder for the unit under "Course Documents."

The following books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore and via Amazon:

Browner, Carole and Carolyn F. Sargent. 2011. *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Edmonds, Alexander. 2010. *Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lock, Margaret and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2010. *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Petryna, Adriana. 2009. *When Experiments Travel: Clinical Trials and the Global Search for Human Subjects*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sikkink, Lynn. 2009. *New Cures, Old Medicines: Women and the Commercialization Of Traditional Medicine in Bolivia*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Assignments

1. Response Papers (4)

Students will submit **FOUR** critical response papers. These should be 1-2 pages each and are due by 5 PM **THURSDAY**, as indicated on the syllabus. There are no prompts for these. You should focus on developing a particular concept or theme that stands out for you from the unit's readings, or critiquing an author's conclusions and argument. You may hand these in via email or hard copy in a folder on my office door. If you email them, you will **not** receive a paper copy with comments. Instead, I will use the comment feature in Word to provide feedback and return the document via email.

2. Analytic Essays (2)

There are **TWO** analytic essays throughout the semester. Students are required to select one essay prompt from a list of several and answer it using course readings and concepts. Your essays should be approximately 7 pages long (12 point font, double-spaced, typed, 1 inch margins) and must synthesize concepts and material from different units.

3. Final Examination (1)

There is a final examination for this class. I will ask you to think creatively and synthetically about course concepts. It will be **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8th at 8 AM**. It will not be a written in-class examination, but a combination of presentations and ethnographic discussion.

4. Discussion & Participation

Students are expected to be active participants in the classroom. You will each choose one class day to be discussion leader. You need to prepare a short summary of the readings and present this to the class, along with some questions for discussion. This is worth 10% of your grade. The remainder of your participation component is based on discussion and engagement with course materials, for 15% of your final grade (total participation = 25% final grade)

5. Extra Credit

Throughout the course there are optional readings & materials posted on Blackboard. Extra credit can be earned by writing no more than **TWO** additional response papers that focus on these materials. If you would like credit for two response papers, one must come from the first set of additional materials (up to 10/06) and one must come from the second set. I will use these to replace your lowest grade(s) on the response papers. Please note that there are some weeks without additional materials. As the course proceeds I may add interesting or relevant readings to Blackboard. I will discuss them in class and announce that they have been posted, at which point they are available for an extra-credit response paper. The deadline for the first extra credit paper is 10/13, the second 12/1.

Grading

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|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Attendance and Participation: | | 25% |
| Response Papers | 4 * 5%: | 20% |
| Analytic Essays | 2 * 20%: | 40% |
| Final Exam | 1 * 15%: | 15% |

Please be aware that any instance of plagiarism will result in a 0 for the assignment at minimum.

This course is graded on the new +/- scale. The scale is:

93-100: A
90-92: A-
87-89: B+
83-86: B
80-82: B-
77-79: C+
73-76: C
70-72: C-
69 and below: D
59 and below: F

If you are borderline, i.e. 79.5, the decision to round up or down will be based primarily upon your participation grade.

Late Policy

I do not accept late papers. The only exceptions are if you have a doctor's note or a note from your advisor. If you miss a response paper, you cannot write an extra credit one to make it up. The extra credit assignments only replace **submitted** response papers.

Participation

This course is both discussion and lecture based. Your participation in class activities is vital for your understanding (and enjoyment) of the material. A good participation grade is based on **engagement** with course themes in class. I encourage you to bring in examples from your lives, to mention anything that made you think of course themes, and try to expand course ideas to your understanding of the world around you. Evidence for this includes: asking questions about the material; answering questions posed by myself and other students; referencing interesting or puzzling popular examples such as magazine articles or T.V. shows in discussion; and respecting others' opinions.

Technology Policy

I encourage you to use e-readers, digital versions of the texts, and so on. You may take notes in class via iPad, tablet, or laptop. However, the use of technology in class is **for class purposes only**. If I catch you texting, chatting, or watching Netflix in class I will a) ask you to leave and b) request that you do not use your device for the next class period.

Student Responsibilities

Along with the course readings, assignments, and class attendance, you are expected to know and understand the material on the syllabus. I **do no respond to** questions that are clearly answered on the syllabus or on Blackboard (e.g. "what's the reading?") Always check your syllabus, then Blackboard if you have a question!

In addition, there may be changes to the syllabus as the course proceeds. If this occurs, I will a) post an announcement on Blackboard b) announce the change in class and c) send an email to everyone informing them of the change.

Statement on Accommodations

I am happy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities when necessary. It is the responsibility of any student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation to contact the Office of Student Disability Services (915-7128). SDS will then contact the instructor through the student by means of an Instructor Notification of Classroom Accommodations form.

Office Hours

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas about the material come and talk to me. I prefer to work with students in person (not over email) whenever possible. I have an "open door" office hours policy, meaning you can come to my office during these times with no appointment. If you cannot make these times, send me an email and we can arrange an alternate time.

Blackboard and Email

You are expected to check your email. I will send reminders and important notices to your Ole Miss account. I have posted the syllabus on Blackboard and additional readings on Blackboard. Anything in the course schedule identified as an article will be on BB in the folder corresponding to the week it is assigned. I will add PowerPoints, additional materials, and handouts as the semester proceeds.

A heads up: I do not keep the late hours many of you do! Therefore, if you email me late at night (after about 8 PM) I will likely not receive or respond to your email until the next day.

Course Schedule

| Week and Unit/Theme | Tuesday | Thursday | Additional Assignments & Materials |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Introduction What is illness? medicine? | 8/23 Welcome and orientation | 8/25 Text: Ch. 1 & Ch 3 (skim Ch. 2) | None |
| 2. Introduction What is biomedicine? | 8/30 Article: Whyte, "Identity & Subjectivity." | 9/1 Schneider, S. "Radical Remedies." Presenter: ERIN | None |
| 3. Cultures, Controversies, and Medical Traditions | 9/6 Text: Ch. 6 Article: Izquierdo, C. "When Health is Not Enough." | 9/8 Articles: Greenway, C. "Healing Soul Loss" Pylypa, J. "Healing Herbs and Dangerous Doctors" Presenter: HANNAH | Spend time exploring the Frontline website on AIDS. Watch an episode, listen to interviews, read articles (linked on BB), Also: Optional Reading on BB: Nguyen, V-K. "Antiretroviral Globalism." |
| 4. Cultures, Controversies, and Medical Traditions | 9/13 In-Class Film: "Frontline: The Vaccine Wars." | 9/15 Article: Blume, S. "Antivaccination Movements" Presenter: ANGELA | Response #1 DUE THURSDAY Listen to This American Life story on the Frontline website (linked on BB) |
| 5. Illness, Healing, and Medical Pluralism | 9/20 Text: Ch. 4 | 9/22 Book: | |

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| | | Sikkink, L. New Cures Old Medicines Ch 1-3 Presenter: NATALIE | |
| 6. Illness, Healing, and Medical Pluralism | 9/27 New Cures Ch. 4-6 | 9/29 New Cures – end Presenter: JASMINE | FIRST ESSAY PROMPTS DISTRIBUTED 9/27 |
| 7. Biomedicine & Biopower | 10/4 Text: Ch 7 | 10/6 Petryna, A. When Experiments Travel: Intro & Ch. 1 (through p. 46) Presenter: MARY MARGARET | FIRST ESSAY DUE 10/4 IN CLASS |
| 8. Biomedicine & Biopower | 10/11 WET: Ch. 2 & 3 | 10/13 WET: Ch 4 – Conclusion Presenter: KATHERINE | 2nd RESPONSE PAPER DUE 10/13 10/13 DEADLINE for first extra credit Article: Lakoff, A. “The Private Life of Numbers.” |
| 9. Biomedicine & Biopower | 10/18 In-class video: Frontline: The Medicated Child | 10/20 Article: Timmermans, S. “Intellectual Property Rights” Giovanni et al. “Do pharmaceuticals displace local knowledge?” Presenter: JANIE | NYT articles: “Can Preschoolers be Depressed?” and “BPA Plastic” |
| 10. Reproduction & Globalization | 10/25 Text Ch. 8, 10 | 10/27 Browner & Sargent, “Towards Global Anthropological Studies of Reproduction.” Ch. 1 in RG & S Presenter: SARAH | 3rd Response Paper DUE 10/27 Article: Roberts, E. “Extra Embryos.” |
| 11. Reproduction & Globalization | 11/1 Chapters 2, 3, & 12 in RG & S | 11/3 4S Chapters 6, 14 in RG & S | Article: Scheper-Hughes, N. “The Last Commodity.” |

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| | | | NYT Articles "Kosovo Organ Trafficking" Text: Skim Ch. 9 |
| 12. Reproduction & Globalization | 11/8 Chapters 4, 5 IN RG & S | 11/10 Chapters 8, 9, 13 in RG & S Presenter: LINDSEY | 2nd ESSAY PROMPT DISTRIBUTED 11/8 |
| 13. Body Politics & Perfectibility | 11/15 Pretty Modern: Introduction – p. 89 | 11/17 NO CLASS, I will be attending the AAAs | 2nd ESSAY DUE 11/15 in CLASS Optional: A Necessary Vanity blog entry (on BB) |
| 14 THANKSGIVING | 11/22 NO CLASS | 11/25 NO CLASS | |
| 15 Body Politics & Perfectibility | 11/29 Pretty Modern: p. 89 - 162 | 12/1 Pretty Modern: 162-end Presenter: JAMES | 4th Response Paper DUE 12/1 |

FINAL EXAM THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8th at 8 AM.