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Tue/Fri 12:35-1:55
Hickman 127

Medical Anthropology

Course Description

In reality, if medicine is the science of the healthy as well as of the ill human being (which is what it ought to be), what other science is better suited to propose laws as the basis of the social structure, in order to make effective those which are inherent in man himself? Once medicine is established as anthropology, and once the interests of the privileged no longer determine the course of public events, the physiologist and the practitioner will be counted among the elder statesmen who support the social structure. Medicine is a social science in its very bone and marrow....

Rudolph Virchow, *Die Einheitsbestrebungen*, 1849

Medical anthropology examines the body, health, illness, healing, and therapeutics across a broad range of cultural contexts, geographic locations, and historical trajectories. It takes as its basic premise the notion that human suffering and wellbeing are shaped by the interplay of complex biological, social, environmental, economic, and political processes. This course introduces students to the methods, concerns, and approaches of this sub-discipline. It asks: what is specific to the way medicine “thinks” its objects and objectives? How are medical ways of thinking linked to other kinds of social, political, and economic structures? How do new technologies of health raise new kinds of questions about ethic, the body, and what it means to be “human”? In the first part of this course, students will develop an overview of the perspectives that medical anthropology brings to the field of health research, and the underlying questions that drive that work. The second half of the semester will draw on a series of full length ethnographies that examine new technologies on the global stage. Reading these works will enable students to examine not only the ways medical research and innovation play out in varying contexts across the world, and through the human life-cycle, but also to develop an understanding of the links between anthropological research questions, methods, and findings.

Course Objectives

- To provide students with the knowledge they need to identify, and explain the fundamental concepts, modes of analysis, and central questions of medical anthropology and to help students demonstrate proficiency in their use of this knowledge.
- To provide students with concrete knowledge of the construction of peoples’

practices, beliefs, and life-ways, paying particular attention to the construction of knowledge related to illness and health.

- To help students gain proficiency in the use of critical thinking skills in their assessment of articles and ethnographic writing.
- To help students increase their ability to express themselves knowledgably and proficiently in writing about central issues in medical anthropology.
- To help students improve their expression and proficiency in speaking about central issues in medical anthropology.
- To help students prepare for life in a diverse and global world by providing them with perspectives and skills for thinking critically about difference and their place within an increasingly integrated world.

Course Requirements:

Your final grade will be based on attendance, completion of ALL your assignments, participation in class activities, and participation in online discussions. Weight distribution of each assignment and a description of their requirements and aims are as follows:

Class attendance and participation

25%

Attendance and participation are required. You must come to class with the assignments completed on time, engage in class discussions and activities, and participate in online discussion (as described in the next section) to receive credit for this portion of your final grade. This portion of your effort will be used to assess your ability to communicate key ideas and to hone your skills at getting to the heart of an argument.

Three Essay Assignments

75% (25% each)

Students will be required to write three short (5-7 page) essays. One of the 3 will analyze an illness narrative (further details to be discussed in class). The other two assignments are TBD, but will involve developing an analysis of independently gathered research material drawing on texts from the course.

Course Policies

In addition to adhering to the Rutgers University Policies and Procedures http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg21708.html, students are expected to adhere to the following course-specific policies:

Workload: This class meets 3 hours per week. **Students can expect 2 hours of outside work for every hour of classroom instruction.** This amounts to **9 hours of work each week for this course.** If you are taking a full-load of courses (15 or more credits), this means that my expectation is that you will be spending 45 or more hours of time in class and doing work for your classes outside of scheduled class times. *Please consider this*

when, in the first week of the semester, you are deciding whether or not this is the right course for you.

Students are responsible for finishing work on time and attending exams.

- All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. The dates and material in this syllabus may be subject to change, so listen carefully to announcements in class.
- In accordance with University policy, make-up exams are permitted only in highly unusual circumstances. A student who misses an exam must notify me of the reason for the absence within twenty-four hours of the exam. Pre-existing travel arrangements do not constitute an acceptable excuse for missing an exam. Anyone who misses an exam and does not notify me within twenty-four hours will receive no points on that exam. Permission to take a make-up exam requires documentation of the reason for absence from a Dean and/or a physician.
- Assignments that are handed in late will be penalized one letter grade per day (i.e. from an A to an B, a B+ to a C+, etc).
- I do not accept e-mailed submissions of written work. Print out a hard copy and bring it to class when it is due.

Policy on Cell Phones, Text Messaging, and Laptops: Cell phones, text messaging devices, and laptops must be turned off during class except with special permission from your instructor.

Attendance and Participation:

Because this is a college course, attendance and participation are required.

- Your active participation will be gauged by your participation in class discussion, class exercises, and, if necessary, pop quizzes.
- You are allowed two excused absences (see below for absences considered excused). Use your “free” absences for illness or true emergencies.
- Any unexcused absences (see below for absences considered excused) will result in a deduction of 3 points from your attendance and participation grade.
- Please review the syllabus before scheduling trips, job interviews, or appointments as I will not accept these as valid reasons for missing class, assignment due dates, or exams (see exception directly below).
- If you know now that you will be missing a class because of a **prior commitment**, see me during **the first week of classes**. I will count prior commitments brought to me during this time as excused absences.

- It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences and to know when you are in danger of incurring the absence penalty.
- It is also your responsibility to ensure that your name appears on daily attendance sheets.
- Arrangements for makeup work can be made by speaking with the instructor.
- The recognized grounds for absences (i.e., “Excused Absences”) are:
 - (1) Illness requiring medical attention.
 - (2) Curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty.
 - (3) Personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid.
 - (4) Recognized religious holidays.
 - (5) Severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.

It is the policy of the university to excuse without penalty students who are absent because of religious observance or participation in intercollegiate athletics, and to allow the makeup of work missed because of such absences. A student absent from an examination because of required religious observance will be given an opportunity to make up the examination without penalty. If you will be observing any religious holidays or participating in intercollegiate athletics events this semester which will prevent you from attending a regularly scheduled class or interfere with fulfilling any course requirement, I will offer you the opportunity to make up the class or course requirement. Make-up assignments must be completed and turned in within one week of such an absence.

It is the general policy of the university not to cancel classes because of inclement weather. However, because of the occasional hazards of night driving in the winter, exceptions may be made for evening classes and, under exceptionally hazardous conditions, exceptions may be made for daytime classes.

If weather conditions make it necessary to cancel classes, a message will be available from RU-info, 732-932-info (4636); by dialing "0" from campus locations; RU-TV's Rutgers Information Channel, Channel 3; and the operating status page available on the Rutgers main page at <http://www.rutgers.edu>. New Brunswick Campus operating status can also be found at: <http://campusstatus.rutgers.edu>. Announcements will also be made over the following radio stations: WRNJ (1510 AM), WCTC (1450 AM)/ WMGQ (98.3 FM), WCBS (880 AM), WINS (1010 AM), WKXW (101.5 FM)/ WBUD (1260 AM), WRSU (88.7 FM), and NEWS12 New Jersey (cable).

Pursuant to Rutgers University Policy

<http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section10/10.3.11-current.pdf>

Communication to students should be done using email whenever possible. Other forms of conveyance should be used only when necessary. Communication to students should employ a single means of conveyance unless there is a compelling reason to employ multiple means of conveyance. *It is expected that students will check their email at least twice a week* (emphasis mine).

Sakai: *I use Sakai for announcements and for distribution of class materials. You are responsible for ensuring that you are familiar with the site. If you are having problems, contact me immediately.*

Readings: All assigned readings must be completed by the time class begins.

Tips on reading for a college class (See also the documents in the “Resources” section of Sakai):

- Read with a dictionary.
- Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and wikis should only be used as an aid while working on your own. One gains full facility with terms and concepts particular to disciplines like anthropology only through the process of integrating what you already know, what you will pick up on your own, and what you will gain by being guided by the instructor and the scholars we will read.
- Take notes while reading.
 - Write down terms with which you are unfamiliar
 - Look them up in a dictionary, social science dictionary, or specialized text like Raymond Williams’ *Keywords*.
 - Bring terms that you do not understand to class or post questions about them to the discussion thread for that reading.
 - Copy quotes (cite the text and page) that you think capture an important part of the reading that raises a question you want to discuss.
 - Try to summarize the main argument of the reading.
- You might also post to the discussion board about or come to class with something that happened to you *that relates to the reading* – a conversation you had in another class, a book you read, a movie you saw.

Grading and Evaluation

The basic grading system shall be the following:

| Letter grade to be awarded | Grade Point (Arithmetic) Equivalent | Percentage (%) Equivalent | Verbal Definition |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| A | 4.0 | 91 | Outstanding |
| B+ | 3.5 | 86 | |
| B | 3.0 | 81 | Good |
| C+ | 2.5 | 76 | |
| C | 2 | 71 | Satisfactory |
| D | 1 | 61 | Poor |
| F | 0 | <61 | Failing |

Academic Integrity (from the Rutgers University website)

“Academic integrity is essential to the success of the educational enterprise and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the academic community. Every member of that community bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld. Only through a genuine partnership among students, faculty, staff, and administrators will the University be able to maintain the necessary commitment to academic integrity.”

“The University administration is responsible for making academic integrity an institutional priority and for providing students and faculty with effective educational programs and support services to help them fully understand and address issues of academic integrity. The administration is also responsible for working with other members of the academic community to establish equitable and effective procedures to deal with violations of academic integrity.”

“The faculty shares the responsibility for educating students about the importance and principles of academic integrity. Individual faculty members are also responsible for informing students of the particular expectations regarding academic integrity within individual courses, including permissible limits of student collaboration and, where relevant, acceptable citation format. Finally, all members of the faculty should report all violations of academic integrity they encounter.”

“Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity fully and abiding by them in all their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to report alleged violations of academic integrity to the faculty member teaching the course in which the violation is alleged to have occurred.”

To view the policy (including definitions, resources, and procedures) in its entirety, go to:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Accommodations for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information

Our institution abides by The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008 including Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. This office is located in Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Ave, 732-932-2848. I look forward to talking with you soon to learn how I may be helpful in enhancing your academic success in this course.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

Required Texts

Edmonds, Alex. *Pretty Modern*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Inhorn, Marcia C. *Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Kuriyama, Shigehisa *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine*. New York: Zone Books, 2002.

Lock, Margaret *Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Martin, Emily. *Bipolar Expeditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007

Rouse, Carolyn *Uncertain Suffering: Racial Health Care Disparities and Sickle Cell Disease*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Schedule of Classes (subject to change)

Part I: Medicine/Meaning/Power

1. Tue Jan 17 – Introduction, Syllabus, Overview

No reading required

Film: *The Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamani* (Bolivia)

2. Fri Jan 20 Knowledge and Meaning

E.E. Evans-Pritchard, “The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events” In *Witchcraft, Magic and the Oracles among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937

- Kleinman, Arthur. 1995. "What is Specific to Biomedicine?" *Writing at the Margin: Discourse between Anthropology and Medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 21-40
3. Tue Jan 24 Meaning and Difference
- Good, Byron. 1994. "How Medicine Constructs Its Objects" *Medicine, Rationality, and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.65-87
- Stacey Pigg, "The Credible and the Credulous: The Question of 'Villagers' Beliefs' in Nepal"
4. Fri Jan 27 The Effects of Meaning
- Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Effectiveness of Symbols"
- Lorna Rhodes, "Studying Biomedicine as a Cultural System" In *Medical Anthropology: Contemporary Theory and Method*. Thomas Johnson, and Carolyn Sargent, eds. New York: Praeger, pp 159-73
- Harrington, Anne. 2000. "Introduction." *The Placebo Effect: an Interdisciplinary Exploration*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp.1-11
5. Tue Jan 31 The Body in Medicine
- Shigehisa Kuriyama, *The Expressiveness of the Body*, preface, chapters 1-2
6. Fri Feb 3
- Shigehisa Kuriyama, *The Expressiveness of the Body*, chapters 3-4, epilogue
7. Tue Feb 7 Biological Citizenship
- Rose, Nikolas, and Carlos Novas. 'Biological Citizenship', in Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier, eds., *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. 439–463
- Petryna, Adriana. "Biological Citizenship: The Science and Politics of Chernobyl-Exposed Populations" *Osiris* 19, 2004. pp. 250-265
8. Fri Feb 10 The Politics of Biomedicine
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century." *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977* (edited by Colin Gordon). New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 166-82.
- Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff "The Diseased Heart of Africa: Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body" In *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*

Paper 1 due

9. Tue Feb 14 Global medicine and inequality

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2003. "Rotten Trade: Millennial Capitalism, Human Values and Global Justice in Organs Trafficking." *Journal of Human Rights* 2 (2): 197-226.

Rothman, David. "The Shame of Medical Research." *The New York Review of Books*, Nov 30, 2000, pp.60-64.

Kent, David et al., "Clinical Trials in Sub-Saharan Africa and Established Standards of Care: A Systematic Review of HIV, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Trials." *JAMA* 2004; 292:237-242

Samsky, Ari. "Populations, Sovereignty, Drugs." *Somatosphere*. Accessed 8 Jan. 2012.

Film: *Deadly Deception* by Denisce DiAnni (NOVA, USA 1993)

Part II Illness/Identity/Agency

10. Fri Feb 17 Illness Narratives

Kleinman, Arthur, *Illness Narratives*, p 1-55

Robert Coles, "Stories and Theories" In *The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination*, 1-30

11. Tue Feb 21 AIDS and The experience of illness in rural Haiti

Farmer, Paul *Aids and Accusation* selections

Film: *The Age of AIDS* (Part II, Frontline, PBS)

Recommended: Haraway, Donna "The Biopolitics of Postmodern Bodies: Determinations of Self in Immune System Discourse" In *Knowledge, Power, Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life*.

12. Fri Feb 24 Illness as a political act: power struggles between patient and doctor

Taussig, Michael "Reification and the Consciousness of the Patient." *Social Science & Medicine*. Part B: Medical Anthropology 14.1 (1980): 3-13

Rouse, Carolyn *Uncertain Suffering*

13. Tue Feb 28 Race, Illness, and Inequality

- Rouse, Carolyn *Uncertain Suffering*
14. Fri Mar 2
- Rouse, Carolyn *Uncertain Suffering*
15. Tue Mar 6 Normal and Pathological
- Porter, Roy. *Madmen: A Social History of Madhouses, Mad Doctors, and Lunatics*. 2004
- Benedict, Ruth. 1959. "Anthropology and the Abnormal." *An Anthropologist at Work: Writings of Ruth Benedict*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 262-283
- Illness Narrative Paper Due
16. Fri Mar 9 Illness as identity: on pharma
- Elliott, Carl. "You Are What You Are Afflicted By" In *A philosophical disease: bioethics, culture, and identity*. New York: Routledge, 1999. 25-48.
- Greenslit, Nathan. 2005. "Depression and Consumption: Psychopharmaceuticals, Branding, and New Identity Practices." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 29(4): 477-502
- SPRING BREAK
17. Tue Mar 20 The Politics of the Normal: Mental Illness in America
- Martin, Emily. *Bipolar Expeditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007
- Film: *Girl Interrupted*
18. Fri Mar 23
- Martin, Emily. *Bipolar Expeditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007
- Paper 2 due
19. Tue Mar 27
- Martin, Emily. *Bipolar Expeditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007
20. Fri Mar 30 New Technologies, New Dilemmas: Birth
- Inhorn, Marcia C. (2003) *Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt*. New York: Routledge.
- Film: *Motherland Afghanistan* by Sedika Mojadidi (2006)

21. Tue Apr 3

Inhorn, Marcia C. (2003) *Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt*. New York: Routledge.

22. Fri Apr 6

Inhorn, Marcia C. (2003) *Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt*. New York: Routledge.

23. Tue Apr 10 New Technologies and the Meanings of “Health”

Edmonds, Alex *Pretty Modern*

24. Fri Apr 13

Edmonds, Alex *Pretty Modern*

25. Tue Apr 17

Edmonds, Alex *Pretty Modern*

26. Fri Apr 20 New Technologies and New Kinds of Death

Lock, Margaret *Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death*

Film: *Investigative Reports—Organ Trade: Life and Death for Sale* (A&E)

27. Tue Apr 24

Lock, Margaret *Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death*

28. Fri Apr 27

Lock, Margaret *Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death*

Paper 3 due