

Medical Anthropology- ANT 121

Spring 2016

University of California, Davis

Times & Location

Lecture: Tuesday 4:10-5:10 & Thursday 4:10-6:00

Section: Tuesday 5:20-6:00

Lecture/Discussion location: Veihmeyer Hall 212

Contact Info & Office Hours

Instructor: Laura Meek (lameek@ucdavis.edu)

Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3pm, or by appointment, Young Hall 321

TA: Kristi Onzik

Office Hours: Mondays 2-4pm, or by appointment, Delta of Venus café (122 B St.)

Course Description and Objectives

Medical anthropology is the study of how social, cultural, and political-economic forces affect human health, illness, healing, and the body. It is grounded in the radical anthropological premise of openness to alternative understandings of the body, illness, disease, and curing. For instance, in this course we approach the “body” as biologically given as well as culturally “made-up” and historically situated, so that one can speak of “local biologies”. Similarly, we approach illnesses like psychiatric diagnoses and addictions as products of a certain cultural, social, economic, and political context. Thus, we can ask whether these categories make sense in non-Western contexts, and how other systems of knowledge (for instance, Tanzanian traditional healing) define cure and the distinction between the normal and the pathological, keeping in mind the increasing (and unequal) link between systems of knowledge and practice. Biomedicine is treated as one among many efficacious systems of medical knowledge and epistemological authority; its embeddedness in forms of social inequalities—like gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability—are investigated in depth.

In this class you will learn how to read and write medical ethnographic texts—how to draw concepts from ethnographic information, as well as how to talk about relevant issues regarding health and medicine in the world today. You will also learn the major theoretical approaches and debates in the field of (cultural) medical anthropology (critical/interpretative/applied/STS) and how the approach of medical anthropology contributes to a broader understanding of health and health problems than biomedicine. Readings include selections of classic writings and the latest research, and reflect a range of cultural contexts. In class discussions and assignments, you are encouraged to put this material in conversation with your own experience and ideas/research/views you have encountered in other places- this is a class about thinking, questioning, and challenging- you are not being asked to ‘agree’ with the instructor or the readings, but to (seriously) contemplate the ideas we explore here.

Requirements & Grading

- **Attendance & Participation (20%):** You are expected to attend each class period. Attendance will be taken each time and will be taken into account in your participation grade. There are readings assigned for each class period, which you are expected to have read and thought about before coming to class. Your participation grade will also take into account your engagement with those readings, through in-class conversations and participation in section activities. (If you are shy about participating in class, you are welcome to come talk during office hours.) Please be respectful during discussions: try not to talk into the classroom late or leave early.
- **Weekly Reading Responses & Comments (40%):** Beginning in the second week (first due dates- April 3 & 4) and ending in the *next to last* week of classes (last due dates- May 22 and 23), you are required to submit *either* a response to one of the reading for the *coming* week (due Sunday night by midnight), *or* comments on one of your classmate's response (due Monday night by midnight).
 - For those students with last names beginning with A-H (as it appears in Smartsite), you will submit original responses on weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8, and comments on your classmate's responses weeks 3, 5, 7, and 9. For students with last names beginning with I-Z (as it appears on Smartsite), you will submit original responses on weeks 3, 5, 7, and 9, and comment on your classmate's responses during weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8.
 - These responses are due the Sunday/Monday before we discuss the readings in class that coming week.
 - There will be a forum on Smartsite where you can submit your work.
 - You are allowed to miss 1 response and 1 comment during the quarter without penalty. Beyond that, no other exceptions will be made. Please plan to participate each week and use your exceptions for times when you get sick or have midterms, etc.
 - The responses, due Sunday by midnight, should be about 1 of the readings for the coming week (either Tuesday's or Thursday's). You should write a 400-500 word analysis of the reading, in which you both summarize one or more of the author's main points and respond to it in some way (for instance, by comparing it to other readings in the class, or to other ideas you have encountered in other classes, or to your personal experience- but make sure to write in an academic style- this is not a blog post!).
 - The comments, due Monday by midnight, should be thoughtful, respectful, engagements with the ideas of one of your classmate's post. Respond directly to their original post. These comments should be 200-300 words. You may build upon their point, disagree with it and present an alternative interpretation, move their ideas in a new direction or put them in conversation with other readings, etc. Please try to respond to a post which has not already been responded to, so that everyone gets feedback. Again, this is not a blog post- your response should also be academic and intellectual in nature.
 - Grading: if you follow these guidelines- submit on time, the correct length, and engage with the course readings/classmate's ideas, you will get full credit.
 - Feedback: Your TA will select a handful of responses each week to discuss in section and the instructor will comment on responses periodically.

- Late responses and comments will be marked down 1 letter grade (beginning at 12:01am) for every day late.
- **Illness Narrative Paper (40%):** A well-written final paper (1,800 words, or about 6 pages, double-spaced Times 12pt font 1" margins) in which you discuss class readings and concepts, in connection to an interview you conducted. You may interview either someone who has experienced an illness (family and friends are OK), or someone who has witnessed or been a caregiver for a relative struggling with an illness and undergoing treatment. The most important things to do in this paper are to summarize in depth your interview material and to use ideas from the course- lecture and readings- to analyze that material. This should be a formal paper- with intro, thesis statement, supporting body paragraphs, conclusion, and citations throughout. Further instructions and help will be provided during the quarter. Late papers will be marked off 1 letter grade per day.

General Policies

- **Check Smartsite regularly:** Class announcements, assignments, readings, grades, and other pertinent information will be available in Smartsite.
- **All readings will be on Smartsite.** There are no books to purchase for this course.
- You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, etc to take notes during class, but please do not be distracting students around you by watching videos, checking Facebook, etc. Your full attention is requested. **Cell phones off, please.**
- Students are encouraged to attend office hours to discuss readings, research, feedback on your writing, or your general thoughts on medical anthropology or the ethnographic investigation of illness and medicine.
- UC Davis values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences (see <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/student-conduct-standards.html> for more info). If you are discovered to have plagiarized work or otherwise cheated, you will be reported to student judicial affairs and your course grade will be reduced by 50%, in addition to receiving a 0 on all assignments that you cheated on or plagiarized. In other words, no cheating, no copying, no submitting other people's work as your own.

Schedule of Topics and Assigned Readings

Part I: Theoretical Framework

Week 1: Introduction to the Course & Medical Anthropology

Tu March 29:

Introduction and read through the syllabus

Th March 31:

Byron Good. 1994. How Does Medicine Construct Its Objects? In *Medicine, Rationality, and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

&

Arthur Kleinman. 1995. What is Specific to Biomedicine. In *Writing at the Margin: Discourse between Anthropology and Biomedicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Recommended:

Deborah R. Gordon. 1988. Tenacious Assumptions in Western Medicine. In *Biomedicine Examined*. M. Lock & D. Gordon, eds. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers

&

Donald Joralemon. 2010. *Exploring Medical Anthropology, 3rd Ed.*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Taylor & Francis Inc.

Week 2: Critical Approaches to Social Inequalities**April 5:**

Nancy Scheper-Hughes. 1990. Three Propositions for a Critically Applied Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 30(2): 189-197

&

Paul Farmer. 1996. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below". *Daedalus* 125(1): 261-283.

April 7:

Emily Martin. 1991. Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles. *Signs* 16(3): 485-501

&

Elizabeth Roberts. 2013. Assisted Existence: An Ethnography of Being in Ecuador. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19(3): 562–580.

Recommended:

Waitzkin, Howard. 1989. A Critical Theory of Medical Discourse: Ideology, Social Control, and the Processing of Social Context in Medical Encounters. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 30(2): 220-239

&

Peter Conrad. 1992. Medicalization and Social Control. *Annual Review of Sociology* 18(1): 209-232

&

Nancy Scheper-Hughes. 2007. Nervoso. In *Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life*. Margaret M Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 459-467.

Week 3: Interpretative Approaches, Illness Narratives, & Translation**April 12:**

Cheryl Mattingly. 1994. The Concept of Therapeutic 'Emplotment'. *Social Science and Medicine*. 38(6): 811-822.

April 14:

Byron Good. 1994. Medical Anthropology and the Problem of Belief. In *Medicine, Rationality, and Experience: An Anthropological Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

&

Cristiana Giordano. 2014. Chapter 1- On the Tightrope of Culture. In *Migrants in Translation: Caring and the Logics of Difference in Contemporary Italy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Recommended:

Arthur Kleinman. 1988. Chapter 1: The Meaning of Symptoms and Disorders. In *The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing, and the Human Condition*. Basic Books

&

Thomas J. Csordas. 1992. The Affliction of Martin: Religious, Clinical, and Phenomenological Meaning in a Case of Demonic Oppression. In *Ethnopsychiatry: The Cultural Construction of Professional and Folk Psychiatries*. Atwood D. Gaines, ed. New York: State of New York Press

&

Laurence J. Kirmayer. 1992. The Body's Insistence on Meaning: Metaphor as Presentation and Representation in Illness Experience. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 6(4): 323-46.

Week 4: Healing & Meaning- the Placebo Effect

April 19:

Claude Levi-Strauss. 1949. The Effectiveness of Symbols. *Structural Anthropology*. 1: 186-205.

April 21:

Selections from: Daniel Moerman. 2002. *Meaning, Medicine, and the "Placebo" Effect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended:

T.J. Kaptchuk. 2002. The Placebo Effect in Alternative Medicine: Can the Performance of a Healing Ritual Have Clinical Significance? *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 136: 817-825

&

Eugene Raikhel. 2010. Post-Soviet Placebos: Epistemology and Authority in Russian Treatments for Alcoholism. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 34: 132-168

&

Shelley R. Adler. 2011. Chapter 6: The Night-mare and the Nocebo: Beliefs That Harm. In *Sleep Paralysis: Nightmares, Nocebos, and the Mind-Body Connection*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Week 5: Bodies & the Production of Difference

April 26:

Clarence Gravlee. 2009. How Race Becomes Biology: Embodiment of Social Inequality. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*. 139(1): 47-57

&

Margaret M. Lock and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2010. Local Biologies. In *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

April 28:

John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff. 1992. Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body. In *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 215-234.

Recommended:

Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock. 1987. The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly, New Series* 1(1): 6-41

&

Veena Das. 1996. Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain. *Daedalus* 125(1, Social Suffering): 67-91.

Part II: Disease, Culture, & Power

Week 6: Drugs & the Pharmaceutical Industry

May 3:

Joseph Dumit. 2012. Introduction & Chapter 2: Pharmaceutical Witnessing and Direct-to-Consumer Advertising. In *Drugs for Life: How Pharmaceutical Companies Define Our Health*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

May 5:

David Healy. 2006. The New Medical Oikumene. In *Global Pharmaceuticals: Ethics, Markets, Practices*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Recommended:

Nathan Greenslit. 2002. Pharmaceutical Branding: Identity, Individuality, and Illness. *Molecular Interventions* 2(6): 342-345

&

Bradley E. Lewis. 2003. Prozac and the Post-human Politics of Cyborgs. *Journal of Medical Humanities* 24(1): 49-63

&

Kristin Peterson. 2012. AIDS Policies for Markets and Warriors: Dispossession, Capital, and Pharmaceuticals in Nigeria. In *Lively Capital*. Sunder Rajan, ed. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 7: Mental Health & Psychiatry

May 10:

David Rosenhan, 1973. On Being Sane in Insane Places. *Science* 179: 250-8

&

Tanya M. Luhrmann. 2007. Social Defeat and the Culture of Chronicity: Or, Why Schizophrenia Does So Well Over There and So Badly Here. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 31(2): 135-172.

May 12:

Gananath Obeyesekere. 1985. Depression, Buddhism, and the Work of Culture in Sri Lanka. In *Culture and Depression: Studies in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Psychiatry of Affect and Disorder*. Arthur Kleinman and Byron Good, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp 134-152

&

G. Rebecca Lester. 2008. Anxious Bliss: A Case Study of Dissociation in a Mexican Nun. *Transcultural Psychiatry* 45(1): 56-78.

Recommended:

Robert B. Edgerton. 1966. Conceptions of Psychosis in Four East African Societies. *American Anthropologist, New Series* 68(2): 408-425

&

V. Skultans. 2003. From Damaged Nerves to Masked Depression: Inevitability and Hope in Latvian Psychiatry. *Social Science and Medicine* 56(12): 2421-2431

&

A. Kleinman & J. Kleinman, 2007. "Somatization: The Interconnections in Chinese Society among Culture, Depressive Experiences, and the Meanings of Pain". In *Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Week 8: Addiction & the Self

May 17:

E. Summerson Carr. 2006. "Secrets Keep You Sick": Metalinguistic Labor in a Drug Treatment Program for Homeless Women. *Language in Society* 35(5): 631-653.

May 19:

Natasha Dow Schull. 2006. Machine, Medication, Modulation: Circuits of Dependency and Self-Care in Las Vegas. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 30: 223-247.

Recommended:

Philippe Bourgois. 2000. Disciplining Addictions: The Bio-politics of Methadone and Heroin in the United States. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 24: 165-195

&

Angela Garcia. 2010. "The Elegiac Addict: History, Chronicity, and the Melancholic Subject". In *A Reader in Medical Anthropology: Theoretical Trajectories, Emergent Realities*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell

&

Eugene Raikhel. 2015. From the Brain Disease Model to Ecologies of Addiction. In *Revisioning Psychiatry: Cultural Phenomenology, Critical Neuroscience, and Global Mental Health*. Laurence Kirmayer, Robert Lemelson and Constance Cummings, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 9: Disability, Debility, & Obesity

May 24:

Matthew Kohrman. 2003. Why Am I Not Disabled? Making State Subjects, Making Statistics in Post-Mao China. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17(1): 5-24

&

Jasbir K. Puar. 2011. Coda: The Cost of Getting Better: Suicide, Sensation, Switchpoints. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 18(1): 149-158.

May 26:

Lauren Berlant. 2010. Risky Business: On Obesity, Eating, and the Ambiguity of "Health"

&

Kathleen LeBesco. 2010. Fat Panic and the New Morality. Both in *Against Health: How Health Became the New Morality*. Jonathan M. Metz and Anna Kirkland, Eds. New York: New York University Press.

Recommended:

Lauren Berlant. 2007. Slow Death. *Critical Inquiry*. 33(3): 754-80

&

Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg. 2012. Anthropology and the Study of Disability Worlds. In *Medical Anthropology at the Intersections: Histories, Activisms, and Futures*. Marcia C. Inhorn and Emily A. Wentzell, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Week 10: Tanzania/Medical Pluralism & Global Health

May 31:

Steven Feierman. 2000. Explanation and Uncertainty in the Medical World of Ghaambo. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 74(2): 317-344

&

Stacey Langwick. 2007. Devils, Parasites, and Fierce Needles: Healing and the Politics of Translation in Southern Tanzania. *Science, Technology & Human Values* 32: 88-117.

June 2:

Lakoff, Andrew. 2010. "Two Regimes of Global Health." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 1 (1): 59–79.

Recommended:

Brad Weiss. 1996. Plastic Teeth Extraction: An Iconography of Gastrosexual Affliction. In *The Making and Unmaking of the Haya Lived World: Consumption, Commoditization, and Everyday Practice*. Durham: Duke University Press

&

Nicholas B. King. 2002. Security, Disease, Commerce: Ideologies of Postcolonial Global Health. *Social Studies of Science* 32(5-6): 763-789

Final paper due June 9, by 5pm, submitted electronically through Smartsite

Detailed directions will be provided and reviewed during class