

**The AIDS Pandemic**  
**Pomona College**  
**Department of Anthropology and Sociology**

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ANT 101  
Monday 7:30 p.m.- 10:00 p.m.  
Spring 1989

**Course Description**

The primary focus of this course will be the current pandemic of AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The objective of the course will be to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of this world-wide phenomenon which has already had devastating consequences and which has even greater potential to transform those societies and cultures most severely affected by its unchecked spread. The course will cover the history of the disease and its epidemiology, the development of theories concerning its etiology, and the problems and prospects associated with efforts to contain the epidemic. The cultural, social, and psychological dimensions of AIDS will be emphasized over the biological, but some attention will also be paid to biomedical and technological advances related to treatment, vaccines and HIV testing. Public policy issues, many of them involving intense controversy, will be analyzed in depth. Health education materials, including sexually explicit information used in "safe sex" campaigns, will be discussed.

To provide a perspective on the AIDS pandemic, the course will deal with the impact that other major epidemics have had on human societies and cultures in the past. Small pox, syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases, the bubonic plague, and kuru will be used as examples. Literary works as well as social science treatises will be read and discussed. Film and video presentations will be featured in the course along with one or two field trips. In addition, students will be expected to attend the series of seven talks in the Tuesday Noon Lecture Series entitled "Scourges" (announcement attached).

**Textbooks: Required Readings**

Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*  
William H. McNeil, *Plagues and Peoples*  
Albert Camus, *The Plague*  
Shirly Lindenbaum, *Kuru Sorcery*  
Allan M. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*  
Robert S. Gottfried, *The Black Death*  
Simon Watney, *Policing Desire*  
Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On*  
I.A.S.H.S., *The Complete Guide to Safe Sex*  
L. Hall and T. Modi, *AIDS: Opposing Viewpoints*  
and possibly one or two others to be decided.

Copies of all textbooks will be available at Huntley Bookstore. Purchasing the books is not required--only reading them is. Copies of most of the texts will also be found on reserve at Honnold Library, and some of them can be read in the library of the Department of Anthropology, located in Carnegie 110. In addition to these books, other readings will be assigned during the course, mostly articles handed out by the instructor.

**Grades**

In calculating grades in this course, the various assignments will count as follows:

- 25% First mid-term examination
- 25% Second mid-term examination
- 30% Term paper of project
- 10% Quizzes
- 10% Exercises & class participation

There will be two mid-term examinations in the course but no final exam. The second mid-term will be scheduled close to the end of the semester. Both objective questions (true-false, fill-in-the-blanks) and essays will appear on the exams. Quizzes will be administered from time to time unannounced in advance. It will be the student's responsibility to keep up-to-date with reading assignments in order to make discussions in class as fruitful and productive as possible.

The students have the option of writing a traditional term paper based on library research or an empirical investigation involving data collection and analysis OR of working as a volunteer intern for an AIDS service organization in the Inland Empire of Los Angeles OR designing and implementing an individual or group project locally. Students choosing to write a standard term paper should produce a work approximately 15-20 pages in length. Students working as interns or volunteers or carrying out independent projects will be expected to devote a minimum of 50 hours to such work and to write a paper of 10 pages based on their experiences. Term paper topics and volunteer assignments must be discussed with and approved by the instructor.

**Some Important Dates to Remember:**

- February 6 Deadline for term paper projects and work assignments
- March 6 First mid-term examination
- April 7 Term papers and project reports due
- April 24 Second mid-term examination

