

# The Anthropology of AIDS

Potsdam College of the State University of New York  
Department of Anthropology

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ANT 311  
T, Th: 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.  
Fall

## Books/Readings:

*And the Band Played On* (paperback revised), R. Shilts  
*The AIDS Caregivers' Manual*, T. Eldson, ed.  
*Love, Medicine and Miracles*, B. Siegal  
*Health and Healing*, A. Weil  
*Scientific American*, Oct. '88, "What Science Knows About AIDS."  
Reserve readings as appropriate including *MMWR* to update data.

## Evaluation:

A 15-20 page research paper required. At six weeks, a paper title, outline and bibliography will be submitted and graded. At spring break, the rough draft is due. The final paper is due the last day of class. This paper and class participation comprise your grade.

## Requirements:

- (1) The research paper is your formal source of evaluation. Deadlines are non-negotiable.
- (2) Class attendance is mandatory. I follow the attendance policy described in the college catalog. After three unexcused absences, you will be asked to drop the course.
- (3) Class preparation and participation are required and mandatory. It is the only way I know that the objectives can be met.
- (4) Anthropology 150 (Human Sexuality) is required.

## Objectives:

The anthropological perspectives of holism and relativism are the foundation of this course. AIDS, a global health problem, affects the species at all levels of our being. We are going to examine AIDS medically, biologically, culturally, economically, politically, behaviorally. We will apply these perspectives to specific groups as relevant. We will be doing anthropology.

The agenda for this course is to reach a cognitive understanding of AIDS which is internalized so that our attitudes and behaviors keep ourselves and others healthy and safe.

This class will be conducted as a seminar. This means that the assigned readings are done so that class discussion of the readings can be conducted. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss, question, and apply the readings. The topics are a guide, and we will proceed through them at the group's pace. Confidentiality and trust are integral parts of the course. I will do what I can to create a safe, trusting environment in which each of us and the group can explore this phenomenon.

**Paper:** Library based research to develop the topic of your choice is required.

**Requirement:** The paper needs footnotes and a bibliography to be accepted.

NO CLASSES: February 20-21, March 27-31  
PAPERS DUE: Friday, April 28

## Proposed Topics, Reading Assignments and Lectures

- I. **Introduction to Course**
- II. **The Anthropological Perspective As It Applies to AIDS**
- III. **The Biology and Virology of AIDS**  
from *Scientific American*, Oct. '88  
Dr. Thomas Budd, SLU, Biology
- IV. **The Epidemiology of AIDS**  
*MMWR*: updates from *Scientific American*, Oct. '88  
intro. to each chapter *And The Band Played On*
- V. **Medical Aspects of AIDS**  
from *Scientific American*, Oct. '88  
Ms. Barbara Wheaton, Student Health Center  
*AIDS Caregivers' Manual*
- VI. **The Anthropology of Health and Illness**  
Fabrega's model of Illness and Disease  
Weil: *Health and Healing*  
Siegal: *Love, Medicine and Miracles*
- VII. **The Politics of AIDS**  
Shilts: *And The Band Played On*  
Masters, Johnson, Kolodny: *Heterosexuality and the Crisis of AIDS*
- VIII. **The Economics of AIDS**  
Shilts: *And The Band Played On*
- IX. **Socio-Psychological Dimension of AIDS**  
from *Scientific American*, Oct. '88

**X. AIDS and Sexuality**

Andrés Gonzales del Valle, *Latino AIDS*  
Dan Ford, Larkin Street Youth Center  
*The Guide to Safer Sex* IASHS  
Safer Sex Mechanisms

**XI. AIDS and Drugs**

Andrés Gonzales del Valle, *Latino AIDS*

**XII. AIDS and Risk Taking**

**XIII. Values Clarification**

**XIV. HIV Test Issues**

NYS ATS forms  
from *Scientific American*, Oct. '88  
Mr. Howard LaVigne, NYSD

**XV. The Personal Dimension of AIDS**

Ms. Ruth Garner

**XVI. AIDS: Grieving and Loss**

Dr. Lou Lagrand / Dr. Frank McLaughlin

**XVII. AIDS and Humanity: What we've been given. Where we go.**