

AIDS:

Social, Economic and Political Aspects of the Pandemic

The MIT course 21A.898, which took place at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during January 2002, covered the following topics related to the global AIDS pandemic:

- the public health crisis, including key target regions, model programs, vaccine potential, and proposals for the future
- pharmaceutical debates: patent issues (including TRIPS, USTR issues, and IP protection), distribution, activism, viral resistance, and infrastructure
- social dynamics: denial, orphans, blame, and community change
- political issues: history, controversy (esp. the treatment v. prevention debate), current obstacles to effective disease control, and pragmatic options for student participation.

The class was a series of lectures and discussions, including guest lectures. Students were given a brief [paper](#) assignment due at the end of IAP.

This course was sponsored by both the Department of Anthropology at MIT and the MIT non-profit student organization [United Trauma Relief](#).

Direct all questions about the course to Sanjay Basu, sanjayB@mit.edu.

Course lectures and readings:

Lectures (in .pdf format)	Readings (in .html, .doc & .pdf formats)
1- Introduction (1/7) An introduction to the course, dynamics of the global pandemic, and how to read and evaluate epidemiological reports.	Monitoring the AIDS Pandemic. (2001). <i>The Status and Trends of HIV/AIDS/STI Epidemics in Asia and the Pacific</i>. Melbourne: MAP.
2- The Central Dogma (1/8) Migration, injection drug use, prostitution, poverty, structural adjustment, and a history of the debt crisis.	Schoepf, BG, Schoepf, C, Millen, JV. (2000). Theoretical Therapies, Remote Remedies: SAPs and the Political Ecology of Poverty and Health in Africa. In Kim, JY, Millen, JV, Gershman, J, Irwin, A (eds.). <i>Dying for Growth: Global Inequality and the Health of the Poor</i> . Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.
3- A History of the Global Response (1/9) The discovery of AIDS in Africa, the formation of USAID, and the beginnings of the global response.	Finish above readings
4- Models and Disasters (1/10) Drug delivery, the case of Brazil, the treatment versus prevention debate, and a look at Kenya.	Individual Members of the Faculty of Harvard University. (2001). <i>Consensus Statement on Antiretroviral Treatment for AIDS in Poor Countries</i>. Cambridge: Harvard University.
5- The Other Drug War (1/14) The politics and history of the pharmaceutical price and patent controversy.	U.S. Congress. (2001, June 7). <i>The United States' War on AIDS: Hearing before the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, One Hundred Seventh Congress</i> [Serial No. 107-17]. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office Attaran, A, Freedberg, KA, Hirsch, M. (2001, June 15). <i>Dead Wrong on AIDS</i>. <i>The Washington Post</i>.
6- Questioning the Assumptions (1/15) A closer look at data on the pharmaceutical industry, focusing on sources of research and development, realized costs of drug development, lobbying, tax setting, and politics.	Attaran, A, Gillespie-White, L. (2001). <i>Do Patents for Antiretroviral Drugs Constrain Access to AIDS Treatment in Africa?</i> <i>JAMA</i>, 286(15), 1886-1892. Joint Statement by Oxfam, Treatment Action Campaign, Consumer Project on Technology (CPT), Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) and Health GAP. (2001). <i>Patents Do Matter in Africa According to NGOs</i>. Oxford: Oxfam UK. Consumer Project on Technology. (2001). <i>Comment on the Attaran/Gillespie-White and PhRMA surveys of patents on Antiretroviral drugs in Africa</i>. Washington D.C.: Consumer Project on Technology.
7-The Early American Response (1/16) Begin film: <i>And the Band Played On</i> .	Finish above readings
8- Orphans (1/17)	Farmer, P, Leandre, F, Mukherjee, JS, Claude, M,

<p>Finish film: <i>And the Band Played On</i>. Discuss the AIDS orphan crisis, focusing on country-specific responses.</p>	<p>Nevil, P, Smith-Fawzi, MC, Koenig, SP, Castro, A, Becerra, MC, Sachs, J, Attaran, A, Kim, JY. (2001). Community-based approaches to HIV treatment in resource-poor settings. <i>Lancet</i>, 358(9279), 404-9.</p>
<p>9-Lessons from Tuberculosis (1/22)</p> <p>The application of directly observed therapy (DOT) for the delivery of highly-active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), and controversy surrounding the DOT model.</p>	<p>Gupta, GR. (2000). Gender, sexuality and HIV/AIDS: The What, the Why, and the How. <i>12th International AIDS Conference: Durban</i>.</p> <p>Heyzer, N. (2000). Women at the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemics: the challenges ahead. <i>Facing the Challenges: Commitments for the Future</i>. U.N.: New York.</p>
<p>10-Gender and AIDS (1/23)</p> <p>A guest lecture by economist Kieran Honderich.</p>	<p>Conners, M. (1996). Sex, Drugs and Structural Violence. In Farmer, P, Conners, M, Simmons, J. (eds.). <i>Women, Poverty and AIDS</i>. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.</p> <p>UNAIDS. (2001). <i>Men, culture and HIV/AIDS</i>. Geneva: UNAIDS.</p>
<p>11-Blame and Stigma (1/24)</p> <p>A guest lecture by anthropologist Joyce Millen.</p>	<p>Farmer, P. (1992). AIDS and Racism: Accusation in the Center. In Farmer, P. <i>AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame</i>. Berkeley: The University of California Press.</p>
<p>12-Death by "Denial" (1/28)</p> <p>A close look at the context of "denialism" in South Africa.</p> <p>Begin film: <i>The Other Side of AIDS</i>.</p>	<p>Work on paper assignment</p>
<p>13-"Denial" in the North (1/29)</p> <p>Finish film: <i>The Other Side of AIDS</i></p>	<p>Work on paper assignment</p>
<p>14-Campaigns in the Courts (1/30)</p> <p>A guest lecture by law professor Brook Baker.</p>	<p>Work on paper assignment</p>
<p>15-Pragmatic Solidarity (1/31)</p> <p>A presentation on key routes of action for students and professionals, including drug recycling projects at MIT, activism and advocacy in the greater Boston area, and NGO internship opportunities in the U.S. and abroad.</p>	<p>Patel, H, Millen, JV, Lyon, E. (2000). Pragmatic Solidarity. In Kim, JY, Millen, JV, Gershman, J, Irwin, A (eds.). <i>Dying for Growth: Global Inequality and the Health of the Poor</i>. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.</p>