

ANT 382
Cultures, Health and Healthcare
Instructor: Chris Morley
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Meets: Tuesday Nights, 6:00pm-9:30pm
Donovan G144

Introduction

This course is intended to introduce students to the field of Medical Anthropology. To begin with, I would like to offer a definition of “Medical Anthropology” as given by the field’s own professional body, the Society for Medical Anthropology:

“Medical Anthropology is a subfield of anthropology that draws upon social, cultural, biological, and linguistic anthropology to better understand those factors which influence health and well being (broadly defined), the experience and distribution of illness, the prevention and treatment of sickness, healing processes, the social relations of therapy management, and the cultural importance and utilization of pluralistic medical systems. The discipline of medical anthropology draws upon many different theoretical approaches. It is as attentive to popular health culture as bioscientific epidemiology, and the social construction of knowledge and politics of science as scientific discovery and hypothesis testing. Medical anthropologists examine how the health of individuals, larger social formations, and the environment are affected by interrelationships between humans and other species; cultural norms and social institutions; micro and macro politics; and forces of globalization as each of these affects local worlds.”

<http://www.medanthro.net/definition.html>

Clearly, the “subfield” of medical anthropology is quite large, covering a lot of ground. Medical anthropologists draw as often upon distinctly non-Western cultures to study health practices and cultural practices that affect health as they do from the settings in which most or all of us in this room are familiar; Western, and U.S., culture and healthcare. With essentially the entire globe as a field of potential study, and with many methods by which to study it, we are left with the need to pick and choose what to study for a single undergraduate semester.

The first part of the class will focus upon basic issues in Medical Anthropology and other social scientific views of health: cross-cultural research, genetic and cultural adaptation in response to disease patterns around the world, and upon a “biopsychosocial model” of health care. In the process, we will encounter health-related issues from around the globe, examining examples such as the relationship between a prion (Kuru) and cannibalistic cultural practices among the Fore of New Guinea, AIDS and Tuberculosis infections in Haiti, and Andean coca chewing practices.

The second half of the semester will counterpose these basic anthropological and international issues against the interaction of culture, health and healing within the U.S. We will look at the pervasive effects of marketing within our own culture, as well as health disparities among cultural, racial and ethnic groups within our societies. We will also examine anthropological views of international health, and will close the semester with a reading and discussion of “The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down,” which offers an account of the family of a young Hmong girl with epilepsy as they encounter drastic cultural misunderstandings with the US healthcare system, and the tragic results that follow.

The ultimate goal of the course will be to insure that participants leave the semester with a view of health and healing that incorporates cross-cultural, evolutionary, and alternative perspectives.

Structure of the course:

Readings: You will have four texts that you will be responsible for purchasing:

Medical Anthropology in Ecological Perspective (Paperback)

by **Ann McElroy, Patricia K. Townsend**

Listed as **MA** in the weekly reading assignments below.

- Paperback: 448 pages
- Publisher: Westview Press; 4th edition (July 2003)

Human Behavior: An Introduction for Medical Students (Paperback)

by **Alan Stoudemire**

Listed as **HB** in the weekly reading assignments below.

- Paperback: 560 pages
- Publisher: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 3rd edition (April 1, 1998)

Mama Might Be Better Off Dead: The Failure of Health Care in Urban America (Paperback)

by **Laurie Kaye Abraham**

- Paperback: 297 pages
- Publisher: University Of Chicago Press; Reprint edition (November 15, 1994)

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down (Paperback)

by **Anne Fadiman**

- **Paperback:** 352 pages
- **Publisher:** Farrar, Straus and Giroux (September 28, 1998)

In addition to these texts, there are journal articles, book excerpts and other material that I will be handing out in class. The reading schedule is laid out below. Notice that you will be expected to have read everything listed for each week by the start of class. Some weeks will have very heavy reading loads, and I have attempted to alter these weeks with lighter reading loads. Additionally, in the background, you will be reading the book "Mama Might Be Better Off Dead" all semester, and should have completed it by our last meeting in April.

Assignments & Grading:

Note: All writing assignments should be typed, 11-12 point font, double-spaced, with 1" margins all the way around.

1. Weekly Reading Summary 20 pts each 100 pts total

There are 10 weeks in which there are readings assigned. For the first week, and for FOUR weeks of your choice, you should be prepared to submit a 1-2 page brief summary of the readings for the week. This weekly assignment is not intended to be especially burdensome. Rather, the point of each summary will be to have you engage the week's readings. You should briefly describe the "point(s)" of each piece, and then critique and/or raise your own questions. Ultimately, you will be responsible to turn in 5 reading summaries.

2. Midterm 100 pts

The Midterm will be given in class, in short answer format. The midterm will cover "basics" of medical anthropology, and the class session one week before the midterm will include a review session.

3. Final Paper 100 pts

A final paper, approximately 10-15 pages long, will be due NO LATER than May 3rd. More details are given below on how the paper should be structured, and how it will be graded. Total points, maximum of 300, will be summed and divided by three. The result will lead to your grade for the course in the following manner (this should be familiar):

90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 60-69 = D <60 = F

NOTE: Pluses, minuses, and borderline cases WILL BE DETERMINED BASED UPON YOUR CLASS PARTICIPATION, INTERACTIONS ABOUT THE MATERIAL AND THE CLASS WITH ME, AND GENERALLY UPON THE VISIBLE LEVEL OF YOUR EFFORT IN THE COURSE!!!!

Reading and Assignment Schedule

Jan	16	Intro	Syllabus review
Jan	23	Cross-Cultural Research *Brief Reading Summary Due	CLASS MEETS IN LIBRARY TONIGHT!!!! – Computer Lab, 2nd Floor Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MA Chap 2 – “Interdisciplinary Research in Health Problems”; Case Study – Kuru in New Guinea among the Fore ● Intro from Paul Farmer, “Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues” - AIDS and Tuberculosis in Haiti ● Bettencourt et al.: “Defining Cultural Competence: A Practical Framework for Addressing Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Health and Health Care”
Jan	30	Culture & Ethnicity *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HB Chap 4 ● Kleinman A, Benson P. Anthropology in the Clinic: The Problem of Cultural Competency and How to Fix It. <i>PLoS Medicine</i> Vol. 3, No. 10, e294
Feb	6	Genes, Disease & Adaptation *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MA Chap 3 – “Genes, Culture, and Adaptation” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Malaria & Agriculture ○ Coca Chewing in the Andes ● MA Chap 4 – “Changing Patterns of Disease & Death” ● HB Chap 13
Feb	13	Biopsychosocial Model *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HB Chap 2 & 9 ● Kleinman A. The cultural meanings and social uses of illness. A role for medical anthropology and clinically oriented social science in the development of primary care theory and research. <i>J Fam Pract.</i> 1983 Mar;16(3):539-45.
Feb	20	Review	-Discussion of Papers -Midterm Review -Paper Topic Due –second library session, Computer Lab, 2nd Floor, 8:00pm
Feb	27	Midterm	Film after Midterm – “ Side Effects ”
Mar	6	Spring Break	No Readings - Paper
Mar	13	The Health Care System *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quadagno, J. (2004). Why the united states has no national health insurance: Stakeholder mobilization against the welfare state, 1945--1996. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 45 Suppl, 25-44. ● Sweet SJ, Norman IJ. The nurse-doctor relationship: a selective literature review. <i>J Adv Nurs.</i> 1995 Jul;22(1):165-70.
Mar	20	Marketing, Sustenance & Economics– Tobacco, Pharma, & Food Film – “ Money Talks ” *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MA Chaps 5 “The Ecology and Economics of Nutrition” ● K M Cummings, C P Morley, J K Horan, C Steger, and N-R Leavell. Marketing to America's youth: evidence from corporate documents. <i>Tob. Control</i>, Mar 2002; 11: 5 - 17. ● Smith R. Medical Journals Are an Extension of the Marketing Arm of Pharmaceutical Companies. <i>PLoS Medicine</i> Vol. 2, No. 5, e138 ● Lieberman LS. Evolutionary and anthropological perspectives on optimal foraging in obesogenic environments. <i>Appetite.</i> 2006 Jul;47(1):3-9. Epub 2006 Jun 27. Review. ● Folta SC, Goldberg JP, Economos C, Bell R, Meltzer R. Food advertising targeted at school-age children: a content analysis. <i>J Nutr Educ Behav.</i> 2006 Jul-Aug;38(4):244-8.
Mar	27	Marketing Continued	In class movie and discussion - “ Supersize Me ”
Apr	3	Behavioral Health *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loring, M., & Powell, B. (1988). Gender, race, and DSM-III: A study of the objectivity of psychiatric diagnostic behavior. <i>Journal of health and social behavior</i>, 29(1), 1-22. ● Excerpt from Kleinman A. “Rethinking Psychiatry” ● HB Chap 3, and review/highlight Chaps 5, 12 & 13
Apr	10	International Health *Brief Reading Summary Due	Selections from Paul Farmer: “Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues” - Readings to be determined.
Apr	17	Access to Health Care *Brief Reading Summary Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● London, A. S., & Meyers, N. (2005). Health care, access to. In S. P. Restivo (Ed.), <i>Science, technology, and society : An encyclopedia</i> (pp. 183-188). New York: Oxford University Press. ● Selected Chapters from “Mama Might Be Better Off Dead”
Apr	24	The Hmong in the U.S. *Brief Reading Summary Due	“ The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down ” – entire book.
May	3	Final Papers Due	

Final Paper

YOUR PAPER TOPIC WILL BE DUE BY FEBRUARY 20th. A BRIEF, 1 PAGE OR LESS STATEMENT OF WHAT YOU INTEND TO DO SHOULD BE HANDED IN AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS THAT EVENING.

Your paper should be 10 - 15 pages long, NOT INCLUDING COVER PAGES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES, although this should be thought of as a guideline. You will be graded based upon analytic content, writing quality, and integration of scholarly references. You may use whatever standard for formatting references that makes you comfortable, but you should keep that format consistent throughout your paper. If in doubt, I recommend APA-style references.

You will have several options for how to proceed with a final paper:

1. A book review of "Mama Might Be Better Off Dead," "Spirit Catches..." or other relevant book (see list)

If you choose this option, I will provide you with additional guidance about how to do a book review. In short, you should:

- Summarize the book;
- Critique the book (raise questions about the authors methods, findings, or assertions);
- Relate it to the material we have examined over the course of the semester and/or that you have identified via literature searches.

2. A Literature Review

Again, if you choose this option, I will provide you with additional guidance on how to conduct a literature review. In short, you should:

- Formulate a research question (the narrower it is, the easier the review will be to do and write);
- Perform a search of the academic literature that pertains to your question;
- Present your findings.

3. An Original Research Project

This should be designed in direct cooperation with me. Some options include:

- A qualitative, observational or interview-based study;
- An analysis of data (for those with a statistical background);
- Autoethnographic.

Note that an original research paper will be difficult to do within the time constraints of an undergraduate semester, and some projects may require approval by SUNY-IT's Institutional Review Board. I therefore do not want to discourage original research, but recommend against this option unless you have a very clear plan about what you want to do, and the necessary skills and background already in place to do it.

Grading of final papers will be based on the following model:

- Length:
 - 20 pts, 2 pts. per page for 1st 10 pages of content
 - For pages >10, I will continue to award 1 point per page, as long as the pages are not "fluff"
- Writing – Grammar, Coherence and Clarity: 20 pts total
- Content and Argument – Have you answered questions you asked? Is content appropriate?: 40 pts.
- References:
 - 2 pts per SCHOLARLY reference (i.e. peer-reviewed journal article or book by an academic press) – NO LIMIT as long as the references are clearly integrated into the text of the paper
 - 1 pt for APPROPRIATE non-scholarly references, up to 5 (please, no Wikipedia references!)

Other Information

Office Hours & Contact Info: As an adjunct, I do not have standard office hours, nor an office, on campus. However, any concerns can be discussed immediately before or after class. Additionally, I have access to campus office space if you feel the need to have a conversation outside of the physical classroom. At times other than Tuesday nights, feel free to contact me via e-mail at morleycp@upstate.edu. I will also have a SUNY-IT e-mail, although my main e-mail at my full – time campus will probably get you the fastest access. I generally check it hourly during waking hours.

If you have a concern about this course or about me that we are unable to resolve, please contact Dr. Veronica Tichenor (792-7374 or tichenv@sunyit.edu).

Statement on Plagiarism

From the 2006-2007 Student Handbook for SUNY IT, available at http://web1.sunyit.edu/pdf/student_handbook.pdf:

A. Plagiarism

Any piece of work that has been presented as the individual creation of the student is assumed to involve no other assistance than incidental comment from any other person.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's work, words, or ideas without attribution. It may involve using another's words without quotation marks and footnotes to indicate the appropriate source. Paraphrasing or summarizing the content of another's work is not dishonest as long as the source is clearly identified. Paraphrasing does not constitute independent work, however; the instructor may thus reject it as insufficient or unsuitable. Plagiarism may also involve misrepresenting the sources that were used. The issue of plagiarism applies to any type of academic work, including but not limited to papers, examinations and quizzes, computer programs, works of art, photography or video.

If you have any questions about what plagiarism is, or how SUNY IT deals with it, please speak with me directly, review the 2006-2007 Handbook, or both. I take this VERY seriously.

Academic journals of interest to medical anthropologists (selected)

Medical Anthropology Quarterly
 Medical Anthropology
Social Science & Medicine
 Journal of Health & Social Behavior
Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry
 American Anthropologist
Women and Health
 Human Organization
International Journal of Health Services
American Ethnologist
 Journal of Public Health Policy
Current Anthropology
 American Journal of Public Health
Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law
Anthropology and Medicine

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Conducting A Book Review

If you choose to conduct a Book review, you should be prepared to:

- Avoid dry formulaic reviews (e.g., in chapter 1; in chapter 2); instead, focus on the book's **purpose, key point(s), methods, and style.**
- Address the book's **importance to the (sub)field, and integration with relevant literature.**
- Consider both strengths and weaknesses.

(Adopted from <http://www.medanthro.net/maq/reviewguidelines.doc>)

PLEASE NOTE that a book review is not an outline, or a bullet-point list of abstracted material. It is a paper in which you discuss the book's purpose, key points, methods, and style in your own words, relate them to one another, and critique the material you have reviewed.

Often, a book review will be less formalic than a research paper or a literature review, but will include the following elements in some form:

1. An **introduction** of the book, describing general facts about the book (be explicit about author, edition, and other bibliographic information), and introducing the main points, location, topic, etc.
2. A description of the **methods** used by the author(s) to ascertain their findings.
3. A **discussion** of the key points of the book, and your responses to them.
4. A further **discussion** of how the book relates to other literature on the topic.

Again, these sections (other than the intro) can be woven together, placed in whatever order you feel is appropriate, and expanded upon as needed. However, to restate, a book review should be a narrative critique of the work, in your own words. In other words, it should "read" coherently.

You may use one of the books from the course (i.e. "Mama Might Be Better Off Dead" or "The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down"), one of the books we will encounter as excerpts (Paul Farmer, "Infections & Inequalities," Arthur Kleinman, "Rethinking Psychiatry"), or may suggest a title. If you suggest a title, the book should be an ACADEMIC book, or at least have substantial medical anthropological content. Some possibilities may be found here:<http://www.medanth.org/books/default.htm>

Other possible titles include:

- **Of Two Minds: An Anthropologist Looks at American Psychiatry (Paperback)** by T.M. Luhmann
- **Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism** by Roy Richard Grinker
- Anything by Paul Farmer or Arthur Kleinman
- Feel Free to suggest!

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Conducting A Literature Review

If you choose to conduct a literature review, you should be prepared to:

- Formulate a research question (the narrower it is, the easier the review will be to do and write);
- Perform a search of the academic literature that pertains to your question;
- Present your findings in a systematic written format.

PLEASE NOTE that a literature review is not an outline, or a bullet-point list of abstracted material. It is a paper in which you discuss findings in your own words, relate them to one another, and critique the material you have reviewed. We have two literature reviews included as required readings this semester, by Sweet and Lieberman, respectively. Use these as examples, or use the library to find other examples if needed (and if you are really stumped, ask me!). Typically, a literature review will contain the following elements:

1. Introduction: An introduction that introduces the topic, and defines the question(s) the literature review will attempt to answer;

2. Methods: Contains a brief statement on how you performed your search (what databases, keywords used, etc.), what limits were placed regarding time of publication, language, etc., and whether the review is intended to be “exhaustive” or partial (i.e. have you “exhausted” all means available to locate publications – or non-published material! – on a topic, or is your review not intended to be that expansive?).

3. Results (will probably be divided into subsections): Here is where you discuss your findings, i.e. report what papers you found, LINK THEM TO ONE ANOTHER, and comment on the methods and results of the paper.

4. Discussion: This is your conclusion. You should present what answer(s) you were able to find to your question, AND ALSO identify what you did NOT find, i.e. where more research is needed.

The following list is intended to provide a guideline for different topics and questions that might be suitable to review for this class.

THESE ARE EXAMPLES ONLY. YOUR TOPIC SHOULD BE OF PRIMARY INTEREST TO YOU, AND SHOULD RELATE TO YOUR DAILY WORK LIFE, HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCES, AND/OR ACADEMIC INTERESTS!

Topic:	Question Example:
Language Barriers in the Clinic	<i>How do refugees obtain care in English-only settings?</i>
Cross Cultural Definitions of Illness	<i>Does ADHD exist in non-western cultures?</i>
International Health	<i>What are the main barriers to treatment for AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa?</i>
Health Behavior	<i>How do Native American patients living on reservations perceive bias in their care?</i>
Economics	<i>What factors influence food choices in U.S. society?</i>
Access to Healthcare	<i>What effect do public health insurance programs have on access to healthcare for poor families?</i>
Genetics and Evolution	<i>How do we define illness phenotypes, and how does this influence health research?</i>

We will use these examples for an in-class, verbal exercise in how to refine the questions further. Again, these are examples only – work on what interests you (and relates to the class, obviously)! An example of a literature – an a good model to follow – is the Betancourt article included in the class reader.