### **Anthropology 205 A: Introduction to Medical Anthropology**

Vincanne Adams

X2-6483; 381-8909

vadams@itsa.ucsf.edu

**Minding the Borders/Exceeding the Boundaries**

Thinking Through Theory in Medical Anthropology

This seminar introduces students to medical anthropology by way of a questioning of its thematic and ethnographic "boundaries" traced theoretically and methodologically. It is intended to complement 240 A-B and is a required course for medical anthropology graduate students. The organization of materials works through chronological development of the field and the labeled methodological movements (transcultural psychiatry, political economy, medical pluralism, anthropology of the body, etc.) by way of thematic undertakings in the subdiscipline. The "grand theories" that have concerned the discipline since its inception include: epistemologies of the nature and causes of affliction; theorizing the locations of affliction, and critiques of intervention as intervention. . The intention is to think through theory in the subdiscipline as a matter of both redefining its boundaries and observing how successful these boundaries are at capturing the lived experience of and structured possibilities of suffering, disease and healing. The hope is to ignite inspiration as well as rigor in our reading of the materials, and creativity in their wake. The second portion of the course (205B, winter quarter) works through ethnographic approaches to Science, Technology and Medicine Studies in postcolonial perspective. The goal here is to educate students in methods of critical analysis that enhance their understanding of the global conjunctures that both arouse and attempt to alleviate human suffering and to develop insights about the methods of ethnography in this process.

# **Evaluation**

Grading for each quarter of the course is based on final papers (two) and on seminar participation. The latter includes at least two presentations and submission of weekly précises. A précis is a short (no more than a page) summary and discussion of readings focusing on (1) the primary argument, (2) the units of analysis, and (3) the intellectual and disciplinary context. It should be emailed to the instructors on the day before the seminar meets. Participants will rotate responsibilities for leading the discussions each week.

The papers should each be a critical review of two distinctive ethnographic and analytical approaches to a given theme or problem, no more than 15 pages, double spaced. Papers are due on the final meeting of the seminar. There will be no extensions.

Readers:

All of the readings for the class (including complete references) can be found in the class reader file (front desk with Clair Dunne). There are two books we will read large portions of that are not included in the reader:

Michael Taussig’s **Colonialism, Shamanism and the Wildman**

Michel Foucault’s **History of Sexuality Volume I**

**Part One: Subdisciplinary Grand Theory**

# 

# **Week One: Theodicy, accusation, rationality: Logics of Witchcraft and Belief**

# **E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, oracles and magic among the Azande (selected chapters)**

**Stacy Pigg**, “The Credible and the Credulous: The Question of Villager’s ‘Belief’ in Nepal” *Cultural Anthropology* 11(2):160-201, 1996.

**Byron Good**, *Medicine, rationality, and experience*, chapter 1 (“Medical anthropology

and the problem of belief”)

# **Week Two: Symbolic Anthropology/Symbolic Interactionism in clinical encounters**

**Levi-Strauss, Claude** “The Effectiveness of Symbols” and “The Sorcerer and His Magic” in Structural Anthropology.

**Douglas, Mary** “Symbolic Pollution” from Purity and Danger

**Turner, Victor** “The Drums of Affliction” pp. 156-197.

**Mauss, Marcel “**Technique du Corps” Sociologie et Anthropologie. Paris

# **Week Three: Structure/Function and Interactionism in Medical Anthropology**

**Parsons, Talcott** “The Sick Role”

**Sigerist, Henry** “The Special Position of the Sick” from Landy pp.338-393.

**Estroff, Sue** Making it Crazy (pp. 81-107)

**Gerhardt, Ute** “The Sociological Image of Medicine and the Patient” SS&M 29(6):721-728, 1989.

# 

# **Week Four: Psychiatry and Phenomenologies of Suffering and Healing**

## **Kleinman, Arthur “Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture (pp.104-118)**

**Good, Byron** “The Heart of What’s the Matter” Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 1:25-58, 1977.

**Gerhardt, U** “The Phenomenological Paradigm: Illness as Intersubjectively Constructed Reality pp 179-196 Ideas about Illness.

# 

# **Week Five: Ethnography as intervention:**

# **Political economies of health and suffering (I)**

**Allan Young** The Anthropology of Sickness

**Doyal, Lesley** The Political Economy of Health (pp. 11-46)

**Taussig, Michael “**Reification and the Consciousness of the Patient (SS&M)

**Frankenberg, Ronnie** “Allopathic Medicine, Profession and Capitalist Ideology in India” SS&M 15A:115-125, 1981.

# **Week Six: Ethnography as intervention:**

# **Political economies of suffering (II)**

**Jean Comaroff**, “Healing and Transformation: The Tshidi of Southern Africa” *Soc. Sci. & Med.* 15b:367-378, 1981.

**Peter Brown** *“Macro and Microparasites”*

**Jackie Orr**, “Theory on the Market: Panic Incorporating” *Social Problems* 37(4):460-484,1990.

**Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret Lock** “The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology”

## 

## **Week Seven: Beyond Political Economy:**

## **Surrealism, Narrative Experimentation and Ethnography**

**Michael Taussig**, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*

##### **Week Eight: Beyond Political Economy:**

##### **Discourse Analysis and Biopolitics**

**Foucault, Michel** “On Governmentality” and History of Sexuality (introduction and second half of book)

**Turner, Bryan** Medical Knowledge and Social Power (pp 18-38)

**Donzelot, Jacques** “Pleasure in Work” from Ideology and Consciousness

# **Week Nine: Triage--Epidemics and the question of moral clarity**

**Paul Farmer**, Infections and inequalities (pp 1-58)

**Paula Treichler**, An Epidemic of Signification, from How to Have Theory In An Epidemic

**Nancy Scheper-Hughes**, *D*eath without weeping 1-30, 216-67, 340-445

**Butt, Leslie** “The Suffering Stranger” Medical Anthropology 2002

# **Week Ten: Trauma and the possibility of voice and audibility**

**Elaine Scarry** The Body in Pain (pp 1-27, 161-180)

**Veena Das** “Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain” from Social Suffering, volume 1, and “Voice as Birth of Culture”