

ANTHROPOLOGY 180
HEALTH & HEALING: CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Course Description:

This course examines a variety of medical and healing traditions. It will address the connections between medicine and culture, and relate the medical practices to the cultures that produced them. The course will cover various healing systems, including both biomedical and traditional (or “ethnomedical”) perspectives. This course will examine how these different healing systems reflect and are reflections of the social, economic, and political history of a given society and region. Students will apply knowledge of these systems to contemporary social and individual contexts.

Course Objectives:

- A. To introduce anthropological concepts
- B. To examine the relevant political, social, and cultural processes that shape medical and scientific knowledge in a variety of settings
- C. To learn about practices of different healing & treatment modalities used around the world, and increasingly in the U.S.
- D. To demonstrate variation in understandings of the body and health.
- E. To recognize the benefits and drawbacks of different systems, as applied to contemporary social and individual contexts.

Course Schedule & Readings:

- I. Introduction to Medical Anthropology**
- II. Chinese Medical Theory**
- III. Traditional Chinese Medicine within the Global Economy**
- IV. Theories of Ayurvedic Medicine**
- V. Political & Economic Contexts for Ayurveda**
- VI. Healing Traditions of Latin America**
- VII. Native American Shamanism**
- VIII. Biomedicine as a Cultural System**
- IX. Contemporary Political & Economic Contexts for Biomedicine**

- I. Introduction to Medical Anthropology**
 - A. Case Studies of Applied Anthropologists
 - B. The Need for Cultural Competency & Cultural Sensitivity In a Global World
 - C. Worldwide Disease Burden (Treatable Illnesses)
 - D. The Political-Economic Context of Global Health

Wiley, A.S. & Allen, J.S.

2009. *Medical Anthropology: a Biocultural Approach*. New York: Oxford University Press. Selections include:

- Chapter 1: Introduction: A Biocultural Approach to Medical Anthropology
- Chapter 2: Anthropological perspectives on Health & Disease
- Chapter 3: Healers & Healing

Brown, Peter.

1998. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. McGraw-Hill.

Excerpts include:

- Chapter 12: Disease Etiologies In Non-Western Medical System

Excerpts from *The Spirit Catches You (Fadiman)*

II. Chinese Medical Theory

- A. Ideas about the Body
- B. Five elements
- C. Hot/cold Foods
- D. Specific Herbs & Acupuncture Points (limited)

Jingfeng, C. & Yan, Z.

2003. "Medicine in Ancient China" In: *Medicine Across Cultures: History and Practice of Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*. (Selin, H. editor) Kluwer Academic Pub.

GUEST LECTURER

III. Traditional Chinese Medicine within the Global Economy

- A. Is there such a thing as "traditional" Chinese medicine?
- B. Concepts of Cultural Transmission (Diffusion)
- C. Chinese Medicine in the West: the rise of "alternative medicine"
- D. Social, Political, & Economic factors shaping "complementary medicine"

Shapiro, H.

2003. "How Different Are Western & Chinese Medicine? The Case of the Nerves." In: *Medicine Across Cultures: History and Practice of Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*. (Selin, H. editor) Kluwer Academic Pub.

IV. Theories of Ayurvedic Medicine

- A. The Body as Holistic Phenomenon
- B. The Practitioner-Patient Relationship
- C. Hot & Cold Correlates

D. Specific Treatment Options (limited)

Chopra, A.S.,

2003. "Ayurveda"

In: *Medicine Across Cultures: History and Practice of Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*. (Selin, H. editor) Kluwer Academic Pub.

V. Political & Economic Contexts for Ayurveda

A. Access to Health Care in India

B. Cultural Transmission of Healing Concepts

C. Ayurveda in the West

D. Retaining Saliency in a Modern World: how does it work?

Readings tba

VI. Healing Traditions of Latin America

A. Core Healing Concepts & Regional Variation

B. Cross-cultural & Comparative Conditions

C. Access and Inequality to Health Care

D. Global Implications: Politics, Poverty, and Health

Sanbria, H.

2007. "Chapter 8: Striving for Health & Coping with Illness." In *The Anthropology of Latin America & the Caribbean*. Boston: Pearson.

Brown, Peter.

1998. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. McGraw-Hill.

Excerpts include:

Chapter 27: The Hot-Cold Theory of Disease: Implications for the Treatment of Puerto Rican Patients

Chapter 30: A Case of Lead Poisoning from Folk Remedies in Mexican American Communities

Excerpts from *Susto: a Folk Illness* (Rubel)

VII. Native American Shamanism

A. Commonalities of Shamanic Healing Systems

B. Case Study of the Flathead Indians

C. Defining Depression Cross-Culturally

D. Political, Economic, and Historical Factors

E. Flathead Treatment of Depression

F. Efficacy & Future Solutions to Crisis in Native Populations

Hultkrantz, A.
2003. "The Relation between Medical States & Soul Beliefs Among Tribal Peoples." In:
Medicine Across Cultures: History and Practice of Medicine in Non-Western Cultures. (Selin,
H. editor) Kluwer Academic Pub.

Mehl-Madrona, L.
2003. "Native American Medicine: Herbal Pharmacology, Therapies, and Elder Care"
In: *Medicine Across Cultures: History and Practice of Medicine in Non-Western
Cultures*. (Selin, H. editor) Kluwer Academic Pub.

Excerpts from *Disciplined Hearts*

VIII. Biomedicine as a Cultural System

- A. Theory & Socialization in Medical Training
- B. The Influence of Gender
- C. Historical Case Studies
- D. Critiques of Naturalization & Biological Determinism
- E. Medicine as Religion; Faith in Science

IX. Contemporary Political & Economic Contexts for Biomedicine

- A. Access to Health Care in the U.S.
- B. Review of Different Health Care Delivery Options
- C. From "Alternative" to "Complementary" Medicine: The Use of
Traditional Medical Systems in the West
- D. Contributions of Applied Anthropologists

Brown, Peter.

1998. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. McGraw-Hill.

Excerpts include:

- Chapter 13: Sacred Healing & Biomedicine Compared
- Chapter 14: The Sorcerer and His Magic
- Chapter 18: Dark Side of the Shaman
- Chapter 37: Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation & Menopause

Brown, Peter.

1998. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*. McGraw-Hill.

Excerpts include:

- Chapter 21: Do Psychiatric Disorders Differ in Different Cultures?

Wiley, A.S. & Allen, J.S.

2009. *Medical Anthropology: a Biocultural Approach*. New York: Oxford University
Press. Selections include::

- Chapter 12: Mental Health & Illness
- Epilogue: The Relevance of Medical Anthropology

Grading & Important Info:

Grading will be based upon:

6 quizzes (50%)

1 final (40%)

Class Participation (10%)

There will be one quiz after/on each of the following topics (dates tba):

- Medical Anthropology
- Chinese Medicine
- Ayurvedic Medicine
- Latin American Medicine
- Native American Shamanism
- Biomedicine

*Note: The lowest quiz score will be dropped automatically.
(Each quiz constitutes 10% of your grade.)*

The final is cumulative and is worth 40% of your grade.

It is scheduled during the regular exam slot, on: May 8th from 1-3pm

Classroom Participation (10%) : assignments tba

Ethnographic case studies include:

Fadiman, A.

1998. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and The Collision of Two Cultures* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

O'Neil, T.D.

1998. *Disciplined Hearts: History, Identity, and Depression in an American Indian Community*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

DeStefano A.M.

2001. The Spirit and the Medicine. In: *Latino folk medicine: healing herbal remedies from ancient traditions*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Kearney, M.

1978. "Spiritualist Healing in Mexico." *Culture & Curing: Anthropological perspectives on Traditional Medical Beliefs & Practices*. (Morely, P. & Wallis, R., eds). University of Pittsburgh Press.

Rubel, A. and C. W. O'Neil, R. Collado-Ardon

1984. *Susto: A Folk Illness (Comparative Studies of Health Systems and Medical Care)*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Selected Films (available at Montclair)