

ANTH 440: MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Professor Gerber: gerbere@mail.montclair.edu
Office Hours (DI 407): Tu/Th 11:30-1, and by appt
Class: Tu 2:30-5pm, Spring 08

Texts:

The Social Medicine Reader, Vol II

Social and Cultural Contributions to Health, Difference, & Equality

Medical Anthropology:

Understanding Public Health

Selected ethnographies (at least ONE of the following is required for each student):

- 1) *Disciplined Hearts: History, Identity, and Depression in an American Indian Community* by Theresa DeLeane O'Neil
 - 2) *The Body Silent: The Different World of the Disabled* by Robert Murphy
 - 3) *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures* by Anne Fadiman
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Objectives

At the completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate through writing and discussion that they have:

- Developed requisite critical thinking skills and the ability to consider multiple perspectives on an issue
 - Expanded their knowledge about: national & international health disparities by race, class, and gender; how culture shapes ideas about "health," "illness," and "difference;" cultural and ecological constructions of the "body"
 - Understood the benefit of an anthropological perspective for improving applied public health projects
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Grading

60% = 2 exams (30% each)

10% = Participation – from contributions to class discussions & "ethnography" response

30% = Written assignments – best 3 of 4 scores; details provided in class

*****NOTE: Additional class policies are posted on Bb.**

Course Schedule

Jan 22 – Introduction to ourselves & to Medical Anthropology

NY Times article: Culture Bound Syndromes or Universal Experience?

Film: Healers of Ghana (#5896; 58 mins)

Jan 29 – Why a Medical Anthropology perspective on public health?

Understanding Public health Chapters 1-3

Feb 5 -- Defining "Health," "Illness," "Difference"

Understanding Public Health Chapter 10

The Social Medicine Reader – pp: 4 – 81
Bb: Disability & the Sociology of the Body (Turner)
Bb: Disability, Identity, and Representation: An Introduction (in Extraordinary Bodies)

Feb 12 -- Discussion of The Body Silent

Film: Twitch & Shout; King Gimp

Bb: A Child is a Child: Disability & Equality Among the Kenyan Maasai (Talle)

Bb: Disability As Incurable Illness: Health, Process, & Personhood in Southern Somalia (Helander)

Feb 19 – Creating & Manipulating Bodies: Reproduction, & Sexuality

Bb: Lessons from the Intersexed – Introduction

The Social Medicine Reader – pp: 202-217

Bb: Emergence of “fetal personhood” (readings tba: Petchesky; Sandelowski)

Feb 26 – Gender & Health Inequality

Understanding Public Health Chapter 6

The Social Medicine Reader – pp: 137-201

Mar 4 – “Race” and Health Disparities

The Social Medicine Reader – pp: 105-136; 218-251; 263-273

Understanding Public Health Chapter 5

Mar 11 – Poverty & Weight: Malnutrition/Starvation & Obesity

Bb: The Inuit Paradox

Bb: other readings tba

Film: Sorcerers of Zaire (#4026; 51 mins); other

*****No class Mar 18 (Spring break)**

*****No class Mar 25 (SfAA)**

Apr 1 – Discussion of Spirit Catches You

Bb: Lucrative Trade in Body Parts; other tba

Film: Strange Harvest

Apr 8 – Ethnomedicine (including Biomedicine; science as a cultural system)

Understanding Public Health Chapters 4, 7

Bb: The Woman in the Body Ch 3

Bb: TCM (article tba)

Apr 15 – Social Relations & Sickness

Understanding Public Health Chapter 9

The Social Medicine Reader – Part III

Apr 22 – Discussion of Disciplined Hearts

FILM: Make My People Live (#1428; 57 mins)

Bb: Readings tba

**Apr 29 (Last class) – Conclusions;
Contradictions, & Continuities in a Post-Colonial World**

Understanding Public Health Chapter 11-12