

**Anthropology 462/662**  
**WGS 462/ HTW 462**  
**Culture and Reproductive Health and Medicine**  
**Spring 2012**

**This course is part of the Consortium for Culture and Medicine (CCM) with  
Syracuse University, SUNY Upstate Medical University, and Le Moyne College**

Professor Cecilia Van Hollen

Dates: Tues. 4:30-7:15

Location: 1508 Setnor Academic Building

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Office Hours: Wed. 2:15-4:15, or by appointment

**Course description:**

This course examines diverse ways in which societies throughout the globe view and manage human reproduction and the implications this has for health care and medicine. The emphasis will be on women's reproductive health throughout the life cycle, including puberty, sex, pregnancy, population control, childbirth, infertility, and menopause. We will also explore some new work on men and reproductive health globally. The course also explores changes in reproductive health care in the context of globalization and considers how an understanding of the influence of culture and social relations on reproductive health is crucial for the development of international public health policy and practice. This course will be of interest to students in socio-cultural anthropology, gender studies, and health studies (including medicine, nursing, public health, and global health). The course is designed for advanced undergraduate students and graduate/professional students. This is a seminar-style course; emphasis is placed on full participation in class discussions and on student oral presentations of course materials.

**The major goals of this course are:**

- To gain knowledge of the field of the anthropology of reproduction as a sub-field within medical anthropology.
- To gain knowledge about theories of medicalization; Marxist feminist analysis; symbolic analysis; rites of passage; globalization; nationalism; political economy of health; and development discourse analysis.
- To gain introductory knowledge of diverse cultural contexts.
- To gain skills in research, writing, and oral presentation.

### Required Readings:

- \* Browner, Carole & Carolyn Sargent, eds. *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State: New Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives* 2011 (Duke University Press)
- \* Ginsburg, Faye & Rayna Rapp, eds. *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction* 1995 (University of California Press)
- \* Gutmann, Matthew *Fixing Men: Sex, Birth Control, and AIDS in Mexico*. 2007 (University of California Press)
- \* Martin, Emily *The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction* 2001 [1987] (Beacon Press)
- \* Rapp, Rayna *Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis in America* 1999 (Routledge)
- \* Van Hollen, Cecilia *Birth on the Threshold: Childbirth and Modernity in South India* 2003 (University of California Press)

The books are available for purchase in the **SU Bookstore** (303 University Place; phone: 443-9901) and are on 2-hour reserve in the Bird Library Reserve Room and in the Upstate Health Sciences library.

Articles required for the course are available to all students through the Electronic Reserve system of the Upstate Health Services Library. All students will be given a LEAP account to for the Upstate library to access the e-reserves. To access the Upstate library e-reserves, go to this website: <http://library.upstate.edu.libproxy1.upstate.edu/articles/reserves/>. You will be asked to enter your ID and Password. Next, under “Electronic Reserve Group,” click on “Consortium for Culture and Medicine.” Then click on the course title, “Culture and Reproductive Health and Medicine.” You will once again be asked to enter your ID and Password and once you do so, you will have access to the readings for the course.

We will also be showing the following films in class and you are expected to view them all:

- \**Born at Home*. 2000. Directed by Sameera Jain. Produced by Matrika & Sublunar Films. New Delhi, India. 60 Min. (Bird DVD 13293)
- \**Born in Brazil*. 2002. Directed by Cara Biasucci. Firefly Films. 52 mins. (Bird Library VC11691)
- \**The Business of Being Born*. 2008. Executive Producer Riki Lake; Director Abby Epstein; Ample Productions & Barranca Productions. (87 minutes) (Bird DVD 16643)
- \**Something Like A War*. 1991. (Bird Library: VC 12594; 52 mins) Director/Producer: Deepa Dhanraj. N & N Productions (India). Distributed by Women Make Movies.
- \**Made in India: A Film about Surrogacy*. 2010. Rebecca Haimowitz & Vaishali Sinha, Women Make Movies. (DVD 97 minutes) (Bird Library 16683)

### Course Requirements:

1. Students are required to attend class regularly, to keep up with the readings, and to participate in class discussions. You are expected to come to class having done the readings and fully prepared to comment on and discuss all of the readings.
2. You are required to write a 1-page critical reflection paper each week on the readings that are assigned for that week. These assignments are required but will not be graded.

You can either write about one particular reading for the week, or about a theme that cuts across all the readings for the week.

These short assignments are intended to provide a forum for you to write about what you found to be most interesting or important about the readings for that week. Or you may choose to critique a piece of writing, indicating strengths and/or weaknesses about the piece. Or you may want to write about some point raised in the writing that confuses you and for which you would like clarification. Or you may want to compare the readings for that day with the readings from earlier in the course. Finally, you may want to comment on how the readings relate to personal experiences or your own, your family members, or friends.

The point of these regular, short assignments is to demonstrate that you are engaging with the readings. These may be used for class discussion. Although these are not graded, they are required and your grade for Attendance/Participation/Critical Reflections will be affected if you do not hand them in each week.

**3.** Each student is responsible for giving at least 2 in-class presentations on the weekly readings. [NOTE: The number of presentations required may change depending on the class enrollment and the weighting of the grade will change accordingly so that the total weight for all presentations is 36. Graduate and Professional students may be required to give more presentations than undergraduate students]. Each presentation should be approximately **10 minutes**, followed by discussion. In your presentation you are expected to do the following things:

- 1) *Briefly* introduce the key points of the presentation reading materials (you should assume that all students have done the reading already so you should highlight key points; you should *not* give a full outline of the reading).
- 2) Discuss how the readings contribute to the theme of the week and the other readings for the week.
- 3) Comment on how the ideas presented in this piece contribute to our understanding of the field of the anthropology of reproduction more broadly and how they can contribute to improving health care services.
- 4) Critique the piece by explaining why you thought the reading was effective, useful, interesting and/or what you thought was problematic about the piece and how it could have been improved.
- 5) Provide the class with three questions for class discussion. The questions raised are a key part of your presentation. Be sure to raise questions that are open-ended enough to

facilitate conversation and debate about the reading and the points it raises. In your questions, feel free to relate the reading to experiences in contemporary American society and/or your own personal experiences.

6) You must provide the class with a hand-out outlining your presentation. Be sure to include your three questions on the hand-out. Make copies for everyone in the class.

NOTE: You do NOT need to submit a Critical Reflection piece on the same days that you give in-class presentations.

4. Each student is also required to conduct a research project and to write a final paper based on the research.

The paper can be on any topic of your choice relating to the Anthropology of Reproduction.

You have the option of writing a library-based research paper or a paper based on ethnographic research you conduct yourself. I will discuss issues of ethnographic research methods and ethics with those students interested in pursuing this type of research.

**Undergraduate students** are required to write a **10-12 page paper**.  
**Graduate/professional students** will write a **15-20 page paper**.

All final papers are due in class on the last day of class.

All students are required to give a brief oral presentation of your final research projects in class during the last two classes of the semester.

All students are required to submit a 1-page research project proposal. The date on which this is due is indicated in the syllabus.

The guidelines for the research project proposal are as follows: One page which briefly discusses the following three points:

- A. Research question. What do you plan to study? What is the larger question you hope to answer from this study? What do you expect to find (i.e. your hypothesis).
- B. Significance  
Why is this project significant to you?  
Why would this project be significant for others? Who would be your audience for this paper?
- C. Methodology  
How will you do this research? Library-based? Ethnographic?  
If ethnographic, who will your informants be? Where will you do research? How will you get permission? What kind of methods will you

use? Choose a topic that is methodologically feasible. Remember that your time is limited and chart out a schedule for yourself to be able to complete the project for this course.

You are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to meet with me to discuss the research project soon after submitting the proposal.

**Grades:**

Class attendance and participation:	25%
In-class presentations of readings:	36%
Research Paper:	35%
<u>Final Research Presentation:</u>	<u>4%</u>
Total	100%

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**General Course Policies**

**Absences**

More than 1 unexcused absence will result in lowering your grade. Absences are only considered “excused” with an official note or according to the guidelines regarding religious holidays as explained below.

**Academic courtesy:**

All students are expected to follow simple rules of academic courtesy to your fellow students and instructors. Please come to class on time to avoid disrupting the class. Once class begins, you must refrain from personal conversations. You must put away all non-course reading materials (e.g. newspapers). Turn off and put away all cell phones and MP3 players, and laptop computers. Please avoid premature preparations to leave class; your instructor will let you know when class is over. Eating is not allowed during class. You may be asked to leave the class for the day if you do not follow these rules.

**Laptop policy:** Laptop use in class is not permitted.

**Plagiarism:** I do not tolerate plagiarism or any other forms of cheating. If I find a case of cheating, you will receive an F on the assignment, possibly for the course, and I will report you to the relevant college administrator at which point you could choose to have a hearing before the college’s students’ standard committee.

Paraphrasing: Avoid using long direct quotations of readings and/or lecture notes. Instead it is better to paraphrase those ideas, that is, to explain the ideas from the readings or the lectures or films using you own words. However, when you paraphrase, you **MUST**

STILL CITE THE SOURCE of the idea. If you fail to cite the source, you are implying that it is your own idea and that is a form of plagiarism.

Direct quotes: If you do use direct quotations, then you must put the quotation within quotation marks and use the correct citation following the quotation.

We will be following the policy of Syracuse University for academic integrity. Information regarding this policy can be found at: <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/>. **It is your responsibility to review this policy carefully and to abide by it.**

**Students with Disabilities:**

Syracuse University students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>.

Students from SUNY Upstate Medical University and Le Moyne should contact the office for services for students with disabilities at your institution and provide me with the appropriate documentation from that office.

**Religious holidays:**

We will be following Syracuse University's policy regarding observation of religious holidays. SU's religious observances policy, found at: [http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp\\_ben/religious\\_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm), recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they **notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes.**

**If you will miss any academic assignments as a result of a religious holiday, you must notify me of this fact at the same time that you request the absence and we will work together to find an appropriate time for you to make up the assignment within the first two days of your return** from the religious holiday.

## **Syllabus:**

**Week 1: Jan. 17 **Introduction****

**Week 2: Jan. 24: **The medicalization of reproduction in the U.S.****

**Required reading:**

Martin, Emily (2001[1987]) *The Woman in the Body* (Whole Book)

**Week 3: Jan. 31: **The medicalization of reproduction in the U.S.****

**Required reading:**

Davis-Floyd, Robbie (1987) “The Technological Model of Birth” (Electronic Reserve)

Davis-Floyd & Davis (1987) “Obstetric Training as a Rite of Passage” (Electronic Reserve)

Fraser, Gertrude (1995) “Modern Bodies, Modern Minds: Midwifery and Reproductive Change in an African American Community” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

**Film**

*The Business of Being Born* (2008) (87 minutes)

**Week 4: Feb. 7: **Menstruation, Menopause, Culture, & Power****

**Required reading:**

Gottlieb, Alma (1988) “Menstrual Cosmology among the Beng of Ivory Coast” (Electronic Reserve)

Herd, Gill (1982) “Sambia Nosebleeding Rites and Male Proximity to Women” In: *Ethos* (Electronic Reserve)

Narasimhan, Haripriya (2011) “Adjusting distances: Menstrual pollution among Tamil Brahmins” (Electronic Reserve)

Lock, Margaret (1993) “The Politics of Mid-Life and Menopause: Ideologies for the Second Sex in North America and Japan” (Electronic Reserve)

Agee, Eve (2000) “Menopause and Transmission of Women’s Knowledge: African American and White Women’s Perspectives” (Electronic Reserve)

Week 5: Feb. 14: **Reproduction and Globalization**

Required reading:

Browner & Sargent (2011) (Forward, Introduction)

Erickson, Susan “Global Ethnography: Problems of Theory and Method” (Browner & Sargent)

Van Hollen, Cecilia (2003) *Birth on the Threshold: Childbirth & Modernity in South India*, Prologue, Introduction, Chaps. 1 - 3

Film

*Born at Home* (60 minutes)

Week 6: Feb. 21: **Reproduction and Globalization**

• **Research Project Proposal Due in Class**

Required reading:

Van Hollen, *Birth on the Threshold*, Chaps. 4, 5, 6, Conclusion, Epilogue

Richey, Lisa Ann “Antiviral but Pronatal? ARVs and Reproductive Health: The View from a South African Township” (Browner & Sargent)

Kuan, Chen-I (2011) “‘Suffering Twice’: Gender Politics of Cesarean Sections in Taiwan” (Electronic Reserve)

Film

*Born in Brazil* (52 minutes; Bird Library VC11691)

Week 7: Feb. 28: **Population Control**

Required reading:

Kligman, Gail “Political Demography: The Banning of Abortion in Ceausescu’s Romania” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

Das, Veena “National Honor and Practical Kinship: Unwanted Women and Children” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

Morsy, Soheir “Deadly Reproduction among Egyptian Women: Maternal Mortality and the Medicalization of Population Control” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

Chen, Junjie “Globalizing, Reproducing, and Civilizing Rural Subjects: Population Control Policy and Constructions of Rural Identity in China” (Browner & Sargent)



Film:

*Something Like a War* (52 minutes)

Week 8: March 6: **Reproduction and Globalization**

Required reading:

Gruenbaum, Ellen “Competing Globalizing Influences on Local Muslim Women’s Reproductive Health and Human Rights in Sudan: Women’s Rights, International Feminism, and Islam” (Browner & Sargent)

Sargent, Carolyn “Problematizing Polygamy, Managing Maternity: The Intersections of Global, State, and Family Politics in the Lives of West African Migrant Women in France” (Browner & Sargent)

Whiteford, Linda & Aimee R. Eden “Reproductive Rights in No-Woman’s Land: Politics and Humanitarian Assistance” (Browner & Sargent)

Fassin, Didier “The Mystery Child and the Politics of Reproduction: Between National Imaginaries and Transnational Confrontations” (Browner & Sargent)

**March 13: No Class: Spring Break**

Week 9: March 20: **New Reproductive Technologies: Prenatal testing**

Required reading:

Rapp *Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis in America* (Chaps 1—7, 11)

Week 10: March 27: **New Reproductive Technologies: Prenatal and DNA testing**

Required reading:

Browner, Carole “Lost in Translation: Lessons from California on the Implementation of State-Mandated Fetal Diagnosis in the Context of Globalization” (Browner & Sargent)

Taylor, Janelle (1998) “An Image of Contradiction: Obstetrical Ultrasound in American Culture” (Electronic Reserve)

Georges, Eugenia (1995) “Fetal Ultrasound Imagining and the Production of Authoritative Knowledge in Greece” (Electronic Reserve)

Fonseca, Claudia “Law, Technology, and Gender Relations: Following the Path of DNA Paternity Tests in Brazil” (Browner & Sargent)

Week 11: April 3: **New Reproductive Technologies: Assisted reproduction**

Required reading:

Strathern, Marilyn “Displacing Knowledge: Technology and the Consequence for Kinship” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

Kahn, Susan Martha (2002) “Rabbis and Reproduction: The Uses of New Reproductive Technologies among Ultraorthodox Jew in Israel” (Electronic Reserve)

Inhorn, Marcia “Globalization and Gametes: Islam, Assisted Reproductive Technologies and the Middle Eastern State” (Browner & Sargent)

Roberts, Elizabeth (1998) “Examining Surrogacy Discourses: Between Feminine Power and Exploitation” (Electronic Reserve)

Film:

*Made in India: A Film about Surrogacy*. 2010. Rebecca Haimowitz & Vaishali Sinha, Women Make Movies. (DVD 97 minutes)

Week 12: April 10: **New Reproductive Technologies: Assisted reproduction**

Required reading:

Lewin, Ellen “On the Outside Looking In: The Politics of Lesbian Motherhood” (Ginsburg & Rapp)

Hayden, Corinne P. (1995) “Gender, Genetics, and Generation: Reformulating Biology in Lesbian Kinship” (Electronic Reserve)

Bharadwaj, Aditya “Reproductive Viability and the State: Embryonic Stem Cell Research in India” (Browner & Sargent)

Roberts, Elizabeth (2007) “Extra Embryos: The ethics of cryopreservation in Ecuador and elsewhere” (Electronic Reserve)

Week 13: April 17: **Bringing men into the Anthropology of Reproduction**

Required reading:

Gutmann, Matthew *Fixing Men: Sex, Birth Control, and AIDS in Mexico* (Whole Book)

Week 14: April 24: **Students research presentations**

Week 15: May 1: **Students research presentations**

**\* Final Research Papers due in class \***

## **Academic journals of interest to medical anthropologists**

### Medical anthropology/public health

American Journal of Public Health  
Anthropology and Medicine\*  
Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry\*  
Medical Anthropology\*  
Medical Anthropology Quarterly\*  
IASTAM Journal of Asian Medicine  
International Journal of Health Services  
Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law  
Journal of Health & Social Behavior  
Journal of Public Health Policy  
Reproductive Health Matters  
Social Science & Medicine\*  
Women and Health

\* key journals for medical anthropology

### General anthropology

American Anthropologist  
American Ethnologist  
Current Anthropology  
Ethos  
Human Organization