

Gender and Health

Anthropology 40825

Spring 2011 / T/Th 3:30 to 4:45 pm in Flanner 323

Vania Smith-Oka, Assistant Professor
649 Flanner Hall, 631-7269

Email: vsmithok@nd.edu
Office hours: F 11:00-1:00
Or by appointment

Course description:

This course looks at the intersection of gender, health policy, and health care organization around the world. The factor of gender in health is often ignored by policy makers and researchers alike, yet it is often a contributing factor to people's health. Men and women have different biologies, and it thus stands to reason that their lives—social, economic, political, and biological—would have an effect on their health. Some of the issues to be discussed in this course include: medicalization of the body; critical medical anthropology; the politics of reproduction; social production of illness and healing; politics, poverty, and health; and national and international health and development policies.

Course Goals:

The goals of this class are threefold: 1) to appreciate the ways that anthropologists have studied health and gender in a variety of contexts, 2) to assess the importance of a gendered perspective on international health issues and, 3) to critically understand that health and its related issues are shaped by broad social, political, and economic forces.

Learning Goals:

At the end of the semester I expect students to:

1. Apply anthropological and ethnographic methods in their assignments
2. Demonstrate the ability to think critically and articulate their thoughts in class and assignments
3. Apply anthropological critique to cultural problems and situations regarding health and illness

Readings:

This course has a significant amount of reading, which includes one long ethnography and a variety of articles and chapters from several sources targeting specific elements of the course material. A major part of contributing to the discussion is by reading the relevant course material and extracting three major elements from it: what is being said, why is it being said, how it is being said. Through challenging the material, each other, yourselves and, yes, even the professor, the class discussion should bring forth not only the salient points of the reading and topic, but also help you to understand gendered facets of health at a deeper level and place them into their relevant social, political, economic, medical, or cultural context.

1. Nancy Scheper-Hughes (NS) – Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil
2. Various readings – on Concourse (VR)
 - a. Sargent, Carolyn, and Caroline Brettell. Introduction: Gender, Medicine, and Health. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
 - b. Martin, Emily. 1991. The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles. *Signs* 16(3):485-501.

- c. Pylypa, Jen. 1998. Power and Bodily Practice: Applying the Work of Foucault to an Anthropology of the Body *Arizona Anthropologist* 13:21-36.
- d. Ginsburg, Faye, and Rayna Rapp. 1991. The Politics of Reproduction. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20:311-343
- e. Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Margaret M. Lock. 1987. The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 1(1):6-41.
- f. Clark, Lauren. 1993. Gender and Generation in Poor Women's Household Health Production Experiences. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 7(4):386-402.
- g. Davis, Dona. The Cultural Constructions of the Premenstrual and Menopause Syndromes. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- h. Dressler, William W., Kathryn S. Oths, and Clarence C. Gravlee. 2005. Race and Ethnicity in Public Health Research: Models to Explain Health Disparities. *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.* 34:231-52
- i. O'Connor, Richard A., and Penny Van Esterik. 2008. De-Medicalizing Anorexia: A New Cultural Brokering. *Anthropology Today* 24(5):6-9.
- j. Singer, Merrill et al. 1992. Why does Juan García Have a Drinking Problem? The Perspective of Critical Medical Anthropology. *Medical Anthropology* 14:77-108.
- k. Hunt, Linda et al. 1999. Balancing Risks and Resources: Applying Pesticides without using Protective Equipment in Mexico. In *Anthropology in Public Health: Bridging Differences in Culture and Society*, Robert A. Hahn, ed. Pp. 235-254. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- l. Singer, Merrill, and Luis Marxuach-Rodriguez. 1996. Applying Anthropology to the Prevention of AIDS: The Latino Gay Men's Health Project. *Human Organization* 55(2):141-148.
- m. Abadía-Barrero, César E. 2004. Happy Children with AIDS: The Paradox of a Healthy National Program in an Unequal and Exclusionary Brazil. In *Unhealthy Health Policy: A Critical Anthropological Examination*, Arachu Castro and Merrill Singer, eds. Pp. 163-176. Altamira Press.
- n. Jenkins, Janis H. The Impress of Extremity: Women's Experience of Trauma and Political Violence. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- o. Farmer, Paul. 2005. On Suffering and Structural Violence. In *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Pp. 29-50.
- p. Sargent, Carolyn F. 2005. Counseling Contraception for Malian Migrants in Paris: Global, State, and Personal Politics. *Human Organization* 64(2):147-156.
- q. Maternowska, M. Catherine. 2006. The Family Planning Center: A Clinic in Conflict. In *Reproducing Inequities*. Pp. 75-102. Rutgers University Press.
- r. Schuler, Sydney R. et al. 1994. Misinformation, Mistrust, and Mistreatment: Family Planning Among Bolivian Market Women. *Studies in Family Planning* 25(4):211-221.
- s. Castro, Arachu. 2004. Contracepting at Childbirth: The Integration of Reproductive Health and Population Policies in Mexico. In *Unhealthy Health Policy: A Critical Anthropological Examination*, Arachu Castro and Merrill Singer, eds. Pp. 133-144. Altamira Press.
- t. Inhorn, Marcia C. and Matthew R. Dudgeon. 2003. Gender, Masculinity, and Reproduction: Anthropological Perspectives. *International Journal of Men's Health* 2(1):31-56.
- u. Michie, Helena, and Naomi H. Cahn. Unnatural Births: Caesarean Sections in the Discourse of the Natural Childbirth" Movement. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- v. Davis-Floyd, Robbie. The Technocratic Body and the Organic Body: Hegemony and Heresy in Women's Birth Choices. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- w. Tapias, Maria. 2006. Emotions and the intergenerational embodiment of social suffering in rural Bolivia. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 20(6): 399-415.
- x. Csordas, Thomas J. A Handmaiden's Tale: The Rhetoric of Personhood in American and Japanese Healing of Abortions. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- y. Henry, Doug. 2006. Violence and the body. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 20(3):379-398.

- z. Browner, Carole H., and Joanne Leslie. Women, Work, and Household Health in the Context of Development. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- aa. Gutmann, Matthew. 2005. Scoring Men: Vasectomies And The Totemic Illusion Of Male Sexuality In Oaxaca. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 29: 79-101
- bb. Whiteford, Linda. Political Economy, Gender, and the Social Production of Health and Illness. In *Gender and Health: An International Perspective*.
- cc. O'Daniel, Alyson A. 2008. Pushing poverty to the periphery. *Transforming Anthropology* 16(2):112-127.
- dd. Bourgois, Philippe, and Jeff Schonberg. 2007. Intimate Apartheid: Ethnic Dimensions of Habitus among Homeless Heroin Injectors. *Ethnography* 8(1):7-31.
- ee. Whiteford, Linda M., and Graham A. Tobin. 2004. Saving Lives, Destroying Livelihoods: Emergency Resettlement and Evacuation Policies in Ecuador. In *Unhealthy Health Policy: A Critical Anthropological Examination*, Arachu Castro and Merrill Singer, eds. Pp.189-202. Altamira Press.
- ff. Briggs, Laura. 2000. The Race of Hysteria: "Overcivilization" and the "Savage" Woman in Late Nineteenth-Century Obstetrics and Gynecology. *American Quarterly* 52(2):246-273.
- gg. Hacking, Ian. 1996. Automatism Ambulatoire: Fugue, Hysteria, and Gender at the Turn of the Century. *Modernism/Modernity* 3(2):31-43.
- hh. Desclaux, Alice. 2004. Equity in Access to AIDS Treatment in Africa. In *Unhealthy Health Policy: A Critical Anthropological Examination*, Arachu Castro and Merrill Singer, eds. Pp. 115-132. Altamira Press.
- ii. Smith-Oka, Vania. 2009. Unintended Consequences: Exploring the tensions between development programs and indigenous women in Mexico in the context of reproductive health. *Social Science and Medicine* 68:2069-2077.
- jj. Singer, Merrill, and Arachu Castro. 2004. Introduction: Anthropology and Health Policy, A Critical Perspective. In *Unhealthy Health Policy: A Critical Anthropological Examination*.
- kk. Manderson, Lenore, and Linda Whiteford. 2000. Introduction: Health, Globalization, and the Fallacy of the Level Playing Field. In *Global Health Policy, Local Realities*.

Grading:

This is a reading-intensive, critical-thinking course based primarily on readings and discussions; it will be managed in the form of a seminar, where student participation in discussion is vital for the class to function and be stimulating. Come prepared—active participation in class, evidence of commitment, enthusiasm, and preparedness will help to make this class enjoyable and challenging.

I will determine your grade from the following sources in order to evaluate your progress towards attaining the class goals. Further details about these assignments will be announced in class. **There is NO final exam for this course.**

Assignment	Percentage	Due Date(s)
Exams (2)	30% (15% each)	03/03, 04/28
Leading Discussion	10%	Variable
Research Project	50% (in 3 parts: 10%, 15%, 25%)	02/17, 03/24, 05/12
Attendance/Participation	10% (5% each)	Daily

The grading scale I use is as follows: **A=96-100, A- = 90-95, B+ = 87-89, B= 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D = 60-69, F = under 60.** I do not use a grading curve.

Assignments:

Assignments are to be handed in at the beginning of the class period on the date listed in the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized. I strongly encourage you to meet with me and discuss any concerns or questions you have with your assignment grades. Due to the short length of the term, however, these concerns or questions can only be addressed within two weeks after I have returned the assignment.

If you have a documented learning disability and are authorized to have special arrangements for assignments, please inform me at the beginning of the course.

Below are the descriptions and/or expectations for the class assignments. I encourage you to turn in any typed work **single spaced and double sided**.

Exams:

These will require you to demonstrate, appraise, and synthesize your knowledge by being able to apply it to particular situations. The questions will require you to think; hence they will be **short answer and essay** questions.

Leading Discussion:

The course will be run as a seminar, meaning that your participation in class discussion is essential for the class to be intellectually stimulating. You **MUST** come to class having done all the readings and be prepared to talk actively about the topic at hand. A very important part of your grade will be leading a class discussion. To do this, you, and one or two of your classmates, will lead one discussion during the semester using any methods you deem appropriate. This activity will prepare you for public speaking and critical thinking. Some Notre Dame students in the past have chosen to lead these discussions using examples from ND, visual aids, participant observation, additional readings, role playing, debates, etc.

Research Project:

A major course requirement will be to carry out an anthropological field investigation, in combination with library research. I would like you to choose a topic of significance that combines issues of gender, health, and structural factors—class, race/ethnicity, or income. You can carry this out on campus or off. If you choose on-campus, you must go beyond simply a topic of convenience located in the dorms and push yourself to explore a topic that exists outside of your comfort zone. Your research must utilize a combination of research techniques—qualitative and quantitative. I especially encourage you to make this research relevant beyond the research question (which is the “so what” factor); this data needs to be significant to the people with whom you will carry out the research. You can carry this out as an individual or as a group (of no more than three members). If you choose to work in a group you must inform me who the members are. The grade obtained for this assignment will thus be for the entire group, not on an individual basis (though your effort and participation in the group will be factored into your final grade). It is up to the group members to assign duties and roles so the final grade is acceptable to all.

This project will require you to begin early on during the semester, where you will present a research question to indicate what topic you will explore. You will then have three graded assignments as part of this larger project: an **annotated bibliography (10%)**, a **mid-way report (15%)**, and the **project itself (25%)**. You can either write up a 3,500 to 4,000-word research paper based on your work or present your work in the form of a poster (and a 1,250 to 2,000-word research paper) at the department of anthropology’s Undergraduate Research Expo in April.

Extra Credits:

I will announce extra credit assignments during the semester, which could take the form of lectures, exhibits, or films. For these assignments you have to write up a brief summary of the main points and then devote the rest of the paper to an analysis of the material from an anthropological perspective. Please write between **600-800** words. Each one you do will be worth **1%** of your final course grade; you can carry out up to **two** extra credits (for a total of **2%**). This is a useful enterprise for those of you on the margin between grades.

Important policies:

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. More than **three unexcused absences** will result in the failure of this course.

Honor Code:

I expect all students to adhere to academic honesty following the tenets of the Notre Dame Honor Code (“As a member of the Notre Dame, community I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty”). A violation of this code is serious and could result in a failing grade.

Office hours:

I encourage you to come to my office to discuss your queries, progress in class, or any issues that come up. If you cannot come to my office hours you can make an appointment at a time that suits us both. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions outside of class in a less formal setting.

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

<u>Week #1</u>	<u>Introduction to Gender and Health</u>
01/18	Get acquainted session
01/20	VR – Brettell & Sargent; Martin
<u>Week #2</u>	<u>A Little Bit of Theory</u>
01/25	VR – Pylypa; Ginsburg and Rapp
01/27	NS – Prologue & Introduction; VR -- Scheper-Hughes and Lock
<u>Week #3</u>	<u>Social Construction of Illness</u>
02/01	VR – Clark; Davis
02/03	NS – Ch. 1 Research Question due <i>student-led discussion</i>
<u>Week #4</u>	<u>Medicalization and Health Research</u>
02/08	VR – Dressler et al.
02/10	VR – O’Connor & Van Esterik; NS – Ch. 2
<u>Week #5</u>	<u>Men’s Health under Modernization</u>
02/15	VR – Singer et al.; Hunt et al.

02/17 NS – Ch. 3; VR -- Singer and Marxuach-Rodriguez
Annotated bibliography due
Student-led discussion

Week #6 **Politics, Poverty, and Health**

02/22 VR – Abadía-Barrero; NS – Ch. 4

02/24 NS – Ch. 5 & 6

Week #7 **Structural Violence and Health**

03/01 VR – Jenkins; Farmer

03/03 **Exam #1**

Week #8 **Reproduction**

03/08 VR – Sargent; Maternowska

03/10 VR – Schuler et al; Castro; Inhorn and Dudgeon
student-led discussion

03/14 to 03/19 **No class – Mid-Term break!!**

Week #9 **Childbirth and Authoritative Knowledge**

03/22 VR – Michie & Cahn; Davis-Floyd; NS – Ch. 7

03/24 **Film: At Highest Risk**
Mid-way report due

Week #10 **Parenthood and Personhood**

03/29 NS – Ch. 8; VR – Tapias

03/31 VR – Csordas; Henry
student-led discussion

Week #11 **Development and Health**

04/05 VR – Browner & Leslie; Gutmann

04/07 NS – Ch. 9 & 10
Film: A Doula Story

Week #12 **Political economy of health**

04/12 VR – Whiteford; O’Daniel; Bourgois and Schonberg

04/14 VR – Whiteford & Tobin
student-led discussion

Week #13 **Gender and Health Policy**

04/19 VR – Briggs; Hacking
Film: The Changeling

04/21 VR – Desclaux; Smith-Oka

Week #14 **International Health Issues**

04/26 VR – Castro & Singer; Manderson & Whiteford

04/28 **Exam #2**

**All extra credit due today at the latest
Undergraduate Research Expo today**

Week #15 **Summing Up**

05/03 NS – Ch. 11 to Epilogue
Summary and evaluation

Finals Week

05/12 **Research project due from 10:30-12:30 in my office**

Happy summer holidays!