

Autumn 2013

Introduction to Medical Anthropology

Introduction

Medical anthropology is a subfield of anthropology. It draws upon social, cultural, biological and linguistic anthropology to better understand those factors that define and influence health and well-being. One of the main focuses of medical anthropology is the experience of illness, the prevention and treatment of sickness, the range and variety of healing processes, the social relations of therapy management, and the cultural importance and utilization of pluralistic medical systems.

Seth D. Messinger

Public Policy 233

410-455-2073

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 6pm – start of class and by appointment.

I will attempt to respond to email within 24 hours of receiving a note from you. However please note that I check my email twice daily: once before 10:00am and again after 4:00pm.

Course Description.

The discipline of medical anthropology draws upon many different theoretical approaches. It is attentive to popular health culture, bioscientific epidemiology, the social construction of knowledge, and the politics of science. Medical anthropologists examine how the health of individuals, larger social formations they live within, and various ecologies (social, political, economic, natural etc) are affected by interrelationships between humans and other species, cultural norms, social institutions, micro and macro politics, and forces of globalization as each of these affects local worlds.

In this course we will tell the story of medical anthropology by exploring the discipline's history through its own texts, as well as present a survey of the different theoretical approaches that anthropologists have taken in their studies of various cultures and societies. Introduction to Medical Anthropology is a lecture course where students will be encouraged to participate in discussion. This term the course is "writing intensive."

This semester the course will look at medical and health issues as they pertain to the body and its relatedness and production through the state and society. The topics we will explore including living with the results of drug addiction and poverty in Baltimore, living with sleep disorder in the United States, and confronting the myriad opaque symptoms associated with Gulf War syndrome.

The contents of this syllabus are subject to revision. Announcements about changes will be made in class and emailed through blackboard.

Learning Goals / Objectives.

At the end of this course students should be able to:

- Know the historical outlines of the anthropology subfield of medical anthropology;
- Discuss the different predominate theories in medical anthropology;
- Have developed critical writing skills;
- Have learned basic library research skills.

Academic Accommodations

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (SSS) is the UMBC department designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact SSS in the Math/Psych Bldg., room 213 or at 410-455-2459. SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS-approved accommodations.

Statement on Course Continuity.

In the event that the campus is closed for an extended period efforts will be to continue to offer the course through the medium of blackboard. A variety of contingency plans are currently being developed to minimize this kind of disruption. These include posting lectures to blackboard and hosting / moderating on-line discussions and the up-loading of course lectures as podcasts.

Requirements and Grading.

Assigned articles and selected readings will either be available on Blackboard or through the various library databases available online through AOK library. In certain cases they may be placed on reserve in the AOK library. The following books will be available for purchase at the university bookstore, and will be on reserve at AOK library.

Meyers, Todd. 2013. *The Clinic and Elsewhere: Addictions, Adolescents and the Afterlife of Therapy*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Wolf-Meyer, Matthew. 2012. *Slumbering Masses: Sleep, Medicine and Modern American Life*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press

Kilshaw, Susie. 2010. *Impotent Warriors: Perspectives on Gulf War Syndrome, Vulnerability and Masculinity*. Oxford, NY: Berghahn Books

There are three types of assignments for this class.

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A. Response papers are due at different dates during the semester. A response paper is a 2-page (double spaced) paper that directly engages the reading usually from of the week it is assigned. The response papers are assigned in order to assess that students are keeping up with the coursework and are focusing their attention on relevant concepts in the course. The response papers are also assigned to contribute to the development of writing skills. A good response paper consists of a brief description / summary of the reading; a quick summation of the theoretical contribution or argument of the reading; finally a response paper concludes with the student's reaction to the material presented. There are four response papers.

B. The research paper assigned for this course will have students conducting ethnographic interviews in accordance with the practices and ethics associated with the American Anthropological Association (<http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/ethstmnt.htm>). Students should read and become familiar with university's requirements and guidelines for student projects (<http://my.umbc.edu/groups/compliance>). Students will conduct one or more interviews with an on campus stranger(loosely defined) to explore their ideas about health and health seeking. The main question for this paper is "tell me about the last time you were sick, how did you know, what did you do, how did you know when you were better." These interviews will be integrated into a research paper that pursues one or more of the themes that are introduced through the course. Students will be given an introduction to anthropological ethics and will required to use pseudonyms or other anonymizing techniques to protect the identity of their interviewee. A week of class time will be devoted to research practices and ethics. Throughout the semester there will be due dates assigned to specific sections of the paper.

C. The midterm exam will be take home essay exams in which students will be asked to do one essay question in common and then pick one or two questions from a list.

-- Class participation	10%
-- Response Papers	15%
-- Midterm Exam	25%
-- Research Paper	50%

In general turning in work late is discouraged. However, student requests to turn in work late will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Repeat requests will likely lead to refusals.

Academic Integrity Statement.

From the UMBC Student Government Association Website
(<http://www.umbc.edu/sga/>, accessed June 14, 2007:

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"By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory [or for graduate courses, the Graduate School website." (Statement from <http://www.umbc.edu/integrity/faculty.html> - accessed 10 May 2007)

Guidelines for maintaining academic integrity in course assignments:

If you take three or more words in a row from any source, it must be in quotation marks and followed by the author's last name, year of publication, and page number. This includes content from the web. Web content should be cited with the web page, author, and date accessed.

If you take ideas or facts from a source but use your own words, you must still use a citation (author's last name and year of publication) to give credit to the source of the work.

Give serious thought to why you are using quotes or ideas. Don't string together a lot of quotes without explaining why you are using them.

The work you produce in this class must be original.

Course Schedule

Week 1 September 3, 2013

Course Welcome

Kottak, Conrad. 2008 "What is Anthropology" Chp. 1 ON Bb RESERVE
Malinowski, B. Selected Readings – ON Bb RESERVE

Week 2 September 10, 2013

Response Paper 1 Due

Research Ethics and Preparation for Research Paper

Kottak Chp 2 Research Ethics On Bb Reserve
Belmont Report (http://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/ac/05/briefing/2005-4178b_09_02_Belmont%20Report.pdf)

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UMBC Human Subjects Training Module --

http://www.umbc.edu/research/ORPC/human_subjects_use_training.html.

Week 3

September 17, 2013

Completed IRB certificates Due at Beginning of Class

Background to Medical Anthropology

Good, Byron. Illness Representations in Medical Anthropology – On Bb Reserve

Baer, H., et al. Medical Anthropology: Central Concepts and Developments – On Bb Reserve

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret Lock. 1987. "Mindful Body" *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. 1(1): 6-41. Find on Anthrosource

Week 4

September 24, 2013

Time

Thompson, E. P. Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism

Serres, M and Latour, B. Conversations

Week 5

October 1, 2013

One page paper due describing participant recruitment

Sleep

Wolf-Meyer, M. Slumbering Masses – Introduction – chapter 2

Week 6

October 8, 2013

Class Lecture Cancelled

Sleep

Wolf-Meyer, M. Slumbering Masses: Chps 3 - 6

Week 7

October 15, 2013

Response Paper Two due (covers Wolf-Meyers chps 3 – conclusion)

Wolf-Meyer, M. Slumbering Masses: Chps 7 - Conclusion

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Week 8

October 22, 2013

Outline for Paper including name of illness and bibliography

Drugs

Meyers, T. Clinic and Elsewhere: Introduction – Chp 1.
Garcia, A. 2008. Elegiac Addict: History, Chronicity and the Melancholic Subject.
Cultural Anthropologist 23(4): 718-746 – Anthro Source

Week 9

October 29, 2013

Response Paper Three Due

Drugs

Meyers, T. Clinic and Elsewhere: Chps 2 - 5

Week 10

November 5, 2013

Class Lecture Cancelled

Week 11

November 12, 2013

Library Research section draft due

Drugs

Meyers, T. Clinic and Elsewhere: Chps 6 - Conclusion
Bourgois, P. 2011. Lumpen Abuse: The Human Cost of Righteous Neoliberalism. City and Society 23(1): 2 – 12 – Anthrosource
Pearson, C and Bourgois, P. 1995. Hope to Die a Dope Fiend. Cultural Anthropology 10(4): 587-593. – Anthrosource.

Week 12

November 19, 2013

Gulf War

Response Paper Four Due

Gulf War

Kilshaw, S. Impotent Warriors: Introduction – Chp 2.

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Brown, P., Zavestoski, S., McCormick, S., Mandelbaum, J., Luebke, T., Linder, M. 2001.
A Gulf Of Difference: Disputes Over Gulf War-Related Illnesses. Journal of Health and
Social Behavior 42:235-257

Week 13

November 26, 2013

Interview section draft due

Gulf War

Kilshaw, S. Impotent Warriors: Chps 3 - 4
Showalter, E. Hystories: Chp TBA ON BLACKBOARD

Week 14

December 3, 2013

Kilshaw, S. Impotent Warriors: Chps 5 - 7

Week 15

December 10, 2013

Research Paper Due Date

Kilshaw, S. Impotent Warriors: Conclusion
Messinger, S TBA