

**ANTH 3312**  
**Medical Anthropology: Illness and Healing in Cultural Perspective**

**Instructor: Melinda Vandenberg Giles**  
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**Course Description:** Medical Anthropology explores conceptualizations of the body, illness and healing from a cross-cultural lens. This course will examine alternatives to the western bio-medical model in terms of traditional healing and holistic interpretations of the body. In addition, the course will focus on Medical Anthropology as an engaged field of work by situating it within the political economy of global health and power/capitalist relations.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Several questions will be posted each week under Content on D2L related to the course readings. You are expected to submit by email ([mvanden1@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:mvanden1@lakeheadu.ca)) a weekly reading response (half a page) incorporating thoughts regarding the readings, video lecture, related video clips and questions posted. Further questions, thoughts, or clarifications related to the weekly Zoom discussion sessions can also be included if applicable. The weekly Zoom discussion is not a requirement but it is available if students wish to engage further with the material or have any questions. The **Zoom meeting will occur every Tuesday from 10-11am with the first meeting being on Tuesday, Jan 5<sup>th</sup>**. Each response is worth 5% for a total of 60% of your final grade. A grade of 0% will be given if the response is not submitted by midnight Friday unless prior arrangements or documentation is provided.
2. 7-10-page term paper based on topic of choice related to medical anthropology. Three outside references are required at minimum and AAA (American Anthropological Association Style) must be used. Double-spaced 12-point Times New Roman font. Term paper will be worth 40% of final grade.

**Evaluation:**

Weekly response: 60%

7-10 page Term Paper: 40%

**every Friday midnight**  
**April 1 midnight**

**Required Text:**

Becker, Anne. Body, Self and Society: The View from Fiji. 1995. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Additional required weekly readings are available as PDFs on D2L.

## **Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

### **1. Jan 4-8**

#### **Medical Anthropology: An Overview**

- Brown, Peter J., Ronald L. Barrett, and Mark B. Padilla 1998 Medical anthropology: an introduction to the fields. In Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology. Pp. 10-19: Mountain View: Mayfield.

### **2. Jan 11-15**

#### **Anthropology of the Body**

- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret Lock 1987 The mindful body: A prolegomenon to future work in medical anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1:6-41.
- Becker, Anne. Body, Self and Society. Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1.

### **3. Jan 18-22**

#### **Sickness and Healing in Cross-cultural Perspective**

- Rekdal, Ole Bjorn 1999 Cross-cultural healing in east African ethnography. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 13(4):458-482.
- Becker, Anne. Body, Self and Society. Chapters 2, 3 and 4

### **4. Jan 25-29**

#### **Illness Narratives and Social Discord**

- Becker, Anne. Body, Self and Society. Chapters 5, 6 and Epilogue
- Kamat, Vinay. Silent Violence: Global Health, Malaria and Child Survival in Tanzania. Chapter 5. Malaria deaths and meaning making.

### **5. Feb 1-5**

#### **Medical Anthropology and Social Justice**

- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1995. The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology, Current Anthropology 36(3): 409-419
- Susser, Ida. The Anthropologist as Social Critic Working toward a More Engaged Anthropology. Current Anthropology 51 (S2): S227-S233

### **6. Feb 8-12**

#### **Critical Medical Anthropology, HIV and Global Health**

- Pfeiffer, James and Mark Nichter 2008 What can critical medical anthropology contribute to global health? *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 22(4):410-415.
- Pigg, S. 2013. On sitting and doing: Ethnography as action in global health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 99: 127-134

## 7. Feb 22-26

### **Social Determinants of Health**

- Vandenbeld Giles, Melinda. "Living in Isolation: Motel Families in Ontario and the Neoliberal Social/Built/Physical Environment" *In* *Mothering and the Environment*. JMI (Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement) Vol 2.1: 194-212.
- Duke, M. 2011. Ethnicity, Well-Being and the Organization of Labor among Shade Tobacco Workers, *Medical Anthropology*, 30(4): 409-424.

## 8. March 1-5

### **Structural Violence and Social Suffering**

- Farmer, Paul. 2003 On suffering and structural Violence: Social and economic rights in the global era (Chapter 1). *In* *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Pp. 29-50. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kamat, Vinay. 2013 Silent Violence. Malaria, single mothers, and social suffering. Chapter 6. 130-160.

## 9. March 8-12

### **The Global Politics of Organ Transplants**

- Lock, Margaret. 1997 The quest for human organs and the violence of zeal *In* *Violence and Subjectivity*. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds, eds. Pp. 271-295. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2002 Min(d)ing the body: On the trail of organ-stealing rumors *In* *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*. Jeremy MacClancy, ed. Pp. 33-63. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

## 10. March 15-19

### **Reproductive Health and New Reproductive Technologies**

- Lazarus, Ellen S. 1994 What do women want: Issues of choice, control, and class in pregnancy and childbirth. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 8(1):25-46.

- Inhorn, Marcia C. 2003 Global infertility and the globalization of new reproductive technologies: Illustrations from Egypt. *Social Science and Medicine* 56:1837-1851

#### 11. **March 22-26**

##### **Anthropology of Pharmaceuticals, Contagion and COVID**

- Etkin, Nina L. 1992 "Side effects": cultural constructions and reinterpretations of Western pharmaceuticals. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 6(2):99-113.
- Kamat, Vinay 2013 Silent Violence. Old ideas, and new promises. Chapter 7:163-190 and Pharmaceutical nexus and globalizing antimalarials. Chapter 8:163-214.

#### 12. **March 29-April 1**

##### **Shamanism, Ethnobotany and Psychedelics**

- Davis, Wade. 1985 *The Serpent and the Rainbow*. The Jaguar.
- Fraser, Sylvia. 2014. *The Green Labyrinth: Exploring the Mysteries of the Amazon*.

### **Class Policies**

#### **D2L**

I will be using D2L to post PDFs of course readings and announcements.

#### **Policy on Extensions**

**Weekly responses** are due **every Friday at midnight with no extension** unless previous arrangements or documentation can be provided. The **Term Paper is due April 1** and will be penalized **5% per day and you will receive 0% after 7 days** unless prior arrangements have been made.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty (for instance, plagiarism) is a serious offence. Please see the web site: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures/node/1046>. Please keep in mind that I have zero tolerance for any forms of plagiarism.