

**Introduction to Medical Anthropology**  
ANTH S114  
Yale University, Summer Session B  
July 3-August 4 2017

**Instructor:** Dr. Elizabeth Miles

**Email:** [elizabeth.miles@yale.edu](mailto:elizabeth.miles@yale.edu)

**Office:** Anthropology Department, 10 Sachem Street, Room 204

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 pm or by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to the themes, theories, methods, and debates within medical anthropology. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the body, health, and medicine to understand that these are not “given” categories outside of questions/structures of culture and power. Topics include: cross-cultural understandings of health; biomedicine and health regimes as culturally contingent; embodiment of difference include race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability; biopolitics; and global and public health paradigms.

**Course Requirements:**

- Weekly Précis: Students will write a weekly one-page précis on the week’s readings. Students should tie together the readings, attempting to find a common thread(s). The précis should also include critical questions (i.e. questions that cannot be answered with a Google search) for the class. See the schedule for due dates and questions.
- Final Project: Students will write a 10-12 page integrative research paper on a topic of their choosing. This is an opportunity to go into greater depth, combining library research with in-class readings.
- Attendance and Participation: I firmly believe that students’ active participation—engaged assessments, cogent critiques—is necessary for a successful class. **You all have important things to say!** Attendance and participation will be graded accordingly.

**Grading and Evaluation:**

Participation	30%
Weekly Précis	30%
Final Essay	40%

**Course Learning Goals:**

- Critically engage with readings on medical anthropology, health and culture, and global health
- Be able to situate biomedicine and other health cultures in historical and cultural context
- Identify theoretical frameworks for researching and understanding health and bodies
- Recognize the role of power, politics, states, and non-governmental actors in health and embodiment
- Draw connections between readings to understand ongoing debates
- Clearly present arguments and ideas in class discussions and coursework

**Course Materials:**

Most of the course readings will be available as PDFs on Classes V2 under the “Resources” section.

Required Texts:

Fadiman, Anne. 1997. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

This book is readily available via Amazon.com: [https://www.amazon.com/Spirit-Catches-You-Fall-Down/dp/0374533407/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493588917&sr=1-1&keywords=the+spirit+catches+you+and+you+fall+down](https://www.amazon.com/Spirit-Catches-You-Fall-Down/dp/0374533407/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1493588917&sr=1-1&keywords=the+spirit+catches+you+and+you+fall+down)

### **Course Policies:**

#### Attendance and Respectful Participation

Class attendance is mandatory, and your participation in class is important. Please complete each day's assigned readings before coming to class, and bring electronic or hard copies of the relevant readings and your notes to class for reference. Come prepared to raise questions and exchange ideas with the group. It's okay if you disagree with something from the readings, or with others' comments during discussion—understanding different interpretations is part of what anthropology is about. Respectful disagreement can be productive for thinking through difficult issues, and this class is a safe space for sharing divergent viewpoints. Don't be afraid to talk, and always be respectful of others. However, in order to facilitate a safe and comfortable learning environment for everyone, racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise harmful language will not be tolerated during discussions.

Please note that the use of laptops and electronic tablets is permitted during class. However, it is important that we focus on our discussions without interruptions or distractions. To that end, please use these devices only in service of the class. Moreover, CELL PHONE USE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

#### Weekly Précis

Students will complete weekly one-page, single-spaced précis due Thursdays by 5 pm. The précis should begin with a brief summary of the readings for that week (M,W, F readings) and then develop connections between readings and how they relate to that week's thematic module. Lastly, the précis will end with questions that the readings provoked. I take these précis very seriously, as should you. They help me to gauge your understanding of the materials as well as provide students with an opportunity to think deeply and critically about the materials. Again, this is not solely a summary of the readings, but an opportunity for you to create links and themes.

#### Final Paper

Students will write a 10-12 page integrative research paper on a topic of their choosing. I encourage students to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss a topic. This is an opportunity for students to draw on the theoretical approaches, themes, methodologies, and approaches highlighted in the readings. **The paper is due on the last day of class, Friday August 4 by 5 p.m.**

Timely completion of assignments is important. In accordance with Yale College policy, extensions will not be granted except under proven emergency conditions and with a note from your Dean. Unexcused late work will be marked down by half a letter grade for every day that it is late.

### **On Disability in the Classroom:**

My aim is to make this course accessible and welcoming to all interested persons. If you have a disability, please let me know and I will do my best to support you. This goes triply for folks with non-apparent disabilities or who pass, mask, or compensate. No need to do that here. I will try my best to make the classroom accessible.

### **Office Hours and Consultations:**

I am always happy to talk with you about the course, either via email or in person. Please make appointments to meet with me, and bring your ideas, questions, doubts, and/or rough drafts.

### **Academic Integrity:**

I treat the issue of plagiarism very seriously. If you cite from a book, article, or web page, you must note the source in your paper and clearly mark the citation with quote marks "" or block citation styles. If you are unfamiliar with how to cite, consult <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources> on this matter. For other writing resources, please see <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing>

I will fail any students who I catch plagiarizing (even on drafts or short assignments). Recycling material that you wrote for other classes is also plagiarism unless you clear it with me beforehand. Plagiarizing from yourself will get you failed in this course just as quickly as plagiarizing from other people. I reserve the right to submit any of your work (including drafts and informal pieces) to plagiarism search engines or sites. If I suspect plagiarism, I also reserve the right to give you a short quiz about your paper (if you wrote it, you should be able to handle with aplomb).

### **Course Readings:**

Please note that this course has a moderate-heavy reading load, especially given the accelerated summer-session class schedule. It is important that students plan and pace their readings for the course.

Engaged reading practices such as taking notes, highlighting and underlining texts, annotating in the margins, and writing questions while reading are highly encouraged. We will go over some active reading strategies on the first day of class, but here are some quick tips:

- Take notes while reading
- Mark questions and key passages in the text
- Write down the article's main points or arguments
- Compare author's approach to other readings for that week
- Identify the author's methodology (how did they research the topic?). Do the methods support the author's claims?
- Do you find the arguments convincing? Why or why not?

If students are not managing to complete the reading assignments, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus. This includes, with advanced warning, changing reading assignments, instituting reading quizzes and/or changing the nature of reading response assignments (i.e. making them time, in-class writing exercises).

## **SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASS MEETINGS**

### **Week 1: De-Centering Biomedicine as Culture**

*Learning Goals: Students will be able to unpack medical language and treatment paradigms and be able to identify cultural assumptions embedded in these regimes of care.*

#### Monday July 3: Introduction to the Course

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. 2009. "The Danger of a Single Story" TED Talk [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30
- Conrad, Peter. 2007. *The Medicalization of Society: On the Transformations of Human Conditions into Treatable Disorders*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. Chapter 1 "Medicalization: Context, Characteristics, and Changes," pp. 3-23
- Clarke, Adele et al. 2010. *Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health, and Illness in the U.S.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, Chapter 1 "Biomedicalization," pp. 1-46

#### Wednesday July 5: "Speaking Science:" Biomedical Language and Metaphor

- Fadiman, Anne. 1997. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her*

*American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-31

- Good, Byron and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good. 1993. "Learning Medicine': The Constructing of Medical Knowledge at Harvard Medical School." In *Knowledge, Power, and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life*, edited by Shirley Lindenbaum and Margaret Lock, 81-107. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Wilce, James M. 2009. "Medical Discourse." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38:199-215.

### **First Precis Due Thursday July 6<sup>th</sup> by 5 pm**

#### Friday July 7: Biomedicine as Culture

- Fadiman, Chapters 4-6, pp. 32-77
- Kleinman, Arthur. 1978. "Concepts and a Model for the Comparison of Medical Systems as Cultural Systems." *Social Science and Medicine* 12:85-93.
- *Biomedicalization*, Chapter 3 "From the Rise of Medicine to Biomedicalization" pp. 104-146

#### **Week 2: Perspectives on Health and Illness**

*Learning Goals: Students will understand the connections between the cultural assumptions of biomedicine and how doctors and patients interact in clinical settings Students will be able to explain, in anthropological terms, how and why doctors and patients may have divergent expectations and opinions regarding medical treatment and care and how these play out in medical encounters.*

#### Monday July 10: Biomedical Encounters

- Fadiman, Chapters 9 to 11; pp. 106-153
- Lupton, Deborah. 2003. *Medicine as Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Chapter 5 "Power Relations and the Medical Encounter" pp. 113-141
- Gordon, Deborah R. 1988. "Tenacious Assumptions in Western Medicine." In *Biomedicine Examined*, edited by Margaret Lock and Deborah R. Gordon, 19-56. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

#### Wednesday July 12: Interpreting Illness and Situated Knowledges

- Fadiman, Chapters 12-15 pp. 154-224
- Haraway, Donna 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575-599.
- Davis, Lennard J. 2013. "Introduction: Disability, Normality, and Power." In *The Disability Studies Reader*, edited by Lennard J. Davis, 1-14. New York: Routledge.

### **Second Precis Due Thursday July 13 by 5 p.m.**

#### Friday July 14: Bridging the Gap?

- Fadiman, Chapters 17-19, Afterword pp. 250-288, 289-303
- Taylor, Janelle S. 2003. "The Story Catches You and You Fall Down: Tragedy, Ethnography, and 'Cultural Competence'." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (2):159-181.
- Kleinman, Arthur and Peter Benson. 2010. "Anthropology in the Clinic: The Problem of Cultural Competency and How to Fix It." In *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*, edited by Peter J. Brown and Ron Barrett, 290-296. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

#### **Week 3: Embodiment and Difference**

*Students will be able to explain medical representations of race, class, gender, sexuality, and*

disability. They will be able to define intersectionality and explain how patients' and doctors' experiences and embodied subject positions influence medical encounters.

#### Monday July 17 Medicalizing Difference

- Epstein, Steven. 2008. *Inclusion: The Politics of Difference in Medical Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Introduction (pp. 1-16) and Chapter Ten "To Profile or Not to Profile: What Difference Does Race Make?" (pp. 203-232)
- Karkazis, Katrina. 2008. *Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experiences*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, Introduction (pp. 1-30) and Chapter Four "Boy or Girl? Bodies of Mixed Evidence and Gender Assignment" (pp. 89-132)
- 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.

#### Wednesday July 19 Disciplining Race and Sexuality

- Weng, Suzie S. and Warren T. Wolfe III. 2016. "Asian American Health Inequities: An Exploration of Cultural and Language Incongruity and Discrimination in Accessing and Utilizing the Healthcare System" *International Public Health Journal* 8 (2): 155-167.
- Wynn, L.L. and James Trussell. 2006. "The Social Life of Emergency Contraception in the United States: Disciplining Pharmaceutical Use, Disciplining Sexuality, and Constructing Zygotic Bodies." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 20 (3): 297-320.
- Norgren, Christiana. 2001. *Abortion Before Birth Control: The Politics of Reproduction in Postwar Japan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Chapter 7 "The Politics of the Pill" (pp. 103-132)

**Third Precis Due on Thursday July 20 by 5 p.m.**

#### Friday July 21 Disability and the Body

- Whyte, Susan and Ingstand, B. 1995. "Disability and Culture: An Overview". Ch 1. Of *Disability and Culture*
- Kohrman, Matthew. 2003. "Why Am I Not Disabled? Making State Subjects, Making Statistics in Post-Mao China." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17 (1): 5-24.
- Ralph, Laurence. 2014. *Renegade Dreams: Living Through Injury in Gangland Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Introduction (pp. 1-18) and Chapter Four (pp. 119-139)

#### **Week 4: Biopolitics**

*Students will be able to articulate the main tenets of biopolitics, including the emergence of medical technologies as modes of surveillance, the increased focus on population, and individual discipline.*

#### Monday July 24 Introduction to Biopolitical Theory

- Lock, Margaret. 1993. "Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practice and Knowledge." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 22:133-155.
- Zola, Irving Kenneth. 1976. "Medicine as an Institution of Social Control." *Ekistics* 41 (245): 210-214.
- Foucault, Michel. 2014. "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century." *Foucault Studies* 18:113-127.

#### Wednesday July 26 Disciplining Bodies

- Foucault, Michael. 1984. *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: Random House, "Docile Bodies" and "Means of Correct Training" (pp. 179-205)
- Bordo, Susan. 2003 (1993). *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Berkeley: University of California Press, Introduction (pp. 1-42)

### **Fourth Precis Due on July 17 by 5 p.m.**

#### Friday July 28 Biopolitics in Action

- Roberts, Dorothy E. 1997. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. New York: Pantheon Books, Chapter Three “From Norplant to the Contraceptive Vaccine pp. 104-149
- Petryna, Adriana. 2013. *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Chapter 5 “Biological Citizenship” (99-130)
- Nguyen, Vinh-Kim. 2010. *The Republic of Therapy: Triage and Sovereignty in West Africa's Time of AIDS*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, Chapter 4 “Life Itself: Triage and Therapeutic Citizenship” (pp. 89-110)

### **Week 5: Global Public Health and Medical Targets**

*Students will be able to situate themes discussed thus far (biomedicine, culture, biopolitics, power) within broader contexts of global health and humanitarian interventions. Students will be able to explain how transnational health interventions intersect with politics, capitalism, violence, and imperialism.*

#### Monday July 31 Genealogies and Legacies of Global Health

- Greenhalgh, Susan. 2008. *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng's China*. University of California Press, Chapter 2 “History: The ‘Ideology’ Before the ‘Science’” (pp. 1-26)
- Comaroff, Jean. 1993. “The Diseased Heart of Africa: Medicine, Colonialism and the Black Body.” In *Knowledge, Power, and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life*, edited by Shirley Lindenbaum and Margaret Lock, 305-329. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Ticktin, Miriam. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, Chapter Two “Genealogies of Care: The New Humanitarianism” (pp. 60-86)

#### Wednesday August 2: Global Health Inequalities

- Berry, Nicole S. 2010. *Unsafe Motherhood: Mayan Maternal Mortality and Subjectivity in Post-war Guatemala*. New York: Berghahn Books, “Global Safe Motherhood and Making Local Pregnancy Safe: The Spin and What it Covers Up” (pp. 85-107)
- Foley, Ellen E. 2010. *Your Pocket is What Cures You: The Politics of Health in Senegal*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, Chapter 4 “Global Health Reform in Saint Louis” (pp. 58-83)
- Nations, Marilyn K. and Cristina M.G. Montes. 1996. “‘I'm Not Dog, No!': Cries of Resistance Against Cholera Control Campaigns.” *Social Science and Medicine* 43 (6): 1007-1024.

### **Fifth Precis Due on Thursday August 3 by 5 p.m.**

#### Friday August 4 Transnational Politics of Health and Humanitarianism

- Farmer, Paul. 1999. “Pathologies of Power: Rethinking Health and Human Rights.” *American Journal of Public Health* 89 (10):1486-1496.
- Butt, Leslie. 2002. “Suffering Strangers: Medical Anthropology and International Morality.” *Medical Anthropology* 21 (1):1-24.
- Irwin, A. et al. 2002. “Suffering, Moral Claims, and Scholarly Responsibility: A Response to Leslie Butt.” *Medical Anthropology* 21 (1): 25-30.

### **Final Paper Due Today, August 4 by 5 p.m.**