ETRNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES IN
GLOBAL HEALTH

ANTH S462
Summer Session B 2020
June 29 – July 31
TTh 1-4:15 pm
Anthropology

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Office Hours: By Email Appointment and Zoom

Course Description

This seminar is designed to explore anthropological approaches to global health, with major attention to the current global health crises posed by infectious disease pandemics and wars. Through reading and discussing nine cutting-edge ethnographies and watching two award-winning films, students will come to understand how anthropologists study, write about, and intervene in global health crises, with implications for understanding the current global COVID-19 epidemic. All of the recent major pandemics, including SARS, H1N1, Bird Flu, and Ebola will be examined, as well as “older killers,” including HIV/AIDS and malaria. Their disparate impacts on the world’s men, women, and children will be examined, as well as how differences in resources and responses between nations impact the course of epidemics. The course also examines how nation-states produce health crises through violence, asking what states owe to refugees and soldiers whose mental health, reproductive health, and post-conflict lives are forever changed and affected by war.

Throughout the course, the politics of global health problems and interventions will be examined from the point of view of nation-states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and humanitarian actors. Efforts to respond to global health crises, often in the absence of adequate preparedness, medical resources, and political will, will be interrogated. The underlying purpose of this course, then, is to develop students’ awareness of the political, socioeconomic, ecological, cultural, and organizational complexity of most global health crises, and the consequent need for anthropological sensitivity, contextualization, and activist commitment.

Ultimately, as an anthropology seminar, this course is about “people first.” Through reading and discussing ethnographies that show how people themselves grapple with tough global health problems and challenges, students will reflect on issues of social justice and the right to health for people living in resource-poor and post-conflict settings, primarily in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. The role of the United
States in both producing and mitigating global health crises will also be critically examined, particularly in the final section on Conflict and Health.

**Learning Objectives and Course Goals**

1) To learn about anthropological and ethnographic research approaches to global health
2) To understand the complexities of recent pandemics and responses to them
3) To become familiar with key thinkers, research themes, and intellectual debates
4) To understand the relevance of medical anthropology for the understanding of global health issues and interventions
5) To read and critically assess award-winning anthropological ethnographies and films
6) To develop and hone seminar leadership skills
7) To master the art of writing an academic book review and a comparative book review essay

**Academic Ethics and Integrity:**

If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, please ask! Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Fortunately, it is also easy to avoid and if you are the least bit careful about giving credit where credit is due you should not run into any problems. You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. In this class, we will be writing book reviews, and your book reviews must be entirely original (i.e. your own descriptions and analysis).

Finally, Yale punishes academic dishonesty severely. This includes suspension from the university, but students caught plagiarizing are also subject to lowered or failing grades, as well as the possibility of expulsion. Please be sure to review the Poorvu Center’s discussion of plagiarism and academic integrity at: https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism

**Writing Partner for Our Course:**

The Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Language Study is offering virtual writing tutoring during Summer Session. Supports for students are available on the Poorvu Center website: https://summer.yale.edu/academics/summer-session-tutoring. But we are lucky to have an official Writing Partner for our course! Our Writing Partner is specially designated to work with multiple students in our course. Our Writing Partner will review your assignment prompts and paper guidelines to offer more targeted feedback. Our Writing Partner make some brief visits to our course so that you students will feel open and comfortable about having tutorial conferences. Our Writing Partner will offer free, one-on-one writing help to all students enrolled in this Summer Session course. More details to be announced during the first class.
Course Assignments

Keeping Up, Being There, Breaking the Silence: This seminar is intended to be a respectful reading group, where we engage with each other, courteously and constructively, in a thoughtful and reflexive conversation about the relationship between anthropology and global health, as exemplified through a series of nine compelling ethnographies to be read and discussed together in an online Zoom seminar. Your major assignment is to keep up with these readings, being there during each class session on Zoom, and “breaking the silence,” individually and collectively, about many important global health issues that are currently changing our world in unprecedented ways. Everyone is expected to participate in these seminar conversations, which are intended to be very friendly, informal, but nonetheless thought-provoking and rigorous. You will be evaluated in this course in large part on your Zoom seminar engagement over the course of the summer session. Attendance at every class is required. 15% of the total grade

Leading a Discussion: Each participant in this seminar will lead one seminar discussion. We will decide this schedule on the first day of class. As discussion leader, you are expected to briefly (no more than 10 minutes) introduce the author and some of the interesting themes/ideas of the day’s book in a structured but informal manner (i.e., no reading of something you have written up). As part of your role as discussion leader, you should assemble a “question set,” examples of which will be provided during the first week of class and posted on CANVAS. The first group of questions should deal with methodological issues, and the second and third with the books’ major themes and ethnographic findings. The final group of questions should deal with policy implications. All four sets of questions should be indicated with a descriptive subhead. Your job as seminar leader is to systematically cover these questions during the course of the discussion, as well as run the seminar more generally. Question sets should be sent the evening before class (by 5 pm, Word document, emailed) to Dr. Inhorn, who will look over, revise with you, and send out the final question set on CANVAS. 15% of the total grade (5% question construction, 10% seminar leadership)

Weekly Responses: Marcia will post a question about the forthcoming book in CANVAS. By 1 pm before the book discussion, please post a 200-300 word response in your CANVAS folder. These paragraphs should demonstrate your close reading of the text, in preparation for class discussion. Five responses are required; you can chose which five books to respond to. But at least one must be submitted by the second week of class. 2% each, for 10% of the total grade

Book Reviews: During the course, each student will write two, 2-page, single-spaced book reviews, focusing on books from different sections of the course. The book reviews should provide a) a compelling introductory paragraph, b) a second paragraph describing the book’s setting, research methodology, and time frame, c) two to three paragraphs providing a descriptive summary of the book’s content (major arguments, themes, issues, empirical findings), d) one paragraph analyzing the book’s major strengths, e) one
analyzing the book’s major weaknesses, and f) a final paragraph describing potential audiences, including which academic disciplines would most benefit. The first page to the top of second page should focus on a) – c). Most of the second page should focus on d) – f). An example of a book review will be provided during the first week of class on CANVAS. These short book reviews are preparation for the longer comparative book review. Book reviews are due to Marcia by email as a WORD document at the beginning of class on the day in which the book is being discussed. Please turn in one of these book reviews by the third week of class (Thursday, July 16). **15% each, 30% of the total grade**

**Comparative Book Review Essay:** Each participant in this seminar will write one final, double-spaced paper, comparing two of the ethnographies that have not been covered in the individual book reviews. The review should be written in *Reviews in Anthropology* format; instructions and an example will be provided on CANVAS. Your essay should summarize and review each book, just as you have done for the individual book reviews. But, as a comparative book review, the essay should also be explicitly synthetic, examining similarities and differences and attempting to outline some common theme(s), as well as major differences in the ethnographies. The final third of the paper should be dedicated to this comparative, synthetic analysis, concluding with the potential audiences for the two books. References to other books are allowed in the essay, but are not required. This essay is due on Saturday, August 1, by 5 pm, sent as a WORD document by email to Marcia.inhorn@yale.edu. **30% of the total grade**

**Schedule of Readings**

(All books are available electronically through Yale Library and placed on CANVAS course reserves)

**I. The New Pandemics: Case Studies in Global Health (Un)Preparedness**

- **June 30**  
  Introduction to the Course and Class Discussion of the Film “Contagion” (Please view on your own prior to our first class meeting)

- **July 2**  
  Andrew Lakoff, *Unprepared: Global Health in a Time of Emergency*

- **July 7**  
  Katherine Mason, *Infectious Change: Reinventing Chinese Public Health After an Epidemic*

- **July 9**  
  Natalie Porter, *Viral Economies: Bird Flu Experiments in Vietnam*

- **July 14**  
  Paul Richards, *Ebola: How a People’s Science Helped End an Epidemic*
II. Infections and Inequalities: The Rise and Persistence of Global Killers

July 16 Paul Farmer, AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame (Film “Bending the Arc” about Paul Farmer, Jim Kim, and the work of Partners in Health; please view on your own prior to class)

July 21 Robert Wyrod, AIDS and Masculinity in the African City: Privilege, Inequality, and Modern Manhood

July 23 Vinay Kamat, Silent Violence: Global Health, Malaria, and Child Survival in Tanzania

III. Conflict and Health: The Ethnography of War’s Aftermath

July 28 Marcia Inhorn, America’s Arab Refugees: Vulnerability and Health on the Margins

July 30 Erin Finley, Fields of Combat: Understanding PTSD among Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan

Aug. 1 Final Comparative Book Review Due, Email as a WORD document to Marcia.inhorn@yale.edu, No Later than 5 pm