

GLOBAL HEALTH ETHNOGRAPHY

ANTH S462

Summer Session A 2024

May 27 – June 28

MW 6-9:15 pm EST

Room 105, Anthropology, 10 Sachem

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Office Hours: By Email Appointment and Zoom

Course Description

This seminar is designed to explore anthropological approaches to global health. Through reading and discussing seven cutting-edge anthropological ethnographies and watching five award-winning films, students will come to understand how anthropologists study, write about, and intervene in global health crises. Recent major pandemics, including COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, and Ebola, will be examined. Their disparate impacts on the world's children, women, and men will be explored, as well as how differences in resources and responses between nations impact the course of epidemics. The course also interrogates how nation-states produce health crises through violence, asking what states owe to citizens, refugees, and soldiers whose physical health, reproductive health, mental 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 studied. 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 Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. The role of the United States in both producing and mitigating global health crises will also be critically examined.

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

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). *Please refrain from reading published book reviews of any of the books in this course!*

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 Tutors

The Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Language Study is offering virtual and in-person writing tutoring during Summer Session. Supports for students are available on the Poorvu Center

website: <https://summer.yale.edu/academics/summer-session-tutoring>. Poorvu Writing Tutors are available to discuss any writing you do in this course (draft not required). They will respond with a Zoom link where you can meet to discuss your work.

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 eight compelling ethnographies to be read and discussed together in our biweekly seminar. Your major assignment is to keep up with these readings, being there during each class session, 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 seminar engagement over the course of the summer session. **Attendance at every class is required. 20% of the total grade**

(Co) Leading a Seminar Discussion: Each participant in this seminar will (co) lead one seminar discussion. We will decide this schedule on the first day of class. As discussion (co) leaders, you are expected to *briefly* (no more than 10 minutes) introduce some of the interesting themes/ideas of the day's book that are not included in your question set. You can use notes, but please do not read a prepared introduction. As part of your role as discussion (co) leaders, you should assemble 10 questions into a "question set," two examples of which are posted in the Files section on CANVAS. The first group of three questions should deal with methodological issues. The second and third set of questions (three questions each) should address the books' major themes and ethnographic findings. The final question (number ten) should deal with policy implications. Please divide these sections with a descriptive subhead. Your job as seminar (co) leaders 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 afternoon of class (by 2 pm EST, Word document, emailed) to Marcia, who will look over, revise with you over the next hour or so, and post the final question set on CANVAS. **25% of the total grade (10% question set construction, 15% seminar introduction and leadership)**

Reading Responses: For each book, Marcia will post a question in CANVAS Assignments. By 6 pm before class, please post a 200-250 word response to the question in CANVAS. These response should demonstrate your close reading of the text, in preparation for class discussion. Five of these responses are due over the course of the seminar. **5 x 3% each, 15% of the total grade**

Book Reviews: During the course, each student will write two, 2-page, single-spaced, 12-point font 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, ethnographic findings), d) one paragraph analyzing the book's major strengths, e) one paragraph analyzing the book's major weaknesses, and f) a final paragraph describing potential audiences, including which academic disciplines would most benefit from reading the book. The first page to the top of second page should focus on a) –c). Most of the second page should focus on d) – f). Several examples of good book reviews are posted as Files in CANVAS. Book reviews are to be submitted as WORD documents in Assignments in CANVAS at the beginning of class on the day in which the book is being discussed. You *can* write about the book you (co) led in the seminar. Please turn in one of these book reviews by Monday, June 12. **20% each, 40% of the total grade**

Schedule of Readings

(All books are available electronically through Yale Library and are in the CANVAS course reserves. They are also available for purchase through the Yale Bookstore.)

May 27 Introduction to the Course and Class Discussion of the Movie “Contagion” (Please view prior to class for in-class discussion)

I. Epidemics: Case Studies in Global Health (Un)Preparedness

May 29 Andrew Lakoff’s *Unprepared: Global Health in a Time of Emergency*

June 3 Emily Mendenhall’s *Unmasked: COVID, Community, and the Case of Okoboji*

June 5 Paul Richards’ *Ebola: How a People’s Science Helped End an Epidemic*

June 10 Discussion of the Movies “Hero with a Thousand Faces” (Ebola) and “Bending the Arc” (HIV/AIDS) (Please view prior to class)

II. Maternal and Child Health (MCH): Case Studies in Death and Survival

June 12 Vinay Kamat’s *Silent Violence: Global Health, Malaria, and Child Survival in Tanzania*

June 17 Nicole Berry’s *Unsafe Motherhood: Mayan Maternal Mortality and Subjectivity in Post-War Guatemala*

III. Conflict and Health: Case Studies in Violence and Healing

June 19 Marcia Inhorn’s *America’s Arab Refugees: Vulnerability and Health on the Margins*

June 24 Erin Finley’s *Fields of Combat: Understanding PTSD among Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan*

June 26 Discussion of the Movies “For Sana” and “War Hospital: The Human Cost of Conflict” (Please view prior to class)