

The Anthropology of Medicine (A)

Sociology and Anthropology 318

Section: D100

Term: 2011 Summer

Instructor: Prof. Stacy Leigh Pigg

Email: pigg@sfu.ca

Office: AQ 5074

Phone: 778-782-3777

Discussion Topics: This course explores the social dimensions of medical technologies. How do things such as the thermometer, the stethoscope, antibiotics, vaccines, ultrasound, PET scans, respirators, blood glucose measures, cochlear implants, prosthetic legs, and so forth affect the ways we know our bodies and perceive our health? How do people interact with these technologies? What ideas -- about normalcy, about user needs, about the role of medical intervention in human futures -- influence the development of these technologies? How do medical technologies intersect with systems of law, policy, and governance? Under what circumstances do medical technologies become explicit subjects of political or ethical debate, and under what circumstances do they push us into certain politics and ethics without us realizing that our actions have been thus shaped? This course provides an overview of work in the anthropology of medicine and science and technology studies that seeks to understand questions such as these. We will give sustained attention to three main types of technologies: pharmaceuticals, diagnostic technology, and visualization technologies. The course involves hands-on discussion of case studies, as presented in ethnographic and historical research.

Grading: 4 500 word essays: 40%
3 article summaries: 30%
class exercises and participation: 15%
study note assignments: = 15%

Grading and Academic Honesty:

All assignments in this course must be completed for a final grade to be assigned. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology follows SFU policy in relation to grading practices, grade appeals (Policy T 20.01) and academic honesty and misconduct procedures (S10.01-S10.04). It is the responsibility of students to inform themselves of the content of these policies available on the SFU website: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>

Required Texts: Leach, Melissa and James Fairhead Vaccine Anxieties: Global Science, Child Health, and Society. Earthscan Press. 2007

Dumit, Joseph Picturing Personhood: Brain Scans and Biomedical Identity. Princeton University Press. 2004.

Lock, Margaret and Vinh-Kim Nguyen An Anthropology of Biomedicine. Wiley-Blackwell. 2010

Recommended Texts: None

Materials/Supplies: None

Prerequisite/Corequisite: SA 101 or 150 or 201.

Notes:

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.