

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH AND DISEASE [SEAHD]

11:374:341

Peter J. Guarnaccia, Ph.D., Professor

Fall 2011

Monday, Thursday 10:55-12:15

Cook/Douglass Lecture Hall 103

Course Description

This course examines human health in its dynamic relationship to both the physical and social environment. We will explore how human interaction with and modification of the natural and cultural world determines the health of populations. Through both historical and contemporary case studies we will develop an ecological model of health and disease, drawing on perspectives from medical anthropology, medical sociology, epidemiology, and health psychology. During this process, we will explore a range of cross-cultural strategies for the maintenance of human health and the management of disease.

Required Textbooks (available at the Co-op Bookstore) [Approx. cost = \$60]

Laurie Kaye Abraham. 1994. *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [\$17.00 new]

Philip Hilts. 2005. *Rx for Survival: Why We Must Rise to the Global Health Challenge*. New York: Penguin. [\$15.00 new] [note: this book is out of print. A few copies are for sale at the Co-op Bookstore. Relevant chapters will be on reserve.]

Gina Kolata. 2005. *Flu*. Touchstone Books. [\$15.00 new]

T.R. Reid. 2009. *The Healing of America*. New York: Penguin. [\$25.95 new]

Reserve: All articles will be available electronically on a Sakai site for the course. Books will be on reserve in the Chang Library at Cook.

Course Requirements (see handouts for assignment descriptions)

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| 2 Hour Exams | 70% (35% each) |
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| 1 Book Essay | 30% |
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Office Hours: Monday 2:00 – 3:30 PM and by appointment.

Section 1. Introduction to Terms and Concepts

- Sept** 1 Introduction to the Course
- 8 Concepts of Social, Ecological, Health, & Disease
Reserve: Kleinman, A., L. Eisenberg, and B. Good. 1978. Culture, Illness and Care. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 88:251-258.
- 12 The Health Seeking Process
Reserve: Chrisman, N.J. 1977. The Health Seeking Process. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 1:351-377.
- 15 Health Care Systems: Where the Action Is!
Readings: Reid, Chapters 1-3
Reserve: Kleinman, A. 1978. Concepts and a Model for the Comparison of Medical Systems as Cultural Systems. *Social Science and Medicine* 12:85-93.
- 19 Health Care Systems: Does the U.S. Have One?
22 **Readings:** Reid, Chapters 4-8 (groups assigned to a country) 9-13 (all read)
Video: "Sick Around America" "Sick Around the World"
- 26 Cultural Competence in Health Care
Reserve: To be determined
- 29 **NO CLASS: Rosh Hashanah**

Section 2. Race, Racism and Health

- Oct** 3 Health Effects of Racism
Readings: Abraham, Chapters 1-4, 6
Video: "Unnatural Causes: When the Bough Breaks"
- 6 Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health
Readings: Abraham, Chapters 7, 8, 10, 11
- 10 Abraham, *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead: The Failure of Health Care in Urban America*, Chapters 12-14, Epilogue
- 13 The Latino Paradox
Video: "Unnatural Causes: Becoming American"

Section 3. Case Studies: Social & Ecological Aspects of Diseases

- Oct** 17 Sickle Cell Anemia, Malaria, & Agriculture
Reserve: Diamond, J. 1989. Blood, Genes and Malaria. *Natural History* 2:8-18.
- 20 Individual and Cultural Adaptations to Sickle Cell Anemia
Reserve: McElroy & Townsend, Chap 3, Profiles (pp. 84-91 & pp.107-111)
- 24 Schistosomiasis I: What Would You Do?
- 27 Schistosomiasis II: Don't Go Near the Water!
Reserve: Goodfield, Chapter 3
Video: "The Three Valleys of St. Lucia"
- 31 FIRST HOUR EXAM – HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**

Section 4. Case Studies in Global Health

- Nov** 3 Smallpox I: Eradicating a Disease through Vaccination
Video: "The Last Wild Virus"
- 7 Smallpox II: Mass Vaccination and Surveillance/Containment
Reserve: Goodfield, Chapter 5
- 10 Polio: Can a Second Disease Be Eradicated?
Reading: Hiltz, Rx for Survival, Intro, Chapter 3
Video: Rx for Survival 1 "Disease Warriors"
- 14 Polio in the US
Video: "A Paralyzing Fear"
- 17 NO CLASS - CONFERENCE**

Section 5. Influenza: Past, Present and Future

- Nov** 22 1918 Influenza Pandemic
Tues **Reading:** Kolata, Flu
Video: "Influenza 1918"
- 24 **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING**

- 28 Avian or Swine Influenza: Which will be the next pandemic?
Reading: Kolata, Flu, Epilogue
Video: "Killer Flu"

Section 6. Global AIDS: Myths and Facts

- Dec** 1 HIV/AIDS Basics
Video: "The Age of AIDS: Part I"
- 5 HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention
Video: "The Age of AIDS: Part II"
- 8 HIV/AIDS: Global Profile
Video: "Rx for Survival: Deadly Messengers"
- 12 SECOND HOUR EXAM**

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Take Home Essays

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Choose **one (1)** of the following two (2) questions and write a 5 page essay on it. The essay should be typed, double-spaced. It will be worth up to 100 points [5 points will be deducted for each page over 5 pages]. Due dates vary with the essay assignment. The essay should be able to be written using class lecture notes and the course texts. While you are welcome to do extra research, it is not required. We will address these topics in class and you are welcome to bring questions and ideas related to the essay to the class discussion. Having these questions ahead of time will help you read the books more critically.

1. Use the concept of *health care systems* to analyze The Healing of America. Choose one (1) of the other countries discussed in the book [France, Germany, Japan, the UK, Canada] and compare and contrast its health care system with that of the United States. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of each country's health care system? How do different ways of thinking about *health* shape each country's health care system? What did you learn about the U.S. health care system through this assignment? [**Due October 6**]

2. Using Mama Might Be Better Off Dead, identify several of the problems in the current American health care "system" (or lack thereof) from the following perspectives:

A. Problems that all people in the U.S. face in obtaining affordable and high quality health care

B. Problems that people who are poor face

C. Problems that African-Americans face.

For each of the 3 perspectives identified above, you should identify a few problems. Discuss each set of problems in a few paragraphs in which you state the problem, analyze it and present at least one specific example of the problem from Mama Might Be Better Off Dead. [**Due October 20**]

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Discussion Questions for Case Studies

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1. What is the **BIOLOGY OF THE DISEASE**?
 - a) What is the primary etiologic agent?
 - b) What is the mode of transmission?
 - c) How infectious is it?
 - d) How does the disease affect people?
 - e) How is the disease treated?

2. What are the **DISEASE, ILLNESS, & SICKNESS** aspects of the problem?
 - a) How does medical science define the DISEASE? (see above)
 - b) How do sufferers view the ILLNESS?
 - c) How does the SICKNESS affect the sufferer=s ability to carry out social roles and maintain social relations?

3. What are the **MEDICAL, EPIDEMIOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC** aspects of the intervention program?

4. What does an **ECOLOGICAL MODEL** of this health problem look like?
 - a) What are the macro-environmental and social factors which affect the distribution of the disease?
 - b) What are the micro-biological, environmental and social factors which determine who is affected by the disease?
 - c) How do interventions relate to the biological, environmental, and social aspects of the disease?