

Chc/Lat 146 W 04

Chicano/Latino Studies 146/Anthropology 134D: Culture and Health

Critical Perspectives on Latinos, Health and Politics

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MWF 10-10:50, SSL 145

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Goals and objectives

Most courses or research on Latinos and health tend to focus on folk beliefs or irrational attitudes. This course examines health problems facing Latinos in a larger social context and the politics of health and medicine in the United States. As a class, we will accomplish two goals. The first is to engage in a critical analysis of medicine and health in the United States as institutions that are not free from problems such as racism, sexism or class bias. Medicine and health professionals enjoy a sacred status in this and in many societies. This veil provides a necessary cover from any intense scrutiny by non-medical professionals. The second goal will be to challenge contemporary paternalistic thinking regarding developing alternatives to standard medical authority and social control. New alternatives should be based on empowering people and communities, not on corporations or government agencies/policies. Students will be asked to focus on the "keywords" of certain debates and issues. A key element in this course will be a close examination of language (English and Spanish) and the thinking attached to words. A background subject in this class will be the role of the government and capitalism in the lives of people. The larger intellectual mission of the course will be to bring attention to the creation of knowledge and its implications. We will entertain alternatives or possibilities for solutions that dominant knowledge or institutions have excluded. Creating dynamic ways of thinking will be important to this class.

Format

This course uses various academic perspectives. I will be using a comparative Ethnic Studies approach to Chicano/Latino Studies. Furthermore, the course will learn from other interdisciplinary traditions such as the history of science and medicine, and critical medical anthropology and sociology. Since the context of the course is the United States, it is important to understand the ways in which U.S. laws, medical practices and social climate impacted other groups. More crucially, most of the medical and scientific abuses have occurred in the U.S. post-Holocaust/post-Nuremberg Nazi scientist and doctor trials. A key phenomenon will be the power of medicalizing social issues, which is closely linked to the power of normalizing or naturalizing authoritative knowledge.

Requirements

This course does not have the traditional format of midterms and a final exam; instead the assignments will be reactions to the readings, handouts and videos. All of the assignments are meant for you to demonstrate your critical understanding and analysis of a particular context. Grading will be based on a standard 100-point scale (no grade curve).

Percentage breakdown:

10% Attendance (sign in sheet)

60% Critical analysis papers, 6-9 pages each

30% Final Project

Readings

Biomedicine and Alternative Healing Systems in America: Issues of Class, Race and Gender

Plus required photocopied readings

Week 1, 2 and 3: Politics and History of Medicine in the United States

Hans Baer, Chapters 1-6

Hippocrates, "The Oath" and "The Canon" in *The Hippocratic Oath: Text, Translation and Interpretation*, edited by L. Edelstein. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

Ronald Takaki, "Aesculapius was a white man: race and the cult of true womanhood" and "Diseases of the mind and skin" from *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth Century America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Samuel Cartwright, "Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race (1851)"

Abraham Flexner, selections from The Flexner Report (especially dealing with the medical education of women and African Americans) 1910.

Week 4 and 5: Body Politics- what is a body and population?

Alfredo López Austin, "Parts of the Human Body"

Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock, "The Mindful Body: a prolegomenon to future work in medical anthropology" *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 1:6-41.

Marcel Mauss, "Body Techniques" in *Sociology and Psychology: Essays by Marcel Mauss*. Translated by B. Brewster. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

Vera Paiva, "Gendered Scripts and the sexual scene: promoting sexual subjects among Brazilian teenagers" in Pp. 216-239 in *Framing the Sexual Subject: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality and Power*, edited by R. Parker, R. M. Barbosa, and P. Aggleton. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Carlos Velez-Ibañez, "The Distribution of Sadness: Poverty, Crime, Drugs, Illness and War" in *Border Visions: Mexican Cultures of the Southwest United States*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Michel Foucault, "The Birth of Biopolitics" in *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, vol. 1, edited by P. Rabinow. New York: The New Press.

Week 6: Politics of Medicine: Race and Gender

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. New York: Pantheon Books., Introduction (pp. 8-21), chapter 1.

Angela Davis, "Surrogates and Outlaw Mothers: Racism and Reproductive Politics in the Nineties." Pp. 210-221 in *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, edited by J. James. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

(OPTIONAL)

Frantz Fanon, "Medicine and Colonialism" in *A Dying Colonialism*. New York: Evergreen Press.

Week 7, 8 and 9: Forced Sterilization- the right to reproduce

Diana Scully, "Baby Catchers and Uterus Snatchers" in *Men Who Control Women's Health: The Miseducation of Obstetrician-Gynecologists*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body*, chapter 4.

Dorothy Roberts, "Who May Give Birth to Citizens? Reproduction, Eugenics and Immigration." Pp. 205-219 in *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States*, edited by J. Perea. New York: New York University Press.

Carlos Velez-Ibañez, "Se me acabó la canción: an ethnography of non-consenting sterilizations among Mexican Women in Los Angeles" in *Latina Issues: Historia(Ella) (Herstory)*, edited by A. S. Lopez. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Antonia Hernandez, "Chicanas and the Issue of Involuntary Sterilization: Reforms Needed to Protect Informed Consent" in *Latina Issues: Historia(Ella) (Herstory)*, edited by A. S. Lopez. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Annette Ramirez de Arrellano and Conrad Seipp, "Turning off the Faucet" and "A Single Instance of Inconvenience" in *Colonialism, Catholicism, and Contraception: A History of Birth Control in Puerto Rico*.

Iris Lopez, "Agency and Constraint: Sterilization and Reproductive Freedom among Puerto Rican Women in New York City" *Urban Anthropology* 22:299-323.

Stephen Jay Gould, "Carrie Buck's Daughter" in *The Flamingo's Smile: Reflections in Natural History*.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Buck v. Bell" majority opinion for the United States Supreme Court on the right of society to sterilize individuals.

Against Their Will: North Carolina's Sterilization Program from *The Winston-Salem Journal*
Gubernatorial apologies (North Carolina, California, Oregon)

Week 10: Men's bodies and sexualities

David L. Gollaher, "From ritual to science: the medical transformation of circumcision in America"

José Limón, "Carne, Carnales, and the Carnavalesque: Bakhtinian Batos, Disorder, and Narrative Discourses"

Lionel Cantú, "Entre Hombres/Between Men: Latino Masculinities and Homosexualities." in *Gay Masculinities*, edited by P. Nardi.