

506:227 / 920:291 Health, Culture and Society

Fall 2018

M/W period 7 [6:10-7:30 pm]

Scott Hall 201

Instructor: Johanna Schoen

Professor:

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Department of History and Institute for Health, Health Care Policy & Aging Research

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 p.m., and by appointment, 213A Van Dyck (CAC)

Course Summary: The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Yet the ways in which we understand, define, and experience health and well-being vary widely across history, cultures, and populations. Although health is often viewed as a condition of biology and the body, scholars have documented the powerful ways that economic, cultural, historical, and social forces shape health. In this course, we bring together perspectives from sociology, history, public health, medicine, and the humanities to: (a) define health; (b) understand the diverse ways that scholars study health; (c) identify the social, economic, historical, and cultural factors that influence the prevalence, distribution, and experience of four health conditions: body weight (including obesity and excessive slenderness); mental health (e.g., depression); cancer; and HIV/AIDS. We conclude with discussions of the ways that scholarship might inform medical practice, medical ethics, and public policies to enhance health in the United States and globally. Course materials include scholarly articles and books, articles from popular media, statistical reports on disease prevalence, cultural portrayals (e.g., film, literature) of health conditions and health care, first-person illness narratives, and brief recordings of expert lectures provided by Rutgers faculty from Newark, New Brunswick, Camden and Biomedical & Health Sciences.

Course Format: Students are required to attend the two class sessions each week. Active participation is encouraged. Lecture slides will be posted on our class Sakai site within 24 hours prior to each lecture. Assigned readings should be read prior to each lecture. Lectures will be supplemented with video clips, movie selections, and guest video lectures. Students are encouraged to visit the professors during office hours to discuss and clarify course material.

Course Requirements: This three-credit course will have two exams, one in-class (Thursday March 10) and one final exam (Friday May 6, noon to 3 p.m.). Each exam accounts for 20% of the overall course grade. Students will also complete three short writing assignments (3-5 pages), each accounting for 15% of the final grade. These short-essay topics and guidelines will be posted on Sakai two weeks prior to the due date. Students are required to write one essay on theories/methods and one on ethics; for the third paper, you may choose to write on one of three possible diseases (mental health, cancer, HIV/AIDS). Attendance and active participation in class discussion will account for 15% of your overall course grade.

Grading Summary:	Midterm Exam (Thursday March 10)	20%
	Paper 1	15%
	Paper 2	15%
	Paper 3	15%
	Final Exam (Friday May 6)	20%
	Attendance and Participation	15%
	TOTAL	100%

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

E-mail etiquette and requirements: We will happily and promptly reply to all student email. However, you must follow two simple rules. First, you must put the course name (e.g., Soc 220, History 227) in the subject line. Second, you must sign your email with your name; your email addresses often do not tell us who you are.

Sakai site: The class Sakai site includes our syllabus, course readings, homework assignments, outlines, exam study guides, occasional supplemental and/or “current event” readings, and other important announcements pertaining to class. Please check the website regularly, to keep updated of class information.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Academic misconduct: Rutgers University policies state that academic misconduct may involve: cheating; fabrication; facilitating academic dishonesty; plagiarism; denying others access to information or material. Any instances of academic misconduct will be reported to your dean. Plagiarism is using someone else's words without giving the author proper attribution. For further information on plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty see the University's academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Class conduct: The History and Sociology Departments encourage the free exchange of ideas in a safe and productive classroom environment. Students and faculty must act with mutual respect and courtesy. Behaviors that distract students and faculty are not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by the instructor. Courteous expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted. If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml>.

TOPICS & READING SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction and Understanding Health

Welcome and Introduction

Sociological Perspectives: An Overview

Mechanic, David. 2001. "Medical Sociology." Pp. 9530-9534 in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, edited by Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes. New York: Elsevier.

Rosich, Katherine J., and Janet R. Hankin. 2010. "Executive Summary: What Do We Know? Key Findings from 50 Years of Medical Sociology." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 51: S1-S9.

Week 2: Studying and Understanding Health

Sociological and Epidemiological Research Methods

Giddens, Anthony, Mitchell Duneier, Richard Appelbaum, and Deborah Carr. 2014. "Asking and Answering Sociological Questions." Pp. 23-41 in *Introduction to Sociology, 9th ed.*, by. New York: W. W. Norton.

Berkman, Lisa F. 2004. "The Health Divide." *Contexts* 3: 38-43.

Historical and Cultural Perspectives: An Overview

Williams, William Carlos. 1938. "The Use of Force."

Week 3. Studying and Understanding Health (cont'd)

Historical and Cultural Perspectives (cont'd)

Fadiman, Anne. 2012. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Chapter 3 (The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, Pp. 20-31) and Chapter 5 (Take as Directed, Pp. 38-59).

Ethical Issues in Research

Reynolds, Gretchen. 2003. "The Stuttering Doctor's 'Monster Study'" *The New York Times* (March 16, 2003). <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/16/magazine/the-stuttering-doctor-s-monster-study.html>

Week 4: Body Weight and Obesity

Historical and Cultural Perspectives

Brumberg, Joan. 1989. *Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia Nervosa*. New York: Plume. Pp. 100-123.

New York Times. 1912. "Call Cornell Co-Ed the Perfect Girl."

Historical and Cultural Perspectives (Cont'd)

Gawande, Atul. 2001. "The Man Who Couldn't Stop Eating." *The New Yorker* (July 9, 2001) 66-75.

Week 5: Body Weight and Obesity (Cont'd)

Epidemiologic Approaches

Ng, Marie. Emmanuela Gakidou et al. 2014. "Global, Regional, and National Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in Children and Adults during 1980–2013: A Systematic Analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013." *The Lancet* 384: 766-781.

Ogden, C. L., Carroll, M. D., Kit, B. K., & Flegal, K. M. 2014. "Prevalence of Childhood and Adult Obesity in the United States, 2011-2012." *Journal of American Medical Association* 311(8), 806-814.

Puhl, Rebecca M., and Chelsea A. Heuer. 2010. "Obesity Stigma: Important Considerations for Public Health." *American Journal of Public Health* 100: 1019-1028.

Sociological Approaches

Saguy, Abigail. 2012. *What's Wrong with Fat?* New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 3-27).

Week 6: Mental Health and Illness

Historical and Cultural Perspectives

Sheehan, Susan. 2014. *Is There No Place on Earth for Me?* New York: Vintage. Pp. 3-8, 54-77.

Historical and Cultural Perspectives (cont'd)

Sheehan, Susan. 2014. *Is There No Place on Earth for Me?* New York: Vintage. Pp. 81-89, 102-115.

Week 7: Mental Health and Illness (Cont'd)

Epidemiological Approaches

Rosenfield, Sarah, and Dawne Mouzon. 2013. "Gender and Mental Health." Pp. 277-296 in *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, edited by Carol S. Aneshensel and Jo C. Phelan. New York: Springer.

Scelfo, Julie. 2015. "Suicide on Campus and the Pressure of Perfection." *The New York Times* (July 27, 2015).

Sociological Approaches

Greenberg, Gary. 2010. *Manufacturing Depression: The Secret History of a Modern Disease*. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 253-285.

Horwitz, Allan and Jerome C. Wakefield. 2007. *The Loss of Sadness. How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 27-52.

Week 8: Cancer

Historical & Cultural Perspectives

Livingston, Julie. 2012. *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapter 1 (The Other Cancer Ward).

EXAM 1

Week 9: Cancer (Cont'd).

Epidemiological Approaches

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014. "Factors that Contribute to Health Disparities in Cancer." http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/healthdisparities/basic_info/challenges.htm

Sternheimer, Karen, 2011, "Race, Class, and Cancer." *Everyday Sociology Blog* (W.W. Norton). <http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2011/08/race-class-and-cancer.html>

Sociological Approaches

Chapple, A. et al. 2004. "Stigma, Shame, and Blame Experienced by Patients with Lung Cancer: A Qualitative Study." *British Medical Journal* 328: 1470-75.

Week 10: HIV/AIDS

Historical Approaches

Film: *And the Band Played On* (1993)

Cultural Approaches

Crimp, Douglas. 2004. "Randy Shilt's Miserable Failure." Pp. 117-28 in *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Week 11: HIV/AIDS (Cont'd)

Epidemiological Approaches

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. 2015. "HIV in the United States: At a Glance."
http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/statistics_basics_atagance_factsheet.pdf

AIDS.gov. 2014. "Global HIV/AIDS Overview." <https://www.aids.gov/federal-resources/around-the-world/global-aids-overview/>

Sociological Approaches

Hobbes, Michael. 2014. "Why Did AIDS Ravage the U.S. More than Any Other Developed Country? Solving an Epidemiological Mystery." *The New Republic* (May 12, 2014).<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117691/aids-hit-united-states-harder-other-developed-countries-why>

Week 12: Medical Ethics

Historical Approaches

Joffe, Carole. 1995. *Doctors of Conscience: The Struggle to Provide Abortion Before and After Roe v. Wade*. Boston: Beacon Press. Chapters 2-4 (pp. 27-69).

Sociological Approaches

Ehrlich, J. Shoshanna. 2006. *Who Decides? The Abortion Rights of Teens*. Westport, CT: Praeger. Chapter 4: In Their Own Words & Chapter 5: Facing An Unplanned Pregnancy: The Abortion Decision.

Week 13: Medical Ethics (Cont'd)

Contemporary Challenges: Abortion Debates

Wicklund, Susan. 2008 *This Common Secret: My Journal as an Abortion Doctor*. New York: Public Affairs.
Chapter 7: Rocks & Hard Places.

Selection of primary source writings from Lambs of Christ.

Contemporary Challenges (cont'd): End-of-Life Care Debates

Gawande, Atul. 2010. "Letting Go: What Should Medicine Do When It Can't Save Your Life." *The New Yorker* (August 2).

Maynard, Brittany. 2014. "My Right to Die with Dignity at 29." CNN (November 2, 2014).
<http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/07/opinion/maynard-assisted-suicide-cancer-dignity/>

Week 14: Improving Health in Contemporary Society: Multiple Perspectives

Can an Understanding of Society & Culture Improve Global Health?

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2011. "Ten Great Public Health Achievements--United States, 2001-2010." *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 60(19): 619-623.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2011. "Ten Great Public Health Achievements--Worldwide, 2001-2010." *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 60(19): 814-818.

Farmer, Paul. 2013. "General Anesthesia for the (Young Doctor's) Soul? Brown Medical School, Commencement." Pp. 7-19 *To Repair the World: Paul Farmer Speaks to the Next Generation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wrap-Up and Review

Final Exam (Noon to 3 p.m.).