

MEDICINE AND THE HUMANITIES

Comparative Studies 305

Spring 2004

Monday and Wednesday, 11:30-1:18

Professor David Horn

Office Hours: Monday, 3:30-5:00 or by appointment, 308 Dulles.

Phone: 292-2559; E-mail: horn.5@osu.edu

I. Course Description

This interdisciplinary course explores medical arts and sciences, concepts of illness and disease, and representations of the human body in a range of cultural and historical contexts. Topics include metaphors and images of the body, the meanings and symbolism constructed around pathology (cancer, AIDS), the social consequences of "medicalizing" racial and sexual differences, and the social concerns raised by new medical procedures. The goal of this course is to introduce you to the comparative and critical traditions of the humanities, and to explore their utility for the study of medical discourses, practices, and ethics. Like other courses in Comparative Studies, it prepares you to explore the relations among systems of authoritative knowledge, cultural assumptions, and forms of power. Finally, by bringing together texts from a variety of humanistic genres and disciplines (literary criticism, history, poetry, cultural studies, gender studies, cultural anthropology) as well as visual materials, it helps train you to think about the possibilities and limits of particular theories, methods, and media.

II. Requirements

Class meetings will be devoted largely to careful consideration of the issues raised by the texts and visual materials; it is therefore essential that you complete assignments *before* coming to class. You will be evaluated on the basis of your attendance and participation in discussion (10%), and on the basis of your performance on a midterm exam (30%), a 5-7 page paper (30%), and a final exam (30%). Guidelines for the exams and paper will be discussed in class. Please note that work completed after the due dates may not be evaluated.

III. Texts (available at SBX)

Paul Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*

Shirley Lindenbaum and Margaret Lock, *Knowledge, Power, and Practice*

Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals*

Emily Martin, *The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction*

Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*

Photocopied articles (indicated by asterisk), available at Cop-Ez, Bricker Hall

IV. Schedule of Readings

A. Medicine and the Humanities

March 30 Introductions

B. Language and Medicine

April 1 Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, pp. 3-87

April 6 Emily Martin, *The Woman in the Body*, pp. 3-67

April 8 Video: *The Miracle of Life* (Swedish Television/WGBH Boston, 1983)

C. Class, Culture, and Medicine

April 13 Emily Martin, *The Woman in the Body*, pp. 71-155

April 15 Emily Martin, *The Woman in the Body*, pp. 166-178

Margaret Lock, "The Politics of Mid-Life and Menopause," in *Knowledge, Power, and Practice*, pp. 330-363

D. Doctors and Patients

April 20 Byron Good, "'Learning Medicine': The Constructing of Medical Knowledge at Harvard Medical School," in *Knowledge, Power, and Practice*, pp. 81-107

April 22 Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals*, pp. 9-77

April 27 **In-class midterm exam**

E. Mind and Body

April 29 Video: *Healing and the Mind: The Phenomenon of Chi*, Bill Moyers (PBS, 1991)

May 4 * Janice Boddy, "Spirits and Selves in Northern Sudan: The Cultural Therapeutics of Possession and Trance," *American Ethnologist* 15 (1988), pp. 4-27

May 6 * Susan Bordo, "Anorexia Nervosa: Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture," in *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance* (Boston:

Northeastern University Press, 1988), pp. 97-117

F. Disease and Difference

- May 11 Jean Comaroff, "Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body," in *Knowledge, Power, and Practice*, pp. 330-363
- May 13 Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation*, pp. 1-32, 61-109
- May 18 Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation*, pp. 110-120, 208-264
- May 20 *Video: Doctors, Liars, and Women*, Jean Carlomusto and Maria Maggenti (Gay Men's Health Crisis), 1988

G. Science, Risk and "Choice"

- May 25 TBA
- May 27 Patricia Kaufert and John O'Neil, "Analysis of a Dialogue on Risks in Childbirth: Clinicians, Epidemiologists, and Inuit Women," in *Knowledge, Power and Practice*, pp. 32-54

Paper due

- June 1 Rayna Rapp, "Accounting for Amniocentesis," in *Knowledge, Power and Practice*, pp. 55-76
- June 3 Conclusions and evaluations
- June 8 **Final exam, 7:30-9:18**

