

**Culture, Health and Illness**  
**ANTH E260 (Section 24884)**  
Meets: Ballantine Hall 310  
Tuesday/Thursday 2:30-3:45

**Instructor: Dr. Sarah D. Phillips**  
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Why do people in some cultures suffer illnesses caused by fear, nerves, and the evil eye, and what cures exist? Who are shamans, and what roles do they play across cultures? How can specialists trained in biomedicine be more sensitive to the cultural beliefs of their patients? What are anthropologists doing to address the AIDS pandemic?

We will explore these questions and many more in this course. The meanings of "health" and illness, and the experience of one's body, are often taken for granted. However, our ideas about and experiences of health, "dis-ease," and medicine are profoundly shaped by culture, transnational flows of people, ideas, and resources, histories of colonialism and structural inequalities, and the development of new technologies. An informed understanding of a person or group's health and illness experiences must begin by exploring the multiple contexts—cultural, geopolitical, and socio-economic—from which those experiences are generated. In this course, students will learn to think about issues of health, disease, and medicine in cross-cultural and global terms.

### **Course Ground Rules**

As members of this class, each of us has a responsibility to help foster civility in the classroom. This means avoiding behaviors that are disruptive to other students and the professor. Please turn off cell phones before coming to class. Please do not hold conversations with classmates whenever the professor, AI, or another student is speaking. Please be respectful of peers and instructors at all times.

### **Readings:**

Course readings consist of a textbook, two ethnographies, and many articles. Students should come to each class meeting having read the selections listed for

that day's class. Frequently, instructors will post a list of "reading questions" on Oncourse. Class discussions of the readings will center on these key questions. Articles we read will be available on E-reserves. E-reserves may be accessed at <http://ereserves.indiana.edu/courseindex.asp>. The course password is *illness*. All videos will be viewed during class time.

**Required Texts:**

Katherine Dettwyler. 1994. Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa. Waveland Press.

Robert Murphy. 2001. The Body Silent: The Different World of the Disabled. W.W. Norton & Company.

**Optional text:**

Peter Brown, ed. 1998. Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology. Mayfield Publishing Co.

(Many articles for the course will be taken from Brown and placed on E-reserves. Students are not required to purchase the Brown text, but are encouraged to do so.)

**Course expectations:**

The grade will be comprised as follows:

Essays: 20% each, = 40%

Class participation: 20%

In-class exercises: 10%

Mid-term exam: 15%

Final exam: 15%

**Grading Scale:**

This course will use a 10-point grading scale, with pluses and minuses.

A+	100	B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	0-59
A	93-99	B-	80-82	D+	67-69		
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66		
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62		

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**Class Participation:**

During many class sessions there will be opportunities for discussion in small groups and as a class. Students are encouraged to ask questions during class. Class

periods when essays are due will be devoted to discussion of the issues and of students' work. You are encouraged to participate actively in these discussions, since we will learn from one another.

It is crucial that students attend every class and keep up with the reading material and assignments. Missed in-class exercises and guest lectures may not be made up. The professor and AI cannot provide students with private make-up sessions.

### **In-Class Exercises:**

At times students will carry out in-class exercises both individually and in groups. These will serve as launch pads for discussions and will help students apply concepts to their own lives. Active participation in these exercises is expected from all students.

### **Essays:**

There are two essays, due **February 13** and **March 29**, which all students will complete. These may require individual field research: specific guidelines will be handed out with each project assignment. Essays should be between 5 and 7 pages in length. Your essays will be graded on your ability to carry out the project and present your findings and ideas in a sophisticated, insightful manner. Essays should synthesize the issues using concepts covered in class (in addition to other ideas and approaches, of course). Students who find it difficult to express themselves well through writing should utilize the Writing Tutorial Services in Ballantine Hall or the Main Library. Late essays will be assessed a penalty of 5 points off per day.

### **Midterm and Final Exams:**

The mid-term exam is scheduled for **March 8**, and will cover the major points covered in the course up to that date. The final exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 1 (2:45-4:45 pm)**, and will cover material from the second half of the course (i.e. it is not comprehensive).

### **Special Needs:**

If you have a physical or learning disability, or ADHD, or any other reason to request special consideration concerning tests, papers or any other aspect of the course, please see Dr. Phillips to discuss your needs as early in the semester as possible.

### **Religious Holy Days and Holidays:**

If you must miss an assignment or exam because of a religious holy day or holiday, please let the instructors know as early in the semester as possible, so we can make any necessary accommodations for you. You may view the University's policy on accommodations for religious holy days or holidays on the web at

<http://www.indiana.edu/~deanfac/holidays.html>

Forms are available for you to complete to request accommodation at

<http://www.indiana.edu/~deanfac/download/download.html#awnom>

### **Other Important Information:**

In your Schedule of Classes bulletin (also available online), there is important information on academic freedom, academic misconduct policies, the Code of Academic Ethics, and the campus calendar. Please read through these sections and any others that may concern you personally.

### **Originality of Written Work**

We expect that all written work you turn in to us is authored by you and you alone, and has been written for this class alone. Any student found to be deliberately copying from the written work of someone else without acknowledgment (whether from a fellow student, a published author, **an internet source**, or anyone else) will face all the repercussions of cheating as outlined in University policies. Adequate citations procedures are critical to demonstrating originality of your writing. If you have questions about appropriate citation or bibliography formats, or what constitutes legitimate paraphrasing vs. illegitimate plagiarism, please consult the instructors—and/or a tutor at the campus Writing Center—right away.

Instructors will use TurnItIn.Com to vet any questionable papers.

The instructors reserve the right to make *minor* adjustments to this syllabus during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class.

The professor and AI are available to discuss questions and concerns with students concerning the course during our office hours (see above). If you cannot come to our office hours, please let us know so we can schedule an alternative meeting with you.

### **Dr. Sarah D. Phillips**

Dr. Phillips grew up in the mountains of North Carolina, and received a BA in Anthropology and Russian at Wake Forest University. She got her PhD in

Anthropology at UIUC. Dr. Phillips joined the Department of Anthropology at IUB as an assistant professor in 2003. Her teaching interests include introductory cultural anthropology, medical anthropology, and the anthropology of Russia and Eastern Europe. Since 1995, Dr. Phillips has conducted research in Ukraine on gender, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society, Chernobyl, folk medicine, and disability politics. She enjoys spending time with her husband and their 5-year-old son, singing, dancing, biking, and gardening.

### Heidi Bludau

Heidi Bludau is a native Texan and received a BA in Anthropology and a Master's of Education from Texas A&M University. After graduating she worked at Texas A&M and the University of Maryland as an academic advisor and program coordinator. Heidi returned to student life in 2004 when she started PhD work in anthropology here at IU. Heidi's interests are Europe and post-socialism, including the EU and the former Soviet Bloc, identity studies, and globalization. However, she works on the anthropology of food on the side (ask her about her research on Texas Chili!). Heidi works specifically in the Czech Republic and is working with Czech nurses who are migrating to the US and other countries for work.

### Course Schedule

#### **Tues., January 9**

Introduction to Course: Syllabus and Q&A

#### **Thurs., January 11**

Bring completed ID cards to class

Topics: Medical Anthropology: Overview of History and Perspectives

Readings:

- Introduction to Part I, "Understanding Medical Anthropology: Biocultural and Cultural Approaches" in Brown (pp. 1-9)
- Brown et al., "Medical Anthropology: An Introduction to the Fields" (Brown, Ch. 1, pp. 10-19)

#### **Tues., January 16**

Topics: Making the familiar, strange

Readings:

- Horace Miner. 1956. "Body Ritual among the Nacirema." American Anthropologist 58(3):503-507.
- Meredith F. Small, "Our Babies, Ourselves."

**Thurs., January 18**

Topics: Medical Anthropology in action

In-class video: Shapes in the Wax: Tradition and Faith among Folk Medicine Practitioners in Rural Ukraine (Phillips and Miller)

Readings:

- Phillips, "Waxing Like the Moon: Women Folk Healers in Rural Western Ukraine." Folklorica 9(1):13-45.

(Post-video discussion will be continued on Oncourse, and in Tuesday's class)

**Tues., January 23**

Topics: Continued discussion of "Shapes in the Wax" video  
Evolution and Disease, Human Biological Variation, Bioarchaeology

Readings:

- Eaton et al., "Stone Agers in the Fast Lane: Chronic Degenerative Diseases in Evolutionary Perspective" (Brown, Ch. 2)
- Armelagos, "Health and Disease in Prehistoric Populations in Transition" (Brown, Ch. 7)

**Thurs., January 25**

Topics: Nutrition, Growth, and Health: Biocultural Approaches

Readings:

- Katherine Dettwyler. 1994. Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-35).

**Tues., January 30**

Topics: Dancing Skeletons, cont.

Readings:

- Katherine Dettwyler. 1994. Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa,

Chapters 4-8 (pp. 37-99).

**Thurs., February 1**

Topics: Dancing Skeletons, cont.

Readings:

- Katherine Dettwyler. 1994. Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa, Chapters 9-14 (pp. 101-164).

**Tues., February 6**

Topics: Shamans: Other Healers, Other Ways

- Mark J. Plotkin, "Shamans."

**Thurs., February 8**

Topics: "Alternative" Medicine in the U.S.

*Guest lecturer: Dr. Candy Brown, Associate Professor of Religious Studies*

Readings:

- Catherine L. Albanese. 1986. "Physic and Metaphysic in Nineteenth-Century America: Medical Sectarians and Religious Healing." Church History 55(4):489-502.
- Grant Wacker. 1998. "The Pentecostal Tradition." In Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and Darrel W. Amundsen, pp. 514-538. New York: Johns Hopkins University Press.

**Tues., February 13**

**Essay #1 Due**

In-class discussion of essays; volunteer student presentations

**Thurs., February 15**

Topics: The Ethnography of Biomedicine: Medical Education

Readings:

- Lella and Pawluch, "Medical Students and the Cadaver in Social and Cultural Context." 1988. Biomedicine Examined, eds. Margaret Lock and Deborah Gordon, pp. 125-153. Kluwer.

**Tues., February 20**

Topics: The Ethnography of Biomedicine, cont.

Readings:

- Pearl Katz, 1990. "Ritual in the Operating Room." American Culture: Essays on the Familiar and Unfamiliar, ed. L. Ploicov, pp. 279-294. Pittsburgh: University of PA Press.

### **Thurs., February 22**

Topics: Pharmaceuticals in cross-cultural perspective

Video: Green Pharmacy

Readings:

- Caroline Bledsoe and M.F. Gibaud. 1988. "The Reinterpretation and Distribution of Western Pharmaceuticals: An Example from the Mende of Sierra Leone." In The Context of Medicines in Developing Countries : Studies in Pharmaceutical Anthropology, ed. Sjaak van der Geest and Susan Reynolds Whyte, pp. 253-276. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers.

### **Tues., February 27**

Topics: Anthropology of Reproduction  
Childbirth in the U.S.

Readings:

- Emily Martin, "Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation and Menopause" (Brown, Ch. 37).
- Robbie Davis-Floyd, "Ritual in the Hospital: Giving Birth the American Way," Birth Gazette, October 1, 1998, Vol. 14, Issue 4.

### **Thurs., March 1**

Topics: Applying Medical Anthropology in Clinical Settings  
Cultural Competency

Readings:

- Sandra Sharma. 1993. "Promoting Cultural Sensitivity in Nursing Practice." Practicing Anthropology, Winter 1993 issue.
- Berlin and Fowkes, "A Teaching Framework for Cross-Cultural Health Care" (Brown, Ch. 32)

**Tues., March 6**

Review for midterm exam

**Thurs., March 8**

Midterm Exam

**Tues., March 13 and Thurs., March 15**

Spring Break--No Class

**Tues., March 20**

Topics:       Critical Medical Anthropology  
                  Structural Violence

Readings:

- Singer et al., "Why Does Juan Garcia Have a Drinking Problem?" (Brown, Ch. 31)
- Farmer, Nizye, Stulac and Keshavjee. 2006. "Structural Violence and Clinical Medicine." PLoS Medicine 3(10):0001-0006.

**Thurs., March 22**

Topics:       The Crisis of the Uninsured in the U.S. Health Care System  
*Guest lecturer: Dr. Rob Stone, Assistant Clinical Professor of Emergency Medicine, IU School of Medicine; Director, Hoosiers for a Commonsense Health Plan*

Readings:

- Gladwell, "The Moral Hazard Myth: The Bad Idea behind Our Failed Health-Care System." The New Yorker, August 29, 2005.
- Paul Krugman and Robin Wells, "The Health Care Crisis and What to Do About It." New York Review of Books 53(5), March 23, 2006.  
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/18802>

**Tues., March 27**

Topics:       Critical-Interpretive Medical Anthropology

Readings:

- Scheper-Hughes, "Culture, Scarcity, and Maternal Thinking: Maternal Detachment and Infant Survival in a Brazilian Shantytown" (Brown, Ch. 40)

**Thurs., March 29**

## Essay #2 Due

In-class discussion of essays; volunteer student presentations

### **Tues., April 3**

Topics: Disability, Embodiment

#### Readings:

- Robert Murphy. 2001. The Body Silent: The Different World of the Disabled. W.W. Norton & Company, Prologue and Ch. 1-3 (pp. 1 - 82).

### **Thurs., April 5**

Topics: Disability, Embodiment, cont.

Video: On Wheels (profile of two wheelchair users in post-Soviet Ukraine)

#### Readings:

- Murphy, The Body Silent, Ch. 4-6 (pp. 85-161).

### **Tues., April 10**

Topics: Disability, Embodiment, cont.

#### Readings:

- Murphy, The Body Silent, Ch. 7-9 (pp. 165-231).

### **Thurs., April 12**

Topics: Global Epidemics: HIV/AIDS

Video: Selections from the PBS series "RX for Survival" on HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis

### **Tues., April 17**

Topics: HIV/AIDS, cont.

#### Readings:

- Joseph R. Oppong and Ezekiel Kalipeni. 2004. "Perceptions and Misperceptions of AIDS in Africa." *HIV and AIDS in Africa: Beyond Epidemiology*, ed. Kalipeni, Craddock, Oppong, and Ghosh, pp. 47-57. Blackwell.
- Jayati Ghosh and Ezekiel Kalipeni. 2004. "Rising Tide of AIDS Orphans in Southern Africa." *HIV and AIDS in Africa: Beyond Epidemiology*, ed. Kalipeni, Craddock, Oppong, and Ghosh, pp. 304-315. Blackwell.

**Thurs., April 19**

Topics: Medical Anthropology in Health and International Development

Readings:

- Tracy Kidder, "The Good Doctor." The New Yorker, July 10, 2000, pp. 40-57. (Profile of anthropologist and physician Paul Farmer, of Partners in Health)

**Tues., April 24**

Topics: Case study of Chernobyl: thinking about biology, food, culture, and healing

Readings:

- Sarah D. Phillips. 2002. "Half-Lives and Healthy Bodies: Discourses on 'Contaminated' Foods and Healing in Post-Chernobyl Ukraine." Food and Foodways 10(1-2):27-53.

Available online at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/FOF-sp-issue.pdf>

**Thurs., April 26**

**Last Class: Review for final exam**

**Final Exam: Tuesday, May 1 (2:45-4:45 pm)**