

## “Sociology of Health, Illness, and Biomedicine”

Fridays, 2:10pm-5:00 pm, in 390 Hearst Mining

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Office Hours: Wed 5-7pm, 482 Barrows.

This course will provide an introduction to central topics in the sociology of health and illness, with an emphasis on its ongoing redefinition by science and technology studies. We will explore multiple domains: the healthcare workgroup or how health professionals interact with one another and with their clients; the research settings where medical knowledge is produced; the circulation of ideas about health and illness; the state and market institutions that transform social inequalities into health disparities; the social movements that shape medicine and challenge the authority of experts; and the bodies and selves that are remade by illness.

Some notes. Although many of the themes we will address have a long history in the subfield, the emphasis in our class will be on developments of the last several decades. The course focuses largely on the United States, though we will try along the way to consider global contexts. While the majority of the scholarship we will consider is sociological (broadly speaking), some of it is drawn from other fields. Students from other disciplines are welcome.

### REQUIREMENTS

- **Attendance and Participation.** (15%) Attendance will be taken at the end of class and participation will be considered in grading. You are expected to attend and participate actively in all classes. If you must miss a class meeting, please notify me via email as soon as you know that and indicate the cause of your absence. Unexcused absences detract from your grade.
- **Paper/Interview Transcript and Analysis (25%):** This assignment will be fun and challenging. You will interview three individuals about their health, healthcare and social histories and provide an analysis using the medical sociology concepts from the class. This will be **due April 18<sup>th</sup> via bcourses**. We will spend a significant chunk of time preparing to execute these interviews and what kind of analyses we are after. You should not miss the session on **Feb 21<sup>st</sup> as we will go over interview methods in detail**. You will provide the (1) interview transcript, (2) three pages of analysis of each interviewee (**single space**, 12 point font, one inch margins), and (3) one page of cross-analysis (**single space**, 12 point font, one inch margins) in which you attempt to build a theoretical understanding through comparisons in your admittedly small sample.
- **Exams** (60% of total) Three tests (20% each) will assess your knowledge of course material and will ask you to analyze theoretical and empirical facts, debates, and interpretations covered in the course. It will employ a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and/or short essay. Test questions may come from any aspect of the course (e.g., lectures, videos,

class activities, the textbook, and supplemental readings). Each test will focus on material learned in the respective third of the course; however, because some material will naturally be relevant throughout the course, the second may not be exclusively non-cumulative. The final will be cumulative.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

- If you will require academic accommodations, please inform the professor at the beginning of the semester. Requests for religious accommodation should be submitted directly to the professor at the beginning of the semester (preferably within the first two weeks) using this form provided by the university: <https://callink.berkeley.edu/submitter/form/start/132891>. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor in writing by the second week of the semester of any potential conflict of an exam with an extracurricular activity. **Students who need disability accommodations will be accommodated but need to apply with DSP for services.**
- Please familiarize yourself with the University's academic honesty policy: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity>. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.
- We only have 3 hours per week together in class and a lot of material to cover. Thus I ask that you please come to class prepared and attentive. It's a better experience for everyone if you are ready to participate.
- To that end, please turn off cell phones and restrict use of technology to course-relevant activities in class. Consider this research in deciding whether to take notes on the laptop or by hand: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>.
- You are expected to attend lecture on a regular basis (and on time) on Wed. Participation can give you a boost in deciding on borderline grades. I will post slide handouts after class, but these are meant as a study aid and not as a substitute for attendance. I urge you to become an active participant in discussions and activities to enhance your learning experience. **You will find that discussion is the main form of lecture in my class.**

**READINGS.** There is no textbook in this course. All readings/materials are posted on bcourses. **This is a tentative schedule and list of materials and will change throughout the semester.** Communication about the course material will be communicated through bcourses throughout the semester. Test dates are firm.

### **SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

\*asterisked readings are recommended

#### **Week 1, Jan 17<sup>th</sup>: Class Overview**

No reading.

**Week 2, Jan 24<sup>th</sup>: Three Examples in Medical Sociology**

Livne, Roi. 2014. "Economies of Dying: The Moralization of Economic Scarcity in U.S. Hospice Care." *American Sociological Review* (79)5

Lee, Jooyoung. 2013. "The Pill Hustle: Risky Pain Management for a Gunshot Victim" *Social Science & Medicine* 99.

Daniel Navon & Gil Eyal. 2016. "Looping genomes: Diagnostic expansion and the genetic makeup of the autism population." *American Journal of Sociology*.

**Week 3, Jan 31<sup>st</sup>: The Contested Goals of Medical Sociology**

Bird, Chloe E., Peter Conrad, and Allen E. Fremont. 2000. "Medical Sociology at the Millennium." Pp. 1-10 in *Handbook of Medical Sociology, Fifth Edition*, edited by C.E. Bird, P. Conrad, and A. Fremont. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

*Note: As you read the following three articles, please think of each as a different sort of alternative vision of the field set forth by Bird, Conrad, and Fremont:*

Timmermans, Stefan, and Steven Haas. 2008. "Towards A Sociology of Disease." *Sociology of Health and Illness* 30 (5): 659-76.

Rose, Nikolas. 2001. "The Politics of Life Itself." *Theory, Culture & Society* 18 (6): 1-30.

Fassin, Didier. 2012. "That Obscure Object of Global Health." Pp. 95-115 in *Medical Anthropology at the Intersections: Histories, Activisms, and Futures*, edited by M. C. Inhorn and E. A. Wentzell. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

**Week 4, Feb 7<sup>th</sup>: Social Conditions and the Embodiment of Inequalities/Review Session**

Link, Bruce, and Jo Phelan. 2010. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Health Inequalities." Pp. 3-17 in *Handbook of Medical Sociology, Sixth Edition*, edited by C. E. Bird, P. Conrad, A. M. Fremont and S. Timmermans. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Connell, Raewyn. 2012. "Gender, Health and Theory: Conceptualizing the Issue, in Local and World Perspective." *Social Science & Medicine* 74: 1675-1683.

Shim, Janet. 2005. "Constructing 'Race' Across the Science-Lay Divide: Racial Formation in the Epidemiology and Experience of Cardiovascular Disease." *Social Studies of Science* 35: 405-436.

**Week 5, Feb 14<sup>th</sup>: \*\*In-Class Test\*\***

**Week 6, Feb 21<sup>st</sup>: Learning How to Interview for Paper**

Learning From Strangers.

Daniel, Caitlin. 2016. "Economic constraints on taste formation and the true cost of healthy eating." *Social Science & Medicine*. 148

### **Week 7, Feb 28<sup>th</sup>: Constructing Illness, Medicalizing Society**

Conrad, Peter. 2005. "The Shifting Engines of Medicalization." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46 (1): 3-14.

Greenslit, Nathan. 2005. "Depression and Consumption: Psychopharmaceuticals, Branding, and New Identity Practices." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 29: 477-501.

Armstrong, Elizabeth M. 1998. "Diagnosing Moral Disorder: The Discovery and Evolution of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome." *Social Science & Medicine* 47 (12): 2025- 2042.

\*Aronowitz, Robert. 2008. "Framing Disease: An Underappreciated Mechanism for the Social Patterning of Health." *Social Science & Medicine* 67: 1-9.

### **Week 8, Mar 7<sup>th</sup>: Constructing Medical Objects and Subjects**

Hirschauer, Stefan. 1991. "The Manufacture of Bodies in Surgery." *Social Studies of Science* 21 (2): 279-319.

Berg, Marc, and Geoffrey Bowker. 1997. "The Multiple Bodies of the Medical Record: Toward a Sociology of an Artifact." *Sociological Quarterly* 38: 513-537.

Timmermans, Stefan, and Mara Buchbinder. 2012. *Saving Babies? The Consequences of Newborn Genetic Screening*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 65-96 and 97- 120 (Ch. 2: "Patients-in-Waiting"; Ch. 3: "Shifting Disease Ontologies").

\* Thompson, Charis. 2005. *Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 145-178 (Ch. 5: "Strategic Naturalizing: Kinship, Race, and Ethnicity").

### **Week 9, Mar 14<sup>th</sup>: Cultures of Risk and Responsibility/Review Session**

Fosket, Jennifer Ruth. 2010. "Breast Cancer Risk as Disease: Biomedicalizing Risk." Pp. 331-352 in *Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health, and Illness in the U.S.*, edited by A. E. Clark, L. Mamo, J. R. Fosket, J. R. Fishman and J. K. Shim. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Reich, Jennifer A. 2014. "Neoliberal Mothering and Vaccine Refusal: Imagined Gated Communities and the Privilege of Choice." *Gender & Society* 28 (5): 679-704.

Barker, Kristin. 2002. "Self-Help Literature and the Making of an Illness Identity: The Case of Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS)." *Social Problems* 49 (3): 279-300.

Sociology c115/PH c155, Spring 2017

**Week 10, Mar 21<sup>st</sup> \*\*\*In-Class Test\*\*\***

**Week 11, Mar 28<sup>th</sup> Spring Break**

**Week 12, Apr 4<sup>th</sup>: Health Activism, Expertise, and Biocitizenship.**

Epstein, Steven. 1995. "The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in the Reform of Clinical Trials," *Science, Technology & Human Values* 20: 408-437.

Klawiter, Maren. 1999. "Racing for the Cure, Walking Women, and Toxic Touring: Mapping Cultures of Action within the Bay Area Terrain of Breast Cancer." *Social Problems* 46 (1): 104-126.

Best, Rachel Kahn. 2012. "Disease Politics and Medical Research Funding: Three Ways Advocacy Shapes Policy." *American Sociological Review* 77 (5): 780-803.

**Week 13, April 11<sup>th</sup>: Making Medical Practice "Scientific"**

Timmermans, Stefan. 2010. "Evidence-Based Medicine: Sociological Explorations." Pp. 309-323 in *Handbook of Medical Sociology, Sixth Edition*, edited by C. E. Bird, P. Conrad, A. M. Fremont and S. Timmermans. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Lakoff, Andrew. 2005. "Diagnostic Liquidity: Mental Illness and the Global Trade in DNA." *Theory and Society* 34 (1): 63-92.

Sismondo, Sergio. 2015. "Pushing Knowledge in the Drug Industry: Ghost-Managed Science." Pp. 150-164 in *The Pharmaceutical Studies Reader*, edited by S. Sismondo and J. A. Greene. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

**Week 14, April 18<sup>th</sup>: No Class/Papers due at 5pm via Bcourses**

**Week 15, Apr 25<sup>th</sup>: Review Session**

**Week 16: Reading Week**

**Week 17: Final**