

Latinos and Medicine: Critical Perspectives, Social Justice and Quality of Care
Chicano/Latino Studies 156(37907)
Anthropology 133A (60195)
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Chc/LAT 156
also see
Chc/LAT
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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. We will be examining systemic, structural and epistemological forms of dominations. Furthermore, blaming culture, individuals or communities will not be the starting point; we will examine other origins. Fundamentally what makes Latinos/as ill or sick...is not lack of access (*per se*) but poor quality of care.

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)
- 20% Group presentations on a health theme (week 7-10, possibly through finals)
- 40% Critical analysis papers based on the class materials
- 30% Final Project (culturally appropriate outreach tool—newsletter, web page, brochure, etc.)
plus analysis of why and how you created it.

Readings

Coursepack from University Readers (available second week of classes)

Week 1, 2 and 3: Politics and Codes of Ethics

- Hippocrates, "The Oath" and "The Canon" in *The Hippocratic Oath: Text, Translation and Interpretation*, edited by L. Edelstein. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
- Nuremberg Code (1949), *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10, Vol. 2, pp. 181-182.*
- World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki, *Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, Adopted by the 18th WMA General Assembly Helsinki, Finland, June 1964 (amended 1975, 1983, 1989, 1996, and 2000).*
- Belmont Report: *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (April 18, 1979).*
- National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NABC), *Ethical and Policy Issues in Research Involving Human Participants: Summary, August 2001.*
- Jessica H. Muller, "Anthropology, Bioethics and Medicine: A Provocative Trilogy" in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* (v. 8, n. 4, 1994).
- Jean Lau Chin, "Culturally Competent Health Care" in *Public Health Reports* 2000; 115: 25-33, (January, 2000 / February, 2000), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Aida L. Giachello, "Cultural Diversity and Institutional Inequality" in *Health Issues for Women of Color*, edited by Diane Adams, 1995.

Week 4 and 5: Health Politics and Structural Issues: risks and problems

- Allan M. Brandt, "Behavior, Disease, and Health in the Twentieth-Century United States: The Moral Valence of Individual Risk" in *Morality and Health: interdisciplinary perspectives*, edited by Allan M. Brandt and Paul Rozin, 1997.
- David Mechanic, "The Social Context of Health and Disease and Choices among Health Interventions" in *Morality and Health: interdisciplinary perspectives*, edited by Allan M. Brandt and Paul Rozin, 1997.
- Malcolm Spector and John I. Kituse, "Social Problems as Claims-Making Activities" in *Constructing Social Problems* by Malcolm Spector and John I. Kituse, 2001.
- Mitchell Dean, "Risk, calculable and in incalculable" in *Risk and Sociocultural Theory: New Directions and Perspectives* by Deborah Lupton, 1999.
- Barry Glassner, "Metaphoric Illnesses: How not to Criticize the Establishment" in *Culture of Fear: Why Americans are Afraid of the Wrong Things* by Barry Glassner, 1999.
- Nina Glick Schiller, "What's Wrong with This Picture?: The Hegemonic Construction of Culture in AIDS Research in the United States" in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, v. 6, n. 3, 1992.
- William Ryan, "The Art of Savage Discovery: How to Blame the Victim" in *Blaming the Victim*, 1976.

Week 6: Reproductive Health and Gender Politics

- 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.

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

Leo R. Chavez, "A Glass Half Empty: Latina Reproduction and Public Discourse" in *Human Organization*, v. 63, n. 2, 2004.

Ruth E. Zambrana and Britt K. Ellis, "Contemporary Research Issues in Hispanic/Latino Women's Health" in *Health Issues for Women of Color*, edited by Diane Adams, 1995.

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)

Week 7: Controversies of Medicalized Pregnancy and Childbirth

Brigitte Jordan, "Authoritative Knowledge and Its Construction" in *Childbirth and Authoritative Knowledge* edited by Robbie E. Davis-Floyd and Carolyn F. Sargent, 1997.

Penny Van Esterik, "Medicalization and the Infant Formula Controversy" in *Beyond the Breast-Bottle Controversy*, 1989.

Margaret Somerville, "Altering Baby Boys' Bodies: The Ethics of Infant Male Circumcision" in *The Ethical Canary: Science, Society and the Human Spirit*, 2000.

David B. Chamberlain, "Babies Don't Feel Pain: A Century of Denial in Medicine" in *Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots*, edited by Robbie E. Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, 1998.

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

Week 8: Immigrant Health Paradox/Cultural Protective Factors

Kyriakos S. Markides and Jeannine Coreil, "The Health of Hispanics in the Southwestern United States: an Epidemiologic Paradox" in *Public Health Reports* 1986; 101: 253-265, May, 1986 / June, 1986.

Javier Escobar, "Immigration and Mental Health" in *ARCH GEN PSYCHIATRY* v. 55, Sept 1998.

Mita Sanghavi Goel, *et al*, "Obesity among US Immigrant Subgroups by Duration of Residence" in *JAMA* 2004;292:2860-2867.

Carlos Ponce and Brendon Comer, "Is Acculturation in Hispanic Health Research a Flawed Concept?" in Working Paper No. 60, January 2003.

Week 9 and 10: Community Oriented Primary Care

Paulo Freire, "Chapter 4" in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 2000.

Darryl M. Williams, "La Promotora: Linking disenfranchised residents along the border to the U.S. health care system" in *HEALTH AFFAIRS*, v. 20, n. 3.

Kurt W. Deuschle, "Community Oriented Primary Care: Lessons Learned in Three Decades" in *Community Oriented Primary Care: New Directions for Health Services Delivery* edited by Eileen Connor and Fitzhugh Mullan, 1982.

Eric J. Cassell, "What is Primary Care?" and "The Heavy Hand of the Past: Thinking about Diseases versus Thinking about Persons" in *Doctoring: The Nature of Primary Care Medicine*, 1997.

Robert Rhyne, Suzanne Cashman and Martin Kantrowitz, "An Introduction to Community-Oriented Primary Care (COPC)" in *Community-Oriented Primary Care: Health Care for the 21st Century* edited by Robert Rhyne, Richard Bogue, Gary Kukulka and Hugh Fulmer, 1998.

Richard Kozoll, "Identifying and Characterizing Community Health Problems" in *Community-Oriented Primary Care: Health Care for the 21st Century* edited by Robert Rhyne, Richard Bogue, Gary Kukulka and Hugh Fulmer, 1998.

Suzanne Cashman, Ron Anderson and Hugh Fulmer, "Education and Training in Community-Oriented Primary Care" in *Community-Oriented Primary Care: Health Care for the 21st Century* edited by Robert Rhyne, Richard Bogue, Gary Kukulka and Hugh Fulmer, 1998.

Agnes M. Richardson-Collins and Antoinette A. Coleman, "Norfolk State University Resource Mothers Program: A Community Response to Adolescent Pregnancy" in *African American Voices: African American Health Educators Speak Out* edited by Ruth W. Johnson, 1999.