

Biomedicine and Culture Syllabus

LMC3318 – Fall 2016

Professor Anne Pollock, apollock@gatech.edu

Class meets: Tuesday/Thursday 12:05-1:25, Skiles 371

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:30 or by appointment, Skiles 360

Prerequisite: ENGL1102

Course Attributes: Humanities, Ethics

Course Description:

In the lab and in the newspapers, topics in biomedicine are frequent subjects of debate. From assisted reproductive technology and stem cells, to pharmaceuticals and imaging technologies, to life support and its termination, biomedical technologies are shaping our lives in unprecedented ways. This course uses interdisciplinary sources – drawn principally from science and technology studies, cultural studies, history, and anthropology – to provide students with both information and analytical tools to grapple with the intersections of biomedicine and culture.

Objectives:

- ❖ To increase awareness of and think critically about the cultural context of the creation of biomedical knowledge and practice
- ❖ To increase awareness of and think critically about the role of biomedicine in culture more broadly
- ❖ To explore nuance and ambiguity in often polarized debates
- ❖ To communicate in sophisticated ways about these issues of broad concern, orally and in writing

Requirements for the course:

- ❖ Class attendance and participation: 15 points. Engagement with the readings is the focus of this class, and students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss them. All readings are available on T-Square.
- ❖ Blog Entries: 15 points. *Before* class each day for which readings are assigned, write an entry on your response to the readings on the blog section of T-Square. Your short comments (200-300 words) should be posted by 10am, demonstrate that you have done the readings for that day, and note comments and questions that you would like to raise in class.
- ❖ Individual presentation: 5 points. Each student signs up for a particular reading and connects it with a newspaper article, advertisement, or other cultural source. The student will take 5-10 minutes to concisely present the outside material to the class and describe how it can be related to a reading for that day. The presentation should (1) present the outside source clearly; (2) describe concept(s) from the particular course reading at hand; and (3) show connections between the course concept(s) and the outside source.
- ❖ Three individual writing assignments (1000-1500 words): 15 points each. Assignments are due on the date and time specified on the assignment. Late assignments will be penalized by one point if they are an hour late or more, and an additional point per calendar day thereafter.
- ❖ Final group project: 20 points. Includes two subcomponents: individually-completed annotated bibliography (5 points), group poster and presentation (15 points). Each group member must also complete an individual self-assessment of their work.

Honor Code: In all assignments, be sure to reference and include full citations for any words or concepts that are not your own. Students are encouraged to seek help from each other on all assignments, as well as from the Comm Lab and the professor.

Attendance: Attendance is required.

ADAPTS accommodation is available for students with disabilities: <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/>

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
UNIT 1: DRUGS		
1	<p style="text-align: right;">Aug 23</p> <p>Intro to the Course</p> <p>In class reading: Dumit, Joseph. "Drugs for Life," <i>Molecular Interventions</i> 2.3 (June 2002): 124-127.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Aug 25</p> <p>Anthropology of Drugs</p> <p>Van der Geest et al., "The Anthropology of Pharmaceuticals," <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i>, Vol. 25 (1996): 153-178.</p> <p>Martin, Emily. "The Pharmaceutical Person," <i>BioSocieties</i> 1(2006): 273-287.</p>
2	<p style="text-align: right;">Aug 29</p> <p>Embodying Drugs</p> <p>Persson, Asha. "Incorporating Pharmakon: HIV, medicine and body shape change," <i>Body and Society</i> 10(2004): 45-67.</p> <p>Mamo, Laura, and Jennifer Fishman. "Potency in All the Right Places: Viagra as Technology of the Gendered Body," <i>Body and Society</i> 7.4(2001): 13-35.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Aug 31</p> <p><i>Professor away at 4S conference</i> <i>No class meeting</i></p> <p><i>Doping media exercise</i> <i>replaces reading and blog</i></p>
3	<p style="text-align: right;">Sep 6</p> <p>Il/licit Drugs</p> <p>Cohen, Michael M., "Jim Crow's Drug War: Race, Coca-Cola, and the Southern Origins of Drug Prohibition," <i>Southern Cultures</i> 12.3 (Fall 2006): 55-79.</p> <p>Chapkis, Wendy, "Cannabis, Consciousness and Healing," <i>Contemporary Justice Review</i> 10.4 (December 2007): pp. 443-460.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Sep 8</p> <p>Writing Assignment 1 due at 10am</p> <p>Media Day, no readings, no blog</p> <p>In-class film: "In the Family"</p>

UNIT 2 DIAGNOSTICS		
4	Sep 13	Sep 15
	<p>Diagnosis and Control</p> <p>Nelkin, Dorothy, and Laurence Tankredi, "The New Diagnostics" and "Defining Diagnosis," from <i>Dangerous Diagnostics: The Social Power of Biological Information</i>, New York: Basic Books, 1989, pp. 3-36.</p> <p>Rose, Nikolas, "Introduction," <i>Politics of Life Itself</i> (Princeton University Press 2006): 1-7.</p>	<p>Diagnosing Brains</p> <p>Dumit, Joseph. "Is it Me or My Brain? Depression and Neuroscientific Facts," <i>Journal of Medical Humanities</i> 24.1/2 (Summer 2003): 35-47.</p> <p>Littlefield, Melissa. "Constructing the Organ of Deceit: The Rhetoric of fMRI and Brain Fingerprinting in Post-9/11 America," <i>Science, Technology & Human Values</i> 34.3(2009): 365-392.</p>
5	Sep 20	Sept 22
	<p>Diagnosing Relatedness</p> <p>Thompson, Charis. "Strategic Naturalizing: Kinship in an Infertility Clinic," in Sarah Franklin and Susan McKinnon, eds., <i>Relative Values: Refiguring Kinship Studies</i>, Duke University Press 2001, pp. 175-202.</p> <p>Nelson, Alondra. "Bio Science: Genetic Genealogy Testing and the Pursuit of African Ancestry," <i>Social Studies of Science</i> 38.5 (October 2008): 759–783.</p>	<p>Diagnosing Nonnormative Bodies</p> <p>Fausto-Sterling, Anne. (2000). "Dueling Dualisms," from <i>Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality</i> (pp. 1-29). Boston: Basic Books.</p> <p>Magnet, Shoshana, and Tara Rogers, "Stripping for the State: Whole Body Imaging Technologies and the Surveillance of Othered Bodies," <i>Feminist Media Studies</i> 12.1(2012): 101-118.</p>
6	Sep 27	Sep 29
	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Cartwright, Elizabeth. "The Logic of Heartbeats." In <i>Cyborg Babies: From Technosex to Technotots</i>, Edited by Robbie Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, New York: Routledge, 1998.</p> <p>Cvetello, Joseph. "The Elite Glucometer," in <i>Evocative Objects: Things we Think With</i>, edited by Sherry Turkle, MIT Press 2007, pp. 63-79.</p>	<p>Writing Assignment 2 Due 10am</p> <p>Media Day, no readings, no blog</p> <p>In-class film: "Dirty Pretty Things"</p>

UNIT 3: SURGERY		
7	Oct 4	Oct 6
	<p>Making Bodies Operable</p> <p>Katz, Pearl. "Ritual in the Operating Room," <i>Ethnology</i> Vol. 20, No. 4 (Oct 1981), pp. 335-350.</p> <p>Waldby, Cathy, and Robert Mitchell, "Real Time Demand: Information, Regeneration, and Organ Markets," in <i>Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism</i> (Duke University Press 2006), pp. 160-180.</p>	<p>Training Surgeons</p> <p>Gawande, Atul. "The Learning Curve: Like Everyone Else, Surgeons Need Practice. That's where you come in," <i>The New Yorker</i> January 28, 2002.</p> <p>Prentice, Rachel. "The Anatomy of a Surgical Simulation: The Mutual Articulation of Bodies in and Through the Machine," <i>Social Studies of Science</i> 35(2005): 837-866.</p>
8	Oct 11	Oct 13
	<p>Fall Break: No Class</p>	<p>Surgical Shapings</p> <p>Frank, Arthur W. "Emily's Scars: Surgical Shapings, Technoluxe, and Bioethics," <i>Hastings Center Report</i> 34 no. 2 (2004): 18-29.</p> <p>Lorde, Audre. "Breast Cancer: Power Versus Prosthesis," from <i>The Cancer Journals</i> (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1980): 55-77.</p>
9	Oct 18	Oct 20
	<p>Heart Surgery's Stories</p> <p>Jones, David S. "Visions of a Cure: Visualization, Clinical Trials, and Controversies in Cardiac Therapeutics, 1968-1998," <i>Isis</i>, Vol. 91, No. 3. (Sep., 2000), pp. 504-541.</p> <p>Lapum et al., "Patients' narrative accounts of open-heart surgery and recovery: Authorial voice of technology," <i>Social Science and Medicine</i>, 70(2010): 754-762.</p>	<p>Writing Assignment 3 Due 10am</p> <p>In Class: Form groups for final projects</p>

UNIT 4: IM/MORTALITY		
10	Oct 25 Immortal Cells I Landecker, Hannah. "Immortality In Vitro: A History of the HeLa Cell Line," in <i>Biotechnology and Culture: Bodies, Anxieties, Ethics</i> , edited by Paul Brodwin, Indiana University Press 2000, pp. 53-72.	Oct 27 Immortal Cells II Franklin, Sarah. "Embryonic Economies: The Double Reproductive Value of Stem Cells," <i>BioSocieties</i> 1(2006), 71-90.
11	Nov 1 Work in groups to complete annotated bibliographies, discuss toward projects Annotated Bibliography Due at Midnight	Nov 3 Living Dead Lock, Margaret. "Living Cadavers and the Calculation of Death," <i>Body & Society</i> 10 (2004): 135-152.
12	Nov 8 Medicalizing Corpses Olson, Philip R. "Flush and Bone: Funeralizing Alkaline Hydrolysis in the United States," <i>Science, Technology, & Human Values</i> 39.5(2014): 666-693.	Nov 10 Corpses on Display Van Dijck, Jose. "BodyWorlds: The Art of Plastinated Cadavers," <i>Configurations</i> 9 (2001):99-126.
13	Nov 15 In-class group work on final projects	Nov 17 In-class group work on final projects
14	Nov 22 Present Final Projects	Nov 24 Thanksgiving: No class
15	Nov 29 Present Final Projects	Dec 1 Present Final Projects
16	Dec 6 Wrap-Up Day Final poster and individual self-assessment of group work due at Midnight	