

Anthropology of Biomedicine & Biotechnology

ANTHRO 139 (60450)

TIME & LOCATION

Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:50am
Room: SSL 228

PROFESSOR INFO

Angela C. Jenks, Ph.D.

Email: ajenks@uci.edu

TA INFO

CLASS MATERIALS

Course readings, assignment info, lecture slides, and discussion forums, can be found on Canvas at: <https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/4372>

Course Description

Stem cells, cardiac defibrillators, pharmaceuticals: biomedicine and biotechnologies affect the way we are born, live, reproduce, and die to an increasing extent and with unprecedented consequences.

This introduction to the anthropological study of biomedicine and biotechnology explores the sociocultural influences and repercussions of biomedical approaches to disease, health, and science.

We begin with an overview of anthropological concerns with the culture of biomedicine, and examine the social, political, and economic conditions that influenced the emergence and global dominance of biomedicine.

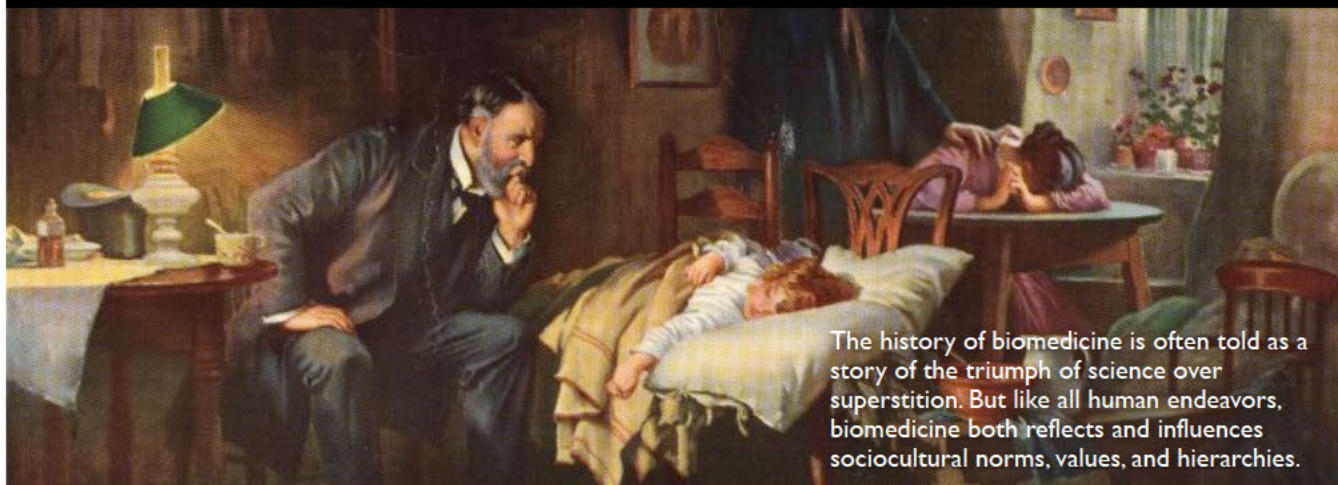
Next, we will explore the way biomedical knowledge is learned, produced, and maintains authority over expanding areas of human life.

In the final portion of the class, we will explore the varied social impacts of recent biotechnologies, including licit and illicit drugs, genetic testing, and life-extending technologies.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the class, students should be able to:

- ◆ Place the development of biomedicine and select biotechnologies in their historical, sociocultural, and political contexts.
- ◆ Identify and critically evaluate key questions, concerns, and approaches in the anthropological study of biomedicine.
- ◆ Apply an anthropological perspective to the analysis of biomedical settings and practitioners.



The history of biomedicine is often told as a story of the triumph of science over superstition. But like all human endeavors, biomedicine both reflects and influences sociocultural norms, values, and hierarchies.

Course Requirements

Lecture Attendance & Activities (10% of grade)

The weekly class sessions are a main source of learning for the course. Please arrive to class on time and plan to stay for the entire session.

There will be multiple activities throughout the quarter that are designed to give you an opportunity to apply the concepts we have been learning in class. These may include quizzes, short reflections, film viewing guides, or other activities. No make-up or late assignments will be accepted, although missing one activity will not affect your grade.

Discussion Participation (20% of grade)

Discussion sections are an important component of the

course and offer opportunities for further learning. You are required to participate in AT LEAST SIX (6) discussions throughout the quarter.

Discussions will be offered online through the course website. Discussions will begin during week 2.

Midterm & Final Exams (40% of grade)

There will be one in-class midterm and a semi-cumulative final exam. The exams may include multiple choice, identification, short answer, and essay questions. A study guide will be distributed one week before each exam.

Make-up exams will only be available in extraordinary and well-documented situations.

GRADING

LECTURE ACTIVITIES 40 PTS

DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION 80 PTS

MIDTERM EXAM 80 PTS

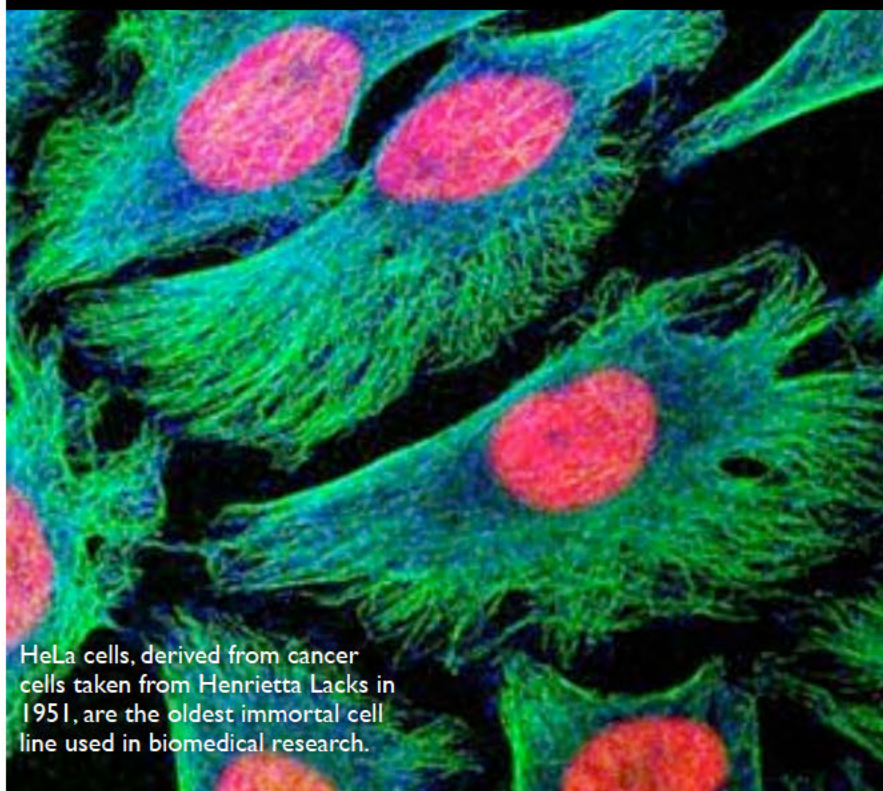
FINAL EXAM 80 PTS

RESEARCH PROJECT
Fieldnotes 20 PTS
Final Analysis 100 PTS

TOTAL 400 PTS

GRADING SCALE (PTS)

A ≥ 374 A- ≥ 360
B+ ≥ 346 B ≥ 334 B- ≥ 320
C+ ≥ 306 C ≥ 294 C- ≥ 280
D+ ≥ 266 D ≥ 254 D- ≥ 240
F ≤ 240



HeLa cells, derived from cancer cells taken from Henrietta Lacks in 1951, are the oldest immortal cell line used in biomedical research.

GRAND ROUNDS

Grand Rounds are an important ritual of biomedical education, most often taking the form of lectures presented to physicians, residents, and medical students.

Grand Rounds are usually held on a weekly schedule, and specific topics may or may not be announced ahead of time.

To find Grand Rounds schedules at UCI, visit <http://www.medicine.uci.edu/grand.asp> or http://www.meded.uci.edu/cme/regularly_scheduled_activities.asp

Course Requirements, cont.

Research Project (30% of grade)

This research project offers two options for learning more about contemporary biomedicine.

CHOOSE ONE of the following:

- a. Observe and analyze Grand Rounds presentations at a

local hospital or medical school.

- b. Conduct an interview with a professional biomedical practitioner and analyze his/her responses & experiences.

For either project, you will turn in:

1. **Fieldnotes (20 points)** based on either the Grand Rounds session or your interview.

2. **Analysis (100 points):** A 1,200 word (~4-5 double-spaced pages) paper analyzing and presenting your findings.

Additional information about each project option and grading rubrics will be posted on the course website.

HELP & RESOURCES

Writing Center

The [UCI Writing Center](#) offers in-person and online consultations for students at any stage of the writing process.

LARC

The [Learning and Academic Resource Center](#) offers several forms of academic assistance, including workshops on academic reading, exam preparation, note-taking in lectures, and study techniques.

Library

The UCI Library is an excellent resource. The Anthropology Reference Librarian, Ms. Pauline Manaka, has developed a helpful [online guide to Anthropology scholarship](#).

Q&A

Course Policies

<i>What's the best way to contact the professor?</i>	To speak in person, come to my office hours or make an appointment. Otherwise, email (ajenks@uci.edu) is generally the best way to contact me. During the week (M-F), I aim to respond to messages within 48 hours. Remember to include the name of the course in the subject line and your full name in your message.
<i>I missed class. What should I do?</i>	You are responsible for all material covered in class. Lecture activities and discussions cannot be made up, although missing one activity will not have an effect on your grade. If you must miss a class session, check the course website to access any handouts and presentation slides, and ask another student for a copy of the notes.
<i>Can I use my laptop or tablet in class?</i>	You may use a laptop/tablet in class, but only to take notes or access class materials like lecture slides. Because many individuals are distracted by glowing screens in their line of vision, the first 3 rows of our classroom will be a "screen free zone." If you wish to take notes on a screen, please sit in rows 4 or higher.
<i>What if I need an accommodation because of a disability?</i>	The UCI Disability Services Center ensures access to educational programs and resources for all students. If you believe you need an accommodation because of the impact of a disability, please contact them at 949-824-7494 or visit http://disability.uci.edu/ .
<i>Can I turn the paper in late or take a make-up exam?</i>	Make-up or late exams will only be accepted in extraordinary and well-documented situations. All other assignments will lose 5 points a day for each day of lateness (including weekends, holidays, etc.).
<i>I think my grade is incorrect. What should I do?</i>	If you believe there is a mathematical error in the calculation of your grade, please email the professor. Requests for a regrade should be submitted in writing within 7 days of receipt of your grade. You must submit your original graded assignment and a detailed written explanation of how your work meets the requirements of the assignment/rubric.
<i>What is the course policy regarding plagiarism and academic honesty?</i>	Learning in this class depends on you completing all required assignments yourself. Violations of academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in no credit for the assignment, course failure, and/or referral for disciplinary action. If you are unfamiliar with UCI's policies on academic integrity, please visit https://aisc.uci.edu/index

Course Schedule & Assignments (Changes to this schedule may be made as necessary).

TOPIC	DATE	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE?
Week 1: Introduction to the "Culture of Biomedicine"	Tues, 1/10	No readings.	
	Thurs, 1/12	Gordon, Deborah R. 1988. "Tenacious Assumptions in Western Medicine." Pp. 19-56 in <i>Biomedicine Examined</i> , edited by Margaret Lock and Deborah R. Gordon. Gawande, Atul. 2015. "Overkill." <i>The New Yorker</i> , May 11.	
Week 2: Genealogies	Tues, 1/17	Porter, Roy. 2002. <i>Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine</i> . [Excerpts]	
	Thurs, 1/19	Baer, Hans A. 1989. "The American Dominant Medical System as a Reflection of Social Relations in the Larger Society." <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 28(11): 1103-1112. Comaroff, Jean. 1993. "The Diseased Heart of Africa: Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body." In <i>Knowledge, Power and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine</i> . Shirley Lindenbaum and Margaret Lock, eds.	Syllabus quiz online, 1/20
Week 3: Learning Medicine	Tues, 1/24	Taylor and Wendland. 2015. "The hidden curriculum in medicine's 'culture of no culture.'" In <i>The Hidden Curriculum in Health Professional Education</i> . Pp. 53-62. Dartmouth College Press. George and Green. 2015. "Lessons learned from comics produced by medical students." <i>JAMA</i> 314(22): 2345-2346. And https://sites.psu.edu/graphicnarratives	
	Thurs, 1/26	Dembosky, April. 2015. Medical School Hopefuls Grapple with Overhauled Entrance Exam. NPR, June 29. Wendland, Claire L. 2010. <i>A Heart for the Work: Journeys through an African Medical School</i> . [Excerpt]	
Week 4: Medicine and Power	Tues, 1/31	Zola, Irving. 1972. Medicine as an Institution of Social Control. <i>Sociological Review</i> 20:487-504. Hartblay, Cassandra. 2015. "'Body Leads': Medicalizing Cultural Difference, or, what are we doing when we say Putin has Asperger's Syndrome?" <i>Somatosphere</i> , February 17.	
	Thurs, 2/2	Lupton, Deborah. 2012. "M-Health and Health Promotion: The Digital Cyborg and Surveillance Society." <i>Social Theory and Health</i> 10(3): 229-244. Dumit, Joseph. 2006. "Illnesses you have to fight to get: Facts as forces in uncertain, emergent illnesses." <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 62(3): 577-590.	

Course Schedule & Assignments, cont. (Changes to this schedule may be made as necessary).

TOPIC	DATE	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE?
Week 5: Discovery and Diagnosis	Tues, 2/7	Landecker, Hannah. 2000. "Immortality, In Vitro: A History of the HeLa Cell Line." Pgs. 53-74 in <i>Biotechnology and Culture: Bodies, Anxieties, Ethics</i> . Paul Brodwin, ed.	
	Thurs, 2/9	Crane, Johanna. 2011. "Viral Cartographies: Mapping the Molecular Politics of Global HIV." <i>BioSocieties</i> 6(2): 142. Armstrong, EM. 1998. "Diagnosing Moral Disorder: The Discovery and Evolution of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome." <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 47(12):2025-42.	
Week 6: Experimentation	Tues, 2/14	Midterm exam in class	Midterm exam
	Thurs, 2/16	Bharadwaj, Aditya. 2013. "Experimental Subjectification: The Pursuit of Human Embryonic Stem Cells in India." <i>Ethos</i> 79(1): 84-107. Elliott, Carl. 2008. "Guinea-pigging." <i>The New Yorker</i> , January 7.	
Week 7: Experts, Patient Groups, and Health Movements	Tues, 2/21	Epstein, Steven. 2000. "Democracy, Expertise, and AIDS Treatment Activism." Pgs. 15-32 in <i>Science, Technology, and Democracy</i> . Daniel Kleinman, ed. Silverman and Brosco. 2007. "Understanding autism: parents and pediatricians in historical perspective." <i>Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine</i> 161(4): 392-398.	
	Thurs, 2/23	Sobo, Elisa J. 2015. "Social Cultivation of Vaccine Refusal and Delay among Waldorf (Steiner) School Parents." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 29(3): 381-399.	
Week 8: Drugs	Tues, 2/28	Oldani, MJ. 2004. "Thick Prescriptions: Toward an Interpretation of Pharmaceutical Sales Practices." <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 18(3): 325-56. Ryan, Girion, and Glover. 2016. "'You Want a Description of Hell?' Oxycontin's 12-Hour Problem." <i>Los Angeles Times</i> , May 5.	Research project field notes
	Thurs, 3/2	Sobo, Elisa. 2016. "Language, Power, and Pot: Speaking of Cannabis as Medicine." <i>Savage Minds Blog</i> , September 1. Bourgois, Philippe. 2000. "Disciplining Addictions: The Bio-Politics of Methadone and Heroin in the United States." <i>Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry</i> 24(2): 165-195.	

Course Schedule and Assignments (Changes to this schedule may be made as necessary).

TOPIC	DATE	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE?
Week 9: Remaking the Ends of Life	Tues, 3/7	Lock, Margaret. 2008. "Biosociality and susceptibility genes: A cautionary tale." Pg. 56-78 in <i>Biosocialities, Genetics and the Social Sciences</i> . Gibbon and Novas, eds. New York: Routledge.	
	Thurs, 3/9	Kaufman, Sharon. 2015. <i>Ordinary Medicine: Extraordinary Treatments, Longer Lives, and Where to Draw the Line</i> . Durham: Duke University Press. [excerpts] Mooallem, Jon. 2017. "One man's quest to change the way we die." <i>New York Times</i> , January 3.	
Week 10: Biotech Futures	Tues, 3/14	Dyson, Freeman. 2007. Our Biotech Future. The New York Review of Books, July 19.	Final research paper due
	Thurs, 3/16	No readings. Wrap-up and review.	
Final Exam	Thursday, March 23, 8:00am-10:00am		