

Sociology of Medicine and Health
HTS 3086A
Mon/Wed/Fri 3:05-3:55

Please Note: This is a new course and a new syllabus. It is an experiment that will undoubtedly be revised and adjusted during the semester.

Maren Klawiter, Ph.D.
maren.klawiter@hts.gatech.edu

Office Hours : Wed 4-5 and by appt.
Office ph : 404-385-0546

Course Description:

This course will provide an introduction to the sociology of medicine, public health, disease, and illness in the U.S. context. What does it mean to examine medicine, public health, disease, and illness from a sociological perspective? It means that we will consider the ways in which these phenomena are shaped by social, cultural, and political relationships, identities, interactions, perceptions, policies, practices, politics, professions, organizations, industries, systems, and institutions. There is nothing inevitable about the unequal distribution of health, illness, mortality, and disease within American society. There is nothing ‘natural’ about experiences of health and illness—the meaning and definition of health varies tremendously; even pain is a socially-shaped experience; illness experiences are shaped by multiple social factors and forces; and everything from conception to death is mediated by medical personnel and technologies. Finally, there is nothing automatic about the organization, financing, and delivery of health care in the U.S.—or the barriers to access that exist for so many people. In this course we will examine the major social forces shaping health, illness, disease, and death in American society.

Required Texts:

1. Peter Conrad. *The Sociology of Health and Illness*. Seventh Edition. 2005.
2. Audre Lorde. *The Cancer Journals*. Aunt Lute Books. 1980.
3. Susan Sontag. *Illness as Metaphor & AIDS and Its Metaphors*. Picador. 2001.
4. An autobiographical illness narrative to be chosen by each student.

Required readings that are not in the texts listed above will be posted to WebCT at least one week prior to their due date.

Course Requirements:

1. In-class Pop Quizzes (20%). There will be an undisclosed number of short pop quizzes. They will cover the current week’s readings. If you do the assigned readings, take notes on the main ideas, and review your notes before class, there is no reason these should be difficult. Quizzes will begin at 3:05. If you are late or absent you will receive a zero on that quiz. Your grade will be the average of all your quizzes. You may drop your lowest score.

2. 4-Part Research Paper (40%). This will be a cumulative paper on any health, illness, or disease condition that interests you *and for which you can find an illness narrative*, divided into four 4-page parts. Each paper is worth 10% of your grade. A description of the 4-part paper project is provided at the end of this syllabus.
3. Current Events Facilitation (10%). We will spend 10 Fridays discussing health and medicine in the context of current events in the world around us. Each student will be required to facilitate this discussion once during the semester. Facilitation will require you to bring in or email to me by WEDNESDAY a short article from a newspaper or magazine that you want to discuss in relation to the themes of the course. I will post these articles to WebCT. Everyone is required to print, read, and bring the articles to class with you on Friday. Presenters will be required to describe (not read) the article and [a] explain how it connects to the topic of the week or [b] explain how it could be re-conceptualized through a sociological lens. In addition, you will be required to hand in a 1-page summary of your analysis, stapled to the article. There will be 2-3 presentations/discussions every Friday that they are scheduled. These are intended to be relatively informal presentations—no PowerPoint, no overheads, no bells and whistles. Just tell us about the issue and why its relevant and interesting.
4. Two Exams (30%). Exams will cover required readings, films, and material from lectures. Format to be determined.
5. Class Participation (borderline bump). I expect you to attend class. I expect you to constructively participate in classroom activities and discussions. I expect you to bring the assigned readings with you to every class meeting. I expect you to underline important passages, confusing passages, interesting passages, etc. I expect you to come to class prepared to ask questions about the readings and contribute to discussion. If you do all of these things than it is likely that I will give you the benefit of the doubt at the end of the semester if you are on the *borderline* between two grades.

Policy on Pop Quizzes, Exams, Extra Credit. I do not give make-up exams or pop quizzes. There is no extra credit.

Policy on Papers. I do not read drafts of papers but I do encourage you to read drafts of each other's papers and provide constructive feedback. I do not accept rewrites after-the-fact. The time for rewriting is *before* you turn in your paper. I do not give extensions on papers. Papers are due at the *beginning* of class on the day they are due. If they are late they will be heavily penalized. If they are very late, they will not be accepted.

Policy on Lecture Notes. I do not post my lecture or reading notes but you are welcome to share your notes and borrow the notes of others.

A Note on Courtesy and Respect. I expect all of us to treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times. This is meant to promote, not inhibit, lively discussion.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities (including but not limited to visual, hearing, and mobility impairments, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, chronic illness, cerebral palsy, etc.) have a right to all necessary and appropriate accommodations. To ensure timely and appropriate accommodations, please contact the coordinator of ADAPTS (Accessible Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students) as soon as possible. ADAPTS is located in the Smithgall Student Services Building; phone 404-894-9411 (voice) or 404-894-3344 (voice/TDD).

Student Athletes, Cheerleaders, Marching Band, etc. Students involved in GT athletics should submit their official travel schedules or a letter from the Athletic Department within the first two weeks of class. Please highlight the days when you will be required to miss class so that they are obvious to me.

Honor Code: Students in this class will be expected to abide by the Georgia Tech Honor Code and avoid any instance of academic misconduct, including but not limited to the substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual or individuals; false claims of performance or work submitted by the student; possessing, using, or exchanging *improperly* acquired written or verbal information in preparation for, or in writing, an exam or paper. Obviously, wandering eyes, cheat sheets, text-messaging, etc. are violations of the honor code. I have zero tolerance for cheating and zero interest in debating what you did or did not do. If I suspect cheating, I will report it to the Office of the Dean of Students. If you cheat on a quiz, you will receive an F and will not be allowed to take future quizzes. If you cheat on a paper, midterm, or final you will receive an F and, depending on the seriousness of the violation, you will fail the course. If you have any questions whatsoever, please consult with me and read the Honor Code, which is available at: www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/Policy/code.in.sections.htm#AHC .

PART I	THE SOCIAL DISTRIBUTION AND PRODUCTION OF ILLNESS AND DISEASE	
Week 1 Aug 22, 24, 26	Intro to Medical Sociology John McKinlay and Sonja McKinlay, "Medical Measures and the Decline of Mortality," pp. 7-19. [SHI] Peter Conrad and Joseph Schneider, "Professionalization, Monopoly, and the Structure of Medical Practice," pp. 170-174 [SHI]	
Week 2 Aug 29, 31, Sept 2	The Unequal Distribution of Health and Disease Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Public Health Puzzle: Social Determinants of Health." <i>Chronic Disease Notes & Reports</i> 15, no. 2 (2002): www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/cdnr/cdnr_spring0201.htm	Wed Aug 31: Submit choice of paper topic and title of

	<p>[WebCT]</p> <p>Lorber, Judith, "Women Get Sicker But Men Die Quicker." In <i>Gender and the Social Construction of Illness</i>. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997, pp. 14-34. [WebCT]</p> <p>Wed Aug 31: Submit choice of paper topic and title of illness narrative. These should be typed, with full citation information and your plan for getting a copy of the book.</p>	<p>illness narrative.</p> <p>Friday Sept 2— Current Events Facilitation [#1]</p>
<p>Week 3 Sept 7, 9 * no class on Sept 5</p>	<p>Social Relationships and Health</p> <p>Sheldon Cohen, "Social Relationships and Health." <i>American Psychologist</i> (2004): 676-684. [WebCT]</p> <p>Eric Klinenberg, "Dying Alone: The Social Production of Urban Isolation," pp. 83-97. [SHI]</p>	
<p>Week 4 Sept 12, 14, 16</p>	<p>The Political Economy of Health and Disease</p> <p>American Heart Association, "Tobacco Industry's Economic and Political Influence." Access and print this report at: www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=11224</p> <p>John McKinlay, "A Case for Refocusing Upstream: The Political Economy of Illness," pp. 551-564 [SHI]</p> <p>Phil Brown, "Popular-Epidemiology: Community Response to Toxic Waste-Induced Disease," pp. 66-73 [SHI]</p> <p>Paper #1 Due Friday Sept 16.</p>	<p>Paper #1 Due Friday Sept 16</p>
<p>Week 5 Sept 19, 21, 23</p>	<p>Film: "Super Size Me" (Mon/Wed)</p> <p>In-Class Exam on Friday September 23.</p>	<p>Exam on Friday September 23</p>
<p>PART II</p>	<p>ILLNESS EXPERIENCE</p>	
<p>Week 6 Sept 26, 28, 30</p>	<p>Illness Narratives—Part I</p> <p>9/26 Discussion</p> <p>9/28 Historical and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Mental Illness</p>	

	<p>[1] Gail A. Hornstein, “Narratives of Madness, as Told From Within,” <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, January 25, 2002, http://chronicle.com/free/v48/i20/20b00701.htm [WebCT]</p> <p>[2] Lawrence Osborne, “Regional Disturbances,” <i>New York Times Magazine</i>, May 6 2001, 98-102. [WebCT]</p> <p>9/30 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Sept 30— Current Events Facilitation [#2]</p>
<p>Week 7 Oct 3, 5, 7</p>	<p>Illness Narratives—Part II</p> <p>10/3 Mundane Ailments and Everyday Life</p> <p>Virginia Olesen, Leonard Schatzman, Nellie Droew, Diane Hatton, and Nan Chico, “The Mundane Ailment and the Physical Self: Analysis of the Social Psychology of Health and Illness,” <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 30, no. 4 (1990): 449-455. [WebCT]</p> <p>10/5 Chronic Disease and Illness Identity</p> <p>[1] Kristin Barker, “Self-Help Literature and the Making of an Illness Identity: The Case of Fibromyalgia Syndrome,” pp. 133-149 [SHI]</p> <p>[2] Arthur Frank, “The Remission Society,” pp. 163-166 [SHI]</p> <p>10/7 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Oct 7— Current Events Facilitation [#3]</p>
<p>Week 8 Oct 10, 12, 14</p>	<p>Illness Narratives—Part III</p> <p>10/10 Gender, Sexuality, and the Political Economy of Illness Experience</p> <p>Audre Lorde, <i>The Cancer Journals</i> [purchase from bkstore]</p> <p>10/12 Impact of Social Movements on Illness Experience</p> <p>Maren Klawiter, “Breast Cancer in Two Regimes: The Impact of Social Movements on Illness Experience” [WebCT]</p> <p>10/14 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Oct 14— Current Events Facilitation [#4]</p>

<p>Week 9 Oct 19, 21</p>	<p>Illness Narratives—Part IV</p> <p>10/17 No Class (Fall Break)</p> <p>10/19 AIDS as Metaphor</p> <p>Susan Sontag, <i>Illness as Metaphor & AIDS and Its Metaphors</i>, pp. 93-183 [purchase from bookstore]</p> <p>10/21 The Sick Role, AIDS, and Stigma</p> <p>Michael D. Quam, “The Sick Role, Stigma, and Pollution: The Case of AIDS,” in <i>Culture and AIDS</i>, edited by Douglas Feldman. New York: Praeger, 1990, pp. 29-44. [WebCT]</p>	<p>No Class on Mon 10/17</p>
<p>PART III</p>	<p>MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES, MEDICAL PRACTICES</p>	<p>PART III</p>
<p>Week 10 Oct 24, 26, 28</p>	<p>The Production of Medical Knowledge</p> <p>10/ 24 and 10/26: View film “Deadly Deceptions”</p> <p>10/28 History and Ethics of Informed Consent</p> <p>Paper #2 Due Friday Oct 28</p>	<p>Paper #2 Due Friday Oct 28</p>
<p>Week 11 Oct 31, Nov 2, 4</p>	<p>The Pharmaceutical Industry: Clinical Trials, Medical Education, and DTC Advertising</p> <p>10/31 Medical Knowledge, Medical Education, and the Pharmaceutical Industry</p> <p>[1] David Cohen et al., “Medications and the Pharmaceutical Industry,” pp. 275-287 [SHI]</p> <p>[2] Carl Elliott, “Pharma Goes to the Laundry: Public Relations and the Business of Medical Education,” <i>Hastings Center Report</i> 34, no. 5 (2004): 18-23.</p> <p>11/2 DTC Advertising of Prescription Drugs</p> <p>Special Section on “Minority Direct-to-Consumer Advertising” in <i>DTC Perspectives</i>, 4 (March 2005), pp. 46-58 [WebCT]</p> <p>11/4 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Nov 4— Current Events Facilitation [#5]</p>

<p>Week 12 Nov 7, 9, 11</p>	<p>Reproductive Medicine—Part I</p> <p>11/7 Clinical Trials and the Configuration of Users. Nelly Oudshoorn, “Clinical Trials as a Cultural Niche in Which to Configure the Gender Identities of Users: The Case of Male Contraceptive Development,” pp. 209-228 [WebCT]</p> <p>11/9 Configuring of Users, Reconfiguring Bodies Laura Mamo and Jennifer Fishman, “Potency in all the right places: Viagra as a technology of the gendered body,” <i>Body & Society</i> 7 (2001): 13-35. [WebCT]</p> <p>11/11 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Nov 11— Current Events Facilitation [#6]</p>
<p>Week 13 Nov 14, 16, 18</p>	<p>Reproductive Medicine—Part II</p> <p>11/14 History of Midwifery and Medical Obstetrics Richard Wertz and Dorothy Wertz, “Notes on the Decline of Midwives and the Rise of Medical Obstetricians,” p. 176-188 [SHI]</p> <p>11/16 New Reproductive Technologies Rayna Rapp, “Refusing Prenatal Diagnosis: The Meanings of Bioscience in a Multicultural World,” <i>Science, Technology & Human Values</i> 23, no. 1 (1998): 45-70. [WebCT]</p> <p>11/18 Current Events</p>	<p>Friday Nov 18— Current Events Facilitation [#7]</p>
<p>Week 14 Nov 21, 23 * no class Nov 25</p>	<p>Medicine in Practice</p> <p>11/21 The Language of Case Presentation Renee R. Anspach, “The Language of Case Presentation,” pp. 347-365 [SHI]</p> <p>11/23 Death and Dying Robin Marantz Henig, “The Struggle to Create The Good Death,” <i>New York Times Magazine</i>, August 7 2005 [WebCT]</p> <p>Paper #3 Due Wednesday Nov 23</p> <p>11/25 No Class--Thanksgiving</p>	<p>Paper #3 Due Wed. Nov. 23</p> <p>No Class Friday Nov. 25</p>

PART IV	THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF MEDICAL CARE	
Week 15 Nov 28, 30, Dec 2	<p>The U.S. Health Care System</p> <p>11/28 The U.S. Health Care System John Fry, et al., “The U.S. Health Care System,” pp. 234-242 [SHI]</p> <p>11/30 The U.S. Health Care System in Comparative Perspective Donald Light, “Comparative Models of ‘Health Care’ Systems,” pp. 500-514 [SHI]</p> <p>12/2 Current Events</p>	Friday Dec 2 — Current Events Facilitation [#8]
Week 16 Dec 5, 7, 9	<p>Contemporary Debates</p> <p>12/5 Alternative and Complementary Health Care Matthew Schneirov and Jonathan David Geczik, “Alternative Health and the Challenges of Institutionalization,” pp. 366-377 [SHI]</p> <p>12/7 The Biomedical Model and the Discourse of Genes Peter Conrad, “The Mirage of Genes,” pp. 401-410 [SHI]</p> <p>12/9 Paper #4 is Due on Friday December 9</p>	Paper # 4 Due Friday Dec 9
	Final Exam will cover Weeks 6-16	

A List of Things You Should Not Do.

- Do not notify me in advance OR ex-post facto about your absences (except athletes).
- Do not request a make-up exam or quiz.
- Do not request an extension, a pre-read, or a rewrite on a paper.
- Do not request extra credit.
- Do not make a habit of coming to class late or leaving early unless you okay this with me ahead of time.
- Do not send me emails asking questions that are answered on the syllabus.
- Do not send me emails asking what you missed or what we did in class on a particular day.
- Do not email your paper to me.

- Do not enter the class room before turning off all cell phones and electronic devices.
- Do not ask me in advance whether or not you are going to receive a borderline bump. I won't know until I sit down to work out the final grades. If you ask, the answer is No.
- Do not beg. Do not make excuses. I grade on performance not effort.

A List of Things You Should Do.

- Email questions about specific readings that you would like me to address in class. If possible, email these to me the day before we meet (or earlier).
- Check WebCT every other day for updates, revisions, readings, and other important information.
- Exchange email addresses and phone numbers with other students in the class and contact them if you would like to borrow their notes or find out what happened in class on a day that you missed.
- Study with other students in the class.
- Read each other's papers and provide constructive feedback.
- Visit me during office hours (or make an appt) to introduce yourself, talk about the class, ask questions, get more specific feedback on your papers, etc.
- Tell me if you're having difficulty understanding me, my lectures, or the assigned materials.
- Talk to the Office of the Dean of Students if you are experiencing difficulty keeping up with your work load due to personal, physical, emotional, psychological, etc. issues. They will contact me if you ask them to; they will put you in touch with the appropriate resources; they will help you decide how to proceed.

Additional Details Regarding the 4-Part Research Paper

Each student will have to pick a health or disease-related issue to research for the semester. It is very important that you plan ahead from the get-go. *Make sure* to choose a health condition for which you can find an autobiographical patient narrative/illness narrative, medical articles, and popular media accounts or publications from a health voluntary, social movement, or patients' organization. You will most likely need to purchase the illness narrative from amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com or half.com *so plan ahead!*

- A suggestion. Go to <http://barnesandnoble.com> and click on 'browse all books by subject.' Then go to 'biography,' then 'medical figures and patient narratives.' Now browse through these listings. Many of these books are patient narratives and will work for our purposes.
- Some of these books are *not* patient narratives in the classic sense of the term i.e., they are not written by the individual whose suffering is being described. In certain cases, I may allow you to use an illness narrative that is not written by the patient. You could, for example, use *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down : A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, by Anne Fadiman. You could not, however, use *Tuesdays with Morrie : An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson* by Mitch Albom. The first book is an excellent exploration of a Hmong family and their child's experience of epilepsy whereas the second book is full of kitschy clichés about dying. These are judgment calls. If you want to use a book that's not a classic patient narrative, send me the url and I'll take a look and let you know if I think it will work.

After clearing the health condition with me, you will be required to research and write about the condition from four different perspectives: [1] medical or public health; [2] patient/sufferer; [3] pop media, patient organization, or social movement organization; [4] your own vision of how society should respond to this health problem. Details follow.

All papers are due on the indicated date at the beginning of class. Papers for this class are built progressively through the semester. All papers should be double-space typed on white paper with 1 inch margins in 12 point Times New Roman font. Include a cover page with a title and all necessary identifying information. Use endnotes, not footnotes. Each of the four papers should be 4 pages in length. Do not include title page, endnotes, or bibliography in your page count.

Topic/Paper Idea, including title of illness narrative. Due Wed. August 31.

Paper 1 (4 pages): Medical Journals Paper. Due Friday Sept 16. Go to the Library and find at least three articles on your disease, disability, or health condition from mainstream medical journals (e.g. *Journal of the American Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet*). Using these articles, discuss how medical researchers and practitioners portray the disease. Give specific examples. Quote from

these texts. Explain their approach. *Attach copies of the articles that you cite as an appendix to your paper.*

Paper 2 (4 Pages): Experience of Illness Paper. Due Friday Oct 28. Find a descriptive narrative of your disease, disability, or health condition—a book-length autobiographical illness narrative. Preferably, this narrative will be a first person account, but other forms may be acceptable if approved in advance by me. Analyze this narrative by drawing upon ideas from the course. Compare your illness narrative to the ways in which this disease/issue was portrayed in the medical journal articles from paper #1.

Paper 3 (4 Pages): Popular Culture/Patients' Organization/Social Movement's Paper. Due Wednesday Nov 23. Obtain some type of mass media, pharmaceutical, or social movement publication(s) of your chosen health issue. As you did for the last paper, discuss how this response to/depiction of the health condition compares to the depictions in your previous two papers. Include copies of your resources/publications at the end of your paper.

Paper 4 (4 Pages): Alternative Vision. Due Friday Dec. 9. Using what you have learned through the investigation of your disease, imagine a world where you could define how doctors, nurses, insurance companies, and society more generally would respond to your disease. What would this world look like and how would people treat and address the disease? Remember that you cannot get rid of the disease you can only respond to it. How would doctors treat these people? What steps would society take to care for them? What changes do you see needed?

Health related Resources

Mainstream Medical Journals:

Lancet
Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)
New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)

Web Sites (there are hundreds of good websites on health):

US Food and Drug Administration www.fda.gov
Institute of Medicine www.iom.edu
Rachel's Environment and Health News www.rachel.org/bulletin
National Institutes of Health www.nig.gov
National Library of Medicine www.nlm.nih.gov
National Women's Health Network www.womenshealthnetwork.org
Center for Genetics and Society www.genetics-and-society.org
Breast Cancer Action www.bcaction.org
American Cancer Society www.cancer.org
American Heart Association www.americanheart.org
American Lung Association www.lungusa.org