

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY**

S/A 4071

**Social/Cultural Aspects of health & Illness
Winter 2010**

**Instructor: Prof. J. Scott Kenney
4049C**

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**Office Hours: Wed 1-2P.M.
(or by appointment)**

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**Class time: MWF 2:00 -2:50 P.M.
C-4036**

There is a growing awareness that social, cultural, economic and political factors play a large part in the good and ill health of individuals. This course focuses on the nature of health, the personal and structural determinants of health, and the nature of health care systems that seek to sustain good health, mitigate and manage disease and illness. The primary goal of this course is to encourage students to think critically about health and illness within its broader social and institutional contexts. We will begin by outlining the history and scope of health sociology and survey some of the major sociological perspectives that permeate and organize this field, including material that challenges the biomedical paradigm of illness as disease. We will then discuss the notion of 'health' itself, exploring selected structural and personal determinants of health that have received attention both historically and in recent years (e.g. environment, occupation, socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, social support, and variations in lived experience of illness). Third, we will move on to review the sociology of medicine itself, including consideration of the social construction of medical knowledge and practice, the medical-moral fix of medicalization, medicare and the state, the medical profession, nurses and midwives, alternative medicine, and the "medical-industrial complex." We conclude with consideration of selected emerging issues and debates.

Text:

Clarke, Juaane Nancarrow (2008) Health, Illness and Medicine in Canada (Fifth Edition)
(Toronto: Oxford University Press)

In addition, I will be placing supplemental readings on reserve at the Library, which you will be required to read for specific classes. See the course schedule below.

Evaluation

Class Participation	Throughout	(20%)
Mid-Term Exam:	February 15	(25%)
Research Paper	March 19	(30%)
Take-home Assignment:	March 19-April 7	(25%)

Class Participation

As this is a seminar course, students will be expected to participate in discussion. To make this easier, I will have you form into teams. At the beginning of each class, each member will hand in one written discussion question based on the assigned readings. These will then be collectively switched between your group and another, and, following my introductory comments on the material, you and your team will have a few minutes to choose, discuss a question among yourselves, and briefly state your position. My experience has been that lively discussion tends to follow. To ensure that all get a chance to speak, and that nobody unduly dominates the class, I will act as moderator of the discussion. At the end of class, these questions will be handed in to me. Your participation mark will depend on the number and quality of your questions, as well as on your actual participation in the class discussion.

Research Paper

A detailed outline of the requirements for this assignment will be distributed in class. I note that I strongly encourage students to pursue relevant topics of interest upon consultation.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

January 8: Orientation/ Introduction

January 11: The Sociology of Health: Overview

Bolaria, B. "Sociology, Medicine, Health & Illness: An Overview" p.3-19.

Coburn, D. & Eakin, J. "The Sociology of Health in Canada: First Impressions" p.83-110.

January 13-18: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives

Clarke: Chapters 1 & 2.

Armstrong, D. "The Rise of Surveillance Medicine" p.393-404.

January 20-25: Historical and Environmental Considerations

Clarke: Chapters 3 & 4

McKinley & McKinley "Medical Measures and the Decline of Mortality" p.10-23.

Sullivan & Cole "Work, Safety, Health and Compensation" p.328-347

p.311-327. Abaidoo, S. "Agricultural Biotechnology, the Environment & Health"

Jan 27 - Feb 1: Social Inequality, Disease and Death

Clarke: Chapters 5 & 6

Link, B. & Phelan, J. "Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease" p. 80-93.

Williams, J. "Emotions, Social Structure and Health: Rethinking the Class Inequalities Debate" p. 296-314.

February 3-8: Social-Psychological factors

Clarke: Chapter 7

Stolzman, J. "Social Dimensions of Mental Illness" p.391-430.

Bolaria & Bolaria "Personal and Structural Determinants of Health and Illness: Lifestyles and Life Chances" p.445-459

February 10-12: The lived experience of illness

Clarke: Chapter 8

Charmaz, K. "Experiencing Chronic Illness" p.277-92.

February 15: *Mid-Term Exam*

February 17-19: Medical knowledge and Medicalization

Clarke: Chapters 9 & 10

p.241-259. Conrad and Schneider: "Medicine as an Institution of Social Control"

February 22-24: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES

Feb 26 - Mar 3: Medical practitioners, Medicare and the State

Clarke: Chapter 11

Torrance, G. "Socio-historical overview: The development of the Canadian Health system" p.3-22

Dickinson & Bolaria "The Canadian health care system: Evolution and current status" p.20-36

March 5-10: The Medical Profession

Clarke: Chapter 12

Beagan, B. "Even if I don't know what I'm doing I can make it look like I know what I'm doing: Becoming a doctor in the 1990's" p.275-292

Good & Good "Learning Medicine" p.81-107

March 12-15: The Medical Care System: Critical Issues

Clarke (2004): Chapter 13

Findlay & Miller "Through Medical Eyes: The Medicalization of Women's Bodies and Women's Lives" p.185-210.

Courtenay, W. "Constructions of Masculinity and their Influence on Men's Well-Being" p.1385-1401

Dickinson, H. "Mental Health Policy in Canada: What's the Problem?" p.372-388

March 17-19: Nurses and Midwives

Clarke: Chapter 13

Wotherspoon, T. "Nursing Education: Professionalism & Control" p.82-101

Varcoe & Rodney "Constrained Agency: The Social Structure of Nurses' Work" p.102-128

Term Paper Due March 19

Take-Home Assignment Distributed March 19

March 22-26: Alternative Medicine

Clarke: Chapter 14

Northcott, H. "Health Care Restructuring & Alternative Approaches to Health" p.460-474

March 29-31: The Medical-Industrial Complex

Clarke: Chapter 15

Lexchin, J. "Profits First: The Pharmaceutical Industry in Canada"
p.389-408

Dineen: "Victim-Making" p.33-59

April 2: GOOD FRIDAY: NO CLASSES

April 5-7: Emerging Issues and Debates

Bourgeault, p.76-98

Smith and Fiddler, p.491-505

Storch, Rodney and Starzomski, 458-490

Take Home Assignment Due April 7

