Anthropology CM168P/CM268P - Perspectives on the Health of Native North Americans
Fall 2005 – Tuesday 2:00 p.m. – 4:50 p.m. – Haines 310

Prof. Linda Garro
Office: Haines 316A
Office Hours: Monday 1:30-2:30 & Wednesday 11:00 – 12:00 p.m. and by appointment
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Class Website: http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/05F/anthrocm168p-1/

This medical anthropology seminar examines some of the different perspectives relevant to an understanding of the health of Native North Americans (those living within the present day boundaries of the United States and Canada). The majority of the readings deal with aspects of the contemporary situation or the relatively recent past. While the topics and findings examined and discussed in the class are necessarily selective, the general thrust of the course is to develop a broad understanding of health and health care in relation to the cultural, social, political and economic aspects of a changing historical context.

The course instructor has fieldwork experience in several Anishinaabe (Ojibway) communities in Canada and her research will be discussed in the class. She has published on the following topics: the interpretation of illness which reflects both biomedical input and Anishinaabe understandings about illness; how people think about and make decisions among different treatment alternatives (including Anishinaabe healers); community control over the provision of health care services; and how people understand and deal with “new” diseases, such as high blood pressure and Type II diabetes.

There are no prerequisites for this course. However, some knowledge of medical anthropology and/or the history and contemporary situation of the first peoples of North America will be an asset to class discussion. This course is intended for upper division and graduate students.

Course Requirements:

There are no formal examinations in this course. There are short weekly writing assignments and a final term paper due during finals week. Class sessions will consist of a group discussion based on the assigned readings. Participants are expected not only to have done the week’s readings, but to have given ample thought to what they have read. To facilitate this process, participants will be expected to submit a brief (no more than 2.5 double-spaced typed pages in length) weekly statement due on the Monday before each class session no later than 2:00 p.m. Please “cut and paste” your statement into an e-mail message to me or drop off a copy of your typed statement in my mailbox in the Anthropology Department office. If you send your statement by e-mail, please include your name and the week number (or date) in the body of your message as I will be cutting
and pasting these back into my wordprocessing program. Please do not send me your statement as an attachment (the threat of computer viruses has made me wary). Having the opportunity to read your statements the day before the class will allow me to better incorporate your reflections and questions in class discussions. **Weekly statements that arrive late will not receive full credit.**

Each weekly statement consists of two parts: 1) a concise summary of the key points in the readings (or evaluative commentary, graduate students are especially encouraged to adopt this approach), and 2) three or four thought-provoking questions for discussion based on the readings. Please keep the summary/commentary section separate from the question section.

Every participant is also expected to bring to class a proactive orientation – active participation in class discussions is essential to the success of this course.

Because the weekly writing assignments and class participation contribute to 80% of your grade, attendance at all classes is expected. If you have to miss a class, it would be appreciated if you would let me know ahead of time with an e-mail message (strongly preferred) or phone call (I do realize that this may not always be possible). Missing a class does not release you from the writing assignment for that week. If you miss more than one class, it will be necessary to meet with me (it is your responsibility to set up this appointment or come by my office hours). Each case will be handled on an individual basis.

The weekly write-ups will not receive individual grades. If submitted on time, I will write comments on your statements and I will inform you if your weekly assignments are not at an acceptable level and/or if your performance in class overall is below a B level.

The remaining 20% of the grade is based on a term paper to be turned in by **Thursday, December 15, 2005.** The topic of the term paper is to be selected by the student and may be on any topic relevant to the course content. The paper may be based on field research, bibliographic work or both. Thoughtful composite book reviews that examine two (or more) books relevant to the course are also acceptable. **Please submit a one paragraph description of your paper topic with your weekly statement for November 15, 2005.** The term paper should be around 15 pages in length and not longer than 25 pages. Your paper should be typed, double spaced, with numbered pages, and have left and right margins no less than 1”. For references, please follow the style used by the *American Anthropologist* (the two articles in your reader that were published in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* use this reference style). Your final paper may not be submitted by e-mail.

I will attempt to respond to your e-mails as promptly as possible. However, you should expect that it may sometimes take me several days to respond if I have other pressing commitments.
REQUIRED TEXTS


Optional Supplementary Text:

OTHER READINGS are posted on the class website. One hard copy will be placed in the Anthropology Reading Room (Haines 352). Please do not remove the articles from the reading room.

I have requested that the books for the class be placed on reserve at College (Powell) Library.

TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE

Week 1 — October 4 – Course Introduction

Week 2 — October 11


Week 3 — October 18


Waldram, James B. 2004 Revenge of the Windigo: The Construction of the Mind and Mental Health of North American Aboriginal Peoples: Ch. 1 “Introduction” (pp. 3-8 only); Ch. 8 “The Culture-Bound Aboriginal” (pp. 190-211).

Week 4 — October 25


Week 5 — November 1


Week 6 — November 8 - TBA by class consensus

**Reading Options (see groupings below):**


Milne, Derek and Wilson Howard 2000 Rethinking the Role of Diagnosis in Navajo Religious Healing. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. 14: 543-570


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Week 7 — November 15


Week 8 — November 22


Week 9 — November 29 (no office hours on Wednesday, November 30)


Week 10 — December 6


Optional (will not be discussed in class):