

Geographies of Health

SCTS 615, W 6:00-8:50PM / 3600 Market, Rm 724

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Office hours: M 4:00-5:00PM & by appointment

Course Description

How does place shape our perspectives, experiences, and decisions about health? How do researchers produce knowledge about disease with location technologies? How are treatments conditioned by space? How does the rise of wellness culture privilege certain contexts and render others invisible? These questions highlight some of the geographic dimensions of health and disease that will be explored in this seminar.

Health is produced in place, shaping how we think about our bodies and others, what we do to get or stay healthy. Place is also intimately tied up with health outcomes, a perspective that is slowly moving into various sites of U.S. healthcare. Healthcare happens in the home, hospital, and clinic, but also on the move. In the event of infectious disease outbreaks, quarantine protects the general population, but almost always in ways based on racial, ethnic, and class discrimination. In western cultures, the operating room gradually became a primary place to treat disease; today, more effort is spent on bringing care to patients in their homes. Location has always been a key metric in epidemiology; the advent of geographic information systems has made place-based analyses possible but also at times problematic. Its use is debated in the field of public health and related environmental health sciences. The rise of digital health technologies has made remote and mobile healthcare possible, creating new communication opportunities between patient and provider. Emerging health technologies are also reconditioning the role of patients, caregivers, and health providers, leading to a host of new ethical questions. As you can see: The place-based dimensions of health, illness, and care provide many opportunities for social analysis.

The course will have six **learning outcomes**. You will:

1. Learn theories of place and space, and how geographic concepts have been used in various social science contexts.
2. Learn how place, space, and location shape health, disease, and illness.
3. Learn about contemporary health issues, and the social, political and technoscientific dynamics that condition these issues.
4. Cultivate analytic acumen that is specific to the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS).
5. Develop an ability to think about and discuss the importance of place in the context of contemporary health issues.
6. Develop analytic writing skills in support of a literature review.

Grading

Reading Responses	20%	(10, 2 points each)
Concept Assignments	50%	(4, 12.5 points each)
Final Evaluation	30%	

Point breakdowns for grades: 98-100 (A+); 93-97 (A); 90-92 (A-); 88-89 (B+); 83-87 (B); 80-82 (B-); 78-79 (C+); 73-77 (C); 70-72 (C-); 68-69 (D+); 63-67 (D); 60-62 (D-) Below 60 (F)

Attendance is required. You are allowed one unexcused absence. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a five-point grade reduction per absence. Please see Drexel's official policy on excused versus unexcused absences. Please be in your seat and ready to start at 6PM.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Assignments

All assignments should be submitted electronically as double-spaced Word documents in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. The heading of each paper should include the following information: Name, Assignment, Title, Date, Word Count. Title your file as follows before emailing it to me: Last name_Paper# (For example, Kenner_2)

Assignments must be turned in **by 12:00PM the day the assignment is due** to receive full credit. I do not accept late assignments unless accompanied by an excused absence. Or rather, I will consider them starting at 50% their worth before 12:00PM the day they were due. *Your grade is very dependent on meeting assignment deadlines throughout the term.* Details on what is expected in each assignment are provided below. You are responsible for maintaining electronic backup copies of your work. I also recommend reading and thinking about digital citizenship (http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/Nine_Elements.html).

Reading Responses (2pts X 10 responses = 20 points / 20%)

Prior to each class, post a reading response in the Black Board Discussion Forum. Your reading response should include a brief reflection on the assigned reading for the week, as well as at least one question that you'd like to discuss in class. You get a point for the staccato reflection, and a second point for your discussion question. Your reflection and question can focus on something substantive from the assigned readings, but you are also welcome to bring in current events and reference past readings or discussions. The weekly reading responses are designed to prepare you for class discussion.

Papers (12.5pts x 4 papers = 50%)

You will submit four papers over the term, each worth 12.5 points towards your final grade. Each paper should be approximately 1000-1500 words long. There are four genres that you can write in: 1) Annotation; 2) Book Review; 3) Literature Review; and 4) Blog Post. You can write in one of the four genres twice; that means you must write in three different genres, but you can write in one genre twice.

Annotations (only one of the four papers can be an annotation)

Annotations work in a mode of summary; they are similar to literature reviews except they focus in on one particular text. An annotation paper must include:

1. The main argument of the text.
2. Three ways the main argument is supported.
3. How the text draws on and contributes to a literature.
4. How the author's argument engages with the course topic and/or your thesis topic.
5. Use at least three quotes from the reading to support your argument.

Book Review

More essay like than an annotation, book reviews are similar to annotations but must present your own argument about the text, in addition to reviewing the book itself. The book review must also take up a book, rather than an article or collection of articles. It should have many of the elements that an annotation does, but with more of your own voice as reviewer. (See example of book reviews:)

Literature Review

A literature review takes a particular concept or theme, and discusses how several authors have contributed to our understanding of the concept or theme. Similar to a book review, you should present your own argument (thesis statement) at the outset of the paper. You should draw on at least three or four texts from class to present your argument.

Blog Post

Blog posts are essays that make an argument using a range of media – images, URLs, videos, other visuals, etc. You have the most freedom in writing, but paper must be a well-written, constructed essay with an argument that

draws on course materials and concepts. It must address course content.

In-text citations are expected and a bibliography must be included with all papers (you can use any bibliographic style you like). You are free to do your papers on any of the assigned course readings; book reviews on books not on the syllabus must be approved by me first.

Final Evaluation (30%)

The final evaluation will be decided on by the class. It could take the form of a final presentation; a research paper or literature review; a project proposal; a take-home exam; or a creative project. The class must decide by the end of the week three class meeting (10/7). Whatever form the final evaluation takes, these must be submitted Friday December 4th by midnight.

Academic Policies

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty of the highest order is expected. It is not acceptable to submit work done for another class in this class, though it is acceptable to build on previous work. Talk to me if you have questions about this. Nor, of course, is it acceptable to submit work done by someone else as your own. Citations must be included for both indirect and direct quotation, providing clear documentation of sources. Special care must be taken to properly cite digital resources. Here is a useful review of plagiarism: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>. *If I am able to confirm plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty on any assignment in this course, you are likely to fail the entire course.* As Drexel students, you are responsible for reading and adhering to Drexel's Code of Conduct: http://www.drexel.edu/studentlife/community_standards/studentHandbook/general_information/code_of_conduct/

Attendance

Attendance is required. Students are allowed one unexcused absence. All other unexcused absences will result in a five-point grade reduction for each unexcused absence. See Drexel's Academic Policy on absences, <http://drexel.edu/provost/policyweb/absence.html>

Grade Appeals

You may appeal a grade through a written statement describing the grounds on which a change of grade should be considered appropriate. Grade appeals must be submitted within one-week of receiving the grade. Before initiating a formal appeal, feel free to talk to me. Please wait a minimum of 24-hours after receiving the grade before contacting me about a grade appeal.

Course Drop Policy

See http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/course_drop.asp

Course Change Policy

As the instructor, I have the right to modify this syllabus at any time. I will solicit feedback from the class before any changes are made, and students will be notified in a timely manner both in class and via Drexel email.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Resources should inform me of their needs as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Resources is located at 3201 Arch Street, Suite 210. For more information, see <http://www.drexel.edu/oed/disabilityResources/>

Quarter Schedule

All reading material will be provided via blackboard.

Week 1 – September 23 rd	Mapping Health
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) W.Gesler (1992) "Therapeutic Landscapes: Medical Issues in Light of the New Cultural Geography." *Social Science and Medicine*, 34(7): 735-746.
 - (2) McLeod, K.S. 2000. "Our Sense of Snow: The Myth of John Snow in Medical Geography." *Social Science & Medicine* 50: 923-935.
 - (3) Selections from: Gatrell, A.C., Elliot, S.J. 2015. *Geographies of Health: An Introduction*. Wiley Blackell: 3-61.
 - (4) King, N. 2004. "The Scale Politics of Emerging Disease." *Osiris* 19: 62-76.

Week 2 – September 30 th	Key Concepts
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) D. Massey's (2005) *For Space*.

Week 3 – October 7 th	Suffering
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) V. Das (2015) *Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty*. Fordham University Press

Concept Paper #1 Due

Week 4 – October 14 th	Toxic Towns
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) M. Balshem (1993) *Cancer in the Community: Class and Medical Authority*. Smithsonian

Week 5 – October 21 st	Exposures
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) Nash, L. 2004. "The Fruits of Ill-Health: Pesticides and Workers' Bodies in Post-World War II California." *Osiris* 19: 203-219.
 - (2) Cutchin, M.P. 2007. "The Need for the "New Health Geography" in Epidemiologic Studies of Environment and Health." *Health & Place*, 13(3): 725-742.
 - (3) Murphy, M. 2008. "Chemical Regimes of Living." *Environmental History*, 13(4): 695-703; 2007. "Exposed on the Inside." *Log*, 109-114.
 - (4) Shapiro, N. 2015. "Attuning to the Chemosphere: Domestic Formaldehyde, Bodily Reasoning, and the Chemical Sublime." *Cultural Anthropology*.

Concept Paper #2 Due

Week 6 – October 28 th	Populations & Place Politics
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- Reading Discussion:
- (1) S. Shostak (2010) "Marking Populations and Persons at Risk: Molecular Epidemiology and Environmental Health," in *Biomedicalization: Technoscience, Health and Illness in the U.S.*
 - (2) Selections from I. Whitmarsh (2008) *Biomedical Ambiguity: Race, Asthma, and the Contested Meaning of Genetic Research in the Caribbean*
 - (3) Selections from K. Rajan (2012) *Lively Capital: Biotechnologies, Ethics, and Governance in Global Markets*
 - (4) Petryna, A. 2004. "Biological Citizenship: The Science and Politics of Chernobyl-Exposed Populations." *Osiris* 19: 250-265.

Week 7 – November 4th

Mobile Health Technologies

- Reading Discussion:
- (1) Johnson, S.A. 2014. "Maternal devices", social media, and the self-management of pregnancy, mothering, and child health. *Societies*, 4 (2), 330-350.
 - (2) Lupton, D. 2013. "Quantifying the Body: Monitoring and Measuring Health in the Age of mHealth Technologies." *Critical Public Health* 23(4): 393-403.
 - (3) Snow, M. 2012. "Health 2050: The Realization of Personalized Medicine through Crowdsourcing, the Quantified Self, and the Participatory Biocitizen." *Journal of Personalized Medicine*, 2: 93-118.
 - (4) Snow, M. 2009. "Emerging Patient-Driven Health Care Models: An Examination of Health Social Networks, Consumer Personalized Medicine and Quantified Self-Tracking." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 6: 492-525.
 - (5) Copelton, D.A. 2009. "Output that Counts: Pedometers, Sociability, and the Contested Terrain of Older Adult Fitness Walking." *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 32(2): 304-318.

Concept Paper #3 Due

Week 8 – November 11th

Technology and Carescapes

- Reading Discussion:
- (1) Bowlby, S. 2012. "Recognizing the time-space dimensions of care: Caringscapes and Carescapes." *Environment and Planning A*, 44(9): 2101-2118.
 - (2) N. Oudshoorn. 2012. "How Place Matters: Telecare Technologies and the Changing Spatial Dimensions of Healthcare." *Social Studies of Science*, 42(1): 121-142.
 - (3) Selection from S. Kaufman's *Ordinary Medicine*, 2014.
 - (4) Brittain, K. et al. 2010. "Aging in Place and Technologies of Place." In *Technogenarians*, 97-111.

Week 9 – November 18th

No Class: Conference Week

Reading Discussion: Choose 3-4 articles or a book that you would like to read for the final. Send Ali your selection by 11/11. Be prepared to talk about your selections in class on the 11th.

Concept Paper #4 Due (by November 25th at Noon)

Week 10 – November 25th

No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Week 11 – December 2nd

Reading Discussion: (1) Sweet, V. 2013. *God's Hotel: A Doctor, a Hospital, and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Week 12 – December 9th (**Week 9 Make-Up**)

Knowledge Share

Class Review / Presentations

Final Assignment Due Monday December 7th by Midnight

Class Discussion Questions

Each week you should come to class, having read the assigned material, with a sense of what discussion questions will be most relevant to each text. Persistent reflection on these questions will keep you prepared for quizzes and class discussion as well as help you plan your final assignment.

- * What is an exemplary STS text, and why?
- * What are the different **disciplinary approaches** that inform STS? How is this realized methodologically, and what do different approaches offer and what are their limitations?
- * What are the text's **prescriptive intentions** and how are they realized?
- * How does the author deal with **complexity**?
- * What **conceptual frameworks** does the author draw on and contribute to? What are the basic tenets of the framework, how is the framework used, what does it highlight and what does it omit?
- * STS is known for dealing with **technoscientific knowledge formation and legitimation** -- think of discussion on "expertise," "epistemic communities," and "boundary objects." How does the text contribute to or resist this tradition?
- * What kind of **feminist analysis** is being made in the text?
- * How does the text describe **the practice and space of technoscience**? (Think about the differences between lab studies, clinics, and scholarship on environmental justice.)
- * What concepts are used to describe the contemporary **political economic order**? (Globalization, informationalism, neoliberalism, post-industrialism, for example)
- * How does the text explain the content and operation of **dominant ideological frameworks**? How do dominant ideologies work and how are oppositional frameworks conceived?

- * How does the text conceive of **democracy** and technoscientific political process, if at all? What is the driving force of social movements and how is citizenship enacted?
- * How does the author discuss **the broader impact of technoscience** on individuals, society, and culture writ large? How does technoscience have a broad impact, and how is power exercised through technoscience?
- * How does **change** happen within the technosciences? What drivers of change are highlighted in the text? What impedes or shapes the direction of change? What is the role of individuals and organizations? What is the role of language, culture, economics, and politics?