Over the past two decades or so, scholars have developed a complex literature on practices of health and healing in Africa. This course examines why the topic of health and healing occupies such a central role in our understanding of Africa’s pasts and presents. It explores the creative and shifting ways in which Africans have sought to compose healthy communities through the expansion of therapeutic repertoires. Our readings will vary from straightforward to very challenging and include works drawn mainly from the disciplines of anthropology and history. This is a seminar-style reading course and is cross-listed with African Languages and Literature, Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, and Political Science.

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**Required Readings:**

Several required articles or book chapters are listed on the date by which they should be read, below. All articles have been placed on reserve (electronically and in hard copy) through the Social Science Reference Library. The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore, and have also been placed on reserve at College Library:

- John Janzen, *The Quest for Therapy: Medical Pluralism in Lower Zaire*
- Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*
- Julie Livingston, *Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana*
- Caroline Bledsoe, *Contingent Lives: Fertility, Time, and Aging in West Africa*
- Adam Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*
- Robert Thornton, *Unimagined Community: Sex, Networks, and AIDS in Uganda and South Africa*
- Harry West, *Kupilikula: Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique*
ASSIGNMENTS

a) Book reviews: Students will write two book reviews over the course of the semester. These reviews should be no longer than 1000 words. You may choose the books you would like to review from any of the assigned texts; the first review should be of a book discussed in weeks 1-7, and the second should be of a book discussed during weeks 8-14. Rather than merely summarizing the book, your reviews should engage the text at hand by raising critical questions about the methods, theories, and conclusions put forward by its author. In other words, you should critically assess and analyze the contents of the book and discuss their significance. What contribution do you feel the book makes to the field, how does it do so, and by what methodology? What are the author’s outstanding contributions? What are the shortfalls of the book? You are encouraged to consult the book review sections in *The Journal of African History*, *The American Historical Review*, *Current Anthropology*, and *American Anthropologist* for guidance. Your reviews will be due in class during the week we discuss the book you have chosen to evaluate.

b) Critical analysis paper: students will be expected to write a critical analysis paper drawing on relevant readings (including but not limited to readings from this course). You may choose to respond to any one of the following questions:

- Given the proliferation of literature on health and healing in Africa and the focus in contemporary scholarship on the effects of disease on African populations, how far removed from the 19th-century vision of Africa as the diseased continent is today’s vision?

- Whereas Africanists once analyzed responses to misfortune in terms of religion, many scholars and African people themselves now conceptualize their modes of dealing with misfortune as medicine and situate their analyses within the realm of health and healing. Discuss the implications of this shift in perspective.

- In his pathbreaking essay “Struggles for Control: The Social Roots of Health and Healing in Modern Africa,” Steven Feierman argues that “the history of health care is inseparable from the total history of communal organization and of the economy” (p.73). Assess this statement in light of the proliferation in literature on health and healing since the publication of Feierman’s essay.
• Theorists in recent years have often used bodily experience, as Livingston does, as a useful lens through which to analyze the “moral imagination.” What are the strengths and limitations inherent in such approaches?

Each student should peer review the critical analysis paper with at least one other classmate before turning it in. Papers are to be ten pages in length plus a bibliography, and are due the last week of class.

c) Class participation: Weekly discussions of the assigned readings are a crucial component of the seminar. You should come to class prepared to share your thoughts on the assigned readings and to actively participate in discussion. Each week, two class members will be assigned to facilitate the discussion. The discussion leaders, who should coordinate ahead of time, will make a short (10 minutes maximum) presentation at the beginning of the class. Each class member will facilitate discussion twice during the semester.

EVALUATION

Grades
30% prepared participation, including leadership of class discussion
30% book reviews (15% each)
40% critical analysis paper

Academic Honesty
In keeping with the policy of this university, plagiarism (using other people’s thoughts or words without acknowledging the source) is unacceptable. All sources, including internet sources, MUST be cited in your written work. A first offense will result in a report submitted to the Dean of Students and a failing grade on the paper in question. Knowing how or when to cite can be confusing; if you are having trouble, rather than living in fear of inadvertent plagiarism please come discuss it with either of us during office hours, or seek advice from the writing center. You may also find the following link helpful: www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html.

Late Policy
Papers are due by the end of class on the date due. No late papers will be accepted. Please submit one hard copy in class, and an identical electronic copy by email to both professors.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/2</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
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9/16  Week 3.  Missionaries, Medicine, and Colonialism


9/23  Week 4.  Medical Pluralism


9/30  Week 5.  The Medicalization of Childbirth in Colonial Africa


10/7  Week 6.  Politics of Reproduction


10/14  Week 7.  Debility and Bodily Misfortune

Reading: Julie Livingston, Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana (University of Indiana Press, 2005)
10/21  Week 8.  Contraception Across Cultures


10/28  Week 9.  Violence


11/4  Week 10.  AIDS


11/11  Week 11.  Mchape '95


11/18  Week 12.  Healing and Power Revisited


12/2  Week 14.  **Work on Critical Analysis Papers**

12/9  Week 15.  **Wrap Up**

critical analysis paper due in class