

Global Perspectives on Women's Health
Anthropology 601.04
Spring 2008

Dr. Barbara Piperata

Days/Time: MW 2:30-4:18
Location: Caldwell Laboratory Room 109

Office Hours: Tues: 1-4
Office: Lord Hall 113-A

Course Description

This course will examine health issues important in the lives of women around the world. The course will take a life cycle approach beginning with issues surrounding the birth of girl babies, continuing through the period of growth and development, adulthood, including pregnancy and lactation and ending with senescence. The course will end with a consideration of programs aimed at improving women's lives world-wide. We will take a bio-cultural approach in considering the topics in this course. The bio-cultural perspective considers our evolutionary history, as well as the interplay between our modern biology and culture. The goal of this course is to provide students with a clearer understanding of the biology of the female life cycle and a greater appreciation for the health risks women face on a global scale. In addition, by taking a bio-cultural perspective, students should gain a richer understanding of the complexities of the health issues women face and the importance of considering both biological and cultural perspectives in improving women's health.

Required Texts:

1. Croll E. 2001. *Endangered Daughters: Discrimination and Development in Asia*. London: Routledge.
2. Gruenbaum E. 2000. *The Female Circumcision Controversy: An Anthropological Perspective*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press
3. Yunus M. 2007. *Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty*. New York: PublicAffairs.
4. Articles available in pdf format on Carmen. Note: at the end of the syllabus you will find a numbered list of these articles. Under Theme/Readings these articles will be referred to by these same numbers.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THEIR NEEDS KNOWN TO THE INSTRUCTOR AS SOON AS THE QUARTER BEGINS, AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SEEKING AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE FROM THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES 292-3307, PRIOR TO OR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE QUARTER. I RELY ON THE OFFICE FOR DISABILITY SERVICES FOR ASSISTANCE IN VERIFYING THE NEED FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND DEVELOPING ACCOMMODATION STRATEGIES.

Evaluation:

Op-Ed/Critical Essay (2) - 15% each (30%). These critical essays will follow the format of a NY Times Op-Ed piece. You will choose a topic and write a critique or reaction to that topic. You should take a position, clearly argue your points, drawing on class readings for examples where appropriate. Papers will be graded on both grammar/spelling, organization and content. These Op-Ed pieces should be no longer than 2, double-spaced type-written pages (500 words, maximum). **DUE DATES are April 23 and May 21.** The Op-Ed piece should reflect issues/topics discussed in class prior to the due date. Late papers will be docked a full letter grade for each day late.

Quizzes – (25%) Over the course of the quarter there will be brief quizzes at the beginning of class over the assigned reading material for that day or from the previous class discussion. There will NOT be any make-up quizzes.

Discussion – (20%) During most class periods, one group will be responsible for generating a discussion on the assigned topic and readings. The discussion leaders must guide the discussion and provide suggestions for improving the situation. How you choose to generate a discussion and define your pro-active prescription is up to the group members. For example, you could provide a description of a project that is addressing the needs of women with respect to the issue under discussion. Such information can be obtained from websites or other similar sources. Your discussion grade will be generated by (a) the other members of your group (10%); and (b) the other groups' opinions of your performance (10%). Each individual group member will give the other members in their group a grade for participation. Each time a group leads the discussion the other students in the class will turn in a sheet indicating the group's strengths and weaknesses in presentation, along with a recommended grade (marked on a 5 point scale). If you miss class on the day of your group's presentation you will receive a 0.

Final Exam – (25%) This will be a take-home final which will be handed out during the last class period and **DUE at 1:30 pm on June 4 (in my office 113-A Lord hall)**. The final exam will include a series of short essays. Each response will have a word limit and should be typed, double spaced. It is expected that each response will be clearly written and will use proper grammar and spelling. Due to the word limitation, it is important that your answers be concisely constructed and clear in order to maximize your ability to convey your knowledge of the topic. It is expected that in your response you include specific example from the readings, which should be properly cited (see the journal American Anthropologist for proper citation style).

Weekly Readings

Date	Theme / Readings
WEEK 1	
Mar 24	<i>Theme:</i> Introduction – Millennium Goals and women’s health in global perspective <i>Readings:</i> #1
Mar 26	<i>Theme:</i> Poverty and women’s health, an overview <i>Readings:</i> #2, #3
WEEK 2	
Mar 31	<i>Theme:</i> Being born female, fetal screening and sex-selective abortion <i>Readings:</i> Croll E. 2000. <i>Endangered daughters</i>
Apr 2	<i>Theme:</i> Being born female continued <i>Readings:</i> Croll E. 2000. <i>Endangered daughters</i>
WEEK 3	
Apr 7	<i>Theme:</i> Growing up female I: Nutrition, education, marriage, abuse, work <i>Readings:</i> #4, #5
Apr 9	<i>Theme:</i> Growing up female II <i>Readings:</i> Gruenbaum E. 2001. <i>The Female Circumcision Controversy</i> Film: Fire eyes
WEEK 4	
Apr 14	<i>Theme:</i> Growing up female II <i>Readings:</i> Gruenbaum 2001. <i>The Female Circumcision Controversy</i>
Apr 16	<i>Theme:</i> Growing up female III: Body image in cross-cultural perspective <i>Readings:</i> #6, #7, #8
WEEK 5	
Apr 21	<i>Theme:</i> Pregnancy in global perspective: maternal and fetal risk <i>Readings:</i> #9, #10, #11
Apr 23	<i>Theme:</i> Childbirth practices in cross-cultural perspective <i>Readings:</i> ; #12, #13 DUE: Op-Ed #1
WEEK 6	
Apr 28	<i>Theme:</i> Biocultural perspectives on breastfeeding <i>Readings:</i> #14, #15, #16
Apr 30	<i>Theme: Reproductive rights and infertility</i> <i>Readings:</i> #17, #18
WEEK 7	
May 5	<i>Theme:</i> Women and AIDS <i>Readings:</i> # 19, #20, #21 Film: Sowing the seeds of hunger
May 7	<i>Theme:</i> Sex work and trafficking in women <i>Readings:</i> #22, #23
WEEK 8	
May 12	<i>Theme:</i> Domestic violence and war <i>Readings:</i> #24, #25

May 14	<i>Theme: Women and work</i> <i>Readings: #26, #27</i> <i>Film: China Blue</i>
WEEK 9	
May 19	<i>Guest Speaker</i>
May 21	<i>Theme: Making a difference, innovative ideas and hope for the future</i> <i>Readings: Yunus M. 2003. Banker to the Poor</i> DUE: Op-Ed #2
WEEK 10	
May 26	*****HOLIDAY NO CLASS*****
May 28	<i>Theme: Making a difference, innovative ideas and hope for the future</i> <i>Readings: Yunnus M. 2003. Banker to the Poor</i>

Bibliography (all articles can be found on CARMEN)

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