

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

**ANTHROP 4LL3**  
**CRITICAL GLOBAL HEALTH**  
**FALL 2021**  
**TUESDAYS 11:30AM-2:20 PM ON ZOOM/A2L**

Instructor: Professor Cal Biruk (she/her or they/them)

Email: [birukc@mcmaster.ca](mailto:birukc@mcmaster.ca)

Office hours: Tuesdays, 3:00pm-4:00pm (Zoom, recurring link on A2L)

Note: All times listed in the course outline are in Eastern Standard Time (EST)

**Contents**

Course Description.....	2
Learning Objectives.....	2
Required Materials and Texts.....	2
Class Format.....	3
Course Evaluation (Overview).....	4
Course Evaluation (Details).....	4
Assignment 1 (10%), due scattered.....	4
Assignment 2 (25%), due October 8.....	4
Assignment 3 (30%), due November 23.....	5
Assignment 4 (5%), due scattered.....	5
Assignment 5 (30 %), due December 14.....	6
Weekly Course Schedule and Readings.....	7
Week 1 (September 7).....	7
Week 2 (September 14).....	8
Week 3 (September 21).....	9
Week 4 (September 28).....	10
Week 5 (October 5).....	11
Week 6 (October 12).....	12
Week 7 (October 19).....	13
Week 8 (October 26).....	14
Week 9 (November 2).....	15
Week 10 (November 9).....	16
Week 11 (November 16).....	17
Week 12 (November 23).....	18
Week 13 (November 30).....	19
Week 14 (December 7).....	20
Course Policies.....	21
University Policies.....	23

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Course Description**

Global health constitutes a diversity of actors, institutions, and projects that mobilize immense resources, interventions, and technologies to address complex health issues across the globe. This seminar exposes students to the theories, methodologies, and approaches adopted by anthropologists and others who critically examine how global health reconfigures local practices, politics, and concepts of care, health, and the body. Drawing on case studies from across the globe and using an interdisciplinary lens, the seminar analyzes initiatives, projects, and interventions carried out to improve health in the past and present. We will critically examine topics including: histories of global health, social, cultural, and political aspects of health, health governance, measuring and quantifying health, global health technologies, cultures and ethics of global health research, health and human rights, and global health's development paradigms. Students will come to appreciate the value of anthropologically informed perspectives and methods for understanding the social, cultural, economic, and political complexities of improving health.

*As members of the McMaster community, we are grateful to work, learn, and study on lands that are the traditional territory shared between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinabe Nations, acknowledged in the Dish with One Spoon Wampum belt.*

## **Learning Objectives**

1. Gain knowledge of the growing subfield of anthropology of global health
2. Challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and narratives about the global distribution of health and illness (rooted in binaries such as North/South, science/tradition, rational/irrational, and the racialized figure of the 'suffering stranger') through engagement with assigned texts, classmates, films, and other media
3. Apply critical theoretical and methodological tools learned in class to texts, narratives, and representations of global health
4. Recognize and analyze the complex and interrelated factors that contribute to the unequal distribution of health and illness across the globe
5. Gain fluency with multiple ways of describing, measuring, and improving health and wellbeing beyond quantitative metrics and numbers
6. Challenge normative ideas of development and global health as heroic and benevolent projects through which the North 'helps' the South
7. Develop awareness of how cultural and political processes and histories inflect global health's projects, assumptions, and economies
8. Gain confidence in contributing ideas and critical insights to an intellectual community and being an active participant in collaborative learning

## **Readings**

All readings are available as PDFs on A2L ("Content" → "Readings and other course material" → by week). Readings should be completed by the day/session for which they are listed.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

### **Class Format + Technology/Platforms**

I recognize that these enduring Covid-times are difficult and unconventional times: We are all doing our best and juggling many commitments, including caring for ourselves and others, holding jobs, navigating the stress and isolation of living through a pandemic, and academic work. **I have considered all of this in putting together a plan for our time together that is fulfilling, fun, reasonable, and enriching, rather than stressful.** It is important in these times that students in this course show the same generosity, care, flexibility, and respect toward the instructor (and all other professors and TAs!) that they expect in return.

This class primarily takes the form of a synchronous Zoom seminar.<sup>\*</sup> We will convene most weeks at our scheduled time (Tuesdays, 11:30am-2:20pm). You can join the seminar meetings via a recurring Zoom link on the class A2L page. Seminars are a valuable opportunity to deeply engage with a small group of people and build community. I hope we can all contribute to creating a vibrant space we look forward to coming to each week. Attending the synchronous sessions is very strongly encouraged, and will, *without a doubt*, improve your performance on all class assessments (see below for more on participation). Synchronous sessions will not be recorded to ensure privacy and security of all class members. Note that a few class sessions are asynchronous, that is, we will not meet for a live session. This is noted on the relevant dates.

Zoom class sessions will be a *maximum* of 2 hours, 30 minutes long. We will take a break every hour for ten minutes. Chat function will be enabled. Class will be a mix of participatory activities, large and smaller group discussions, lectures, and brief student-led facilitations.

My office hour will be held on Zoom via a recurring link set to the designated time (Tues, 3p-4p) on A2L. Click on the link in A2L (“Content”→“Virtual Office Hour”) and you will be in my Zoom office. I utilize the “waiting room” function for office hours. If someone is waiting, meetings are limited to 10 minutes.

<sup>\*</sup>I very much appreciate when students leave their videos on in the Zoom space. It is discouraging to speak to and with black boxes. If at all possible, please have your video on as much as possible in class.

All materials associated with our seminar will be available on **Avenue to Learn** (our course site). In some seminar meetings, I may utilize Powerpoint slides or other media, which will be posted to A2L (“Content”→“Reading and other course material”) after our class meeting. If I record brief lectures or other supplementary material outside of class, I will post them as MacVideo files to the same place. Such content will be organized by the date it corresponds to on the course outline.

Please note that I do not generally respond to emails at the weekend or in the evenings. I prefer to communicate via email (I often miss messages sent to me on A2L).

Communications and announcements will be posted to A2L and sent to the entire class via the A2L “email classlist” function.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## Course evaluation

- \*Participation: 10 % of grade
- \*Film take-home quiz: 25% of grade
- \*Take-home exam: 30 %
- \*Three-minute mini lecture: 5 % of grade
- \*Final project: 30 % of grade

## Due dates

- \*October 8 at 11:59pm, Film quiz due
- \*November 23 at 11:30am, Take-home exam due
- \*November 30 at 11:30am, Accountability assessment due
- \*December 14 at 5pm, Final project due
- \*Various/scattered, three-minute mini lecture (on randomly assigned date) + 3/7 reflection posts

## Assignments

### 1. Participation

Seminars are a unique opportunity to deeply engage with a small group of people about a topic of shared interest. To get the most out of this opportunity, attending the Zoom sessions is very highly recommended (and respectful of me and your classmates). Attending the sessions will greatly enhance your ability to do well on class assessments and will figure into your accountability self-assessment described below. The points that can be earned for participation call for two components:

a. (5 %): You will complete **three** of the seven possible reflection posts associated with prompts on the syllabus. You can choose the ones that most interest you; all three must be submitted by the deadline suggested for that specific post (which is the start of class on Tuesdays when a reflection post is available). To submit a post, click on “Communication” → “Discussions” and post to the discussion board. These posts will be assessed for completion and adherence to the guidelines articulated in the reflection post prompt itself.

b. (5 %): You will submit an accountability self-assessment, due on **November 30 at 11:30am via A2L** (“Assessments” → “Assignments” → “Accountability self-assessment”). This **1-2 page paper** asks you to reflect honestly and with integrity on your own participation and engagement this term in the seminar by citing specific examples, including but not limited to attendance. This paper will also ask you to evaluate your own participation according to a rubric included in the assignment sheet for this paper posted to A2L (“Content” → “Assignment sheets”).

### 2. Take-home film quiz

You will complete a graded film quiz on your own time. The assessment entails watching a short film titled *In the Shadow of Ebola*, reading two brief articles about Ebola, and viewing an Ebola photo essay. The film questionnaire will require you to respond to questions in various formats (true/false, short answer, application exercises, analysis). The film quiz should take you around 2

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

hours **max** (though you have multiple days and unlimited efforts in A2L to complete it). It will assess your basic comprehension of the film and your ability to apply concepts, frames, and ideas learned up to now in class to the film and texts assigned for that date. You are free to consult your notes or readings from class. The film quiz will become available on Tuesday, October 5 at 11:30am and must be submitted by 11:59pm on Friday, October 8 to A2L. The expectation is that you should aim to take the quiz during our regular scheduled class time on October 5 (obviously, you should complete the readings and view the film before then), but I have extended the deadline to accommodate all learners—extensions will not be granted due to the flexible timeline for the quiz. Questions will be designed to be not Googleable, and Googling will likely lead you astray. Further, if it is obvious you have googled when I grade the quiz, you are at risk of receiving no credit for the given question. **You should not consult anyone else in the class or otherwise (family members, friends, etc...) in completing the exam.**

### **3. Take-home exam covering material from Weeks 1-10**

The midterm will be posted by Tuesday, November 16 at 11:30am. You must submit your completed midterm on A2L by Tuesday, November 23 at 11:30am and you may use notes, lectures, slides, and films at your disposal. The exam will be taken on A2L. Questions will be designed to be not Googleable, and Googling will likely lead you astray. Further, if it is obvious you have googled when I grade the exam, you are at risk of receiving no credit for the given question. **You should not consult anyone else in the class or otherwise (family members, friends, etc...) in completing the exam.**

The take-home midterm will cover material from Weeks 1-10 (lectures/class, films, readings). It may include definitions, short answers, visual analysis, true/false queries, multiple choice questions, and application instruments (i.e., applying a theory or concept from class to a case or scenario). You may also be prompted to cite readings to support answers or interpret quotations from course readings. When the time comes, you will find the exam on A2L (“Assessments→”Quizzes”→”Midterm”). The timeline/format of this take-home exam (with one full week permitted to complete it) accommodates all learners; extensions will not be granted.

### **4. Three-minute mini lecture**

You will be randomly assigned a date. Your task that day is to come to class with with a single ‘keyword’ that, for you, captures or encapsulates the main themes, arguments, or concepts your classmates should take away from today’s readings. You should spend your time: 1) explaining why you chose that keyword in particular; 2) give one specific example or case study from the reading that is illustrative of/relates to the keyword; 3) connect the reading(s) to something in real life. Please refer to the assignment guidelines for advice and ideas. On a given day, there will be more than one presenter, but each presenter will have a full three minutes for their keyword (please keep time). This is a *low stakes* way to practice sharing your ideas you’re your colleagues. Note: If you cannot make it to the session you are assigned, it is your responsibility to contact and find a classmate willing to switch dates with you (Please notify me of any such switches by email, cc’ing the person you are switching with on the communication). If, *for any reason*, you miss your assigned session, the alternate way to get the points for 5 percent of your grade is to write a five-page critical response to the reading(s) for that day (using

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

quotes from the readings and APA citation style), which will be graded by me. This paper must be submitted by email to me the day after the missed session (Wednesday) by 5pm and follow formatting guidelines.

### **5. Final project: Global health zine -OR- global health podcast**

The final project for our seminar asks you to creatively apply what you've learned this term. You will produce either a global health zine or a global health podcast that reflects on a topic of your choice related to global health. The zine or podcast will make an argument, challenge dominant narratives, or reframe audiences' perceptions of a global health issue, problem, or case study. The project will require you to cite/work with and engage at least THREE readings assigned in this class (the Onion articles assigned in Week 10 do not count). Please see the assignment sheet for more details on the expectations for this assignment and the rubric for evaluation. The assignment provokes you to translate things you've learned in our seminar for a general, intelligent audience (imagine: fellow students at McMaster) using a format other than a traditional paper. If you are nervous about having to be 'creative', you can think of the podcast as a transcript that is more or less a paper you will read in an animated way. I have tried to frame this assignment in a way that enables multiple kinds of learners the chance to shine. The project is due December 14 at 5pm to A2L. You are encouraged to email or come to office hours to get feedback on your intended topic for the zine or podcast from Cal. We will also discuss it further in seminar session(s).

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

### **Weekly Course Schedule and Readings**

**\*\*Schedule and readings subject to change\*\***

#### **Week 1| Tuesday, September 7**

#### **Introduction of course and instructor**

**\*No live Zoom seminar today**

#### **To read (required):**

\*This entire course outline

\*Read the *Against the Grain* interview titled “Containment vs. care” (with Alexis Shotwell):

<https://alexisshotwell.com/2020/05/07/containment-vs-care/>

Note: The link also includes an audio version of the transcript, so feel free to listen to the interview instead.

*Questions to guide your reading:*

*What does it mean to think of viruses as relationships (as Shotwell suggests)? How can such an orientation help us to rethink what the project of ‘global health’ is or should be?*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Listen to recorded lecture (“Hello!”). This lecture will provide an overview of the expectations, organization, and assignments for this seminar, and present some reflections on Shotwell’s brief essay to get us thinking about (global) health in new and different ways.

#### **Assignments due:**

\*Fill out introductory google survey (10 minutes). The link is available on A2L under “Announcements.”

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 2 | Tuesday, September 14**

### **What is global health? What is *critical* global health?**

#### **To read (required):**

\*Todd Meyers and Nancy Rose Hunt. 2014. “The other global South.” *The Lancet* 384(9958):1921-1922.

\*Nicholas B. King and Alissa Koski. 2020. “Defining global health as public health somewhere else.” *BMJ Global Health* 5:e002172, pp. 1-3.

\*Janes, Craig R. and Kitty K. Corbett. 2009. “Anthropology and global health.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38:167-183.

*Questions to guide your reading:*

*What do you think the title of this course (‘critical global health’) means? What is or should be the relationship between anthropology and global health? What do these disciplines/practices have in common and how do they differ? What does it mean to be ‘critical’ of something? What places in the world immediately come to mind when you think of global health? Why is this so? Can academic knowledge (particularly as produced in the social sciences and humanities) be ‘useful’—how so?*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

\*Come to class ready to introduce yourself to our seminar (name, pronouns, major, 1-2 hobbies, something that interests you about global health)

#### **Assignment due:**

\*None

Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.

### **Week 3 | Tuesday, September 21**

#### **Colonial health: Care and violence**

Schedule for mini-lectures will be posted today to A2L and discussed in class.

#### **To read (required):**

\*Frantz Fanon. 1959 [1994]. "Medicine and colonialism." In *A Dying Colonialism*. Grove. (pp. 121-146).

\*Jean Comaroff. 1993. "The diseased heart of Africa: Medicine, colonialism and the black body." In *Knowledge, Power, and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life*. University of California Press. (pp. 305-325).

#### *Questions to guide your reading:*

*What does Fanon mean when he writes, reflecting on doctor/patient encounters, "The colonial situation standardizes relations, for it dichotomizes the colonial society in a marked way" (p.126) According to Fanon, why are deaths in Algerian hospitals sites of suspicion or rumor? Write down one word that, for you, captures the relationship of medicine to colonialism. How might we apply Fanon's ideas about colonial medicine to our discussions of global health? Identify at least three tropes of "Africa" and "Africans" that, according to Comaroff, motivated and justified projects of colonialism and medicine in South Africa.*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

#### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 9/21 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L ("Communication" → "Discussions") by today at 11:30am.

--

On p. 324, Comaroff writes, "Notwithstanding their contribution to the human condition, biomedical knowledge and technology have played a large part in sustaining the economic and cultural dependency of the non-Western world." Reflect on her argument here, and articulate whether you agree or disagree and why. You should also include one example or piece of evidence to support your reflection (this can be a news story, an image from the internet, etc).

Please respond in **150 words or so**. If you wish, you can upload an image or drawing of your idea(s) with your post.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 4 | Tuesday, September 28**

### **Backwards, at risk, pathological: The ‘culture problem’ in global health**

#### **Mini-lectures begin**

#### **To read (required):**

\*Megan Vaughan. 1991. “Seeing is believing: Colonial health education films and the question of identity.” In *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*. Stanford University Press (pp. 180-199).

\*MK Nations and CM Monte. 1996. “I’m not a dog, no!”: cries of resistance against cholera control campaigns.” *Social Science and Medicine* 43(6):1007-1024.

*Questions to guide your reading: How can anthropologists shed new light on common narratives about backwards, ‘stubborn’ or irrational people in other places? How and why were poor Brazilian residents living in urban slums ‘non-compliant’ with official cholera control initiatives? Vaughan puts forth the concept of the ‘audience-position’ in her analysis of colonial health films. What assumptions did colonial filmmakers make about their African audiences? How did they arbitrate whether their films were successful or not? How does ‘culture’ figure into colonial film projects and propaganda? What can we learn about present-day public health messaging or propaganda from Vaughan’s account of colonial African cinematic audiences?*

#### **To do (required):**

Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

#### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 9/28 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L (“Communication → “Discussions”) by today at 11:30am.

--

You are tasked with designing a Covid-19 awareness campaign (aimed at delivering an important and targeted message about Covid) for 18–21-year-olds living in Ontario. What message do you want to deliver? How will you go about targeting this specific demographic and addressing their unique cultural and other characteristics in the larger Covid-landscape (give examples of slogans or images or pop culture icons and language you would use to grab the attention of this group, for example)? What challenges are there in crafting a culturally relevant and catchy campaign for this or any age group? Please respond in **150 words or so**. If you wish, you can upload an image or drawing of your idea(s) with your post.

Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.

## **Week 5 | Tuesday, October 5**

### **Film quiz**

**\*No live Zoom seminar today**

**\*Note: I will not be holding office hours this week.**

### **To read/watch (required):**

\*Gerard Flynn and Susan Scutti. 2014. “Smuggled bushmeat is Ebola’s back door to America.” *Newsweek*.

\*Frédérique Le Marcis and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2015. “An Ebola photo essay.” *Limn* (Issue 5).

\*Peter Redfield. 2015. “Medical vulnerability, or where there is no kit.” *Limn* (Issue 5).

\*Watch *In the Shadow of Ebola* (film, 23 minutes).+ Available on You Tube [here](#)

+Content note: the film contains graphic scenes of dead and ill bodies. There is also a scene where a person is shot (the film warns you with a ‘viewer discretion label’ if you prefer to skip that section).

### **To do (required):**

The film quiz will be available on A2L by 11:30am today. After reading and viewing today’s texts, respond to the questions. This quiz is due on Friday, October 8 by 11:59pm to A2L. The quiz will include a mix of questions in various formats (true/false, short answer, application exercises, analysis) that will measure your basic comprehension of the film, and ability to interpret today’s texts and the film critically through lenses learned thus far in class. I suggest taking the quiz during our scheduled class time. No extensions will be granted as the extended quiz timeframe accommodates all learners in the course.

### **Assignment due:**

Submit your completed film quiz to A2L by 11:59pm on **Friday, October 8.**

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

**Week 6 | Tuesday, October 12**

**No class, midterm recess**

**To do (required):**

Enjoy the break 😊

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 7 | Tuesday, October 19**

### **Health for all?: The rise and fall of primary health care**

**\*No live Zoom seminar today! I will not be holding office hour this week.**

\*The declaration of Alma-Ata (c. 1978)

\*Matthew Basilio, Jonathan Wiegel, Anjali Motgi, Jacob Bor, and Salmaan Keshavjee. 2013. "Health for all? Competing theories and geopolitics." In *Reimagining Global Health*. University of California Press (pp. 74-109).

*Questions to guide your reading: Come away from the readings with a sense of what primary health care is and looks like (and how it is different from selective primary health care). Where have you heard the word neoliberalism before? In your own words, describe how neoliberalism affected calls for 'health for all': What kinds of definitions of health and wellbeing did neoliberal interventions normalize? Alma-Ata is often framed as a utopian vision; in looking at the Declaration, what potential real-world challenges do you see to its ambitions?*

### **To do (required):**

\*Listen to lecture posted to A2L ("Health for all? Ambitions and ambivalences")

### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 10/19 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L ("Communication" → "Discussions") by today at 11:30am.

--

Take a look at the World Health Statistics 2021 visual summary (WHO) here:  
<https://www.who.int/data/stories/world-health-statistics-2021-a-visual-summary>

Choose one visualization or graph that presents health data for 2021 from this page. First, describe what argument the visualization or graph is making. Then, based on your reading of the Basilio et al chapter and the Alma-Ata declaration, make some hypotheses about how the 'fall of primary health care' has likely contributed to the health phenomena/outcomes being represented. Your reflection need not be correct, but should demonstrate that you are thinking about the present-day outcomes through the lens of the 1978 Alma-Ata declaration

Your post should be **150-words (or so)** and should include or explicitly mention which visual you are focusing on.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 8 | Tuesday, October 26**

### **‘Good numbers’ in global health**

\*Cal Biruk. (unpublished manuscript in progress). “Capturing men: race, value, and the enclosure of key populations in Africa.”

\*Svea Closser. 2019. “The corruption game: Health systems, international agencies, and the state in South Asia.” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 34(2):268-285.

\*Kathryn Moeller. 2019. “The ghost statistic that haunts women’s empowerment.” *The New Yorker*.

*Questions to guide your reading: What, according to Moeller, is a ghost statistic? Think about the role that statistics and numbers play in helping us to understand important dimensions of life: risk, health, etc... Where do numbers come from? Why is global health so obsessed with numbers? List the specific ways in which, according to Cal (me), the push for numbers in the era of the ‘end of AIDS’ affects LGBT-identified people on the ground in Malawi. In what ways, according to Closser, are “corruption and anti-corruption in South Asian vaccination programs...shaped by the structure of the global aid system”? How do Biruk and Closser’s articles challenge dominant imaginings of data?*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

#### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 10/26 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L (“Communication → “Discussions”) by today at 11:30am.

--

After reading the readings for today, visit The Global Fund’s website:

<https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/>. Choose any one number or statistic from the site (you can poke around a bit) and do a kind of ‘autopsy’ on the number. Speculate on (informed by today’s readings): Where did this number come from? What kinds of data points were needed to make this number ‘real’? What kinds of labor went into making this number? What things does the number obscure or invisibilize? **(150 words or so)**

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 9 | Tuesday, November 2**

### **The politics of humanitarianism and biopolitical care**

#### **To read (required):**

\*Adia Benton. 2016. "Risky business: Race, nonequivalence and the humanitarian politics of life." *Visual Anthropology* 29(2):187-203.

\*Lisa Stevenson. 2012. "The psychic life of biopolitics: Survival, cooperation, and Inuit community." *American Ethnologist* 39(3):592-613.+

+Content note: Stevenson's article contains discussions of suicide among Inuit youth.

*Questions to guide your reading: In what ways does race intersect humanitarianism and humanitarian projects? How does race direct emotions and uphold moral investments? What does Benton mean when she suggests that race is a "foundational aspect of how humanitarianism functions?" (p. 198) Think about Benton's method—applying ethnographic analysis to images—and how it affords us new takes on visual representations of suffering and the politics of rescue. Stevenson outlines how the Canadian state cares "indifferently" (p. 593) about the Inuit—what does she mean? Give an example of this kind of care from the article. Stevenson mentions 'biopolitics' frequently in the article. Maybe you've heard the phrase, maybe not: try to read for her main points and work out what the term might mean from your own perspective.*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

\*We will discuss the final project in detail in class today. I recommend re-reading the assignment sheet for the final project before class.

#### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 11/2 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L ("Communication → "Discussions") by today at 11:30am.

--

Find an image, news story, or other artifact (in online news media or in a book or magazine lying around your house, anywhere) that reflects, in your opinion, different valuations or hierarchies of human life according to race or other dimensions. Include the image or a link to the story in your post. Explain why you chose it, and link your artifact to one of the concepts put forth by either of the authors today. **(150 words or so)**

Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.

## **Week 10 | Tuesday, November 9**

### **Doing good?: Volunteering in global health**

#### **To read (required):**

\*Noelle Sullivan. 2021. “Hosting gazes: Clinical volunteer tourism and hospital hospitality in Tanzania.” In *Volunteer Economies: The Politics and Ethics of Voluntary Labour in Africa*. Boydell and Brewer. (pp. 140-163).

\*Ivan Illich. 1968. “To hell with good intentions.” (Speech delivered to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects).

\*Abraar Karan. 2019. “It’s time to end the colonial mindset in global health.” *NPR, Goats and Soda*: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/12/30/784392315/opinion-its-time-to-end-the-colonial-mindset-in-global-health>

Look at these brief articles from *The Onion* (links on A2L under ‘readings/film(s)’):

\*[6-day visit to rural African village completely changes woman's facebook profile picture](#)

\*[Local villagers just waiting around for American volunteers to leave so they can rebuild school correctly](#)

*Questions to guide your reading: Have you ever volunteered? Why did you do this? Was it in your own community or outside it? What benefits did you gain, and what do you give in your role as a volunteer? What connotations do we tend to assign to the term ‘volunteer?’ How does volunteering hold up certain imaginaries of giving and receiving? What overlaps do you see between Illich and Sullivan’s essays? What argument do the Onion articles make about volunteering? **Why** are they funny (if you think they are)?*

#### **To do (required):**

\*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

#### **Assignment due:**

Global health reflection post for 11/9 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L (“Communication→ “Discussions”) by today at 11:30am.

--

What are the immediate connotations that come to mind when we hear the word ‘volunteer’? How do the authors for today challenge some of those connotations? Think about the last time you volunteered (this can be broadly interpreted). Having read today’s readings, reflect on: What did you ‘give’ in your role as a volunteer? What did you ‘get’? Were the people or organization you were helping similar to or different from you, and how did this affect the ways you interacted with them (and vice versa)? Given Illich’s commentary on good intentions, what should all volunteers think about as they step into such roles? **(150 words or so)**

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

**Week 11 | Tuesday, November 16**

**Take home exam on material covered in weeks 1-10.**

**Note: I will not be holding office hours this week.**

**To do (required):**

The take-home exam will be posted to A2L today at 11:30 am.

It must be submitted to A2L by Tuesday, November 23 at 11:30am.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Week 12 | Tuesday, November 23**

### **Ethics in global health**

#### **To read (required):**

\*Wenzel Geissler and R. Pool. 2006. "Popular concerns about medical research projects in sub-Saharan Africa---a critical voice in debates about medical research ethics." *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 11(7):975-982.

\*Adriana Petryna. 2005. "Ethical variability: Drug development and globalizing clinical trials." *American Ethnologist* 32(2):183-197.

*Questions to guide your reading: What makes research (whether in global health, anthropology, or otherwise) ethical? List the main tenets of 'research ethics' in your own view. What is ethical variability? How can 'rumors' or 'conspiracy theories' help us to rethink normative ideas of ethics? How and why might people be resistant to participating in research?*

#### **To do (required):**

Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am.

#### **Assignment due:**

*Submit your completed exam to A2L by 11:30am today.*

Global health reflection post for 11/23 (Note: you are required to submit any three global health reflection posts). If you wish to submit this one toward those three, post your reflection to A2L ("Communication" → "Discussions") by today at 11:30am.

--

After reading today's articles: You are asked to evaluate the ethical protocols put in place by a large urban university that will be enrolling homeless people living in the city where it is based in a research study focused on mental health and substance abuse. What, in your view, are the three most important things the university should do to ensure its research is accomplished as ethically as possible? Explain your reasoning. (You can think about things like consent, compensation, community buy in, etc). **(150 words or so)**

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

**Week 13 | Tuesday, November 30**  
**Beyond success and failure (Final class meeting of the term)**

**To read (required):**

- \*Susan Erikson. 2019. “Faking global health.” *Critical Public Health* 29(4):508-516.
- \*Desmond T Jumbam. 2020. “How (not) to write about global health.” *BMJ Global Health* 5:1-2.
- \*P. Wenzel Geissler and Ruth J. Prince. 2020. “Layers of epidemy: Present pasts during the first weeks of Covid-19 in western Kenya.” *Centaurus* 62:248-256.

*Questions to guide your reading: Throughout the term, we have aimed to move beyond simply determining whether global health logics, projects, and interventions are ‘good’ or ‘bad’. How does “faking” help us to think beyond a model of critique where we only seek to arbitrate the worthiness or failure of projects? What are the implications of framing the activities of global health—as Erikson does here—as ‘faking?’ Having now spent the term thinking critically about global health, what do we make of Jumbam’s satirical essay? How will you ensure the narratives you tell about global health (or representations you include) in your zine or podcast move beyond those discussed by Jumbam? Finally, how does this term help us think about Covid-19 in new and different ways?*

**To do (required):**

- \*Attend live seminar session on Zoom (link on A2L, 11:30am)

**Assignment due:**

Submit your completed accountability self-assessment paper to A2L by 11:30am today.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

**Week 14 | Tuesday, December 7**

**\*No live Zoom session today**

**\*\*Final project is due Tuesday, December 14 at 5:00pm to A2L\*\***

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

## **Course Policies**

### **Discomfort and learning**

Before you enroll in this course, it is important to understand that the discipline of Anthropology, in its theory and methods, entails a comparative and reflective perspective that relies on one's investment in understanding different ways of being, living in, or seeing the world. Encountering experiences that are radically different from our own, or that resonate (sometimes in painful ways) with our own can be disorienting and raise a host of emotions. Our classroom community encompasses people who have different vocabularies for discussing privilege, oppression, politics, and selves (we should note that these vocabularies are learned, and, thus, cultural). I hope we can use both the alignments and differences between our vocabularies, social positions, and experiences as starting points for learning. If you are reading this, send me an email sharing your favorite food (by Tuesday, September 14 at 11:30am). I ask that you always be respectful of one another, and keep in sight our shared project: denaturalizing and destabilizing the self so as to gain a wider perspective on others, whether in our own classroom or further afield.

Before deciding to take this course, please read the syllabus thoroughly. I trust that each of you can assess whether and how the content of our readings or films might disturb you. ***This is particularly important in a course where our main project is reading and thinking about sickness, health, and bodies; many of our topics may intersect your own or your classmates' experiences or traumas.*** If you think any of the material or assignments might disturb you to the point where your emotional or mental health may be threatened, but you wish to remain in the course, take advantage of mental health and other support services available on campus or elsewhere.

### **Inclusive learning environment**

I am committed to making my classrooms a welcoming space for a wide spectrum of diverse learners and thinkers. Please see the note below regarding academic accommodation of students with disabilities. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to make this course more accessible to you, and I will do my best.

### **Privacy and intellectual property**

***Audio and video recording of class sessions (open sessions, Zoom) is never permitted without my explicit prior consent.*** All materials related to class should ***never be circulated and should only be used for the purposes of taking this course.*** Please note, according to University Policy, that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. ***The Copyright Act and copyright law protect lectures by University instructors.*** Students are advised that circulating or sharing recorded lectures or any other course material with anyone outside this course will incur disciplinary measures.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

Zoom sessions will not be recorded by the instructor. In specific and approved circumstances, students should be aware that their voice/image may be recorded by others during live open Zoom sessions. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

### **Format for Written Assignments**

All written assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins and in-text citations and works cited page should follow APA style format. Do not include more than one space between paragraphs (see here: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)). **Note that you do not need to include the APA cover page or “running head” for coursework.**

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

This term’s course outline has been designed to build in ample time and flexibility for submitting assignments. Late assignments will be subject to one full letter grade deduction for each calendar day the assignment is late. (For example, an A assignment turned in two days late becomes a C paper; for clarity: 1 minute-24 hours late=A drops to B; 24 hours-36 hours late=A drops to C; all *inclusive* of weekend days). Late assignments will not be accepted after five calendar days have passed, inclusive of weekend days. Extensions will only be considered in *extenuating* circumstances, given the ample time and generous flexibility built into deadlines this term.

### **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

You are responsible for any announcements, changes to course outline, or material shared in Zoom seminar meetings, on A2L, or in email communications. While attendance itself is not mandatory, missing class will make mastering the material from readings and films much more difficult and attendance is one variable that will inform your evaluation of your participation in the accountability assessment.

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to *submit their work in hard copy and electronically to Turnitin.com* so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **Please note University policies**

#### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

#### **McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015. You can find information at [mcmaster.ca/msaf/](http://mcmaster.ca/msaf/). If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

#### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be

*Given shifts related to living in pandemic-times, some details and deadlines regarding course content and assessments in the published course outline may be changed. Please check Avenue to Learn (A2L) for the most up-to-date information for this course. The course outline on A2L will supersede previously published outlines until published course outlines are updated.*

arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Privacy Protection**

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

### **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.