

Anthropology of Pregnancy and Birth
(ANG6930/ANT4930)
Wednesday Periods 5-7
Location: RNK0280

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Course Overview

This course uses a biocultural life course approach to examine pregnancy and birth in human populations. The class focuses on several aspects of maternal health including reproductive ecology and determinants of fertility, maternal-fetal nutrition, birth experience and the political ecology of maternal health. Each of these topics has a long history, and could be covered in an individual course, but this class endeavors to provide a systematic overview and foundation for understanding issues associated with global maternal health and the anthropology of reproduction across the life course.

Required Books (Additional articles will be made available electronically.)

- 2011 Trevathan W. *Human Birth: An Evolutionary Perspective*. Transaction Publishers.
- 2007 Block, J. *Pushed: The painful truth about childbirth and modern maternity care*. DeCapo Press.
- 2013 Van Hollen, C. *Birth in the age of AIDS: Women, Reproduction and HIV/AIDS in India*. Stanford University Press

Course Requirements and Grading

Final grades are based on a total of 225 points. Point totals are calculated based on participation in class activities, discussion leadership, and the final research project.

Class Participation (100 pts.): I expect students to attend each class meeting and to take an active part in class discussions and activities. Active participation includes attendance but also requires that you read all assigned readings and prepare thoughtful questions and critical discussion points in advance of class meetings. I will evaluate your participation based on the *quality* of your contributions and not simply on how often you speak in class. The purpose of evaluating your participation is to encourage you to prepare for class and to promote thoughtful analysis and discussion. In this class, participation will be divided into two components:

- 1) Class participation and discussion (40 pts.)
- 2) Leading discussion (60 pts.): starting the second week, students will lead group discussions on the readings each week.

Research Poster (125 pts) Students will be required to present a research project on a topic relating to maternal health. In lieu of the typical research paper, you will present a poster detailing the results of your research during the last week of classes. Development of the research project will occur throughout the semester. Grading rubrics for each part of the poster project will be provided.

- 1) You are required to submit a poster proposal outlining the topic of your research project by **Feb 1**; this proposal should describe the topic, including why the topic is important, and should identify some of the key questions or issues your project will explore (25 pts.).
- 2) A 250-300 word abstract (25 pts.), and annotated bibliography (25 pts.) with at least 15 carefully selected references from scholarly literature due **March 1**.
- 3) You must submit a draft copy of your final poster (electronically) **April 12** (25 pts.)
- 4) The final poster will be presented during regular class time on **either April 15 or April 22** (25 pts.)

Grades

Final grades will be based on the following scale: A (90-100), A- (87-89), B+ (84-86), B (80-83), B-(77-79), C+(74-76), C (70-76), C-(67-69), D+(64-66), D (63-60), D-(57-59), E (<57).

Policy on Late Assignments

Students are required to complete all assignments by the stated due dates. Late assignments will lose one half-letter grade for each day past the deadline. There are no make-up opportunities for any assignment, as you will have ample time to complete each requirement. I will not assign grades of “incomplete” except in the most unusual, extreme circumstances (i.e. alien abduction). You must provide documentation of such circumstances from an appropriate authority. Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the day assigned unless otherwise specified.

Academic Honor Code

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code of the University of Florida. The Academic Honor Code is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the University community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and responsibility on the part of the University community. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Code: www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific modifications. Students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office and then provide documentation to the instructor. For more information about services available to University of Florida students:

Dean of Students Office Disability Resource Center
202 Peabody Hall or 0020 Reid Hall
Phone: (352) 392-1261 Phone: (352) 392-8570

University of Florida Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students that feel like they are struggling in their personal or academic life. These resources include:

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

Course Schedule and Readings

This is a preliminary schedule of topics and readings. The syllabus is a guide for the course and may be subject to change with advance notice.

Date	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 (Jan 7) Course introduction	Syllabus	Familiarize yourself with course site and materials
Week 2 (Jan 14) Biocultural approaches to maternal health, nutrition, and fertility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McElroy, A. (1990) Biocultural Models in Studies of Human Health and Adaptation. <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i>, 4(3): 243-265. Joseph, S. (2004) The biocultural context of high fertility among the Bekaa Bedouin. <i>American Anthropologist</i>, 106(1): 140-144. 	
Week 3 (Jan 21) Human reproductive ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vitzthum, V. (2008) Evolutionary Models of Women's Reproductive Functioning. <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i>, 37:53-73. Ellison, P. (2003) Energetics and Reproductive Effort. <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i>, 15: 342-351. Wasser, S. and N. Place (2001) Reproductive filtering and the social environment. In, <i>Reproductive Ecology and Human Evolution</i>. Ed. P. Ellison. Aldine: New York. Pp137-157. Ellison, P. (2012) Social relationships and reproductive ecology. In, <i>Endocrinology of Social Relationships</i>. Edited by P. Ellison and P. Gray. Harvard University Press: Boston. Pp 54-73. 	
Week 4 (Jan 28) Culture, fertility, and fertility behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bledsoe, C. et al. (1994) Constructing natural fertility: The Use of Western Contraceptive Technologies in Rural Gambia. <i>Population and Development Review</i>, 20(1): 81-113. Dudgeon, M. and M. Inhorn (2004) Men's influences on women's reproductive health: Medical anthropological perspectives. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 59: 1379-1395. Bledsoe, C et al. (1998) Reproductive Mishaps and Western Contraception: An African Challenge to Fertility Theory. <i>Population and Development Review</i>, 24(1): 15-57. Becker, G. & R. Nachtigall (1994) 'Born to be a mother': The cultural construction of risk in infertility treatment in the U.S. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 39(4): 507-518. Ettorre, E. (1999) Experts as 'storytellers' in reproductive genetics: exploring key issues. <i>Sociology of Health and Illness</i>, 21(5): 539-559. 	Research topic due Feb 1
Week 5 (Feb 4) Vulnerability and pregnancy	Read <i>Birth in the Age of AIDS</i> (Van Hollen)	

Week 6 (Feb 11) Maternal nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bentley, G. et al. (1999) Women's strategies to alleviate nutritional stress in a rural African society. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 48: 149-162. Kuzawa, C. (2005) Fetal Origins of Developmental Plasticity: Are Fetal Cues Reliable Predictors of Future Nutritional Environments? <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i>, 17:5-21. Pelto, G. (1987) Cultural Issues in Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 25(6): 553-559. Flaxman, S. & Sherman, P. (2000) Morning sickness: a mechanism for protecting mother and embryo. <i>Quarterly Review of Biology</i>, 75(2): 113-148. Pike, I (2000) The Nutritional Consequences of Pregnancy Sickness: A Critique of a Hypothesis. <i>Human Nature</i>, 11(3): 207-232. 	
Week 7 (Feb 18) Fetal-maternal conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haig, D. (1994) Genetic Conflicts in Human Pregnancy. <i>The Quarterly Review of Biology</i>. 68(4): 495-532. Markens, S. et al. (1997) Feeding the Fetus: On Interrogating the Notion of Maternal-Fetal Conflict. <i>Feminist Studies</i>, 23(2): 351-372. Gluckman, P. and M. Hanson (2004) Maternal constraint of fetal growth and its consequences. <i>Seminars in Fetal & Neonatal Medicine</i>, 9: 419-425. Fasouliotis, S. and J.G. Schenker (2000) Maternal-fetal Conflict. <i>European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology</i>, 89:101-107. 	
Week 8 (Feb 25) Stress and pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schell, L.M. (1997) Culture as a Stressor: A Revised Model of Biocultural Interaction. <i>American Journal of Physical Anthropology</i>, 102:67-77. Huizink et al. (2003) Stress during pregnancy is associated with developmental outcome in infancy. <i>Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry</i>, 44(6): 810-818. Nepomnaschy, P. et al (2006) Cortisol levels and very early pregnancy loss in humans. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 103(10): 3838-3942. Bernazzani, O. and A. Bifulco (2003) Motherhood as a vulnerability factor in major depression: the role of negative pregnancy experiences. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 56: 1249-1260 	Abstract and annotated bibliography due March 1
Week 9 (Mar 4) Spring Break		
Week 10 (Mar 11) Childbearing: Cultural practices and birth technology	Read <i>Pushed</i> (Block)	
Week 11 (Mar 18) Birth outcomes: Preterm delivery, IUGR, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pike, I.L. (2004) Maternal Stress and Fetal Responses: Evolutionary Perspectives on Preterm Delivery. <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i>, 17:55-65. 	

birthweight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moutquin, J. (2003) Classification and heterogeneity of preterm birth. <i>BJOG</i>, 110 (Suppl 20): 30-33. • Mackey, M et al. (2000) Stress, pre-term labor and birth outcomes. <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>, 32(3): 666-674. • Lane, S. (2008) Structural violence, urban retail food markets, and low birth weight. <i>Health & Place</i>, 14:415-423. 	
Week 12 (Mar 25) SfAA Meetings		
Week 13 (Apr 1) Mother –infant bonding	Read <i>Human Birth</i> (Trevathen)	
Week 14 (Apr 8) Breastfeeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hausman, B (2007) Things (Not) to Do with Breasts in Public: Maternal Embodiment and the Biocultural Politics of Infant Feeding. <i>New Literary History</i>, 38(3): 479-504. • Scavenius, M. et al. (2007) In practice, the theory is different: A processual analysis of breastfeeding in northeast Brazil. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 64: 676-688. • Zeitlyn, S. and R. Rowshan (1997) Privileged Knowledge and Mothers “Perceptions”: The Case of breastfeeding and insufficient milk in Bangladesh. <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i>, 11(1): 56-68. 	Poster draft due April 12
Week 15 (Apr 15) Poster session I		
Week 16 (Apr 22) Poster session II		