

Anthropology of Pregnancy, Birth, and Early Childhood Development

Preg Birth & Child Dev (ANG6734/ANT4484)

Spring 2022

Location: Turlington 208H, Thursdays 9:35am-12:35pm

Instructor: Dr. Adrienne Strong

Email: adrienne.strong@ufl.edu

Office: Grinter 441

Phone: 352-392-4490

Course website: Canvas

Spring Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30-3:30 pm or by appointment via

<https://calendly.com/adrienne-strong> (All office hours via Zoom link in Canvas until the end of January)

Office Location: 441 Grinter



Course Overview

Using a medical anthropological lens, we will examine variability in health among birthing people across the world and early childhood development cross-culturally, drawing both on critical medical anthropology and biocultural accounts of these topics. We will focus on several aspects of maternal health including reproductive ecology and fetal growth, birth experience, political ecology of maternal health, reproductive loss, the early postpartum period including breastfeeding, and key anthropological perspectives on early childhood development both in the social and physical realms. 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 the anthropology of maternal health and early childhood development. Through the course material we will answer questions such as: how do children

develop moral personhood in different societies? What effect does racism have on low birth weight? Why do women still die due to pregnancy and childbirth? How do cultural explanatory models for pregnancy loss and stillbirth differ and why?

Prereqs: ANT 4462 OR ANT 3478 and ANT 2410 OR Graduate Standing

Learning Objectives

- Identify the challenges facing women and communities at importance stages of the reproductive cycle from a cultural anthropological and biocultural perspective
- Analyze societal forces that either impede or support childbearing and early childhood development
- Connect the course content to everyday, current societal and policy challenges surrounding issues such as conception, pregnancy, pregnancy loss, birth, breastfeeding, and the early childhood years

Required Books

Cecil, R. (1996). *The Anthropology of Pregnancy Loss: Comparative Studies in Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Neonatal death*. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers.

Davis-Floyd, R. and M. Cheyney. (2019) *Birth in Eight Cultures*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Gottlieb, A. and J. DeLoache, eds. (2016), *A World of Babies: Imagined Childcare Guides for Eight Societies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Han, S., T.K. Betsinger, and A.B. Scott (2017). *Anthropology of the Fetus: Biology, Culture, and Society*. New York: Berghahn. **(ebook available through UF libraries)**

Lancy, D.F. (2015). *The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Theobald, Brianna. (2019). *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Tomori, C., A.E.L. Palmquist, and E.A. Quinn. (2018). *Breastfeeding: New Anthropological Approaches*. London: Routledge. **(ebook available through UF libraries)**

Sufrin, Carolyn. (2017). *Jailcare: Finding the Safety Net for Women Behind Bars*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. **(ebook available through UF libraries)**

Class structure

In general, some weeks will vary but, each class will be divided into three components:

- A brief lecture/orienting remarks that introduce the fundamentals of the topic for that week or any necessary context and/or background information.
- Group work where students will be broken into teams and assigned a specific article to analyze.
- Discussion-each team will present their analysis of the article and discuss it with the class.
- Student led discussion of one of the readings prepared beforehand.

Course Requirements and Grading

Course grades are calculated based on the following:

1. Attendance (5% of final grade)

Students have to be in class to receive credit for group activities and discussion. Attendance will be taken daily and recorded in the Canvas gradebook. You are allowed two “personal days” for the semester, after which each absence that does not meet university criteria for “excused” will result in a two-point deduction from your final grade. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Excused absences require documented proof of absence and non-emergency situations must be approved in advance. Per UF policy, “... acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.” For more information on university attendance policies please visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext>

2. Participation in class discussion (10%)

Students will be assessed based on their contribution to both leading and participating in weekly class discussions, which will include reporting on small group discussion and contributing at least once during each class period to overall discussion. Leading discussion and in-class presentations will be graded based on clarity and organization of content, summary of material, appropriate use of visuals, and public speaking/delivery (clarity, volume, etc.). Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate class participation is expected and a crucial component of a seminar course. See the rubric below. **NOTE:** If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see me as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

	High Quality	Average	Needs Improvement
Informed: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work.			
Thoughtful: Shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised.			
Considerate: Takes the perspective others into account.			

3. Weekly response papers (15%)

These papers serve as a way to reflect on the material read for that week. They are **due before the start of class, at 9am**, and should be approximately 500 words long. The paper should include any comments, questions, or criticisms you have related to the material, as well as any comments you want to be sure to cover in the class discussion. Your weekly response paper **must include** at least **two** discussion questions you would like to talk about in class.

4. In class group work (15%)

Each team will upload their weekly article analysis to Canvas on Friday by the end of class.

5. Leading class discussion (10%)

At the beginning of the semester students will sign up for one presentation times throughout the semester. In pairs or small groups you will lead discussion on a reading or topic for the first half of the class. Presentations will be graded on their coverage of the topic, the thoughtfulness of the discussion questions prepared, and the methods used to present the material. I will provide a rubric at the start of the semester.

5. Research and Advocacy Project (45%)

Students are required to present a final project on a topic relating to pregnancy, birth, and/or early childhood development during the last class session (April 19th). The goal of this project is to use medical anthropological theories, concepts, and insights to produce materials for an imagined advocacy campaign addressing some element of the course topics. With this advocacy campaign your goals are to:

1. Educate your audience about your chosen topic
2. Propose solutions to address the issue you have identified

In order to have a well-rounded campaign, you will need to produce a minimum of **two** different products. The **first** can be in any format you choose (other than a traditional essay/research paper), including, but not limited to, a podcast, infographic, brochure, informational video, etc. and the **second** should be a 2000-word narrative providing additional information and background on the topic supported by a minimum of 8 scholarly (anthropological) sources (three of which may be websites or news media) and how your proposed advocacy campaign would work and how you might know if it was successful. The goal here is to apply anthropological insights and ideas to public health problems in order to think through creative solutions to real world health issues.

Several assignments will be used to assess the progress of the final project throughout the semester:

1. For this first assignment you must decide which topic you will address. Along with this decision, you will submit a proposal outlining the topic of the project and a preliminary idea of the format your campaign material might take. **Due February 10th**, this proposal should describe the topic, including why the topic is important, and should identify some of the key questions or issues you will explore. (10%)
2. 300-word abstract and annotated bibliography with at least 8 carefully selected references from scholarly literature is due **March 17th**. (10%) You should indicate in your bibliography how or why each source is important to thinking about and designing your campaign.
3. Your final materials are due at the start of class on **Thursday, April 14th**. (20%)
4. The final project presentations will be held during regular class time on Thursday, April 19th (5%)

For graduate students:

You will be doing something slightly different. Your job will be to use medical anthropological theories, insights, and research to analyze a current or past health campaign related to pregnancy, birth, or early childhood. Using perspectives and information gained from class over the course of the semester, you will describe the identified campaign and assess its likely effectiveness and suitability given the target population(s) and your research on them and the sociocultural context of the group. This project will also be broken up into smaller assignments throughout the semester.

1. Due February 10th, you will submit a brief, one-paragraph proposal identifying one or two ideas of campaigns for analysis with a short description of why this will be a good choice and a link to any program/campaign websites. (10%)
2. Due March 17th, you will submit a 300-word abstract outlining your main argument/thesis statement and any theoretical perspectives or frameworks that you will be using in your analysis. You will also submit an annotated bibliography at this time with at least 10 sources to be used for your analysis **NOT** including any websites related to the campaign/project itself. (10%)
3. The final paper is due at the start of the last day of class, Thursday, April 14th. (20%)

4. You will present your project to the rest of the class during regular class time on Thursday, April 14th. (5%)

Grades

All assignments, exams and your participation grade will be calculated using a point system. The grading scale is as follows:

93-100% A	80-82% B-	68-69% D+
90-92% A-	78-79% C+	63-67% D
88-89% B+	73-77% C	60-62% D-
83-87% B	70-72% C-	

Policy on Late Assignments and Grade Inquiries

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 (including weekends). If you anticipate an approved absence or potential cause for tardiness due to activities such as interviews, sports trips, etc. please communicate with me as soon as you are aware of these circumstances, so we can work together to make sure you can still complete the assignment in a timely manner. We will work together to ensure you have a reasonable amount of time to make up an assignment if missed due to an approved reason. Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the day assigned unless otherwise specified.

If you have a question about the grade you received on an assignment, I will be happy to discuss these with you *in person*. Please come to my office hours or schedule an appointment. Please note: I will only discuss grades for ONE week after I have passed back the assignment. No changes will be made to existing grades after that window but I encourage you to come discuss your progress with me at any time.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Accommodations

Please assert requests for accommodations often and early. It is never too late to request accommodations – our bodies and circumstances are continuously changing. If you have any kind of disability, whether apparent or non-apparent, learning, emotional, physical, or cognitive, and you need some accommodations or alternatives to lectures, assignments, or exams, please feel free to contact me to discuss reasonable accommodations for your access needs. I am committed to making the course accessible to all students.

You will be asked to make use of formal accessibility services on campus; however, you will not be asked to disclose personal medical information. If there are ways in which the overall structure of the course and general classroom interactions could be adapted to facilitate full participation, please do not hesitate to raise your ideas with me: I welcome comments and suggestions about the format of readings, lectures, and class discussions.

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester

Faculty can expect to receive a student's accommodation letter within the first 3 weeks of classes; however, if a student registers with the DRC later in the semester faculty are still obligated to facilitate accommodations. Neither faculty nor administrators may independently deny a request for accommodation that is approved by the Disability Resource Center.

Basic Needs: Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

University of Florida Campus Resources

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

Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.
- *University Police Department*: Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](https://ufcomputinghelpdesk.com/) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services career.ufl.edu/.
- *Library Support*: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. teachingcenter.ufl.edu/
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio
- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Course Schedule and Readings

The syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice at my discretion.

All assigned readings are due the day of the class for which they are listed and reading responses are due every week by 9am on the day of class

Date	Readings/Assignments
Week 1 Jan. 6th <i>Why study pregnancy and birth?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus and class policies • Discussion: what do pregnancy and birth tell us about larger cultural values and trends? Background on the anthropology of reproduction as a sub-field • Davis-Floyd and Sargent Intro • Han and Tomori Intro
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellison, P. (2003) Energetics and Reproductive Effort. <i>American Journal of Human Biology</i>, 15: 342-351.

Jan. 13th <i>Fertility & Conception</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhorn, M.C. (2003) Global infertility and the globalization of new reproductive technologies: Illustrations from Egypt. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 56:1837-1851. • Chisholm and Coall “Not by bread alone: The role of psychosocial stress in age at first reproduction and health inequalities.” • Payne and Erbenius (2018). Conceptions of transgender parenthood in fertility care and family planning in Sweden: from reproductive rights to concrete practices. <i>Anthropology & Medicine</i> 25(3): 329-343.
Week 3 Jan. 20th <i>Fetal development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Markens, S. et al. (1997) Feeding the Fetus: On Interrogating the Notion of Maternal-Fetal Conflict. <i>Feminist Studies</i>, 23(2): 351-372. • Han, Betsinger, and Scott. Foreword, Intro, and ch. 2, 3 <p>Grad students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Betsinger, and Scott ch. 4, 8, 9
Week 4 Jan. 27th <i>Defining a healthy pregnancy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flaxman, S. & Sherman, P. (2000) Morning sickness: a mechanism for protecting mother and embryo. <i>Quarterly Review of Biology</i>, 75(2): 113-148. • Betti L. & A. Manica. (2018) Human variation in the shape of the birth canal is significant and geographically structured. <i>Proc. R. Soc. B</i> 285:20181807 http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2018.1807 • Sesia, P.M. “Women come here on their own when they need to:” Prenatal care, authoritative knowledge, and maternal health in Oaxaca in Davis-Floyd and Sargent. • van der Sijpt, E. (2013) Hiding or hospitalizing? On dilemmas of pregnancy management in East Cameroon. <i>Anthropology & Medicine</i> 20(3): 288-98. • Valdez, N. talk on her book <i>Weighing the Future: Epigenetics, Pregnancy Trials, and Race</i>
Week 5 Feb. 3rd <i>Maternal health & reproduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pelto, G.H. (1987) Cultural issues in maternal and child health and nutrition. <i>Social Science and Medicine</i> 25(6): 553-559. • Theobald, <i>Reproduction on the Reservation</i>
Week 6 Feb. 10th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufrin book, <i>Jailcare</i> • Lane, S. (2008) Structural violence, urban retail food markets, and low birth weight. <i>Health & Place</i>, 14:415-423.

<i>Birth outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mullings, L. (2021) The necropolitics of reproduction: Racism, resistance, and the Sojourner Syndrome in the age of the Movement for Black Lives in <i>Handbook of Anthropology and Reproduction</i> • Poster/paper proposal due <p>For graduate students, also read the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slaughter-Acey, J.C., Talley, L.M., Stevenson, H.C. et al. (2018) Personal versus group experiences of racism and risk of delivering a small-for-gestational age infant in African-American women: A life course perspective. <i>Journal of Urban Health</i> (2018): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0291-1
Week 7 Feb. 17th <i>Support People</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castañeda and Johnson Searcy, J. (2021). Practising Intimate Labour: Birth doulas respond during COVID-19. <i>Anthropology in Action</i> 28(1): 21-24. • Powis, R. (2021). From Couvade to “Men’s Involvement”: Sociocultural perspectives of expectant fatherhood in <i>Handbook of Anthropology and Reproduction</i> pp. 410-421. • El-Kotni, M. (2021). Midwifery in Cross-Cultural Perspectives in <i>Handbook of Anthropology and Reproduction</i> pp. 454-467. • Guest speaker, Dr. Dick Powis, USF
Week 8 Feb. 24th <i>Childbirth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Birth in 8 Cultures</i> • Watch “The Business of Being Born” (may be in class or prior, TBD) • Davis, Dána-Ain. (2019) Obstetric Racism: The Racial Politics of Pregnancy, Labor, and Birthing. <i>Medical Anthropology</i> 38(7):560-573. https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2018.1549389 • Possible fieldtrip to visit the Florida School of Traditional Midwifery, to be confirmed
Week 9	<i>SPRING BREAK Feb 28-March 4</i>
Week 10 March 10th <i>Maternal mortality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arps, S. (2009) Threats to safe motherhood in Honduran Miskito communities: Local perceptions of factors that contribute to maternal mortality. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> 69: 579-586. • Archaeologists and Death in Childbirth online article • Strong (2021) Maternal Mortality in <i>Handbook of Anthropology and Reproduction</i> pp. 510- 523. • Sgaier and Downey 2021, November 17. “What we see in the shameful trends on U.S. maternal health” <i>New York Times</i>.
Week 11 March 17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cecil</i>: Ch. 1, 6, 8, 9 • Van der Sijpt, E. & C. Notermans. (2010). Perils to pregnancies: On social sorrows and strategies surrounding pregnancy loss in Cameroon. <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 24(3): 381-98

<p><i>Pregnancy loss</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Craven, C. & Peel, E. (2014) Stories of grief and hope: Queer experiences of reproductive loss. In M.F. Gibson (Ed.) <i>Queering Maternity and Motherhood: Narrative and theoretical perspectives on queer conception, birth and parenting</i>. (pp. 97-110) Bradford, Ontario: Demeter Press. Abstract and annotated bibliography due
<p>Week 12 March 24th <i>Surrogacy</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deomampo, D. (2013) Transnational surrogacy in India: Interrogating power and women's agency. <i>Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies</i> 34(3): 167-188. Whittaker, A. and A. Speier. (2010) "Cycling Overseas": Care, commodification, and stratification in cross-border reproductive travel. <i>Medical Anthropology</i> 29(4): 363-383. Films <i>Dr. Strong at the Society for Applied Anthropology Meeting</i>
<p>Week 13 March 31st <i>Breastfeeding</i></p>	<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. 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. Tomori, Palmquist, and Quinn (2018) Forward and chapters 1, 2, 9 <p>Graduate students also read the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tomori, Palmquist, Quinn Chapter 4 and choose one additional chapter not covered to present a brief summary to class
<p>Week 14 April 7th <i>Early Childhood and Socialization in Culture</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lancy Intro, Chapters 1-3, 5, 10 <i>World of Babies</i> discussion and presentations
<p>Week 15 April 14th <i>Final project presentations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final project presentations. Submissions due online by start of class