Ethnic Studies 289
Topics/Researching Racial Inequality in Health

Winter Quarter, 2004-2005

Fridays 10:00-12:50     Instructor:  Charles L. Briggs
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Office hours:      E-mail: elbriggs@weber.ucsd.edu
Wednesdays, 2:00-3:00 (Social Sciences 231)
Thursdays, 1:00-3:00 in CILAS (Gildred Bldg., Inst. of Americas Complex, below RIMAC)

Course description
A practicum for graduate students interested in pursuing research on race, health, and inequality and for any student who wants to gain experience in conducting multidisciplinary research. The orientation is toward developing strategies capable of generating critical, creative, truly multidisciplinary, and highly innovate research on an area that presents thorny intellectual challenges and where the human stakes are high. Students may collect historical, ethnographic, and/or qualitative data through both group and individual projects. Guest lecturers will represent a range of social science disciplines and multidisciplinary fields that contribute to research in this area.

During the Winter 2005 quarter, the class will focus on three types of materials:

- The students’ own research projects on health and social inequality, which may relate to their theses or dissertations.
- Research presented by visitors to the class.
- A research project sponsored by the Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies that explores how “the state” attempts to communicate with “the public” on health issues via the news media. Research activities will include multi-site ethnography, interviews with state officials, health policy-makers and professionals, and journalists (including TV, newspaper, and radio), archival research, and focus groups, the latter seeking to grasp the multiple ways that people actively receive this information. Modes of analyzing the data will include media content analysis (qualitative and quantitative), discourse analysis (several types), and visual cultural studies.

In each case, the class will focus collectively on one perspective, discussing how research questions are formed, how they framed in terms of the existing literature, and the research strategies planned to address these questions. In the analytic part of the course, materials that result from the projects will be presented and analyzed in detail, including transcripts of interviews and focus groups, ethnographic field notes, archival documents, newspaper articles, photographs, recordings of radio and television broadcasts, Web sites, and other materials.

Workshop. On most Fridays, a workshop will meet in the afternoon to focus collaboratively on the media and health project. Participation in the workshop is not a requirement for the course, nor will it affect grading. It will be co-directed by Professor
Daniel Hallin, Department of Communication, a specialist on the press. These afternoon sessions will be devoted to planning research activities, conducting interviews and focus groups, analyzing research materials, and drafting scholarly analyses. Students who participate actively in the workshop will have the possibility of serving as co-authors with faculty members on articles or chapters that result from the research.

Course materials:
The course is organized around articles and book chapters. These materials will be available in the CILAS office in the Gildred Building, Institute of the Americas Complex (across from RIMAC). A set of materials to be analyzed will be passed out in class for the following week. They may be check out for two-hour periods in order to permit photocopying. Books that are used will be placed on reserve in the Social Sciences and Humanities Library. Two of the texts, Latour’s *Science in Action* and Bowker and Star’s *Sorting Things Out* are available through Groundworks Books.

Requirements:
(1) Careful preparation of readings before coming to class.
(2) Participation in class discussions, including occasional presentations on research projects.
(3) An oral presentation on the last meeting that outlines and analyzes the research that the student conducted during the quarter.
(4) A final written product of the research project. For students who plan and inaugurate a research project during the quarter, this document may consist of a detailed research proposal (including a literature review) and a summary of work conducted to date. For students who focus on the media and health project or are further along in their own projects, the final product will be a paper that presents the research question, analyzes the materials, and draws conclusions. To be sure, students who focus on the media and health project may concentrate on only one dimension (such as the content analysis of the press sample, ethnography, interviews, documents, or focus groups).

Reading and meeting schedule:

Week 1  7 January
*Introduction*

Week 2  14 January
*Interviewing*
Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 3   21 January   Guest: Howard Waitzkin, M.D., Medicine, UNM
Political-Economic and Marxist Approaches

Readings:
Recommended Readings:
_____. 2001. *At the Front Lines of Medicine: How the Health Care System Alienates Doctors and Mistreats Patients ... and What We Can Do about It.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Week 4 28 January Guest: Aaron Cicourel, Cognitive Science, UCSD

**Discourse analysis**

Readings:
Week 5 4 February

**Ethnography**

Readings:

Recommended:

Week 6 11 February

**Guest: Steven Epstein & Andrew Lakoff, Sociology, UCSD**

**Science Studies**

Readings:
Week 7  18 February  Guest: Daniel Hallin, Communication, UCSD

Media Studies, Content Analysis, and Health News

Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 8  February 23   Guest: Natalia Molina, Ethnic Studies, UCSD

Historical/Archival Research

Readings

**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 9 4 March**  
**Guest: Roddey Reid, Literature, UCSD**

**Literary and Cultural Studies**

Readings:

Recommended readings:
Emily Martin: *Flexible Bodies; tracking immunity in American culture from the days of polio to the age of AIDS*. Boston: Beacon Press

Week 10  11 March
Symposium with presentations of quarter’s research, including other participants in the media and health project