**Professor Anne Pollock**

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Office hours: W 2-5 or by appointment

Class meets: MWF 11-12, Skiles 311

**LCC 3318: Biomedicine & Culture**

**Prerequisite:** ENGL1102  
**Course Attributes:** Humanities, Ethics

**Course Description**: In the lab and in the newspapers, topics in biomedicine are frequent subjects of debate. From assisted reproductive technology and stem cells, to pharmaceuticals and imaging technologies, to life support and its termination, biomedical technologies are shaping our lives in unprecedented ways. This course uses interdisciplinary sources – drawn principally from science and technology studies, cultural studies, history, and anthropology – to provide students with both information and analytical tools to grapple with the intersections of biomedicine and culture.

**Learning Outcomes:**

* To describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts
* To become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations
* To understand that scientific and technological innovation occurs in a social context, and they will be able to recognize how the social influences scientific and technical discourses
* To increase awareness of the cultural context of the creation of biomedical knowledge and practice
* To increase awareness of the role of biomedicine in culture more broadly
* To explore nuance and ambiguity in often polarized debates
* To communicate in sophisticated ways about these issues of broad concern, orally and in writing

**Requirements for the course:**

* Class attendance and participation: 15%. Engagement with the readings is the focus of this class, and students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss them. All readings are available on T-Square.
* Blog Entries: 15%. *Before* class each day for which readings are assigned, write an entry on your response to the readings on the blog section of T-Square. Your short comments (100-300 words) should be posted by 10am, demonstrate that you have done the reading, and note comments and questions that you would like to raise in class.
* Individual presentation: 5%. Each student signs up for a particular day to bring in a newspaper article, advertisement, or other current cultural source. The student will take 5-10 minutes to concisely present the material to the class and describe how it can be related to the readings for that day. The presentation should (1) present the outside source clearly; (2) describe concept(s) from the day’s course reading(s); and (3) show connections between the course concept(s) and the outside source.
* Three individual writing assignments (1000-1500 words): 3 @ 15% each= 45%. Assignments are due on the date and time specified on the assignment. Late assignments will be penalized by one point if they are an hour late or more, and an additional two points per calendar day thereafter.
* Final group project: 20%. Includes subcomponents: individually-completed annotated bibliography (5%), group poster (5%), group poster presentation (10%). Each group member must also complete an individual self-assessment of their work.

**Attendance & Participation Policy:**

Attendance is required.

First of all, participation assumes presence; that is, you must show up to class on time on a regular basis. You are allowed three free absences to do with as you please.  Beginning with your fourth absence, your overall *final* grade will be lowered by 50 points for each absence. For example, a 920 (A) would become an 870 (B) if you were absent four times.

*If you miss six or more classes, you run the risk of failing the course as a whole.* If you have an illness or family emergency that prevents you from attending class, contact the instructor as soon as possible by email. If you are late for class, it is your responsibility to make sure that you are not recorded as absent. If you miss a class for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed *before* the next class.

In addition to attendance, your participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

Doing the readings and assignments

Actively participating in class discussions and assignments

Actively participating in all small-group activities (workshops, etc.)

Your participation grade will be negatively affected by any forms of behavior that disrupt the classroom experience, including:

* Failure to do the readings
* Failure to be courteous to others when talking in class or posting online
* Disrupting class in nonverbal ways (Reading the paper, checking your cell phone, doing homework, or sleeping in class. If you get caught doing these things you will be counted absent for the day.)

**Students with Disabilities:**

Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities should also contact Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS) to discuss reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 404-894-2564 (voice) or 404-894-1664 (voice/ TDD) or visit Suite 210 in the Smithgall Student Services Building. For more information, please [visit the ADAPTS website](http://adapts.gatech.edu/).

**Academic Honesty and Integrity:**

Students are encouraged to seek help from each other on all assignments, as well as from the Comm Lab and the professor. Late assignments will be penalized 1% per day.

But all work you turn in for this class must be your own work, with all outside reference sources properly cited and acknowledged. According to Section 3 of the [Academic Honor Code](http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18b.php),

Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. The immediate objective of the Honor Code is to prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort student grades or other student academic records. Such acts include but need not be limited to the following:

* + Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay, laboratory report, examination, or other assignment included in an academic course;
  + Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, a student in the commission of academic requirements;
  + Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate credit notations including authorship (plagiarism);
  + False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant;
  + Alteration or insertion of any academic grade or rating so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
  + Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a member of the faculty so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
  + Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any institute document relating to the academic status of the student.

While these acts constitute assured instances of academic misconduct, other acts of academic misconduct may be defined by the professor.

Students must sign the Honor Agreement affirming their commitment to uphold the Honor Code before becoming a part of the Georgia Tech community. The Honor Agreement may reappear on exams and other assignments to remind students of their responsibilities under the Georgia Institute of Technology Academic Honor Code.

**A Further Note about Plagiarism:**

According to Dictionary.com, [plagiarism](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/plagiarism?s=t) is defined as:

1. an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author’s work as one’s own, as by not crediting the original author;
2. a piece of writing or other work reflection such unauthorized use or imitation.

In addition, other instances of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, putting a quotation around an entire article, and citing it, and turning that “quoted” article in as your work; cutting and pasting more than 10% of your paper; improperly citing sources including forgetting to include a source on your works cited page or within the body of your texts; imitating the arguing style of another author without attribution; buying and turning in a paper from a term paper mill; forgetting to use quotation marks for a direct quotation; paraphrasing materials from a source without proper documentation; etc.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty may receive a zero on the assignment or fail the course. In addition, the instance will be reported to the Dean of Students who may take further action. If you have any questions involving these or any other issues regarding plagiarism, the Academic Honor Code, or what constitutes appropriate academic integrity, please talk to me or visit the [Academic Honor Code website](http://www.honor.gatech.edu/).

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| **Week** | **Monday** | **Wednesday** | **Friday** |
| **UNIT 1: FOODS AND DRUGS** | | | |
| **1** | Jan 9  Intro to the course  In-class reading:  Dumit, Joseph. “Drugs for Life,” *Molecular Interventions* Vol 2 Iss. 3 (June 2002): 124-127. | Jan 11  Food/Drug 1:  Patent Medicine  Cohen, Michael M., “Jim Crow’s Drug War: Race, Coca-Cola, and the Southern Origins of Drug Prohibition,” *Southern Cultures* 12.3 (Fall 2006): 55-79. | Jan 13  Food/Drug 2:  Foods as Pharmaceuticals  Pollan, Michael. “Unhappy Meals,” *New York Times Magazine* January 28, 2007.  Weiner, Kate. “Configuring users of cholesterol lowering foods: A review of biomedical discourse,” *Social Science & Medicine,* Volume 71, Issue 9, November 2010, Pages 1541-1547. |
| **2** | Jan 16  MLK Day – No Class | Jan 18  Anthropology of Drugs  Van der Geest et. al., “The Anthropology of Pharmaceuticals,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 25 (1996): 153-178. | Jan 20  Pharmakon  Persson, Asha. “Incorporating Pharmakon: HIV, medicine and body shape change,” *Body and Society* 10 (2004): 45-67. |
| **3** | Jan 23  Blockbuster Drugs  Greene, Jeremy, “Releasing the Flood Waters: Diuril and the Reshaping of Hypertension” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 79 (2005): 749-794. | Jan 25  Marketing Gender and Drugs  Mamo, Laura, and Jennifer Fishman. “Potency in All the Right Places: Viagra as Technology of the Gendered Body,” *Body and Society* 7.4(2001): 13-35. | Jan 27  Il/licit drugs  Chapkis, Wendy, “Cannabis, Consciousness and Healing,” *Contemporary Justice Review*  10.4 (December 2007): pp. 443–460. |

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| **UNIT 2: DIAGNOSTICS** | | | |
| **4** | Jan 30  Unit 1 Assignment Due, Noon  Screening replaces class:  7pm  “In the Family” | Feb 1  Diagnosis and Control  Nelkin, Dorothy, and Laurence Tankredi, “The New Diagnostics” and “Defining Diagnosis,” from *Dangerous Diagnostics: The Social Power of Biological Information*, New York: Basic Books, 1989, pp. 3-36. | Feb 3  Consuming new diagnostics  Nikolas Rose "Introduction," *Politics of Life Itself* (Princeton University Press 2006), pp. 1-7. |
| **5** | Feb 6  Monitoring  Cartwright, Elizabeth. “The Logic of Heartbeats.” In *Cyborg Babies: From Technosex to Technotots,* Edited by Robbie Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, New York: Routledge, 1998. | Feb 8  Diagnosing Relatedness I  Nelson, Alondra. “Bio Science: Genetic Genealogy Testing and the Pursuit of African Ancestry,” *Social Studies of Science* 38.5 (October 2008): 759–783. | Feb 10  Diagnosing Relatedness II  Thompson, Charis. “Strategic Naturalizing: Kinship in an Infertility Clinic,” in Sarah Franklin and Susan McKinnon, eds., *Relative Values: Refiguring Kinship Studies,* Duke University Press 2001, pp. 175-202. |
| **6** | Feb 13  Diagnosing Sex  Fausto-Sterling, Anne. (2000). “Dueling Dualisms,” from *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (pp. 1-29). Boston: Basic Books. | Feb 15  Racialization of Diagnosis  Metzl, Jonathan, “A Racialized Disease” in *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009): 95-108. | Feb 17  Confronting Diagnosis  Dumit, Joseph. “Is it Me or My Brain? Depression and Neuroscientific Facts,”  *Journal of the Medical Humanities* Vol 24, Nos. 1/2 (Summer 2003): 35-47. |

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| **UNIT 3: SURGERY** | | | |
| **7** | Feb 21  Unit 2 Assignment Due, Noon  Screening replaces class:  7pm  “Dirty Pretty Things” | Feb 23  Organ Trades  Waldby, Cathy, and Robert Mitchell, “Real Time Demand: Information, Regeneration, and Organ Markets,” in *Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism* (Duke University Press 2006), pp. 160-180. | Feb 25  Training Surgeons I  Gawande, Atul. “The Learning Curve: Like Everyone Else, Surgeons Need Practice. That’s where you come in,” The New Yorker January 28, 2002. |
| **8** | Feb 27  Training Surgeons II  Prentice, Rachel. “The Anatomy of a Surgical Simulation: The Mutual Articulation of Bodies in and through the Machine,” *Social Studies of Science* 35/6 (December 2005) 837–866. | Feb 29  Knowledge in Surgery  Jones, David S. “Visions of a Cure: Visualization, Clinical Trials, and Controversies in Cardiac Therapeutics, 1968-1998,” *Isis*, Vol. 91, No. 3. (Sep., 2000), pp. 504-541. | Mar 2  The Operating Room  Moreira, Tiago. “Coordination and Embodiment in the Operating Room,” *Body & Society* 10.1(2004): 109-129. |
| **9** | Mar 5  Surgical Shapings  Frank, Arthur W. “Emily’s Scars: Surgical Shapings, Technoluxe, and Bioethics,” *Hastings Center Report* 34 no. 2 (2004): 18-29. | Mar 7  Patient Accounts I  Lorde, Audre. “Breast Cancer: Power Versus Prosthesis,” from *The Cancer Journals* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1980): 55-77. | Mar 9  Patient Accounts II  Gimlin, Debra. “Imagining the Other in Cosmetic Surgery,” *Body & Society*, Vol. 16.4 (2010): 57-76. |

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| **UNIT 4: IM/MORTALITY** | | | |
| **10** | Mar 12  Unit 3 Assignment Due, Noon  Intro to Death  Form groups for final project | Mar 14  Immortal Cells I  Landecker, Hannah. Immortality In Vitro: A History of the HeLa Cell Line,”  in *Biotechnology and Culture: Bodies, Anxieties, Ethics,* edited by Paul Brodwin, Indiana University Press 2000, pp. 53-72. | Mar 16  Immortal Cells II  Franklin, Sarah. “Embryonic Economies: The Double Reproductive Value of Stem Cells,” *BioSocieties*, Vol. 1(2006), 71-90. |
| **11** | SPRING BREAK | | |
| **12** | Mar 26  New Deaths  Pollock, Anne. “The Internal Cardiac Defibrillator.” Ed. Sherry Turkle. *The Inner History of Devices: Technology and Self*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008: 98-111. | Mar 28  Living Dead I  Lock, Margaret. “Living Cadavers and the Calculation of Death,” *Body & Society*  Vol 10 (2004): 135-152. | Mar 30  Living Dead II  Anderson, Patrick. “On Feeding Tubes,” The Drama Review 49.3 (Fall 2005), pp.  5-9. |
| **13** | April 2  Examining Corpses  Timmermans, Stefan, “Making the Case for Heart Disease,” in *Postmortem: How Medical Examiners Explain Suspicious Deaths*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006: 35-73. | April 4  Corpses on Display I  Trompette, Pascale, and Melanie Lemonnier, “Funeral embalming: the transformation of a medical innovation,” *Science Studies* 22.2 (2009): 9-30. | April 6  Corpses on Display II  Van Dijck, Jose. “BodyWorlds: The Art of Plastinated Cadavers,” *Configurations* 9 (2001):99–126. |
| **14** | April 9  Bring sources for final project | April 11  Final Project group work | April 13  Final Project annotated bibliography due |
| **15** | April 16  Final Project group work | April 18  Final Project group work | April 20  Poster Presentations |
| **16** | April 23  Poster Presentations | April 25  Poster presentations | April 27  Last day of class: wrap up  Group Poster Due at Midnight  Individual Self-Assessment Due at Midnight |