Rhetoric, broadly defined by its interest in the persuasive element in human action and interaction, has a lot to offer critical studies of health and medicine. This course concerns itself, in the first instance, with the contributions rhetorical theorists and critics have made to Medicine Studies (an interdisciplinary on the model of Science and Technology Studies: Medicine Studies mobilizes theories and methods from the social sciences and humanities to examine medicine as a human practice and as both a culture in itself and situated in larger cultures).

Rhetoricians of health and medicine have taken up a range of questions: How do disease categories function persuasively in the public realm (Emmons)? How are women persuaded to breastfeed—or not to (Koerber)? What are the discursive practices through which midwifery is made legitimate—or isn’t (Spoel)? Moreover, the course will concern itself with rhetorically-inflected writings outside of Rhetoric itself, as scholars in a number of disciplines have taken up questions of persuasion. From Women’s Studies and Psychology, Eunjung Kim poses questions about discursive habits that pathologize asexuality. From Psychiatry, Jonathan Metzl argues that health itself is a construct with worrying rhetorical force. From Sexuality Studies, Kristina Gupta looks at representations of sex as a health-promotion activity. From Medicine, Abraham Fuks warns about common metaphors in clinical practice.

This course will survey articles and book chapters, inside Rhetoric and outside of it, to outline a program for the study of persuasion in Medicine Studies. At the same time, it will explore rubrics other than Medicine Studies under which scholars in the humanities and social sciences have worked on health and medical topics—including, especially, Medical Humanities, Disability Studies, and Narrative Medicine.

Course Reading

A list of readings follows the course schedule. Readings from journals and books for which the UBC Library has electronic holdings are not provided for you. Readings from journals and books not easily available to you are collected in a course packet. The packet is on sale at Copiesmart in the Village.

Seminar presentations will centre on course readings as shown below. For each presentation, there is an associated monograph or collection that the presenter alone is tasked with reading. It is the job of the presenter to track down the publication in question. Many, but not all, of the books are on reserve at Koerner.

Course Requirements

1. Seminar presentation. 30%. Each presentation takes up a designated reading-list item and a larger associated text (monograph, collection, or journal issue) the presenter alone will have been assigned. The first job of the presenter is to place the course reading in the context of the larger project of the author(s) in question. Presentations should be in the genre of the conference presentation that is scripted for a
listening audience. Plan to submit your script. The presentation should take 20 minutes (c. 8 pages) and will be followed by 10 minutes of q & a. Presenters should have discussion questions on hand.

2. Seminar participation. 20%. One element of participation is this: Please bring, to each class, at least one generative question for each of the assigned readings. We probably won’t get to all questions in any class, but we will count on your preparation and your ability to (re)direct the conversation on any reading.

3. Term paper. 50% (once the abstract requirement is met; 45% otherwise). Papers are due on December 14. Papers should be 18-20 pages, and should be, as far as possible, original contributions to the literature in the field. Please send me, no later than November 12, an email including a 150-word abstract for your paper, along with (by way of specifying an audience for the paper) the name of a journal you think might be interested in your work.

Course Schedule

Note: Classes begin at 2 and end between 4 and 5. On some Thursdays, there will be speakers of interest to the class at 5:00, in connection with the Science and Technology Studies Graduate Program/Science and Society Lecture series at Green College. I’ve indicated dates where I’m sure of them. Attendance at events is encouraged, but not required. The full list of STS speakers will be posted at <http://sts.arts.ubc.ca/colloquium-events/sts-colloquium/>.

Week 1. September 6. Field mapping
Segal (2008)
Couer
Paul
Charon
5:00 – Science and Society at Green College: Margaret Schabas, Alexei Kojevnikov, me

2. September 13. Health and medicine on a rhetorical model: sample approaches/methods
Segal (2005)
Spoel & James
Derkatch
Scott
5:00 – STS colloquium: Andrea Tone

3. September 20. Genres of Medical Practice
Good
Lingard
Anspach
Cali & Estrada
Berkenkotter

4. September 27. What do we mean when we talk about Medical Humanities?
Chambers
Polianski and Fangerau
Mairs
Frank
Paterson
Loftus

5. October 4. Case study for Medicine Studies: Pain
Chambers and Holmes
6. October 11. **MD’s talk about medical culture**
Charon
Fuks
Klitzman – for presentation, with *When Doctors Become Patients*
Elliott
Aronowitz

7. October 18. **Medicalization and Biomedicalization**
Conrad – for presentation, with *The Medicalization of Society*
Adams, Murphy, & Clarke
Lane
Tone – with the special issue of *Journal of Sex Research, July 2012* on Medicalization of Sex
(Watch http://www.ideacityonline.com/talks/andrea-tone-on-the-evolution-of-contraception/)

8. October 25. **“Against Health”**
Gilman
Gupta
Metzl (2010)
Kim – for presentation, with *Metzl and Kirkland, eds., Against Health: How Health Became the New Morality* (2010)

4:00 – Science and Society speaker

9. November 1. Power and empowerment
Kukla
Kopelson

Angelmar, Angelmar, and Kane – for presentation, with Cristser, *Generation Rx: How Prescription Drugs Are Altering American Lives, Minds, and Bodies*
Rubin
Blakely
Huber
Metzl

11. November 15. **Case study for Medicine Studies: Breast cancer**
Ehrenreich
Sinding and Grey
Jain
Segal (2007)
Class will include, with permission, screening of “Pink Ribbons Inc” (Ravida Din, Producer, NFB)

12. November 22. Of what use is rhetoric to the health of persons?
Henwood, Harris, & Spoel
Koerber
Keränen
Emmons – for presentation, with *Black Dogs and Blue Words: Depression and Gender in the Age of Self Care* (2010)
13. November 29. (1) Case study: Enhancement (2) Short presentations on your projects
Haiken
Hall
Asterisked items are available online through the UBC Library. All other items are compiled in a course packet.


Mairs, Nancy. “On Being a Cripple.” In Gail E. Henderson et al., eds., The Social Medicine Reader:


*Gupta, Kristina. “‘Screw Health’: Representations of Sex as a Health-Promoting Activity in Medical and Popular Literature.” *Journal of Medical Humanities* 32 (2011): 127-140.


ENGLISH 509A. RHETORIC OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE. SEPTEMBER 2012.
COURSE PACKET CONTENTS


PRESENTATIONS

September 27. _____________________________________________________

September 27 _____________________________________________________

October 4. _____________________________________________________

October 11. _____________________________________________________

October 18. _____________________________________________________

October 18. _____________________________________________________
Special issue of *Journal of Sex Research* on the Medicalization of Sex (July 2012)

October 25. _____________________________________________________
Jonathan Metzl and Anna Kirkland, eds., *Against Health: How Health Became the New Morality* (2010)

November 1. _____________________________________________________

November 8. _____________________________________________________
Greg Crister, *Generation Rx: How Prescription Drugs Are Altering American Lives, Minds, and Bodies*

November 8. _____________________________________________________

November 22. _____________________________________________________
Kimberly Emmons, *Black Dogs and Blue Words: Depression and Gender in the Age of Self Care* (2010)