

MDSC 307: Medicine and Society

Dr. Lester D. Friedman

Fall 2016

Office Phone: 315-781-3580

Thursdays. 1:30-5:00 / Gearan 111

303 Demarest Hall

Office Hours: Wed. 10-12

“Medicine is magical and magical is art/The Boy in the Bubble/And the baby with the baboon heart/These are the days of miracle and wonder/This is the long distance call/The way the camera follows us in slo-mo/The way we look to us all” --Paul Simon / “The Boy in the Bubble” “Graceland” (1986)

The worlds of media and medicine exist in a unique symbiosis. Not only do medical issues fuel plot lines of popular television programs and films, the programming of cable channels devoted to health care matters, an ever-increasing number of books, newspaper stories, magazine articles, advertisements and internet sites, but these media outlets, in turn, alter the practice and delivery of health care in the United States. The intricate web that conjoins the culture of medicine and the production of media has become a pervasive, two-way process that reflects the public’s obsession with health care and the central role it occupies in our national consciousness. This class will explore the interconnections and intersections between medicine and the media, investigating a significant and, at times, troubling collaborative enterprise that characterizes contemporary American society.

Required Texts:

Conrad, Peter

Jones, Wear, Friedman

The Medicalization of Society

Health Humanities Reader

Recommended Texts (available, on a sign out basis, from the instructor as are other texts as well):

Cartwright, Lisa

Crutchfield, Susan

Friedman, Lester

Gilman, Sander

Harper, Graeme (ed)

Hensen, Bert

Juhasz, Alexandra

McNiff, Shaun

Metzel, Jonathan

Morris, David

Norden, Martin

Mullan, Fitzhugh

Paietta, Ann

Pekar, Harvey

Pointon, Ann

Robinson, David

Signorielli, Nancy

Showater, Elaine

Spence, Jo

Terry, Jennifer

Thomson, R.

Turow, Joseph

Vaucher, Andrea

Wall, Otto

Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine’s Visual Culture

Points of Contact: Disability, Art, and Culture

Cultural Sutures: Medicine and Media

The Picture of Health: Medical Ethics and the Movies

The Body Beautiful / Fat Boy / Picturing Health and Illness

Signs of Life: Medicine and Media

Picturing Medical Progress from Pasteur to Polio

AIDS TV; Identity, Community, and Alternative Video

Art as Medicine: Creating a Therapy of the Imagination

Against Health

Illness and Culture in the Postmodern

A Cinema of Isolation: A History of Physical Disability in the Movies

Narrative Matters: The Power of the Person Essay

Health Professionals on the Screen

Our Cancer Year

Framed: Interrogating Disability in the Media

Reel Psychiatry: Movie Portrayals of Psychiatric Conditions

Role Portrayal on Television: Women, Minorities, Aging, Sexual

Behavior, Health, and Handicaps

Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media

Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression / Putting Myself in the Picture

Deviant Bodies

Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body

Playing Doctor: Television, Storytelling, and Medical Power

Muses from Chaos and Ash: AIDS, Artists, and Art

Media Madness: Public Images of Mental Illness

CLASS SCHEDULE

Sept. 1	Subject: Medicine and Society: The Delicate Balance Subject: What is Health? Screening: <u>The Waiting Room</u> (2012, 81 mins) Handout: Film Terms Workshop Forms/ Common Writing Mistakes / Grading Rubric/ Plagiarism
Sept. 8	Subject: Medical Care in the Real World Reading: Conrad: Preface, Chapters 1-4 Select topics and dates for oral presentations and research paper Complete Film Terms Workshop Forms Screening: <u>Big Bucks, Big Pharma</u> (2006, 46 mins.)
Sept. 15	Subject: Disease and Illness Reading: Conrad: Chapters 4-8 JWF: Introduction, Chapters 1, 4, Screening: <u>Contagion</u> (2011, 106 mins.)
Sept. 22	Subject: Disability Reading: JWF: Chapters, 5-8 Screening: <u>The Diving Bell and the Butterfly</u> (2007, 112 mins.) Student <hr/> <hr/>
Sept 29	Subject: Death and Dying Reading: JWF: Chapters 9-11 Screening: <u>Wit</u> (2001, 99 mins) Student <hr/> <hr/>
Oct. 6	Subject: Patient-Professional Relationships Reading: JWF: Chapters 12-14 Screening: <u>The Elephant Man</u> (1980, 124 mins) Student <hr/> <hr/>
\Oct. 13	Subject: The Body Reading: JWF: Chapters 15-18 Screening: <u>The Skin I Live In</u> (2011, 120 mins) Student <hr/> <hr/>
Oct. 20	Subject: Gender and Sexuality Reading: JWF: Chapters 19-23 Screening: <u>Transamerica</u> (2006, 103 mins) Student <hr/> <hr/>
Oct. 27	Subject: Race and Class I Reading: JWF: Chapters 24-25

	Screening: Student	<u>Dirty Pretty Things</u> (2003, 97 mins.) _____ _____
Nov. 3	Subject: Readings: Screening: Student:	Race and Class II JWF: Chapters 26, 27 <u>Miss Evers' Boys</u> (1997, 118 mins.) _____ _____
Nov. 10	Subject: Reading: Screening: Student:	Aging JWF: Chapters 28-30 <u>Amour</u> (2012, 127 mins) _____ _____
Nov. 17	Subject: Reading: Screening: Student	Mental Illness JWF: Chapters 31-34 <u>Away From Her</u> (2006, 110 mins) _____ _____
Nov. 24		Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 1	Subject: Readings: Screenings: Student	Science and Technology I JWF: Chapters 39,40 <u>Gattica</u> (1997, 106 mins) _____ _____
Dec. 8	Subject: Readings: Screening: Student	Science and Technology II JWF: Chapters 41, 42 <u>Ex Machina</u> (2015, 108 mins.) _____ _____
Dec. 12		<u>Final Papers Due by Noon in 303 Demarest Hall</u>

GENERAL COMMENTS

Oral Presentations (1/4 of your grade)

During the second class meeting, each student will select an in-class oral presentation topic which will likely be a shared presentation. This should not simply be a cut-and-past job culled from other sources, i.e. Wikipedia. The talk can be interactive as well as didactic, but it must be lively and engaging. You will be graded on how well you convey the material, how thoughtfully you integrate research with conclusions, and how well you present the materials to the class. Every student must meet with me a minimum one week before his/her due date, but more often and earlier if needed.

Required Guidelines. Your power point or prezi presentation will examine the film we have just screened, linking it to the chapters read for that class and other films we have seen this term. Here are the **MINIMUM** elements that must be incorporated into the talk: 1) provide the background of the film's production (such as year released, main figures behind the camera such as directors, cinematographers, screenwriters (allude to the

previous and future works of importance if relevant), main characters (with pictures), production company, budget, box office revenues, specific awards nominated for and received; 2) relate the film to our readings, lectures and previous screenings; 3) offer a detailed technical/visual analysis of one specific 2-3 minute segment to include A) camera, B) lighting, 3) sound, and 4) editing—keep the scene short and include details; and 4) elaborate on prominent thematic ideas that relate the film to other films in the genre. Anyone not incorporating all four elements (and their subsections) listed above cannot receive a grade higher than a “C” on the in-class assignment.

You are expected to be analytical, creative and speculative. It is also most definitely not a book report that asks you to synthesize secondary sources, but rather requires you to draw conclusions and do individual analysis in a visually creative manner. If you are doing a joint presentation, meet with your partners and break down the topic. Each speaker will present his/her own visual analysis of different scenes. If someone is not fulfilling his/her responsibilities, I need to be notified early in the process. Each presentation will run 15-20 mins. Please adhere to these time restraints. Clips/ handouts/ pictures should illustrate the talk and provide the class with some VISUAL sense of your topic. The talk can be interactive as well as didactic, but it must be lively and engaging. You will be graded on how well you convey the material, how thoughtfully you integrate research with conclusions, and how well you present the materials to the class, both orally and visually. Make sure you talk with me at least one week prior to your presentation date. The class will respond, in anonymous written notes, to the presentation, but I will be the sole person to grade the power point. All of the films screened during class will be reserve in the library.

A Note on Power Point Presentations. Although you are not graded on the technical aspects of your presentation, this is a class in visual thinking and that consciousness about visual construction and engagement should extend to your in-class talk. Because one can never fully separate form and content, the incorporation of better technical elements usually results in higher grades. Take these suggestions into consideration: 1) don't make slides too crowded; 2) make sure everything is clear and readable; 3) make the talk as interactive as possible; 4) spend some time thinking about the visual aspects of your presentation to make them interesting, informative, and engaging/choose the background and font carefully; 5) don't incorporate slides filled with texts—highlight key words and phrases on the slide and supply the rest in your talk; 6) don't read directly off the slide. (I will also provide you with a handout to help with this)

Class Structure. Class will begin on time. I will take the first half hour (1:30-2:00) for a discussion (see comments below) on the given topic and readings. Often, this will include an assignment for students to complete. We will then take a fifteen-minute break (2:00-2:15). Screenings will start promptly at 2:15 and run till approximately 4:15 or so. Another break from 4:15-4:30. Then, from 4:30 till 5:00 students will do their presentations. I will try hard to maintain this schedule so that students can have adequate time to deliver their presentations properly. Sometimes, however, we run over the 5 PM class ending, but I will try to minimize this as much as is possible. This structure should allow you to remain seated during the screenings, rather than enter and exiting the classroom. Leaving is greatly discouraged other than for natural emergencies.

Readings:

One disappointing aspect of teaching at HWS is that students often fail to read the required assignments so necessary for productive classroom discussion. Let me say this clearly so you understand my goal here. You are expected to read ALL the assignments BEFORE coming to class. These are the basis of the class and you need them to understand and contextualize our discussions. To encourage this, I intend to make the opening discussions as interactive as possible. This means I will not hesitate to call on you (even if your hand is not raised), give you graded quizzes, or do whatever I feel is needed to assure you are reading throughout the term.

Research Paper (1/2 of your grade)

Due one week after the oral presentation, this research/critical paper (10-15 pages, double spaced, 250 words per page) deals with the analysis of a medically oriented film that I have available for loan (see sheet of film/TV choices). Your paper should be analytical rather than just a summation of facts and figures and other people's ideas. Your essay will be judged on how cogently you argue your position,

how clearly you demonstrate your research efforts, how skillfully you integrate the topic with our lectures and readings, and how well you write your paper. All papers four elements described above for the oral presentation must also be in the research paper if a student expects a grade above “C.” This means that the student must include a number of freeze frames from the segment analyzed in the appendix and label them properly both in the text and in the appendix. (See IT in the library for assistance if needed.) The paper should have a visual image from the film on the cover sheet, as well as a title that provides guidance about the paper’s focus. Grammar and style do have a distinct bearing on your grade. All late papers will forfeit one letter grade for each class beyond the due date. No incompletes will be given, except in case of documented medical problems. If you select a TV show, you should watch at least 3 episodes and, if possible, the entire year.

Final Response Paper (1/4 of your grade)

A comprehensive paper that asks you to respond to general statements/questions and to support your ideas by using the books, lectures, and television shows discussed during the term.

Film Screening Etiquette

You will be viewing these films in an academic environment, not at a commercial cinema or in your home. Since you will be responsible for taking notes and discussing these movies, not to mention knowing them for your final examination, we need an atmosphere conducive to concentration, as well as a setting which allows others to respond positively to a series you might find funny, vulgar, or even boring. Specifically, this means you must be quiet during a screening, except for normal audience responses. Talking will not be tolerated. Also, please refrain from entering or leaving the classroom once the film has started. If, however, you must do so, please make sure to use the doors at the rear of the classroom and that you open and close them as quietly as possible. All electronic devices need to be turned off during the entire class, especially during the screenings. If you cannot do this, you will be asked to leave the classroom for that day. Those who can comply with these simple rules will be asked to drop the course.

Attendance Policy

Everyone is allowed two (2) unexcused absence--no questions asked and no documentation needed. If a third absence occurs, it will be considered unexcused and your paper will be lowered one grade. If a fourth absence occurs, you will be asked to write an extra paper. More than four absences and you will automatically get a failing grade for the class. The only excused absences involved serious illness or catastrophic events, which must be documented in writing from reliable sources, i.e. physician, health center staff, etc. Please make sure to sign the attendance sheet under the proper date. This is the only official record of your class attendance. If the semester runs true to course, you will likely be required to attend at least one event outside of class as well.

CTL Statement:

At Hobart and William Smith Colleges, we encourage you to learn collaboratively and to seek the resources that will enable you to succeed. The **Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)** is one of those resources: CTL programs and staff help you engage with your learning, accomplish the tasks before you, enhance your thinking and skills, and empower you to do your best. Resources at CTL are many: Study Mentors help you find your time and manage your responsibilities, Writing Fellows help you think well on paper, and professional staff help you assess academic needs. I encourage you to explore these and other CTL resources designed to encourage your very best work. You can talk with me about these resources, visit the CTL office on the 2nd floor of the library to discuss options with the staff, or visit the CTL website.

The CTL resource(s) of most use for this class include:

Writing Fellows

The CTL resource that will be most essential in enhancing learning in this course is the **Writing Fellows** program. Writing Fellows help students develop their writing by providing feedback on essay drafts, offering strategies for the writing process, and enhancing students' understanding of what good college writing means. In this class, Writing Fellow assistance with your papers and will be extremely helpful to you, and I suggest that you make an appointment via the TutorTrac (<http://tutortrac.hws.edu:81/TracWeb40/Default.html>) appointment system (link on the CTL webpage, too).

Study Mentors

Study Mentors engage directly with each student in the process of adjusting to academic demands: they help you find the time you need to engage with both your academic and co-curricular activities, accomplish the tasks in front of you, and enhance your reading and study time. Study Mentors may be especially important for those of you who are involved in many activities. To meet with a Study Mentor, one option is to go to the TutorTrac link provided on the CTL webpage and make an appointment. You can also contact Sam Vann at vann@hws.edu, or drop in at the CTL office on the 2nd floor of the library.

Disability Accommodations: If you are a student with a disability for which you may need accommodations, you should self-identify and register for services with the Coordinator of Disability Services at the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and provide documentation of your disability. Disability related accommodations and services generally will not be provided until the registration and documentation process is complete. The guidelines for documenting disabilities can be found at the following website: <http://www.hws.edu/disabilities>