Illness and subjectivity  
(CHDV 43302; ANTH 51305)

Eugene Raikhel  
Comparative Human Development  
eraikhel@uchicago.edu

LOCATION AND TIME  
Wednesday 1:30-4:20  
HD North 102 (5750 S. Woodlawn Ave.)

OFFICE HOURS  
Time may vary from week to week. For current office hours and to sign up, please visit: https://wiki.uchicago.edu/display/~eraikhel/Office+hours  
Office hours are held in 5736 S. Woodlawn, #203

SUMMARY  
While anthropology and other social sciences have long explored the social and cultural shaping of the self and personhood, many scholars have recently employed the rubric of “subjectivity” to articulate the links between collective phenomena and the subjective lives of individuals. This graduate seminar will examine “subjectivity”—and related concepts—focusing on topics where such ideas have been particularly fruitful: illness, pathology and suffering. Throughout the course we will critically examine the terms “self,” “personhood” and “subjectivity”—and their relationship to one another. Each week we will discuss a mix of conceptual and ethnographic readings which draw on some common analytical frameworks and categories, including narrative theory, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, biopower and science and technology studies.

PREREQUISITES AND FORMAT  
This course is intended for graduate students. Special provision may be made for selected advanced undergraduates to take part as well. The course will be run in a
seminar format, with a minimum of lecturing on the part of the instructor. We will spend the majority of the time closely examining the texts for each week and discussing the problems they address. Please come to each class with two or three questions regarding the reading (whether or not you are giving a presentation that week).

Please note that the final meeting of this course occurs during reading week.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION
Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following requirements and assignments:

1) **Participation** in weekly discussions.
2) **One in-class presentation** of the readings for a particular week. Working with one or two classmates, students will give one short (10-15 minute) presentation of the readings for a particular week. This should be a presentation of the themes, issues or problems that run through all of the readings, *not* a summary of the texts. Your presentation will serve to open our discussion, so please prepare some discussion questions for the class.
3) Two 2,000 to 3,000 word **analyses** of the readings for one or more weeks, in which you analyze a particular problem and establish your own position in relation to the assigned texts. Due by February 1 and March 7.

A number of books will be available for purchase at the Seminary Co-op Bookstore and on reserve at Regenstein:

**Required:**


All other texts will be available in the “Course Documents” folder on Chalk.
Schedule of course sessions and readings:

January 4 – Subjectivity, illness and patienthood


Todd Meyers. “The patient as a category of thought.”


January 11 – Experience and narrative


Byron Good, “The narrative representation of illness,” in *Medicine, Rationality and Experience* (ch 6).


January 18 – Metaphor and embodiment


January 25 – Emotion, feeling, affect


February 1 – The work of culture

* First paper due *


February 8 – Suffering, violence and trauma


February 15 – Becoming subjects


February 22 – Intimacy and care


February 29 – Making up minds


March 7 – Disordered states

○ Second paper due ○

Listen to: Byron Good, “Theorizing the ‘Subject’ of Medical and Psychiatric Anthropology,’ The 2010 Marett Memorial Lecture.


