

Epidemiological Methods for Documenting Human Rights Abuses

Room: 60 Haven B2 Conference room

Tuesdays: 5:30 – 8:20PM Oct. 23rd – Dec.. 4th

INSTRUCTOR

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Office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The occurrence of murder, disappearances, and rape are common during complex emergencies and yet the rate of these events is rarely measured while the conflict is ongoing. In some cases, groups are denied life-sustaining services because of race, politics, or HIV status. Public health practitioners are uniquely situated and qualified to advocate for populations whose human rights and survival are threatened by the intentional actions of organized groups. This class will teach students techniques for detecting and estimating the rates of these major abuses of human rights in order to better advocate for the abused, and to permit the evaluation of programs designed to prevent such events. At the end of the course, students will be expected to be able to evaluate the sensitivity of surveillance systems, and undertake surveys, designed to measure the rates of violent deaths and rape. Classes will involve a combination of lectures, case studies, and a research project ending with a debate. Students will be evaluated based on class participation, a presentation and a paper.

PREREQUISITES

Students should have completed relevant classes in Epidemiology and (Bio)Statistics (or equivalent)

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Describe and know the limitations of the basic survey and surveillance techniques utilized to document the rates of rape and murder.
- Evaluate the sensitivity of a surveillance system designed to detect episodes of rape or murder.
- Conduct a capture-recapture analysis from multiple lists of documented events.

- Monitor rates of murder or rape over time during a protracted complex emergency situation.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING POLICY

Student grades will be based on:

Class participation.....50%

Project participation and short paper.....50%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to keep up with readings, attend class and participate on a regular basis. All assignments are to be submitted on time unless there is a documented compelling health or personal problem.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course will be a combination of lecture and case-study.

MAILMAN SCHOOL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Students and faculty have a shared commitment to the School's mission, values and oath. <http://mailman.columbia.edu/about-us/school-mission/>

Academic Integrity

Students are required to adhere to the Mailman School Honor Code, available online at <http://mailman.columbia.edu/honorcode>.

Disability Access

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Students who have, or think they may have a disability are invited to contact ODS for a confidential discussion at 212.854.2388 (V) 212.854.2378 (TTY), or by email at disability@columbia.edu. If you have already registered with ODS, please speak to your instructor to ensure that s/he has been notified of your recommended accommodations by Lillian Morales (lm31@columbia.edu), the School's liaison to the Office of Disability Services.

Session 1 – Overview of Public Health Information use in IHL and Human Rights Promotion

<p>Oct. 23rd</p>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u> An overview of past convictions & indictments based on health-related data will be presented. Class will struggle with what defines a systematic human rights problem and the role of the Public Health community in addressing such problems. The class options for doing a project or a paper will be discussed.</p> <p>Case study: Birth Defects in Iraq, 2014.</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trafficking of Nigerian women into prostitution in Europe 'at crisis level' The Guardian https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/aug/08/trafficking-of-nigerian-women-into-prostitution-in-europe-at-crisis-level• Busby C, Hamdan M, Ariabi E. Cancer, Infant Mortality and Birth Sex-Ratio in Fallujah, Iraq 2005–2009. <i>Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health</i> 2010, 7, 2828-2837.• Summary of the Prevalence of Reported Congenital Birth Defects in 18 Selected Districts in Iraq. WHO. Sept. 2013. http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/iraq/documents/Congenital_birth_defects_report.pdf• Fourth Geneva Convention: Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. (Skim)• Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Skim)
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Jan. 24 No class: school-wide teach-in.

Session 2 – Documenting Rape: Surveys

<p>Oct. 30th</p>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u> Overview of literature on estimations of rape.</p> <p>A summary of the methods and difficulties of documenting this difficult topic will be presented. Two studies conducted by the Forced Migration Program will be reviewed.</p> <p><u>Required readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirsten Johnson; Jennifer Scott; Bigy Rughita; et al. Association of sexual violence and human rights violations with physical and mental health. <i>JAMA</i>. 2010;304(5):553-562 (doi:10.1001/jama.2010.1086)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mukwege DM, Nangini C. Rape with Extreme Violence: The New Pathology in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. <i>Plos Med.</i> Dec. 2009. Vol. 6; Issue 12 • Swiss S. et al. "Violence against women in the Liberian conflict." <i>JAMA</i> 1998, Feb 25;279(8):625-9. • Amowitz LL. et al. "Prevalence of war-related sexual violence and other human rights abuses among internally displaced persons in Sierra Leone." <i>JAMA.</i> 2002 Jan. 23-30; 287(4):513-21. <p><u>Recommended Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcorn T. Responding to sexual violence in armed conflict. <i>The Lancet.</i> June 10, 2014 http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)60970-3 • WHO. 2005. "Multi-country study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Summary Report." WHO. • Swiss S, Giller JE. "Rape as a crime of war: A medical perspective." <i>JAMA</i> 1993, Aug. 4; 270(5):612-5. • Leaning J. "War crimes and medical Science." <i>BMJ.</i> 1996 Dec. 7,313(7070):1413-15. • Fisher, Bonnie. "The Effects of Survey Question Wording on Rape Estimates." <i>Violence against Women</i>, Vol. 15, No. 2, 133-147. • MSF Holland. "The Crushing Burden of Rape; Sexual Violence in Darfur." 8 March 2005
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Nov. 6th Election day – No classes

Session 3 – Documenting Deaths	
Nov. 13th	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u> students will be able to highlight the history of attempts to document deaths in times of conflict and the basic approaches for doing so.</p> <p>A summary of past attempts to estimate mortality will be presented.</p> <p>Case study on forced displacement in Zimbabwe.</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiegel P, Salama P. "War and Mortality in Kosovo, 1998-99: an epidemiological testimony." <i>Lancet.</i> Vol. 355, Issue 9222, 24 June, 2000. pp.2204-09.

- Ugandan Government Refutes Oxfam report on Northern War. http://english.people.com.cn/200604/04/eng20060404_255867.html
- Interpreting and using mortality data in humanitarian emergencies. A primer for non-epidemiologists. HPN Network paper 52. Sept. 2005. <http://www.odihpn.org/documents/networkpaper052.pdf>

FYI kind-of Reading:

CAR: Retrospective Mortality Survey reveals levels of death. <http://www.msf.org/article/central-african-republic-retrospective-mortality-study-reveals-massive-levels-death-due>

Session 4 – Documenting death: The special cases of Syria and Iraq

Nov. 20th

Learning Objectives: Students will gain insight into the unique problems of communication of mortality data from the war in Iraq.

A summary will be presented of the various efforts to measure mortality in Iraq and the systematic process by which incomplete surveillance efforts have become the dominant source cited in the press.

Readings:

- Hagopian A, Flaxman AD, Takaro TK. et al. Mortality in Iraq Associated with the 2003–2011 War and Occupation: Findings from a National Cluster Sample Survey by the University Collaborative Iraq Mortality Study. *PLoS Med.* Oct. 2013, Vol. 10; Issue 10
- Burnham G, Lafta R, Doocy S, Roberts L. “Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster sample survey.” *Lancet.* 2006 Oct. 21: 368;1421-28.
- MOORE SE, “655,000 War Dead? A bogus study on Iraq casualties.” *Wall Street Journal.* Wednesday, October 18, 2006 12:01 a.m. EDT <http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110009108>
- Iraq Family Household Study Group. “Violence-related Mortality in Iraq from 2002 to 2006.” *New Eng. J. of Med.* 2008;358:484-93.
- Letters responding to IFHS in NEJM. *New Eng. J. of Med.* 359; 4: 431-434.

Recommended reading if you have the time:

- Carl Bialik. Why It Took So Long To Update the U.N.-Sponsored Syria Death Count? <http://fivethirtyeight.com/datalab/why-it-took-so-long-to-update-the-u-n-sponsored-syria-death-count/>
- Les Roberts. "Iraq's death toll is far worse than our leaders admit." *The Independent*. Published: 14 February 2007 <http://comment.independent.co.uk/commentators/article2268067.ece>
- Giles J. "Death Toll on Iraq: survey team takes on its critics." *Nature*. March 1, 2007, p. 6-7.
- Munro N and Cannon C. "Data Bomb." *National Journal*. 4 January 2008.
- How Syrians are being Killed.
<http://www.irinnews.org/maps-and-graphics/2016/07/25/how-syrians-are-being-killed>
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Session 5 – Other difficult to measure issues: snowball sampling and respondent driven sampling

<p>Nov. 27th</p>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u> The problems associated with recording and documenting the effects of murder, human trafficking, and immigrant vulnerability and other situations with difficult to identify denominators will be discussed.</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checchi et al. "A new way of monitoring mortality in crisis-affected populations: Validation and Feasability study." The Fanta Project. March 2009. • Boko Haram destruction in Nigeria captured in satellite images, Amnesty says. The Associated Press Posted: Jan 15, 2015 6:57 AM ET Last Updated: Jan 15, 2015 6:57 . • Ball P, Spierer H, Spierer L. "Making the Case: Investigating Large Scale Human Rights Violations Using Information Systems and Data Analysis." AAAS 2000. (Introduction Only) • Razzak J and Luby S. "Estimating deaths and injuries due to road traffic accidents in Karachi, Pakistan, through the capture-recapture method." <i>Int. J. Epi.</i> 1998. 27(5): 866-70. • Potterat, John J., et al. "Mortality in a Long-Term Open Cohort of Prostitute Women." <i>American Journal of Epidemiology</i> 159.8 (2004): 778-85.
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	<p><u>Recommended reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leslie Roberts (No, a different one!!!!) A war within a war. • Cohen, E. & Amon, J. "Health and Human Rights Concerns of Drug Users in Detention in Guangxi Province, China." <i>PLoS Medicine</i>. December 2008. Volume 5 (12): 1682-1688. • Kippenberg, J, Sahokwasama, J, & Amon, J "Detention of insolvent patients in Burundian hospitals" <i>Health Policy and Planning</i> 2008;23:14–23 <p><u>Similar articles if you are looking for them later:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reis, C, Heisler M, Amowitz LL, Moreland LS, Mafeni JO, et al. 2005 "Discriminatory Attitudes and Practices by Health Workers toward Patients with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria." <i>PLoS Med</i> 2(8):e246/ doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0020246</u> • <u>Chersich, M F, Luchters, S M F, Malonza, I M, Mwarogo, P, King'ola, N, Temmerman, M. "Heavy episodic drinking among Kenyan female sex workers is associated with unsafe sex, sexual violence and sexually transmitted infections." <i>Int J STD AIDS</i> 2007 18:764-769</u> • <u>Magnani et al. "Review of sampling hard-to-reach and hidden populations for HIV surveillance." <i>AIDS</i> 2005, 19 (suppl 2): S67-S72.</u> • <u>Kendall et al. "An Empirical Comparison of Respondent-driven Sampling, Time Location Sampling, and Snowball Sampling for Behavioral Surveillance in Men Who Have Sex with Men, Fortaleza, Brazil." <i>Aids and Behavior</i>. Volume 12, Supplement 1 / July, 2008</u>
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Session 6 – Past Student Project, The Disappearance of Native American Women

<p>Dec. 4th</p>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u> Review a series of approaches past classes have employed</p> <p>Other techniques and past projects by students covering a variety of techniques will be discussed.</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara A. Snyder, and Columbia Epidemiology of Human Rights Study Group. The Eric Garner Case: Statewide survey of NY voters’ response to proposed police accountability legislation. <i>J. of Social Service Research</i>. • Roberts LF, Van Rooyan MJ. Ensuring Public Health Neutrality. <i>New Engl. J. Med.</i> 2013;368: 1073-1075. March 21. • Siegler A. et al. "Media coverage of violent deaths in Iraq: an opportunistic capture-recapture assessment." <i>J. of Prehospital and Dis. Med.</i> 2008;(23)4: 369-71. • Henderson et al. "Reporting on deaths in Iraq." <i>Conflict and Health</i> 2009, 3:9 • Carpenter D, Fuller T, Roberts L. WikiLeaks, and Iraq Body Count, the Sum of Parts may not Add Up to the Whole. A Comparison of two tallies of Iraqi Civilian Deaths. In preparation.
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zradavec F et al. Gender and unaccompanied ridership late at night in New York Subways. In preparation. |
| | <p>Before class, please consider watching:</p> |
| | <p>http://www.thedailyshow.com/watch/thu-april-23-2009/a-brief-history-of-torture</p> |
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