NEW COURSE Fall 2017
ANTH 395B: Bodies in Medicine

This course introduces students to fundamental questions in medical anthropology through an engagement with surgical procedures that remake the body and its world. A practice at once familiar and strange, we center surgical interventions to ground abstract social and political concepts firmly in the materiality of the human body. For example, we'll examine belief and belonging through analyzing male circumcision, cultural relativism through female genital cutting, the constitution of race through cosmetic procedures that reshape the eyes and nose, nationalism and patriotism through the surgical rehabilitation of soldiers' bodies, and more. These procedures invite us to consider the body as a site at which particular ideas about what is “normal” and what is “good” quite literally find their form. They make manifest the economic, racial, political, and ethical forces through which contemporary life and value unfold.

This will be a great course for Anthropology students, pre-med students, and anyone else with an interest in how medical practice both shapes and is shaped by the social world. Join us!

Prof Eric Plemons