

ASB 462: Medical Anthropology

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Module 6 Assignment: Comparative Documentary Analysis (60 points)

Download, fill in, and turn in this form. Read through the instructions to the end before you get started. Be sure to **use complete sentences where indicated**, and maintain this document's 1-inch margins, single-spacing, and 11-12pt font.

Name:

(1) Complete the assigned readings and lectures in Module 6.	
(2) Watch and take notes on the two assigned documentaries on childbirth in the Bunong community of Cambodia and various communities in the United States. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bunong's Birth Practices (Bunong Guu Oh)</i>. Documentary Educational Resources. 2010. (54 min) • <i>Giving Birth in America</i>. 2015. CNN Digital and Every Mother Counts. (10 videos; approximately 100 min total) 	
Part 1: The Medicalization of Birth:	
(3) Describe <u>the meaning of 'the medicalization of birth' in your own words</u> . (5 points) Important! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and cite the course readings and lectures. • Write your answer in complete sentences. 	Medicalization of birth refers to considering birth as a condition that needs to be treated rather than a natural process.
(4) Describe <u>in your own words one advantage and one disadvantage</u> of medicalized birth (5 points) Important! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and cite the course readings and lectures. • Write your answers in complete sentences. 	One advantage of this perspective is that it offers more options for women regarding delivery and health. One disadvantage, however, is that by viewing it as something to be fixed, we may lose sight of its incredible nature and its role in the cycle of evolution.
Part 2: Bunong's Birth Practices	
(5) Based on the personal insights presented in the film <i>Bunong's Birth Practices</i> , what are some of the decisions that the Bunong women of Cambodia face regarding	They have their traditions, practices, and stories passed down through generations. Some women may have

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<p>childbirth practices, <u>and</u> what factors influence their decisions? Please write complete sentences. (10 points)</p>	<p>to decide whether to go to a medical center or have a midwife. For instance, one woman in the documentary mentioned that it was a tradition for the man to place the umbilical cord by a tree in the forest, but when she went to the medical center to give birth, they disposed of it.</p>
<p>(6) Based on what you've learned in this module about the medicalization of birth, what benefits and disadvantages may result from changing childbirth practices among the Bunong? Please write complete sentences. (5 points)</p>	<p>Cultural beliefs and practices help define identity. While changes might be beneficial, they can also create a disconnect with ancestral traditions, like the umbilical cord practice.</p>
<p>Part 3: Giving Birth in America</p>	
<p>(7) Although the United States spends more on healthcare than any other country in the world, the U.S. maternal mortality rate is higher than any other developed country and is on the rise. Based on the personal stories presented in the <i>Giving Birth in America</i> documentary series, <u>describe in your own words</u> two factors that may contribute to the rising U.S. maternal mortality rate. Please write complete sentences. (10 points)</p>	<p>One factor is that almost everyone in the United States gives birth in a hospital. Despite advanced medical technology, it can sometimes be unnecessary and potentially endanger the patient or child. Another factor is that doctors may opt for the more straightforward solution; if a birth becomes complicated, they often perform a C-section, which has become common practice. In other places where midwives are more prevalent, midwives do everything they can before sending the mother to seek medical care.</p>
<p>(8) Based on what you've learned in this module, how might the medicalization of birth contribute to childbirth complications and the rising maternal mortality rate in the U.S.? Please write complete sentences. (5 points)</p>	<p>Since the United States spends so much on medical care for childbirth, only a tiny fraction of births occur at home or through midwives. In other countries where midwives and home births are more common, there is a decrease in maternal mortality.</p>

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Part 4: Compare, Analyze, & Brainstorm	
(9) What issues are shared by pregnant women in Cambodia and the U.S.? Please write complete sentences. (5 points)	Typical complications from childbirth include the high risk of severe or fatal diseases during pregnancy.
(10) What factors outside of medicine might be used to improve childbirth outcomes in both countries? Please write complete sentences. (5 points)	Better access to modern information and at-home treatments for certain risks is needed.
(11) Write two questions that the documentaries brought up for you regarding childbirth and maternal health. (5 points)	Question 1: Why are midwives so familiar in many other countries but not in the U.S.? Question 2: What changes could we make to reduce maternal mortality?
(12) Choose one of your questions above and describe briefly how that question could be investigated using a medical anthropological research approach. Please write complete sentences. (5 points)	I will choose the first question. This question can be explored using observational methods and surveys. Medical anthropologists could visit U.S. hospitals, interview patients, and implement similar studies in other countries.