

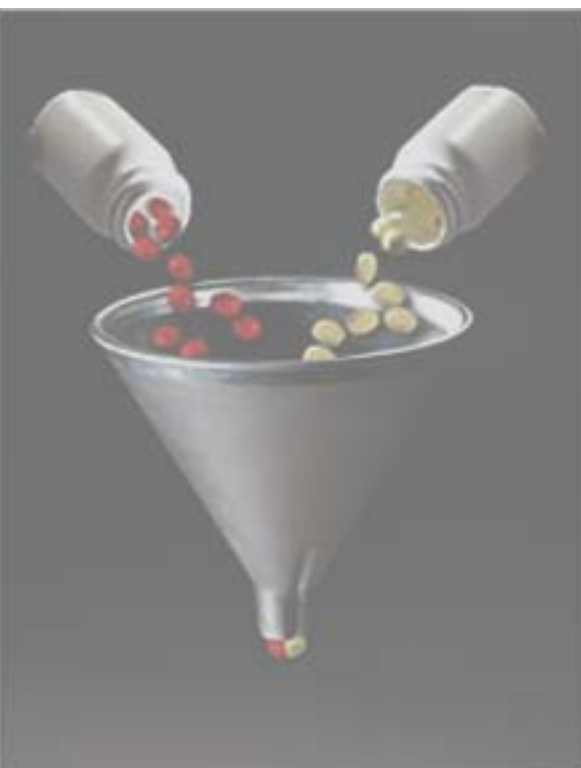


The 2009-2010 Klopsteg seminar series in SCIENCE IN HUMAN CULTURE presents:
SPRING 2010: LATIN AMERICA SERIES

CORI HAYDEN

“Generic Specificities: Pharmaceutical access and the Making of New Same Things”

ABSTRACT: The production and circulation of copied pharmaceuticals – cheaper, usually, than their patented, name-brand counterparts – have become central to efforts to improve access to medicines, North and South. The politics of access writ large is thus in many ways a politics of the substitute, in which generics manufacturers, state regulators, health advocates, international trade bodies, the transnational pharmaceutical industry, and consumers, patients, and activists all engage in highly charged contests over what shall count as a “good enough,” or a proper, copy. In fact, we might say that much of the action in contemporary pharmaceutical politics is centered precisely on the proliferation of markets for -- and practices for making -- new and distinctive kinds of "same" things. In this paper I seek to open up to ethnographic inquiry the notions of similarity, equivalence, and difference, turning to practices in quality control in manufacturing, pharmacology, regulation, and marketing in order to understand how particular relations of sameness, difference, and similarity are produced and contested. Ultimately, I argue that current pharmaceutical politics and practices make vivid demands on our analytic lexicons, requiring us to reconsider equivalence, similarity, interchangeability – and even 'the generic' itself – as ethnographic terms, constituted in and by their historical specificity and irreducible materialities. This is important both analytically and politically, as the matter of who can claim equivalence – and how – remains a dominant question in the global politics of pharmaceutical access.



BIO: CORI HAYDEN is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. She received her PhD in Anthropology from UC Santa Cruz in 2000 and has held postdoctoral research fellowships at Girton College (University of Cambridge) and at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UC San Diego. Current projects include *Generic Specificities*, an ethnography of generic pharmaceuticals in Latin America. Recent publications include “A Generic Solution? Pharmaceuticals and the Politics of the Similar in Mexico,” *Current Anthropology*, 2007; “Taking as Giving,” *Social Studies of Science*, 2007; and *When Nature Goes Public: The Making and Unmaking of Bioprospecting in Mexico*, Princeton University Press, 2003.

Anthropology Dept, UC Berkeley

Monday, May 3, 2010

4:00 - 5:30 pm

Hagstrum Room

University Hall 201

Evanston Campus

reception to follow