Medical Technology and Technique

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Introduction
The rich array of anthropological research on medical technology has primarily been carried out by anthropologists with specialization in medical anthropology, and science and technology studies. This research benefits from its conversations with the history of medicine. Among journals that have frequently published in this area are: Anthropology and Medicine; Culture, Health and Psychiatry; Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences; Medical Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies in Health and Illness; Medical Anthropology Quarterly; Medicine Anthropology Theory; Social History of Medicine; Social Studies of Science; and Sociology of Health and Illness. In this bibliography, material is organized thematically into eleven substantive sections to include work that exemplifies both long-standing topics as well as emerging frontiers of research. The first section introduces readers to the framework of biopolitics that often contextualizes scholarship on technology. Next, the reader is introduced to theorizing technology in relation to technique. This is followed by the issue of discipline in relation to medicine. The next two sections describe sensory practices encompassing the audio and the haptic. The article then turns to the conditions under which technologies are produced and used, treating the question of politics before discussing systems of subjugation. After this, the next section highlights technologies of rendering, broken down into visual technology, writing, and enumeration. The final three
sections cover reproductive health, pharmaceuticals, and subjectivities. These topics represent dense nodes of anthropological scholarship that have informed the broader approach of anthropological research on technology and technique.

**Biopolitics and Technologies of Life and Death**

Within anthropological scholarship, medical technology and technique is engaged in its capacities to “make live” or “let die” as iconically described by Foucault 1992. Foucault’s primary methodology for establishing these scholarly positions is genealogical, and in Foucault 1969 he describes a form of historiographic and cultural analysis that follows particular material, discursive and generative trajectories without insisting on their singularity. A number of edited collections have compiled important work on medical technology framed through such themes as the biosciences, life and death, and reproductive health, including Brodwin 2001; Das and Han 2016; Franklin and Lock 2003; Ginsburg and Rapp 1995; and Lock, et al. 2000. A few key review articles have also provided insightful analysis of medical technology and technique, such as Jane and Corbett 2009; Kaufman and Morgan 2005; and Taylor 2005. This work is not exhaustive, but represents some of the major themes in the scholarship on anthropology of medical technology and technique. As biopolitics references the politics that engage life and death, related terms, such as biotechnology and biometrics, have emerged. The biopolitical subject arises as a primary disciplinary subject. Biotechnology references those techniques and technologies that intervene in biological processes, though this has often resulted in struggles over the definition of “biological” which, itself, is not understood as self-evident by anthropologists. Biometrics emerge as a form of measuring biological processes. The biopolitical, biotechnological, and biometric are deeply cultural and social.


An edited volume covering technological interventions into the body and the ethical complexities new technologies introduce.


An edited collection that locates technologies in particular contexts in relation to living, illness, and death.


A collection of eleven lectures in which Michel Foucault laid out some of the ideas for which he is now most well-known, including power, subjectivity, and genealogy, but develops them by positing them in the contexts of ongoing peace, developing a critique of sovereignty in contrast to the focus on war. The particular formulation of biopolitics here lays the groundwork for later political theorists to focus on necropolitics.


This volume takes up new definitions of life and death, with particular focus on genomics and cell science.


The quintessential primer on all things reproductive, with reference to the social complexities of a variety of reproductive technologies.

Article lays out the rich global health literature, contextualizing the technologies that traverse national boundaries.


Article focuses on research on the beginnings and endings of life, with particular emphasis on governance and biopolitics, thus focusing on technologies that organize and categorize life and death.

Lock, Margaret, Allan Young, and Alberto Cambrosio. 2000. *Living and working with the new medical technologies*. Edited by M. Lock, A. Young, and A. Cambrosio. London: Cambridge Univ. Press. DOI: [10.1017/CBO9780511621765](10.1017/CBO9780511621765)

An interdisciplinary dialogue on new biomedical technologies and their practical applications.


A creative approach to medical anthropology's focus on objects by emphasizing the action of “surfacing,” and therefore situating literature on medical technique and technology in relationship to its actions.