

Hospitals as a Window into Global Flows and Local Articulations in Tanzania

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Since December 2007, I have been on the outskirts of Arusha, Tanzania, conducting dissertation field research investigating the ways that privatization of medicine has affected medical practice. In particular, I have been exploring how global, multi-national, and national organizations have influenced the opportunities and constraints experienced by health care workers at the micro level—within a Tanzanian hospital. This research investigates how global agencies (such as WHO and the World Bank), various donors (such as USAID or DANIDA), and various volunteer organizations (such as Work the World and Students for International Change) have affected the ways that medicine is practiced within Tanzania, and what kinds of opportunities and constraints health care workers experience as a result of the rapid changes that have been effected within the health sector.



An important aspect of this research has been to consider the ways that multiple forces come to bear on the hospital and the ways that power operates on the local scale within the hospital. I am using participant observation, archival research, and individual and group interviews with hospital workers, local government officials, officers within the Tanzanian Ministry of Health, and representatives within various aid and volunteer organizations to investigate the ways that global and state forces articulate on the micro scale (within one hospital), the politics of these interactions, and what this context means for the people who work within this system and for those who use it in order to achieve better health for themselves and their relatives.

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