

Anthropology Department
Brandeis University
Fall 2007

ANTHROPOLOGY 155b
Psychological Anthropology
Janet McIntosh

Class: Tuesdays 4:40-7:30 pm, Pearlman 113
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Course Description:

This course addresses the relationship between mind and culture by exploring and critiquing a broad array of approaches in psychological anthropology. We begin by examining psychoanalytic anthropology, learning how Freudian tenets about unconscious processes have been applied to cultural symbols and practices. We explore how psychoanalytic approaches might apply to aspects of culture in New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and the USA, and critique their potential shortcomings. We also examine theories of ritual, including its transformative properties, and its possible psychodynamic implications. Next, we examine the “culture and personality school,” a popular mid-century movement that worked from the assumption that significant parts of the personality will be similar for all members of a culture or even a nation. Then we explore cross-cultural studies of “selfhood,” emotion, and belief using ethnographic research from Bali, India, Brazil, Micronesia, and the USA to investigate how culture might shape foundational ideas of what a person is and what kinds of beliefs and emotions they ought to have. Finally, we turn to the issue of mental health, asking how cultures construct and address phenomena such as depression, multiple personality disorder, and so-called “culture-bound syndromes” of the mind and body. Throughout the semester, we will attend to broader theoretical matters such as the tension between human universals and cultural particulars, and historical shifts in the relationship between anthropology and psychological approaches.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Class attendance and participation

- 2) Participation in 4 discussions on the WebCT discussion board. Your TA will provide feedback and evaluation on the basis of your comprehension of the readings, and the sophistication and originality of your comments on the material. Discussion questions will be provided, but you need not address them directly.
- 3) 45 minute in-class midterm exam (short answers).
- 4) 5 page midterm paper.
- 5) 7 page final paper.

Grading:

- 1) Attendance/participation in class: 10%
- 2) Webct discussion participation: 20% (5% per discussion)
- 3) In-class short-answer midterm: 15%
- 4) Midterm paper: 25%
- 5) Final paper: 30%

Readings:

There is one required textbook for this class, available from Back Pages Books in Waltham (owned by a former Brandeis anthropology major!):

Bock, Philip K. *Rethinking Psychological Anthropology: Continuity and Change in the Study of Human Action*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. 1999.

Back Pages delivers to campus. The way to order your book is to go to their website--

www.backpagesbooks.com/texthub

Any order received before midnight is delivered to Shapiro by 6 pm the next day, and someone from Back Pages will be waiting in the Shapiro atrium (very visibly) between 6 and 7:30 pm to distribute your book the day after you order it. If you don't collect your book the day after you order it, it will be held at Back Pages Bookstore (unfortunately, the store doesn't have a safe on-campus storage space for holding books). This means it's up to you to pick up the book the evening after you place the order.

Several articles are available through on-line databases. In these cases, the database in question will be listed in capital letters after the article title on the syllabus (e.g. "JSTOR").

All other readings are available in PDF form on WebCT. (If the reading is not in the Bock book and is not marked with the name of a database in capital letters on the syllabus, then it is on WebCT.)

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

January 16th—Introduction, and plunging right in: Introduction to Psychoanalytic Anthropology

Wulff, David M. Excerpts: “An outline of psychoanalytic theory,” “Freud’s psychology of religion,” and “D.W. Winnicott: Religion as transitional phenomenon” in *Psychology of Religion: Classic and Contemporary*, Second Edition. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1997. Pp. 269-277, 339-341.

Bock, Philip K. “Prelude” and “Psychoanalytic Anthropology” in *Rethinking Psychological Anthropology, Second Edition*. Ed. Philip K. Bock. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. 1999.

January 23— Psychoanalytic Anthropology, Symbolic Interpretation, and the Ritual Process I

Turner, Victor. “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*.” In *The Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society*. Symposium on New Approaches to the Study of Religion. University of Washington Press. 1964. Pp. 4-20.

Herdt, Gilbert. “Gender and Socialization” and “The Men’s Secret Society” in *The Sambia: Ritual and Gender in New Guinea*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1987. Pp. 67-169.

Herdt, G. H. “Transitional Objects in Sambia Initiation Rites,” *Ethos* vol. 15: 40-57. 1987. JSTOR.

IN CLASS VIDEO: “The Sambia”

January 30—Psychoanalytic Anthropology, Symbolic Interpretation, and the Ritual Process II

Obeyesekere, G. Excerpt from *Medusa’s Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1981. Pp. 1-51.

IN CLASS VIDEO: excerpt from “Full Metal Jacket”

(WebCT discussion #1 by February 1.)

February 6—Understanding and Critiquing the “Culture and Personality School”

Bock, Philip K. Chapter 3 “Configurations of Culture and Personality,” Chapter 5, “National Character Studies,” Interlude, “The Crisis in Culture and Personality,” in *Rethinking Psychological Anthropology, Second Edition*. Ed. Philip K. Bock. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. 1999.

Whiting, John W. M. “Socialization Process and Personality.” In *Psychological Anthropology: Approaches to Culture and Personality*. Ed. Francis L. K. Hsu. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, Inc. 1961. Pp. 355-380.

Benedict, Ruth. "Assignment: Japan" and "The Child Learns," from *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1989 [1946] Pp. 1-19, 253-296.

February 13—Cultural Diversity in Models of the Self

Geertz, Clifford. "Person Time and Conduct in Bali." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books. 1973. Pp. 360-411

Markus, Hazel Rose and Shinobu Kitayama. "Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation." *Psychological Review*, Apr 1991, Vol. 98 Issue 2, p224-253.
ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER.

Lamb, Sarah. "The Making and Unmaking of Persons: Notes on Aging and Gender in North India," *Ethos* 25(3): 279-302. 1997.

Spencer, Jonathan. "Fatima and the Enchanted Toffees: An Essay on Contingency, Narrative and Therapy." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3(4): 693-710. 1997. JSTOR.

(WebCT discussion #2 by Feb 15)

February 20—NO CLASS

February 27—The Consistency (or not) of the Person; the Tenuousness of "Beliefs"

Nisbett, Richard and Lee Ross, Chapter 2, "The Power of the Situation," in *The Person and the Situation: Essential Contributions of Social Psychology*. 1991. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Tooker, Deborah E. "Identity systems of highland Burma: 'Belief', Akha Zan, and a critique of interiorized notions of ethno-religious identity" *Man*, New Series, 27(4), 1992: 799-819. JSTOR.

McIntosh, Janet. "Going Bush: Black Magic, White Ambivalence, and Boundaries of Belief in Post-Colonial Kenya." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 36(3), 2006: 254-295.

March 6—Cultural Differences in Emotional Categories and Emotional Experiences

Bock, Philip K. "Emotions and Selfhood" in *Rethinking Psychological Anthropology, Second Edition*. Ed. Philip K. Bock. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. 1999.

Lutz, Catherine. "The Cultural Construction of Emotions," in *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll and Their Challenge to Western Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1988.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. "(M)Other Love: Culture, Scarcity, and Maternal Thinking," and "Our Lady of Sorrows: A Political Economy of the Emotions," from *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1992. Pp. 340-359, 400-445.

Hoschchild, Arlie Russell. "Exploring the Managed Heart," "Feeling as Clue" (recommended: "Managing Feeling") in *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1983. Pp. 3-55.

(WebCT discussion #3 by March 8)

March 13—Culture and Psychological Disorders: the Startle Reflex and Latah

Simons, Ronald C. "Preface," and Chapters 7-9 and 11 in *Boo! Culture, Experience, and the Startle Reflex*. Oxford University Press. 1996. Pp. vii-x, 3-17, 143-203, 230-248.

IN CLASS VIDEO: "Latah"

**45 minute midterm examination in class

March 20—Culture and Psychological Disorders: Symptoms, Models, and Politics I

Bock, Philip K. Chapter 11, "Shamans, Alternative States, and Schizophrenia" in *Rethinking Psychological Anthropology, Second Edition*. Ed. Philip K. Bock. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. 1999.

Michele Stephen. "Cargo Cults, Cultural Creativity, and Autonomous Imagination," *Ethos* Vol. 25, No. 3, 1997. pp. 333-358. JSTOR.

Foucault, Michel. "Introduction" and "The Historical Constitution of Mental Illness," in *Mental Illness and Psychology*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1987. Pp. 60-85.

Good, Byron J. "Studying mental illness in context: local, global, or universal?" *Ethos*, Vol. 25, No. 2, (Jun., 1997), pp. 230-248. JSTOR.

March 27— Culture and Psychological Disorders: Symptoms, Models, and Politics II

Jenkins, Janis H., Arthur Kleinman, and Byron J. Good. "Cross-Cultural Studies of Depression." In *Psychosocial Aspects of Depression*. Eds. Joseph Becker and Arthur Kleinman. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 1991. Pp. 67-99.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. "'Mental' in 'Southie': Individual, Family, and Community Responses to Psychosis in South Boston" in *Meanings of Madness*, ed. Richard J. Castillo. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company. 1998. Pp. 248-260.

Luhrmann, Tanya. "What's wrong with the patient?" in *Of two Minds: the Growing Disorder in American Psychiatry*. New York: Knopf. 2000.

**Midterm paper due

April 3, April 10—NO CLASSES

April 17--Trauma, Psychology, Culture

Zarowsky, Christina. "Writing Trauma: Emotion, Ethnography, and the Politics of Suffering Among Somali Returnees in Ethiopia." *Culture, Medicine & Psychiatry* 28:189-209. 2004.

Carol A. Kidron "Surviving a Distant Past: A Case Study of the Cultural Construction of Trauma Descendant Identity" *Ethos* Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 513-544. 2003.

West, Harry G. Girls with Guns: Narrating the Experience of War of Frelimo's "Female Detachment." *Anthropological Quarterly*. 73(4): 180-194. 2000.

[A short story may also accompany this week's readings; TBA]

(WebCT discussion #4 by April 19)

April 24—Embodied suffering, Embodying dissent

Lock, Margaret and Nancy Scheper-Hughes. "A Critical-Interpretive Approach in Medical Anthropology: Rituals and Routines of Discipline and Dissent" In *Medical Anthropology: Contemporary Theory and Method*. Eds. Carolyn F. Sargent and Thomas M. Johnson. Westport, CT: Praeger. 1996. 41-70.

Ong, Aiwah. "The Production of Possession: Spirits and the Multinational Corporation in Malaysia." *American Ethnologist* v. 15 no. 1, 1988: 28-42. JSTOR.

McIntosh, Janet. "Reluctant Muslims: Embodied Hegemony and Moral Resistance in a Giriama Spirit Possession Complex" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 10(1): 91-112. 2004.

IN CLASS VIDEO: "Les maîtres fous (The mad masters)"

May 1—Multiple Personality Disorder, and Dissociation as Coping/Healing Mechanism

Acocella, Joan. "The Politics of Hysteria." *The New Yorker*, April 6, 1998. Pp. 64-79.

Hacking, Ian. "Is It Real?" and "What Is It Like?" in *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory*. Princeton University Press. 1995. Pp. 8-38.

IN CLASS VIDEO: "Dateline" special on exorcism

Evaluations

****Final paper due May 5**