

CULTURE AND MEDICINE: HEALERS AND HEALING PRACTICES ANTH 301

Course Description:

Every culture and society has had to deal with illness and thus has well-developed concepts about the healing process, healers, diagnosis, medical treatment, medical knowledge and healing practices. This course offers a cross cultural exploration of medical systems, healers and healing approaches. In Healers and Healing Practices we examine differences and similarities in the ways that people approach illness and healing by relying heavily on an abundance of examples from various cultures, including that of the United States. We examine illness causation and classification theories, diagnostic practices, therapeutic procedures, preventive care, the assumptions that underlie medical concepts and practices, and medicine's relationship to the social, cultural, and technological environments in which it is constructed and practiced. The course focuses on the role of the healer in the context of culture and will examine physicians, shamans, witch doctors, *curanderos/as*, midwives, wise men and women, and other healers. The course also explores the use of medicinal herbs, music, healing aids, and pharmaceuticals in the healing process. Informed self-reflection and critical analysis of one's own worldview assumptions and medical beliefs system are fundamental to the course.

Prerequisites: None

Course Objectives:

- Distinguish between different illness etiologies
- Understand the role of the healer in distinct medical systems
- Know the fundamentals of the Great Medical Traditions
- Compare patient/provider relationships in varied medical systems
- Learn that there are many ways of knowing and doing regarding health and illness
- Engage in critical thinking regarding the relationship between health care and culture, environment, and economy
- Appreciate the traditional relationship between medicine and religion
- Employ the holistic perspective when attempting to understand human phenomena, including health care and medical treatment

Required Materials:

Three text books, listed below, plus articles posted on WebCT

Course Requirements:

It is essential to be present at class each session. What is covered in class sets the parameters for writing of exams and assignments. It is equally important to complete all reading assignments listed on the syllabus.

Course Assignments and Grade Evaluation:

- Case Study (30%)
This assignment is a case study, or a medical ethnography, of a healer. Based on interviews with a healer (*curandero/a*, medicine person, physician, herbalist, etc.),

your ethnography will explore such concepts as world view, causation, recruitment, diagnostic and therapeutic methods. Pre-approved interview questions will guide your ethnography. Perrone et al. present a useful model for the ethnography and relevant interview questions. The paper should be at minimum ten pages double-spaced. More detailed instruction will be provided during the semester.

- Midterms (10% - first; 20% - second)
The midterms consist of take-home essay questions designed to test your ability to relate key concepts and explain these through examples provided in the class readings and discussions.
- Final (20%)
- Reading and Healing Methods Journals (10%)
This journal, or set of notes, is your weekly commentary on the readings, films and guest speakers during class. You must make weekly entries in your journals, a minimum of one full page each. The purpose of the journal is to engage you in some critical thinking about the readings prescribed each week and the healing methods presented. The last two entries must be on *The Spirit Catches You* and at least two must be on the shorter articles. Journals will be due in two parts, but you must have a total of 10 entries by the end of the semester.
- Attendance and Participation (10%)
Attendance and participation are extremely important to this course and mean not only being present during class time but also contributing thoughts, comments, and questions to the class discussion. It is important for me to see that you are engaging with the material and the concept.
- Extra Credit: Extra credit is available by attending cultural events related to world views and/or healing and by watching videos to be kept in the media library for your viewing. Extra credit work constitutes the viewing and writing on five (5) or more cultural events, films and/or readings related to cross-cultural views of healing. More information on extra credit will be provided later in the course to those of you interested. All extra credit work must be submitted no later than week 14.

Late Work and/or Missed Exams: Late work and missed exams is/are not credited. It is your responsibility to turn in work on time. Special circumstances may be considered.

Course Schedule:

(Come to class having read the required reading)

WEEK 1

Course Overview: Syllabus, assignments, evaluation

Lecture: Medical Anthropology: A Course Introduction

Discussion: Healing and Becoming a Healer

Film: *Eduardo the Healer*

WEEK 2

Lecture: World Views, the Body, and Cultural Relativity

Discussion: Perrone and Miner

Research Proposal Handout / Journal Entry Handout

Read: Perrone et al.: “Bridges: An Introduction” (pp. 3-17)

Miner’s “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema” (In Class)

WEEK 3

Lecture: Man as Nature: Traditional Navajo Medicine

Film: *Touching the Timeless: Huichol Medicine, Dene Medicine*

Discussion: Film and Perrone et al.

Read: Perrone et al.: Part One: Medicine Women (pp. 21 through 83);

WEEK 4

Lecture: Humoral Medicine and the Principle of Equilibrium

Guest Speaker: Lydia Diaz, Curandera

Read: Perrone et al.: Part Two: Las Curanderas (pp. 85 through 123)

Harris: “Someone is Making You Sick”: Conceptions of Disease in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan” (WebCT); AND

Yukes “No One Wants to Become a Healer” (pp. 44-56) (WebCT)

WEEK 5

Library Research

Meet 5:30 in KEL 3400

Mandatory Attendance

WEEK 6

Lecture: Naturalistic and Personalistic Causes of Illnesses in Indigenous Mexican and Guatemalan Medicine

Film: *Mixtec Medicine*

Read: Bade “Contemporary Mixtec Medicine” (WebCT)

MIDTERM (take-home) (10%)

JOURNALS DUE (3-4 journals, please)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

WEEK 7

Lecture: The Principle of Equilibrium in Tibetan Medicine

Film: *Amchis: The forgotten healers of the Himalaya*

Read: Fadiman, Chapters 1 through 5,

Donden’s *Healing from the Source*,

Prost’s “Causation as Strategy: Interpreting Humors among Tibetan Refugees” (optional)

MIDTERM DUE

WEEK 8

Lecture: The Principle of Equilibrium in Chinese Medicine

Guest Speaker: Beth Peckham, acupuncturist

Read: Fadiman, Chapters 6 through 11

WEEK 9

Lecture: Personalistic Illness Causation and Hmong Perceptions of Illness

Film: *The Split Horn*

Read: Fadiman, Chapter 12 through 15

MIDTERM (take-home) (20%)

WEEK 10

Lecture: Shamanism

Guest Speaker: Chris Allen, Shaman (Peruvian Based)

Read: Fadiman, Chapters 16 through 19

MIDTERM DUE

WEEK 11

Lecture: Modern Maladies Part I: Health and Healing in Disaster Situations

Read:

WEEK 12

Lecture: Modern Maladies Part II: TBA

Read: TBA

JOURNALS DUE

WEEK 13

Lecture: Shamanism, Ethnobotany and Indigenous Knowledge

Film: *A Twentieth Century Medicine Man*

Read: Plotkin, Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5 (Chapter 2 optional)

WEEK 14

Lecture: Biomedical Hegemony, Indigenous Knowledge, and the Institutionalization of Health Care

Film: *Ghana Healers*

Read: Plotkin, Chapters 7 and 9 (Chapters 6 and 8 optional)

RESEARCH PAPER DUE

WEEK 15

Lecture: The Integration of Western and Traditional Medicine

Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Frazier, Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine

Read: Reread Fadiman, Chapters 17, 18, and 19

WEEK 16

Readings

Books: (in order of assignment):

Perrone, Bobette, H., Henrietta Stockel, and Victoria Krueger. 1989. *Medicine Women, Curanderas, and Women Doctors*. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman.

Fadiman, Anne. 1997. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux: New York.

Plotkin, Mark J. 1993. *Tales of a Shaman's Apprentice. An Ethnobotanist Searches for New Medicines in the Amazon Rain Forest*. Penguin Books: New York.

Articles: (in order of assignment):

Miner, Horace. 1956. Body Ritual Among the Nacirema. *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 503-507.

Harris, Jason. 2007. "Someone is Making You Sick": Conceptions of Disease in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan. In: Adams, Walter Randolph and John P. Hawkins (eds.) *Health Care in Maya Guatemala. Confronting Medical Pluralism in a Developing Country*. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman.

Yukes, Jolene. 2007. "No One Wants to Become a Healer": Herbal Medicine and Ethnobotanical Knowledge in Nahuala. In: Adams, Walter Randolph and John P. Hawkins (eds.) *Health Care in Maya Guatemala. Confronting Medical Pluralism in a Developing Country*. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman.

Bade, Bonnie. ND. Contemporary Mixtec Medicine. Emotional and Spiritual Approaches to Healing.

*Others TBA

Optional Readings:

Prost, Audrey. 2006. Causation as Strategy: Interpreting Humours among Tibetan Refugees. *Anthropology and Medicine*. 13(2):119-130.

Coronado, Gabriel. 2005. Competing Health Models in Mexico. An Ideological Dialogue between Indian and Hegemonic Views. *Anthropology of Medicine*. 12(20):165-177.

Hoffman, Susanna M. and Anthony Oliver-Smith. 2002. Introduction to Catastrophe & culture: the anthropology of disaster. Santa Fe School of American Research Press: Oxford

*Others TBA

Student Learner Outcomes:

In ANTH301, the following skills will be reinforced:

1. Know what the human universals are: we/they dichotomy; sex; gender; world view concepts of self and other, relationship, classification, causation, space and time; subsistence (economic production and environmental interaction); political organization; social organization; kinship; religion
2. Be able to understand, converse about and write about human phenomena from an anthropological perspective: holism; evolutionary or historical changes; cultural integration (how beliefs, economies, political structures, gender, etc. are interrelated and influence each other); cross cultural comparison of human phenomena.
3. Be able to understand, converse about and write about culture in terms of its learned, symbolic, dynamic, and integrated nature. Be able to understand that culture is ideas/beliefs, that ideas/beliefs inform behavior, and that within cultural context behavior is logical.
4. Define the emic (believer, adherent, member) and etic (outsider, non-member) perspectives and know the role of the anthropologist in bridging the two.
5. Identify the ethical issues surrounding anthropological investigation and the relationship between the anthropologist and the subject or subjects.

Academic Honesty:

Each student shall maintain academic honesty in the conduct of his or her studies and other learning activities at CSUSM. The integrity of this academic institution, and quality of the education provided in its degree programs, are based on the principle of academic honesty.

The maintenance of academic honesty and quality education is the responsibility of each student within this university and the California State University System. Cheating and plagiarism in connection with an academic program at a campus is listed in Section 41303, Title 5, California Code of Regulations, as an offense for which a student may be expelled, suspended, put on probation, or given a less severe disciplinary sanction. See page 77 of the 2009-2010 General Catalog or at (<http://www.csusm.edu/academicprograms/catalog/>) for more information on the Academic Honesty Policy.

ADA Statement:

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300A, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with the Department Chair during his or her office hours in order to ensure confidentiality.