

Anthropology 123
PSYCHOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
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Hours: T 1-3

Introduction

This course introduces the field of psychological anthropology. Psychological anthropology rests upon a central claim: that cultural anthropology cannot do without a reasonably sophisticated *model of the person*. In other words, psychological anthropologists reject cultural, social, or discursive determinism and consider exclusively social-level analyses to be fundamentally incomplete or misleading. They insist that no comprehensive account of meaning, the central concern of cultural anthropology, can ignore the fact that meaning is ultimately *someone's*.

In this course we examine works that are organized around three such models of the person:

1) The *psychodynamic model* has informed the field of culture and personality, the earliest approach in psychological anthropology. Culture and personality draws extensively on Freudian theory, looking at such topics as culturally constituted defense mechanisms, child-rearing practices, psychological functions of religion, and the like.

2) The *cognitive model* is the foundation for cognitive anthropology, which examines perception, thought, self, and emotion. For many years, research in this area dealt mainly with systems of categorization. More recently, cognitive anthropologists have explored more complex knowledge structures, or “cultural models.” These are shared conceptual schemes of, for example, emotions, the self, interaction sequences, and moral systems.

3) Finally, we will look at the *experiential (or consciousness) model*, which emphasizes the complexities of human experience, consciousness, reflection, and agency and has been especially important in recent studies of self and identity.

Think of this trifold classification as a set of ideal types. Particular theorists often combine them, for example integrating psychodynamic and experiential models. The ethnographic genre of *person-centered ethnography*, which we will consider in some detail, cuts across all three paradigms.

Readings and lectures will examine theoretical issues, ethnographic studies, and selected controversies. The reading load is heavy and will keep you busy: there is no shortcut into the issues. This class deals with the invisible. Dig deep, beyond appearances. Much of the course material will be unfamiliar and difficult even for those who have had other upper-division anthropology or psychology courses. That said, if you work hard in this course you will have plenty to think about.

I may make minor revisions to this syllabus during the quarter. Any such revisions will be announced in lecture and/or through email.

Texts

Freud, Benedict, Briggs, Månsson McGinty, and *No One Home* are required. Freud's book is not just an excursion into psychological theory; it is a daring masterpiece in synthetic thinking about human beings. Ruth Benedict was a major influential figure in cultural anthropology during the mid-twentieth century. Her controversial book on Japan, written under unusually difficult circumstances, is a classic national character study. Jean Briggs is a contemporary anthropologist who has worked for many years among the Inuit of northern Canada. Her ethnography of a three-year old child is an exemplary, mind-opening exploration of that process we often unthinkingly call "learning." Anna Månsson McGinty takes a novel approach to religious conviction, examining surprising personal aspects of women's conversions to Islam. *No One Home* addresses the ways that nine Brazilians of Japanese descent work through identity quandaries while living in central Japan.

We will also be reading several chapters from books by Sapir, Obeyesekere, and Spiro. Edward Sapir, a contemporary of Benedict's, was a brilliant linguist and cultural theorist. His concerns foreshadowed much recent work in psychological anthropology, and the UC Press collection of his most important writings is a real bargain. Melford Spiro and Gananath Obeyesekere are outstanding practitioners of psychodynamic anthropology.

Required books:

- Benedict, Ruth. 1946. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. New York: New American Library. (hereafter **CS**)
- Briggs, Jean. 1998. *Inuit Morality Play: The Emotional Education of a Three-Year Old*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (**IMP**)
- Freud, Sigmund. 1961 (1930). *Civilization and Its Discontents*. James Strachey, trans. N.Y.: W.W. Norton. (**CID**)
- Linger, Daniel T. 2001. *No One Home: Brazilian Selves Remade in Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (**NOH**)
- Månsson McGinty, Anna. 2009. *Becoming Muslim: Western Women's Conversions to Islam*. N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan. (**BM**)

Recommended books:

- Obeyesekere, Gananath. 1981. *Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (**Obey**)
- Sapir, Edward. 1949. *Selected Writings in Language, Culture, and Personality*. David G. Mandelbaum, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. (**Sapir**)
- Spiro, Melford E. 1987. *Culture and Human Nature: Theoretical Papers of Melford E. Spiro*. Benjamin Kilborne and L.L. Langness, eds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (**Spiro**)

Very short list of additional general texts for those interested in psychological anthropology:

- Casey, Conerly and Robert B. Edgerton, eds. 2005. *A Companion to Psychological Anthropology*. London: Blackwell.
- D'Andrade, Roy. 1995. *The Development of Cognitive Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ethos*, journal of the Society for Psychological Anthropology (a division of the American Anthropological Association)
- Quinn, Naomi. 2007. *Finding Culture in Talk*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sperber, Dan. 1996. *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Strauss, Claudia and Naomi Quinn. 1997. *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Assignments

The assignments are two papers and one quiz.

Your grade will be calculated as follows: midterm paper 30%, final paper 50%, quiz 20%. The midterm and final assignments will ask you to address substantial, challenging questions of theory in psychological anthropology. I may also take class participation into consideration when assessing your grade.

You should remain current in the readings: it will be impossible to understand the lectures, do the papers, or participate in discussions without having studied the assigned materials carefully. I think you will find the issues provocative.

Toward the end of the quarter, there will be an in-class open-note quiz. (No books, copies of readings, or electronic devices permitted.) This should not make you unduly nervous if you have carefully done the readings and attended the lectures.

Academic dishonesty (plagiarism) will result in a failing grade and referral to the university for further discipline. If you are in doubt as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, consult http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/undergraduate_students/.

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to me in person outside of class (e.g., during office hours) within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or <http://drc.ucsc.edu/> for more information on the requirements and/or process.

Lectures and readings

Required and recommended books can be purchased at the Literary Guillotine in downtown Santa Cruz. They are also on reserve at McHenry Library. Other readings can be accessed through the eCommons site for this course. You should immediately print out the “Handouts” package from eCommons. Get into the habit of bringing it to class, as we will often be referring to it during our discussions.

WEEK

TOPICS AND READINGS

1 (4/3-4/5) Introduction (1): questions of meaning

CID, whole book

NOH, Chs. 1-2, pp. 3-41.

Linger, Daniel T. 2010. What Is It Like to Be Someone Else? *Ethos* 38(2):205-229. (You probably will not understand all of this article now, but keep thinking about it, and we'll return to it later on.)

2 (4/10-4/12) Introduction (2): psychodynamic, cognitive, and experiential models

D'Andrade, Roy G. 1984. Cultural Meaning Systems. In *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion*. Richard A. Shweder and Robert A. LeVine, eds. Pp. 88-119. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rapport, Nigel and Joanna Overing. 2007. *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.
 - Individualism, pp. 209-216.
 - Individuality, pp. 216-226.
NOH, Chs. 3-8, pp. 45-152.

Recommended:

Schwartz, Theodore. 1978. Where Is the Culture? Personality as the Distributive Locus of Culture. In *The Making of Psychological Anthropology*. George D. Spindler, ed. Pp. 419-441. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 Cohen, Anthony P. and Nigel Rapport. 1995. Introduction: Consciousness in Anthropology. In *Questions of Consciousness*. Pp. 1-18. New York: Routledge.

3 (4/17-4/19) Introduction (3): person-centered ethnography

Hollan, Douglas. 2005. Setting a New Standard: The Person-Centered Interviewing and Observation of Robert I. Levy. *Ethos* 33(4): 459-466.
NOH, Chs. 9-11, pp. 153-208.
CS, Chs. 1-4, pp. 1-97.

Recommended:

Hollan, Douglas. 2001. Developments in person-centered ethnography. In *The Psychology of Cultural Experience*. Carmella C. Moore and Holly F. Mathews, eds. Pp. 48-67. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Levy, Robert I. 1994. Person-centered anthropology. In *Assessing Cultural Anthropology*. Robert Borofsky, ed. Pp. 180-189. N.Y.: McGraw-Hill.
 Levy, Robert I. 1973. *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

4 (4/24-4/26) Cultures and persons: Sapir

Sapir, Edward. From *Sapir*:
 - Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry (pp. 509-521).
 - The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society (pp. 544-559).
 - Personality (pp. 560-563).
 - Symbolism (pp. 564-568).
 - Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist (pp. 569-577).
 - Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living (pp. 578-589).
 - The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in the Study of Cultures (pp. 590-597).
CS, Chs. 5-8, pp. 98-176.

5 (5/1-5/3) National character: Benedict

CS, Chs. 9-13, pp. 177-316.

*** **MIDTERM PAPER DUE MAY 3 AT START OF CLASS – NO LATE PAPERS** ***

6 (5/8-5/10) Psychodynamic approaches: Spiro and Obeyesekere

Spiro, Melford E. Culture and Human Nature. *Spiro*, pp. 3-31.

Spiro, Melford E. Collective Representations and Mental Representations in Religious Symbol Systems. *Spiro*, pp. 161-184.

Obey, Part 1, pp. 1-51; Part 5, pp. 169-182.

BM, Chs. 1-3, pp. 1-52.

Recommended:

The rest of *Spiro* and *Obeyesekere*.

7 (5/15-5/17) Cognitive approaches

Linger, Daniel T. 1994. Has Culture Theory Lost Its Minds? *Ethos* 22(3):284-315.

Holland, Dorothy. 1992. The Woman Who Climbed up the House: Some Limitations of Schema Theory. In *New Directions in Psychological Anthropology*. Theodore Schwartz, Geoffrey M. White, and Catherine A. Lutz, eds. Pp. 68-79. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BM, Chs. 4-9, pp. 55-185.

Recommended:

D'Andrade, Roy G. 1987. A Folk Model of the Mind. In *Cultural Models in Language and Thought*. Dorothy Holland and Naomi Quinn, eds. Pp. 112-148. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

D'Andrade, Roy G. 1995. *The Development of Cognitive Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Special Issue on the Missing Psychology in Cultural Anthropology's Key Words. 2006. *Anthropological Theory* 6.

8 (5/22-5/24) Experiential (consciousness) approaches

IMP, Introduction and Chs. 1-5, pp. 1-145; Conclusion, pp. 203-210.

Recommended:

IMP, Ch. 6, pp. 146-202.

Bateson, Gregory. 1972. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. N.Y.: Ballantine Books. (Social Planning and the Concept of Deutero-Learning, pp. 159-176; The Logical Categories of Learning and Communication, pp. 279-308.)

Cohen, Anthony P. 1994. *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity*. N.Y.: Routledge.

- Rapport, Nigel. 1997. *Transcendent Individual: Towards a Literary and Liberal Anthropology*. N.Y.: Routledge.
- Sökefeld, Martin. 1999. Debating Self, Identity, and Culture in Anthropology. *Current Anthropology* 40(4):417-47.

9 (5/29-5/31) What is a self?

- Geertz, Clifford. 1983. "From the Native's Point of View": On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding. In *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. Pp. 55-70. N.Y.: Basic Books.
- Quinn, Naomi. 2006. The Self. *Anthropological Theory* 6:362-384.
- NOH**, Chs. 12-17, pp. 209-313.

Recommended:

- Hollan, Douglas. 1992. Cross-Cultural Differences in the Self. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 48(4):283-300.
- Holland, Dorothy and Andrew Kipnis. 1994. Metaphors for Embarrassment and Stories of Exposure: The Not-So-Egocentric Self in American Culture. *Ethos* 22(3):316-342.
- Parish, Steven M. 2008. *Subjectivity and Suffering in American Culture*. N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Spiro, Melford E. 1993. Is the Western Conception of the Self "Peculiar" within the Context of the World Cultures? *Ethos* 21(2):107-153.

***** QUIZ 5/31: MANDATORY ATTENDANCE *****

10 (6/5-6/7) Experience here

- Linger, Daniel T. 2010. What Is It Like to Be Someone Else? *Ethos* 38(2):205-229. (Re-read: this time it should make more sense.)

*****FINAL PAPER DUE 6/7 AT START OF CLASS – NO LATE PAPERS*****