

Race and Decolonizing Psychological Anthropology: A Bibliography

Prepared by Brooke Jespersen, April 5, 2021

This bibliography accompanies the roundtable, “Living and Theorizing Racial Subjectivities in Psychological Anthropology,” organized by Katie Rose Hejtmanek and Sonya Pritzker for the 2021 SPA meeting. During the roundtable, the contributors—James Akpan, Stephanie McClure, Asher Goldstein, Katie Rose Hejtmanek, Stephanie Keeney Parks, and Sonya Pritzker—discussed psychological anthropology’s lack of engagement with processes of racialization. They considered how under-examination of racialization processes may perpetuate inequalities in psychological anthropology and discussed strategies for transformation. This bibliography provides additional sources on race and two topics of relevance to psychological anthropology: 1) subjectivity and affect, and 2) psychiatry and mental health. It also includes sources on decolonizing anthropology (emphasis on psychological anthropology).

Part 1: Race, Subjectivity, and Affect

Racialization refers to the historical, social, and political processes of attributing superior and inferior status on the basis of presumed biological difference (Omi and Winant, 1994; Pierre 2020). The readings in this section examine how racialization processes articulate with affect, subjectivity, and evaluations of personhood. Together, the readings highlight the unequal ways that affect and subjectivity are experienced across groups, as well as anthropology’s role in perpetuating racial hierarchies through the production of racialized conceptions of affect, emotion, and subjectivity (Berg and Ramos-Zayas 2015).

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Part 2: Race, Psychiatry, and Mental Health

This group of readings examines the relationship of race and psychiatry, including racism in psychiatry and the racialization of mental health conditions.

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Part 3: Decolonizing Anthropology (Emphasis on Psychological Anthropology)

Several decades ago, members of the Association for Black Anthropologists argued that a decolonized anthropology could emerge “from the critical intellectual traditions and counter-hegemonic struggles of Third World peoples” (Harrison 1991, 1). These anthropologists—later known as the “decolonizing generation” (Allen and Jobson 2016)—sought to rethink anthropological epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies in order to create “historical, financial, and intellectual accountability for not only the work we do, but also for the academic institutions in which we study, teach, and learn” (McGranahan and Rizvi 2016; for overview, see Thomas 2018). Given the large body of intellectual work on decolonization and the fact that most of this work has occurred outside of psychological anthropology, this bibliography is not exhaustive. Instead, this section includes influential texts on decolonizing anthropology, suggestions for decolonizing the classroom, and works written by psychological anthropologists who engage decolonial theory.

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Acknowledgements

Preparation of this bibliography was supported by the National Science Foundation, project “Strengthening Methods and Broadening Public Impacts in Psychological and Cultural Anthropology.”