

Syllabus
Cultural Models and Health
ANTH 437/HSOC 437
Spring 2008

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Meets: Mondays, 2:00-4:50 p.m., room 330, Museum

Course description:

There is a great deal of variation among population groups in the incidence of and mortality from most major diseases. Biological and social factors can account for some of this variation. However, there is increasing evidence that behavior- and the cultural models that are linked to health behavior- play an important role too. Cognitive anthropology is the study of how people in social groups conceive of objects and events in their world. It provides a framework for understanding how members of different groups categorize illness and treatment. It also helps to explain why risk perception, helpseeking behavior, and decision making styles vary to the extent they do. This seminar will explore the history of cognitive anthropology, schema theory, connectionism, the role of cultural models, and factors affecting health decision making. Research methods for identifying cultural models will be discussed and practiced.

This is an Ideas in Action Course < <http://www.fels.upenn.edu/ideas-in-action.htm>>. Students will learn how an understanding of cultural models can be used to appreciate and affect practices that lead to health disparities. Early in the semester the class will meet in Harrisburg with Dr. Calvin Johnson, Secretary of Health for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Dr. Johnson will discuss health disparities in Pennsylvania and will describe how health policies are being used to affect differences in morbidity and mortality among population groups. During the semester, the class will develop research strategies using cultural models theory which could address health problems that are raised by Dr. Johnson.

Required texts:

Naomi Quinn, Ed. (2005) Finding culture in talk. New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
Norbert Ross (2004) Culture & Cognition, Walnut Creek, Sage Publications.

Books can be purchased from the **University of Pennsylvania Bookstore**
They are also on reserve in the Museum library

Bulkpack* available from **Campus Copy**

Objectives:

The overall goal for this course is to introduce students to a framework for understanding ways that people reason about their health. Objectives include:

- Students will articulate the source, development, and role of key constructs (schema theory, connectionism, cultural models, cultural consensus theory) in cognitive anthropology
- Students will identify ways that cultural models operate to create different beliefs and behaviors among cultural groups.
- Students will describe ways that cultural models function as heuristic devices for health care decision making
- Students will demonstrate ability to utilize one of three research strategies (freelisting, pilesorting, narrative analysis) to identify a cultural model
- Students will utilize cultural models theory and methods in a research proposal

Course requirements:

- 1) The course will be conducted in seminar style. Readings assigned for each week will be discussed in depth in class. You are encouraged to play an active role in the discussion and to attend each class. *20% of grade*
- 2) You will develop an annotated bibliography on cognitive anthropology consisting of readings that you do for class as well as suggested readings, if they interest you. Each week, as you read the required and suggested readings, you should write a brief synopsis of each of the readings. The purpose of this annotated bibliography is to provide YOU (not me) with an accessible summary of the readings. You might want to assign key words to each reading so that you can retrieve them easily with reference software. You should also include questions or issues from the readings for discussion in class. The bibliographies will not be graded for content, but I will ask you to submit your working bibliography at three time points during the semester. *15% of grade*
- 3) The class will be divided into five or six groups (depending upon how many students are in the class). Each group will be responsible for conducting the class discussion on the readings. I will distribute a template for these discussions and will set up a section of the blackboard site for intragroup communication. Creativity in presentations is encouraged. *15% of grade*
- 4) Students will identify a problem with health disparities that can be addressed (at least in part) using cognitive anthropology theory and methods. In small groups, students will craft a research proposal that utilizes cognitive anthropology theory

and methods to address a problem in health disparities. Each member of the group will be responsible for a different part of the proposal. The proposal must consist of a rationale, a relevant review of the literature, a methods section, and a data analysis section. Each small group will present their proposal (20 minutes per presentation) to the class on **April 21 or April 28, 2008**. We hope to have a representative from the Department of Health present for the presentations. (25 % of grade)

- 5) A jointly authored, written version of the proposal is due on **May 2**. Each student should indicate which section s/he has written. Length should be approximately 20 pages. The format will be discussed in detail in class. (25% of grade)

Final grades will be based upon:

Class participation	20%
Leading group discussion	15%
Annotated bibliography	15%
Group presentation	25%
Final proposal	25%

Week 1 **January 28, 2008**

Introduction to cognitive anthropology

Role of cognitive anthropology in understanding health and illness

Cultural models for breast cancer

Week 2 **Feb 4, 2008**

Class trip to Harrisburg to meet with Secretary of Health Dr. Calvin Johnson

History of the development of cognitive anthropology/Classification

Read: Ross, intro, ch. 1, 2

Chowdury et al. Food beliefs and practices among British Bangladeshis with diabetes:

Implications for health education. *(Chowdhury, Helman et al. 2000)

Supplemental reading: Pinker, How the mind works Ch 5*

Week 3 **February 11, 2008**

Culture as socially distributed knowledge

Read: Ross, ch 3

Schemas and motivation, (D'Andrade 1992) ch 2*

Hannerz, ch 1, the Nature of culture today. (Hannerz 1992)*

Matthews, Negotiating cultural consensus in a breast cancer self-help group. (Matthews 2000)*

Submit working bibliography

Week 4 **February 18, 2008**

Cultural Models: What do they do? How do they work?

Read:

Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*, ch 1 and 2 (Lakoff and Johnson 1999)*

Loewe and Freeman, *Interpreting diabetes mellitus: differences between patient and provider models of disease and their implications for clinical practice*. (Loewe and Freeman 2000)*

Supplemental reading: Switzer, Wittink, Karsch, Barg, *Pick yourself up by your bootstraps*. (Switzer, Wittink et al. 2006)*

Week 5 **February 25, 2008**

Schema theory and connectionism

Lakoff & Kovecses, *Cognitive model of anger in American English* (Lakoff and Kovecses 1987)*

Strauss and Quinn, pp 48-88 *Schema theory and connectionism* (Strauss and Quinn 1997)*

David R. Shanks, *Distributed representations and implicit knowledge: A brief introduction*, ch 6 (Shanks 1997)*

Supplemental reading: Goldin-Meadow, Nusbaum, Kelly, Wagner, *Explaining math: Gesturing lightens the load*. (Goldin-Meadow, Nusbaum et al. 2001)*

Week 6 **March 3, 2008**

Rationality in the real world

Reasoning in health and illness

Hausmann-Muela and Muela Ribera, *Recipe knowledge: a tool for understanding some apparently irrational behavior* (Hausmann-Muela and Ribera 2003)*

Special issue: *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, pp.267-362, Hunt and Mattingly, guest editors, (Browner 1998; Garro 1998; Garro 1998; Hunt 1998; Hunt and Mattingly 1998; Mattingly 1998) *

Supplemental reading: Gordon , *They don't have to suffer for me*, (Gordon 2001)*

Submit working bibliography

Week 7 **March 17, 2008**

Memory and emotion: What do they do to beliefs about health?

Worthman, *Emotions: You can feel the difference* (Worthman 1999)*

Kovecses, *Metaphor and Emotion* ch 1 and 2 (Kovecses 2000)

Garro, *Remembering what one knows and the construction of the past* (Garro 2000)*

Mellers et al , *Effects of emotions and social processes on bounded rationality* (Mellers, Erev et al. 2001)*

Week 8 **March 24, 2008**

Research methods in cognitive anthropology (read over the next two weeks)

Ross, ch 4 and 5

Romney, Batchelder, Weller, Recent applications of cultural consensus theory. (Romney, Batchelder et al. 1987)*

Handwerker, Reasoning with numbers 569-591* (Handwerker and Borgatti 1998)

Weller, Structured interviewing and questionnaire construction* (Weller 1998)

Dressler, Culture, socioeconomic status, and coronary heart disease risk factors in an African American community (Dressler, Bindon et al. 1998)*

Gravlee: Ethnic classification in southeastern Puerto Rico: The cultural model of “*color*” (Gravlee 2005)*

Week 9 **March 31, 2008**

Continue readings from week 8

Week 10 **April 7, 2008**

Research methods in cognitive anthropology

Begin Quinn book.

Submit working bibliography

Week 11 **April 14, 2008**

Research methods in cognitive anthropology

Quinn book.

Week 12 **April 21, 2008**

Group presentations

Week 13 **April 28, 2008**

Group presentations

Bulkpack Bibliography

- Borgatti, S. (1999). Cultural consensus theory. The Ethnographic Toolkit. J. Schensul and M. Weeks. Newbury, Sage Publications.
- Browner, C. (1998). "Varieties of reasoning in medical anthropology." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 356-362.
- Chowdhury, A. M., C. Helman, et al. (2000). "Food beliefs and practices among British Bangladeshis with Diabetes: Implications for health education." Anthropology & Medicine 7(2): 209.
- D'Andrade, R. (1992). Schemas and motivation. Human Motives and Cultural Models. R. D'Andrade and C. Strauss. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 23-44.
- Dressler, W. W., J. R. Bindon, et al. (1998). "Culture, socioeconomic status and coronary heart disease risk factors in an African American community." Journal of Behavioral Medicine 21(6): 527-543.
- Garro, L. C. (1998). "On the rationality of decision-making studies: Part 2: Divergent rationalities." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 341-355.
- Garro, L. C. (1998). "On the rationality of decision making studies: Part 1: Decision models of treatment choice." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 319-340.
- Garro, L. C. (2000). "Remembering what one knows and the construction of the past: A comparison of cultural consensus theory and cultural schema theory." Ethos 28(3): 275-319.
- Goldin-Meadow, S., H. Nusbaum, et al. (2001). "Explaining math: Gesturing lightens the load." Psychological Science 12(6): 516-522.
- Gordon, E. (2001). "They don't have to suffer for me: Why dialysis patients refuse offers of living donor kidneys." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 15(2): 245-267.
- Gravlee, C. C. (2005). "Ethnic Classification in Southeastern Puerto Rico: The cultural model of "color"." Social Forces 83(3): 949-970.
- Handwerker, W. P. and S. P. Borgatti (1998). Reasoning with numbers. Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology. H. R. Bernard. Walnut Creek, AltaMira Press.
- Hannerz, U. (1992). Cultural complexity: Studies in the social organization of meaning. New York, Columbia University Press.
- Hausmann-Muela, S. and J. M. Ribera (2003). "Recipe knowledge: A tool for understanding some apparently irrational behavior." Anthropology & Medicine 10(1): 87-103.
- Hunt, L. M. (1998). "Moral reasoning and the meaning of cancer: Causal explanations of oncologists and patients in southern Mexico." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 298-318.
- Hunt, L. M. and C. Mattingly (1998). "Introduction: Diverse rationalities and multiple realities in illness." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 267-272.

- Kovecses, Z. (2000). Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture and Body in Human Feeling. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson (1999). Philosophy in the Flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought. New York, Basic Books.
- Lakoff, G. and Z. Kovecses (1987). The cognitive model of anger in American English. Cultural Models in Language and Thought. D. Holland and N. Quinn. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Loewe, R. and J. Freeman (2000). "Interpreting diabetes mellitus: Differences between patient and providers models of disease and their implications for clinical practice." Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 24: 379-401.
- Matthews, H. (2000). "Negotiating cultural consensus in a breast cancer self-help group." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 14(3): 394-413.
- Mattingly, C. (1998). "In search of the good: Narrative reasoning in clinical practice." Medical Anthropology Quarterly 12(3): 273-297.
- Mellers, B. A., I. Erev, et al. (2001). Group report: Effects of emotions and social processes on bounded rationality. Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox. G. Gigerenzer and R. Selten, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Romney, A. K., W. H. Batchelder, et al. (1987). "Recent applications of cultural consensus theory." American Behavioral Scientist 31(2): 163-177.
- Ross, N. (2004). Culture & Cognition. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publishing.
- Shanks, D. R. (1997). Distributed representations and implicit knowledge: A brief introduction. Knowledge, Concepts and Categories. K. Lamberts and D. Shanks. Cambridge, MIT Press.
- Strauss, C. and N. Quinn (1997). A cognitive theory of cultural meaning. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Switzer, J. F., M. N. Wittink, et al. (2006). "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps: A response to depression in older adults." Qualitative Health Research 16(9): 302-309.
- Weller, S. C. (1998). Structured interviewing and questionnaire construction. Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology. H. R. Bernard. Walnut Creek, AltaMira Press.
- Worthman, C. M. (1999). Emotions: You can feel the difference. Biocultural Approaches to the Emotions. A. L. Hinton. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.