TRADITIONAL MEDICINE, SHAMANISM AND FOLK ILLNESS
IN LATIN AMERICA

M264: Latin American Studies/Anthropology/Community Health Sciences
Mondays, 12:00-2:50pm, CHS 61-262
Spring 2013

Dr. Bonnie Taub
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS
This course examines the role of traditional medicine and shamanism in Latin America. We will explore how indigenous and mestizo groups throughout the region diagnose and treat folk illness and Western defined diseases with a variety of methods. Culturally defined illnesses such as soul loss, nervios and evil eye will be explored. Several case examples of shamanistic traditions and healing practices of bonesetters, midwives, healers of witchcraft, soul loss and other medicine women/men will be explored through lecture, readings, film. We will examine the use of art, music and ritual as well as psychotropic plants as part of the very heart of many Latin American cultural traditions.

Course Learning Objectives
1) To obtain an understanding of health status, beliefs and practices with an emphasis on cultural, psychological, political, social, historical and economic influences at the individual, family and community levels in a regional global context
2) In depth exploration of health promotion strategies and activities, including traditional, clinical, grass roots, social, educational at the community level
3) Opportunity to critically research and assess cross-cultural health issues

CHS 264: Learning Objectives linked to ASPH competencies

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<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Competencies (Source in Parentheses)</th>
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<td>1. To provide students with understanding of historical, cultural, social and educational influences on health at the individual, family, community and international levels in a regional global context.</td>
<td>Diversity and Culture #1 (ASPH MPH) Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences # 2, #6, #10 (ASPH MPH)</td>
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<td>2. To learn about health practices and participatory community involvement with regards to local healing techniques, clinical services, grass roots, and traditional means of health communication in the Americas region.</td>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences #7 (ASPH MPH) Communication and Informatics # 10(ASPH MPH)</td>
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<td>3. To learn to critically assess the literature on the role of culture in health promotion in an international context.</td>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences # 8 (ASPH MPH) Communication and Informatics # 7(ASPH MPH)</td>
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M264: ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

1. Class participation and weekly attendance (10%)

Readings Discussion Leader- students to prepare discussion questions and a 1 to 2 page summary about books and lead a discussion with others, during one of the following sessions:
- Week 4: Peyote Hunt
- Week 5: Way of the Shaman
- Week 7: Tobacco & Shamanism

3. Animal Guide Paper- write a two page paper describing, from an animal’s point of view, how as a shaman you might transform into that animal, move and sound like it, and the meaning associated with it. Choose an animal that you feel a kinship with. Be prepared to discuss paper and attach a photo or drawing of your animal and turn in to class. Due Week 5 (10%)

4. Summary Discussion (5 pages long, double spaced) of an Interview you Conduct with a traditional or alternative health practitioner in Latin America or in Los Angeles, of Latin American or other cultural origin (ie: curandero, bonesetter, herbalist, masseuse, priestess, shaman, oriental medicine doctor, acupuncturist, etc.) Attach notes/ & topic guide. Due Week 7 in class (20%)

5. Final Paper on a topic of your choice related to traditional medicine, folk illness and shamanism in Latin America. Paper to be 12-14 pages long, double-spaced. Paper due finals week, on Monday, June 10 to Taub mailbox on A level, at School of Public Health or emailed (50%). Your interview and paper topic may coincide. A one paragraph description of your paper topic with list of three references is due Week 6.

6. Oral Presentation to the class about your final paper topic, lasting 15 minutes, including a one page handout summary. Student presentations to be given during class, weeks 8 and 10 (10%).

READINGS

Weekly reading assignments will be required (see later). The course reader will be available for purchase from Westwood Copies on Gayley Avenue in Westwood village. Books will be available for purchase at the Health Sciences Bookstore.

Books:
- Meyerhoff, B. Peyote Hunt, Cornell University Press, 1976
- Wilbert, Johannes. Tobacco & Shamanism in South America, Harvard Press, 1993

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<th>SESSION</th>
<th>DATE 2013</th>
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<td>Mondays</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Introduction to the study of Traditional Medicine, Folk Illness and Shamanism in the Americas</td>
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| 2       | April 8  | Indigenous Healers & Folk Illnesses- Mexico, Mesoamerica, Andes  
*Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamami* |
| 3       | April 15 | Shamanic Traditions/Mapuche(Guzman)  
Films: *Eduardo the Healer; Huichol Sacred Pilgrimage to Wirikuta*  
View films at Powell Media Lab, Room 270 |
| 4       | April 22 | Hallucinogenic Plants & Shamanism  
Mushrooms/ Mazatec & Peyote/Huichol; San Pedro-Peru  
*Peyote Hunt Discussion* |
| 5       | April 29 | Trance and Altered States of Consciousness;  
Shamanism and Nahuales  
*Way of the Shaman Discussion*  
Animal Guides Paper Due |
| 6       | May 6    | Afro-Brazilian and Caribbean Spiritism/Santeria  
*Healing States* |
| 7       | May 13   | Shamanism in South America;  
Warao & Yanomamo; RainForest, *Magical Death, Tobacco and Shamanism Discussion, Interview Paper Due* |
| 8       | May 20   | Healing Artifacts- Meet at Fowler Museum of Cultural History  
Student Presentations |
| 9       | May 27   | Memorial day- University Holiday /No Class |
| 10      | June 3   | Student presentations |
REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1 Introduction
Eliade, Mircea, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*  
Chapters 1, 2

Week 2 Traditional Healers/Folk Illness
Eliade, Mircea, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*  
Remainder of book

Recommended:
Bohigian, George, The history of the evil eye and its influence on ophthalmology, medicine and social customs, Documenta Ophthalmologica 94 91-100, 1997, Netherlands.


Week 3: Shamanic traditions
BOOK – Meyerhoff, B. *Peyote Hunt* (first half)  
Recommended: Article on Mapuche

Week 4: Hallucinogenic Plants/Discussion
Meyerhoff, B. *Peyote Hunt* – finish

Furst, Peter, Chapter 11: “To Find our Life”: Peyote Hunt of the Huichols of Mexico;  


Week 5  Trance and Altered States  
Eliade, Mircea, Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, Chapters 3, 4, 9  

Week 6  Afro-Brazilian/Candomble/Spiritism/Santeria  
Furst, P. Hallucinogens and Culture, Chandler and Sharp Publishers, Tenth Printing, 2000  
Introduction, pp. 1-18; Chapter 10: The Diabolic Root.  

Chapter from Voeks, Robert, Candomble Medicine in Sacred Leaves of Candomble:African Magic, Medicine, and Religion in Brazil, U of Texas Press, 1997  


Week 7 South America-Shamanism  
Wilbert, Johannes. Tobacco & Shamanism in South America, Harvard Press, 1993  

Furst chapter  
Recommended: Plants of the Gods: on ayahuasca, datura, etc.  

Week 8- Healing Artifacts/Fowler Museum/Student Presentations  
Furst, Peter:Remaining chapters  
Recommended: Schultes book  

Week 9  Memorial day/Review  
Articles for paper  
Week 10  Student Presentations