

Medical Anthropology (6)

**Cultural systems models** (source: Winkelman M, "Culture and Health", Chapter 4, Jossey-Bass, 2009)

- Present cultural systems models as bases for understanding cultural influences on health
- Differentiate aspects of cultural systems to emphasize material, social and mental influences on health
- Illustrate cultural effects of health in nutrition, reproductive activities, gender and family activities
- Present different ideological aspects of culture that can be used to enhance health, particularly religious healing approaches that provide healing and care
- Introduce evaluation procedures for ascertaining health needs and program effectiveness
- Present the ethnographic rapid assessment, response, and evaluation protocols for assessing cultural dimensions of health and creating community-responsive health care

Cultural models for health assessment

- Diverse models are necessary for organizing learning about and research into the myriad influences on health and addressing the multiple areas of culture.
- Key issue in developing culturally responsive care and health services is an assessment of community health needs. This also incorporate communities into health care planning, development, delivery, and assessment.

Cultural systems approach to health = health is a product of the relationships among many subsystems or fields: the physical environment, the social environment, individual behavior, medical care services, and the generic and biological levels

- Cultural systems are recognized in several levels: infrastructure (=physical: roads, sanitary water, housing, nutrition, reproduction), structure (=social: family, kinship, community networks) and superstructure (=mental: behaviors and ideas or mental representations such as beliefs about the causes of diseases and the best means of treating them)
- As superstructure, we need to understand the worldview and symbolic resources
  - Religion as an ideological cultural resource
  - Curing, healing and care: pilgrimage as social healing
  - Culture care
  - Witch-doctor's legacy ~ anthropological medicine
    - accepting client's representation of symptoms, worldview, and explanatory model
    - addressing client's concerns and the personal and social consequences of illness
    - using cultural approaches to enhance client confidence and disclosure
    - developing a personal style that enhances client's sense of acceptance and positive relations
    - cultivating a charismatic approach that enhances client confidence
    - creating a positive community image

<Debate of next week>

- Read the PNG case in handout<sup>1</sup>. Under such situation, PNG should  
(Prop side) keep traditional witchcraft and distinguish appropriate health message for such case?  
(Opp side) completely stop to believe witchcraft and sorcery and promote modern health services everywhere?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.irinnews.org/report/100040/witchcraft-and-png-s-disappearing-health-service>  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-21363894>