May 21, 2026 <minato-nakazawa@people.kobe-u.ac.jp>

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 topic for the next week>

- Some indigenous people in the world still believe supernatural existence and traditional superstition as thier ***superstructure***. For instance, Yanomami in Amazon is known as "fierce people", who sometimes make conflict, refuse medical treatment, and so on (see, below). However, such indigenous people cannot be free from the effect of globalization. Covid-19 cases and death were reported.
  - https://www.yanomami-hilfe.de/wp-content/uploads/phj_19_page_52-55-yanomami.pdf
  - https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1376692/
  - http://anthroniche.com/darkness_documents/0603.pdf
  - https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.14318/hau4.3.003
  - https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/%28SICI%291098-2337%281998%2924%3A2%3C97%3A%3AAID-AB2%3E3.0.CO%3B2-P
  - http://anthroniche.com/darkness_documents/0594.pdf
  - https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/27/opinion/yanomami-covid-brazil.html
  - https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/04/first-coronavirus-deaths-indigenous-communities-amazon/
- Should indigenous people change their ***superstructure*** to adapt globalized world?
  - Prop: Yes
  - Opp: No