Multicultural Psychology
Psychology 276
November-December, 2010

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Class hours: Selected from 9-11 AM and 1-3 PM Monday-Friday

Introduction
Multicultural psychology can be defined as the systematic study of psychology in many (or “multi”) cultures or contexts. “Culture” is used in many different ways and can refer to nationality, race, ethnicity, or country of origin. “Culture” can also refer to “cultural life” and artistic opportunities; the historical, food, clothing, family, religious, and historical traditions or rituals of specific groups; or the behaviors and thought patterns of subgroups within a country or across nations (e.g., “teen culture” or “Asian American experience”). “Culture” can be used to refer to descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural, and genetic aspects of experience.

In addition to the complicated uses of terms such as culture and psychology, a multicultural psychology course may emphasize within-country and domestic themes, or transnational and global themes. In the former case, the content of multicultural psychology encompasses the range of cultures present within North America and examines similarities and differences among groups. It also focuses on how structural inequities such as oppression, prejudice, privilege, and discrimination may influence the cognitive, affective, and behavioral experiences of persons within North America. Beyond North American borders, multicultural psychology (sometimes referred to as cultural psychology or cross-cultural psychology) encompasses the study of cultures and nations around the world.

North American psychology has been characterized as “a child of its culture,” and as bound by Western concepts of individualism. In light of the growing recognition of culture-bound aspects of American psychology, psychologists have increasingly examined the foundations of Western psychology and ways in which psychological constructs can be used in ethnocentric ways, and are attempting to place psychology in a more global, diverse perspective. Within this class, we will examine within-North America issues and challenges as well as transnational and global concerns. Given the breadth of this content, this course can only provide “slices” or case studies of cultural variation. It is my hope that this sampling method will provide a frame of reference or strategy for examining other cultural themes relevant to psychology throughout your educational career.

In summary, then, this course will explore the ways in which psychology is socially constructed and will pay particular attention to the following factors as they influence human development: oppression, language, acculturation, economic concerns, racism and prejudice, sociopolitical factors, child-rearing practices, religious practices, family structure and dynamics, and cultural values and attitudes. Over the course of this block, we will examine multicultural aspects of psychology within the United States and will also explore the possibilities for more globally situated psychologies.

Class Texts and Readings
Journal articles and chapters (see schedule) posted on Moodle

Class Requirements
Regular attendance
Short overnight reaction papers
Two tests
Participation in and leadership of discussion
Psychosocial and social identity interview paper
Concise research paper
Explanation of Class Requirements

Tests
Class members will complete two tests: Friday, December 3 and Friday, December 17. Tests will include both objective and essay questions. The highest proportion of test points are devoted to essay and short answer responses.

Occasional Overnight Response Papers
These short directed papers will require approximately one-page responses related to the topic of study for a specific day.

Psychosocial and Social Identity Interview Paper
Due: Wednesday, December 8
Recommended length: 5-6 pages
This paper is based on your interview with another person. The primary purpose of this assignment is to gain a better understanding of psychosocial issues that are relevant to a person from a diverse cultural or ethnic context. Below I have recommended a variety of questions and issues that are relevant to the paper. In general, the discussion of any of the themes explored in class (e.g., racism, identity development, acculturation) can be incorporated within the paper. If you are unable to find another person to interview, it is possible to focus on your own experience (but please check with me first). In this case, you will reflect on the relevance of each of the themes listed below for yourself.

Paper content and organization
The paper should begin with an introduction, which should include demographic information such as the respondent’s pseudonym (avoid using the person’s name in order to protect his or her privacy), age, sex, ethnicity, relationship to the interviewer, family composition, current residence. The introduction should include a statement of your purpose and how the paper is organized. In writing the paper, the following questions or areas of analysis are likely to be especially relevant.

1. According to acculturation models presented in your text (e.g., Berry’s), how would you characterize the acculturation experiences of the respondent and his/her family? Which mode of acculturation appears to be displayed by the respondent and his/her family? Have the respondent and his/her family experienced acculturative stress? Describe.
2. How do you understand the respondent’s socioeconomic status in relation to how society is stratified by ethnicity (refer to chapter 2’s section on ethnic minority stratification)? What other individual characteristics are related to stratification in your respondent’s life?
3. How do you understand the respondent’s psychosocial challenges (i.e., problems that negatively impact his/her daily functioning) in relation to his/her acculturation experience and exposure to social stratification? Are there specific risk factors that may predispose him/her to psychological distress? (Refer to risk behaviors, culture and health, and psychological distress sections of text.)
4. How has your respondent and his/her family coped with these psychosocial challenges? Are there any protective factors in their lives that may help buffer the effects of stress?
5. How would you characterize the respondent’s ethnic identity based on ethnic minority models reviewed in Chapter 5 (e.g., Cross or Phinney’s model of ethnic identity or Root or Collins’ for biracial individuals)?
   a. How would you describe the different components of the respondent’s ethnic identity? Explain and provide examples.
   b. What stage(s) of ethnic identity development best capture(s) the experiences of the respondent? Explain and provide examples.
6. What other identity formation issues (e.g., gender, sexual, class), as outlined in Chapter 5, best represent your respondent’s experiences? Explain and provide examples.
7. How have racism and discrimination impacted your respondent’s life? How does your respondent cope with racial stressors?
Potential questions for the psychosocial interview

Ethnic identity
“How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity?” (You may also ask about the person’s multiple identities.)
“What thoughts/feelings do you have about your ethnic group?” (e.g., its social problems and contributions)
“What thoughts/feelings do you have about the dominant culture?”
“What thoughts/feelings do you have about other ethnic groups?”

Experiences with racism and discrimination:
“Have you had any personal experiences with racism or other ‘isms’?”
If the response is “No,” “Do you know of other members of your ethnic group who have experienced racism and discrimination? Please describe these incidents.”
“Has discrimination ever interfered with your life?” (e.g., with your work or school performance, relationships)
If yes, “Please explain.” “How do you deal with racism and discrimination?”

Socioeconomic status (SES)
“What is your highest level of education?” “What was the highest level of education obtained by your parents?”
“What is your current job?” “What is (are) the current job(s) of your parents?”

Immigration and migration history of the respondent, acculturation experiences
“Please tell me about your family’s immigration to the United States?” (if immigration is relevant);
“What challenges did you and your family face during relocation?”
“What types of adjustment challenges have you faced in making cultural transitions?” “How have you dealt with these challenges?”

Concise Research Paper
Due: Wednesday, December 15 Recommended length: 6 to 8 pages
Minimum number of sources: 4 (one source may be a class reading)

Research Option 1: Research on modern racism or ethnic/racial development
A substantial body of research focuses on modern forms of racism, gender bias, or ethnic identity development. For this paper, you will review closely related research articles (qualitative or quantitative research) on a specific topic. The paper should begin with a clear definition of the racism-related construct or identity theory and should be followed by a discussion and critique of studies. At least 3 of the articles should be empirical research articles on the topic. Additional description of this paper will be distributed in class. Relevant topics include:
-microaggressions & racism
-aversive or modern racism
-perceived racism & psychological/physical distress
-research on internalized racism (may include interactions with internalized heterosexism, sexism etc.)
-ethnic identity development in a specific group (e.g., adolescents, African American persons, Latinos)

Research Option 2: A mental health issue introduced in Crazy Like Us
The book Crazy Like Us uses 4 case studies to explore how Western concepts of mental health have been applied in other settings without careful attention to cultural values and differences. The topics explored in this book include eating disorders (Hong Kong), posttraumatic stress disorder and disaster responses (Sri Lanka), medical treatment of depression (Japan), and schizophrenia (Zanzibar). Using one of these chapters as a foundation or starting point, explore some aspect of the issue in greater detail. As part of the paper, you should provide your own critical analysis of the issue, which may vary from the analysis provided by the author (Ethan Watters). In addition, you should provide recommendations for culturally appropriate application of psychological assessments or interventions.
Crazy Like Us is a “trade book” that is written primarily for the general public. Although the book is well researched, the writing style is rather different than primary source research material in psychology. Your task will be facilitated by exploring some of the primary research materials used by this author and expanding on the chapter content and to provide greater depth of perspective. A recommended approach is to consult the reference list associated with each chapter, secure these resources or closely related sources, and write a paper that analyzes the issue. You may also use other primary sources and studies that are relevant to the topic. At least two of the sources you use should be original research studies (not literature reviews).

Another alternative is to take the subject matter of a chapter and apply it to another country. For example, one option would be to explore eating disorders (chapter 1) in an Asian country other than Hong Kong. As another option, you might focus on a topic such as post-traumatic stress in response to the Rwandan genocide.

Research Option 3: Study of a psychological issue with human rights implications

Many topics relevant to multicultural psychology have implications for social justice. A short list of these issues includes domestic violence and other forms of violence against women, war-related trauma, poverty, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS infection, and racism/discrimination. If you choose to focus on the psychological implications of a major issue facing a country or region, you should begin by providing an in-depth analysis of the issue or problem. For this aspect of the paper, you may rely on materials both within and beyond psychology. This analysis should include reference to the following themes that are relevant to the issue: family structure, value systems, religion and spirituality, economic and socioeconomic factors, ethnic diversity and/or conflicts, form of government and legal policies, and history of colonialism and/or war. When possible, you should discuss theory and research related to the psychological impact of the issue (e.g., depression, trauma, mental health, treatment) and discuss the need or implications for intervention and social change. Whenever possible, discuss how psychological interventions should be matched to values and traditions of importance within the country or region.

The following description clarifies general standards for grading research papers.

Superior (A): This paper not only fulfills the assignment, but also has something original and important to say and the points it makes are well supported. It is organized effectively, develops smoothly, and it is written clearly and correctly (according to scientific writing standards). It is based on data or a review of the literature that is clearly related to the points it makes. Findings from the literature are integrated into a readable and comprehensive paper. The conclusions suggest that the writer has synthesized the literature and has identified strengths and limitations of the literature as well as future directions for research and theory. The paper is written correctly with regard to mechanics and citation style.

Good (B): This paper fulfills the assignment. Its general ideas are clear and it is presented effectively. It handles sources clearly, and includes no serious errors of fact or interpretation. Although it may not represent substantial new insight into the issues, it provides an adequate and appropriate report about data or literature. Generally, the paper is correct with regard to usage, is appropriate in style, and uses correct standards of writing, including bibliographic citations.

Average (C): This paper fulfills the assignment adequately, but it might be better described as an annotated bibliography. Points may be hard to follow and the paper may be poorly organized (e.g., unbroken narrative with no headings or clear relationships; literature review that summarizes sources merely in sequence without synthesizing points). There may be errors of fact or interpretation. Sources or data may be poorly chosen – insufficient in number, of inappropriate types, too old, lacking in authority, etc. There may be errors in usage, the style may be inappropriate for the assignment, or there may be errors in mechanics of writing or citation.

Marginal (D/F): This paper does not fulfill the assignment. It may fail to focus on a single topic or subject. It omits important material or makes repeated errors of fact or interpretation.
Make-up Exams and Late Papers
Occasionally students become ill immediately before an exam or the due date of a paper. Students who wish to request extensions because of illness or personal crises must notify me in a timely fashion (e.g., before the day the assignment is due and before a test begins.) In other cases, papers that are submitted after the deadline will be considered late and will be penalized 1/2 grade for every 24 hour period after the stated deadline.

Accommodations for Disabilities
Cornell College is committed to providing equal opportunities to all students. If you have a documented learning disability and will need any accommodation in this course, you must request the accommodation(s) from the instructor of the course within the first three days of the term. Additional information about the policies and procedures for accommodation of learning disabilities is available on the Cornell website at http://cornellcollege.edu/student_affairs/compass/academic-policies.shtml.

Academic Honesty
The College considers Cornell students to be responsible persons who maturity will develop in a community that encourages free inquiry. The College expects the highest degree of personal integrity in all relationships. Any form of dishonesty is a violation of this spirit and of College rules. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. Dishonesty in academic work includes both cheating and plagiarism. For more information, see http://cornellcollege.edu/student_affairs/compass/academic-policies.shtml.

Approximate Values Assigned to Class Assignments
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<th>Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>60-80</td>
<td>(45-50%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial and identity</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>(9-10%)</td>
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<td>Short research paper</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>(20-22%)</td>
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<td>Participation/attendance</td>
<td>30-35</td>
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<td>One-page writing assignments</td>
<td>20-30</td>
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<td>Total points</td>
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Grading Scale
A=94%
A-=90%
B+=87%
B=83%
B-=80%
C+=77%
C=73%
C-=70%
D+=67%
D=63%
D-=60%
F=59% and below
**Working Class Schedule & List of Readings**

**Monday, November 22**
Defining Multicultural Psychologies: global, cultural, cross-cultural, & indigenous psychologies
A.M.: Introduction and overview
P.M.: Movie
Recommended Reading:

**Tuesday, November 23**
World Views, Value Orientations, and Cultural Dimensions
Individualism and Collectivism: Culture, the Self, and Development
Reading:
Text, Chapters 1 & 2
www.geert-hofstede.com, overview of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions

Activity: Complete the Independence/Interdependence Questionnaire (the Kato/Markus Questionnaire), which can be found at www.personalityresearch.org. Click on “tests” (toward the top/left area of the screen. Then scroll down to Cognitive Social Theories section, and within that section, click on Independence/Interdependence Questionnaire.

**Wednesday, November 24**
Culturally Appropriate Research
Reading:
Text, Chapter 3
Otsuka, S. (2005). *Talanoa research: Culturally appropriate research design in Fiji.*
Begin reading *Persepolis 2*

**Monday, November 29**
Acculturation and Immigration
Reading:
Text, Chapter 4
*Persepolis 2*

**Tuesday, November 30**
Identity Development: Ethnic/Racial Identity
Reading:
Text, Chapter 5
Excerpt from Tatum, B. D. *Why are all the Black kids sitting together the cafeteria?* *Persepolis 2*
**Wednesday, December 1**
Identity Development: Ethnic/Racial Identity and Intersecting Identities
Reading:
Text, Chapter 5 (continued)
Recommended:

**Thursday, December 2**
Stereotyping, Prejudice, Discrimination, Racism
Reading:
Text, Chapter 7

**Friday, December 3**
Test #1
PM: Movie

**Monday, December 6**
Subtle Biases, Internalized Oppressions, and Their Consequences
Stereotype threat and other internalized “isms” (e.g., internalized racism)
Microaggressions
Reading:
Text, Chapter 7

Class assignment: Complete an implicit association test (IAT) at implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

**Tuesday, December 7**
Culture, Gender, and Mental Health
Gender Issues, Inequalities, and Intimate Violence in Cross-Cultural Context
Reading:
*Crazy Like Us*, Chapter 1
Other recommendations:

**Wednesday, December 8**
Trauma and Mental Health
Due: Psychosocial Identity Paper
Trauma, Natural Disasters, and Psychological Distress
Reading:
*Crazy Like Us*, Chapter 2

**Thursday, December 9**
Culture and Violence: Genocide
Reading:
APA Resolution on genocide

**Friday, December 10**
Family and Intimate Relationships
Reading:
Text, Chapter 6

**Monday, December 13**
Culture, mental health, and culture-based expressions of distress
Reading:
Text, Chapter 9
*Crazy Like Us*, Chapter 4

**Tuesday, December 14**
Culture and physical health
Reading:
Text, Chapter 8
Wednesday, December 15
Culturally Sensitive Interventions
DUE: Research paper
Reading: 
*Crazy Like Us,* Chapter 3

Thursday, December 16
Toward an inclusive psychology
Reading: 

Friday, December 17
Test #2