

IMAGINING HEALTH

"What is Medical Anthropology?"

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Episode 2 STUDY GUIDE



KEY TERMS

Cultural Awareness: Recognition of the nuances of one's own and other cultures.

Cultural Competence: The ability of individuals to use academic, experiential, and interpersonal skills to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups. Cultural competency implies a state of mastery that can be achieved when it comes to understanding culture.

Encompasses individuals' desire, willingness, and ability to improve systems by drawing on diverse values, traditions, and customs, and working closely with knowledgeable persons from the community to develop interventions and services that affirm and reflect the value of different cultures.

QUESTIONS

- *Why is culture important in matters of health and medicine?*
- *Is medicine shaped by culture, or is culture shaped by medicine?*
- *Based on what you have seen in media coverage of major social health concerns (e.g., the novel coronavirus pandemic, the opioid crisis) how do you think that the coverage reflects cultural assumptions about illnesses? Where do they come from, how are they transmitted, and what might be needed to address them?*

CULTURE & HEALTH

Culture-Bound Syndromes: A culture-bound syndrome is a collection of signs and symptoms that is restricted to a limited number of cultures by reason of certain psychosocial features. Culture-bound syndromes are usually restricted to a specific setting, and they have a special relationship to that setting. Because culture-bound syndromes are classified on the basis of common etiology (e.g., magic, evil spells, angry ancestors), clinical pictures may vary. Culture-bound disorders occur throughout the parts world.

Some examples are amok, latah, and koro (parts of Southeast Asia); semen loss or dhat (East India); brain fag (West Africa); ataque de nervios and susto (Latinos); falling out (US South and Caribbean).

CANCER MATCH BY JOHN DICKEY

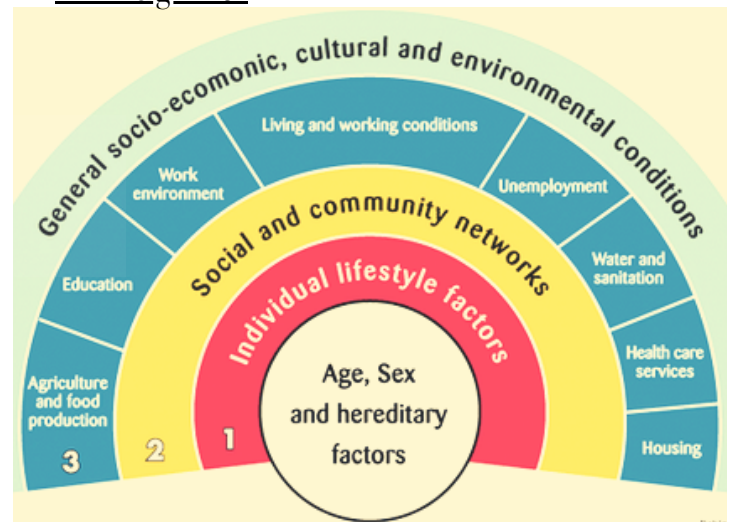
Read here [CANCER MATCH](#)

QUESTIONS:

- What metaphors does Dickey Use?
- Is it helpful? Why?
- -How is the experience of cancer understood through the metaphors Dickey uses?
- What are the implications of each metaphor?

LISTEN

[Martina McBride "I'm going to Love you Through It"](#)



THE SPIRIT CATCHES YOU AND YOU FALL DOWN BY ANNE FADIMAN

- American journalist Anne Fadiman examines the intense clash between American and Hmong cultures through the case of Lia Lee, a Hmong child.
- Lia's wellbeing is inextricably bound up in the pursuit of 'best interest standards' by all those around her.
- Fadiman reports on the complicated interactions between them all and examines the deep-rooted struggles of power relationships between health and culture.

QUESTIONS-

- Do immigrants migrate because they want to?
- What do you think about the Fish Soup story? (Why is it important?)



WITCHCRAFT AND THE AZANDE

- Azande distill a narrative into socially significant events.
- Witchcraft is primarily invoked for social phenomena that are deemed significant and/or slow-moving.
- Witchcraft complements, rather than dominates, the causal beliefs of the Azande.

SONTAG'S ARGUMENT

Metaphors can be damaging when describing illness....aims to strip illness of its meaning (language.)

Patients suffer not just from the illness but also from the IDEAS of the illness.

- Examples- when an illness is thought of as a punishment ---AIDS, Cancer