

Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

---Neale Donald Walsh

ANTY 336: *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*

The University of Montana—Missoula
Spring Semester 2017

Instructor: C. Riley Augé, PhD

Time and Place: Tue. & Thurs. 11:00-12:20 **Room:** SS 252

Office: SS 224 **Office Hours:** T/Th 1:00-2:30 and by appointment

Phone: 249-5851 **Email:** cynthiariley.auge@mso.umt.edu



Course Description: Offered in an experiential exploration format, this course introduces students to the anthropological study of supernatural concepts. Unlike the approaches of theologians and historians, anthropologists view mythological, magical, and religious belief and their associated rituals as integral components of social and cultural systems to be studied in comparative and historical perspective. Students will become acquainted with the diversity of belief systems worldwide and learn to apply anthropological concepts to the study of myth, ritual, magic, and religion. In addition to traditional topics, the course will also include food rituals, supernatural landscapes, sport as religious phenomenon, and monstrosity.

Learning Objectives:

- gain vocabulary for the anthropological comparative study of belief systems and practices
- analyze and evaluate ethnographic case studies from literate and nonliterate societies
- gain an understanding of the roles and mechanisms of myth, ritual, and religion as cultural constructs
- learn and practice analytical writing formats as a vehicle for critical thinking and anthropological analysis

Required Text and Materials:

Lehman, Myers, and Moro, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion* (6th or 7th edition)

(Supplemental reading materials and suggestions for optional reading will be provided in each class.)

You will also need a field journal. This does not need to be weatherproof—unless you plan to conduct your ritual project outdoors. It should be sturdy and ample enough to accommodate notes, images, etc. from throughout the semester and particularly through your ritual project observations. A standard spiral notebook is probably not sufficient.

Disability accommodation: If you are registered with Disability Services and need accommodation, please notify the instructor by the end of the first week of the course.

Class Preparation

The lectures will be based on readings, films, class discussion, and handouts. Be prepared for class by completing the assigned readings and any writing assignments before class. Bring your textbook and journal to every class meeting.

Grading

Students will be assessed on class participation, writing assignments, two in-class exams, and a final presentation:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Exam 1 | 50 pts |
| Exam 2 | 50 pts |
| Journal | 50 pts |
| Question Paper | 50 pts |
| Pilgrimage | 25 pts |
| Participation | 25 pts |
| Classification Exercise | 25 pts |
| Ritual Project | 100 pts |
| Final Presentation | 25 pts |
| Total Points | 400 |

Final Course Grades will be accorded plus/minus designations.

Exams: All grades are based on the traditional 100 point scale (A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-9; F=59 and below). Make-up exams are only allowed in the case of illness, family emergency, military duty, participation in University sponsored sports competition (documentation from Athletics department required), or participation in academic events (documentation required). You will not be eligible for a make-up exam for your family reunion, vacation, or 'personal day.'

Attendance

Attending every class meeting is very important since we cover a great deal of material during the semester. Information and experiences presented in class go beyond that found in your textbook and readings and will reflect topics on the exams. Additionally, material generated from class discussions and activities may be included on the exams.

Academic Misconduct (<http://www.umt.edu/studentaffairs/sccAcademicConduct.htm>)

Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. Academic misconduct is defined as all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to: 1) plagiarism, 2) misconduct during an examination or academic exercise, 3) unauthorized possession of examination or other course materials, 4) tampering with course materials, 5) submitting false information, 6) submitting work previously presented in another course, 7) improperly influencing conduct, 8) substituting, or arranging substitution, for another student during an examination or other academic exercise, 9) facilitating academic dishonesty, and 10) altering transcripts, grades, examinations, or other academically related documents.



Meoto Iwa Shinto Shrine, Japan

Class Schedule (** denotes an in-class activity day)

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Week One | The Anthropology of Religion |
| Jan. 24 | Introductions, Syllabus, Writing Projects |
| Jan. 26 | Anthropology of Religion ** (Ritual creation) |
| Week Two | Mythological Foundations |
| Jan. 31 | Mythology |
| Feb. 2 | Cosmology and Worldview ** (Imbolg food ritual) |
| Week Three | Symbolic Classification |
| Feb. 7 | Symbolic Classification and Totem |
| Feb. 9 | Taboo, Identity, and Boundary Maintenance ** (Jewish food ritual) |
| Week Four | Spiritual Beings |
| Feb. 14 | Gods, Demons, and Supernatural beings |
| Feb. 16 | Ancestors and Ghosts; Spirits and Souls |
| Week Five | Ritual |
| Feb. 21 | Nature of Ritual: Environment, Symbol, and Speech ** (Empowered sound) |
| Feb. 23 | Ritual Process: Initiation ** (film) |
| Week Six | Ritual Specialists |
| Feb. 28 | Divination and Trance ** (Special Guests) |
| Mar. 2 | <i>First Exam</i> |
| Week Seven | Magic and Witchcraft |
| Mar. 7 | Magic ** (Identifying Magic) |
| Mar. 9 | Witchcraft and Sorcery |
| Week Eight | Death |
| Mar. 14 | Funerals and other Deathways |
| Mar. 16 | Symbolic Associations of Death |
| Week Nine | SPRING BREAK |
| Mar. 20-Mar 24 | No Classes |
| Week Ten | The Natural Environment |
| Mar. 28 | Animism |
| Mar. 30 | Pilgrimage and Place ** (Pilgrimage) |
| Week Eleven | Agents of Change |
| Apr. 4 | Revitalization Movements and Cargo Cults |
| Apr. 6 | ** TBA |
| Week Twelve | Sex, Gender, and the Sacred |

Apr. 11 Fertility and Creation
Apr. 13 Gender and the Social Order *** (Gendered dance performance)

Week Thirteen **Contemporary Issues**
Apr. 18 Proselytism and Conversion
Apr. 20 Sports as Religious Phenomenon

Week Fourteen **Contemporary Issues**
Apr. 25 Monstrosity: Vampires, Werewolves, Cannibals, and Zombies
Apr. 27 Harry Potter, Wicca, and Witchcraft

Week Fifteen **Conclusions**
May 2 *Second Exam*
May 4 Conclusion and Evaluation

Final Exam Day: **Tuesday, May 9th 8-10am**
You will not have a final exam, but you will do your final presentations during this time slot.

Chronology of Paper Due Dates:

Question Paper (**March 2**)
Magical Material Culture Classification (**March 14**)
Ritual Observation #1 Journal review (**March 16**)
Ritual Observation Comparative Analysis Paper (**May 4**)
Journal (**May 9**)

Graduate Students

In addition to the class assignments, you will read ONE of the following texts or one of your choice with instructor approval and write a 700-1000 word book review. Instructions for writing a book review are attached. The book review is due **April 14, 2017**.

James Siegel's *Naming the Witch*

Lorraine Aragon's *Fields of the Lord*

Maggie Kilgour's *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation*

Paulo Apolito's *The Internet and the Madonna: Religious Visionary Experience on the Web*

Diane Bell's *Ngarrindjeri Wurruwarrin: A World That Is, Was, and Will Be*

Klara Bonsack Kelly and Harris Francis' *Navajo Sacred Places*

Karen McCarthy Brown's *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*

Susan Greenwood's *Magic, Witchcraft and the Otherworld: An Anthropology*

J. David Lewis-Williams and D. G. Pearce's *San Spirituality: Roots, Expression, and Social Consequences*

Anna S. Meigs' *Food, Sex, and Pollution: A New Guinea Religion*

GUIDE FOR BOOK REVIEWS

All reviews must be **typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, with one-inch (1") margins** all around. Be sure to put your name and the class on the front of the paper and to **staple** all pages together. All writing assignments must follow the American Anthropological Association Style Guide. Up to one letter grade may be deducted for poor style, grammar, and usage.

Book reviews are expected to be critical evaluations rather than synopses or abstracts. While you need to describe the nature and content of the book, most of the review should be analytical rather than descriptive. You must also provide a logical or empirical basis for your opinions and support your arguments and assertions. You may consult any professional journal for examples. All reviews must be 700-1000 words and should contain the following elements:

1. Full bibliographic citation, including: author(s), full title, publication information (place of publication & publisher), and year of publication (See AAA Style Guide). **This goes at the top of the first page as a title/heading.**
2. A brief discussion of the nature (monograph or edited volume) and major emphases and topics of the book. This should include the primary subjects covered and the theoretical or methodological approach(es) used.
3. A brief description of the organization and contents of the work. This should be provided in an essay (not outline) format and should take about one or two paragraphs.
4. Evaluation of the quality and usefulness of the work in terms of: a) description and detail; b) historical and/or social background provided; c) interpretation and analysis; d) presentation, organization, and style.

Do not include foot- or endnotes or cite other works. Citations to the work being reviewed are given in the text as page numbers in parentheses.

Although not a comprehensive list, below are some relevant journals that publish articles pertinent to the anthropological study of myth, ritual, religion, and magic.

Africa
African Studies
African Studies Review
American Anthropologist
American Ethnologist
American Historical Review
American Journal of Sociology
American Scientist
Annual Review of Anthropology
Anthropology of Consciousness
Anthropology Today
Anthropos
Behavioral Science Research
Comparative Studies in Society and History
Cultural Survival Quarterly
Current Anthropology
Ethnology
Ethos
Folklore
Gender and History
Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion
Journal of Altered States of Consciousness
Journal of American Folklore
Journal of Contemporary African Studies
Journal of Ecclesiastical History
Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion
Journal of Modern African Studies
Journal of Psychoactive Drugs
Journal of Religion
Journal of Religion in Africa
Journal of Ritual Studies
Journal of the American Society of Psychical Research
Journal of Transpersonal Psychology
Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft
Method and Theory in the Study of Religion
Numen
Past and Present
Pulpit & Pew Research Reports
Religion
Religious Studies Review
Scientific American
Semiotica
Speculum
Symbols
The Historical Journal
Worship

Online Journals

Hoodoo and Conjure Quarterly (<http://planetvoodoo.com>)

Paranthropology: Journal of Anthropological Approaches to the Paranormal (www.paranthropology.co.uk)

The Journal for the Academic Study of Magic as Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural (<http://preternature.org>)