

ANT 3241 Section AM01
Magic, Ritual, Belief
Summer 2009
Dr. Ty Matejowsky

Course Information

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:00PM-3:50PM
UCF Classroom Bldg 3, Room 0308

Contacting the Professor

Office Hours: 1:00PM-2:00PM Tuesdays, Thursdays, or by appointment (room 409k Philips Hall)
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Course Description: This is an upper-division course designed to familiarize students with anthropological perspectives on religion and the supernatural. In this class we will examine topics such as types of belief systems, religious specialists, rituals and symbols, religious use of drugs, divination and magic, witchcraft and sorcery, the occult, and revitalization movements.

Course Objectives: The objectives of this course are fourfold:

1. to introduce students to various belief systems
2. to explore the concepts of magic and witchcraft
3. to acquaint students with ethnomedicine and the religious use of drugs
4. to examine religious change.

Course Format: This is a mixed-mode course comprised of both face-to-face class meetings and class modules in UCF Webcourses.

The traditional lecture format will be utilized as the primary mode of instruction in the face-to-face class meetings. Supplementing lectures will be the occasional video presentation. Student participation is vital to the success of the course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material presented in the assigned readings. Students will be responsible for **all** material covered in class lectures, web modules, assigned readings, and films.

Web modules will entail relevant lecture material that corresponds with assigned class readings from the texts.

Required Texts (purchase in Bookstore)

1. Lehman, Arthur C., James E. Myers, and Pamela A. Moro. 2006. *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural*. Seventh Edition. McGraw-Hill
2. Davis, Wade. 1997. *The Serpent and the Rainbow*. Reissue Edition. Touchstone Books.

Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion will serve as the basic text for this course. This selection of articles focuses on topics relevant to the anthropological study of belief systems and the supernatural. *The Serpent and the Rainbow* is much more specific in focus. It provides an

ethnographic account of voodoo, “zombification” and the traditional belief systems underlying Haitian society. A study guide for *The Serpent and the Rainbow* is included with the syllabus.

Tests: Tests: There will be four multiple choice exams held on the dates scheduled below. Exams will occur on the day scheduled and must be taken in class. Each exam will consist of around 50 plus questions covering material presented in lectures, readings, and video presentations. Anyone caught cheating on an exam will be assigned a **zero** for that exam. Students will have the first 50 minutes of class to complete the exam.

Note: All students are required to take all four exams. If they do so, the lowest grade of the three will be dropped in the calculation of their total exam grade. If they miss one or more of the exams, however, the “0” grade for the missed exam(s) **will be included** in the calculation of their total exam grade (i.e., **a “0” grade for missed exams will not be dropped.**)

Course Grades: Final grades will be determined by (1) your performance on the non-cumulative exams and (2) my assessment of your class participation & preparedness.

Four Exams = 90% (22.5% each or 30% if the lowest score is dropped)

Class participation & preparedness = 10%

Total = 100%

Grading System:

A = 93+, A- = 90-92, B+ = 88-89, B = 83-87, B- = 80-82, C+ = 78-79, C = 73-77, C- = 70-72, D+ = 68-69, D = 63-67, D- = 60-62, F = 59 or below.

I will only discuss matters related to grades/grading during office hours or by appointment (i.e. not in class, after class, or by phone/email).

There will be **no** “extra work/credit” to improve your grade. If you think you are failing the course, please contact me right away.

Changes in the Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make appropriate changes in the syllabus, the testing procedure and the grading basis, if in the professional judgment of the instructor, such modification is in the best interest of fulfilling the course objectives and assuring the academic integrity of the course and the institution. Any changes of this type will be announced in class. It is the student’s responsibility to keep up on course information if s/he is absent. Thus, you should make every effort to attend classes. If you are having difficulties that interfere with the class, I urge you to contact me.

Attendance Policy: The structure and nature of this course demands that students be present in class. Class attendance is one of the major factors I consider when assessing student participation points.

Besides lecture, much of the material presented in class will take the form of videos. These visual presentations must be viewed in class and can not be loaned out. Moreover, the instructor will not provide students access to his lecture notes. If you are seeking notes from a missed lecture please get them from a classmate. Please know that I will not put you in contact with

* note: this takes into account the lowest test score being dropped

other students for notes.

Incompletes: A grade of "I" is only given in cases of extreme emergency or special & highly documented circumstances late in the semester, provided that you have been making satisfactory progress. In order to be considered for an "I", students **must** contact the professor prior to the scheduled final exam on **June 25, 2009**.

Withdrawals: The withdrawal deadline for Summer Term A 2009 is **Friday June 5, 2009** which is the last date to withdraw or drop out without grade penalty.

Miscellaneous: Students are expected to conduct themselves with appropriate classroom behavior during class meetings. Disruptive behavior such as talking, passing notes, texting, sleeping, and the like may result in the student being asked to leave class. Also, please do not bring cell phones and pagers to class. If you choose to use a laptop in class, please refrain from web-surfing or sending emails.

If there is anything in the syllabus that is unclear, it is up to the student to contact the professor for clarification.

Accommodations: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate forms upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with **Student Disability Services** before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Tentative Class Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the class. Students are responsible for keeping up with any changes in syllabus/schedule which are announced in class.

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Topic</i> | <i>Readings</i> | <i>Assignment</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| WEEK ONE Tuesday May 19 | Introduction & Course Overview | | |
| Module 1 | Anthropological Study of Belief | None | |
| Thursday May 21 | Religious Practitioners | <i>Religious Specialists</i> by Victor W. Turner (pp. 147-154). | |
| Module 3 | Rituals and Symbols | <i>Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage</i> by Victor W. Turner (pp. 91-100). | |
| WEEK TWO Tuesday May 26 | | None | EXAM 1; film |

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| Module 5 | Magic & Divination | <i>Consulting the Poison Oracle among the Azande</i> by E.E. Evans-Pritchard (pp. 290-295); <i>Baseball Magic</i> by George Gmelch (302-308). | |
| Thursday May 28 | Witchcraft & Sorcery | <i>An Anthropological Perspective on the Witchcraze</i> by James L. Brain (pp. 265-271); <i>Sorcery and Concepts of Deviance among the Kabana, West Britain</i> by Naomi M. McPherson (pp. 272-280). | |
| Module 7 | Religious Use of Drugs | <i>On The Peyote Road</i> by Mike Kiyaani and Thomas J. Csordas (pp.192-194). | |
| WEEK THREE Tuesday June 2 | | None | EXAM 2; film |
| Module 9 | Ethnomedicine & Healing | <i>Eyes of the Ngangas: Ethnomedicine and Power in Central African Republic</i> by Arthur C. Lehman (pp.216-224). | |
| Thursday June 4 | The Occult & Paranormal | None | |
| Module 11 | Death: Ghosts, Souls & Ancestors | <i>Death Be Not Strange</i> by Peter A. Metcalf (pp. 332-335); <i>The Real Vampire</i> by Paul Barber (pp. 319-324). | |
| WEEK FOUR Tuesday June 9 | | | EXAM 3; film |
| Module 13 | Revitalization Movements | <i>Revitalization Movements</i> by Anthony F.C. Wallace (pp.385-390); <i>The Ghost Dance Religion</i> by Alice Beck Kehoe (pp.391-395); <i>Cargo Cults</i> By Peter M. Worsley (pp.396- | |

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| | | 400); | |
| Thursday June 11 | Rastafarianism | <i>Urban Rastas in Kingston, Jamaica</i> by William F. Lewis (pp. 401-406). | |
| WEEK FIVE Tuesday June 16 | Snake Handlers | <i>Serpent Handling as a Sacrament</i> by Mary Lee Daughtery (pp.81-86). | |
| Thursday June 18 | Voodoo | <i>The Serpent and the Rainbow</i> Chapters 1-8. | |
| WEEK SIX Tuesday June 23 | Voodoo | <i>The Serpent and the Rainbow</i> Chapters 9-13. | |
| Thursday June 25 | None | None | EXAM 4 |

Study Guide for *The Serpent & the Rainbow* (1985) Wade Davis

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|--|-----------------|
| Terms from the ready for which you will responsible | |
| <i>vodoun</i> | <i>hougan</i> |
| <i>bokor</i> | <i>houmfour</i> |
| <i>coup poudre</i> | |
| <i>coup l'aire</i> | |

Part One – The Poison

Chapter 1 – What sub-branch of Anthropology does the author pursue?

Chapter 2 – What was Davis' assignment in Haiti? What medical applications did Klein & Lehman believe the unidentified drug could remedy? What were the common characteristics of those who had experienced or were victimized by the process of zombification?

Chapter 3 – What is the significance of the datura plant to Davis' research? Where did it originate? What is the author's calabar hypothesis?

Chapter 4 – What does the ritual of *Rada* entail? Who is Marcel Pierre? What services did he provide Davis?

Chapter 5 - What were the important historical developments that gave rise to the traditional Haitian belief system? What are the differences between Haiti's urban elite & rural peasantry? What were the traditional West African values emphasized in the Haitian social world? How does *voudoun* act as a social control?

Chapter 6 – How does the author, Marcel Pierre & the others collect ingredients for the poison? What were the ingredients Marcel Pierre used for this powder? How did the poison's antidote work according to Davis?

Part Two – Interlude at Harvard

Chapter 7 – What did Davis determine to be the active ingredient in the zombie poison? What are the effects of tetrodotoxin? How does this relate to Japanese delicacies?

Chapter 8 – What are the fundamental signs associated with voodoo death? How does the way an individual is socialized relate to voodoo death?

Part Three – The Secret Societies

Chapter 9 – What three critical pieces of information did Herard Simon impart to Davis? What are the two types of zombis & processes of creating them discovered by Davis?

Chapter 10 – Why is vodoun not an animistic religion? How does scientific thinking differ from the beliefs of vodoun society? What are the two aspects of the vodoun soul? According to vodoun beliefs, how does death occur? What must the bokor do to successfully resurrect a zombie cadaver?

Chapter 11 – How did the development of secret societies affect the emergence of Haitian society? How did these organizations traditionally go about administering justice? What other functions did the secret societies perform on the local level?

Chapter 12 – What was the basis for selecting individuals for zombification? What role did family members have in such decisions? How does the Haitian military & the secret societies relate? What are some of the important positions within these organizations?

Chapter 13 – What are the seven actions/transgressions that can lead to zombification identified by Davis? How do they related to the zombie victim – Clairvius Narcisse? What is the relationship between secret Haitian societies & the Duvalier regime?