

Dr. Mark A. Freeman

PSYC 025 - Cross-Cultural Psychology

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## O v e r v i e w

Mainstream psychology has long neglected the role of culture in its theories of behavior; the interdisciplinary field of cross-cultural psychology represents an attempt to correct this imbalance. The subject matter of cross-cultural psychology, then, is the study of how culture and the psychology of the individual "make each other up." It is more than the mere study of cultural differences, although this is a basic issue in the field.

## R e q u i r e d T e x t s

Required readings are made available on-line to students in the course only, and in the library at the reserve desk. Links in syllabus below will take you to these documents, which are in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf or "portable document format") format.

Instructions on accessing and reading required texts

Make sure you have Adobe Acrobat Reader on your machine...

Try one of the links below; your computer should already be configured to read these files. If not, then download Adobe Acrobat Reader now.

To ACCESS the reading...

**IMPORTANT:** These files are restricted access, which means the links to the reserve readings will only work if you are logged on to the Drew network as yourself (if you didn't type in your own username and password in the window that looks like this, you can't access them).

## Course Requirements

Requirement	% of Final Grade
1. Participation and Attendance	5%
2. Short Papers	10%
3. Midterm Exam	30%
4. Reading, Presentation, & Book Review	25%
5. Final Exam	30%

1. Participation & Attendance. This is not a "gimme" portion of the final grade; you will have to earn it with regular class participation. I will try to manage class time so that everyone has an opportunity to fulfill the in-class participation requirement. Regular attendance is obviously a basic prerequisite for participation, so I will take attendance regularly and that will also enter into the determination of this portion of the final grade.

2. Short paper (10% of final grade). You will attend at least one of the events from multi-cultural awareness week, and write a short (~ 3 page) paper relating some aspect of cross-cultural theory (i.e., moral development, human rights vis a vis cultural emphasis on hierarchy) to the talk you attended. I will make recommendations of talks to attend for this purpose, although of course you are encouraged to attend any of your own choosing. If you attend a session and feel you will be unable to relate its contents to what we are discussing in class this week, I would recommend attending another talk until you feel you have enough to write about. This paper is due October 5.

3. (& 5). Midterm and Final Exam. The mid-term is scheduled during class time on October 19, will last about one hour, and will consist of some multiple choice and some short answer items. The final exam is to be scheduled during the exam period, and will also be multiple choice and short answers. The final exam will not be cumulative.

4. Reading, Oral Presentation, and Book Review. Six outside book-length readings have been selected for their relevance to the content of the course. You will select one of these to read and, along with four of your peers, develop a presentation for the rest of the class. In addition, you will hand in a five-page "book review" no later than one week after your oral presentation. Here are more details about this assignment.

Readings. You will need to purchase these yourself from a book vendor. All are in print, in paperback and all are under \$15 (I recommend, assuming you or a friend has a credit card, using one of the on-line vendors such as <http://www.amazon.com> Amazon.com or <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/> Barnes and Noble). We will discuss a system through which you will be allowed to have, as much as possible, your choice of book to read. I have provided each group with some thought questions that you are free to use (or not) to help structure your discussion and connect it to the course material (click [here](#) to go to the presentation schedule and click on the relevant link to see your thought questions).

First, read the book. The six books are:

1. Anand, M. R. (1990). *Untouchable*. Penguin Press. [Click [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0140183957/ref=sim\\_books/002-4594963-4876655](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0140183957/ref=sim_books/002-4594963-4876655)>here to order book or read reviews from amazon.com] This book will be used to discuss the social and psychological effects of living at the "bottom rung" of a culture in which the principle of hierarchical relationships is central. From the book jacket: "Bakha is a young man, a proud and even an attractive young man, but none the less he is an outcast in a system that is now only slowly changing and was then as cruel and debilitating as that of apartheid. Into this re-creation of one day in the life of Bakha, sweeper and latrine-cleaner, Anand poured a vitality, fire and richness of detail that have caused him to be acclaimed as his country's Charles Dickens as well as this century's greatest revealer of the Other, India."
2. Mernissi, F. (1995). *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*. Perseus Press. [Click <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0201489376/o/qid=935070100/sr=2-3/002-1965758-6609630>>here to order book or read reviews from amazon.com] This book will be used to present what, for many of you, will be a radically different social construction of gender. It is partly historical, since the world described herein no longer exists in this form.
3. Schaller, S. & Sacks, O. (1995). *A Man Without Words*. University of California Press. [Click <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0520202651/qid=966964462/sr=1-1/102-8262204-6073730>>here to order book or read reviews from amazon.com] A fascinating look at how an understanding of sign language and deafness can shed new light on our view of the relationship between thought and the cultural phenomenon of language. Asks questions such as, "Is it possible to think without language?" "Does the nature of our language determine the way we think?" "What are the cognitive and neurological implications of processing language in a visual, rather than an auditory, medium?"
4. Welch, J. (1987). *Fools Crow*. Penguin Publishing. [Click <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0140089373/qid=966963711/sr=1-2/102-8262204-6073730>>here to order book or read reviews from amazon.com] Drawing from his own family history and research as a Blackfeet Native American Indian, Welch describes what life was like on an Indian reservation around 1870, during the time of the westward expansion of whites. Part fiction, part historical account, the purpose of this reading will be to examine this groups' conception of "intelligence" or, more broadly, "competence" in adapting to particular social and ecological context that is changing rapidly. Does it bear any similarity to our own culture's conception of intelligence? Should it?
5. Wickremasinghe, M. (1962). *Viragaya: The way of the Lotus*. [The English translation of this text is out of print -- you will need to borrow a copy directly from me]. A

fictional autobiography of a Sri Lankan man whose life presents a puzzle to those around him. Viragaya is translated as "without fire/passion/desire," and this describes the life of this man who, at every major point in his life, has avoided worldly attachments such as money, love, family, home. The puzzle is this: Is he a virtuous man (Buddhism, a major religion in Sri Lanka, describes such a monastic ideal in which worldly attachments are avoided in favor of meditation on the so-called truths of existence: impermanence, selflessness, and the belief that this life is unsatisfactory, full of suffering), exemplifying the highest principles of his religion and community, or is he in some sense mentally ill, a sufferer of some psychological malady such as depression or avoidant personality disorder? The answer, as you will see, depends mainly on your own cultural perspective.

6. Santiago, E. (1999). *Almost a Woman*. Vintage Books. [Click <[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ts/book-glance/037570521X/ref=pm\\_dp\\_ln\\_b\\_1/102-8262204-6073730](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ts/book-glance/037570521X/ref=pm_dp_ln_b_1/102-8262204-6073730)>here to order book or read reviews from amazon.com]. Though this autobiographical account of a young woman's move from San Juan, Puerto Rico to Brooklyn, New York, we will discuss issues of acculturation and debate the possibility of maintaining a "bi-cultural" identity. Santiago is a brilliant writer and spoke at Drew about the book that is the precursor to this one, *When I Was Puerto Rican*, in 1998.

Next, give an oral presentation. A schedule for the oral presentations is provided below. As a group, you will arrange to meet with me one full week prior to the date of your scheduled presentation, at which point we will discuss the content, organization, and distribution of responsibilities for your presentation. You will be evaluated as a group (this group grade will contribute 50% of your final grade for this assignment). Total length will be about 30-40 minutes. A suggested model for your presentation would be to spend 20-25 minutes presenting your topic, leaving 10-15 minutes for discussion of criticisms or questions which you deem central or problematic. A significant portion of your grade will be determined by whether you succeed in generating class discussion on the topic, so develop and try out thought-provoking questions in advance.

Evaluation of oral presentations will be based on the following criteria:

1. Clarity of discussion - 50% of presentation grade
  - Is your presentation easy to follow?
  - Have you made explicit connections to the course material?
  - Are difficult concepts clearly presented?
2. Format & Organization - 25% of final grade
  - Have you focused on the most relevant issues or have you tried to include too much detail?
  - Have you employed overheads, handouts, or other visual materials where appropriate?
  - Does the presentation wander or is it focused and coherent?
3. Discussion - 25% of final grade
  - Did you manage to generate discussion on the topics of particular interest to you?
  - Did you respond to criticisms and objections adequately, given the extent of your reading?

Book Review. You will write up a book review of 6-8 pages in length. This will be graded individually, and will comprise the other 50% of your final grade for this assignment. You should not simply summarize the book's plot. Rather, your review should address the larger themes in the text relevant to this course. Your review should debate the questions raised by the book in the context of the concepts covered in this course. If direct connections to course material can be made, so much the better. By all means, use quotes and plot material in your review, but only to the extent necessary to make your point about the cross-cultural issues involved. It is OK if this overlaps somewhat with the content of your group's oral presentation, but the paper should also reflect your independent thought and writing.

## MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

Late assignment policy. All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Points will be deducted for lateness as follows:

Before end of class on due date: 1 point deducted (out of 100)

After class, but within 24 hours of due date: 5 points deducted (out of 100)

24-48 hours after due date: 10 points deducted (out of 100)

After 48 hours: Receive a „0% for the assignment, unless accompanied by excuse approved by a dean or other appropriate campus official.

Tests will be taken on the dates they are scheduled on the syllabus, at the beginning of class. Be sure to arrive on time. If you need to miss class on the day of a test for any reason, please show me a note from a campus official (dean, health services official, etc.) to take a makeup test without penalty.

If you miss a scheduled test without an approved excuse, a makeup will be given, but will have 25 points deducted out of a possible 100 (i.e., the highest possible grade is a 75, assuming a perfect score).

If you miss class on the day you are scheduled to give a presentation, you will receive a „0% for that portion of your grade, unless your absence is approved in writing by a dean or other appropriate campus official.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: links to readings work only when accessing through the Drew network

Week Topic Readings Assignments

Weeks 1 - 2: Basic Issues in Cross-Cultural Psychology

Introduction and course overview

Is psychology a culture-bound discipline?

Lonner & Malpass (1994).

Sears (1986).

What is "culture" anyway?

Brislin (1993).

NYT article (web only)

Explaining cultural differences

Nisbett (1986)

Weeks 3 - 7: Social Behavior Across Cultures

Individualism & collectivism

Bellah et al. (1985)

Kagitcibasi (1997)

Individualism & collectivism In-class film: Individualism in America (25 mins)

Culture & moral development

Shweder et al. (1993)

Attend at least one MCAW event

Hierarchy versus egalitarianism

Branscombe & Ellemers (1999)

Klostermaier (1989)

Quigley (1993)

In-class film: Caste at Birth (35 mins)

Hierarchy versus egalitarianism

Group Presentation #1: Untouchable

Gender across cultures

Wade & Tavris (1994)

Williams & Best (1994)

MCAW short report due

Gender across cultures  
Group Presentation # 2: Dreams of Trespass

Non-verbal communication  
Matsumoto (1996)  
In-class film: A World of Gestures (25 mins)

Midterm exam

Weeks 8 - 10: Culture and "Basic" Psychological Processes

Culture and sensation  
Freeman (handout)

Culture and perception  
Segall et al. (1999)  
Highwater (1981)

Culture and perception  
NYT article (web only)  
Presentation # 3: A Man Without Words

Culture, cognition, and intelligence  
Segall et al (1999)  
Brualdi (1998)  
Gardner (1984)

Culture, cognition, and intelligence  
Group Presentation # 4: Fools Crow

Weeks 10 - 14: Applications of Cross-Cultural Psychology

Doing business internationally  
Brislin (1993)

Doing business internationally  
In-class film: Your passport to Int'l Business (15 mins)

Culture and health  
Berry et al. (1992)

Psychopathology across cultures  
Brislin (1993)  
Kleinman (1988)

Psychopathology across cultures In-class film: Disordered states (40 mins)  
Group Presentation # 5: Viragaya

Acculturation & culture contact

Berry (1994)

LaFromboise (1993)

Acculturation & culture contact

1) View film on Drew network: The Japanese Version (8 pm & 10 pm, 12/4) (60 mins)

2) In-class film: Cannibal Tours (30 mins)

Course wrap-up and review

Presentation # 6: Almost a Woman

Final exam as scheduled during exam period

## Complete Reading List

- 9.7.00 Lonner, W. J., & Malpass, R. S. (1994). When psychology and culture meet: An introduction to cross-cultural psychology. In W. J. Lonner & R. S. Malpass (Eds.), *Psychology and culture* (pp. 1-12). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 9.7.00 Sears, David O. (1986). College sophomores in the laboratory: Influences of a narrow data base on psychology's view of human nature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 515-530.
- 9.12.00 Brislin, R. (1993). Understanding culture's influence on behavior. (Conceptualizing culture and its impact) (pp. 1-27). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- 9.12.00 Angiers, N. (Aug 22, 2000) "Do Races Differ? Not Really, Genetics Shows."
- 9.14.00 Nisbett, R. E. (1993). Violence and U.S. regional culture. *American Psychologist*, 48, 441-449.
- 9.19.00 Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1985). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. New York: harper & Row. (Chapters 1-2 only)
- 9.19.00 Kagitcibasi, C. (1997). Individualism and collectivism. In *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology Vol 3* (1-51) pp. 1-31 only.
- 9.28.00 Branscombe, N. R. & Ellemers, N. (1998). Coping with group-based discrimination: Individualistic versus group-level strategies. In J. K. Swim & C. Stangor (Eds.), *Prejudice: The target's perspective* (pp. 243-266). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- 9.28.00 Klostermaier, K. (1989). *A survey of Hinduism. (The Hindu social order)* Albany: SUNY Press. (pp. 316-327)
- 9.28.00 Quigley, D. (1993). *The interpretation of caste. (Dumont's theory of caste)* Oxford: Clarendon Press. (pp. 21-38)
- 10.5.00 Wade, C. & Tavis, C. (1994). The longest war: Gender and culture. In W. J. Lonner & R. S. Malpass (Eds.), *Psychology and culture* (pp. 121-126). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 10.5.00 Williams, J. E. & Best, D. L. (1994). Cross-cultural views of women and men. In W. J. Lonner & R. S. Malpass (Eds.), *Psychology and culture* (pp. 191-196). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 10.17.00 Matsumoto, D. (1996). Culture and psychology. (Cultural similarities and differences in emotional expression) *Pacific grove, CA: Brooks/Cole* (pp. 251-258; 285-303).
- 10.26.00 Segall, M. H., Dasen, P. R., Berry, J. W., & Poortinga, Y. H. (1999). *Human behavior in global perspective*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (Chapter 4: Perceptual and cognitive processes).
- 10.26.00 Highwater, J. (1981). *The intellectual savage*. In *The Primal Mind: Vision and reality in Indian America*. New York: Harper Collins.
- 10.31.00 Goode, E. (August 22, 2000). Culture molds habits of thought. *The New York Times*.
- 11.02.00 Segall, M. H., Dasen, P. R., Berry, J. W., & Poortinga, Y. H. (1999). *Human behavior in global perspective. (Alternative views on human competence)* Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (pp. 126-149).
- 11.02.00 Brualdi, A. (1998). Gardner's theory. *Teacher Librarian*, 26, 25-28
- 11.02.00 Gardner, H. (1984). The development of competence in culturally defined domains: A preliminary framework. In N. Goldberger & J. Veroff (Eds.), *The culture and psychology reader*. New York: NYU Press. (pp. 228-233).
- 11.09.00 Brislin, R. (1993). Understanding culture's influence on behavior. (Culture's Influence on the World of Work). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace. (pp. 245-282).

- 11.16.00 Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y. H. Segall, M. H., & Dasen, P. (1992). Cross-cultural psychology: Research and applications. (Culture and Health Behavior) Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 369-377).
- 11.21.00 Brislin, R. (1993). Understanding culture's influence on behavior. (Culture general and culture-specific concepts) Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace. (pp. 329-346)
- 11.21.00 Kleinman, A. (1988). Rethinking psychiatry: From cultural category to personal experience. (Do psychiatric disorders differ in different cultures?) New York: The Free Press. (pp. 631-651).
- 11.30.00 Berry, J.W. (1994). Acculturative stress. In W. J. Lonner & R. S. Malpass (Eds.), Psychology and culture (pp. 211-215). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 11.30.00 LaFromboise, T. Coleman, H. L. K., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. Psychological Bulletin, 114, 395-412.