Ron’s notes

October 15, 2018

**Course project**

Submit your ideas today

**Midterm exam**

One hour of discussion, two hours exam, online lecture

--Raha’s tutorial review drop-in session, Wed., Oct. 17., 11:00-2:00, Vari Hall 1020

What is cultural psychology?

Heine, Greenfield, Sinha;

Arnett, Gjerde

What are the psychological aspects of culture?

Hanley, Perlstein, Steinberg

Mechanisms of culture, how it works

 Gjerde, Rogoff, Fivush

Cultural differences in basic psychological processes

 Bhatia (emotion), Sundararajan (cognition, emotion)

**Gjerde article**

Toward a person-centred cultural psychology

Essentialism. Cultures are not uniform.

How do culture and persons connect?

Let’s work through the opening of [his article](http://www.karger.com/Article/Pdf/77987)

Cultural models of the person

Cultural determinism – external determines internal representation

Choice model – a rational actor who chooses from the external

Consciousness model – an intermediate creative agent

Differing personal meanings with same behaviour

Culture and groups: Ambiguous and slippery terms

Fluidity of traditions and values

Negotiation about conflicting values, dominant traditions

(naturalizing) Power, public and subjective representations

The ‘cultural unit’ and the persistence of essentialism

East and West, a historical discourse

Culture, dominance, and subordination

Factors that frame culture; culture as a political/historical construct

Hegemony

Classes rather than countries as unit

The discursive turn

Nihonjinron – cultural nationalism

Canadian multiculturalism

Cultural values, ideologies, and subjective experience

Cultural values not the same thing as lived experience

Cultures as mutually constructed contrasts

 Conceptions of the ‘Other’

Cultures as distribution of subjectivities

 Perhaps it is experiences which are shared, rather than meanings

 Chelmsley Wood, for example

What needs to be done?

Start at level of individual and look for overlap

Narrative approaches (Bruner) re life struggles

“Concerns” or themes rather than values in a culture

 Multiculturalism or harmony, for example

Coda

Culture is not an objective reality ‘out there’ to be revealed/discovered by cultural psychologists. Rather, it is something that is invented, reinvented, and sustained by people in personally meaningful ways within the political terrain that frames their lives; it is dynamic, fluid, and emergent. This process takes, to some extent, place through discursive practices. Culture is ‘primarily a discursive notion, a tool for the (subjective) representation of reality rather than itself an objective reality’ [Eelen, 2001, p. 238]. It is important, however, to add that these discursive practices do not emerge in a political vacuum but are influenced, perhaps even limited, by hegemonic forces. Sharedness, to the extent it exists, should not be taken as

an unquestioned premise but as a topic of investigation.

**Fivush article**

Her focus is on autobiographical memory

From her abstract

Cultural frames for understanding – canonical biographical forms, life scripts, master narratives

Tools for understanding

Rags to riches

 Natural-born athlete, singer, etc.

 Redemption narratives

 Not much said about where these frames come from

Reminiscing

Adults coconstruct meaning, using these tools

Her evidence that reminiscing really matters

Narrative environments imbued with cultural values

Scaffolding how to create meaning from experience

Where does Fivush stand on agency? Which of Gjerde’s models of the person is she closest to?

Relation to Rogoff’s participation/situated emphasis?

Comparisons within and between cultures

The east/west collective/individual comparison

High elaborative, low elaborative

Boys vs girls in coconstruction

[**Zarpie Culture Wars**](https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/conversations-diversity/blasey-ford-kavanaugh-and-zarpie-culture-wars) **and** [**Rhodes study**](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marjorie-rhodes-phd/generic-language-social-stereotypes_b_1753667.html)

**Bhatia review of a Sundararajan book**

Emotion in Chinese culture

An indigenous approach

What are the emotions, how are they different from West?

Painting “emotional blends” with a gentle brush

Creativity as both with and against the flow

Origin of the differences?

Confucius

Chinese folk theory of mind (shared belief systems)

Holistic vs analytic cognition

Relational vs nonrelational cognition

Globalization and “Chineseness”

 Individuality in the context of Chinese families

**Sundararajan article**

Harmony is not unity or uniformity

 Symmetry breaking and its restoration

 A second symmetry

 A dynamic equilibrium

Difference and diversity in harmony

 Music and flavours

A dialectic relationship between opposing terms – holistic

 Doctrine of the Mean – moderation, avoid excess, leniency

 The logic of both/and, rather than either/or

 Yin/Yang balance, due proportion

 Cognition without control