Magic & Divination

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Office Hours; Mon. & Wed. after class Tues. before class
Reminders

Exam 2 next Friday 10/3
Contagious Magic Project Handout today: Due 9/29
Magic? Or Illusion?
Magic! Don't forget this is an anthropology class.

Differences:

- Illusion: Uses deception or trickery.
- Magic: In anthropological sense, is when a person will use something like a ritual to influence the supernatural world.
What is Magic?

- To do with The supernatural
- The supernatural forces can be controlled through supernatural rituals and incantations
- Control the supernatural or spiritual forces through rituals to gain power over the circumstances
- Magic as a form of technology, the use of spell, chant, design
The Magical worldview

- A connection between the universe and the individual
- E.g. palm reading, Taro reading, astrology etc
  - “As above so below” “As below so above”
- Human being as the microcosm of the universe
- Universe is a fundamental unity
Classical View in Anthropology

• Magic as step in evolution of society

• O.G. anthropologists; Frazer, Taylor, & Durkheim

• Magic was something separate from religion — A step toward a more advanced society
Magic vs.
Science
Science is something that can be tested
Magic

Trying to influence the unknown

"See, here's where you screwed up."
James Frazer (1854-1951)

- The Golden Bough (12 volumes) 1890
- Science, magic and religion (sharp distinction)
- Types of Magic: similarity and contagious
- Language of magic is diff from science
- Magic defies logic
• Magic > religion > science

• Magic is logically more primitive than religion because the conception of personal agents (religion) is more complex

• Australian aborigines > the most primitive - only magic
Law of Similarity

- “Things that are alike are the same”
- This gives rise to:
  - Homeopathic/Imitative magic
  - Image Magic: Voodoo dolls or cave paintings
Law of Contagion

- This give rise to contagious magic
Contagious Magic

• Whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other. Thus the logical basis of Contagious Magic,...is a mistaken association of ideas.

• It is assumed to unite distant objects and to convey impressions from one to the other.

• For example, between a man and his hair or nails; so that whoever gets possession of human hair or nails may work his will, at any distance, upon the person from whom they were cut.
Your project!

- This project I want you to build, write about, draw, paint, or whatever creative way you can think of to describe contagious magic for YOU.

- What do I mean?
  - Athletes sometimes associate a pair of socks or a shirt with a victory, so they continue to use that same pair of socks when they play.
  
  - So, either write about, draw, paint, or whatever creative way you can think of to describe something that YOU do or use in this way. If you don’t have any examples from your life, use someone else’s that you know.
Divination

Controlling the Supernatural
Reminders

How many people are going to do extra credit??
Different forms of Divination

Inspirational: direct contact with supernatural being
http://prezi.com/7ilsalxzbznz6/the-virgin-of-guadalupe/
Noninspirational Divination

Use of Magic to alter the supernatural:

1. Reading of Natural events, i.e. a change in the wind
2. Oracular Devices
Fortuitous Divination

Comes without effort
Deliberate

Setting out to find meaning
Forms of divination

- Oneiromancy: dream recall
  - why? connects individual to spirit world
- Presentiments: Feeling of dread
- Necromancy: Contact with the dead
- Omens: Come through observations
Questions about the reading
Pages: 154-156

1. What kind of Divination does the Azande use?

2. What is the most popular oracle used by the Azande? What is it used for?

3. What are the other oracles used? Why are they considered more accurate?

4. Would you ever use an oracle to answer a question? Why or Why not?

5. Would the oracle’s at Delphi be considered shaman’s be today’s standards?