

Magic, Sorcery and Witchcraft

Instructor: Dr. P. Stevens

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Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 11:00 - 1:30, by appointment. Other times are possible. Make an appointment; drop-ins may be disappointed.

Assisted by: _____

Required materials, at local bookstores (the University Bookstore or, save a few bucks at The College Store, or Greeks & Sneaks):

Stein, Rebecca L., and Philip L. Stein, *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2005.

Tallant, Robert, *Voodoo in New Orleans*. Pelican, 1983.

Trachtenberg, Joshua, *The Devil and the Jews*. 2nd. ed. Jewish Publication Society, 1983.

Required materials, on Online Reserve: see separate list.

General Information, Requirements, etc.

(For juniors and seniors only. PLEASE self-select. If you are a freshman or sophomore, please drop, and come back another year.) No previous knowledge of anthropology is required. Concepts will be explained as we go along. **Your registration in this course means that you understand and commit yourself to the following expectations and requirements:**

-- **REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED.** The general concepts that provide the framework for this course are presented in class only. They are not available anywhere else. We are going to cover a lot of material that is both new and strange to you, and there is little time for review. **You are expected to attend every class, and to pay careful attention in class. If you cannot meet this expectation, PLEASE do not register for this course.** Beginning September 7 attendance will be taken in every class, and your record of attendance will affect your grade.

-- CAREFUL COMPLETION OF ASSIGNED READINGS, ON TIME. The reading assignments are made to complement class discussions, and to give specific illustrations of general material presented in class. If you fall behind in the readings, you may miss discussion of that material. If you do not read them carefully, you will not do well. Read to understand author's main points, and a few specific illustrations of the main points. Do not worry over fine details, foreign words (unless they are emphasized in class), bibliographic references, etc. It will help your understanding if you make separate, brief notes on the readings.

This course deals with variations of beliefs that are universal in human culture, found in all societies and at every level of society, and at all stages of recorded human history. But the material in this course is new and strange to you. The explanations and illustrations of the three words in the course title will be new and strange to you; understanding them requires new ways of thinking; and understanding them is critical to

understanding everything else in the course. **Believe it:** adequate understanding of the concepts of this course can be gained only by following these two simple rules: **attend class** and pay careful attention in class, and **do the readings** carefully on time.

Students should assume that everything presented or assigned is required and testable. This means films, videos, audio tapes, slides, hand-outs, guest lecturers -- as well as the regular lectures and readings.

-- **TESTS and grading.** Three short tests will be given, two in class and one "take-home." Each test covers all general concepts presented to date, but only that specific material presented or assigned since the previous test. Test values: Test I, 10%; Test II (take-home), 30% (yes, thirty per cent!), Test III, 20%. These values are approximate; overall improvement will be rewarded. And remember, your record of attendance will affect your grade. A FINAL EXAMINATION will be given during the final examination period, and will be worth 30-40% of the course grade. The final exam will cover specific material presented since Test III, and general material presented throughout the course. The final exam may also re-test any areas of course material with which students had difficulty earlier.

All tests and the final exam will be of the short answer and short essay type. The final exam may contain one or two longer essays. Specific guidelines for review and preparation, and sample questions, will be distributed in advance of each test. There will usually be choices among questions. Questions will usually require students to draw from several sources within the course material. Questions will reflect material presented both in class and in the readings, approximately equally. Questions on general concepts will usually require students to provide specific substantive examples from the course material, to demonstrate their understanding of the general concepts.

In-class tests and the final exam should be written in pen, not pencil. Paper will be provided. No other materials may be used, or consulted. For the take-home test, students will have access to all course materials, and to each other. But you should be certain that the work you submit is your own. NOTE: Everyone in this class has some ideas and knows some stories about different aspects of the course material. But, on tests, students must not use information discovered outside the framework of this course, unless a test question specifically permits it.

TYPEWRITTEN MATERIALS. Answers to the take-home test and the optional research paper (see below) must be typed in 12-pt. font, double-spaced, on opaque white 8½ x 11" paper, on one side of a sheet only, with margins of about 1" on all sides. Your name should appear at the upper right corner of every page. All pages should be stapled together, once, at the upper left corner. You may include a cover page, but do not use any sort of binder. Your typescript should be clear and dark. Keep a copy of everything you submit, at least until the original is returned to you.

OPTIONAL RESEARCH PAPER. Here's where you may go beyond the required material. Students wishing to do so may write an extra-credit research paper. A list of suggested topics is available from Dr. Stevens; other topics may occur to you. The final choice of topic must be approved by Dr. Stevens in advance.

You should consult with Dr. Stevens about your topic, in advance. A short statement about the proposed topic should be submitted on October 28, not earlier and not later.

The statement should indicate what you propose to do, and how you propose to do it. The statement will be returned in the following class, with Dr. Stevens' comments and suggestions. You must retrieve it -- it may not have been approved. (If it is disapproved, Dr. Stevens will help you to re-design it.)

The paper must not be shorter than 7 pages and must not exceed 10 pages. It should be typed according to directions, above. It should be carefully proofed, before submission, especially for the following: it should be concise, non-repetitive, grammatically correct, with no spelling errors. It must be an original piece of work, and it must be the result of research conducted for this course. The style and organization of the optional research paper **MUST** follow the stipulations in the document, "Guidelines for Research Papers," which will be given to any students who want to do this project. It is due in class December 10. It will not be accepted after that date. The paper will be returned to you at the final examination.

The optional paper can raise one's course grade by as much as 10 points, according to the following scale: B- 3, B 4, B+ 5; A- 8, A 9, A+ 10. If the paper grade is below B it can help only if it is higher than the test average. It cannot hurt. It cannot substitute for any of the tests.

IMPORTANT DATES: tests: I, in class September 16.

II, questions distributed October 19, essays due in class October 24.

III, in class November 21.

optional paper: topic due October 28; paper due in class December 9.

final exam: according to University schedule.

LATENESSES AND EXCUSES. Unexcused late tests and papers will lose credit, a lot, definitely not worth it. Don't even think of being late. Excuses for late papers or missed tests will be granted only in cases of emergency, with some verification of the emergency. The student should telephone or e-mail Dr. Stevens, not a T.A., when the emergency arises, or as soon after as possible. Make-up tests may be scheduled, depending on the justification.

General Course Outline

Readings should be completed during the week for which they are assigned, and in the order in which they are listed. Note that some readings are assigned more than once. Remember: read for general understanding of main points, and a few specific examples to illustrate the main points, and to demonstrate your understanding of them. Take notes on your readings, and organize the notes according to the class topics. All dates and deadlines are firm, but assigned readings and daily topics may change. Any changes will be announced in advance. HO=hand-out. S&S = Stein & Stein. OR=Online Reserve.

<u>Week/Dates</u>	<u>Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.</u>
1 M 8/29	Orientation, business. The nature of supernatural beliefs. The focus of this course.
W 8/31	Anthropology and the nature of culture. The concept of power and the nature of symbols.
F 9/2	Perception and cultural "reality."

Readings for Week 1

S&S: Chap. 1, pp. 1-30; 3:56-82.

OR: Nos. 1, 2, 3 (articles by Sanders & Edwards, Miner, R. Lee)

2 M 9/5	L A B O R D A Y, no class
W 9/7	The structure of religious beliefs. <u>video:</u> "The 11 Powers," a major, once-in-a-century Shivaistic Hindu festival on the island of Bali, Indonesia; addressed to the major deities (manifestations of Shiva), and designed to restore order and balance to the world
F 9/9	religious beliefs, cont'd. <u>video:</u> "The Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamani," an elder of the Aymara of the Bolivian Andes. After film: discussion of both films.

Readings for Week 2

same as for Week 1, plus **OR:** No. 4 (D. Lee)

<u>Week/Dates</u>	<u>Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.</u>
3 M 9/12	Discussion of 9/4 and 9/6 films, cont'd.
W 9/14	Religious practitioners: <u>status</u> : priest, shaman; <u>role</u> : diviner, medium, prophet, doctor, magician, etc. TEST I sample questions distributed
F 9/16	TEST I , on material through Week 3.
	<u>Readings for Week 3</u> Review readings for Weeks 1 and 2, plus S&S pp. 123-133, 194-206, 164-176; OR No. 5 (Pattison)
4 M 9/19	Meanings of "magic." The anthropological meaning.
W 9/21	Principles of magic and components of "magical thinking," or a "magical worldview:" natural "forces," power, interconnections in nature, symbols, Frazer's principles.
F 9/23	Principles of magic, cont'd. The meaning of "superstition."
	<u>Readings for Week 4</u> S&S 6:136-150; OR 4 (D.Lee), 6 (Gmelch), 7 (Hand)
5 M 9/26	Other magical acts and concepts: (good) magic, sorcery, mana, taboo, pollution, divination, magical protection.
W 9/28	Other magical acts & concepts, cont'd.
F 9/30	Magic and sorcery by gesturing and speaking. Blessing and curse, vs. spirit invocation and command.
	<u>Readings for Week 5</u> Same as for Week 4, plus S&S 8-10, 149-150 (<i>kuru</i> & sorcery), 91 ("anti- therapy rituals"), 104-106, 151-162; OR 8 (Stevens)

<u>Week/Dates</u>	<u>Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.</u>
6 M 10/3	Meanings of "witchcraft." The ethnological/historical meaning of witchcraft. Development of the anthropological concern with witchcraft: Reo Fortune and <i>Sorcerers of Dobu</i> (1932); E.E. Evans-Pritchard and <i>Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande</i> (1937); Clyde Kluckhohn and <i>Navajo Witchcraft</i> (1944)
W 10/5	12 attributes of the ethnological/historical witch
F 10/7	Witchcraft by looking: the Evil Eye.
<u>Readings for Week 6</u>	
S&S 225-239, 238 (Evil Eye); OR 9 (Apuleius), 10 (Burke)	
7 M 10/10	Evil Eye, cont'd. Other variants on the witchcraft theme: vampires, werewolves, other were-animals.
W 10/12	other variants, cont'd: monsters, secret societies, other dangers of the night. Wild People.
F 10/14	How does it work? the psychology of belief and the "Voodoo Death" syndrome.
<u>Readings for Week 7</u>	
S&S 146-148, 177-178 OR 11 (Lévi-Strauss), 12 (Eastwell), 5 (Pattison)	
8 M 10/17	What do you do about it? I: identifying the evil agent. II: protective and curative techniques: spiritual defenses, talismans and charms; "witchdoctors" and exorcism of the witch.
W 10/19	<u>video</u> : "Witchcraft among the Azande," Evans-Pritchard's classic central African case TEST II questions distributed, covers material through Week 8. Answers due 10/24.
F 10/21	Shamans and witches; review discussion.
<u>Readings for Week 8</u>	
S&S 88-89 ("protective rituals") OR 13 (Evans-Pritchard), 14 (Howells), 15 (M.F. Brown)	

<u>Week/Dates</u>	<u>Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.</u>
9 M 10/24	TEST II essays due, in class. <u>video</u> : "Healers of Ghana"; health and illness, spirit possession, and "witch-catching" among the Bono of central Ghana.
W 10/26	The African background to African-based religions in the Americas. African religions in the Caribbean: <i>Vodou</i> , <i>Santería</i> , etc.
F 10/28	Meanings of Halloween optional research paper topics due today
	<u>Readings for Week 9</u> S&S 178-179 ("zombies"), 252-257 OR 16 (K.M. Brown) begin Tallant, <i>Voodoo in New Orleans</i>
10 M 10/31	<u>video</u> : "Legacy of the Sprits," <i>Vodou</i> in New York City.
W 11/2	African magical influences in the U.S.: <i>Voodoo</i> , <i>hoodoo</i> , <i>mojo</i> , <i>gris-gris</i> , roots, conjure, etc.
F 11/4	More social and psychological dimensions of sorcery and witchcraft beliefs; suspicion v. accusation, social patterns and functions, in "normal" times and times of social stress. Demonologies and witch hunts.
	<u>Readings for Week 10</u> same as for Week 9; finish Tallant; S&S 21-25, 231-232 OR 8 (Stevens), 17 (Lindenbaum) hand-outs: text of B.B. King's, "Got My Mojo Workin'" guide to reading Trachtenberg
11 M 11/8	Magic and sorcery in early Judaism.
W 11/10	The development of beliefs in Satan and Hell.
F 11/12	The Millennium. The Inquisition. Heresy and witchcraft in late medieval Europe.
	<u>Readings for Week 11</u> begin Trachtenberg, <i>The Devil and the Jews</i> ; follow guide; S&S 232-239 OR 9 (Apuleius), 18 (Brain)

<u>Week/Dates</u>	<u>Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.</u>
12 M 11/14	Witchcraft in medieval Europe, cont'd., and in 17th-century New England
W 11/16	<u>video</u> : "Days of Judgment: The Salem Witch Trials of 1692"
F 11/18	Review discussion. TEST III , sample questions distributed.
	<u>Readings for Week 12</u> continue Trachtenberg; S&S 236-237
13 M 11/21	TEST III covering material through Week 12, in class
W 11/23 - F 11/25	T H A N K S G I V I N G B R E A K
	<u>Readings for Week 13</u> continue Trachtenberg
14 M 11/28	Modern demonologies and witch hunts. <u>video</u> : "Night and Fog," the horrors of the Nazi death-camps. The title is Hitler's decreed designation (<i>Nacht und Nebel</i>) for Europe's non-persons, the victims of the Holocaust.
W 11/30	Modern demonologies and witch hunts, cont'd. <u>video</u> : conclusion of "Days of Judgement" (see 11/16)
F 12/2	Magic and magical thinking today: the New Age, "complementary" and "alternative" medicine; cults and "the occult"
	<u>Readings for Week 14</u> S&S 257-259 (revitalization movements), 264-265 ("cults") OR 7 (Hand), 18 (Cardozo), 19 (Stevens) continue Trachtenberg

Week/Dates	Topics, events, readings, deadlines, etc.
15 M 12/5	"Cults" and the "occult" today. Satanism. <u>video</u> : "The Devil's Disciples," a satanic cult scare in Lethbridge, Alberta
W 12/7	"Cults and "the occult" today, cont'd. Wicca and modern paganism. <u>Guest speaker</u> : Norman Fleck, on modern paganism (The Carole S. Healey Memorial Lecture)
F 12/9	Review for Final Exam. final exam sample questions distributed. optional research papers due today. <u>Readings for Week 14</u> S&S 239-245 Finish Trachtenberg.

FINAL EXAM date, time, place

Note: final grades will not be posted, and will not be given over the telephone. Blue books will not be left out for students to pick up. If you want your final exam grade, and/or your course grade before the University sends it to you, you may bring a stamped self-addressed envelope to the final examination. If you want your exam mailed to you, it should be a large envelope with 78c. postage. Or, you may pick up your exam from Dr. Stevens' office next semester; he keeps exams and papers for one year.

NOTES

Readings on Online Reserve; in order of their assignment. Original sources given.

1. Miner, Horace. "Body Ritual among the Nacirema." *American Anthropologist* 58, 1956, pp. 503-507.
2. Sanders, Todd. "Imagining the Dark Continent: The Met, the Media, and the Thames Torso." *Cambridge Anthropology* 23, 3, 2003. **together with** Edwards, Richard. "Child Sacrifices in London." *Evening Standard*, 16 June 2005.
3. Lee, Raymond. "Amulets and Anthropology: A Paranormal Encounter with Malay Magic." *Anthropology and Humanism Quarterly* 12, 3-4, 1987, pp. 69-74.
4. Lee, Dorothy. "Religious Perspectives in Anthropology." In Lowell D. Holmes, ed., *Readings in General Anthropology*. New York: Ronald Press, 1971, pp. 416-427.
5. Pattison, E. Mansell. excerpts from "Psychosocial Interpretations of Exorcism." *J. Operational Psychiatry* 8, 2, 1977, pp. 5-19.
6. Gmelch, George. "Baseball Magic." Orig. *Transaction* 8, 8, 1971, pp. 39-41, 54. This version, revised, in Arthur C. Lehmann and James E. Myers, eds., *Magic, Witchcraft and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural*. 4th ed. Mt. View, CA: Mayfield, 1997, pp. 276-282.
7. Hand, Wayland. "Folk Medical Magic and Symbolism in the West." In *Magical Medicine*. Berkeley: U. Calif. Press, 1980, pp. 305-319.
8. Stevens, P., Jr. "Some Implications of Urban Witchcraft Beliefs." *New York Folklore* 8, 3-4, Winter 1982, pp. 29-45.
9. Apuleius, Lucius. "The Story of Telyphron," and "The Transformation of Lucius," from *Metamorphoses*, 2nd cent. AD. English trans. as "The Golden Ass" by

- Robert Graves, Penguin Books, 1950, pp. 63-71, 88-93.
10. Burke, Charlanne. "Witchcraft Tswana Style." In James Spradley & David W. McCurdy, eds., *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. 11th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003, pp. 358-369.
11. Lévi-Strauss, Claude. "The Sorcerer and His Magic." In *Structural Anthropology*. Trans. Claire Jacobson & Brooke Grundfest Schoepf. Basic Books, 1963,
12. Eastwell, Harry D. "Voodoo Death and the Mechanism for Dispatch of the Dying in East Arnhem, Australia." *American Anthropologist* 84, 1, March 1982, pp. 5-17.

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Readings on Online Reserve, cont'd.

13. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. excerpts from "Consulting the Poison Oracle." In *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937, pp. 281-312.
14. Howells, William. "The Shaman: A Siberian Specialist." In *The Heathens: Primitive Man and His Religions*. Doubleday, 1948, pp. 129-144.
15. Brown, Michael F. "Dark Side of the Shaman". *Natural History*, November 1989, pp. 8-10.
16. Brown, Karen McCarthy. "Voodoo." In Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York: Macmillan, 1987. Vol. 15, pp. 296-301.
17. Lindenbaum, Shirley. "Sorcerers, Ghosts and Polluting Women: An Analysis of Religious Belief and Population Control." *Ethnology* 11, 1972, pp. 241-253.

18. Brain, James L. "An Anthropological Perspective on the Witchcraze." In Jean R. Brink, Allison P. Coudert, and Maryanne C. Horowitz, eds., *The Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe*. Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989, pp. 15-27.
19. Cardozo, A. Rebecca. "A Modern American Witch-Craze." In Max Marwick, ed., *Witchcraft & Sorcery: Selected Readings*. 2nd ed. Penguin Books, 1982, pp. 469-476.
20. Stevens, P., Jr. "Magical Thinking in Complementary and Alternative Medicine." *Skeptical Inquirer*, November/December 2001, pp. 32-37.