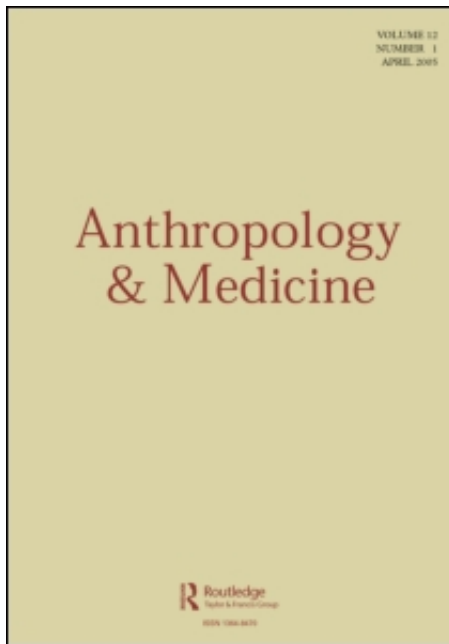


A medical anthropology canon?

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By Eugene Raikhel



The latest issue of [Anthropology and Medicine](#) includes the first of a series of articles called “The Canon,” each of which will feature “a reappraisal of a past text of what may be considered (unfashionably) canonical, classical or at least of continuing interest in medical anthropology or cultural psychiatry.” The first is [a piece by Roland Littlewood](#) on W.H.R. Rivers’ *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, often described as “a founding text for medical anthropology,” (Littlewood 2010).

The editors of *Anthropology and Medicine* [invite reviewers to write](#) about any of the books listed below — or to suggest others. Here is the list:

- Janice Boddy, [Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan](#) (1989)
- E. E. Evans-Pritchard, [Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande](#) (1937)
- Paul Farmer, [AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame](#) (1992)
- Ari Kiev, [Magic, Faith and Healing: Studies in Primitive Psychiatry Today](#) (1964)
- Arthur Kleinman, [Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture](#) (1979)

- Donna Haraway, [*Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*](#) (1990)
- I.M. Lewis, [*Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession*](#) (1971)
- Godfrey Lienhardt, [*Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka*](#) (1961)
- Roland Littlewood, [*Pathology and Identity: The work of Mother Earth in Trinidad*](#) (1993)
- Margaret Lock, [*Encounters With Aging: Mythologies of Menopause in Japan and North America*](#) (1993)
- Bronislaw Malinowski, [*Magic, Science and Religion*](#) (1954)
- Margaret Mead, [*Coming of Age in Samoa*](#) (1928)
- Gananath Obeyesekere, [*Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*](#) (1981)
- Rayna Rapp, [*Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis in America*](#) (1999)
- Elaine Scarry, [*The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmaking of the World*](#) (1985)
- Nancy Scheper-Hughes, [*Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Mental Illness in Rural Ireland*](#) (1977)
- Marilyn Strathern, [*The Gender of the Gift*](#) (1988)
- Paul Stoller, [*Stranger in the Village of the Sick: A Memoir of Cancer, Sorcery, and Healing*](#) (2004)
- Allan Young, [*The Harmony of Illusions: Inventing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*](#) (1995)

Would others add different texts to this list — perhaps key articles as well? Do we even have need of a “canon” in medical anthropology or are discussions of texts which have continued relevance for our field important whether or not we label them “canonical”?

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