

Body, Health and
Society

BODY:
**A CENTRAL NOD IN SYMBOLIC AND
SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

SYNOPSIS

- length?
- design?
- comment/ question!
- language settings and autocorrection...

REVIEW

- Is possession something more biological, or more of a social phenomenon?
- Normally young women would be 'well-protected' from spirit attacks but that changes with a socio-economic transition and the mass introduction of women to factory work, why? (according to Ong)
- How could we explain that during a spirit possession one of the women gained such strength that it took 20 people to handle her?
- What is medicalization?
- If factories try to treat better their employees, will the spirits still appear ? Or if they gave to them better works conditions, instead of recruiting people to counter the possession.

READING REFLECTIONS

- How was the text for reading?

Situating the reading

- time
 - space
 - discipline
 - methodology
- What is the text about?
-
- What is the main argument?



NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES



- * 1944
- professor of Anthropology and director of the program in Medical Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley
- shantytowns, organ trade
- mindful body

- 1979 *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Mental Illness in Rural Ireland*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 1993 *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

EXERCISE

Scheper-Hughes, N. ([1989] 2006): Mother's Love: Death without Weeping. In: Spradley, James P. & McCurdy, David W. (Eds.): Conformity & conflict: Readings in cultural anthropology. 14th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Pearson, 156-162

- What is an angel child?
- What factors are causing high child morbidity in the environment described?
- What is the relation between high child morbidity and mothers' love (kinship system) there?
- What meaning is ascribed to and social mechanisms relate to children's' death in the study?
- In summary: what causes the phenomenon of common children's' death and what this phenomenon further causes in the environment under study?



DISCUSSION

- Explain, how the power, social system, culture, and nature are entangled on the example of this case.
- Relate the paper to the Douglas', Bourdieu's and Murphy's/ Merleau-Ponty's approach to the body.
 - i.e., apply the theory of social body, habitus, and embodiment on the example analyzed by Scheper-Hughes



NEXT CLASS

Topic

Bodies incommensurable and menopause

reading

Lock, M., Kaufert, P. (2001). Menopause, local biologies, and cultures of aging. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 13(4), 494. (reccommended)

Lock, M., Nguyen, V. K. (2010). *An Anthropology of Biomedicine* Oxford. **The end of menstruation: 84-89.**

guiding questions

What is menopause?

- when and how did the concept emerge?
 - how is it defined by medical discourse?
 - how is it experienced by people?
- What is kônenki?
 - how medicalization of the transformation labeled as menopause happened?
 - what has it changed in Japanese society?