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Culture and Personality Week 6

Margaret Mead and Samoa
Cognition: Per-ception / Con-ception
... Gone Wrong ... and Extra?

Thursday, 18 February, 2016 is World Anthropology Day

Friday, 19 February, 2016 is . . .



National Anthropology Day

Last week we had a brief look at Super Bowl brains. . . . This week we're going to start having a look at how your *brains* change *what you see*. And how what you *see* isn't always what you're looking at.

Take the selective perception tests below and you'll *see* what I mean. . . .

But first we'll have a look at *Margaret Mead and Samoa* and the famous (and important) Mead-Freeman debate.



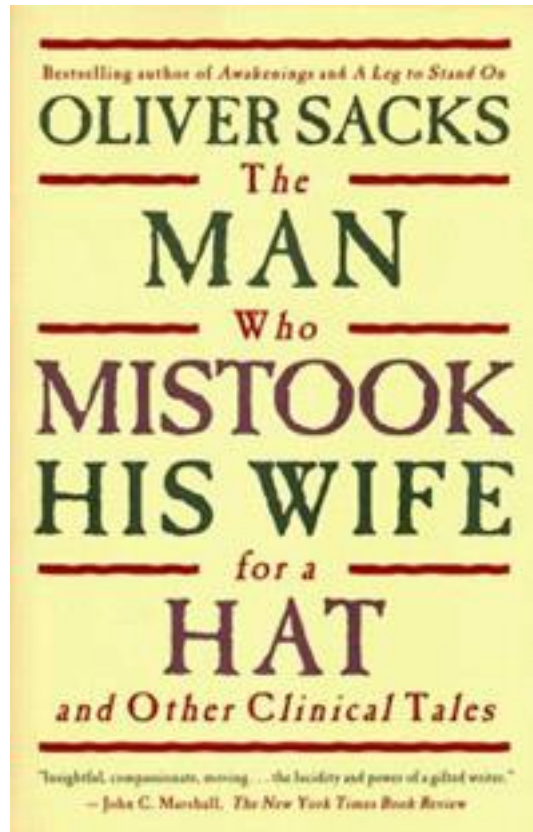
After we've had a brief review of the Mead-Freeman debate, **we'll return as soon as we can to continue to finish having a look at the basic analytic, theoretical and historical framework for the course**, moving towards our second mini-series of videos, a series which focuses sensory information and senses "short circuits."

This week and next we're also going to try to review (just a little bit) the **Units of Analysis**, as time allows. And this week we'll also start to have a look at some basic principles of **perception and cognition**—that is how your brain receives and processes information from the senses and from . . . elsewhere

This week and part of next we're going to have a week's look at **cognition** and cognition gone haywire. Keep in mind that **cognition** refers to how your senses work and **perception** refers to what your brain does with that sensory (and "extra-sensory") information.

This week we'll have a look at a really interesting video, *Stranger in the Mirror*, a video version of *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. We'll meet John and Larry who can see well, but can't put the images of what they see together in their minds in order to recognize what they're looking at—including themselves. And, in the process, we'll briefly meet Phineas P. Gage, ". . . an American railroad construction foreman now remembered for his improbable survival of an accident in which a large iron rod was driven completely through his head, destroying much of his brain's left frontal lobe, and for that injury's [profound] effects on his personality and behavior . . ."

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phineas_P._Gage).



This was like the accident with Dante Autullo from Oak Lawn, Illinois, who just a few years ago shot himself in the head with a nail gun and didn't notice it . . . a modern-day Phineas P. Gage . . .

Man shoots nail into brain without noticing

-- BBC NEWS (20 January 2012)

It should be noted that in Culture and Personality most of the time we're looking at **"normal" adults** in populations—whatever that means—but from time to time it is necessary to have a look at **"the abnormal"** and **children**, in order to understand normal adult behavior.



Remember that in Culture and Personality most of the time we're looking at **"normal" adults** in populations, but from time to time it is necessary to have a look at "the abnormal" adults, and children, in order to understand normal adult behavior. And then again, in Culture and Personality the "abnormal" sometimes becomes the "normal," and vice versa . . . so watch for the gorilla. . . .

Take a look at the chart . .

cognition	perception	sensory	vision	"per - cepts"
			hearing	
			touch	
			taste	
			smell	
			pressure	
			temperature	
			pain	
			balance	
			motion	
	extra - sensory (ESP)	6th ?	"?"	
conception		"con - cepts"		

Cf., "Foundations of Cultural Knowledge," in *Culture and Cognition: Rules, Maps, and Plans* (San Francisco, CA: Chandler, 1972), pp. 3-38.

The Midterm Exam will be in class on Monday, 29 February 2016. Details on the Midterm are available at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cpexams.html>. The night before the exam we'll have a live chat for last minute questions about the exam. **Save the date . . .**

-  **Live Chat -- Review for Midterm Exam, Sunday, 28 February 2016, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.**
-  **Wiki: Contribute your question to the Midterm Exam**
(Due End of Week 6, Saturday, 20 February 2016)

After the Midterm Exam I'll try to wrap up the first part of the semester with a brief synopsis making senses of senses.

I hope you enjoyed your “**Magic Eye**” <http://www.magiceye.com/3dfun/stwkdsp.shtml> and the optical illusions <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cpticalillusions.html> experiments, and that you have a better picture of what can be normal and “real” to you.



If you were having trouble with the “Magic Eye” and the optical illusions—try the “**beer goggles**”¹—a vision of vision change after six beers

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cpASC.html#beergoggles>.

BEFORE 6 BEERS



AFTER 6 BEERS

If you're mathematically inclined the “beer goggles” are explained as

$$\beta = \frac{(A_2)^2 \times \alpha(S+1)}{\sqrt{L} \times (V_0)^2}$$

Speaking of various kinds of perception, in the 2014 Winter Olympics the Canadian Olympic Team brought eight **sports psychologists**, the U.S.A team seven (*The New York Times*, “Sports”, Sunday, 23 February 2014, 1,8), and **“visualization”** (fka “imagery”) continues to be a big factor in mental training in elite sports. It has been since the 1960s, “but the practice of mentally simulating competition has become increasingly sophisticated, essential and elaborate, spilling over into realms like imagining the contents of news conferences or the view from the bus window on the way to the downhill” (1). (I wonder if they mentally image their “selfies”.) Some schools of puppy training now even use “visualization”. Some sports psychologists also use Mihály Csíkszentmihályi’s concept of “flow”—“the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. In essence, flow is characterized by complete absorption in what one does” (Wikipedia). Visualization, “flow”, anticipatory gratification/reward have all become an important part of today’s competitive world as well as the more mundane, as is the power of positive thinking, and the mind-body relationships seen in the “placebo effect.”

Be sure to check the activities of the week, including due dates . . .

-  **Response to the film *Margaret Mead and Samoa*** (Due by the end of Week 6—Saturday, 20 February 2016; Your Name Will Be Logged)
-  **Wiki: Freelist Reasons for the Discrepancies between Mead and Freeman**
-  Response to the film *Stranger in the Mirror: An Examination of Visual Agnosia* (Due by the end of Week 6—Saturday, 20 February 2016; Your Name Will Be Logged)
-  **Wiki: Contribute your question to the Midterm Exam** (Due by the End of Week 6, Saturday, 20 February 2016)

It’s always a good idea to share your ideas with others. You can discuss them on-line with the others in class. And you should do that. In addition to the *Forum* posts, share your other ideas, including your project ideas and study-questions with your classmates. Discuss them on-line with the others in class . . .

Selective Attention Test

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>>

The Monkey Business Illusion

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY>

In the meantime, if you have any general or specific questions, please let me know <mailto:troufs@d.umn.edu>.

Remember to check the results of the class Video Responses from earlier weeks when they close. You can find the results in the **Moodle** Blocks where they first appeared. This week have a look at . . .

-  Results--*Personality All About Me* s2016
-  Results—"Psychological Anthropology" from the *Faces of Culture* Series s2016
-  Results--*Chimp Talk* s2016 File resource
-  Results--"Everything is Relatives: William Rivers" s2016 File resource
-  Results--"New Orleans Black Indians: A Case Study in the Arts" s2016
-  Results--"Grouping by Gender, Age, Common Interests and Class" s2016 File resource
-  Results--"Coming of Age: Margaret Mead" s2016 File resource

Your **(1) Topics** and **(2) Readings** and **(3) Assignments and Activities listings** are available in the **Week 6 Block** of your **Moodle** folder.

Best Regards,

Tim Roufs