

INTRODUCTION TO MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

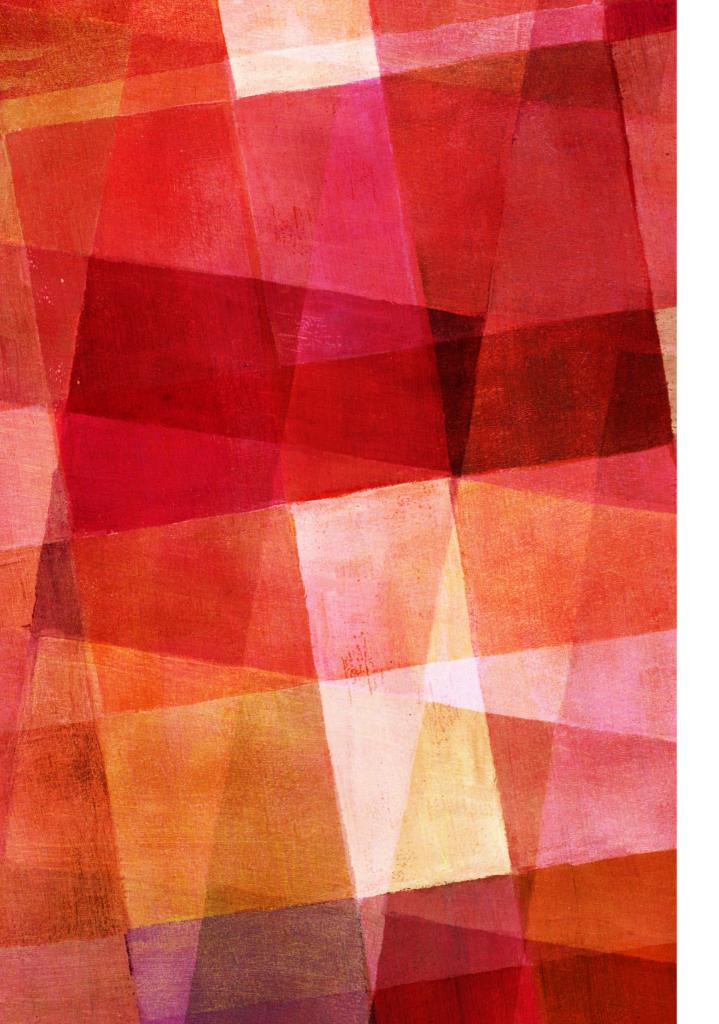
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WHAT IS MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY?

Autonomous discipline emerged at the end of the 1970s, which aims to investigate the processes through which biological, political-economic and socio-cultural phenomena determine each other.

BIOMEDICINE AS A SPECIFIC ETHNO-MEDICINE

- bio-physical dimension as an exclusive aspect of a disease/ illness
- > disease, illness or sickness?
- ► DISEASE VS ILLNESS
- ► DISEASE: measurable pathological condition of the body
- ► ILLNESS: feeling of not feeling normal and healthy
- ► ILLNESS= culture-related
- ► CURING VS HEALING



PROS AND CONS

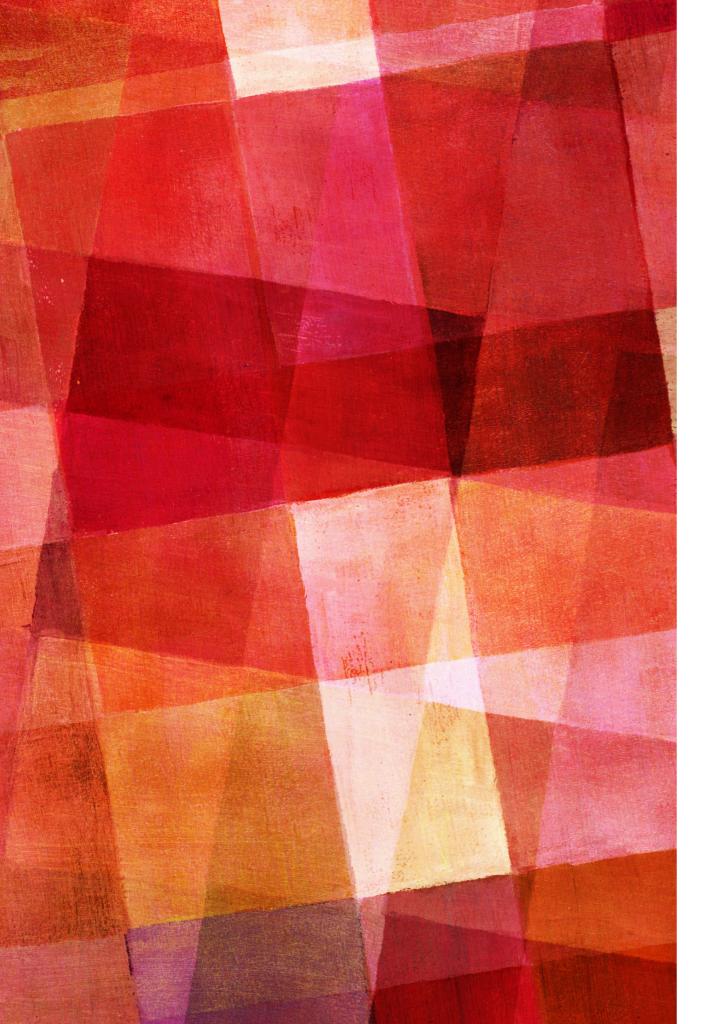
- PROS considering
 biomedicine as a cultural knowledge;
- CONS the distinction
 between illness and disease
 falls victim of the same
 dichotomy it aspired to
 overcome

THE ANALYSIS OF SICKNESS

- ► How medical knowledge and pathologies are produced?
- social processes as determinants of what counts as a medical problem
- ► From the individual to the social sphere
- economic, social and political forces EMBEDDED in the "sickness"
- ► LIMIT: What about the DISEASE?

WHAT ABOUT THE BODY?

Nancy Scheper Hughes and Margaret Lock (1987), "The mindful body: a prolegomenon to future work in medical anthropology". *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.



WHAT IS THE BODY?

- ► Biological VS cultural
- ➤ The body as a social product
- somatic experiences and social discourses
- illness as a technique of the body
- product of social processes and producer of meanings

ILLNESS AS SOCIAL SUFFERING

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTi_hAdwsR0