

 Subscribed

This is a graded discussion: 100 points possible

due Apr 12



Week 4 Discussion: Religious Specialists

135 135

[Arion Melidonis](#)

Select a specific religious specialist from your own culture or from any other culture. You can be very broad in your definition of a religious specialist (feel free to include specialists that we may not immediately consider to be religious in our culture- doctors, scientists, dentists, judges, yoga teachers, plumbers, etc. Be sure to tell us why you think they are religious specialists if you choose one of these). Describe the role/function of this specialist in the culture. Would they be better classified as a shaman or a priest? Why? Are these specialists treated differently from other people in the culture? Are they given any special powers by the group? Do they benefit the group as a whole? Why or why not?

Complete your initial post by Wednesday at 11:59 pm. Respond to at least two other posts by Sunday at 11:59 pm. Remember to apply the course theories in your responses and cite your work properly.

◀ [Reply](#)

1 | 2

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/25608>



[Juan Gonzalez](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/25608>

Wednesday

Faith healers or better known as televangelists are people who are considered the miracle works of the day. Some of the time you will see these types of people on tv with large congregations and in extremely large buildings or arenas. Its believed that with one touch they could heal whatever ailment you might have and they persuade you give them large sums of money. Some of the well known televangelist like Tammy Faye Baker and her husband Jim Baker or Jimmy Swaggart where believed to be criminals in the late 80's early 90's.

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/22599>



[Jess Fowler](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/22599>

Wednesday

Okinawa, an island off the cost of Japan, is home to a unique religion composed of all female religious specialists. As further explained in the text *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*, "Okinawa is the only known society in which women lead a mainstream, official, publicly funded religion that is practiced by both sexes". (Stein 128) This indigenous religion takes influence from the Shinto, Buddhism, and Taoism religions and finds its foundation in the beliefs of animism and shamanism. Additionally, the Okinawa religion believes kami, supernatural beings, cohabit the earth and have influence over daily life. Okinawa believers strive to please the kamie via rituals in hopes they'll bring good fortune the members of the religion. The Okinawa priestesses, also known as kaminchu, are held in great esteem within their religion as they are believed to actually embody a specific kami whom they seek to please. During rituals the kaminch wear a crown of

leaves and
more, but “
termed “pri

Unread



Subscribed

Works Cited:

Stein, R & Stein, P. (2011) The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft. 3rd Edition . Pearson: NY, NY.

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/7274>

Andres Medrano

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/7274>

Wednesday

A religious specialist I would like to talk about is a sports official. A sports official can most accurately be described as a part-time specialist. As defined in our book, a part-time specialist is someone who is “called on to perform rituals when necessary because of their special knowledge or abilities”(Stein,119). Sports officials are called upon during sporting events that take place any given day of the week and in any surface and location. They must know every law of the game and must possess the ability of making good judgement calls within seconds. Their role is to make sure that the rules of the game are honored and also call upon rituals when necessary such as the blow of the whistle when a game begins/ends or to call a penalty, time out or out of play. A sports official holds characteristics of both a shaman and a priest. The sports official resembles a shaman in the way that he/she works part-time as an independent contractor (Stein,121). However, a sports official would most closely resemble a priest in the way that he/she gains his/her skill by learning the “knowledge of how to perform these rituals for the benefit of the community”(Stein,127). Sports officials are definitely treated differently from other people of the culture. Quite frankly, they are often treated ungraciously due to “bad calls” that they make and as a result, they receive criticism from athletes, coaches, fans and analysts. Despite whether the right call was made or not, officials do hold powers over the group as they can simply blow their whistle and the athletes will stop playing. Ultimately, sports officials benefit the group as a whole. Without officials, there would be no one to enforce the laws of the game and therefore there would no longer be a fair and organized sports game.

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/10567>

Carlyn Perez

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/10567>

Yesterday

Hi, Andres!

Do you think that a sports official is under the same scrutiny as a priest or a shaman? If we look at earlier examples of corruption within the Church, Catholic Priests would forgive sins if the person donated enough money to the Vatican. In that vain, a sports official could easily be given money to maybe throw the game in favor of one team or athlete (and therefore, make those inevitable "bad calls").

Also, I liked your correlation of sports official to religious official, because I definitely feel that there is a sort of "religious fervor" when it comes to the love of a sports team. There are even people who incite violence against rival team fans (much like extremist followers of a religion). Some fans even have pre-game rituals to ensure that their team will win (much like prayers, meditation, saint interceding).

Thanks for the discussion; I obviously really liked your post!:)

-Carrie

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/13164>

Search entries or author

Unread



Subscribed

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/13164>

Wednesday

The religious specialist I chose from my culture is a Mexican healer. In time of pain mentally, physically or spiritually a healer comes into play with their beliefs in magic. They cure, rejuvenate and empower. A Mexican healer is as every bit important as a doctor or teacher. They are most commonly classified as a shaman. They are treated different because not all people have the gift to heal. I wouldn't say they are given special powers by the group but I would say they are given special power from magic. Healers benefit the group as a whole. They come in handy, just as a tool in time of need.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19116>

[Amee Fujino](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19116>

Wednesday

A Pastor for Christians of Faith

Christian churches are lead by pastors. Pastors in a christian church are given the calling by God to look after the people of the church "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding"(Jeremiah 3:15). Not just anyone in the church can become a pastor they must have the calling from God. Their assignment from God is to watch over the souls of the church, they are involved with their lives and must genuinely care for them just as the God cares for us. They must set a good example for the church "So an overseer must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have good reputation...(1Timothy 3:2). Pastors are given certain privileges like being able to baptize or lead weddings, but they are held accountable much more than any other member of the church "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness"(James 3:1). A pastor in a Christian church would be classified as a priest because they are the ones who teach us about the Bible and during each Sunday service they preach (give us a message from God). A pastor is seen as the most knowledgeable from the church. If any of the leaders or members of the church are having spiritual warfare, the paster is one who can help them through prayer. Pastors definitely benefit the group.Through a pastor's teachings we can learn more about the word of God, and how to apply the teaching of scriptures to our lives. They are an essential tool to a Christian's relationship we have with God.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/4018>

[Kimberly Cruz](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/4018>

Wednesday

A fortune teller is a religious specialist whom provides answers to questions of the future, they serve the culture with a sense of relief as their life is predicted and they are the ones to go to for answers to know your destination. They would be better classified as a shaman as they have direct contact to the supernatural, they use the supernatural world to give the seeker answers. Also, they are typically chosen by the spirits to be able to obtain the "powers" or communication that they have.They get their status of predicting the future and informing through personal communication with the supernatural. These people are treated differently as some may see them as skeptical or a scam while others bow down to them as they see their future in their hands. I dont think they are given special powers by the group as he/she has direct contact with the power he/she needs (supernatural) to provide those who seek them with answers. They do benefit from the group as a whole because without those who believe in them and seek them for their fortune, they would not have any business (if practiced as a business) or have a point in connecting with the supernatural.

[Reply](#)

Search entries or author

Unread



Subscribed

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/14615>

Miguel Coronel



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/14615>

Wednesday

The specialist I chose from my culture is a Padre which means priest. I believe they are a specialist because they dedicate a huge portion of their time to a certain practice of religion and perform various tasks. They could perform wedding ceremonies, mass, house blessings, and individual blessings. This person is a priest but could be classified as a shaman due to individuals relying on him for help in whatever the situation could be. This comes back to Malowaski and how people seek comfort by feeling they are in control of the uncontrollable. This individual could be treated differently in a culture depending on the crowd environment he could be in, maybe be recognized and thanked. Also they could be given the power of great advice and knowledge. Overall this group of individuals could benefit in a religious, spiritual way and materialistic way but it all depends on the people who follow his practice and gift him.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/13251>

Nicholas Medina



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/13251>

Wednesday

I would like to highlight teachers of our educational institutions as a cultural/religious specialist. Teachers are persons who we hold as a person of value in our society and bear a significant importance onto them because of what they do. Their job is to guide and instill knowledge unto us broadening our understanding of the world we live. As a specialist, they would be more considered as priest-like because they are representative of the power of knowledge and understanding and act as messengers to deliver knowledge. They clearly benefit the community by enriching all with their wisdom.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/546>

Lucia Rocha



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/546>

Wednesday

One religious specialist from my culture is a Curandero. A Curandero is a folk healer, a person who uses plants, herbal medicine, spiritualism, massage and prayers to treat people that are ill. They can also predict the future through card readings. Curanderos are known as healers, witch doctors and medicine men or women. They are religious specialists because they pray and perform rituals to try and connect with god. People go to them when they feel sick, mentally and physically. People that feel sick believe that this could be caused by the curse of a witch. Witches are known to use evil powers to cause pain and suffering to others. The Curandero is known to be the only person who can cure and get rid of a curse. The Curandero performs spiritual cleansings to rid a person from curses, spirit possession, sickness and bad luck. They believe God gives them the power of healing through rituals and prayers. Many people prefer going to Curanderos instead of medical doctors. Curanderos are very common, especially in low income communities where people can't afford to pay for medical treatment. Curanderos usually charge a small amount of money for their services.

Their classification falls under a Shaman because they heal with herbs, prayers and they try to communicate with spirits. As opposed to a priest, Curanderos charge for their services. They are like doctors but without a professional degree and less expensive. I believe that Curanderos are treated and seen differently from other people. Many people see Curanderos as witches just because a Curandero does rituals, divination, and communicates with spirits. Some people are afraid of them because they are known to be powerful. The people that go to them and believe in them treat them with the utmost respect. I want to believe that people are benefiting from Curanderos. Growing up and especially traveling to Mexico made me believe somewhat about Curanderos. People are benefiting when they are healed. Low income

families the
knowledge
personally
brings stre

Unread



Subscribed

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/4618>

[Janeth Viveros](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/4618>

Wednesday

I would like to talk about Catholic priest. Years of studying abroad to serve the Lord is what they dedicate their lives to. Not only that, but not being able to get married and have intercourse. Typically any woman would say no way. However these men, dedicate themselves to serving the Lord. They are the ones who "have a stronger deeper connection" with him. Priest are the ones who bless you, baptize you, wed you, etc. kind of like how a doctor has to go through so much schooling in order to help you feel better. They are seen as sacred because they help spread the word of the Lord, the way he wants it to be explained. Average Joe has no idea of what truly is meant to be understood unless a priest breaks it down and explains the Bible. A priest is looked upon with great respect and it is an honor to be able to shake his hand and even receive a blessing from him. For he is a tangible representation of God. Based on what you hear and see, not all priest are good. Just like any other pair of apples, you can't assume they are all rotten. Their special power is that they are able to preach and retrieved the words of the Lord for our salvation. They help re establish basic human rights and expectations. I do believe that they benefit everyone as a whole because they help bring us together. Via mass ceremonies on Sunday, they bring us all together for an hour of service to praise, acknowledged, and love our savior.

◀ [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/12567>

[Marlene Hernandez](#)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/12567>

Wednesday

I recently had a health problem while visiting my grandmother in Mexico. I was not sure who to go to and her neighbor referred me to an "alternative medicine" doctor. He is a doctor who uses herbs, in the form of tinctures and teas to cure certain medical conditions. It is a clinic located in the University of Chapingo that researches herbs and their medicinal benefits. Thus, we decided to go since there was nothing to lose right? We went to the University of Chapingo near Mexico City and found the clinic "Formulas Herbolarias." Well, this was actually a very good choice especially since they did not only help with my problem but guided me to a healthier life style.

At the same time doctor Erick Estrada, the doctor who runs this clinic, would be considered a Neoshaman. In this clinic they do not only conduct medical research to treat medical conditions but they also help you eat a well-balanced diet. Thus, I believe that such doctor would be a Neoshaman because they do not only give you the herbs and tinctures but they also give you information to make wiser choices.

Nonetheless, not all the people see this clinic as beneficial. As with many "alternative medicine" beliefs, not everyone agrees that this type of treatments would cure a person. I remember that when I came back from my trip I mentioned to my boss (who is also Mexican) about the treatment. As soon as I mentioned "alternative medicine" he jump and said "a curandero right?" It was not worth trying to explain since sometime people ignore the differences that exist among religious specialist.

As we can see, such doctors are not always treated the same as with traditional doctors. I believe that it is the lack of information that people have regarding innovating medicine. However, it was very difficult to get an appointment because they had many people to treat. It would be very beneficial for the culture to think outside the box and give such treatments a try. Treatments like this are always worth a try.

The clinic's website: <http://www.erickestrada.com.mx/index.php>

◀ Reply

Search entries or author

Unread



✔ Subscribed

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/8017>

Mark Rivera



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/8017>

Wednesday

In my culture priests are the religious specialist. Their role as a priest is to relay sacred rites to us humans from god. Priests show us the true meaning of our culture and why we are here on this earth. These specialist are treated differently because they aren't your typical American walking down the street. The reason I say this is because they live a much different lifestyle, for example, they cannot get married because they specially configure themselves to Christ. They do benefit our group as a whole by giving us knowledge and positivity through Christ.

◀ Reply

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/16637>

Jesus Quintino



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/16637>

Wednesday

Growing up in a catholic home, a priest in the catholic church has been our religious specialist. The priest in our culture has always been looked upon and as an example to live by, or should I say, a leader.

Priests in the catholic church are the religious leaders who spread the word of god and helps show the way. For that reason, they are treated with a lot of respect and are seen as someone who is trustworthy, and powerful in some way, for they can know all your sins and help you find the way of god.

I can say they benefit in many ways, but one that I have seen the most of in the time that I've been close to church are the relationships they build in the community. A benefit that helps both, the community and the priest.

◀ Reply

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19464>

Lehann Richardson



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19464>

Yesterday

so i think yoga teachers are considered to be a shaman because they push off good spirits and vibes to people so they can relax and be comfortable and be able to go on with there day. i do not think that they are treated any different because some go to yoga as therapy and counseling and some rather do that instead of sitting and talking to someone. i do not think that they are given any special powers and yes they benefit everyone as a whole because as long as there spirits are high they are in a good mood and that will help rub off on others because when one is happy others tend to have no choice but to be happy and be relax and have fun its similar to dancing dancers usually go dance and perform to release all the bad energy and feelings they are having

◀ Reply

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687>

Search entries or author Unread   Subscribed

I agree, my mom has been a yoga instructor for the last five years and she herself has changed a lot mentally, physically and spiritually. The process for her has been very cleansing and having participated in many of her classes, I now understand the transition our body goes through mentally. The amount of strength and energy is amazing.

 [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/20052>



Jana Castine



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/20052>

Yesterday

I think Justin Perry from "You are Creators" is a specialist because he helps people be the best version of themselves. He helps those that want to be spiritually awakened. Justin would be classified as a priest because he doesn't speak to the supernatural. Justin and his audience gain an understanding of themselves and the energy they send to the universe. They learn of to be positive and welcome wealth, success, and health into their lives.

 [Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/16367>



Maham Shah



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/16367>

Yesterday

According to the textbook, "individuals may develop a special interest in religious practices and may develop a special ability to contact the supernatural." [1] This is what best describes a religious specialist to me. Today I am going to talk about an Imam in the Islamic culture. An imam is chosen by the community and he understands and is able to recite the Quran perfectly. [2]. The imam is highly respected in the Islamic culture and religion. The imam's primary responsibility of an imam is to lead Islamic worship services" [3]. The imam also plays a leader in the Muslim community. Many go to the imam or advice for religious and personal matters. An Imam would be best classified as a priest. According to the textbook, " a priest acts as a representative of the community in dealing with the deity or deities." [4]. This is exactly what the Imam is. Also, a priest is someone who is given their role by the community or religious organization and that is exactly how an Imam is appointed. Most of the time an Imam is a full time religious specialist. Imams are treated much differently than everyone else! They are very respected to the point where people put their heads down as they cross paths with them. They are known to be very knowledgeable and wise. They are given special powers such as being in charge of the Mosque and its people, its funding, charities, and many other duties in regards to the mosque. They do benefit the group as a whole because without the Imam there would be no one to lead the prayers and make announcements for those who have died or lead prayers for those who had passed. Without Imams, one couldn't convert into Islam.

[4]. Stein, Rebecca L; Stein, Philip. The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft -- Pearson eText (Kindle Locations 3764-3765). Taylor and Francis. Kindle Edition.

[3]. <https://www.thoughtco.com/role-of-the-imam-2004527>

[2]. <https://www.thoughtco.com/role-of-the-imam-2004527>

[1]. Stein, Rebecca L; Stein, Philip. The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft -- Pearson eText (Kindle Locations 3553-3554). Taylor and Francis. Kindle Edition.

 [Reply](#)

Search entries or author

Unread



Subscribed

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19841>

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/19841>

Yesterday

For those who believe in the ability of these readers, Tarot Card readers can be instrumental in affecting decisions and gaining answers in aspects of their lives. People come to them to figure out the unknown, believing that they have a connection with a higher power and the tools to interpret the messages. They can be compared to shamans because of the believed ability to connect directly with the spirits, or spirit world. In the common religious cultures, such as christianity or catholicism, these card readers are shunned, considered to be the instrument of the devil. Those who believe come to these people in times of need so these readers have a huge influence on their believers, based on the information they choose to relay. I've seen a woman sitting on the floor, crying and explaining to someone over the phone that she was told that this person was her soul mate! In that moment, I saw a powerful ability to affect the lives of those who come to them. I do not see these readers affecting groups of people as a whole like a catholic priest would at Sunday mass, this is mostly an independent experience.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/25933>

[Vince Bales](https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/25933)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/25933>

Yesterday

I'm going to talk about pastors within the Christian community these individuals are considered to be priests. In a way, they do have different powers due to the fact that they are considered to be called by God to lead and guide his flock. These people are definitely treated different with in the culture they are considered holy people and are treated as such.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687>

[Diana Lara](https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687>

10:41am

Agreed. I actually appreciate the approach of a pastor versus the intensity and repetition of a priest. I just feel like the involvement keeps my attention and everyone else.

[Reply](#)

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/26413>

[Levon Siggels](https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/26413)



<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/26413>

2:14am

Dentists can be seen as a religious specialist in our society. Our culture favors a trip to the Dentist, and is necessary for acceptance. Their role is to take the gifted knowledge learned in secular text, and for a price, share that knowledge with the community to help with our well-being. Dentists function to enlighten the patient on how to take care of their oral hygiene in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Through the spirit of gentleness and peace, Dentist will use their healing power to save teeth through a ritual called a, root canal. They must abide by the specific text learned in school and follow strict procedure, in order to perform the ritual properly. Our culture sees the Dentists(along with

other doctor
Doctors.

Unread



Subscribed

Although D

the given text, so when it comes time to save teeth by doing a root canal, they must perform procedure accordingly. This benefits the whole community because everyone is treated with the same care. But, be aware that some Dentist that take the text and alter the meanings. What may look like a cavity through their magic x-ray, could just be the unique anatomy of patient's tooth. Those are observations that can only be seen after looking visually in the patient's mouth. Their treatment may leave patients with unnecessary fillings and could put their teeth at risk of root canals, and even worse, extraction's! Please use discernment when getting examination's. After dental appointment, sometimes second opinions may be necessary. I hope you find the best specialists around, who will give you word for word truth, which can only be found from the written text.

ithin the community.

[Reply](#)


<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/26413>

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/26413>

2:19am

What I mean is that can be classified as a type of priest.***

[Reply](#)


<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687>

<https://vcccd.instructure.com/courses/1509/users/21687>

10:37am

I chose holistic healer as my religious specialist. Not everyone fully understands the concept of holistic healing but some do use this as a source of religion. Not so much for worshiping but spiritually. The ultimate goal of holistic healing is wholeness. In achieving wholeness, we must consider all aspects of our lives including respecting our body, healing our relationships, caring for our environment, showing love for all humankind, and living our life purpose. We are either in balance or out of balance, aligned or misaligned, integrated or disintegrated, and that's what makes us feel well or unwell both spiritually and mentally. The body, mind and soul work as a system with each part contributing equally to whole person. When in flow, this system facilitates the natural flow of energy throughout the body, without blockages or resistance. When out of flow, this natural flow is interrupted as energy accumulates and stagnation of energy occurs.

Holistic Healing is about bringing any imbalance into alignment with its natural state of functioning spiritually and physically. Holistic healing strays from the typical medicinal approach of conventional medicine, and looks beyond a person's physical state and sees the holistic view of their state of being or functioning. It finds that the root cause of a physical illness may in fact be non-physical. Holistic healing works when we approach life from all aspects of being – physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. This is beneficial to anyone willing to have patience in centering oneself. This overall would be classified as Shaman because the rituals involved and healing process as the end product.

[Reply](#)


<https://vcccd.instructure.com/about/15476>

12:31pm