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Anthropology 121

Quiz #4

Why Is Religion Natural?

1. T/F Religion allays anxiety.
F – It generates as much anxiety as it allays – fears of ghosts, spirits
2. T/F Religious explanations of natural phenomena may further the sense of mystery.
T – A humungous flood, etc.
3. T/F Religious claims are irrefutable.
F That some claims are plausible to some people makes them worthy of investigation. There are many such claims that no one believes
4. T/F People have religious beliefs because they fail to reason properly.
F—Presumes a dramatic difference between religious and ordinary thinking. Ultimately better arguments do not explain away faulty beliefs
5. T/F Religious concepts are easy to understand and can be exciting to consider.
T – appealing to children..
6. What are examples of far-fetched notions that are never considered as religious claims?
Too arbitrary – Cats think in French, God ceases to exist on Thursday evening.
7. T/F We are not aware of why our minds sustain certain religious concepts while they dismiss others.
T – Peoples’ actual religious concepts may diverge from what they believe they believe!
8. What sorts of qualities do the supernatural characters we believe in have?
Omniscient, born of a virgin, walk through walls, walk on water
9. T/F Moral intuitions are not directly linked to supernatural agents (ghosts, gods, spirits).
T – Religious teaching do not have any effect on people’s moral intuitions (separate domain)
10. Gods and spirits function as: (select those that apply)
a. moral legislators b. moral exemplars c. interested parties d. having causal powers.
C and D
11. T/F The presence of actual witches is not necessary for people to believe in their powers.
T (just their existence)

12. T/F Rituals to remove contamination by magical pollutants are characteristic of OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder)

T

13. T/F Religion is very similar to language and very different from music.

F (the reverse) We effortlessly recognize music and religious concepts

Acquisition of language is an adaptation

14. What are examples in which religious concepts violate some of our most entrenched intuitions?

Gravity, invisibility, witches fly, people grow old and die

You Are What You Eat: Religious Aspects of the Health Food Movement

1. Do you eat health food? Why? Why not?

(Discussion)

2. When did the health food movement begin?

1830s Popular Health Movement

Sylvester Graham (crackers, vegetarian, whole grains, exercise)

Physiological and Spiritual reform

3. Who was Adele Davis?

Author, authority on healthy cooking and health living

4. What are the origins of the contemporary health food movement?

1960s counter culture - Organics, Natural foods

Today challenge agribusiness re: Monsanto farming products

5. T/F Converts to the health food movement commonly resynthesize their mental image of the world.

F

6. What are some symbolic oppositions in the health food movement?

White /Whole Grain/dark

Raw/Cooked

Cloudy/Clear

7. The health food movement contains all the elements utilized by Geertz in his definition of religion. These include: (select those that apply)

a. mana b. taboo c. sacrifice d. promise of salvation

A, B, D

Burning Man

1. What is Burning Man and when does it happen?
Gathering on the Black Rock Desert in N. Nevada – Last week of August culminating on Labor Day. 60,000 participants. Celebration of self-expression, arts, third largest city in Nevada..
2. What sorts of people might be drawn to attending Burning Man?
Artists, people interested in inventing new culture, free thinkers, people who are likely not affiliated with mainstream religious practice.
3. T/F The journey to and experience of Burning Man can function as a pilgrimage.
T – People come from all over...especially SF Bay Area where it originated. Prepare in advance, gather many items, drive for long distances
4. How might the Burning Man festival be seen as a religion?
Pilgrimage, initiation, burn (consecration and renewal) , ritual activities
5. What ritual activities occur at Burning Man?
Burn of Man, Burn of Temple, other burns following the Man, playful initiation of newbies/virgins.
6. How does the economy of Burning Man differ from mainstream U.S. trade?
No advertising, marketing, no corporate sponsorship. Gifting – no expectation of direct return...