## Power and Symbolism

1. Power and Symbolism
   1. Symbols
      1. Symbols’ meaning may be controlled or manipulated by those in power, or by those under the control of the powerful
      2. Symbols permit people to discuss abstract topics and to talk about things in the past.
   2. Culture, politics, and power
      1. The fundamental task of politics is to **establish social order** and to **maintain that order through social control**
      2. Every human individual is immersed in a sea of social control, sanctioning and being sanctioned by other members of society
         1. Age
         2. Ethnicity
         3. Rank in University
      3. Politics is the use of power
         1. Politics is the ability to influence or control the direction and outcome of social interactions
            1. Sources of power

Authority

Legitimate power - ascribed and or achieved

Based on socially recognized grounds

Age

Knowledge

Skill / experience

Personality / charisma

Office

Etc

Usually limited in scope(are of authority) and duration

Persuasion

Based on control over valuable social resources

Typically exercised through manipulation of rewards or expert use of language (making an argument, giving a speech), often described as “charisma’

Coercion

Threat or use of force or sanction

Usually combined with authority and/or persuasion

* + - * 1. Power in or between societies

Ideology

Active or agentive

Identifiable instruments of power

Contestable

Spoken

Hegemony

Elusive

Unrecognized

Uncontestable

Taken for granted

Unspoken

* 1. Power and Symbolism in Culture
     1. The most universal symbol that all humans share is the human body
     2. All humans have bodies. It belongs to both the individual and to the wider social body. It is a vehicle for symbolizing individual and society
     3. There is continual interaction between the embodied individual and the social and natural world of which the individual is a part
  2. Douglas: The body as a symbol
     1. Mary Douglas: Emphasized the relationship between symbolic classification, rituals, and social systems
        1. There is a recurring connection between the human body and the body politic; rituals designed to protect the human body from pollution or outside contamination are reflected in those rituals designed to protect the boundaries of society
     2. Douglas defined two bodies of experience and the relationship between them; the social body and physical (human) body.
     3. Society is organized as a system of relations which regulates and constrains the way the human body is perceived, thus regulating and constraining social behavior
     4. The body is a model which can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious” Purity and Danger
        1. Boundaries are physical and conceptual
           1. Physical

Clothing

How we adorn ourselves

How we walk

* + - * 1. Conceptual
      1. Boundaries for the individual body
      2. Boundaries for the societal or social body
         1. The ways we understand the individual body