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**ANTH 1102**

**Attendance/Participation Questions for Week 4: Taboo**

**Attendance/Participation:** Your attendance/participation will be determined by your post in the discussion board. Read the entire article before answering the questions. Only answer one option each covering the topic, thesis, and cultural example (aim for 250 words):

***Option 1: (Mary Douglas)***

A.(Topic) What is the main point of Mary Douglas’ article? (one sentence)

B.(Thesis) Some of the main points to Douglas’ article relate to taboo, classification systems, and systems of holiness or purity.  A taboo is typically something the society deems inappropriate. What is Douglas definition of taboo?  She suggests that “classifications are not otiose.  They do something, they are necessary in organization. [. . .] Leviticus was a case for pollution theory the classifying of the animals should correspond to some important classifying for the internal organization of society”(Douglas 2008: 185).  Having read the entire article, can you explain what she means by classification systems in this quotation, and how does it contribute to her overall argument.  (hint: what may be classified as clean or pure as opposed to unclean or impure may be based on one’s cultural perception and not inherent qualities. ). What do classification systems have to do with her definition of taboo? (hint:  think about what foods she defined as pure or impure/dirty and why) (Write at least three sentences)

C.(Cultural example)  The cultural example she uses to prove her thesis are the food taboos as outlined in Leviticus, in the bible.  Think about taboos that you adhere to within your everyday experience.  Think about what is  culturally inappropriate in American culture and/or your own community. Can you show how your  example of a taboo can be explained in terms of classification systems? (Explain how your example fits Douglas’ understanding of taboo/impurity as things that do not fit within the cultural understanding of purity).

***Option 2: (William Tsitsos)***

A.(Topic) What is the main point of Tsitsos’ article? (one sentence)

B.(Thesis) William Tsitsos uses Mary Douglas’ theory or definition of taboo in order to understand the origins of techno music in Detroit and rap music in the Bronx.  Tsitos states:

“Whereas rap emerged in reaction to incursion into the South Bronx, techno was itself the product of disconnection on multiple levels.  According to the arguments set forth by Mary Douglas, the former situation leads to greater solidarity to repel the “matter out of place,” whereas the latter situation is one in which people themselves are out of place and must be symbolically erased”  (2018: 279).

Having read the entire article, explain in your own words what the above quotation means and how it contributes to Tsitso’s overall thesis argument).? He looks at Douglas theory of pollution to apply her understanding of “danger from external boundaries” to the situation in the Bronx, and “danger from internal contradiction” to his analysis of Detroit (Douglas 1995: 24). What does this mean? (Write at least three sentences)

C.(Cultural example)  Tsitso discusses the evolution of rap music in the Bronx and Techno music in Detroit to apply Douglas’s theory of taboo (purity/impurity as matter out of place).  Can you give an example of your own that you can relate to the Tsitso’s general argument? (Explain how your example relates to the understanding of boundaries and “matter out of place”- things that do not belong).