

Lecture Outline: Popular, Folk & Non-Western Medicine

Introduction:

Part 1: Medical Pluralism

Part 2: Popular Medicine

Part 3: Folk Medicine

Part 4: Non-Western Medicine

Conclusion

Introduction

- **Beyond biomedicine**
- **Western perceptions of folk & non-western medicine**
- **Mind-body modalities; expert & lay knowledge**
- **Medical Pluralism**

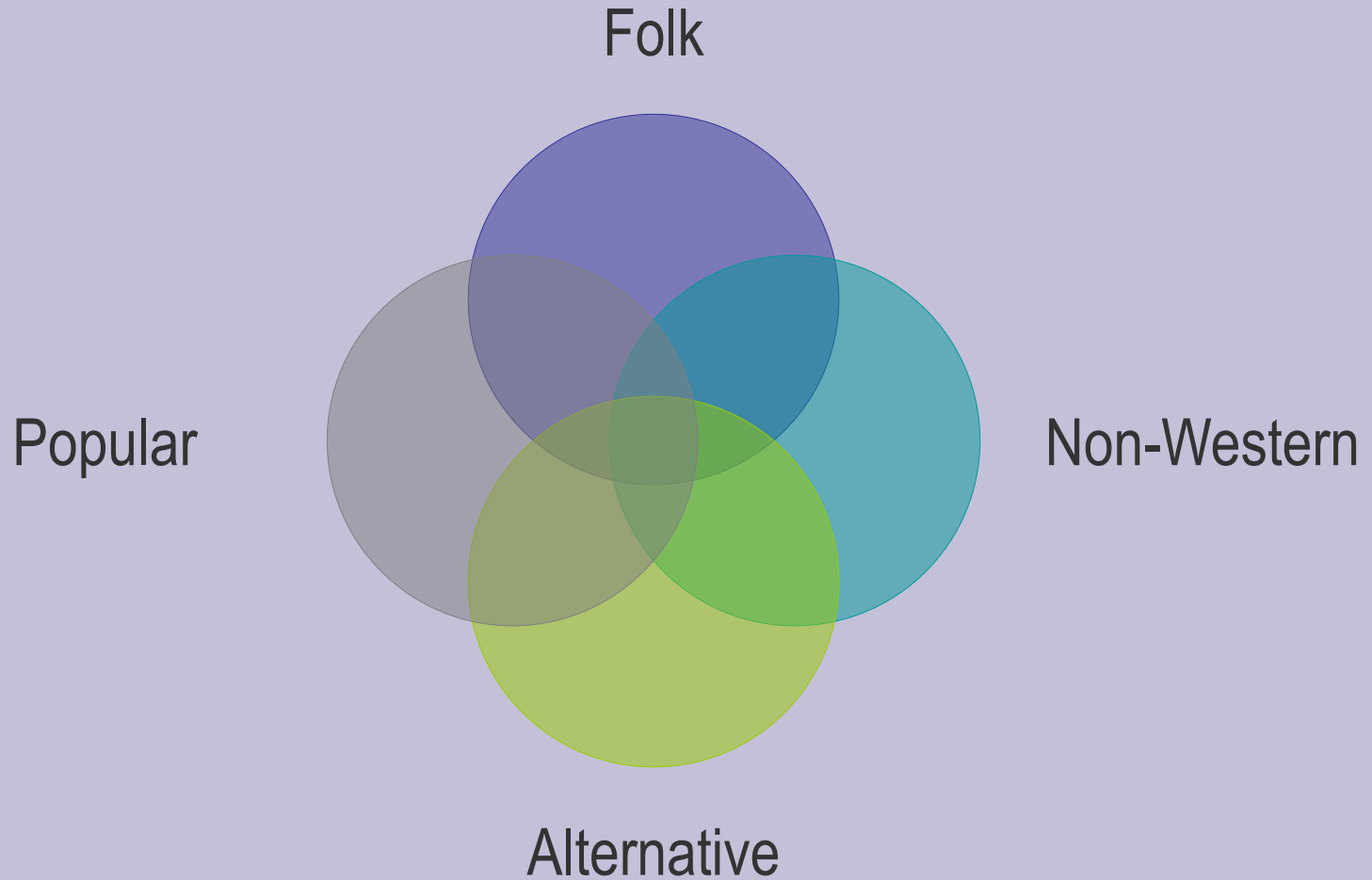
Introduction

- **Asclepius, Greek god of medicine: interventionist; health through correcting imperfections**
- **Hygeia, Greek goddess of health: prevention of disease; health education; health as the natural order**

Introduction

- **19th century holistic health**
- **20th century rise of allopathic medicine**
- **Late 20th interest in non-Western & complementary therapies**

Medical Pluralism



Medical Pluralism

- **multiple medical cultures**
- **health consumerism: popular & folk sectors, alternative therapies, biomedicine**
- **medical pluralism in a global age**

Medical Pluralism

- **Galenic Medicine dominant in west to 19th Century**
- **Humoral Theory - balance of body humours - healing through diet, medicine & blood-letting**
- **Humoral models & popular culture**

Popular Medicine

- **informal health care networks**
- **lay “experts” & lay literature**
- **90% health care in family setting**
- **role of women**

Popular Medicine

- **'hierarchies of resort'**
- **over the counter medicines**
- **traditional folk remedies**
- **diet & behaviour**
- **faith healing**

Folk Medicine

- **intermediate position**
- **place in non-industrial, non-Western societies**
- **secular 'technical' experts, i.e. bone-setters, herbalists, spiritual healers**

“I’ve heard stories of how she would ride or drive horses day or night to help the sick or needy. Many babies were delivered by her before the arrival of a doctor in this country and even after they came. In 1915, when dysentery swept through this area she was credited with saving many lives. It didn’t matter if it was an animal or human being in need of medical or dental help; she would do her best.”

**(Mrs) Kate Edwards “Aunt Kate”
Peace River Region, BC, Early 20th Century**

Folk Medicine

- **holistic**
- **informal training**
- **practitioners 'chosen'**
- **empirical base +
complex
understandings**

Non-Western Medicine

- **Indian Ayurvedic & Chinese Medicine**
- **individual & family**
- **healer & patient**
- **rejection of body as a machine model**
- **holistic –mind & body**

Ayurvedic Medicine

- **mystical principles, observation, extensive pharmacopoeia**
- **5 elements: earth, water, fire, air, space**
- **3 dosas: Vata; Pitta; Kapha**

Ayurvedic Medicine

Table 1 20 guṇa- (qualities) (see CS, Sū, 25. 36)

heavy (<i>guru-</i>)	light (<i>laghu-</i>)
cold (<i>śīta-</i>)	hot (<i>uṣṇa-</i>)
unctuous (<i>snigdha-</i>)	dry (<i>rūkṣa-</i>)
dull (<i>manda-</i>)	sharp (<i>tīkṣṇa-</i>)
stable (<i>sthira-</i>)	mobile (<i>sara-</i>)
soft (<i>mṛdu-</i>)	hard (<i>kāṭhina-</i>)
non-slimy (<i>visāda-</i>)	slimy (<i>picchila-</i>)
smooth (<i>ślakṣṇa-</i>)	coarse (<i>khara-</i>)
minute (<i>sūkṣma-</i>)	gross (<i>sthūla-</i>)
viscous (<i>sāndra-</i>)	liquid (<i>drava-</i>)

Chinese Medicine

- established 3000 years ago
- revived under Communist regime - global influence
- chronic disorders & pain
- pharmacology

Chinese Medicine

- **oppositional elements (female/cold/chronic) & yang (male/hot/acute)**
- **natural elements & seasons**
- **yin/yang imbalance**

Chinese Medicine

- **comprehensive**
- **extensive
pharmacopoeia & food
cures**
- **specialists, i.e.
bonesetters,
acupuncturists**
- **spirit mediums,
astrologists, specialists
in mental illness**

Conclusion

- **non-western therapies & chronic disease**
- **economically viability**
- **trans-cultural model?**

Conclusion

- **1978 WHO directive re traditional healers**
- **collaborations: birth, mental health, HIV/AIDS prevention**
- **1998 - 22 African countries researching indigenous medicine; 17 countries cultivating medicinal plant reserves**