

Perception and Misperception Across Cultures

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**Week One:** The impact of culture on perception; "The stranger sees only what he knows," as reflected in an American’s experience in Africa; in how, across cultures, the same image may have multiple meanings; how different perceptions of time, touch and politesse may muddle communication in humorous and angry ways.

**Week Two:** How underlying assumptions of individualistic and collectivist cultures drive dramatically different values, behaviors and perceptions; how many international students, scholars on the Berkeley campus and new immigrants to the Bay Area perceive and respond to common behaviors in the United States.

**Week Three:** Language and Culture: Verbal and non-verbal styles clashing across cultures; exploring the various meanings of ‘face’ hyperbole, understatement, silence and voice volume across cultures; and how metaphors, symbols, colors and numbers reflect differing cultural preoccupations.

**Week Four:** Examining cultural misperceptions of a US American in India through segments from the film, OUTSOURCED.

**Week Five:** Discussing the sources of misunderstanding of "The Lost Boys of Sudan" and their new American hosts in segments from the film, THE GOOD LIE.

**Week Six:** Globalization and Polarization: How, in a rapidly globalizing world, diplomatic, business and religious cultural clashes and misunderstandings increasingly play out in the news of the day.

**Course Related Readings:** Perception and Deception, A Mind-Opening Journey Across Cultures by Joe Lurie (www.PerceptionAndDeception.com), available in paper and kindle on Amazon, plus selected handouts to be provided in class.

Other relevant and recommended readings: A Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently and Why, by Richard Nisbett; and A Geography of Time, (how time is perceived, understood and used differently across cultures) by Robert Levine