# Part 11: Medical Anthropology

## Key Terms and Definitions

**Agency**: the capacity to act, making one’s own choices independently.

**Biocitizenship**: citizenship based in the age of biomedicine and biotechnology.

**Biomedicine**: medicine based on principles of western natural sciences.

**Critical medical anthropology**: an approach that highlights the linkages between social, political, and economic processes to human health and illness.

**Cutting**: form of self-injury that involves making small cuts on one’s body, often, but not always, on arms and legs.

**Disease**: forms of biological impairment explained by biomedicine.

**Habitus**: personal dispositions, both conscious and unconscious.

**Illness**: the social and psychological experience a patient has of a disease.

**Reproductive health**:a state of physical, mental, and social well-being in all aspects related to the reproductive system.

**Suffering**: the physical, mental, and emotional distress recognized by members of a particular culture.

**Structural violence**: the systematic ways in which the political and economic organization of our social world harms or disadvantages certain individuals or populations.

**Symbolic violence**: the mechanisms that lead those who are subordinated to “misrecognize” inequality as the natural order of things and blame themselves for their location in their society’s hierarchies.

**Techniques of the body**: distinct and routinized bodily actions that embody specific cultural behaviors; can be divided by class, gender, race ethnicity and other identity markers.