

It and seemingly blind
faith they put into



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It is very difficult as a reader to make any sense of the rituals performed by the Nacirema. The Nacirema are a people who stress the importance of physical wellness and go to great and to the outsider horrific lengths to ensure this. A professor Linton was the first to shed light on the particularly bizarre lifestyle that is lived by the Nacirema. Physical wellness being so heavily stressed is not the bizarre aspect, it is the spiritual sense and seemingly blind faith they put into their beliefs that is bewildering.

These people believe the human body is ugly and that it breeds disease.

The Nacirema pray daily through a private shrine in their house to, what seems to me cleanse and prevent, what to them lurks and breeds in our body. It is believed by the people that there is magical forces possessed in a chest in the shrine. These forces or magic is supplied through text by a medicine man who holds very high stature among the Nacirema. One part of the body that is seen to be especially unholy is the mouth.

One major part of the cleansing of the mouth is done once or twice a year by the holy mouth men. This is where the man uses exotic instruments to open holes larger in decaying teeth or even healthy teeth. The teeth, with nerve exposed, are stuffed with magical material to arrest decay. To the outsider this is torturous.

There are many other disturbing body cleansing rituals like the baking of women's heads scheduled by the patterns of the moon. This culture is one of many cultures who put their faith in past on beliefs and go to seemingly horrific measures carrying them out. This article was frightening as well as

uplifting to me. What was frightening to me is the fact that in the US these disturbing rituals take place.

As I already stated as an outsider it is very difficult trying to make sense of these customs in terms of my society. I was being quite ethnocentric. It took me a while to get my stomach back and realize that these people are born into this lifestyle. These rituals are a part of the religion they hold dear to their heart. So yes, to the common white Irish Catholic this may be peculiar, but after some time it occurred to me, the beauty in such strong religious devotion.

The Nacirema go to great lengths to, in their minds, cleanse the unholy body. Although it may turn your stomach as well as mine, I believe we should be cultural relativists, step back and respect such deep faith and belief. I also believe there is a lesson to be learned here. For if our society as a whole upheld and blindly accepted the teachings of our respected religions, we would live in a safer and better educated society than we do today.

Category: Social Issues