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Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness

1996 Conference

MARCH 27-31
HOLY SPIRIT RETREAT CENTER
ENCINO, CA

Theme: Trance-Formation

PROGRAM CHAIRS

GERI-ANN GALANTI

LARRY PETERS

SITE COORDINATOR

DANA BALDWIN

Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness

1996 Conference

Theme: Trance-Formation

March 27-31
Holy Spirit Retreat Center
Encino, CA

Program Schedule

Wednesday, March 27

- 3:00-5:00 Registration
5:00 Opening Convocation.....by Larry Peters, Program Co-Chair
- 5:30-6:30 Dinner**
- 7:00 Experiential Workshop: Every Step a Prayer.....by Philip Scott (Ancestral Voice)**

Thursday, March 28

8:00-8:45 Breakfast

8:45-9:00 Welcome.....Geri-Ann Galanti, Program Co-Chair

SACRED LANGUAGE CHAIR: BARRY MICHIRINA

- 9:00-9:20 A New Theory of Kabbalistic Pathwork.....by Mira Zussman (San Jose State U)
- 9:20-9:40 666: Pre-Christian Pagan Legends of Jesus and Sacred Numerology in the Formation of Christianity.....by Dave Doleshal (Lemuria)
- 9:40-9:50 Discussion

PSYCHOLOGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS CHAIR: GERI-ANN GALANTI

- 9:50-10:10 PMS as a Culture Bound Syndrome.....by Geri-Ann Galanti (CSU Los Angeles & Dominguez Hills)
- 10:10-10:30 Emotions and the Shift in Consciousness in Fieldwork.....by Barry Michrina (Mesa State College)
- 10:30-10:45 Break
- 10:45-11:05 Psychic Encounter as Grief Support.....by Tim Lavalli (C.I.I.S.)

- 11:05-11:25 Narratives of Psychic Attack: The Lived Ghost Story as a Catalyst for Transformation and Power.....by Tina R. Fields (C.I.I.S)
- 11:25-11:45 The Anthropology of Consciousness and Social Policy.....by Stephan A. Schwartz (Cognitive Sciences Laboratory)
- 11:45-12:00 Discussion

Thursday Afternoon

12:00-1:00 Lunch

CONSCIOUSNESS AND TECHNOLOGY CHAIR: MIRA ZUSSMAN

- 2:00-2:20** Ghosts on the Screen: The Search for Authenticity in an On-Line Environment.....by Matthew Bronson (C.I.I.S; UC Berkeley)
- 2:20-2:40** The Virtual Body-Mind in the Interactive Animated Cyberspace Landscape.....by Janet Richardson (Fujitsu Cultural Technologies)
- 2:40-2:50** Discussion

INTEGRAL PHILOSOPHIES OF TRANCE-FORMATION ORGANIZER/CHAIR: HELMUT WAUTISCHER

- 2:50-3:10** Twentieth Century Warfare as Religious Ritual.....by Richard Koenigsberg (Library of Social Science)
- 3:10-3:30** Sensuality and Consciousness V: Emergence of the "Savage Savage"by E. Richard Sorenson (Gyudmed U at Hunsen, India)
- 3:30-3:45** Break
- 3:45-4:05** Stealing the Fire.....by Dan Moonhawk Alford (CSU Hayward; C.I.I.S.; JFK U)
- 4:05-4:25** On Christian Metaphors and Chinese Dreams: An Epistemological Analysis of Ecstatic Visions.....by Constantine Hriskos (Colby College)
- 4:25-4:45** Transformation of What? -- A Critical View on the Concept of Self.....by Helmut Wautischer (Sonoma State)
- 4:45-5:05** Discussion

Thursday Evening

5:30-6:30 Dinner

7:30 **Experiential Workshop:** The Dream as Ethnographic Resource.....by Iain R. Edgar (Durham U)

Friday, March 29

8:00-9:00 Breakfast

DREAMS, PRECOGNITION AND GUIDANCE: ORGANIZER: YVES MARTON / CHAIR: IAIN EDGAR

9:00-9:20 Dreams and Artistic Training: A Balinese Example.....by Daniel Deslauriers (C.I.I.S)

9:20-9:40 A Phenomenological Study of Precognitive Dreams.....by Mary Stowell (private practice)

9:40-10:00 Dream Visions Which Advise and Protect: Lessons From Fieldwork and Inner Work.....by Yves Marton (UCLA)

10:00-10:20 The Navajo Approach to Dreams: A Preliminary Study.....by John D. Dadosky (U of Dayton)

10:20-10:40 Discussion

10:40-10:55 Break

DREAMS FROM THE FIELD: A STUDY OF ETHNOGRAPHIC DREAMING ORGANIZER: IAIN EDGAR / CHAIR: YVES MARTON

10:55-11:15 Dreaming as Interaction.....by Douglass Price-Williams (UCLA)

11:15-11:35 Ethnographic Dreaming.....by Iain R. Edgar (Durham U)

11:35-12:00 Discussion

Friday Afternoon

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-3:00 ▶ Board Meeting

1:00-3:00 Networking Groups

3:00-5:00 **Experiential Workshop**: The Lovers' Journey: A Quest for the Inner Man and Woman.....by Peggy Owen (Michigan State U)

Friday Evening

5:30-6:30 Dinner

BIOLOGICAL AND EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVES ON CONSCIOUSNESS CHAIR: JEFF MACDONALD

7:00-7:20 Transcendence and Enlightenment: An Evolutionary Imperative for Modern *Homo sapiens*.....by Alondra Oubré (Bioanthropology Research Laboratory; U of Maryland)

- 7:20-7:40 Shamanism and Ontological Security: A Psychobiological Approach.....by Marlene Dobkin deRios (CSU Fullerton)
- 7:40-8:00 Trance, Dance, Myth, and Art: Communal Visions of/in the Paleolithic Caves.....by Jeff Collins (Oglethorpe U)
- 8:00-8:20 The Impact of Consciousness on Human Mate Selection.....by Leanna Wolfe (El Camino College, LA Valley College)
- 8:20-8:40 Mythological Traces of Aquatic Human Ancestry.....by Ralph Metzner (C.I.I.S, Green Earth Foundation)
- 8:40-9:00 Discussion

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| Saturday, March 30 |
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8:00-9:00 Breakfast

ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES ON CONSCIOUSNESS CHAIR: MICHAEL WINKELMAN

- 9:00-9:20 Possession in Two Balinese Trance Ceremonies.....by Hoyt Edge (Rollins College)
- 9:20-9:40 Foot Reflexology and Culture Change in Taiwan.....by Christian Anderson(C.S.U. Northridge)
- 9:40-10:00 Dzogchen: The Path of Experience.....by Dana Baldwin (Kaiser Permanente)
- 10:-10:20 Illness, Divination, and Curing Among a Mayan Community in Mexico..... by Bill Stephens (U of Oregon)
- 10:20-10:35 Break
- 10:35-10:55 Trance and Healing Among the Shona of Zimbabwe.....by Clive and Maricarol Kileff (U of Tennessee, Chattanooga)
- 10:55-11:15 The Plasma Dimension and the "Three-Worlds-Interpretation" of Traditional Cultures.....by Holger Kalweit (Germany, Psychologist & Anthropologist)
- 11:15-11:35 Indigenous Concepts of the Soul.....by Armand Labbé (Bowers Museum of Cultural Art)
- 11:35-12:00 Discussion

Saturday Afternoon

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-3:00 Networking Groups / ►► Business Meeting (everyone interested is welcome)

3:00-5:00 **Experiential Workshop:** Resonance, Frequencies and the Human Body.....by JoAnne Combs (L.A.U.S.D.) and Rian McGonigal (Curentur U of Holistic Medicine; Simonton Cancer Center)

Saturday Evening

5:30-6:30 **Dinner**

7:00-8:30 **Keynote Address and Experiential Workshop:** Drinking From Mimir's Well: An Exercise in Evolutionary Memory.....by Ralph Metzner (C.I.I.S, Green Earth Foundation) By Subscription only. \$10, payable during registration or at the door.

Sunday, March 31

8:00-8:30 **Breakfast**

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONSCIOUSNESS CHAIR: DAN ALFORD

8:30-8:50 Consciousness as a Bridge Between the "Hard" and "Soft" Sciences.....by Sean Topping (Hippocampus Research Facilities)

8:50-9:10 Toward a Conscious Pedagogy.....by Cari Spring (Reel Grammar; SDSU)

9:10-9:30 Anthropology and the Study of Consciousness.....by Michael Winkelman (Arizona State U, Tempe)

9:30-9:40 Discussion

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS CHAIR: MATTHEW BRONSON

9:40-10:00 Merging with Nature while Rock Climbing.....by Charles Winstead (C.I.I.S)

10:00-10:20 Waking Dreams: A Tool for Actors.....by Carlos B. Hagen-L. (Santa Monica College)

10:20-10:30 Break

10:30-10:50 The Form of Hallucinogenic Experience.....by J. David Cole (Thomas Burke Museum)

10:50-11:10 EEG Brain Mapping in Altered States of Consciousness Under the Influence of Cannabis While Listening to Selected Pieces of Music.....by Jörg Fachner (U. Witten/Herdecke)

11:10-11:30 Trance in America: A Comparison of Trance Types and Trance Experience in Two Religious Communities..... by Sarasvati Buhrman (U of Colorado, Boulder)

11:30-11:50 Discussion

11:50-12:00 Closing Ceremony.....by Larry Peters

12:00-1:00 **Lunch**

Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness

1996 Conference

PROGRAM ABSTRACTS

WEDNESDAY EVENING

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| Experiential Workshop |
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Scott, Phillip: EVERY STEP A PRAYER

Life is motion. Everything sings, dances and pulsates with precious life. Through dance, storytelling, indigenous songs from various tribal peoples and the playing of such instruments as the Australian didgeridoo, the shamanic drum and Native flute--all of which are recognized strategies for harnessing the power of sound and vibration--the role, importance and power of prayer, ritual and ceremonies for the health and continued survival of all beings is brought to light.

THURSDAY MORNING

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| Sacred Language |
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Zussman, Mira: A NEW THEORY OF KABBALISTIC PATHWORK

Since the early medieval period, Kabbalists have been associating the letters of the Hebrew alphabet with paths on the Tree of Life, in an attempt to merge what may once have been two distinct mystical and/or divinatory systems. This paper will briefly review some of the creative solutions of the early Kabbalists, the current standard in Kabbalistic thought and practice, and will introduce a new approach to the problem, which radically alters the current understanding of the function of the mystical alphabet.

Doleshal, Dave: 666: PRE-CHRISTIAN PAGAN LEGENDS OF JESUS AND SACRED NUMEROLOGY IN THE FORMATION OF CHRISTIANITY

The pre-Christian Jesus legend will be examined in relation to an ancient form of "sacred numerology." Numeric values were assigned to each letter of the Greek alphabet, and then used to calculate the sacred numeric value of a name. Great mystical significance was attributed to such numbers. Early Christian constructions used precisely this same form of sacred numerology and employed it in a manner that suggests they did so in a deliberate attempt to "capture" the magic power and prestige of the older pagan Jesus myth and transfer it onto the new mythology of the Christian Jesus they were intent on creating.

Psychology and Consciousness

Galanti, Geri-Ann: PMS AS A CULTURE BOUND SYNDROME

There have been many different theories regarding the nature of culture bound syndromes. My hypothesis is that with some of them, having the diagnostic "label" may give individuals freer reign to act out their physical/emotional feelings. They may indulge their feelings and modify their behavior to a greater or lesser degree depending upon the situation and the secondary gains to be achieved. I will discuss this perspective, focusing on the specific example of PMS.

Michrina, Barry: EMOTIONS AND THE SHIFT IN CONSCIOUSNESS IN FIELDWORK

Cultural Anthropology has long claimed a phenomenological aspect to the process of fieldwork. Many anthropologists believe that they can shift their consciousness to align with that of natives and that they can thus obtain a unique form of data while performing native rituals. I propose that the emotional characteristics of the investigator as she or he attempts this aspect of fieldwork can impede or facilitate this process. Because we are emotionally conditioned by our early interpersonal experiences, we may re-experience feelings when we perceive people who remind us of our past experiences. This phenomenon, called transference, can lead to complexities of which most fieldworkers are unaware.

Lavalli, Tim: PSYCHIC ENCOUNTER AS GRIEF SUPPORT

An inquiry into the therapeutic and transpersonal effects of a psychic encounter with a deceased child by members of a grief support group. The eight member study group were participants in hospice after-care grief support for "Parents who have lost an Adult Child." Fieldwork includes pre- and post-encounter interviews with members of the group, as well as interviews with the psychic and participant sessions by the researcher. Researcher/Psychic sessions include: a pre-disclosure session, an informational interview, a closing data-check session, and one unplanned encounter the psychic described as "an insistent voice from the other side" and the researcher describes as "divergent data" or "oh wow!"

Fields, Tina R: NARRATIVES OF PSYCHIC ATTACK: THE LIVED GHOST STORY AS A CATALYST FOR TRANSFORMATION AND POWER

A small study on "psychic attack" as experienced by modern Americans. Using a hermeneutic narrative research method, I collected lived tales of nonordinary torment, and analyzed them for thematic content. As I noticed the qualities of the particular storytelling mode which kept being used, the idea of 'genre narrative' began to emerge. Psychological and transformative aspects of these experiences are discussed, along with the recurring motif of a sense of fate or word, and the influence of relationship in setting up conditions for psychic attack. Comparative discussion of older European views on similar topics, as seen through folklore and protective charms, is also included.

Schwartz, Stephan: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOCIAL POLICY

Dead bodies line the nightly news, an American gulag dots our national landscape, and the images of starving and homeless children that so disturb us, all suggest social policies dead in the street. Would a perspective based on insights developed by the anthropology of consciousness, parapsychology, and energy medicine produce policies that look any different? The presentation proposes that anthropologists, particularly those interested in the anthropology of consciousness, have a significant contribution to make to the design of social programs.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Consciousness and Technology

Bronson, Matthew: GHOSTS ON THE SCREEN: THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY IN AN ON- LINE ENVIRONMENT

The emergence of on-line networks as a new social space calls for the careful and sustained attention of anthropologists. In particular, the tension between "impression management" and "authenticity" evident in real-time "chat" sessions on America On-line is a defining element of this most self-conscious "culture". This paper approaches computer mediated communications as forms of interaction that combine attributes of spoken and written communication in a radical reconfiguration of social space. Sociolinguistic and pragmatic analysis are of substantial use in framing this still largely text-based medium.

Richardson, Janet Rolph: THE VIRTUAL BODY-MIND IN THE INTERACTIVE ANIMATED CYBERSPACE LANDSCAPE

This research is based on participant-observation in a cutting edge technology interactive animated multi-participant object-oriented international on-line virtual community in cyberspace. Analysis focuses on contact consciousness, cognitive exchange, and communication involvement between the Primary Referential Body-Mind-Environment and the Virtual Body-Mind-Environment. The implications of the research encourage a call to re-examine Western paradigmatic preoccupation with body-based definitions of reality and consciousness.

Integral Philosophies of Trance-Formation

Koenigsberg, Richard: TWENTIETH CENTURY WARFARE AS RELIGIOUS RITUAL

Five hundred years ago, the Aztecs practiced warfare in the name of religion -- prisoners were required to feed the blood-thirsty gods. It was believed the earth and sun were born of the body and blood of sacrificial victims. During WW1, 65 million forces were mobilized in the name of "France," "Germany," "England." Thirty-seven million soldiers died, were wounded, taken prisoner or reported missing in action, 57.9% of all forces. This presentation explores modern state-worship and the mounds of human beings sacrificed to the conflicts of nation-states. We pose the question: "To what principle, what purposes have these monstrous sacrifices been made?"

Sorenson, E. Richard: SENSUALITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS: PART V. EMERGENCE OF THE "SAVAGE SAVAGE"

The premodern way-of-life of the "noble savage" proved astonishingly vulnerable to exposure to societies embodying negative emotions and coercion. Animosity, and compelled acquiescence, savaged the innate intuitive rapport and ultimately undermined the basic type of consciousness from which it emerged. Thrown unexpectedly into this type of existential abyss, with no other models thereabouts to grasp at except those of the conquerors, the "savage savage" emerged -- a product of conquest. The selfless unity that seemed so firm and self-repairing in the isolation of the forests then vanished, as a truth-based type of consciousness gave way to one that lied to live.

Alford, Dan: STEALING THE FIRE

If physics is the 'queen of sciences,' then linguistics in this century has been the queenmaker, having given physics its best puzzles to work on. Four times in this century physicists have crept into the linguists' camp while linguists were sleeping and stolen the fire. I will briefly discuss Einstein's relativity, Heisenberg's Lament, Bohm's Wholeness and the Implicate Order, and the Fetzer Science Dialogues between Indigenous and Western Scientists that finally validated Benjamin Whorf's principle of linguistic relativity.

Hrskos, Constantine: ON CHRISTIAN METAPHORS AND CHINESE DREAMS: AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF ECSTATIC VISIONS

The Taiping rebellion of Nineteenth century China was the first Chinese uprising to draw much of its imagery from a missionary Christianity. It owed its unusual formulations to a visionary leader, Hung Hsiu-chuan, who, as a consequence of a nervous breakdown and series of dreams and hallucinations during that period, believed that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ who had ascended to heaven and was reminded of his divinity so that he would return to earth and establish a new kingdom under his rule. This presentation examines the visionary imagery of Hung's dreams and hallucinations and contrasts them to the Confucianist ideology of the Qing dynasty.

Wautischer, Helmut: TRANSFORMATION OF WHAT? -- A CRITICAL VIEW AT THE CONCEPT OF SELF

Scientific theories of consciousness clearly emphasize on the importance of functionalist interpretations of conscious experience. Ontological categories for "mind" or "self" seem to have become a relict of a Cartesian past. These categories are no longer capable of accommodating new findings in scientific consciousness research. Similarly, also spiritual and esoteric disciplines emphasize on the importance of transcendence and one's increased awareness of and surrender to a holistic universe. This paper examines how the dissolution of "self" affects both New Age business enterprises as well as the judicial and ethical and economic foundations of self-centered Western societies.

THURSDAY EVENING

Experiential Workshop

Edgar, Iain R. THE DREAM AS ETHNOGRAPHIC RESOURCE

While dream workshops are commonly used for personal growth purposes, their potential role as a professional resource in fieldwork, and more generally in the process of anthropological inquiry, is largely unexplored. This experiential workshop aims to facilitate participants' recollection of suitable dream imagery and relate this data to their academic/professional endeavors. Overall the workshop aims to elucidate the potential of dream (and vision) to inspire, suggest, problem-solve and even theorize the practice of research. Participants need not have a dream in mind nor be active researchers to share in the workshop.

FRIDAY MORNING

Dreams, Precognition and Guidance

Deslauriers, Daniel: DREAMS AND ARTISTIC TRAINING: A BALINESE EXAMPLE

This paper will present the experience of a Balinese shadow puppeteer and dancer which illustrates how dream can be a source of instruction in the acquisition of artistic skills and the inception of creative ideas. The dream narratives replicate a training situation in which Pak Agus' deceased father fulfills the traditional father-son mentorship. As this is in accord with the Balinese transmission of artistry, we will discuss how the dreams become a source of internal as well as external legitimization. Other dream related events that colored the relationship that I had with Pak Agus will be discussed.

Stowell, Mary: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF PRECOGNITIVE DREAMS

Using the research method of psychological phenomenology, five women who had had precognitive dreams were interviewed and asked to describe their experiences. Presented will be the phenomenology of a precognitive dream about persons or events not known to the dreamer, the psychological importance of unconfirmed dreams, the relationship between the worldview of the dreamer and the way in which the dreamer responded to the experiences, and the strengths and limitations of these findings.

Marton, Yves: DREAM VISIONS WHICH ADVISE AND PROTECT: LESSONS FROM FIELDWORK AND INNER WORK IN BRAZIL, NIGERIA, AND LOS ANGELES

Based on research with Brazilian, Cuban, and Nigerian spiritual leaders/teachers and my own related learning process, I discuss the way certain dreams are understood as carriers of messages from the spiritual or unknown dimension. I explore the distinction between "important dreams," coming from universal "reality" and those coming from the individual mind, giving examples of dream-visions from my research. "Important dreams" give truthful and helpful (sometimes life-saving) information in a manner which defies common-sense Western explanations.

Dadosky, John: THE NAVAJO APPROACH TO DREAMS: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

The Navajo consider dreams very personal and do not speak of them readily. I will review the data which I collected in the field speaking to: the value of dreams, as well as the relationship of dreams to the family within the context of a story telling culture. Animal symbolism within dreams provide a special source of inspiration. This includes the notion of *igoodi* dreams and *ibadi* (taboo) dreams, as illustrated from informants' examples. Also important is the role of the diagnostician (medicine person) with regard to interpretation and/or prescription for cure, in the case of *itabooi* dreams.

Dreams From the Field: A Study of Ethnographic Dreaming

Price-Williams, Douglass: DREAMING AS INTERACTION

Rather than regarding dreams as "things" or property, and grammatically treating them as nouns, the suggestion is to formulate a dream as an activity, label it "dreaming" and more specifically accept dreaming as interactional. For dreaming to be of importance, several psychological factors must be considered, including retention and selection, as well as external factors, such as to whom dreams are reported and their style of communication. Examples from anthropological writers on dreams are provided. It is noted that societal beliefs about dreams tend to influence the amount and types of dreams that are communicated.

Edgar, Iain R: ETHNOGRAPHIC DREAMING

The first part of the presentation will provide an overview of the reported and potential role of ethnographers' and informants' dream imagery in the ethnographic process. The focus will be on its possible value as a source of inspiration, suggestion, hypothesis and problem-solving for social science researchers. The second part will provide an example from my own fieldwork experience.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Experiential Workshop

Owen, Penny: THE LOVERS' JOURNEY: A QUEST FOR THE INNER MAN AND WOMAN

The experiential activity is based on Paul Rebillot's week-long workshop which is designed to help participants better integrate their positive and negative images of male and female. During the conference workshop, I will focus on the tracing aspects of the journey. Participants will improvise, dance, draw and meditate on either their negative male or female image. The workshop climax is the dance of trance-formation which transforms the negative image into a more positive one.

Networking Groups

The idea is to gather informally with other conference attendees to discuss topics of mutual interest and generally get to know each other.

If you have a topic you would like to discuss, write your name on the board, along with the topic, so that others can find you.

Networking groups will meet on Saturday afternoon as well.

FRIDAY EVENING

Biological and Evolutionary Perspectives on Consciousness

Oubré, Alondra: TRANSCENDENCE AND ENLIGHTENMENT: AN EVOLUTIONARY IMPERATIVE FOR MODERN *HOMO SAPIENS*

Enlightenment may be part of a processual scheme wherein the movement toward psychosocial and biocultural "progress" of the hominid lineage is the manifestation of an evolutionary imperative. Within the context of human evolution, the role of enlightenment may have become one of necessity because it seemingly encourages increased "brain power" while simultaneously promoting transcendence of excessively hostile and combative ways of being. The motivation among humans and their immediate ancestors to develop a nondivisive perceptual style, or a sense of connection with an all-pervasive source (i.e., the numen, cosmic consciousness, or divinity), may stem partly from genetic forces.

Dobkin deRios, Marlene: SHAMANISM AND ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY: A PSYCHOBIOLOGICAL APPROACH

This presentation will examine shamanic themes of control and domination of individuals over nature and spirit forces from a psychological perspective. I will argue that the food shortfalls and constant danger facing early hunters and gatherers would inevitably have led to feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and despair, and immobilized such groups from responding actively to the challenges of survival. The shamanic belief systems that focus on the individual dominating his/her world can only be understood in terms of the biology of hope which would lead to the evolutionary success of *Homo sapiens* in confronting and transcending the challenges faced.

Collins, Jeff: TRANCE, DANCE, MYTH, & ART: COMMUNAL VISIONS OF/ IN PALEOLITHIC CAVES

This presentation focuses on recent discoveries of Paleolithic shamanic art and entoptic images found at Lascaux and select sites in the archaeological record. Slides and handouts will be used to demonstrate the relationships between trance, dance, the origins of mythical thinking, and the culminating expression in art on cave walls. The paper proposes that the elevation of consciousness 40,000 years ago occurred in "sacred shrines."

Wolfe, Leanna: THE IMPACT OF CONSCIOUSNESS ON HUMAN MATE SELECTION

This presentation will consider why many humans want to believe that they make conscious choices about those who become their mates. We'll evaluate the biological components of sexual attraction, including ancestral evolutionary drives, pheromones, and neurochemicals like PEA (phenylethylamine). We'll then overlay psycho-emotional, social, cultural, geographical, and historical factors to demonstrate the multi-dimensional soup that in fact conditions consciousness in mate selection. We'll then critique mate acquisition strategies that attempt to override "unconscious" factors.

Metzner, Ralph: MYTHOLOGICAL TRACES OF AQUATIC HUMAN ANCESTRY

This videotape and discussion presents a brief overview of the evidence for the theory that semi-aquatic ecosystems provided the habitat for our primate ancestors, between the arboreal and the Savannah phase. Such environments also could have provided the impetus for the evolution of several anomalous but essentially human characteristics, including bigedalism, hairlessness and enlarged brains. Also mentioned will be some possible traces of proto-human aquatic existence in ancient mythologies.

SATURDAY MORNING

Ethnographic Perspectives on Consciousness

Edge, Hoyt: POSSESSION IN TWO BALINESE TRANCE CEREMONIES

This presentation reports on two trance ceremonies in Bali filmed during research in 1990. Both occurred at the Pura Dalem, the so-called Temple of the Dead, in their respective villages, and involved possession. I will analyze the different trance types and behaviors in these ceremonies, offering an interpretation of Balinese trance within the three-tiered worldview of the Balinese.

Anderson, Christian: FOOT REFLEXOLOGY AND CULTURE CHANGE IN TAIWAN

I will present a field report on an ethnographic method for studying culture change by focusing on the practice of foot reflexology in the small Taiwanese community of Makalahay. After briefly describing the context in which foot reflexology is practiced, I will explore how it connects the traditions of the Makalahay 'Amis people with that of the Catholic missionaries, the ancient Chinese concepts of acupressure, and the popular New Age movements in the West, and how it is negotiated by its practitioners and clients. I will also raise questions concerning cultural ownership, continuity, and change.

Baldwin, Dana: DZOGCHEN: THE PATH OF EXPERIENCE

Many Eastern traditions and practices have filtered to the West over the course of the 20th century, all of them changing to some degree upon transplantation. Such is the case with Dzogchen. Although it evolved in a culture radically different from ours, it has been adapted in a way that makes it a powerful methodology for actively working with one's everyday experience in the Western world. This presentation will describe a Dzogchen approach which encompasses four "ways of working" (power, ecstasy, insight, and compassion) with the emotions and reactions that arise within us as we move through our lives.

Stephens, Bill: THE PROCESSUAL ASPECTS OF ILLNESS AND CURING IN SAN ANDRES LARRAINZAR: A STUDY IN INTENTIONALITY AND INTERIORITY

I will discuss the processual aspects of the experience of illness in the highland Maya community of San Andres Larrainzar, Chiapas, Mexico. The presentation will center on the patient's experience, rather than the healer's. I will present first-person, "I feel", comments from ill individuals as a technique for highlighting the fluctuation in their feelings of well-being. I propose that this domain of human consciousness, i.e., the moment-to-moment fluctuations in interiority, represents an aspect of human consciousness that is not fully understood in terms of current discussions of intentionality.

Kileff, Clive & Maricarol: TRANCE AND HEALING AMONG THE SHONA OF ZIMBABWE

Shamans in many cultures use trance to facilitate healing. This presentation examines a trance exorcism ceremony among the Shona of Zimbabwe. The healer uses rhythmic music and chanting to create an altered state among the participants of the ceremony. He then places a white cock on the head of the patient, enabling the evil spirit to leave the patient and enter the white cock. The videotape made of this ceremony is analyzed in order to reveal the mechanisms used for trance induction and healing.

Kalweit, Holger: THE PLASMA DIMENSION AND THE "THREE-WORLDS-INTERPRETATION" OF TRADITIONAL CULTURES

All cultures, from small tribal societies to large ancient civilizations such as in China, India, and Egypt, seem to believe in three different cosmic dimensions. Of this "tri-cosmos," I am particularly interested in the second, which I term the "plasma dimension," where death, psyche and primordial matter are one. I compare this ancient model with the quest of modern physics for a basic matter or subatomic energy ocean. I will explain the principles of this dimension in terms of the holographic paradigm, and draw conclusions from my own near-death research which inspired me to postulate the plasma dimension.

Labbé, Armand: INDIGENOUS CONCEPTS OF THE SOUL

The presentation presents an overview of findings from a study on indigenous concepts of soul in non-western cultures around the world. My research suggests a broad correspondence in perception and conceptualization concerning the nature and properties of the purported human soul(s) by culturally and geographically disparate and diverse groups. I suggest that these ideas are based in commonly shared precepts rooted in shamanism and of significant antiquity. The research also indicates that the human soul(s), though categorized as a spirit is also described as substantial, mortal, and subject to certain physical laws.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Experiential Workshop

Combs, JoAnne & McGonigal, Rian: RESONANCE, FREQUENCIES & THE HUMAN BODY

JoAnne offers techniques and concepts about the body as an electro-magnetic transmitter, and will guide participants into experiencing the body as a sender-receiver of energy and frequencies. Rian will demonstrate four shamanic sound practices -- human voice, shamanic drums, didgeridoo, and singing bowls -- and will explain their healing qualities.

SATURDAY EVENING

Keynote Address & Experiential Activity

Metzner, Ralph: DRINKING FROM MIMIR'S WELL: AN EXERCISE IN EVOLUTIONARY MEMORY (by subscription)

In the mythology of the Nordic Eddas, Mimir is the ancient tree-giant who guards the well at the foot of the Tree of Worlds. Whoever drinks from the well can obtain knowledge of the origins -- of self, of clan, of people, of life, or the Earth, of the Universe. Odin, the knowledge-seeking shaman-god drinks from the Well in order to obtain such knowledge. After an introductory discussion of the story of the Well of Remembrance, we will go through a sound-movement-imagery exercise in evolutionary remembering, reliving the pre-vertebrate, vertebrate, amphibian, reptilian, mammalian, primate and human phases of our existence. The purpose is to restore and enhance perception and awareness of our natural, primordial relationship with the sacred Earth.

SUNDAY MORNING

Theoretical Perspectives on Consciousness

Topping, Sean: CONSCIOUSNESS AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE "HARD" AND "SOFT" SCIENCES

In the last few years "mainstream" scientists and academics have begun accepting consciousness as a viable and necessary component to their studies. Perhaps even more than chaos, consciousness has become the unifying entity of the "hard" and "soft" sciences and creates a dialogues in which a cross-fertilization of disciplines is emerging. Curiously, many scientists are looking to more archaic models to guide their current works. Investigated here are: the circumstances under which these people work, the countries in which they work, reasons for this paradigm shift, the apparent "sources" of these efforts as well as the ramifications in the global scientific community.

Spring, Cari: TOWARDS A CONSCIOUSNESS-RICH PEDAGOGY

This discussion has three parts. 1) Identification of the link between current definitions of "consciousness" and the evaluation of learning in the western educational system. 2) Understanding the consequences of this link. 3) Alternative modeling of the educational paradigm with a concomitant richer definition and understanding of "consciousness".

Winkelman, Michael: ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The anthropology of consciousness benefits from moving our domain of inquiry from strange, marginalized and esoteric phenomena to the central concerns of social and physical sciences by linking with broader developments in these other areas. Consciousness plays a central role in the recently emerging dialogues about agency, intentionality, embodiment, and meaning. Concepts of consciousness lie at the crux of the role of subjectivity and the observer in the creation of knowledge and experience of the world. Anthropology provides unique methods and perspectives for relating these and other phenomena to their neurophenomenological bases.

States of Consciousness

Winsted, Charles: MERGING WITH NATURE WHILE ROCK CLIMBING

I will present the results of my research into the experience of merging with nature while rock climbing. I will first summarize my methodology and then outline the 25 themes of the experience.

Hagen-L., Carlos B: WAKING DREAMS AS TOOLS FOR ACTORS

Acting and theater are activities permeated with powerful emotions and dissociative states of consciousness. I will explore -- based upon personal experience -- the power of waking dreams and sudden inspiration as tools to understand the meaning of a play and better prepare for representing on stage a given character. I will also discuss the nature of some of the forces and states present in these activities and the considerable difficulty in properly measuring and understanding them.

Cole, J. David: THE FORM OF HALLUCINOGENIC EXPERIENCE

Hallucinogenic experience often takes the form of the proscenium theater, with its preparatory sensuous and arousing phase, followed by the didactic, tension-heightening phase, and ending with the resolution phase, sometimes characterized by catharsis. This same sequence is repeatedly represented in the narratives of individuals describing ecstatic states induced by psychedelic substances or physiological stress. I will discuss the form constant and explore its implications in a number of directions.

Fachner, Jörg: EEG BRAIN MAPPING IN ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF CANNABIS WHILE LISTENING TO SELECTED PIECES OF MUSIC

[See title]

Buhrman, Sarasvati: TRANCE IN AMERICA: A COMPARISON OF TRANCE TYPES AND TRANCE EXPERIENCE IN TWO RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Presentation looks at trance behavior and subjective trance experiences of yogis and mediums in two U.S. communities. Extensive interview data suggest two psychobiologically distinct forms of common full trance experience: conscious trance, with continuous and remembered altered subjective inner awareness, and unconscious trance, in which the practitioner completely loses all subjective consciousness between the time of entering into and coming out of trance. Although trance behavior and its purpose are different for yogis and mediums, subjective trance experience is quite similar.