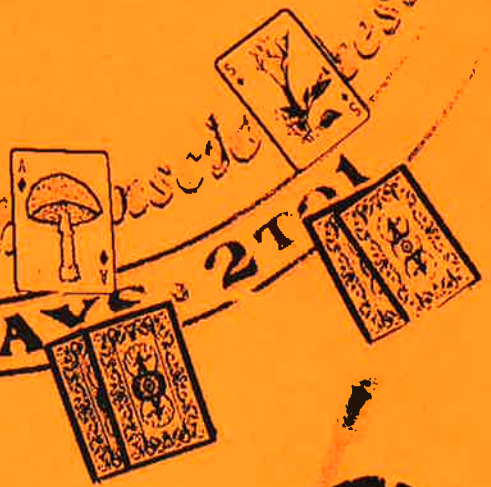


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Society for the
Anthropology
of Consciousness

Las Vegas 2007



Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness

Annual Meeting April 2-6, 2003

Marjorie Barrick Museum

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM
Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness
April 2-6, 2003

WEDNESDAY APRIL 2

Please note that no paper sessions are scheduled for either Wednesday or Sunday. Travel arrangements in and out of Las Vegas and several late on-site considerations persuaded us to fill all the Thursday, Friday and Saturday time-slots rather than hold only one paper session on Wednesday or Sunday.

There will be activities on both Wednesday and Sunday. Besides registration and general orientation for those arriving on Wednesday, we will also have an off-site excursion to Red Rock for late afternoon hiking and Chance Encounters with Desert Sunset Consciousness.

3:30 Tentative departure for **Red Rock**, leaving from Amerisuites.

Later Wednesday evening there will be a Consciousness Excursion to the Strip lead by a seasoned though non-native Las Vegas guide. This will follow the return from the Red Rock sunset hike.

9:00 Tentative departure for **Strip Exploration**, departing from Amerisuites.

We will repeat both of these experiences on Sunday, times to be announced.

THURSDAY APRIL 3

8:30-9:30 Registration & Orientation

9:30 Official Conference Opening & General Announcements

9:45 **UNLV Welcome** - Gary Palmer, Graduate Coordinator, Department of Anthropology and Ethnic Studies

10:00-11:40 Session

Castaneda's Controversy: Examining Consciousness Studies Future

(Chair: M. Diane Nell)

Suggestive Similarities and Correspondences of Shamanic Cognition and Nonshamanic Cognition (Timothy L. Hubbard)

Witches, Shamans and a plant called Datura: Drawing the line between Witches and Shamans through their use of this plant (Leslie McQuade)

Castaneda: Shaman or Sorcerer? (Stanley Krippner)

Castaneda's Controversy: Examining Consciousness Studies Future (Mark A. Schroll)

11:45-1:30 Lunch & Continued Registration

1:30-2:45 Session

Ritual and Transformation: Synchronicity, Birth and Elephants

(Chair: Jeff MacDonald)

Ritual, Synchronicity and Learning (Letty Lincoln)

Transition Through Personal Ritual: Childbirth as Transformative Act (Karen Radcliff)

Taking another look at the story of the Blind Men who went to "See" the Elephant
(A. Muhammad Ma`ruf)

3:00-4:15 Session

Tonight's the Night: Raves, Spirit Possession, and Psychokinetic Phenomena

(Chair: Mira Zussman)

Rave On! The Breakdown of Prejudice in a Contemporary Nightlife Culture (Bryan Rill)

The Question of Trance in Les Maitres Fous (Jamie Tomlinson)

How Shamanism Began: An Ethnographic Example (James McClenon & Amanda Mosher)

4:15- Brief Promotion and Directions for Tonight's Events

4:30-6:30 Dinner Break

THURSDAY EVENING (Note: there are two events tonight timed so that you may do neither, either or both)

6:30-8:45 **Event #1: Video Night (3 films)***

CBC Building, Room A108

(this is a free event)

"Frank Talks About Channelling"; early episode of cablecast Reality Mind, & Language, Hayward, CA (27 mins.).

Jean Rouch filmed *Les Maitres Fous* (The Crazy Masters, 30 mins.)

Wondrous Healing (56 mins.)

8:00-later **Event #2 Club Galaxy**

Celebratory Workshop of Human Consciousness*

* for complete descriptions of evening events see 'Special Events' section

FRIDAY APRIL 4

9:30-10:45 Session

Magical Metaphors: Evolution, Imagination and the Mahabharata

(Chair: Stephen Glazier)

Evolutionary Consciousness: a Dialogue between Experience and Metaphor

(C. Jean DeRousseau)

Magical Efficacy, Power and Lived Reality (Mark Shekoyan)

Encounters with Primal Nature on the Path to Enlightenment (Katherine Bradford)

11:00-12:15 Session

Modern Shamanic Practices: Magical, Burning and Breathing

(Chair: John Baker)

From Shaman to Modern Showman (Paul Draper)

Reflexivity, Ritual, and the Media at the Burning Man Festival (Lee Gilmore)

At a Loss for Words: A Preliminary Study of Cellular Theta Breathing and its Influence on Language (M. Diane Nell)

12:15-2:15 Lunch (**SAC Board Meeting**)

2:15-4:00 Session

(Chair: Geri-Ann Galanti)

Untold Tales of Two Cities: San Francisco and Los Angeles

Unleashed in Paradise: The Consciousness of Place [part #1] (Mira Zussman)

Unleashed in Paradise: The Consciousness of Place [part #2] (Larisa Chapman)

Unexpected Manifestations, Boundary-Crossing and Changes of Allegiance in the lives of Afro.Brazilian and other Latin American mediums (Yves Marton)

Unpacking the Anomalous Individual: Methodology and Audience (Tim Lavalli)

4:15-5:45 Special Session

"And That's Only the Top: Claiming the Legacy of Dan Moonhawk Alford (1946-2002) for the Anthropology of Consciousness" (Matthew C. Bronson)

6:00-8:00 Dinner Break

8:00-10:30 **Cellular Theta Breathing Workshop***

by M. Diane Nell, Diane Donovan-Vaughn and Cheryl Cornelius

* for complete description of this event see 'Special Events' section

SATURDAY APRIL 5

9:30-10:45 Session

Cosmologies and Consciousness: Rituals and Divination

(Chair: Lee Gilmore)

Husserlian Meditations and Anthropological Reflections:

Toward a Cultural Neurophenomenology of Experience and Reality

(Charles D. Laughlin and C. Jason Throop)

Death and Resurrection in a Missouri Village: Initiation Ritual and Experienced
Cosmology (Eric Sonnicksen)

Iu-Mien Divination Practices (Jeffery L. MacDonald)

11:00-11:50 Session

Drugs, Cultural Healing and the Creative Process

(Chair: Mark Schroll)

Drug Tourism or Cultural Healing? Ayahuasca Journeys in Amazonia (Michael
Winkelman)

LSD, Spirituality and the Creative Process (Marlene Dobkin de Rios)

11:50-1:00 Lunch Break

1:00-2:00 **SAC Business Meeting**

(please consider attending the business meeting for up-to-date status on SAC
projects, including current plans for next year's conference)

2:00-3:15 Session

**Physicality and Consciousness: UltraRunners, Professional Wrestlers, and
BellyDancers**

(Chair: Matthew Bronson)

Ultrarunners and Chance Encounters with "Absolute Unitary Being" (Peter Jones)

Consciousness and the Ethnography of Contemporary Social Forms: A Case Study of A
Professional Wrestling Federation (Lawrence McBride)

Bellydancing as a Spiritual Practice (Geri-Ann Galanti)

3:30 **UNLV Welcome** – James H. Frey, Dean of College of Liberal Arts

3:35-4:00 Presidential Paper

Chance Encounters with Spirits: Gender and Authority in Afro-Caribbean Religions

(Stephen D. Glazier, SAC President)

4:00 Introduction of Keynote Speaker by SAC President Stephen D. Glazier

4:00-5:00 Keynote Address

Faith, Healing and "Ecstasy Deprivation": Secular Society in a new Age of Anxiety

(Erika Bourguignon)

6:00-8:00 SAC dinner at Gandhi's Indian Restaurant*

8:30-10:30 Introduction to Shamanic Drumming Workshop*

* for complete descriptions of evening events see 'Special Events' section

SUNDAY APRIL 6

Please note that no paper sessions are scheduled for Sunday.

We will have an off-site excursion to **Red Rock** for early hiking and preflight Chance Encounters with Desert Consciousness. There will also be a **Consciousness Excursion to the Strip** highlighted by the best Champagne Brunch within walking distance of the hotel. Times to be announced.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Thursday Evening

6:30-8:45 Thursday Event #1: Video Night (3 films)

CBC Building, Room A108

(a free/no fee event)

"Frank Talks About Channelling"; early episode of cablecast Reality Mind, & Language, Hayward, CA (27 mins., 1984).

Presenter: Matthew Bronson

This video appropriates linguistic and paralinguistic (body language) analysis to deconstruct the popular phenomenon of spirit incorporation as practiced on the West Coast. World-renowned hypnotist and NLP specialist Thomas Condon and linguists Dan Moonhawk Alford and Matthew Bronson take a trenchant, light-hearted look at actual examples of channeled speech to ask the question of spirits: "Just because they're dead, does that mean they're wise?" (Warnings: the penultimate channeling demonstration by one of the panelists inadvertently started a cult in Austin, TX. Do not attend if you are a New Age fascist, as you will almost certainly be offended by the content).

Les Maitres Fous (The Crazy Masters, 30 mins.)

Presenter: Jamie Tomlinson

Jean Rouch filmed *Les Maitres Fous* in 1954, more than ten years after the golden age of the Hauka movement. This film documents a Songhay spirit possession ceremony, which takes place just outside of Accra on Africa's Gold Coast. Men from both northern and western Africa gather for the ceremony with the hope that the new gods will cure their ailments. Rouch wonders if these men have found a way to combat the severe oppression in their society as he depicts the horrific comedy of African resistance to colonial rule.

Wondrous Healing (56 mins.)

Presenter: James McClenon

Based on the research of Dr. James McClenon, practitioners of alternative medicine, and the observations of physicians and patients, this documentary explores explanations behind the contemporary growth of Shamanic healing practices, as more and more Americans choose alternative remedies to supplement or replace standard Western medical care. Includes interviews with doctors who have seen the rise in the use of alternative medicines among their patients. Also features case studies of patients who recount their "wondrous" experiences with alternative medicine. Examines the seeming efficacy of many alternative therapies and how some, such as Lamaze, have become adopted into standard practice. McClenon believes the human capacity to induce self-trance for pain control, emotional well being, and physical healing is a genetically inherited trait that has helped people survive physical trauma since prehistoric times. Shamanic practices can draw out this human ability, producing a distinctive form of "placebo" cure. The documentary also engages a discussion of wondrous events and their role in healing.

8:00-later Thursday Event #2 Club Galaxy

Celebratory Workshop of Human Consciousness

(\$10 at the door) *transportation provided

Club Galaxy event is by Heather Smoll and Michael Phillips;
and stars our very own Bryan Rill.

"Dancing, singing, wearing masks, and costumes; impersonating other people, animals, gods, and demons (and being possessed by these others); acting out narratives; rehearsing or in other ways preparing actions; and making ready places where people can gather to perform and witness performances, are all integral to being human"(Richard Schechner in The Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology. Routledge/Tim Ingold. 1994:614).

Come celebrate our shared humanity and join us at Club Galaxy for a collective musical journey. Participate in spontaneous ritual performances, experience modern interpretations of mind expanding primitive trance rhythms, and enjoy the benefits of communal well-being through social interaction and dance.

You are encouraged to feel free; to bring, use, and share any ritual materials, musical instruments, costumes, masks, food, etc.; to express your humanity through your voice and your body in this culturally unifying and intimate gathering. Be ready with your open mind and a fabulous attitude; this is your official permission to play.

Friday Evening

8:00-10:30 Friday Evening

Cellular Theta Breathing Workshop

by M. Diane Nell, Diane Donovan-Vaughn and Cheryl Cornelius

(\$20/\$10 student)

Cellular Theta Breathing (CTB) is a meditation technique that uses a gentle breathing pattern to achieve expanded consciousness. This easy to learn meditation assists in immediately reducing stress and is reported to produce an altered state of consciousness that is often accompanied by extraordinary experience.

At the workshop, participants will receive an introduction to Cellular Theta Breathing, followed by a demonstration. Participants will then practice CTB to experience this method for themselves. Afterwards, time will be allowed for those that want to share their experience and for questions and answers.

Saturday Evening

6:00 PM SAC Dinner at Gandhi's Restaurant

we have the restaurant - transportation provided
(\$16)

8:30 PM Saturday Evening

Introduction to Shamanic Drumming Workshop

by Michael Winkelman

(\$30/\$20 student)

This workshop provides an experiential introduction to shamanic practices, focusing upon universal principles of shamanic practice. The workshop will introduce shamanic journeying, power animal relations and divination. Participants should dress comfortably, come prepared to lay down on the floor, and bring a rattle or drum if they wish, and a bandanna.

Sunday Special Reminder

While you slept daylight savings time arrived, Spring Forward, it's later than you think.

Encounters with Primal Nature on the Path to Enlightenment

Katherine Bradford,
Pacifica Graduate Institute
(Friday 9:30-10:45 Session)

Mythic narrative lends insights into the role of nature in developing consciousness. The integration of the dualism between rationalism and spirituality on the path to enlightenment is investigated using concepts from the Hindu *Mahabharata* with references to Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra*.

"And That's Only the Top: Claiming the Legacy of Dan Moonhawk Alford (1946-2002) for the Anthropology of Consciousness"

Matthew C. Bronson, CIIS, UC Davis
(Friday Special Session 4:15-5:45)

Moonhawk, a pioneering linguist and author, my teaching partner for twenty years and one of the elders of the SAC community, retired from this existence to become, in his words "a full-time, as opposed to a part-time being of light" in October of 2002. This special session shines the light on three decades of his contributions to linguistics, indigenous science and the anthropology of consciousness. The intentions are: 1) to claim for this generation of scholars some of his key insights at the intersection of language and consciousness studies and 2) to define the "langscape" that his work discloses so that others might pick up the torch to explore this terrain on their own terms. In the first hour, I will present a pastiche of some video clips of his long-running cable t.v., show, an overview of his research program and writings and an exegesis of several of his more memorable punch lines. After the sing-along, the last third of the session will be turned over to others attending who would like to speak to, and celebrate Moonhawk's legacy. If you had the pleasure of knowing this remarkable man, I know you'll attend; but even if you didn't, come anyway! It's not too late to find out what's under the top.

Unleashed in Paradise: On the Consciousness of Place (part II)

Larisa Chapman, UC Santa Cruz
(Friday 2:15-4:00 Session)

This paper includes speculations on the influence of place on states of mind, body, and consciousness. The exploration will focus on: 1) bondage and freedom as expressed through physical locality—from Folsom to Funston in San Francisco—and 2) the city's laws and customs regarding leashing and unleashing. Where, when, and why is it okay to leash or run free? Where, when, and why does leashing produce comfort, and unleashing rage? Where the reverse? This paper is Part V of a series on bondage and freedom.

LSD, Spirituality and the Creative Process

Marlene Dobkin de Rios
University of California, Irvine
(Saturday 11:00-11:50 Session)

In 1954, a Los Angeles psychiatrist experimented with Sandoz Pharmaceutical's LSD-25. During the eight year period from 1954-1962, Janiger gave LSD-25 to more than 930 men and women, aged 18 to 81, in all walks of life. All take a measured dose of a pure substance and all are given the substance in a controlled and safe environment--a private home. The author has analyzed and evaluated this data which occurred at a moment in history that can never be repeated--at an uncontaminated time when there was neither expectation nor hype about this powerful substance and its influence in de-conditioning the individual from his or her strongly held beliefs, values, ways of thinking and feeling. Despite the untimely death of Janiger in August, 2001, De Rios has prepared this important body of materials available in a book to be published in June 2003. As a medical anthropologist, she contrasts the LSD process in 1950s' Los Angeles with data from tribal societies cross-culturally. The author looks at how the psychedelic experience take on similar patterns within and between cultures.

De Rios has looked to the future and speculates on the current role of such LSD-like substances in religion, such as peyote use among the Navaho Indians of North America, or among Brazilians in the church, União do Vegetal. The author examines the nature of the creative process as influenced by psychedelics.

Evolutionary Consciousness: a Dialogue between Experience and Metaphor

C. Jean DeRousseau, UC Santa Barbara
(Friday 9:30-10:45 Session)

The idea of evolution has been controversial since its inception. While some debates have been academic, others have enlarged the schism between science and religion, and engendered strong emotion on the part of those who view the world as God's creation. As a physical anthropologist raised Catholic, I created an integrated metaphor of evolution, enlarging 7 days into the eons required for natural selection to take place, even while my experience of the mystery of life felt far from random and impersonal. Only my experience of a competitive world supported my idea of natural selection. In the last decade, however, I have been experiencing another aspect of evolution, i.e., existence within a continuity of interconnected life, even as I have been learning new evolutionary metaphors from ecology, systems and complexity theory. This experience, an evolutionary consciousness, is remarkably similar to those traditionally reserved for religious contexts, and has great potential for healing the rift between science and religion.

From Shaman to Modern Showman

Paul Draper, Weber State University
(Friday 11:00-12:15 Session)

In my presentation I will discuss my research into performance magic and its underlying principals as a tool for the ethnoarcheological study of ancient magic, magical traditions, shamans kits and religious ritual items. While scholars have often looked to occult, rituals, witchcraft, and magical beliefs as important cultural sources for exploring the lives and concerns of pre-industrial peoples, few have attached much significance to the more profane magical practices of modern performance

magicians. The world of wands, sawing ladies, Harry Potter, abracadabra and rabbits in hats is only the smallest remnant of what history has bequeathed us. Modern performance magic is an appendage of an epic story of humanities search for order and meaning in the universe.

Through my ethnographic participant observational study of the practices and methods used by modern conjurers and my literature review into magic history, I have discovered that throughout time, performance magic is not only about physics or the physical process. It is about the nature of consciousness. It is about, not the reality, but the observations of the observer. Not the outer reality but the inner reality. I propose that through a greater understanding of the underlying principals of modern performance magic, anthropologists and other scholars can gain insight into the social and cultural implications of magico-religious observers who believe that they have witnessed proof of the sublime.

Bellydancing as a Spiritual Practice

Geri-Ann Galanti, CSULA
(Saturday 2:00-3:15 Session)

Bellydancing has a long history, and is thought to be one of the oldest dance forms known. Many non-dancers perceive it as a lower form of entertainment, one or two steps above stripping - an attitude not shared by the dancers themselves. For many, in fact, it is a spiritual practice that enables them to get in touch with divine energy and the "oneness of the universe". It is not uncommon for teachers to advertise their classes as "Goddess Dance," emphasizing the spiritual connection. In this paper I will present the views of those who emphasize the spiritual aspects of the dance, based upon data collected from library research, questionnaires, and interviews with dancers.

Reflexivity, Ritual, and the Media at the Burning Man Festival

Lee Gilmore, Graduate Theological Union
(Friday 11:00-12:15 Session)

The Burning Man festival is a week-long celebration of art, community, and ritual

that annually draws tens of thousands of individuals to northwestern Nevada's Black Rock Desert. Drawing upon my extensive ethnographic research at this event, and utilizing ritual studies theory, this paper will explore the reflexive interplay of ritual and the media in the construction of culture as expressed through this festival. My approach to this problematic is two-fold. I will first consider how the mainstream media utilizes certain tropes that parallel ethnographic narratives. This will include a discussion of how the media's representation of Burning Man helps to shape and define the event and how festival organizers negotiate the media, seeking to influence not only the public image of the event but also to ultimately influence mainstream culture. Secondly, I will examine how the work of prominent scholars such as Turner, Eliade and others has subtly permeated popular culture such that the ritual frameworks proposed by these theories serve not only as apt descriptions of Burning Man, but likewise have helped to define the fabric in which such an event takes shape. I conclude that these two reflexive mechanisms work in tandem to shape and transform cultural consciousness.

Chance Encounters with Spirits: Gender and Authority in Afro-Caribbean Religions

Stephen D. Glazier
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
(Presidential Address Saturday 3:35-4:00)

This presentation examines the roles and statuses of women and female spirits in Afro-Caribbean religions, with special attention to the Spiritual Baptists of Trinidad. The focus will be on *how* women (and men) conceptualize spiritual power and authority. A pronounced pattern in all Afro-Caribbean religions is that women constitute the overwhelming majority of followers, own and operate most religious organizations, and make generous financial contributions. Nevertheless, they are not perceived to possess spiritual power and authority equal to men. Generations of male researchers (Melville J. Herskovits, George Eaton Simpson, Leonard Barrett, and so on) looked for *and found* ample evidence for male dominance in these religions. But relations of power and authority are not always what they seem to be. If power consists only of "getting one's own way" (as Thomas Hobbs conceived it); then, perhaps women are at a slight disadvantage. But if power is seen as the ability

to redefine one's situation and create a new sense of self (as Nietzsche understood it); then, spiritual power resides primarily with women and female spirits. It is argued that in the world of the spirits -- as in the material world -- surface male authority obviates power and authority that is actually held by women and female spirits.

Suggestive Similarities and Correspondences of Shamanic Cognition and Nonshamanic Cognition

Timothy L. Hubbard
Texas Christian University
(Thursday 10:00-11:40 Session)

Even though shamanic training may emphasize objective methods, it has been argued that shamanism must be experienced in order to be properly understood. Such a position assumes shamanic cognition is fundamentally different from nonshamanic cognition. However, a consideration of ideas in shamanism and ideas in contemporary cognitive science reveal a surprising number of correspondences and similarities. The importance of interconnectedness in the web of life worldview characteristic of shamanism and in connectionist models of semantic memory in cognitive science, and the extension of meaning to elements of the natural world in shamanism and in distributed cognition, highlight basic similarities of shamanic and cognitive scientific views. Cognitive consequences of such an extension (e.g., use of representativeness and intentional stance heuristics, magical thinking, social attribution errors, and social in-group/out-group differences) are discussed. It is suggested that attributions of mental states, beliefs, and desires to a computer on the basis of behavioral measures (e.g., the Turing test) is consistent with the extension of meaning and intentionality to nonhuman elements of the natural world in shamanism. In general, the existence of such correspondences and similarities suggests that elements of shamanism may reflect cognitive structures and processes that are also used by nonshamans and in nonshamanic settings. Thus, shamanic cognition may not be fundamentally different from nonshamanic cognition.

Ultrarunners and Chance Encounters with “Absolute Unitary Being”

Peter N. Jones, Saybrook Graduate School
(Saturday 2:00-3:15 Session)

Absolute Unitary Being (AUB) is a term coined by Eugene d’Aquili and Andrew B. Newberg to explain mystical phenomena that have such overwhelming influence that a person who experiences AUB emerges with their outlook and persona permanently modified. According to d’Aquili and Newberg, experience of AUB is quite rare, with most individuals having “chance encounters” with mystical experiences of exaltation and transcendence, which are related to, but not quite, the life-changing events of AUB. The two main methods identified in reaching AUB begin with either self-emptying and silence (meditation type practices) or active movement and frenzied activity (shamanic or movement-based type practices). It has been proposed that meditation type practices saturate the parasympathetic-trophotropic system while movement-based practices saturate the sympathetic-ergotropic system, either one causing a spillover effect that results in a mystical experience, though usually not AUB. Ultrarunners regularly report a feeling of “connection” or what may be classified as a chance encounter with AUB during their runs. However, it is proposed that ultrarunning overloads both the sympathetic-ergotropic and parasympathetic-trophotropic systems at the same time, causing both systems to overload and “spillover” simultaneously. This creates an experience in the ultrarunner of pure connection with everything, a loss of time, and a complete state of peace and knowing, or AUB. Finally, implications of this “double” system saturation will be discussed concerning shamanism, puberty ceremonies, and related phenomena.

Castaneda: Shaman or Sorcerer?

Stanley Krippner, Saybrook Institute
(Thursday 10:00-11:40 Session)

Castaneda's purported mentor, don Juan Matos, has been described as a shaman by some, and a sorcerer by others. Castaneda himself has at times described himself as a shaman, and other times as a sorcerer. This presentation draws upon

autobiographical material from an anthropologist that knew Castaneda, and whose experiences together involved more sorcery than shamanism.

Husserlian Meditations and Anthropological Reflections: Toward a Cultural Neurophenomenology of Experience and Reality

Charles D. Laughlin and C. Jason Throop
(Saturday 9:30-10:45 Session)

We often recognize that our senses provide only partial information about objects and events in our environment, and our understanding of our universe is limited by the structures of our nervous systems. Indeed, the evidence pertaining to cultural cosmologies around the globe suggests that virtually all peoples recognize this distinction – hence the focus upon the “hidden” forces behind daily events.

In this paper we address this problem head-on, and argue that the best, and perhaps only scientifically tenable route to a solution of the experience-reality “gap” is by way of an anthropologically informed cultural neurophenomenology. By this we mean a perspective and methodology that applies a phenomenology that controls for cultural variation in perception and interpretation, coupled with the latest information from the neurosciences about how the organ of experience – the brain – is structured.

We begin the discussion with a brief history of some of the issues that have peppered past debates, including debates over the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, over Kant’s positing of the “thing-in-itself,” and over solipsism and the problem of intersubjectivity. Then, applying an anthropologically refined Husserlian “epoche,” we will bracket the essential elements of the interface between experience and extramental reality. This exercise will continue the work the authors have already undertaken elsewhere developing a cultural neurophenomenology of alternative states of consciousness, variance and invariance in cultural cosmologies, truth and the process of trueing, emotion and Durkheimian “collective effervescence.”

Unpacking the Anomalous Individual: Methodology and Audience

Tim Lavalli, unaffiliated
(Friday 2:15-4:00 Session)

At the 1996 SAC conference in Encino there was an individual in attendance who 'interacted' with many of the conference attendees. In retrospect this individual was quite 'different' from those who typically attend the SAC events. Upon hearing the many reports of interactions with this person and being familiar with the sometimes unusual events at previous SAC conferences, I took it upon myself to collect data on the various experiences of the conference attendees. In 1997 I briefly presented my findings to the members in a pre-conference informal session. This current work explores the 'story' via two multi-vocal tellings of our collective tale and reflects on the authenticity versus the validity of a methodological presentation using multiple voices.

Ritual, Synchronicity and Learning

Letty Lincoln, Gartner Primary Research
(Thursday 1:30-2:45 Session)

This paper investigates six adult experiences of synchronicity linked with ritual and learning, three from each of two ethnographies conducted within the continental United States. One of these studies described an esoteric mystery school held during the late 1980s at which adult middle class professionals sought to learn ancient secret spiritual practices. The other examined working class European Americans in the Midwest during the 1990s learning what they believed to be American Indian customs at a native style talking circle. Six individuals instances of synchronicity related to ritual and learning are presented. Of these two informants' experiences of synchronous events are analyzed in detail using Piaget's cognitive theory.

Synchronicity is a Jungian term for an observable phenomenon in which there is a meaningful coincidence of two or more events where something other than probability or chance is involved. The altered states of consciousness informants experienced when practicing rituals resemble hypnotic states that open the mind to suggestion more than ordinary

waking consciousness does. Individuals applied symbolic meanings from rituals to synchronous events. From a Piagetian viewpoint their process resembled reconstructing schemata. Nevertheless, some aspects of synchronicity remain unexplained by probability, chance or cognition.

Taking another look at the story of the Blind Men who went to "See" the Elephant

A. Muhammad Ma'ruf, Cordoba Institute
(Thursday 1:30-2:45 Session)

I would like to invite my colleagues to join me in taking another look at a story that they may be familiar with: the tale (as Englished by an American poet in the early years of the 19th century) of

".... Six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind....".

The paper includes some history and discussion of published English versions of the story and their uses by anthropologists, a historian of religion and "metaphysical" thought traditions in America, and others. It seeks to advance that discussion. Toward that end I provide a report and discussion of my journal entries recorded over several years, of my own attempts at telling the story in "Anthropology of Religion and Magic" classes, and other contexts, and of the responses I have received.

Iu-Mien Divination Practices

Jeffery L. MacDonald, IRCO
(Saturday 9:30-10:45 Session)

This paper examines some of the divination practices of the Iu-Mien refugee community in Portland, Oregon. This community, originally from Laos, practices divinatory techniques that are similar to Chinese ones involving interpersonal transactions between spirits and humans as well as those involving casual or other connections. Examples include divination by coins, dowsing, dream interpretation, spirit possession, planchette or basket divination,

divination sticks, Chinese character divination, chronomancy, 60-year-cycle divination, physiognomy, geomancy, the Chinese almanac, and chicken bone divination. The paper focuses on the use of the *jaaux* or divination blocks, the most common form of Iu-Mien divination, and compares the underlying mathematical principles of the *jaaux* responses to those of the hexagrams of the *I Ching*. The relation of divination to Iu-Mien shamanism and healing are also discussed.

Unexpected Manifestations, Boundary-Crossing and Changes of Allegiance in the lives of Afro-Brazilian and other Latin American mediums.

Yves Marton, UCLA
(Friday 2:15-4:00 Session)

Following long-term research with Brazilian mediums in Los Angeles as well as in Brazil, permutations and changes have been noted in the stated allegiances that individual mediums demonstrated insofar as spiritual adherence. In response to, or accompanying life crises, generational changes, conjugal changes, the entities and religions ascribed to have metamorphosized. In the same manner that allegiance to religion has changed in unexpected fashions so have spirit manifestations been reported in unusual extra-ceremonial contexts as well as by persons not commonly thought to be directly concerned with or having access to such spiritual and paranormal phenomena. In this paper I will examine how changes (and a constant search for truth and healing) intersect in the unexpected living cosmology of human beings: mediums, researchers and others and how the following of Spirituality dictates and spirits intercross commonsense religious boundaries.

**Consciousness and the Ethnography of Contemporary Social Forms:
A Case Study of A Professional Wrestling Federation**

Lawrence McBride, University of South Florida
(Saturday 2:00-3:15 Session)

Classical ethnography was born in the study of small, bounded groups where cultural variables such as kinship were the primary sources of social organization. Ethnography today is often

carried out in fields that are unbounded, urban, and distinctly postmodern in style. I argue that while classical ethnographic methods naturally highlighted the culture phenomenon, contemporary ethnographic studies of organizations, social trends, subcultures, etc. will tend to centralize the consciousness concept more and more. I support this thesis with analysis of findings from ongoing research with independent pro wrestling federations in Illinois and Florida. I argue that professional wrestling is not only an example of discourse that reflects and shapes social values, as argued by Barthes, but also a technology that is designed to produce controlled amounts of pain, and thereby induce altered states of consciousness for the participants—similar to Mira Zussman's conclusions about S/M, Bondage and Fetish Play.

How Shamanism Began: An Ethnographic Example

James McClenon & Amanda Mosher
Elizabeth City State University
(Thursday 3:00-4:15 Session)

This video program presents segments of an interview with participants of a group that has experienced group psychokinetic phenomena for over forty years. Participants report an out-of-body experience, communicating with rapping sounds coming from floors and walls, and seeing objects levitate. A group member describes how these experiences generated profound beliefs in magical events. His narrative supports a scenario portraying how shamanism developed among Paleolithic people. Anomalous experiences, such as apparitions, extrasensory perceptions, and out-of-body experiences, produce belief in spirits, souls, life after death, and magical abilities. These beliefs support group rituals and trance performance. These practices lead to psychokinetic experiences and communication with spirits. This experiential process generated the ideological foundations for shamanism. Characteristics allowing magical group experiences were prevalent among hunter-gatherers, suggesting that anomalous perceptions were not uncommon and that they contributed to the origin of shamanism.

**Witches, Shamans and a plant called Datura:
Drawing the line between Witches and
Shamans through their use of this plant**

Leslie McQuade
(Thursday 10:00-11:40 Session)

The focus of this presentation is an analysis of the co-occurrence of witchcraft and datura in various cultures. In the course of my research on datura, I have noticed a trend in the ethnographic reports of its usage. Travel, sex, healing, stealing and cursing are the primary ways datura is used by witches, shamans, sorcerers and those in related occupations. I will compare and contrast who is using datura and to what end, as a way of understanding not only the global datura-witchcraft connection, but also the divisions and similarities between witches and shamans in particular.

**At a Loss for Words: A Preliminary Study of
Cellular Theta Breathing and its Influence on
Language**

M. Diane Nell, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
(Friday 11:00-12:15 Session)

A pilot study was conducted to measure language patterns in response to meditation. The method of meditation employed is Cellular Theta Breathing which uses a double breath technique believed to expand consciousness. This meditation method was chosen because it often generates an extraordinary experience. Furthermore, as no formal research has been conducted on Cellular Theta Breathing, this study represents the first of its kind regarding this meditation technique. Analysis of the pilot data indicates statistically significant changes in language prior to, and immediately following, a one hour meditation. The component found to have the greatest impact on language use was the occurrence of an extraordinary experience during the meditation. This event, when present, appears to alter verbal expression when individuals attempt to narrate their experience. Altered language patterns are characterized by a dramatic increase in verbal pauses and suggest that the occurrence of an extraordinary experience influences normal expression

patterns. These findings also suggest that attempts to attribute meaning to an extraordinary experience influence language patterns where individuals are literally at a loss for words.

**Transition Through Personal Ritual:
Childbirth as Transformative Act**

Karen Radcliff
(Thursday 1:30-2:45 Session)

A woman's experience of childbirth is rarely only a biological one. She goes through physical changes which are both the outward manifestation of and the trigger for psychological and social transformations. The process of pregnancy and labor acts as a ritual, one whose rhythms are interpreted as signals of natural transition points from one status to the next, concurrently allowing for a perceived control of the process through the cultural recognition of these transition points as well as a preparation for the seemingly magical act of "suddenly" bringing a new member into the social group. This cultural reading of pregnancy and childbirth allows the social group to change the act of pregnancy from a dangerous time of chaos into a culturally-controlled rite of passage. But this process, for the woman involved, becomes a very personal, biologically driven ritual act, a specialized state of consciousness through which she makes the transition from individual to dual entity: both herself and a member of a (perceptually) inseparable duo.

**RAVE ON! The Breakdown of Prejudice in a
Contemporary Nightlife Culture**

Bryan Rill, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
(Thursday 3:00-4:15 Session)

The United States is a culture of dichotomies. In terms of prejudice, we as a people preach the egalitarian ideal. However, our society is in fact a class society, divided along many lines. Social class is largely a matter of wealth, profession, and ethnic background. Many policies have been placed in effect to promote equality in our culture, but in the everyday world prejudice is a common problem we all face.

This paper discusses the breakdown of prejudice in a global subculture: the techno culture. The research this theory has emerged from originally

targeted the emergence of hybridized belief forms within this techno culture. In the process of investigating this phenomena, I found that the reason hybrid beliefs systems could exist in this culture was an open acceptance of other people and their ideas. At raves, the central event of this subculture, people of all ages, professions, and ethnic backgrounds gather together and share an experience as a unified group. There are almost no instances of prejudice or violence in this subculture, and it seems to be the only place in our society where this is a universally practiced rule. I have dubbed this phenomenon the "unity in acceptance of diversity".

Although the techno subculture is still considered marginal, it has reached out and touched the lives of millions of youths around the globe. When the members of this culture grow into power as an adult generation, the social implications could change the status of egalitarianism from an ideal to a practice.

Castaneda's Controversy: Examining Consciousness Studies Future

Mark A. Schroll,
Antioch-McGregor University-Ohio

In the February 2003 SAC column of Anthropology News I expressed this session's initial purpose. I had intended to clarify the difference between the study of organized religion based on ritualistic symbolism without somatic understanding and a somatic tradition of mystical experience that forms our core religious experience. What I mean by this difference exceeds the debate between etic and emic research methods, yet this debate provides familiar territory to begin our discussion. Seeking another familiar way to illustrate this difference, I cited Carlos Castaneda's claim that shamanism can only be truly understood by becoming a practitioner. Castaneda's claim supports my position that researchers need to have personal encounters with alternate states of consciousness before we can be considered adequately prepared to assess these states. Organizing this session brought to my attention a deeper concern, that Castaneda was not initiated to become a shaman, but a sorcerer. Raising the question, what are the differences between shamans and sorcerers? What, in other words, is the motivation that encourages people to seek a somatic tradition of mystical experience?

Magical Efficacy, Power and Lived Reality

Mark Shekoyan,
(Friday 9:30-10:45 Session)

Within the tradition of Ceremonial Magic as practiced within the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (HOGD), magical efficacy in ritual is seen keenly tied to the creative and focused use of the will and the imagination. An effective magical ritual is viewed as intimately interwoven with the ability to harness imaginative "God Forms," to visualize geometric shapes including pentagrams, hexagrams, and sigils, and the ability to "see" various angelic divinities located on the "astral" plane. A "powerful" ritual is one in which the participants "feel" on some fundamental level, a change wrought by the act of participation. Magical efficacy, or power is experienced as a felt and lived reality translatable into change.

The locus of this change is a subject of anthropological curiosity. Malinowski felt magic's key contribution was to change the emotional state of its practitioners to one of confidence which provided psychological security in the face of uncertainty. This paper will explore a different track. Drawing from the Imaginal Psychology of James Hillman, Henri Corbin, and Carl Jung, we will explore how ritual magic's tapping of the "Imaginal Realm" opens doorways for human consciousness and transformation which portends a very different explanation of ritual power and "efficacy."

Death and Resurrection in a Missouri Village: Initiation Ritual and Experienced Cosmology

Eric Sonnicksen,
Ste. Genevieve Center for Cultural Studies

"...ritual intended to evoke transpersonal, cosmological experiences in participants cannot be understood apart from those experiences."
(Laughlin 1989)

In the Blue Lodge of Freemasonry, performance of rituals, and particularly initiation rituals, provide the members' with a cosmological frame of reference. This nature of and one's place in this cosmology is increasingly revealed through a series of initiation rituals that culminate in the 3rd degree of Master Mason.

The 3rd degree initiation ritual is a highly structured performance in which most of the

Lodge members (in this study) actively participate. The performance is directed to alter the candidate's consciousness and heighten receptivity for the triggering of a transformative experience. The intended result of this experience is the receipt of direct, intuitive knowledge of Masonic cosmology by the candidate.

While a more complete explanation of the symbols and system of Freemasonry unfolds through readings and discourse with other Brothers, full comprehension of Masonic cosmology is inseparable from and incomplete without the 'gnosis' gained through ritual participation. To enhance understanding of ritual participation and its relationship to Masonic cosmology, my research went beyond the status of participant observer to active participant. This researcher chose this as the optimal position to 'flesh-out' and share the methods utilized by ordinary Freemasons to produce extra-ordinary experiences.

The Question of Trance in Les Maitres Fous

Jamie Tomlinson, San Jose State University
(Thursday 3:00-4:15 Session)

Jean Rouch filmed *Les Maitres Fous* specifically to document a Songhay spirit possession ceremony. His intent is to shock viewers and force them to understand the "horrific comedy" of Hauka ceremonies; the unimaginable. His use of editing and brutal imagery carefully exhibits a parody of French rule and the Songhay resistance to colonialism. Every aspect of Rouch's film is intentional, yet he neglects to address the induction of trance. In fact, I have not encountered one piece of literature written on *Les Maitres Fous* or the Hauka that discusses the mechanisms of trance. Is the altered state of consciousness found in *Les Maitres Fous* a physiological occurrence, or is Rouch hiding from his viewers the use of psychotropic drugs by the Songhay people? Why do neither Rouch nor Paul Stoller, who has written numerous books on Rouch's work, venture to discuss the onset of drugs, or lack thereof? My paper will address the possible vehicles of trance in *Les Maitres Fous* and the importance of Jean Rouch's work.

Drug Tourism or Cultural Healing? Ayahuasca Journeys in Amazonia

Michael Winkelman, Arizona State University
(Saturday 11:00-11:50 Session)

In an article in *AoC*, de Rios characterizes Western visitors to Amazonia in terms of "drug tourists." This paper provides analyses of interviews of 15 participants in an ayahuasca seminar in Amazonia. These interviews sought reasons for the participation and assessment of what the participants received from their sessions. The purposes and effects discount "drug tourism" motivations. Instead participants sought a redirection of their lives, a clarification of their goals, and contact with spiritual dimensions of existence. The effects of these sessions are analyzed in terms of cultural healing and with respect to the effects of psychointegrators.

Unleashed in Paradise: On the Consciousness of Place (part I)

Mira Zussman, San Jose State University
(Friday 2:15-4:00 Session)

This paper includes speculations on the influence of place on states of mind, body, and consciousness. The exploration will focus on: 1) bondage and freedom as expressed through physical locality—from Folsom to Funston in San Francisco—and 2) the city's laws and customs regarding leashing and unleashing. Where, when, and why is it okay to leash or run free? Where, when, and why does leashing produce comfort, and unleashing rage? Where the reverse? This paper is Part V of a series on bondage and freedom.

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