

Abstract continued from Session I:

ranging from tribal Aborigines to assimilated urban Aborigines, and 85 interviews with Euro-Australians, ranging from rural and desert-living "outback" types to urban dwellers. Comparisons were made of usage of words constructed from 38 folk categories for time in Roget's Thesaurus. More specifically, the variables studied were the proportions of total words produced that are in each of these categories. Through factor analysis and discriminant analysis two factors were found, interpretable as "linear" and "nonlinear." As hypothesized, Aborigines made less use of words classified as linear but more use of words classified as nonlinear. The nonlinear wordlists form only a negative concept, but have to do with patterned cyclicality, irregularity, a fusion of the past and the present, and a qualitative way of talking about time. While only 8 percent of Euro-Australians were misclassified as Aborigines (i.e., had a nonlinear conception of time) 20 percent of Aborigines were misclassified as Euro-Australian. These misclassification were related to cultural experience: the misclassified Euro-Australians tended to be rural, "outback" dwellers; the misclassified Aborigines tended to be urban Aborigines who have been incorporated into the cash economy. Implications for cognitive assimilation, for Aboriginal health, and for cognitive structure, are discussed.

Abstract continued from Session II:

For example, at one end of the spectrum, dreams at times exhibit cognitive and perceptual errors similar to those produced by brain damage. However, one man's brain damage may be another's creativity, and dream bizarreness also shows the creative recombinatory potential of the dreaming brain. Moreover, as illustrated by lucid dreams, dreaming consciousness can also be as volitional and rational as waking consciousness. Indeed, at times, the mind may ascend to greater heights in dreams than in waking.

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The Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness (SAC) is a member unit of the American Anthropological Association. SAC is an interdisciplinary organization concerned with cross-cultural, experiential, and theoretical approaches to the study of consciousness. The primary areas of interest include: (altered) states of consciousness, religion, possession, trance, dissociative states; ethnographic studies of shamanistic, mediumistic, mystical, and related traditions; indigenous healing practices; and linguistic, philosophical, religious, and symbolic studies of consciousness phenomena.

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New Guinea Ancestors Mask

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association

SOCIETY FOR THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In conjunction with the Annual Meeting of
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Conference Program

LOS ANGELES

March 30 - April 2, 1994

THE WESTIN BONAVENTURE HOTEL, 404 SOUTH FIGUEROA STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90071-1710

Thursday, March 31

Session I

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

SANTA BARBARA B

Topic: **Levels of Consciousness**

Chair: **Dureen Hughes (UCLA)**

Speakers:

6:05 - 6:45 **Harmon R. Holcomb III (Univ. of Kentucky, Lexington)**
Evolved Content-Specific Psychological Mechanisms

6:45 - 7:25 **Roger W. Sperry / Polly Henninger (Cal. Inst. of Tech.)**
Consciousness and the Cognitive Revolution as a True Worldview Paradigm Shift

7:35 - 8:15 **Ruth-Inge Heinze (Univ. of California, Berkeley)**
Applications of Altered States of Consciousness in Everyday Life

8:15 - 8:55 **Warren D. TenHouten (UCLA)**
Australian Aboriginal Conceptualization of Time

Commentators: **Malek Khazae (CSU, Long Beach)**

John W. Powell (Humboldt State Univ.)

Brian Schroeder (SUNY, Stony Brook)

Helmut Wautischer (Humboldt State Univ.)

Abstracts:

Harmon R. Holcomb III, Department of Philosophy: In *The Adapted Mind* (1992), Cosmides and Tooby argue for the thesis that biological evolution endowed the human mind with a system of content-specific computational mechanisms designed to solve long-standing adaptive problems humans encountered as hunter-gatherers, and not just a generalized "capacity for culture" or all-purpose "learning capacity". This paper analyzes three types of arguments they offer: historical arguments for the rise of content-specific psychology; programmatic arguments for the aims, theory, concepts, and methods of their evolutionary approach; and experimental arguments for the content-dependence of reasoning.

Roger W. Sperry and Polly Henninger, Biology Division: Traditional scientific views of the conscious self and world we live in are suddenly being challenged by an unprecedented outburst of "emerging new paradigms", theories of consciousness, perceptions of reality, new sciences, new philosophies, epistemologies, and a host of other transformative approaches. This still expanding outburst can be traced, on both logical and chronologic grounds, not to chaos theory, ecology, the new physics, or dozens of other currently ascribed sources, but rather to the cognitive (consciousness) revolution that immediately preceded. These new approaches all share one key feature in common, namely, they all depend, directly or indirectly, upon a refutation and successful overthrow of the long dominant materialist paradigm. This is what was required to shift consciousness from an accidental or 'eliminable' status to a functionally indispensable role. Traditional 'bottom-up' micro-determinism had to be supplemented by a reciprocal, 'down-level' control exerted by mental emergents over lower-level components. This does not dispose of behaviorism or reductionism, as methodology, but simply incorporates these within a more comprehensive explanatory framework. With the long reign of materialist constraints finally broken, other antireductive views have proliferated but with little regard for what the new paradigm allows.

Ruth-Inge Heinze, Center for Southeast Asia Studies: In my presentation I will discuss the importance of recognizing different states of consciousness. I will prove that the knowledge how they differ from each other and how the recognition of their specific qualities does determine their use when we want to increase our self-knowledge, balance our behavior and adjust our course of action. In the second part of my presentation I will report on workshops conducted in the United States, Russia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The examples will illustrate the nature of material retrieved during different states of consciousness. It will be shown that insights arouse which were not accessible to daily, consensus reality consciousness. Sudden insights might emerge either at moments of complete tranquillity or at critical moments in our life when our consciousness could not go any other way. Dance also can restore the balance between mind, spirit, and soul and render our life more effective. I, however, have designed techniques through which we can access different states of consciousness and find out whether (1) inner and outer experiences need to be balanced, (2) grief needs to be resolved, (3) the source of strength and nourishment needs to be discovered, and/or (4) new directions should be explored. Because we live simultaneously at least on five different levels -- the biological-physical, the emotional, the mental, the social, and the spiritual one -- we have to learn the language of each of these levels and give them the opportunity to talk to each other. The third part of my presentation will then be devoted to evaluating the respective techniques which can be used to access different states of consciousness and I will show how they can be applied to everyday life.

Warren D. TenHouten, Department of Sociology: Australian Aborigines have been widely described, mainly through descriptive ethnography, as having a nonlinear, cyclical conceptualization of time that contrasts with the Western notion of linear time. A comparative analysis of computerized transcripts of life-historical interviews was carried out to assess these hypothesized cultural differences in the conceptualization of time. Analysis was based on 76 interviews with Australian Aborigines. continued on last page →

Friday, April 1

Session II

6:00 - 8:50 p.m.

SANTA ANITA A

Topic: **Dreamstates and Consciousness**

Chair: **Helmut Wautischer (Humboldt State Univ.)**

Speakers:

6:05 - 6:45 **Douglass Price-Williams (UCLA)**
Cultural Perspectives on Dreams and Consciousness

6:45 - 7:25 **Stanley Krippner (Saybrook Institute)**
'Waking Life,' 'Dream Life,' and 'Reality': Data from Shamanism and Parapsychology

7:25 - 8:05 **Gordon G. Globus (Univ. of California, Irvine)**
The Dreaming Perspective on Consciousness

8:05 - 8:45 **Stephen LaBerge (Stanford Univ.)**
Varieties of Dreaming Consciousness

Commentators: **Geri-Ann Galanti (CSU, Los Angeles)**

Scott Landers (Univ. of San Diego)

Larry Peters (Cal. Grad. Inst. of Prof. Psychology)

Nina Rosenstand (San Diego State Univ.)

Abstracts:

Douglass Price-Williams, Departments of Psychiatry and Anthropology: Anthropological studies of folk cultures have been made not only on the content of their dreams but also on their interpretations. While there is a wide variance in the understanding of dreaming by cultures other than our own, there is a large set which might be called the classic dream interpretation of folk societies, which was first noted by Tylor in the nineteenth century. Its main tenet is that dreams are the experiences or travels of the soul, and that the soul is distinct from the waking ego who recounts the dream. The dream is a narrative about real things, not something of a fantasy nature. This leads to a different epistemological basis of dreaming than the western framework. This paper details the extent and nature of this interpretation, and explores the psychological and philosophical issues raised by it.

Stanley Krippner, Center of Consciousness Studies: Shamans were the first dreamworkers. They used (and use) altered states of consciousness to travel into "dreamtime," obtaining power and knowledge to help and heal members of their community -- the social group that has awarded them shamanic status. In psychological terms, shamans regulate their attention so as to obtain information not available to their peers, using it to reduce stress and improve the living conditions of members of their society. Over the years, social scientists have tended to dismiss shamanic "journeying" as fanciful at best, and delusional at worst. In recent years, however, scientific data have emerged supporting the beneficial use of imagination and imagery to treat disease, to improve sports performance, and to enhance creativity. There are numerous case studies and anecdotal examples demonstrating the utility of dreams for these purposes, as well as laboratory work, especially that involving lucid dreaming. Shamanic claims to "journey" to the Upper World and the Lower World can be reframed as useful metaphors for the accessing of unconscious material and latent potentials. A smaller body of evidence, both anecdotal and experimental, supports the shamanic model of "journeying" backward and forward in time.

Gordon G. Globus, Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior: Freud considered dreams to be compositions of past waking experiences but his theory is untenable: (1) the process of composing disparate memories into the seamless dream life is miraculous, and (2) authentically novel dream worlds are experienced. Deenett makes dreams into purely cognitive affairs, a matter of scripts, denying their perceptual appearing. I suggest that dreams are de novo constructions of actual perceptual worlds, not put together from memory scraps. Implications for waking perception are considered.

Stephen LaBerge, Department of Psychology: *To perceive is to dream: A dream is a model of the world.* The basic task of the brain is to predict and control the results of actions in the world. To accomplish this task, it constructs what may be considered a model of the world. The waking brain infers what is going on in the world predominantly on basis of the information it is currently receiving from the senses, and secondarily on the basis of expectations derived from past experience. In contrast, the sleeping brain acquires little information from the senses. Therefore, the information most readily available is what is already inside our heads--memories, expectations, fears, desires, and so on. I believe dreams result from our brains using this internal information to create a simulation of the world. According to this theory (LaBerge & Rheingold, 1990), dreaming is the result of the same perceptual and mental processes that we use to comprehend the world when awake. In order to understand dreaming, we need to understand perception, and vice versa: from this perspective, to perceive is to dream. More precisely, perception is dreaming constrained by sensory information; dreaming is perception independent of sensory input, and thus external constraints. *Dimensions of typical dreaming vs. waking experience:* How does typical dreaming and waking experience compare? Data will be presented comparing subjective reports of cognition, sensation, and emotion from dreaming and waking experiences. In terms of the typical, waking and dreaming experiences have much in common, with dreams being characterized by somewhat more movement and emotionality, and less choice and stability. *Extraordinary varieties of dreaming consciousness: From Delirium... To Lucidity.* However, less typical examples reveal a wider range of qualities of consciousness in dreaming than in the normal waking state. continued on last page →