

Society for Anthropology in Community Colleges

LLOYD MILLER, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

2002 Five-Fields Symposium

The proposed theme for SACC's Current Issues in Anthropology: Five-Fields Symposium at the 2002 AAA Annual Meeting is "Moslem World Cultures and the West." The focus for each of the five fields is as follows: Cultural Anthropology: "Clash of Civilizations"; Archaeology: "The Relevance of Prehistory"; Cultural Linguistics: "Babel Today"; Biological Anthropology: "Demography of the West and the Muslim World"; and Applied Anthropology: "American Foreign Policy and Applied Anthropology."

The SACC is seeking presenters for this symposium. If you know of someone whom you would recommend to speak on any of the above topics, please contact Leonard Lieberman (liebe1@mail.cmich.edu; tel 517/774-3477).

Addendum to Mexico Postscript

Since my Oct AN report on traffic extortion, I received a response from the Development Editor of the American Automobile Association's Mexico TravelBook. He said that his research—both online and in print—"provided no information regarding how license plates that end in a letter are treated [in the Federal District-Mexico City], other than the fact that there is no specific provision for such plates." He acknowledged that my driving experiences in Mexico City "were obviously bribery incidents." Furthermore, he said that he added "more strongly worded warnings regarding the possibility of graft or bribery incidents in and around Mexico City" in the 2002 edition of the TravelBook. Hopefully, others who drive their vehicles in DF in the future will be forewarned and better prepared.

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Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness

CONSTANTINE HRISKOS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Shamanism and Neurobiology

By Michael Winkelman

The cross-cultural distribution of shamanism poses a challenge to science. Why should spiritual, and hence presumably ephemeral practices, be found in similar forms across cultures? A neurobiological perspective helps explain shamanic universals in terms of evolutionary psychology, the functional effects of altered states of con-

sciousness (ASC) and processes of innate brain modules. In *Shamanism: The Neural Ecology of Consciousness and Healing*, I outline this neurological basis of the shamanic paradigm.

Cross-cultural research, as I stated in *Shamans, Priests and Witches*, reveal universals of shamanism such as ASC, soul flight, chanting, visionary experiences, death-and-rebirth, animism and animal spirits. These reflect fundamental brain processes and structures of consciousness.

ASC

The diverse procedures used to induce the "ecstasy," or ASC, central to shamans' selection, training and professional practice, share physiological commonalities. These involve elicitation of the body's relaxation response and induction of the integrative mode of consciousness. These slow wave discharges produce strongly coherent and synchronized brainwave patterns that synchronize the frontal areas of the brain, integrating non-verbal information into the frontal cortex and producing insight. Music is an innate capacity that induces this pattern, as are rhythmic activities such as drumming and dancing.

Visionary Experience

Shamanism is characterized by intense visual experiences that reflect an innate representational system referred to as "presentational symbolism." Shamanic visionary experiences are a natural brain phenomena resulting from release of suppression of the visual cortex. These visions use the same brain substrates that process perceptual information, providing an integration of psychophysiological information with emotional levels, linking somatic and cognitive experience. These images are a preverbal symbol system that coordinates muscles to achieve goals and provides a basis for diagnosis, cognitive analysis, planning and analogic synthesis.

Shamanism and Analogical Thought

Human cognitive evolution involved development of specialized innate processing modules, including a natural history intelligence, self-conceptualization and mental attributions regarding social "others" ("mind-reading"). These specialized forms of knowledge production are combined in the production of fundamental features of shamanism—animism, totemism and animal spirits. These shamanic features are produced through metaphoric predication based on the representations of these innate modules.

Animism

Animism involves use of innate representation modules for understanding self and social others, attributing these human mental and social capabilities to animals, nature and the unknown. This use of the self as a model of the unknown other is a manifestation of symbolic capabilities in relation to the environment and a universal and natural epistemology based in humans' relationship to the environment. Spirit concepts reflect a social intelligence—the ability to infer the mental states of others. This enables prediction of others'

behavior through an intuitive psychology—a "theory of mind" involving attribution of mental states to others through the organism's use of their own mental states to model others' mind and likely behaviors.

Animal Allies

Animal allies and totemism involve a reciprocal process to animism, representing humans through the use of the natural history module. This module provides specialized capacities for organizing knowledge about animals and species, exemplified in the cultural universal of natural taxonomical classification schemas. This capacity provides a universal analogical system for creation and extension of meaning. Totemism and animal allies and powers involve use of the natural history intelligence in formation of personal and social identities. Animal models provide natural symbol systems for differentiation of self and social groups, and have psychosocial functions in empowering people. Shamanic representations involve "sacred others," the intersection of the spiritual and social worlds in cultural processes that play a role in the production of the symbolic self. These spirit beliefs exemplify social norms and psychosocial relations, structuring individual psychodynamics and social behavior.

Self-Representations

Animism, totemism and guardian spirits, as well as soul-flight and death-and-rebirth experiences, are natural symbolic systems for self-representation. The shaman's ASC is known as a "soul journey" or "soul flight" that is manifested universally in other forms such as out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences. The homologies in these experiences reflect their innate basis in psychophysiological structures. These forms of self-representation stir a natural response of the human nervous system. These self-representations provide forms of self-awareness referenced to the body, but apart from the body, providing a basis for the shaman's transcendence and altered consciousness.

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Society for the Anthropology of Europe

DEBORAH CAHALEN AND LYNN MANERS,
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Governance in a Globalizing World

By Janine Wedel (U of Pittsburgh)

The events of Sept 11 dramatize the importance of understanding the roles of non-state actors and informal social networks that have come to perform the work of governments. As I noted in recent talks at the State Dept and the Brookings Institution, the sophisticated networks of public and private actors that have been hailed as millennial models of governance may also go hand-

in-hand with the absence or breakdown of state and legal structures. "Modern" organizational forms can have traits in common with "traditional" means of rule such as clans (as some powerful political-financial groups are known in the former Soviet Union and the Middle East) and even with criminal networks that thrive amidst the breakdown of state and legal structures.

On the other hand, the past two decades have produced growing acceptance around the world of new roles for non-state actors in governance activities. Under the rubric of "good governance," concepts such as public-private partnerships, devolution and deregulation have gained popularity. Proponents of this "new governance" advocate "glory in the blurring of public and private." International organizations such as the World Bank promote the rule of law, civil society and NGOs, and have taken to fighting corruption in a wide range of systems.

Yet the now-global vernacular of "NGOs," "civil society" and "privatization" often substitutes for knowledge and research into the actual practices and patterns of governance. This is particularly costly when modes of governance are exported by those with little grounded knowledge of the workings of the recipient societies or of how the initiatives might resonate differently in different societies.

For example, the current worldwide anti-corruption campaign—as conducted by the World Bank and others—points to a dilemma. The classic definition of corruption—"the abuse of public office for private gain"—depends on the state-private dichotomy. But how does one define corruption in settings where this distinction is unclear? The "flex organizations" controlled by Eastern European powerbrokers that I have identified in my research illuminate the problem. So-called in recognition of their impressively chameleon-like, multipurpose character, flex organizations can switch their position from state to private, back and forth, strategically maneuvering their identities to best access governmental, business and foreign aid resources. Likewise, as Alexei Yurchak has observed, a Russian government official at work may call on remedies available through both law and criminal affiliates. What are the implications of these state-private mixes for the way rule-of-law and anti-corruption programs are and should be constructed?

The US is held up worldwide as a positive model of "reinvented government." But, as Dan Guttman has demonstrated, law has not always kept abreast of the new governance. With "private" employees delivering services ranging from the management of the nuclear weapons complex and airport security to the development of government budgets and policies, the laws in place to protect citizens from official abuse typically do not apply to non-governmental employees who perform governmental services.

Worldwide, rules increasingly emanate from non-state sources. Today's networks, like those of clans and tribes, may rely on cultural understandings more than on formal or legal rules. NGOs can be paragons of public virtue, or selfish usurp-

ers of resources. "Mafias" and NGOs may be equally unaccountable to voters. Organized groups learn how to design or to "work the system," manipulate its formal and informal structures, and use the ambiguity to their advantage.

In a world of international organizations, multinationals and trans-border NGOs, the boundaries among state, market, public and private are blurred and likely will become more so. With "globalization," the state has increasing responsibility and decreasing control, as Marine Kurkchyan has noted. To chart some of these developments, I have initiated a project at the U of Pittsburgh, with partners from Eastern Europe and Latin America. The project studies the rich mix of organizational forms that perform the work of governance, embracing state and private, formal and informal.

Failure to examine governance "as it actually works" can militate against the development of valid and comparative frameworks. And, as I have emphasized in talks in Washington, this can have unfortunate policy consequences.

Submissions for this column can be sent to: Deborah Cahalen (412 N Jordan #404, Alexandria, VA 22304; tel 202/647-3892; dcahalen@binghamton.edu) or Lynn Maners (2242 E Silver, Tucson, AZ 85719; tel 520/321-0955; lmaners@dakotacom.net).

Society for the Anthropology of North America

ALISSE WATERSTON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Community Service Learning in NYC

By Sam Beck (Cornell U)

The Urban Semester Program at Cornell U's C of Human Ecology uses a pedagogy that flips conventional teaching on its head. For one semester, juniors and seniors are asked to "learn from experience" through a process of active community participation and systematic reflection involving daily journal writing, term papers, and discussions in informal settings and formal seminars. Students learn about the nature of difference as they confront it in their daily activities related to the topic "Multicultural Issues in Urban Affairs," which is covered in three courses: a three-day internship focused on multicultural issues in professional settings, including organizational culture; a full day in a school setting providing resources and support to children, teachers and the community at large; and a full day of site visits in New York City neighborhoods, communities and organizations, which includes discussions with local leaders. With help from assigned readings, the students are expected to generalize from these experiences and learn to develop theory.

The three courses work in synergy to support student academic, professional, personal and civic development. For the students, engaging in these activities, which offer a taste of "life after college,"

has become a rite of passage to adulthood. Our society provides few contexts or processes through which young people can learn to be adults and take on responsibilities as members of a civil society.

It is this last aspect that I find particularly compelling and to which anthropology is most relevant. In my experience, it is one thing to think about civil society and another to participate in and help create it. To build a civil society is as much in the doing as in theorizing about it. Community service learning nurtures knowledge production and learning by means of social interaction. My undergraduate students find active participation much more meaningful and empowering than simply reading, talking and thinking abstractly—precisely the point of "learning from experience and in context."

Our experiences with the "Beginning with Children" School in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, offers a case in point. The Urban Semester Program, which averages 28 Cornell students every semester, has joined in partnership with the Beginning with Children Foundation and Pfizer Inc to provide tutoring and community outreach services as requested by the school. The school itself, which is the brainchild of philanthropists Carol and Joe Reich, was established to provide quality public education in the resource-deprived school district that serves Williamsburg and Bedford-Stuyvesant's primarily Latino/a and African American residents.

Cornell's service learning course is guided by the mutuality principle in which each stakeholder benefits, creating a whole that is greater than its parts. As a result, a rich and rewarding relationship between the Urban Semester Program and the "Beginning with Children" School has developed over the past six years. Cornell undergraduates are provided the opportunity to experience and reflect on what it takes to help support these children through K-8 schooling and orient them toward a life of upward mobility and civic engagement. The project also enables "border crossings" between the children and the college students, and provides a forum for conversations and social interactions that help problematize notions of "privilege" and "underprivilege." Moreover, Cornell students also are provided the opportunity to view community service at different levels, from private and foundation philanthropy to corporate service, including actions by individuals who help shape corporate service policies.

In the absences of radical political and economic transformations in "under-resourced" parts of our cities and a forward-thinking national urban policy, institutions of higher learning must involve students in the service of others, and provide real benefits to the recipients of these services. Through community service learning, college students learn to go beyond theory to action. At the "Beginning with Children" School, the unusual partnership of a public school with private and foundation philanthropy, corporate participation and university support opens up the opportunity for students to think about the