

Agency, Consciousness, and Medicine

Panel Organizers: Sydney Yeager (Southern Methodist University) and Mark Flanagan (Piedmont Health Services)

Call for Papers

2018 Meetings of the American Anthropological Association

This year's meeting will be held in **San Jose, CA., November 14-18, 2018** and the topic is "**Change in the Anthropological Imagination: Resistance, Resilience, and Adaptation.**"

Panel Abstract

Defined by Sherry Ortner as the ability to change culture and behavior, agency is a hallmark of certain states of consciousness. Dramatic changes in a person's experience of their own agency are frequently noted in the cross-cultural record. The primary goal of many ritualistic transformations of consciousness is to allow the person to obtain a greater degree of agency or to regain agency that has been lost or to give up individual agency in communion with higher authority, primarily framed in spiritual terms. Similarly, agency is a central question in many medical settings; the ability to exercise agency is contested by medical practitioners, patients, and caregivers. Illness, trauma or emotional distress can trigger a shift in consciousness and agency in profound ways. This panel seeks to explore the many ways that consciousness can affect agency within formal and informal medical settings, and how positive transformations of consciousness can lead to emotional healing through a journey of reclaiming of agency.

Abstract Submissions

This CFP hopes to attract scholars working in a wide range of topics and field sites to engage in a lively discussion of how we can expand our understanding of agency through the lens of consciousness.

Please note the unified deadline—**April 16, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.**—for the submission of abstracts for the AAA meetings. As such, the panel will need to be finalized in advance of this date.

Abstract submissions for inclusion on this panel need to be emailed to Sydney Yeager at sydneyyeager@gmail.com by **April 5, 2018**.