



AASC NEWSLETTER

Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness

Volume 1, Number 3

December 1985

From the Editor . . .

This is my last issue as editor of the Newsletter. I began editing and publishing a newsletter in the field of anthropology and consciousness seven years ago. It was called NASPAP -- Newsletter for the Anthropological Study of Paranormal and Anomalous Phenomena. I published and edited it on my own. In 1980, it became affiliated with the newly formed Association for Transpersonal Anthropology, and changed its name to NATA. In 1984, when a group formed the current AASC, I and the newsletter went with them. Once again, it went through a change in identity, to its present title.

Thus, I have been through seven years and three incarnations with this newsletter. It is difficult to let go, but I feel it is time for both of us to move on. I am pleased to turn over the editorship to Jeffery MacDonald; we have been associated in both ATA and AASC for a number of years now. He is both literate, and more importantly, has what I feel are the right sensibilities for the job. I trust the rearing of my "child" to him.

As I leave, I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the various newsletters over the years. As subscriber-written publications, they could not have existed without your contributions. Thank you.

GERI-ANN GALANTI

AASC News

1986 AASC Meetings

The dates for the 1986 AASC meetings have been changed to April 4-6. The deadline for submission of papers and panels for the meetings has been extended to February 15, 1986. Proposal forms are enclosed in this issue. Everyone is encouraged to apply.

New Editor Selected

JEFFERY MACDONALD has been selected as the new editor for the AASC Newsletter. He will begin his editorship with the first issue of 1986.

MacDonald is an Anthropology Doctoral student at the New School for Social Research in New York. He is a founding member of AASC, and currently on the Board of Directors. He is the author of several published articles and has a book, Fox on Ice: Chinese Immigrants and Northern Puget Sound (co-authored with Margaret Willson) in press.

Report on the American Anthropological Association 84th Annual Conference, December 3-8, 1985, Washington, D.C.

The AASC held two sessions at the 1985 AAA meetings. The first session, entitled "A Summary of Data and Theories from Parapsychology Relevant to Psychological Anthropology" was chaired by AASC President Joseph K. Long. Several AASC members as well as noted parapsychologists gave papers, and the session was well-attended despite the fact that it was the first session of the conference.

The key-note speaker was Irwin L. Child, well-known cross-cultural psychologist and parapsychologist from Yale University. He showed that any (alone) of three types of research now seem to show with overwhelmingly convincing evidence that ESP really exists. These are the dream work (REM sleep), ganzfeld-induced (sensory deprivation) relaxation, and random event generators (eg. radioactive decay).

Patric V. Giesler spoke on Batcheldorian Psychodynamics (PK events) in Brazilian Umbanda Cults. Psi-conductive features started by Ken Batcheldor of London and documented by American researchers may be

the same as client effected results as managed by Umbanda mediums. Joseph K. Long extended the Batchelder Effect Model to poltergeist cases such as William Wedenoja's in Jamaica.

Stephan A. Schwartz, parapsychologist and archaeologist, summarized the recent work he has done, especially on psychic archaeology, in "Remote Viewing: An Applications-Oriented Perspective for Anthropology."

Anthropologist Michael Winkelman compared the differing types of magico-religious practitioners in relation to socio-economic conditions and level of technological development (see article this issue).

Walter W. Wescott gave a paper on Myth and Consciousness. His work on linguistics, biology, mythology, and consciousness strongly suggests that human consciousness has evolved (even in the past 10,000 years) through two or three different styles and expressions. Recent work of Stephan Jay Gould in biology and Wescott in anthropology supports the notion that development includes catastrophism at least as importantly as stochastic evolution. Myths must then be re-examined.

The session was concluded by anthropologist Jeffery L. MacDonald, who compared near-death-experiences and shamanic states of consciousness in the context of the anthropology of consciousness.

The second session was an informal discussion and cashiered bar reception sponsored by the AASC. Joseph Long spoke briefly to welcome the guests and AASC members. Sydney M. Greenfield, an anthropologist from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee then presented his videotape on Brazilian psychic surgeon, Edson Queros. The last speaker was Stephan A. Schwartz of the Mobius Society, who discussed his remote viewing experiments and showed a videotape of the Mobius Society's psychic archeology research.

The AASC Board of Directors also met during the meetings and decided to seek affiliation with the AAA and to expand the newsletter. The Mobius Society will take over the production end and computerize AASCH via modem to new editor, Jeff MacDonald in New York.

President-elect Stephan Schwartz will take over when Joe Long retires at our Annual Meeting in Menlo Park, CA April 4-6, 1986. (Long expects to begin a long-awaited sabbatical from Plymouth State, May 1986-September 1987, returning to the Caribbean for further research and filming on Jamaican medical practitioners).

JEFFERY L. MACDONALD
JOSEPH K. LONG

Research Reports

Magico-Religious Practitioner Types

This paper presents a synopsis of the major results of a cross-cultural study of magico-religious practitioners (Winkelman 1984). The major points addressed here are: 1) the different types of magico-religious practitioners found and their major characteristics; and 2) the relationship of magico-religious practitioner types to social variables. Research is based upon a representative 47 society subsample selected from the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (Murdock & White 1969).

This investigation focused upon culturally recognized magico-religious roles and the characteristics associated with or attributed to those occupying those roles. No differentiation was made between magic and religion; it was intended that the investigation shed light on this issue. Magico-religious practitioners were defined as occupying a culturally recognized role which has as its basis an interaction with a supernatural order. The definition was extended to include assessment of those culturally recognized roles which may be attributed rather than sought, such as witches and sorcerers.

Each magico-religious role in a society was individually assessed in a number of areas, including: political powers, social and economic status and roles, mythological and psychological characteristics of the practitioners, selection and training procedures, types of magico-religious activities performed, magical techniques employed, and trance induction procedures and characteristics.

In order to determine the different types of magico-religious practitioners, cluster analysis procedures were used. Stable groupings were found under different measurement procedures, and the final groupings arrived at in the classification were validated with independent procedures. The different solutions suggest that there are four major types of magico-religious practitioners, with one type divided into three sub-types: 1) Priests; 2) Malevolent Practitioners; 3) Mediums; and 4) the Healer Complex: a) Shamans; b) Shaman/Healers; and c) Healers.

Priests

The Priests are full-time specialists with high social and economic status who generally exercise political, legislative, judicial, economic, or military power. These practitioners are predominantly or exclusively male, with females generally serving only as assistants. The Priests are

usually considered to be moral leaders. Their magico-religious activities are generally public events and almost always social functions such as agricultural rites, ancestor worship, propitiation, and rites for protection; these activities generally involve publically consumed sacrifices. The Priests' power is nominally based upon relationships with superior spirits/gods who are beyond the practitioner's direct control. Role selection is largely based upon social inheritance, social succession or political action. There are seldom any trance states involved in the training or activities of Priests.

Malevolent Practitioners

The Malevolent Practitioners are generally referred to by terms translated as sorcerer or witch. They are part-time specialists with low social and economic status. Malevolent Practitioners in most societies are both male and female; all perform malevolent acts and little else. They generally are thought to have power over spirits, particularly animal spirits, but also have access to personal or impersonal sources of power such as in exuvial or imitative magic. Animal transformation beliefs and beliefs about killing kin and eating corpses are frequently ascribed to these practitioners. They frequently acquire their role through social labeling and are often killed for their actual or suspected magical activities.

Mediums

Mediums are part-time practitioners who are predominately female in most societies; males are also found in this role but generally less frequently. Mediums act at client requests to heal and divine while in possession trance states. Their power is based in spirits, who are thought to act independently of the Medium's control. Mediums are selected for their roles through spontaneous possession experiences, and are frequently thought to learn directly from the spirits. Their spontaneously induced trance states show other symptoms of lability in the central nervous system such as compulsive motor behavior, tremors and convulsions, seizures and amnesia. These characteristics were almost entirely absent from the other types.

The Healer Complex

The subgroups of the Healer Complex -- the Shamans, Shaman/Healers and Healers -- were very similar with respect to most characteristics. Most were part-time specialists who frequently exercised judicial or informal political power. These high social status practitioners were predominantly male within most societies, although there were more female Healers than female Shamans.

The activities of the practitioners of the Healer Complex were generally carried out at a client's request, and involved healing, protection, divination, minor agricultural rites, food acquisition activities, and malevolent acts. Propitiation was used as a technique, but generally not an activity in its own right.

Physical manipulations of the patient such as rubbing, massaging, cleansing of wounds, application of herbal medicines, object extraction/sleight-of-hand, spells, exuvial, imitative and manipulative techniques, exorcism and spirit control were all more frequent in the Healer Complex than with any other type, and predominate in the Healer subtype. The divination procedures of the Shaman and Shaman/Healer group tend to be based in trance states, while those of the Healer group utilize material systems functionally similar to procedures like the I Ching and Tarot.

The main differences between the different types of practitioners of the Healer Complex were as follows: Although all of these groups are involved with spirits, the Shaman and Shaman/Healer groups are predominately associated with animal spirits. The Shaman/Healer and Healer groups also had impersonal sources of power such as mana. Shamans had individual teachers, while the Shaman/Healers and Healers had significantly higher levels of training by practitioner groups.

The training procedures of the Core Shamans and the Shaman/Healers involve the induction of non-possession trance states through social isolation, physical austerities, the use of hallucinogens, auditory driving and percussion, and frequently resulted in collapse and unconsciousness. Altered states and altered state spirit relations were generally weak or lacking among the Healer group. Trance states labeled as soul journey were present for almost all of the shamans and a few of the Shaman/Healers, but absent in the Healer subtype.

The practitioners of the Healer Complex generally sought their roles voluntarily, but the Shaman and Shaman/Healer practitioners were also frequently selected on the basis of illness, involuntary visions or dreams. The Healers frequently required payment to the practitioner as a major part of training. In addition, the Healer subtype showed a strong tendency toward a degree of role specialization.

Social Variables

The practitioner types of the Healer Complex also showed strong differences with respect to some of the social variables reported by Murdock and Provost (1973). All of the Shamans were in nomadic or semi-

nomadic societies, primarily with hunting and gathering economies. In contrast, all of the Shaman/Healers were found in agricultural societies, and almost all of the Healers were found in societies with political integration beyond the local level. Nomadic lifestyle, agriculture and political integration significantly predicted the incidence of Shamans, Shaman/Healers and Healers, respectively.

The other types of practitioners also showed strong relationships to social variables. All of the Mediums occurred in societies with agricultural or pastoral economies, and with one exception, occurred only in societies with political integration beyond the local level.

Political integration is also the best predictor of the incidence of the Malevolent Practitioners. Only one society had a Malevolent Practitioner without political integration beyond the local level, and only two societies had two or more levels of political integration beyond the local community without the presence of a Malevolent Practitioner. The presence of classes was also strongly correlated with the Malevolent Practitioners; only two societies had classes present and no Malevolent Practitioners.

Priest practitioners were present only in sedentary societies with a major reliance upon agriculture or pastoralism. The presence of political integration beyond the level of the local community was found in all societies with Priests except for four, and there are only two cases of political integration beyond the local community without the presence of Priests. All of the societies with classes also had Priests, although Priests were also present in societies without classes.

Analysis of the patterns of co-occurrence of practitioner types in a given society indicated some typical patterns:

- 1) The societies with a single practitioner always had a practitioner from the Healer Complex present, generally a Shaman.
- 2) Societies with two practitioner types present generally had a Priest and a Shaman/Healer, or a functionally equivalent pattern such as a Priest and a Medium.
- 3) The societies with three practitioner types present had a Priest, a member of the Healer Complex and either a Medium or a Malevolent Practitioner. The only exception was one society which had a Medium instead of a healer.
- 4) The societies with four practitioners exhibited a

single pattern of a Priest, Malevolent Practitioner, Medium and a practitioner from the Healer Complex.

The configurations of practitioner types were examined with respect to the social complexity variables. Those societies with a single practitioner type were generally hunting and gathering societies, while those with two practitioner types present always had agriculture as a major mode of subsistence. The societies with three practitioners present had agricultural or pastoral economies, and with one exception, political integration beyond the local level. Those societies with four practitioner types present had agriculture and political integration beyond the local level, and with one exception, the presence of classes.

Summary

Analysis of the coincidence of the different practitioner types as outlined above shows them to be strongly related to socioeconomic conditions. Agriculture appears to be central to the transformation from Shamans to Priest and Shaman/Healers; political integration and the presence of classes are central to the emergence/development of the Malevolent Practitioners and Mediums. The evolutionary model is assessed and found to be very strongly related to the data; multiple regression analysis with autocorrelation controls indicate that agriculture, political integration and classes have a significant contribution to the explanation of the different magico-religious practitioner types and that these relationships are independent of the effects of diffusion.

References

- Murdock, G.P. and C. Provost. 1973. Measurement of cultural complexity. *Ethnology* 12: 379-392.
- Murdock, G.P. and D. White. 1969. Standard cross-cultural sample. *Ethnology* 8: 329-369.
- Winkelman, M. 1984. A Cross-Cultural Study of Magico-religious Practitioners. Ph.D. dissertation. Ann Arbor: University Microfiles.

Note: This paper is a synopsis of the work which was awarded the C.S. Ford Cross-Cultural Research Award. Versions of this paper were presented at the 1984 and 1985 American Anthropological Association Meetings.

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Physicist's Corner

A Physicist's View of Telepathy

Most parapsychological phenomena are rejected by physicists because they violate the known physical laws. One exception, however, is telepathy.

Telepathy involves the transfer of information from one person to another by means of something other than the traditional five senses, usually considered to be a mind to mind link. Examples of this are hard to find in well-documented form, despite the volume of work done by investigators such as J.B. Rhine. Nearly everyone has had the experience of saying the same thing as another person at the same time. Often one then might say to the other, "you must have read my mind." These occasions are almost certainly not telepathic in the extranormal sense, but rather reflect the reaction of two similarly inclined people to the same shared experience. More of interest to a physicist are the transfers of information and dreams reported in the cases of identical twins. Here is why.

Let us suppose that modern medical and neurological science is pretty much on the right track in ascribing thought processes to electrochemical activity in the brain. This means that different sections of the brain are sensitive to very small voltage fluctuations. The fluctuating voltage of an electromagnetic wave might be sensed by the brain, and those who either have the innate talent to "tune in and listen" to direct electromagnetic input or have learned to do so may have become known as telepathic. It is also known that the human body is a source of low level electromagnetic radiation, with the brain and muscles being the strongest broadcaster, muscles leading the way by a long margin in the output power rating.

The electric component of an electromagnetic wave is not the only part that might be sensed. It has been established that pigeons can sense the slow variations in magnetic dip angle (of the Earth's magnetic field) as they fly from one place to another. It seems that some iron-containing cells can actually feel magnetic changes and convert this to useful information for the rest of a bird's brain. This may be the evolutionary extension of the sea organisms that migrate along the Earth's magnetic field lines and are seen to move oppositely at the north and south polar regions. It is possible that some humans have similar mechanisms at work in their brains.

Establishing then that humans could, by virtue of the broadcast abilities of muscles and nerve cells, be senders of intelligible electromagnetic signals,

and that animals are known to be sensitive to very low level electromagnetic signals (this is how electric eels track food at close ranges), the next question is how might one individual be able to sort this out from all the other clutter and decode the signals into something that can be understood.

Surmounting the clutter question may be as simple as humans being insensitive to the high frequencies associated with most man-made noise (radio, TV, machinery, etc.) and the ability to mask out the 60 cycle noise and its harmonics from the power distribution network much as we can ignore the background din in the room at a party. More difficult, possibly, is deciphering the broadcast signal. Every individual most likely has their own internal representations of the sensations and abstractions that constitute thought and memory. My own brain's way of coding the color red is likely to be different from that of most readers of this article, if for no other reason, because I am color blind.

Accepting a wide continuum of sensory system behavior in the population, there must be a wide range of internal brain representations of the "same" thoughts across individuals, even if everyone's brains were identical. Brains themselves are determined by inheritance, education, nourishment and history of injury. No one is likely to really believe variability is certain for more moderately accomplished thinking organs. In other words, why should my brain language (and thus my electromagnetic emanations) be the same as yours on the detailed electrochemical level?

For telepathy to occur then, there must be translation in addition to reception. This is why the occurrence of telepathy among identical twins is so interesting. With the likely similarity of brain structure, the internal codes might be close enough that were reception to occur, the translation might be simplified to the point of making communication feasible. At least in this case, perhaps roughly equivalent to watching a TV program broadcast for European TV reception on an American TV. The distortions can be learned and corrected based on the fact that the picture, while quite distorted and bizarre, is still orderly and possesses some recognizable carryover elements. At this level, one must learn a new language to understand the broadcasts coming from outside the receiver's mind.

Naturally, if the telepathy were as hypothesized above, working via the exchange of electromagnetic waves, it would lose effectiveness with distance. It would also be cut off by electromagnetic shielding. At some, probably short, range it should become very reliable (of course assuming that it is present at all).

If I were designing an experiment to investigate this possible telepathy, I would start with the attempt to broadcast simple ideas that go back to primitive sensations. These have the greatest likelihood of translatability even among non-identical twin subjects. Rather than playing with stars and wavy lines, sender-receiver pairs should work with sensations such as warmth, cold; colors (given no color blind participants); smells; tastes; high-pitched vs. low-pitched tones, etc. The distance between partners, the shielding and e.e.g.'s of each would be experimental parameters. Multiple choice situations should be used in a "training phase" of the experiment. Care should be taken to avoid contamination by the thoughts of data takers while the experiment is being conducted. Verifiable claims of communication on the part of the sender-receiver pairs would be more convincing than reducing the data in the end and taking the deviation from the expected mean results on the basis of random responses as indication of telepathy, or worse yet, "negative" ESP.

In sum, telepathy could possibly exist in a form which does not violate any laws of physics and which is consistent with known facts on the behavior of animal brains. A significant signal processing problem exists, but this is only an obstacle to success, not necessarily an impenetrable barrier.

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Conferences

The First Langara Conference on Multiple Personality

The conference will be held on May 10-11, 1986 at Vancouver Community College, Vancouver, B.C. Canada. Key speaker will be Ralph Allison, M.D. Among other contributors will be anthropologist Ariadne Bursewicz, who will present an alternate approach in the treatment of multiple personality disorder, an approach which applies principles drawn from structural-functionalism theory and shamanic techniques.

For information about the conference, contact:

Adriane Carr, Chair
Interdisciplinary Studies
Vancouver Community College
100 West 49th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5Y 2Z6
(604)324-5511

Resources

Stones, Bones and Skin: Ritual and Shamanic Art

This classic book is a survey of the significant cultural roots of art throughout the world and their connection with and meaning for both Western and non-Western artists working today. There are seventeen illustrated chapters written by a variety of experts -- anthropologists, musicians, art historians, folklorists, and poets.

A limited number of hard bound editions are available for \$35.00 US.

To order, make check or money order payable to: SAPA and send to:

The Society for Art Publications of the Americas
P. O. Box 410234
San Francisco, CA 94141-0234

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US/USSR Cooperative Experimentation in Psychic Functioning

In October, 1984, a pioneering team of American psi research scientists journeyed to Moscow to work with their counterparts in the USSR Academy of Sciences in order to explore the phenomenon of remote viewing. This marked the longest long distance remote viewing experiment on record, across a span of 10,000 miles and the first time American and Soviet researchers have cooperated in this way.

Russell Targ and his daughter Elizabeth Targ worked with Djuna Davitashvili, a well known Soviet healer, to see if she could "remotely view" the place their colleague Keith Harary would visit the following morning in San Francisco.

The successful experiment was documented by an American camera crew, and is now available for purchase and use in personal collections. The one hour videotape includes an English translation of the entire experiment in both Moscow and the U.S., as well as an evaluation by a leading researcher with the USSR Academy of Sciences.

VHS and Beta - \$135
3/4" U-Matic - \$165

Contact: Karil Daniels, Producer
Point of View Productions
2477 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415)821-0435

Book Reviews

The Human Cycle by Colin Turnbull. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1984.

C. Wright Mills once wrote:

"The most admirable thinkers within the scholarly community...do not split their work from their lives. They seem to take both too seriously to allow such disassociation, and they want to use each for the enrichment of the other... Scholarship is a choice of how to live as well as a choice of a career; whether he knows it or not, the intellectual workman forms his own self as he works toward the perfection of his craft."

Colin Turnbull is clearly a scholar who does know about the interaction between the self and scholarship. His latest work, The Human Cycle is an extraordinary exemplification of scholarship which, as Mills also said, weaves life experience into one's intellectual work, using each for the enrichment of the other.

Thus Turnbull takes us not only to the Mbuti of the Ituri forest in Zaire but also to the halls of his own British education at Westminster and Oxford as well as to his early experiences in India. In the process he leads us through an examination of childhood ("the art of becoming"), adolescence ("the art of transformation"), youth ("the art of reason"), adulthood ("the art of doing") and old age ("the art of being"), ending with a prescriptive chapter on "the art of living" in which he discusses possible changes in Western society.

But this is a book about more than the stages of life or societal change. It is a work which is written with grace, style and heart. Turnbull does not give us classifications or impose arbitrary definitions, or give us charts and tales "as academics are wont to do" (p.255). Instead he tells us what he sees and feels, capturing the pulsation of life among the Mbuti, or during his encounter with Sri Aurbindo, or with the saintly recluse he encountered high in the Himalayas in a cave where perpetual ice melts and mingles with steaming water (p.239), or among the "primitives" who were his peers at his exclusive English school.

He reminds us that we do not have to go to exotic far away places to see the extraordinary in life. Turnbull speaks of the exotic nature of all that is around us: "Nowhere is the world richer, more exciting, or more beautiful than it is in our own lives...beauty is an internal quality rather than an external reality" (p.16). Turnbull also reminds us as anthropologists about the quality of transforma-

tion that can occur within our own lives in the practice of our art:

"Just as when a tourist travels thousands of miles to spend only a week or two on some tropical island he is really seeking a beauty that is inherent in the life that he lives at home, so when the anthropologist studies the exotic ways of other people in other cultures, he is really learning the truth about himself..."

We are likely to discover more about ourselves than about others, and in so doing discover unknown riches in our own lives" (p.16).

This is not a book to be "read" but a work with which one can pulsate. It is a book to be used widely for students not only in anthropology but in numerous other courses in the humanities and social sciences. Mainly it is a book not to be missed.

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Altered Steaks of Consciousness

Mute Evidence by Daniel Kagan and Ian Summers. New York: Bantam Books (paper). 1984.

Kagan and Summers have written 502 pages detailing their treks across the U.S. investigating the purported epidemic of cattle mutilations that began in the late 1960's and filled the supermarket tabloids with tales of "surgically" removed organs, corpses drained of blood and strange lights in the skies. They outline the small network of original reports that spread like ripples in a pond, while also bringing to bear the expertise of the Veterinary Pathologists. Though few in number, they are, in fact, the only truly authoritative source on dead animals, not the veterinarians who deal only with the living.

By page 502, there are no more UFOs pulsing in glowing colors over a Montana cattle range or super secret and quasi-governmental agencies doing dirty work as represented in the film Endangered Species. There are only the normal works of a normal world: predator action and lividity. But the voyage there was full of mystery, and the peoples' need for that mystery.

DONALD SUTHERLAND

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Graduate Programs

Brazilian Graduate Parapsychology Program

The graduate parapsychology program of the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Psicobiológicas (National Institute of Psychobiophysical Research) which is run through the Faculdade de Ciências Biopsíquicas do Paraná (Department of Biopsychic Sciences of Paraná) has completed its first group of graduates. The Institute's program includes 570 hours of coursework over 1 1/2 years of study. Courses on research methods and theory in parapsychology and the interface research areas (e.g., parapsychology and physics) are given in the first year, followed by intensive study and research work in an area of concentration the second year. The program was founded by Hernani Guimarães Andrade and is directed by Octavio Melchhiades Ulyseia. (Rua Tobias de Macedo Junior, 333; Bairro Santo Inacio; 80.000 Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil.)

PATRIC GIESLER

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