

Investigation into the Culture of American Oncology—M J D Good; Culture, Cancer and Communication in Italy—D R Gordon; Images and Interpretations of Severe Illness: Ethnological Aspects of Dealing with Cancer—J Dornheim; Emil Kraepelin and the Origins of American Psychiatric Diagnosis—A Young; The Love-Lorn Consumptive: South Asian Ethnography and the Psychosomatic Paradigm—F Zimmermann; Traditional European and Chinese Definitions of Illness and Medical Practice—P U Unschuld; The Hierarchies of Medicines: A Contextual Analysis of Schismogenic Processes—G Bibeau; Cultural Constructivism: Sickness Histories and the Understanding of Ethnomedicines beyond Critical Medical Anthropologies—A D Gaines; Holistic Health and Changing Western World View—C MacCormack.

#### Medical Anthropologists at Work

This month we present the conclusion of Tom Johnson's commentary on the role of anthropologists as faculty members in medical schools. The first part of this commentary explored the values of therapeutic activism, positivism and affective neutrality within biomedicine, and the epistemological contrasts between biomedicine's drive to explain and anthropology's drive to understand.

#### Anthropology and the World of Physicians (Continued)

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While treatment decisions ostensibly are attempts to "control" the diseases to be treated, I have noticed an unconscious tendency for physicians to want to control patients themselves (the term "patient management" is common in biomedicine, and betrays this posture—I insist on the term "disease management," but recognize that this still involves a cooperative effort between physician and patient). When hospitalized and seriously ill, illusions of control of patients and their diseases are easier; in primary care outpatient settings, however, patient behavior is frustratingly difficult to predict, making attention to the psychosocial dimensions of patient care—the grist for a medical anthropologist's mill—essential.

I have discovered that work in biomedicine demands constant attention to other unspoken assumptions about the world, such as the *concept of time*, which is viewed differently in medical and academic anthropology settings. In the latter, time is one's own, and scholarship that results from working in relative isolation is expected and valued. Time is something that one can "control," as when a long-distance runner consciously sets an individual pace. In biomedicine, time is both a scarce commodity and a compelling force, in relation to which practitioners see themselves as out of control. In clinical settings one responds almost exclusively to demands from others, there is never enough time to meet all the demands, and it is impossible to predict when demands will be made. Although it seems trivial on the surface, one of the most frustrating aspects of working as an anthropologist in the biomedical world is seldom being able to enjoy conversations over meals, which invariably are eaten hurriedly for fear that one's beeper

will go off at any moment.

Availability is another important core value in biomedical culture. Carrying a beeper is a symbolic statement that one is "always available": this is a powerful anxiety-alleviating mechanism, reassuring all that help is always close when the inevitable emergencies occur. Although there are seldom emergencies demanding my involvement, I have found it imperative (albeit sometimes annoying) to adopt the "beeper mentality" that exists in biomedicine. Interestingly, my academic anthropology colleagues regularly questioned the presence of my beeper with derogatory suggestions that I was "playing doctor." The importance of availability in clinical settings is also symbolized in daily ritual activities in clinical settings: "making rounds" on patients starting at 7:00 AM, being "on call" at night, or working on holidays become rites of intensification that solidify group identity. I have found that I must be available to participate in such activities, even at onerous times, to remain an effective part of the group.

In individual physicians, the behavioral and attitudinal manifestations of therapeutic activism, positivism, affective neutrality, time pressure and expectations of availability are often expressed and/or perceived by outsiders as arrogance. Successful medical anthropologists must not be put off by such a posture in physician colleagues, but recognize it as a psychological defense against the uncertainties that attend patient care—something I truly believe most of my academic colleagues have never experienced (here, I recognize my own apparent arrogance!).

In truth, unspoken assumptions within biomedicine can and sometimes do have negative effects on clinical reasoning and decision making. Unless physicians can step back and examine these assumptions within biomedicine, there is very real likelihood that medical practice will become a compulsion to change patients, rather than an opportunity to help them. There is a danger that these unconscious assumptions of biomedicine will be a source of clinical distortion. Thus, in every patient care consultation, my goal is to get medical students and residents to understand themselves, and not simply help them explain their patients' problems. My work is an attempt to help physicians become more genuine and flexible in their care of patients by better understanding the unconscious motivations and assumptions underlying their clinical activities.

Maintaining close ties with academic anthropology has also taught me that there are strong biases from within the discipline with which I am trying to come to terms, and which challenge my own professional identity. Ultimately, we medical anthropologists must also become aware of the unconscious assumptions, distortions and biases underlying our own professional activities, such as our disciplinary predilection to identify with the less fortunate "Others" in Third World cultures, while vilifying those assumed to be in positions of power and prestige within our own culture. My own belief is that such bias deprives significant groups of the beneficial effects of good applied medical anthropology, and deprives the discipline of opportunities to further enrich our understanding of human behavior in the context of culture.

Certainly, if we want to work to

change biomedicine, we must heed the maxim "confrontation without a relationship is an attack." Unbridled criticism by medical anthropologists in the absence of culturally informed understandings about biomedicine, and without ongoing relationships with physicians cultivated through long experience "in the field," is little more than disciplinocentric physician-bashing, and must be considered a prime example of medical anthropological malpractice.

#### SMA News Column Information

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### SOCIETY FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Sara Hartness, Contributing Editor

#### SPA "Gavel" Is Passed

This is the time of year when we as a Society pass the figurative "gavel" to the next group of individuals who will volunteer their time and energies to leading the organization. With results of the recent elections now in, we can congratulate our next President-Elect, Naomi Quinn, and two new Board members, Erica Bourgeois and Claudia Strauss—wish thanks also to those who ran but were not elected. The new year will bring a new President, Vincent Crapanzano, who begins his two-year term officially after the AAA meeting in Chicago, and a new Secretary-Treasurer, Susan Seymour. With these arrivals are some departures: Fred Myers completes his term on the SPA Board, and Rick Shweder finishes two very active years as President. Sara Hartness, who has served as SPA Secretary-Treasurer and Contributing Editor of this column for the last four years, will also rotate off. In this column, Rick and Sara offer two farewell messages that combine reflections on our past progress, our shared present and our future prospects.

#### A Glimpse of the 1991 SPA Meetings By Richard A Shweder

The 1991 SPA meetings were held at the Forum Hotel in Chicago on October 11-13. One hundred and sixty-one scholars attended a variety of sessions and workshops on self, emotion, life-span development, human nature, psychopathology, categorization, sociolinguistic analysis and the psychoanalytic experience. The meetings featured anthropologists of many stripes (medical, symbolic, linguistic, cognitive, psychoanalytic) as well as several prominent psychologists (including Shinobu Kitayama, Hazel Markus and Richard E Nisbett). Some of the more contested issues were innatist vs connectionist images of mind, and pragmatic vs semantic approaches to the study of meaning systems. Voices were heard for and against the use of "narrative" as a key to cultural understanding. The evening of October 12 featured a dinner event honoring Melford E Spiro with the SPA Distinguished Scholar Award, followed by a Distinguished Lecture by Dan Sperber on "Expertise: Natural and Cultural." The dinner was hosted by SPA President Richard A Shweder, who began the post-dinner festivities with the following words.

"Encomium" is a word made up by Ted Schwartz, who somehow managed to slip it into Webster's dictionary and Roger's Thesaurus. It means a laudation, a glorification, a tribute, an accolade, a psalm, a mead of praise; and in a few

minutes we are going to put this word into action. Led by Roy D'Andrade we shall honor Mel Spiro, our distinguished teacher, colleague and friend.

And there is even more to come, a distinguished lecture by Dan Sperber. It is unlikely that Dan will have us all singing "Do your ears hang low, do they waggle to an fro" as did Alan Dundes at our last SPA meeting, when he took us on an after-dinner psychoanalytic tour of 83 different body parts (one minute per body part) from the ears (symbolic of the genitals) to the toes (symbolic of the genitals). But I am sure Dan's talk will also be a tour de force and not lacking in sex appeal. It may even be relatively short.

Neurologists think that the French mind consists of two cerebral hemispheres connected by the corpus callosum, but they have got it all wrong. As we all know the French mind consists of two banks, the left and right, connected by a bridge of irony, and Dan in many ways speaks for the bank that gets less of the publicity. That is what happens when you go to school in England! Dan will be introduced by our incoming SPA president Vincent Crapanzano, who will take the helm of our Society after the conclusion of the AAA meeting in November. I haven't asked Vincent where he hangs out in Paris, but I think I can guess. Roy D'Andrade, who in a few moments will lead our laudation for Mel Spiro, is the only anthropologist I know who has so many brains that it is hard to keep track of hemispheres (or at least it seems that way to me when I read his various work on cognition, personality, symbolism and methodology). So between Mel, Dan, Vincent and Roy, I think the evening is going to be fun.

My son, who is now at college, tells me that at Swarthmore they have a T-shirt which reads "Guilt without sex." Around the University of Chicago we have a somewhat different view of things. We subscribe to the view that the brain is the onlyrogenous zone, and during these weeks in October there has been in Hyde Park much self-indulgent head scratching going on over two events, the 100th Anniversary of the University of Chicago and the 50th anniversary of the Committee on Human Development. Thank to Bob LeVine and Mel Spiro, before them Lloyd Warner, Bob Havighurst, Bill Henry, Bernice Neugarten, after them Gil Herdt, Dan Freedman, Ray Fogelson, Marvin Zonis, Jim Stigler, Peggy Miller, Bert Cohler and others, the Committee has over the years been a home for psychological anthropology and cultural psychology. The selection of Chicago as the

site of our meeting was meant to acknowledge these significant birthday celebrations. I offer a toast to the University of Chicago and the Committee on Human Development. May they thrive!

May the SPA thrive as well. I have learned a lot during the last four years as President-Elect and President of the SPA. One thing I have learned is that much of the interesting action in anthropology these days is on ethnicity and culture in relationships to topics such as self, emotion, body, health, gender and cognition, topics of traditional concern to psychological anthropologists. I am not really sure why there has been such a return of interest to these topics. Some think the women's movement had something to do with it. Leave anthropology to men and all you get is politics, economics and religion, or so the argument goes. Others think it had something to do with the 1964 US immigration laws, which have turned the 1990s into the decade of "ethnicity" (and not just the decade of the brain). Others think it has to do with some kind of natural cycle of fashion, of the kind that fascinated Kroeber: by the late 1970s everyone was just bored with personless ethnography and structural formalisms, or weary of communal strife dividing disciplines and subdisciplines from each other. Whatever the explanation we seem to be on the threshold of a new age of interdisciplinary cooperation on the topics we care about. So it is with considerable pleasure that I welcome to our convention so many scholars from other disciplines and subdisciplines who recognize as we do that we need each other to do it right. I extend a special welcome to all of you who have never been to an SPA meeting before. We are delighted you are here.

This is not a business meeting of the SPA, so I won't speak of administrative issues very long. There are, however, a couple of issues that need to be raised. I am not going to tell you the exact size of our membership, except to say that we are doing pretty well, although we have not yet reached one thousand, which ought to be our goal. When Margaret Mead chaired the organizational meeting of this Society back in 1977 we were all full of hope, but who did not wonder about false optimism. Today optimism is fully justified. For the moment history is on our side, so we must "seize the day."

One thing I learned during the last four years is that those little petty stupid administrative matters, getting the rule for this or that changed, can make a big difference for the well-being of the Society. It helps that starting last month every copy of *Ethos* is going to have a subscription form in it. It helps that it is now possible for anyone interested in reading our journal to subscribe to *Ethos* for \$35 without joining the Association or the Society. And if you are a member of another disciplinary association it is now possible to join SPA without having to pay full AAA dues as well. The red tape has been simplified. So let us all be missionaries for our Society and go out and spread the word to the rest of the academic world.

It also helps that we have launched a book series published by Cambridge University Press, which will focus attention on culture and psyche (and should as a side effect add to the coffers of the Society and give us some resources for independent action). Within the next year

the first six volumes of the series should be available to SPA members at a discount. The first volume is on Culture and Human Motivation (edited by Roy D'Andrade and Claudia Strauss), the second on Sex and Gender Hierarchies (edited by Barbara D Miller), the third on Self in Japan (edited by Nancy Rosenberger), the fourth on New Directions in Psychological Anthropology (edited by Ted Schwartz, Geoffrey White and Catherine Lutz), and other volumes on language, on human development and other topics are in process. Some of John Whiting's most important papers have been gathered together in a volume, which we hope will soon be added to our list.

It also helps that we have a lively column in the *Anthropology Newsletter* and can use it to effectively communicate ideas and events, including information about our meetings.

Concerning the *Newsletter*. There are many thankless tasks in life. Over the past several years Sara Harkness has labored brilliantly and quite altruistically on behalf of the SPA as secretary/treasurer and as the brains behind the SPA column in the *Newsletter*. She will shortly be moving on to other ventures and adventures. I could not have remained sane without her. All of us owe her at the very least a tremendous show of gratitude. Let us applaud our colleague Sara Harkness and her distinguished ten-year term as a member of our board. Sara is going to be a tough act to follow. Good luck Vincent! [Vincent, it turns out is lucky indeed, for Susan Seymour has recently agreed to carry on the noble tradition of the SPA secretary/treasurer, although the SPA Newsletter column will now have a separate editor.]

One final item for your consideration. At the AAA meeting the SPA board will consider a fascinating option which has been made available as a result of subcommittee discussions at AAA headquarters. The *American Anthropologist*, the journal of the AAA, belongs to no particular affiliated society, yet at the moment the only affiliated cultural anthropology society to offer it as a benefit of membership is the General Anthropology Division (GAD) of the AAA. Some people even believe, incorrectly, that the *American Anthropologist* is the journal of the General Anthropology Division. We now have the option to offer the *American Anthropologist* as well as *Ethos* as a benefit of SPA membership, at an additional membership cost of approximately \$24 (an unofficial estimate). The effect of exercising the option would be as follows. For those who might belong to GAD only so as to get the *American Anthropologist* this will constitute a small savings. For those who might wish to belong to GAD anyway they would not be double billed for the *American Anthropologist*. If we were to decide to make the *American Anthropologist* as well as *Ethos* a benefit of SPA membership, everyone in our Society would have to take it, so if you currently do not receive the *American Anthropologist* and positively do not want it, costs would go up for you nonetheless. I estimate that approximately 30% of our membership do not currently receive the *American Anthropologist*. The question is whether to exercise this new option. I hope you will share your views with members of the board.

The poet Wallace Stevens once wrote, "Philosophy before breakfast makes the eyelids stick." The same can probably be said for administration after dinner. So enough business talk. On with the really real events. Tomorrow morning we will experiment with a poster session, as well as with workshops and a paper session. Five adventurers will set up summaries of their work on easels in the Hutchinson Room, and will wait eagerly for you to drift into the room and engage them in discussions of their work, their views and their findings. The idea is to have a kind of intellectual fair. I hope each of you will take a few minutes to wander into the Hutchinson Room and engage our colleagues in conversation. Don't sleep too late! And now for the "Encomium." To introduce our distinguished scholar I call on Roy D'Andrade. [The poster session was a successful experiment. Melford Spiro received his award. And Dan Sperber delivered a relatively short talk about domain-specificity and the things people already know or are prepared to know when they come into the world. The conversation continues. See you in two years at the Third Biannual SPA Meeting. Good luck Vincent.]

#### *A Glance Back Over the Last 10 Years—And Forward* By Sara Harkness

Lately, I have been going through various files to prepare the last of a four-year series of annual reports to the Board of Directors. Noting, as I always do, what has happened with SPA memberships and subscriptions over the last year, I was tempted to look even further back at trends since I first joined the SPA Board as an elected member in 1982. I am a unique phenomenon in the SPA, having served on the Board in an elected or appointed capacity for ten years straight—an amount of time rivaled only in my own experience by the number of years I spent as a parent at our children's cooperative pre-school in Cambridge. A couple of years ago, a Board member asked me whether I planned to remain on the Board permanently, or what?—a quite reasonable question, in that context, although I was glad to answer that I would be stepping down along with the second President (Rick Shweder) who appointed me.

My explorations of past records of the SPA, going back over the years of my tenure on the Board, turned up the fact that during these last ten years, our membership has grown impressively—from 517 paid members (the only ones who count) in September '82 to a projected 802 for next year, or an increase of over 60%. Subscribers have also grown impressively, from 331 in 1982 to a projected 436 for the coming year, or about 35%. Yet in absolute numbers, we are still a small Society, and one that seems to be growing older together as we add only modest numbers of student members each year. That being the case, the increase in activities of the last few years has been remarkable. The first year that I joined the Board, I sat through a relatively uneventful First (Thursday) Meeting with the expectation that the real action would take place at the Second (Saturday) Meeting—only to find that the Second Meeting was mostly a recap of the first. Nowadays, we have plenty to keep us busy, including planning and

implementation of our special SPA meetings (initiated by Ted Schwartz), organizing and editing the SPA series in psychological anthropology for Cambridge University Press (a project started by Rick Shweder), putting out a Newsletter column that has reports of ideas and research as well as "news" (my contribution), and the planning of an increasing number of sessions at the AAA annual meetings. This is an exciting time to be involved in psychological anthropology, and it's been fun to contribute to the growth and development of the field through the SPA.

There is an odd disparity, though, between the intellectual ferment in our field and the lack of opportunities for professional employment. As I habitually scan the job announcements in the Newsletter, I am struck by the absence of "psychological anthropology" in all but a very few entries. In contrast, there seem to be many departments looking for medical anthropologists, biological anthropologists, ecological anthropologists, women's studies anthropologists, economic anthropologists . . . the list goes on, but takes on a familiar pattern. I have not made a systematic study, but it seems that much of the growth of professional opportunities in anthropology are at the interstices with other new fields. In this regard, psychological anthropologists should be well positioned to make a real contribution. Developmental psychology, for example, has experienced a veritable revolution over the past decade in attention to culture as a context for human development. International health, education, and population and family policy are among other fields where the potential contribution of psychological anthropologists could be significant. Yet, to take developmental psychology as a convenient example, there are only a handful of us who have actually worked and published in this relevant field. This is unfortunate, for three reasons. First, it deprives us of employment opportunities that could provide greater vitality to the field, much as the growth of employment for anthropologists in medical contexts has fueled the development of medical anthropology. Second, we can gain interesting new ideas and perspectives from these other fields, which can enrich our own thinking in psychological anthropology. And last but not least, if we do not contribute the special expertise that we have, others without our training will invent what we would probably regard as less well-developed versions of "our" ideas (for example, Culture).

Soon after this year's annual meeting (which I will not be able to attend, unfortunately), I will be packing up to leave, with my family, for eight months of research and lecturing in Holland—a project made possible by the Spencer Foundation as well as the Fulbright Commission and the University of Leiden. Charlie and I are looking forward to doing some very interesting work in collaboration with European developmental psychologists while living in a different (more civilized) culture. After a decade of service on the SPA Board, it is a pleasure to rotate off knowing that the Society will be in excellent hands and that our agenda will provide plenty of opportunities for continued intellectual growth. The next challenge will be to think about how to match this with growth in opportunities for psychological anthropology as a profession.