

APA Newsletters

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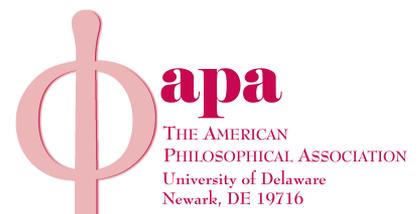
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LETTER FROM THE CO-EDITORS

Expanding the Dialogue

Hanging above my desk, wherever I have had a desk, is a quotation that I jotted down quickly one day. It came from one of the news magazines sometime in the late 70s and was credited to the *New York Times*. The subject of the article the magazine referred to was apartheid in South Africa.

“A closed society, where only the highest circles are permitted to debate, hears only its own voice.”

Anne Waters, in her review of *Tribal Epistemologies*, speaks of “philosophical frameworks in which self-reflective experiential information maintains metaphysical and epistemological cultural boundaries.” In her paper, “Broadening the Scope of American Philosophy,” she argues for allowing those voices that have not previously been included to engage in the dialogue of the philosophical endeavor.

It has been the experience of the American indigenous peoples to be spoken OF and FOR and not WITH. At most the indigenous person is credited as an “informant” and given initials (e.g., “H. W.”) or a description, “70 years old, grandson of...(some well-known Indian ‘hero’).” The articles presented in this issue have one thing in common: they all speak to “broadening the scope” through taking into consideration the fact that indigenous peoples are human and therefore rational thinking beings. Or better yet, as Ted Jojola, an Isleta scholar says, “We do not need interpreters; we can speak for ourselves.”

Thomas Norton-Smith offers a re-evaluation of the use of indigenous terminology in naming athletic teams. Steve Russell directs us to seeing the context of seemingly random actions undertaken by Native Americans. V.F. Cordova explores the context of metaphysical concepts as influential in determining concepts of “human nature.” David Martinez offers an insight into the indigenous view of what some might call “the dreamtime.”

All of the authors are facing the problem of not belonging to the “highest circles” of a “closed society.” The “closed society,” on the other hand, has also a problem: an exclusive society suffers from the dilemma of self-referentiality. Despite the recent influence of the French post-modernists, deconstructionists and hermeneutical approaches, American philosophy is dominated by a school of philosophy that has discounted the validity of all other paths to enlightened

thinking. It justifies its present course by presenting itself as “the handmaiden of science.” American philosophical endeavors are to be directed to the duty of “clarifying” the language of scientists. The fact that scientists, in general, seldom pay deference to philosophers is of no concern to the analytical tradition of American philosophy.

There is no engagement in the academic discourse of evaluating the metaphysical constraints that underlie the “debate” upon which the “highest circles” base their pronouncements. Propositions which begin with “All men...” can have little value when applied to “all men” if only a few are making the evaluation based on the examination of a closed circle. The term ‘men,’ as well as the term ‘women,’ is a very general term, similar in generality to the term ‘cats.’ The term ‘cats’ covers a multitude of life forms from house pets to lions. Each of the forms exist in different contexts which make it difficult to say anything beyond mere generalities about the species.

Japanese researchers discover that the brain of a Japanese person processes music in a different area than does that of the Western brain. The Chinese science of acupuncture depends on a very different concept of a human form than does Western medicine. The fact that acupuncture seems to work in veterinary medicine would imply that there is something more than imagination and superstition that is at work in the theory of life upon which acupuncture is based.

The variety of human thought is an avenue to explore—not so as to gather together the oddities of human thinking and concept building—but to determine, when the views are placed side by side, the capacity of human thought. The greatest breakthroughs in the advance of human thought have always been the result of different ideas in confrontation. What was the era of the Renaissance but a clash of recovered Greek concepts that threw into dispute the concepts promoted by the Catholic Church?

Philosophers, who once led the way in exploring the validity of conceptual notions, have succumbed to the art of theologians: apologetics replaces examination. Or, as an acquaintance of religious leanings likes to say, “We already have the answers; it is the questions that bedevil us.”

A plea for “broadening the scope” is not a simple demand for a place at the table; it is an attempt to be heard. We can, after all, “speak for ourselves.”

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR

of the APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy

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American Indians and the Philosophy of Science. The APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy has encouraged several American Indian philosophers to participate in professional philosophy conferences this past year. Presented were ten papers, supported by the American Philosophical Association (APA) and National Science Foundation (NSF) Diversity Grant; we presented at APA conferences in New York, San Francisco, and Minnesota. These grant resources enabled travel to and from each regional meeting, making possible two of the Committee goals, more visible American Indian professional participation in the APA, and building the work in the field. A special thanks to the APA, NSF, Bernard Boxill, Sandra Harding, and Rob Figueroa for these centennial celebration funds, and most notably for supporting our development of this field. As a result, several articles arising from these presentations will be published.

Indigenous Philosophies of the Americas Book Series. The APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy, in conjunction with the American Indian Philosophy Association, has been exploring with the Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS) the development of a special series of books on Indigenous Philosophies of the Americas, to be published by the international publisher, Rodopi. A formal proposal has been approved by the VIBS Editorial Board to elect Anne Waters as an Associate Editor as well as Editor in charge of the prospective special series.

New American Indian Ph.D.'s in Philosophy. (a) This past year the Committee has welcomed David Martinez to our APA ventures, and we are excited by his interest and contributions in aesthetics. David is a new Philosophy Ph.D. from the State University of New York, Stony Brook, and on tenure track in American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota. (b) Last December John Dufour, who has worked with this committee since its inception, completed his Ph.D. from Yale University, and is currently teaching philosophy courses at the College of Santa Fe and Albuquerque Community College. John's work in the ethics of belief will contribute much to conversations about American Indian epistemology and ethics. (c) Katy Brown has just finished her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in the area of social and political philosophy, and has accepted a position at the University of St. Thomas.

Thurman Lee Hester in Vermont. Thurman Lee Hester, by participating in the Society to Advance American Philosophy Summer Institute in Vermont, has moved us closer to our goals to increase visibility of American Indian philosophers, philosophical issues related to American Indians, and to build the field of American Indian philosophy.

The first Inaugural Issue of the Newsletter is Published. The first inaugural APA Newsletter on American Indian Philosophy, edited by Viola Cordova and Anne Waters, is now published, and several supportive letters continue to be received by the editors. Networking and general interest in the field is picking up. Our APA presentations have presented an opportunity to showcase and extend the work of American Indians in philosophy.

Institutional credibility by the APA in building the field of American Indian philosophy through the publication of the newsletter will hopefully result in more interest and attendance at our sessions about issues affecting American Indians, at the Eastern, Pacific, and Central APA divisional meetings. Although the APA supports and recognizes the importance of the field of American Indian philosophy, apparently many members have expressed a feeling that although this is an area they would like to work in, they fear that doing so would not promote their career, and may even damage it. In response to this dilemma, we hope to involve more philosophers in stimulating exchanges about current issues affecting American Indians. A special article by Thomas Norton-Smith (Kent State) is being published that responds to the ethical issue of sports teams and mascots capitalizing upon American Indian images, characters, and representations at the expense of engaging in serious forms of racism. This issue reaches beyond the sports arena into matters of moral accountability in advertising and economic responsibility in creating cheap stereotypical imitations of American Indians, and our art, that undercuts American Indian tribal development of small business.

Committee Meetings and Members. Meetings were scheduled at each of the three divisional conferences last year. As both Thurman Lee Hester and Judith Green step down from their responsibilities as committee members, we thank them for serving and know they will continue to support the committee. Lee Stauffer and Thomas Norton-Smith step forward in July to assume duties as committee members. Efforts will continue, given our small numbers, to maintain American Indians on this committee, alongside more senior scholars in the profession, to assist in the development of committee projects, mentoring, and moving the field forward.

Recruitment Goals Woefully Sad. Currently much energy is expended developing presentations for the divisional meetings and putting out the newsletter. This work is necessary, but equally important is to direct our attention to the recruitment of American Indian students into philosophy. Feedback needs to come from educational institutions to the APA when American Indian students are recruited into graduate schools. No mechanism for this is currently in place. The committee is not aware of any new American Indian students in undergraduate or graduate philosophy programs in the past three years, and hopes that the new committee on inclusiveness will address this issue of recruitment. As well, the committee holds out an open invitation to colleges and universities to contact the chair of this committee if they have any American Indian students interested in the field of American Indian philosophy. It is important that we be able to network with potential professional philosophers who are American Indian. There has been no progress for American Indian participation in the Rutgers Recruitment Program for Minorities in Philosophy—neither American Indian students nor faculty have participated, nor has there been uptake to

our requests to participate. Thus, the committee needs urgently to network with the Inclusiveness Committee to begin recruitment of American Indians into the field of Philosophy, and most especially, American Indian Philosophy.

Supporting American Indian Philosophy Speakers at Colleges and Universities. A list of currently generated professional academic American Indian speakers with a Ph.D. in Philosophy would include: Laurie Ann Whitt (University of Western Ontario, '85), Michigan Technological Institute (Humanities, tenured); Lee Stauffer (University of New Mexico), Highlands University (English and Philosophy, tenured); Thomas Norton-Smith (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, '88); Kent State (Philosophy, tenure track); Viola Cordova (University of New Mexico, '92), Independent scholar; Anne Waters (Ph.D., Purdue University, '92, J.D. Univ. of New Mexico, '92), Independent scholar; Dale Turner (McGill University, '99), Dartmouth (Native American Studies, tenure track); Thurman Lee Hester (Univ. of Central Oklahoma, '99), The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (Native American Studies, tenure track); John Dufour (Yale University, '00), College of Santa Fe and Albuquerque Community College, (Humanities, adjunct); David Martinez (State University of New York, Stony Brook, '00), University of Minnesota (Native American Studies, tenure track); and Katy Brown (University of Minnesota, '01), University of Saint Thomas (Philosophy).

Supporting American Indian Graduate Students in Philosophy. A list of currently generated professional academic American Indian graduate students in Philosophy would include: Lorraine Brundige, University of Oregon; Jason Hagen, Purdue University, Brian Yazzie Burkhart, Indiana University; Michael Brown, University of Minnesota. Marilyn Notah Verney (B.A. Phil. University of Texas at El Paso) and Leslie Nawagesic (Native Philosophy Graduate Program, Lakehead U.) continue to search for a University with a Ph.D. program in Philosophy with American Indian tenured faculty [the nonexistence of such an institution is a telling barometer of our nonassimilation into the philosophy discipline].

Supporting American Indian Undergraduate Students in Philosophy. A list of professional academic American Indian undergraduates in Philosophy would include William Bravebull, American Indian Art Institute in Santa Fe.

Author Meets Critic Session. Next year the committee hopes to sponsor an Authors meet Critics session for *American Indian Thought: A Philosophical Reader* (Blackwell), edited by Anne Waters and available in 2002.

Need Senior Academic Philosophy Mentors. There is an increased trend for American Indian professional philosophers to find employment outside philosophy departments. Currently Thomas Norton-Smith and Katy Brown are the only American Indians working in an academic philosophy department. The committee is concerned with this trend because of the very few American Indians with a Ph.D. in philosophy, and the lack of mentoring for these and younger scholars who may be interested in the profession. If this trend continues (and unless the Inclusiveness Committee can intervene) it appears that very soon there may likely be no, or fewer, American Indian academic philosophers involved with the APA than currently. Since there are no tenured American Indian philosophers who work in an institution having a Ph.D. in philosophy, the APA needs to begin mentoring for American Indians who have Ph.D.'s but are not

successfully employed, or who are underemployed. The committee encourages any senior scholars who have interest, skills, and are able to assist us in this project to contact the chair.

In search of American Indian Dropouts from Philosophy. We still need to find and make a list of American Indians who have a B.A. and/or an M.A. in philosophy. If anyone can lead us to them, please contact the chair.

Division Sessions. The sessions sponsored by both the APA Committee on American Indian Philosophy and the American Indian Philosophy Association (AIPA) have been listed at the APA web site. Thanks to Everett Green and Lisa Heldke, the Radical Philosophy Association continues to support joint sessions with the AIPA. The committee encourages joint sessions with diverse committees and associations.

The Committee chair extends a warm thank you to all who have supported us the past few years, and hopes we can look forward to continued supportive activity as we begin again this coming year to cultivate the seeds of our struggles. Our most immediate next project? Placing a Directory of American Indians with a Ph.D. in Philosophy on the APA Committee Website! Look for it! Wa Do.

PAPERS

Time, Culture, And Self

V. F. Cordova

When we define “human nature” we also set forth certain expectations of a human being. Different cultures define human beings according to other beliefs about Life, Time, and the Universe. The definition is set, so to speak, in a matrix of related beliefs.

As an example we might look at the different definitions of human beings offered by Christianity and the secular West. In the first instance humans are defined as “fallen creatures;” they are so due to a willful act on the part of the first ancestors. All human beings inherit the willfulness, or “sinfulness,” of the original pair. In the secular version of human nature, humans are described as essentially laden with “instincts” that have not kept pace with other aspects of human evolution. In both cases human beings are not “what they are meant to be,” in both cases it is “human nature” that is to blame for human shortcomings.

What we expect from human behavior is colored by the definition we have given of human nature. Human nature, on the other hand, is defined in the matrix of other beliefs about the greater world that humans occupy. In the Christian version of human appearance, an extra-terrestrial being creates the universe, the planet, and then places humans at the center of concern. Their command is to “subdue, and hold dominion...over every living thing.” The Earth and all of its characteristics is an object, a *thing*. Humans hold a position of superiority over Earth and its other occupants. In the secular belief system, Earth, too, is mere object. Humans, by virtue of having evolved from a lower stage to a higher, are also

superior to other beings and the planet itself. The secular version offers a humanistic version of the Christian mythos: what God has failed to do, through not restoring humans to their rightful place (the perfection of Eden), Man can now accomplish. He can transform the Earth, establish proper order, and guide his own “development.” The Christian version gives a limited time for the rectification of humans so that proper order might be restored; there is a sense of an “end time.” The secular West postulates a near infinite scale of progression from one state of being to an ever higher and more complex state.

Time is the stage upon which the Western drama is enacted. It has been so since the days of the firming of Christian beliefs, especially so in the work of St. Augustine. Time, in Augustine’s sense, is not the “mere measure of heavenly motions” as the pagan Greeks and Romans would have it; it is something else altogether. Time exists as its own dimension.

Augustine offers as proof of this claim the biblical account of the battle fought in God’s name in which God allows time to stand still (the sun does not go down) until the battle is fought to its proper end. If time were not something separate from heavenly motion would not everything have come to a standstill along with the sun’s passage?, asks Augustine.

We are more accustomed, today, to hearing of something called the “space/time continuum” than we are of biblical accounts. Nevertheless, the reformulation of a definition of time by Augustine, in distinction from the formulation of the ancients, is the Western sense of time. Time and the Universe are set out as in a closed block; the past and the future are all laid out by, perhaps, “the hand of God.” The present merely marks out the passage of humans through past and into the future. The future is when everything will work out, either God returns, through his avatar, Christ, or man, himself, will bring into being the glorious future—it is *out there*, waiting. This scenario allows us to speak of such things as “time travel”—the future, as well as the past, are lying in place. The best analogy for this sense of time is the cinematic film. If we stretched out the film from beginning to end we would see the outcome of the “play” frame by frame. We could imagine ourselves as actors in a play who imagine that they make up the dialogue as they go along, only the playwright knows different. God holds past, present and future in his vision. There is nothing new under the Sun.

Time is culturally constructed. The Moslem believes that the future is not yet created, Allah creates the universe, second by millisecond. The Westerner exists in the “year” 2001 by virtue of a time system based on a specific event. The Chinese and the Jew exist in a time frame counted in the six thousands, again based on culturally specific events.

What if, however, there is yet another means of “telling time?” Native Americans are not questioned about their theories of human nature. What could they possibly have to say that has not been said before? In the Western scenario of time and the Universe, the Native American exists as a living fossil portraying earlier stages of Western man’s singular climb to complexity on a teleological evolutionary path of the Universe. It is no more acceptable to engage a Native American philosopher in discussions of time and human nature than it would be to engage a single celled amoeba.

But such discussions do go on. The Native American exists in a world not of his own making and in order to survive

he must learn other ways of “dissecting” the world. He arms himself with Western concepts so as not to alarm his potential non-Native American listeners. He maintains his own view for discussion with his own kind.

Human nature does not revolve around a fall from a deity’s favor. There is no prison-like sentence of a specific time in which he must redeem himself in the eyes of a deity. Human beings are beings of the flock, like geese; a herd, like some animals. He, more so than any other being, is tied to his group through language. The Earth has produced him, as a group, to occupy a certain area. There are other groups occupying other areas. Each new being is trained to be a specific kind of human being, according to the group’s definition of what it is to be human. Despite such views of singular “creation” of specific groups, there is much accord among Native American groups. Unlike the anthropologists’ view of Native Americans living in isolation, in a state of genetic purity apart from other groups, there was much mingling between groups. The Northern part of America was criss-crossed with ancient trade routes. Copper from the Great Lakes is discovered in the ruins of the Southwest, as is coral from the Caribbean found in ancient mounds in the Midwest. There were intermarriages and ready interpreters between different peoples. There was a well-established and now, perhaps, forgotten sign language that dealt with concepts that allowed people of different tribes to communicate with each other.

The idea of a human nature, though existing in various guises, revolved around the fact that humans were creatures of the hive, the flock, the “we.” Humans were but one of many species of beings that coexisted equally, all dependent on the Mother, the Earth, for their sustenance. Humans differed from other flocks in that they had language, the better to bond the group. They saw themselves as existing in a web of highly interrelated and interdependent “substances”: air, water, other beings, the land. They maintained their life force by ingesting the life force of other beings. No less respect was due a wild onion than a deer. “Eat it,” my father would say to us, “we took its life that we might continue our own.” Eating was a holy sacrament; a thanksgiving to the creatures that provided us life.

Above all, humans had prodigious memories. Memory provided the awareness of consequences. All actions came with consequences. To know consequences was to exhibit knowledge and learning. And to know the consequences of actions of those before us was to display wisdom. The past was not a dead and unknown time—for so long as there were people to remember it and hand it down to others.

And with mention of the past, mention of the future cannot be avoided.

Many Native American languages are languages of verbs. The noun depicts a world of stasis—*something is*; the verb portrays a world in perpetual motion and change—*is-ing* occurs, *being* happens. Time, said Aristotle, is “the measure of motion;” Plato called it the “number” of motion. The Native American could say, “time is the measure of *relative* motion.” I once heard a man say, Augustine informs us, “that time is simply the movement of the sun and moon and stars. I did not agree.” Time, for Augustine, as for the majority of the West, is not a measure of motion; it is that, instead, by which motion is measured.

Augustine is plagued by the views of the pagans. They insist that there has always been motion and that the Universe is infinite. Augustine must explain the creation of the world *ex nihilo* and at the same time explain the eternity of God. Things did exist prior to God “speaking” them into existence, says Augustine, but they existed in *eternity*—in the mind of God, as a poem exists in the mind of he who has memorized it. The poem is called into existence “out of nothing” through the poet’s recitation. “What word,” asks Augustine, did God utter to bring things into existence? As for those vexing questions posed by the pagan thinkers as to what God was doing *before* he decided to bring the Universe into existence, Augustine offers an explanation all too familiar to modern day thinkers more predisposed to a Big Bang Theory than Creation: there was no *before* before things came into existence.

The Native American philosopher could have joined the ranks of the ancient Greeks and Romans: perhaps the Universe is infinite as well as is motion. Picture another “version” of time: imagine a spinning top, a child’s toy, in this case, however, it would be a top spinning in a perpetual motion. One cannot *go back* to a previous spinBit no longer exists. One cannot go into a *future* spin—it has *not yet* come into existence. Now imagine tops among tops, vortices, if you will—so that there is no space between the spinning tops. And imagine also that all of the things on the top, in the top, have an effect on the spinning.

The legends of Native Americans that portray humans as co-creators of the spinning Universe are the stuff which we read to children. Native Americans take such “stories” deadly serious: Time and the Universe have everything to do with the expectations of what it is to be a human being. I AM RESPONSIBLE. My actions in the world are not meaningless; they may be no more than a drop of water in an ocean but at some point that drop triggers a deluge, or a weather pattern, or myriads of other “relative motions.” The future does not exist. “I” have not yet made it, contributed to it. My present actions are making it. Present actions are like layers of snow added to a snowball—the shape of the present outer layer determines the future shape of the whole.

Whether any of these accounts of time are true or not, they do affect the actions of humans in their world. A view of the Universe as on a collision course with greater forces will affect a Christian sensibility; a view of the Universe as set on an inevitable progressive course through time will affect the sensibility of secular Westerners. A view of a Universe in the making will affect the actions of a Native American, in a sense of “what one sows one will reap.”

The ancient Hebrews had only to exercise patience toward the fulfillment of a promise made by a god: someday they would be led to their proper home. The Christian invented a new sense of waiting for that fulfillment. The secular, Post-Christian, Westerner invented a new theory of time: the idea of Progress is a product of the enlightenment.

Who questions the reality of something called ‘progress?’ I know of no work to match that of J.B. Bury’s, *The Idea of Progress*, though today the evolutionary biologists question the idea of a progressive evolutionary process. They offer, instead, change in the face of other changes. A Native American philosopher could agree with that: what I change can change me.

The first oxygen breathing being changed in response to changes and caused, in turn, other changes to the world. The Universe is about interrelationships and interdependencies. In a world of change and motion *stability* becomes an important goal. In a world that asks, “Why is there something rather than nothing?,” a fear of falling into nothingness, motionlessness, is something to be feared. The ancient Aztecs, fearing that the Universe would fall apart if they did not sacrifice pulsing hearts to augment its own pulsing, fought with their neighbors for sacrificial hostages. What price is paid in the name of Progress, and who pays the price? Who are the sacrificial hostages of the superior beings who mark the acme of a teleological process?

Time, Culture, and Self are intricately tied together. It is not possible to determine human nature, or the concept of a self, without taking into account a theory, or theories, of time. Nor is it possible to determine with any finality what it is to be human if all “stories” are not laid out on a table for the perusal of all comers.

The Hidden Path from Dream to Reality: Myth, Character, and the Dunne-za

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For most of us the difference between dream and reality is determined by either being asleep or being awake. We encounter this seemingly clear distinction whenever we awake from a deep sleep and our dreams drain from us like liquid through a sieve, leaving us with only the vague feeling of having dreamt *something*. When we do recall our dreams, it’s not uncommon to remember only a fragment, in which we may find esoteric images invoking their own laws of reason. When these fragments are recounted, though, the inclination is to stop and ask for their meaning. We naturally want to isolate “symbols” and assign them definitions, attaching them to what they say about the dreamer’s everyday world. Of course there are plenty of theories about dreams, from Aristotle to Jung, from which we can draw an “interpretation.” However, what most of these theories have in common is a tendency to extract the dream from its nightworld origins and make it conform to the needs of the dayworld. “Yet,” as James Hillman says in *The Dream and the Underworld*, “this conversion has become the main effort in the therapeutic use of dreams.”

We turn the light on them in the morning, take them to the typewriter, bring them to the analyst, and together we read them for messages about living situations, choices, and relationships of our conscious life, its problems, feelings and thoughts. By means of the dream we may remember what was forgotten in the past, perceive what we missed in the present, or decide about the future, reading the dream prophetically, oracularly, for tendencies in the underworld that will help us to cope better with our lives.

By using words like “underworld” rather than “unconscious,” Hillman is suggesting that dreams belong to a special place and not merely to the underside of one’s conscience. More specifically, the underworld is meant to

connote, not the Inferno of Dante, but the Hades of ancient Greek mythology, which is really a land of the dead. Dreams, as this premise implies, are comparable to myths. In the spirit of Hillman, then, who's critical of the daylight uses of dreams, I want to "re-vision the dream in the light of myth." For dreams, as Hillman argues, "emerge from a specific archetypal 'place,'" which corresponds "with a distinct mythic geography." Another such geography, complete with an underworld, belongs to the Dunne-za Indians of northwestern British Columbia. They're a traditionally hunter-gatherer culture, who have survived to become a part of the contemporary world, remaining in the shadows of modern civilization like dreams in the night. In particular, the Dunne-za sacred geography is expressed through their creation story, an epic that enables the Dunne-za to make sense out of their place in the world, in which their notion of world includes more than the horizontal domain of everyday life. To the Dunne-za, the world also includes the invisible domains of the land of the dead and the trail of songs that lead to "heaven." All of this was created by *Yagesati*, whose name means "that which is motionless in heaven." Robin and Tonia Ridington recount this story in "The Inner Eye of Shamanism and Totemism."

Before *Yagesati* created the world there was nothing but ocean. On the ocean *Yagesati* drew a great cross to which *Yagesati* called all the animals that lived in the water. One by one, they were asked to dive to the bottom of the ocean to retrieve some "earth" out of which the world would be made. Finally, it was muskrat who succeeded in bringing back a pawful of earth to *Yagesati*. The earth was placed on the cross and rolled into the "island" home that exists today. "Each direction," furthermore, would be "defined by a color, a time of day, a season, a sex, and a quality."

Upon completing this island, *Yagesati* would set the sun in motion. The sun began its ascent from behind the mountains in the east, turning the sky red. Then, as the sun followed its path across the sky it turned to yellow as it reached the noon hour. Eventually, though, it began to set behind the mountains in the west, turning the sky once again into red. After night fell, the white moon, which is the sun's soul, rose into the sky. Once the days were in motion, the seasons came, following the path of the sun. From the east came spring when the trees and plants begin to bud. From the south came summer when the warm winds blow. Then, from the west came fall, when the leaves turn and the plants begin to wither. Finally, from the north came winter, when all the plants and trees have died.

Within this environment, *Yagesati* created the animals, then at last he made the Dunne-za. Both animals and humans, it was predetermined, would follow the path initiated by the sun. During the spring, animal souls would be sent to the east to be born. Summertime, in turn, would be when the animals suckled their young. Fatefully, as fall came, the animals mated at the same time that they faced death at the hands of Dunne-za hunters. After being killed, the animal souls traveled to the west to rejoin *Yagesati* in "heaven." Finally, during winter, the animals were absent due to hunting, migration, or hibernation, awaiting the next spring when the cycle began anew.

Paralleling the animals' path of life, then, were the Dunne-za. Obviously, with respect to humans, their path extends over a greater amount of time, entailing that what was limited

to literally a year of seasons for plants and animals also became symbols by which the Dunne-za understood their lives. Like the animals, then, the east is where Dunne-za souls go to be born, followed by the summertime of infancy, when Dunne-za mothers nurse their children. After being weaned from their mother's breast, the child grows and shows signs of its character. It's also a time, especially for boys, as the Ridingtons emphasize, when the mother seems "harmful." For as the boy reaches puberty, he becomes aware of sex, and "being unready for it, sees it as a destructive force." A boy in this stage of his life is likened to the moose during rutting season, when "they go crazy and charge humans." In other words, the boy's childhood is in its death throes, and the boy is ready to become an adult. What he needs during the first "winter" of his life, is the wisdom of the white-haired men. It'll be the white-haired men who'll teach their young charge about the myths of *Yagesati*; it'll also be the time when a boy embarks on his first vision quest. "As the winter season of the year passes," the Ridingtons write, "and spring returns, so does the winter of a child's youth pass. He has gone full circle...Each day each person relives the cycle of life. But after a child has passed through the four quarters of his life once, his direction is toward the center." This gravitation toward the center is the soul's natural attraction for the underworld. What it's seeking is a fulfillment to its desire. But a desire for what? According to Hillman, there's a connection between the underworld and "the archetypal intelligence given in images." However, to acquire such knowledge, "we must sleep in order to see these ideas. It is these images, these visible ideas, that fulfill the desire of the soul, feeding it with intelligence as it sinks into the night."

What the Dunne-za boy will be seeking in particular during his vision quest is a *ma yine*, which is an animal's song, itself modeled "after the songs that are the cries of giant prototypical animals represented in myth." In order to acquire this song, the boy will have to travel away from camp into the bush. "The camp," as Robin Ridington writes in *Little Bit Know Something*, "is associated with women and family life and the bush with men and the animals they mysteriously go out to hunt and miraculously bring back to be transformed into food by the women." The bush is a place uninhabited by humans that's characterized by the animal ways that thrive in it. Going into the bush, then, on a vision quest means joining the world of animals. For only if "a child has the right thoughts, if his head is in the right place," will "a medicine animal...come to him." But an animal will do this only if it "accepts" the vision seeker. This means not being afraid, which can be very difficult under the circumstances. Entering such a world, especially when one is so young can be a little like entering a nightmare. One tends to react with the attitudes learned from the dayworld of camp. In particular, one may have to fight the desire to runaway. However, if the boy can fend off his apprehensions and maintain the fast that's part of his quest, the boy will enter a "transformation when he is 'just like drunk' or in a dreamlike state" (p. 57). At this point the meeting between an animal and the vision seeker will be one in which the boy will understand the animal's speech. During this time, which may seem to be "for days or even weeks," the animal who visits a vision seeker will impart its song, then eventually tell the boy when it's time to return to camp. Having been immersed in the ways of the bush, the boy will lurk "outside the people's camp, afraid of the smell

of smoke and unable to understand human speech.” Eventually, he’ll be spotted and brought back into camp, where his people will give him food and water and one of the white-haired men will put his “medicine coat” around the boy so he can sleep. Upon awaking the boy will have returned to the way of his people, understanding their words again. In other words, the boy needs to pass through the boundary of sleep in order to fully return from the dreamlike world of the bush to the dayworld of camp life. However, what the vision seeker can’t do is reveal the content of his experience, especially the *mā yine* he has brought back with him. “The childhood vision quest experience is private and secret,” as Ridington explains. “If a child reveals the story that came to life during the dream space alone in the bush, the power may turn against him.” Only the old people, such as the white-haired men, will have some idea, due to their years of experience with animals and the bush, of what’s happened with the vision seeker after his return to camp.

But *where* has this boy been? As alluded to above, Ridington likens the bush during the vision quest to the world we encounter when we dream, though it’s not dreaming *per se*. Yet, because of the fasting involved, the vision seeker is also not fully sober and alert. The mind of everyday life has given way to an alternate state of being, not quite conscious, not quite asleep. It’s tempting to call this state of mind a daze, but this would wrongly suggest that the vision seeker is merely dazzled, stupefied, or bewildered from lack of food and sleep. If the vision seeker can be said to go through such a daze he doesn’t end his quest in such a state. There’s a point where one pushes through to the “other side.” At this juncture, one achieves the alacrity that one exhibits while dreaming. During a dream, we all sense ourselves as being cognizant of the “things” around us, yet, true to the nature of dreaming, we’re also open to the extraordinary occurring, such as animals speaking to us. Mythologically speaking, the vision seeker has journeyed to the west where animal souls go after hunters have killed them. Still, “it is clear,” as Ridington observes, “that the experience goes far deeper than learning the habits of animals and attaining a rapport useful for hunting in later life” (p. 58). On one level, then, the boy has walked into the bush behind his people’s camp. On another level, the boy, as vision seeker, entered a dimension that defines the descent into the underworld. This isn’t a literal journey between two points in the landscape, but a metaphorical passage from one state of being to another. “It is a stage of developing independence,” as the Ridingtons describe this transition, “or rather, of transferring dependence from parents to animal protectors and thus identifying himself with the objects of his livelihood.”

Another way of looking at what the vision seeker has done is say that he’s recreated the first vision quest inaugurated by the boy named Swan. Here and there, without realizing it, we’ve been recurrently referring to this legend. As is common with many stories in an oral tradition, there are different versions told. One such telling, in an anthology titled *The Mythology of Native North America*, portrays Swan at puberty, when he sets-off on his first rabbit hunt. His stepmother insists on accompanying him, after which she would accuse Swan of trying to molest her to his father. Swan’s father believed his wife over his son and became furious with Swan. As punishment, Swan was taken to an island out west where he would be abandoned and left to die. “Swan cried himself to

sleep, but heard a voice in his dreams. It told him to spread pitch around on the rocks. When he woke up, he did this, and soon game birds came and landed on the rocks and were stuck there.” Because of this dream, Swan would have enough to eat through winter. When Swan’s father returned in the spring expecting to find his bones, Swan instead stole away in his father’s canoe, leaving his father behind. Swan returned home with vengeance on his mind. Upon seeing her stepson Swan’s stepmother fled into the ocean, but Swan shot an arrow at her that was so hot it boiled the water around his stepmother and killed her. “Then,” as the story concludes, “Swan took the name of the sun and the moon and traveled the rim of the world, killing the monsters that lurked there, turning them into the animals we have today. When he was done, he made himself into a stone. When the present world comes to an end, he will come back and set things right, they say.” The ending of this story can be taken to refer to some Dunne-za notion of the apocalypse. But it can also refer to whenever a boy’s childhood has come to an end and Swan is needed as a guide for setting things right.

Like Swan before them, the vision seeker begins a path on which he’ll reach an understanding of his own humanity—as mediated through the animal who has given its song. More to the point, the Dunne-za “do not find animals in themselves but rather begin to find themselves in the natures of animals.” Like the animals of the Chinese horoscope, different animals are associated with an equally diverse range of characteristics. Depending on which animal approaches the vision seeker, it will determine what kind of characteristics he discovers in himself. For Swan, he took on the characteristics of the only bird that could travel between the underworld and the upperworld. For the Dunne-za, the swan is a symbol of the shaman, a “dreamer.” Moreover, what distinguishes the shaman from the ordinary Dunne-za is the capacity for “flight.” According to the Ridingtons, “The shaman does not really fly up or down, but inside to the meaning of things.” Of course, every Dunne-za vision seeker enters that “inner realm of meaning within experience” when an animal visits them, which, as it turns out, is “the boss” of that species. The shaman, however, goes further, and encounters “the boss of the human species *Yagesati*.” It is only from *Yagesati* that a shaman will learn “the meaning of human life and death.” This was probably the voice that Swan heard. Very few, as you can imagine, receive a song from this animal, let alone hear the voice of *Yagesati*.

But whatever animal visits a vision seeker, the path to self-discovery emerges over a long stretch of time. “The vision quest represents,” as Ridington portrays it, “a developmental stage between the families of orientation and procreation. During this stage [the vision seeker] symbolically moves from the western to the northern phase of his maturation.” Reaching the east again means reaching another spring, such as when Swan’s father returned and then was abandoned. When spring came a cycle had been completed and Swan departed with his animal power. “The path,” as Ridington states, “his life has taken from the moment of his birth has come full circle, and he is ready to begin other paths to the completion of other circles.” Swan had grown and he knew how to slay the “monsters” that made the land dangerous for the people. Similarly, after a vision quest, a boy learns the way of the hunter, making the transition from being vulnerable to animals to knowing how to follow the trails of game.

“When a boy-man,” as Ridington also says about this turning-point, “becomes one of the core adults of a band and has his own children..., the experience of his preadolescent vision quest and postadolescent maturity come together in a powerful symbolic synthesis. He dreams” (pp. 58-59).

What happens when one reaches this point is that eventually, the vision seeker begins to dream back to his experience in the bush and he’ll know that it’s time to gather tokens for his medicine bundle. “The bundle is an outward sign of inner growth,” as Ridington portrays this ritual. “It can only be put together on the authority of the dream that goes back to the child’s vision” (p. 18). However, to dream back to something doesn’t mean that one is replaying the events of the vision quest as if it were captured on a home movie. “The dream is less a comment on the day,” as Hillman explains this, “than a digestive process of it, a breakdown and assimilation of the dayworld within the labyrinthine tracts of the psyche.” We’ve all dreamed back to previous points in our lives, and each time dreaming back entailed a metamorphosis of persons, places, and things into the shadow objects of the dreamworld. Once this is done, an important distinction of the dreamworld, as Bachelard describes it in *The Poetics of Reverie*, is that it doesn’t have a history—the dreamworld, like myth, is timeless. “In the dreams” after the vision quest, Ridington says, one “sees himself as a child living in the bush and knows that the stories he has both taken for granted and taken literally are about *him*.” Myth, dream, and life begin to merge together at this point. Before going on his first vision quest, the boy listened to stories about “real” people and creatures, without connecting what was being said to anything occurring in his own life. During the vision quest, the boy was alone and afraid in the bush just like Swan, awaiting a message from an animal or maybe even *Yagesati* himself. This experience inextricably connected Swan’s story with the life of the vision seeker. “When he entered the world of animals as a child, he also entered the stories.” Consequently, dreaming back to the vision quest reveals someone who is no longer merely recreating a myth, but whose very dreams have become myths.

“The child who is to become a person,” Ridington observes in *Trail to Heaven*, “must leave family, home, and the familiar sights and smells of protective camps.” What the vision seeker enters is “the deeper life of the bush.” Dreaming back to this event reveals that “life in the bush was actually an entry into the dimension of mythic time and cosmic space.” However, it would be misleading to say that all Dunne-za have the same dreamworld in common in the same way that they share the same camp in common. Whereas they may all have some ordinary world in common—such as we have at work, school, or the shopping center—they, like us, have an ability to dream of extremely personal and unique worlds. Or, as Heraclitus stated: “The waking share one common world..., whereas the sleeping turn aside each man into a world of his own.” For the Dunne-za, dreaming back to the vision quest is also when it’s time to create a medicine bundle.

Creating a medicine bundle is done in lieu of “interpreting” the dream insofar as interpreting means, as Hillman warns us not to do, of “projecting the dream into the future, reducing the dream to the past, extracting from the dream a message.” With all the discretion of someone keeping a secret, the Dunne-za individual puts objects into

“a plainly wrapped bundle” symbolizing the contents of his vision quest dreams. “The bundle is a physical representation of a story becoming active in a person’s life,” as Ridington portrays this stage of development, “but it does not give any clues to the identity of the story or its powers.” The bundle itself will hang over where its owner sleeps, marking a boundary between camp and the bush. As already mentioned, the medicine bundle is an outward sign of inner growth—in particular, the owner has moved from the north to the east again. He knows that he’s made this transition because his dreams disclose this to him. “In brief,” Hillman states, “a dream tells you where you are, not what to do; or, by placing you where you are, it tells you what you are doing.” For the Dunne-za this means being on a particular point on the path that the sun initiated after it first arose from behind the mountains in the east. Reaching the east again in light of the vision quest entails returning to the place where both human and animal souls are born and reborn. It’s the place then where not only a boy may be reborn as a man but also it’s where a hunter endows animals with new life after killing them. The medicine bundle symbolizes this cosmic turn of events. “A man is unmistakable,” Ridington says, “because of his medicine bundle hanging behind where he sleeps and testifying to his existence even in his physical absence.” Its contents, however, will be disclosed incrementally over several years. As the contents are revealed, that individual’s life will slowly be associated in some way with stories from the Dunne-za tradition. Furthermore, as these associations are made, the space around this person will change. This phenomenon becomes more distinctive as a person ages. “During the course of daily life in camp,” Ridington recounts, “I observed that the space around these old people was treated differently from other spaces.” Younger Dunne-za were expected to know what to do and not do around each individual elder. Behavior around these elders was determined by what others knew about them with respect to their medicine powers, that is to say, the contents of their medicine bundle. Given that the contents of a medicine bundle are kept relatively secret, their revelation is such that “they are discovered by people rather than imposed upon them.” As Ridington also says about the process after dreaming back to the vision quest begins:

When a person begins to dream back, the child’s vision gradually emerges from his...subjectivity to touch an inner circle of closest relatives and then outward to more distantly connected people. As a person’s household grows, more people have an opportunity to observe the medicine bundle.

As others become more acquainted with the contents of a medicine bundle, they begin to associate that person with the characters and legends from their oral tradition. In a sense, a person’s life becomes a variation on a myth. In particular, what a person experienced during their days or weeks in the bush, when the animals could speak, becomes a part of that person’s life-story as shared by others. Furthermore, given that dreaming back to the vision quest was what inspired an individual’s medicine bundle, those dreams also become an integral part of what others know about that person’s life. Waking and dreaming, in other words, are both a part of the same life-story.

While living among the Dunne-za, Robin Ridington learned that there were certain old people who didn’t eat

berries, throw eggshells into a campfire, enjoy camera flashes, the sound of a stretched string, or playing a drum. Slowly, indirectly, Ridington would learn the tales about these people and the powers they held in their medicine bundle. He would have to learn these things on his own because that's the only way, as the Dunne-za believe, of attaining true knowledge. The most important thing that Ridington learned about the old people in camp were the myths with which they were identified. "Their personal identity and actions," as Ridington recalls these elders' presence in camp, "bring stories from the realm of long ago and far away into the center of camp life."

Red berries, eggshells, and camera flash link to stories about the power of Thunderbird, whose red eyes flash lightning and whose eggs are laid in nests high in the mountains. The sound made by stretched string was used by giant Spider Man to lure his human game to a giant web. Frogs, living like people beneath the lakes, used drums in the gambling games they played with one another.

Because the Dunne-za are bonded by a common homeland, language, kinship, and, perhaps most important, sacred history, "The meaning of their symbols," as Ridington points out, "is neither imposed upon nor derived from but is rather inherent in the experiences of their lives." This makes it possible for their dreams to refer back at some point to a common oral tradition. We should hesitate, however, before categorizing this phenomenon in Jung's "collective unconscious." Jung's concept is another instance in the Western tradition of creating universal propositions at the expense of local cultures. In other words, the collective unconscious is a "meta-narrative" that overlooks the devotion that people like the Dunne-za have for a particular place. The Dunne-za oral tradition is a narrative exclusive to the Peace River area, and the dreams that it inspires are tied to where the Dunne-za dwell. What we're seeing with respect to the Dunne-za is a way of dreaming among a people who have the benefit of a unifying myth. I mean this in contradistinction to the fragmented, almost "traditionless" way that modern people tend to dream. The special space around Dunne-za elders signifies that an important journey has been completed within the Dunne-za cosmos, culminating in the stories that emerge as a part of that person's identity. "When the children return to camp from the bush," as Ridington describes this merging of life and story, "they can look to the old people within themselves."

They can look ahead to the circle of their lives, to telling secrets of the vision quest. In the span of life between child and old person, the medicine stories of a child's experience alone in the bush become an old person's stories known by everyone in camp. The stories become real in the theater of their telling. They always remain secrets, but during the course of a lifetime become known to a widening circle of people. By the manner of their telling secrets, Dunne-za children establish themselves as people of knowledge. Thus, the story of an individual's life becomes part of the stories known to all. This diffusion of information balances the vision quest, during which a story known to all becomes part of the child's experience.

The stories of the Dunne-za oral tradition represent the shadow side of everyday reality. This isn't to say that they're the opposite of reality; rather, like the shadows we see around us, they're an integral part of the environment, or that-which-

exists. In the Dunne-za sacred geography, the moon was regarded as the sun's soul. In a way this is like saying that the sun's soul only comes out when the sun is sleeping at night. It's during the night when animal souls go to the west after being hunted. It's also during the night, according to the Dunne-za cosmology, when an animal will visit a vision seeker. This is why one must be in a dream-like state in order to receive a *m? yine*. Secrets too are a part of the nightworld. Just as the night only slowly gives way to daylight, so should one's secrets be revealed carefully. But what's at stake here is more than simply trying to imitate nature. Secrets, including both dreams and the medicine bundle, are disclosed gradually because it takes the benefit of years and experience in order to gain some understanding of what's being kept hidden from others. In traditional Dunne-za culture, as with most hunter-gatherer people, the individual knows their responsibilities. Roles and customs are laid out quite clearly for all to follow, complete with their correspondence to the oral tradition. Nonetheless, intersecting the everyday world of custom are the dreams of the vision quest. After all, it's in dreams where the most profound instance of "individuation" takes place. For one's dreams add a chapter to a common mythology that wasn't there before. Dreams, in other words, are a person's personal mythology. Even if dreams have appropriated symbols from a common oral tradition, each dream is an event that only happens to a specific individual. In the end, this is the ultimate lesson of the Dunne-za for us: that we should take our dreams as seriously, if not more so, than the social masks we wear for the benefit of the dayworld. For behind the roles we play in the dayworld there's a nightworld in which our souls pursue needs that aren't satisfied by dayworld wealth and status. Only by doing right with the dream will we do right with the soul.

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Broadening the Scope of American Philosophy at the Turn of a New Millennium

Anne Waters

Situating American Philosophy

Is it possible to broaden the scope of American philosophy to include an understanding of traditional indigenous, or tribal, knowledge? Might such knowledge complement or challenge, that of the American scientific community?

Vine Deloria, Jr., in recent correspondence, and in recent American Philosophical Association meetings, discusses a problem of contemporary American philosophy: it is “removed from the people.” Deloria claims, “Other than Political Science...philosophy has simply moved away from the world in which people live, and isolated itself from discourse with other realms of thought.”¹ If Deloria is correct in this view, then as philosophers, at least some of us are living our lives within what is traditionally known as “the ivory tower”.

Assuming Deloria correct, and assuming also that philosophy generally can be something “lived,” rather than only studied, Native American philosophy may have a role to play in moving toward this goal. The history of American philosophy brought to the history of Western philosophy new ideas; from the Romanticism of Emerson and Thoreau,² to the Pragmatics of James and Dewey³

As American philosophy was concerned with issues of science, ethics, and value, a new pragmatism emerged in both theory and practice. Philosophy became a tool that could be used to justify or question public policy issues: questionable medical research, domestic and foreign war practices, global genetic and ecological engineering projects, race and civil rights affairs, sex/gender inequities, political situations arising from manifest destiny land and resource acquisition schemes. Pragmatic justifications, flowing from philosophers in university thinking tanks, were applied to hospitals, educational institutions, research centers, reservation infrastructures, and global capitalist economic systems. A frequently heard phrase in law courts since point of colonial contact has been “for public policy reasons” rather than “according to the law”. These contributions of pragmatic reasoning to Western Thought are uniquely American. They arose from America’s colonial experience⁴. American philosophers presented us with a “picture of life” at least as powerful as that of the Middle Ages, or any European contributions of Phenomenology, Existentialism, and Post Modern Thought.

Now American philosophers face not merely a new century, but a new millennium. In some specialized areas, theory for example, philosophers move into this new millennium as members of a profession with a past reputation of being distant from everyday life, favoring thought systems and structures.⁵ In response to this charge, however, philosophers are exploring more closely how individuals, on a global scale, relate to society, environment, nations, resources, and community as we move into a new millennium. The new millennium promises to redirect attention away from the individual and individualism, and turn a critical eye toward the role of communal discourse, and individuals-in-relation with total environment. A few American philosophers, in turning toward America’s Indigenous communal values, have found new and exciting ideas on the horizon of communalism.⁶ In this project, the scope of American Philosophy broadens, and thereby redefines itself.

American philosophers in the US stand as an icon amidst a growing international turmoil and discontent with Western European thought and value systems. As such, we have a crucial role to play in listening, learning about, and attending to non western philosophical foundations that can address currently dominant world political issues. As Mexico, Central and South America continue amidst political turmoil, in the face of having natural resources and land stolen by dominant colonial corporate and government powers, the Middle East threatens the world with the possibility of using technologically sophisticated warfare, while indigenist movements struggle to voice sustainability issues on all continents.

Corporations, ever rising to an economic occasion, prey upon wealth comfortable North Americans that show increased signs of stress and anxiety. Drug stores now stock

vast amounts of traditional and homeopathic drugs for a multitude of ailments, most markedly anxiety and depression. As these medicines are being introduced into the U.S. and Canadian market economies⁷ American philosophy, as a discipline, has done little to respond to the relation between global politics and the new drug cultures. Distinguished traditional philosophers⁸, however, are responding to the drug crisis, including several Native American, Asian American, and African American philosophers. The search is on in North America, not only for new ways of being drugged, but also for new ways of thinking about human place in the world, and the nature of how humans relate to drugs.

The influx of drugs for human consumption parallels a recent trend in education: some universities and colleges, finding students dissatisfied with what has passed as traditional western thought, now seek out texts that include non-Western philosophical perspectives. In this context, the discipline of philosophy is experiencing an historical moment of textual renaissance by allowing new voices to enter the profession. Some of these voices speak a cacophony of the former naturalist, or American Indian tradition of early pre-contact history, the colonial moments of conquest, the pragmatism of the American colonial experience, and the romantic interlude of American individualism.

Native American philosophical voices appear to remain within frameworks of naturalism, and of tradition, while having adopted the meaningfulness of pragmatic community action and traditional discourse of individual autonomy and responsibility. In the structures of our institutions, this has been necessary in order to maintain our traditional cultural values. Over many years, African Americans have also had to move from a more naturalist philosophy “of a former motherland,” to a specifically communally pragmatic course of action and individuation, geared toward survival in a culture antagonistic to Black existence. Similarly, the Diaspora of many indigenist nations created struggle with these same obstacles and dilemmas of survival.

Articulating the metaphysics and epistemology of the survival experiences of these three cultural groups may lead to paradigmatically shifting the definition of American Philosophy, and thus the significance of it, from a Eurocentric perspective, to an Indigicentric philosophy of meaning. What has counted in the past as American philosophy, has in reality been Western European American philosophy, as influenced by the many traditions on the continent. As against the historic Western European Renaissance of mechanistic metaphysics, a metaphysic of relatedness to all living things is currently surging through the pavement of American philosophy, breathing new life into stagnant theories. Anyone reading Vine Deloria’s work can easily decode how Heisenberg’s theory of indeterminacy, for example, has entered the scene of American metaphysics as a translation tool for American Indian philosophy. As well, the metaphysics being articulated by contemporary American Indian philosophers of the discipline align and complement Deloria’s work.

Americans are looking for a new sense of personal being-in-the-world: seeking alterations of consciousness in drugs, holistic medical practices, traditional spirituality, new age shamanism, and following religious icon.⁹ A return to traditional Native beliefs and practices is underway in Indian Country, as young people turn toward our Native elders to ask for help in finding meaning to life, the nature of illusory

truth, our place and our values in a seemingly topsy turvy world that we walk in when outside of traditional living. New voices, assisted by traditional elders, in Native American art, education, literature, economics, math, politics, architecture, and science, are now taking a front seat in academe, as compared to the forced silence and complicity of the colonized experience had by so many tribes at the turn of the 20th century.¹⁰ American Indian philosophers are no exception to this movement forward. We are finding voice.

Analogously, African Americans are also experiencing a renaissance of being in looking to traditional African indigenous philosophical systems, as well as traditional American indigenous traditions, and their impact on African Americans. Texts in African and African American philosophy are currently in demand. Perusing the A.P.A. “Jobs for Philosophers” publication, we see a search for individuals competent to teach African and African American philosophy. As the philosophical dialogue between Native Americans and African Americans, which has begun, continues on the horizon, and Native American Philosophy itself finds a voice within traditional academic philosophy, hints of a new era of American Philosophy can be gleaned.

However, hints of a new era for Native American Philosophy do not look like the traditional existentialism as embraced by Franz Fanon, nor the political and economic anarchy as understood by Cornelius Kellogg. Philosophies grown from the soil of Indigenous America that challenge a new era of global cooperation are looking like a consciousness of action, sustainability, responsibility, and accountability. Appearing at dawn with the new millennium are philosophies of place and identity with the universe, epistemologies of voice and personal identity situated within cosmic community, metaphysics of organic change and continuity that challenge fixed mechanics, and philosophies of government to manage global economic and environmental crises among sovereign nations.

Philosophers, in working to bring these philosophies forth, will need to look anew at some of the old. For example, some American philosophers are studying governmental systems of the Iroquois Nations in efforts to reclaim what was not gleaned from the tripartite system, as borrowed from the Confederation, to develop the U.S. Constitutional government structure in the 18th century. Others are comparing traditional science with contemporary science, both in method of operation, and processes of predicting.

Because of the rapid changes taking place among the living conditions of humans and all our relations, out of a need for more diverse frameworks, a scope of philosophical discourse is developing in American Philosophy. One of the more salient aspects of EuroAmerican Philosophy, as colonial philosophy, is that it has concerned itself with issues of satisfying naturalist, romantic, and pragmatic tendencies in science enterprise and survival. Yet the epistemology and metaphysics of values that have directed these quests have largely been ignored, or at least not subject to critique by outsiders within the academic discipline. For the past twenty years or so however, as American Indians have moved into scientific communities, many traditional Western European ideas have come under scrutiny by these young scholars who are also trained in their tribe’s traditional science and medicine. Now, in philosophy, American Indian philosophers question many traditional Western European ideas that have

stood behind Western European science, as continued on America's shores.

In directing our attention to the survival of our natural world [ourselves included], there may be a need to produce, along with a new philosophy of science, new American epistemologies of knowing, of value inquiry, and metaphysics of being. These new philosophies would speak to the diversity of traditional knowledge available to humanity, and hitherto tapped by only a few among us. Such philosophies may be capable of processing meanings arising from overlapping and emergent diverse cultural beliefs and practices. They may also point to distinct differences between the current ambiance of sacred scientific theory, versus more traditional sacred feelings, within the ambiance of the presence of cosmological knowledge.

Epistemology, Metaphysics, Science

Partly in the tradition of Dewey, scientific thought, as reasoning, is a function of systematic habitual responses to environmental demands. The crux of this reasoning is "causality"—the mission to understand causality in order to predict and control the environment. A variation of this type science can be glimpsed via both a Native and African tradition. In these traditions scientific thought, as reasoning about the universe, is a function of creating historical record via observation and the passing on of traditional information. The purpose of this process is to maintain a balance in the universe, for human people and all our relations; it is to understand the human role of interdependency and hence responsibility for our actions in maintaining a balance of survival for all our relations. Both the European American, the Native American, and African American traditions share the importance of observation and study of action-reaction. The former has the goal to build a formal system of causal theory, grounded in predicting the profane; the latter two have the goal to record information, grounded in maintaining the sacred (because information essential to human survival is sacred).

A couple of interesting differences appear in comparing Western European scientific reasoning, and American Indigenous reasoning. Western European science, in taking up a quest, assumes a specific type of explanatory causality, whereas American Indigenous thought more frequently recognizes a multiplicity of causal factors. And, whereas EuroAmerican science assumes complete understanding is the goal, indigenous thought recognizes that not everything may be, or need be, known. Causality, in Native American thought, is macrocosmically complex, and demands a complementary complex metaphysic and ontology of the world.

These two ways of approaching the cosmos, and claiming to have information about an ontology of being in the world, suggest not only a metaphysical and ontological difference but an epistemological difference as well. The Western European tradition creates a system of interrelated reasoning patterns (with possible invalid relational claims); the American Indigenous tradition creates an ordering of different types of information (with a possibility of observation error). Both types of method have room for error, but of a different type. The goal of the Western European tradition is to seek out causal explanatory patterns via eliminating anomalies. For example, the effect of gravitational pull is verified in an

experimental setting, in order to know, for instance, how to bring Apollo home. Error, in this tradition, is to occur in the experimental setting, not in real life.

The goal of the Indigenous tradition is to record sacred historical knowledge via the paths of noticing repeated events and following the reasoning of presented anomalies. For example it is important to both know the conditions that will enable a good rainfall for a crop, and also recording shifts (anomalies) in the environment that may lead to further information. Moreover, science is engaged not in experimental settings but in real life.

Other differences are important to note, and have been mentioned by native scholars, for example both Gregory Cajete and Vine Deloria, Jr. Both the Western European and the Indigenous science study how humans interact with the cosmos. The former, but not the latter, is committed to "discovering the how of knowledge" with an epistemological certainty. The Indigenous perspective acknowledges that some things may simply not be explained, or can only be explained in a sacred, spiritual way. The EuroAmerican scientist is uncomfortable with notions of subjectivity, yet the indigenous scientist is satisfied to maintain information as seen from the eyes of the recorder. Subjectivity is a plus!

An interesting fallout of such differences, is that the response to a traditional philosophical question "Why Am I Here?" or "Who Am I?" will suggest a profane *causal explanation* for traditional Western American philosophy; it will suggest a *sacred, or spiritual explanation* for traditional Indigenous philosophers. The word 'spiritual' is used here to mean special in the sense that one feels in awe of, in harmony with, and part of the complexity of the cosmos and place. Knowledge of our immediate natural environment comes only to persons who have attained an ability to experience and understand ourselves as metaphysical beings-in-the-world intimately connected to and interdependent with our environment, and our particular place and relations in that environment. Rather than seek the nature of the other, we understand ourselves to be *of* the other; and when we are the other, there is nothing which stands outside of us that is not also us. Bearing relationship with all others and being *of* all others, means that our being in the world is about constant reciprocal relations with the world, as animated, and hence not metaphysically distinct or discreet from the world.

Considering the historicity of these two parallel streams of thought currently in North America, Western European American and Indigenous Native American, our historical moment suggests a new and different epistemology may be on the horizon of American philosophy. These two diverse epistemological perspectives, when brought together, may provide new ways of knowing how we who live on mother earth relate to one another, the environment, and all things in the universe. Such an epistemology may provide human people with a way to face the threat of epistemological relativism, the fate of lonely solipsism, and the dearth of a resources ravaged mother earth.

American Philosophy

Whether a predominant American philosophy develops upon the American scene at this turn of the millennium, may depend upon whether the scope of American philosophy is large enough to operate with the diversity in which it has been and is currently situated. This challenge will include a study

of ideas in the history of American philosophy on the American continent, in the historical records of those currently over five-hundred and fifty unique Indigenous tribal nations recognized by the colonial (U.S.) government. It will extend throughout Turtle Island, among America's indigenous nations in what is currently known as Canada, Mexico, Central and South America. The project is one of endurance, patience, and trust.

Granted, there will be some issues of authenticity and accuracy that come to the fore in efforts to articulate Indigenous philosophies. It remains to be seen whether any language could ever be capable of rendering similar enough meaning for translatability in communication. Hopefully this difficulty would not stand in the way of such a project. For the question of diverse philosophies at this historical moment is not so much whether we can understand one another, but whether we will be given the opportunity to engage in the dialogue of possible understanding. And in this sense, hermeneutic translation and questions of over and under determination may need to be set aside to first achieve an articulation of some Native American philosophical ideas which carry origins for some American Philosophies.

Some contemporary Indigenous philosophers in America claim that we will not understand many things in our lifetime. Our desires are no more nor less than part of those of the larger universe, though human beings seem to have a[n instinctual or innate] need to strive to learn about causal relations. Yet knowledge about our universe continuously unfolds throughout time, it is an ongoing process as dynamic as the universe herself. Indigenous philosophy does not observe nature to discover ultimate causality, but observes nature to learn about ourselves as part of the environmental milieu. A cross fertilization of Western American and Indigenous American thought suggests we may be looking at a paradigmatic Kuhnian type shift in developing the future of epistemology.

Let us suppose Dewey is correct in that our reasons to act are no more than highly developed habitual pragmatic patterns of behavior, and ideas that are thoughts about future survival actions. If this is all that cognitive activity is, then the Western science need for certainty in causal matters may be nothing more than an outdated habit, illusion, or throwback to the striving for the certainty of epistemic foundations in Western philosophy. Many habits outlive usefulness. Perhaps this one has as well. Our abilities to understand an experiential, rather than causal universe, such as that presented by indigenous Native American thinking, may soothe our habits of experiencing angst and frustration amidst a desire for too much information. Such a need for certainty may be like the banal desire for one's own beauty, the senses of limit and balance gone on vacation, while hubris steps in to take over the day of pride.

Western European philosophers have been trained to seek answers to questions decidedly philosophical., such as "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" or "How many degrees of certainty are required for confidence?" Many non western philosophers have followed in this path as well. Arriving from this historical context, American philosophy may be entering a new dialogue about epistemology, metaphysics, science, and value. If philosophers can shift our metaphysical world view, in the context of revisiting the philosophical question "What counts for causality?" then the new

millennium will accept part of the challenge brought to it by American Indian Thought.

Descartes was born only a hundred years after Europeans discovered the existence of the Americas (1596). Descartes was under an illusion about the importance of proving his existence, just as surely as Europe was under an illusion about the flatness of the earth, notions of manifest destiny, and the value of human relations. Descartes thought that if he could prove the fact of his existence to be essentially certain and beyond question, everything else could be proven. But Descartes could not get beyond himself as a thinking being. So he cheated. Some say he simply drew an invalid inference. Whether Descartes was a poor logician or merely a victim of his own history and culture, this profound dependency upon the act of thinking, as distinct from experiencing, kept philosophy in a closet until Hume's fire alarm woke everyone up. And since this time, Western philosophy has still not looked past Kant's broken glasses.

Whether Descartes meant to make a deduction, or whether, at that moment of recognition, his meaning was to articulate an acting, a performative utterance, an experiencing, we will never know. But if we contemplate the alternative to the deductive response, a new way of epistemology opens up, swerving around Kant's glasses. To know, in some senses, is to experience. And through experience, we may yet learn what it means that our existence is not the center of the universe, the earth is not flat, manifest destiny continues to be a hoax, and relations are everything to survival. We may also learn that to experience is to accept sacred knowledge in her noncausal, experiential sense. In this context, the answer to such a question as, "Why Am I Here?" and even "What Am I?" becomes simple. I am here to experience what I am, and what I am will become (over time and place) known in the experience. In this way, however profane the universe may appear to some, and however much they may strive to understand Plato's forms, we live in the present, and we experience the here and now in our present places, through our traditional relations with the past and future.

The universe we inhabit, like the universe Aristotle gazed upon, is still the one and same universe that Hypatia, an Egyptian of Greek descent, held up to her pupil. As a Neoplatonist, she was worried that he was being distracted by falling in love with matter, that is, herself, rather than the Divine Being of the One. So she dangled a soiled item of personal clothing in front of him. And in doing so, she told him "This is the me that you love"; her point was that earthly beauty is an illusion, that surely this is not the Hypatia the student thought he loved, and yet, just as surely, it is that Hypatia. Hypatia wanted the student to believe that true beauty could only be found in the Divine One, beyond illusory physical things.

If we look at the soiled item as an Aristotelian, and as an empiricist, Hypatia's intent to get us to focus beyond the empirical can lose its force. In affirming yes, this also is the me of who I am *as I know my being in the world*, we can recall a type of information gleaned from experience, that tells us that this is only part of the story. If we shift our cognizing of our metaphysical being to one of accepting animation in the world, then the soiled clothing represents only a part of reality, that which is always becoming. And beauty, as we know, is evaluative, and because it is in the

eye of the beholder, is does not merely hang in the clouds of the sky.

If I cannot understand my relations of experiential being in the world as aesthetic being, and as part of the world, and not merely in the world, then I cannot be with the world in health. Vast amounts of Western philosophical reasoning, when presented to me, however intuitively plausible, may not convince me of anything about the nature of the universe and my being in it. To be, is not to think, but to experience, and experience requires animation. Just as the cosmos, I am always in process. Being in process means that my being is interdependent with other beings of the universe, and in this we remain causally and always connected. Being in process also means that as the universe constantly changes and unfolds in a never ending dance, I am always learning anew about my place in the universe among all my relations. This is American philosophy.

Philosophers of the next millennium, in the Americas, will continue to recognize a diversity of human experience as many humans encounter disappointment with the power of deductive reason employed out of context. And because human experiences carry a framework of a world schematic, we may expect to encounter differing expressions of ontologies and metaphysics of knowing about existence. Whether this would lead us to less depressing, anxious, stressful lives however, is not only a philosophical question, but a psychological one as well.

If all consciousness, as Husserl says, is consciousness “of” something, then our experiential consciousness is consciousness of “what is” and “what is not” even when “what is” or “what is not” is illusion for us. Space, for instance, in the experience of bracketing our notions of north, south, east, west, up and down, here and there, is with us, simply as an immediate presence. Experiencing immediacy of space, and also time, may be a uniquely individual adventure: A particular human person will experience the immediacy of time as that particular person, whereas some other particular person will experience the immediacy of time differently; similarly for experiencing a sense of self or other, or for particular experiences of perception, feeling, hearing, smelling, touching, understanding, etc. In this way, certain experiences that might otherwise be presumed as universal become unique to each individual when experienced *by* that individual, and experienced *as* that individual experiences the event; thus the infinite beauty of diversity. and also, the diversity of having consciousness of something.

Conclusion

I return to the original questions of this paper: “Whether it is possible to broaden the scope of American philosophy to include an understanding of traditional indigenous, or tribal, knowledge?” and, “Whether such knowledge might complement or challenge, that of the American scientific community?” The popularity of American science rests in its successful ability to predict, and control; science enables experimental control within a systematic predictable universe of natural laws. But whether what passes as natural law is correlative to what happens in the universe remains a mystery. It is possible that Indigenous science, with its ever open ambiance toward the window of anomaly and shifting causality, may enable Western science to rethink some of its fundamental ontological principles. Whether this can be

done without a different metaphysics demanding a correlative different value system, remains for discussion.

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Endnotes

1. Personal Correspondence and discussion fall 1998.
2. Works of Emerson and Thoreau helped to build the field of philosophical literature.
3. Dewey, influenced by Darwinian naturalism, understood consciousness to be a part of nature, rather than a faculty separate from the natural. Thus, reason, as behavior, is an evolutionary phenomenon, having developed from mere instinct, habit, and the need for creatively resolving situations.
4. The [European] need to survive in an unfamiliar [American] environment where common religious assumptions of ontology and determinism gave way to new experiences, framed by the discovery of alternative ways of being and belief systems.
5. Value assumptions of recent critique of game theories are most notable.
6. See Jace Weaver, *That The People Might Live*, 1998, and Robert Warrior *Tribal Secrets*.
7. Mass demands of St. John’s Wart for depression; rising demands for quantities of Ginkgo Balboa for memory retention; steady sales of Echinacia for immune system build up, and the biggest secret of all, the stress tablets and B vitamins that have become a popular item among young people.
8. By the notion of a “traditional” philosopher I mean non-academic healers and caretakers.
9. Recall Jim Jones community of suicide made up of individuals who had lost any “meaning” to life; and the subsequent failed philosophical attempts overcoming difficulties of distinguishing psychological programming from reprogramming efforts.
10. Although there was a surge of American Indian academics at the turn of the century, i.e. authors such as Cornelius Kellogg and Charles Eastman, in many ways their works echo the values and perspectives of EuroAmerican thought, as distinct from tribal traditions.

ARTICLES

What is Philosophy?

V. F. Cordova

Around 500 B.C. various ancient Greek thinkers made a decision to look beyond the stories of gods and goddesses as sources of natural phenomena. They sought to find natural explanations for their world and their experience of it. These thinkers are known to us today as the “Pre-Socratics.” Socrates, himself, was not particularly interested in questions dealing with metaphysics or cosmology, his concern was with the clarification of the concepts we used to explain our everyday actions. The unexamined life, he decided, was not worth living. What was it, he asked, that we called “justice,” or “good”?

Philosophy, as it has been framed by the Greeks, has been divided into several major areas. One can study metaphysics—make theoretical claims about what the world

might be; or ontology—about what it means “to be”. The study may be concerned with cosmology, this was the major concern of the Pre-Socratics: what is the world, of what is it composed?

An attendant question arises from these fields: epistemology—how do we know that we know? Logic comes into play when we consider the validity of our use of language to portray the world and our relations to it. Ethics is an exploration of the basis upon which we make claims about right and wrong, moral and immoral. Aesthetics is an examination of the beautiful and harmonious and how we make judgments about such topics.

Philosophy, after the Greeks, and in the hands of the early Church fathers, became *theology*—a systematic attempt to explain the being and characteristics of a specific god. It also dissolved into *apologetics*—a system of arguing for the particular actions toward the god, and the Church, which lay claim to be the final arbiter of suitable topics concerning the god, belief, and practices.

With the rise of scientific thinking, an experiential exploration of the world based on observation which could be corroborated by others—without recourse to religious approval—there is a split made between philosophy and religion. Philosophy recovers its original goal of offering non-religious explanations for beliefs about the world, man, and the role of man in that world.

Socrates is the role model for philosophers. His questioning of people claiming to have “knowledge” and his attempt to force people to understand the ramifications and implications of their stated beliefs led to charges filed against him of atheism and corruption of the youth of Athens. He was sentenced to death. He was offered an alternative by his accusers: he could stop his questioning. Life, however, for Socrates, without the ability to question was not worth living. He drank the hemlock.

He also rejected the alternative offered by his many friends: flee Athens.

Socrates saw himself as an Athenian; he saw himself as performing a much needed service to his community; he did not see his actions as detrimental to his community. Athens, in his view, needed Socrates. When the need was no longer perceived, death was preferable to flight or silence. Socrates, being a true philosopher, offered no “answers” to the questions he posed; he was not a metaphysician, nor a cosmologist, and not even an ethicist. He saw himself as a “gadfly,” one of those pesky flies that nibble at resting horses and spur them into action. Athens was slipping into somnolence; Socrates performed the service of waking and spurring Athenians to rise out of dogmatic slogans, unquestioned givens—the unexamined life.

I once heard a philosopher claim that there was no such thing as “Native American Philosophy.” As I rose to argue with him he proceeded to tell us what philosophy was. He gave an explanation similar to that which I have just given. What passed as “Native American Philosophy” was in actuality merely a compilation of myths; a presentation of various practices; and a description of various ideas (“they believe...”)—offered without question, without analysis. The various discourses on Native American beliefs consisted of *ethnographies* and were often presented with explanations derived from a context which originated from outside the context of Native American thought, culture, and language.

Formal training in the discipline of philosophy produces a philosopher. As a philosopher one becomes adept at turning the “philosophical gaze” upon any topic. One may choose to examine, as a philosopher, Chinese thought, Western thought, or Native American thought. As a philosopher one should be knowledgeable enough about one’s own conceptual framework to be able to see the framework of “the other” without imposing one’s own. This is a most difficult task; the philosopher Heidegger points to this difficulty when he talks about our embeddedness in a specific framework. “We cannot,” he says, “jump over our own shadow.” As philosophers, however, that is exactly what we try to do. My “shadow” may serve as the ground upon which my sense of reality resides but it need not color the other grounds to which I am exposed—if I am aware of my shadow—as a shadow. A “shadow” among “shadows.”

The linguist Benjamin Whorf depicted distinct cultural groups as held together through shared world views which were reflected in language. A world view consisted of observations about the world, the universe, human beings, that were drawn from one’s specific circumstances. The cosmos, as well as the planet we inhabit, is a vast and diverse place. When we attempt to describe these we may look at only one aspect of the whole; we then tend to take that aspect as illustrative of the whole. We “segment” the universe, says Whorf, and we do this through language. We do it also through beliefs and practices.

The value of Whorf’s research into language is that he opens us to the awareness of how diverse descriptions of the world may come to be. We are, in effect, like the proverbial blind men examining the elephant. Each examines the part of the elephant that he is exposed to and each offers a different description. Each also tends to ascribe his own experience to the whole. None of the descriptions are “wrong”, but, on the other hand, none of them are complete.

Native American thought, languages, and cultures offer one more description of the world to be added to other descriptions. An understanding of many descriptions may offer us an insight into the whole. To date, and because there is little philosophical analysis of Native American concepts and ideas, Native American thought is portrayed as merely a variation of a general theme. Most specifically Native American Thought is portrayed as an illustration of archaic and anachronistic thought patterns that were “typical” in the “earlier stages” of “modern” contemporary Europeans. Native American Thought, in this sense, is portrayed as something that “modern” peoples have “lost”. Or “outgrown.” Such thought is not equally valid to the descriptive views of the “moderns”—it is erroneous, mythological, poetic, even “spiritual”—but never a valid or viable description of things-as-they-are.

Native America has produced ethnographers, anthropologists, poets, writers, religious notions—it has yet to produce its own philosophers. A major obstacle to such creation is a misunderstanding about what ‘philosophy’ is. It is not a compiling of legends and stories; it is not an expression of our beliefs or practices; and it is certainly not a description of what we do and how we do it.

‘Philosophy,’ in common parlance, has come to signify personal opinion concerning our self and our world. “My philosophy about that is...,” is commonly heard. What one is actually saying when one says this is, “my *opinion* or *belief*

about that is...". When we speak of "the philosophy" of Kant or Hume we are speaking of a well-thought out body of concepts and ideas which come with arguments offering the means they have pursued in arriving at their views. When we offer a *belief* or an *opinion* we do not validate these with arguments demonstrating how we arrived at those beliefs and opinions. We simply state them. That is not 'philosophy.'

We may speak, also, of "the philosophy" of a certain group, as in "Chinese Philosophy," in doing so we are speaking of a body of concepts and ideas that are shared broadly throughout the Chinese culture. These concepts and ideas have a direct influence on present cultural practices and are distinctively different enough from those influences upon other cultures to be singled out as "Chinese."

I argue that there are sufficient concepts and ideas shared among North American indigenous groups to qualify speaking of "Native American Thought." There are few of us who do not believe that we exist in a world of interrelatedness and interdependencies. The idea of the Earth as "mother" is a commonly held notion. The concept of a non-anthropomorphic "force" that suffuses the universe is well-known to most native North Americans. The idea that our identities are derived from our group is shared among us. The idea of a diversity of "equal" life forms provides a ground for tolerance of the many diverse beliefs held among ourselves—how often, for example, do we hear people arguing over which tribe has the "correct" view of the world? We assume that our "creation" or "emergence" accounts are specific to a tribe and not some universal explanation.

There are hazards attendant upon practicing the philosophical endeavor in a Native American context. Native Americans are no different than Athenians: questions are perceived as threatening to the status quo. Example: Inquiries about the "force" that underlies and sustains all things are seen as *demeaning* "creation" accounts. So many of us have been indoctrinated with Christian notions of "God" that it is not unusual to see prayers offered up to "the Creator" as though it is something akin to the "heavenly father" of Christianity. "It" has a location of residence; "it" requires a certain humbled approach; I expect, most times, to hear an "amen" closing off the prayers of entreaty to this "Creator." My question, as a philosopher, is, "if we truly shared a concept of a monotheistic, anthropomorphic god with the Christians, why did they see our religious practices as instances of 'devil worship'?" Why would our religious views have seemed such a threat to Euro-Christians if they were essentially "the same thing" as that being practiced and adhered to by the Euro-Christian?

Many of the images that we have acquired about ourselves derive from European sources. The prevalent idea of ourselves as "spiritual" people has become popular only since the rise of interest in our practices on the part of disenchanted Euro-Christians. The fact that our cultures survived due to very pragmatic approaches to distinct and various environments elicits no equal interest on the part of "indians" nor Euro-Christians. To see indigenous Americans as pragmatic observers of their world would be to admit the validity of their ways—to admit that there are alternative ways of living on the Earth. Native American Thought and world views would be seen as competitive with those held by Euro-Christians.

There is a need for Native American philosophers as well as scientists, social workers, medical personnel, and all the other experts with knowledge upon which societies depend. The dominant Euro-Christian nation in which we have been cast by circumstance has accepted us as "living fossils," as persons with a direct pipeline to spiritual dimensions, as poets and writers pouring out in the most eloquent of phrases our *dis-ease* in having to survive in a nation not of our making.

What has not been allowed is the development of an intellectual class. This is partly due to our forced participation in an educational system geared to creating "Americans." We have not had the luxury of allowing our children to develop as *indigenous* intellectuals. We have not had, either, the *confidence* of our own ways of being to allow deep analysis and questioning. We have not *examined* who and what we are, what and why we believe—and most specifically, why we deserve to be allowed at the table of contemporary human philosophical discourse. When we can discuss, with anyone, Native American metaphysics, cosmology, epistemology, logic, ethics, and aesthetics, then we should demand a place at the table.

As long as we address only our beliefs, our immediate concerns, our "stories," our practices, our woes, we will be welcome only in courts of law, or specialized journals. We will be welcomed as "case histories." We will provide fodder for all sorts of experts. We will not provide someone who can speak with any authoritative voice about *who* we are and *why* we are not *them*. Only the latter is *Philosophy*.

A Consideration of the Use of Indian Sports Team Mascots

Dr. Thomas Norton-Smith

I would like to share some thoughts with you about the use of American Indian sports team mascots. I have been interested in this issue for about twenty years, ever since I first enrolled in the philosophy department at the University of Illinois in 1981. You may know that Illinois has the mascot "Chief Illiniwek," who has performed a spirited dance at halftimes since 1926. Northeast Ohio—where I currently teach—has its own ubiquitous Indian mascot: Chief Wahoo, a relative youngster, has represented the Cleveland Indians since 1948.

My interest in the issue of Indian mascots evolved into concern with the evolving understanding of my Shawnee ancestry. I discovered that I had a stake in the debate over the propriety of using Indians as sports team mascots, and I've concluded that it's wrong to do so.

Now, allegiance to a team mascot comes more from the heart than the head. Unfortunately, good arguments target the head, so my goal cannot be "changing the heart" of those who support the use of Indian mascots. For such people, my more modest goal must be "changing your mind." Failing that, at least your head will know what all of the fuss is about.

I've already disclosed one important bias, that I'm ¼ Indian. But now I'm forced to disclose another: I happen to be an ethical realist, which means that I believe that moral statements and values are not mere matters of opinion. So, a response like, "It's just your opinion. Get over it!" will be an insufficient rebuttal to an argument establishing that it is wrong to use Indians as sports team mascots. (By the way,

there is no more crass and uncivil way of responding to someone's argument than "Get over it!" for it both dismisses the argument and insults the arguer.)

I want to present three arguments in support of the proposition that it is wrong to use Indians as sports team mascots. In order they are the "stereotype," "caricature," and "impiety" arguments. My intention is to be as brief as possible without rushing, for I want there to be ample time for discussion.

I. The Stereotype Argument

Stereotyping a group—racial or otherwise—is not inherently wrong; indeed, some stereotypes are innocent, perhaps even humorous—the bespectacled, absent-minded professor in the tattered, corduroy jacket comes to mind. However, if a stereotype comes to dominate our conception of a group, then the stereotype does undeserved harm to its members. This is obvious in the case of negative stereotypes, e.g., dumb blondes and greedy Jews, but it may not be so obvious in the case of more "positive" stereotypes e.g., athletic Blacks and smart Asians. For the dominating positive stereotype becomes a cognitive shortcut, the little bit of inside information that we think we know about group members. Before I've even met Joe—an African-American—I want him on my ball team, and I know *a priori* that Ling-li—an Asian-American—is the person who blew the curve on the calculus test. But from this "inside information" comes the unfair expectation or misperception we often place on or have of others. And insofar as that expectation is unfair, it does undeserved harm.

Now, any practice that does undeserved harm to people is wrong. If the use of Indian mascots is a practice that either affirms a negative stereotype, or affirms a dominating positive stereotype of Indian people, then it does undeserved harm. Therefore, the use of Indian mascots is wrong. I have only to establish that the use of Indian mascots either affirms a negative or a dominating positive stereotype of Indian people.

Citing Ray Franks' 1982 study, David Rider lists the top ten college nicknames in order of popularity:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Eagles | 6. Lions |
| 2. Tigers | 7. Panthers |
| 3. Cougars | 8. Indians |
| 4. Bulldogs | 9. Wildcats |
| 5. Warriors | 10. Bears |

The striking thing about the list is that, with the exception of "bulldogs," all of the animals are predators that "conjure up images that evoke fear and loathing"—exactly what one wants when facing an opponent on the field. Likewise, "Warriors" and "Indians," while not naming predatory animals, are intended to evoke the same feelings, as if Indians were predators! And if the category "Indian" had included all of the teams named for individual tribes or using generic nicknames—Fighting Illini, Seminoles, Redskins, Braves—then "their number would exceed that of its nearest rival by a considerable margin."¹ Thus, the use of some Indian mascots affirms a negative stereotype, the *savage Indian*.

Interestingly enough, some who support the use of Indian mascots justify the practice by appealing to the opposite, positive stereotype—the *noble Indian*. (If you're thinking to yourself "noble savage," then you're right on target!) Indeed, this is exactly the principal argument used to justify Illiniwek. "Rather than demean American Indians," the argument goes,

"the Chief honors them—and the University of Illinois—by embodying dignity, power, pride, spirit, and especially *tradition*. After all, Illiniwek's been dancing for 75 years, even doing his dance at halftime when, according to Carol Spindel, *it was illegal for the real Indians to do their dances*."² Even if true, Illiniwek affirms the *noble savage*, the dominating "positive" stereotype of Indian people. Commenting about the Chief Illiniwek debate on campus, the *Detroit Free Press* says it well: "...[not] every American Indian should...be viewed as a proud, brave, noble, dancing and whooping plainsman. Doing so perpetuates fallacies and fosters [in]accurate perceptions of cultural minorities."³ So we have, then, that the use of Indian sports team mascots is a practice that either affirms a negative stereotype, or affirms a dominating positive stereotype of Indian people, so it is wrong. Note, importantly, that this is an argument about stereotyping groups of people who actually exist. It will not suffice to establish that the use of Vikings as mascots is wrong. And to the extent that pirates, raiders and buccaneers are still with us, perhaps the harm is deserved!

As an aside, I've always found curious the justification that a mascot like Illiniwek "honors" Indian warriors—who spiritedly fought a losing battle with dignity—especially when Indians object to their use. "We're going to honor you," asserts Illinois, "whether you like it or not!" But imagine fictional Big-10 school Midwest University choosing to honor Vietnam veterans—who also fought a losing battle with dignity—by adopting "Private Zippo," portrayed by a jungle-uniformed, M-16 toting, black-camouflaged-faced college freshman performing heroic mock military assaults at halftime. It strikes me that veterans wouldn't and shouldn't be particularly "honored" by Zippo—and you can bet that Midwest U. wouldn't insist on keeping him despite veterans' objections.

II. The Caricature Argument

According to the "caricature argument," the use of a team mascot like Wahoo is wrong, because its ridiculous exaggeration of the characteristics of Indian people is demeaning and offensive. But we have come to realize—in the case of virtually every other ethnic group *except* Indians—that the use of these kinds of demeaning and offensive racial caricatures is wrong. But Americans seem to have a moral "blind spot" when it comes to Indians. Indeed, we wouldn't think of using caricatures of other ethnic groups in like fashion. I'll prove it to you here, but I must apologize in advance for the offense.

One more interesting observation before we move on to the final argument. Some of you may remember the controversy not so long ago when the "transplanted"—some say, "stolen"—Akron minor league baseball team was trying to find a team name. Do you recall how quickly the management back-peddled from the name, "the Akron Blast," for fear that it might offend the memory of Judy Resnik, who died in the Challenger explosion? It seems that in some cases being offended *does* matter in the selection of sports team names and mascots. When? "Why, when *we're* offended!" the white community says.

III. The Impiety Argument

I find this final argument—the "impiety" argument—to be the most compelling. But first, a story: I recently attended an American Philosophical Association conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. While there, I visited the

Petroglyph National Monument. The trail I followed was lined with about 600 totems—drawings of turtles, rattlesnakes, thunderbirds, and the like—carved into the basalt stones by the ancient ancestors of the Pueblo people. Indeed, the Pueblo people today regard it as a holy place. And while walking along in this ancient, sacred place, I came across a prominent stone that read, “M. L. Thorpe, Feb. 22, 1919.”

Now, Thorpe probably saw a bluff filled with pictures carved in stone and was moved to add his or her own carving, innocently imitating the ancient carvers using English symbols. *Once more, my guess is that Thorpe probably did not understand the religious significance of this holy place.* And that’s the point: an action can be done in ignorance and still be an irreligious act! Just like someone’s innocent name carving in a Christian church alter, Thorpe had no intention of acting impiously—but his name carving was impious nonetheless.

I am certain that most—if not all—people who support the use of Illiniwek, Wahoo, and other Indian team mascots do not intend to offend, let alone act irreligiously. But non-natives are often surprised to learn that ritual dances, feather war bonnets, paint and similar native trappings have a deep religious significance in Indian traditions. Sports teams and their fans may adopt them being wholly unaware of that significance—but like Thorpe’s innocent name carving in the Pueblo holy place, such a use is still impious.

To make the point more salient, Spokane Indian Sherman Alexie asks us to imagine the cassock-bedecked mascot for the sports team “the Priests,” whose sideline antics include tossing communion wafers into the crowd and engaging in a holy water fight with the opposing team’s mascot. Of course, this would never happen—nor should it ever happen. Why, I ask, are American Indian sacred traditions any less deserving of respect?

Here, then, is the “impiety” argument: Any impious practice is wrong, and the use of some Indian mascots is an impious practice, so use of some Indian mascots is wrong.

This concludes my formal remarks—your turn. Nyaawe.

Endnotes

1. David Rider. “Indians” and Animals: A Comparative Essay. http://members.tripod.com/earneman/david_rider_essay.htm. David Rider is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Xavier University.
2. Carol Spindel. (2000) *Dancing at Halftime: Sports and the Controversy over American Indian Mascots*. New York University Press.
3. *Detroit Free Press* (October 18, 2000). Website: http://www.freep.com/news/statewire/sw21671_20001018.htm.

Duty to the Dying

Steve Russell

In 1978, Doug Stankewitz, an Indian of Mono and Cherokee blood and from the Mono community in California, was involved in a homicide. It is doubtful that a cautious person will ever know precisely what his involvement was, because, as is so often true in death cases, the person most likely to know testified for the government to save himself.

There is a sense in which it does not matter. The very best light in which the facts could possibly be seen show Stankewitz to be a damaged human being, somebody you would not want to meet on a dark street, particularly if you were carrying something he might want.

The best you can say for the homicide, other than his exact involvement is not knowable, is that it was quick. An innocent woman was shot through the back of the head without warning and never knew what hit her. She had done nothing wrong beyond being in possession of a car at a time when Stankewitz and his drug-addled friends needed a ride. So they took hers, and for no apparent reason beyond removing a witness, killed her.

It is fair to say that among all the people who might be lost to us, Doug Stankewitz is among the least consequential. If his victim, or a friend of his victim, had been armed and had blown Stankewitz’ head off, the law should and would take little notice. Another shot Indian. Drugs and alcohol and gunpowder. Homicide cocktail.

However, the state proposes to strap this man to a gurney and poison him, after first explaining to him what is about to happen. In our name. Not in defense, but in revenge. The state is about to destroy any chance to learn how Doug Stankewitz got to be a damaged human being, or how to avoid it in the future.

Why should the state care how he got that way?

To answer, I will put to one side the obvious fact that understanding sociopaths will generally make us safer and killing them will not. I will forego harping on the magnitude by which the death penalty costs more to the taxpayers than life without parole. I will even ignore the inevitability of executing innocent people and admit that even if Stankewitz is not guilty in this case he sure as hell is not innocent.

The generally crazy nature of his crime was followed up by enough bizarre behavior while in custody to raise a question whether he was competent to stand trial. The law requires a hearing on that issue, and one was never held. Stankewitz himself did not want a hearing on his competence, nor did he want the public defender to raise any mental defenses. The judge was responsible for having a hearing on the competence issue, and one was never held.

The California Supreme Court reversed the death sentence and ordered a competency hearing, as well as a hearing on the issue of whether Stankewitz should be allowed to “fire” his public defender. Guess which issue the judge heard first?

The new lawyer is prepared to testify that he was appointed to the case with the understanding that he would have the competence issue tried on the affidavits of head shrinkers with whom Stankewitz had refused to meet and would raise no mental defenses.

The new lawyer called no witnesses at the guilt phase. At the penalty phase, he called several witnesses, including a prosecutor, to testify that anyone can be changed by God. Of course, the witnesses referred to the Christian God, and their testimony, even in the unlikely event that it impressed the jury, was quickly rendered irrelevant by the fact that Stankewitz is an Indian who has not yet been converted to the True Faith as understood by his court-appointed lawyer.

A second death sentence was no great surprise.

But I still have not answered the question: Why should the people care if this guy’s head ever gets properly shrunk? He is obviously dangerous. Why not just kill him and have done with it? California spends a lot of money on social services for children. Obviously not enough, but a lot. The

public has a clear interest in getting some results for what they spend.

Doug Stankewitz, abused at an early age in the custody of parents with criminal records of their own, was a ward of the state from age six, bouncing from one foster home to another. From foster homes, it was on to the California Youth Authority.

Does this excuse what he did? Of course not.

But the victim would be just as alive if California's agencies had done their job as she would be if Doug Stankewitz had summoned enough self-control through his heroin fog to talk his co-defendants (none of whom are on death row) into leaving her in the desert rather than killing her.

The people are no safer with Stankewitz dead if the government is making more sociopaths as quickly as it can kill them. Actually, quickeróhe has been on death row longer than with any other state agency. Nick Arguimbau, the lawyer who is currently in charge of trying to save Doug Stankewitz' life, wrote it this way:

"Petitioner (Stankewitz) is the product of a disastrous social experiment: three decades of uninterrupted mismanagement of his life by state social services and criminal justice bureaucracies, marked by repeated punishment of Petitioner as a child for his attempts to escape from brutality and violence, and by a few short interludes of positive human interaction which came not because of, but rather in spite of, the public mismanagement of his life. The state of California has decided that its experiment has failed, and now wishes to put Petitioner to death without letting a jury of citizens decide who, between him and his caretakers, is more culpable for the failed experiment."

If I could say it better than Arguimbau, I would. We are all dying, some of us more quickly than others. The woman Doug Stankewitz is accused of killing is dead by the action or inaction of Stankewitz and by the action or inaction of the state.

That she may rest in peace is a worthy goal, and some will argue that the spirits of the dead must quench themselves on the blood of the living. Let that be true, our higher duty here is to the dying: that no more children be twisted and gnarled and then judged for not rising above cruelty. After all, why should we expect an abused child to rise above cruelty if the state itself cannot? Learning how to avoid cruelty and, failing that, to rise above it. This is our duty to the dying.

We might, if we believe that history exists within the living, ask if there is some duty imposed by California Indian history, which is among the few Indian histories that can stand beside Texas' for barbarism. Martha E. Ture, freelance writer and research in California, writes of the direct line between California Indian history and the production of Douglas Stankewitz as a danger to society:

"You know that Douglas Stankewitz' maternal grandfather, Sam Jack Sample, was the son of one of the Chuckchansi overridden and burned out by Jim Savage's "Mariposa Battalion." You know that California Governor McDougal promised the state legislature in his first speech that he would have an all-white state, that he would conduct a war of

extermination against the Indians. You know that in 1851 on the heels of statehood California, brought into the Union as a free state, immediately passed laws authorizing, funding, and subsidizing the capture and enslavement of Indians, and paid for bounties on Indian scalps with a million dollars of gold mining tax monies. It was a precursor of Nazi Germany for the Jews.

"Into the Chuckchansi territory right after the invasion, looting, and burning of the Mariposa Battallion, came a man named Sample, who began ranching. He hired Douglas' great-grandfather, as I know the story, and a horse kicked the great-grandpa in the head, killing him. Mr. Sample, it is said, adopted Douglas' grandfather, who was about 7 years old, and raised him. He gave the child the name "Jack Sample." "Jack Sample was raised to be a Christian. He married and had many children, including Douglas' mother Marion. Marion told us that as children, they were forbidden to speak anything but English, and that Chuckchansi ways were discouraged in the house. But as an old man, Jack Sample returned to the traditional Chuckchansi way, and became a Singer in the Roundhouse. It is a fact that he died of a heart attack while singing a ceremony in the Roundhouse one night.

"Marion was an alcoholic adult. She drank through her pregnancy with Douglas, and Douglas was born with fetal alcohol syndrome and suffered brain damage before he was 2 years old. His father was an alcoholic, probably schizophrenic manic-depressive Polish-Cherokee. He was a mean drunk truck driver. He beat Marion while she was pregnant. Douglas never had a chance. He had no control over his life from the git go.

"It was into this situation of cultural, societal, and personal defeat and despair that Douglas was born. His mother and father had no power over their alcoholism, manic-depression, bipolar disorder, or despair. Had they been able to cure or treat their illnesses, they still would have been niggerized by society, which had taken the land and all the resources, and imposed its own order. Hell, to this day Judge Ishii in Fresno County refused to find anything discriminatory or wrong in Hugh Goodwin's Jesus Saves defense.

"Here we have the son of a cantor, if you will, whose attorney puts on a defense as mythological, superstitious and biased as the Spanish Inquisition or Cotton Mather's witch hunts — if you believe in Jesus, you will be Saved. Douglas, however, showed no interest in being Saved. Therefore, he would not be saved, or Saved. "Now you take Douglas. First time he gets taken away from home and institutionalized is when he's six years old. A sweet kid by all accounts, just hungry all the time, as were they all - and you tell him he's going where he'll have a good, a proper, life, according to the white folks' rules, because he has to be protected from his drunken mother, who did in fact beat him half to death. And

in the entire rest of his life, he gets the meanest, least competent, most lewd, obscene, molesting, authoritarian, pederast, sadistic, self-serving, venal, stupid, low-brow, uncultured part of white society.

“He does not get civilization. He gets raped, buttfucked, beaten, lied to, cheated, and left to rot mentally. He does not get Bach, Beethoven or Buddha, he does not get Einstein, Science Magazine, Picasso, philosophy, logic, the classics. He does not get the most rudimentary developmental encouragement, he gets fed the worst sort of slop, without nutritional value. He’s given the dregs of American food, culture, thought, education, health care, and society, and those dregs are pretty despicable.

“And now you ask this man to be responsible to this society, and to know all the rules, and the reasons for proper behavior? How? With what knowledge, skills or ability? With what equipment or training?”

I wrote an amicus brief for TIBA arguing that Stankewitz should have an evidentiary hearing on his writ of habeas corpus filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California. I took the somewhat novel position that the Indian trust doctrine commands federal review of state criminal proceedings alleged to be discriminatory against Indians.

On June 1, 2001, the District Court, Judge Anthony W. Ishii presiding, denied leave to file. The Court reasoned that he was disposing of the merits of Stankewitz’s claims without a hearing and therefore stating another ground for review would add little but pages to a record the court believed already too voluminous. After all, how many pages does it take to justify killing another Indian?

TIBA will have to decide whether to participate in the Ninth Circuit appeal complaining of the denial of an evidentiary hearing.

Note from the Teaching Underground

John Dufour

(*This brief note is not oriented toward teachers in tribal colleges or toward teachers who have the chance to teach whole courses devoted to Native Philosophy.*) Given an irregular presence of Native American philosophical ideas in most Philosophy anthologies, I thought it could be useful if I briefly indicated how I have brought such ideas into several of my lower level Philosophy classes: the first-year Introductory Philosophy course and an Introductory Philosophy of Religion course.

What I have done may be appropriate only for those teachers who teach in similar situations as I. Maybe not. However, I can only speak from own personal teaching experiences, so let me briefly describe my situation. The schools I teach at are metropolitan community-college-like. (They are not tribal schools.) I teach part-time and there is not much of any institutional support, loyalty, or connection. (The working situation is similar to being a temporary laborer.) My students are, more often than not, working full time and typically have children. (Single parents are not unusual.) Usually, but not most of, the students lack academic self-

esteem (e.g., they have been out of school for many years, or they had sorrowful and regretful previous schooling) and experience. Consequently, my teaching concerns, by and large, focus on stimulating motivation to learn about Philosophy and to philosophize, and, primarily, to instill the *fascination* (really, I hope to *stun* them with it) that certain philosophical issues create. (Perhaps my concerns are widely shared by possible readers of this Newsletter, but I suspect that my working situation is not. Hence the title of this article.)

What I have done is invite to class a Native person who has experience with his/her own tribal Philosophy. For instance, Milton Chee (Navajo) and William Brave Bull (Lakota/Dakota) have visited my classes. Since my Introductory Philosophy classes are organized around themes and issues, Mr. Chee, for instance, focused on Navajo epistemology, as he understands it. The class had read one article on Navajo Philosophy, but clearly the most vivid way of learning for my students turned out to be in discussion with Mr. Chee. Throughout his talk students engaged in a lively inquiry with him on the concepts. On one level it was an interesting philosophical inquiry into a clarification of some fundamental concepts. Again, I need hardly add that promotion of intercultural understanding at a fundamental level was in itself a rewarding learning experience for my students. Pedagogically, going beyond the texts lessened the dryness some students typically perceive Philosophy classes to have.

I saw similar results when Mr. Brave Bull spoke on some aspects of Lakota philosophy to my Introduction to Philosophy of Religion class. Since I find that students like *some* reading material on unfamiliar topics, and the Aglobal@ Philosophy of Religion text for the class had no Native representation, a few supplementary articles were necessary. Then during class Mr. Brave Bull focused on some central concepts of Lakota Philosophy. After he spoke the class engaged in discussion. I need hardly add that a visiting speaker adds vividly to the learning experience.

My overall impression is that my students have been enriched in ways current philosophical texts cannot reach. Although I have had some Native students in my classes, e.g., Navajo, Hopi, Jicarilla and Mescalero Apache, Yaqui, San Juan, Santa Ana, Laguna, Acoma and so on, by far most of my students know nothing or extremely little about Indigenous philosophical ideas. Nevertheless, there is a curiosity there (due in part, probably, to the perceptible Native influences on the city where I teach).

As far as I know, it is still true this year (2001) that philosophical texts for lower level students (first and second year classes) contain little, if any, indigenous philosophical content. I have found that inviting Native guest speakers interested in philosophical reflections has had positive and beneficial educational effects on my students. (Not to mention the change of pace in their classroom lives.) They are forced to grapple with concepts unfamiliar to them, their minds are culturally broadened, and they engage in an inquiry of philosophical clarification. I think this offers them another, and unique, opportunity to engage in the activity of philosophizing. That is something all Philosophy teachers hope to ignite an interest in, if not an enthusiasm.

Whatever your paradigm for Philosophy is, at least when it comes to *teaching* or *presenting* philosophical thoughts in a classroom, the chance to conversationally engage across

conceptual borders is a fantastic learning opportunity for students.

(It may be difficult in some areas of the U.S. to locate willing and able Native guest speakers who are close by. My suggestion is to try to obtain travel funds for class visitors. Perhaps a list of willing and able speakers could be made and published in a future issue of this Newsletter.)

BOOK REVIEW

Tribal Epistemologies: Essays in the Philosophy of Anthropology

Edited by Helmut Wautischer

Reviewed by Anne Waters, J.D., Ph.D.

“Cowlitz is a consciousness of people, place, and cosmos that embraces the notion of eternal changeability.” — Rudolph C. Ryser

What is it that perennially leads to questions about our humanly situated place in the cosmos? Perhaps it is as Rudolph C. Ryser comments in an article “Observations On ‘Self’ and ‘Knowing’”, in a new book titled *Tribal Epistemology: Essays in the Philosophy of Anthropology*, edited by Helmut Wautischer: “Like all people, humans have the capacity to learn; but humans have a greater need to learn owing to their relative youth, inexperience, and lack of knowledge. It is because of this serious limitation that humans have needed a brain that allows them to learn more things (28).” This idea complements Wautischer’s view in his introductory article, “Pathways to Knowledge,” “...consciousness is but a tool through which power symbols are recognized and managed (3).”

These explanations, of why and how human consciousness learns, via a need to know and the use of consciousness’ tools, may suggest why postmodernism embraces multiple standpoint truth claims. A reasoning process, via tools of consciousness, closes the dual chasms of what appear to modern science as a tripartite dual gap structure. What is the relationship between the brain’s consciousness and culture? And what is the relationship between culture and physical reality? I suspect the investigation of consciousness must theorize these relationships, while at the same time, assuming them! The assumptions about consciousness, culture, and physical reality, may give rise to apparently disparate truth claims.

What is at issue in this text, one of the first of its kind, is whether the editor’s “participatory” theory of epistemic validation for transformative states of consciousness can survive a narrative approach to exploring conscious experience. The criteria for conscious experience assumed in this text, is having a situated ethnocultural consciousness about related “states” or “moments” of experience, that can be understood by applying crosscultural understandings of the nature of the “self.”

This book presents papers about Indigenist worldviews. From nine nonindigenist scholars, included are four

anthropologists, two philosophers, a sociologist, and a psychologist. Also presented are the work of two indigenist scholars: a specialist in International Relations (Indigenist to Mexico); and a joint paper from two New Zealand biologists (one of Pakeha-European and Maori-Tainui descent). There are no cross-disciplinary projects. As a philosopher of American Indian descent, I found it most interesting to note the different metaphysical frameworks used by Indigenous and nonindigenous authors. Because of this difference, one can glean from the anthology valuable insights about philosophical frameworks in which self-reflective experiential information maintains metaphysical and epistemological cultural boundaries.

The editor divides the book into five parts, and I will follow this method in my discussion.

In the Introduction, “Pathways to Knowledge,” Helmut Wautischer claims that fertile ground “wherein new scientific methodologies might have a chance to blossom” may be found by entertaining disparate truth claims. Wautischer wants to find new methodologies, because he is concerned that reductionism, theorizing human intelligence as no more than the application of deterministic principles, reduces human behavior to merely a function of being governed by neuropharmacologies, rewards, or punishments. In such a reductionist framework, understanding a sentient being’s non disposition to act in a certain predictable manner, therefore, can be looked upon as no more than a form of pathology, which, for Wautischer, and myself included, would be an undesirable consequence.

Reductionism has not been the method employed by these several authors’ searches to understand aspects of consciousness. They all seem to share an assumption that notions of “intentionality and introspection” do not easily give way to traditional scientific methods without objectifying epistemic phenomena into a subject—object dichotomy. My take on this reservation to objectification is that these authors view the process of consciousness as tied so intimately with life, that neither consciousness nor life can be separated from the other, without losing the lived consciousness that defines life.

Twentieth century postmodern philosophers understand consciousness to require a living consciousness of something. A living human consciousness may be a consciousness that is simultaneously both a personal and a collective consciousness, as delicately tied together as consciousness and life. To grasp this relationship, we can use the metaphor of a spinning sphere wherein each part actively composes the other; another example might be the chemicals of water, hydrogen and oxygen, neither of which, by itself, can produce water (H₂O).

Drawing out the analysis of consciousness of self and community as intimately bound together, it is easy to see how this notion of consciousness merges, with the experience of what many Indigenist people call the living universe (cosmos), or “people.”

Part Two, titled “Methodological Conundrums,” presents Rudolph C. Ryser’s, “Observations on ‘Self’ and ‘Knowing’,” which is perhaps appropriately referred to as the “leading article” to the remaining papers. This is because when introducing the Cowlitz people he refers to a submerged consciousness as a “consciousness of people, place, and cosmos that embraces the notion of eternal changeability. . .

born of countless generations of interaction among individuals, their extended families (which includes other animals, plants, water sources, stones, mountains, the Moon, the Sun, the stars, and prairies), and revered ancestors (17).” Able to understand the nature of the Cowlitz awareness of consciousness, Ryser lays out a terrain of ontological relationships: the source of all knowing is found in living contradicting capacities of self, both as manifesting “interdependence and simultaneous capacity for independence (18).” Rysers explains this being in the world by using the metaphor of a river’s waters for the collective self, and the fractional quantity of water “as representation for the ‘personal self (18).’”

After explaining the tremendous ontological importance of “place” in Cowlitz ontology, Ryser explains the metaphysical terrain of Cowlitz people, first by noting that individual personality is distinguishable from the collective self by physical separateness, which is essentially an illusion. Cowlitz know only in knowing relationships as discerned by the self. “The Cowlitz who lives rightly knows that the superficial differences among the people give meaning only to relational concepts (at 18).” A fractional part of a river’s water (representing personal self), has meaning only by being in relationship to the whole of water; and only the totality of water (metaphor for collective self) has meaning. The fractional part of water in relation to the whole of water, is merely an attribute to “permit adjustment to change.” (Ryser also uses the metaphor of a water filled cup: the water has the attribute of a cup shape, but only to adjust to change.)

Ryser further explains Cowlitz metaphysics by noting that one can experience either a sense of disconnectedness and vulnerability, or connectedness of a unified submersion. “Mowich” (deer people) also experience both the singular and unified sense of submersion; they travel collectively, can pretend to be a lone, but are at once itself and all other things. As a part of the collective consciousness Mowich experiences a calm serenity—any awareness of change is experienced as a shared consciousness of tension. Mowich can choose a time to separate from the permanent and perpetual state of collective consciousness, to experience a temporary and fleeting moment, to expose an instance of separation, perhaps to a spirit, thus, for example, choosing a time to give its life to a hunter. This giving becomes a manifestation of both independence of separational choice, and interdependence with consciousness of all other “people,” in this case, especially with the spirit and the hunter.

Central to Ryser’s epistemology of knowing are five ways, or methods, of thought ; he likens these to “braided rivers of knowing.” Time, space, and place animate a great consciousness in the universe; and human beings experience different streams of thought that flow into “a single river of thought that offers ways of knowing.” These five ways are Cyclicism (Eastern Mediterranean to 18th Century), Cuarto Spiralism (Western Hemisphere), Fatalism (Asia), Providentialism (Christendom), and Progressivism (Western-Modern-Industrialized). Each of these ways is associated with particular cultures; each reflects the diversity and similarity of human cultures over time; and each records human experience. For Ryser, these different ways of knowing can be understood as different streams of a great river of thought that offers different ways of knowing. It is only progressivism, the alleged objective, and most recently

developed way of knowing, that places human beings in a dominant role, controlling the destiny of earth. Ryser holds that to embrace cultural relativity with respect to epistemology, is to recognize that the differing modes of thought contain truths about ultimate consciousness.

The second paper in this section, “Individuality in a Relational Culture: A Comparative Study,” is by Hoyt L. Edge, a postmodern philosopher. Edge distinguishes between a traditional Western view of the self, as atomistic, and relational concepts of the self found in Balinese and Australian Aboriginal cultures. Whereas the former atomistic self, in valuing sameness, searches for selves of commonality (and deviations are suspect), the latter relational self, in valuing autonomy, seeks out difference (unique perspective). In the Western model, autonomy is present, but as a given of human nature. Contrasting this, aboriginal notions of autonomy are developed via relationships with others, and one grows into autonomy by developing relationships unique to that person’s perspective. By juxtaposing different relational cultural concepts of the self, Edge concludes that differences, of language, customs, beliefs, and race seem “. . .to bring the sense of community into question” (38); but that the relational model of self suggests that “we can form a robust notion of community based on difference and individuality (38). Moreover, as our communities become more multicultural individuality and difference may become the norm, thus shifting the Western notion of the self to a relational notion.

Part Three, “Ethnographic Assessment of Knowledge” presents two good articles about how one comes to “know” one’s place in the cosmos. The first, “Understanding Maori Epistemology: A Scientific Perspective,” by Roma Mere Roberts and Peter R. Wills, attempts to represent the nature and function of an indigenous knowledge system (of Aotearoa/New Zealand), on an equal playing field with academic inquiry into an epistemology of science. Central to their work is the claim that “to know” something is to locate it in space and time. This is precisely what American Indians have been saying for many years, that identity is relative to an ancestral homeland of origin, that reference to place establishes one’s personal identity, and that knowledge of place is knowledge of a line of historical and cosmological entry into the world.

Roberts and Wills point out that in a world where everything is relationally connected, animate (and inanimate), a framework of locating one’s place in the world requires both a cosmogonic and anthropogonic template. This framework begins with divine power, or energy, rather than the western notion of an inherent principle of mechanics or a random event. This spiritual breath, or life force, precedes shape, form, space, and time. This kind of knowledge, as sacred knowledge, belongs to a group, though individuals pass it on to particular members from generation to generation. This knowledge is passed on via oral narrative, mnemonic devices such as poetry, place names, song, oratory, metaphors, recitation and visual cues, including visible acts of carving knowledge into wood, as rafters, walls, etc. Moral tenets, causal explanations, tribal history, and extratribal relationships, are but a few of the types of information that can be transferred with narrative, using multiple interpretations, so that knowledge of the “status” of the listener would also be required in order to decipher their meaning.

In a narrative, the process of speaking names, for example names of mountains, is to make manifest the tribe. Indeed, mountains and rivers cannot be externalized, objectified, nor made separate from oneself, which is a manifestation of one's people. Similarly, to say "I am Anishnabe" in the Americas, is to identify place, being, group, and relationships in the world. This type of genealogy as a repository of knowledge allows members to interpret current events in the context of an ontology encompassing biological, social, and cultural order over millennia. Hence, rather than living in a teleological universe, where one interprets present action as directed toward a future goal (usually termed 'progress'), an Indigenist context brings knowledge of the past to the present by invoking ancestors, and ancestral knowledge of all relations. In this way, generations can be guided by ancestral knowledge of values providing moral and value guidelines. Also, because all things are related, what a generation did in the past is directly linked to what generations do in the present. And finally what generations do in the future will be informed by what the current generation does now. Thus, continuity of past, place, relations, and identity maintain a moral accountability to future generations. The authors would like to bridge this type subjective interpretation of experience to mechanistic notions of contemporary science, thus bringing together humanity and the world, or ethics and science. A proposal of this nature will be strongly rejected by a scientific worldview claiming that scientific methodologies are value free, as are the scientists doing science!

The second article in **Part Three**, "Preconquest Consciousness," is by E. Richard Sorenson. This article is a clear example of why many Indigenous People reject anthropologists. Even if there is some semblance of truth to the affectively experiential moments of "erocentric rapport" that Sorenson explicates, i.e., a social condition that is "...a sociosensual type of infant and child nurture that spawns an intuitive group rapport and unites people without need for formal rules," the language of this article is enough to send many folks, myself included, on to the next article. But against my better judgement, I stayed with it, through the talk of liminal awareness to supraliminal awareness, past the pictures of naked full bodied women, the sexism employed talking about girl and boy children, and the literary nature of what are supposed to be descriptive passages. I was finally cognitively rewarded when Sorenson presented basic features of a particular type consciousness, holding a particular sense of name, space, number, truth, and emotion. But even here I was left with problems of questionable third person observer interpretations. Arriving at what many have referred to as "Just So!" stories, I was again disappointed by the imaginative leaps.

In **Part Four**, "Shamanistic Mediation of Meaning," Michael Ripinsky-Naxon presents "Shamanistic Knowledge and Cosmology." This paper is basically about polar bi-unity, whereby the union of opposites synthesizes a psycho-epistemological understanding of the universe. The author seems to have a good grasp of the notion that a dualistic cosmology does not imply a dichotomous cosmology. Nonetheless his view about shamanism necessitates trancelike, and ecstasy experiences brought about by mind altering drugs. A shaman's power allegedly consists of an ability to master ecstatic technique, acquire spirit helpers, and ritual song. A bit simplistic in the explanation, the author

leaves nothing to our imagination exploring the variety of types of drugs to induce this experience. Both Ripinsky-Naxon and Hultkrantz share the assumption that shamanism requires a trance (medical) or ecstasy (religious) experience. This assumption is powerfully challenged by Roberte N. Hamayon. Hamayon holds that although trance or ecstasy may be part of some shamanic experiences, it is certainly not a necessarily condition for all shamanic experiences. Cross cultural research, for Hamayon, pays off powerful dividends in her search to substantiate this thesis. The rest of this part of the book is about this debate.

The final section, **Part Five**, is about "Converging Knowledge in Cultural Diversity." The first of two papers in this section, is by Nina Rosenstand, "Myths and Morals: Images of Conduct, Character, and Personhood in the Native American Tradition." Rosenstand points to the obvious: the cognitive environment of tribal epistemology embeds a social ethics and way of being that underlies oral history (myth, or narrative). One problem: Rosenstand imposes Western concepts of persons, and personhood, onto native ideas. Without a prior discussion of human nature, and the place of humans among all our relations, the author dismisses the entire realm of metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology that form the fabric of social ethics.

The second paper, by Robert M. Torrance, is "Some 'Shamanistic' Affinities of Western Culture." Although the spirit of the paper is admirable, in wanting to maintain integrity of "shaman like" behaviors and lifestyles, Torrance is so inclusive in his understanding of shamanism, that he runs the risk of making it out to be everything, and thus nothing at all in particular. He identifies shamans as persons who make poetry, engage in stand-up entertainment, are possessed, have visions, trances, ecstatic flight, etc. He claims that "the legitimate plasticity of the concept thus gives plausible cover to its inordinate popular extensions (208)."

Torrance's thesis is that "Though tribal shamanism and Western poetry and thought have often been opposed to each other by simplistic distortion of each, the affinities between these very different phenomena are thus far greater than this opposition suggests" (230)." Torrance supports his thesis by employing questionable analogies between his concepts of "shamanism" and "tribalism" and Western culture from the PreSocratics, through Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and a variety of historic and contemporary poets. He claims that shamans seek transcendence through vision: "...transcendence of present time and personal self through memory, both individual and collective, by which the poet is united, with others out of place in their time: widowed queen, urban negress, orphaned child, marooned sailor, and whoever has lost what will never again be found (226)." This description of the shaman leaves this reader, at least, to wonder, if Torrance claim is true, what might have been (and in some places still is) the role and lifestyle of shamans who are not out of place in their time. However powerful and passionate, I do not share the notion that poets of Western thought are like shamans of tribal epistemologies.

This is a book to be read by philosophers interested in the anthropology of consciousness. Philosophers working in American Indian philosophy should read it with a critical eye, and some of the better articles, like Ryser's, will be well worth the read.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Indigenous Philosophies of the Americas Special Book Series. The APA Committee on American Indians in Philosophy, in conjunction with the American Indian Philosophy Association, has been exploring with the Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS) the development of a special series of books on Indigenous Philosophies of the Americas, to be published by the international publisher, Rodopi. A formal proposal has been approved by the VIBS Editorial Board to elect Anne Waters as an Associate Editor as well as Editor in charge of the prospective special series.

Invitation To Present Papers At American Philosophical Association

Both the American Philosophical Association (APA) Committee on American Indians in Philosophy and the American Indian Philosophy Association (AIPA) invite scholars to submit papers or an outline of a presentation for inclusion in the Eastern, Central, and Pacific Division Conferences in the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002. Information about these conferences can be seen on the APA webpage. Possible topics include: All Traditional Areas of Philosophy. Especially invited are philosophical thought related to Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ontology, Science, Math, Logic, Social, Political, Ethics, Aesthetics, Gender, Sovereignty, Identity, Indigeneity, Economics, History, Religion, Spirituality, and other areas of philosophical concern. We welcome papers from any philosophical tradition. Submissions must be limited to 20 double-spaced pages. References should follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Please submit 2 copies of manuscripts:

As attachment to email send to:

Anne Waters: brendam234@aol.com

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For the Central Division only, send papers/presentation outline to:

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Invitation to Join The American Indian Philosophy Association

The American Indian Philosophy Association exists in order to promote research, writing and teaching of American Indian philosophy, and philosophical analysis of issues specifically relevant to American Indians. This organization, involving hundreds of philosophers and many more students, seeks to facilitate understanding of America's indigenous philosophy in all educational curricula in the Americas, and especially curricula used to educate American Indians. This association, although affiliated with the American Philosophical Association, is an autonomous organization, academically and financially responsible to itself.

If you would like more information, or are interested in joining this association, please contact our current Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Norton Smith about details: Dr. Thomas Michael Norton-Smith, Associate Professor of Philosophy, 310 B Main Hall, Kent State University, Stark Campus, 6000 Frank Avenue NW, Canton, OH 44720, Phone: (330) 499-9600, ext 53302 or Fax (330) 494-6121 or email tnorton-smith@stark.kent.edu; or Dr. Anne Waters at email brendam234@aol.com or phone (505) 265-3912.