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Popular Depictions of Neanderthals
Anne Hamilton

_Homo sapiens_ were not created with a specific goal in mind. We are well adapted, innovative, and highly intelligent, but only by chance. Natural selection is nothing more than an editor which deletes those traits which are not advantageous, and does not select against those which are. No trait is ever selected for. The idea that we are a chance creation leads us to question who we are, how, and why are we different. Our answers can only be solved by looking at who we are not. We attempt to define our species by comparing ourselves with all others.

Who then is a logical comparison for our species? In this paper I present the Neanderthals as the rational comparison. They are both our immediate predecessors in Europe and west Asia, and arguably the next closest species to being “human,” after us. With our chosen means of comparison we must next find a method to compare ourselves. I propose the use of art, specifically illustrations and popular literature, as a means of self-definition. I further argue that art is in fact an adaptive trait which was inherited in order to make sense of our world. By looking at Neanderthals with the sole purpose of defining ourselves we are also able to see how Neanderthals are popularly portrayed. This consequence will be looked at when it arises.

Understanding the Impact of Entheogens on Ancient Mesoamerican Religion
Marc Blainey

The little discourse that has included discussions of the use of psychoactive substances in Mesoamerican religious practices has thus far revolved around misinformation and an obvious ethnocentric bias where modern prohibitionist values are being projected onto the past. The term _entheogen_, meaning “plants or chemical substances which awaken or generate mystical experiences,” (Forte 1997: 1) is used here as an alternative to the more popular terms, hallucinogen and psychedelic. Hallucinogen implies that the resultant experiences are nothing more than fanciful delusions that lack significance in the real world. Psychedelic is too affiliated with the “drug culture” of the 1960s and 1970s so its use in cultural description is loaded with recent historical associations that have nothing to do with ancient Pre-Columbian religion. Previous treatments of Pre-Columbian religions have largely ignored the use and depiction of entheogenic substances in Mesoamerica even though the evidence for their ritual use is plentiful and widespread. I intend to pick up where Marlene Dobkin de Rios left off in her unheeded 1974 call for Mesoamerican specialists to “shed further light on the role of psychotrophic flora and fauna in Maya religion” (Dobkin de Rios 1974: 152). Dobkin de Rios received many replies about her theories regarding entheogen use. However, most of the replies were very unwelcoming to her suggestions that ancient Mesoamericans used drugs and many esteemed scholars vehemently denounced her claims. This was followed by a long period where virtually no Mesoamericanists conducted research on the subject of entheogens and the study of their religion appears to have totally ignored Dobkin de Rios. I propose that we end this trend and that Mesoamericanists take a hard look at entheogens, their use in religious ritual and the depiction of their use in iconographic remains. The following discussion will attempt to revitalize entheogen studies as they pertain to ancient Mesoamerican religion and worldview.

Diagnosis Gay: The Medicalisation of Homosexuality
Christopher A. Little

Homosexuality has long been a problem in the minds of the dominant, patriarchal elements in Western society. Of all the different sexual variations, “homosexuality has had the most vivid social pressure, and has evoked the most lively (if not usually grossly misleading) historical accounts” (Weeks 1989: 96). This essay provides a brief survey of the history of the medicalisation of homosexuality and other pertinent areas of concern. Remembering that homosexuality is culturally constructed and has varied across space and time, the concretized image of a homosexual in popular Western culture developed towards the end of the 19th century. The new image replaced the idea of the ‘sodomite’ — an individual with a heterosexual gender identity who engaged in same-sex acts.
Peculiarly absent from thought and discourse throughout Western history is a concern for female homosexuals. This indicates, for the most part, that lesbians have been of significantly less concern to individuals and parties throughout history, for a number of considerations. Enduring a long history of residence under the legislated morality of criminal statutes, homosexuality was officially labeled as a medical illness in the mid-20th century as the influence of psychology and the idea that homosexuality was not pathological gained increasing prominence. With the transition, sin and science became enmeshed in one model. A number of practitioners performed a number of different procedures — some more ghastly than others — to achieve a number of different "cures." A confusing and inconsistent record of success was achieved with these procedures. With the increasing evidence that the medical model was achieving few, if any results, and with the increasing influence of gay liberation groups, homosexuality officially came to be recognized as a normal sexual identity. The recent scientific interest into homosexuality has returned it to the medical model, a move which some find quite alarming. Similarly, homosexuality has continued to be recognized as a disease, or at the very least, abnormal, in some Christian communities. The recent upswing in evangelical Christian conservatism in the United States has worried some of an anti-gay agenda. Among the mainstream American population, attitudes towards homosexuality in general remain especially negative though, again, vary widely from place to place. Issues such as the relatively recent gay marriage debate in Canada and elsewhere continue to put homosexuality in the news and make the topic especially salient to our times. The future of actions for and against homosexuals remains, for the most part, relatively unclear.

Widows in Post-genocide Rwanda: Emergent Coping Strategies in a Regional Conflict Zone
Laura Eramian

This paper explores the challenges and opportunities facing widowed female household heads in Rwanda's post-genocide era. Historically, there have always been female heads of household in Rwanda, but now they comprise 35% of all households in the country. In light of that, how are widows negotiating their emergent roles in the social, political, and economic spheres of their communities? What transformations have coping and livelihood strategies undergone? Ultimately this paper argues that, like all Rwandans, genocide widows recognize that the problems that have created conflict in Rwanda are in fact regional problems, thus the possibility of a resurgence of violence in the future is not precluded by the national unity and reconciliation effort. Therefore, the coping strategies that widows are using today are in many ways designed to limit their vulnerability and that of their children in the future, as their lived experiences are testament to the obstacles that women have had to face in the absence of male family members.

Israelestinians In Jerusalem: An Account Of A Peoples Living On The Seam
Elias A. Parker

With so many unresolved conflicts in this world it is odd yet not surprising to see how ethnographers seem to understand certain societies and cultures in black or white. While I am sure such a statement has potential to offend, it of course does not does change the fact that when an analysis of the grey area is presented it becomes hard to ignore. One of today's conflicts in particular has earned the interest of every type of analyst; political economists right through to socio-cultural anthropologists. In the midst of today's horrifyingly complicated Middle Eastern conflict lays the State of Israel, the same land that once weaned the world's most famous Jew (Jesus) and today harbours a multilateral conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis.

Professors Alex Weingrod and Adel Manna are two writers that have raised the bar in terms of analyzing a society within the grey area. Most people of the world, especially those in North America, are at least vaguely familiar with the notion that constant dispute exists between Israel and their many Arab neighbours, including the Palestinian peoples; who largely remain in Israel's backyard. However, most of us are not familiar with the fact that like most conflicts, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot simply be reduced to black and white.

In the article titled Living Along The Seam professors Weingrod and Manna wonderfully point out that there is in fact a grey area in the midst of this conflict. On the contrary
to common belief there actually exists a population of people who identify as Palestinians yet willingly and in many cases, proudly, hold Israeli citizenship. This concept is surprisingly difficult to grasp especially for those of us who obtain our information from a television news resource. The Israeli-Palestinians of Jerusalem became the focus of these two writers as they looked into many sociological, economic and cultural factors of this unique group. As the title states, this particular group of people are in fact “along the seam” in every regard.

Civilization Defied and Defined: The Case of the Indonesian Nation State and the Meratus Dayaks

Carolina Pineda

This paper was presented for a graduate seminar I took last year with Professor Regna Darnell entitled Theorizing Ethnography. The paper focuses on nation building and more specifically, on the building blocks of a nation -- its citizenry. It begins with a quote from Plato’s Republic and is grounded on the work of anthropologist Anna L. Tsing as presented in her ethnography of the Meratus Dayaks in In the Realm of the Diamond Queen. In this paper I will demonstrate that the hegemonic definition of civilization carries with it the potential to alter the everyday experience of individual’s living within the umbrella of an imagined nation’s state. As an alternative to this oppressive system I suggest that Ian Hacking’s concept of anarchorationalism is a good place to start.

The Problem of Race in Anthropology

GJ Brown

In this paper (presentation) I show that there are currently at least three dominant viewpoints on the existence of race within anthropology. Most physical anthropologists rely on the biological species concept to deny any genetic basis of race. Many socio-cultural anthropologists maintain that race is an obsolete, inaccurate, and/or false term for which they prefer ethnicity as a suitable, more accurate replacement. In general, forensic anthropologists choose not to address the issue of race since their methods of determining 'ancestry' are mostly successful in aiding to solve modern medico-legal issues. While the American Anthropological Association insists that there are no races, it is the conclusion of this study that the concept of race is still an issue within anthropology.