

Southern Anthropologist



Newsletter of The
Southern Anthropological Society

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Southern Anthropologist

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Editor's
Corner

Gifford S. Nickerson

Andy Miracle handily met Tony Paredes' challenge in the last issue of the *Southern Anthropologist* to have a "President's Corner" in my hands before May 30th, for publication in this issue. His commentary continues a series of thought-provoking columns which Tony started last Fall; I am sure that members appreciated Tony's, as I know they will Andy's, efforts to convey personal experiences as anthropologists as well as views of the past, present, and future of the Southern Anthropological Society. These kinds of informal discussions with the membership of the SAS communicate messages that generally are not represented in journals or monographs, providing germane and valuable insights for members and other readers of the *Southern Anthropologist*.

Other materials represented in this issue include Holly Scholles' winning entry in the graduate division of the 1989 SAS Student Paper Competition, "Compromise in Human Mating Strategies," and items submitted by Mary Ellen Chatwin, "Simple Treasures: Nostalgia, Southern Identity and Randy Travis," and Miles Richardson, "Heroic Anthropology in the Post-Modern South." The minutes of the SAS 1989 Annual Business Meeting are also printed in this issue, as well as other items of potential interest to members.

The Fall issue will include Edward A. Monnier's paper, "Games as a Social Window," the winning entry in the undergraduate division of the 1989 SAS Student Paper Competition. More information on the 1990 SAS Annual Meeting also will be furnished in that issue, including requirements and submission details for the 1990 SAS Student Paper Competition.

I am pleased that members have begun to answer the call for submissions; we all are the beneficiaries of items such as those by Chatwin and Richardson, and I continue the call for submissions to this newsletter by SAS members. This is, I might note, neither only a current, nor even only a recent, concern — attested to by the constant requests for submissions by all past editors of the *Southern Anthropologist*. Nevertheless, we can always use items, and encourage members once again to send them along.

Finally, in the last issue I noted that there would be more in this issue about our good colleague, Asael Hansen; unavoidably, this had to be delayed somewhat, but I fully intend to include more about "Hans" soon.

The President's Corner

Andrew W. Miracle

The Invisible Future

One of my favorite places is Wayna Picchu, the "young mountain" which rises adjacent to Machu Picchu, the pre-Columbian Inca site in Peru. Sitting on the rock which caps the peak of Wayna Picchu, one can view virtually all of this fabulous Inca city, which lies far above the winding Urubamba River, yet well below the glaciated peaks of the eastern Andes.

The ancient city itself is spread out, seemingly at arm's length, from garden terraces and the Cuzco road on the east to the *inti wantana* (or hitching post of the sun) on the western heights, where the sun was tied each winter solstice so it would not totally disappear. Today, it doesn't take much imagination to see Inca laborers building walls and terraces under the careful eye of an engineer, to watch peasants tending their fields of corn and potatoes, or to catch young herders casting stones at llamas and alpacas tempted by the gardens.

From this eyrie atop Wayna Picchu, the past is clearly visible. Indeed, this is the way that modern Andeans perceive time. The past lies in front of one, where it is visible. The future is behind one, where it cannot be seen, and thus remains unknowable. From this perspective, we are always facing the past and backing into the future. This seems quite sensible to me.

Perched in my new position as President of the Southern Anthropological Society, I can see the SAS past—and what an exciting and rewarding past it has been. Twenty-five years ago, under the leadership of Asael Hansen, the SAS held its first annual meeting. From that small group the society grew in numbers and importance.

That remote past of 25 years ago is dim for me since I only know the SAS personally from the 1973 meeting in Wrightsville Beach to this year's meeting in Memphis (where I ate barbeque five consecutive meals, closed Beale Street establishments three nights in a row with some of my past and present students, revelled in an abundance of

blues, and churned up and down the Mississippi on a riverboat in the company of good friends and colleagues). In fact, since 1973, I have only missed attending SAS meetings when I was out of the country.

Thus I can see the past 17 years quite clearly, and know with as much certainty as humans ever have what has taken place. In front of me I see a vibrant, dynamic, fiscally sound organization, perhaps the premier regional association in American anthropology today—and certainly the most collegial. I see the organization's lively annual meetings, its respected annual volume based on a key symposium, the Mooney prize which it sponsors, and this newsletter, the *Southern Anthropologist*. In addition, I can see the healthy state of anthropology in the South, with its seemingly stable or growing undergraduate enrollments, its nationally recognized graduate programs, and even the development of some new Ph.D. programs.

The future, however, is behind me and I cannot see it. Moreover, there are questions about the SAS which I wish I could answer.

Will membership and the level of participation in the SAS increase? The membership in SAS has been steady for many years, in spite of the regional upswing in anthropology. Why haven't more Southern anthropologists joined the SAS and participated in its activities? While the answers to these questions elude me, I am certain that the availability of a strong regional association is desirable, and that participation in the SAS has benefited hundreds of anthropologists, their students, their departmental programs, and the state of anthropology in the South.

Will more individuals use the newsletter for professional communication? Gif Nickerson has worked hard to improve the substance, as well as the presentation of the newsletter. In the past, however, there has been a reluctance to use the *Southern Anthropologist* as a medium for exchange of information or ideas, even for preliminary findings or brief research notes. I cannot see whether or not Nickerson's efforts will pay off for the SAS and for anthropology in the South.

Will more departments encourage their students to participate in the annual student paper competitions, to attend the annual meeting and to learn from such participation more about the discipline and those who are members of it? Traditionally, too few graduate departments have encouraged student participation in the annual meetings in spite of the student paper awards, and publication in the *Southern Anthropologist* for the winning entries. Yet, I know there is no other means of students learning so much about the discipline of anthropology in such a cost-effective fashion.

The next time I travel to the Andes, perhaps I shall seek out a *yatiri*, a "wise one" (or shaman) who can look back into the future and see things that haven't yet happened. Such a person might be able to tell me what the future holds for the SAS. In the meantime, I encourage all anthropologists in the South and everyone interested in anthropology of the South to celebrate with me the past accomplishments of the SAS and take advantage of present opportunities, as together we back into the future.

An Appeal for Help from SAS Members

Chowanoc Indian Headquarters
Rt#1, Box 286
Hobbsville, NC 27946
(919) 221-4585

To: Southern Anthropological Association

The Chowanoc Indians of the Northeastern band of North Carolina are working on State and Federal recognition. We would appreciate very greatly any information you could give us regarding the Chowanoc Indian Tribe.

There are certain pronunciations of the tribe: Chowan, Chowanoke and etc. This information is given just in case the information you have on the tribe is not the same spelling that is stated above.

Here is some brief information regarding the tribe:

In 1584-85, when first known to Europeans, the Chowanoc were the leading tribe in Northeastern North Carolina. In 1663, they entered into a treaty with the English by which they submitted to the English Crown, but *they violated* (the author's opinion) this in 1675 and after a year of warfare were compelled to confine themselves to a reservation on Bennett's Creek which became reduced by 1707 from 12 square miles to 6. They sided with the colonists in the Tuscarora War, and at about the same time were visited by a Church of England missionary, Giles Rawsford. In 1723 a reservation of 53,000 acres was set aside for them conjointly with the Tuscarora and in 1733 they were given permission to incorporate with that tribe. They continued to decline in numbers until in 1755, Governor Dobbs stated that only 2 men and 3 women were left.

In 1584-85 one of the Chowanoc towns, Ohanoak, was said to contain 700 warriors, and Mooney (1928) estimates their numbers at about 1,500 in 1600. In 1707 they were reduced to one town of about 15 fighting men, but at the end of the Tuscarora War their numbers were placed at 240. In 1731 less than 20 families were reported and by 1755 only 5 individuals, as above noted.

We are desperately clinging on to what is left of our heritage. Any information you could give on the Chowanoc Indians would be very much appreciated. Thank you for cooperation.

Secretary/Treasurer
Gerald Glenn Wiggins

SOUTHERN ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 21, 1989
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Item 1 — Call to Order by the President: President Paredes called the 1989 Business Meeting of the Southern Anthropological Society to order.

Item 2 — Appreciation for a Successful Meeting: President Paredes stated his appreciation, and that of the Society, for all those who worked to make the 1989 Meeting a success. In particular Paredes noted the support of the Mid-South Association of Professional Anthropologists, the efforts of Thomas Collins and Ruthbeth Finerman in their work on local arrangements and the program, the work of Tim Wallace as book exhibit chair and student paper competition chair, and the excellent service and free coffee of the Radisson Hotel.

Item 3 — Thanks to Hans Baer: Paredes thanked outgoing Councillor Hans Baer for his work for the Society.

Item 4 — Minutes of the 1988 Business Meeting: The minutes of the 1988 Business Meeting of the Southern Anthropological Society were approved as submitted.

Item 5 — Secretary-Treasurer's Financial Report: Secretary-Treasurer Arcury reported on the financial situation of the Society. The accompanying tables show the 1988 revenues and disbursements for the Society, the cash on deposit at the end of the year, and the financial statement for the 1988 annual meeting.

Total income for 1988 was \$6881.50. This was an increase of \$1300.00 over 1987. This increase is largely the result of increased revenue from the annual meeting, followed by increased membership and therefore increased dues, and increased interest income due to larger reserves.

Total disbursements for 1988 were \$3348.00, down a few hundred dollars from 1987. This decrease results from some 1988 printing expenses not being billed until

1989. These will show up as 1989 expenses.

Total cash on deposit as of December 31, 1988 was \$11,152.00. This is a sufficient reserve for an organization of our size to meet any contingency. Funds currently in the checking account (\$3364.00) should cover all expenses for the year, plus allow the addition of some funds to the savings account.

In addition to the frugality of the officers, the major factor in the financial health of the Society has been the profits made on the past two meetings. The 1988 meeting returned a profit of over \$2200.00. Tom Collins, Mike Angrosino and everyone else associated with organizing the 1988 meeting deserve to be commended in this regard.

President Paredes noted that Susan Abbott, appointed Associate Secretary-Treasurer, had reviewed the financial records for the past year. The financial report was approved.

Item 6 — 1989 Election of Officers: Holly Mathews was elected President-Elect. Benita Howell was elected Councillor.

Item 7 — Report of the Proceedings Editor: Mary Helms reported on the Proceedings Series. Proceedings Volume 22, *Women in the South*, edited by Holly Mathews, is out. Members will receive a copy as soon as Arcury gets a mailing list to the Press. Proceedings Volume 23, edited by Benita Howell, is far along, with final page proofs going to the Press. It should be available next Spring. Della McMillan, organizer of this year's Key Symposium and editor of Proceedings Volume 24, has been given materials and instructions on how to proceed, as have Yvone Jones and Hans Baer, editors of Proceedings Volume 25.

Sales figures for the Proceedings Series by volume and for all volumes were then presented.

Item 8 — Report on the 1989 Annual Meeting: Thomas Collins reported on the 1989 Meeting. Collins noted that 92 persons pre-registered for the Meeting, and 46 registered on site, for a total of 138 registered participants.

Collins thanked the Mid-South Association of Professional Anthropologists for their professional and financial assistance. This group provided \$250.00 for the support of the Meeting. Collins thanked several individuals for their help in completing the tasks necessary for a successful meeting.

Item 9 — Appointment of the James Mooney Award Committee: The Board of Directors appointed the following individuals to the James Mooney Award Commit-

tee. The terms of the Committee members were staggered to allow for three-year overlapping terms.

Gilbert Kushner, University of South Florida, Chair and three-year term

Hester Davis, Arkansas Archaeology Survey, two-year term

James Crawford, University of Georgia, one-year term

The first year of each term ends on December 31, 1990.

This committee has the tasks of establishing the selection procedures for the revised James Mooney Award and selecting the first winner of the revised James Mooney Award.

Item 10 — Update on the 1990 Annual Meeting: Paredes reported on the 1990 Annual Meeting. This meeting will be held in Atlanta and is being hosted by Spelman College. Local Arrangements Chair is Tanya Frazier, College Hostess of Spelman College. The Program Committee includes Harry LeFever, Chair, Daryl White, and Tony Colson. The Key Symposium for this meeting is being organized by Yvone Jones and Hans Baer and is entitled "African-Americans in the South: Issues of Race, Class and Gender."

The 1990 Meeting will be held jointly with the American Ethnological Society. The theme of the AES for this meeting is "The Body in Society and Culture." The meeting will be held in the Ramada Capital Plaza, on April 26 to 28, 1990.

Harry LeFever, Program Committee Chair, addressed the Business Meeting. He asked for the help and support of the members in making 1990 a successful meeting.

Item 11 — 1991 Meeting and Selection of the 1991 Key Symposium: The 1991 Annual Meeting will be held in Columbia, South Carolina. The Board of Directors selected the proposal submitted by Karl Heider, University of South Carolina, for the 1991 Key Symposium. The title for this Key Symposium is "Projections of the South: How Documentary and Fiction Films Have Portrayed the Region."

Thomas Leatherman, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, addressed the membership. He noted that his department was arranging for a program chair and a local arrangements chair for the meeting.

Item 12 — Future Annual Meetings of the Society: President Paredes noted some special events which should be observed during the Annual Meetings of the next several years. The 1990 meeting will be the 25th meeting of the Society. The 1991 meeting will mark the 25th anniversary of the Society.

The year 1992 will be the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage of discovery. The Society should recognize this anniversary. He suggested that we try to meet in St. Augustine, Florida. Some preliminary checking indicated that an appropriate facility is available, The Ponce de Leon Resort and Conference Center. The Key Symposium for the 1992 Meeting should also reflect a Columbian theme.

— **Newsletter:** Gifford Nickerson, Editor of the *Southern Anthropologist*, the Society Newsletter, could not attend this year's annual meeting. President Paredes offered his commendation for the outstanding job Giff has done in the job of Editor.

Item 13 — Rules for the Student Paper Competition: President Paredes announced decisions made by the Board of Directors concerning the Student Paper Competition.

1. Both graduate and undergraduate division papers will have a maximum length of 20 double-spaced pages of text, with additional pages of tables, figures, references, etc.
2. Four copies of both graduate and undergraduate division papers must be submitted.
3. Individuals submitting papers for the graduate or the undergraduate division must be members of the society and must register for the annual meeting.
4. All papers submitted for the graduate or undergraduate division will appear in the annual meeting program, and the students will be expected to present them.
5. Should an extraordinary number of papers be submitted, the chair of the Student Paper Competition has wide latitude to increase the number of readers.

Item 14 — 1989 Student Paper Competition: James Wallace reported on the student paper competition. The goal of the student paper competition is to encourage student participation in the Society. For the 1989 competition, eight graduate-division and eight undergraduate-division papers were submitted. The committee reviewing these papers included Patricia Lerch, William Pollitzer, and Robert Blakely.

The winner of the undergraduate division was Edward A. Monnier, Emory University, for his paper entitled "Games as a Social Window." The winner of the graduate division was Holly J. Scholles, Emory University, for her paper entitled "Compromise in Human Mating Strategies." These papers will be published in the *Southern Anthropologist*. Each winner will receive 25 to 30 books donated by book exhibitors at the meeting, and a cash award of \$200.00.

President Paredes noted that James Wallace had volunteered to serve as Chair of the 1990 Student Paper Competition. Paredes thanked Wallace for his work.

Item 15 — Membership: A question was raised from the floor as to the current membership of the Society. Arcury responded that presently about 165 members had paid dues for 1989. This number was about the same as in past years. Also, the final membership for the year would probably increase as dues were received from those who paid late.

— **Turn over to Miracle:** President Paredes turned over the symbol of the Office of President of the Southern Anthropological Society to President-Elect Miracle, conferring with it the Office of President.

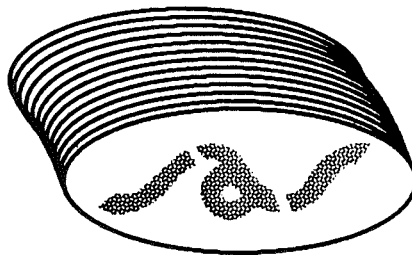
Item 16 — Thanks to Tony: President Miracle's first official act was to thank Past-President Paredes for his work.

Item 17 — New Business: President Miracle then asked for any new business from the floor.

Item 18 — Resolution: A resolution was made from the floor to thank Past-President Paredes for his work. This resolution was passed by acclamation.

A second resolution passed by acclamation directed President Miracle to communicate the Society's appreciation for Past-President Paredes' work to the appropriate official at Florida State University.

Item 19 — Adjourn: As there was no further new business, the General Business Meeting was adjourned.



**SOUTHERN ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1988**

REVENUES FOR CALENDAR YEAR:	1988	1987	1986
Dues	\$2989.00	\$2428.00	\$2063.30
Paid for 1987	\$20.00		
Paid for 1988	2587.00		
Paid for 1989	382.00		
Royalties on Proceedings	139.97	133.94	215.59
Proceedings Sales	53.90	87.80	94.40
1985 Annual Meeting	-----	-----	102.75
1986 Annual Meeting Registration Fees	-----	-----	4959.03
1987 Annual Meeting			
Registration Fees	-----	1560.00	20.00
Book Exhibits and Sales	-----	337.60	-----
1988 Annual Meeting			
Registration Fees	1924.00	133.00	-----
Book Exhibits and Sales	1025.00	100.00	-----
On-site Activities	120.00	-----	-----
Refund from Advance	26.61	-----	-----
1989 Annual Meeting			
Registration Fees	38.00	-----	-----
Interest Income			
N.C. State Credit Union			
Money Market Account	-----	257.07	497.54
Checking Account	-----	32.13	75.57
University of Kentucky Credit Union			
Savings Account	250.26	75.08	-----
Bank One, Lexington, Kentucky			
Certificates of Deposit	281.76	-----	-----
Refund from Newsletter Editor	-----	281.44	-----
Miscellaneous	33.00	25.00	.60
TOTAL CASH REVENUES	\$6881.50	\$5450.46	\$8028.28

DISBURSEMENTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR:	1988	1987	1986
Newsletter	\$600.00	\$500.00	\$400.00
Postage	76.76	184.21	180.83
Printing and Duplicating	19.70	385.42	184.40
Office Supplies	-----	15.00	115.69
Telephone	-----	31.98	80.70
Bank Charges	-----	16.17	14.79
Bad Checks	-----	28.00	-----
License Fee	10.00	10.00	10.00
Officer Expenses	48.82	61.35	184.86
Officer Travel	-----	-----	929.37
Refund for Over-Payment of Dues	-----	22.00	-----
Refund for Out-of-Print Proceedings	-----	15.20	-----
1986 Annual Meeting Expenses	-----	-----	5168.76
1987 Annual Meeting Expenses	-----	792.00	500.00
1988 Annual Meeting Expenses	-----	-----	-----
Advance	-----	500.00	-----
Split of Book-Exhibit Fees with SfAA	560.00	-----	-----
1989 Annual Meeting Expenses (Advance)	500.00	-----	-----
Proceedings	1505.60	1232.09	2933.25
Publication of Volume 21 — \$1327.20			
Orders for Back Issues — 178.40			
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$3348.38	\$3793.42	\$10,702.65
<hr/>			
CASH ON DEPOSIT ON DECEMBER 31,	1988	1987	1986
N.C. State Credit Union			
Checking Account	-----	-----	\$651.59
Money Market Account	-----	-----	5346.89
University of Kentucky Credit Union			
Checking Account	\$879.95	\$899.68	-----
Savings Account	5990.61	2740.35	-----
Bank One, Lexington, Kentucky			
6 Month Certificate of Deposit (6.80% APR, Due 8/27/89)	2136.76	2000.00	-----
1 Year Certificate of Deposit (7.25 APR, Due 8/27/89)	2145.00	2000.00	-----
TOTAL CASH ON DEPOSIT	\$11,152.32	\$7640.03	\$5998.48

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1988 ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
SOUTHERN ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY
TAMPA, FLORIDA**

REVENUES

Registration Fees	\$2057.00
Book Exhibit Fees	1125.00
On-site Activities (e.g., program sales)	120.00
Total	\$3302.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Program Costs (Program Chair)	\$473.32
Copying of Program on Site	27.50
Split of Book Exhibit Fees with SfAA	560.00
Total	\$1060.82

MEETING PROFIT \$2241.18

Acknowledgement

The photograph of **John Reed Swanton** (1873-1958) on the front cover was used through the courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Compromise in Human Mating Strategies*

Holly Scholles
Department of Anthropology
Emory University

Abstract

While humans exhibit a variety of mating strategies, polygyny is widespread cross-culturally. The costs and benefits for each sex of different mating strategies are investigated, and optimal tactics determined. The incompatibility of optimal strategies requires a compromise by one or both sexes. Polygyny is prevalent because, due to reduced variability in reproductive success relative to men, women are more willing than men to compromise. The presence of mediating factors to diminish negative impact on the compromising individual's reproductive success is demonstrated.

Evolution through natural selection is science's current working paradigm, and is the best available explanation for the existence and diversity of life on this planet. Humans, too, are a product of Darwinian evolution, and thus extant human traits must be the result of previous selection pressures. But *Homo sapiens* is a different kind of animal, an animal with culture. As Clifford Geertz points out, "There is no such thing as a human nature independent of culture. . . . We are, in sum, incomplete or unfinished animals who complete or finish ourselves through culture" (Geertz 1973:49). Contemporary humans are the result of coevolution, biology and culture reinforcing each other (Durham 1976; 1982). While, like all human activities, culture influences marital patterns, underlying biological predispositions can shed light on variation in human mating patterns as well as their occurrence frequencies.

In this paper I examine the possible range of human mating strategies from an evolutionary perspective, demonstrating that men and women accrue different costs and benefits from various tactics. To accomplish this, I analyze how various strategies effect an individual's fitness or *reproductive success* (RS) (Trivers 1985:457). Reproductive success, or the "total number of offspring of an individual surviving to a given age" (Trivers 1985:457), is determined by four factors: (1) mating, including mate acquisition and

*Winning entry in the Southern Anthropological Society's 1989 Graduate Student Paper Competition

accompanying costs; (2) conception, maintenance of pregnancy, and successful birth; (3) offspring survival to maturity, including costs of nurturance; and (4) production of successive generations. In addition, the concept of *inclusive fitness* will be referenced, as defined by Hamilton's Rule (Hamilton 1964).

Next, I will demonstrate that inherent differences in optimal strategy between the sexes results in compromise. I hypothesize that polygyny predominates in human societies because women are more willing to compromise than men. Women have less to lose, i.e., reduced reproductive success relative to men who compromise. To support this hypothesis, I examine both polygyny and polyandry to uncover under what conditions women and men settle for less than "optimum" in attempting to maximize RS.

HUMAN REPRODUCTION

The biology of human female reproduction is reported to include asynchronous fertility cycles relative to other women, and externally asymptomatic (hidden) fertility cycles, large egg size relative to sperm size, internal fertilization, lengthy gestation period, prolonged offspring dependence, and female lactation (Creager 1983). This translates into a large amount of requisite female *parental investment* (PI) in offspring. Moreover, females remain fertile for only thirty-five to forty years, with a decrease in reproductive value toward the end of the span (Barash 1982; Buss 1987; Creager 1983). Males enjoy lifetime fertility, although they also may experience a decrease in relative fertility, albeit due to compromised performance rather than erratic cycling. Thus, females have fewer years than males in which to maximize their direct reproductive success (Lockard and Adams 1981).

Biology translates into different priorities for men and women. For a female, the number of offspring that she can produce and raise to maturity is constrained by (1) number of fertile cycles she has (i.e., the number of eggs she produces); (2) mating frequency with a fertile male; and (3) adequate prenatal and postnatal nurturance (i.e., defense and subsistence) to insure offspring survival to maturity. In contrast, for a human male, reproductive success is constrained by (1) his own fertility (viable sperm); (2) the number of females he successfully mates and impregnates; and (3) provision of adequate nurturance to his offspring to insure their survival to maturity. A male's potential RS is limited by the fertility of the females he is able to impregnate, while a female is limited by her own fertility (which is limited by external resources). A male can increase RS by increasing the number of females he mates with, but a woman can only increase her RS by optimizing the chance of survival of each successful impregnation.

Another result of human reproductive biology is that women are always certain of their maternity, while men can never be absolutely assured of their paternity. Internal

fertilization hides the possible existence of competing sperm. This has important repercussions in choice of mating strategy.

For humans, mating behavior typically occurs within a social form: marriage. However, mating and marriage are not congruent, although mating behavior can be shaped and constrained by marriage. Therefore, before exploring the possible reproductive tactics available to humans, it is necessary to distinguish between mating and marriage. Mating is a biological activity, the sexual act. Marriage is a social construct involving (1) public recognition of the joining of the man and woman; (2) the assumption by each of the status of "spouse"; and (3) the existence of reciprocal responsibilities and rights between the partners (Peter 1963:487-488). Other characteristics include legitimization of offspring resulting from the union and formation of affinal relations (Levine and Sangree 1980). Sexual access and mating can be a part of marriage, but are not necessarily so; conversely, mating can occur outside of marriage. In this paper I limit the discussion to mating strategies rather than marriage. When the data utilized in this analysis deal with marriage, as opposed to mating forms, I clearly note it.

TYPES AND EFFICACY OF POTENTIAL HUMAN MATING STRATEGIES

Following several researchers (Daly and Wilson 1983; Emlen and Oring 1977; Krebs and Davies 1984), I conceptualized seven different mating strategies which humans could pursue in attempting to maximize their inclusive fitness. These are:

(1) *celibacy* — a decision not to mate.

(2) *monogamy* — a male and a female form an exclusive pair bond, terminated only by the death of one of the mates. Both mates care for offspring.

(3) *polygyny* — one male maintains a pair bond with two or more females at the same time, while each female is bonded with only that one male. Both parents care for offspring.

(4) *polyandry* — one female maintains a pair bond with two or more males, while each male is bonded with only that one female. All the mates contribute to care of the offspring.

(5) *serial polygamy* — a male and a female form an exclusive pair bond, which can be terminated at any time, and the mate replaced by another individual. Both mates care for offspring.

(6) *polygynandry* — two or more males bond with two or more females. All male mates and the mother provide offspring care.

(7) *promiscuity* — a male and a female mate without forming a pair bond. The mother cares for the offspring.

To evaluate the efficacy of these tactics in maximizing reproductive success, I analyze each according to a paired set of characteristics. The sets are delineated by sex, and in rank of importance, as follows:

Factors for Males: (1) To what degree can ego be assured of paternity of his mate's offspring? (2) To what degree is limited female fertility constraining his fertility? (3) What is the cost to ego of parental investment?

Factors for Females: (1) How much paternal investment will the male contribute? Thus, what is the cost to ego of nurturing offspring? The question of certainty of paternity is relevant here, in terms of obtaining/inducing PI in her offspring, as well as accessing resources through her offspring's paternal kin. (2) Is there female competition for male investment in offspring? (3) To what degree is her fertility constrained by her mate's fertility?

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF MATING STRATEGIES

Although interesting in its own right, I omit celibacy from the discussion, and analyze the remaining strategies for each of the factors listed above to determine fitness effects. In this analysis, I assume that no cheating occurs. The terms "husband" and "wife" are used to designate, respectively, male and female marriage partners. Weighted ratings ranging from "0" to "1" are applied to the findings, with "0" indicating the null set, and "1" indicating completeness. Beginning with the Factors for Males (Table 1), the following apply:

For the category "Assured Paternity," a "1" is assigned if paternity is assured to the greatest extent possible. Thus, monogamy is assigned a "1" as paternity is assured because ego's wife's only sexual partner is ego. For instances where paternity is in doubt, the probability of paternity is measured as one over the number of co-husbands. The "0" is assigned when there is no certainty of paternity, as occurs with promiscuity.

"Protection from Female Infertility" is a measure of the extent to which a man's fertility will be constrained if one or more of his mates is infertile. This is determined by subtracting the number of infertile wives (y) from total wives (w), and dividing by total wives $[(w-y)/w]$. Thus, in cases where there is only one mate, as occurs with monogamy, ego has no protection against his mate's infertility, and a "0" is assigned. For cases with two or more mates, the value assigned is a fraction based on the above formula.

The measure "Cost of Nurturance per Offspring Borne by Others" assumes that nurturance will be shared equally by each mate, although in fact females necessarily bear a greater proportion of the burden, as discussed above. This value is determined by dividing the total number of husbands (x) by the total number of husbands plus one, the wife ($x/x + 1$). In situations where ego is the only husband, cost of nurturance will be

Table 1
Factors affecting male fitness

	Assured paternity	Protection from female infertility	Nurturance cost borne by others
Monogamy	1	0	1/2
Polygyny	1	$(w-y)/w$	1/2
Polyandry	1/x	0	$x/x+1$
Serial Polygamy	1	$(w-y)/w$	1/2
Polygynandry	1/x	$(w-y)/w$	$x/x+1$
Promiscuity	0	$(w-y)/w$	1

w = Number of wives
 x = Number of husbands
 y = Number of infertile wives

one-half. Where ego is a co-husband, cost borne by others will equal a fraction greater than one-half, based on the above formula.

To evaluate whether a particular mating strategy is fitness-enhancing relative to another strategy, the values for each of the three Factors for Males delineated above are added, and the sums compared. The highest sum is the best strategy for enhancing fitness, and the lowest is the least (see Table 1).¹

Thus, according to this analysis, the best mating strategies for males are polygyny and serial polygamy, and the more wives included, the better the strategy. The worst strategy is polyandry, which only has shared nurturance costs to recommend itself.

What about the female half of the equation? In examining Factors for Females, the following apply:

"Nurturance Cost Borne by Others" indicates how much of a contribution mates are making to caring for offspring. As with males, contributions are assumed to be equal among spouses. Values are determined by dividing the number of husbands (x) by the

number of co-husbands plus one ($x/x+1$). Thus for monogamous women, the value is $1/2$; for a polyandrous woman with three husbands the value is $3/4$; and for the promiscuous woman, the value is 0 ($0/1$).

The measure of "Monopolization of Resources" reveals to what extent a woman will be competing with co-wives for resources provided by the mate(s). This is determined by dividing one by the number of wives in the marriage. For monogamy, polygyny, and serial polygamy, the value is one ($1/1$). Promiscuity is a special case, as the woman is not competing with other wives for male resources because the male does not provide any resources; the value is zero. For other strategies, the value is a fraction equal to or greater than one-half (depending on the number of wives).

"Protection from Male Infertility" indicates to what degree a woman's fertility is affected if her mate is infertile. This is determined by subtracting the number of infertile spouses from the total number of husbands, then dividing by the total number of husbands [$(x-y)/x$]. For monogamy and polygamy, the value will be zero [$(1-1)/1$], indicating that the woman has no protection against her husband's infertility; for other strategies, the value will be a fraction (assuming that all spouses are not infertile or are equally likely to be).

Table 2
Factors affecting female fitness

	Nurturance cost borne by others	Monopoly of resources (competition)	Protection from male infertility
Monogamy	$1/2$	1	0
Polygyny	$1/2$	$1/w$	0
Polyandry	$x/x+1$	1	$(x-y)/x$
Serial Polygamy	$1/2$	1	$(x-y)/x$
Polygynandry	$x/x+1$	$1/w$	$(x-y)/x$
Promiscuity	0	0	$(x-y)/x$

w = Number of wives

x = Number of husbands

y = Number of infertile husbands

Again, values for each of the three factors are summed and compared to ascertain which strategy most enhances fitness² (see Table 2).

Thus, polyandry is the strategy of choice for females according to this analysis, as it provides the most assistance with nurturance, complete monopolization of spouses' resources (i.e., no co-wife competition), and high protection against an infertile mate. Serial polygamy is runner-up, as it also protects against male infertility, while protecting against co-wife competition. In reality the competition would be higher for subsequent wives than for first wives, as men siphon off resources to continue PI in first wives' offspring. Polygyny is the second-worst scenario for women, with no protection against male infertility, competition with co-wives for resources, and a full one-half of the nurturance costs. Promiscuity is the worst strategy, with the woman bearing the entire cost of nurturing offspring, thus jeopardizing her offspring's survivorship, and limiting her reproductive success (for an example, see Goldstein 1976).

THE REAL WORLD: COMPROMISE

The previous discussion assumes a strictly biological universe, devoid of culture, and without cheating. It indicates that, to maximize their reproductive success, men and women should pursue opposing strategies, men favoring polygyny and women favoring polyandry. Obviously, such incompatible strategies cannot simultaneously coexist for all individuals in a society (i.e., all women be polyandrous, all men be polygynous). As the human species has not died out from lack of mating activity, I hypothesize that some factor(s) must be mediating mating behavior, causing one or the other sex, or both sexes, to accept a less than optimal strategy, in any given society.

Let us momentarily ignore ecological conditions and begin with one crucial factor: the variance from maximum RS which is experienced by ego if a reproductive strategy is selected which is **not** optimal for her/him. Thus, for women, if the worst-case scenario (according to my model) occurs and polygyny is implemented, how much will ego's RS be lessened relative to the optimal strategy of polyandry? In general, assuming that her mate is not infertile, the absolute loss in RS to a woman is less than a man's loss in RS in his worst-case option. In other words, polyandry is worse for men than polygyny is for women. This is because female RS is already tightly bound by the biological factors outlined at the beginning of this paper, and male RS is not. "Extra males do not normally make a woman more fertile" (Brown and Horta 1988:154). I speculate that while sub-optimal strategies **do** impact female RS, the effect is less than the parallel impact would be on male RS.

Empirical support for this hypothesis is found by comparing fertility statistics for women using different mating strategies within the same culture. For example, a study

of Mormon polygynists (Daly and Wilson 1983; cf. Faux 1981) revealed an average of 25 children for men with five wives (five children per wife or a ratio of 1:5 [wife's children to husband's children]); 15 children for men with 2.4 wives (6.25 children per wife, or a ratio of 1:2.4) and 6.6 children for monogamous men (6.6 children per wife or a ratio of 1:1). The higher the man's status in the church hierarchy, the more wives he had. The range in female fertility was 1:6 (6.6 minus 5.0), while the range for men was 18.4 (25 minus 6.6). Thus, while female fertility did increase as the number of co-wives decreased, the difference was not as great as that experienced by men.

This fact creates a "desperation factor"; men are more desperate than women to see their optimal strategy implemented. This does not mean that women are less interested in maximizing their reproductive success than men, but simply that women are more constrained than men in doing so. Women do resist polygyny (Daly and Wilson 1983:283).

Yet, predictably, humans can be characterized as mildly polygynous (Van den Berghe and Barash 1977:811). As cited in Daly and Wilson (1983:265; cf. Murdock 1967), polygyny is found, to some degree, in 708 of 849 human societies sampled (84%), and is the usual form in about half of those groups.

Yet, if polygyny is a widespread human mating strategy, one would anticipate the presence of mediating factors to ameliorate its impact on female RS. If such factors were not present, women would resist polygyny so strongly that it would be very difficult to implement. In fact, mitigating factors are common in polygynous systems. And when other mating systems are found in human groups, various mediating factors are also found.

POLYGYNY

Women in polygynous unions suffer reduced fertility due to fewer surviving offspring per woman, relative to monogamous women in the same society (Chojnaka 1978; Daly and Wilson 1983). Several studies have indicated that monogamous marriages produce more surviving children than polygynous unions in the same society. For example, a study of the Temne people of Sierra Leone (Dorjahn 1958) found 54% of married men to be polygynous, with an increasing number of children per male as number of wives increased. Concomitantly, women in polygynous marriages experienced a small, but non-trivial, decline in number of living children as the number of co-wives increased. This was due to a decline in the rate of live births (in households with four or more wives) and an increase in the rate of infant mortality — 41 percent in polygynous households versus 25 percent in monogamous households.

Differential offspring mortality exists even when polygyny is limited to the richer men. For example, in the Mormon study cited above, the higher a man's status in the

church hierarchy, the more wives he had. As each wife was entitled to her own separate house, only wealthier, higher status men could afford numerous wives. Yet, female lifetime reproductive success was lower for polygynous than monogamous women, despite differential access to resources. While unproven, it is reasonable to speculate that, even in relatively wealthy households, resources available *per offspring* in polygynous families are less than that available in monogamous families. Another possible factor in decreased female fertility in polygynous households is lessened coital frequency due to reduced access.

Along with depressed female fertility, polygyny yields larger household size due to higher male fertility. This means more surviving offspring for men, relative to monogamous men in the same society. Even if maternal fertility were equal for monogamous and polygynous families, more children would result in polygynous families as there are more wives. However, maternal RS generally declines under polygyny; nonetheless, total household fertility (i.e., husband's RS) increases. That is because the husband's cumulative total is large, due to having more than one spouse, even if he has to sustain greater rates of offspring mortality than a monogamous counterpart. Again, the Mormon example provides evidence for this phenomenon, with an average of 25 offspring in large polygynous families, versus 6.6 children for monogamous households. Additionally, Chojnacka's 1978 study of Nigerian marriage found that polygynous households had approximately three times as many children as monogamous ones, although in her sample fertility revealed no consistent variation between the two household types.

Both in theory and in reality, polygyny is good for male, and bad for female, reproductive success. However, many tactics have developed which mediate the negative impact on female RS. For instance, wives can cheat. Under polygyny, a woman will maximize her RS by choosing the man with the most resources as a mate, thus insuring adequate parental investment for her offspring. As the men with the most resources are frequently older, a woman would select a wealthy, older man as mate. However, she could then take an attractive, younger man as a lover, side-stepping the limitations polygyny places on her RS (Van den Berghe and Barash 1977:814). In order to minimize the opportunity for female cheating, a husband will engage in overbearing behavior (Daly and Wilson 1978:274); seclusion of wives, as seen in certain Muslim societies (Abu-Lughod 1986); and severe punishment for infidelity such as were found among many North American Indian groups (Niethammer 1977) and Mediterranean "honor and shame" societies (Dickemann 1979; Herzfeld 1980; Peristiany 1966).

When a man marries sisters, the diversion of resources to co-wives' offspring *does* reduce female RS. However, this is partially compensated for by an increase in fe-

male inclusive fitness, as co-wives' offspring are ego's nieces and nephews, thus related by 0.25.

Among the Bedouin, wives must be treated totally equally, including the presentation of identical marriage gifts to current spouses when a new wife is acquired (Abu-Lughod 1986). By mandating that a man can only take on additional wives if he treats them equally, any inclination toward differential treatment of spouses is negated. Even so, however, absolute levels of resource availability per wife will be less than they would be if the man took only one wife.

In many polygynous societies, the first wife may contribute to the selection of an appropriate second wife, and even initiate the process (Bledsoe 1980; Abu-Lughod 1986). New wives can increase the amount of household labor, lessening the current wife's work load. In these instances, for example, among the Mende of Sierra Leone (Isaac 1980) and in Nigeria (Ukaegbu 1977), a first wife's RS is not adversely affected, perhaps because her childbearing is already well established; RS may, in fact, be augmented by the presence of a helper who increases available resources and decreases physical stress on the first wife.

Disruptive activity between wives (Borgerhoff Mulder and Caro 1983) often occurs and takes the form of arguments, manipulation and control of resources (such as access to food), and even physical violence. These potentially have several effects: (1) to cause the husband to favor one spouse over another; (2) to cause one spouse to desert the household; or (3) to cause one spouse to have fewer resources, thus reducing the survival of her children.

Older or primary wives may serve as watchdogs over the fidelity of younger co-wives, informing the husband of any adultery (real or suspected). This could result in limiting co-wives' fertility, and the concomitant drain on household resources, particularly in societies where age discrepancies between spouses can be extreme (Goodale 1971; Hart and Pilling 1979).

Alternatively, co-wife cooperation can increase the survival of offspring for each woman in the household by eliminating adverse actions, such as abuse of co-wives' children. Cooperation can result in increased reciprocity, such as exchanging child care, or intervening if co-wife's child is in danger. Increased productivity due to combined and coordinated labor can expand household resources, and improve offspring survival.

One or more of these mediating factors is frequently found in polygynous systems. Additionally, female choice can have a critical impact. "Female assent is a precondition to nearly all mating" (Van den Berghe and Barash 1977:815). Assent is a passive form of choice, as denial can be used to eliminate unacceptable potential spouses. Given that even in societies classified as polygynous, monogamy is not uncommon, the question

becomes, under what conditions would a female consent to enter a polygynous union?

Evolutionary biology provides an answer: the polygyny threshold model (Orians 1969). To summarize, a female can choose between a monogamous mating, in which her offspring will receive the benefits of *all* her mate's resources, and a polygynous union, in which she will have to share resources. Rationally, a woman will choose a monogamous union *unless* the polygynous union provides access to more or better quality resources. Lower fertility of women in polygynous marriages demonstrates that this is not always the best choice. However, if a woman in a polygynous union is able to utilize mediating factors such as favoritism, control of resources, etc., she might be able to increase her fertility above that of her co-wives *and* of monogamously-paired women. It is this *potential* for increasing RS that could entice a woman into a polygynous union.

POLYANDRY

According to my hypothesis, polygyny is far more common than other mating strategies because women have less to lose than men by compromising their optimal course of action. Thus, while polyandry is the tactic of choice from the female perspective, it should be rare. And in fact, it is found in only four, or 0.47%, of 849 cases sampled (Daly and Wilson 1978: 265; cf. Murdock 1967). While several researchers have documented polyandrous societies (Beall and Goldstein 1981; Chalifoux 1980; Crook 1988; Goldstein 1976; Kemper 1980; Levine 1980; Majumdar 1960; Muller 1980; Prince Peter 1963; Sangree 1980; Schuler 1987), the estimated occurrence of polyandry is very low.

Benefits and costs of polyandry for females have already been delineated. However, an additional benefit to women can also accrue. Among the Limi Tibetans in Nepal, polyandry is a common mating strategy resulting in a decrease in number of available men for mating. Therefore, polyandrously-mated women have a disproportionate share of men and resources, while other women have reduced fertility, and still others have zero fertility, due to lack of mates (Goldstein 1976:229).

Thirty-one percent of the women in Goldstein's study are unmarried. Lifetime reproductive success for married women is 3.3 offspring, and for unmarried women is 0.7. Thus, by decreasing the available pool of mates, polyandry provides a competitive reproductive advantage to women who are able to marry; they have almost five times as many surviving offspring as unmarried women.

A theoretical cost/benefit analysis indicates that polyandry should be advantageous for the majority of women in societies where it is found. But why do men cooperate with polyandrous matings? Polyandry is the strategy which least enhances their fitness. Again I would predict the existence of factors which ameliorate the impact on men's re-

productive success. Such factors do exist.

First, in societies where polyandry is found, alternative marriage forms are also acceptable (Berreman 1980; Levine and Sangree 1980). For example, Schuler (1987) provides a description of fraternal polyandry in the north-central Nepalese village of Chumik. Among estate (*trongba*) holding families, all the brothers in a family (excluding the second brother who is dedicated to temple service) are married to a single woman. Her offspring will inherit the estate, thus keeping land division to a minimum. In the event that a family has no sons, the daughters will inherit the estate, and polygynously marry a man who agrees to uxorilocal residence; the daughters' sons, if any, will then inherit the estate. Thus, polyandry is the strategy of choice if male heirs are available, while polygyny is utilized if they are not. For non-estate-holding families, monogamy is the norm.

Economic concerns can necessitate polyandrous unions. In areas such as Chumik, polyandry is the mechanism used to preserve a family's productive resources (land and animals). Polyandry is consciously practiced to avoid, in particular, the division of scarce land among its male heirs into units too small to maintain a satisfactory living standard (Goldstein 1976:231).

As mentioned above, polyandry is found only in landholding ranks; non-landed individuals practice monogamy. Thus, polyandry is a means of preventing subdivision of resources to the point where they can no longer sustain minimum subsistence. "Without polyandry families . . . would have to export population, or large numbers of men and women would have to remain unmarried, in order to ensure a constant number of households" (Crook and Crook 1988:103). Even with polyandry, imposed celibacy is not infrequent in the Himalayan areas where polyandry is found. For example, in families with three sons or three daughters, it is normal practice for the middle child to be given into religious service as a monk or nun; from seven to ten percent of adults of each sex is dedicated to religious service at any given time. Such an altruistic sacrifice of RS by an individual has the effect of further conserving resources for one's reproducing siblings, thus enhancing the altruist's inclusive fitness.

With polyandry, each estate is assured of only one set of heirs, i.e., the offspring of the polyandrous wife. Goldstein (1976:232) postulates an additional function of polyandry — "a cultural mechanism for adjusting population levels to chances in resource availability and economic productivity." When resources and/or economic opportunity increases, a sort of monogamy threshold for males is breached. Younger brothers tend to leave polyandrous unions and form their own neolocal, monogamous families. This leads to increased population, pressuring resources and leading to a return to polyandrous patterns.

Unrelated individuals can also benefit economically from polyandrous unions. For example, Kemper (1980) describes a system of "situational polyandry" (Levine and Sangree 1980:397) in Kandyan Sri Lanka, characterized by disparate positions for original and subsequent husbands (reflective of the inherent inequality of Sinhalese family structure); maintenance of co-husbands' economic interests as separate; economic cooperation; central, mediating role of the wife; and co-residence. The marriage begins monogamously, with additional husbands incorporated later. Flexibility is the rule, with polyandrous unions reverting quickly back to monogamy if one of the spouses finds the arrangement unsatisfactory. Generally, the reason for forming a polyandrous marriage is to facilitate agriculture by consolidating land and labor. It "further cements ties between two men who already share economic and social interests important to them both" (Sangree and Levine 1980:iv).

What does all of this have to do with male reproductive success? Everything, to the extent that male RS is determined by resource adequacy for nurturing offspring. Without polyandry, as mentioned above, large segments of the population would have to forego any type of reproduction, as resources are insufficient to allow everyone to reproduce. To guarantee the necessary level of resources for offspring survival, men limit their fertility to the level of their wives' fertility.

In addition to limiting their number of offspring by confining themselves to one wife, polyandrous men share sexual access with other men and thus to a degree, jeopardize their own chances for paternity (Beall and Goldstein 1981). However, this is offset somewhat in systems practicing fraternal polyandry by the fact that a man's wife's offspring will be either his own (related by 0.5) or his fraternal nieces and nephews (related by 0.25). Under these conditions, this decrease in potential relatedness is offset by the improvement in offspring survival, thus increasing ego's inclusive fitness.

Areas where polyandry is found, such as in the Himalayas, are frequently characterized by a great deal of seasonal migration, with men traveling long distances during agricultural slack periods. Land scarcity, and the marginality of subsistence in the area, necessitate this additional income if the household is to survive. One result of the heavy migration is that, while all husbands make their domicile with the same wife, there is flux in the number of spouses co-residing at any one time. This means that a man has opportunities to monopolize his wife's sexual attention, and thus mate without competition. Simultaneously, a man can feel free to leave on an extended trip knowing that his wife will be "guarded" against adulterous temptation by his co-husband.

Hughes (1982) postulates that, due to the decreased risk of cuckoldry in polyandrous marriages, attributable to the continual presence of at least one husband, polyandry actually increases male RS relative to polygyny. Thus, according to this argument, in

situations where paternity confidence is low, polyandry would be a wise male strategy. This would be especially true if the opportunity for extra-marital mating opportunities for men were scarce.

CONCLUSIONS

As I have demonstrated, the diversity found in human mating practices can be explained as maximization of individuals' reproductive success and inclusive fitness. Optimal strategies differ for men and women due to their biological constraints. For women, resource acquisition and control is important in mating strategy, while maximizing access to fertile females and guaranteeing paternity is important for men. As optimal strategies for males and females are, in theory, non-overlapping, this paper demonstrates that compromise positions are reached through the inclusion of mediating factors. In most instances, women are more able to compromise than men without decreasing their reproductive success to maladaptive levels. Thus, polygyny is more widespread than other mating strategies.

Space limitations have restricted this discussion to the two extremes on the continuum of possible mating plans. Others are, of course, also utilized. Each society culturally defines the acceptable range of mating strategies. For example, among Himalayan groups, the range covers polygyny, polygynandry, monogamy, polyandry, and even celibacy. Within that range, an individual must decide what is the best strategy for maximizing inclusive fitness, given social status, wealth, subsistence requirements, alliance needs, etc. An individual will move as close to the optimal strategy for his (polygyny) or her (polyandry) sex as possible, given intersecting ecological conditions.

The maximization of inclusive fitness is a powerful factor in mating; it is mediated by both cultural forms (for example, jural exclusion of non-monogamous marriage) and individual considerations. The dovetailing of these three elements provides a complete explanation of observed variation in human reproductive systems.

NOTES

¹ As an example, a monogamous individual would have a summed value of 1-1/2; a polygynous man with three wives with one infertile, a value of 2-1/6; a polyandrous man with two co-husbands a value of 1-1/12; a serial polygamist with three wives with one infertile, a value of 2-1/6; a polygynandrist with two co-husbands and three wives, one of the wives infertile, a value of 1-3/4; and a promiscuous man who mates with three women, one of them infertile, a value of 1-2/3.

² Constructing an example similar to the one for male strategies above, monogamy yields a value of 1-1/2; polygyny (three wives) a value of 5/6; polyandry (three husbands, one infertile) a value of 2-5/12; serial polygamy (three spouses, one of them infertile), a value of 2-1/6; polygynandry (three wives, three husbands, one husband infertile), a value of 1-3/4; and promiscuity (three mates, one of them infertile), a sum of 2/3.

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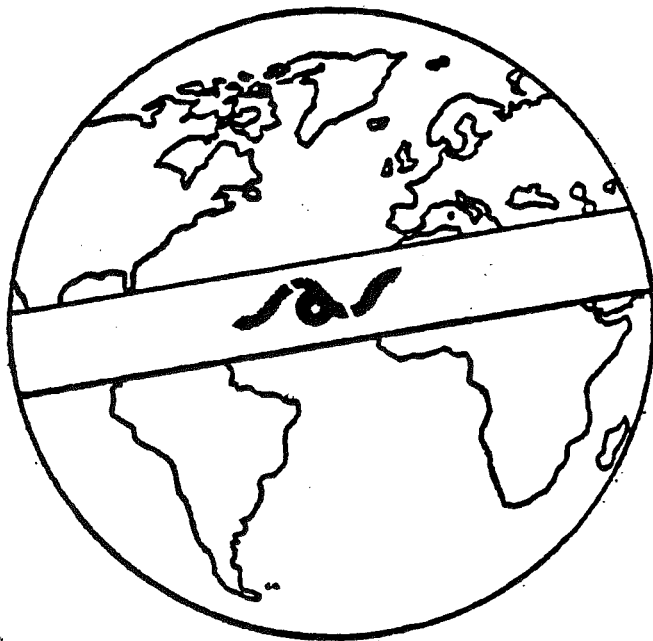
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Simple Treasures: Nostalgia, Southern Identity and Randy Travis

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Nostalgia: from the Greek, *nostos* return home, *algos* pain.
Sentimental yearning for (some period of) the past.*

Nostalgia—like homesickness—has an insidious way of reminding us we're neither home nor as young as we once were. Home and the past (space and time) become one, and that past-as-home or home-as-past is conjured up through food, for example, or music. Concepts based on pain (though sweet the pain may be) have had little place in social research. Yet how is "feeling"—the scientific unmentionable—to be considered in anthropological investigation? I even had my doubts whether, being from the South, I had the right to look at the questions of nostalgia and identity from a personal point of view or whether I would sentimentally read around my cultural blind spots as I sought to understand how country music conveys nostalgia for Southern culture. However, I have now come to believe that it is precisely the sensitivity to what seems to be missing in *other* cultural contexts we come to live in, this "homesickness," which may lead to perceiving the uniqueness of what one's own culture of origin offered.

Nostalgia as culture detector

This article is meant as a reflection on Southern identity; its aim is to stimulate comments or comparisons more than to offer irrefutable facts. It is but an autobiographical fragment of life history, and explores the role nostalgia plays in my personal perception of social phenomena and cultural identity. Like a metal detector skimming the Gulf sands, held by a tourist listening for the beep, living in cheap anticipation, full of optimism that something is really to be found, I heard Randy Travis' music for the first time

**The Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1978

and felt that thrill of hope for simple treasures. I thus use Travis' lyrics as a tool for exploration. His voice is sublime to the country-tuned ear, and instrumentation is both in keeping with tradition while re-interpreting and bringing the legacy of country music up to date.

Even though I now live far from the South, and a second "homeish" feeling has developed for the particular part of Switzerland where I live, my initial geographical references of appurtenance remain principally those of south Alabama.

Much of Southern "reality" as it is related to us now has been reconstructed from the experience of countless Black, White or immigrant lives, and especially as it relates to "Northern" or mainstream U.S. social, political, and economic interests. Also, the South has been subtly "rising again" while we weren't looking, helped up by many of yesterday's and today's authors and artists, who incessantly exorcise the painful experiences of several levels of dominated populations for generations past.

I now have access to more pre-digested information on Southern identity than I ever did as a child. In popular culture during the 50s and early 60s, magazines like *Southern* and TV serials such as *Designing Women* were unknown, perhaps seen as "unnecessary"; Black writers were never read in Southern schools where White children attended segregated classrooms; in those years, even *To Kill a Mockingbird* was too daring for south Alabama highschools, though it may have been read further north, in Birmingham. . . .

Politics were locally defined by the power structures in place, always a variation of the Democratic Party with its firm underlying assumptions about the harm that had been done to the poorest White farmers by Yankees after the War Between the States. ("Civil War" was a term never used in south Alabama schools then, as it implied a whole forbidden way of thinking about "our" disobedience and subsequent punishment. "Hell No, I ain't forgettin'" was more frequent on car bumpers then—maybe we "done forgot"?)

Thinking back, I find it odd that one of the main cultural expressions of Southernness, country music, captured so little of these larger issues. Instead, themes expressed local culture and family values, man/woman relationships and infidelities, religion and the life cycle. Alabama's country music hero, Hank Williams, died when I was a child, yet his influence was—and is—interwoven forever into the mesh of the Southern country sound. Today Randy Travis' lyrics also crystallize nostalgically noticeable aspects of a former way of life, related emotionally to a unique region (not only within the U.S.—but within the South itself) and its way of life and thinking. For, though Southerners

from the Carolinas to Texas can and certainly do draw other conclusions from the same musical material (Travis' revival of Texas swing is certainly even more remarked by Texans, for example), the nostalgia one individual from a specific area feels must necessarily be related to her/his own family life, social networks, life cycle and cultural experience in general; for example, our Tennessee cousins would talk of going "to the seaside" instead of "to the Gulf," which added to the exoticism they already possessed through coming from up near "the Smokies."

The popularity of Southern country music has long overrun the borders of the U.S. into Europe and the rest of the world. Recently, German acquaintances lit up with surprise when they learned I was a fan of Randy Travis, but the astonishment was mutual, as I wasn't aware that the more recent country music is still very popular in Europe (though I know there are regular country music festivals held here in summer). Europeans have a greater general knowledge of most types of current and traditional American music—including Motown, jazz, Cajun, rap and country—than we Americans. I learned more about jazz, blues and country music in Europe than in the U.S.; this knowledge hasn't changed the nostalgic force of country music, but has focused my attention on aspects which were formerly unconscious.

Ear pressed to the radio, I would spend long moments as a 6-7-year-old, sitting on the living room floor near my Dad's chair as he sat reading the paper and listening to The Grand Ole Opry or other music necessarily turned down low; the plaintive "hillbilly" sounds irritated my mother (she had other nostalgic references from further north—mainstream crooners and big bands). As an adolescent I saved up allowance money for Jack Scott and Jim Reeves as the new singles appeared, though at sock hops Buddy Holly and Elvis dominated the scene. The parallel Southern identity ran underground and remained unacknowledged. For the Southern child a certain ambivalence was produced, and we learned how mainstream "style" differed in its references to social structure and interaction.

Around that time, many young country music singers went mainstream; with a Southern accent they sang songs which reflected new political and social appurtenances. The particular themes which were familiar to Southerners became drowned out by the new sound. This is perhaps why I was astounded in listening to Randy Travis for the first time several years ago. His lyrics seemed more purposefully local in their nostalgic content, the authentic themes gave his music a homecoming sound, as if Southernness is, after all, just for us to know and for others to find out.

With a twist of insight Travis recreates former family and social roles: as long as old men sit and talk about the weather, as long as old women sit and talk about old men," and expresses the permanence of hidden and sometimes illicit relationships ("diggin' up bones" and "messin' with my mind"). With empathy he delves into the painful and complex relationships between men and women ("all you wanted was a one-night stand . . . but what'll you do about me?"; "she's taken all the lonely she can stand"; or "It's out of my hands, now, it's over and done; she's made her choice now, and I'm not the one").

Travis gives the impression he's understood both sexes' positions—an innocent, though implicated, bystander watching all levels of the social system function. The specificity of Southern family interaction ("Mama always prayed that I'd be a better man than Daddy"), and reminders that a dominant system exists "elsewhere" leaves no doubt that we've left mainstream and headed South ("send my body home on the freight train; don't worry none that I don't go first class"; or "I heard those city singers singing 'bout how they can love . . .").

"We're gonna' have ourselves a ball"

The metaphorical use of language, less common in mainstream music, reflects how the physical body and values are one, conveying a way of thinking about self, relationships and the body: "But if they ever say I'm cheatin' they'll be lyin'; the truth is lyin' next to you"; or "You're not just time that I'm killin'"; or "On the other hand, there's a golden band to remind me of someone who wouldn't understand . . ." Marriage and the long-term relation are still the norm in country when Travis notes "You've run out of sugar and my matches got wet," but that "we ain't out of love yet."

The "corny" side of its sentimentality has perhaps made Southern music a laughing-stock outside of the South at times. I believe the fact that Southerners don't perceive these ways of speaking (or singing) as silly or laughable is due in part to hidden assumptions, not perceived by the outsider. Speaking in double entente and understatement are cultural adaptations to constant potential and underlying violence; using verbal techniques to incorporate figurative references to situations which are otherwise socially "unmentionable" and volatile is simple social wisdom.

Thus irony and understatement are the essence of country music as they are of conversation, at least between Southerners: "Since my phone ain't ringin' I assume it still ain't you." Well said will be well taken. This sometimes gentle, sometimes playful tact for expressing disappointment or invitations sends us back to the quintessential Hank

Williams' "Hey, good lookin', whatcha got cookin', how about cookin' somethin' up with me?" In my own anthropological field research and interviews I've been told I'm "too tactful." If my assumptions are right I am perceiving that "holding back" in another way, and it's an internalized reticence learned in a specific cultural environment.

Bedrooms, pickups and honky tonk moons

For the nostalgic listener, references describing home, rooms, furniture and closets recreate a context of familiar space—houses with porches and rocking chairs, walls which echo with the intensity of interaction behind closed doors ("This old bed that we sleep on don't have satin covers but it holds some great memories, no decorations can make better lovers"). Even pictures on the wall symbolize rapport ("Now my whole world's in one 8 X 10, with four metal walls holding it in . . .").

Outside of the home, less consecrated places exist to let off social steam. "Neon moons" were perhaps more familiar to our parents' epoch, but these barrooms with bands or jukeboxes remain emotional metaphors for safe places to retreat to when the psychological going gets rough ("Where I go when my troubles pull me down . . . for a while I'll be the biggest man in town"), a means to ignore reality, where disillusioned men can meet "fallen angels"—themselves disappointed in love—and hide or imagine themselves outside of the restrictions and rigid social structures of Southern life: "There'll always be a honky tonk somewhere." It's reassuring to know, but outside of the South Travis' consoling affirmation produces a twinge of realization that those honky tonks seem pretty far away . . .

When gossip, cheating, and even delinquency which are still interwoven into Southern social networks, are evoked by Travis, old friends and relatives crowd back into consciousness: "I'm gettin' older, my life's growin' colder, these are some of the reasons I cheat." It's in remembering sins, not only loves, that makes us feel included in the social group again. I can come back any time; grey hair and strange ideas from other places don't matter—they are pardoned as evidence I've braved "the storms of life." Though claiming appurtenance while no longer living in the South may seem odd to some, the music we grew up with assures us it's not strange at all: "You could be anywhere in the world tonight . . ." The rock-bottom line when it comes to Southern identity is "forever and ever, Amen."

(Lyrics drawn from R. Travis' three albums, "Storms of Life," "Always and Forever," and "Old 8 X 10")

Heroic Anthropology in the Post-Modern South

Miles Richardson

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With a thoughtful eye toward promoting discussion about anthropology in the South, Andrew Miracle, President of SAS, wrote to ask if I might respond to Anthony Paredes' observations about how little we now seem to know of what the total field is up to. Although I more than qualify for the senior discount at Shoney's Breakfast Bar, I'm going to resist the temptation to reflect on the old days when we all knew pottery types, dolichocephalic indices, bilabial explosive stops, and Tsimshian mythology. Instead, I want to go further back in our prehistory, back to the truly heroic days of those who first brought the emancipatory project of an enlightened anthropology to a South enslaved by the traditions of its pre-industrial past. Once in the time of people such as Frank Essene of the University of Kentucky, Charles Fairbanks of the University of Florida, Hale Smith of Florida State University, Tom Campbell of the University of Texas, and William Haag of Louisiana State University, I offer my interpretation of their view of recent changes in university departments.

A figure stood at the door. W. Charles Elliot. He entered my life two years ago, and at times, I wondered what I did for aggravation before he came.

"Come in, Charles. Have some coffee?"

"No thank you. May I ask your reaction to the news?"

"About the fire?"

"What fire?"

"The Howard place."

"The Howard place?"

"A big house of big family north of town. It burned early this morning. Lucky, no one was home. A woods fire broke loose."

"It was intentional?"

"Could be. The Howards are good at collecting enemies."

"As a native participant, but as an anthropological observer, do you consider this incident an example of the syndrome referred to as the South's penchant for violence?"

Unable to respond, I groped for the coffee and poured more on my desk than in

my cup.

"Do you?"

I now understood how natives felt about their anthropologists. Being the object of someone's dispassionate curiosity, however well considered, lacked a lot. I could almost see W. Charles taking notes.

"Perhaps," I reluctantly agreed.

When he finished his mental recordings, W. Charles said, "I was referring to the President's announcement."

Now it was my turn, "What announcement?"

"I had forgotten you had retired. President Coleman has launched a campaign to change the name of our University."

Our University? Thirty years and more I've been here. Gordon Coleman took Intro to Anthro from me, and barely made a B. And you? Where were you, W. Charles Elliot? No more than a gleam in your daddy's eyes?

"The President proposed to change the name from the University of South Louisiana to the University of Louisiana."

Sounding more like a press release than a young man barely 25 with a dissertation still pending, W. Charles made it clear that "the change of the name simply encapsulates all the changes, modern new buildings, increased library acquisitions, and addition of new faculty, that have moved the University from being a regional school concerned almost exclusively with teaching to being an institution of national, if not international, import."

Charles went on at length about how "we" had gotten so much better, especially during the last two years, and particularly with, he quoted again, "the infusion of fresh talent recruited from the major universities across the nation, including," here Charles spoke in italics, "*Cornell*."

"The President specifically mentioned the development of doctoral programs and implied that anthropology is slated for additional enhancement. If so, I am confident we will shortly offer the doctorate."

Elliot's enthusiasm amused me. During the boom days of the 60s, when salaries were doubling and grants were for the asking, the only intellectuals who came to the region came for a quick fix for their conscience and dashed back to brag how they had been with King at Selma. Now, with the recession, they were flocking south like ducks. Strangely, this time they said little about Selma and not a word about King.

Even so, listening to Charles, hearing him make plans, and watching the eagerness grow in his eyes, I felt the old desire to build, to put together, to construct how the future might come to be. Having for years been the lone anthropologist at the University, and, when I first came, the only one in the state, teaching every subject from biological evolution to language and culture—expounding in one class on the significance of bipedality in the australopithecines and the very next hour arguing the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic determinism—and realizing with every breath how inadequate I must sound and how poorly prepared I was to carry forth the cause of my discipline, I rejoiced that new faces, each with a specialty, each with new knowledge, had appeared. I longed to tell Charles the pride I had in his arrival. But he wouldn't shut up.

From "Cry Lonesome and other Accounts of the Anthropologist's Project."

A Parody of Southern culture

...submitted by J. Anthony Paredes

Sometimes it seems Southern culture is intent on parodying itself. A portable sign set up in front of a convenience store spotted in June, 1989 outside a small, very small town in the panhandle of Florida, read:

**"Thank you for your business. Esther, Renee, Lamonda,
& Juanita." And just when you thought it was safe to
come out of the chifforobe!**

(With apologies for reifying "Southern culture")

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