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Army Enlists Anthropology in War Zones

David Rohde

In 2007 the U.S. military launched a $41 million project called the Human Terrain System. In hopes of helping U.S. soldiers better understand the cultural landscape in Iraq and Afghanistan, this project places anthropologists in combat zones to advise and help develop counterinsurgency operations.

Each Human Terrain System team consists of a team leader, an area specialist, a social scientist, and a research manager. The only civilian member of the team is the social scientist, typically an anthropologist with specialized knowledge on the region and its people. The team conducts original ground-level research and consults existing documents before presenting their conclusions and counsel to military commanders.

The use of anthropology in war zones is not a novel idea; it has created controversy in previous conflicts including World War II and the Vietnam War. In 1964, for example, a U.S. military project named CAMELOT was ostensibly organized to apply social science research to better understand the conditions which lead to military conflict; critics, however, believed that the military would use the project to destroy populist movements in Latin America, Asia, and elsewhere.

Today, anthropologists from the American Anthropological Association debate the ethics of civilian anthropology in Afghanistan and Iraq. Opponents of the Human Terrain System project argue that collaboration with combat operations violates the association's Code of Ethics which mandates that anthropologists do no harm to the subjects of their research. Advocates, on the other hand, counter that if anthropology can reduce combat casualties and assist civilian victims caught up in the destruction of war, anthropologists should apply their methods and training to reduce human suffering if they can. In this selection, David Rohde portrays both sides of this heated debate.

As you read this selection, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is mercenary anthropology?
- Why do many anthropologists object to using anthropologists in military operations?
- Why do military officials collaborate with anthropologists in combat operations and war zones?
- Is it ethical for professional anthropologists to work in combat operations?

The following terms discussed in this selection are included in the Glossary at the back of the book:

Human Terrain Team	*mercenary*
jirga	*Operation Khyber*

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SHABAK VALLEY, AFGHANISTAN

In this isolated Taliban stronghold in eastern Afghanistan, American paratroopers are fielding what they consider a crucial new weapon in counterinsurgency operations here: a soft-spoken civilian anthropologist named Tracy.

Tracy, who asked that her surname not be used for security reasons, is a member of the first Human Terrain Team, an experimental Pentagon program that assigns anthropologists and other social scientists to American combat units in Afghanistan and Iraq. Her team's ability to understand subtle points of tribal relations—in one case spotting a land dispute that allowed the Taliban to bully parts of a major tribe—has won the praise of officers who say they are seeing concrete results.

Col. Martin Schweitzer, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division unit working with the anthropologists here, said that the unit's combat operations had been reduced by 60 percent since the scientists arrived

in February, and that the soldiers were now able to focus more on improving security, health care and education for the population.

"We're looking at this from a human perspective, from a social scientist's perspective," he said. "We're not focused on the enemy. We're focused on bringing governance down to the people."

In September, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates authorized a $40 million expansion of the program, which will assign teams of anthropologists and social scientists to each of the 26 American combat brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since early September, five new teams have been deployed in the Baghdad area, bringing the total to six.

Yet criticism is emerging in academia. Citing the past misuse of social sciences in counterinsurgency campaigns, including in Vietnam and Latin America, some denounce the program as "mercenary anthropology" that exploits social science for political gain. Opponents fear that, whatever their intention, the scholars who work with the military could inadvertently cause all anthropologists to be viewed as intelligence gatherers for the American military.

Hugh Gusterson, an anthropology professor at George Mason University, and 10 other anthropologists are circulating an online pledge calling for anthropologists to boycott the teams, particularly in Iraq.

"While often presented by its proponents as work that builds a more secure world," the pledge says, "at base, it contributes instead to a brutal war of occupation which has entailed massive casualties."

In Afghanistan, the anthropologists arrived along with 6,000 troops, which doubled the American military's strength in the area it patrols, the country's east.

A smaller version of the Bush administration's troop increase in Iraq, the buildup in Afghanistan has allowed American units to carry out the counterinsurgency strategy here, where American forces generally face less resistance and are better able to take risks.

A NEW MANTRA

Since Gen. David H. Petraeus, now the overall American commander in Iraq, oversaw the drafting of the Army's new counterinsurgency manual last year, the strategy has become the new mantra of the military. A recent American military operation here offered a window into how efforts to apply the new approach are playing out on the ground in counterintuitive ways.

In interviews, American officers lavishly praised the anthropology program, saying that the scientists' advice has proved to be "brilliant," helping them see the situation from an Afghan perspective and allowing them to cut back on combat operations.

The aim, they say, is to improve the performance of local government officials, persuade tribesmen to join the police, ease poverty and protect villagers from the Taliban and criminals.

Afghans and Western civilian officials, too, praised the anthropologists and the new American military approach but were cautious about predicting long-term success. Many of the economic and political problems fueling instability can be solved only by large numbers of Afghan and American civilian experts.

"My feeling is that the military are going through an enormous change right now where they recognize they won't succeed militarily," said Tom Gregg, the chief United Nations official in southeastern Afghanistan. "But they don't yet have the skill sets to implement" a coherent nonmilitary strategy, he added.

Deploying small groups of soldiers into remote areas, Colonel Schweitzer's paratroopers organized jirgas, or local councils, to resolve tribal disputes that have simmered for decades. Officers shrugged off questions about whether the military was comfortable with what David Kilcullen, an Australian anthropologist and an architect of the new strategy, calls "armed social work."

"Who else is going to do it?" asked Lt. Col. David Woods, commander of the Fourth Squadron, 73rd Cavalry. "You have to evolve. Otherwise you're useless."

The anthropology team here also played a major role in what the military called Operation Khyber. That was a 15-day drive late this summer in which 500 Afghan and 500 American soldiers tried to clear an estimated 200 to 250 Taliban insurgents out of much of Paktia Province, secure southeastern Afghanistan's most important road and halt a string of suicide attacks on American troops and local governors.

In one of the first districts the team entered, Tracy identified an unusually high concentration of widows in one village, Colonel Woods said. Their lack of income created financial pressure on their sons to provide for their families, she determined, a burden that could drive the young men to join well-paid insurgents. Citing Tracy's advice, American officers developed a job training program for the widows.

In another district, the anthropologist interpreted the beheading of a local tribal elder as more than a random act of intimidation: the Taliban's goal, she said, was to divide and weaken the Zadran, one of southeastern Afghanistan's most powerful tribes. If Afghan and American officials could unite the Zadran, she said, the tribe could block the Taliban from operating in the area.

"Call it what you want, it works," said Colonel Woods, a native of Denbo, Pa. "It works in helping you define the problems, not just the symptoms."

EMBEDDING SCHOLARS

The process that led to the creation of the teams began in late 2003, when American officers in Iraq complained that they had little to no information about the local population. Pentagon officials contacted Montgomery McFate, a Yale-educated cultural anthropologist working for the Navy who advocated using social science to improve military operations and strategy.

Ms. McFate helped develop a database in 2005 that provided officers with detailed information on the local population. The next year, Steve Fondacaro, a retired Special Operations colonel, joined the program and advocated embedding social scientists with American combat units.

Ms. McFate, the program's senior social science adviser and an author of the new counterinsurgency manual, dismissed criticism of scholars working with the military. "I'm frequently accused of militarizing anthropology," she said. "But we're really anthropologizing the military."

Roberto J. González, an anthropology professor at San Jose State University, called participants in the program naïve and unethical. He said that the military and the Central Intelligence Agency had consistently misused anthropology in counterinsurgency and propaganda campaigns and that military contractors were now hiring anthropologists for their local expertise as well.

"Those serving the short-term interests of military and intelligence agencies and contractors," he wrote in the June issue of *Anthropology Today*, an academic journal, "will end up harming the entire discipline in the long run."

Arguing that her critics misunderstand the program and the military, Ms. McFate said other anthropologists were joining the teams. She said their goal was to help the military decrease conflict instead of provoking it, and she vehemently denied that the anthropologists collected intelligence for the military.

In eastern Afghanistan, Tracy wanted to reduce the use of heavy-handed military operations focused solely on killing insurgents, which she said alienated the population and created more insurgents. "I can go back and enhance the military's understanding," she said, "so that we don't make the same mistakes we did in Iraq."

Along with offering advice to commanders, she said, the five-member team creates a database of local leaders and tribes, as well as social problems, economic issues, and political disputes.

CLINICS AND MEDIATION

During the recent operation, as soldiers watched for suicide bombers, Tracy and Army medics held a free medical clinic. They said they hoped that providing medical care would show villagers that the Afghan government was improving their lives.

Civil affairs soldiers then tried to mediate between factions of the Zadran tribe about where to build a school. The Americans said they hoped that the school, which would serve children from both groups, might end a 70-year dispute between the groups over control of a mountain covered with lucrative timber.

Though they praised the new program, Afghan and Western officials said it remained to be seen whether the weak Afghan government could maintain the gains. "That's going to be the challenge, to fill the vacuum," said Mr. Gregg, the United Nations official. "There's a question mark over whether the government has the ability to take advantage of the gains."

Others also question whether the overstretched American military and its NATO allies can keep up the pace of operations.

American officers expressed optimism. Many of those who had served in both Afghanistan and Iraq said they had more hope for Afghanistan. One officer said that the Iraqis had the tools to stabilize their country, like a potentially strong economy, but that they lacked the will. He said Afghans had the will, but lacked the tools.

After six years of American promises, Afghans, too, appear to be waiting to see whether the Americans or the Taliban will win a protracted test of wills here. They said this summer was just one chapter in a potentially lengthy struggle.

At a "super jirga" set up by Afghan and American commanders here, a member of the Afghan Parliament, Nader Khan Katawazai, laid out the challenge ahead to dozens of tribal elders.

"Operation Khyber was just for a few days," he said. "The Taliban will emerge again."

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The Challenge of Race to American Historical Archaeology

Charles E. Orser Jr.

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Cultural and biological anthropologists play central roles in debates about race and racism, but archaeology has its own relevance as a subfield of anthropology which contributes to our understanding of how race shapes society (and vice versa).

While many archaeologists study ancient cultures and the early history of humankind, historical archaeologists apply their methods to learn about more recent societies and people. By uncovering the material remains of southern plantations, for example, we can better understand the daily lives and cultures of African slaves—people who are often marginalized through generalizations and insidious caricatures found within written documents from early U.S. history. Nonetheless, transcending historical constructions of race is not as simple as one may think.

Some historical archaeologists working in the United States, for example, conceal the dynamic construction of race when they analyze artifacts by identifying specific characteristics as indicative of whiteness or blackness. Other archaeologists, however, have shown that racially specific artifacts are buried in the imagination, not the soil. Archaeologist Vernon Baker analyzed ceramics excavated from the homesite of a freed slave who spent most of her life in Massachusetts; Baker undertook his study with the intention of revealing distinctly African American ceramic characteristics, but found he could not determine whether the artifacts signified poverty or ethnicity.

While historical archaeology in the United States may sometimes misinterpret race by confusing it with ethnicity and class, this selection explores how archaeology can be applied to increase our understanding of race as a social construction. More specifically, it demonstrates how material dimensions of racial categorization reveal the dynamic nature of racial identity and class distinctions.

As you read this selection, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the difference between race and ethnicity?
- Why are "knickknacks" and "kitsch" poor ethnic markers for African Americans in the archaeological record?
- Why do historical archaeologists have difficulties determining whether some artifacts reveal ethnic, racial, or class distinctions?
- How has historical archaeology interpreted material culture to determine racial and ethnic boundaries?
- What can historical archaeology contribute to our understanding of race?

The following terms discussed in this selection are included in the Glossary at the back of the book:

African survivals   *historical archaeology*
debt peonage   *material culture*
ethnic markers

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Issues of race and racism, though never absent from the realities of American life, are once again assuming a prominent place in our collective anthropological consciousness. This development is not completely surprising, since Americans, goaded by the writings of popsociologists and the comments of television's political pundits, tend to see every issue through a racial lens (Fischer et al. 1996:171). Scholars foregrounding race do not restrict themselves to any particular period of history, and reinterpretations of both the past and the present are well underway.

The pedigree of American anthropologists in the study of race is well documented, and it is only right that cultural and biological anthropologists should take center stage in the debates about race and racism that will surely emerge across the globe. But in light of the widespread interest that will undoubtedly be generated, we may well ask where archaeologists fit into the discussion. What is the role of these anthropologists in the work of examining race and racism? Will archaeologists be able to increase knowledge about the material dimensions of racism and to determine how material inequality has been attached to racial categorizations? When thinking about such questions in terms of the future, we may justifiably suppose that historical archaeologists will assume a prominent position in the intellectual enterprise of illuminating the material dimensions of American race and racism.

My purpose in this essay is to explore issues of race and racism in the archaeology of modern America, defined here as post-Columbian in time (see Orser 1996). Although American historical archaeologists should be in the forefront of the study of race and racism, with only a few exceptions their interest to date has been minimal. Overwhelmingly, the interest of American historical archaeologists has focused on issues of ethnicity rather than of race. This trend is showing signs of changing in line with current anthropological thinking, but historical archaeologists in America still have major strides to make before their research will become relevant to a wide range of scholars, including even their anthropological colleagues.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND ETHNICITY

Archaeologists' interest in past cultural entities stretches back to the nineteenth century, when pioneering prehistorians struggled to identify archaeological "cultures" in the silent refuse from the past (Shennan 1989). In the course of their research, these early practitioners learned that to make meaningful statements about past cultures they had to be able to distinguish them with material culture. The act of segregating the remains of different peoples seems relatively simple. It follows logically that peoples with different traditions will create and use things that look appreciably different from the things made and used by peoples from other traditions. Thus, the presence of red pots at one site may be used to identify men and women from one culture, whereas the discovery of white pots at another site may identify a second, distinctive culture. As is the case with most archaeological research, however, reality often imposes on even the best model, and prehistorians have regularly been bedeviled by cultural

identification. Childe's (1926:200) observation of over seventy years ago is thus still pertinent today: "The path of the prehistorian who wishes to draw ethnographical conclusions from archaeological data is often beset with pitfalls." The wisdom of Childe's comment is intimately understood by every archaeologist who has ever attempted to identify a discrete group of people with recourse only to their material remains.

The problems of cultural identification that torment prehistorians also exist in historical archaeology. With the benefit of supplemental textual information, however, historical archaeologists have a somewhat easier time understanding what kinds of socially defined groups can be expected to have inhabited certain sites. Put most stereotypically, Asian immigrants can be assumed to have lived in Chinatowns, Welsh men and women in mining camps, and men and women of African descent on slave plantations. Having acquired such basic knowledge from textual sources, historical archaeologists have generally framed their studies in terms of ethnicity, beginning with the idea of using material objects to identify past social groups.

Studies assigning ethnic affiliation through material culture began in historical archaeology with the search for "ethnic markers," or specific artifacts that could be associated with certain peoples, or "ethnic peoplehoods." At sites associated with African Americans, for example, such research began with a search for African survivals in the archaeological deposits at southern plantations. The logic here was straightforward. African slaves in the Americas brought their cultural knowledge with them from Africa. When they made or refashioned physical things for their use, they invariably did so in ways that were consistent with their cultural knowledge. Archaeologists excavating slave cabins at plantation sites, then, should be able to locate these objects and to distinguish them as signs of African cultural survival in the New World. Once this kind of research became standard practice, it was not long before archaeologists expanded the search for ethnic markers to other peoples. Archaeologists who associated colonoware pottery with African Americans soon expanded this understanding to link smoking pipes embossed with harps to Irish immigrants, and opium pipes with transplanted Asians.

Many historical archaeologists today recognize this kind of archaeological stereotyping as reifying perceived artifact associations, while investing artifacts with a static ethnicity by assuming that only an Irishman could smoke from a pipe marked "Erin Go Bragh." This kind of rudimentary interpretation has not entirely left the field, but some historical archaeologists have adopted much more sophisticated efforts to envision artifacts as symbols of group identity that,

rather than being static containers of ethnicity, are free to be manipulated by conscious human actors (Praetzellis et al. 1987). Within this more theoretically mature framework, some archaeologists have begun to see artifacts as tools for manipulating the social order while also creating and promoting a sense of people-hood (Praetzellis 1991; Staski 1993). Historical archaeologists who have stepped beyond the search for ethnic markers have begun with studies of assimilation and ethnic boundary maintenance, as well as investigations of ethnic pride, in which they have attempted to demonstrate the contribution of various nonelite groups to the multicultural history of the United States (Kelly and Kelly 1980; McGuire 1982:161–162; Staski 1990).

Numerous historical archaeologists have been drawn to the study of ethnicity, but fewer have shown an overt interest in the archaeological examination of race. Most historical archaeologists seemingly have been willing to accept the widely held, albeit nonanthropological, understanding that associates race with ethnicity. This facile understanding of race has made it possible for historical archaeologists to downplay or to sidestep racism as a means of creating and upholding the social inequalities that characterize American society. The failure of American historical archaeologists to address race and racism in any substantive way has served to maintain the field's tacit political conservatism, a stance consistent with the traditional use of historical archaeology to examine sites associated with places and personages important in the dominant national ideology. Race perception, though a major contributor to American social inequality, is largely absent from historical archaeological practice (but see comments in Orser and Fagan 1995:213–219).

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND RACE

Not every historical archaeologist, however, has entirely ignored race in American history. Examining sites associated with planters, overseers, and slaves at Cannon's Point Plantation in Georgia, John Otto (1980) made one of the earliest attempts to study race as an imposed condition. Otto argued that race was a fixed legal status that created a divide between "free white" planters and overseers, and "unfree black" slaves. Based on this caste model, Otto attempted to identify artifacts and artifact classes that had been distributed or acquired because of this categorization. In a way, Otto's use of race was just another way of looking at ethnicity, but he at least inserted the word *race* into the archaeological lexicon and made it a topic of serious archaeological investigation. Although his study is flawed in several serious and well-known respects

(Orser 1988a), the ambiguous results of his analysis demonstrated the complexities inherent in the static investigation of an extremely fluid social designation. Such simplistic analyses, though pioneering when first conducted, have been largely though not entirely abandoned for more sophisticated studies.

In an important statement on the importance of a historical archaeology of race, David Babson (1990) argued that by insisting on the study of ethnic groups as timeless, immutable social artifacts, historical archaeologists have missed important opportunities. Also, by reifying ethnic identity through association with specific artifacts or artifact classes, American historical archaeologists have ignored the ways in which racist beliefs have defined identity in relations of power. Babson argued that because racist ideology structures how people treat one another, racism should leave identifiable traces in archaeological deposits. To illustrate his point, Babson explored the material and spatial effects of racism at a slave plantation in South Carolina. The antebellum southern plantation is one category of site where we may expect racism to be readily apparent and therefore abundantly visible in archaeological deposits (also see Babson 1987). In a more recent though theoretically similar study, Robert Fitts (1996) demonstrated how racist beliefs were expressed in a segregationist use of space in the early plantations of Rhode Island.

In another study of plantation society, Terrence Epperson (1990b) argued that historical archaeologists must maintain a dual focus in their studies of race and racism. This dual perspective, modeled on W. E. B. Du Bois's (1961:16–17) concept of "double-consciousness," allows historical archaeologists—examining race in a racist society—to work toward two goals: the "valorization of the African American culture of resistance and the denaturalization of essentialist racial categories" (Epperson 1990b:36). This approach allows historical archaeologists to realize that racism "embodies contradictory tendencies of exclusion and incorporation, simultaneously providing a means of oppression and a locus of resistance" (Epperson 1990a:341).

These kinds of studies demonstrate the challenges faced by historical archaeologists when they attempt to examine race and racism. Race is a highly mutable, often situationally defined designation, and archaeologists do not know precisely how to study it using material culture. As if the changing nature of racial perception as expressed in material culture is not slippery enough, racism is inexorably intertwined with capitalism, another major topic of historical archaeological research. The presence of incipient and eventually full-blown capitalism in the New World after 1492 defines American historical archaeology, both in terms of its subject and its contemporary practice. Today, it is

as impossible to conceptualize the post-Columbian world without global commercialism as it is to imagine historical archaeology without capitalism (Handsman 1985; Leone 1995; Orser 1988b, 1996).

The appearance of market forces in a capitalist world has practical significance for historical archaeologists. The vast majority of objects used by post-Columbian Americans were not made by them. Thus, with increasing frequency as we move closer to our own time, men and women were called upon to select the things they wished to use from an often broad, but still finite assemblage of products. These acts of selection, and the assignment of meaning to the decisions made, are exceedingly complex issues, even in observable market situations. Faced with myriad possibilities to account for artifact presence at an archaeological site, historical archaeologists seeking distinctions between "ethnic markers," economic markers of class, and visible symbols of racial designation usually provide only tentative interpretations. The problems inherent in this kind of study were exemplified in historical archaeology several years ago.

In 1943, Adelaide and Ripley Bullen (1945) excavated a homesite in Andover, Massachusetts, that was once inhabited by a freed slave named Lucy Foster. Foster died in 1845 at the age of 88 as an impoverished freedwoman who had been on the poor rolls beginning in 1812, the year her mistress died. Several years after the Bullens' excavation, Vernon Baker (1978, 1980) analyzed the excavated ceramics in an effort to illuminate "patterns of material culture distinctive of Afro-American behavior" (Baker 1980:29), or in other words, to determine which ceramics were indicative of African American ethnicity. In the end, Baker could not decide whether his findings reflected poverty or ethnicity, a central problem for historical archaeology that is still unresolved almost twenty years later (e.g., Yamin 1997). The major reason for the inability of historical archaeologists to decide whether the artifacts they excavate relate to past ethnic, racial, or class designations derives from the simple reality that these typological threads are never really separate in American life.

Without doubt, understanding the material relationships between and among reified categories of ethnicity, race, and class presents perhaps the greatest challenge to contemporary American historical archaeology. The way in which archaeologists respond to this challenge will establish the relevance of their discipline within both anthropology and within the broader transdisciplinary investigation of human life. Although historical archaeologists have yet to take this challenge seriously, one recent analysis stands out by offering one direction for future research.

In a sophisticated study, Paul Mullins (1996) provides a thought-provoking exposition on African America and the consumer culture of the United States between 1850 and 1930. Mullins argues that material consumption presented African American consumers with a Janus face. On one hand, consumption provided a mechanism for African Americans to cement and to improve their places in American society, but on the other, it offered a way for racists to subordinate them by imposing on them a sentence of material inferiority. Living in a country dedicated above all to capitalism, African Americans, with the rise of all-pervasive mass consumption, were confronted with a way to enter public spheres of consumption that were once closed to them.

We may well suppose that the movement of African Americans toward full-scale American consumerism undoubtedly took many material forms, but Mullins's (1996:528–533) exploration of the African American acquisition of bric-a-brac is particularly instructive. Although we may be inclined to view knickknacks as insignificant kitsch, in truth they were symbolically charged representations of American abundance, nationalism, and racial purity. In some sense they were tiny pieces of Americana that could sit in the parlors of European Americans, and being rich with meaning, could express their owner's affluence and belonging, even though the objects themselves were not expensively priced. With Emancipation, however, the ownership of knickknacks became contested. For example, some mid-nineteenth-century commentators argued that commissaries were indispensable institutions on the reorganized plantations of the American South because without them, once-enslaved African Americans would waste their money on cheap bric-a-brac. Thus, paternalistic non–African Americans saw an almost-frantic need to create capitalistic institutions that would ostensibly assist freed African Americans during their initiation to full membership in the marketplace. In reality, however, these institutions were intended to control African American buying habits even down to the smallest objects. Commissaries were significant creations because many African American tenant farmers, living in debt peonage on the same estates they inhabited as slaves, could only purchase what was available on-site. Even when tenants were issued money rather than the all-too-common commissary tickets, racism and terrorism kept many of them from visiting nearby towns to obtain the wider variety of goods available on the open market. Thus, when knickknacks began to appear in African American homes in the late-nineteenth century, they were especially meaningful because they served to distance their owners from the racial and

class caricatures that were pervasive in racist America. Rather than having them represent simply a resistance to racist attitudes, African Americans recontextualized the knickknacks. What was important about them was not "what they were made to be, but what they have become" (Thomas 1991:4).

The meaning of knickknacks was further complicated when non–African American employers gave them as gifts to African American domestic servants. As Mullins (1996:532–533) observed, this seemingly simple act of gift-giving was highly significant. The ownership of such items could represent for African Americans a symbolic redefinition of their material world by allowing the ownership and display of objects once reserved strictly for others. Conversely, however, the knickknacks held a far different meaning for the non–African American gift givers. For them, the act of giving was a symbolic way of reproducing the social relations of dominance that pervaded American society. In offering something they perceived to be inexpensive, non–African Americans reasserted their power as dominant elites. Their recontextualization of the artifacts was really quite different from that which may have occurred among African Americans.

Mullins's insightful analysis reveals the always-close and ever-complicated relationship between race and acquisition in a capitalist environment. His analysis shows that historical archaeologists would be ill advised to use the presence of knickknacks as ethnic markers for African Americans. When found in archaeological deposits, brightly painted porcelain statuettes of a regal-looking George Washington or of quaintly dressed peasant girls do more than simply reify our already stereotypic understanding of the relationship between artifact ownership and past social standing. As Mullins (1996:533) observes, "Material goods and consumer space harbored a legion of possibilities which played on affluence, democratization, and nationalism and lurked within a rich range of accessible objects and flexible symbols." Clearly, when we begin to analyze even the most commonplace artifacts in terms of race and class, we enter a fluid world where meanings, being temporally and even situationally mutable, defy easy interpretation.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, RACE, AND POVERTY

In Mullins's analysis we see the glaring complexities inherent in analyzing race in American historical archaeology. Much of the interpretive challenge centers on the complex relationship between racism and consumerism. This relationship was succinctly expressed by boxer Larry Holmes when he said, "I was black once, when I was poor" (Oates 1987:62). The problem with race, from a purely archaeological standpoint, is that it is not ethnicity. As a result, even if the search for archaeological "racial markers" was desirable as an end in itself, it would be appreciably more difficult than the search for "ethnic markers." On a practical level, though, the search for racial markers would be no more satisfying than the search for ethnic markers. Nonetheless, historical archaeologists still maintain a strong interest in examining archaeological deposits in terms of reified social entities, even in cases where the authors claim to do just the opposite (see Cook et al. 1996:58).

At present, the few historical archaeologists who are interested in questions of race confine themselves to African Americans. For historical archaeologists, it is as if race attaches only to men and women of color. But even a brief consideration of the Irish illustrates the flawed nature of this conclusion and suggests the immature state of race research in historical archaeology.

For the sake of convenience, we may consider the Irish to be an ethno-nationalistically defined people from an identifiable politico-geographical unit, an island in the North Atlantic (GAP 1987:24–25; Rose 1974:13). Given the American propensity for creating "us" and "them" categories around perceived racial categories, we may be willing today to consider the Irish as members of the White Race. The racialization of the Irish, however, was a much more contested process that took many years to be resolved. In short, the Irish were not always "white."

Recorded history shows that the colonizing English considered the native Irish to be a barbaric and inferior people. In 1366, English overlords passed the Statutes of Kilkenny as a way to legislate enforced acculturation. The native Irish were commanded to use the English language, to ride their horses with saddles in the English manner, to use English naming practices, and to wear English clothing (Bartlett 1993:239).

With the rise of large-scale enslavement in the New World many years later, it was not long before English observers began to compare the still-despised Irish with African American slaves. For example, in 1749, Anglican bishop and philosopher George Berkeley wrote that "The negroes in our Plantations have a saying— 'If negro was not negro, Irishman would be negro' " (Berkeley 1871:439). Just over one hundred years later, the staunchly anti-Catholic clergyman Charles Kingsley stated that he was "haunted by the human chimpanzees" he saw around Sligo. For him, "to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they

were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours" (Gibbons 1991:96). Two years later, the English satirical magazine *Punch* referred to the Irish as "A creature manifestly between the Gorilla and the Negro," and as late as 1885, British anthropologist John Beddoe referred to the Irish as "Africanoid" (Foster 1993:184; Young 1995:72). Not surprisingly, such attitudes were also expressed visually, and it was common during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for English artists to portray the Irish with apelike features (Curtis 1971). Racism thus became a common element of English-Irish interaction, as the English strove to establish the Irish as the Other, comparable to the many Others their country's explorers and colonists encountered around the globe (Doan 1997; Lebow 1976; Waters 1995).

When Irish immigrants began to flood the streets of America in the early-nineteenth century, it was not at all clear that they were members of the so-called White Race (Ignatiev 1995:41). Since Congress decreed in 1790 that only "whites" could be naturalized citizens, Irish immigrants found that they had to fight for the national privilege of being perceived as white. The American White Race was an invention, and since the days of the Puritans, the American power elite consciously worked to build a homogeneous Americanized state based on their perception of whiteness (Allen 1994; Carlson 1987). Before Emancipation, foremen and labor-gang bosses often used Irish laborers instead of slaves for the most dangerous jobs because the Irish, as poor freemen, were wholly expendable (Ignatiev 1995:109). As a people, the Irish did not move into the ranks of "white" America until they repudiated the rights of those deemed nonwhite. The stereotypic character of the evil Irish overseer on the southern slave plantation is a literary device intended to show this accommodation. Tara, mythic America's most famous plantation, was named for a venerated site in Ireland, and its owners had the time-honored Irish name of O'Hara (Mitchell 1936).

To summarize, the Irish in America had to struggle to attain the racial designation that put them in the nation's highest racial category. To accomplish this act of wholesale racial advance, they had to overcome years of discrimination to create a place for themselves in the American scheme of whiteness. Some Irish immigrants even climbed to the highest echelons of the American elite, with their names becoming synonymous with wealth, power, and the American Dream (Birmingham 1973; Greeley 1981). Nonetheless, the movement of the Irish into the ranks of White America has yet to interest American historical archaeologists. The Irish in America are still perceived

monolithically as an ethnic group inhabiting the sphere of whiteness, and their place in White America is taken for granted.

RACE IN THE FUTURE OF HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

If the present corpus of scholarship is any guide, the way in which Americans address issues of race and racism will undoubtedly be many and varied over the next several years. There is danger, of course, in the notion that the most serious discussions will be restricted to the realm of scholastic inquiry and will not reach a wider audience (Cole 1995). The problem of intellectual isolation is particularly acute for archaeology, since the only times the field is regularly mentioned outside the profession is when the popular media designates a new discovery as especially spectacular, or when pseudo-scientists have made some new outlandish claim.

The possible courses of action for the development of serious, concerted research in the historical archaeology of race are infinite, and we may well hope and expect that the approaches taken by archaeologists will be varied. I believe, however, that the examination of the material side of race and racism provides archaeologists with a rare opportunity to use their discipline's unique transdisciplinary insights and methods to promote greater understanding far beyond archaeology. In a nation like the United States—where the national ideology is wholly given over to capitalist accumulation and conspicuous consumption—the role of historical archaeologists may be easily expanded beyond the narrow halls of a few universities and the conference rooms of cultural resource management firms. At a time when political conservatives are using race in a wrongheaded and divisive manner—the effusive excitement over *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein and Murray 1994) being one clear example—historical archaeologists are afforded the opportunity to show the historic origins and manifestations of racial categorization and the relationship of such pigeonholing to social and material inequality.

In an important essay, Jesse L. Jackson Jr. (1997) argues that it is not enough to talk about race in America without taking action on employment. To discuss one without the other is to engage in what Jackson calls "race entertainment." Racial justice is not synonymous with economic justice, but the two are clearly linked. As Jackson (1997:24) notes, "In a nation with the economic and technological ability to provide every American with a decent life, it is a scandal that there should be so much social misery."

Will race ever become an important subject in historical archaeology, or will historical archaeologists only engage in "race entertainment," forever examining race as if it were ethnicity? This question cannot be answered now, but to become true partners in the expanding anthropological discourse on race in America, historical archaeologists must seek to illustrate the effects of racism on African Americans and other peoples, developing at the same time a historical archaeology of whiteness. Baker (1978:113) inadvertently made this suggestion when he stated that to interpret the meaning of the ceramics at Lucy Foster's homesite, historical archaeologists must also conduct research on sites inhabited by poor whites. Most historical archaeologists now accept "whiteness as an unassailable fact of nature" rather than as a social construct (Epperson 1997:10). This tendency is adequately demonstrated by examining how historical archaeologists have examined, or not examined, the Irish in America.

Because the appellations of whiteness and nonwhiteness contain deep-seated notions of social inequality, studies of domination and resistance should constitute a major focus of research in historical archaeology (Paynter and McGuire 1991). Through this sustained research activity, historical archaeologists will be able to denaturalize the condition of whiteness, and to demonstrate the material dimensions of using whiteness as a source of racial domination even in cases, such as with the Irish, where racism may initially appear absent (Harrison 1995:63).

Recently, Robert Paynter (1997) proposed that historical archaeologists must understand the complexities inherent in examining social inequality in historic America. Three questions he posed as worthy of future study in historical archaeology are particularly relevant here:

> Under what conditions do stratified societies mark and hide social cleavages with material culture? How, during the age of capital, did wage labor, mass consumption, and white supremacy produce distinctive and shifting identities? And, how did local communities redefine identities among these global shifts in race, class, and gender relations? [Paynter 1997:11]

Providing answers to such questions as these will not only make historical archaeology more relevant to anthropological inquiry, it will also raise the profile and societal relevance of the field. Whether large numbers of historical archaeologists ever move to the examination of the material dimensions of racial categorization is simply a matter of what historical archaeologists wish their field to be.

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9

Ancient Bodies, Modern Customs, and Our Health

Elizabeth D. Whitaker

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Culture determines the way we have children and how we raise children. The American way of childbirth—with the woman in a hospital, lying on her back with her legs up in stirrups, connected to a fetal monitor, and numbed with an epidural anesthetic—is a cultural creation that has developed in recent history. Rarely do we question our cultural traditions, especially when there are experts and expert opinions. People in all cultures take comfort in the fact that they are doing things the "right way," that is, the way things are supposed to be as dictated by tradition. The comfort derived from our traditions is most evident in rituals, like weddings or funerals. But cultural traditions (and dependence on cultural experts) also play a major role in how people go about being parents. In the United States, mothers and fathers try to do the best they can for their children, often unaware how the larger cultural context shapes or limits the possibilities. Children, in turn, get not just their genes but also their ideas, beliefs, and values from their parents, thus perpetuating the culture. But people also have minds of their own, and there are more rational ways to choose one's child-rearing practices than to simply accept the opinions of "experts" and authorities. After all, it is also part of our culture to question authority!

Biological anthropologists believe that evolution has shaped our bodies and therefore strongly influences our health. In this selection, Elizabeth Whitaker reviews evidence from evolutionary medicine about the health implications of infant feeding and sleeping patterns. She demonstrates that American cultural

ideas emphasizing the individual have detracted from the fact that mothers and their infants form a biological interacting pair during pregnancy and continuing in infancy. Patterns of breast-feeding in other cultures are undoubtedly linked to health issues such as birth spacing, allergies, and infant diarrhea and dehydration. It is less obvious, however, that the disappearance of evolutionary patterns of breast-feeding is also linked to the increasing incidence of breast cancer in countries like the United States. Finally, there is solid evidence that the cultural pattern of babies sleeping in their own cribs—by themselves, in a separate room, and often placed on their stomachs—is linked to the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

As you read this selection, ask yourself the following questions:

- What benefits does breast-feeding have for the mother? What benefits does it have for the child?
- Why do people get fevers? Why do people take medicine to stop fevers?
- Does the U.S. socioeconomic system shape our patterns of breast-feeding and weaning?
- Is evolutionary medicine against progress?

The following terms discussed in this selection are included in the Glossary at the back of the book:

diseases of civilization	*ovulation*
evolutionary medicine	*SIDS*
food foragers	

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Mothers and infants are physiologically interconnected from conception to the termination of breast-feeding. While this mutual biological relationship is obvious during pregnancy, to many people it is less clear in the period following birth. In Western society,

individuals are expected to be autonomous and independent, and this ideal extends to mothers and their babies. Individual autonomy is a core value in our economy, society, and family life: even to our understanding of health and disease. However, it is not a widely shared notion, as more *sociocentric* conceptions of personhood are very common in other cultures and have prevailed in other time periods. Until the

Industrial Revolution, Western society also recognized the dependence relationships among individuals and families, and this matched an agrarian social structure involving mutual responsibilities and obligations. Mothers and infants were considered interdependent and there was relatively little cultural intervention in or manipulation of gestation or lactation.

Until a century ago, medical experts followed Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen in saying that *not* to breast-feed was to have half a birth, because mother's milk came from the same blood which nourished the fetus. Today, in many cultures around the world, infants are not expected to be independent of their mothers for as long as they breast-feed—that is, for at least the first few years of life. These beliefs reflect an appreciation of the fact that breast-feeding represents a physiological process for both mothers and infants and is more than a simple question of nutrition.

Cultural interventions in the mother–infant relationship are bound to bring significant biological outcomes. Common infant feeding practices in Western societies, such as timed, widely spaced meals, early weaning, pacifier use, and isolated infant sleep with few or no nighttime feedings, are very new and rare in human history, and do not reflect "natural" needs or optimal behaviors, as is commonly presumed. They result in partial or short-term breast-feeding that is very different from the "traditional" or ancient pattern humans have known over evolutionary time. This pattern involves frequent, exclusive, and prolonged breast-feeding, and brings the greatest benefits to mothers and infants. These benefits include reduced risk of breast cancer and the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), diseases which share a common thread in their history: the decline in breast-feeding in the Western industrial societies. By examining them together, we will try to overcome the assumption of individual autonomy, which is so entrenched in Western culture that studies on breast-feeding commonly focus on either the mother or child, but not both.

OLD GENES, NEW LIFESTYLES

Beyond the level of personal experience, breast-feeding concerns both biological processes and cultural interpretation and manipulation. Biocultural anthropology examines such a topic by bringing together cross-cultural comparison and evolutionary considerations. This can mean, for example, comparing human physiology and behavior to those of other primates, such as chimpanzees and gorillas, with whom we share common ancestors and diverge genetically by less than 2 percent. It also involves looking at different strategies for making a living among human populations. In particular, anthropologists are interested in comparing hunter-gatherers, or foragers, to agricultural or industrial societies. We study modern-day foragers such as the !Kung San of Botswana or the Gainj of Papua New Guinea because their diet, exercise, and health patterns roughly represent those of humans for the vast majority of evolutionary history.

With a few exceptions, our genetic endowment has not changed since the first foraging groups began to practice settled agriculture and animal husbandry between 13,000 and 9,000 years ago (the *Neolithic Revolution*). From the start, the lifestyle change produced notable health consequences. Early agriculturists had shorter stature, greater nutritional stress, and higher infant mortality, especially at the age of weaning. Whereas foragers suffered annual seasonal food shortages, these were less severe than the famines that resulted when crops or livestock were lost. Although famines are rare now, especially in the wealthier countries, constant over-nutrition produces new health problems. At the same time, the diet in many impoverished countries remains scanter and less varied than the foraging diet.

In contrast to what we think of as proper nutrition, foragers subsist on a low-calorie diet made up exclusively of wild plant parts (roots, seeds, stalks, leaves, nuts, fruits) and game or fish. There are no dairy products (except mother's milk) or processed grains in their diet. Most of the food comes from plants, while meat is a less reliable but highly valued supply of concentrated protein, fat (though only one-seventh the amount in the meat of domesticated animals), and vitamins and minerals.

Foragers collect these foods over distances of 10 or more kilometers per day, often carried out in a pattern of one or two days of work for six to eight hours and one or two days of other activities. This averages out to more than 6½ kilometers per day. Women routinely carry up to 15 kilograms (almost 35 pounds) of food, a bundle which can reach half their body weight. They also carry children up to three or four years of age, adding up to another 15 kilograms. In addition to this physical activity, foragers move camp several times each year. Because they work outdoors and do not have climate control indoors, they are constantly exposed to the elements.

Unlike people in affluent societies, foragers do not experience any "natural" rise in blood pressure with age. They do not undergo hearing loss or become overweight as inevitable consequences of aging, nor does their body mass increase. They are not free of disorders including accidents and injuries, degenerative bone disease, complications of childbirth, and infectious disease, but the major health problems of the Western societies are very rare. These "diseases of civilization" or

"chronic diseases" include heart disease, hypertension, strokes, and cancer, as well as emphysema, cirrhosis, diabetes, and obesity.

While we all share a genetic propensity for the chronic diseases, it is our lifestyle and environment which cause their wide expression today. Our biological characteristics are those of Stone Age humans practicing a hardy foraging lifestyle, making our bodies adept at storing fat against the likelihood of periodic food shortage. This helps to explain why overweight and obesity are so common wherever physical activity and exposure to the elements are minimal while food supplies are plentiful and steady.

Similarly, the perspective of evolutionary medicine helps us to understand cancer as the cost of the beneficial biological adaptation of tissue repair and regeneration through cell division. In all living things, the body's various ways of regulating and suppressing cell division become less effective in older age. However, over the past centuries, cancer rates have risen way beyond those which would result simply from the increase in the proportion of individuals living into old age. Beyond exposure to carcinogenic and viral agents, this can be explained in terms of changes in diet and lifestyle away from the foraging pattern. Our diet is scarce in protective micro-nutrients such as beta-carotene and selenium, but abundant in macro-nutrients such as fat, protein, and calories which, in themselves and in relation to body composition and size, promote cancer.

Compared to the chronic diseases, we have been adapting to infectious organisms for ages, and vice versa. In many cases, fever is an adaptive defense against infection. It raises the body's temperature and speeds up its metabolic processes, helping to eliminate viruses and bacteria. When ectothermic ("cold-blooded") animals are injected with virus, they seek out a hotter place, and are more likely to die from the infection if prevented from doing so. Recent studies have found that people who take antipyretics (drugs such as aspirin or acetaminophen, which suppress fever) are infectious longer and take longer to recover from colds, flu, and chicken pox.

Fever also promotes the sequestration of iron which takes place as a defense against many kinds of infection. The iron is bound more tightly to protein and hidden in the liver, reducing the amount that circulates in the blood. The resulting anemia is typically treated with iron supplements, but iron is a necessary mineral to many bacteria and their need for it is increased by fever. This pair of evolved defensive systems—increased heat and decreased iron—is therefore blocked by human interventions such as iron supplements and antipyretics. On the other hand, some pathogens actually reproduce better or become more toxic in the presence of fever and reduced iron, which

would be expected since their rapid reproductive rates and short lives give them an evolutionary advantage. What this suggests is that an evolutionary perspective is needed to better target and treat symptoms appropriately, just as it contributes to our analysis of lactation and the health outcomes of variations in its practice.

MOTHERS AND INFANTS

When breast-feeding patterns are compared across mammals (from *mamma,* Latin for "breast"), non-human primates, and humans, "on-demand" or baby-fed feeding emerges as the evolutionary norm for our species. Many aspects of the ancestral pattern are shared by non-Western societies today and were common in Western populations until a few generations ago. A relationship of interdependence and mutuality is expressed in parent–infant co-sleeping and exclusive, unrestricted breast-feeding well beyond the first year.

The ancestral pattern involves frequent feedings (from several times an hour to once every hour or two) all day and night with no limit on their duration; no supplementary foods before six months and low to moderate use of pre-chewed foods or very ripe fruits thereafter; and complete weaning at 2½ to 4 years, when the child is able to walk long distances on its own. Mother's milk remains the principal food until 15 to 18 months, after which it continues to be a significant source of nutrition. When these conditions prevail, infants are more likely to survive, pregnancy is prevented for 2 to 3 years or more, and births are spaced 3 to 5 years apart. In all but one family of primates, lactation implies *anovulation* (lack of ovulation). In our closest relatives, births are spaced as far as 5 (in chimpanzees) to 8 (in orangutans) years apart.

In foraging societies such as the !Kung, the mother carries her child in a sling against her body, providing constant physical contact and access to the breast. Infants hardly ever cry, and are not expected to cry. Their signs of distress bring an immediate response from their mother or another relative, but never with any kind of pacifier other than the breast. Infants are constantly cuddled and kissed all over the body, including the genitals. Parents are bewildered to hear that Western infants cry and are left alone in a crib, swaddled perhaps, to do so for long periods without being held or allowed to suckle. They do not share the idea that infants and children need to be denied what they want or they will grow up spoiled or dependent. Indeed, the opposition between independence and dependence has relatively little meaning in these societies.

Milk production and release are regulated by pituitary hormones secreted in response to nipple stimulation, the emptying of the breast, and psychological

factors. Prolactin is released in response to suckling, stimulating the synthesis of milk in the lacteal cells within a couple of hours. Oxytocin is also released in response to nipple stimulation, and immediately causes the cells around the milk-producing bulbs and ducts to contract and secrete milk. This pathway can be affected by psychological factors in positive and negative ways. A thought, emotion, or sound or sight of an infant can cause the release of oxytocin. Contrariwise, fear and other stressful emotions lead to the secretion of epinephrine, which impedes the circulation of oxytocin to breast tissue by constricting the blood vessels around it.

After the surge following nipple stimulation, prolactin levels drop off quickly, reaching baseline levels within two hours. Consequently, to maintain continuous milk production it is necessary to breast-feed at short intervals and keep prolactin levels high. Especially in the early months, more frequent feedings result in greater milk production. Milk that is not secreted but left in the breast has an independent dampening effect on production through both a substance in the milk and the mechanical pressure it exerts on the surrounding cells. This kind of control over milk production seems to apply in a preponderant way after the first two or three months, against a diminishing but still important background of hormonal regulation. Moreover, more frequent feedings and complete removal of milk lead to higher average fat and calorie content. Infants fed without restrictions are able to vary feed frequencies and the degree of breast-emptying and thereby regulate their nutrition very closely. They tend to be satiated and satisfied after feedings.

High prolactin levels inhibit ovulation, so that infrequent feedings and reduced time at the breast lead to less effective suppression of fertility. In addition, other hormones involved in the menstrual cycle are affected by frequent breast-feeding, interfering with normal follicle growth, ovulation (should an egg mature), development of the endometrium, and implantation of a fertilized ovum. As women space feedings at wider intervals, introduce supplementary foods, and reduce nighttime feeding, the contraceptive effect of breast-feeding weakens and ovulation and menstruation resume.

The composition of human milk also indicates that it is made to be given frequently. Unlike other mammals such as rabbits or tree shrews, who keep their young in nests and leave them all day or even longer, primates carry their babies and thereby provide them with transportation and temperature regulation, for which their milk is less fatty. Primate infants are born less mature and grow more slowly, explaining why protein is relatively scarce in the milk. Continuous

breast-feeding and physical contact also protect the infant from predators, as well as illness. Contact with others is reduced, while exposure to the same diseases leads to the production of immunological substances, which are then transmitted in the mother's milk.

In recent years, there has been wide publication of the wonderful properties of breast-milk, from nutritional components to immunological factors, sedative substances to anti-allergenic properties. These benefits make breast-fed infants better able to resist and overcome infections, including those of the gastrointestinal and respiratory tract (which includes the middle ear). Breast-feeding promotes optimal growth and development of the body's systems, such as the cardiovascular, immune, nervous, and gastrointestinal systems. It also protects breast-fed infants from protein malnutrition, even in areas of the world in which it is common. This is because the quality of milk is remarkably constant across mothers, regardless of their diet or nutritional status.

The uniform quality of mother's milk, even in conditions of stress, brings up two points. It implies that we should focus upon infant demand and suckling behavior when there are problems in breast-feeding, but the tendency is instead to search for maternal causes. Secondly, by focusing on the benefits of breast-feeding in terms of the useful properties of the milk, we may fail to acknowledge the impacts of breast-feeding on the mother. Mothers who are overworked and poorly nourished may become depleted, their lives shortened by repeated cycles of gestation and lactation.

On the other hand, assuming good conditions, breast-feeding has many positive effects on mothers. It helps the uterus to return to its normal size and shape after childbirth, hastens weight loss and moderates digestion, metabolism, blood circulation, and sensations of well-being. It favors bone consolidation, preventing osteoporosis and hip and other fractures in later life, and reduces the risk of women's reproductive cancers. In order to appreciate these benefits, we must go beyond looking at breast-milk as a mere product manufactured for the advantage of the child.

Whereas in foraging and agricultural societies mothers and their fetuses or infants are considered inseparable, even when physically divided after childbirth, in Western society they are considered independent even during gestation. In evolutionary biology, this is an appropriate concept since the interests of the child and the mother may conflict: for example, the fetus of humans and all placental animals taps into the mother's blood circulation, injecting fetal hormones into it and drawing nutrients from the mother's organs if they are not available through her diet. Yet, the biological concept of individuality simultaneously presumes physiological interdependence. The cultural

concept of the autonomous individual denies it. After childbirth, the separation between mother and child is complete, and the physiological interrelationship in breast-feeding is obscured by a focus on the infant's nutritional and psychological independence. This has notable health outcomes for both mothers and infants, some of which we will now examine in light of an evolutionary perspective.

BREAST CANCER

Until the nineteenth century, European medical philosophers observed that well-off women who lived in cities were much more susceptible to breast cancer than women who lived in the countryside. They attributed this difference to the abandonment of breast-feeding, which, they noted, caused numerous other maladies and grave health effects. Even today, not only is breast cancer more common in affluent societies, but within them it is more frequent among the wealthier classes.

The decline in breast-feeding has been part of a broad change in reproductive and child-rearing patterns since the Industrial Revolution. Urban women were the first to undergo the *secular trend* of earlier maturation and greater achieved stature. They experienced earlier puberty, delayed marriage and first birth, fewer pregnancies, and reduced or forsaken breast-feeding. Over time, these patterns diffused through the entire population.

Many of the things we consider "natural" are therefore more like aberrations or deviations from what evolution has produced. To illustrate, a typical woman of a foraging or pre-industrial society reaches puberty and her first menstrual period *(menarche)* at the age of 16 to 18. She becomes pregnant within three or four years, breast-feeds for three or four years, and has a subsequent child four or five years after the first. This sequence repeats itself between four and six times before she reaches menopause at around the age of 45. As a result, she has about 150 ovulations in her lifetime, taking account of non-ovulatory cycles at the near and far end of her reproductive years. Periodic nutritional and exercise stress reduce the number of ovulations even more. Because only half of her children survive long enough to reproduce, population grows very slowly, as was the case until historical times. Lactation has represented humankind's main method of birth control for most of our existence.

In contrast, Western women enjoy a stable food supply, including foods concentrated in fat, protein, and calories, and experience very little stress from exercise and exposure. Over the past centuries, this has caused them, and men, to reach higher stature and lower age at puberty. Girls arrive at menarche at the age of 12 or 13, while menopause is delayed to 50 or 55 years. Significantly, the first birth is postponed for 13 or 14 years, to the age of 25 or 26, and the average number of births is reduced to two or three. The average Western woman breast-feeds for a few months, if at all. Because she spaces feedings at long intervals and supplements with other foods, breast-feeding does not inhibit ovulation for long. As a result, population growth was very rapid in Europe for several centuries (and in many developing countries today) not only because mortality rates were falling but also because women did not have a long interval of infertility associated with lactation.

If she does not take oral contraceptives, the average woman will ovulate around 450 times over her lifetime. Ovulation will rarely be suppressed due to physiological constraints associated with nutritional or exercise stress. This amounts to three or four times as many ovulations over the life-span, and some scholars have suggested that the proportion may be as high as nine times.

The differences in reproductive patterns between women in foraging as opposed to affluent societies match some of the currently known risk factors for women's reproductive cancers (breast, endometrium, ovary), including age at menarche and menopause, *parity* (number of births), and breast-feeding. Differences in diet and physical activity, as well as body composition, also agree with identified non-reproductive risk factors such as fat intake and percent body fat. Together with other factors, they give Western women, especially below the age of 60, at least 20 times the risk of reproductive cancer. The risk for breast cancer may be more than 100 times higher. In nonhuman primates, these cancers are extremely rare.

For all three cancers, earlier age at menarche and later age at menopause increase risk, while greater parity reduces risk. Like these factors, breast-feeding is protective against ovarian cancer because it inhibits ovulation. This reduces the monthly mechanical injury to the ovarian epithelium and the release of hormones by the follicle, which are considered the main elements in the etiology of ovarian cancer. For breast cancer, lactation and earlier first birth are also protective factors.

The breast's susceptibility to carcinogenesis is directly related to the rate of epithelial cell proliferation. Consequently, the lengthening of the period between menarche and first birth widens the window of time in which undifferentiated structures destined to become secretory glands are vulnerable to carcinogenic agents and therefore the initiation of tumors. In breast tissue, cell proliferation is promoted by exposure to estrogen, apparently in concert with progesterone, and cell division rates are highest during the first five years after

menarche. With pregnancy and lactation, these structures differentiate and develop, devoting themselves less ardently to cell proliferation. Their cell cycle is longer, and they are more resistant to chemical carcinogens. Subsequent pregnancies may also be protective because they increase the proportion of fully differentiated secretory lobules, until in advanced age pregnancy increases risk by favoring the expansion of initiated tumors.

While the age at first pregnancy seems to be of primary importance and may even modulate the protective effect of breast-feeding and later pregnancies, breast-feeding in itself provides protection against breast cancer in step with the number of children breast-fed and the cumulative duration of breast-feeding. The reason some studies have found no effect or a weak one is that they were based upon the experiences of Western women, who do not generally conform to the ancient pattern of breast-feeding at close intervals for at least a year. Short periods of breast-feeding may in fact provide very little protection.

At the level of the breast fluid, there are lower levels of a potential carcinogen, cholesterol-epoxide, as well as cholesterol, in breast-feeding women, a reduction that persists for two years after childbirth or lactation. Estrogen levels are also lower, protecting the breast tissue directly as opposed to systemically through variations in blood estrogen levels. Breast-feeding also affects the turnover rate of substances in the breast fluid, so that prolonged breast-feeding reduces exposure of the breast epithelial tissue to potential exogenous carcinogens.

Exercise, high consumption of dietary fiber, and low fat consumption and percent body fat are all protective against breast and other cancers. High dietary levels of fat and protein (especially from animal sources) and total calories are associated with higher levels of breast cancer across populations and within subpopulations of single countries. Animal studies have shown that dietary protein promotes tumor development while restriction of protein intake inhibits tumor growth. The enzymes in adipose tissue convert precursor adrenal hormones into active estrogens. Dietary fat raises serum estrogen levels and promotes tumor development and may also play a role in originating tumors. In contrast to Western women, women in foraging societies have low serum estrogen levels.

Western women's skinfold thickness (a measure of the proportion of body fat) is almost twice that of pre-agricultural women. Compared to college athletes, women who are not athletic in college (and less active in adolescence and somewhat less active after college) have two to five times the rates of breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer. Women in affluent societies consume 40 percent or more of their calories in the form of fat, against 20 percent to 25 percent among pre-agricultural women, but only 20 as opposed to 100 grams of fiber per day. Dietary fiber is protective because it reduces free estrogen levels in the blood. It helps to prevent bowel dysfunction, which has been associated with breast cancer, and the severe constipation which can lead to the migration of mutagenic substances from the gastrointestinal tract to the breast fluid.

The protective effect of breast-feeding goes beyond the current generation to the next one, for early nutritional influences seem to have an important effect on later susceptibility to cancer. Breast-feeding contributes to the development and regulation of the immune system, which plays a central role in suppressing the initiation and growth of tumors. It prevents over-consumption of fat, protein, and calories. This influences body size and composition, the baseline against which nutrition works throughout life. That is, breast-feeding prevents the accelerated growth of muscles and fat stores associated with breast cancer risk factors: faster growth rates, earlier menarche, and greater achieved stature and size. Women who have been breast-fed themselves are less likely to develop breast cancer.

We have seen that breast-feeding benefits both the mother and child with respect to prevention of breast cancer. In the mother, breast-feeding according to the ancient pattern influences systemic hormone levels and the micro-environment of the breast tissue, reducing exposure to exogenous and endogenous carcinogens. In the child, breast-milk provides an appropriate balance of nutrients that prevents over-nutrition, rapid growth, and early maturation. This circular interaction of factors expresses and can be predicted by the concept of the mother-infant dyad as a biological interacting pair.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

From a global perspective, Western society's expectation that infants should sleep alone for long hours away from their parents stands out as anomalous, even if it fits well in its cultural context. One unfortunate consequence is that the diffusion of lone infant sleep over the past several generations may be related to the rise in the frequency of infant death from the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

The meaning of reproduction and child-rearing changed with the emergence of industrial society and its predominance of small, simple families (couples plus children). In this kind of society, the crib symbolizes the child's place and is usually placed in a separate room. By contrast, in rural pre-industrial Europe and

in a survey of over 90 contemporary non-Western societies, infants invariably slept in the same bed or room as their parents. SIDS does not appear to exist in these societies, nor is it found among non-human primates or other mammals. In many Western societies, SIDS is the major cause of infant death, though rates are very low among sub-populations in which there is co-sleeping and nocturnal breast-feeding. Peak mortality is between the ages of two and four months, with 90 percent of all deaths occurring before the age of six months.

While there seem to be many intrinsic and secondary factors that affect infants in different ways to bring about SIDS events, one common factor is that SIDS usually happens during sleep. While breast-feeding in itself reduces risk, it is the frequent, intensive, prolonged breast-feeding implying mother–infant co-sleeping that may provide the best environment for avoiding the disease.

Co-sleeping infants lie on their backs or sides with their heads turned toward the breast and feed through the night, often without waking their mothers. Even newborns and very young infants are able to attach to the breast on their own, provided it is within reach. In non-industrialized societies, it is rare for infants younger than one year to sleep long hours with only a few arousals or feedings. They do not increase the length of their longest sleep episode within the first few months, nor do they stop feeding at night, as parents in Western societies expect.

These same patterns are observed in sleep laboratories, where mothers report waking up and feeding their child many times fewer than the number recorded on the monitors. They and their infants move through the various stages of sleep in synchrony, shifting between them more frequently and spending less time in the deep sleep which makes arousal more difficult. If in the laboratory the breast-feeding mother spends the night in a separate room from her child, on average she breast-feeds less than half as often. She also tends to put the child on its stomach when leaving it to sleep alone. Notably, breast-feeding mothers who routinely sleep in a separate room from their infants actually sleep for a shorter amount of time during the night, even though they feed their infants less often and for a shorter overall time period than mothers who co-sleep.

One factor common to a majority of cases is that the infant had been placed on its stomach to sleep: the opposite of the position used by infants who sleep with their mothers and breast-feed throughout the night. This may be due to suffocation because the child is unable to move out of pockets of its own carbon dioxide in puffy mattresses or bean bag cushions. It also may be the result of developmental changes related to a shift in the position of the larynx (windpipe) which takes place at four to six months.

At birth, the larynx is in contact with the back of the palate, allowing air inhaled by the nostrils to go by its own route to the lungs. It then begins to descend in the throat to a position below the back of the tongue, so that the two openings leading to the lungs and stomach lie side by side (which is why food sometimes "goes down the wrong tube"). During this shift, problems can occur if breathing through the nose (which infants greatly prefer) is impeded by a cold or other factor. Breathing through the mouth can be blocked by the uvula (the fleshy structure hanging over the back of the tongue) if it enters the descending larynx, especially if the child is lying at the wrong angle. Huge reductions in SIDS rates have taken place over the past decade in many European countries and the United Kingdom since the initiation of campaigns against the face-down position, and the U.S. is also beginning to show rapid improvement in SIDS rates.

There is more to the story than sleep position, which itself inculpates the crib since co-sleeping is associated with the safer position. More directly, the crib implies isolated, prolonged, deep sleep. Like adults, infants are able to fall into deep sleep, but they are less equipped to arouse themselves out of it. All people have temporary lapses in breathing during the night, but their brains generally respond to them appropriately. Infants are different, for they are born at a much earlier stage of neurological development than other primates, even our closest relatives.

During sleep, infants may need frequent arousals to allow them to emerge from episodes of apnea or cardio-respiratory crisis. External stimuli and parental monitoring from co-sleeping and breast-feeding give them practice at doing so, and keep them from spending long periods of time in deep stages of sleep. SIDS deaths peak at the same age at which the amount of deep sleep relative to REM sleep increases dramatically, at two to three months. Moreover, at this time infants begin to exercise more voluntary control of breathing, as parents notice in their more expressive cries. This is a step toward the speech breathing they will use later, but may complicate breathing in the short term.

The rhythm of sound and silence in the mother's breathing gives the infant auditory stimulation, while contact with her body provides tactile stimulation. The carbon dioxide which her breathing releases into the air they share induces the infant to breathe. Frequent waking for breast-feeding is a behavior common to primates and prevents hypoglycemia, which has been implicated in some SIDS deaths. Human milk also provides immunological protection against several infectious organisms (and preparations of them given as immunizations) considered responsible for some deaths. This protection is especially needed after two months, when inherited maternal antibodies become

scarce but the infant's own immune system is not yet developed. Breast-feeding and constant physical contact prevent overheating and the exhausting crying spells which seem to be factors in the disease. In addition, the infant is sensitive to other aspects of its micro-environment, including temperature, humidity, and odors.

While many experts and parents advise against or avoid co-sleeping because they fear suffocating the infant, in fact this risk is very low, especially where people sleep on hard bedding or the floor. Modern bedding is dangerous because of the conformation of bed frames and the use of soft mattresses and heavy coverings. Yet, these factors are at least as relevant to cribs as parents' beds. On the other hand, some parents should not sleep with their infants, such as those who go to bed affected by drugs or alcohol. Cigarette smoke in the sleeping room could cancel the benefit of co-sleeping.

While isolated infant sleep may be consistent with parents' desires and the primacy of the conjugal bond and other Western values, it is a new behavioral norm in human history and does not represent a "natural" need. It is neither in the infant's best interest nor in conformity with behavioral patterns and biological conditions established long before our time. By contrast, parent–infant co-sleeping matches evolutionary considerations such as the need for temperature regulation, frequent nutrition, and protection from predators and disease. There may be some wisdom to the popular term, "crib death," or "cot death," for it points to the crib and the Western concept of infant independence as major factors in the disease.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INTERVENTION

We have seen that mothers and infants are physiologically bound together from conception to weaning, not just conception to birth. The Western ideal of the autonomous individual, even the neonate, is not shared by other societies today or by those of the past. The biocultural model shows that evolution has favored frequent, exclusive, and prolonged breast-feeding in humans. This entails constant physical contact, parent–infant co-sleeping, and nighttime breast-feeding. It leads to postpartum infertility and protects against SIDS and breast and other reproductive system cancers. Breast-feeding, therefore, has significant health outcomes, beyond the usual benefits of breast-milk, which have been popularized in recent years.

Unfortunately, the health benefits of breast-feeding, especially for mothers, are generally overshadowed by assertions regarding the supposed convenience of bottle feeding and the nutritional adequacy of artificial milk. Even the promotion of breast-feeding on the basis of the milk's value to infants does not always induce women to breast-feed, since there is little if any mention of a benefit to them. To the contrary, there are many disincentives to breast-feeding, such as beliefs that it causes the breasts to sag and makes it difficult to lose weight, or that it makes the husband feel jealous and left out. The lack of familiarity with breast-feeding which has resulted from a couple of generations of preference for the bottle also discourages it. Many people have never seen a woman breast-feed, and would prefer not to.

The degree to which our culture has come to favor intervention in the fundamental relationship between nurslings and mothers is evident in the nearly universal use of pacifiers. This has been promoted by the notion, sanctioned by professional medicine, that infants need to suckle, and better a scientifically designed object than the thumb or finger (the nipple is not even among the choices). However, in evolutionary perspective, a pacifier is completely unnecessary since infants who are breast-fed according to the ancient pattern are allowed to suckle to their heart's content. Not surprisingly, pacifier use has been found to reduce the duration of breast-feeding.

The birthing process is focused upon the infant, while the mother is considered and often treated as an impediment to the physician's efforts to extract the child. Afterward, the medical care of the two is split between obstetricians and pediatricians, reflecting the conceptual splitting of the mother–infant relationship at birth. There is little or no breast-feeding (in the United States, only one half of all infants begin life feeding at the breast). Weaning takes place within a few months and almost always within the first year, and the mother resumes her menstrual cycle within a few months. Mothers are strongly encouraged to put their children on feeding schedules and eliminate nighttime feeding as quickly as possible, and to teach them to get to sleep and stay asleep on their own, in their own bed and room. Instead of being carried and cuddled throughout the day and night, infants are left in cribs, strollers, and playpens and are touched relatively rarely. They are expected to cry and left to do so, sometimes for hours. Often, the door to their room is closed at nap time and during the night.

On a social-structural level, cultural interference in breast-feeding seems to be more common in societies which are based upon vertical inheritance and the simple family structure, than societies in which families are wide and inheritance is lateral. In the former, the institution of marriage is emphasized over kin relations. Women's sexual and conjugal duties take precedence over their role as kinswomen and mothers,

while children are considered heirs rather than links in a kinship network. These conditions can make breast-feeding seem to interfere with sexuality, and pit the husband against the child in competition over the woman's sexualized breast.

Notably, our culture describes breasts as "secondary *sexual* characteristics," highlighting a tendency to regard them as objects of display rather than functional organs. In medieval to modern Europe, the post-partum taboo against sex during lactation was circumvented among the elite classes by wet-nursing, so that women could be available to their husbands instead of breast-feeding. This was subsequently replaced by formula feeding and practiced by a much wider segment of the population.

The rise of the modern nation-state over the past two centuries meanwhile has brought an expansion of the authority of medical experts. Beginning with early industrialization, the state and its emerging medical system sought to shape public morality and oppose traditional authority by reaching into the private, intimate world of the family. As a result, reproduction and child-rearing became medicalized well before professional medicine had much legitimate knowledge or expertise in these areas. As multiple families broke up due to socioeconomic changes, families became more dependent upon outside experts in areas which had previously been handled by older relatives or other authorities such as midwives and clerics.

By now, it is rare for anyone to question the authority of the medical community in questions such as birth control or infant feeding. This phenomenon has emerged hand-in-hand with the notion of the autonomous individual. By considering fetuses and infants as beings independent of their mothers, Western society has allowed and welcomed experts into the life of the dyad and granted them predominant authority in decisions regarding the care and upbringing of the young. Mothers are not encouraged to think of themselves as competent or knowledgeable enough to breast-feed without expert intervention and surveillance. This is reinforced by the regimen of ever-more numerous obstetric and pediatric examinations before and after childbirth, and the literature directed at mothers by the medical and pharmaceutical communities.

In contrast to agricultural and foraging societies, in ours breast-feeding does not easily fit into women's work or social lives. Few professions allow women much flexibility in time scheduling, and there is a deep, underlying expectation that the new mother will immediately be independent from her child. Many working women are forced to pump their milk in bathrooms, often in secrecy. Women who do not work outside the home are targeted by formula manufacturers, who capitalize on cultural values such as work and efficiency by suggesting that formula feeding with an increasingly complex array of products demonstrates a woman's capability in scientific mothering.

Firms that sell formula, pacifiers, and other infant care products distribute samples and coupons through hospitals and physicians' offices, lending their products a medical stamp of approval that appeals to many parents. Often, they are able to "hook" babies even before they leave the hospital because the staff supplements the mother's milk with formula or sugar water, and the infant comes to prefer the easier flow of the bottle.

Thus, even when breast-feeding is promoted and women feel committed to it, social and cultural obstacles can make it difficult. A biocultural understanding of breast-feeding as an evolved, two-way process could help to make conditions more favorable. It would highlight the fact that women are normally able to breast-feed without medical approval, surveillance, and intervention and reduce the public's receptiveness to industrially produced formula and baby foods. Most importantly, the biocultural perspective would foster an appreciation of the intricate mechanisms linking mothers and infants together in a dynamic system of nutrition that benefits them both.

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24

"To Give up on Words"

Silence in Western Apache Culture

Keith H. Basso

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Can you imagine working on a four-person cattle crew for several days without being introduced to or speaking with one of the other members, whom you did not know? For the Apache, this is a normal occurrence; they do not feel obligated to introduce strangers to one another. Instead, the Apache believe that when the time is right, the strangers will begin speaking to one another.

Would you find it uncomfortable to go on a date and sit in silence for an hour because you had only recently met your companion? What would you think if after returning home from several months' absence your parents and relatives didn't speak to you for several days? Although these situations seem unusual to us, they are considered appropriate among the Apache. Although it seems natural to us that when people first meet introductions are in order and that when friends and relatives reunite greetings and catching up will immediately follow, this is not the case for all cultures.

In this selection Keith Basso shows how, among the Apache, certain situations call for silence rather than communication and how silence makes sense within its cultural context.

JOHNSON, OLIVIA

As you read this selection, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are some of the ways silence is used in European American communication, and how are they different from those in Apache culture?
- How are the meaning and function of silence affected by the social and cultural context?
- What is the critical factor in an Apache's decision to speak or keep silent?
- How do Apaches interact upon meeting a stranger, courting, welcoming children home, "getting cussed out," and being with people who are sad?
- Despite the variety of situations in which Apaches are silent, what is the underlying determinant?

The following terms discussed in this selection are included in the Glossary at the back of the book:

hypothesis	*socialization*
informant	*sociolinguistics*
kinship	*status*

....

It is not the case that a man who is silent says nothing.
—Anonymous

I[1]

Anyone who has read about American Indians has probably encountered statements which impute to them a strong predilection for keeping silent or, as one writer has put it, "a fierce reluctance to speak except when absolutely necessary." In the popular literature, where

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this characterization is particularly widespread, it is commonly portrayed as the outgrowth of such dubious causes as "instinctive dignity," "an impoverished language," or, perhaps worst of all, the Indians' "lack of personal warmth." Although statements of this sort are plainly erroneous and dangerously misleading, it is noteworthy that professional anthropologists have made few attempts to correct them. Traditionally, ethnographers and linguists have paid little attention to cultural interpretations given to silence or, equally important, to the types of social contexts in which it regularly occurs.

This study investigates certain aspects of silence in the culture of the Western Apache of east-central Arizona. After considering some of the theoretical issues involved, I will briefly describe a number of situations—recurrent in Western Apache society—in which one or

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more of the participants typically refrain from speech for lengthy periods of time.[2] This is accompanied by a discussion of how such acts of silence are interpreted and why they are encouraged and deemed appropriate. I conclude by advancing an hypothesis that accounts for the reasons that the Western Apache refrain from speaking when they do, and I suggest that, with proper testing, this hypothesis may be shown to have relevance to silence behavior in other cultures.

II

A basic finding of sociolinguistics is that, although both language and language usage are structured, it is the latter which responds most sensitively to extra-linguistic influences (Hymes 1962, 1964; Ervin-Tripp 1964, 1967; Gumperz 1964; Slobin 1967). Accordingly, a number of recent studies have addressed themselves to the problem of how factors in the social environment of speech events delimit the range and condition the selection of message forms (cf. Brown and Gilman 1960; Conklin 1959; Ervin-Tripp 1964, 1967; Frake 1964; Friedrich 1966; Gumperz 1961, 1964; Martin 1964). These studies may be viewed as taking the now familiar position that verbal communication is fundamentally a decision-making process in which, initially, a speaker, having elected to speak, selects from among a repertoire of available codes that which is most appropriately suited to the situation at hand. Once a code has been selected, the speaker picks a suitable channel of transmission and then, finally, makes a choice from a set of referentially equivalent expressions within the code. The intelligibility of the expression he chooses will, of course, be subject to grammatical constraints. But its acceptability will not. Rules for the selection of linguistic alternates operate on features of the social environment and are commensurate with rules governing the conduct of face-to-face interaction. As such, they are properly conceptualized as lying outside the structure of language itself.

It follows from this that for a stranger to communicate appropriately with the members of an unfamiliar society it is not enough that he learn to formulate messages intelligibly. Something else is needed: a knowledge of what kinds of codes, channels, and expressions to use in what kinds of situations and to what kinds of people—as Hymes (1964) has termed it, an "ethnography of communication."

There is considerable evidence to suggest that extra-linguistic factors influence not only the use of speech but its actual occurrence as well. In our own culture, for example, remarks such as "Don't you know when to keep quiet?" "Don't talk until you're introduced," and "Remember now, no talking in church" all point to the fact that an individual's decision to

speak may be directly contingent upon the character of his surroundings. Few of us would maintain that "silence is golden" for all people at all times. But we feel that silence is a virtue for some people some of the time, and we encourage children on the road to cultural competence to act accordingly.

Although the form of silence is always the same, the function of a specific act of silence—that is, its interpretation by and effect upon other people—will vary according to the social context in which it occurs. For example, if I choose to keep silent in the chambers of a Justice of the Supreme Court, my action is likely to be interpreted as a sign of politeness or respect. On the other hand, if I refrain from speaking to an established friend or colleague, I am apt to be accused of rudeness or harboring a grudge. In one instance, my behavior is judged by others to be "correct" or "fitting;" in the other, it is criticized as being "out of line."

The point, I think, is fairly obvious. For a stranger entering an alien society, a knowledge of when *not* to speak may be as basic to the production of culturally acceptable behavior as a knowledge of what to say. It stands to reason, then, that an adequate ethnography of communication should not confine itself exclusively to the analysis of choice within verbal repertoires. It should also, as Hymes (1962, 1964) has suggested, specify those conditions under which the members of the society regularly decide to refrain from verbal behavior altogether.

III

The research on which this paper is based was conducted over a period of sixteen months during the years (1964–1969) in the Western Apache settlement of Cibecue, which is located near the center of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation in east-central Arizona. Cibecue's 800 residents participate in an unstable economy that combines subsistence agriculture, cattle-raising, sporadic wage-earning, and government subsidies in the form of welfare checks and social security benefits. Unemployment is a serious problem, and substandard living conditions are widespread.

Although Reservation life has precipitated far-reaching changes in the composition and geographical distribution of Western Apache social groups, consanguineal kinship—real and imputed—remains the single most powerful force in the establishment and regulation of interpersonal relationships (Kaut 1957; Basso 1970). The focus of domestic activity is the individual "camp," or *gowáá*. This term labels both the occupants and the location of a single dwelling or, as is more apt to be the case, several dwellings built within a few feet of each other. The majority of *gowáá* in Cibecue are occupied by nuclear families. The next largest residential unit is the *gotáá* (camp cluster), which is a

group of spatially localized *gowąą́*, each having at least one adult member who is related by ties of matrilineal kinship to persons living in all the others. An intricate system of exogamous clans serves to extend kinship relationships beyond the *gową́ą́* and *gottáá* and facilitates concerted action in projects, most notably the presentation of ceremonials, requiring large amounts of manpower. Despite the presence in Cibecue of a variety of Anglo missionaries and a dwindling number of medicine men, diagnostic and curing rituals, as well as the girls' puberty ceremonial, continue to be performed with regularity (Basso 1966, 1970). Witchcraft persists in undiluted form (Basso 1969).

IV

Of the many broad categories of events, or scenes, that comprise the daily round of Western Apache life, I shall deal here only with those that are coterminous with what Goffman (1961, 1964) has termed "focused gatherings" or "encounters." The concept *situation,* in keeping with established usage, will refer inclusively to the location of such a gathering, its physical setting, its point in time, the standing behavior patterns that accompany it, and the social attributes of the persons involved (Hymes 1962, 1964; Ervin-Tripp 1964, 1967).

In what follows, however, I will be mainly concerned with the roles and statuses of participants. The reason for this is that the critical factor in the Apache's decision to speak or keep silent seems always to be the nature of his relationships to other people. To be sure, other features of the situation are significant, but apparently only to the extent that they influence the perception of status and role.[3] What this implies, of course, is that roles and statuses are not fixed attributes. Although they may be depicted as such in a static model (and often with good reason), they are appraised and acted upon in particular social contexts and, as a result, subject to redefinition and variation.[4] With this in mind, let us now turn our attention to the Western Apache and the types of situations in which, as one of my informants put it, "it is right to give up on words."

V

1. "Meeting strangers" *(nda dòhwáá iɬtsééda).* The term, *nda,* labels categories at two levels of contrast. At the most general level, it designates any person—Apache or non-Apache—who, prior to an initial meeting, has never been seen and therefore cannot be identified. In addition, the term is used to refer to Apaches who, though previously seen and known by some external criteria such as clan affiliation or personal name, have never been engaged in face-to-face interaction. The latter category, which is more restricted than the first, typically

includes individuals who live on the adjacent San Carlos Reservation, in Fort Apache settlements geographically removed from Cibecue, and those who fall into the category *kii dòhandáágo* (non-kinsmen). In all cases, "strangers" are separated by social distance. And in all cases it is considered appropriate, when encountering them for the first time, to refrain from speaking.

The type of situation described as "meeting strangers" *(nda dòhwáá iɬtsééda)* can take place in any number of different physical settings. However, it occurs most frequently in the context of events such as fairs and rodeos, which, owing to the large number of people in attendance, offer unusual opportunities for chance encounters. In large gatherings, the lack of verbal communication between strangers is apt to go unnoticed, but in smaller groups it becomes quite conspicuous. The following incident, involving two strangers who found themselves part of a four-man round-up crew, serves as a good example. My informant, who was also a member of the crew, recalled the following episode:

> One time, I was with A, B, and X down at Gleason Flat, working cattle. That man, X, was from East Fork [a community nearly 40 miles from Cibecue] where B's wife was from. But he didn't know A, never knew him before, I guess. First day, I worked with X. At night, when we camped, we talked with B, but X and A didn't say anything to each other. Same way, second day. Same way, third. Then, at night on fourth day, we were sitting by the fire. Still, X and A didn't talk. Then A said, "Well, I know there is a stranger to me here, but I've been watching him and I know he is all right." After that, X and A talked a lot. . . . Those two men didn't know each other, so they took it easy at first.

As this incident suggests, the Western Apache do not feel compelled to "introduce" persons who are unknown to each other. Eventually, it is assumed, strangers will begin to speak. However, this is a decision that is properly left to the individuals involved, and no attempt is made to hasten it. Outside help in the form of introductions or other verbal routines is viewed as presumptuous and unnecessary.

Strangers who are quick to launch into conversation are frequently eyed with undisguised suspicion. A typical reaction to such individuals is that they "want something," that is, their willingness to violate convention is attributed to some urgent need which is likely to result in requests for money, labor, or transportation. Another common reaction to talkative strangers is that they are drunk.

If the stranger is an Anglo, it is usually assumed that he "wants to teach us something" (i.e., give orders or instructions) or that he "wants to make friends in a hurry." The latter response is especially revealing, since Western Apaches are extremely reluctant to be hurried into friendships—with Anglos or each other. Their verbal reticence with strangers is directly related

to the conviction that the establishment of social relationships is a serious matter that calls for caution, careful judgment, and plenty of time.

2. "Courting" (*l˝goláá*). During the initial stages of courtship, young men and women go without speaking for conspicuous lengths of time. Courting may occur in a wide variety of settings—practically anywhere, in fact—and at virtually any time of the day or night, but it is most readily observable at large public gatherings such as ceremonials, wakes, and rodeos. At these events, "sweethearts" (*zééde*) may stand or sit (sometimes holding hands) for as long as an hour without exchanging a word. I am told by adult informants that the young people's reluctance to speak may become even more pronounced in situations where they find themselves alone.

Apaches who have just begun to court attribute their silence to "intense shyness" (*'isté*) and a feeling of acute "self-consciousness" (*dàyééz*) which, they claim, stems from their lack of familiarity with one another. More specifically, they complain of "not knowing what to do" in each other's presence and of the fear that whatever they say, no matter how well thought out in advance, will sound "dumb" or "stupid."[5]

One informant, a youth 17 years old, commented as follows:

> It's hard to talk with your sweetheart at first. She doesn't know you and won't know what to say. It's the same way towards her. You don't know how to talk yet . . . so you get very bashful. That makes it sometimes so you don't say anything. So you just go around together and don't talk. At first, it's better that way. Then, after a while, when you know each other, you aren't shy anymore and can talk good.

The Western Apache draw an equation between the ease and frequency with which a young couple talks and how well they know each other. Thus, it is expected that after several months of steady companionship sweethearts will start to have lengthy conversations. Earlier in their relationship, however, protracted discussions may be openly discouraged. This is especially true for girls, who are informed by their mothers and older sisters that silence in courtship is a sign of modesty and that an eagerness to speak betrays previous experience with men. In extreme cases, they add, it may be interpreted as a willingness to engage in sexual relations. Said one woman, aged 32:

> This way I have talked to my daughter. "Take it easy when boys come around this camp and want you to go somewhere with them. When they talk to you, just listen at first. Maybe you won't know what to say. So don't talk about just anything. If you talk with those boys right away, then they will know you know all

about them. They will think you've been with many boys before, and they will start talking about that."

3. "Children, coming home" (*čogoše nakáii*). The Western Apache lexeme *iltá `natsáá* (reunion) is used to describe encounters between an individual who has returned home after a long absence from his relatives and friends. The most common type of reunion, *čogoše nakáii* (children, coming home), involves boarding school students and their parents. It occurs in late May or early in June, and its setting is usually a trading post or school, where parents congregate to await the arrival of buses bringing the children home. As the latter disembark and locate their parents in the crowd, one anticipates a flurry of verbal greetings. Typically, however, there are few or none at all. Indeed, it is not unusual for parents and child to go without speaking for as long as 15 minutes.

When the silence is broken, it is almost always the child who breaks it. His parents listen attentively to everything he says but speak hardly at all themselves. This pattern persists even after the family has reached the privacy of its camp, and two or three days may pass before the child's parents seek to engage him in sustained conversation.

According to my informants, the silence of Western Apache parents at (and after) reunions with their children is ultimately predicated on the possibility that the latter have been adversely affected by their experiences away from home. Uppermost is the fear that, as a result of protracted exposure to Anglo attitudes and values, the children have come to view their parents as ignorant, old-fashioned, and no longer deserving of respect. One of my most thoughtful and articulate informants commented on the problem as follows:

> You just can't tell about those children after they've been with White men for a long time. They get their minds turned around sometimes . . . they forget where they come from and get ashamed when they come home because their parents and relatives are poor. They forget how to act with these Apaches and get mad easy. They walk around all night and get into fights. They don't stay at home.
>
> At school, some of them learn to want to be White men, so they come back and try to act that way. But we are still Apaches! So we don't know them anymore, and it is like we never knew them. It is hard to talk to them when they are like that.

Apache parents openly admit that, initially, children who have been away to school seem distant and unfamiliar. They have grown older, of course, and their physical appearance may have changed. But more fundamental is the concern that they have acquired new ideas and expectations which will alter their behavior in unpredictable ways. No matter how pressing this concern may be, however, it is considered

inappropriate to directly interrogate a child after his arrival home. Instead, parents anticipate that within a short time he will begin to divulge information about himself that will enable them to determine in what ways, if any, his views and attitudes have changed. This, the Apache say, is why children do practically all the talking in the hours following a reunion, and their parents remain unusually silent.

Said one man, the father of two children who had recently returned from boarding school in Utah:

> Yes, it's right that we didn't talk much to them when they came back, my wife and me. They were away for a long time, and we didn't know how they would like it, being home. So we waited. Right away, they started to tell stories about what they did. Pretty soon we could tell they liked it, being back. That made us feel good. So it was easy to talk to them again. It was like they were before they went away.

4. "Getting cussed out" (*šˀłditéé*). This lexeme is used to describe any situation in which one individual, angered and enraged, shouts insults and criticism at another. Although the object of such invective is in most cases the person or persons who provoked it, this is not always the case, because an Apache who is truly beside himself with rage is likely to vent his feelings on anyone whom he sees or who happens to be within range of his voice. Consequently, "getting cussed out" may involve large numbers of people who are totally innocent of the charges being hurled against them. But whether they are innocent or not, their response to the situation is the same. They refrain from speech.

Like the types of situations we have discussed thus far, "getting cussed out" can occur in a wide variety of physical settings: at ceremonial dancegrounds and trading posts, inside and outside wickiups and houses, on food-gathering expeditions and shopping trips—in short, wherever and whenever individuals lose control of their tempers and lash out verbally at persons nearby.

Although "getting cussed out" is basically free of setting self-imposed restrictions, the Western Apache fear it most at gatherings where alcohol is being consumed. My informants observed that especially at "drinking parties" (*dáˀidláąą́*), where there is much rough joking and ostensibly mock criticism, it is easy for well-intentioned remarks to be misconstrued as insults. Provoked in this way, persons who are intoxicated may become hostile and launch into explosive tirades, often with no warning at all.

The silence of Apaches who are "getting cussed out" is consistently explained in reference to the belief that individuals who are "enraged" (*hasˀkéé*) are also irrational or "crazy" (*bˋnéˀidˀ˒ˀ˒*). In this condition, it is said, they "forget who they are" and become oblivious to what they say or do. Concomitantly, they lose

all concern for the consequences of their actions on other people. In a word, they are dangerous. Said one informant:

> When people get mad they get crazy. Then they start yelling and saying bad things. Some say they are going to kill somebody for what he has done. Some keep it up that way for a long time, maybe walk from camp to camp, real angry, yelling, crazy like that. They keep it up for a long time, some do.
>
> People like that don't know what they are saying, so you can't tell about them. When you see someone like that, just walk away. If he yells at you, let him say whatever he wants to. Let him say anything. Maybe he doesn't mean it. But he doesn't know that. He will be crazy, and he could try to kill you.

Another Apache said:

> When someone gets mad at you and starts yelling, then just don't do anything to make him get worse. Don't try to quiet him down because he won't know why you're doing it. If you try to do that, he may just get worse and try to hurt you.

As the last of these statements implies, the Western Apache operate on the assumption that enraged persons—because they are temporarily "crazy"—are difficult to reason with. Indeed, there is a widely held belief that attempts at mollification will serve to intensify anger, thus increasing the chances of physical violence. The appropriate strategy when "getting cussed out" is to do nothing, to avoid any action that will attract attention to oneself. Since speaking accomplishes just the opposite, the use of silence is strongly advised.

5. "Being with people who are sad" (*nde dòbił gòzóóda bigą́ą́*). Although the Western Apache phrase that labels this situation has no precise equivalent in English, it refers quite specifically to gatherings in which an individual finds himself in the company of someone whose spouse or kinsman has recently died. Distinct from wakes and burials, which follow immediately after a death, "being with people who are sad" is most likely to occur several weeks later. At this time, close relatives of the deceased emerge from a period of intense mourning (during which they rarely venture beyond the limits of their camps) and start to resume their normal activities within the community. To persons anxious to convey their sympathies, this is interpreted as a sign that visitors will be welcomed and, if possible, provided with food and drink. To those less solicitous, it means that unplanned encounters with the bereaved must be anticipated and prepared for.

"Being with people who are sad" can occur on a footpath, in a camp, at church, or in a trading post; but whatever the setting—and regardless of whether it is the result of a planned visit or an accidental meeting—the situation is marked by a minimum of speech. Queried

about this, my informants volunteered three types of explanations. The first is that persons "who are sad" are so burdened with "intense grief" (*dółgozóóda*) that speaking requires of them an unusual amount of physical effort. It is courteous and considerate, therefore, not to attempt to engage them in conversation.

A second native explanation is that in situations of this sort verbal communication is basically unnecessary. Everyone is familiar with what has happened, and talking about it, even for the purpose of conveying solace and sympathy, would only reinforce and augment the sadness felt by those who were close to the deceased. Again, for reasons of courtesy, this is something to be avoided.

The third explanation is rooted in the belief that "intense grief," like intense rage, produces changes in the personality of the individual who experiences it. As evidence for this, the Western Apache cite numerous instances in which the emotional strain of dealing with death, coupled with an overwhelming sense of irrevocable personal loss, has caused persons who were formerly mild and even-tempered to become abusive, hostile, and physically violent.

> That old woman, X, who lives across Cibecue Creek, one time her first husband died. After that she cried all the time, for a long time. Then, I guess she got mean because everyone said she drank a lot and got into fights. Even with her close relatives, she did like that for a long time. She was too sad for her husband. That's what made her like that; it made her lose her mind.

> My father was like that when his wife died. He just stayed home all the time and wouldn't go anywhere. He didn't talk to any of his relatives or children. He just said, "I'm hungry. Cook for me." That's all. He stayed that way for a long time. His mind was not with us. He was still with his wife.

> My uncle died in 1911. His wife sure went crazy right after that. Two days after they buried the body, we went over there and stayed with those people who had been left alone. My aunt got mad at us. She said, "Why do you come back over here? You can't bring my husband back. I can take care of myself and those others in my camp, so why don't you go home." She sure was mad that time, too sad for someone who died. She didn't know what she was saying because in about one week she came to our camp and said, "My relatives, I'm all right now. When you came to help me, I had too much sadness and my mind was no good. I said bad words to you. But now I am all right and I know what I am doing."

As these statements indicate, the Western Apache assume that a person suffering from "intense grief" is likely to be disturbed and unstable. Even though he may appear outwardly composed, they say, there is always the possibility that he is emotionally upset and therefore unusually prone to volatile outbursts. Apaches acknowledge that such an individual might welcome conversation in the context of "being with people who are sad," but, on the other hand, they fear it might prove incendiary. Under these conditions, which resemble those in Situation No. 4, it is considered both expedient and appropriate to keep silent.

6. "Being with someone for whom they sing" (*ndeb`dád`stááha bigą́ą́*). The last type of situation to be described is restricted to a small number of physical locations and is more directly influenced by temporal factors than any of the situations we have discussed so far. "Being with someone for whom they sing" takes place only in the context of "curing ceremonials" (*gòǰitáł*). These events begin early at night and come to a close shortly before dawn the following day. In the late fall and throughout the winter, curing ceremonials are held inside the patient's wickiup or house. In the spring and summer, they are located outside, at some open place near the patient's camp or at specially designated dance grounds where group rituals of all kinds are regularly performed.

Prior to the start of a curing ceremonial, all persons in attendance may feel free to talk with the patient; indeed, because he is so much a focus of concern, it is expected that friends and relatives will seek him out to offer encouragement and support. Conversation breaks off, however, when the patient is informed that the ceremonial is about to begin, and it ceases entirely when the presiding medicine man commences to chant. From this point on, until the completion of the final chant next morning, it is inappropriate for anyone except the medicine man (and, if he has them, his aides) to speak to the patient.[6]

In order to appreciate the explanation Apaches give for this prescription, we must briefly discuss the concept of "supernatural power" (*diyˊ*) and describe some of the effects it is believed to have on persons at whom it is directed. Elsewhere (Basso 1969:30) I have defined "power" as follows:

> The term *diyˊ* refers to one or all of a set of abstract and invisible forces which are said to derive from certain classes of animals, plants, minerals, meteorological phenomena, and mythological figures within the Western Apache universe. Any of the various powers may be acquired by man and, if properly handled, used for a variety of purposes.

A power that has been antagonized by disrespectful behavior towards its source may retaliate by causing the offender to become sick. "Power-caused illnesses" (*kásitį́ kiyˊbił*) are properly treated with curing ceremonials in which one or more medicine men, using chants and various items of ritual paraphernalia,

attempt to neutralize the sickness-causing power with powers of their own.

Roughly two-thirds of my informants assert that a medicine man's power actually enters the body of the patient; others maintain that it simply closes in and envelops him. In any case, all agree that the patient is brought into intimate contact with a potent supernatural force which elevates him to a condition labeled *gòdiyò'* (sacred, holy).

The term *gòdiyò'* may also be translated as "potentially harmful" and, in this sense, is regularly used to describe classes of objects (including all sources of power) that are associated with taboos. In keeping with the semantics of *gòdiyò'*, the Western Apache explain that, besides making patients holy, power makes them potentially harmful. And it is this transformation, they explain, that is basically responsible for the cessation of verbal communication during curing ceremonials. Said one informant:

> When they start singing for someone like that, he sort of goes away with what the medicine man is working with (i.e., power). Sometimes people they sing for don't know you, even after it (the curing ceremonial) is over. They get holy, and you shouldn't try to talk to them when they are like that . . . it's best to leave them alone.

Another informant made similar comments:

> When they sing for someone, what happens is like this: that man they sing for doesn't know why he is sick or which way to go. So the medicine man has to show him and work on him. That is when he gets holy, and that makes him go off somewhere in his mind, so you should stay away from him.

Because Apaches undergoing ceremonial treatment are perceived as having been changed by power into something different from their normal selves, they are regarded with caution and apprehension. Their newly acquired status places them in close proximity to the supernatural and, as such, carries with it a very real element of danger and uncertainty. These conditions combine to make "being with someone for whom they sing" a situation in which speech is considered disrespectful and, if not exactly harmful, at least potentially hazardous.

VI

Although the types of situations described above differ from one another in obvious ways, I will argue in what follows that the underlying determinants of silence are in each case basically the same. Specifically, I will attempt to defend the hypothesis that keeping silent in Western Apache culture is associated with social situations in which participants perceive their relationships *vis-à-vis* one another to be ambiguous and/or unpredictable.

Let us begin with the observation that, in all the situations we have described, *silence is defined as appropriate with respect to a specific individual or individuals.* In other words, the use of speech is not directly curtailed by the setting of a situation nor by the physical activities that accompany it but, rather, by the perceived social and psychological attributes of at least one focal participant.

It may also be observed that, in each type of situation, *the status of the focal participant is marked by ambiguity*—either because he is unfamiliar to other participants in the situation or because, owing to some recent event, a status he formerly held has been changed or is in a process of transition.

Thus, in Situation No. 1, persons who earlier considered themselves "strangers" move towards some other relationship, perhaps "friend" (*šdikéé*), perhaps "enemy" (*škédnd'*). In Situation No. 2, young people who have relatively limited exposure to one another attempt to adjust to the new and intimate status of "sweetheart." These two situations are similar in that the focal participants have little or no prior knowledge of each other. Their social identities are not as yet clearly defined, and their expectations, lacking the foundation of previous experience, are poorly developed.

Situation No. 3 is somewhat different. Although the participants—parents and their children—are well known to each other, their relationship has been seriously interrupted by the latter's prolonged absence from home. This, combined with the possibility that recent experiences at school have altered the children's attitudes, introduces a definite element of unfamiliarity and doubt. Situation No. 3 is not characterized by the absence of role expectations but by the participants' perception that those already in existence may be outmoded and in need of revision.

Status ambiguity is present in Situation No. 4 because a focal participant is enraged and, as a result, considered "crazy." Until he returns to a more rational condition, others in the situation have no way of predicting how he will behave. Situation No. 5 is similar in that the personality of a focal participant is seen to have undergone a marked shift which makes his actions more difficult to anticipate. In both situations, the status of focal participants is uncertain because of real or imagined changes in their psychological makeup.

In Situation No. 6, a focal participant is ritually transformed from an essentially neutral state to one which is contextually defined as "potentially harmful." Ambiguity and apprehension accompany this transition, and, as in Situations No. 4 and 5, established patterns of interaction must be waived until the focal participant reverts to a less threatening condition.

This discussion points up a third feature characteristic of all situations: *the ambiguous status of focal participants is accompanied either by the absence or suspension*

of established role expectations. In every instance, non-focal participants (i.e., those who refrain from speech) are either uncertain of how the focal participant will behave towards them or, conversely, how they should behave towards him. Stated in the simplest way possible, their roles become blurred with the result that established expectations—if they exist—lose their relevance as guidelines for social action and must be temporarily discarded or abruptly modified.

We are now in a position to expand upon our initial hypothesis and make it more explicit.

1. In Western Apache culture, the absence of verbal communication is associated with social situations in which the status of local participants is ambiguous.

2. Under these conditions, fixed role expectations lose their applicability and the illusion of predictability in social interaction is lost.

3. To sum up and reiterate: keeping silent among the Western Apache is a response to uncertainty and unpredictability in social relations.

VII

The question remains to what extent the foregoing hypothesis helps to account for silence behavior in other cultures. Unfortunately, it is impossible at the present time to provide anything approaching a conclusive answer. Standard ethnographies contain very little information about the circumstances under which verbal communication is discouraged, and it is only within the past few years that problems of this sort have engaged the attention of sociolinguists. The result is that adequate cross-cultural data are almost completely lacking.

As a first step towards the elimination of this deficiency, an attempt is now being made to investigate the occurrence and interpretation of silence in other Indian societies of the American Southwest. Our findings at this early stage, though neither fully representative nor sufficiently comprehensive, are extremely suggestive. By way of illustration, I quote below from portions of a preliminary report prepared by Priscilla Mowrer (1970), herself a Navajo, who inquired into the situational features of Navajo silence behavior in the vicinity of Tuba City on the Navajo Reservation in east-central Arizona.

    I. *Silence and Courting:* Navajo youngsters of opposite sexes just getting to know one another say nothing, except to sit close together and maybe hold hands. . . . In public, they may try not to let on that they are interested in each other, but in private it is another matter. If the girl is at a gathering where the boy is also present, she may go off by herself. Falling in step, the

boy will generally follow. They may just walk around or find some place to sit down. But, at first, they will not say anything to each other.

    II. *Silence and Long Absent Relatives:* When a male or female relative returns home after being gone for six months or more, he (or she) is first greeted with a handshake. If the returnee is male, the female greeter may embrace him and cry—the male, meanwhile, will remain dry-eyed and silent.

    III. *Silence and Anger:* The Navajo tend to remain silent when being shouted at by a drunk or angered individual because that particular individual is considered temporarily insane. To speak to such an individual, the Navajo believe, just tends to make the situation worse. . . . People remain silent because they believe that the individual is not himself, that he may have been witched, and is not responsible for the change in his behavior.

    IV. *Silent Mourning:* Navajos speak very little when mourning the death of a relative. . . . The Navajo mourn and cry together in pairs. Men will embrace one another and cry together. Women, however, will hold one another's hands and cry together.

    V. *Silence and the Ceremonial Patient:* The Navajo consider it wrong to talk to a person being sung over. The only people who talk to the patient are the medicine man and a female relative (or male relative if the patient is male) who is in charge of food preparation. The only time the patient speaks openly is when the medicine man asks her (or him) to pray along with him.

These observations suggest that striking similarities may exist between the types of social contexts in which Navajos and Western Apaches refrain from speech. If this impression is confirmed by further research, it will lend obvious cross-cultural support to the hypothesis advanced above. But regardless of the final outcome, the situational determinants of silence seem eminently deserving of further study. For as we become better informed about the types of contextual variables that mitigate against the use of verbal codes, we should also learn more about those variables that encourage and promote them.

NOTES

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Schneider, Joel Sherzer, and Paul Turner. Although the final version gained much from their criticisms and suggestions, responsibility for its present form and content rests solely with the author. A preliminary version of this paper was presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 1969. A modified version of this paper is scheduled to appear in *Studies in Apachean Culture and Ethnology* (ed. by Keith H. Basso and Morris Opler), Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970.

2. The situations described in this paper are not the only ones in which the Western Apache refrain from speech. There is a second set—not considered here because my data are incomplete—in which silence appears to occur as a gesture of respect, usually to persons in positions of authority. A third set, very poorly understood, involves ritual specialists who claim they must keep silent at certain points during the preparation of ceremonial paraphernalia.

3. Recent work in the sociology of interaction, most notably by Goffman (1963) and Garfinkel (1967), has led to the suggestion that social relationships are everywhere the major determinants of verbal behavior. In this case, as Gumperz (1967) makes clear, it becomes methodologically unsound to treat the various components of communicative events as independent variables. Gumperz (1967) has presented a hierarchical model, sensitive to dependency, in which components are seen as stages in the communication process. Each stage serves as the input for the next. The basic stage, i.e., the initial input, is "social identities or statuses." For further details see Slobin 1967:131–134.

4. I would like to stress that the emphasis placed on social relations is fully in keeping with the Western Apache interpretation of their own behavior. When my informants were asked to explain why they or someone else was silent on a particular occasion, they invariably did so in terms of *who* was present at the time.

5. Among the Western Apache, rules of exogamy discourage courtships between members of the same clan (*kii àɫ hánigo*) and so-called "related" clans (*kii*), with the result that sweethearts are almost always "non-matrilineal kinsmen" (*dòhwàk`da*). Compared to "matrilineal kinsmen" (*kii*), such individuals have fewer opportunities during childhood to establish close personal relationships and thus, when courtship begins, have relatively little knowledge of each other. It is not surprising, therefore, that their behavior is similar to that accorded strangers.

6. I have witnessed over 75 curing ceremonials since 1961 and have seen this rule violated only six times. On four occasions, drunks were at fault. In the other two cases, the patient fell asleep and had to be awakened.

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