

BRIDGES

A L U M N I M A G A Z I N E

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Culture—the Vital Differences that Color Life

Intro by Chad Nielsen, journalist and KC alumnus, international relations / 1995

It was still dark when Antonio sat bolt upright in his bed, eyes bulging like boiled eggs. “Did you hear that?” he asked.

On cue, the Muezzin’s second call to prayer filtered through the dusty slit in the wall, our room’s only window in the misnamed Hotel Palace. I made a groggy attempt at sarcasm, rolled over, and went back to sleep. Only weeks later did I realize that his fear—though irrational and tinged with xenophobia—would make the next day’s events practically inevitable.

We set out from Barcelona two days prior, in a borrowed Citroen sedan. Antonio was a convenient travel companion, an easy-going Spaniard without a job to get in the way. We made good time down Spain’s eastern coast, until a donkey cart slowed our descent into Granada. Across the valley, the setting sun shone red against the Alhambra, a fourteenth-century Moorish fortress that fell to Christian forces in 1492, ending eight centuries of Berber rule in the Iberian Peninsula and almost as many years of war.

Raised in a country with only a brief history, it is difficult for me to comprehend the cultural impact of eight centuries of anything, much less a protracted war with religious undertones and the associated propaganda. Yet many Spaniards still see Moroccan travelers and immigrants through fifteenth-century glasses. From the time we boarded the ferry to Morocco, Antonio couldn’t stop looking over his shoulder as though he wore a target on his back.

At the Port of Tangier, we were greeted by a throng of young men hawking their services as tour guides. One of them, a lanky, Borat look-alike, hopped into the front seat of our taxi. Had I understood local

economics, I might have realized that Mustafa’s jeans and leather jacket blew his cover as an unemployed student and the driver’s friend. He was, in fact, a fairly sophisticated criminal who had zeroed in on Antonio’s fear.

In a city rife with unemployment and drug traffic, enterprising young talents run world-class con jobs on unsuspecting tourists, dizzied by the harsh transition from west to east and from industrialized modernity to poverty-stricken traditionalism. With similar architecture and genetics, Tangier feels more like being in an alternate reality than being on a separate continent, and smart con artists understand how disorienting this can be. They boost the effect with offers of hashish and roundabout hikes through tiny, twisted streets to some isolated corner of the Kasbah—that’s when they take your money.

Essentially, these criminals use culture as a weapon—and they understand it better than many of us who work internationally. Webster’s dictionary offers various definitions of culture, but the most salient sounds like a social petri dish, where natural elements and organic materials grow together over time. Shared beliefs, attitudes, values, and history



form the context in which new generations develop. Each generation adds ingredients, which soon become inseparable from those already in place. In order to understand individuals—their words, actions, and motives—we must understand the context in which they acts. That context is their culture.

Mustafa understood that Antonio felt like a lone soldier behind enemy lines. It was clear that neither of us trusted the gaunt Moroccan, especially after he offered to sell us hashish during a midnight search for a pay phone. Every time we left the hotel, at any hour of the day or night, he was there waiting for us.

The whole situation made
me nervous, but
Antonio reasoned
that it was

easier to watch Mustafa than to keep our eyes on every man in the street. Each time I tried to send Mustafa away, Antonio found a reason to keep him around.

We finally left Mustafa the next afternoon, at a taxi stand near the medina. With high hopes for Rabat—and a short-lived sense of relief—we took a taxi to the bus station. It wasn't long before a rough-bearded young man in a tattered gray suit approached our table at a café inside the station. "My cousin Mustafa has been arrested for selling you hashish," he said, jittery. "Come, you can help him."

Refusing the obvious blackmail attempt, I went to ask the café owner to send the man away. That's when the man looked Antonio in the eyes, sneering a warning, "Have a *nice* trip." We took his advice, in a way, and caught the first ferry back to Spain.

There is not much room for culture study in fields that pride themselves on rigor; the vast number of variables are simply too elusive to quantify. Those who work internationally have experienced the impact of culture. In the following collection of writings, BYU faculty and associates share personal experiences, filtered through the light of their various disciplines. Together, they demonstrate that culture matters.



From Pencils to Computers—the Vast Digital Divide that Separates Us

Allen Palmer, International Media Studies director, BYU

As a specialist in international communication, one of the perplexing questions I have struggled to understand involves the challenge of introducing new information technologies to less-developed nations. During a Fulbright assignment in southern Africa in 2004, there were several occasions when I encountered examples of the digital divide, the gulf separating the information “haves” from the “have nots.”

I was particularly interested in weighing the merit of several proposals served up by international agencies to provide cheap laptop computers to schoolchildren in Africa. Fewer than 2 percent of African students have touched a computer keyboard, and it seemed to me there were many unanticipated problems on the horizon that would be confronted if laptop computers were introduced.

One day, in my office at the university in Windhoek, Namibia, I was reviewing a video documentary about a researcher in the border desert regions of the Kalahari, near Botswana. A brief encounter between the researcher and a San nomad involved a pencil. The San tribesman said he was not familiar with pencils. He had never before touched a pencil. It seemed to me this example of the technology gap between cultures increased the potential distance between us even more. Should we make pencils and paper available to people before we consider introducing laptop computers?

My wife, a specialist in distance education, undertook a tour of satellite classrooms in

northern Namibia. These outposts served as education centers and rudimentary libraries for hundreds of distance education students scattered throughout the vast region. One of the outreach staff members described to us how a student who lived in a remote village confronted obstacles to gain an education. He did not have electricity in his village and could not depend on the rural mail system to deliver his completed lessons to the education center to be forwarded to the university. So the student worked by the light of a campfire to read books borrowed from the university, and then traveled by foot for two to three days, carrying the necessary kitchen utensils to cook meals by the side of the road, hoping to hitchhike a ride to the distance education office, just to deliver his completed lessons to be forwarded to the university.

Not long afterward, I was approached by a university student who asked for some suggestions on a village development project he was organizing. He was hoping to introduce a few desktop computers and the Internet to his traditional village in northern Namibia. The problem he worried about was how he would change the mindset of the school children, who scarcely had access to a simple school library.

“The Internet just doesn’t make sense, if you are not curious and asking questions,” he told me. “How do I teach children to ask questions, to be information seekers?”

It became clearer than ever to me that we were just scratching the surface of the deeper issues of bringing the information society to these people. If we could find a way to provide electricity, it would be inevitable that computers—as well as radios, TVs, and cell phones—would flood into the lives of people in these less-developed nations, reconfiguring the relations of the people with each other, and the outside world. These changes would challenge centuries of cultural practices and traditions that their lives revolved around. Yes, these changes may be unavoidable, but the outcome is more than ever unpredictable.



NAFTA's Cultural Triangle

Earl H. Fry, professor of political science and Endowed Professor of Canadian Studies, BYU

Significant differences in culture exist between the U.S. on the one hand and Mexico and Canada on the other, but all three have achieved notable economic gains since 1994 when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect. Trade and investment activity have risen dramatically in all three countries, with three-way merchandise trade up from less than 300 billion dollars in 1993 to over 800 billion dollars in 2005.

However, economic issues alone do not determine how people perceive trade agreements. Many Mexicans lament the exodus of farmers who have left the countryside because they cannot compete against more efficient U.S. and Canadian farming operations, and they worry that the rural lifestyle of their citizens may be threatened further by closer economic integration with the world's largest and ninth largest economies. And though there has certainly been job creation in Mexico during this period, not at the pace nor at wage levels that would slow the influx of Mexicans across the U.S. border, with up to 14 percent of Mexico's adult workforce now employed within the U.S.

Moreover, Mexico, in contrast to Canada and the U.S., has had a culturally tepid respect for the rule of law, and their judicial system is far from impartial. Corruption and graft are also much more prevalent, at times making it difficult for U.S. and Canadian companies to operate there. These factors are explained in part by Mexico's colonial legacy, which was quite different from that of its two North American partners.

Another issue is Mexico's deep-seated historical distrust of the U.S. From the mid-1840s through the early 1850s, half of what was once Mexico became part of the U.S., largely by force of arms. This distrust dissipated somewhat in the 1980s as Mexico began to open its economy to the rest of the world. As NAFTA was being negotiated, Mexican President Carlos Salinas asked his compatriots, "Do we want to be the richest of the poor or the poorest of the rich?" He said that Mexicans should prefer to become the poorest of the rich but then add prosperity as a functioning part of the richest tier of nations in the world.

As for Canadians, there are far more differences than most Americans ever recognize and understand. We are fond of saying that Canadians are just like us, and we mean it as a compliment, but for many of them it is a slap in the face. We come to this conclusion about Canadians because we share a common border, they speak English (except for Quebec) so we understand them, we visit Alberta and notice this has much in common with the western U.S., including cowboys, and we know that Canada has long been an ally in so many areas. However, Canadians believe that they are very distinctive from Americans and desire above all to safeguard their sovereignty and national identity.

When we started off in 1989 with the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Canada and the U.S., the precursor to NAFTA, there was widespread skepticism expressed in Canada, and the political opposition even forced a "free-trade" election in 1988. Some of this suspicion and skepticism is still apparent. With the U.S. having almost ten times the population and an economy twelve times larger, there is a fear among Canadians of their eventual absorption by the U.S. Nevertheless, I cannot remember a time in modern Canadian history when the nation has done so well economically. Ottawa has had nine straight years of budget surpluses, and the employment picture is the best in at least three decades. Both FTA and NAFTA have paid

In the Democratic Republic of Congo . . . somebody came into the hospital with Ebola virus, and it began to be spread within the hospital. It was also exacerbated by cultural practices. We biology guys sometimes forget how critically important these things are in the epidemiology and transmission of some of these terrible diseases. What was happening was that when a patient would die in the hospital, the family would come. In fact, very often, it's the family that provides the nursing care—so they're exposed. Here are these patients covered with blood that's full of virus. The patient's family comes, they bring them home, and the cultural practice is to wash the body before burial. So here's this dead person covered with a thin veneer of virus, and you can imagine . . . the exposure that would bring to the people involved.

And so one of the very, very hard things that they had to try to do was to change this very deeply held cultural practice. . . . They wrapped these dead patients up, and then the family wasn't even permitted to go to the burials.

This was done by a crew with protective clothing. It's a really scary situation but effectively they were able to get people to understand what was going on.

Global Awareness Lecture:

“Emerging Diseases in the Tropics: Biology Meets Economics, Politics, and Culture,”

Thomas M. Yuill, emeritus director and professor, Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies,

Wednesday,
7 February 2007

significant economic dividends for Canadians, and some of the fear of continental integration has subsided.

Culturally, many Canadians continue to feel Americans are more chauvinistic and materialistic and that quite a few U.S. foreign policy goals are not compatible with Canadian goals. They think that they have a kinder, gentler society that treats their people from all walks of life and income levels far better than the U.S. does. They basically think that they have a much wider and deeper safety net for their citizens, such as universal healthcare coverage. The British connection is still quite noticeable in Canada, Queen Elizabeth II remains Canada's official head of state, and Canadian positions on health care, pensions, taxation, and some international issues are generally closer to countries across the Atlantic than to the country with which Canada shares a common border.

Both U.S. neighbors to the north and south want to take full advantage of unimpaired access to the world's largest national market, but at the same time they desire to maintain their own cultural values and distinctive sense of national identity. Hopefully, all three will prosper from NAFTA's full implementation in 2008 but still retain their strong sense of national identity and love for their respective countries and cultures.

Cultural Sides of Human Trafficking

Jini L. Roby, associate professor of social work, BYU

Generally, trafficked victims are brought into the illegal labor market through force, fraud, or coercion. It is believed that several million people are engaged in trafficked labor globally, and the profit from trafficking is the fastest growing international crime, at an annual profit of \$32 billion US. These victims provide cheap manual labor and sexual services. They work in sweat shops, farms and orchards, restaurants, race tracks, brothels, and bars under difficult conditions that result in physical and psychological injury.

One of the strongest forces behind human trafficking is embedded in culture. Culture can impact both the supply and demand side of human trafficking.

On the supply side, cultural attitudes about gender roles can play a major role pushing people into human trafficking. Due to the lower status of women in many cultures, girls and women often do not have access to gainful employment. Typically, they are kept out of the education and skills building that they need in the first place.

This cultural attitude, coupled with extreme poverty can encourage trafficking into very cheap and exploitative labor including commercial sexual exploitation. In some cultures children—especially girls—are expected to care for their parents, and selling a child into debt bondage—where the child works for a time period until the debt is paid off—is viewed as a method of keeping the rest of the family intact.

In other cultures, boys are expected to grow up fast and become the provider of the family, pushing them into whatever means might bring a job. There is also cultural

tolerance for corruption or a lax enforcement of laws, even if laws are in place.

In some countries, the police and border patrol have been known to conspire with traffickers to pass them through for shared profits or bribes. In many cases, parents and victims are aware of what will happen, but in some cases, due to lack of education, the victims fall prey to manipulative traffickers.

On the demand side (the side that purchases services being provided by those who have been trafficked), there may be a cultural belief that some people are born to do the manual labor that is deserving of the class into which they are born. In some cultures, the attitude is still prevalent that children born into certain social classes do not need to be educated since their future only holds “dirty” and loathsome tasks that befit their station in life. This cultural attitude perpetuates the lack of access to opportunities, often giving way to viewing children as commodities, and many are sold as camel jockeys to the Middle East and as household servants.

There are some societies in which cultural practices tolerate using domestic servants who have very little voice and are treated unfairly, including children who are often abused at the hands of their employers. In many countries, there is a cultural attitude that men should be allowed to visit prostitutes without legal or moral recrimination, in order to “preserve” their marriages (prevent having mistresses). This attitude encourages prostitution, including by victims of human trafficking.

Plus ça change: Fraud, Religion, and Law in France

Elizabeth Sewell, associate
director, International
Center for Law and Religion
Studies, BYU

In 1669, the French playwright Molière published *Tartuffe*, a classic portrait of a religious shyster. By pretending to be a holy man and spiritual guide, Tartuffe almost completely swindles a gullible man’s fortune and ruins his family. The poor target of Tartuffe’s wily charms, Orgon, recognizes the fraud too late, and is finally delivered by a representative of the King, who denounces and apprehends Tartuffe. Modern American critics have puzzled over this seemingly “forced” and “not convincing” resolution that is “so unexpected as to cast doubt upon the dramatic coherence of the entire comedy.”

In a move that was equally baffling to Americans, over three hundred years later, French legislators also attempted to protect their population from religious fraud. Reacting to fears of “dangerous cults,” following investigations prompted by events that occurred in the mid-1990s, the French Senate and National Assembly adopted a law on 30 May 2001 “to strengthen prevention and repression of sectarian groups liable to undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms.” The law criminalizes “mental manipulation,” fraud, and deceptive practices by purportedly religious actors.

Both of these visions of a strong state protecting citizens from religious fraud sit uncomfortably with Americans. For precisely that reason, however, they are particularly useful vehicles in an attempt to understand French legal and religious culture. The noted cultural historian Robert Darnton suggested





that “[w]hen we cannot get a proverb, or a joke, or a ritual, or a poem, we know we are on to something. By picking at the document where it is most opaque, we may be able to unravel an alien system of meaning.”

In the texture of French legal and religious life, this opacity can be seen in French approaches to religious fraud, as illustrated in *Tartuffe* and the French anti-cult law. To most Americans, these seem overly paternalistic and prone to violate individual liberty. Instead of simply being content with labeling a foreign system of thought as condescending or paternalistic, it is worth thinking through why the French seem to expect the state to interfere in what seem like individual religious decisions, and why they view the state as having a role in protecting individuals from religion. Again, to quote Darnton: “When we run into something that seems unthinkable to us, we may have hit upon a valid point of entry into an alien mentality. And once we have puzzled through to the native’s point of view, we should be able to roam around in his symbolic world.”

The strong role of the state in protecting individuals from religion in France dates back to at least the French Revolution, when Enlightenment thinkers and Revolutionary leaders sought to disentangle the Roman Catholic Church from its privileges. The sense of rivalry between church and state in France has fostered a strong anti-clerical sentiment that has shaped modern French church-state relations. French views of a state active in social and religious life also stem from a different understanding of the role of the state and the nature of civil society and social life. In contrast to an American perspective, in which “we, the people” form a government and directly participate in civil society and social life, the French “understand the State as the first intermediary between society and citizens—the State is responsible for legal and practical civil society.” Drawing on Greek political thought, the French state saw itself as embodying the will of the citizens and historically positioned itself as the protector of individual rights vis-à-vis the monarchy. A French church-state scholar has explained that “[t]he true public sphere in France,

for example, is the space where the State exerts its authority for the benefit of all and at the service of all. . . . The implicit tendency of the French State is to define first whether its religious partner is religious and only then to accept its entry into the public sphere if its actions are deemed useful.” Much more could be said about the role of religion and the state in French history and culture, but these points should illuminate why both Molière and a modern French legislature see it as the role of the state to protect individuals from religious fraud and hucksterism. Of course, understanding the cultural background of a legal system and law is only the first step in an analysis of a law. It does not necessarily mean that a particular law should be enacted, upheld by courts, or enforced—but it is a vital first step, one which allows for mutual comprehension and meaningful debate.

It is worth noting that cultural perceptions and concerns are not uniform across a culture, and may have significant overlaps and points of contact with vastly differing cultures. In the area of religious fraud, for example, France and the U.S. are not entirely opposites: the anti-cult law has been denounced by French religious leaders and human rights workers, and U.S. courts have attempted, albeit gingerly, to address cases of religious fraud. Still, however, the strikingly similar views of religious fraud in French literature and law over three hundred years reveal the lasting power of cultural norms, particularly in the deeply-felt arenas of religion and the role of the state.

Sources are available upon request.

Globalization with a Hint of Nationalism

Dodge Billingsley, producer / director, *Combat Films & Research, Beyond the Border Series*

For the last year and a half I have been in the midst of filming a program about globalization and the automobile industry—global supply chains to be exact; the networks of car parts traversing continents and oceans to be assembled into automobiles at all points of the globe. Two things have impressed me from the start. First, how tight-lipped the automobile manufacturers have been on the topic. (I work predominantly with the armed forces, and they have proven to be much more accommodating when it comes to sharing information—believe it or not.) Second, the varying role of nationalism when it comes to automobile manufacturers, and their global supply chains.

Nationalism has been a fundamental weapon in the struggle for companies to compete in the global marketplace and get home markets to buy their products over other, foreign, competitors. The plant manager at Modine Radiator in Tennessee told us there is “a certain sense of pride when you see a vehicle drive down the street that has a part it in made by us,” while Ford’s advertising campaigns constantly appeal to Americans to *buy American*. The CEO of Burke Limited in the UK worries that if automobile manufacturing jobs, like his company provides, don’t stay in the UK, “there won’t be enough people in the UK with money to buy the cars.” Yet the CEO of Sundram Fasteners in Chennai India, who sends radiator caps made at his facility all over the world, adamantly defends quality over nationalist

sentiment, citing for example the dominance of Korean automobiles over Indian models.

And so it was true in Beijing, where our friend Jin Zhilin and his daughter had just purchased the family’s first car. It was Jin’s daughter who chose the Buick sedan, because she recalled, “It was made from all over the world.” In her mind, a global car was an indication of quality. She shopped for a car over the Internet—perhaps the greatest instrument available in facilitating globalization. For her, nationalism wasn’t a determinant—or was it? She did acknowledge that when the Korean car companies began to infiltrate the Chinese market years ago it was a bit hard to take. As she put it, “I expected a quality product from the Japanese, Germans, and Americans, nations with a strong automobile tradition, but felt ashamed that Korea would have better cars than China.” A very cultural response.

Jin Zhilin and daughter with their new Buick sedan in front of their apartment in Beijing, summer 2005.





Experiencing Culture Shock—Again

Dana S. Bourgerie, associate professor, Asian and Near Eastern languages and Chinese Flagship Program director

Culture shock is something anyone who has been abroad knows something about, yet it is usually associated with the initial experience with a culture. In the Chinese Flagship Program at BYU, we regularly work to prepare students for direct enrollment in Chinese universities and to fulfill internships within Chinese institutions. Most of our students have been to China at least once before and are rated at the highest level of Chinese-language proficiency. Many have been participants in rigorous, traditional study abroad programs. Still, they are often unprepared for the experience for which they are training.

As these students enter previously unexplored domains of the culture, they are often taken aback by what they find—that they are treated as natives not as honored foreigners. One student enrolled in a regular university course taught by the teacher she also had for a regular study abroad course, but this time it was as if she was dealing with another person and a different educational system. There was no syllabus, no accessibility, no friendly conversations, and no special treatment. She was left bewildered to decipher her new environment with no handholding, and the much greater formality associated with the Chinese classroom.

Another student, anxious to be a team member in a law firm and to show his abilities, earnestly tried to contribute to group deliberations in company meetings, only to be reminded that it was his role as a junior person to listen.

He felt underappreciated and even maltreated, but, in fact, he was being treated as a Chinese person—something he had supposed he had wanted all along. He had discovered a truism of cultural assimilation: the better your language and cultural skills, the more you are treated as a member of the host culture—all of which brings greater opportunity but more challenges as well.

I have lived and traveled in China for nearly twenty-five years, but I still regularly encounter the mild disorientation associated with loss of control of my environment that we typically refer to as culture shock. As I tried to enroll my nine-year-old daughter in a Chinese school a couple of years ago, I was told that I could not be present for the first day and that they would make no accommodations for her. Furthermore, I was subtly but clearly told that it was their job to teach and mine to be a parent. A cultural adage I often share with my students is that the more things seem universal the more they are in fact deeply cultural. Through education and training one may begin to understand and anticipate this principle, but only through experience do we fully realize it.

Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction

Kerry M. Kartchner, foreign affairs advisor, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, Washington, D.C.

It has become increasingly important to understand the cultural context in which U.S. foreign and defense policies operate. Our failure to anticipate the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11 was more than a “failure of imagination,” as the 9/11 Commission formally concluded, and it was more than a failure of the intelligence community. It was a failure of the United States to understand its place in the world, to understand the impact its actions were having on various segments of world opinion, and it was a collective failure to appreciate that cultural values can sometimes drive political actions.

Several government-commissioned studies and reports over the last several years have concluded that understanding strategic culture is vital to effectively implementing and safeguarding U.S. national security and foreign policy. One example is the 2004 Defense Science Board Study on Strategic Communications. This report concluded, among other things, that hostility to U.S. national security goals and policies is undermining U.S. power, influence, and strategic alliances. It further asserted that much of this hostility is driven by a lack of understanding of the cultural and regional context for U.S. policy. As with other studies, it called for educational and training efforts to be undertaken to address the need for greater cultural understanding.

In this context, there has been a revival of interest in “strategic culture,” which had been of great interest to scholars in the 1970s and 1980s, and is a subset of the broader study of culture and foreign policy. Strategic culture can be defined as “shared beliefs,

assumptions, and modes of behavior, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written) that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.” This is the definition that was developed and adopted by a two-year project undertaken by the Advanced Systems and Concepts Office of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency to explore the potential for strategic culture to help understand the motives states and societies might have to proliferate or use weapons of mass destruction. This study found that the concept of strategic culture captured the domestic sources of these motives much better than either traditional realist theories of international relations or more recent constructivist theories.

This study involved a focused and structured series of case studies of those countries and their associated cultures that are most closely associated with weapons of mass destruction, either in the sense of acquiring them, proliferating them, or threatening to employ them. In each case, we determined that such policies either were driven by strategic cultural considerations, or had to be reconciled with strategic cultural themes in order to be accepted as legitimate.

For example, for many years the Islamic Republic of Iran refused to engage in the development of its own chemical weapons arsenal, citing the Koranic proscription against “poisoning the wells of your enemies.” But Iraq’s relentless chemical attacks against Iran during the Iran–Iraq war of the 1980s, and the international community’s failure to come to Iran’s aid, or even to condemn Iraq for its use of chemical weapons, convinced Iran that it had to acquire its own chemical weapons defense. This was a difficult decision for Iranian clerics to make, and when the decision to acquire them and to use them in battle was eventually made, even though the decision was based on political

realism, it had to be reconciled with Iran's Islamic precepts. This reconciliation was found in the Koran's prescription to arm oneself with the weapons with which one's enemies come against you.

This could one day be taken as a precedent for Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons, which it currently claims are prohibited for religious reasons but could easily be justified as required to confront its alleged enemies. When that time comes, we must be prepared to recognize that understanding Iranian strategic culture will be essential to implementing successful deterrence policies.

"Media, technology, and transportation continue to shrink the world and even unify it in some ways, but cultural differences will never disappear. Instead, more and more of these differences will become apparent as we are increasingly exposed to them and interact with cultural others"

Brooks Peterson
*Cultural Intelligence:
A Guide to Working
with People from Other
Cultures*

p. 84

The Cultural Challenge of Charity

Jan R. Van Orman,
assistant international
vice president, BYU

There is a vast chasm between gripping world poverty and our abundant wealth in the U.S. Fundamentally, this results from a cultural gulf: a lack of constructive interchange between those who need and those who have. In our Latter-day Saint community, many feel compassion to reach out. My neighbor recently registered her own NGO to help school children in Kenya. This past summer she went to Africa and saw the world of poverty firsthand—AIDS orphans, squalor, and children who cannot read. She wants to help, as do the hundreds of other Utahans who went abroad last year on self-styled humanitarian crusades.

The cultural chasm manifests itself when my neighbor and others decide that they know what the school children need, and that she should supply it. From her perspective, money can provide books and pencils. But is this really the problem? And how does her giving help?

Students in my international development class have shared some of their experiences. "Sarah" describes the Christmas project she organized to bring toys to kids at a women's shelter. While she and her friends handed out their gifts and played with the children, Sarah was struck to see their mothers standing at the back of the room with downcast faces. Only then did she realize that her presents made these women feel even more marginalized—accentuating their deficiency and dependence. Her charity didn't raise their self-esteem. It didn't help them to change the humiliating circumstance in which they found themselves.



“Ned” wanted to help the Russian people he came to love on his mission. He gathered generous donations from his neighbors with which he helped a destitute state-run orphanage fix up its bathrooms, lighting, and add fresh paint. When he returned the following summer with more resources, the orphanage was gone. The building had been taken over by a government office that took a liking to the refurbished space. The orphanage had been moved to another—worse—location. Ned learned that local sociopolitics weigh heavily upon any effort to change the status quo. He came to appreciate how difficult it is for outsiders to understand complex economic and cultural issues and to predict the unintended consequences that usually follow external donations.

Both the orphans and displaced moms were deserving and needing help. The real challenge is to discern the best way to help. The only way to truly overcome poverty is to enable people to help themselves. Only this makes them free. From the outside looking in, poverty situations often appear easy to change with a few resources, but disadvantage is rooted within people themselves and in their relationships with others. It is the interrelationships that are encumbering, or that could become enabling. The challenge for givers is to recognize that problems are inherently personal and bound within culture and context. People’s progress is inhibited more by deficient relationships than by scarcity of resources. Random giving seldom empowers people—it rarely dislodges the deep roots of petulant poverty. External donations sometimes even do more harm than good—if they undermine people’s ingenuity and initiative, demean their self-respect, or lead them into a more vulnerable or dependent position.

I’ve spent my career and my life learning from those who are pulling themselves up through heroic self-help efforts. The reality of these people is quite different from the situation outsiders perceive. Too often donors come with prescriptions for narrow problems they

have defined. These are palliatives and stop-gap. Too much charity is simply dropped off, without givers understanding or addressing many interrelated needs that are left wanting. This cultural myopia is a consequence of an outsider’s inability to fully appreciate a receiver’s priorities and capabilities. We bring little hope to receivers when we see them as deficient and needy, rather than as competent individuals who live in a foreign environment—on the other side of a cultural chasm. Few givers take the time or are able to build the relationship that fosters understanding, and the dignified interchange that truly lifts people up.

I applaud the generous efforts of those who seek to humanely rescue people in deprivation. I honor the good will and compassion shown by their kindness. However, decades of experience has shown that short-sighted interventions and insular gifts seldom change things. Consider the fact that after trillions of dollars in foreign aid and millions of NGO projects, there are nearly as many people living in poverty today as there were in 1950. This is the cultural chasm.

A better answer for my neighbor might be to find a sensitive, effective NGO on-the-ground in Kenya that can establish a supportive relationship with the families of “her” schoolchildren. Such organizations exist. You cannot really lift another from a distance. For other compassionate people who want to help those in need, I remind you of wise counsel. True charity requires giving yourself. To exalt the needy we must lower ourselves. This recommends staying closer to home, where we can truly reach our “brother.” At home the cultural chasm is less wide. I know this is counterintuitive to some and perhaps less personally satisfying. But that’s not what true charity is about. There are many excellent local organizations that provide opportunities for givers to share their time and hearts in meaningful and needed ways. To cross the cultural abyss, we have to be willing to travel a different road.

Managing Culture: A Global Business Perspective

C. Brooklyn Derr, professor of organization, leadership, and strategy, BYU

Managing culture is an oxymoron. Culture simply exists and begs to be understood. However, as the business world becomes increasingly global, many are involved in numerous global work activities, such as business travel, cross-national teams, global supply chains, outsourcing to offshore sites, virtual teams, global product launches, interacting with inpatriates and repatriates at corporate and regional headquarters, and project task forces solving international problems. In all of these situations, one must quickly understand cultural basics and how they impact business transactions. Managing culture, in this sense, means adapting to core cultural reality and trying to change what is culturally ambiguous.

For example, it is a cultural reality that French business leaders come from a very different education and background than do U.S. MBAs. It is also an established cultural fact that most French leaders prefer stability, planning, hierarchy, and government regulation and have a lower tolerance for ambiguity and change than do most U.S. leaders. A question for a U.S. corporation in France or for acting effectively in a Franco-American joint venture, therefore, is how to adapt U.S. forms of organization to French culture while, at the same time, carefully selecting those French who might prefer a different corporate culture. It is also important to consider how to use U.S. cultural work methods to exploit (in the strategic sense) the situation and gain competitive advantage. General Electric (GE) has done this very well.

So how do global businesspersons manage national culture? Mostly, they turn to *CultureGrams* (developed by the Kennedy Center at BYU and now sold by ProQuest), and they talk to colleagues who either live in-country or have been to the country. It is also quite common for them to refer back to the national culture analysis frameworks used in business schools.


The Geert Hofstede (1980) framework is the most common of these cultural frameworks from which one would gain a sense of the attitudes and behaviors of many with the same passport on four key dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, and quality of life, or what Hofstede terms the masculine/feminine aspects of the culture. Edward T. Hall (1976) put forward a common cultural framework from which one may ascertain the distance between one's own culture and the host culture, assuming that it will be more difficult to understand those cultures more distant or different from one's own culture. Hall also offers a useful shorthand concept of "high context" (more relational, more time fluid) and "low context" (more task oriented, more punctual) for various national cultures. And Edgar Schein (1992) explores the idea of culture depth and how to differentiate between more superficial corporate cultures and deeper national cultures, with the idea being to ascertain the deeper national culture assumptions that impact the nature of organizational behavior.

These cultural frameworks are sometimes called "sophisticated stereotyping" of people from a national culture based on research findings. Mary Yoko Brannen (2003) and others point to the many variations on these broader cultural themes. Busy global executives and professionals need some quick way to make sense out of important differences imposed by national culture. These cultural frameworks

"Imagining the lives of others is an essential human instinct. It is an act of empathy, a gesture of faith in a common bond. It is also a kind of travel, an attempt to move outside the parameters of our own narrow universe. But it almost always fails. Once we pick up and go—once we cross the borders, physical and intellectual, political and emotional, that divide countries and continents—we come to realize that we're not merely imagining. We're projecting. And if we're honest with ourselves about that, we at last see the truths, or at least the puzzles and muddles in which they are buried."

Elinor Burkett

*So Many Enemies,
So Little Time:
An American Woman in All
the Wrong Places*



help them get beyond simple stereotypic assumptions or reading facts about a country. Of course, when actually living and working in one country or cultural region as an expatriate employee, one would be expected to be much more knowledgeable about the national culture.

As the world becomes increasingly interdependent, it is estimated that about 70 percent of national culture variance may be controlled using a global standard and a strong corporate culture (norms, values, common reward, and reporting systems). The concern, therefore, is with the 25–30 percent of the national culture factor that is deep-seated and will impact basic assumptions and organizational behavior. National culture frameworks will help global executives and professionals operate more effectively across borders. 🌐

“We finally noticed that foreign cultures are not arbitrarily or randomly different from one another. They are instead *mirror images* of one another’s values, reversals of the order and sequence of looking and learning.”

Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Trompenaars

Building Cross-Culture Competence

AT THE CENTER

Remember your days
on campus: attending guest lectures in
the Kennedy Center conference room,



... participating in student groups,



... and then came graduation?



Whether your departure was last year or twenty-plus years ago, the Kennedy Center offers multiple options for you to connect with the center on a regular basis.

By the end of April 2007, the center will have sponsored ninety-eight events during fall and winter semesters, some of which are in partnership with various departments and groups on campus with an international emphasis. These include ambassadorial visits, panels and conferences on current events, the Book of the Semester lectures, and scholarly research.

Oman-U.S. Relations, September 2006

Her Excellency Hunaina bint Sultan Al-Mughairy, Omani ambassador to the U.S.

"We literally have come from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first century in the last thirty-six years."



The Next Christendom:

The Coming of Global Christianity, October 2006

Philip Jenkins, Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University

"The kinds of Christianity that are succeeding across much of the global south tend to be more traditional

in their view of religious authority; they are charismatic in the sense of being open to ideas of dreams and prophecies and visions; they are deeply committed to ideas of healing—they are in that sense more supernaturally oriented."



**Turning the Telescope Around:
The CIA Looks at its History,
November 2006**

*Nicholas Dujmovic, CIA staff
historian*

"We CIA officers have to face our history as it really is or was. If we do that, if we're aware of the real history, warts and all, then we at least have a better chance of trying to figure out the present and to do better in the future what it is we do."

agendas," Christopher Jones, visiting professor of political science, BYU

"Dividing the country as far as the Iraqis are concerned is not acceptable because of the distribution of wealth from oil revenues," Hamid al-Masudi, Iraqi national and graduate student, University of Utah

"How do you engage these militias without engaging in the sectarian violence? What if a year from now we learn we have backed the wrong group?" Dodge Billingsley,

Combat Films & Research producer/
director, SLC



**The Future of Iraq, a panel response to
the Iraq Study Report, January 2007**

"Unintended consequences from the war in Iraq are going to bring incentives to us to more seriously engage Iran and Syria as key players in the region," Eric A. Hyer, associate professor of political science, BYU

"Everybody sees that what is needed in Iraq is a political as well as a military solution," R. John Hughes, Pulitzer prize-winning journalist (formerly with the *Christian Science Monitor* and *Deseret Morning News*) and currently a professor of communications, BYU

"When we look at the different groups in Iraq, there is no one that can be an American champion; there are no groups that are uniformly good guys . . . everyone has hands that are somewhat dirty," Donna Lee Bowen, professor of political science, BYU

"One of the biggest challenges to the future of Iraq is that it is plagued by personal



Slovakia-U.S. Relations, February 2007

*His Excellency Rastislav Kacer, Slovakian
ambassador to the U.S.*

"If I go back to the creation of Czechoslovakia, the U.S. was extremely important for the historical survival of the Slovaks. Our wise leaders met in the United States in Pittsburgh and created one of the basic documents and political statements of the democratic future of Czechs and Slovaks [Pittsburgh Agreement 1918]."

**The New York
Times and the First
Amendment,
March 2007**

*George Freeman, vice
president and assistant
general counsel, New
York Times*

"Historically, newspapers hold back facts all the time in the interest of national security."



These selections represent only a fraction of what is archived for easy access to view online <http://kennedy.byu.edu/events/archive.php>.

You might prefer to download a podcast via iTunes.

In addition, you can sign on to the E-News career or event listserv to receive weekly updates via e-mail on upcoming events.

Or you might elect to receive RSS feed as the most convenient way to receive updates.

In 2006, the center launched a new secure Alumni Database, where you can post your current information, connect with classmates, and from which we search to select alums to participate in convocations and other Kennedy Center events.

Links for all of these options may be found on our home page at <http://kennedy.byu.edu>.

We would also like to extend an invitation to alumni to pursue opportunities to participate in more personal ways to make a difference. Consider these examples and determine where you, or classmates teamed together, might be of assistance, or be creative and make a suggestion of your own:

- be a guest lecturer or contribute articles for *Bridges* magazine
- offer your connection with upper-level administrators, scholars, or officials who could be potential guest speakers
- liaison for internships with your company or organization
- career mentor
- guest lecture for a class or forum (especially spring/summer terms)
- participate in or attend conferences
- enhance ISP program options (*i.e.*, fund a field trip or activity that would not otherwise be an option in the program)
- sponsor an annual guest lecture or conference

Check out your options soon at <http://kennedy.byu.edu>!

Expand
Your WorldKC Photo
Awards

The 7th annual Kennedy Center Photo Contest awards were announced in conjunction with International Education Week, 13–17 November. At an awards reception,

first place and \$100 went to Ralph B. Brown for "Hanoi Cobbler."

Brown is a professor in and associate chair of the Department of Sociology, who has directed students in southeast Asia study abroad. Second place and \$75 was awarded to David Stoker for "Classmates," taken during a field study program in Ghana.

Nicole Watts, a student from the University of Illinois in Chicago, participated in a Guatemala field study through a partnership with Brigham Young University. Watts took third place and received \$50 for her entry, "Head Strong."



Thirteen additional photos were selected to receive Honorable Mention. See the photo gallery online at <http://kennedy.byu.edu/publications/photo>.



Motorcycles— A Vehicle for Social Change

by John Hustedt

In Southeast Asia, specifically Vietnam, the introduction and widespread use of motorcycles is both a blessing and a curse. Throughout the last fifteen years, motorcycles have changed virtually every aspect of social life in Vietnam. Consequently, in the years prior to 2005, many studies were conducted on transportation. Fortunately, there was a gap in the research, as relatively few studies addressed the social consequences. When an opportunity to work on cutting edge research in Chiang Mai with the Kennedy Center's volunteer program presented itself, I was excited to do work that clearly had policy implications that could help Vietnam in the future.

The topic I researched on my initial visit to Vietnam was the effect of transportation (especially motorcycles) on social change in Southeast Asia, which became my honors thesis that I presented at the Pacific Sociological Association. After the volunteer program, I set out to conduct research in Vietnam before heading home for classes, lingering in Vietnam for about a month. During that time, while looking for advice at the Institute of Sociology, one of the staff members was impressed with my language skills acquired during a mission in Dallas, Texas, and invited me to return and study at the institute after I finished my undergraduate training.

That research commenced in May 2006, and I have since joined an advanced statistics class on SPSS, STRATA, and other computer statistics programs. The best part is that it only costs about fifteen dollars—talk about great tuition prices. During the day, I discover interesting things about Vietnamese society by reading books, perusing other studies, and picking at the brains of intelligent people. At night I teach English to children ranging in age from five- to thirteen-years-old but find that I am more frequently teaching conversation and pronunciation classes

to adults and teenagers. Finally settled in a rented top floor of a house in town, I bought a motorcycle from a friend, and am finding my way around.

I have been trying to attend as many cultural events as possible, visiting museums, traditional art shows, jazz clubs, and the opera house. One Saturday I saw the Vietnamese National Orchestra in the historical opera house building, where I met the American ambassador and other local leaders. On a recent trip to the beach with the Institute of Sociology, I got sick, but it gave me time to think, read, and catch up on things I had been neglecting in the midst of the excitement of being here.

When I first arrived, I was not affiliated directly with any BYU department, but since then I have begun working as a fellow for the BYU International Center for Law and Religion Studies. Previously, I had served as a translator for several of the annual conferences the center hosts, and, therefore, knew (and conveniently worked in the same building with) many of the Vietnamese



religious officials they needed help contacting. I am now helping them contact, interview, and receive information from officials and academics in Vietnam. Through my research and experiences here, I hope to contribute in some small way to the knowledge base the local and foreign researchers have already built. During my time in Vietnam, I have seen the need for assistance in dealing with public health issues in the community. That eventually lead me to seek out a partnership with the Hanoi School of Public Health. With the experience and knowledge I have gained here, I hope to positively impact the lives of the people in Vietnam. 🇻🇳

Hustedt plans to live in Vietnam until at least May 2007. Following his return to the U.S., he plans to complete both a master's and a PhD in public health beginning fall 2007.



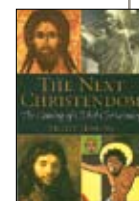
Expand Your World



Book of the Semester Redefines Christian Demographics

Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University, Philip Jenkins, lectured on his award-winning book the *Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, wherein he stated that Christianity is moving south—not to the Bible belt—but to Latin America and Africa. His lecture on 19 October was preceded by a panel discussion on 4 October, with faculty members: Ted Lyon, panel chair, who is the Latin American studies coordinator and a professor of Spanish at BYU, and panelists: Paul Y. Hoskisson, Richard L. Evans Chair of Religious Understanding; Roger R. Keller, professor of Church history and doctrine; Richard N. Holzapfel, associate professor of church history and doctrine; and Mark L. Grover, Africa and Latin America subject specialist, Harold B. Lee Library.

Jenkins' book won the 2003 Christianity Today Book Award, the Gold Medallion book award, and the



Theologos award for the Best Academic Book. He received a PhD from the University of Cambridge (1978), and a double first-class honor BA in history and Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic Studies (1974). During graduate school, he was a research officer on an Oxford and Cambridge project on the history of criminal law 1790–1914.



Find both the panel and lecture archived online at http://kennedy.byu.edu/events/lecture_archives_2006_fall.php.

**FINCA International
in Honduras and
Mexico**

by Tyler Woolstenhulme

From May to August 2006, I worked in Honduras and southern Mexico as a client research fellow for FINCA International, one of the largest microlending institutions in the world that distributes funds to clients in twenty-four countries. My team and I conducted poverty assessment research by evaluating the economic impact the loans have on borrowers.

Overall, clients who had more time borrowing from the organization were in a better economic situation to provide for their children, their families, and to strengthen their businesses. Over 95 percent of the clients gave FINCA excellent ratings and were very pleased with the organization and rapidity with which the loans were delivered. One way in which all microlending banks and institutions may improve their practices is to encourage entrepreneurs to invest in new, uncommon products, eliminating threats of over saturation and slow growth. They may also offer incentives to clients who use profits from business to invest in education or healthier foods.

Each day I met wonderful people, enjoyed their ways of life, and learned of their successes and failures. I saw places that are mostly unknown to the rest of the world that are in need of assistance and continual caring. One particular evening, I noticed an older man in a rickety wheelchair pushing himself along the street. I entered the local office to pick up a personal item, and upon leaving, I noticed that the man had not moved but fifty yards. After obtaining his permission to be his chauffeur, I pushed him through town to his final destination, which by himself would have taken a couple of hours. I noticed puzzled looks in the people's eyes as they witnessed the two of us glide down the main stretch in rural Honduras. The man knew where he was going, and I was just helping him get there. And so it is with many of those living in poverty. They know where they are going, they just need a little help getting there.



Malta—is that in Utah?

by Clint Long, senior, history major, BYU



Well, no, it isn't. Maybe you're thinking about Magna. Malta is a small island in the Mediterranean Sea inhabited by about a half million people.

While on an international internship with a member of the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, I took a directed readings course, which meant that I would read three thousand pages of books on any historical subject(s) of my choosing and write book reviews. My faculty supervisor, Mark Choate, professor of modern European history, suggested that I read recently published books so as to send my reviews to journals for publication.

After preparing a list of books and e-mailing as many journals as possible, I hoped a few would offer me the chance for publication. The response was excellent, so I sent a second batch of requests to a few more journals. One of them, *European Legacy*, replied that the staff welcomed my offer, and they would accept my review for publication. The e-mail also offered an astonishing opportunity.

European Legacy is produced by the International Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI). Every two years, ISSEI holds a conference in various parts of Europe or the Middle East. In July 2006, ISSEI would hold its tenth biannual conference in Malta at the University of Malta, and enclosed with my e-mail was a casual invitation to participate.

As an undergraduate, I had nothing published to that point, I had not completed any internships or similar activities, and the realm of my presentation experience certainly did not include any academic conferences. Besides, I wasn't even sure if this organization existed! I replied with an incredulous "I'm an undergraduate—are you sure?" to which the book review editor calmed my doubts by inviting me a second time.

As I researched the conference, I found the theme would be "The European Mind: Narrative and Identity," which fit well with my internship research paper on the survival of stateless nations in an integrated Europe. I submitted a proposal based on that and, in true academic fashion, changed the topic of the paper for my internship.

Parliamentary Partners

In Belgium, I worked for Ian Hudghton, a member of the European Parliament who is also the president of Scotland's leading independence-seeking party, the Scottish National Party. He led a group called the European Free Alliance (EFA) who, along with their coalition partners the Greens, constituted the fourth-largest group in the European Parliament. EFA is a European political party made up of individuals and political parties that seek greater recognition and autonomy for Europe's stateless nations.

Another course commitment was a paper for the party I worked for, suggesting a stance or policy change on a relevant issue. Serious consideration began to evolve toward how EFA should improve its policy on getting recognition for minority languages spoken by nations they represent.

My interest in this subject came largely due to a book on my readings list, *Law and Language in the European Union*. Author Richard L. Creech points out the facets of language use in the EU and submits his own policy suggestion for a more just EU language policy. After my reading, I began to notice how EFA tried to represent nations like Scotland, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Wales, and others without exercising much effort in getting more recognition for their languages. Based on EFA's language policy, which did not reflect the role of languages in national identities, my thesis solidified that a more effective language policy would not only bring more recognition for these languages but also improve these nations' opportunities for more sovereignty and autonomy.

Back at BYU, I was met with scholarship monies for my internship from the Kennedy Center; the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences; and the History Department, which made it possible to pursue the ISSEI conference in Malta. After some deliberation, I submitted a second proposal, and chose to participate in a workshop titled "European Identity at the Crossroads: Philosophical Perspectives."

Malta and Beyond

Additional research and changes to my paper completed, I traveled to Malta, where I found a beautiful island country with gorgeous waters, amazing architecture, and time-tested culture—a beautiful backdrop for an academic conference. The University of Malta also added multiple advantages, including air conditioned rooms.

The day after I arrived was when my workshop was held. My nerves were relatively relaxed after I found myself to be the only person in the room with a tie on. Somewhat relaxed, I proceeded to present my paper, entitled "Can't We All Just Get a *Langue*? A Better Language Policy for the European Union." I argued that EFA needed to create a stance on language rights that reflects the role languages play in national identities. Language is perhaps the factor that most defines Europe's nations and thus preserves national identity. My suggested policy focused more on language rights and recognition in the EU for European minority languages. I also argued that the EU needed to see language rights not as something definable by the boundaries of nation-states but instead to pay attention to the needs of many stateless nations (*i.e.*, Catalonia, Wales, Basque) to have their languages recognized.

An attentive and interested audience was evidenced by the number of hands that shot up as my presentation finished. We had to break for lunch before I could answer all the questions, and as a result of my presentation, my confidence grew tremendously. Language rights in Europe has become an issue that I love to study and learn about, developing my understanding of Europe, its minority nations, and the world. 🌍

Cultural Barriers to Education among the Tarahumara

by Ariel Marshall

Chihuahua, Mexico is home to the Tarahumara, an indigenous population with a culture rich in tradition that is struggling to maintain its unique identity, while taking advantage of educational opportunities offered by the dominant culture. The Tarahumara in Chihuahua number fifty thousand, occupy one-fourth of the state, and make up 81.3 percent of the indigenous-language speakers. No one knows exactly how long the Tarahumara have lived in the Sierra Madre mountain range, but the earliest human artifacts found in this region date back fifteen thousand years.

The Tarahumara speak *Rarámuri* and live in communities with houses far from each other and away from the town center, which generally consists of a church and a school. Immediate and extended families reside together on small plots of land, typically living in small, one-room log houses without running water or electricity.

According to the 2000 census, there is a large gap in the completion of basic education between indigenous groups and those who speak Spanish as their first language. *Mestizos*, or people who are a mix of Spanish and Indian descent, make up the majority of Mexico's population and speak Spanish as their primary language. The educational gap is amplified in the Tarahumara, but existing research tends to focus on the inequality of education in Mexico instead of focusing specifically on inequalities and attitudinal barriers regarding

educational attainment among a specific indigenous group.

Education has the potential to positively influence these groups and is one of the few ways for outside intervention to affect a culture; education is also a significant indicator of socioeconomic status. Studying education among the Tarahumara illuminated the cultural factors and attitudes that have contributed to the lack of education and extreme poverty.

Past to Present: Tarahumara and Education

From the time the Mexican Ministry of Education was created in 1921, substantial inequalities have been documented among students attending public schools. From 1988 to 1998, governmental programs aimed to combat poverty through better employment, creating specific goals to help education become more accessible, with the idea that better education would create better jobs. The most recent and successful government program was PROGRESA (*Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación*, also known as "Contigo" and Oportunidades), created in 1997 by then-president of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo. PROGRESA focuses on improving the health, education, and nutrition of families in the lowest 20 percent of income distribution. PROGRESA provides educational grants to children in impoverished communities. And today, one in five Mexicans is enrolled in the program.

Despite the efforts of PROGRESA and similar programs, primary education (ages six to fifteen) among rural children is still very limited. Not surprisingly, rural schools are poorly



equipped and teachers ill-qualified despite efforts to narrow the gap. Among the Tarahumara, fully 60 percent of the community is illiterate. Educational attainment among them falls well below national and state averages.

Additionally, 60.4 percent of indigenous women have received no formal education in Chihuahua. This number is significant, as the level of education among mothers has a major impact on their children's education. Though the number of males receiving no education is 42.6 percent, making a difference of almost 20 percent, women who begin school are more likely to stay in school, with a 21.3 percent dropout rate compared to the 34 percent of men who do not complete primary school.

Through interviews, I found that the reasons for this educational gap between the Tarahumara and the mestizos fall into five categories: lack of cultural understanding, working and absent mothers, poor implementation of government programs, a hierarchy of needs problem, and gender inequality.

Lack of Cultural Understanding

I interviewed Mauricio del Villar, a twenty-five-year-old mestizo man who works with the Tarahumara under the direction of his friend and relative Juan Daniel. Together, they strive to improve the lifestyle of Tarahumara communities. As a result, they are both experts on Tarahumara culture from an outside perspective. Del Villar has observed that local schools do not teach what would be useful for the Tarahumara to advance economically. Though

they live mostly in farming communities, almost nothing about agriculture is taught in the schools. For information about agriculture, children rely on their parents as well



Studying education among the Tarahumara illuminated the cultural factors and attitudes that have contributed to the lack of education and extreme poverty.

as others in their community. Mathematics and sciences are taught in the schools, but the Tarahumara do not see any immediate relevance to either subject. Spanish is taught as well, a skill many Tarahumara consider useful. However, the effect of Spanish on their society is significant and viewed as potentially negative from a cultural perspective.

Working and Absent Mothers

Most mothers of indigenous children work away from home during the day. Armenda Lopez Carrillo, a preschool teacher in a colony in Cuauhtémoc, indicated that the mothers of the children she teaches start work before the children wake up and come home around five or six in the

evening. Carrillo believes the long hours parents work away from home is the cause of the often low attendance rate of their children at school. Older children, especially girls, are expected to take on many of the mother's duties at home. When we first entered the colony on a weekday in the middle of the afternoon, we saw only one or two adults the rest of the day, and many children are left to play by themselves.

Additionally, working mothers are not adequately involved in their children's lives. Sanchez believes that many of the aggressive tendencies she sees among her young students is a direct result from the violence children watch on TV, when their parents are not home. Petra Olivas, as well as other primary school teachers at a school in Cuauhtémoc, believes that if the mothers were home more often and had more control in their homes and with their children, they could teach them the value of education, sex education, and marrying later in life.

Poor Implementation of Government Programs

Juan Carlos, an educated father of two primary-school-aged children, described his experience with several government programs. The problem, he said, is not with the programs themselves, but with their implementation. In his opinion, these programs were well conceived but lacked adequate funding. Carlos further described that there was adequate funding in the system, but corrupt government officials take so much money for themselves that there is not enough left over by the time it reaches

Expand
Your World

Gore Film featured in Series


An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore's documentary, was screened twice as a featured film in the fall 2006 Global Environment film series. The two screenings were punctuated by a faculty discussion on the documentary. At the time of the screening, the film had not yet been released to the general public.

The series focused on critical environmental threats, from toxic chemicals and global warming to unsustainable economic growth and over-consumption. Some of these global challenges—such as disruptive climate change—are said to threaten life everywhere, while other problems are more local in scope but can be found throughout the world.

How do we understand and face these problems? The films posed important questions about our obligations to each other and to future generations as well as the opportunity to learn to become good stewards over the natural resources entrusted to our care.

The series was presented by the Kennedy Center in partnership with BYU's Ecology Club 6–10 November in the Herald R. Clark building





the schools, “like the mafia.” Principal Bilma Sanchez reported that government programs are often good for establishing schools but do little to help with ongoing management. All of the teachers or professors interviewed mentioned a lack of materials and funding. This cultural acceptance of corruption continues to hamper program funding.

Hierarchy of Needs Problem

One common complaint among teachers is that children are too hungry to pay attention. Some schools provide a small breakfast of beans for the children for three pesos (\$1 U.S. equals twenty-four Mexican pesos). When food is provided, the attendance goes up. Sanchez reported that sometimes the breakfast of beans provided by the school is the children’s only meal all day.

Gender Inequality

Although the 2000 Mexican census showed no difference in Chihuahua in the level of education attained by males and females, the teachers I interviewed believed strongly that there was in fact a gap in the education. They offered many reasons to explain a gender difference, because they observed an earlier dropout rate among females in their own classes.

Everyone interviewed agreed that schooling was equally important for males and females and that schools did not discourage either gender to attend. Gender inequality is due primarily to cultural norms in Tarahumara

society. According to Olivas, if girls know how to read, write, and make corn tortillas, they are ready to be married. Young women are often married at about thirteen- or fourteen-years-old, sometimes following a pregnancy. Once pregnant, they dropout of school, because they need to start working in order to provide for their children. Their lack of educational training requires them to work at low wage jobs as their parents did, and the cycle of working parents unable to care for their children begins again. In the Sierra, the young men and women do not get married at all but live together as though they were married until they choose otherwise.

The tradition of marrying at a young age also has an effect on to what degree parents are able to help their children in their school work. If parents have only a few years of schooling themselves, they will not be in a position to help their children with homework.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Thus far, I have illuminated reasons for the education gap between mestizos and the indigenous Tarahumara. The goal of education for the Tarahumara people should be to better their quality of life, while allowing them to maintain their unique culture as much as possible.

The first step would be to build on existing programs, such as bilingual schools. Language influences culture, and culture and language influence the way people think. Bilingual schools have

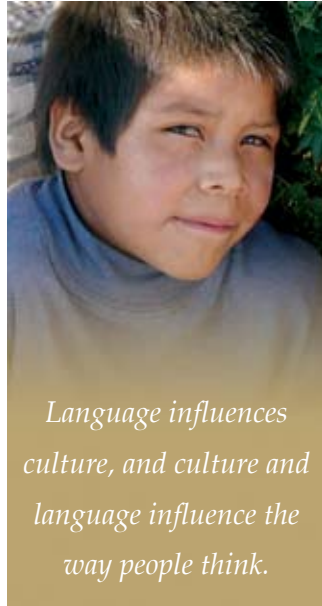
proven themselves to be effective in the past. Spanish would help the Tarahumara be more prepared to continue their education and get better jobs if they chose to integrate or work with the mestizos, while continuing the Rarámuri language would further cement their cultural identity.

Local leaders could be included in the process of writing the curriculum. An open forum between local, respected leaders and educators, where members of the community could come forward and make suggestions regarding what they would like their children to learn in school, would result in greater respect for their educational opportunities and help to make education a priority. The community may decide that it would be beneficial for a Tarahumara leader to participate in the classroom himself to teach the children their own history orally, as they have done traditionally.

It would also be important to augment the curriculum in such a way as to give Tarahumara children skills that would be useful to them in their everyday lives. For the Tarahumara in the Sierras, additional classes could include agriculture, animal husbandry, and basic health care. School calendars and class schedules could take into account agricultural seasons, when children would be helping their parents work in the fields. For areas where children tend animals during the day, evening classes would provide an alternative route to attaining an education.

Those who live in the colonias do not participate in agriculture nor animal

husbandry, so their curriculum needs would be different and could address drug and alcohol awareness, childcare, family planning (to help prevent unwanted pregnancy and young marriage), and job



training to help them prepare for work in the local economy.

To help the parents gain a better education, community classes could be provided. Again, the most effective and well attended classes will be those endorsed by community leaders and chosen by the Tarahumara people.

Additionally, better education comes from better educators. To make working in the Tarahumara communities more attractive to teachers, grants could be offered to anyone willing to teach in these areas for a significant period of time. There could be free educational training offered by the government to anyone from a Tarahumara tribe in exchange for returning to the Sierra or colonias to teach.

For any of these changes to take place, a change must occur in the government

and in the people. A more transparent government with less opportunity for corruption will help keep the program funds for their proper use, as well as build trust in the people. But the people must also show their desire for better education, or government leaders will have no incentive to provide better services. In the interim, non-government organizations could get involved by teaching some of these skills mentioned (such as basic health and child care), as well as raise money for school programs that would not go through the current corrupt system.

Conclusion

The Tarahumara people of Chihuahua, Mexico, have a distinct culture that is not well studied, despite the size of their population and how close they live to the U.S. border. They are behind the mestizo population in their educational attainment, but I believe improved educational opportunities will enable them to function in society while retaining their distinct culture and values. 🌱

Marshall traveled to Chihuahua from 23 May to 11 June 2006 with BYU's Sociology Department and Professor Tim Heaton.

Expand Your World

Kennedy Scholars Announced

The Kennedy Scholars for the 2006–07 academic year are: Zachary S. Davis, a senior majoring in international relations and comparative literature; Joshua D. Loud, a senior majoring in political science and economics; and Byron D. Peacock, a senior majoring in political science and German with minors in international development and philosophy.

This award is open to all full-time BYU students who embody the aims of the Kennedy Center and covers part- to full-time tuition stipends for two semesters. Emphasis is placed on those students who have an international or global focus, which they have demonstrated through majors, minors, participation in Kennedy Center programs, theses, research projects, or internships.



For more information on this and other scholarship opportunities, visit <http://kennedy.byu.edu/student/scholarships.php>.

These are different ways in which people deal with the **psychological aspect** of suffering.



Cultural Responses to Atrocity—interview with Alan Tansman

Chair and professor, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, University of California—Berkeley



What is the connection that brought you to BYU?

Marc Yamada [assistant professor of Japanese literature, BYU] was one of my students, and he invited me.

When did and how did your interest in this comparison between the Jewish and Japanese experience begin?

My interest in the comparison began seven or eight years ago. I grew up in a Jewish family whose grandparents were in Europe in the 30s, so there was a family connection to the Holocaust. When I started doing Japanese literature, there was no connection to the Holocaust in my work. And then I became interested in WWII, and the reactions of the Japanese to the bombing of Hiroshima, specifically. I found myself, because of my own biography, thinking about the connections between the two things that happened, and how the people responded to them. That's how it started, partially personal and partially professional; and the two things came together when I started teaching an undergraduate class with a colleague who was in Jewish studies—I did the Japanese side, and my colleague did the Jewish side.

Rather than there being a universal human response to atrocity, do you feel that culture plays a role? Will you identify some specifics in these two cultures?

I think going into it I assumed that there wasn't a universal response, and I'm not really that convinced anymore. That is, I think the responses are sometimes so idiosyncratic that it's hard to say that it is necessarily a cultural difference. It might have to do with individual differences: a person's own mental, emotional fortitude; a person's own sense of religiosity or not; or a person's socioeconomic situation. But something that sticks out might include, for example, in European-American, Jewish-European, Jewish-American culture, there is an emphasis on talking about one's suffering, processing one's suffering through psychoanalysis or therapy. And perhaps the Japanese feel that one matures oneself by being stoical or by reintegrating into the community as a form of healing. These are different ways in which people deal with the psychological aspect of suffering. And then for religious Jews, there's a biblical narrative to work with on suffering, for secular Jews there

You understand different **cultural ways** of feeling and representing feeling.

isn't. For some Japanese there's a certain kind of Buddhist sensibility that has to do with a sense of life, that may come into play, but not all Japanese have that same sensibility to the same degree. And the last thing I would say is that the way in which writers and filmmakers narrate the past, narrate these experiences, may differ because of different narrative traditions in each culture. Marc knows this well, that often in Japanese literature, pre-modern and modern, there isn't the same kind of structure found in European/American novels with a beginning, climax, and a conclusion. Japanese narratives tend to drift off in different directions. And I have found that when people are trying to cast their experiences into their narrative form they do call on their own culture's narratives, and that affects how they represent their experience. In the end, an individual's response and ways of representing their challenge and their sufferings is complex—so complex that the category of culture doesn't quite cover it.

At the time of the Holocaust, do you feel that there were more or less religious and secular Jews than now?

German Jewry was for the most part completely secular. The Jews prided themselves at how well they were assimilated into the German culture to the extent that many did not think of themselves as being Jews. Most Jews in the Holocaust weren't from Germany; they were from Poland and Lithuania, where there was a more traditional society and culture. Religious learning is more a part of them now than American Jewry. European Jews are more familiar with biblical texts, either in Hebrew or in Yiddish. But people weren't killed because they were religious or not, there were many people who were killed or who suffered and survived who were not religious. There videos of survivors talking about their experiences in the camps, for example, and as many don't talk about religious ways of understanding their experiences as do. From what I've seen, fewer tend to talk about religion. But some talk about how they lost religion in their camp, and some who had been secular, talk about how they gained religion. To me this is a mystery that somehow in their experience of suffering they came to believe in God.

You mentioned that it wasn't as many of the German Jews who were killed. To what do you attribute that?

It's a very simple fact that they were far fewer in number that's all. Most European Jews were not in Germany; they were

killed in the millions. Comparatively, there were hundreds of thousands of German Jews. Assimilation didn't affect anybody. Basically, people with money and resources were able to leave; that was another factor for the majority of European Jews who did not have those resources.

Do you feel that culture is a factor in the response regardless of the size of the group or the breadth of the event. For instance, when the Amish children were slain in Pennsylvania this last fall?

I can't imagine why the size of the group would matter, because in the Amish case, which is an interesting case, it is a very small group, but from what I understand, the religious cultural sensibility modes of understanding the world are very strong; they are very strongly felt by people in the community. Even though it is a tiny community, I don't think that has as much to do with their experience of their culture as a way of understanding that tragedy, for example. And I don't think the public got a sense of how they mourned this. To me it is not only stoic but saintly. I don't fully understand it in my gut. Related to my sense of the Japanese response, one thing that was often misdefined, about the bombs especially, was the people didn't generally express anger toward the United States. The bombs are often talked about as natural events that fell from the sky. It's pretty rare that people are angry at the United States. And it's a complicated situation, because people remember they were liberated from forms of oppression by the Japanese state, too, so there is that and there is relief at the war ending. But even for the people in Tokyo who suffered terribly from American bombings (one night in Tokyo 75,000 people were killed), it wasn't about the Americans. I can't get into the mind of the Amish resident, but I'm glad there are people like that on the planet.

Based on your research, do you feel that culture helps or hinders a group and their response?

It depends. I think it can help or it can hinder. We heard the Amish elders, but we don't hear the people we don't hear from, so for all we know they don't feel that way, and the elders are imposing this culture model on them and they are suffering because they can't express rage. The mothers for instance. I mean you can imagine the suffering of someone who is being told by the community you cannot express rage. I don't know if that's true or not, but if it is true, that's a case in which I think culture is causing damage. But this is all so subjective.

Personally, I think that it can do both. Having grown up in a unique culture, I know personally that it can be a positive thing, it can be liberating, or it can be oppressive.

What was the most surprising find as you explored the roles culture played in the Jewish/Japanese experiences?

I guess the most surprising thing came very gradually, because of the categories I had in my mind when I went into this. We scholars, teachers, intellectuals, whatever—we want to figure things out; we have categories. At the end of all this, I think having taught this numerous times and written about it a bit, people are complex. It's very hard and no one should reach for broader conclusions. And that goes against our instincts. I don't know if that's disappointing or just sobering, but there it is.

Do you have plans to apply your findings to others groups who have experienced catastrophic events?

The Japanese/Jewish comparison isn't quite right because the Jews were victims and the Japanese were not just victims. And the German people are interesting, because they've always been understood as victimizers, but Germans suffered terribly in the war. It has been hard for Germans to have a public voice about that because they spent so many decades dealing with their Nazi past, and it is wonderful that they did that. But more and more writing is coming out, and that is an experience I've become interested in and added to the class. Last year, I co-taught with an anthropologist who studies Africa, and there we had lots of material about the Sierra Leone conflict. And that makes it even more complicated because at least with the Japanese/Jewish case you're taking about literate, modern people. In Sierra Leone, we are talking about tribal people, preliterate people.

What has not been covered here that you would like for us to understand?

The most important thing, and I really don't have an answer to it, is what it does for students—what it does in a good way and a bad way. What's the point of teaching it? What's the point of putting people, young adults, through this? Because serious students tend to get drawn to a class like this, and they do experience the content quite emotionally. So when you're done, what have you produced? Have you made them feel strongly? "What's the point?" is the question that I would put on the table. You make someone sensitive to people's suffering,

you make them understand what happened in the past, and see where it's happening now. You understand different cultural ways of feeling and representing feeling. Students are moved in the class, but I don't know if that gets through. Once in a while there are those who are motivated to do something in the world, which we teachers don't generally do so that's always nice when that happens. But once in a while, you get a student who walks out of the class thinking that all violence is equal. So the Holocaust is no better or worse than the American war in Vietnam. Bad universalism. It's one downside of the class that I see in student papers. When that happens, I feel like I don't want to teach it anymore. I feel like it's really gone haywire.

How was this changed your own personal view of your biographical knowledge?

I realized looking back that I did Japanese literature because I grew up with this dark cloud of a bad past. Japanese literature and the study of Japan seemed like a relief to me that had absolutely nothing to do with it. Ironically, years later I found a way that the two are related. I think that this study has made me much more forgiving of my grandparents and my parents. If they were depressed or angry or couldn't talk about things, or were impatient, I am much more sympathetic and forgiving, which is a nice thing. So that's good.

And the last question would be, what is it about culture that is important for us to understand?

No one can just ignore their own cultural biases, but I think it's important to discipline oneself, to put a check on it when trying to understand how other people are behaving and reacting to things and not assume something is barbaric or something is malformed, and try to appreciate that. There could be cultural ways in which a person is talking about violence, or representing violence or something that you and I might not appreciate as being cultural; we just think it's raw or unformed, but there may be something cultural there that we're not aware of, and we need to be willing to be open to that possibility. We need to be very open to the possibility of different ways of being in the world. 🌍

Tansman's lecture, "Japanese and Jewish Responses to Atrocity," and a panel discussion, "Cultural Responses to Atrocity," may be viewed online at <http://kennedy.byu.edu/events/archive.php> under 15 March 2007.

University Press Receives Award for Printing



Last year BYU's University Press received a silver award from the In-Plant Printing and Mailing Association for the fall 2005 cover of *Bridges* magazine designed by Robert H. Boden, the Kennedy Center's graphic designer. "Each year we take some of the best printed materials and enter them in the competition, where they are judged and the awards are handed out at the yearly convention held around the country," said Reed Swenson, a project manager for the press.

Association members provide in-house printing for their organizations throughout the U.S. From 573 entries, 99 gold, silver, and bronze awards were given out for different categories.



The Culture of *Chocolate* in Buenos Aires

Aaron Rose, ISP internship coordinator

For those who have not yet traveled to the southern capital of Buenos Aires, hot chocolate may not sound like a traditional Argentine treat. However, the rich chocolates offered in this cultural center of Latin America rival those offered in Spain, Mexico, or Venice. The very act of having chocolate in this cafe culture is a ritual. The thick, bittersweet chocolate comes in a serving pot, with a small pitcher of cream for diluting. One serves a combination of chocolate, cream, and sugar to taste, then fried, sugar-coated churros are dipped into the almost pudding-like darkness.

Following Argentina, I traveled to neighboring Chile, where I soon learned to not mistake one culture for another. In Santiago, I asked for chocolate in a restaurant and the server asked me in return, "Chocolate, you mean, like for kids?"!



Travel Safety Insider

by Landes Holbrook, security analyst, BYU

We have all heard this travel advice before—"Don't be an ugly American. If asked, Tell them you're Canadian!" When traveling abroad, I believe one's personal security and happiness is related to one's understanding of and involvement in the local culture. You don't have to be Canadian to be liked and safe. Here are some universal cultural tips on how to be safe, happy, and liked while traveling abroad:

1 Respect, mon! Respect! We can learn a lot from the Jamaicans; they have a high level of respect for all people and cultures. Do as the Jamaicans do, but also be yourself and others will respect and protect you. I believe this principle is universal. On a recent trip to Kingston, I had a Jamaican man ask me to buy some jerk pork he was cooking from a half barrel on the street. I sincerely told him that I had just eaten and would buy it next time. We touched knuckles, and he said, "Respect mon, respect. I will see you next time, you promised." When I return to Kingston, my first meal will be at his half barrel. In a country of high crime rates, I will feel safe at night walking the area where he works.

2 Put your camera aside and join in! Before you travel, do your homework on the local language and culture. Learn words or phrases of trust, such as "friend" and "how's your family"; this will bring you closer to the people and help you feel more secure in the new environment. It's interesting how

The U.S. State Department reports that the leading causes of death to U.S. civilians abroad are:

- automobile accidents
- assault
- suicide
- drowning

WORLD

much we can learn and remember when we participate in, listen to, and observe the culture rather than clicking and talking our way through it. Try not to spend all your time living the foreign experience through the lens of a camera. From a security point of view, you will draw less attention to yourself by putting your camera aside and joining in with the locals. Take your camera out later, after you have established relationships, and make sure you are in the picture with your new friends. Some of my most memorable and safest travel experiences have been without my camera and hardly a word spoken—playing soccer with a Tzotzil tribe in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico, and sitting with shepherds somewhere in the desert between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Walk, walk, walk with purpose and confidence!

And do so away from the tourist traps and McDonald's. This is one of the most basic yet important security tips. Pickpockets and other petty criminals choose their victims out of a crowd within 10–15 seconds. Leave your expensive jewelry and other costly items at home. Even if you have no idea where you are and what you are doing, if you walk with purpose and confidence at the pace of the local population, chances are you will be left alone. So get off the tourist path and walk, walk, walk like a native right into the neighborhoods where the locals hangout—your eyes will be opened to a new world!



Book List

Faculty picks from our area experts.

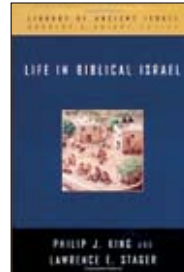


International Relations

Frances Hagopian and Scott Mainwaring, eds., *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*

"It offers a very nice survey of the problem of creating stable democracies in Latin America, with a discussion of culture included alongside other factors so one gets a sense of how it all comes together."

—Darren Hawkins, coordinator

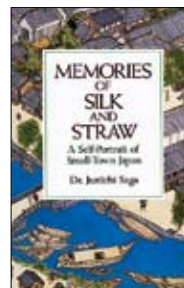


Ancient Near Eastern Studies

Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Library of Ancient Israel Series)

"This thorough and richly illustrated volume combines biblical texts and artifacts to provide a great overview of ancient Israelite culture and everyday life, from birth to death."

—Dana Pike, coordinator



Asian Studies

Saga, Junichi. *Memories of Silk and Straw: A Self-Portrait of Small-Town Japan*

"Dr. Saga, a physician in Japan, began taping the stories of his older patients in order to document the era of pre-war Japan. This anthology consists of thirty oral histories that document the lives of people who lived and worked near Lake Kasumigaura, northeast of Tokyo. They provide a record of everyday life in a traditional rural culture of Japan. *Memories of Silk and Straw* has won praise and recognition from a number of sources and is widely used in college curricula."

—James A. Davis, coordinator

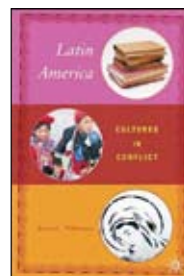


European Studies

Rémi Brague, *Eccentric Culture: A Theory of Western Civilization*

"At a time when the European Union is attempting to generate a 'European' identity by promoting 'pan-European culture,' it is useful to understand what is meant by 'European culture.' Unlike other theorists, who analyze the origins of European culture in terms of 'content' (an amalgam, for example, of Greek, Roman and Christian cultures), Brague focuses on a particular 'attitude' or 'way' he believes Europeans inherited from the Romans (the original title of the book is *Europe: The Roman Way*). The question Brague ultimately explores is what modern European culture will become as it increasingly sheds this traditional Roman attitude and cuts itself loose from its founding sources."

—Scott Sprenger, coordinator

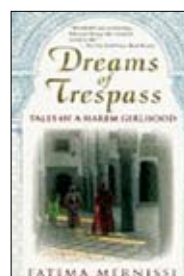


Latin American Studies

Robert C. Williamson, *Latin America: Cultures in Conflict*

Williamson offers an overview of the history, diverse geography, and political background of Latin America. He then explores the necessary roles of family, religion, gender, and education in the culture of contemporary society and offers innovative insights into these standard features of culture. He also covers education, communication, and social change in Latin America."

—Ted Lyon, coordinator



Middle East Studies/Arabic

Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*

"Fatima Mernissi, a prominent Moroccan feminist and democracy advocate, begins the autobiographical account of her childhood: 'I was born in a harem in Fez, a ninth-century Moroccan city some five thousand kilometers west of Mecca, and one thousand kilometers south of Madrid, one of the dangerous capitals of the Christians.' Fatima, who did graduate work at the Sorbonne and then received a PhD from Brandeis University and is a professor at the flagship Moroccan University Mohamed V, writes of growing up under two disadvantages: as a girl under

the heavy hand of French colonialism—subordinated twice in a society that valued men and foreign cultures."

—Donna Lee Bowen, coordinator

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*Raised in a country with only a
brief history, it is difficult for me to
comprehend the cultural impact of
eight centuries of anything, much less a
protracted war with religious undertones
and the associated propaganda.*