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(both non-college graduates and graduates) were so identified. This is notable, primarily, because much has been made of the claim that Western civilization presently exists in a profane and secular status. It is conceivable that for some individuals the more primitive beliefs inherent in magic offer an assuagement of fears and doubts in a stressful twentieth century.

Also, the three respondents scoring highest in belief were from the non-college graduate group, and the respondent scoring lower in belief was also from this group. Thus, there exists a greater variance in the non-college graduate group than in the graduate group, even though there is little difference in average scores between the two groups. It may be that college graduates have a tendency to respond less intensely to questionnaire items than do non-college graduates. It is also conceivable that non-college graduates tend to respond emotionally to the items, whereas graduates are more detached. These possibilities could account for the greater variation in scores.

Included in the unexpected factors arising during the course of this research were numerous subjective statements added to the questionnaires by respondents. One volunteered a personal experience as justification for belief in magic, stating that muddy footprints appeared across a floor as she watched.

Another phenomenon observed in the study was that while respondents stating themselves to be believers scored as believers, some avowed non-believers agreed

with such items as number 33 (It is possible that there are such things as haunted houses); and number 31 (Some rare people are gifted in being able to contact the spirit world). Additionally, non-believers tended to agree with conclusively belief-oriented items such as those above as often as they agreed with items expected to elicit an *agree* response even among non-believers. Item 8 (I know under which sign of the Zodiac I was born) is an example of this.

The factors discussed above are among the unexpected findings of this study, but they are meaningful in that they offer distinct guidelines in the questions which they pose, and these can be utilized to benefit further research.

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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The Image of Limited Good in Ojibway Society

JEFFREY C. MOORE*

ABSTRACT — Ojibway Indians of the north-central United States have had great difficulty in organizing effectively to work toward common economic, social, and political ends. This has been the case historically and remains true today. The basic reason for the inability to organize is an orientation to life which Foster has described in his theory of the Image of Limited Good, and which was observed on a Minnesota reservation.

"Most of the people of the world live and die without ever achieving membership in a community larger than the family or tribe. Except in Europe and America, the concerting of behavior in political associations and corporate organizations is a rare and recent thing."

With those words, Banfield begins his description of the life of peasants in southern Italy. The phenomenon he describes — an inability of people to organize for their collective benefit — is symptomatic also of an underlying

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orientation to life shared by countless other peoples throughout the world. Ojibway Indians of the north-central United States are no exception.

The underlying world-view that is found in the descriptions of both western and non-western peasants and among an observed band of American Indians is what Foster has termed the Image of Limited Good. He notes that peasant behavior is "patterned in such fashion as to suggest that peasants view their social, economic, and natural universes — their total environment — as one in which all the desired things in life . . . exist in finite quantity and are always in short supply" (Foster's emphasis). Nothing is excluded from this list of limited goods — land, wealth, honor, manliness, love, status, security, power,

health, friendship, influence, safety, and respect are all included. Then, since individuals at the peasant level of society so often view themselves as subject to the workings of history rather than active makers of it, it is beyond their ability to change the short supply of these goods.

It is not difficult to see in which direction the image of limited good leads with regard to both the cognitive orientation and the behavior of people who subscribe to it. Each social unit sees itself involved in a constant struggle for its share of scarce values. What Friedman calls the "mentality of mutual distrust" develops. Those who hold this view will wish to minimize and even falsify their own achievements, believing that neighbors will perceive anyone else's improvement as being at their expense. As Foster states, "even if an individual cannot see that he is suffering as a consequence of another's progress, he knows that he must be; it *has* to be so" (Foster's emphasis).

This perceived life-or-death competition (which in the case of peasant societies is all too often correct) is the basis of the atomistic-type society, a society in which the nuclear family represents almost the only formalized social entity. Anyone who stands outside of the family group is seen as a potential competitor, and therefore a potential enemy. But even the nuclear family cannot escape the contention, suspiciousness, and invidiousness that mark interpersonal relationships outside of the family in an atomistic society.

Atomism among the Ojibway

The Ojibway are an excellent example of such a society. Among them the most glaring manifestation of atomism is the hostility that exists between families and individuals holding the view that success or achievement can be gained only at someone else's expense. During an experience of living on a reservation, the importance of avoiding any show of excessive favor or friendship toward one or two families became clear. Such behavior was certain to alienate other families, who would see themselves as slighted. Even among those who know each other well, the most common reactions at a chance meeting were displays of tension, hostility, and distrust. Any improvement by one individual or group is viewed as a threat to the entire community, and it is widely believed that visible success will cause neighbors to seek one's downfall. This attitude has countless repercussions in Ojibway behavior.

A strong desire to avoid any display of conspicuous consumption or any acknowledgment that one owns more than his share of the material pie was evident among the Ojibway. Friedl notes that, historically, "one of the major Chippewa values was generosity. The man who had an abundance of food or other goods was expected to distribute them at the earliest convenient moment." It was also common practice for a man to share hunting and fishing areas with others if game was scarce. Harkins reports that reservation Ojibway still expect help from kinsmen when in economic or social difficulty.

An atomistic outlook has a negative effect even on the

intimate ties within a family group. Reservation life is fraught with fighting and hostility among kin. In a League of Women Voters survey of Minneapolis Indian residents, there was strong evidence of "problems in the management of youth behavior by adults." Desertion and divorce rates, especially the former, are high in both reservation and city areas.

"Uncle Tomahawk" Phenomenon

Another painful outcome of the Ojibway's atomistic society is the "Uncle Tomahawk" phenomenon. Strong concern is evidenced among most Ojibway about "going over" to the larger society. Cries of "white sell-out," "white Indian," or "Uncle Tomahawk" are quickly raised to describe those Indians who, for whatever reason, have adopted behavior elements of the dominant society. Concern that these individuals may gain too much power or prestige is often masked by complaints that they are not following the "Indian way."

Elements of a generalized Indian personality have been widely noted among northern North American Indians. Honigmann observes that "people reveal a tendency to retreat from too intense or unnecessary contact with neighbors," with the result that "interpersonal relations are marked by . . . reserve, restraint or caution, perhaps also by suppression of feeling." This description is extremely close to Caudill's findings with psychological tests among the Ojibway Indians. He notes: "an emphasis on restraint and control, an emotional indifference to things, a lack of warm interpersonal relations, a wariness and suspiciousness, and a great deal of [covertly expressed] aggression and hostility."

One obvious outgrowth of the Indian's emotional restraint—the careful avoidance of overtly interrupting or interfering in another's affairs—can also be traced to limited good-atomistic origins. Given such an outlook, an Indian cannot absolutely trust the advice of his neighbor (whose motives are generally suspect), nor can he be expected to give advice himself. Wax and Thomas put it directly, saying: "The Indian society is unequivocal: interference of any form is forbidden, regardless of the folly, irresponsibility, or ignorance of your brother." This attitude is clearly evident among the Ojibway, who attempt to treat their children (and expect to be treated by them) in a non-interrupting or non-interfering way.

In an atomistic society it is difficult or impossible for people to act together for their common good, or toward any goal beyond the fulfilling of the material needs of the nuclear family. In such a society of what Banfield calls "amoral familists," "there will be no leader and no followers. No one will take the initiative in outlining a course of action and persuading others to embark upon it." Where such interfering is socially unacceptable, even if leadership is offered, the group will reject it out of distrust. The Ojibways' inability to get together—to organize effectively for social, economic, or political reasons—is only an extension of the fact that they eschew both accepting and giving orders or direction.

Evidence for such lack of cooperation and organization in early Ojibway society is noted by Barnouw, who

states: "There was no economic cooperation outside of the family unit. There was no communal hunting . . . no camp circle, no organized council of chiefs, no policing system, no regularly constituted military societies, and no symbols of group integration." A tribal council existed to hold the various bands together, but its power was weak—bands were functionally autonomous, and disaffected members could easily drift off and form an entirely new band. No cooperative structure existed even in a war party. Each warrior was intent on solely personal gains and fought only for himself. Even cooperation in team games was unstable. Individuals were out only for personal glory, and at the same time were quick to denounce the same motive in others.

Organizational problems continue

Seemingly, the scene has not changed much. Both on the reservation and in the city, problems of organization and leadership are hallmarks of Ojibway society. A marked reluctance of individuals to commit themselves to large groups still exists, and there is a hesitancy to accept leadership or take organizational initiative. No matter how pure a potential leader's motives may be, they seem to be viewed by others as entirely self-centered.

Lack of organization has been widely noted among reservation Ojibway. Formal organizational activity is generally limited to school and church affairs, and even these are often run by whites. James, in his description of an Ojibway village, notes that white teachers organized a PTA, a boys' sports league, and benefit dances which "sputtered along uncertainly, however, beset by petty gossip and harassed by dissension among villagers." Friedl reports that Indian dances for tourists are organized weekly by the Ojibway in Hayward, Wisconsin, but that no matter who organizes the affair, or how he does it, he is always criticized for being "too bossy."

Urban Indians, too, have displayed an inability to cooperate effectively. Even Libertus, who claims that Minneapolis Indians are organizational-minded, acknowledges that most group efforts are short-lived. Minneapolis Ojibway are painfully aware of their organizational void. The League of Women Voters survey showed that only twenty-five percent believed there were real leaders within the Indian community, and strong negative feelings were voiced concerning the quality of caring and cooperation patterns in the neighborhood.

Conflicts with other minorities (over the distribution of poverty funds for example), with white society, and with other tribes also reflect Ojibway atomism. The growth of a pan-Indianism movement in recent years has sometimes been taken as a refutation of intertribal disunity, but, in fact, pan-Indianism is an attempt by In-

dians to counter a stereotypic inferiority by adopting roles which are congruent with the romantic values of both whites and Indians. It is a symbol, then, of Indian-white relations, rather than of relations between tribes.

Understanding that a society sees its world as a place of limited good makes its attitudes appear less irrational. Nevertheless, the distrust of organization, cultural conservatism, ill-defined leadership, intense individualism, social restraint, refusal to idealize hard work, and frequent disinterest in white society's status symbols that can be noted in Ojibway society, cause incessant conflicts with the white majority. While it is unfortunate that these conflicts exist, it is also unfortunate that white society does not recognize the origins of the conflict, and it is perhaps most unfortunate that, in a nation as wealthy and productive as the United States, the Ojibway perception of limited good must so frequently apply.

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