Guardian Spirits, Alcohol, and Cultural Defense Mechanisms

by JOHN H. HAMER

RÉSUMÉ

Chez les Indiens Potowatomi, toute démonstration de dépendance ou de besoin de sécurité était et est encore défendue. Traditionnellement, l'acquisition d'un esprit protecteur satisfaisait ce besoin sur le plan individuel. De nos jours, il semble que l'alcool se soit substitué à l'esprit protecteur et qu'en état d'ivresse un individu puisse chercher l'appui de ses concitoyens.

Spiro (1961:479-490) has brought to our attention in recent years the importance of investigating the problems of what happens when cultural norms run counter to certain basic human motivations.[1] Thus, even though motives may be culturally proscribed, they do not simply disappear and some means must be found for their gratification if serious consequences for individual personalities are to be avoided. He suggests three alternatives for resolving this conflict: the development of culturally prohibited behavior which is socially and psychologically disruptive such as various forms of mental illness; the use of personal defense mechanisms which are culturally approved and psychologically and socially integrative; and the implementation of culturally constituted defenses which are patterned versions of the individual psychological defense mechanism. It is the purpose of this paper to consider the cultural patterning of sublimation as a means of compensation for proscribed expressions of dependency needs among a small group of Forest Potawatomi Indians, in the traditional and reservation setting.

[1] Field work on which this paper is based was conducted in 1961, under a grant from the Michigan State Board of Alcoholism. I wish to express appreciation for the helpful criticism of Ronald Cohen who read an earlier version of this paper. He is in no way responsible for the final results.

Spiro (1961:488) defines the culturally constituted defense of sublimation as the *direct* gratification of forbidden behavior "through a symbolic (ritualized) expression of the motive". Through sublimation the group is protected from potentially disruptive behavior, and at the same time an unacceptable motive becomes the basis for culturally acceptable role performance. Certain aspects of the social system become a means for camouflaging and hence providing for gratification of the forbidden motive. Formally stated the process involves:

(a) Resolution of conflict between the cultural norm and the forbidden motive without mental breakdown for the individual;

(b) The individual is protected from guilt feelings since the disguised motive is gratified in a socially acceptable fashion;

(c) The social system is protected from the disruption which could occur with direct satisfaction of the individual motive;

(d) A potentially disruptive motive is changed into a force for maintenance of the social system (1961:489-490).

Dependency

In every definition of dependency there is an emphasis on the individual's attempt to obtain nurturance from another without success. Many theories also include a conceptualization of aggression as a response to sought after but unrewarded dependency. In a recent publication Gavalas and Briggs (1966:97-121) have summarized the major theories of dependency as falling under the heading of those stressing the causal importance of anxiety, fear of independent behavior, conflict, and concurrent reinforcement of dependency and competency. In this paper we shall follow the conflict theory as it seems appropriate to the individualistic, highly controlled personality found among the Forest Potawatomi.

Mowrer (1960) has developed a theory of conflict in which the opposing emotions of hope and fear are aroused as a consequence of the individual experiencing both reward and frustration

of his responses over a period of time. This tends to result in anger which leads either to intensification or inhibition of the response. The application to dependency may be formally stated as follows:

> Dependency occurs when nurturance is sought from others with only intermittent success; as a consequence the individual learns to experience mixed emotions of hope and fear when approaching others. The conflict serves to heighten the threshold of response, which when frustrated results in anger.

On the basis of this definition it is possible to construct a paradigm of how the proposed cultural defense mechanism relates to dependency.

(a) When the cultural norms call for guardedness in social interaction the individual will experience ambivalent emotions of hope and fear in attempting to associate with others. The long period of nurturance required in the socialization of the human primate is such that to some degree individuals in all societies are going to experience dependency, simply because it is humanly impossible, and even dangerous, to avoid frustrating the desires of the small child to attract attention and to be near a nurturant adult. At the same time many tribal societies, including the Potawatomi, tend to maximize contact between mother and child until the weaning period. After weaning, however, the rules may call for quite the opposite form of behavior not only in terms of a stress on independent, self-reliant action, but more especially a redefinition of the role of adults and gradually even of peers from positive nurturant others to negative, powerful, competitive others. It is this drastic negative, reinterpretation required of the small child which leads to mixed expectations about receiving support from people.

(b) Approaching others involves the contrasting emotions of hope and fear, but withdrawal reduces the fear. On the other hand the desire to be near and receive attention from others remains, so that once fear has been reduced the approach will be made again. The individual is caught in a dilemma. As Mowrer (1960:424) suggests there would seem to be three options in such a situation: (1) the finding of another source of nurturance; (2) elimination of punishment for seeking nurturance; (3) indi-

viduals lose interest in the quest. Choice of alternative (2) is unlikely considering that Potawatomi socio-economic norms stress independence and (3) is improbable given the degree to which nurturance expectations have been highly rewarded in the early socialization process. Therefore (1) becomes the most probable alternative. Nevertheless, given the anticipated uncertainty about the response, a premium will be placed on circumspection in initiating social interaction. Since, however, behavior is never completely consistent with the rules and because others are also seeking attention and reassurance, there will be intermittent success.

(c) It might be expected that intermittency of reinforcement would lead to a balancing out of fear and hope in the long run, but Sears *et al* (1965:48) have suggested that the process actually serves to heighten dependency.

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In their study of American nursery school children they found some evidence for a relationship between intermittent reinforcement in early childhood and a high level of positive attention seeking at age four (1965:48-75).

(d) Nonetheless, a built-in paradox exists regarding the conflict induced between hope and fear (Gavalas and Briggs 1966:108-109). There is some empirical data to show that the direction of the conflict is difficult to predict since it may inhibit as well as energize responsiveness. Mowrer (1960:425) sites one study which shows the time factor to be important; the initial response to frustration tends to activate, but if reinforcement is not forthcoming over a period of time depression sets in and the response tendency is ultimately extinguished. It is possible, however, that the cultural defenses against overt expressions of dependency discussed in this paper are so spaced that there is insufficient time lag for extinction to occur.

On the basis of the above reasoning it is possible to advance the following hypotheses concerning the relation between depen-

dency and culturally constituted defense mechanisms in the historic and reservation experiences of the Forest Potawatomi.

(1) Traditional child rearing practices in the past and in the present tend to encourage the fear-hope conflict in interpersonal relations which is the basis of dependency.

(2) Emphasis on the avoidance of open nurturant, helping, or caretaking behavior is compensated by the prevalence of this behavior within the institutionalized framework of the traditional guardian spirit relationship which has been replaced in recent times by social drinking.

As indicators of dependent behavior we shall use three developed by Sears *et al.* (1965:27,33). One is "negative attention seeking" which refers to the attempt to gain attention through aggressive behavior; a second is "reassurance seeking" involving the quest for help and emotional support; while a third, "positive attention seeking" is the attempt to win the admiration and cooperation of others. In their study of nursery school children they found some evidence that negative attention seeking was associated in both sexes with low demands and restrictions by the parents. For reassurance seeking both parents showed high demands for achievement along with coldness and encouragement of independent behavior. Positive attention seeking was clearly associated with parental restrictions on aggressiveness and in the case of boys, rejection by the father. There are other attributes that researchers found associated with these measures of dependency, but these appear to be the principal ones, and those for which we have information from the Potawatomi.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The community to be considered, which will be given the pseudonym Whitehorse, consists of 29 families of predominantly Potawatomi Indians located in Northern Michigan. Historically, these people like other Algonkian-speaking groups in the area were hunters and gatherers, lacking a centralized government and complex ceremonial and religious institutions. From the small amount of ethnographic data and the memories of some of the

oldest informants, there are indications that traditional Potawatomi culture was very similar to that of the Ojibwa and Ottawa (Quimby 1960:122-132). Therefore, in the discussion to follow extensive use will be made of the more abundant Ojibwa material.

Child Training

Densmore (1929:48-51) in his account of Ojibwa infancy indicates that even during the second decade of this century the contact between mother and child impressed him as being of greater intensity and warmth than that found in European societies. The permissive period may also have been of greater length, for Keating (1824:132) suggests that before the middle of the last century Potawatomi mothers nursed their children for prolonged periods of three, four years, or longer. The criterion for change seems to have been the arrival of a new sibling, at which time the mother would induce a relatively abrupt separation by sending the child away to a kinsman, covering the breasts with unpleasant tasting substances, and/or frightening the child when he tried to suck (Hilger 1951:28-29).

After weaning, stress seems to have been placed on independence with the consequence that the formerly nurturant adults took on the opposite attributes of distance and aloofness. The cultural basis for independence training has been well summarized in Barry, Bacon, and Child's (1959:53-59) study on the difference between the accumulative, cooperative, agricultural, and pastoral societies as compared with those with hunting and fishing economies. The results of their statistical comparisons show that the accumulative groups emphasize obedience, responsibility, and nurturance in youngsters while the hunting and fishing types socialize achievement, self-reliance, and independent behavior. Though the Ojibwa are one of the societies considered as ranking high in the importance placed on independence, it is the consequence of this training in terms of reversal of the earlier nurturant adult-child relationships which is important in this study.

Densmore (1929:58-59) states that the Ojibwa parent attempted to instill self-control in the child through games and various fear techniques. He notes by contrast with white children

the far greater demands "to keep still when surprised or frightened". Keating (1824:96-97) reports that the principal technique of discipline utilized by the Potawatomi in the early 19th century was fear; children were continually being told that to disobey their parents would bring down the wrath of the Great Spirit upon them, and in the case of boys, would deprive them of all success as hunters or warriors. Another form of punishment, apparently used somewhat sparingly, was to require the child to blacken his face and go without food for varying periods (Keating 1824:123). In 1929 Jenness (1935:95) found among the Parry Island Ojibwa that withdrawal of food was an "ordinary punishment" for young children six to eleven years old. They were given a bowl of soup once a day for several days and told to fast the rest of the time, remaining in a corner of the wigwam and attempting to dream in order that the punishment would not be wasted.

Landes' (1938a:2-4) discussion of early Ojibwa childhood fits in well with the dependency model proposed in this paper. She found that even though warmth and affection was stressed during infancy, there was concern that too much nurturance would detract from making the new arrival into an efficient, contributing, member to the subsistence activities of the household. Boys especially, as they grew older, were urged to acquire power by going without food. She says the four or five year old child: "... often objects to the fast, stamps and cries, or runs around to snatch some food for himself." There was no escaping the parent, however, who would rub charcoal on his face and send him out to play with the other children. If he managed to maintain the fast for the rest of the day he would be rewarded with an "especially good meal" in the evening. A child of eight who on the day he was supposed to fast demanded bread rather than charcoal when confronted with the choice, would be severely punished by his father. Like Keating, she also found that withdrawal of food was used as a punishment for disobedient children.

There is in the situation described by Landes, which is reminiscent of that described by our older Potawatomi informants, much that fits into the conflict sequence. A child approaches the adult in hope of a nurturant reward of food only to be rebuffed. The immediate response is anger and a short interval of rejection,

which is followed by a lavish reward of food, reinforcing the hope for future nurturance. Hence in the early attempts at coping with adult demands for independence and power, the child is likely to have developed mixed expectations of hope and fear which were alternately reinforced by the adult. Through the process of fasting for a vision his dependency threshold was increased by intermittent reinforcement, but the learning experience of the vision quest led to a transfer of expectations of nurturance from people to supernatural beings.

The process of transference is frought with conflict which would seem to have potential for increasing the threshold of the dependency response vis-a-vis the individual and his sought-after vision. Landes (1938a:4) notes that some dreams were considered acceptable and others "evil". Guide lines for "correct" dreaming were laid down by parents, but it is evident that boys met with intermittent success, thus reinforcing the hope-fear conflict. Whatever the outcome the boy was admonished to: "...identify himself with it so thoroughly that he 'can pretty nearly talk to his manido'" (Landes 1938a:5). Parker (1960:605) has indicated the significance of this change from early childhood to adult status when he says that it was based on a developing awareness of the precarious subsistence of the small isolated group of kinsmen. There was the absence of the adult males on long hunting trips, the boy's own inability to contribute significantly to the group, the continual reminders of his spiritual vulnerability, and the proddings to grow up as rapidly as possible. All were mediated through parental withdrawal of "over-effectionate behavior".

Though the pre-adolescent male apparently experienced increasing frustration in his attempts to gain the nurturant attention of adults, there was no immediate repression of expressions of childhood anger. In fact there is considerable evidence from early explorers and missionaries that Indian children were overtly aggressive and relatively uncontrolled in their behavior (Hallowell 1955: 135-136). Nevertheless, as an individual became aware that others possessed supernatural powers in differing and usually unknown amounts, he became wary of overt expressions of hostility. Hallowell (1955:148) suggests that expression of open anger toward another became the equivalent of a challenge to a

duel by sorcery. Green (1948:227) is even more emphatic in proposing that Ojibwa boys were subjected to a severe conflict when they were urged to be successful hunters. While this would indicate great power and entitle them to the respect of others, such power was feared as well as admired and could result in others becoming sufficiently jealous to direct their power against one who was reckoned a success. In such a situation the only alternative was a surface friendliness and agreement which could antagonize no one. This would seem to fit in with the statements of 17th century French missionaries that the Potawatomi were the most "docile" and eager to please of any of the Indian groups that they had encountered, and the evidence from historical accounts of the 18th century that they could easily be persuaded to switch alliances between the Americans, British and French (Lawson 1920:44-45, 60-61, 76-77, 82-83). Moreover, extreme friendship seems to have been a sign of the practicing sorcerer. Thus the individual learned that he existed in a society which was individualistic and highly competitive not only in regard to subsistence, but also in terms of the supernatural power which made a man a success or failure. He gradually came to fear people and, as Hallowell (1955:305) suggests, sought help from supernatural others who "became parent surrogates from puberty onward".

> ... Formerly the boy had been dependent upon older human beings, who in addition to teaching him necessary skills, had trained him to rely upon himself to the extent of his capacity. Henceforth he was to rely primarily upon superhuman beings, that is upon inner promptings, derived from further dreams or the memories of his fasting experience.

Both Hallowell (1955:288, 305) and Landes (1938a:3-5) indicate that sexual differentiation was important in the socialization of reliance on supernatural power. Girls could dream and acquire power, but there was no great emphasis, given their primarily domestic role, on self-reliance and the climactic puberty ritual of acquiring one or more supernatural protectors was not a required part of their experience. Densmore (1929:61) mentions that the relationship between mother and daughter was very close and Hilger (1951:6) suggests that mothers liked to have a number of daughters because they, unlike sons, tended to be willing to care for their parents in old age. Further data is provided by Landes (1966:121, 123) who says that the early training of a

girl was directed toward developing an attitude of subordination and cooperation while at the same time greater ambiguity in expectations about the adult female role made for greater variation in acceptable behavior than was found among males. Perhaps Parker (1960:617) has best summarized the situation in his comprehensive survey of the literature:

> During both the early childhood phase and in adult life, females are able to satisfy normal dependency needs to a far greater extent than males.

The limited evidence is more than suggestive in light of the aforementioned study by Sears *et al* (1965:70-75), in which they found a positive association between permissiveness by mothers of dependent behavior and its appearance among their daughters in the nursery school setting, but a negative association between the two variables in regard to boys. On the other hand dependency in boys occurred with the withholding of love and affection by both the mother and father. They felt, however, that the withholding of nurturance could not be absolute and was likely to be of the kind that would encourage intermittent reinforcement of the dependency response.

Guardian Spirits and Dependency

There should be indications of the hope-fear conflict, intermittent reinforcement, and anger arising out of frustrated attempts to receive nurturance from others if the guardian spirit complex is an institutionalized means of sublimating dependency in adult life. In this section the consequences for males of acquiring at puberty a life-long guardian spirit will be examined, according to the suggested indicators of dependency: reassurance and positive and negative attention-seeking.

Reassurance

For purposes of this paper reassurance means the restoration of confidence in another by providing sympathy, protection, and help. It seems that one of the principal goals in seeking a supernatural helper was to obtain a substitute for the reassurance formerly provided by the parent. As previously noted these super-

natural beings became "parental surrogates" and once an adolescent male Ojibwa had established such a relationship, help from human beings, in time of crisis, was considered both unnecessary and dangerous (Hallowell 1955:305, Landes 1937:55). Furthermore, the ritual by which this substitution was made involved a symbolic regression to a nearly complete state of helplessness, reminiscent of infancy. The process was one of weakening the body through fasting to the point where one could hardly walk, with most of the time being spent curled up in a nest of leaves in a semi-comatose state (Hilger 1951:42-43). The spirit is said to have taken "pity" on a supplicant in this condition; the meaning of the word for pity in Ojibwa carries the connotation of adopting and caring for another as a parent or grandparent would care for a child (Landes 1938:6). Landes (1966:98) describes the typical response of the helper as follows:

> My grandchild (or brother or sweetheart or any other relationship term which has emotional significance), I have taken pity upon you (this is a very respectful phrase, not a patronizing one). I have seen you in your sufferings, and I have taken pity upon you. I will give you something to amuse yourself with.

After an individual had established such a relationship he continued to approach his spiritual benefactor at times of crisis in a state of helplessness. He would always carry a special medicine bundle as a token of the power and help promised by his guardian and, as one of Hilger's informants reported, even the thought of this helper in times of trouble was sufficient to make things "brighten up" (1951:61). Keating (1824:119-120) has also mentioned this helping quality in discussing the link between a Potawatomi and his spirit as it existed during the early nineteenth century: "... he consults it in all his difficulties and not infrequently conceives that he has derived relief from it." For the Potawatomi friendship with the animal spirit was considered completely personal and under no circumstances to be shared with others.

In regard to confidence building, it is significant that the only way in which an individual could develop a reputation for unusual accomplishment was through the attainment of special powers from his guardian spirit. By this means some attained the most prestigious position in the society, that of shaman, but few acquired

sufficient confidence from their vision quest to aspire to such heights. Nevertheless, one could feel confident of successfully negotiating various life crises through the aid of supernatural support and adherence to the traditional norm proscribing warm interpersonal relations. The latter form of behavior provided a means of avoiding tests of strength with others, who might possess more powerful supernatural protection, which could not only destroy self confidence, but in some cases life itself (Hallowell 1955:362).

Positive Attention Seeking

This phrase refers to individual utilization of a culturally recognized and acceptable competency as an attention getting device. Among Algonkian speaking peoples probably the most notable means for males to gain the admiration and cooperation of others was through the demonstration of prowess in hunting, curing, games and/or warfare. The only source of power to do these things was the guardian spirit. In the case of the Ojibwa Hallowell (1955:361) observes:

> Every special aptitude, all his successes and failures, hinged upon the blessings of his supernatural helpers, rather than upon his own native or acquired endowments, or even the help of his fellow human beings.

An individual suspected of having great power was respected by others, but because of a conceptualized rank order of power there was always someone who had more and was consequently more successful in attracting the attention of others through concrete examples of his competency. One could not, however, be certain about the amount of power possessed by the next person, nor was it possible to control fluctuations in power which were, in reality, the result of the element of chance in hunting, curing, games, and warfare. Also, while the individual might excel in performance and impress others, he was simultaneously arousing their envy and fear which would ultimately be directed against himself (Parker 1960:616; Green 1948:227).

Thus a conflict situation develops, involving hope that people will be impressed with a display of prowess combined with fear that the jealousy aroused will constitute a danger to the self. One can then only turn for support to the supernatural helper, but

due to the element of chance there is no real escape from the conflict. The spirit's reaction is of necessity ambiguous, sometimes resulting in support and frequently in rejection, according to the rationalization of the supplicant because of anger or disappointment with the latter. Therefore, it is a fair assumption that intermittent reinforcement of nurturance occurs, heightening dependency on the spirit protector.

Negative Attention Seeking

A third more desperate means of rousing nuturant support was through overt or covert displays of hostility. Despite frequent mention in the literature of the reverence and awe in which a guardian spirit was held, Parker (1960:611) has suggested that an element of ambivalent hostility existed in the relationship. Landes (1938b:19) has made specific mention of this ambivalence, pointing out that the form of the protective spirit was often that of an animal which the supplicant desired to kill. Also available is some evidence from early accounts that intoxicated Indians would rage against their supernatural partners, even seeking to destroy them with their guns (Cooper 1933).

Another aspect of negative attention seeking involved what could be considered repressed hostility toward spirits being projected on to human subjects, in the sense that persons claiming extreme power, such as shamans, could challenge others overtly by trying to hurt or frighten them. A well known shaman relying on the power of his supernatural helper might confront a rival with the claim that he was superior and threaten to destroy the latter within a designated period (Hallowell 1955:289; Landes 1938a: 188-201, 205-208). To embark upon such a venture involved grave risks because the medicine used was so powerful it might ultimately result in the destruction of the self and the immediate members of one's family. Nevertheless, there is evidence of shamen even challenging whole communities by making exhorbitant demands for curing or protecting people from illness (Landes 1938a:201-204).

In short the available data show that the Potawatomi might acquire help and sympathy from an anthropomorphic being. The acquisition of competency as a means of gaining the attention of

others was unpredictable, resulting in the element of hope-fear vis-a-vis approach to the spirit helper. Even if the individual's confidence was increased because of help from his spirit, the contrasting element of fear was never far behind due to the fact that a show of greater competency led to jealousy and the danger of challenge from mortals with more power. Nevertheless, it would seem that fortuitous support and assistance from super-human helpers was sufficient to provide intermittent reinforcement of dependency. There is also limited evidence of occasional overt anger against spirits and hostile challenges of other humans and their guardian mentors, which is suggestive of frustration in obtaining nurture by supernatural means.

Dependency as a potentially disruptive motive in a society where survival was contingent on isolated, economic, self-sufficiency was thus gratified in a socially acceptable manner. Nurture could be sought indirectly from a nonhuman source, the approach being based on secrecy and privacy. These elements provided support for the underpinnings of circumspection and highly controlled emotional affect validating social atomism.

RESERVATION SETTING

Both Parker (1960:621-622) and James (1961) have suggested that the reservation way of life has encouraged dependency among the Ojibwa. In a recently published article Cohen and VanStone (1963:46-49) in comparing traditional folk tales with essays written by Chipewyan school children for evidence of self-reliance and dependency found that there was a tendency toward a balance in the occurrence of these attributes in the tales, but an increase of dependency over self-reliance in the contemporary essays. They attribute this change to the acculturation experience. There is evidence, as the following data show, that the conditions of reservation life for the Potawatomi of Whitehorse have also been conducive to increasing dependency, but social drinking has replaced the guardian spirit complex, as a culturally constituted means of coping with it.

In general the younger generation at Whitehorse has little knowledge of the old Indian way of life and only a few of the

oldest inhabitants can remember childhood experiences involving fasting and the vision quest. Nevertheless, the psychological norm in this small Potawatomi community with its stress on suppressed hostility and highly introverted inner controls is very similar to what Hallowell (1955:345-366) has deduced as typical of traditional Ojibwa personality. To understand the reasons for this seeming psychic continuity it is necessary to give consideration to the culture that supports it.

It is evident that there has been nothing to replace the old forms of religion, warfare, and technology, so abruptly dislocated by the white man in the nineteenth century, but the atomistic social structure and subsistence type of economy have changed only slightly. Part-time woods work and government relief checks provide a bare subsistence level of existence, which, in terms of the forest life orientation and work rhythm, is similar to subsistence patterns of the last century. For the most part families live spatially isolated from one another, each on a separate quarter section of land. Though a tribal council exists on paper it seldom meets unless convened by a government official, and since the members have no real authority most people can see no purpose in holding meetings. Social interaction continues to be concentrated within the bilateral, extended family. Intertribal marriage was a major source of contention in the past, but it has been replaced by a new form of conflict arising out of various marital and sexual alliances with the white man. Finally, religious practices continue to be individualistic rather than communal, since a succession of Protestant and Roman Catholic churches have only sporadically engaged the allegiance of some members of the community.

The time factor is of no small consequence. The Forest Potawatomi gave up their semi-nomadic existence for a sedentary way of life as recently as the first decade of this century. In addition to adapting to a new pattern of subsistence they are spatially and socially isolated from the dominant white community. This means that the number of potential relationships with persons outside the community is minimal. Indeed, interaction with the white man is largely confined to occupational and convivial drinking situations (Hamer 1965). Hence the avoidance of conflict in order to maintain the limited potential for interaction within the community is essential. Therefore stress on rigid emotional control

and social reticence is one way of furthering this end. But in addition to historical support and the social functions of the traditional oriented personality type there is a third variable, indifference, which has developed out of the frustrating and ambivalent experiences of trying to cope with a hostile social environment. The seeming emotional coldness and unresponsiveness of the individual in a social setting also constitutes a kind of "I don't care" attitude, which provides a defense against further rebuffs from within and outside the community.

Child Training

There is no attempt to maximize the early independence of the small boy by urging him to obtain the power and protection of a supernatural being. Nevertheless, it does not take the observer long to realize that in their dealings with others adults show considerable reserve and covert hostility. In dealing with their children they are inconsistent in the imposition of sanctions, hold an anomalous position as cultural models, and lack support from other potential sources of nurture. All of these things limit the opportunities for the child to obtain satisfaction of dependency needs. As in the last century the child, during the first two years of his life or until the arrival of a new sibling, receives consistently favorable responses to his demands for warmth and acceptance. Following infancy, however, the socialization process becomes relatively inconsistent, with the parent sometimes lavishing food and attention on the child and at others times being too preoccupied to make more than an indifferent or mechanical response.

Covert hostility in Whitehorse is as evident as that inferred from sources concerning traditional Algonkian speaking peoples. For the ethnographer it was most noticeable in the form of jealousy, invariably related to the fear that someone else was receiving more attention than the informant. So intense was this feeling that it was sometimes difficult to interview the members of one household without being accused by others, quite overtly if they were intoxicated, of not only favoring, but having ulterior motives in regard to women informants. This fear of not receiving enough attention on the interfamilial level applied as well to intrafamilial relations. Though overt aggression, except when intox-

icated, runs counter to the social norms there was continual gossip and rumor. For example, there was frequent talk of marital infidelity, parental neglect of children, and failure of siblings to assist each other in time of need. Furthermore, this thinly concealed hostile rivalry seems to have become a part of parent-child relations in the reservation situation. As one old grandfather explained it, many parents are "jealous" of the accomplishments of their sons and daughters, fearing that the latter will get more benefits from the school, government agencies, or the occasional friendly white man.

It is difficult for even the most sympathetic adult to decide what values and beliefs should be transmitted to the younger generation. Parents lack knowledge about the subtleties of Euro-American culture and are uncertain of the appropriatness of many aspects of traditional Indian culture. Perhaps as a consequence of this dilemma parents tend to have contradictory performance expectations for their children. This begins in early childhood with promises to help the child in a given task or to provide an opportunity for participation in some desirable activity, only to fail in following through. In latency parents occasionally expect and demand a high standard of competence in the carrying out of household chores and subsistence activities, while at other times they are permissive almost to the point of negligence. Examples of the latter include allowing small children to simply disappear for the day without knowing their whereabouts, and permitting them to wander unsupervised in the woods or swamps in areas where men are cutting fence posts or gathering cedar brush. Nevertheless, inconsistence in its most dramatic form appears in the periodic drinking parties which are so much a part of everyday life. In this situation the child is initially favored with candy and affection only to be later ignored for hours or occasionally even days, while adults are engrossed in their own pleasures and disputes. Describing their early childhood experience with these drinking groups teenage informants told with a show of considerable emotion, of their initial joy in receiving favors from parents and visitors; later, however, they would be forced to flee into the woods in fear of the arguements and fighting that ensued.

Potential sources of nurturance other than parents are older siblings, grandparents, and persons outside the community. Grand-

parents often show more affection and responsibility than parents in socializing children. Their prestige, however, as models of deportment and their role as protectors is undermined by the disparagement and contradiction of their efforts by parents. Older siblings provide only limited nurture, for their lives are made difficult, not only by the short interval between births and the heavy demands of parents, but by the fact that the latter overtly show favoritism to one child.[2] It is unlikely that children find much support in the school system, considering the high rate of truancy and the fact that most children drop out before finishing. The only other external contacts are with contract physicians, administrators from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and welfare case workers, although because of the formality and infrequency of these contacts there is little opportunity to form personal relationships.

Thus the inconsistency of parents in socializing goals and standards of performance in both boys and girls indicates the existence of a social milieu conducive to the development of the hope-fear conflict. Covert hostility and jealousy between generations make it difficult for grandparents to alleviate this conflict. Furthermore, potential outside sources of nurture are by nature of their respective bureaucratic roles too emotionally uninvolved to provide support. Under the circumstances, a child seeking help or emotional sustenance from adults is likely to meet with only intermittent success, the conditions which the hypothesis defines as leading to dependency.

Social Drinking

The opportunities for expressing dependency are not completely absent, for though the supernatural helper is no longer available, there is evidence that social drinking has an analogous function. Since Potawatomi drinking has been examined in detail elsewhere (Hamer 1965) it is necessary to mention only a few

[2] The number of persons per family increased from 3.8 in 1937 to 5.6 in 1961. Also, the percentage of population under 5 years of age in 1961 was 17 as compared with 11.1 in the surrounding white community (Hamer 1962:A1A3). These figures provide some indication of the relatively large number of small children in most families as well as an implied close spacing of pregnancies in recent years.

quantitative aspects which apply to the problem under consideration. Of the approximately 80 members of the community over 15 years of age, not more than 6 could be classified as non-drinkers. Most drinkers indicate that they began imbibing consistently sometime between their fourteenth and sixteenth birthdays. The expressed goal of drinking is intoxication which for many individuals occurs once or twice a week, whenever beer or wine can be obtained in sufficient quantities. Euphoria, aggressive activity, and passivity are the three sequential phases through which individuals progress in becoming intoxicated (Hamer 1965:292-293). At first they are more friendly and open than when sober, but amiability gradually gives way to insults and physical agression to be followed finally by collapse into a drunken stupor. The behavior that goes with the first two phases involves much of the reassurance and positive and negative attention seeking that have been suggested as measures of dependency.

Positive Attention Seeking

Individual Potawatomi no longer seek power from a spirit helper that will enable them to acquire more prestige than another. Instead they use their position of relative poverty to gain the cooperation of others prior to and within the drinking situation. Unlike the covert method for acquiring admiration in the past, however, in the quest for alcohol one may make overt demands on others. Nevertheless, the plea for money to purchase beer and wine, usually directed toward neighboring white men as the most likely sources of cash, is couched in such indirect, ritualized terms as: "I don't know where I will find the money to get bread for the children's breakfast" or; "I need money for gasoline so I can look for work". The real meaning behind this devious petition is seldom missed. White men are better potential sources of money than Indians. They are also likely to be more sympathetic both out of a sense of guilt concerning the conditions of poverty at Whitehorse and a vicarious pleasure stemming from a romanticized belief that life for Indians on the reservation is a continual round of convivial beer parties and casual sex relations.

Though acts of friendliness were traditionally associated with a form of witchcraft which is no longer the norm, the amicable

approach continues to be used in the drinking situation, as a means of manipulating others. This indirect form of attempting to attract admiration is used by intoxicated women to lure men, both white and Indian, into promiscuous relations. The purpose is either that of obligating them to render future personal favors or as a means for gaining revenge against an erring husband. Men may also use the convivial drinking relationship to extract promises of a monetary loan, the use of tools, or other material rewards.

Reassurance Seeking

An examination of themes of conversations occuring during the early stages of intoxication, but seldom found in sober exchange, indicate numerous attempts to arouse pity. In this phase of the drinking process it is the listener who is expected to and usually does express an interest and sympathy seldom shown in the isolation of ordinary, sober, existence. For example, one informant would talk openly of a longing for her deceased mother whom she felt was the only one to show real feeling and understanding for her. Another combined lamentation about his long deceased wife with ritual repetition of the phrase "Jesus will come again." For several people there was a noticeable increase in concern about health and the possibility of death, leading to long detailed stories of the development and difficulties of curing an ailment, and invariably ending on a note of self-pity.

Given the limited encouragement for problem solving and the resolution of social conflicts, the individual has little opportunity for developing confidence through interpersonal associations. As a result there is a tendency to resort to fantasy. In the traditional culture he could bolster his confidence by relying on supernatural power, but now he turns for similar results to the make-believe world of a small circle of drinking companions. The process involves seeking direct assurance from others and creating temporary make-believe status positions of prestige. The former situation is illustrated by the man who after two or three beers invariably insists on reminding others that he is not a "bad guy", and expects his drinking companions to reciprocate with declarations of their esteem. Simultaneously, or as an alternative, he may attempt to assume such fantasy positions as a person of authority, superior

parent, paragon of generosity, or status equal to the white man. In the event that a fictive status is assumed, it is generally conceded that the Potawatomi display an optimism and emotional affect seldom shown on other occasions. In fact this exuberance may reach the point, as one informant suggested, where "a man thinks he knows too much." A case in point involved two men who, as long as beer or wine were available, would expound for hours on their rights to the tribal chieftaincy and what they were going to do to the man who had usurped this position. It is of interest to note that one of these men who had actually been chairman of the tribal council for a short period, indicated that it was very difficult for him to attend and direct the infrequent council meeting without consuming a "drink of courage". On the other hand, pretending the role of the superior parent is a somewhat more indirect method of seeking reassurance. It involves in the beginning a great deal of bragging about the exceptional performance of one's children, and ends with the announcement that the latter are going to go to college, and acquire a place in the white man's world. This declaration is frequently made despite the fact that the listeners know the son or daughter referred to, has dropped out of high school several years prior to the discussion. The same form of exaggeration occurs in the case of penurious individuals who seek to create the illusion of unusual generosity, by offering drinks to all comers and even going to the point of pawning expensive chain saws and rifles in order to keep a drinking party going.

Relaxed social interaction with the white man is at best difficult, but with the aid of alcohol it does occur in the recreational setting. The problem of how to attain status equality is easily resolved by buying the white man a drink, and then behaving with a show of animated joviality as an equal. Sufficient confidence results from encouragement provided by the white drinker to enter into open competition in tavern games, even dancing, without fear of retribution or overwhelming shyness.

Though self-assurance from visions induced by alcohol is only temporary, it is reinforced by the frequency and pleasure of intoxication. Nevertheless, just as in the guardian spirit quest few individuals acquire enough confidence in their supernatural power to challenge others overtly. For the contemporary

Potawatomi, status fantasies of intoxication are seldom, if ever, acted upon when the individual becomes sober. No one, white man or Indian, questions or belittles this type of status claim within the context of the drinking situation, but attempts at implementation in the world of reality lead only to social rebuff, if not outright ostracism.

Negative Attention Seeking

In the second phase of the drinking sequence spasmodic outbursts occur in which the individual agressively asserts his rights, attempts to manipulate others, or is physically aggressive. All of these actions provide a temporary means of mastering the social situation by forcefully attracting the attention of others.

Drinking occasions were the only times that Potawatomi were observed to vehemently assert their rights to respect from others. At a drinking party it was not uncommon for an informant to remind the ethnographer that many of his questions were unwarranted infringements of the latter's privacy and that henceforth questions would not be answered. After he thought sufficient time had elapsed for the ethnographer to have been suitably impressed by the outburst, the same informant would issue an invitation to be sure and pay him a visit when interviewing other families. Another example is that of a heavily intoxicated man who would become insistent about his exclusive rights to water from a pump which was not only far removed from his premises, but customarily used by other members of the community. Even the contract doctor, grocer, and others dispensing services in the white community observed that Indians tended to demand their rights only when intoxicated.

Contempt is another method often used when drinking, though as a means of commanding the attention of others, it is especially disruptive of kinship bonds. For example, in the case of a husband and wife it was not uncommon for the latter to make a slurring remark about some attribute of her spouse, provoking an immediate denial to be followed by prolonged argument or direct physical aggression. In either case the wife succeeds with dramatic effect in obtaining immediate recognition from her husband, while simultaneously justifying her feelings and expres-

sions of hostility at his negative reaction. Another type of situation involves the mother-in-law who seeks to regain control over her son by using drinking as an excuse to express contempt for her daughter-in-law. Though this creates conflict between husband and wife it often brings the son, if only temporarily, back to the mother's home to provide affection and care. It was not even unusual for intoxicated individuals to bait the ethnographer with thinly veiled expressions of contempt for his work, in an effort to persuade him to spend more time with them, so that he might obtain the "true story about the Indian".

The most extreme of these attempts to control others end in overt aggression, as a kind of last desperate effort to regain the real or alleged loss of attention to another. Nevertheless, stealing, physical assault, and the smashing of others' property occur only in the drinking setting and are either not remembered or else minimized when the period of intoxication has passed.

Drinking patterns at Whitehorse provide encouragement of the hope-fear conflict in two ways. First of all the individual knows that nurturant responsiveness is linked only to the *modus operandi* of social drinking. On the other hand sobriety is associated with the introverted, withdrawn personality of adult life which has its cultural foundations in a subsistence economy and the tensions of living in a small, socially isolated community. Thus the hope-fear ambivalence is supported by persons being giving and warm in one situation, but generally cold and circumspect in another. Also, there does not seem to be a sufficient time lapse between drinking episodes to lead to the extinction of the conflict response. On the contrary, the frequency of drinking seems to provide the kind of intermittent reward which according to the paradigm is likely to lead to the reinforcement of dependency.

Secondly, and as a consequence of this intermittent reinforcement, there is a noticeable amount of frustration and overt anger. The expression of hostile feelings invariably follows the reassurance of the initial drinking phase. This is not to say that all the aggression necessarily relates to frustration in the ongoing social situation, for it may represent a cumulation of rejection by others or be totally unrelated to dependency. Nevertheless, the inevitable sequence of nurturance followed by hostility seems to

be more than a coincidence. The switch from helpfulness or friendly verbal exchange is often so abrupt that it is as if there were a sudden recall of some past slight or rejection which justifies the aggressive outburst. Aggression is excused in sober afterthought because it is attributed to alcohol, but the event is not forgotten and provides sufficient reason for an ambivalent attitude toward future interaction.

It is clear that only within the confines of the drinking situation can one overtly manipulate others, express hostility, and seek emotional support. Thus, in terms of Spiro's paradigm the individual is protected from mental breakdown in the sense that most violations of the cultural norms other than serious physical assault, are excusable when associated with the imbibing of alcohol. Supporting this rationalization of deviation is a complete lack of guilt feelings about drinking to intoxication (Hamer 1965: 291). As a consequence, the social system is protected by the channeling of dependency expressions into the fantasy world of intoxication.

SUMMARY

In traditional Potawatomi culture it seems probable that the child experienced high, initial indulgence of his attachment to adults. The permissive period was followed, however, by a reversal of the process of encouraging dependency in favor of the socialization of self-reliance. On the reservation a high degree of dependency is still rewarded in the infancy and toddler stages of development, but there is no emphasis on training the child for the kind of socio-economic self-sufficiency which was so important in the past. In fact the uncertainty and apathy of adults as to how they should train their children leads to discontinuity of nurture. Thus in the past the desire on the part of parents to avoid indulgence of their children with warmth and affection in order to instill independence, while intermittently rewarding them with an abundance of affection for a job well done, would seem to be consistent with the conditions necessary for the development of the hope-fear conflict. The unintentional discontinuity of nurture in Whitehorse leads to analogous results. As a consequence of

the socialization process and adult roles, both past and present, which place a premium on circumspection and fear of warm personal ties in social interaction, it is difficult for dependency to be overtly expressed.

The guardian spirit quest and social drinking provide institutionalized outlets for sublimating dependency. Both institutions furnish individuals with an opportunity to give and receive nurture, and provide a situationally acceptable means for releasing aggression which may be related to the frustrations of rejection. Also, the ease and frequency of consulting a spirit or joining a drinking party makes dependent behavior emotionally rewarding. It is not, however necessary to view the relation between dependency and these two institutions as teleological. Rather it is sufficient simply to indicate the obvious, that while guardian spirits and social drinking have several other manifest and latent functions, they also furnish individuals with an indirect way of expressing dependency needs.

Finally, the question arises as to whether the predominantly sacred guardian spirit quest was more effective than secular institutionalized drinking in providing an outlet for dependency. Relationship with a superhuman force is by nature ambiguous and unlimited in regard to the benefits to be derived. On the other hand, drinking companions can provide a social bond which is at best specific and circumscribed. The spirit helper being immortal cannot be blamed for failure to support the supplicant while a non-nurturant mortal's failure is more tangible and the responsibility of the latter is not easily avoided. In other words it is possible that the ambiguity of the nurturing bond with spirit beings provides for a greater ease in building a fantasy of hope. Though, as we have seen, the fear of non-support is not completely lacking and provides a basis for development of conflict.

Department of Anthropology
University of Manitoba

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