A Case Study of "Normal" Windigo [1]

J. ANTHONY PAREDES
Department of Anthropology, Florida State University,
Tallahassee, Florida

RÉSUMÉ

Cet exposé décrit une fantaisie de *windigo* éprouvée à plusieurs reprises par une femme Chippewa contemporaine, sans tenir compte des symptômes psychologiques qui accompagnent, d'habitude, la psychose *windigo*. Suit une interprétation de cette fantaisie, interprétation qui (1) se sert des détails de la vie personnelle de cette femme afin de démontrer l'importance qu'il faut accorder aux expériences personnelles de l'individu pour arriver à une juste compréhension du phénomène *windigo* et des éléments non occidentaux concernant la fantaisie en général, et (2) qui, en cherchant à établir quelles pouvaient être les sources folkloriques des personnages et des suites d'événements qui se sont manifestés dans les rêves du sujet, soulève de nouvelles questions à l'égard de l'étude du *windigo* et examine les liens éventuels qui existent entre la tradition folklorique et la psychologie de l'individu. Pour conclure, nous proposons un cadre analytique qui fait penser que la psychose *windigo* n'est pas particulièrement "exotique".

The term "windigo" (wiitiko) has been used by natives and anthropologists alike to describe both cannibalistic psychological aberrations and mythological characters of the Ojibwa and neighboring peoples. However, the connections between the psychological and mythological referrents of the term have not been altogether clear. Parker (1960) in his psychoanalytic approach suggests that belief in the legendary monster is the means by which

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dependency need frustrations are "cultivated and given definite form" (619) in the windigo sufferer. Teicher (1960) has argued that the windigo belief is a determinate cause of the pathological behavior. As Fogelson has shown (1965) even when applied to psychological processes alone, windigo designates at least five basic syndromes. Similarly, windigo "stories" range from oral history of episodes of mental illness to mythological accounts of the monster itself. While it is not possible to discuss the mental disorder without reference to the belief, the windigo belief can be examined independently of acknowledged cases of windigo psychosis.

In the etiology of windigo psychosis starvation, real or imagined, in connection with a strong cannibalism taboo, has been suggested by Landes (1938a:214), among others, as a causative factor. Recently Rhorl (1970) has advanced a dietary deficiency hypothesis as a partial explanation for the psychological phenomenon; the absence of cases among southern Ojibwa and the paucity of cases under the less rigorous conditions of the 20th century give some support to her argument. Nonetheless, belief in windigo monsters apears among Southern Ojibwa (Chippewa) apparently independent of the psychotic syndrome. Hallowell early suggested (1934) that all cases of the so-called windigo psychosis are not pathological, however reported cases of windigo phenomena almost universally are dramatic and emphasize the bizarre. In view of the complex of psychological, cultural, and nutritional factors which have been proposed in the etiology of "classic" windigo cases, analysis of the role of windigo belief in the psychic life of individuals who do not display the classic symptoms might serve to clarify some of the issues. This paper presents such a case collected from northern Minnesota in 1966. Following the presentation of the data I offer some interpretive remarks which suggest new directions in the study of windigo and the relation of cultural beliefs to individual psychology in general.

The data presented here were obtained in two tape-recorded life history interviews with a woman living in a small Minnesota city, "North City"[2] where I conducted a study of Chippewa urban

[2] I have utilized pseudonyms throughout in order to protect the anonymity of individuals in this paper and anticipated publications.

adaptation during 1965-68 (Paredes: 1969). Before these interviews I had visited the informant on three previous occasions and administered a rather lengthy interview schedule to her. The recording sessions lasted approximately two and one-half hours each, were conducted in English in her home, and she was paid for her services. After the tapes were completed I worked briefly with her on several successive occasions, employed her as a babysitter, and had her address a small anthropology class I was teaching at a local college. These windigo materials were an unexpected dividend in the collection of data pertinent to my major research aims.

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Mrs. F. was born c. 1888 in an isolated traditional community on a northern Minnesota reservation. Her father was a White lumberjack and camp cook; her mother was Chippewa and died before the informant can recollect. She spent her childhood in her maternal grandmother's house; also in the household were her "step-grandfather" and her mother's sister. Her father occasionally saw her but on the whole had little interaction with her:

> He used to come see me and give me some money or bring some groceries. He used to have big hundred pounds of flour. Everything he used to bring then he'll give my aunt some money. Then, I never know if they spent that money on me to buy clothes. Pretty soon, of course, people tell — maybe people tell him 'bout giving money to these people, but soon he used to buy the clothes for me. Then he'll put groceries there. His name was... He was a red headed man; that's why, maybe, my hair was red when I was little girl. One time we come in the birch canoe around this lake... We stop in... there, they used to be logs in the water. That's the way they carried their logs long ago, in a boat. I otta logs there. We see bunch of people swimming — it was pretty near Fourth of July then. "There is, there is that man — oh yeah, he come to us," my aunt said. That was my father that swimming around there. He recognize us; then he come to the boat. Then my aunt use her paddle to hit him... splash the water on him. That old man was in the back. My grandmother died before I went to school. She died. He was along then: he told my aunt to go to the shore — he'll go and get something to give it to them — food. Just after my cousins go up there, they bring boxes — oh all kinds of bread, cookies, doughnuts, ham... come to the boat and bring them. Then he [her father] got them stand there, and he just dig in his pocket a hand full of money. He

> throw it at me like that, at me sitting in the birch, in the boat. One silver dollar fall in the water. They dig there and try to find it. They couldn't find it, never find it. We went on, on [to the Agency], they gonna have Fourth of July there. That before I went to school...

She did not begin school until she was approximately thirteen. At the reservation boarding school she learned English and received an English first name (she did carry her father's surname). At seventeen she began living with a young man in one of the more acculturated reservation communities. Later she formally married him in the Episcopal church, ostensibly to insure that "the school" would not "come after her." At the time of the marriage she was baptized; before, "I used to go to pagan — when they're have medicine dances."

Despite physical abuse and deprivation from the start she remained with her husband for twenty-four years and had several children, the first of which died in infancy. Finally, she left her husband and soon after established a consensual union with another man by whom she bore her last two children. After four years she separated from her second husband and thereafter lived independently with her children. Ever since her first marriage she has returned only intermittently to her natal village and in recent years has frequently alternated between living on the reservation, in the Twin Cities, Washington State, and North City — she has had children living in all these places.

In recounting her life history she emphasizes two main themes. She has endured poverty and personal hardship — first at the hands of her grandparents and aunt, later because of her husbands. Secondly, she has endured by virtue of her strength, self-sufficiency, and ability to "work just like a man." Also she often mentioned comments made by other Indians on her Caucasian appearance, particularly her reddish hair.

Mrs. F. has quite a detailed knowledge of traditional culture, and she is well acquainted with and is still actively interested in Ojibwa folklore. She reported to me a recent discussion with one of her agemates in which they considered the possibility that the traditional culture-hero, Nanabushu, was really Jesus.

The informant has had a rich psychic life. Her main spirit helper seems to have been her long-dead mother, but she is not

absolutely positive of that identification. She once dreamed a powerful gambling song which her first husband successfully used to recoup his losses after a bad losing streak at moccasin game. At the close of World War II when her sons were in the South Pacific she received a "brave song" reassuring her that her sons would return safely. She asserts that although all her children have learned the song, other Indians have not been able "to catch it" when members of her family try to teach them. Mrs. F. appears to have always been a rather passive recipient of her supernatural gifts and rather perplexed about the whole phenomenon. Referring to the brave song, she reports her adult granddaughters on the reservation as asking:

> "Why this don't happen to one of those Indians here — the full-blood Indians here, and it had to happen to you. You're half White and half Indian; and it pick you to come and show you these songs," they said. "Yes. I think it happen, I don't know why it happen, but it happen," I said.

Soon after World War II Mrs. F. lived briefly in Washington State with one of her sons. During this time she visited meetings of the Shaker Cult, to which her daughter-in-law's family belonged. Mrs. F. was impressed by these meetings and told some of her dreams there. Although not a convert to the cult, Mrs. F.'s first trip to Washington and her experience with the Shakers were instrumental in her finally arriving at a self-satisfying explanation of her dreams, in particular those which included windigo.

THE DREAMS

Mrs. F. began her autobiographical sketch, as I had instructed her, with her earliest remembrances. On the whole her first anecdotes centered around her fear of her grandmother's husband, whom Mrs. F. referred to as "an old man — the Humpback," the abuses which she suffered from him and other members of the household, and her mother's brother's kindness and intercessions for her. Then she introduced her dreams:

> ...I remember what I did. All I do is hauling wood in or I'll go and get the axe and chop, chop, chop, just the way I am, [i.e., in light weight clothing]. And when I remember when I sleep sometimes I get up in the

night and go and find myself outside standing around. I don't notice myself that I walk out, because I used to have bad dreams.

(J.A.P. — What kind of dreams did you have?)

I used to dream men — men come around me, and I be running away from a giant, from a giant. He's gonna catch me. Everytime I worry about in the evenings every *night* I dream about him — a giant that's gonna catch me, and those men are protec'ing me — twelve of them. They stand around me like this, and I be there [she demonstrates self in middle of a circle]. Oh, he gonna get me anyway. He even cut his head off — just took his head off and come through the men's legs. I used to dream that I'm running and just like under the ground like that [she demonstrates] to try to get away from him. I had a bad dream, alla time I dream about him. Everywhere I go I be afraid I'll see him — even, even not dreaming, when I go someplace.... there's a brush [bush] there as you go down-a lake, there's three brushes there; sometimes he'll be hiding there, he's gonna get me anyway — he's the giant. He's not *very* tall; he's a man about this tall [she indicates about average height] and he's a man — I know how they call them, them men: Misabe, they call 'em. He can lick giants. They call 'em Misabe.

(J.A.P. — and what is the giant called?)

wendiigo.

(J.A.P. — *wendiigo?*)

Uh huh, *and* Misabe they call him, he's the one that wanted to catch me. I don't know what he gonna do with me. He ain't gonna eat me, but he's gonna catch me. But still I'm afraid of him. And those twelve men: [One time] I go down-a lake to go and put the boat down upside down, because it gonna rain... They [step-grandfather and aunt] use me in everything... whatever they want done they tell me to go do it... I run over there. I stop. I hear. I hear something. I heard those men talking — they talking in the brush there I thought. They're talking, they're talking about me!

(J.A.P. — Misabe?)

No, them men that try protec'me, those twelve men. They talking about me, but I can't understand 'em, what they say [she briefly imitates their high pitched voices] all they say like that. They were talking about me. I come back again, I wasn't afraid, I just wished to see them.

(J.A.P. — you wanted to see them?)

Uh huh. But I just hear them; that's all, and that. And then I told my cousin, "I wonder what I could do to stop the dream? I'm afraid of that giant I always dream about." "I don't know, people said if you tell your dreams it'll stop," she says. "Well, I'm telling you, maybe it

will stop," I said. Didn't, didn't stop — even when I was married... I still dream. And I went to school, 'nough of that there. I went to school...

In her school experiences the informant emphasized that "Mrs. [the school superintendent's wife] sure been good to me since I went to school. They call me Mrs. ——'s pet..." While at school she had her first menstrual period. She claimed that she had not known about menstruation before, and when her first menses came she was frightened and "...I was ashamed I was like that." It was during this traditionally crucial stage of life that her dreams of the giant began to acquire new meaning for her:

...pretty soon there was a payment. Oh, all kids go to the store, so I wanna go too... I went there. Boys tease me, "Hello there big legs." "Hello there big legs." I turned back, and I cry... I just didn't go again; I didn't go to town; I just stay. So, I had all kinds of trouble.

And, then when they, when they used to go playing; girls go playing outside, I'll be inside working away at that tub fixing bread. That's my job in the kitchen. When they change details, they won't change me; that's my job making bread — mixing bread there. And, then after it raise up, and then everybody would put some in pans, only the fixing is my job. And maybe that why I had muscles, my hands, my hands grow just like man. And then I thought about myself: Maybe that's why I was dreaming about that, the strongest giant in my life; maybe take pity on me because I was an orphan. And ever since that I never get sick. I was strong all the time. I grow up just like a man...

After this the informant made no further spontaneous mention of the giant dream, but later I unexpectedly elicited more details of the dreams. After describing the events between her school days and World War II, she recounted her first trip to Washington State. She recalled how frightened she was as the train passed along the edge of the mountains overlooking treetops below and —

Oh, and sometimes it would get just dark while we were riding, as we go under the tunnels, you know. I was scared.

(J.A.P. — [jokingly] Did you think about *wendiigo* when you went through those tunnels?)

Right. I used to. Some of my dreams — I seen what I used to dream when I was little girl. I used to dream some of those I seen over there, of those cliffs. I used to dream I was walking around up there when I was telling you my dreams. I dream what I see over there.

(J.A.P. — When you went through Washington?)

Uh. huh. Isn't that funny.

(J.A.P. — That is really funny. And you had never been any place where there were cliffs when you were a little girl?)

No. No. Then I seen my dreams over... Gee my dreams musta been true. They were telling me how long I'm going to live.

(J.A.P. — the dreams were?)

Uh huh. And they were telling me, I seen my dreams over there. All the clothes; I can just grab what I wanna wear — I seen it over there — that's the way I used to dream.

(J.A.P. — Let me see if I got this right. Did you say that you had more of your bad dreams after you got married?)

Twice I know that I got sick. Got sick. When I lay down there when I was sick, I can hear those twelve men talking in back of my head here. Talking, talking, talking. "Oh! Oh! Wait," when you hear somebody talking — "A bunch of them talking in the other room maybe," and that's the way.

(J.A.P. — and this is after you were married?)

Uh huh. They were talking about me. There is twelve men. I don't know how come there's twelve; because there were twelve of them standing around me there protecting me from that giant. And then when I was sick again, that's when they leave me alone, cause I never been sick real bad again. I don't know what was wrong, just before I, these — had [last two children]; before I had them.

(J.A.P. — That's the last time?)

Uh huh.

(J.A.P. — what happened in that last one, the last dream?)

That's when they come talk here. Then when I went over there Washington I went and see my dream... When I used to dream, I go from my place there — That's the main one I used to dream too. That's where I going when that giant chasing me... that's where I'm going. This old lady, I used to go to some old lady in my dream... And then, in my little dress, I'll gather — When I come to her place, "Oh here comes my girl again," she'll say. Then maybe she'll feed me there. Then after she feeds me, she'll give me berries, I'll go from her door and then gather money in my dress. I gather some money just like there was a big hole there, all around there some money, that's what I pick up, and hand it to her. That's all I did in my dreams.

And I told a man over there [in Washington] after the church — we went to [Shaker] church, "I seen a lot of dreams I used to have back home when I was a little girl," I said. "I seen all these dreams only I

didn't see the money to pick up yet," I says. "Oh maybe if you stick around here long enough," he says... "Maybe you stick around here long enough, maybe you see the money. Maybe you be the rich woman here," he says.

(J.A.P. — But you never did find the money did you?)

I never stayed long enough. I always wanna come back, 'cause I had kids here.

DISCUSSION

It is impossible to distinguish actual content of the dreams from retroactive elaborations, to separate biographical fact from biographical fancy, and the data are lacking in sufficient detail for any full analysis of the meaning of the dreams from either a psychological or cultural standpoint. Nevertheless, a cursory survey of Ojibwa folklore quickly reveals a number of parallels to the manifest content of Mrs. F.'s dream. Secondly, the specific circumstances of the informant's life present rather immediate possibilities for a simple and direct interpretation of much of the dreams' symbolism.

Barnouw has discussed the "desire for dependence" (1950: 53) in Chippewa personalities and Parker (*op. cit.*:611) speaks of "dependency cravings" in the etiology of windigo psychosis; Mrs. F.'s dreams can be readily interpreted in this general context. Indeed, the symbolic meaning of the dreams appears quite transparent. The identification of her giant requires no diffuse psychoanalytical abstractions or the invocation of an amorphous "mother figure" (*Ibid.*: 619); there are much more immediate and concrete models for the monster. Futhermore, in addition to any dependency needs the dream in complementary fashion can easily be seen as fanciful flight from an inescapable, hostile emotional environment.

One of the most curious features of these dreams is the way in which windigo and Misabe appear to be confounded; the giant is both a fearful monster and a slayer of giants. At one level the giant quite likely represents the informant's step-grandfather. Compare her description of the dream with the following recollection:

> I think back how I lived when I was a little girl, how they treated me. When it's time for me to go to bed, there is no bed for me to lie down; there'll be something maybe on there for my mattress — maybe an old coat or something. There I lay there, just like I was afraid all the time. *I was afraid of that old man 'cause he always keep after me,* and he was mean to my grandma... (emphasis mine).

I suspect that the giant also symbolized her father. Although it is not certain why her father left her to the care of her mother's people, her story of her father's attempts to attend to her clearly indicate the hostile manner in which the family treated him. Nonetheless, it is probable that as a child Mrs. F. felt rejected by her father, but his sporadic attentions to her suggest the dual nature of the giant. The uncle could also have been a model for the transformation of the fear-provoking giant of early childhood to the benign supernatural of adolescence whom she decides "took pity on me." Again from her life history:

> ...They wouldn't let me go school 'til I was about twelve or thirteen years old... finally my uncle went after me. He was a cop. Still my aunt wanted to take me out in the woods; she was starting to make maple sugar... I didn't run away from my uncle; I was kind afraid of my uncle that he might catch me running away, but he sure didn't never get after me. I know one time he come and got after... his dad, that old man. He come and got after him one time... When he [the uncle] comes in he picks me up, puts me with him. "You sit here," he says, "while I'm visiting, then maybe I take you along when I go, so you can go and play."... He used to tease me a lot, that old man. One time he come and catch that old man hitting me, or whipping me, anyway I was crying when he come. Then he got after him. He said, "Dad, none of us own this kid, none of us. You people think you own her; no, you're not. None of us are relation. We related to her? None of us. None of us own her. We didn't even know when my sister died, and so we ain't got nothing to say. You people ain't got no rights to hold her back on school. The law want her to go to school, and she should go to school. She shouldn't be tied up in here, and you see how it is, look at her hair. She looks like a White girl, why holding her back going to school?" My hair used to be just red.

Finally, the giant could represent, not an abstract mother figure, but her actual dead mother. Some specific details are intriguingly suggestive in this regard. The giant is said to take off his head. While this is consistent with the belief that even chopping off a windigo's head will not kill it (Teicher *op. cit.*:3), the head removal might also have its basis in the common tale

(cf. Radin and Raegan 1928:142-43) in which a luckless hunter who suspects his wife of secretly, and faithlessly, securing meat while he is gone, decapitates her, and then the head rolls in deadly pursuit of him and his children. In another version of the story (*Ibid.*) the husband is pursued by his dead wife's six brothers. Are the "twelve men" of Mrs. F.'s dream the six brothers in duplicate and her identity in the dream suddenly switched to that of the mother in the tale? Mrs. F.'s mother's brother's intercessions on her behalf lend credibility to such an interpretation.

Later in life the informant's violent husband may well have served to reinforce the image of the giant in his more fearful aspect. Although too long to quote here, some of the most vivid and spine-chilling episodes of her autobiography are her accounts of her flights through winter darkness with her drunken husband in hot pursuit. When finally the husband is jailed for his mistreatment of her, she rejects all his pleas — through friends, tribal leaders, and clergymen — for reconciliation, and he attempts suicide by slitting his throat.

It is not until Mrs. F. has divorced her husband and as a mature woman joined a second man, whom incidentally she seduced from another woman, that the dreams finally cease. Up until this point she had had a lifetime of rejection by mother, father, grandmother, the "hunchback", aunt — she said, "she's not my girl anyway," and husband, and she was even "kind afraid" of her policeman uncle. By rejecting her husband she had turned the tables, so to speak, on all her "significant others" (cf. Parker, *op. cit.*,:619) and simultaneously the dreams ceased.

During adolescence she received some positive affection from several *White* adults, namely, the school superintendent's wife; the engineer on the steamboat which crossed the lake on the reservation — he used to call her "my little girl"; and a male school employee who used to teasingly try to kiss her. These relationships, too, very likely contributed to the reinterpretation of the image of the giant in her dreams.

From a folkloric point of view Mrs. F.'s merging of windigo and Misabe is not as strange as may seem at first glance. The two characters are linked as combatants in at least two tales

(Teicher 1960:18-19, 33); thus their mythical juxtaposition is clearly established. Barnouw has reported one of his female informant's reinterpretation of another Chippewa ogre, Bebukowe; by way of explanation he states, "some characters in Chippewa folklore appear to be vague and flexible enough to admit of varying interpretation, for even windigog (cannibal giants) can be friendly creatures in some anecdotes" (1963:229).

Bebukowe is described as a hunchback (*Ibid.*:228), and interestingly enough Mrs. F. dubbed her step-grandfather, "The Humpback." It is impossible to know if, in fact, the old man was a hunchback or whether this is fanciful retrojection. Whichever the case, the humpback characterization provides yet another clue to the dual nature of Mrs. F.'s giant, for if the old man did serve as a model from life for the giant of dreams, a hunched back has contradictory connections with mythological windigo. In at least two stories (Teicher, *op. cit.*:24-25, 26-27) a despised hunchback kills a windigo and saves his people. Somewhat further afield, one of the performers among the Plains Cree clowns, *wetigokanuk* — cannibal cult, is costumed to resemble a hunchback (Mandelbaum 1940:275). It is also significant that Plains Ojibwa clowns too bear a name derived from "windigo", *windigokan*, but it is *paguk*, a Skeleton Being, who directs a visionary to organize the foolish yet mystically powerful clown activities, and they are curers (Skinner 1916:500-503). The use of inverted speech and behavior by these clowns provides yet another cultural analogue, albeit remote, for Mrs. F.'s dualistic giant. All this evidence suggests that, considered in its broadest ethnological context, the windigo idea of mythology has complex associations with other characters, has benign even comical aspects, and, thus, cannot be summarily dismissed by simple characterization as a cannibalistic monster.

To return to Mrs. F.'s dream, what are we to make of those mysterious twelve men who protect her yet are tantalizingly just beyond communicative reach? Unlike the giant, I can find no direct models for these dream characters among the people in the informant's life. Nonetheless, possible sources for the twelve men in Ojibwa folklore are easily found. First of all their number is a Christian sacred multiple (three) of the aboriginal sacred number

four. The six brothers are mentioned above. Perhaps more to the point is a story from Michigan Ojibwa collected by Smith (1897). In this story a chief receives visionary instructions to gather a party of *twelve* and go to war. On the way they encounter a monster who systematically pursues each one, catches all but the twelfth and returns them, one at a time, to his lair. The twelfth escapes through the assistance of a "lion". The lion instructs him to crawl under his body; (perhaps this is one source for Mrs. F.'s reference to going "just like under the ground" to escape from the giant). When the man emerges from under the lion, his mentor tells him that he, the lion, will defeat the monster, but be slain himself; then the man is to sacrifice six dogs in order to revive the lion. The monster is defeated, the lion dies, the man fetches the six dogs and kills them, and the lion is revived. Again, the number of sacrificial dogs is half of twelve.

Even more directly relevant to Mrs. F.'s case is Hilger's report (1951:61) of an informant, from the same reservation as Mrs. F., whose visionary helpers were twelve White girls. Finally, it has been suggested that the twelve men of Mrs. F.'s dream indicate Christian influence, i.e., the twelve disciples (Harry W. Basehart, personal communication). Since the informant's original name is a Chippewa variant of "Mary", this interpretation has no little appeal.

The twelve men cannot be as easily explained in terms of the persons in Mrs. F.'s life as can the giant; undoubtedly the symbolism of the twelve men is extremely complex. I can only speculate that they generally represent the informant's unfulfilled needs for security and in an indirect way manifest Mrs. F.'s unconscious sensing of a seeming contradiction between her Indian way of life and her "half White" parentage. Unfortunately the data do not permit as definitive an accounting for the twelve men as one would like.

The final episode in the informant's dream is going "to some old lady." No stretch of the imagination is required to interpret the old lady as wish fulfillment for a mother in particular, and a solicitous female adult in general. In early life Mrs. F. is quite explicit that her aunt and grandmother, as well as the old man, were "mean" and made heavy demands on her.

This part of the dream has a close parallel in folklore. In a tale collected on a nearby reservation (Radin and Raegan, *op. cit*: 193-206): In mythical times women are fully developed, but the single existing man-god is in a cocoon-like state and must be hauled about and cared for by his wife. She tires of her burden and tries to kill him by tightly binding him and putting him under the ice of a frozen-over stream. For a while he bounces along carried by the flowing water under the ice, then he discovers what is happening to him, becomes enraged (before this he had been quite mild-mannered), and breaks himself free. Now a giant he chases his wife who flees in terror. She sees a wigwam with smoke emitting from the smoke hole; she dashes inside, where she encounters an old woman whom she addresses as "Grandma." The old lady saves her from her husband through deceit, but the giant soon discovers the old lady's trickery and starts to kill her. She changes into a pike-fish and her dorsal fin cuts the giant into two uneven parts. The two women then hack up the two pieces of the giant's body and toss the small pieces about outside. These bits of the giant's body are the origin of men — some short, some tall depending upon from which of the two parts of the body they sprang.

In addition to the above story, I collected one from another informant about a bear-woman which resembles this episode in Mrs. F.'s dream, particularly in connection with the gifts of berries.

In this last episode of the dreams the collection of money, as well as the soaring over the earth (e.g., seeing cliffs in Washington State) and the selection of clothes, appears as pure wish fulfillment. But is it only that? To be somewhat more psychoanalytical, giving money to the old lady may represent ambivalence and hostility toward Mrs. F.'s mother and/or grandmother, as Hallowell (1938) argued for the Freudian symbolic identification of money with fecaes as an expression of hostility in a dream of one of his key informants. Finally, if this episode is somehow related to the tale of the woman who tries to drown the original man-god, perhaps bringing the money to the old lady is an eerie psychical subterfuge for a secret desire to hack up those men whom I have argued are represented by the giant, then as a helpless child gather up the pieces in her "little dress" and

present the gory treasure to a windigo-mother, who in death deserted her daughter for the spirit world but who will later return gifts of powerful songs. Only by such a bizarre interpretation as this can I find any evidence for even deeply repressed cannibalistic urges on the part of Mrs. F.

The question arises as to why after these recurrent dreams Mrs. F. did not exhibit more psychotic, or at least neurotic, symptoms. The solution to the problem appears far too complex to attempt here, but a few speculations are in order.

The informant did relate her dream to her cousin and sought to rid herself of the giant. According to Landes (1938b:26) renunciation of windigo by one who dreams of him is supposed to prevent possession.

Mrs. F. makes frequent mention of the hard work she did as a child and her manly qualities in general. Particularly after her separation from her last husband she achieved some notoriety as a hard worker, including cutting cedar posts for sale, and, as noted earlier, she dreamed masculine songs. Landes (1938b:32) states that women who succumb to windigo "have been raised like men", but "if... women who episodically employ men's techniques are capable, they become the most conspicuous women in the culture, but they do not turn windigo or suffer other personality disintegration. The Ojibwa find them confusing." This seeming contradiction of Landes' is exemplified by Mrs. F. In only certain respects she was raised like a man, but when the occasion arose she could work like a man, so she seems intermediate between Landes' characterization of women "raised like men" and those who occasionally and aptly "employ men's techniques."

Perhaps, in keeping with Rhorl's argument, Mrs. F. did not suffer the dietary deficiencies which Rhorl (*op. cit.*) posits. However, it is worth noting that the informant mentions sometimes being given berries in her dream, and Rhorl suggests that the therapeutic value of the ingestion of bear fat for treatment of windigo lies in the substance's content of "vitamin C... probably derived from berries and other foods in [bear's] diet" (99).

Finally, in her fantasy life Mrs. F. appears to have resolved her fears, anxieties, and wishes by subconscious reinterpretation

of the windigo figure and the utilization of a wide range of folklore material. (At one point in her life story the informant even compared herself to Cinderella.) Rather than becoming fixated on the cannibalistic monster — she explicitly denies the giant having any intention of eating her, windigo appears as only an *aspect* of one of the central figures in a phantasmagoria which sweeps across a broad panorama of Ojibwa folklore and mystical belief.

CONCLUSION

While this rather informal analysis is far from exhaustive, is necessarily inconclusive, and leaves many unanswered questions, the interpretation does raise important issues in windigo research. First, it has been shown that in this particular case fantasy material can be rather simply and directly related to specific persons and relationships in the "real world" of the informant's unique life situation, without resorting to generalized descriptions of cultural patterns or relying on very abstract psychoanalytical devices, e.g., a "prototypic mother figure." This, in turn, would indicate that in addition to mythology, cultural patterns of childrearing, and nutrition, specific features of the immediate social environment of the individual need be carefully considered in analyses of windigo psychology. Otherwise, it is impossible to explain why only a certain few and not all Ojibwa suffer from windigo psychosis. Indeed, in all discussions of dreams, visions, and hallucinations in non-Western societies greater attention should be given to the specific life situation of the dreamer or visionary than is usually the case. Even the layman in our own culture is familiar with the procedure of interpreting dreams on the basis of individually unique life histories, yet in dealing with fantasy material from other societies cultural explanation often supersedes situational explanation. As has so often been the case, in anthropology we "neglect somewhat those elemental phases of human existence, just because they seem to be obvious and generally human, non-sensational and non-problematic" (Malinowski 1960:72).

Secondly, the data presented here indicate that the whole complex of windigo belief may need reexamination. Is, for example,

the windigo lore of southern Ojibwa significantly different from that of the sub-Arctic? What have been the effects of several centuries of acculturation on the windigo syndrome? How is it that the horrible cannibal monster is terminologically identified with the ludicrous clown-shamans of the Plains Ojibwa and Plains Cree? What relationship does the windigo idea have to other folklore characters — is windigo a character, a *characterization*, or both? Precise answers to these and related questions should provide important insights into our understanding of "windigo."

Finally, even a brief survey of Ojibwa folklore has revealed numerous separate tales which closely parallel one part or another of Mrs. F.'s dream. It appears, then, that she subconsciously selected personages and sequential motifs from the body of folklore and combined them into her own private fantasy. It may be hypothesized, then, that pervasive psychological stresses in the informant's life were channelized into a fantasy structure creatively derived from entities and motifs of folklore.

In connection with this last point I have observed that Landes' brief life histories of Ojibwa women (1938a:227-247) generally conform to the "motifeme" patterns of Dundes' structural typology of North American Indian tales (1963). Either this is mere coincidence, Dundes has discovered the structure of life as well as folktales, or in recounting their life stories Landes' informants cast their autobiographies into an underlying structural frame of folklore. A comparable example of this phenomenon is the Horatio Alger form in which so much American biography has been presented (W. W. Hill, personal communication).

If it can be demonstrated that individual fantasy and introspection draw not only content but also structure from cultural belief, to what extent then are various Euro-American self images such as "I'm a loner," "everybody is against me," and "I am Jesus" culturally relative psychological manifestations founded in recurrent Judeo-Christian literary themes of the righteous man who stands alone against overwhelming forces? In this kind of context the windigo psychosis is no more "exotic" than, certainly, paranoia and probably other textbook mental aberrations. Furthermore, just as the data in this paper demonstrate that not every Ojibwa who has chronic dreams including windigo exhibits the

classic symptoms, neither does every White American who daydreams of courageous leadership in a hostile arena believe himself to be Napoleon Bonaparte.

In summary, I have argued that Mrs. F.'s dream has its psychological origins in the particular unique circumstances of her life, but in both its content and its structure the dream is an individually unique reintegration of a variety of elements of traditional Ojibwa belief. In general I propose that in every society, belief, particularly as presented in the whole body of literature, provides the "adjusted", the neurotic, and the psychotic alike with a kind of cognitive map for the unconscious. In dreams, visions, daydreams, and hallucinations most individuals successfully trace a safe psychological path through the fantastic labyrinth of collective folklore; a few are lost.

None of the ideas presented here are startling new, but hopefully this interpretation of one very mild "windigo case" will serve to emphasize the continuing need for greater precision in the formulation of problems in modern psychological anthropology. Even so, it was one of the pioneers in culture and personality studies, Edward Sapir, who perhaps best stated the central point of this paper:

> ...psychological derangements... arise not on the basis of generalized cultural conflict but out of specific conflicts of a more intimate sort, in which systems of ideas get attached to particular persons, or images of such persons, who play a decisive role in the life of the individual as representative of cultural values (1932:241-242).

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