

Yet there are also some rather disturbing statements in this book that, sadly, betray a Western set of values that foregrounds control over nature, in contrast to the prevailing values of the majority (if not all) Native American groups in the American tropics that foreground living in harmony and balance with nature.

This book contains no maps, a serious omission for those unfamiliar with Costa Rica. However, with a little searching, I found that Finca Loma Linda has a web site— <[http://www.squaw.com/summer\\_site/summer/index.htm](http://www.squaw.com/summer_site/summer/index.htm)>—which does contain both the location of the farm on a map of Costa Rica, and a map of the farm layout (as well as other information).

In the final analysis, this book conveyed mixed messages. The author speaks of both harmony with nature and control over nature. Finca Loma Linda has been converted to meet the needs of scientific research on farming in the tropics and on systemic relations in successional and primary forest (about a third of the farm's land deliberately was left from the beginning in primary forest). This is laudable, but it still represents an effort at control over nature. It does not appear that any efforts are being made to incorporate the lessons that indigenous knowledge systems have to offer.

This book is well worth reading, but to me its message is still very Western in the values that are espoused. Would that it were otherwise.

**Performing Dreams: Discourses of Immortality  
Among the Xavante of Central Brazil. By Laura R.  
Graham. 1995. University of Texas Press. xiv, 290  
pp.**

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Graham's engagingly written book recounts in epic terms the ritual performance of a dream-myth by a Brazilian Indian community. Organized so as to lead the reader through an initial description of a Xavante Indian leader's dream peopled by mythic beings, then on to a description and analysis of the various expressive forms used by these people, and finally to the preparation and performance in the village plaza of the dream, this tour de force builds to a climax that cannot fail to affect even those whose area is not Brazilian Indians or mythology.

The book is based on research done between 1981 and 1991 with the Xavante Indians of the Pimentel Barbosa Reservation in Mato Grosso, Brazil. It is made up of seven chapters, each of which includes discussions about what life is like for these Indians. These highly readable sections alleviate the sometimes dense theoretical sections, which although well written, can sometimes pose a challenge for those unacquainted with the study of discourse practices.

Chapter 1 introduces Warodi, the Xavante elder whose dream is at the heart of the book. It also explains the idea of polyvocal discourse, is the way in which these Indians recount myths and dream. This type of discourse involves a number of people who repeat,

affirm, question, and comment about what is being said by the narrator. Graham describes the effect it can have, “Punctuated with clicks and emphatic glottal sounds, their simultaneous utterances, their staggered and overlapping phrases produced a soft but acoustically spectacular murmur in the forest clearing.” (p. 2)

How myths and dreams are expressed, rather than their content, is central to such discourse studies as Graham’s. Chapter 1 goes on to describe her theoretical model (pp. 4-9). It uses the framework of Peircian semiotics, which was adapted by Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban, for the study of other cultural phenomena and which assumes that people build up over the course of their lives a set of references that allows them to interpret signs. Although each individual has a unique personal history and thus a unique way of interpreting experiences, people from the same culture, and in the case of the Pimentel Barbosa Xavantes, from the same reservation, share similar interpretive frameworks. The job of the anthropologist in this case is to define and describe for others the interpretive framework, with all its signs and meanings, that performers draw upon when they narrate a myth. As Graham notes at the end of the book, “I began to understand that tellings provided the key to unraveling the meanings embedded in the performance.” (p 221). It is this structure, replicated each time the myth is performed, that gives people a sense of continuity.

Chapter 2 provides a general overview of Xavante history and culture, while Chapter 3 describes the “Xavante soundscape” (p. 64), which consists of expressive practices commonly used, for example, during the day, at night, with kinsmen, when lamenting, and in the age-grade system. Chapter 4 goes on to analyze in some detail the form of dreamed songs, or *da-Zo?re*. When a man (and this is a male prerogative) wants to share a song he has been given in a dream, then he must do so in a culturally appropriate form and context. Generally, the form that the song takes tends to minimize the voice of the individual and highlight the blending of community voices that result from polyvocal discourse. Through the repetition of song elements and the manipulation of range, pitch, melodic contour, and rhythm, any one voice recedes into the background (p. 119).

In Chapter 5 Graham discusses the ways in which Warodi’s dream song does not conform to the typical pattern, and she wonders if there is a political component to his narrative. She goes on to investigate characteristics of Xavante political discourse, emphasizing once again the importance of multiple speaking. In this arena, it facilitates consensus formation and the process of depersonalization that is apparently important to Xavante politics. Chapter 6 presents data that show how Warodi manipulates the formal devices in his speech to blur distinctions between the past and present, and the living and the mythic. As he narrates his dream, he aligns himself with Xavante ancestors and creators. The linguistic sections in this chapter are challenging, but comprehensible to the nonexpert with a close read.

In chapter 7 the dream myth is actually performed in the plaza of the village. Graham notes that the day-long preparations for the event is important for the psychological transformation of the Xavante performers into immortals. The ritual itself is short, three songs are sung through only once. However, during the event the Pimentel Barbosa Xavante effectively demonstrate several points. They signal to other Xavante that they have a privileged connection to the creators, and thus superiority over other Xavante communities, because only Warodi has been told the songs by the immortals. They maximize their village’s benefit from the anthropologist’s presence by taking advantage of her camera, tape recorder, and writing ability (pp. 219) And they reaffirm to themselves and to the world their determination “to continue as Xavante forever.” (p.224)

For those who wonder whether the study of a single dream experienced by one man in a obscure Indian village in central Brazil could possibly be of any interest or significance for us, Graham manages to connect successfully the case study with general concerns about the role of myth in social change. Simultaneously she weaves a great deal of cultural information into each of the chapters so that the study has broader appeal than it might appear at first glance.

Graham's book is a worthy addition to the literature on both indigenous peoples and expressive performances. As an ethnography about a Brazilian Indian society that is managing to survive contact with the Western world, it provides us with a case study that shows "creative adaptation" at work (p. 9). And it adds to the growing number of studies of GJ societies which include Urban's work on the Xokleng, Seeger's study of Suy< music, and Aytai's research on Xavante music. As we begin to accumulate rich collections of high-quality research on such cultures as the GJ, comparative work and theory building will be increasingly enhanced. Finally, the work makes a valuable contribution to the literature on the study of discourse practice. Shifting totally away from the study of the contents of myths and dreams, it successfully focuses our attention on the form of expression and on its connection to cultural transmission.

This book is appropriate for those interested in indigenous peoples, discourse-centered studies, rituals and myths, and culture change. It can be assigned to upper-level undergraduate studies, as well as graduate students.

**A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton, by John Jacobs; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995. xxvii, 578 pp. Photographs, index.**

**Reviewed by Richard E. DeLeon, Professor and Chair, Political Science Department, San Francisco State University.**

This political biography of the late Rep. Phillip Burton is a masterful study of how one man's political genius and passionate liberalism shaped history by producing landmark legislation in the areas of labor law, civil rights, welfare reform, and environmental protection. Phillip Burton was arguably this country's most important and influential liberal politician during the 1970s. Yet outside his home base in the San Francisco Bay Area his political career and legislative triumphs have gone unheralded. In this welcome book, Jacobs vividly reconstructs Burton's political life and illuminates it for all to see.

Over the course of his eight years in the California legislature (1957-1964) and nineteen years in the U.S. House of Representatives (1965-1983), Burton played a pivotal role in passing laws that increased welfare benefits for needy families, raised the minimum wage, protected the health and safety of coal miners, and preserved more of America's wilderness "than every Congress and president before him combined" (p. xx). In his effort to "explain the man in his full political dimension and make as explicit as possible how he did what he did," (p. xiv) Jacobs conducted an exhaustive review of Burton's personal