Dear Colleagues:

I hope this finds you in good health and spirits.

It is a pleasure to announce the online posting of a set of videos that present research on the topics of personhood and soul-like essences as conceived by pre- and post-contact Indians of the Eastern Woodlands and as used ritually and strategically by them in their lives.

The videos include nine researchers’ and two discussants’ presentations written for a symposium for the 85th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Austin, Texas, April 23, 2019. When the meetings were canceled, we constructed the videos as an alternative means of sharing our ideas with the profession.

The contents of the symposium videos and contact information for the participants are summarized below.

The videos have applicability to subjects beyond Eastern Woodland Indians archaeology and ethnography. They will be of interest to those who study the archaeology and ethnography of New World indigenous peoples, the archaeology of religion, mortuary archaeology, bioarchaeology, identity, folklore, performance, comparative religion, and the “ontological turn” movement in archaeology.

The videos can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLq8AGDwGZC7qHiXW1E3mTXpt52f9fxDLP

Feel free to show all or any of the videos for teaching purposes in your college and/or professional classes.

Please pass on this email to colleagues of yours who might have an interest in it for their research or teaching. Thank you.

Wishing you the best,

Chris Carr

Christopher Carr
Professor Emeritus of Anthropology
School of Human Evolution and Social Change
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85281-2402

Mailing address:
5428 Valinda Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Email: christopher.carr@asu.edu
Symposium Title:

Notions and Strategic Uses of Personhood and Souls-Like Essences among Early Woodland, Middle Woodland, and Postcontact Indians of the Eastern Woodlands

Abstract:

Inspired by the work of ethnologist A. Irving Hallowell and more recent developments in the study of non-Western peoples’ ontologies, we document precontact and postcontact Woodland Indians’ ideas about personhood and soul-like essences as constituents of a person. We explore how these notions were expressed in mortuary rituals, were a foundation for intergroup interactions, and were sometimes used strategically to create productive relations among groups and ties to places. Major themes that crosscut the presentations are: (1) the central place of ideas about soul-like essences in Woodland Indian concepts of the person; (2) the inclusion of other-than-human beings in the Woodland Indian cultural category of the person; and (3) the native logics and strategic uses of these two facets of personhood in forming intercommunity alliances, in place-making, and in issues of apparent “territoriality”.

Symposium Organizer and Chair:

Christopher Carr, Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University.

Presenters and Titles of Papers:

Christopher Carr, Professor Emeritus
   Introduction: Symposium Topics and a Historical Critique of Some Recent Anthropological Views of Personhood

William Rex Weeks, Ph.D.

Mary Kupsch, M.A.

Brianna Rafidi, B.A.

Heather Smyth, M.A. and Christopher Carr, Prof. Emeritus

Christopher Caseldine, Ph.D.
Anna C. Novotny, Assistant Professor
Souls in Flight: A Scioto Hopewell Ritual Drama about the Journey of Souls of the Deceased to an Afterlife.

Mark McConaughy, Ph.D.
Bird Effigies at Sugar Run Mound, Pennsylvania and North Benton Mound, Ohio.

Christopher Carr, Professor Emeritus

Andrew Seidel, Ph.D.
Persons and Places: Ontology and Landscape Use among Kentucky Adena Groups

Discussant: Kelley Hays-Gilpin, Professor
Discussant: Christine S. VanPool, Associate Professor

Video Production and Audio Engineering:

Brianna Rafidi, Christopher Carr

Email Contact Information for the Participants

Christopher Carr: christopher.carr@asu.edu
William Rex Weeks: william.weeks@chattanoogastate.edu
Mary Kupsch: marykupsch@gmail.com
Brianna Rafidi: briannajoy0913@gmail.com
Heather Smyth: Heather.Smyth@asu.edu
Christopher Caseldine: chris@archaeologysouthwest.org
Anna Novotny: anna.novotny@ttu.edu
Mark McConaughy: TimeTraveler50@comcast.net
Andrew Seidel: acseidel@asu.edu
Kelley Hays-Gilpin: kelley.hays-gilpin@nau.edu
Christine VanPool: vanpoolc@missouri.edu