

However, those living in the village of Kaktovik, located within ANWR on the Beaufort Sea coast, are more divided. Opponents of drilling in Kaktovik fear that opening ANWR will lead to offshore development that will disrupt whale migration or result in oil spills polluting their habitat. All Inupiat, whether living in Barrow or small communities such as Kaktovik, are balancing subsistence hunting as a way of life and the economic imperatives of contemporary American living. Both Inupiat supporters and opponents of drilling in ANWR are aware of the difficult tradeoffs between oil development and protection of key wildlife subsistence resources, but appear to weigh those tradeoffs differently. Supporters question how adequate standards of living, employment opportunities and government services can be maintained without new oil revenue, while drilling opponents question whether opening ANWR will endanger traditional subsistence activities.

COMMENTARY

How Can Anthropologists Contribute?

Anthropologists can help Americans understand the complexities of the issues surrounding ANWR and petroleum development in other areas of the region, while steadfastly advocating for cleaner energy sources and conservation, so that petroleum production in sensitive, undeveloped lands such as ANWR might eventually become unnecessary.

Anthropologists can also spread the word that indigenous communities in the circumpolar Arctic bear the brunt of oil development, global climate change and ecosystem contamination, and thus national and international forums must give them greater representation when addressing these issues and formulating legislation and policy. Anthropologists have assisted indigenous Arctic communities in their efforts to fully participate in the development process. The region's future will depend on public support for the rights of indigenous people to make their own informed decisions and control their own destinies, recognizing the difficult terrain they must negotiate to sustain their communities. ■

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Cartoon Violence and a Clash of Civilization

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If two symbolic systems are confronted, they begin to form, even by their opposition, a single whole. In this totality each half may be represented to the other by a single element which is made to jump out of context to perform this role. Other people select among our external symbols of allegiance those which offend or amuse them most. —Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols*

As the debate proceeds, both sides become more and more excited ... and then suddenly some exasperated speaker will go to the "root" of the matter and declaim some esoteric secret about the totemic ancestors of the other side, miming one of their cherished myths in a contemptuous dance. Before his pantomime has finished a brawl will have started which may lead to serious injuries and be followed by a long feud of killing by sorcery. —Gregory Bateson, *Naven*

We often view our own popular culture forms as meaningless diversions. Anne Allison, in her research on Tokyo hostess clubs, and Walter Ambrust in his work on Egyptian film, found that few local people took the subjects of their research as worthy of serious scholarship. Such cultural forms were seen as trivial if not vulgar. Likewise, Bateson's *latmul* men told him to ignore the dance forms of women, which were silly and not worth watching. But popular culture often surprises us. When it comes to look like folklore, or when it crosses the line in the other direction to become high art, as Ambrust shows, it gains an aura of respectability. Editorial cartoons occupy both positions simultaneously. As folklore, they promise commonsense wisdom against the self-serving obfuscations of the powerful. As high art, they qualify for Pulitzer prizes and are displayed—like the work of Thomas Nast—in museums of history and art.

Role of Political Cartoons

And like either folklore (dogfights) or art (Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*), they can become instrumental in instigating and focusing ideological conflict between groups with different backgrounds and interests. In April 2003, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Bladet* rejected a series of cartoons depicting Jesus submitted by a Danish illustrator, fearing they would provoke an outcry among readers. But in late September 2005 the same paper printed cartoons it had solicited depicting the Muslim prophet Muhammad, in a conscious effort to counteract what the paper saw as the self-censorship of Danish culture in the face of an implicit veto power of Muslim

sensibilities in Europe. Local Muslim protests failed to generate apologies, and the Danish Prime Minister failed to answer the concerns of ambassadors from 11 countries who complained about the cartoons.

By December a number of local Muslim leaders began speaking with professionals, muftis and other leaders in the Middle East to gather support. They took with them a 43-page "dossier" which reprinted not only the newspaper cartoons, but other documents, including newspaper clippings from the Middle East concerning the stalled diplomatic protests, and three images that had been sent to Danish Muslims as hate mail once the controversy erupted. One of these is an Associated Press photograph originally taken at an August 2005 pig-squealing contest in Trie-Sur-Baise, France. It shows a man dressed in pig ears and snout, the top of his head wrapped in a cloth that might be mistaken for a skull cap. It is labeled in Danish, and in the dossier's Arabic gloss, "This is a true picture of Muhammad." It is this picture, along with a drawing of Muhammad as a pedophile, and another, a cut-and-paste photo of a dog mounting a praying Muslim from behind, that may have caused some of the protests in the Muslim world.

Some of the worst of the *Jyllands-Bladet* cartoons—like a portrait of Muhammad with a bomb-turban emblazoned with the phrase "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the prophet of God"—are hardly tame given the world's tense political, economic and military environment and the tangle of real and symbolic desecrations it has helped create. Egypt's foreign minister showed the dossier to colleagues at a December meeting of the Organization of the

Islamic Conference in Mecca, sparking the international escalation of the conflict into economic boycott, orchestrated rioting and death, as governments, local leaders and media outlets on all sides strove to score points with their constituents and stave off challenges from more radical elements.

Internal Conflict

There is in fact a clash of civilization here. Note the singular noun. The clash is an internal one in which social groups are pushed further apart by taking on the mantle of particular values (here, freedom versus respect), which their leaders use as alibis for their own competitions. Bateson wrote that the whole of *latmul* culture was "moulded by the continual emphasis upon the spectacular, and by the pride of the male ethos." The dynamic of individual and moiety competition eventually led to schismogenesis, the differentiation of individual behavioral norms through the very process of interaction. The end result was "a hostility in which each party resents the other as the cause of his own distortion" and "an increasing inability to understand the emotional reaction of the other party."



Afghan protesters burn a Danish flag, chanting "long live Islam," while condemning the depiction of the Prophet Mohammed in cartoons first published in Denmark. Photo by John Moore/Getty Images

It is the issue of human understanding, and not the lack of understanding of abstract principles like freedom of speech, that is the operative issue in the cartoon conflict. Those who do not understand why Muslims react badly to insults to their Prophet, or who do not understand why Europeans might profane the holy, are left only with the image of an unapproachable Other. Those who do understand these reactions, on the other hand, are too often busy provoking them for their own benefit. ■

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