

THE CHAMORRO STUDIES
CONVENTION



The Chamorro Studies Convention

About this Issue

As Guam continues to evolve, new values and customs are added as older ones adapt or are discarded completely. For years, the local "Chamorro" has been concerned that his "identity" was among the customs and traditions being abandoned.

Understanding the Guam culture is necessary if it is to remain viable. Towards that end, a Chamorro Studies Convention has been established both to acquaint the outsider with Guam and to focus the local population upon the threat of cultural demise.

The convention is to be held this Friday and Saturday at George Washington High School.

The convention consists of seminars on language, history and culture. It also includes cultural activities. The total fee for both days is \$2.

The material in this special Chamorro Studies Convention section was prepared by convention organizers. Also included are letters of endorsement from island leaders.

Esta ki manali'e' hit guibi.

GOVERNMENT CODE OF GUAM
Art. 2009. Official Language. English is the official language of Guam, and all persons employed by the Government of Guam shall speak only English during working hours. Other languages must not be spoken except for official interpreting.

The Race with Plenty of Time

"You know Underwood, you're pretty smart for a Guamanian, why don't you be an electrician or something," my counselor for the JPK graduating class of 1965 told me.

I have often looked back on that remark and passed it onto friends so that they may be properly aghast at its insensitivity and

implicit racism which everyone dutifully agrees exists no longer.

The ironic thing about that remark is that I took it as a compliment. In that time frame of my past experience as a student in Guam's schools, it was a legitimate statement. Only later did I become indignant. Then upset. Then fighting mad.

And finally I had become a retrospect ethnic radical (I kept digging up the unpleasant past to justify my narrow emotions).

More recently, I have gone beyond ethnic radicalism and approached what I feel is a genuine respect for all people, including myself. I look back at that counselor's

remark now and only a faint smile comes to my lips -- and perhaps a tinge of pity for a man whom the world had passed by.

If there are any lessons to be learned at all from a multicultural environment, it must be mutual respect. Such respect can come only from education. But on Guam the educational structure provides children with only a superficial respect for Chamorro culture, a deep-rooted respect for "American culture," and almost no respect for such minority cultures as those from the Philippines or Micronesia.

Since this week's Chamorro Studies Convention addresses itself to knowledge about the Chamorro people, let's address ourselves to this cultural group and their educational image.

You may say, "Wait a minute, we have Chamorro Week, we have the Chamorro Language and Culture Program, we have the Guam Reader Series and we have bilingual programs." How can the Chamorro child have educational image difficulties since everything seems to be going their way.

All these programs and activities do exist, true. But these programs are doomed to failure: These programs need widespread support from educators, which has failed to materialize; the Chamorro people need a better self-image which is only now emerging; lastly, these programs need more than conversational Chamorro and making an occasional object out of coconut trees.

The Chamorro Studies Convention hopes to begin to satisfy all three needs.

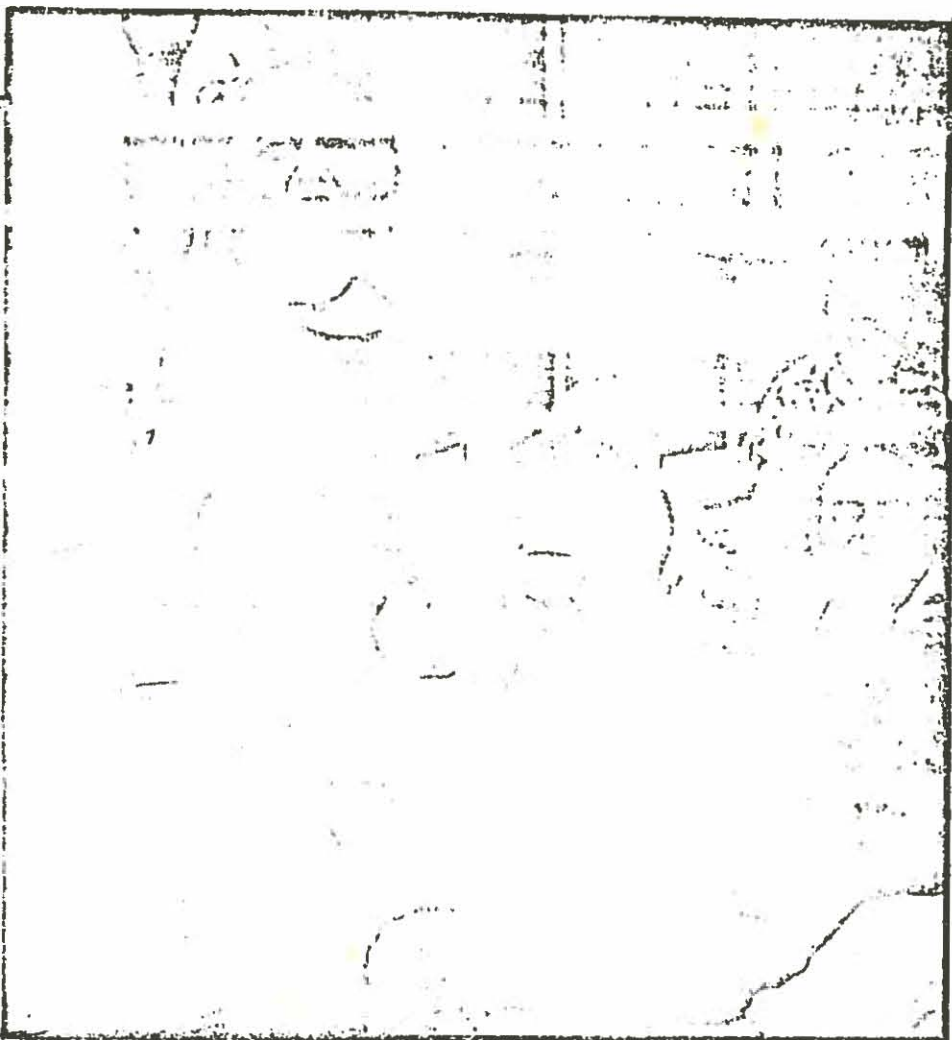
Educator Support

Let us be honest for a change. The educational structure on Guam is dominated by Statesiders. Maybe not numerically, but the power and the ability to influence the community rests with Statesiders. More importantly, in terms of the community's perception, educational leadership comes from outside.

Does this mean that Chamorro studies are doomed because many of our teachers are not Chamorros? No, that isn't the case at all. I think that the biggest problem lies in the Chamorros themselves.

Rather, there is a lack of personal knowledge about Guam and the Chamorro people which can be overcome only by years of Guam living. It also means that no matter how these Chamorro programs are implemented, explained, justified or rationalized, there is a gnawing sense among Chamorros of being on the "outside." There are fears that the mass institution of these programs might mean job loss. These are real problems which nearly everyone denies, but are real just the same.

Knowledge about Guam? Most teachers are woefully lacking. Yet it is conversely true that individual Stateside teachers have



adopted of larger-scale Chamorro Studies programs. This will be done in a nonthreatening spirit; these programs do not exist to develop "brown-power" zombies nor will they supplant current educational programs.

We rightfully want an equal share of the educational pie and for good reasons.

It is becoming increasingly clear that youngsters coming out of school lack firm foundations in self-identity. A clear image of "place in the world" was lost after the impact of mass education on Guam. One frequently hears the cry that things are getting better, that many Chamorro youngsters have gone to Annapolis and get good grades in other U.S. universities.

It is a case of the rich getting richer while the poor get eliminated. If you don't believe it, count the wasted human resources cutting tangantangan as a CETA employee by the roadside. There is much more than an economic slump involved. There is a kind of educational-motivational that increasingly permeates the youth of Guam.

Sometime soon Guam educators are

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Written by Robert Underwood

men in the forefront of research on Guam and the Chamorro. In particular, the case of Guam history in secondary schools has been advanced -- frequently over the objections of Chamorro administrators -- by Statesiders.

The convention, by presenting an array of interesting topics, hopes to expand the knowledge of individual teachers about Guam. Hopefully, that will lead to research on their own and a new kind of understanding in the classroom.

Another feature of the convention is to provide sound educational reasons for the

going to need a respect for the Chamorro culture and a break from the traditional "I treat everybody the same" moralizations.

Nothing is more infuriating than a statement to the effect that when I talk to a person, I never notice his color, his accent, his color of eyes, his or her sex, cut of clothes, nervous mannerisms or whether he is handicapped. Living in a multicultural environment -- and more importantly educating in a multicultural environment -- does not call for ignoring differences. Learning from living with different kinds of people does not involve an attempt to

pretend that they aren't different. The lessons come from a real sense of respect.

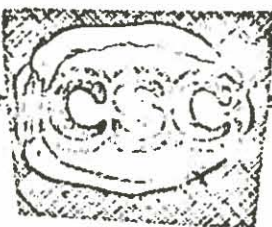
What is real cultural respect? Perhaps it is an unattainable goal only hazily defined.

What it isn't can be easier explained:

It isn't sympathy as in, "I must make allowances for this child in the classroom because he comes from a culturally disadvantaged background."

It isn't empathy as in, "I must pretend to be Chamorro so that I can get the child's respect: I'll say lana' lahi, don't do dat."

It certainly isn't cultural education that contrasts outdated things (grass huts,



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banana leaf plates) with the modern "American" things (television, disco music) in a way that is clearly unbalanced, even to a moron. I never could understand why modernization was co-opted by the U.S. to be an American phenomenon.

Lastly, it isn't faint attempts to mask the curriculum with a Chamorro flavor. To have a once-a-year activity during which we highlight our past only serves to highlight our present failure as a people.

What should the educator do? Nothing elaborate except gain a knowledge about Guam and put some of it to use in the classroom. Educators generally are intelligent, adaptable individuals who are especially trained to deal with changing environments.

What shouldn't he do? He shouldn't treat bicultural or multicultural education as an adjunct to "real education" nor should he fear that the much-vaunted "real education" no longer applies.

Chamorro Self-Image

The main stumbling block in the institution of a Chamorro studies program is the Chamorro people themselves. Due to many factors, many Chamorros are unsure about how to react to Chamorro studies, particularly in the schools. Some see it as "too late" to be effective and others seize upon it for all the wrong reasons. The end result has been confusion -- not only in planning for implementation, but also in rationalizations for implementing such programs.

The convention hopes to persuade differing factions to share their knowledge and gain realistic insight into the problems they confront.

Let's deal with the contention that these attempts at cultural education are "too late." Persons who support this contention frequently argue that Guam's Chamorro children are really not Chamorro at all; that Chamorro is no longer their first language; that they no longer behave as their parents did; that they are thoroughly Americanized in most respects. These arguments, aside from being a universal parents' lament, ("it just isn't like the good old days"), are a serious misconception of culture.

They are not speaking about a Chamorro culture that is alive and vibrant, they are speaking about a Chamorro culture that is static and traditional. Yet, if the members of a culture change or adapt, who is to say it is still not their culture? The argument should not be between the American way ala hamburgers versus the Chamorro way ala pre-war Guam. Time has eliminated that choice. The debating point should be: Do Chamorros have the resources and ability to control their cultural future?

One of the more interesting features about Chamorros is their adaptability. I often get irritated by Micronesians who chide Chamorros for selling their culture for American dollars and creature comforts. Yet, it is because Chamorros do adapt and have traditionally done so that they continue to exist. My retort: When the U.S. is through with Micronesia 50 or 100 years from now, Chamorro will continue to exist as a language whereas Micronesian cultures that view all change as cataclysmic will be the real recipients of cultural punishment.

Nevertheless, the "too late" group is large and full of devoted followers. They foul up bilingual programs, give lip service to curriculum changes when it appears profitable and privately predict doom for all such programs. It is not that they are ethnically untrue or turn their backs on fellow Chamorros.

The reasons for their behavior may be quite personal. People who have spent years learning "proper English," invested

large sums of money for an "American" education and have devoted a lifetime to a concept of "American" success find it hard to turn their back on those efforts.

But upon closer examination, we should find that a Chamorro program does not mean turning your back on "American" education. But that perception dies hard. Speaking - English - so-that-one-may-acquire-marketable-skills can easily be misinterpreted as speaking-English-means-intelligence. Cultural patterns that call for respect for elders, for example, become synonymous with stumbling blocks to quick achievement for the young.

It is difficult to explain to the Guam newcomers why Chamorros (except for brown power fanatics) seem to lack ethnic pride. When your whole formal education calls for different standards than those you learned at home, ethnic pride becomes meaningless, or worse yet, an obstacle to progress.

What about those Chamorros who do support these programs? Yes, some make snide remarks about non-Chamorros. Yes, there are those who latch on to the concepts involved in Chamorro studies as an extension of brown power. What do we do with these individuals?

The problem is not to reject this kind of support, but to channel it, perhaps turning it into something positive. The convention hopes to meet this problem head on. We want to show that valuable research for all kinds of purposes can be done on Guam, that educational programs with a definite cultural content are not racist and, in fact combat racism. We want to be proud of ourselves in a positive way.

Chamorro Studies Content

A frequent and valid complaint about current educational programs featuring Chamorro language and culture is that they lack depth and substance. This is often excused by the relative newness of the programs. But development of curriculum materials has made great strides since the inception of such programs.

The convention hopes to add to the list of curriculum possibilities and source materials by providing a forum for scholarly research. The familiar complaint, often by Chamorros themselves, is that there just isn't enough material to study about Guam, its past, its people and its language. Moreover, that such study is not scholastically rewarding since the people don't really have much of a language, only a fragmented and fading culture and a history which highlights events caused by external factors. Again, these are perceptions which may fall quite outside the mark.

The convention, by being as professional in operation and content as possible, hopes to make a significant contribution to the enhancement of Chamorro studies. There is much to study. There are many materials yet unstudied. The contributors to the convention have made the initial steps in what will soon be a classroom is the teacher. By attracting the teacher to the convention and presenting him with worthwhile scholarly information, he can then make a professional judgment as to its adaptability and utilization in the classroom.

Only in this way can we break the perception of Chamorro studies as a kind of quaint native studies as something to take a picture of and send to the folks back home showing a South Sea island paradise.

Guam is no paradise. It is too complex for that and its educational structure must respond.



Hek-na i dikike' na patgom
 "Ya-hy, Nana, umeskuela.
 Ya-hu todū i mangga'chong-hu,
 Plot si Pedro'yan si Manuela.

"Hu e, yak i lino' English,
 Ya hu tungo' i lino' Chamorro.
 Hek-na i ma'estrang-mami
 Taya' guini manmudoru.

"Hek-na i ma'estrang-mami
 Ta fanaguaiya ha' todū
 Parehu, guahu yan i palu,
 Ya balina un ulu ki un kodu.

"Manhami todos an manmagof,
 Manhami todos an manganta,
 Manhugando pat manmange'.
 Taya' sina ma'espanta.

"Nana, bai sgi ha' umeskuela
 Gi bilingual na tiningo'.
 Ya hu magahet na Chamorro,
 Ya i Chamorro ti u falingu."

INIGE: LAGRIMAS L.G. UNTALAN

From Bishop Flores...

It has always been my contention and my conviction that the preservation of the Chamorro language and culture is in no way a hindrance but rather a help towards the total education and personality growth of our young people in all our schools.

If language is the soul of any people, and culture is the body of self-identification, then it stands to reason that the Chamorro language and culture program will go a long way towards making education meaningful and relevant to our people.

It is a fallacy, I believe, to think that by emphasizing the Chamorro language and culture studies in our schools the effectiveness of teaching English is weakened. On the contrary, it should be strengthened. The Chamorro language and

culture are lacking in resources and dimensions to make it difficult or valueless to pursue. The greater the appreciation we have of our own Chamorro language and culture, the better and more enlightened Americans we become. Our educators in the Mainland and also here on Guam are presently challenged by the yearnings of both the youth and adults for a personal identity and for an appreciation of their ethnic and cultural beginnings.

I am sure that the Chamorro Studies Convention will play a major role in coordinating the various efforts that have already been spent to make possible the scientific and professional presentation of the Chamorro language and cultural program, thus enriching our educational goals and objectives.

Sifting Through the Clues in Search of Identity

A fear of losing what we value as tradition argues many of the descendants of the ancient Chamorro and those who recognize the beauty and worth of a culture that has evolved over a period of 3,500 years in the Mariana Islands.

The cultural crisis now confronting Guamanians results from a diverse historical acculturation experience, recent multicultural influences, and an introduction to a modern technology with clues totally new and bewildering to Guamanians.

An identity crisis or state of confusion

Guamanian please stand up?" Opinions are plentiful, the most popular being:

- those who speak Chamorro
- those who were born on Guam or whose parents were born on Guam
- those presently residing on Guam
- those who contribute politically, economically, or socially to the local community.

These opinions fall short of giving a satisfactory answer to the question "What is a Guamanian?" Combined they paint a portrait, but the distinguishing features and shades are as yet unclear. All elements are

competition of all sorts, from games and dancing, to barter and warfare, and they loved to outdo a rival by wit or trickery. Intellectually they were ingenious and quick to learn anything to which they applied themselves." These words were written in 1947 by anthropologist Laura Thompson. These characteristics are as applicable to Guamanians of today.

Guam was ceded to the United States in 1898 as a spoil of the Spanish-American War. 40 years of American military government ensued. The U.S. system of government, education and commerce were slow to take hold. Ties with the United States came to an abrupt halt with the Japanese occupation during World War II.

This was by no means a cultural revolution, as Japanese trades and food were virtually all that was assimilated culturally. But that experience became the catalyst for full fledged participation in the American system. From Liberation Day on July 21, 1944, Americanization has confronted and challenged the older pre-war, 19th century Spanish existence of the people of Guam.

The Guamanian experience, then, has been one of constant adaption, assimilation, and fusion since Western contact. One would expect that modern Guamanians should be well equipped to handle the influences of peoples and cultures as was done in the past. However, it seems that present changes are quite different.

The roots of the present day identity crisis lie in the existence of conflicting values created by a new educational system and rapid economic development.

These elements have emerged:

- The traditional family socialization versus socialization in the schools, a generation gap;
- The importance of traditional obligations within the family versus a growing sense of

Written by Laura Souder

as exist among the younger generation in Guam. It stems from an uncertainty about who we are, "where we're at," and what we want to become." The reference youth is deliberate -- more than 60 percent of Guam's population is under 25 years of age.

This perceived crisis is not simply that experienced by maturing individuals. More importantly it is the inability to identify with a future that one can call his or her own.

To Be Guamanian

When confronted with the seemingly simple question by the newcomer, "What is typical Guamanian?" most of us are tongue-tied beyond the universal response, "Oh, the people of Guam."

Each is trying to make sense about being Guamanian. One can easily ask, "Is anybody on Guam a Guamanian?" A sounding NOOOO ensues. "Well, not really."

So we ask ourselves, "Will the real

not in harmony. An integrating force is lacking.

Clashes of Culture

The experience of the people of Guam in the last three centuries, the recent influx of ethnic groups and technological modernization are some origins of the Guamanian identity conflict.

Spanish culture was introduced in the 16th century. Remnants are most noticeable in church observances, in the extended family structure and the shared economic and social functions of its members. Bits of the ancient Chamorro culture have filtered through to the present day. The Chamorro language has survived. We still chew betel nut and believe in the taotaomona, spirits of the ancient pagan Chamorros.

"The early Chamorros were easily pleased, well mannered, hospitable and tractable when treated with consideration. They were boisterous and gay and delighted in jokes and buffoonery. They were fond of



Pride in the native culture is not encouraged, the youth harbor feelings of inferiority -- being local and speaking Chamorro isn't cool anymore.

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individualism and socio-economic independence outside the family;

--Social control derived from religious and moral principles versus less defined situational ethics with emphasis on more secular explanations.

The young population is most affected by these recent trends. They do not have the sense of security and sense of tradition that their parents possess. Nor do they wholly accept the modern approach to life.

In school they are bombarded with ideals of individualism, personal decision making and independence, a "think for yourself" philosophy, through a curriculum conducted in English and focusing on the American experience.

Pride in the native culture is not encouraged, the youth harbor feelings of inferiority -- being local and speaking Chamorro isn't cool anymore. Yet at home, they are expected to adhere to the traditional style of life.

A young Guamanian for example, is torn between social obligations and stability of the extended family versus the individual freedom and personal gain (but not necessarily a secure position) of independence from family ties.

A child is taught to respect elders and obey authority. There is a strong sense of priority and deference to family members. Personal choices and desires are compromised in return for a sense of belonging and caring, stability and emotional security in the extended family.

Simultaneously, at school one learns to compete and get ahead, to be decisive and assertive when dealing with others. Parents force the child to use English so that adjustment at school and in the business world will be easy. Some children are embarrassed to speak Chamorro or never learn to as a result of this emphasis on English as the superior language.

Rapid economic growth requires that the island population increasingly rely on manpower and subsistence resources from outside sources. Insecurity and feelings of inadequacy beset the local people. In addition, modernization demands a highly skilled, technically trained labor force which are currently alien and Mainland workers and professionals. This leaves a bitter taste. The local person, on the one hand, enjoys the comforts of change, but on the other hand, must depend on someone else to make it possible. In Guam this situation has created a growing resentment between Guamanians and Filipinos, Statesiders, and more recently Orientals. The outsider is blamed for problems such as the increasing rate of crime and drug abuse.

Tourism is an added source of frustration as improvements in entertainment and recreation are tourist-directed. Most of the tourists coming to Guam are Japanese. Some youths vent their hostility by stealing from, molesting or assaulting Japanese tourists. The rationalization behind these acts of violence is alarming. "Let's get even; look what they did to us during the war."

Social control was enforced by the family and the church. Obedience and respect for

others were highly valued. Now there is a falling out of this pattern into a more loosely defined code of behavior which allows for overt expression of frustration and vindictiveness in crime and delinquency.

Added to this loosening of social restrictions and control by the family and church is a major source of new influence: the mass media. As family and church control breaks down, there is a greater susceptibility to be influenced by audiovisual communication. Movies, television and printed materials provide new models for growing children uncertain about how they should act.

A thread of insecurity is woven through the everyday experience of the Guamanian youth. It is this insecurity which prevents the young Guamanian from integrating the new with the old to form an identity which can be called his or her own.

Some Concrete Approaches

Adults are becoming aware of the identity crisis of the youth. Young people, government leaders, educators, and other interested citizens are seeking solutions to this cultural dilemma. They believe that building pride in the local culture will strengthen the youth's feelings about themselves, that it will give them a sense of belonging, an identity.

Such efforts embrace educational programs like the bilingual-bicultural project in Guam schools, community projects, the emergence of the brown-power movement, the consideration of different political alternatives and the development of culture-oriented programs sponsored by the government.

It is too soon to evaluate the impact of those programs on the youth's search for identity. But they have elements which can provide a sense of pride in the local heritage and a sense of security in belonging to a multicultural society.

Young Guamanians perceive the need to develop a unique identity while meeting the challenge of today's world. The problem comes in deciding how to mold a functional identity in a society of conflicting values.

We need to formulate a self-concept which combines elements from different cultures. In choosing what values to accept in life, the young Guamanian is challenged with various possibilities. Let us hope that what we choose for ourselves will strengthen confidence in our ability and capacity to make our own future.

We must learn that we have something to be proud of, a heritage rich with a sense for people.

Being Guamanian then, is not definable in 25 words or less. It is not simply spicy food lovers, Catholics with a host of religious celebrations, speaking Chamorro, being a part of the extended family, the compadre system or celebrating fiestas. Nor is it just Americanization or technological man.

Identity embraces the feeling of all these elements; it is the combination of a multicultural way of life. That is the real Guamanian.

From Agueda Johnston ...

The Chamorro Studies Convention is most timely and commendable.

The convention no doubt will implement programs that will help the Chamorro to learn about (and preserve) their own culture and background, and most important of all, their own mother tongue. It is a known fact that many of our Chamorro children cannot communicate freely with their grandparents because the grandchildren speak only English and the grandparents speak only Chamorro. The situation discourages the beautiful relationship that should exist between the grandchildren and the grandparents. In this connection, the schools of Guam can help--and also be benefited by--multicultural education.

While it is most gratifying to note the great progress and improvements shown in our ability to speak the language of our fellow Americans and benefactors, it is sad to realize that we have neglected to preserve our own culture and mother tongue to the extent that we do not know how to count or name the days of the week and months of the year in Chamorro.

As I heartily endorse the Chamorro Studies Convention, I also wish to extend sincere congratulations to the individual participants who are giving their time, talents, experience and expertise to the project to help retrieve the fast vanishing culture, history, mother tongue and heritage of the Chamorro people.

Unu Dos Tres Kuatro

"Our ultimate goal for a world socien society is equality of people, not their uniformity"

**--Seymour W. Itzkoff
"Cultural Plurism and
American Education"**

Written by Clotilde Gould

That statement sums up our objectives in teaching and usage of the Chamorro language: We seek equality through a recognition of Chamorro as our right to be individuals. We (Chamorro-speaking people) wish to be equal, yet free to be different.

How shall we achieve our "freedom?" First, by identifying language problems. Secondly by initiating a broad, comprehensive program to search for solutions and implement them.

The problem areas are not unique to Guam. "Language pluralism" can be identified and advocated without fear of destroying basic structural principles of language learning. In Guam, much like other bilingual areas in the United States, students come from different home language environments. In one, Chamorro is spoken by parents who have strong educational backgrounds. They generally speak English to the children and provide good health habits. The other is a home in which the parents speak Chamorro but are educationally handicapped. They speak the kind of English they have learned to their children. Subsequently the parents' limitations are passed on to their children. In the case of the educationally han-

dicapped parents, if there is no emphasis on health habits and nutrition the problems are intensified.

Some of the basic problem areas are as follows:

1. Why do Chamorro speakers pronounce certain English words the way they do?

Basically, the reason for this is the fact that some sounds do not exist in Chamorro, for example, "th" sounds. Chamorro

speakers sometimes say "tree" for "three," or "Da" for "the," or "dem" for "them." A similar situation exists for long vowels. Chamorro speakers may say "bit" for "beat", or "ship" for "sheep."

2. why is English sentence structure verbalized by Chamorro speakers in a unique manner?

There are two reasons. First, home language environment (i.e.: "Maria gets it" or "It's more better." These are reinforced by common usage). Second, no such word or phrase exists in Chamorro (i.e.: the command "off the light" instead of "turn off the light." There is no such phrase as "turn off," so a literal translation is used).

3. Why are literal translations so difficult?

The explanation is similar to the reason given in the previous answer. For example, a variation of the command used before (turn off the light) commonly used by some Chamorro speakers is "kill the light." In Chamorro, it is "puno' i kandit." "Puno" means "kill" or "to terminate." There is no translation for "off." In some cases it is almost impossible to translate from Chamorro to English or English to Chamorro if one wishes to retain the real

substance of the thought.

It is interesting to note here that Chamorro speakers are much more efficient and practical in devising a translation for "turn off the light" than some teachers are willing to admit. Why clutter up the conversation with extra words? "Off" or "kill" does the same job as "turn off," doesn't it?

4. What are the language Interferences that appear as a result of cultural background?

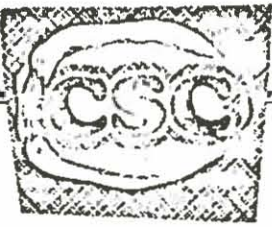
So many that it would be impossible to try to list them. However, each child is an individual and individual differences are the key to this problem. Some generalizations can be postulated, though. Compare the manner in which "Stateside" children express themselves with Chamorro children. Is an aggressive, loud, confident attitude a good model for Chamorro children if their own culture teaches the opposite?

Solutions are evident and involve a wide spectrum of approaches. Since proficiency in both Chamorro and English has been proven to be beneficial to learning, we must strive to teach the best Chamorro and the best English.

"Informal language" has been identified by scholars as the development of a means of communication which embraces aspects of two or more languages.

In Guam, bilingual education is more than merely correcting grammar and increasing vocabulary. It has to do with redesigning the child's entire outlook on life without destroying family ties, cultural identity, self-confidence or pride. The process involves changing speech patterns and revising the entire structure and pronunciation of what has grown from an "informal language" to a formal language for most Chamorro children. The "restructuring" and "redesigning" must begin in the primary years of a child's education. After they reach the fourth grade level, it is virtually too late.

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kuatro

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What must be done?

The first thing that must be done is to throw out all Mainland-oriented educational materials for kindergarten through the third grade. This does not mean that we should get rid of English language materials, it merely indicates that we need to develop our own texts based upon the realities that exist here in Guam. This statement should also not be interpreted as a rejection of proven teaching methods that have been developed in the United States. It is the language materials (audio-visual aids, pictures, stories, and so on) that need to be localized. After all, how can a child who has never seen or touched snow, been on a desert, traveled over fifty miles in one direction in one day, seen a train or streetcar, raked leaves in Autumn, been warmed by a fireplace or a furnace, seen a building taller than ten stories or seen wheat being harvested, relate to the experience as if it were a daily occurrence? The list is endless. The result is the harshest kind of language interference, especially for children who already have language problems.

Rather, materials should refer to alien environments and phenomena as exactly what they are: alien! We should not drop all mention of trains, snow, or Autumn. We should show them as something "far away" which can be experienced only by "going there." We should not pretend that Dick and Jane (or rather, Ricardo and Juanita) living in suburbia or an urban setting is the way that things are here or even should be. We should recognize that "unu, dos, tres, kuatro" is as valid a means of counting from one to four as the way it is done in other parts of the world.

Secondly, our elementary teachers should be trained to identify the language needs of their students. This means the recognition of children with language problems and children that need language enrichment. The student with problems should be given

materials and activities that are closer to their experience and background. The children who have stronger educational home environments should be allowed to expand because they are able to relate to more universally applicable subject matter.

In short, we must individualize instruction from the beginning. I suppose this means smaller class size at greater expenditure, but are we debating the dollar value of a child's education or how to solve that child's problems?

The next thing our curriculum experts should do is to develop educational games, role-playing lessons, songs, arts and crafts, that utilize local natural materials and the local environment and attitudes. They should be readily available for use in all elementary schools not as a supplement to so-called "traditional" primary tools, but as the core of the curriculum.

"Stateside" and other cultures should be woven in as an adjunct to the core curriculum as a constant reminder to children that there are other ways to do things.

This should not be difficult because television, the newspaper, comic books, radio, records and movies are great "teacher aids." Let's stop fighting the media and start using it for our own ends.

Another thing we should always keep in mind is that Chamorro culture is indeed the dominant culture. The "Chamorro Way" may not be the only way, but it is the way of Chamorros. Guam is strongly associated with American ideals and American-style democracy. This is something we cannot, nor should not deny. Neither should we teach our children that it is wrong to be different, that it is bad to speak something other than English or that we are not free to express ourselves. We must attempt an understanding of the Chamorro "language of love" and affection. We must begin to know what nonverbal forms of communication are interwoven with the linear aspects of Chamorro.

Thus, I hope we can achieve our "freedom" from the oppression of a single language. The only way to achieve this goal is to begin at the beginning -- with our children.

From Robert Hartsock...

A major problem for many, if not all, of Guam's teachers is a lack of thorough understanding of the culture of our island. The majority of teachers on Guam were born and reared off-island. This fact is coupled with the lack of courses in the public schools which provide for the study of the history and culture of Guam. Consequently, the opportunity to become knowledgeable is very limited.

Teachers who are unaware of the rich

cultural heritage of the island can not transmit this information to the children of Guam. It is impossible for a child to develop pride in the island and its heritage if that child is kept ignorant. Teachers, at all levels, have a tremendous responsibility to insure that the children of Guam understand the history and culture of Guam.

Now for the first time teachers also have an opportunity to learn a great deal about Guam's cultural heritage. The Chamorro

Studies Convention to be held at GWSH on January 21st and 22nd will bring together the foremost experts on language, culture and history of Guam and the Marianas. I urge you to attend this convention and increase your awareness of Guam's rich cultural heritage. Your students need a well prepared teacher. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to increase your competence.

From Tom Brislin...

I commend the architects of the first Chamorro Studies Convention and admire their perseverance in bringing about this culmination of their years of dedicated work against what were sometimes Herculean roadblocks of apathy, inertia, and general pseudo-intellectual "poo-pooing" over the idea that there is value in studying ourselves.

It has never ceased to amaze me that individuals who have their cultural roots in a small island that was once populated by a limited, primitive people and subsequently cross-culturally pollinated by larger, more aggressive nations could deny intrinsic studies to other individuals whose culture has taken the same general trail.

For this is history. England was once an isolated land populated by the Celts, then the Anglos and Saxons (not to mention Jutes) whose language and culture became dominated through centuries by "outsiders" such as the Romans, Germans and French.

Despite this domination, a unique and valuable culture arose that is certainly

worthy of study, and certainly occupies tremendous amounts of space in modern education.

Equally unique, valuable and worthy is the culture of the Pacific that has strong, indigenous roots in Chamorro customs and culture, even though subsequently influenced by Spanish, German, Oriental and American nations with their attendant contributions to language and custom.

That culture is Guam.

Like other subcultures which comprise the American fabric, there was a period of neglect, followed by an ominous period of suppression. Strict penalties were imposed for speaking Chamorro. Guamanians were encouraged to abdicate their own culture in favor of imitating the culture of the "overseers."

Paradoxically this suppression led to increased awareness of the true cultural distinctions that makes the "Chamorro Way" unique. Modern events slowly eroded the philosophy of "manifest destiny" and allowed the subcultures of America to emerge in pride.

Why study culture?

The reason is simple: survival. If there is to be anything resembling a world community where politically drawn nations cooperate to insure the survival of all, each nation and culture must understand the others.

Modern communication and transportation has eliminated the "them and us" status of the world. The "thems" and the "us's" intermingle freely in a constant contact.

We must understand each other in order to communicate with each other. We cannot understand another culture until we understand our own.

We must study ourselves and find our own uniqueness so that we can appreciate the uniqueness of others.

Bank robber Willie Sutton was asked, after being sent continuously to jail for his repeated crimes, why he robbed banks. "Because," he replied, "that's where the money is."

Why should we convene on January 21 to study Chamorro? Because that's where the culture is.