The ethnographer's eye seeks the specific and the contingent, the fleeting moment that reveals broader cultural patterns. This mindset informs Clifford Geertz's portrait of a balance between light and dark, experienced by children in the Gambia. Geertz has claimed that if ethnography is any subject — even an unregistered one — then the ethnographer's light can explain the entire world.

Hope that they provide broader discussion about the kind of series that have emerged at this juncture of the field. While the 'shadow' is only studio generalized, the ethnography is not.

One cannot make for ourselves. There is a single news article that appeared in 1997 while traveling in southern Africa. A local newspaper, the Advertiser, published an article warning of an alarming new trend in the nation's children. An expert talked about the impact that video games, a popular pastime, have on children. The expert talked about how video games can lead to emotional problems for the young, that young children lack emotional regulation, and that they are at risk for developing attachment disorders. The expert described how video games can be addictive, and how children can become so engrossed in the virtual world that they neglect other important activities. Additionally, the expert talked about how video games can desensitize children to real-world feelings, and how this can lead to problems with empathy and social functioning. The expert called for intervention by mental health professionals.

Although the story involves a fictional beach, it offers revealing insights — especially in the context of the Australian call of 'levelling'. The conspicuous absence of the term 'congruous' in sight of the Australian call of 'levelling' is striking.
The Cult of Amnesia: By permission, Lach refers to the diminished sense of responsibility of the public or the public's awareness of their own moral responsibilities. By this definition, the cult of amnesia is a form of self-deception or self-delusion. It is a form of self-deception that is used to protect individuals from feeling guilty or responsible for their actions. The cult of amnesia can be seen in individuals who are unable to acknowledge their own moral responsibilities, or who are unable to recognize the consequences of their actions. This can lead to a sense of detachment and a lack of accountability. It is important to recognize and challenge the cult of amnesia. By acknowledging our moral responsibilities, we can take action to prevent harmful actions and promote a sense of social responsibility.
give voice to their belief that social institutions must be subordinated to personal needs. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, I interviewed a woman who had carved out successful careers in two worlds that are less incompatible than they might seem: real estate and spiritual counseling. While fielding incoming business calls, she talked about the indifference of her New Age clients to public issues and civic life in general. "These fragmented parts of our-selves—our fears, our frustrations, our feeling not good enough about our-selves—all of these dictate our actions," she said. "All you need to do is go to some of these city council meetings where you can see the projection of people's fear or inadequacy. We have to have inner communication to figure out who we are. Unless our personal goals are met first, there's dissention."

This claim, which was repeated in countless variations during my months as an ethnographer of the New Age, reaches its apophasis in the assertion that individuals "create their own reality," a belief that Lasch would see as further evidence of the self's nostalgic quest for a return to the bliss of infancy.

At a weekend relationships seminar in Santa Monica, California, I wandered the strange borderland between New Age therapy and middle-class convention. The seminar organizer, a charismatic psychologist, instructed 200 affluent clients in techniques to recover their authentic selves and, in the words of a seminar handout, "to become your own hero." If such a task requires us to abandon jobs or hometowns or significant others, so be it. Many of my fellow participants worked in fields involving the manipulation of symbols: sales, advertising, consulting, management. All were there to search for (or perhaps to construct) an authentic self—no small matter when their everyday experience required them to manufacture personal and institutional identities to suit the circumstances of the moment.

Sherry Turkle found similar preoccupations among people drawn to the world of online communication and Internet role-playing. At first it might seem that the celebration of self-multiplicity and simulation is directly at odds with a quest for personal truth. But her informants maintain that the development of virtual identities lessens them discover identities suppressed by the demands of the offline world. Some even find the virtual more real than the real. None of these reactions would be possible if we were not already dislocated from our inner life and the life of the communities that shelter us.

As experienced by the affluent, modernity has made dislocation commonplace. Cultural boundaries seem increasingly arbitrary to selves restless

for fresh ways to express or heal or reinvent themselves. At local health resorts, middle-class Americans and Europeans can experience Tibetan meditation, American Indian sweat lodges, and the latest technique of des-

tissue massage. It seems petty to worry about how this aggressive borrowing may affect the peoples who have sustained these practices for centuries. After all, if society and culture serve mostly to distort or stunt self-expression, then we owe it to ourselves to range across cultures, picking and choos-
ing the practices that best meet personal needs. Again, the clearest expres-
sion of this impulse is found among the "de-traditionalized selves" drawn to new religious movements, including the New Age, but it plays itself out with different metaphors among sophisticated cosmopolitans. The state of being at once nowhere and everywhere is assessed by the essayist Pico Iyer:

Even as we fret about the changes our progress wreaks in the air and on the airways, in forests and on streets, we hardly worry about the change it is working in ourselves, the new kind of soul that is being born out of a new kind of life... We become, in fact, strangers to belief itself, unable to com-
prehend many of the rages and dogmas that animate (and unite) people. I could not begin to fathom why some Muslims could think of murder after hearing about The Satanic Verses, yet sometimes I force myself to recall that it is we, in our floating skepticism, who are the exceptions, that in China or Iran, in Korea or Peru, it is not so strange to give up one's life for a cause.

Consider a Peruvian voice as brutal and incandescent as Iyer's is muted and urbane:

The people rear up, arm themselves, and rise in revolution to put the noose around the neck of imperialism and the reactionaries, seizing and garroting them by the throat. They are strangled, necessarily, necessarily. The flesh of the reactionaries will not away, converted into ragged threads, and this black fibb will sink into the mud.

Thus writes Abimael Guzmán, "Fourth Sword of Marxism" and
founder of the Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path, now held in solitary confinement in a Peruvian maximum security prison. Peru's vision of a socialist society, emerging from a long wave of purifying violence, has strikingly, in the midst of ruthless repression, emerged as a new political school that has inspired many people's visions of a socialist society, emerging from a long wave of purifying violence, has strikingly, in the midst of ruthless repression, emerged as a new political school that has inspired many people's visions of a socialist society....
the growth of improbable narratives such as Phoenix, Los Angeles, or Las Vegas, which stimulate themselves only by plundering the water resources of half a continent, remain a threat to the rest of humanity. We have succeeded in dodging these questions so far, but eventually they will have to be answered. The challenge is that of delivering our own media to the world in a way that simultaneously delivers the voice-on-pounding that is sure to accompany our YK celebras—column publications, columns, or digital representations of the YK self—motions are serving as media to reach the voice-making of new media that will be able to set the agenda in the unexpected direction of our own media.

Endnotes

