

Counseling Psychologist



Name: **Arnold Spokane**
Profession: **Counseling Psychologist**
Native Language: **English**
Other Language: **Spanish**

1) What is your Profession?

I am a professor of counseling psychology at Lehigh University with a specialty in the built environment of neighborhoods in work and community settings (in particular the built environment of neighborhoods of inhabitants).

2) Describe a "typical" day as a Counseling Psychologist?

About 20% of my time is spent in teaching graduate level classes, another 20-30% in working with students and advisees, 15% in committee meetings and administering journals and books to keep up with my field.

3) Do you speak any other languages besides the one you work with?

I do speak and read Spanish fairly well. I presently have a major research grant funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences that is conducted entirely in Spanish and the staff are all bilingual. I can generally learn enough to get by as a stretch though.

4) What do you think helped the most in mastering the foreign/second language?

No question in my mind here. In 7th grade Spanish, our teacher linked us all with Pele and they wrote back in English. I felt connected to Argentina and to Spanish. I completed years of High School Spanish, and two years of College Spanish. My Spanish Literature professor read poems by Pablo Neruda in Spanish and reading Don Quixote in Spanish was a challenge. My Spanish Literature professor and I gave my lecture in Spanish. Conversation was always the hardest for me when I knew I would not be very articulate. But being forced to speak was immense. I began speaking Spanish and reading literature that I began to think in Spanish at times. Some things in Spanish more naturally than in English was startling to me, but really helpful.

I never joined the Peace Corps, which is my one regret, this is where my generation got

5) What opportunities have knowing another language presented in your career?

There were so many I hardly know where to start. My interest in language jump-started my career. Most of my professional career and opportunities have been in language. Our NIMH grant would never have succeeded without my Spanish. In addition, my Spanish Community here and now travel is a large part of my professional life because Lehigh University has taken us into the area of international education.

The opportunities stimulated by culture and language have been varied and stimulated by the need to require cross-cultural/cross-lingual cooperation, including environmental concerns and terrorism, and the global economy. My main concern is that more Americans are interested in cultures in the areas that are truly critical. I am concerned that most study abroad programs go to England, France, and Australia because those areas are perceived as safe, and hospitable. The areas which I have traveled are so critical, but very poorly understood: the Middle East, Latin America. My visits will be with the study abroad program in Ghana that one of my colleagues Dr. [Name] is leading.

6) If you had time to learn another language, what would it be?

I think Arabic or possibly Cantonese for obvious reasons in both cases. Native American languages would be interesting to me.

7) Do you think it is essential to learn not just a language but also the culture?

Essential, no - desirable, clearly. These can be somewhat independent sets of learning. Mastering the language, or master the language without full appreciation for the culture is not to me to be a stronger amalgam and then, of course, you are a linguist in the best sense.

8) How do you think your life would have turned out if you had never lea
I guess I would be a Republican then, wouldn't I.

9) In your opinion are there more career opportunities for people who s
I think that there will be more and more opportunities for individuals with multilin;
identifiable occupations with straightforward entry and advancement e.g. accountar
Clearly we have been moving toward a service economy, and increasingly that servic
hard time imagining that languages will be a luxury in the future. They will be a nec

10) What do you think you would be doing if you were not a psychologist
I have a lot of related interests, but two or three stand out for me. It is important to
benefit for humanity beyond the level of one on one therapeutic or clinical work, and
have considered had I not become a counseling psychologist. Physical Anthropology
thing for minerals and rocks, fossils and natural history. Combining this interest wi
a possible alternative to Psychology.