

Shrink Rap Radio #168, August 17, 2008, An International Conference on Shamanism

David Van Nuys, Ph.D., aka “Dr. Dave” interviews Juliette Hanauer, Jurgen Kremer, Ph.D. and Gail Hayssen

(Transcribed from www.ShrinkRapRadio.com by Susan Argyelan)

Introduction: *The format for this week’s podcast is a little different than what we’ve done in the past. Rather than interviewing a single guest, there are three short interviews here with organizers and presenters of the upcoming 25th Annual International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternative Modes of Healing, which will take place August 30 – September 1, 2008, at the Santa Sabina Retreat Center in San Rafael, California. Now, this is only about a 45-minute drive from where I live, and so I will very likely attend some or all of this conference with an eye to recruiting some more good guests for the podcast. The first interview is with Juliette Hanauer. Juliette Hanauer has worked as a healer with individual clients for 20 years. Now, she pursues using the media for healing large groups of people at once. To this purpose, she makes documentary films for television about healing. She has just completed a 13-part series titled Shamans, Physicians, and Healers. Juliette traveled around the world, filming indigenous healers and had their results documented by a Western physician. Now, she uses this footage to make presentations to physicians about alternative healing. Here’s the interview with Juliette.*

Dr. Dave: Juliette Hanauer, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

Juliette Hanauer: Thank you.

Dr. Dave: Well, you’re one of the organizers of the 25th International Conference on Shamanism and Alternative Modes of Healing. Tell us a bit about this conference in terms of who’ll be presenting and the range of topics. I gather shamans and presenters from all over the world will be attending.

Hanauer: Yes, it’s an international conference, and we’re going to have shamans from Mongolia arriving for the first time in the United States. And they’re going to be giving people an experience of healing, and demonstrating their healing, and teaching people what they do. And in addition to just demonstrating and giving people a taste of what they do, they’ll also be having a dialogue with physicians, anthropologists, scientists, teachers, and musicians to talk about what traditional wisdom has to teach modern wisdom, and how together, we can create a future for ourselves.

Dr. Dave: Wow. That sounds fascinating. And it’s not just the Mongolians, right? Aren’t there presenters from other parts of the world as well?

Hanauer: Yes, there will be presenters from all over the world. There'll also be some Huichol shamans from Mexico.

Dr. Dave: That really sounds fascinating. And it's sponsored by the Society for Shamanism, Healing, and Transformation. Can you give us a thumbnail sketch of that organization?

Hanauer: Well, 25 years ago, Ruth-Inge Heinze started this conference. And she died last year. And so a small group of her followers have taken over the producing of the conference and making it a little more international than before.

Dr. Dave: Now, people might not be familiar with her. Maybe you could tell us a little bit about her.

Hanauer: Ruth-Inge Heinze herself was a shaman and a teacher, and she produced conferences and seminars and produced this conference for 25 years.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Now, how did you personally come to be attracted to the area of shamanism?

Hanauer: Twenty years ago, my mom had colon cancer, and I healed her. But I was unaware of healing, and I was unaware of having healed her. She had a spontaneous remission, and all her friends and family, they all knew that she was dying. And then when they saw her in radiant health and still alive, everybody said, "What happened to you?" And she said, "Juliette touched me." And then everybody wanted me to touch them. And I didn't know that I had done anything to my mom.

Dr. Dave: Hmm...

Hanauer: I was totally unaware. So I had to quick, study what healing was. I had to start asking people, "What is healing? And who gets healed, and how does one become a healer? How does it work?" Because I didn't know that I had done anything, so I didn't know what to do when people came to me. And that's how I got started in studying shamanism. I had to quick, get some answers and techniques.

Dr. Dave: My goodness.

Hanauer: And so I, as a result of my studies, I started traveling around the world, filming indigenous healers, and then asking a Western physician to document the results of these healers, because without that, it was just anecdotal evidence. And so I found a client of the healer who had been diagnosed by a Western physician. And then the client went to the healer and then went back to the Western physician and was declared free of disease. So in my 13-part series about healing, I

interviewed the healer, the client, and the physician all talking about what is healing, why do people get sick, and how do they get well?

Dr. Dave: Now, I see you're giving a presentation at the conference called Healers Around the World. What can we expect from that?

Hanauer: I'm going to be showing a 10-minute promo from my 13-part series, and then I will be talking about what I learned from traveling around the world and meeting all these healers, and then also, I'll be answering questions.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Now, what if listeners – you know, I've got listeners all over the country and all over the world. What if listeners would like to see this 13-part series? How might they do that?

Hanauer: It'll be on television.

Dr. Dave: Oh, that's great.

Hanauer: And I'll let you know when it's going to be on, and then you can let your listeners know.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Hanauer: It'll be on Discovery, BBC, or National Geographic.

Dr. Dave: Oh, boy. Yes, please do let me know, and then I'll help to get that word out. Because it sounds like it'll be a very fascinating series. How long will each episode run?

Hanauer: You know, it really depends on who buys it. Some people want to make it into a one-hour special. Other networks want to make a half-an-hour weekly show; other networks want to make a two-hour special. So, I don't know the exact format yet.

Dr. Dave: Oh, okay.

Hanauer: It depends on who buys it.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Sometimes it's hard to get hold of some of these alternative kinds of presentations, but I really hope yours is able to go mainstream like this.

Hanauer: Yes. One of the things that I discovered in filming all these healers is that I was looking for what was the common ingredient between all of them. And the only thing I found was that each one in every culture said that they were not the ones doing the healing; that they were able to access something greater than themselves on behalf of humanity. And as to what that greater thing was, each one

of them had their own cultural understanding. Some called it Buddha; some called it the Great Spirit; some called it the Infinite Creator or God, or Yahweh, or Jehovah, or... You know, everyone had their own cultural identification of what it was that was happening for them and made healing possible.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense to me. Now, how about in your own case? In working with your mother, you said you did it kind of unconsciously.

Hanauer: Completely.

Dr. Dave: Had you in fact, though, been meditating or studying some spiritual tradition?

Hanauer: No, no. No, I hadn't. I had many different careers in working as a campaign manager, getting people elected to office, teaching school, working as a therapist... What else? And I also worked as a telemarketer, selling workshops over the phone. But I had no experience with healing. And so when I was with my mom, I saw her lying there uncomfortably. The physicians had done all they could for her, and she was so miserable. But I was just trying to make her comfortable. And my love for her pulled something out of me that I didn't even know I had. I had never heard of healing, and I had no idea that I was healing her. And the only way that I knew was that afterwards, she started telling people, "Juliette healed me." And I was shocked.

Dr. Dave: You seem...

Hanauer: What?

Dr. Dave: Go ahead; finish your thought.

Hanauer: So when people started coming to me, I was absolutely terrified, because since I didn't know what I had done for my mom, I didn't know what I could do for them. When I started taking classes real intensively, and when I went to the classes, I would ask millions of questions!

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Good for you! So have you, in fact, then, continued a sort of healing career, if you will?

Hanauer: Yes, I worked as a laying-on-hands healer for 20 years, and I stopped working as a healer about three years ago. I mean I stopped working as a healer working with individual clients. Now, I am interested in using media for healing groups of people at once.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm... And what was your experience working as a healer with individuals? Were you getting good results, as you did with your mother?

Hanauer: Results were inconsistent. I would like to say that I was 100% accurate or effective, and that's not true. The only thing in life that's... I don't think there's anything that's 100% accurate or effective. But I was going to say that only something like God is 100% effective. But what I found was that I really couldn't control the healing that came through me. Every client that came, I prayed the same – with the same intensity – but the results weren't the same. That some people were spontaneous healed, and some people died. And it was very upsetting, you know? I was very attached to the results.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Hanauer: I wanted everybody to heal...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Hanauer: ...and I didn't want anybody to die.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Hanauer: But as I studied healing, a lot of people made the distinction between healing and curing – that you could heal someone and they could still die. They could have a resolution to their life, to die with no fear and with dignity. And that was a healing. But I didn't really feel that way. I just wanted everybody to live, and I found it frustrating that not everybody lived. And I didn't know how to control it.

Dr. Dave: Well, I really understand that. I (laughs) have experienced that myself as a psychotherapist, maybe in a somewhat different way. I really appreciate –

Hanauer: No, I think it's the same.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I really appreciate your candor about that. My level of trust and belief in what you're saying goes up as a result of your candor. Julie Hanauer, I want to thank you so much for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio, and I'm looking forward to meeting you in person at the conference.

Hanauer: I am, too. Thank you so much.

Introduction: *My next interview is with Dr. Jurgen Kremer. Jurgen describes himself in the following terms. "In recent years, I've been involved in interdisciplinary work with indigenous peoples as part of my practice of socially engaged spirituality. My theoretical work is an attempt to transgress the established boundaries of nature, culture, and gender, and to walk in the spaces between and across disciplinary territories, exploring transformative dimensions of current and traditional thought and practice. I received my education at the University of Hamburg in Germany and am an Executive Editor of ReVision – Journal of*

Consciousness and Transformation. My past positions include, Dean of Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Saybrook Institute in San Francisco, Academic Dean of the Integral Studies Program and of the East-West Psychology Program, and I was co-director of the Ph.D. Program for Traditional Knowledge at the California Institute of Integral Studies. I have co-written several books and contributed extensively to journals, handbooks, readers, and more popular venues. Towards a Person-Centered Resolution of Intercultural Conflicts (1980) is the title of one of my books. After receiving my doctorate in clinical psychology at the University of Hamburg, Germany, and working for some years in private practice, I relocated to San Francisco to teach at Saybrook Institute Graduate School. I have edited special ReVision issues on: Peace and Identity; Paradigmatic Challenges; Culture and Ways of Knowing; Indigenous Science; and Transformative Learning. Recently I have written about ethnoautobiography, dissociation, healing and cosmology, Ken Wilber, trance, the history of sense alienation in euro-centered cultures, my travels in Sápmi (Lapland), the bear in circumpolar stories, the obligations of a white man, ancestral conversations, and violence against indigenous peoples.” Now, here’s the interview with Dr. Jurgen Kremer.

Dr. Dave: Dr. Jurgen Kremer, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

Jurgen Kremer: Thank you. Thank you for having me, and thank you for interviewing me.

Dr. Dave: Yes. Well, you’re one of the organizers of this year’s Annual Conference on Shamanism, Healing, and Transformation, and I believe you’re also going to be a presenter. Maybe you can tell us a bit about your background and how you came to be interested in shamanism.

Kremer: Well, I think the earliest roots of my interest in shamanism really comes from my love for nature and being in nature a lot, spending a lot of time there and finding it a healing place. I think that’s where the earliest roots in my childhood are.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Kremer: And beyond that, as I was studying clinical psychology – and I’m a clinical psychologist by training – I was also looking for ways of healing that are not accounted for easily by mainstream psychology. And I was interested in the accounts about Native American medicine people, Siberian shamanism, etc., etc. So that was part of a fascination; tried to understand how those kinds of healings are happening, because clearly there were enough documented cases in the literature. So, I got really fascinated with that, and I had my own experiences in one of them, which is kind of a very interesting one. Oh, probably now 20 years ago, somebody started to teach me overtone chanting.

Dr. Dave: Oh, yes.

Kremer: And after I was learning about that, I was going, “I’ve done this for a long time! And I used to do it as a child.” And so overtone chanting is one of the things that I do as part of when I go into ceremony, when...whether, you know, it’s for somebody or for myself, as a way of going into a trance and shifting my state of attention and shifting other people’s states of attention. That’s one of the things that I consider my gift and something that I tremendously enjoy. And I know that it’s of course used in a variety of shamanic traditions.

Dr. Dave: Yes, I learned about it through a film that maybe you’ve seen, and I’m blocking on the name. It was something like Mongolian Blues, or something like that...

Kremer: Yes.

Dr. Dave: ...about the Tuvan? What’s the name of that film? (laughs) Do you remember?

Kremer: I don’t. I don’t know if it was Tuvan Blues, but “Blues” was definitely in the title.

Dr. Dave: Right, right. And then since then, I attended a didgeridoo workshop, where they were also teaching – it was actually sort of a didgeridoo retreat. And they were also teaching overtone singing there, but I didn’t sit in on any of those classes, to my regret.

Kremer: Yeah, yeah. Well, I think this is one of those things that I think psychology has struggled with for a long time. And Freud did it through free association and trying to relax people, or people have done it through imagery work and art. And I think all of it is to connect us more deeply to our, the emotional part of our brains and ourselves that doesn’t speak the rational language.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...yes.

Kremer: I think shamans are particularly adept at that, and something like overtone chanting sort of opens up that portal or gateway, and it allows us to reach into regions where our habits are sort of inscribed. And these habits can be reprogrammed, as it were. And the language of that reprogramming is not a rational language, but it’s the language of poetry and imagery, and so that’s what these trances and overtone chanting are really helpful in doing, and opening that up so that people can activate their self-healers and balance themselves.

Dr. Dave: That’s a very interesting way of talking about it. I really like that, that approach. You mentioned your boyhood. Am I correct that you grew up in Germany?

Kremer: I grew up in Germany, yes.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. And then did you get interested in the shamanic phenomena before you were involved in working on your Ph.D. or after?

Kremer: No, that was actually before. That was actually before. Remember, that was the sixties!

Dr. Dave: Oh, okay.

Kremer: That was when most people were interested in altered states of consciousness; hence, everything. So that was definitely the time. No, I was definitely interested in it in Germany and had my own experiences there; did a lot of reading and was fascinated with the accounts whether of Carlos Castaneda or of Siberian shamanism in the anthropological literature.

Dr. Dave: Yes, well, you and I both came up through the sixties. So I also got very intrigued with the whole altered states of consciousness, although shamanism was not the direction that I pursued at that time. Now, I see that you're giving a presentation at this conference titled Shamanism and Cultural Healing. What can you tell us about that?

Kremer: What I'm going to focus on is a Sami. He's really an all-around artist. He was a painter, a poet, a singer or a chanter, a musician, a composer. His name was Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, or most people really call him with the honorific Áillohaš up there. He was a shaman, a seer, a visionary; he also was an actor in movies.

Dr. Dave: From what country?

Kremer: Well, he was Sami, which is, you know, most people know it as Lappland. So that's the northern part of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and part of the Kola Peninsula in Russia.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Kremer: And they have their own language, their own culture. And he did something quite amazing and was really, in many ways, instrumental in bringing the Sami consciousness back as remembering their own indigeneity and really asserting themselves as an indigenous people. He published a book called *The Sun, My Father*. He also published a book called *The Earth, My Mother*, which he published later. But it's one of those books that really is more like a medicine bundle. It's a book of poetry. It's like probably 500 poems in there; it's quite a thick book. But part of it is also...there are photos in there. And he went into all the archives and all the museums and anthropological collections and brought those photos of Sami people back into the Sami culture. So when a Sami person opens this book, they can find one of their relatives in there. So this had a tremendously, tremendous healing impact, sort of liberating these photos out of the archives and bringing them back to life again. The other thing is, this is a poem that deals about the life cycle.

And it talks about, it starts with birth and ends with death. It talks about the cycle of the seasons. And it talks about what it is like to life up in the Arctic, to be with the reindeer, to fish in the sea and in the rivers. And it's a very, it's a visionary poem that brought a lot of healing to his own culture by dealing also with the shadow aspects of the colonial culture – the suppression of the Sami culture, when people couldn't speak their own language and were carted off to residential schools...

Dr. Dave: Hmm.

Kremer: ...just like here in the U.S. and in Canada. And so it's a tremendously important work that actually won what you could call the Booker Prize of the North, and it's a highly respected work. So that's what I'm going to be talking about. And he actually has it on a, also on a CD, where he recites the poetry, where he chants, and where he has recorded all the sounds of nature on there. The reindeer also have a voice, and the ptarmigans have a voice. So it's an awesome multidimensional work of art.

Dr. Dave: Wow, that does sound fascinating. I wonder if you have anything that you've written that if some of our listeners were interested in your work, is there anything out there that they might find?

Kremer: Sure. There are any number of publications. Most of them are in the journal, ReVision, which I'm an editor of. And one of my articles... See, what I'm really interested in is, how can people who are not indigenous by tradition engage with indigenous traditions? And one of the first questions, of course: how come we lost our indigenous connections? What happened there? And then we have to deal a little bit with the shadow material of history, how this disconnection or dissociation happens. So in a sense, everybody has indigenous roots, and shamanic skills are really a human potential that everybody can learn. Some of us are better at it, and some of us are not so good at it. It's like, we all can paint, and some of us are better at it; then some of us are not so good at it. But it is a human potential. Now how do we ground it when we're not an indigenous person? And part of that is really investigating our own roots, which is part of the work that I've done. So that's what a lot of my publications are about. I've written an essay which is sort of my favorite essay. It's called Millennial Twins, which deals with how can I be as a settler here on native lands, and it deals with the history of native Californians and visions – a different kind of presence that both deals with the terrible history, but also where I'm trying to make myself present to the shamanic work and inspiration through vision. So it's kind of a healing essay, in a sense, and it's called Millennial Twins because it was written right at the millennium.

Dr. Dave: And that can be found in ReVision?

Kremer: Yes, that can be found in ReVision. If you go to any library and go on ProQuest or EBSCO, you'll be able to find it, or somebody can send me an e-mail and I'll send them a copy. It's definitely available.

Dr. Dave: Okay. And is your e-mail address one you'd care to give out here?

Kremer: Sure. Jkremer@sonic.net.

Dr. Dave: Okay, and "Kremer" is spelled K-r-e-m-e-r, as I have learned. (laughs)
And probably related to what you were just talking about, I noticed in one place on the Web that you talk about "engaging in radical presence." What do you mean by that?

Kremer: Well, radical presence is what I think shamans do or what, ideally, indigenous people are doing, which is, you know, when we are in a place, we can ground ourselves in the land. So part of our job is to make ourselves present to what is around us – meaning the animals, the plants, the earth, the weather. And then we have an awareness of the cycles of changes – meaning spring, summer, fall, winter. And then there are larger cycles. You know, native peoples have always watched the stars and the changes in the sky as the procession of the equinoxes – so, you know, which is what the Mayan calendar and other systems are about. So making ourselves present to this and making ourselves present to what may be denied, what may be a challenging history or shadow material, so that's all part of radical presence. One of the interesting things is, when we do that, different people have come up with different visions or imaginations in places that are very similar, because then human creativity also comes in. People know that the native peoples over the hill in the next valley, well, they live in an ecology that is very similar, but their imagination or their understanding – what they make of their observations of their grounding in nature – is a different imagination; it's a different creativity. So radical presence means making ourselves present to all these different aspects of ourselves. And it really sort of enlarges our sense of self, and we're no longer just our ego, but we're sort of branching out. And sort of what is outside comes out, and we're branching out on the outside, so we have carried that awareness of what is around us inside and are in what the Andean people call a "nurturing conversation," where there is a gift-giving back and forth so that we nurture what is around us and so that we are nurtured by what is around us.

Dr. Dave: Okay, fascinating. Now, you mentioned that your training is as a clinical psychologist. I'm wondering, are you doing any work these days as a clinical psychologist? And if so...

Kremer: No, I'm not. I'm mostly teaching.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Kremer: I'm mostly teaching. Now and then, I work with individuals, but not in a clinical psychology setting.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Maybe more in terms of a shamanic kind of practice?

Kremer: Correct, yes. Correct.

Dr. Dave: Okay, well, I really appreciate your spending this time with us, and I look forward to meeting you at the conference.

Kremer: Very good. I look forward to that, too, and thank you so much for having me.

Introduction: *Our final guest today is Gail Hayssen. Here's what she has to say about herself. Gail Hayssen is an intuitive paranormal researcher, Reiki master and mother. Gail is the author of the autobiography Small Medium at Large – Adventures of a Psychic Traveler, which documents extraordinary remote viewing, medical diagnosis, and other experiences. Gail has participated in many published paranormal research experiments with Dr. Dean Radin, Russell Targ, and others at Interval Research and at The Institute of Noetic Sciences. They include Effects of Intentionally Enhanced Chocolate on Mood, Double-Blind Test of the Effects of Distant Intention on Water Crystal Formation, and most recently, Compassionate Intention as a Therapeutic Intervention by Partners of Cancer Patients: Effects of Distant Intention on the Patients' Autonomic Nervous System. You'll find links to these, by the way, in our show notes. Gail has participated in the Ruth-Inge Heinze International Shamanic Conference since 2005. She has a unique connection with shamans of Mongolia, shamans and friends among the Huichol Indians in the remote mountains of Mexico, and the Haida Indians of Alaska. Gail has hosted the shamans in the U.S. as well as being a welcome guest in their homes. Gail is married with three children and lives in Sebastopol, California. Now, here's the interview.*

Dr. Dave: Gail Hayssen, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio.

Gail Hayssen: Thank you for having me here today.

Dr. Dave: You're one of the presenters at this year's Annual Conference on Shamanism, Healing, and Transformation. Tell us a bit about your background and how you came to be interested in shamanism.

Hayssen: My background?

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Hayssen: Oy vey. (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Well, I know you've had a long life. (laughs) You don't have to cover the whole life, but some of the highlights.

Hayssen: Well, let's see. Yes. I spent time with the Huichol Indians in the mountains of Mexico...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Hayssen: ...in a very remote area called Santa Catarina. And during that time, and during that time, I was actually dealing with my own cervical cancer, and I had started healing with shamans there.

Dr. Dave: My goodness.

Hayssen: And this is actually my first introduction to direct relationship with shamans and working with healing with them.

Dr. Dave: Now, how long ago was that?

Hayssen: That was, oh, close to 20 years ago.

Dr. Dave: Okay. And I gather, because I was looking for you on the Web and I found some very interesting things, I gather that led to a whole raft of other experiences – travel experiences and experiences in the whole world of shamanism and in related phenomena.

Hayssen: It's been, yes, it had. And actually, there's two different areas that were very interesting for me, which is in travel, I've spent time with the Haida Indians, up in Alaska in Hydadburg, doing a healing...participating in a healing workshop with the Indians there, and met some very, very wonderful Indian shaman people. And then I got involved with this shamanic conference, and I met Mongolian shamans who came to present at the conference in 2004, I believe? And we had an immediate connection, so I ended up going over to Mongolia and traveling and staying for 3 ½ weeks with the Mongolian shamans (inaudible) and spending time there, and being immersed in their culture and being with different shamans and different ceremonies traveling around Mongolia.

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness. And I gather for this upcoming conference, you are hosting some Mongolian shamans who are coming over here, and some Huichols as well?

Hayssen: Well, actually the Huichols won't be coming this year, but we do have Professor Bat Bayar (ph) coming, who's the Director of the Institute of Ata Tangor (ph) of Mongolian shamanism. And he's also a history professor, and his topic is going to be discussing the accessories of Mongolian shamans.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Hayssen: And he's bringing with him three very, very well known women shamans, who have spent... One of them, this woman, Beru Visorin (ph), has spent a bunch of time with the Dalai Lama recently, and she specializes in dealing with healing people that have a lot of cancer issues. And she's going to be speaking about curing the possibility of cancer using bioenergy.

Dr. Dave: Interesting.

Hayssen: And we have another woman coming, Sumiya (ph), and she's going to be speaking on the meanings of the Mongolian shaman spirits. Very beautiful women; I'm really looking forward to them joining us here and presenting. And the third woman, she is an assistant to the Shamans and Science staff at the Research of Mongolia of Mountains, Nature, and Water (?), and she's going to be speaking about Mongolian shamanism as an intangible culture.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Hayssen: So I kind of feel very wonderful that I get to sort of be a little bridge between these two different cultures by being able to be there in their company in Mongolia and then hosting them here to stay with me when they come here to the United States.

Dr. Dave: Oh, yes, you must. Now, I –

Hayssen: So the relationship is also a friendship relationship and a teaching relationship.

Dr. Dave: Yes, that's wonderful. Now, I see you yourself are giving a presentation titled Experiences with Death and Cremation. What can you tell us about that?

Hayssen: Well, in this last year – actually, in July – it's the one-year anniversary of the passing of the woman who is the founder of the conference, Dr. Ruth-Inge Heinze, and this will be the second conference we're having without her. And this is the 25th year, and one of the experiences in the last four years I've had of knowing Ruth was participating in caring for her during her time of passing. And part of the things that I did in this was attending her cremation, which I really had no idea until another friend, Molly Burgess, told me that you can actually attend a cremation and place the body in the oven yourself, and be there to take out the ashes – or really, it's the bones – and be there for the entire part. And it was such an amazing experience to see the completion of the body, after the cremation, and hold these hot, warm ashes against my own body of somebody that I loved very dearly...

Dr. Dave: Hmm...

Hayssen: ...and the experience of seeing her, it was almost like the woman, I both had the same visual effect of seeing this woman's spirit just sort of leave into the sky.

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Hayssen: So I was going to speak about that, and then the comparison when a person has chosen to not have a medical directive and ends up having to be in the hospital system basically being kept alive – where in Ruth's case, she had a medical directive that stated that in the event that her body was not functioning at certain levels that she would like it to be at, then she would prefer to be in hospice and to have cremation, and to have her ashes spread in the Pacific. And so somehow, I ended up being that person for her, and taking her ashes and going up in a plane, and having them all be sent down into the ocean, exactly opposite from the Odion (ph) Buddhist Temple. And she was a woman who was foremost known for her knowledge on Asian shamanism. So it felt like an honor to her to drop her ashes in the ocean right opposite a very amazing Buddhist monastery.

Dr. Dave: My goodness.

Hayssen: So that's what I was going to talk about, and the difference between that and when you can't have cremation, or you decide to have embalming – and the differences of what it feels like when you view it as the person watching the person's passing.

Dr. Dave: Yes, yes. Fascinating. Again, looking on the Web, I saw a reference to a book that I guess you are either in the process of writing or have already written, called Small...

Hayssen: Well, I've written the book, but I have not done a lot of work pursuing publishing it, except actually, in the recent. But in the near future, I'm actually meeting with someone on Wednesday to discuss the idea of what it would be to publish the book. I really haven't pursued that much.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Hayssen: It was mostly important to sort of write down this life that I've had, because it's (laughs) been an interesting one.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, I get that because there are glimpses on the website that talks about it.

Hayssen: Yes!

Dr. Dave: You know, you've got some photos there, and you sort of document these different stages of your life.

Hayssen: In 1998, I met Dean Radin and Russell Targ, who are scientists in the field of parapsychology...

Dr. Dave: Yes, yes. I'm familiar with both names.

Hayssen: Yes, this opened up - I started doing something called remote viewing for them...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Hayssen: ...and I would do experiments in the laboratory that were funded by Paul Allen, where my husband also worked as a computer scientist. And I did this task for them that I was not trained in but was able to do naturally, which was describing a photo that a computer would select randomly out of 300 National Geographic photographs at 3:00, but at 1:00 I would draw what the photo was going to be in the future.

Dr. Dave: Yes, and you were able to do this?

Hayssen: Oh, yes. I was able to do this. In fact, one of them, Dean, has shown in talks where he's given slideshows - one of the slides has been shown of the one we did of a mosque in Istanbul. And when they were asking me to remote-view it - I'm not an artist at all. My drawings are, you know, but you can tell that my drawing is a replica of what we were seeing, but I can't draw detail. But I was drawing the towers and the fences and all these things. And then I said, "You know, I keep feeling that there's incredible mosaics here." And since the photograph only showed the outside of the temple, I never found out 'til years later, when I spoke about this at a talk that Ruth had me give... and she said, "I've been to that temple in Istanbul, and it's filled with the most incredible mosaics in the world!"

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness.

Hayssen: So sometimes the information - even the details - come years later that you find feedback on these things! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: Yeah. You know, Dean Radin is one of the people I've been meaning to interview, so I'm -

Hayssen: Ah, he's a brilliant man with a great sense of humor.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, that's great. I love the title of your book, speaking of senses of humor: A Small Medium at Large. (laughs)

Hayssen: Yes, and interestingly enough, another woman published a book a couple of years ago with that title, through Putnam Books...

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness.

Hayssen: It's called Small Mediums at Large, and it was Adventures – not Adventures. It was Tale of a Psychic Family. So I ended up sending her an e-mail, and we became very good friends. And she came and stayed with me this year, and I went and stayed with her in New York a couple months ago. And everyone who met us, including my father, said, “My God! You're like twins!”

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Hayssen: (laughs) And when I wrote her, I said to her, “Same title, same life!” I mean, it was a bizarre thing to read another book that had so many similarities to my own life!

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness.

Hayssen: So we met each other, and everyone had to measure us to see who was really the shorter or the smallest of the mediums.

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Hayssen: And she was ¼” shorter than I was. I'm 4' 11 ¾”, so I think she was like 4' 11 ¼”. (laughs)

Dr. Dave: So now, you're a *big* medium now!

Hayssen: Right! I'm the “medium medium.” (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Oh, that's great.

Hayssen: So you never know when you put these things out there, what is going to come from just a title!

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah. So, just to wrap things up here, what do you see as the relevance or the promise of shamanism today for those of us who don't come from an indigenous culture?

Hayssen: Well, I think that there's going to be some sort of a, because I don't come from an indigenous culture. I'm a, you know, my family were Russian and Polish Jews that immigrated to this country one generation ago.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Hayssen: And yet when you go to Siberia and Russia, you're really bordering on these areas where you don't know what your grandparents know from or took from what might've been passed down from shamanic teachings.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Hayssen: Like my grandmother did some strange... When somebody was not well and they didn't know what was wrong with them, they'd put a broom over their head and pour wax over the broom. And whatever formation came in the water in the sink, then the grandmother would determine what was the problem of the person. Now, that doesn't... I had not found out anything about that until I read about some Siberian culture, where they do wax-reading.

Dr. Dave: Interesting.

Hayssen: So interesting to know what gets passed down through time. I think that something is changing now, where it's like, I could never become a Native American Indian and be considered that I had that heritage, but I feel that there is some sort of a new, something new that's emerging in other people that are finding that they have a close affinity for shamanic teaching, or for being in touch... I find the thing that's in common of all the shamans is, they're dealing with the spirits of animals and plants and the sun and the wind and the earth. And whether it was Mongolian ones, or Native American Indians, or the Huichols, that was the tools they were all working with. And it seems to me that there's something that we could integrate into our own life, where we can take from this some sort of teachings that can help us to move forward with what we're doing, even though we can't actually be that person. I get this sort of feeling like I don't like to feel like people think that they can only be a shaman if they come from that culture...?

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Hayssen: I think that there's things for our own self that we can learn and develop our own form, that is also a credible form of some sort of shamanic-type healing or work.

Dr. Dave: Wonderful. Well, you know, I look forward to meeting you at the conference. I'll be there, so keep an eye out for me –

Hayssen: Oh, wonderful!

Dr. Dave: I'll keep an eye out for you. I'll probably be wearing a shirt that says "Shrink Rap Radio" on it, so...

Hayssen: Okay, I'll –

Dr. Dave: ...so you'll recognize me that way (laughs).

Hayssen: I'll look for you and Shrink Rap Radio...

Dr. Dave: Okay. You'll recognize me that way.

Hayssen: And I will, hopefully, we'll have our five Mongolians with us. And so you'll know where I am, 'cause once you'll see them, I'll be the little short person.
(laughs)

Dr. Dave: Okay, excellent. (laughs)

Hayssen: And, it's also, the one thing that I love about this conference is that it's not like other conferences you go to, where, like, there's the keynote speaker, and there's the one person everyone's really coming there to see, or this sort of thing –

Dr. Dave: Right.

Hayssen: This is where everybody is equally presenting their own view or their own experiences to a group of people who are all open-minded and willing to listen to what they have to say.

Dr. Dave: Excellent.

Hayssen: And I feel that that's a very beautiful arena for people like myself who had never actually spoke before in public until Ruth encouraged me to do this, and then now all these other doors have opened up since then. So I feel that this conference has supported a lot of people that have been able to continue doing their work and have a place to present it, without having to be considered the keynote speaker or some other... You know what I'm saying?

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Yes, yes. Well, that's wonderful. I look forward to possibly speaking with you at greater length in a future interview.

Hayssen: All right!

Dr. Dave: Gail Hayssen, thanks so much for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

Hayssen: It was a pleasure, and I look forward to speaking and meeting with you in the near future.