

## ***Anthro-at-Large* Retrospective Special Issue, Spring 2022**

### **Introduction and Message from the Editors**

Sarah Hautzinger (Colorado College), Anthony Kwame Harrison (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), Abbey Basa (Georgetown University), Josh Birndorf (Colorado College) and Yingru Chen (University of California, Davis)

We are pleased to offer this retrospective issue of *Anthro-at-Large*, the newsletter of the [Federation of Small Anthropology Programs](#) (FOSAP), a committee membership committee of the [General Anthropology Division](#) (GAD) of the [American Anthropological Association](#) (AAA). Named *Anthro-at-Large* when first published in 1992 and for most of its run, the newsletter circulated annually through 2017, producing some twenty-five issues in all. (The 2017 FOSAP newsletter was the sole published under a new name, *Anthro Writ Small*. For this retrospective, we retain the name used for the preponderance of the run.) These issues largely reflected the concerns of FOSAP's mission: to support teaching and practicing anthropology in small programs and to solo anthropologists both within and beyond higher education, as well as to aid in navigating institutional challenges for anthropologists, such as assessment, program evaluation, and resisting downsizing or consolidation of anthropology programs. Not least, FOSAP has provided a congenial and companionable space and community for anthropologists whose institutional circumstances risk isolation.

The idea for reissuing a selection of *Anthro-at-Large* articles arose over coffee at the 2019 AAA meetings in Vancouver, between then-GAD president, Anthony Kwame Harrison, and incoming FOSAP chair, Sarah Hautzinger. It was a moment of uncertainty about FOSAP's future, and Kwame suggested celebrating all that *Anthro-at-Large/Anthro Writ Small* has meant for its readership with a retrospective issue. To that end, he offered to oversee an independent study for one of his Virginia Tech students keenly interested in anthropology. The 2020 spring semester found then-junior Abbey Basa (Virginia Tech '21, now entering a public policy master's program at Georgetown) reading the entire run of newsletters, and producing an annotated selection of articles she found of enduring relevance and value. From there, two Colorado College alumni joined Sarah to continue the selection, editing and arranging process: Josh Birndorf (CC '20, current Anthropology Paraprofessional) and Yingru Chen (CC '19, current UC Davis doctoral student and GAD graduate student representative). Josh, Yingru and Sarah further sought permission from all authors; those we heard back from all granted it, but since all articles had already been published in *Anthro-at-Large*, we were not concerned with those we couldn't reach, permission being a courtesy in this circumstance.

The selection we feature reflects difficult choices, as many wonderful pieces also merited re-publication that we were not able to include. Those we did choose, we believe, reflect the lively and conversational, readable-and-relatable tone that has made the FOSAP newsletter a distinctive venue. We elected to feature articles in four sections:

In Part I, **Advocacy and Emergent Decolonial Anthropology**, we feature aspects of action-oriented or applied anthropology, and especially aspects that have long been "decolonial" before that term came into common usage. Kjell Engg's 1999 "The Ethnography of Migrant Farm Workers in Adams County Pennsylvania" exemplifies engaged ethnography as embedded in coursework at its best. The piece underscores the ability to do anthropology close-to-home, showing how revelations surrounding people's similarities and differences do not require traveling off to distance places. Additionally, Engg

illustrates how an undergraduate program at a small school dedicated itself to training civic-minded anthropologists—an approach that was ahead of the curve in centering community engagement and collaborative efforts at public anthropology. Next, Brian McKenna's 2011 piece asks "Is Genocide Still at Work Against First Nations' Peoples? Debates Over U.S. and Canadian Indian Policy," reflecting increasing awareness that we are far from a truly *post*-colonial era, or beyond practices that continue to cause heightened risk, death and culture loss for native peoples. This call to action highlights the need for anthropologist to center both historical and on-going processes of cultural erasure in their teaching. In 2022, throughout North America, we see increased attention to land acknowledgements and recognitions of tribal groups—to this degree some of McKenna's call is being met. Yet the most devastating actions, those that lead many of the referenced authors to describe settler colonial and indigenous relations as "genocide," persist. Finally, we include Sarah Hautzinger's 2012 "Small Anthropology Programs and Exercising Academic Freedom to Talk Costs-Of-War at AAA in Montreal," because it voices anthropologist Roberto Gonzalez's observation that, when critiquing such phenomena as militarization, anthropologists in small programs may be better situated to take risky public positions. Hautzinger's front-lines report of observations from the 2012 meetings reminds us of the vital role of anthropology in speaking truth to power and resisting the cooptation of our profession.

Part II, **Nacirema and De-/(Re-) Exoticizing US Culture**, focuses in on one of anthropology's most timeless and productive tropes, rendering the familiar "strange"—typically following first rendering the strange "familiar"—and often riffing off Horace Miner's renowned 1956 spoof, "Body ritual among the Nacirema." Daniel Moerman and Tina Palivos's 1996 piece, "Anthropology Through the Looking Glass: The Anthropological Self in a Multicultural Classroom," brings a critical stance on teaching the article, observing that the flipped lens Miner offers presumes predominantly white, middle-class and male student readers; they underline how estranging the familiar becomes more complicated in increasingly diverse classrooms. From there we feature a trio from Robert ("Bob" to FOSAP and GAD members) Myers' many contributions, all of which draw on self-otherizing tactics with an adept linguistic and etymological touch. His 2004 "Nuf and E-Nuf Among the Nacirema: Capturing Culture for the Classroom" casts estranging light on insatiable consumption. His 2005 "Gunspeak: the Influence of America's Gun Culture on Everyday Communication" de-naturalizes the prominence of firearms in American life—but without taking up the mass shootings and store-housing by militias that increasingly are part of our current picture—suggesting a vital coda most readers could imagine. Finally, Myers' 2007 "America The Fearful: Enculturated Anxiety in Modern U.S. Society" feels especially portentous from a 2022 reading, anticipating the high costs of a ubiquitous "environment of fear" that arguably anticipates the polarization, mistrust and conspiracy theorizing that mark present circumstances. Finally, Clare Boulanger's 2004 "The United States, and the Power of Myth" wraps up this section, exploring the myth of the "bad mother" as a scapegoat in "Usan" (her twist on Nacirema) culture, blamed for the entitled being denied their privileged, "rightful destinies."

Part III, **Institutional Politics, Support and Strategies**, turns to myriad challenges that anthropologists and their students in small programs confront and navigate. Stephen M. Fabian's 1998 "One-Man Show: Job Security or Early Demise? Reflections on Starting Up an Anthropology Program at a Small Liberal Arts Institution" is a frankly stark depiction of the untoward demands placed upon a new position for a lone anthropologist, expected to build and advocate for a program, all while teaching and attempting to maintain an active scholarly agenda. Byron Dare and Roger Peters' (1998) "Assessment as Ideology: Reagan's Revenge" follows, in abridged form. They associate implementation of mandatory assessment in higher education with the "right swing" in the US since the 1960s. Twenty years later, with assessment "culture" far more entrenched, would we still associate it primarily with right-wing control

mechanisms and political intrusion into teaching—or equally with career needs of bloated administrative bureaucracies, consumerist attitudes about education, or accountability to “value-added” commodification, or still to equity, inclusion, and anti-racist commitments and accountability? Next comes Mary Cameron’s account of the fight to preserve the anthropology major at Auburn University, titled “The Politics of Anthropology: A Sad Story” (2000). Despite that title, happily we learn that the program was preserved (and continues in 2022, we’d add). “Why Anthropology? Ask a Student?” with a 2011 introduction by Connie DeRoche, and student responses compiled by Christina Beard-Moose in 2012, responds to then-Florida Governor Rick Scott’s singling out of anthropology as the kind of program his state should cut. We love the varied organizational partnerships and contributions that the students specify, as well as their feisty conclusion: “Governor Scott, with all due respect, Florida needs more anthropologists. . .not fewer.” Lastly, David Price’s “Why Small Anthropology Programs Matter” (2017, in the sole *Anthro-Writ-Small* issue) rounds out this section, highlighting numerous aspects of our work in small programs, but especially our “unique opportunities to open students’ minds to new ways of thinking about the world.”

In Part IV, **Teaching**, we turn to what is arguably the shared life-blood for most FOSAP members and *Anthro-at-Large* contributors. Beginning with Margi Nowak’s (1999) “Triangulating to the Point of #Sanity: The Use of Lived Experience in the Construction of Reflexive Ethnography,” we learn how she embraced the all-consuming work of caring for her elderly parents by making gerontological issues the focus for her anthropology course. Nowak drew on Turnerian notions of “rituals of affliction” to consider end of life issues as both practical and also symbolically rich terrain. Robin O’Brian’s “Teachable Moments: Anthropological Citizens and Cultural Consumers” (2002) follows, demonstrating how stimulating and accessible a topic like consumption can be for students, and how it can inform their notions of citizenship. “Writing an American Community: The Ethnographic Directory Project” (2004) by Catherine M. Cameron follows; we appreciated how this assignment made use of multiple data sources, including population figures, units of government, citizen groups, steel mills, museums, and photography – all relevant to ethnography, but also to areas such as historical archaeology. We round out the section with Peter Peregrine’s “Scientific Anthropology is Central to the Liberal Arts” (2004), which pursues an extended comparison between anthropology and biology as disciplines, offering an intervention to misrepresentations about anthropological empiricism and rigor. Much of this pointed critique relies on anthropology’s refutation of “race” as holding any biological validity; we wonder if, in 2022, this wholesale negation might require some revision, as anti-racist anthropologists point out how even the most seemingly negligible phenotypical characteristics can, unfortunately, carry weighty and even lethal significance in social fields shaped by racist legacies.

This collection, in short, underlines many enduring, broad strokes of anthropological practice, but also how these inflect differently from one historical moment to the next. Whether “at large” or “writ small,” the collection demonstrates how the vantage points from small programs may uniquely enable anthropologists to see the big picture, and how we fit into it. All of these pieces merit being read today, and we anticipate they can generate searching and stimulating conversations. Cheers, FOSAP, *Anthro-at-Large* (and *Writ-Small*) for offering such welcoming venues for such exchanges! Going forward may we continue to assess and respond to the needs and desires of anthropologists immersed in landscapes at remove from large programs.

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# Advocacy and Emerging Decolonial Anthropology

The Ethnography of Migrant Farm Workers  
in Adams County, Pennsylvania

Kjell Enge  
(Dickinson College)

The American Mosaic Semester at Dickinson College was created in 1996 to provide students with the opportunity to elect an immersion experience focused on American cultural diversity as viewed through the perspectives of at least three different academic disciplines. The idea was to provide a domestic immersion experience to expand the boundaries of the college community by actively engaging students in meaningful community projects with people who, by virtue of their diverse experiences, had much to teach them. Students who participate in the Mosaic Semester take no other courses and get a full semester credit that can be distributed across the students' majors and also be used to satisfy College distribution requirements. In other words, we have the students complete personal and "scholarly" attention for the entire semester, creating as much of an immersion experience as possible. Our students have primarily been from American Studies, Anthropology and sociology.

The first Mosaic (1996) was in Steelton, PA, a local working-class community with extensive ethnic diversity, and the second Mosaic in the fall of 1998 in Adams County, PA, a rapidly changing area with an increasing Latino population, consisting of both seasonal migrants and permanent residents. Adams County is nationally known for its 80 some odd apple orchards, fruit processing and packaging

plants, and a large and constantly increasing migrant population. For example, some of the small towns in the county now have Latinos making up 30-40% of their populations, a radical change over the last 20 years. This paper is about the Dickinson College student ethnographers and the Latinos of Adams County, but first a few words about the Steelton experience.

Steelton, an old steel mill town dating back to 1966, drew a diverse immigrant workforce from England, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Central and Eastern Europe, and Mexico during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; in addition, a large black population migrated from the south during this same period. Job categories in the mill, residential neighborhoods, and churches were all distinguished by race, ethnic groups, and class. Over the past 20 years, Steelton has been affected by rapid de-industrialization and a subsequent population decline.

The Mosaic students examined how Steelton residents were struggling to maintain their multicultural identities, the strength of their families, the vitality of their community, and their religious faith in the face of hard times. After spending six weeks on campus studying the political economy of de-industrialization, memoir and narrative, community studies, ethnography, and oral history, students spent seven weeks doing intensive fieldwork in Steelton, interacting across race, class, gender, generational, age and religious lines, the Dickinson students and the Steelton community engaged each other in the union halls and classrooms, in churches and cafes, at the mill and in the cemeteries as they explored questions of mutual interest: how does one make a living, raise a family, go to school, sustain faith, and relate to others in the mid-1990s in a small town in America.

In the Steelton experience, the process was an interactive, self-reflective one. While <sup>1</sup>conducting fieldwork, the students were working out their understandings of what was going on not only in the Steelton community but within themselves and their community at Dickinson as well. As they were studying another community, they were also exploring their own identities and expanded the boundaries of the college community.

Students, faculty and community members came to realize that the most challenging and enriching experiences developed in relationships with others who were both different and similar to themselves. The socio-historical and cultural study was not about the “other” but about relationships and how they are affected by racism, classism, sexism and by structural factors as well as by personalities and emotions. Steelton, the students realized, is one community where many people coexist. Although there are divisions and conflicts, diversity and unity are not in fundamental opposition.

With the Steelton experience in mind, the 1998 Mosaic in Adams County was to be both similar and at the same time quite different from Steelton. Nevertheless, the lessons learned in Steelton were quite important in terms of how undergraduates are prepared and how they become involved in community research, as ethnographers, archivists and oral historians. First, Steelton was a single limited and clearly defined community, while Adams County is a large rural area with numerous communities. The Latino population consists of both seasonal migrants and permanent residents spread across many communities and numerous migrant labor camps. In addition to Latinos, there are also Haitian and Jamaican farm laborers, but the

Latinos are the most numerous, and about 90% come from Mexico, primarily from the state of Michoacán.

For Steelton Mosaic, the classroom training period for the students was almost equal to the time spent in the community, six and seven weeks, respectively. For Adams County, however, we decided to get the students in to the field sooner and limit the class-room preparation to just two weeks. Then, the students were placed as interns with agencies and organizations that provide services to both the permanent and migrant Latino residents, according to pre-arrangements with the participating agencies. Our students were at their internships by the beginning of the third week of the 1998 Fall semester and were able to begin making observations, carry out interviews and do oral histories soon thereafter.

The classroom preparation for the field included examining the role of the ethnographer, introduction of self, and ethics of fieldwork, how to structure and ask questions, how to make observations, keeping detailed notes and a journal, how to review and analyze data, drawing conclusions and writing reports. In retrospect, the pre-field training seems like a blur, and it was not until we were in the field that learning took place through actually doing ethnography. In part, this was the reason we shortened the preparation period and decided it was more important to get “out there” as quickly as possible.

Once the students were in the “field” and began to make contacts through their internships, we accompanied them on some of the interviews and began giving advice on style, type of questions, etc. We also had them turn in their journals every two weeks for comments and suggestions. Through our own experiences

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<sup>1</sup> Table Removed

as anthropologists, we know that some have a real knack for doing ethnography while others have to work hard at making contact, gaining acceptance and collecting data. Our students were no exception, and as it turned out, several were quite good, made numerous contacts that benefitted the entire group, especially those who were much more reluctant if not downright apprehensive.

The Table 1 below shows the types of internships by organization, activities and the number of students in each. Ten out of eighteen students were involved with some form of education, ranging from high school equivalency programs (GED) to Headstart for children and Evenstart to assist adults to cope with life in the United States.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
DesignCore	Migrant Housing	2
Human Services	Evenstart	2
Human Services	Citizenship/recruitment/GED	2
Human Services	Services for the Disabled	1
Human Services	Peer Education	2
Lincoln Intermediate Unit	Health Services	2
Rural Opportunities	Recruiting/Profiling	2

Rural Opportunities	Evenstart	2
Rural Opportunities	Headstart	2

After about two weeks into the internships, each of the 18 students in the Mosaic designed and carried out individual research projects. In some cases, these were directly tied or closely related to their internships with a migrant social service organization. At first, many were unsure of what would be their focus and a few simply had no idea how to develop and carry out “ethnographic” research; it did not take long for most to catch on and start doing it.

As the semester went on, each project was refined and the focus became more clearly formulated. Mostly, this came about as the students found through experience who would talk to them and what kinds of data they could readily collect. Of course, some were able to go through this process with relative ease, while others had continual problems with research goals and data collection.

In conclusion, setting up and running an ethnographic “experience” for undergraduates is a challenge, especially with severe time constraints, but having each student do a limited and carefully defined project can produce a composite picture of a much larger reality. I think that undergraduates can learn quickly, and as mentioned before, some showed considerable potential for becoming excellent field researchers. We found that the Latinos were much more open and willing to talk and socialize with the students than were the Anglo residents of many small communities; in some cases there was open hostility. Many

Latinos said this was the first time anyone had spoken with them and showed any interest in what they were doing, how they were feeling and were interested in what their lives are really like. Although the apple harvest season ended in the beginning of November and some migrants have gone back to Mexico or to Florida for the citrus harvest, many have remained to work pruning apple trees or to look for work in local factories. Also, the permanent population is increasing. As part of the Mosaic, the students made an exhibit showing their internships, research project findings, numerous photographs, and historical materials. This exhibition was held on the Dickinson College Campus in December, 1998, and both Latinos and Anglos from Adams County attended. Currently, the exhibit is located at Human Services in Gettysburg, PA, giving a large number of participants an opportunity to see the products and conclusions reached by our students.

### **Is Genocide Still at Work Against First Nation Peoples?**

Brian McKenna

(University of Michigan-Dearborn)

In his Foreword to *The Politics of Genocide* (2010), political theorist Noam Chomsky writes that denial of the Indian holocaust is a potent force in the United States. He argues that "the most unambiguous cases of genocide" are often "acknowledged by the perpetrators and passed over as insignificant or even denied in retrospect by the beneficiaries, right to the present." He states that:

"Settler colonialism, commonly the most vicious form of imperial conquest, provides striking illustrations.

Revolutionary War hero General Henry Knox, the first Secretary of War in the newly liberated American colonies, described "the utter extirpation of all the Indians in most populous parts of the Union" by means "more destructive to the Indian natives than the conduct of the conquerors of Mexico and Peru," which would have been no small achievement.

Canada has not been much better. Kevin Annett's important new book *Hidden No Longer: Genocide in Canada, Past and Present* (2010) provides important evidence. The book is based, in part, "on the living testimonies of nearly three hundred survivors of thirty-eight separate Indian residential schools or hospitals across Canada." Annett, a former church minister, was fired and then defrocked for his



investigations into the deaths of native children at his church's residential schools. He was black-listed and socially outcast for his continual efforts to bring these stories to light. Noam Chomsky said that "Kevin is more deserving of the Nobel Peace Prize than many who have received it in the past." (in *Hidden From History*).

Historical U.S. and Canadian genocide is well established (Biolsi 2004; Oswalt 2009). But are these countries still committing genocide against American Indians? Gail Small thinks so. Small is featured in the Bullfrog film "Homeland: Four Portraits of Native Resistance" (2005). She is a member of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Tribe in Lame Deer, Montana, and serves as the Executive Director of the non-profit Indian organization Native Action. In the film she uses the harshest word one can use to describe U.S. Indian policy: genocide. She says that, "Genocide is the destruction of a people and their culture. And unless we face up to the fact that destruction of these tribes is at a point where they may not be able to survive much longer. We are at that point here. You put in 75,000 methane gas wells around our reservation, you take our ground water, pollute our air, destroy our rivers, the Cheyenne here will probably not be able to survive. We'll have a wasteland here. That's what's at stake here. Where will the Cheyenne go?"

Sandy Grande, a Quechua scholar/activist, concurs. She is the author of *Red Pedagogy, Native American Social and Political Thought* (2004). Grande well describes "the ongoing project of cultural genocide" (p. 103). The book is the result of hard won ethnological investigation by a critical public pedagogue who "came to know through transgressing the disciplinary boundaries and ossified borders of academia - between fact and fiction, teacher and activist, spirit and reason,

theory and practice [that are] highly guarded by the sentinels of the ivory tower" (p.4).

In addition to several important books on this question (Churchill 2002, Hermann and Peterson 2010), there is an important peer-reviewed *Journal of Genocide Research* that investigates these issues. In their classroom teaching, anthropologists must become familiar with these debates and take seriously questions of definition, perspective, and history (Glauner 2002). This dialogue in and of itself will provide a fundamental pedagogy of the oppressed, setting the stage for the civic-engagement actions to follow.

#### Major Victory in the United Nations

In 2007, the United Nations passed "The United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (United Nations 2007). This was a momentous achievement, with 143 Member states voting in favor. Ironically, the four opposing countries included Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. In December 2010, following acceptance by the other three countries, President Obama announced that the U.S. would formally support the declaration. Notably, however its acceptance is legally non-binding. These developments are important for teachers and students to monitor, debate, and act on.

There appear to be three key possibilities in current U.S. American Indian policy and relationships. The first is continued exploitation, environmental destruction, and "ethnocide" (LaDuke 1999; Grande 2004). A second is the establishment of dramatically increased tribal autonomy and state-to-state relationships between the U.S. federal government and federally recognized tribes (as well as the federal recognition of scores of other tribes that are valiantly seeking this designation). The U.N. Declaration of 2007 is a

fundamental tool in this effort, affording a base for significant educational and legal action, both for American Indians and the estimated 370 million indigenous peoples around the world. Importantly, the U.N. Declaration also provides a political opportunity for Indian tribes to finally win recognition as member nations in the United Nations. Associated with this trajectory are calls for decolonization.

Such developments are likely to be strongly resisted by the United States and Canadian governments. Therefore, a third possibility, promoted by the U.S. federal government will be a continued public policy of so-called peaceful coexistence. This liberal approach will find adherents on all sides of the movement, Indians included, but we must be very careful to scrutinize the manner by which such a policy, by omission and neglect, will discourage educational action and petition for redress of grievances. All of these possibilities exist within the larger culture of neoliberalism that speaks very loudly.

The dominant pedagogy, which informs the hidden curriculum found in schools today, enforces continued denial and repression against those who raise questions about history, genocide, ethnocide, and injustice (Zinn 2009). Self-censorship will continue to be a prominent feature in such a culture. However, in North American countries desperately in need of democracy and social justice, these questions must be vigorously debated and pursued.

Debate over terms like “ethnocide,” “genocide,” “proto-fascism,” and “inverted totalitarianism,” are very important. But just as important are creating forms of educational struggle that can effectively shatter the culture of illusion and assist citizens in becoming involved in the struggles of indigenous people for social justice.

Here is my question: How do we best approach these developments and radical educators?

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### **Small Anthropology Programs and Exercising Academic Freedom [when talking Costs-of-War] at AAA Montreal**

Sarah Hautzinger,  
(Colorado College)

"It seems like a lot of this work is being done by people at small schools, at places like Colorado College, or St. Martins, or San José State." The "work" Roberto González referred to was anthropology about the US military, both at home and in theaters of war. "Maybe we are the ones who can risk it," he speculated.

Roberto, author of *Militarizing Culture* (2010), two other books and numerous articles on militarization, met with my collaborator Jean Scandlyn and me for coffee following our panel "Deployment Stressed: Legacies of the War on Terror in Home Front Communities." This was one of a number of timely panels seeking to reckon with the effects of the current armed conflicts. The most relevant point, however, for FOSAP members is recognize how many of us are uniquely positioned to take risks in our work – to engage wider publics in our readerships and audiences, to research with and for undergraduates. We can involve ourselves with sticky, controversial issues, and unlike many of our colleagues in R1 universities, we need not always prioritize showing ourselves to be on the cutting edge of theory and multi-syllabic erudition, freeing us write and speak in plainspoken language on issues of immediate relevance, both within and beyond the academy.

Another moment sticks out in my memory, from the discussion following a screening of James Der Derian's film, [\*Human Terrain: War Becomes Academic\*](#) (2010). The small screening room was at standing room only, and many of

us assembled were award of the presence of Christopher King, current director of the social science portion of the US military's Human Terrain System, repudiated by the AAA in 2007.<sup>2</sup> After the film, the commentary was uniformly outraged and condemnatory about the HTS -- not surprising considering the session. I had remained silent, until someone expressed frustration and despair about having our hands tied, about not being able to use anthropology to say or do anything around the impact of the wars. At that point, I did not so much decide to raise my hand and speak as feel myself burst. "I don't get it. There are so many ways to do fieldwork around this that don't violate the AAA's ethical code in the ways many of us feel HTS to do. We, and especially those of us with tenure, enjoy protections and privileges related to academic freedom that, while far from absolute, compel us to engage." Or something like that -- I certainly wasn't recording. "But it's messy," I added. "I was recently asked if I wasn't just militarized, but also *militarizing*, by members of the peace community at home, because I helped organize panels for Veterans Day. And those were good questions, and they changed what we did."

Without a doubt, here are costs to jumping into such "trenches" as the ones I've been working in -- and such terrain is far from limited to issues of militarization. But one thing I took home from Montreal is "gratitude for the latitude" that those of us whose institutional settings often find us remote from the "beaten paths" of the discipline have, to fulfill the promises of academic freedom and scholarly risk-taking and creativity. FOSAP continues to be an important

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<sup>2</sup> Max Forte (Concordia U.) wrote about this session and others with military themes at AAA--Montreal [here](#) (Consulted Feb 28, 2012). Forte, noted that at the film screening he was silent as "it was important for me to observe American anthropologists" -- striking for a Canadian anthropologist attending the

context for nurturing, and yes, emboldening, one another. See you in San Francisco!

meeting of our US-based association convened in his own country, reportedly at first without AAA asking for permission, and worthy of a commentary all its own.

## **Nacirema and De-/(Re-) Exoticizing US Culture**

### **Anthropology Through the Looking Glass: The Anthropological Self in a Multicultural Classroom**

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Anthropologists study the "other." The recognition of an "other," however, implies the existence or construction of an implicit self. Who is the implicit self in anthropology? We contend that this implicit self, as it is constructed for beginning students in textbooks, readers, films and so on, is white, middle-class and male. Teaching anthropology in a classroom composed of this audience may not pose any particular problems. The students will most likely grasp the anthropological perspective.

However, in more diverse classrooms the situation becomes problematic because, as we argue, in order to "get" anthropology, one must understand the culture of the anthropologist; indeed, one must share it. We will demonstrate this assertion with the results of our study using Horace Miner's *Body Ritual of the Nacirema*; an article that clearly reveals the implicit audience of anthropology.

Horace Miner's article is a holy text in anthropology (not unlike the "holy mouth men"). It is probably the one article read by

every American anthropologist since World War II; it is also read by nearly every student of anthropology, as it is reprinted everywhere. The article consistently appeared in every collection we checked: Annual Editions, Hunter and Whitten's *Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives*, etc. all reprint it. An Internet query some months ago elicited a barrage of accounts of how important the article had been to people. This ubiquity denotes a very clear message about the implicit audience for anthropological writing and teaching.

The point of Miner's article is essentially to show that objective language can mystify the self. Similarly, the article shows the difference between an emic and an etic perspective, by totally eliminating the emic from the description of the familiar. This piece can be used to convey the concept of ethnocentrism when presented to its intended audience—white, middle-class males. If, however, a substantial portion of the class does not share WASP culture to begin with, this is problematic at best.

Some years ago, I began to notice that, when I had a group of students read Miner's paper, there was a number of students who just didn't get it. They didn't see who was really being described, and even denied the situation when it was revealed to them. "Hog bristle? No way!" was one student's reaction. Our resulting hypothesis was that students who didn't understand it would more likely not be white, middle-class males. We examined this hypothesis using a simple test the week of October 16, 1995. Students were given copies of Miner's article on October 16. They were told that they should read it before October 17 when there would be a quiz in class about the article. The quiz asked three questions about the text.

1. Who are the Nacirema? Which of their customs did you find the most interesting or unusual? Why?

2. Briefly describe the Nacirema shrine. Why do they have these shrines? Why do they do their ritual ablutions in private?
3. What is a latipso? Miner notes, "The fact that these temple ceremonies may not cure, and may even kill the neophyte, in no way decreases the people's faith in the medicine men." Why is this?

Subsequently, students were arranged into small groups to discuss their answers. At that point, many discovered who the Nacirema were from their peers. After a few moments, I interrupted, and read to them the bathroom scene from Salinger's *Zooey*—an emic version of Miner's etic description of the household shrine. By then, everyone realized what the Nacirema article was about. The students were then instructed to write on their papers at what point they understood it and to add some personal data—gender, age, religion, where they grew up, racial or ethnic identification, class level, crib language, and father's and mother's crib languages.

The results of this test provide a general support for our hypothesis. We sorted student responses into 5 groups. The first group of 16 figured out the subject of the article in the second paragraph which describes the tribe's location and culture here. The second group of 3 realized it out a bit further on, usually with the latipso, then went back to the beginning and read it again. The third group of 13 never really got it, but were suspicious of one element or another. They noted things like this: "I finally realized [what was happening] when I was reading about the holy mouth man, and I began relating their ritual to our dentists, but I didn't make the full connection (I didn't see all the relations)." The fourth group of 23 stated that they never figured it out until it was explained to them, or until they heard Salinger's tale. Two students had read the article in high school and

are omitted from the rest of the discussion. Of the entire class, a total of 19 students got it; 36 didn't. How do the groups compare?

Ten males (51%) and nine females (49%) got it; 15 males (40%) and 21 females (60%) didn't. More males got it than females. This difference is not statistically significant. Seventeen (90%) who self-identified White or Caucasian and two (10%) otherwise identified students got it; 26 whites (70%) and 10 (30%) others didn't get it. More whites than non-whites got it. This difference is not statistically significant. A smaller portion of upperclassmen (22%) didn't get it than underclassmen (70%—freshmen and sophomores combined). Those who got it were on average 2 years older than those who didn't. The differences in religion are not statistically significant. However, none of the students who listed a religion other than Catholic, Protestant (or a Protestant denomination) or None got it. The religions listed by those 6 students listed were Muslim, Moslem, Moravian, LDS, Islamic and Orthodox. The pattern with student's language is similar. The original language of all students (100%) who got it was English. All students with a first language other than English didn't get it. This difference is not statistically significant. However, when we look at student language and parents' language, the situation is more substantial. We combined the student's language with each of the parent's language (e.g. student/English+ mother/Arabic+ father/Arabic= 3) for a total of 165 languages. Two of 57 languages of those who got it (and their parents) were other than English. In other words, 95% of the students who understood it were raised speaking English as their first language by parents with the same crib language. This difference is statistically significant with  $p > .05$ . Although few of these results achieve statistical significance, there is a composite picture which emerges. Those who get it tend to be male, not female, older rather

than younger, upperclassmen rather than lower, white rather than non-white, Christian rather than non-Christian, and English speaking rather than non-English speaking, with English speaking parents. In a phrase, they are white, middle-class males, the implicit audience for anthropology.

There is another dimension to this situation. The quiz asked students what they thought was the most interesting or unusual custom of the Nacirema. By far, the most common response was the holy mouth-man rituals. In particular, students noted how odd it was to use hog-bristles as they did; in addition, many stated something like this: "the most interesting custom was the one with the mouth where they go thru pain and still come back to it even though they know it didn't work," said one student who didn't get it. One who did understand it said "I found the custom of visiting the mouth man very unusual because it is very true that even though our teeth continue to decay we still insist on visiting the dentist." Many also commented on the practice of head baking. One student said: "As part of their ceremony, women bake their heads in small ovens for about an hour. That is insane." Generally, those who found an interest in the same items as most interesting as those who didn't, but, the former treated the matter with more reflexivity: "It is humorous to think of what we put ourselves through in the name of vanity. The most interesting custom is [head baking]...! can not understand why [they do this] even though I must admit I have taken part in this custom [myself]."

So now what to do? Perhaps it is better for students not to read Miner at all. Removing the article from the syllabus may eliminate one source of ethnocentrism and androcentrism in anthropological writing; but, it does not resolve the problem. There is, however, a way to gain pedagogic advantage from the situation. During

class I have drawn on the point that some students didn't get it to discuss these issues which are typically only addressed to textbook authors. I told the class they didn't get it because they most likely weren't members of the essay's implicit audience. Discussing this subject with the class draws the student's attention to the assumed "we" or "us" that is used when writing about an "other." This is especially valuable for the students reading anthropology who don't see themselves in the implicit "we." We have been continuously drawing on this lesson throughout the class with other texts, ethnographies, films, etc. to improve the level of inclusivity in a diversified classroom. This does not solve the problem of ethnocentrism in anthropological writing; however, it does provide students with the tools to think critically about what they are reading.

Miner's article also continues to be a valuable exercise for teaching the concept of ethnocentrism in general. Those who didn't get it will readily admit to feeling foolish, stupid, or embarrassed. "So, I'm a naive fool," wrote one student. They also admit that a prime reason they didn't get it was because the Nacirema were so extreme, so "gross," as they put it. I tell them to grab onto their embarrassment, to feel it, to remember it, to capture it and put it in their pocket and keep it handy. Then the next time they read about some strange culture which seems gross, they should remember the Nacirema, and take their bundle of embarrassment out of their pocket, and read the article again, remembering the difference between Miner's and Salinger's descriptions of the medicine cabinet.

## **Nuf and E- Nuf Among the Nacirema: Capturing Culture for the Classroom**

Robert Myers  
(Alfred University)

The Nacirema, members of a complex, stratified, post-industrial/post-modern, largely affluent, materialist culture of North America, are well known to anthropologists Arens and Montague 1976; Spradley and Rynkiewich 1975). Their body rituals are among the most familiar of any cultural habits anywhere (Miner 1956). Weston LaBarre described behavior at ritual gatherings called *koktel partis* (2002). Lionel Tiger reported on their diffuse marriage patterns, called *omnigamy*, a quarter- century ago (1978). Another colleague examined political culture (Weatherford 1981). Ralph Linton described the borrowed inventions of a patriotic everyman (1937). At least two observers prematurely described the demise of the Nacirema (Thompson 1972; Macaulay 1979). As unappreciated, as it is thoroughly conspicuous, is the role of *nuf* in Nacirema life. *Nuf*, in both tangible and abstract forms, a quality which permeates or is desired in nearly every facet of Nacirema life, motivates much Nacirema behavior, and figures prominently in the constellation of Nacirema values. It is with some hesitance but little modesty that I announce the discovery of *nuf* as a significant theme among the nearly 300 million Nacirema, a theme taken for granted by the Nacirema as cultural themes usually are by any group.

Consider the following examples and references to *nuf*, offered in partial translation:

Nacirema use *nuf* to frame daily experiences in one of their most common transitional exchanges and phatic greetings: "Have *nuf*!" they often say when someone departs. Upon a person's return, he or she will be asked, "Did you have *nuf*?"

*Nuf* occupies space. The Nacirema refer to "*nuf*-filled" events and times. Family life should be "*nuf*-filled," and if it is not, there are suspicions that something has gone awry. Distinctions between work and other-work (formerly known as leisure), and once separate realms of activity have blurred with the rise of *nuf*. The Nacirema work very hard to have and acquire *nuf*. Work itself should be "*NUF*", a theme in many office management books of the 1990s. (Papa John's [pizza] mission statement includes: "Make work *nuf*." 6/02)

Education is thought to be more effective through *nuf* activities. "Children learn better when they're having *nuf*" asserts one early education company. (NoodleKidoodle)

Science and science education are supposed to be fun. Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry uses the logo, "We've got *nuf* down to a science."

*Nuf* is thought to be an important dimension of the vast Nacirema world of sporting activities.

One of their most famous baseball players declared "When baseball is no longer *nuf*, it's no longer a game. And so I've played my last game" (Joe DiMaggio, 1951 retirement speech). The Nacirema amuse themselves with "*nuf*-runs" on many occasions; I once heard a Nacirema runner upon completing an hours-long, 26- mile 385- yard race enthuse, "That was *nuf*!"

The Nacirema Federal Emergency Management Agency in a radio ad, in part, suggested, "For *nuf*, have your children practice



diving for cover.” The Nacirema National Park Service associates “Nuf and Safety” and “Adventure and Nuf” in brochures. The Nacirema Postal Service encourages collecting commemorative stamps because, “They’re nuf. They’re history. They’re [Nacirema.]”

A half-century ago Martha Wolfenstein reported the emergence of a type of “nuf morality” in Nacirema baby training guides (1951). Since then, nuf has permeated nearly every aspect of Nacirema child-rearing efforts, from toilet training devices (Tinkle Time Targets) to early socialization toys (first nuf laptops) to “underwear that’s nuf to wear” (Underoos) to “nufbops” (with which children practice punching each other). One of the most popular authors of children’s books wrote, [did you ever do this or that or that], “If you never did, you should. These things are nuf and nuf is good” (Dr. Seuss 1960).

Nuf is a popular euphemism for sex. In the advertisements for sexual mates which Nacirema place in their newspapers and in electronic form, and use in face-to-face communication, they refer to “hot nuf,” “nuf-loving,” “romantic nuf,” “intimate nuf,” and “adult nuf.” In a famous film renown Nacirema actor Woody Allen declared to his mate, after they had sex the first time, “That was the most nuf I’ve had without laughing.” (Annie Hall).

Within the belief systems of many Naciremans, Professor Conrad Kottak, one of our teaching gurus, has observed that since the Nacirema were unable to put nuf in their religion, they made a religion of nuf (1994: 522).

The Nacirema are famous for their commercial and marketing vigor and the range of products packaged as some form of nuf. A popular brand of camera is the “Nuf-sa ver.” (Kodak) Subway day tickets are sold as “Nuf Passes” in the largest Nacirema city. Examples are endless.

Recently the Nacirema have been noted for their increase in weight and girth. Perhaps nuf plays a role here too, as many foods and “snacks” are packaged as being nuf. “Spread the nuf.” “Squeeze the nuf.” “Nuf to eat, no need to heat.” “Let the nuf out!” (Rediwhip). “Put a little nuf on your bun.” “Zero calories. 100% nuf!” (actually, that was a car ad).

Nuf has an adjectival first cousin, e-nuf which the Nacirema apply in a wide range of settings to imply aspects of the idea of nuf, although its usages often fall into one of two extremes of meaning. Nacirema refer to something being “e-nuf” - ha-ha, meaning amusing or comical, or to “e-nuf” peculiar, meaning strange or unusual. He’s “e-nuf” can mean a person is humorous, or it can mean he’s odd. One sees and hears these usages daily in Naciremland. Entertainments and entertainers in particular measure their success according to the degree in which they are e-nuf.

Because of its varied forms and its near ubiquitous presence in Nacirema life, nuf is an ideal classroom vehicle for demonstrating the complex and influential nature of “culture.” In many ways, “nuf” is to the Nacirema as “culture” is to anthropologists. The culture concept, anthropology’s most significant contribution to the larger society, has become widely used in everyday commentary. Yet understanding clearly what “culture” means, or comprehending its many meanings, or the ways in which it molds behavior, remains elusive.

However, much more than many other important cultural themes (e.g., individualism, independence, self-reliance, freedom), “fun” (now working in complete translation) is coupled to so many physical objects, behaviors, words, and phrases that once accumulated, its meanings and roles can be decoded. Using fun expressions, artifacts, and associated behaviors, through conversations with students in the class, I show how “culture operates at the level

of taken-for-granted assumptions about human nature and social relations which are expressed and transmitted through everyday phrases, ritual and practices” (Schalet 2000: 76). And I would add, through legions of physical objects and their advertisements.

Its role as culture, while important to understand, is only part of fun’s usefulness. Fun, in its many incarnations as a theme, also teaches about the ways Nacirema society, the students’ own society, and hence the students themselves, are shaped by a particular concept, nuf. Nuf objects, nuf quests, nuf as matrix for the entertaining Dreamtime, to borrow from Lee Drummond’s analysis of popular films (1996), embody the ideational dimension of nuf and serve as part of the “tool kit” with which people construct “strategies of action” (Swidler 1986: 273).

#### How to use nuf, or fun, in an introductory cultural anthropology classroom:

I introduce the concept of nuf following a discussion of the concept of culture, an explanation of the anthropological perspective, and after students have acquired a tongue-in-cheek distance from their culture through Miner’s article. Even then Nacirema students do not expect to hear that part of their course will focus upon “nuf.” I give the first few minutes of class time over several weeks to the gradual introduction and examination of Nacirema fun. I have their attention. Over the weeks, I lead them from a popular, superficial notion of something taken for granted and presumed to be of trivial importance to a gradual realization of its pervasive presence in American culture. We explore; we probe; we brainstorm. (If the truth be known, we probably even have some “nuf.”) This is a far cry from the teaching of anthropology examined forty years ago by Mandelbaum, Lasker, and Albert (1963) and

much more akin to the styles discussed in Kottak, et al. (1997) and by Coggeshall (2002) and Metz (2002).

Initially, I ask students to define “fun” and to give examples of fun activities, as well as activities which definitely are not fun, on a large note card. They soon react with surprise to the assignment, “Bring in as many examples or artifacts of nuf as you can find.” I encourage students who have studied abroad to recall examples of “fun” from other countries. Weekly, I challenge them to search more widely for examples and to keep producing them for class. Slowly we accumulate a substantial collection of “fun,” much of which I have displayed in my office which doubles as “The Myers Museum of Fun.”

We list, group, and examine further the fun words, phrases, advertisements, songs, objects, packages, and examples that students bring to class. Socratic (with apologies to the philosopher) and rhetorical questions abound.

What makes something, some activity, or some person fun? How would you define “fun”? Are there categories of fun activities and things? Are some things more fun than others? Why?

Is “fun” the same as “play”? Is fun-seeking behavior an innate human characteristic or culturally constructed and variable from society to society?

Are there ideas or attitudes related to fun which fill out a Nacirema feel good tool kit? (such as “happy,” “smile,” “being liked,” “have a nice day”)

Are there age limitations to fun? Is fun different for males and females? How does fun vary across ethnic groups?

How does the theme of fun fit with other American cultural themes, such as

individualism, independence, and self-reliance?  
Life, liberty, and the pursuit of ... fun?

Might there be a theory of fun?

Finally, to what extent does our notion of the value of fun shape our sense of ourselves and the world around us?

To further explore an anthropological perspective, students can do additional research on fun:

- Has the nature of fun in the U.S. changed over time? [history]
- Is fun the same in other industrial societies? European? Asian? Islamic? Pre-Industrial societies?[cross-cultural views]
- has an American conception of fun, and even the English word “fun,” spread throughout the developed world? [diffusion]
- How can we describe fun holistically? How many disciplines can contribute to an understanding of fun? [holism]

In conclusion, fun, because it is a familiar, though not well understood dimension of contemporary life (as well as an idea which is “good to think, and because it links values and actions with symbols and practices) is a perfect illustration of the concept of culture defined as “the publically available symbolic forms through which people experience and express meaning” (Swidler 1986:273). Through fun we can acquire an understanding of “how culture shapes or constrains action” and how “culture provides a repertoire of capacities from which varying strategies of action [which are cultural products

themselves] may be constructed” (Swidler 1986: 284). In the introductory classroom where students first encounter our discipline, “fun” offers an engaging, and grounded (Metz 2002) subject for understanding ourselves as well as the central concept of culture. But for now, enuf fun already.

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## **Gunspeak: the Influence of America's Gun Culture on Everyday Communication**

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My goal is to describe the linguistic ways that an aspect of United States culture, guns, gun-affection, and gun ownership, considered important by significant numbers of citizens, appears in familiar speech. In putting common linguistic elements of the world's third largest society in my sights, I am attempting a small contribution to what Marcus and Fischer call a "repatriated anthropology" in which "the most important subject for cultural criticism, . . . is not these conventionally defined topics [of kinship, migrants, public rituals, and ethnic minorities, for example], but the study of mass-cultural forms, and, . . . mainstream middle-class life. . . [including] the formation of public consciousness. " (1986:152). According to Traube, anthropologists have shied away from studying American popular culture, regarding it as an "impoverished object," without the "exoticism inscribed in the anthropological culture concept" (1995:128).

To frame this description in sociolinguistics terms, I use the concept of "cultural presupposition," meaning "participants in speech interaction come to encounters with an array of knowledge and understandings (models) of their culture as expressed and transmitted through language" (Bonvillain 2003:61). The cultural presuppositions underlying gunspeak are taken for granted by its users, and as is normally the case with cultural bases, applied automatically, without conscious reflection or decision-making. As such, the pervasive presence of guns in American culture, in history as mediated by

film and story, and through all forms of entertainment and boy enculturative practices, is as familiar and influential as camels in traditional Bedouin society or cattle among the Nuer.

Gunspeak appears as a diverse semantic field. Similes abound, such as "Written words are like bullets. I'm shooting at death" (W.T. Vollmann, *Rising Up, Rising Down* (2003 HarperCollins), NPR, "Bookworm," 11/27/04). Metaphor and metonymy, types of semantic transfer, permeate gunspeak. Metaphor, for example, exists with the common attribution of someone as a "big gun," "big shot," or "hot shot," in which the entire person is identified as prominent or powerful in terms of firearms or firepower. Metonymy, "the substitution of one entity by another based on their shared occurrence in context rather than similarity of their attributes" (Bonvillain 2003:66), is a more limited form of substitution than metaphor. For example, in two references to body parts as "guns," a gun refers only to a specific part of the person. In recent years the fitness and body building craze has boys saying, "Look at my guns" or "show me your guns," meaning muscles, particularly biceps. Over the preceding century, the penis has often been referred to as a "gun." In his novel *Battle Cry*, Leon Uris describes the humiliating instruction of a marine private being taught not to call his rifle a gun: "Jones then stood there, holding his 'gun' in his right hand and his rifle in his left and recited: 'This is my rifle,/ This is my gun,/ This is for fighting,/ This is for fun'" (1954:53). This same usage appears in at least five other sources (Lighter 1994:990; Wentworth and Flexner 1967:235). When considered in its fullest presence and richness, gunspeak is one of our most familiar and useful ways of expressing ourselves, revealing a relationship with firearms so strong it may surprise some.

In their slender volume *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson examine the profound relationship between metaphors and culture, asserting that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action (1980:3). Gunspeak metaphors describe varied relationships with guns, firearms, and their qualities or projectiles. In some cases people speak of themselves as firearms (a loose cannon; a straight shooter; to target something; to take a shot at something, as having a hair-trigger), or describe themselves as having attributes of a gun (hair-trigger; to be out of bullets or ammunition), or feel shaped by a firearm (to be armed, to feel under the gun). Metaphors of gunspeak suggest cultural attitudes about power and hierarchy embedded in competition. Over and over the influences of firearms, seen through the action-based words and images of gunspeak, bespeak a contentious society based on ranking, aggression, and conflict. The relationship between culture and metaphor as described by Lakoff and Johnson sounds not unlike the ideas expressed above by B. L. Whorf: "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:22).

### U.S. Gun Culture

According to sociologist Gary Kleck, the United States "almost certainly has more firearms in civilian hands than any other nation in the world" (1997:63). Exact numbers of civilian firearms are arguable and difficult to ascertain, but in 1994 they numbered upwards of 235 million, of which 80 million were handguns (Kleck 1997:64). Data suggest that gun-owning households often own more than one. "Among households with a handgun, the average number of handguns owned is about 2.8" (69). Cross-nationally, the proportion of U.S. households with guns is "extraordinarily

high," with Norway a close second at 32% (Kleck 1997:68). Switzerland and Israel are other industrial societies with high rates of gun ownership, yet among these four countries, only the U.S. has a significant problem with gun-related violence and might be described as gun-obsessed, judging by the high emotions generated by gun-control debates. The social vigor and political lobbying of the "nearly three million" members of the National Rifle Association, and the fame of its recent leader Charlton Heston's "not from my cold, dead hands" speech, are but one prominent example of gun-addiction in the United States.

Although the number and rate of firearm-caused deaths in the U.S. has been declining since a high of 39,595 in 1993, the number killed by guns in 2001, the most recent year available, was still 29,573 (CDC 2003), a figure not approached in any other industrial nation. In addition to those killed by guns, an estimated 3 to 4 times as many suffer non-lethal wounds, numbering perhaps as many as 200,000 (medlib.med.utah.edu), although these data are not systematically collected. As many as 2.6 million children live in 1.4 million homes where firearms are kept loaded or stored with ammunition (Schuster, Franke, Bastian, Sor, Halfon 2000). Another phenomenon of U.S. firearm deaths is that the percentage of those killed as suicides has steadily grown to 57 percent of all gun deaths in 2001. A gun provides the most common means of suicide, and the most successful. Perhaps most striking of all is the accumulation of gun deaths over time. In the last twenty-five years in the U.S., a period of remarkable affluence and domestic "peace," more than 830,000 people have died in gun violence, about 14 times the number of Americans who died in the Vietnam War. Therefore, it is not surprising that an impressive number of words, phrases, and non-verbal gestures pertain to the culture of firearms and

provide us with familiar metaphorical grounding.

### Gunspeak

We define our honesty and trustworthiness with gunspeak when we call someone a straight-shooter, or our willingness to try something when we agree to take a shot at it. If the chances of success are low, it is a long shot, but regardless of the difficulty or obstacles, we should stick to our guns and not be gunshy. If something is definite, it is a sure shot; if unfocused, it is a scattershot. If I want to try out an idea, I'll run it up the flag pole and see if it gets shot down. If we feel strongly, we'll stick to our guns. We might take pot shots at someone who annoys us, and if really annoyed, give them both barrels. He shot a glance at his rival and took a parting shot before leaving the room. If we become psycho, we "go postal," or "go ballistic."

Gunspeak seems to be everywhere. The headline "5 Young Guns Who Nearly Took Memphis" is about an international bridge tournament, not an armed assault (Truscott 2001:A21). "Young guns shine at Hollywood premier" (USA Today 8/31/00, p. 2D). Many corporate hot shots rose through the ranks faster than a speeding bullet to become big shots.

TV shows may attract viewers with their pseudo-news natures in CNN's "Crossfire," MSNBC's "Firing Line" or AMC's "Shootout," and William Buckley's "Firing Line" was on for 33 years, but I would rather watch the sitcom, "Just Shoot Me." The title of the letters-to-the-editor page of the The New York Times' Circuits section is "Incoming."

Some gunspeak has a particular history. When Andy Sipowicz on NYPD Blue said, "You just be keeping your powder dry," he was

encouraging his partner to act cautiously and prudently, to be on the alert. He echoed Oliver Cromwell's centuries-old advice to his troops, as did Margaret Mead in her only book on American culture, *Keep Your Powder Dry* (1942). Moving anything completely, lock, stock, and barrel, refers to the three basic parts of a rifle, and was used by Sir Walter Scott in 1817. Surprise, registered as "son of a gun!," may derive from children registered as such who were conceived or born among the cannon of a sailing ship.

Gunspeak thrives in the hypercompetitive world of U.S. sports. Pitcher Roger Clemens is 40 years old, and "he's still throwing bullets out there" (The New York Times 7/5/01, p. C10). And "AL West reloads for 2002" (---3.27/02, p. 4C). "Mets try to turn season around minus big guns" (NYT 7/1/01, p. 3SP). From a football headline and article: "Shootout. Two quarterbacks winging passes as if they were gunslingers firing bullets at each other in dusty Dodge City" "Favre shoots himself in the foot in a showdown that fizzles" (NYT 1/21/02, p. D5). NASCAR Winston Cup driver Joe Memechek was a "hired gun" for the race at Watkins Glen (NYT 7/1/01, p. 3SP).

Bullets are everywhere. "He asked me if I had any bullets in my tank" i.e., whether I had any energy (NYT 10/19/04, p. 1SP). ". . . PowerPoint has become a generic term for any bullet-ridden [riddled?] presentation" and "when [PowerPoint] bullets are flying, no one is safe" (Schwartz 2003:12WK). The anti-missile defense system is described as a system to "hit a bullet with a bullet." Investors are always looking for "funds that can dodge tax bullets" (Braham 2001:78). "This budget shoots with real bullets," asserted a Congressman on NPR (4/25/01). But if a man is infertile or has a low sperm count, he is said to be shooting blanks.

The legacy of the imagined Wild West lives on in gunspeak. A popular lottery game is

called "Quick Draw." Stagecoaches are long gone, yet we refer to sitting in the front passenger seat as riding shotgun, or as one student said, "shottie." "Bush and Rumsfeld may have to holster guns," according to one headline (NYT 6/3/01, p. 20). When Canon advertises, "Shoot first. Edit later," it is playing on stereotypical constructions from the Old West (NYT 5/31/01, p. D5). Or it may be used in association with historic individuals. Extended StayAmerica uses Annie Oakley in its series of "Famous Road Warriors" quoting her, "I only wanted a hotel room. I wasn't planning to shoot the whole budget," adding "Aiming for a comfortable hotel at an affordable price? Bulls-eye!" (USAT, Sept. 27, 2000, p. 12A)

Guns lurk in our gestures as well as our words, as parents of boys know well. The single-handed finger-gun gesture frequently used toward other cars while traveling has become more complex. Now boys use both arms and hands, pretending to chamber a round in a rifle and aim it, often with sound effects; if they are "shooting" a finger pistol, they use both hands to steady it, as they have seen in police dramas. Three years ago, two New Jersey kindergartners were suspended for pointing their finger "guns" at each other. Adults use the gestures too. After scoring a direct conversational hit, someone might pretend to blow smoke from the barrel of an index finger, or having made a foolish statement, might hold a finger gun to his head in mock suicide.

So embedded is gun culture that my son's keyboard offers "gunshots" as one of the instrumental modes of choice. He can play "Ode to Joy" completely with gunshot sounds. In the popular adolescent world of PaintBall, however, an interesting reversal has taken place. The weapons used to shoot paint globules are called "markers," not pistols or guns, and therefore can be sold over the Internet.

## Conclusion

"Gunspeak" is generalized throughout the language. As such it becomes an unself-conscious complement to violent non-gunspeak language which also laces our speech, whether when we say we "bombed" a test, or in our "culture wars," political "wars of words," our wars on terror, cancer, or drugs, discussion of "battleground" states and the "voter-drive ground war" (NYT 10/20/04, p. A1) in the fall election, or in the speech of adolescent boys (and college students) as they endlessly play videogames, shouting, "Die. Die. I killed you."

Gunspeak is reminiscent of Toni Morrison's passionate view of violent language expressed in her Nobel acceptance speech:

The systematic looting of language can be recognized by the tendency of its users to forgo its nuanced, complex, mid-wifery properties, replacing them with menace and subjugation. Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge (1994:15-16).

Less vehemently, at the very least, gunspeak is a "fashion of speaking" supporting Whorf's assertion that "there are connections but not correlations or diagnostic correspondences between cultural norms and linguistic patterns. . ." (Whorf 1941:93). Hoiyer might as well have had gunspeak in mind when he described "a functional interrelationship between socially patterned habits of speaking and thinking and other socially patterned habits" (1964:148).



Catching up on a newspaper I had a gunspeak moment when I read the headline, "An Itchy Trigger Finger Draws Lethal Return Fire" (Byrne 2002), but the article was about a chess match. At one of my sons' Little League games I snapped awake fearing the worst when I heard the coach shouting to the batter, "Pull the trigger, Sam! Pull the trigger!" But he was only urging a cautious child to swing the bat, not to shoot anyone. Frankly, all this gunspeak just blows me away. If cartoonist Walt Kelly had been an anthropologist examining U.S. culture, he might have had Pogo say, "We have met the [Exotic Other], and they are us."

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## **America the Fearful: Enculturated Anxiety in Modern U.S. Society**

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"A scholar can hardly be better employed than in destroying a fear."

Clifford Geertz (2000:42)

What's wrong with the United States? We have a culture of fear, for one thing. Fear is one of our most elemental emotions. Its evolutionary dimension, its survival value, is obvious: danger is near, be alert, seek safety, flee, hide, fight, do not let your guard down. Such fear is normal. Its goal is preservation. Fear is bio-cultural, with physiological consequences, sometimes mildly generalized, described by Hans Selye as "stress" (1956), or severe as in Walter Cannon's "voodoo death" (1942), but its cultural forms are what interest me. Webster defines "fear" as "a feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of danger, evil, pain, etc; timidity; dread; terror; fright; apprehension... a feeling of uneasiness; disquiet, anxiety; concern" (Webster's New World Dictionary). Our many synonyms for fear, including angst, worry, horror, and panic, suggest varied causes and intensities. In today's post-9/11 climate of terrorism, we should remember that the word "terror" refers to "intense fear," deriving from Old French and Latin meaning "frighten."

Many have noticed fear's self-replicating nature. Henry David Thoreau wrote, "nothing is so much to be feared as fear" (1851), an idea FDR echoed in his first inaugural address: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," referring to traumas from the Great

Depression (1933). Among the four essential freedoms Roosevelt later described in a 1941 message to Congress was “freedom from fear” (all historic quotes from *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations*, 16th edition). This double whammy reverberates in the New York Times columns of economist Paul Krugman who writes critically about “fearing fear itself” and the “unreasoning fear” preoccupying Republican political aspirants (2000, 2007).

Some of our anxieties are inevitable by-products of our rapidly changing world. In addition to the social and technological changes of the present, other characteristics of modern life— isolation, loneliness, social fragmentation, shrinking kin-based support networks, loss of community, competitive consumerism—all provide fertile soil for fear.

In *American Tough*, British scholar Rupert Wilkinson identified four historic American fears: fear of being owned (including fears of dependence and of being controlled and shaped by others); fear of falling apart (a fear of anarchy and isolation); fear of winding down (losing energy, dynamism, forward motion); and fear of falling away from a past virtue and promise (1984: 2, 114). Barbara Ehrenreich wrote about similar anxieties in *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class* (1990). Susan Faludi describes how our current levels of fear have revived and heightened asymmetrical gender relations in *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post 9/11 America* (2007). In Amy Schalet’s comparative study of adolescents in the U.S. and the Netherlands, the deep concern American parents have about their teenagers’ sexuality can be understood as parental fear for their well-being, although she does not use the word “fear” explicitly (2000). Fear affects constructions of gender relations and sexuality as well as other dimensions of life.

Several authors have written about our misplaced fears, i.e. how we consider high risk

those behaviors and situations which are not (Glassner 1999, Kluger 2006, Lee 2004, Stossel and Varner 2007). Others have emphasized the political uses of fear, including Frank Furedi’s *Politics of Fear* (2005). Fear is a prominent feature of life today.

In myriad familiar ways we accept lives saturated with fears, however unlikely or misplaced. As with most familiar culture, we take them for granted (Schalet 2000:79).

Consider a few examples:

- At a lake near my house: Lake Closed. High levels of bacteria.
- At a pool: Danger. Shallow Water No Diving. Warning. No Lifeguard on Duty.
- At the beach: Warning. Under-Water Hazards. Strong Currents.
- On a restaurant menu: “Consumption of raw or undercooked food, such as meat, shellfish, and eggs, may contain harmful bacteria and may cause severe illness or death.”
- On an aspirin bottle: “Warning: Aspirin Sensitive Patients: Do Not Take this product if you have had a severe allergic reaction to aspirin, . . . cross-reactions may occur in patients.”
- At the gas pump: Warning. Failure to Follow These Warnings Could Cause Serious Injury or Death.
- On every wine bottle: GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS. (2) CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IMPAIRS YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE A CAR OR OPERATE MACHINERY, AND MAY CAUSE HEALTH PROBLEMS.

In every airport frequent loud announcements never let us forget the threat

of terrorism: The current threat level is orange. Do not leave your luggage unattended or carry any luggage for someone you do not know. On every car's sun-visor, about air bags: WARNING. DEATH or SERIOUS INJURY can occur. Daily, we are warned and warned. In our litigious society, we caution constantly about the dire consequences of mundane acts, motivated, I suspect, more by fears of lawsuits than genuine concern.

Our culture seems to have done something different with this elemental emotion. We have made fear useful far beyond political purposes. We have commodified it as a moneymaker, as a facet of commerce. We promote, advertise, and enculturate fear. We enlist fear as a marketing tool. Moreover, we use intense fear as entertainment. If these uses of dread or anxiety are not exactly new, they seem more pervasive than in past decades. It is the daily cumulative presence of fears, large and small, real and imagined, which I find striking, and unsettling.

Sex sells, fun sells, weight loss sells, but fear trumps all. Ads for miscellaneous products play upon our worries: "Take the Fear Factor out of Checking Your Cholesterol." TV and magazine ads market drugs directly. Take this medicine if you have that condition. BUT do not take it if you have any of the half dozen conditions which are then listed.

Advertisers, and politicians at every election, have long known the power of fear to sell. It is not simply the marketers' faults, however. We consumers are entirely cooperative.

No activity or area of life is worry free. Consumer society emphasizes fear of personal shortcomings or social disapproval. Politicians and talking heads on TV and radio hype fears about everything from the imminent collapse of social security to the loss of basic American

cultural values. Religious firebrands promise eternal damnation to non-believers. The government warns about invading terrorists plotting massive destruction, dirty bombs concealed in shipping containers, and fuel trucks turned into bombs. Airlines won't let me take an open bottle of water on board. Chinese global domination, bird flu and HIV/AIDS pandemics, nuclear proliferation, rising gas prices, trans fats, gay marriage, the Republicans, and the Democrats all worry me, or at least someone insists that they should.

Television generates fear by creating the "mean world syndrome" as described by the late George Gerbner. According to Gerbner, the more one watches television, the more one thinks the world is a dangerous place. This fear is rational, given the real and fictional crime and murder saturating us nightly on TV. Specific channels and programs push fears even more:

- Lifetime Channel cultivates fear in women. No relationship is safe, secure.
- An ad for "Lost": "FEAR. BETRAYAL."
- Nightly Lou Dobbs on CNN presents dire warnings about the results of our "Broken Borders" across which stream illegal aliens
- The 11 o'clock news infamously reports all the reasons you should fear leaving your house or opening your door.
- The 2007 Super Bowl ads, viewed by some 90 million people, were notable for their scary nature, especially one for Bud Light showing an attractive, young couple stopping at night for ax-wielding and chain saw-wielding hitchhikers carrying that beer. Researchers at UCLA studying brain patterns of subjects viewing Super Bowl ads demonstrated that the strongest responses to many ads were those of fear and anxiety (Hampp 2007).
- Stephen Colbert satirizes our fears on his "Threatdown." He makes the point perfectly: fear is everywhere.

The Weather Channel, with more than 85 million viewers, stands out as a purveyor of fear, especially to the elderly and the infirm confined to their homes and mesmerized in anxiety by threatening weather extremes.

TWC's weathertainment language is alarming. Nightly we hear about megastorms, supercells, wind shears, category 4 or 5 hurricanes, F5 tornados, flash floods, tsunami devastation, and drought. The glee with which weathertainers announce the arrival of hurricane season has little to do with responsible weather information. Every evening, someone's home is swept away, a forest fire threatens, a volcano erupts, or giant hailstones assault vehicles. But mostly not today, and not nearby, because usually these stories are from the past or from elsewhere, and hence the unnecessary anxiety generated by the channel. Generalized weather worry is not unlike the generalized fear we are supposed to have from domestic terrorists, except that weather is more familiar, is more real, and therefore is scarier.

The cumulative effect of intense weather stories and endless warnings about dangerous weather is to increase our worries and our sense of vulnerability even when it is a balmy 70 degrees outside. Today may be beautiful, but look what's coming. There is no humor in weathertainment, only anxiety about potential threats heightened with images of historic disasters. TWC has created the mean weather world syndrome.

We are surrounded by warnings and fearmongers, but they are just a part of our culture of fear. We actively seek out scary experiences. Many of us love the rush we get on roller coasters and extreme rides, but I will never forget the father forcing his crying 8-year-old son onto an intense ride at Busch Gardens

in Virginia. Son: "I don't want to go, it's too scary!" Father: "It's not scary. It's fun!"

Children learn early to associate fear with fun. A Berenstain Bears Halloween book for children, *Ghost of the Forest*, ends with Leader Jane saying, "There are no such things [as ghosts]! There never have been! But just as sure as night follows day—it's fun to be scared of them anyway" (Berenstain 1988). The fear-fun connection turns up elsewhere. The Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf is "Fun, educational, and just a little scary." An ad for figurines based on Tim Burton's *The Nightmare before Christmas* reads, "Life's no fun without a good scare" (Discover June 2007). Halloween is the annual pinnacle where fear and fun mix (Blum 1999, Stoeltje 2007).

Fear as entertainment permeates American culture. Both in film and in print, purveyors of fear have huge followings. Stephen King's books sell tens of millions of copies and become successful, frightening films. Teen-oriented slasher films are widely watched. Horror films such as *Halloween*, *Friday the 13th*, Wes Craven's *Scream* films, and many others, more numerous in recent years, are without question more gory and grotesque. Many in the genre are promoted as fun. *Hannibal* was reviewed in *USA Today* as "brain-eating, face-slicing fun." *Resident Evil* was "A Killer Thriller!" "It's Terrifying Scary Fun." *The Haunting* was "A funhouse of shrieks and screams."

"Thrillers" thrive, playing to our fears of the unpredictable and the unstable. A recent film *P2* in a full-page *New York Times* ad promotes itself with "The only thing more terrifying than being alone is discovering you're not. ... A new level of fear." Rated R for "Strong violence/gore, terror and language." (NYT 11/9/07). *Saw IV* is "The scariest, most suspenseful *Saw* movie yet" and "The best horror movie of the year!" rated R for "Sequences of grisly bloody violence and

torture throughout, and for language.” The Mist, Stephen King’s newest “visionary tale of terror” is both “terrifying and fun” (NYT 11/23/07). The new 3D Beowulf with its “intense sequences of violence and disturbing images” is “your own private fun house” (NYT 11/23/07). The special effects “fright industry” keeps pushing the envelope with new terrifying sights. Fear provides a direct, conspicuous source of entertaining fun. Fear is commercially lucrative.

The usual interpretation of popular artificial terror is that it provides stimulation in an otherwise bland existence and that it does so in a safe environment (Blum 1999, Stoeltje 2007). Perhaps, but that doesn’t go far enough. We have enculturated ourselves with this approach to artificial fear; we have learned to seek fright and to tease ourselves with it. We welcome market-driven fear. We use fear to strengthen the cultural theme of toughness, often reinforcing gender stereotypes by displaying male toughness in the presence of females.

Beyond frightening films and books are other sources of anxiety from which there is no easy escape. Consider a random list:

- Do I have bad breath? body odor? yellow teeth? Am I going bald?
- What are the results of my prostate test, colon test, or your PAP smear, or mammogram?
- Is the mall safe?
- Are the children safe playing at the park? in the woods? at home alone?
- If I get a flu shot, will I be the one in a million who gets paralyzed?
- Is that hamburger thoroughly cooked?
- Is that bag of spinach safe to eat?
- Does the toy made in China I just bought have lead in its paint, or is it coated with toxic chemicals?

In the U.S., fear’s name is legion. It is culturally entrenched and exacts a cost. The Mayo Clinic estimates that 12 percent of the U.S. population experiences a phobia at some point, “making this disorder the most common mental illness in the U.S.”

[www.mayoclinic.com/health/phobias/DS00272/](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/phobias/DS00272/)

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that anxiety disorders, ranging from specific phobias, panic disorders, social phobias, PTSD, OCD, and generalized anxiety disorders, “affect about 40 million American adults age 18 and older (about 18%) in a given year, causing them to be filled with fearfulness and uncertainty”

[www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/anxiety.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/anxiety.cfm).

These private anxieties are not necessarily caused by pervasive fear-enculturation to which I am calling attention, but they do not exist in a vacuum either. Our stressful, anxious cultural climate makes them worse.

U.S. fearfulness plays a role in our international perspectives. While in Mali recently, Jimmy Buffet commented that if one read and took seriously every State Department warning, one would never travel outside the U.S. (Vanity Fair, Nov. 2007). Fear is confining and feeds xenophobia, both at home and abroad.

Clifford Geertz, writing about Na non-marriage and Han-Na relations in China, noted that difference powers most fear (2001: 30). If difference drives fear, our limited familiarity with other cultures increases our tendency to magnify both difference and the fear it creates.

Others have noted our exaggerated world of anxiety. Writing in Foreign Affairs, Dominique Moïsi, a senior advisor at the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI) in Paris, extends the idea of fear in the U.S. to Europe as well. Moïsi contrasts the Euro-American “culture of fear,” with the Arab-Muslim world’s “culture of humiliation” and the Asian “culture

of hope” (2007). “The United States and Europe are divided by a common culture of fear.” Each of the fears emphasized for Europe applies equally well to the U.S., concerning loss of control over territory, security, and identity— “in short, one’s destiny” (2007:9). Both European and American fears include “fear of being blown up by radical Islamists;” “fear of being left behind economically,” and “fear of being ruled by an outside power, even a friendly one” (9).

Canadian journalist, writer, and activist Naomi Klein is on the mark when she asserts, “The main difference between [our] two countries is that the United States is driven by fear. There is not a strong social safety net in the U.S., so you worry that you will have no money when you retire, or have no one to take care of you when you get sick. The look-after-yourself mentality is at the core of how the United States has chosen to build its society” (Solomon 2003). She describes larger, conspicuous sources of anxiety, a situation amplified by our many enculturated fears.

Is there hope for less culturally-induced fearfulness? Not much, I fear, but becoming more aware of it is an important step. On the positive side, consumer culture creates counter-swings and counter-niches by promoting the absence of fear. Fearless this and fearless that identify many websites, from shopping and driving to music and sports predictions and hundreds more. “Fearless Planet” on the Discovery Channel seems oddly named, except that it emphasizes this counter-theme. Nick Lachey and Eva Mendes are *Cosmopolitan Magazine’s* “Fun, Fearless, Male and Female of 2007.” “Mastering yourself makes you fearless” is the tagline for the recent (2006) Jet Li martial arts film, *Fearless*. The Fearless Living Institute sells “Be Fearless” bracelets. “Fearless” is the new marketing logo of Oberlin College: “We are Oberlin. Fearless.” Fearlessness fits well with a

culture emphasizing macho toughness. In a fearful culture, being fearless is distinctive and marketable. It does not neutralize fear, but at least highlights a welcome counterweight.

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## The United States and the Power of Myth

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When teaching a course on Usan (i.e., US) culture, I describe the United States as a nation that coheres through a compelling corpus of myth. For Usan students, myth is something that affects other peoples who, lacking the sophistication and scientific curiosity of Usan, struggle to apply some sort of sacred text to an understanding of their circumstances. Hence, my suggestion that Usan society is grounded in myth is met with incredulity. My students, who cannot shake the impression that a myth is essentially an untruth, believe Usans are not taken in by myths, but, on the contrary, labor to dispel them. Clearly what is immediately called for is a fundamental reworking of their understanding of myth along the lines of Middleton's definition: "...a statement about society and man's place in it and the surrounding universe" (1967: x). Beyond this, their ideas on how myth is disseminated must also be adjusted, because Usan mythology, though it certainly may be ensconced in a musty, seldom-consulted tome, or shared by a revered elder entertaining a circle of rapt young listeners at day's end, is far more likely to be broadcast via magazines, radio, television, film, and the internet. Through such ubiquitous media Usans are in fact at least as immersed in their mythology as any other society.

My favorite Usan tale is what I call "The Myth of the Bad Mother," which I introduce in my course under the rubric, "Manifest

Destiny—It's a Guy Thing." As these titles indicate, the Bad Mother myth is first and foremost a myth about gender. The Bad Mother stands in contrast to the Good Mother, who expeditiously individuates her child. The Bad Mother, however, refuses to release him (masculine pronoun intended) to become his own person. She may keep him shrouded in infancy, and/or she may feminize him, jealously preventing him from attaining his rightful manhood by misdirecting him toward womanly pursuits. The climax of any retelling of the Bad Mother myth is when the young hero breaks away from his mother's crushing grip, and becomes productive not only on his own account, but on behalf of others beyond his immediate kin.

Like so many Usan phenomena, as Linton (1937) pointed out many years ago, the Myth of the Bad Mother has its origins elsewhere. Indeed, it seems to reach into the most ancient layers of Indo-European thought. For example, in one version of his life story, the Greek hero Heracles undergoes a period where he is taken in by Queen Omphale. He dresses as a woman and does women's work until such time as he realizes he must resume his adventures. Similarly, Odysseus is distracted from his quest by the nymph Calypso, who detains him in a womblike cave. Gilmore (1990: 39) reminds us of the German legend of Tannhäuser, who escapes the indulgent care of Venus to return to glorious, manly battle. But the retelling that addresses most specifically the notion of masculinity as it has been celebrated in our society is that of the master mythographer Sigmund Freud, in, among other sources, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1961). According to Freud, there is nothing the (male) infant desires more than cathexis with a love object, i.e., his mother, at least in the earliest stage of his life. For the sake of civilization, however, it is imperative this desire remain unfulfilled. This is because the dyad of mother-

and- infant is a sterile one; it is only when the infant is thwarted in his desire to unite with the love object that he learns to channel his productive energies outward, toward the needs of society. Hence civilization is tragically but necessarily founded on the defeat of this most basic form of self- gratification, and only a Bad Mother would interfere with such an essential dynamic.

The Bad Mother mythic formula is central to the plot lines of many classic Usan books and films. The famed WWII romance *Casablanca*, for example, can be seen through this lens. Rick, an able-bodied and intelligent expatriated American, could be contributing substantially to the war effort, but instead languishes in Morocco, running a seedy café. Any greater ambitions on Rick's part are scuttled by the memories of a love affair from which he has never fully recovered. His love object is Ilsa, a Bad Mother who haunts him because she has not been effectively rejected. Circumstances conspire to bring Ilsa back into his life, thus giving Rick a second opportunity to win his freedom, but not before it seems he might once again succumb to the blandishments of cathexis. Eventually, however, he manages to shake off his ill-starred attraction, and nobly restores Ilsa to her husband's side. Only then is Rick able to undertake his own manly share of battle, and the conclusion to the film implies that he, in concert with his (male) partner-in-crime, will go on to frustrate many a Fascist design.

Like all myths, the Myth of the Bad Mother is subject to variation. The Bad Mother, for instance, is not always represented as female or even as feminine, though the effect she has on her victim remains the same. Mind-altering substances, machines, and socialist systems of government have also been cast in the role of Bad Mother, depriving men of their individuated masculinity. Despite Freud's belief

that rejection of the love object is a key component in the making of civilization, in some media products civilization is depicted as over- elaborated, and hence itself takes on the qualities of a Bad Mother. In *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, for instance, McMurphy and his asylum mates are beset by an especially oppressive Civilization, represented by the avatar of castrating bitches, Nurse Ratched. When McMurphy and his merry band contrive to escape from the asylum, it is hardly coincidental that their outing involves drinking, whoring, sailing, and other masculine pastimes. *The Shawshank Redemption* echoes the plotline of *Cuckoo's Nest*, although *Shawshank* is less overtly misogynist and ends far more happily.

In class, however, I only touch on these examples to save time for a full examination of my favorite source of Usan mythology—and here I am in good company (see, e.g., Kottak 1990: 101-105)—*Star Trek*. Bad Mother figures abound in the original series, although they are not absent from *The Next Generation*, the Borg being perhaps the most prominent. But when the original *Trek* came out, the United States was in need of the sort of renewal Bad Mother mythology might provide. Our efforts to stop Communism had bogged down in Vietnam, and the number of Usans drifting away from the conviction that the Usan way was the only true way had grown alarmingly. Unsurprisingly, then, *Trek* featured several stories where Bad Mothers reminded us of the evils of Communism, and of the self-indulgence that might cause us to relax our vigilance against such wrongheaded paths. Episodes that fit this mold include "The Return of the Archons," where a machine strictly regulates the behavior of its humanoid subjects; "The City on the Edge of Forever," where Captain Kirk must allow the woman he loves to die so that the timeline that leads to the glorious conquest of space can be restored; "The Apple," where a machine maintains a population of infantilized

humanoids in an idyllic but unproductive environment; and “The Paradise Syndrome,” where Kirk, stricken with amnesia, settles into marital bliss with a comely Indian maiden (no kidding) until First Officer Spock rudely recalls him to duty. For my course, however, the Bad Mother show I use is entitled “This Side of Paradise.”

In this episode, the Bad Mother is a consciousness-altering substance called “spores,” but there is a distinct feminine cast to the evil involved here in the person of Leila, a woman from Spock’s past who lures him into spore use. Leila belongs to a contingent of humans charged with setting up an agricultural colony on Omicron Ceti III, but well after the colony had been established, it was discovered that the planet was uninhabitable due to chronic radiation. Kirk and the Enterprise crew had been assigned the unhappy task of retrieving the bodies of the colonists, but upon reaching their destination, they are astonished to find the colonists alive and well, though not living in the way proper humans should—they engage only in the amount of agricultural activity necessary to sustain them, and there has not even been any population growth from the time they arrived. It turns out the spores are responsible for this steady state, since while they protect the humans from radiation, they also strip a man of his drive to achieve. Over time everyone from the Enterprise falls under the spell of the spores, and the crew prepares to abandon its mission to join the colonists. Kirk, however, recovers the strength of will to throw off the spores, and then induces the others to do the same. The colonists suddenly realize they have been deterred from their aspirations. The first words uttered by their leader, Sandoval, as he regains his presence of mind, are “We’ve done nothing here. No accomplishments, no progress.” Since the colonists cannot survive on the planet without the spores, they are evacuated to a new planet

where, as Sandoval says, they can “get some work done.” Back on the Enterprise, Dr. McCoy compares the ship’s departure to a second exile from Eden. Kirk counters with a stirring speech on how men were not meant to live in Paradise, how they must “struggle, claw their way up, scratch for every inch of the way.” Spock’s final assessment of his experience was that he was happy for the first time in his life. But this happiness, of course, had to be displaced by the necessary discontent that accompanies the state of being civilized.

How motivational is the Bad Mother myth? In concert with other Usan myths and the way they are operationalized economically, socially, and politically, I believe the Myth of the Bad Mother is in fact an effective call to action. Henry (1963) once identified all culture as absurd, and the secret to maintaining a culture is to prevent its adherents from fully recognizing that fact. In the United States we accomplish this through a very well-integrated set of institutions, along with a ruthless suppression of alternatives, although enough of these are allowed to exist in the margins to cull off troublemakers. Those contradictions that occasionally emerge in the mainstream become objects of ridicule, as Usans, perhaps more so than other peoples, deploy a cutting sense of humor to force those aspects of Usan life that make us most uncomfortable into a conceptual cage where they are less threatening (Robbins 1993: 66-67). All of these mechanisms are well developed in the United States, turning out Usans with the courage of their convictions, a courage that is sometimes sufficient to blind other peoples to Usan absurdity even when they have not directly been subject to our military wrath or economic displeasure.

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## **Institutional Politics, Support and Strategies**

### **One-Man Show: Job Security or Early Demise?**

Reflections on Starting Up an Anthropology  
Program at a Small Liberal Arts Institution

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Hanover College is a small (ca. 1000 students), private liberal arts institution, the oldest of its kind in the state (est. 1827). It is scenic and generally quiet, nestled in rural southern Indiana. Its student body comes predominantly from the tri-state area of Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio.

I was hired initially as a temporary replacement for the one full-time professor in our International Studies "department" who had met an early and unexpected death while traveling in his home country of India during the summer of 1990. My anthropological research had previously taken me to Latin America and Japan, and the then current academic Dean, to his credit, decried the College's lack of anthropology, making me an attractive candidate. His discussions with me at the time of hiring indicated his interest in making mine a tenure-track position the following year, and so I took the position, intending to make myself invaluable to the school's curriculum and programs. Little did I realize then that by maximizing my appeal to the institution, and thereby enhancing my job security, I might

ultimately threaten my very survival in the profession!

### Contributions to the Curriculum

At the time I was hired, Hanover offered only one course in cultural anthropology, taught by an international sociologist with some anthropological background. While what was required of me my first year was mostly filling in and carrying on already scheduled classes and programs, I introduced some new anthropology offerings and began suggesting the make-up of a coherent program of anthropology on campus. Greatly satisfied and relieved when my position did become tenure-track, I became a full member of the newly renamed Sociology and Anthropology Department, and an active member of the International Studies Program. It was time to draw up plans and make technical recommendations to the requisite committees and authorities to have anthropology take its rightful place amidst our other liberal arts offerings.

As it is now organized, our department offers both a sociology and a joint sociology/anthropology major, as well as minors in each discipline. As a socio-cultural anthropologist, the courses I consider fundamental to the major are the Introduction to Anthropology, which covers all the major subdisciplines, a course on ethnographic field methods, and another that studies the trends and major entities in anthropological theory. All majors are also required to do an independent research paper, and must pass a comprehensive evaluation. For electives, I offer various topical and area study courses that align with my main interests and the College's needs.

Besides offering students a new major and minor, anthropology on campus also offers students additional options in fulfilling their

General Degree Requirements on Cultures Other Than the West, and a sequence in the social sciences. In addition, courses in anthropology contribute to a new major and minor in Latin American Studies, and to the revamped International Studies Major (which I have chaired for several years). I have also contributed to academic courses and programs on Africa and the Americas, and Eurasia, have hosted speakers, offered an off-campus course in our one month intensive spring term, and work closely with our new Multicultural Affairs Office, as well as with several student organizations.

#### The Demands of Teaching and Administrative Functions

Our teaching load at Hanover is seven courses per year, arranged in a 3-3-1 pattern over fall, winter, and spring semesters. Besides these formal courses, many faculty such as myself also offer occasional --if not regular-- independent or directed studies for students, and oversee student internships and the comprehensive evaluations. The college self-identifies as a "teaching institution," where the greatest emphasis on faculty responsibility is put on teaching, with yearly salary adjustments and decisions on tenure and promotion made accordingly. Of course, the de facto teaching load for each faculty person differs as influenced by enrollment figures, lab or discussion sessions, discipline-based differences in content and methods, or the offering of different sections of the same course as opposed to different courses.

While the student-teacher ratio is currently about 11:1, in a usual fall or winter semester I will average seventy students enrolled in my three formal course offerings (no repetitive sections). Since my work and interests emphasize qualitative methods, and

since the College emphasizes writing skills across the curriculum, I spend a significant amount of time in preparing written assignments and exams, and especially in grading them. In addition, we faculty have several formal office hours per week, and many of us have additional meetings with students we oversee on independent or directed studies. These duties and the day-to-day lesson preparations and reading of assigned material -- particularly heavy in new and updated courses-- require considerable time and energy, and occupy the majority of my formal working hours during the nine months of the in-session academic year.

In addition to our teaching responsibilities, all Hanover faculty must serve yearly in the faculty committee or governance system. For some, this results in de facto positions in several committees outside of our department. Not only will one be on a formal faculty committee (such as Faculty Development or Curriculum), but more than a few of us will perform on an ad hoc committee (e.g., Student Retention) or in a service role (such as a search committee). A number of us also occupy positions in interdepartmental academic programs such as International Studies or Africa and the Americas. All of these occupied statuses come with their own administrative responsibilities, required meeting times, and special assignments (e.g., the drafting of documents, interviews or other formal conversations in person or via phone or e-mail, budget planning, course or other program coordinating, etc.). Although the workload related to such service may vary tremendously based on an individual's statuses, roles and expectations (imposed by self and/or others), many faculty find this set of responsibilities onerous and unnecessarily time-consuming.

### Little Time For Research: When Is an Anthropologist No Longer an Anthropologist?

In addition to our teaching and service requirements, all Hanover faculty are also required to continue to develop ourselves professionally, with the expectation of periodic presentation before peers. Funds are available for both meeting attendance and research, the latter through a competitive process, and sabbaticals are encouraged (though competitive) every seventh year.

There is irony here: regardless of the College's requirement to be an active scholar, it is what there is the least time for, and yet what many of the faculty want more to do. It is in this area of research and professional development that my own ideal models and expectations are most at conflict with the reality and demands of my position at Hanover. While I acknowledge and appreciate the technical support and monetary aid that is available through the College for the pursuit of professional development, given the priority of teaching demands and the extra time needed in service capacities, I am simply unable to pursue serious research or writing, and even keeping up with the more significant developments and publications in the discipline or my specific areas is a wished-for but chimerical goal.

True, I have made certain life course decisions, such as marrying and raising three children, which also demand much more of my time and energy than I can adequately give. But when my average 50-60 hour weeks leave virtually no time for serious scholarship, I'm not sure how much more time I'd be willing to give the profession, even had I no children's homework to check, games to play, meals to prepare, or significant other with which to squeeze in quality (forget quantity!) time.

But it is precisely this incongruity between my ideal regarding professional development and the reality of work that is the most jarring to my personal and professional identity. My most rewarding early work as an anthropologist was in Latin America, culminating in a field stay among the Bororo Indians of Brazil, and several articles and a book that are related to this. A period of three years in Japan followed, immediately preceding our move to Hanover. Since our move here, what had been the active (even adventurous?) life of a committed ethnographer has now transformed into the daily grind of the engrossed teacher. The teaching has been tremendous for my own education and maturation within the discipline. But somewhere along the line I stopped being someone working directly with the substance of anthropological study, and instead now largely interpret and share the work of others in an effort to open the eyes and minds of marginally interested students. This in itself may not be wrong or bad, but it is not the vision I had of myself as a professor of anthropology.

### Job Security vs. Job Mobility, and Short vs. Long-Term Survival

Clearly, my early strategy to be highly valued for my contributions to the institution and to win job security as a partial outcome, has proven successful. In spite of my current professional and personal angst, my contributions to my institution over the past seven years have been solid and significant, as indicated by tenure, promotion, and a decent salary (at least within the context of our profession). But my strategy has been successful to a fault. In the determination to win job security for myself through my participation and devoted involvement with the institution and its programs, I have lost my

idealized image of active and continuing presence in the discipline.

Although I have published an occasional article and have participated in some professional meetings and organizations, I suspect my scholarly output has not been sufficient (e.g. second book, articles in the high-powered journals) to keep me fully competitive were I to seek a position elsewhere; the few ads are either open rank or specific to associate professors, and most positions open for chairs or heads seem to require national prominence. Thus, by securing my position at a predominantly teaching institution through meeting its heavy demands on teaching and service, I may have jeopardized my overall professional mobility and limited my professional visibility due to insufficient scholarly productivity.

This in itself is not necessarily a bad thing, especially were I to be satisfied with remaining in my current position for the remainder of my professional life. But being a one-man show at a small but demanding institution has had another serious and detrimental effect: while I may have burst onto the Hanover scene as a bright star, as I now enter my eighth year I find myself burning out! Underrepresented as anthropology was when I arrived, there were simply too many directions to which I could turn on campus, all awaiting some type of presence, participation and contribution. I love anthropology, and saw its relevance on all sides; what might have started out as a strategy for job security quickly became a labor of love, as I strove with missionistic zeal to make anthropology a known entity on campus. But my willingness to participate and to be an active part of so much resulted in a level of involvement that is impossible to maintain.

How to cope with professional burnout? Although eligible for a sabbatical, I

find myself challenged to find adequate time to prepare an appropriate proposal or grant application that would sufficiently fund any potential ethnographic plans. The timing of the sabbatical is also problematic, since there is no one at Hanover to take over the courses I offer, and a temporary replacement would be in an awkward position overseeing independent studies as senior culminating experiences, or comprehensive evaluations, with students and in a program with which s/he has no prior experience. While I have made successful short-term adaptations to my environment, I wonder if the professional and personal costs are too high for long term survival?

#### Anthropology and the Liberal Arts: Survival Strategies

As the most liberal and liberating of disciplines, anthropology has tremendous wealth to offer any liberal arts or university program. This is our strength: as an anthropologist with field experience and training through the doctoral level, any one of us can bring an enormous potential to any campus. We can make real contributions to the curriculum via new course offerings; to a variety of academic and extracurricular programs through our field experiences and areas of expertise; and even to governance and student life issues through our trained ability to empathize via emic and culturally relative perspectives.

But as in my own case, these strengths, and our willingness to apply them, can be our own downfall! Especially as a one-person representative of the major (or if less extreme, in a department with one or two anthro colleagues), we cannot do it all! Even if your own interests are diverse and there are numerous inviting niches for you to fill, you would be well-advised as a new professor to



study the situation in broad context and make conscious, strategic choices about where to invest your time and energies. Perhaps the active membership and hands-on participation that are strangling me can be balanced with a more aloof availability for consultation or only occasional interaction. This might allow some breathing room.

Most faculty attempt to match teaching with research interests. Unfortunately, this is improbable in small programs where we wear the unwieldy ten-gallon hat of "generalist," forced to be the jack-of-all-trades, but master-of-none. Still, if we can make some painful decisions about courses that we'd like to or could offer, but won't for fear of overtaxing our ability to adequately keep up with the material, long-term survival may be enhanced. Offering an occasional seminar or "Topics in Anthropology" course on a developing or other interest not met in your normal teaching load is one way of mediating interests with demands.

We all should make time to keep at least our foot in the door of important research and writing interests, especially by maximizing summer or other time away from teaching. At a predominantly teaching institution, this is hard to manage: even the summer time needs major allotment to course revamping and upkeep not to mention the time needed to reforge the strained or worn ties with your loved ones. We can enhance our scholarly output by taking full advantage of in-house funding, and by working on smaller pieces that can be cleaned up and presented in the course of the average academic year, particularly at regional meetings. I try to keep notes on any bigger projects, and devote blocks of time to their completion when I can, but I have had to revise the timetable for their completion. Unfortunately, this can mean that we never fully integrate the latest relevant research into our work: by the time we're up to what had

been the most recent work, we're already really behind the stuff that's just come out!

Another helpful strategy for long-term survival is to analyze one's situation from longer term and broader context perspectives. What is a realistic expectation for your scholarship over the next 3-5 years? How is what you're doing being received by your local colleagues, or even by students? How much of it do you share? Keeping a broader perspective on what we're doing can help keep us out of the rut of routine and drudgery.

At the least, we must struggle to stay connected! Even if at an isolated locale, make the effort to regularly attend at least a regional conference. Interact with other FOSAP members, read the AAA Newsletter, hook up on e-mail with individuals and/or subscribed lists, and at least browse the major journals (perhaps your library can provide a "contents service" by sending you the photocopied contents pages of one or more journals you'd like to keep tabs on). Staying connected can also help us do what human populations have been doing since we've been around: sharing common interests, building relationships, enhancing access to knowledge and other resources through these relationships, and even having the advantage of experienced advice from the elders.

While offering some suggestions for professional survival as the one representative of the discipline, I am nevertheless painfully aware that I don't have all the answers. In fact, I too frequently feel depressingly beset by all the problems. But timely strategic care can enhance the success of our adaptations for both long-term and short-term survival, and can support our efforts to continue to bring anthropology to one of its most logical and important niches: classrooms on small liberal arts campuses.

## Assessment as Ideology: Reagan's Revenge

Byron Dare and Roger Peters

(Fort Lewis College)

This paper explores the link between the widespread conservative reaction to the 1960s and contemporary assessment mandates. In particular, it examines the policies initiated by William Bennett as Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Education in 1988 to force accrediting agencies to incorporate assessment as a component of their evaluation of higher education programs. In addition, our analysis links these policies to an attack on higher education initiated by the Trilateral Commission in 1975 and carried through the period of domestic "culture wars" from William Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (1987) through Robert Bork's *Slouching Towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and America's Decline* (1996). And while there are certainly other components that need to be considered when analyzing assessment and accountability mandates, we would be remiss to ignore the ideological factors underlying a program that presents itself as rational, common sensical, and even scientific.

Even the quickest glance at the social and political environment in the United States today clarifies the intensity of the reaction to policies generated from the upheaval of the 1960s. Affirmative Action is on the ropes, if not down for the count; George Bush's proclamation upon verifying Iraq's surrender in the Gulf War Armistice in 1991 ("By God, we've kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all") provides a haunting link between the jungles of southeast Asia and the desert of Iraq; and the murder last summer of a teenage Hispano shepherd by a U.S. Marine Corps sniper on a

drug interdiction mission in southwest Texas is a component of the "War on Drugs"--a war impossible to conceive without a reference to the proliferation of recreational drug use thirty years ago. For some, "the sixties" still represent a period when this society struggled to narrow the gap between its professed ideals and reality; for others, it conjures up Edmund Burke's 18th-century nightmare of an "antagonistic world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and unavailing sorrow" (Burke 1955: 97).

Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 signaled the ascendance of the latter group, and his appointment of William Bennett as Secretary of Education in 1985 opened the door to a wholesale attack on higher education--the relative democra<sup>3</sup>tization of which should not be forgotten as a critical legacy of the 60s. Three years later, Bennett formalized his assault on the academy by mandating that accrediting agencies expand the scope of their activities to include assessment. Today, as more and more faculty and administrators are beginning to realize the ramifications of these policies, we would do well to recall Tom Hayden's 1995 observation that "Reagan has tried through administrative methods to dismantle as much as possible of what the Sixties created" (Miller, 1987: 321). We will return to the details of Bennett's DoE following a quick attempt to provide some necessary background information.

In political terms, the sixties represent a dramatic crisis of legitimacy for government institutions. In social terms, they represent an intense demand for greater equality, and the concomitant extension of influence to voices that had been ignored throughout U.S. history. No one should be surprised that institutions of higher education provided an arena where much of this activity was focused, and defenders of the pre-sixties status quo are still haunted by the images of a younger generation

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<sup>3</sup> Table Removed

of educated citizens challenging their norms. Significantly, this specter often includes an updated dimension that repeatedly links higher education today with the challenges of the past:

*It was a malignant decade that, after a fifteen-year remission, returned in the 1980s to metastasize more devastatingly throughout our culture than it had in the sixties, not with tumult but quietly, in the moral and political assumptions of those who now control and guide our major cultural institutions. The Sixties radicals are still with us, but now they do not paralyze the universities; they run them (Bork 1996: 53).*

### The "Vietnam Syndrome"

Michael Klare has defined the "Vietnam Syndrome" as "the American public's disinclination to engage in further military interventions in internal Third World conflicts" resulting from our agonizing experience in southeast Asia (Klare 1981: 1), and Noam Chomsky notes that the term summarizes the elites' response "to the effects of formerly passive groups to engage in the political process..." (Chomsky 1982: 5). Klare documents the efforts to destroy the lessons that we thought we had learned in the sixties. He stresses that, beginning in 1973, the attacks cut across party lines and included participants from both outside and inside the foreign policy establishment who were "determined to revive intervention as a legitimate instrument of U.S. foreign policy...[by launching] a vigorous and unceasing campaign to 'cure' America of the 'Vietnam Syndrome'" (Klare 1981: 1). Today's "bipartisan foreign policy" illustrates the success of the campaign.

Dimensions of the "Syndrome" have even found their way into the historical record of the Gulf War. In *Desert Victory: The War For Kuwait* (published by the U.S. Naval Institute Press), the author attributes motivations to

Saddam Hussein that are purely speculative, but familiar to the mantra of the "Syndrome":

*Saddam apparently believed that the United States would shrink from serious military sacrifice, that it was soft and decadent...He was impressed by what he saw as U.S. weakness in withdrawing from Vietnam after losing 50,000 troops. He may have been aware of the numerous post-Vietnam claims, in the United States, that foreign war would be impossible in the future (Friedman 1991: 108).*

In *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War*, Rick Atkinson, of the Washington Post, opens the Prologue and concludes the Epilogue with a focus on Vietnam, including 54 references in the index. We are reminded that "senior [Gulf] officers were junior officers in Vietnam..forever seared by the war and the hard peace that followed," and that "For Norman Schwarzkopf and his lieutenants, this war had lasted not six weeks, but twenty years" (Atkinson 1993:2). He concludes with a description of the victory parade in Washington D. C., noting that:

*For twenty years the debacle in Vietnam had bred self-reproach, mistrust, and an abiding doubt in the efficacy of military power. The competence and potency of the American military was now beyond question (Atkinson 1993: 493).*

### The "Crisis of Democracy"

In 1975, as Saigon fell and the attack on the "Vietnam Syndrome" gained momentum, the Trilateral Commission (the organization created by David Rockefeller in 1973 and composed of political and business elites from the United States, western Europe and Japan) sponsored a study on the governability of democracies. Written by scholars from the three areas, the report was published as *The*

Crisis of Democracy by New York University Press in 1975. The authors introduce their thoughts by quoting Joseph Schumpeter's definition of intellectuals as those "who wield power of the spoken and written word...[in] the absence of direct responsibility for practical affairs"(Crozier, et al. 1975:6). This theme of a lack of responsibility (or accountability) provides the foundation for later attacks on higher education. They go on to identify a "stratum of value- oriented intellectuals who often devote themselves to the derogation of leadership, the challenging of authority, and the unmasking and delegitimation of established institutions," concluding that:

*...this development constitutes a challenge to democratic government which is, potentially at least, as serious as those posed in the past by aristocratic cliques, fascist movements, and communist parties (Crozier, et al. 1975:7).*

Samuel Huntington went on to apply his core argument on political instability in the southern hemisphere (that institutional/governmental "capacity" to govern was overwhelmed by societal demands for participation; see Huntington, 1968) to his discussion of the United States:

*The essence of the democratic surge of the 1960s was a general challenge to existing systems of authority ... this challenge manifested itself in the family, the university, business, public and private associations, politics, the government bureaucracy, and the military services (Crozier, et al. 1975:74-75).*

Anticipating later debates over an academic Huntington argued that an "excess of democracy" is the problem, and stressed that the future of the United States is most vulnerable to internal threats to the status quo, given our "highly educated, mobilized, and participant society" (Crozier, et al. 1975: 115). Hence, it is necessary to "moderate" the democratic "distemper," and he identifies

higher education as an arena where limited democracy would be "appropriate" (Crozier, et al. 1975:113-114).

Tucked into the Appendix of The Crisis of Democracy, the authors warn that the expansion of higher education (again, a key component of the sixties) can overproduce "people with university education in relation to the jobs available for them," drain "scarce public monies," and "create frustrations and psychological hardships among university graduates who are unable to secure the types of jobs to which they believe their education entitles them"(Crozier, et al. 1975:183). To the initiated, this last point conjures up the spectre of violent revolution in the United States led by an overeducated and underemployed group experiencing "relative deprivation" (a concept much in vogue at the time) if the trend continued. The authors of the Trilateral study conclude that:

*What seems needed...is to relate educational planning to economic and political goals. Should a college education be provided because of its contribution to the overall cultural level of the populace and its possible relation to the constructive discharge of the responsibilities of citizenship? If this question is answered in the affirmative, a program is then necessary to lower the job expectations of those who receive a college education. If the question is answered in the negative, then higher education institutions should be induced to redesign their programs so as to be geared to the patterns of economic development and future job opportunities (emphasis added, Crozier, et al. 1975:183-1874).*

The reader in 1975 may be excused for asking "induced by whom?," but the answer should be clear to us today.

### What Students Learn in College

Academicians have studied the effects of college on students in the United States since the 1920s. The contemporary era of this field began in 1969 with the publication of Feldman and Newcomb's massive review of previously published and the authors' own research, *The Impact of College on Students*. Two of their findings were widely publicized at publication: the first was an increase in social and political liberalism, and the second was an increase in skepticism about "the existence and influence of a supreme being," and "the church as an institution" (p.23). Several other studies confirmed these findings, including William Perry's influential description of intellectual development in the college years. Pascarella and Terenzini's meta-analysis of 2600 studies, based on two decades of outcomes research, concluded:

*There are unmistakable and sometimes substantial freshman-to-senior shifts toward openness and a tolerance for diversity, a stronger other-person orientation, and concern for human rights and human welfare...combined with an increase in liberal political and social values and a decline in both doctrinaire religious beliefs and traditional attitudes about gender roles...(Pascarella and Terenzini 1991: 559- 560).*

Alexander Astin's investigation of how 24,847 students taught by about 20,000 faculty members at 217 colleges and universities from 1985 to 1989 lent even more support to these observations. In addition, a sound-bite distillation of the statistical findings in this 894-page book is that for most kinds of measurable knowledge and skills, the average senior graduates at about the average freshman 70th percentile. This research shows that although some graduates lack important knowledge and skills, on the average most colleges are doing a pretty good job.

### William Bennett: The U.S. Department of Education and Assessment

Most of the facts that went into these summaries were readily available in 1983, when the "A Nation at Risk" report directed attention to the imperfections of U.S. education. The following year brought a proposal to reform undergraduate education by William Bennett, the director of the National Endowment for the Humanities. In *To Reclaim a Legacy*, Bennett made a plea to save higher education by recognizing that "...the core of the American college curriculum--its heart and soul--should be the civilization of the West, source of the most powerful and pervasive influences on America and all of its people." In his concluding remarks, Bennett asks us if we are "teaching what we should" (Bennett 1984: 30,32). This position reflects one side of a debate that was emerging on campuses throughout the country at the time. The opponents, many of whom were younger faculty who benefited from the "democratic surge" in higher education during the sixties, advocated greater cultural diversity and the extension of non- western topics into the curriculum. And while these perspectives were hotly contested among faculty across the country, political conservatives heralded Bennett's proclamation as a means to save the United States from the group that Dinesh D'Souza would later call "The Visigoths in Tweed." In November of 1984, those tuned in to Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network were warned that:

*The teachers that are teaching your children are not necessarily nice, wonderful servants of the community. They are activists supporting...one set of values and a number of the values which they espouse are: affirmative action, ERA, gun control legislation, sex education, illegal teacher's strikes, nuclear freeze, federal funding for abortions, decriminalization of marijuana, etc.(quoted in Hunter 1991: 204).*

As the “culture wars” emerged into public debate in the mid 1980s, Reagan replaced his Secretary of Education (Terrell Bell, who later “wrote of his battles while in office with ‘the lunatic fringes of ideological political thought’” [Brademas 1987: 99]) with Bennett. He soon became known as an advocate of “assessment” of the effects, or “outcomes,” of higher education, arguing:

*I believe that higher education could learn a lesson from the reform movement taking place at the elementary and secondary level. For one, the call for assessment has been good for elementary and secondary education (Bennett 1985: ii).*

Within months of his confirmation, the DoE (with the assistance of the American Association of Higher Education) sponsored the first of a continuing series of national conferences on assessment that introduced the themes that characterize mandates to assess outcomes to this day. In his 1985 foreword to a DoE publication of papers on assessment, Bennett showed his ideological hand by noting that:

***I believe that thoughtful assessment will bear out the truth of what I have been saying about the matters that lie at the heart of higher education. I believe we will find that students regard their college experience as more valuable if they have been required to confront the truly great issues, great thoughts, and great writers. Real assessment, I think, will bring support for these themes for which I have argued in the past (emphasis added; Bennett 1985: iii).***

The “themes” for which Bennett had argued were soon to emerge as a call to return to an education narrowed to the “western canon,” and the campaign to assert its preeminence included a wholesale attack on higher education in the United States. Conflict within the academy is certainly not unique-- but

a premier advocate for one side was now the secretary of education in an administration committed to overturning the “Vietnam Syndrome” and the associated remnants of the sixties.

While the federal government’s interest in higher education predates the ratification of the Constitution, it did not emerge as a major player until World War II and the ensuing Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944. The “GI Bill” produced an unprecedented expansion of post-secondary educational opportunities for veterans, but it failed to provide any guidelines for educational programs. The result was a proliferation of fly-by-night “institutions” (that often advertised via matchbooks) that took the money but provided little or nothing in return. In response:

*The Korean War GI bill, passed in 1952, required the commissioner of education to develop and maintain a list of accrediting agencies that “he determines to be reliable authority as to the quality of training offered by an educational institution...” The accrediting process received another infusion of delegated power in 1958 when the National Defense Education Act specified that one of the definitions of an “institution of higher education,” for the purposes of participation in NDEA programs, was that it be “accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association.” It was again left to the commissioner to “recognize” the accrediting bodies(Finn 1978: 157).*

In the mid 1970s, following widespread news reports on high default rates on student loans, accrediting agencies balked at congressional pressure to extend their authority deeper into the workings of higher education institutions. In 1974 Frank G. Dickey, executive director of the National Commission on Accreditation, testified that:

*If “policing and fiscal accounting” for federal funds must be done... “only governmental machinery can effect such monitoring,” and the private accreditation system ought not be burdened with this public function. “Accreditation,” Dickey warned, “cannot be a surrogate ministry of education”(Finn, 1978: 159, 160).*

Shortly after taking office, Bennet convinced the national Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility to review the criteria used by the DoE to improve accrediting agencies:

*...the recommendations developed by the NACAIE was to preserve the voluntary, self-regulatory character of accreditation, while providing those working within the system with the encouragement and the support to meet the challenge of improving the quality of postsecondary education, as measured through the assessment of educational effectiveness (emphasis added, Federal Register Vol. 53, No. 127: 25088).*

On July 1, 1988, the new regulations (to amend Part602)were announced: “greater emphasis” henceforth be placed “upon consistent assessment of documentable student achievement as a principle element in the accreditation process,” and:

*Accrediting agencies would be required to adopt and act upon guidelines for examining an institution’s or program’s representations of its programs, practices, and student achievements (emphasis added, Federal Register Vol. 53, No.127: 25088).*

It may be worth noting that the DoE’s Press Release on July 1, 1988 quotes Bennett “asking” for, as opposed to requiring, the “more aggressive focus,” and the coup is justified as an enhancement of fiscal responsibility. Bennett left the DoE to become George Bush’s Director

of the Office of National Drug Control-- but his regulations were incorporated into statutory law in Section 496 of the 1992 Higher Education Act, and the DoE has continued on his path of micromanagement of higher education via control over the accrediting agencies. In 1994 an additional change was announced by the DoE:

*To be listed by the Secretary as a nationally recognized accrediting agency, an institutional accrediting agency must demonstrate to the Secretary that it maintains adequate substantive change policies that ensure that any substantive change to the educational mission or program(s) of an institution after the agency has granted accreditation...does not adversely affect the capacity of the institution to continue to meet the agency’s standards (Federal Register, Vol. 59, No. 82: 22259).*

## **Conclusion**

Much of the power in Klare’s analysis of the attack on the “Vietnam Syndrome”is derived from his discussion of the voluminous publications that emerged from 1973 through 1981 to discredit that perspective at precisely the same time that the executive branch of the U.S. Government was making preparations to prepare the society for future wars. A parallel pattern emerges in literary attacks on higher education during and after Reagan’s administration. Time does not permit us to elaborate on these works, but we will close with a chronology and illustrative passages from some of them. Note the recurring theme that laments the impact of the sixties, and how it roles over into the substantive arena in the attack on “multiculturalism”:

...[timeline from original omitted.]

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### **The Politics of Anthropology in Academia: A Sad Story**

Mary Cameron

Auburn University

The story of how the program in anthropology at Auburn University was threatened with elimination in the fall quarter of 1998 begins with caprice, develops into disciplinary partisan-ship and animosity, and ends in a victory for anthropology. This is not a story of heartless administrators, though the whole saga originates in what was apparently a misstatement by the University's president reported in the local news- papers. Rather, it is a tale of departmental politics at its worst. That three anthropology faculty prevailed against twelve colleagues in sociology, criminology and social work attests to our strength in all three facets of Auburn's mission - research, teaching and outreach - and the need to have strong alliances with other campus pro- grams and regional anthropology programs.

For the few years prior to the crisis, our department had been discussing the ways in which our smaller programs, particularly anthropology and sociology, could shield themselves against the inevitable 'restructuring' that the board of trustees (governor appointees) was compelling the president to do. If the president did not develop the strategy to implement budget cuts, then the board would do it. So, the president established committees to develop priorities and goals, and a strategy was put forth by which all colleges would cut up to 20% of their budgets.

Deans were authorized to submit restructuring recommendations, with varying degrees of input from their faculty. Unfortunately, our department had settled into a dangerous complacency in which we believed we were safe from any drastic changes. Still, because we recognized that dropping below ACHE (Alabama Commission on Higher Education) standards of viability might occur for either sociology or anthropology in certain years, we had informally agreed in department meetings that we would merge the programs and jointly count the majors. The degree would continue to read either anthropology or sociology, depending on the student's concentration. There was never any discussion about one program being merged into the other as a concentration. In fact, anthropology had to be persuaded of the final merged arrangement because we had more majors, and unlike sociology, had never had a problem meeting ACHE standard.

After a year of consulting with faculty, our dean proposed several program changes to the provost. In our department, the social work program would be canceled, and the programs in anthropology and sociology would be merged, allegedly in the form that we had agreed upon earlier. After much lobbying, the social work program was retained. The president reported to the trustees the university-wide restructuring proposals. These were reported in the newspaper the following Saturday, only I read with some surprise that anthropology would be merged with sociology and would become only a concentration. Given that this was never discussed with us by either our department chair or the dean, nor among the faculty during departmental meetings, I was certain that this was an error. What followed was a flurry of email messages that I initiated, inquiring about the apparent error in reporting. The chair and the dean replied that indeed, it was no error and that

anthropology as a major would be discontinued and would be offered only as a concentration. No one admitted to the error, and no one stepped forward to correct it. Quite incredibly, the mistake soon turned into policy, anthropology being reassured all along that the decision was not final and would be reviewed by the APRC (Academic Program Review Committee). Initially enraged by the unfairness, the lines began to be drawn in very distinct ways among the disciplines in our department.

Realizing that the APRCs review of programs targeted for termination (or what the administration called "low priority programs") would be critical to our case, the faculty senate chair quickly appointed our program coordinator to the APRC, and she promptly recused herself from the discussion of anthropology. We then rallied our friends and colleagues throughout the university and in other Alabama anthropology programs to submit letters supporting the retention of anthropology as a major, which they did. We contacted FOSAP and Catherine Cameron and Ann Hill wrote letters on our behalf. Our archaeologist, a native son, contacted the many influential people he knows throughout the state and asked for letters of support. AAA provided critical data on the increase in anthropology degrees nationally. On the other side, the other program coordinators were asked to canvas their faculty and write letters to the APRC expressing their views on the merger. The department chair indicated that he would not be writing a letter, and that only one program coordinator had done so. Only later did he inform us that he had written a letter in support of the merger, with anthropology becoming only a concentration. We also learned that all the program coordinators, without fully representing their faculty, had written similar letters. So, there we were, fighting a local uphill battle.

But sometimes faculty governance prevails. We submitted a full report of our program to the APRC, emphasizing our strengths in furthering the university's mission. In the process we discovered that we three faculty had brought in the vast majority of grants and awards to the department. News of this leaked out to the student newspaper reporters who did a feature article on anthropology and all of our accomplishments. This further angered our colleagues, since it did not show them in a good light. I was on sabbatical during the quarter when we were to present our case to the APRC, and I spent many hours discussing with the chair how much more beneficial it was to everyone in the department if the programs in anthropology and sociology remained separate. Slowly, he became convinced, and when the day arrived to present to the APRC, he reversed his earlier position and said that he felt a compromise had been reached and that the programs should remain separate.

The dean was there, and he admitted that in fact the meager savings (a grand total of \$70,000!) from such a merger could be found in other ways. The APRC voted to retain the anthropology major, suggesting that we invite the faculty at AUM (Auburn University at Montgomery) to participate in our program in order to meet what were (and still are) faculty needs. The recommendation was presented to the trustees who accepted and voted to retain anthropology.

### **Why Anthropology? Ask a Student**

Constance DeRoche

University College of Cape Breton

Christine Beard-Moose

Suffolk County Community College

Years ago, an anthropology professor told me about an encounter he had, as a young man, with an uncle – clearly not his family favorite. Uncle "Joe," a successful businessman, questioned the wisdom of anthropology as a career choice: 'It's not good for anything!' To which my teacher replied, 'exactly.' If unworldliness was ever anything more than a marginal attraction, it is hardly so today.

Most of us would be ready, willing, and able to take on an Uncle Joe – and they still exist, of course, despite the demonstration value of applied and practicing anthropologists. It is ever more important to do so, as long-in-the-tooth neo-liberalism (ironically re-energized by recent crises of capitalism) keeps liberal education on the defensive.

Small anthropology programs are especially vulnerable. Their institutions' budgets are often tight; the programs tend to be relatively undeveloped; and, anthropologists, not uncommonly, form a minority (in both senses) in joint departments. And, since numbers count to the administrators who are mandated to make ends meet, teachers in small programs have been called on to do some marketing. We know that we must remain conscious of what anthropology is good for, what it offers to myriad students: our majors, majors in other academic programs, and vocationally oriented recipients of service or elective courses in our

discipline. Handbooks have become available on the subject, and it is no accident that introductory texts have come to include relevant sections on it.

McCurdy's "The Using Anthropology" (in various editions of James Spradley and David McCurdy, eds., *Conformity and Conflict*, Pearson Education) has been a favorite resource of mine. It not only reveals the relevance of an anthropological imagination in the "real world" - of commerce, no less! - but it also gives voice to an alumna. We can and should profess about the matter - and colleagues are invited to submit to *Anthro-at-Large* their strategies for promoting the discipline. But it seems to me that senior students and recent alumni are an especially important asset when it comes to "plugging" the discipline. It is easier for students to identify with peers, whose experience is more recent and thus more relevant to contemporary conditions. Peers also have less at stake; they are evidently more disinterested.

Moreover, their hopes and dreams are more varied than those of professors, who can be dismissed as atypical "eggheads."

Listening to students' perceptions of the discipline makes sense in other ways. The better we know these views, the easier it should be to incorporate them into classes and curricula. And how do anthropologists characteristically investigate quotidian thought? We go to the source, speak to the grounded experts. FOSAP members are eminently suited to the task. Teaching looms large in the duties of faculty in small departments. With no graduate assistants, student/faculty relations are more direct and informal, making it easier to identify especially astute opinions, and to foster and promote student entry into the discourse.

With your support, *ANTHRO-AT-LARGE* can serve as a forum through which our students share the ideas and experiences that have validated their encounters with anthropology and advise us about improvements.

Please encourage your upper-level students and recent graduates to offer their

reflections to the bulletin. In doing so, they will help the membership provide more varied, useful, and concrete answers to novices who ask: what can anthropology do for me? (They might, at the same time, provide themselves an opportunity to clarify their own thinking, and add an item to their resumes).

To get started, potential contributors might ask themselves questions such as these: What has anthropology meant to me? What role has it played in my intellectual development? How has it helped with job performance, or might it in future? What could I say about its value if asked in a job interview? Am I happy to have studied the discipline, and why? What modifications might improve its personal, social, and career value? Examples are, also, available on the website of Cape Breton University's Department of Anthropology and Sociology - where I taught for three decades, originally as the sole anthropologist, and more recently with two or three others. To find them go to <[www.cbu.ca/academic/anthropology-sociology/careers](http://www.cbu.ca/academic/anthropology-sociology/careers)> and cursor down to "Alumni Bios."

In October, 2011, Governor Scott of Florida stated on the Marc Benier Show, that:

*We don't need a lot more anthropologists in the state. It's a great degree if people want to get it, but we don't need them here. I want to spend our dollars giving people science, technology, engineering, and math degrees. That's what our kids need to focus all their time and attention on, those types of degrees, so when they get out of school, they can get a job.*

In response to that ludicrous statement, and others, graduate students from the University of South Florida, led by Charlotte Noble, have put out a Prezi.com called "This is

Anthropology." [Click here if you're reading on-line!] Here are a few excerpts. . .

*I'm Margeaux Chavez and I work for the Alliance for Applied Research in Education and Anthropology (AAREA) @ USF. We use anthropology, especially qualitative and quantitative scientific methodology, to evaluate the impact of the educational reforms paid for by tax dollars. The statistics used by Rick Scott to extol the virtues of STEM education at the expense of other disciplines are brought to you by anthropologists. . .*

*I'm Elizabeth McCoy, and I work with Florida State Parks to design strategies to increase park visitation and revenues, decrease park operating costs, and improve the visitor experience for all Floridians. . .*

*I'm Charlotte Noble, and I am currently working on a nationally funded project that is evaluating a Positive Youth Development (PYD) program that seeks to reduce the incidence of teen pregnancies, suspensions, and dropout rates in a number of rural counties in Florida. . .*

*I'm Wendy Hathaway, and my current research is on improving health care delivery for veterans at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. I use both qualitative and quantitative methods to help policy makers and health care professionals provide the best care to Florida's veterans. . .*

*My name is Stewart Allen and I work as an ethnographic researcher for Intel, Ireland. I work within an interdisciplinary team of engineers and designers providing*

*ethnographic insight into the design, usability and content creation of various new technologies. The contribution that anthropology can make within emerging technologies in the future can only get stronger as industry moves to more integrated solutions to everyday problems. . .*

*I'm Jason Miller, and my research helps Floridians tell their own stories using photos and video. Anthropologists are uniquely suited to do this because we understand people and the social systems in which they live. I facilitate conversations between diverse community members to build a stronger community. . .*

Here is a half-dozen student responses. Be sure to check out all of these thoughtful and thought-provoking responses in their presentation at <http://prezi.com/vmvomt3sj3fd/this-is-anthropology/> . And, as the students ended . . . "Governor Scott, with all due respect, Florida needs more anthropologists. . .not fewer."

## Why Small Anthropology Programs Matter

David Price  
(Saint Martin's University)

For over two decades I have taught anthropology in a small department situated within a small college, and while small programs have some obvious limits, I continue to support them because of the unique interactions that we instructors have with students, and the ways we can easily interact with other disciplines. There are significant variations in small anthropology programs' budgets, class sizes, teaching loads, ratios of tenure-track and contingent faculty, or students' academic preparation; but there are many features of small anthropology programs that unite all of us who teach in these programs.

Small programs don't mint anthropology doctorates, though we sometimes plant the seeds of those who later earn these degrees. But because we tend to focus on teaching over research, we have unique opportunities to open students' minds to new ways of thinking about the world. We often spend significant amounts of classroom and office hours engaging with students who are not anthropology majors. While this can sometimes limit the depth of analysis we can delve into in class instruction and discussions, we can engage non-majors who would otherwise have no contact with anthropological perspectives on the human condition. It also means that some of our students later become pioneers, bringing anthropological ideas to workplaces outside of academia, as they use their anthropological training in the private

sector or governmental agencies where they build their careers.

Our contacts with these non-anthropology majors may be one of the most significant ways that our small programs matter. Our primary roles as teachers gives us unique opportunities to help students rethink a lot of what they were taught before entering college. Sometimes this means we use classroom time to patiently counter widespread fallacies about race, heredity, social Darwinism, meritocracy, ethnicity, UFOs, cryptozoology, evolution, or the many other social beliefs that shape our non-majors' world.

Small programs tend to be less research driven, and focus primarily on teaching undergraduate students; these circumstances increasingly mean we use our discipline as a medium for teaching the vital skills of writing, rewriting, critical reading, and the development of argument. Anthropology professors sometimes resent these tasks as intrusions on classroom activities, but I see them as the best rationalization for all we do. Small programs provide opportunities to work on student writing in ways that large programs can't, and because our subject matter can capture student interest in unique ways, we have opportunities to add to their understanding of the world *and* make them stronger writers.

Small programs sometimes mean small budgets, which require us to play multiple roles. We often become generalists; we need to keep abreast of broad anthropological knowledge about all kinds of things: kinship systems, color typologies, exchange systems, primatology, social theory, quantitative and qualitative methods, the history of the discipline. Because we have to become generalists in ways our colleagues in larger institutions don't, many of us, over time, also inevitably broaden our own theoretical perspectives, simply by trying to accurately represent perspectives that we aren't personally drawn to or perhaps were trained to dismiss in graduate school. In this

way, I have come to read theoretical work that I would otherwise have ignored but that I have come to appreciate.

The possibilities of doing research at smaller colleges has been revolutionized in the last dozen years due to the rapid spread of accessible online library resources; this shift now opens incredible research opportunities for anthropologists in small departments. An academic generation ago, anthropologists in small programs faced significant disadvantages in access to library resources needed for research. The transformation in online library consortiums, e-texts, and electronic journals have eliminated the need for proximity and access to large university libraries to be able to do cutting edge research. While many have been slow to recognize the potential of this technological transformation, small anthropology programs no longer face meaningful library resource disadvantages.

All these reasons argue that small anthropology programs matter. But fundamentally it is pedagogical interactions we have with our students that connects all of us working in these programs and that gives meaning to our daily work. We have unique opportunities to teach students about cultural worlds that exist beyond their life experience, and, in some sense, the small scale of our programs shapes our relationships with students in ways that reflect the discipline of anthropology itself.

## Teaching

### Triangulating to the Point of ~~In~~Sanity<sup>4</sup>:

#### The Use of Lived Experience in the Construction of Reflexive Ethnography

Margi Nowak  
(Puget Sound)

Who of us does not remember reading, or at least hearing reference to, the richly described explorations of Victor Turner into the semantic world of Ndembu ritual symbolism? Recalling those essays might also bring back the memory that two of them, included in *The Ritual Process*, feature not only textual description but also numerous photographs of individual Ndembu people for whom these "rituals of affliction" are being performed.

While I, as an anthropology graduate student in the 70's, paid great attention to Turner's well-crafted exegesis of "what was going on" in those photographs, I must admit that at the time I first read these essays, I gave scant attention to the people who were pictured on those pages, standing in holes dug in the earth, holding white pullets, having water sprinkled or powdered clay blown on them. I had not yet, at the time, heard much about, let alone integrated into my work, the principles of

reflexive anthropology, which might have prompted me to see those human faces in the photographs as worried mothers, anxious husbands, and concerned family members - reminding me then of my own culture's expectations concerning threatening or even potentially deadly problems involving social relationships. Moreover, in the 1970's I was unmarried, had never given birth nor provided intense levels of care to a beloved child, nor had I yet served as the anchor relative to a dying parent. I was, in short, academically as well as experientially unable to "see" in those photographs anything other than Ndembu men and women who were illustrating key moments of Turner's interpretations of specific Ndembu rituals designed to address "some crisis" in their lives.

Flash-forward to the late 1990's. Not only has reflexive anthropology now been a part of my research and teaching for years, but I, like those frozen-in-time Ndembu people in the photographs, was now badly in need of a socially supportive "ritual of affliction" myself as I attempted to deal simultaneously with a university teaching career while caring for family, children, a mother with Alzheimer's Disease and a father dying of Parkinson's Disease. Lacking any access to native healers like the Ndembu diviner or doctor of Turner's essays, I devised my own plan for maximizing dangerously low energy levels: I revised the syllabus for my introductory anthropology course to incorporate a heavy and deliberate focus on gerontological issues. While the selection of such a theme was most definitely motivated by my urgent need to consolidate the time I was spending on preparations of all sorts (for my classes, as well as for the advocacy I was doing on behalf of my parents), I soon

story, we opt here for the strikeout of In-, in consultation with the author.

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<sup>4</sup> Nowak's title in the 1999 version as *Insanity*, but seeking permission from the author revealed the correct title was always intended to be "Sanity." Loving the



discovered that such a choice also brought with it certain pedagogical benefits as well.

Constructing a course around the lived experience of the course presenter is, of course, hardly a novel undertaking for fieldwork-sharing anthropologists, and anthropologically exploring the world of the elderly in US society has likewise already been done, and quite masterfully, by anthropologists such as Barbara Myerhoff. But putting the two concerns together at a time of personal crisis -- namely, the impending death of a parent -- added an intense dose of experientially grounded reflexivity to the endeavor. For me, as well as for the students who would take this course an introductory anthropology class with a mini-fieldwork component involving a focus on end-of-life realities, strategies, and experiences - the ethnographic subject and object of investigation here would be a deeply personal one. For this reason, right from the start of this project I sought to articulate, for myself as well as for students, the issues of epistemology and professional ethics that seemed so relevant here. By no means did I want this course to lose its anthropological moorings and drift out into the open sea of self-indulgent, "talk-show" ramblings. An explicit acknowledgment of the importance of "boundaries" was thus imperative: boundaries of privacy as well as boundaries and implications of disciplinary methodology. Hence the first task of my syllabus became that of attempting to teach my students "how to see" - that is, how to delineate, perceive, record, and acknowledge data reflexively.

Perhaps it was not accidental that the means I hit upon to begin to convey this instruction derived inspiration from an activity I had happily shared with my father ten years earlier: backyard gardening. A 1980's PBS series entitled "Square Foot Gardening with Mel Bartholomew" provided the idea I had tested in

my father's raisedbed vegetable garden a decade earlier and was now about to adapt for use with my students: measuring off a grid pattern consisting of precise one-foot squares, marking it off visibly with twine, planting seeds in each square with precise attention to quantity and position within the square, and above all, giving highly focused attention and care to "just this one square at a time". Minor modifications were made to the "square foot gardening" analogy for teaching the "how to delimit" aspect of doing ethnography: the four-foot long sections of rope each student was given lent themselves more easily to being tied in a circular form, and since the purpose of this initial exercise was only connected with zooming the lens of observation down to a micro-focus, I made no further attempt in this exercise to exploit the grid analogy at a more comprehensive level of observation.

What I told students about this preparatory activity was actually very little at first: they were released from the classroom to go outside and chose their place in the sun to "rope," and then simply asked to "write down what you noticed inside your rope boundary." Afterwards they recounted and shared their observations, and then I asked further questions, having in mind the link I was trying to develop being "paying highly focused attention to a delimited area." and researchers' much less consciously made decisions involving "what to record and recount." For example, among the questions I posed to them were the following:

- what position were you in when you made your observations?
- did your comfort play any role in your selection of where to put your rope?
- how soon did you start to write?
- did you taste or smell anything?
- did you express any of your observations in the form of a question or a statement that began with "I wonder...?"

The discussion that followed gave students a brief introduction to the types of epistemological issues that would be pursued in greater depth as the course progressed. The "taste or smell" question, for example, was intended to lead students to notice how often that our recorded observations tend to be heavily biased in favor of visual and aural sensory perceptions, and the questions about "comfortable research positions" were deliberately intended to raise awareness about more than one kind of "position". My more far-reaching aim, of course, was far less concerned with the inert object of this first exercise (the interior of the ropes) than the subject of class exercises to come - real human beings, some of them elderly.

As the course progressed, the general theme of the assigned research project began to come into focus: an exploration of an individually selected aspect of life (e.g. demographic, technological, social, ideological and so on) which affects and is affected by the reality of "being elderly". Students were encouraged, but not required, to connect personally with at least one elderly person or caregiver (often a family member interviewed by phone), and all students were expected to prepare a set of questions which I would consolidate to present to the guest speakers who came to class.

These individuals, including two elderly residents and a non-elderly administrator for an assisted living facility, gave students an opportunity to listen and take notes - as eager anthropologists might - during their informal presentations and responses to prepared as well as spontaneous questions. For many students, this was a transformative experience made all the more meaningful by their subsequent shared reflections on their role (as either active listeners or listeners who also

asked spontaneous questions) in those "mini-fieldwork" classes. True to the prevailing class background of the "typical" student at the university where this exercise took place (a small, private, largely residential liberal arts institution), student listeners and questioners consistently gave the elderly presenters obvious nonverbal indications of polite respect, even when they might have been impatiently waiting for certain monologues to change topics. Politeness and common sense, then, were certainly highlighted as necessary starting points for successful fieldwork!

In the classes that immediately followed these sessions, students also expressed their delighted surprise at the openness and frankness which the two elderly men showed in their willingness to answer questions not always posed to strangers, let alone "old people" (one student who was openly gay asked about the acceptability of same-sex apartment-sharing in the residential facility). While I had correctly presumed that the elderly speakers (who had been personally selected and invited by the facility administrator) would be, for most of my students, both "exotic!" (in their relative age) as well as "accessible" (coming from similar middle and upper-middle class backgrounds), even I was surprised by observation that we all noted: the topic of sex, for these particular individuals, at any rate, seemed to be far less private a matter than the issue of personal end-of-life finances.

Further reflections were elaborated again and again as the end of the semester approached, especially in connection with course readings dealing explicitly with epistemological and ethical concerns. As students examined their own answers to the retrospective question "What, if anything, would you do differently if you had another chance to interview the guest speakers?" they

also struggled to articulate their reactions to what Harry Wolcott has called "the darker arts of fieldwork"-- namely, the ever-present possibility that "being anthropologically curious" about people's lives might also involve the potential for intellectual profiteering, informant deception and even betrayal.

Other lessons learned were less related to the fieldwork endeavor itself and more linked to these students' own personal lives. For the great majority of them, the world of the elderly is far removed from their everyday realm of awareness. For a minority of my students, however, the research topic did directly intersect with problematic concerns that were ongoing in the lives of their families at home. Finally, for a significant number of students, the sustained focus on gerontological topics brought home some frightening demographic realizations. As one young woman put it, I am the only daughter of two sets of divorced and remarried parents. Does this mean that I will be the primary caregiver for four different people at the end of their lives?"

As delighted as I was to hear my students puzzling on their own over questions that ultimately concerned social justice, I was also eager to underscore for them the epistemological, methodological, and ethical lessons I saw emerging from this semester's experience. On the one hand, some of these could easily be articulated within the broader framework of hermeneutic discourse, inviting speculations about the very nature of intersubjective interpretation, and understanding. But for summing up this particular project - with all its personal meanings intertwined around the official task - the specialized jargon of interpretation theory (which I use quite comfortably in other contexts) somehow seemed inappropriate.

In the end, I decided to relate the whole experience to a simple affirmation of the limits

of any social science research endeavor: namely, that the more any of us succeed in "learning more" about some topic, the more we must humbly recognize how impossible it is to get "the whole picture". On so many levels, this was, above all, the primary reflexive lesson that I had wanted to teach. Anthropologists spend only a fraction of their total lives with their informants (and in our greatly abridged mini fieldwork project, actual time spent with "the anthropological other" was barely a few hours). Without denigrating the very real achievement most students did achieve with their final papers, I also wanted to be sure they kept alive the gentle wonder that so many of them had expressed immediately after the elderly speakers came to our class, using their memories of that experience to support subsequent commitment to the ideals of non-hubristic intellectual honesty.

As for the initial impulse that had motivated me to teach this course in this particular way at that particular time in my life, this too became a subject for deeper reflection. All class visitors had come from the assisted living facility where both of my parents lived before my father was transferred to a hospice, and even the "square foot gardening" analogy I adapted for that first "learning to see" exercise occurred to me only because I had shared a similar experience with my father. In creating this course at a time of personal crisis in my life, I was thus drawing on interlinked associations some anthropological, others directly connected with the crisis at hand. No one sprinkled water or blew powdered clay on me, but insofar as this particular course drew so heavily upon the reality of my personal social networks, perhaps it can also be seen as a weak but still viable type of Turnerian "ritual of affliction", enabling the anthropologist at the center to triangulate to the point of sanity from the two vertices of disciplinary knowledge and personal reflectivity.

## **Teachable Moments: Anthropological Citizens and Cultural Consumers**

Robin O'Brian  
(Elmira College)

### Consuming culture

Students in my classes approach most things as commodities and entertainments. Although many have not traveled much, particularly in the places most people still associate with anthropology, they have long been consuming the images, music, art, and language of other cultural groups as depicted on cable television and as used in commercials in a variety of media. My students, then, have some familiarity with other societies although they are apt to think about them in ways that make me uncomfortable. Most have an unreflective view of their own experiences and many suspect that most people in those "other" places are eager to adopt "modern" American ways.

Rather than encouraging "cultural consumption" and recognizing that professional anthropology will be a choice for a very few, I teach it as a way to comprehend a new and changing world. Most of my students will live in a world that is increasingly diverse, even in my own fairly homogeneous rural town. By suggesting to students that they share much with the "exotic others" whose images they consume, I encourage them to see human commonalities rather than bundles of unfamiliar identities. This does, I suppose, place me at odds with many trends in the discipline. But anthropology has always been messy and

multivocal, and numerous constituencies have staked claims on its message.

My second goal is to encourage students to think of their own cultural experiences and to reflect on the culture they experience so unreflectively. While it is certainly true that some of my students aggressively promote their culture, most are more likely to ignore it or to think about it as "natural" if they think about it at all. I ask them to think about how their own experiences might shape their perceptions of their worlds and how these might be similar to what people elsewhere experience. In particular I ask students to consider things like appearance, hygiene, gender and cuisine as culturally mediated. While they start out superficially, over time they draw increasingly sophisticated parallels: for example patterns of body scarification seem less "exotic" when considered with tattooing and piercing. This seems like an obvious parallel, but I find that some students think they have a different sort of motivation, that what prompts some kinds of behavior is somehow more "authentic" when they do it. I ask students to question their assumptions in light of their new thinking about other peoples.

### Deconstructing Western Culture

As a member of a liberal arts college faculty I also teach out of my discipline in my contributions to a series of history and civilization courses. Such courses are common in liberal arts colleges, and their mission is to ground students in the historical, social and intellectual development of Western thought and civilization. Rather than seeing this as contrary to the anthropological project, I try to contextualize the concerns of my own discipline within its larger place as one stream of western thought. This permits students, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to consider

Darwinian thinking, to reflect on its influence on a wide range of western thinkers, its continuing contribution to the biological sciences, and how it colors contemporary American thinking.

We explore the ideas of “evolution,” “improvement,” and “progress” critically, examining what they mean and in particular how they influence American assumptions of individualism and self-improvement. Many of my students are surprised to learn that evolutionary theory does not suggest an endlessly improving path toward some kind of perfection, but rather explains how populations become suited (through the mechanism of natural selection) to a given environment. When they understand this, they begin to track how our own cultural ideas of “progress” contribute to a wide range of Western ideas and beliefs. I thus teach this course at least in part as an exploration of how Western culture itself is constructed. Again, my students think about themselves as cultural beings who evaluate and understand their world through the lens of their own cultural assumptions.

As students become more comfortable with this approach they begin to make connections between what we discuss in class and what they experience in daily life. We compare different ways of theorizing economics and explore whether our own economic system is more immutably “right” than another. I want students to think critically about their world, but I also want them to think reflectively, to understand how multiple processes contribute to what they experience. In this I draw on the theoretical assumptions of anthropology, exploring institutions like the economy holistically. Why is it that many Americans, my students among them, often think of economics in narrow financial terms? Is a gift an economic process? What about loaning someone your car? Anthropologists certainly treat these as economic interactions, but this is often a new

idea to students. In a recent discussion on Marx, we explored the meaning of commodity fetishism and value. When a student pointed out that requiring payment for a Christmas gift diminished its value, we could unpack the meaning of “value,” the contrasting monetary and social values of things, and the socially constructed nature of money. I value the broad holistic approach I bring from anthropology, but I am also able to give concrete contemporary examples of societies that think differently than Americans.

#### Across the Disciplinary Divide

Because I have also taught in interdisciplinary programs (e.g., Latin American studies, women’s studies) I came to my current institution with the desire to work across disciplines. I sometimes find that working with scholars in other fields somehow makes the result larger than the sum of its parts. At present I try to combine my own academic interests and the needs of anthropology students with courses that could also serve other disciplinary constituencies. Both “Anthropology of Gender” and “Peoples of Latin America” are new courses on my campus that meet obvious multidisciplinary needs, but I also plan an “Anthropology of American Culture” course that I anticipate will provide an ethnographic and empirical look at modern U.S. culture. I expect American studies and history majors, more familiar with historical and literary approaches to American culture, to make up the greater portion of non-majors and I anticipate introducing them to both the ethnographic literature and brief fieldwork opportunities. Such a course would give these students in particular the chance to see how our own (and I use “our” both deliberately and broadly) culture is shaped by our historical and literary traditions, and how at the same time changing cultural patterns in the U.S.

(economic, demographic, technological) influence history. Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary teaching allows me to integrate what students bring to the classroom with what I know and allow all of us to learn from each other. Because most students still pursue fairly narrow courses of study, they often find interdisciplinary approaches liberating.

While I feel a strong professional identity as an anthropologist, I am also a broadly trained generalist, so being the only anthropologist on a faculty allows me to draw from a broad range of knowledge, from the biological to the cultural, in the courses I teach. Indeed, while professional training increasingly encourages finely-tuned specialization, institutions like my own value those trained in a “four-fields” approach. In my case I teach all cultural courses and the introductory physical anthropology course and I find that this grounding allows me to present a wider range of material than I might be able to do in a larger institution. In physical anthropology, while we study population genetics, fossil evidence and primate behavior, we also examine the social contexts of these fields. How for example does “race” come to be defined as a biological category? We sort through the genetics of human polymorphisms and explore how different physical traits might cluster together. Students also begin to see how these traits are not in fact interlinked. They can then see more clearly how historical and social factors played a far more important role than biology in defining racial categories.

I turn this approach on its head in “The Anthropology of Gender.” Here I include the old “man the hunter” model of human behavioral evolution, particularly because it still enjoys broad currency in popular conceptions of early humans. We explore the female role as gatherer not as a refutation but as an expansion of the earlier model. I further extend this by

discussing recent research on menopause and partible paternity. Most students I teach still tend to regard biological reasons for things as somehow more “real” than social or cultural reasons; I present a range of examples and explanations in my courses to show how such reasons interact with each other. Biology is more plastic than students presume and the biological and social are strongly intertwined in the human species.

Because I can draw on the range of understandings that all of anthropology offers I present students in all my courses with a deeper and more nuanced understanding of what humans are about. Key to this understanding I think is holism, the awareness that the human project, our institutions and experiences, are interrelated and embedded in specific historical contexts. Anthropology gives me a language to articulate this across disciplinary boundaries and the small college gives me a place to teach this language to all my students. Some choose to take up its study in more depth, but I hope to give each student ways to understand and discuss their worlds more thoughtfully.

## **Writing an American Community: The Ethnographic Directory Project**

Catherine M. Cameron  
(Cedar Crest College)

This paper addresses one of the central questions of this symposium: How to increase students' understanding of their own culture through an anthropological approach. My response comes in the form of an extended example, with the description of a course developed to give students the experience of doing fieldwork at home. The course was designed as an American communities course that included a substantial fieldwork component. The paper details the main writing assignment, the Ethnographic Directory Project, which was meant to be a variant of the standard term paper.

The course described here, called Researching American Communities, was co-designed with a colleague in religious studies, who thought, like me, that a community-based course with a strong field component in it was a useful pedagogical experience. We also believed such a course would help sell our program minors. Both of us had previously used small fieldwork assignments and did field trips in other courses. We had done quite a bit of research on the local region, in my colleague's case documenting religious diversity over the years, and in my own, writing about the economic transitions of the Lehigh Valley that had accompanied recent de-industrialization.

In its original design, my rendition of the course was roughly divided between a

classroom and a fieldwork segment. The field locus was Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a city of about 70,000, in a region formerly dominated by heavy industry and the textile trade. I knew the region well from a research point of view and had written a number of articles on economic change, cultural tourism, and the museumification of the city's heritage (see Cameron 1987, 1991, 1992, 1999; Cameron and Gatewood 1994). I had also served for a number of years on the city's tourism board (Cameron 1997).

The field segment, which lasted about six to seven weeks, involved trips in the college van to selected locales in Bethlehem. We did walking tours of the historic area adjacent to the downtown, and the north side and south side business districts. In several instances, I had arranged for guided tours by local experts. We visited a major community arts facility and the closed steel plant, where we were given a lecture on the steel museum and an auto tour of the location in which it is planned. I found that it was not difficult for student researchers to penetrate the city's heterogeneous class and ethnic structure.

In the first iteration of the course, the students had to decide on topics for independent research fairly quickly after the field trips began. They were encouraged to work in small groups. In total, they had about three weeks to collect data and write up their papers. While those first year papers were submitted in a timely way, the submissions were fairly uninspired and somewhat superficial. It became clear to me that students found this research task too much to accomplish in the short time period.

Eight students enrolled in the second offering of the course. This time, however, I decided to try a different kind of field work strategy, one in which students would be asked to undertake more specific and concrete tasks

in their field research. I envisioned assignments that could be done in tandem and subsequently assembled into a group document. I decided to design something based on the city directory concept.

The directory I had in mind was to be more comprehensive than the standard type, closer to an ethnographic description of a community. The assignment was called the Ethnographic Directory Project. I wanted to feature historical coverage of the city, population statistics, ethnic composition, an economic profile of the area and labor statistics, and information on city government, agencies, non-profit organizations, and the like. I asked students to write about one topic of special interest to them in greater depth, and I provided the students with detailed written instructions to collect data on the following areas:

- Population figures broken down by age, sex, and ethnicity
- Labor statistics
- Levels of Government
- City Government
- Business Associations
- Citizen Groups
- Human Services Organizations
- Media
- Museums and arts organizations
- Bethlehem Steel and the Bethlehem Works Project
- Any additional areas of the students'
- Choosing

The students were told where they should be able to find this kind of information, for example, text sources such as newspapers and tourist brochures, Internet sites, the public library, city hall, and agencies such as historical societies and museums, the chamber of commerce, arts groups, local businesses and corporations such as the (now defunct) Bethlehem Steel Corporation. I kept print material of various kinds (newspaper clippings

arranged by topics, brochures and community publications, charts, etc) in a resource room. I invited a community activist to visit the class to talk about a land redevelopment issue and introduced the students on field trips to people in agencies who were willing to do follow-up interviews.

The students began their own field research in the course of the field trips to the city and worked in groups of two. Each group was assigned specific data collection tasks. They produced a spatial map of the business district and visited selected agencies and organizations. They did photographic work, using their own cameras or disposable cameras that I provided. I asked them to try to take pictures that might help "tell the story of the city". They were also instructed to keep a field notebook to record their activities, observations, findings, and personal reactions. Their notebook was to be handed in at the end of the semester and was graded as a homework assignment.

I was surprised at the amount of information the internet provided about the region. The city of Bethlehem has an official web site with useful links to other sites; the county and the state do, as well. Census and labor statistics are available on several sites. Museums, historical agencies, and arts groups have helpful information, as does a local history project run from one of the colleges. The Bethlehem Steel site provides very good historical overview of the company and the city, as well. The students ended up doing quite a bit of virtual ethnography.

At the end of the course, the student groups handed in their data. Much of the data appeared as brief reports and tables, for example, lists of schools and churches, descriptions of local and county government, tables and figures of census reports and labor statistics, and a business index. Some of it was in the form of mini-essays such as brief



historical report on Bethlehem Steel and its museum project called the Industrial History Museum, an inventory of arts and cultural organizations, a report on city history, and the like.

I put all the materials together in a very large three-ring binder with a labeled tab index. The front cover of the binder was embellished with a photograph of the blast furnaces of the Bethlehem Steel plant and given the title, Ethnographic Directory for the City of Bethlehem. The side of the directory featured the name of the course and the students. It turned out to be a rather impressive

document. As a physical artifact, the directory has an impact which is, in many ways, much more substantial than the course Web site.

The directory project works despite the time bound context of a semester-long course. Meaningful fieldwork is difficult, perhaps impossible, for students to carry out in one semester. Yet, as many teachers of anthropology recognize, fieldwork can be the most pedagogically valuable aspect of an anthropological communities course. The obvious utility of the directory project is that the community ethnography can be broken down in small chunks in which students can be given explicit assignments that can be completed in one semester. When all the pieces are put together, the cumulative effect of the directory is that it is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Another virtue of the directory is that it serves as a resource for the next class that takes the course. Subsequent groups can use the directory as the basis upon which to do additional fieldwork.

New topics can be added, and existing ones fleshed out. Thus, over several semesters, the directory expands to include greater depth on certain areas and a wider array of topics until it

really does resemble an anthropological ethnography. This will probably require expanding into additional volumes, which can be topically organized. In addition, the directory concept can be adapted for the Web, linked from a course Web site.

The applied value of the directory project is that it can be given to the community upon which it is based. Copies can be made and deposited with local institutions: the local library, mayor's office and/or city council, schools, and other institutions. If it exists as a Web site, the address can also be circulated. The actual or virtual artifact is a concrete demonstration of what students can give back to a community and, in a more abstract sense, the value of anthropology as a research method.

While we anthropologists perhaps secretly hope that we will send skilled ethnographers into the world, the reality is that the students who do community fieldwork in our courses are probably never going to "do ethnography" in their professional lives. Nonetheless, there is value in students learning ethnographic skills. Such skills, while they may never be used to earn a living, are simply important in life. Everybody whether they know it or not will do some form of ethnography in adulthood, whether it's when they move to a new place, take a new job, or travel abroad as a tourist. It seems to me that learning how to gather information about a place is something that one can always use in life. This is a skill that we can impart to students in communities course that uses the U.S. as a field site.

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### **Scientific Anthropology is Central to the Liberal Arts**

Peter Peregrine

(Lawrence University, Wisconsin)

I'm here from Lawrence University, and I'm in the lucky position of being in a department that is fairly strong, actually, and until the recent downturn in the economy was marked for expansion. Nobody is expanding at the present moment, but the point of my paper was to suggest that post-modernism has really hurt us as far as college programs go. My point was that our colleagues learn about anthropology from the Chronicle of Higher Education and the New Yorker, and what they tend to publish are stories about problems and stories about the exoticism of anthropology. I'm sure after this meeting the Chicago Tribune is going to have a lovely little piece talking about all these strange anthropologists and the weird things they do, and that really doesn't represent the field--it represents the edges of the field. So, my thought on asserting anthropology in the liberal arts is that while we absolutely have to do it among the students, we also need to educate our colleagues about what it is that we actually do. We may spend so much time thinking about how we are serving our students that we forget that, at least politically, it is our colleagues that have to know the relevance of anthropology. Many times I think they have the same misconceptions as the students. The ones that are reading widely may believe that we spend a lot of time investigating our own navels and arguing

about minutia, and some of us do. But I think the vast majority of anthropologists do not. The students, as most of you know, come into our classes thinking that all anthropologists wear pith helmets and work in Egypt, and some think we dig up dinosaurs! Unfortunately, I have found some very intelligent colleagues have similar misconceptions.

That's the side of the field that gets represented on the Discovery Channel and National Geographic, but again it is the kind of work some of us do, but the vast majority of us do not. And so the point that I would like to make is that it is important to educate our colleagues about why anthropology is valuable and what it is that we do. To me the best way to do that is to talk about the things that we really do know.

There are some core ideas that we share. We may fight about them, and rightly so, because they are important. But those fights are not things that we need to focus on when we are talking to our colleagues, and maybe not even to our students until they are in higher level classes. And so I wrote some of those down and I will read them out. These are what I think are core ideas that it would be good for us to try to disseminate as much as we can.

First is the idea that even the most bizarre practice makes sense in its own cultural context, and to me that is the idea of cultural relativism. Second is the idea that there are viable alternatives to the way we do things in our culture, things that work in other cultures. To me that really is the critique of ethnocentrism. If anything, critiquing ethnocentrism is by far the greatest service we can offer any liberal arts college. The more biological side of this critique is the idea that humans are a single species who are divided by language and culture, and this becomes a critique of

the biological concept of race. The critique of race is a third core idea that we should disseminate. I teach our human evolution course, and that course becomes my critique of the concept of race. It has surprised many of my colleagues that in a course that counts for our quantitative analysis requirement, and that has been taken by almost all of our music majors, that

students gain a rigorous grounding not only in evolutionary theory but also in a very practical critique of race. Liberal arts faculty recognize the value of this. Finally, we share the idea that humans are at once biological organisms and cultural beings, and that the interplay between biology and culture is essential to understanding humans. To me this is the bio-cultural approach. And the group of students and faculty who seem the most intrigued by the bio-cultural approach are psychologists. If your campus is like mine, there are passels of psychologists running around. The other group interested in this approach are the environmental scientists, and environmental science is becoming very popular. The bio-cultural approach is something both groups of students inherently understand, when they find out that anthropologists employ this approach, they start taking anthropology classes and find them both interesting and valuable.

I want to add one other note about something my department made a conscious effort to do in about 1998. I don't know if we were ahead of the curve, or if there was any curve, but I'm finding our approach more common now. We decided to run headlong away from area studies and from area emphases. The reason is that we felt that area studies programs and departments were taking from us and not giving us much in return. So we do not cross

list, for example, any courses now that do not originate in our department. We're very happy to serve interdisciplinary programs and area studies programs, but with courses that come from us. In other words, what we were afraid of, what we were finding, is that students were satisfying anthropology requirements by taking courses from non-anthropologists, and we didn't want that. So what has happened is that now students in area studies programs fill area studies requirements by taking courses from anthropologists, and we think that is a very good thing.

Once we decided to move away from the area studies model, we asked ourselves "What is it that we as anthropologists can offer students?" Our answer was our methodology. Anthropological methods have developed over the past 100 years and are a great gift to social science. This is particularly true for participant observation. We have a methodology that really is vastly superior at least in data collection to what most the other social sciences have. Our data analysis methods are probably not anywhere near what either psychologists or sociologists have, so we have a lot to learn from them as well. But we transformed our major into one in which students are taught methods—in a sense, where anthropological knowledge comes from. And what we found out is that is what students want. While they want a liberal arts education, they also realize that they need to learn skills that they can use, and what has been very nice is that many of our students have gone out and been able to get non-anthropological jobs by saying, "Well, you need somebody who can do interviews with diverse populations, I can do that, I've done it; You need somebody to do market research on what parents

want in a diaper, I can do that;" and so on. That again has fed back to our colleagues who do not see the anthropology program at Lawrence as one of people who study the exotic and the bizarre, but rather as one of people who have a very rigorous methodology that can actually be applied to lots of interesting things.

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