Message from the Co-Chairs

Our business meeting at the 2011 AAA meetings in Montreal was lively and productive, with a spirited discussion of several issues of concern to FOSAP. See the minutes (in this issue) provided by Sarah Hautzinger that cover our full hour-long meeting.

As this issue of ANTHRO-AT-LARGE goes to press, one of the necessary matters raised at our business meeting is still being worked out—the FOSAP session at the 2012 AAA meeting in San Francisco. Several interesting suggestions were put forth, but we need someone to organize the session. We would like to encourage you to participate and respond to session ideas on our FOSAP listserv.

In looking back over the last several years, we have produced excellent sessions every time. Our special thanks to Frank Salamone for organizing “Anthropologist as Hero” this past year in Montreal. Our thanks also to those who participated and shared so many interesting ideas.

In looking ahead, we hope to continue that excellent record. If you are interested in organizing or participating in a session at the 2012 meeting in San Francisco, please voice your ideas and suggestions on our listserv.

We are also open to ideas about how to conduct FOSAP future business meetings, particularly in regard to serving food. John Rhoades has graciously covered the cost until now. But since his status is changing, we will have to make changes as well. Does anyone know a good pizza parlor near the conference center in San Francisco? We could have our lively discussions there!

110th Annual AAA meeting in Montreal!

November 16-21, 2011:

(Cont. Page 7)
FOSAP Business Meeting at the 110th American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting

Montreal, Saturday November 16, noon.

Attendees: John Rhoades (St. John Fisher C; Co-Chair), Merrily Stover (U.MD-Univ. C; Co-Chair), Tom Love (Linfield C), Laurie Occhipinti (Clarion College); Sarah Hautzinger (Colorado C; Secretary).

Introductions

Governance: Deborah Picchi will replace John as co-chair, joining Merrily, who will continue. Carol Morrow will be retiring; listserve needs new home. Tom Love has inquired at Linfield about Linfield hosting. Typically not a managed listserve but occasionally do need to remove a sender who is abusing it.

GAD (General Anthropology Division) Board Meeting (of which FOSAP is an Interest Group) Report (by John):

FOSAPers may be GAD members, but this is not required for FOSAP membership). May or may not get an invited session to next year in SF; each proposal likely to be judged on own merits. But we are still guaranteed a session (single 1.75 hours). In 2009 “Got Anthropology” was invited. Next year’s theme: “Borders and Crossings.” Amber Napoleon is webmaster; Connie deRoche and Christina Beard-Moose continue as of editors of Anthro-At Large.

Possible sessions:

(Working Title) Engaging students as Public Anthropologists: Crossing Borders from Classroom to Public Sphere

This session features student experiences of being engaged as public anthropologists. How do anthropological training or perspectives make a difference, informing activities and strategies? Would you “Occupy Wall Street” or approach other activism differently? The AAA theme, “Borders and Crossing,” invokes students moving from classroom to “field” to public sphere; from scholarship to activism; studying up or across; student to professional. Exposure to the roles and expectations for anthropology in higher education outside of North America may embolden and obligate students to greater involvement. Papers might also address the hazards, risks or pitfalls in student involvement (their vulnerability, inadequate preparation; poor reflection); employing new and not-so-new social media -- blogging, tweeting, letters to editors, internships, policy formation, public speaking, protesting, media outreach, organizing dialogue events.

Sarah couldn’t organize but would recruit student presentations; Tom may have some. Lori was willing to organize. IRB constraints on dissemination. Blogging, tweeting, letters to editors, internships, policy formation, public speaking, protesting, media outreach, organizing dialogue events, Occupying Any Street – how does anthropology inform these activities?

· Roundtable may be better

· Taking “Anthropologist as Hero” panel this year as point of departure, fiction as solving mysteries and practical problems; tying in to

Anthro-at-Large

· Upcoming Serena Nanda interview

· Kathleen Terry-Sharp should be visiting, looking to see what AAA can do for FOSAP.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Hautzinger
**New Publication Announcement**

Be on the lookout for *The Anthropologist as Hero*, edited by Frank Salamone (Cambridge Scholars Press, forthcoming 2012). This collection will be of special interest to newsletter readers not only because of its useful content but also because of the involvement of our members. Based on an AAA session in New Orleans in 2010 organized by Frank, it demonstrates the significance of FOSAP sponsored presentations.

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**Congratulations to Frank and all of the contributors!**
Using Fiction in the Cultural Anthropology Classroom

Serena Nanda, Professor Emeritus, John Jay College, CUNY

Culturally based fiction, written both by anthropologists and others, has a long history. I have had the pleasure of being a consumer and producer of it, and have used it to pedagogical advantage.

My keen interest in teaching, especially through student discussion, led to my participation in an interdisciplinary department early in my career at John Jay. Team taught classes with history and literature faculty particularly, coincided with my own wider interests and was relatively easily combined with the core concepts in cultural anthropology. A team-taught course in American history, for example, included Arthur Miller’s The Crucible, which gave me a richer understanding of the McCarthy era “witch hunts” against supposed communists in the United States, and also opened up space for cross cultural perspectives on religion and witchcraft, which both students and faculty found fascinating. Similarly, a team taught course with literature, using Leo Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilyich, introduced me to the topic of death and dying, which I later pursued from an anthropological perspective in several articles, and which became the focus of my second anthropological novel Assisted Dying: An Ethnographic Murder Mystery on Florida’s Gold Coast (with Joan Gregg, AltaMira, 2011).

Interdisciplinary courses with history and literature were particularly well subscribed, because they helped students fulfill required course credits. Like many small anthropology departments in colleges without an anthropology major, student enrollment is an important issue. As several students informally noted to me, these unorthodox interdisciplinary courses motivated them to take subsequent courses in cultural anthropology, a subject previously unknown to them, and one that provided them with useful perspectives in their other courses as well. As both students and faculty agreed, “anthropology goes with everything.”

A cautionary note, however. Interdisciplinary teaching requires a certain open mindedness and is not for everyone. For example, since my students responded very positively to my using Inuit poetry in a team taught Literature class, I used this as an illustration in an interdisciplinary workshop for faculty at another college; in response, one of the teachers sneered, “Eskimo poetry, our students don’t even read American poetry!” Cultural anthropologists also need to be flexible in teaching interdisciplinary courses. We primarily need to accept that we cannot “teach everything” as in a standard text-based course. This requires a reshaping of a typical class syllabus to what we consider the most important substantive and theoretical issues in cultural anthropology and forgoing others.

My experiences in interdisciplinary courses led me to experiment in my standard cultural anthropology classes with fiction as a supplement to standard anthropology texts. Novels like Kamala Markandaya’s Nectar in a Sieve, Richard Wright’s Black Boy, Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart, and Norval Morris’s The Brothel Boy and Other Parables of the Law, aligned with my interests in Indian culture, American social stratification and ethnic identity, the impacts of colonialism, and legal anthropology, and also engaged my students with the standard material of an anthropological syllabus in a deep and lively way. This strategy also provided faculty in other departments with an anthropological perspective that “worked” in their own classes. A colleague in Public Administration, for example, successfully used Chinua Achebe’s A Man of the People to heighten her students’ awareness of the culture of bureaucracy in the different contexts of Nigeria and the United States.

Using fiction in anthropology classes engages students partly because it can draw on the experience most students have had in reading and discussing novels in high school. Because a good fictional narrative is structured
with a beginning and an end, incorporates a wide range of characters, and contains an exciting plot, students are drawn in to care about what happens and become more open to the cultural elements involved. Novels which use the "stranger-in-a strange land" approach, such as the Albanian immigrant trying to fit into American society in Francine Prose's *My New American Life*, are especially effective in highlighting America as a culture, a key anthropological point many students find difficult to grasp. Tales of Americans abroad offer a similar benefit, as in the intriguing short story, “Who Ate Michael Rockefeller,” by Christopher Stokes, that was the basis of a fantastic off-Broadway play by Jeff Cohen. The play could become the basis of a collaboration between anthropology, literature, and theatre departments to attract a college wide audience, while the script could form the basis for role playing in the classroom (permission and fees information at joan@joankovatzcompany.com).

Whatever culturally based fiction we choose, the aim is to lead students to a deeper involvement with a work’s cultural milieu and with anthropology itself. Relatively short fiction (around 250 pages) seems to work best as classroom supplements; long enough to incorporate several anthropological concepts but not too long to lose student attention. As an instructor becomes more experienced in this teaching strategy, it may even be expanded to an entire syllabus, covering different cultures and different anthropological concepts. My own culturally based novels, *The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony, and Murder* (with Joan Gregg, 2009, AltaMira) and *Assisted Dying* (see above), written especially for classroom use, include chapter questions, an extensive study guide and a comprehensive bibliography, but even many contemporary trade novels append discussion questions and author’s notes that are helpful in the classroom.

Using culturally based literature in the anthropology classroom requires preparation and class organization strategies beyond that of a conventional cultural anthropology course. The instructor’s preliminary work first involves choosing culturally based novels congruent with the class syllabus, both in terms of anthropological concepts and cultural areas. This takes a fair amount of prior reading, though recommendations of colleagues and book reviews, both in professional and popular media, are very helpful in getting started.

The fictional works chosen should present a wide range of characters acting within discernible cultural contexts and must avoid both negative stereotyping and romanticizing the culture. They should allow a reader to understand behavior in its cultural context; provide a diversity of points of view within the culture, especially in “exotic” cultures; illustrate the connections between the different parts of a culture; and comment on the different ways insiders and outsiders understand a culture: all of these are core anthropological ideas. Novels, even by insiders, that present the dark side of a culture, such as Ghanaian author Kwei Quartey’s *Wife of the Gods*, for example, which deals with witchcraft and shamanism, require especially careful consideration. While providing an excellent basis for discussions of cultural relativism, such novels may be too challenging for first year students. This challenge also arises in many novels from Pakistan, especially those about political radicalism. A recent article by Pankaj Mishra, “Pakistan’s Writers: Living in a Minefield” (NYRB, Oct. 10, 2011) provides a useful caution into how carefully an instructor must supplement information on a culture through close reading and lectures, and explicitly highlight internal cultural diversity and cultural omissions. It is critically important, therefore, that instructors choose a novel on a culture in which they have developed some expertise based on academic sources or on their own ethnographic research. This can be used to supplement whatever cultural substance or anthropological perspectives are distorted or omitted in the novel.

Teaching anthropology through fiction requires organizing a syllabus that explicitly includes attention to core anthropological concepts, for example, the connections between cultural institutions; cultural diversity; changes brought about by culture contacts; and the importance of culture in understanding contemporary social problems or political conflicts. Globalization as it involves migration and refugees, for example, now appears more frequently in Scandinavian mysteries, such as James Thompson’s *Snow Angels*. In James Church’s *A Corpse in the Koryo*, set in...
**Why Anthropology? Ask a Student?**

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.

I’m 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.”
Ready to teach?

Become the most effective teacher you can by using the American Anthropological Association’s Teaching Materials Exchange

http://www.aaanet.org/customcf/syllabi/search_form.cfm

Give back and help others by submitting your materials to the exchange


Thanks to the AAA Resource Development Committee, the donors and members who contributed to the Teaching Materials Exchange.

AAA San Francisco Meeting Important Dates:

February 15
Online abstract submission system opens on AAA website

March 1
Decisions on executive sessions announced

March 15
Proposal deadline for section invited sessions, innovet and public policy forums

April 4
Results of section invited session proposals announced

April 15
Proposal deadline for volunteered sessions, individual paper and poster presentations and special events. To be included in the 2012 AAA Annual Meeting program, participants must be registered by this date.

April 16-May 31
Section program editors review and rank proposals

June 1-15
AAA Executive program committee schedules program

July 1-15
Program decisions emailed to applicants.
Annual Meeting Program, registration and hotel information are posted online

November 14-18
2012 AAA Annual Meeting in San Francisco
North Korea, a closed, internationally isolated society, Inspector O, the liaison between his government and the few visiting foreigners, is motivated by these interactions to consciously “compare and contrast” North Korea with other cultures.

An effective syllabus will include a variety of strategies for highlighting anthropological concepts through lectures, discussion questions, group work assignments, role playing, and term paper topics. Culturally based novels almost always provoke interesting student questions and perceptions, which can then be included in subsequent classes. Although integrating ethnographic fiction into a course is time consuming, the intellectual excitement and obvious student interest make it an exceedingly rewarding strategy.

The emphasis on issues of crime and justice at John Jay College, combined with my enjoyment of culturally based mysteries, led to my own particular interest in using culturally based crime fiction as the lens for applying my anthropological training. Because of the dramatic and suspenseful plots, crime fiction offers a particularly effective window on culture and society and I frequently taught one of John Jay’s most popular courses, Crime and Culture, using some of the works noted above (for more on this see the “Culture section” of Strategies in Teaching Anthropology, edited by Pat Rice, which can be accessed free at www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Strategies-inTeaching-Anthropology, Instructor Resources Center, forthcoming, 2012).

My own inspiration to write an anthropologically based crime novel grew out of a long-ago comment by a member of my dissertation committee that my chapter on arranged marriage in India “reads like a novel.” Many decades later, I finally had the time to consider this seriously; I prepared by participating in the very helpful fiction workshops offered at the American Anthropological Association meetings as well as more general writing workshops. In my case, choosing the topic was easy: The Gift of a Bride brings together all of my anthropological interests: marriage and family in India; domestic violence; and comparative perspectives on gender. In addition to literature and history, newspaper stories, museum exhibits, and the internet are all useful sources of ideas, no matter what your subject.

In my novel writing, I apply the same basic question I apply to my use of fiction in the classroom: how best can I use the treasure trove of cultural anthropology and the culture in raphers and as human beings acting within periences that are particularly memorable, of a culturally based novel that will both and will also be great fun to write!

Acknowledgments: Many thanks to Joan Gregg, professor of literature par excellence, who shares my interest in crime and is a source of continuing inspiration; and to Connie deRoche, whose excellent questions formed such a useful framework for this article.
Dear Colleagues,

Greetings of the New Year to all of you.

At our FOSAP business meeting in Montreal, a number of interesting ideas for sessions were shared for the coming AAA 2012 meeting in San Francisco. The AAA 2012 theme is “Borders and Crossings.”

1) Engaging students as Public Anthropologists: Crossing Borders from Classroom to Public Sphere

How can anthropological training or perspectives make a difference, informing activities and strategies for ‘crossing the border’ from the classroom to the public sphere? Would you “Occupy Wall Street” or approach other activism differently?

Exposure to the roles and expectations for anthropology in higher education outside of North America may embolden and obligate students to greater involvement. Papers might also address the hazards, risks or pitfalls in student involvement (their vulnerability, inadequate preparation; poor reflection); employing new and not-so-new social media -- blogging, tweeting, letters to editors, internships, policy formation, public speaking, protesting, media outreach, organizing dialogue events.

It was suggested that this could be organized as a roundtable.

2) Crossing borders from fiction to reality: Using popular literature to teach the four fields of anthropology.

Sometimes story telling can more readily convey ideas than scholarly work. In what ways, and with what works, can anthropologist use popular fiction to help students learn the concepts and craft of anthropology? See Serena Nanda’s article on page 4 of this edition.

Please do share any additional ideas. Please especially be in touch if you would like to take the lead in any sessions.

We will need to get our ideas to GAD fairly soon.

Thanks!

~Merrily Stover
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~Merrily Stover
ANTHRO-AT-LARGE
Bulletin of the Federation of Small Anthropology Programs
University of Central Missouri
Dept. of History and Anthropology, Wood 136
Warrensburg, Missouri (MO), 64093.
Editors: Christina Beard-Moose, SCCC Constance DeRoche, CBU

Meeting Calendar

March
March 22-24: Central States Anthropological Society: Annual Meeting, Toledo, Ohio. Distinguished lecture by Dr. Thomas D. Hall, professor emeritus at DePauw University entitled “Why Study Frontiers or Borders in an Age of Globalization?”

April
April 19-21: American Ethnological Society: Anthropologists Engage the World, NYC. The conference aims to explore and assess anthropology’s capacity to make important interventions in public issues and shape global realities, whether through fieldwork, social critique, applied practice, activism, university teaching, public education, media engagement, or advocacy.


May
May 11-12: Society For Cultural Anthropology: Life and Death: A Conversation, Providence, RI. Life and death have long played a central role in anthropology’s efforts to define the human. Recent developments in the experience of both, however, suggest reconfigurations in these essential thresholds of being and a corresponding need to reexamine the analytic assumptions brought to bear on them.

September
September 19-21: Ecomuseums 2012: 1st International Conference on Ecomuseums, Community Museums and Living Communities, Seixal, Portugal. Ecomuseums 2012 seeks to bring together scholars, researchers, architects and heritage professionals to discuss the commonalities, differences and future of safeguarding practices that are holistic and community oriented in scope.

October

November