

ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR ANTHROPOLOGISTS A.A.A. MEETING PROGRAM

(2-1621) Anthropology and Activism

Thursday, 11/18/2021 -- 6:30-8:15 PM

Roundtable / Townhall (In-Person)

Martin Schoenhals, Organizer

Abstract. This is a proposal for a roundtable about anthropology and activism. This roundtable continues and elaborates on the discussion held by several of the same participants in a virtual roundtable last year. This roundtable is inherently concerned with the goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and/or analysis of power. All of the participants are activists working on these issues and discussion of our work will be a central part of our conversation. Issues that participants work on, and which will be subjects of discussion, include racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and other invidious distinctions that exploit individuals both in the US and around the world. The roundtable will expand the discussion from last year with a consideration of the broader relationship between anthropology and activism. We will discuss questions such as: What does the concept of culture add to the way that activism is carried out by anthropologists? Does the virtual absence of a recognition of community dissensus and class conflict hinder our activism? Does cultural relativism, in its most extreme form, impede the practice of activism among anthropologists? How does anthropological methodology, especially our emphasis on qualitative study in a naturalistic context, contribute to the kind of activism in which we engage? How, then, do journalism, filmmaking and other forms of critical “witnessing” become important modes for anthropological activism? The many years of experience of roundtable participants will provide a historical perspective to the topic of activism in anthropology. We will discuss, for example, the increasingly tight job market and the manner in which it may leave less time for activism than was the case several decades ago. This will lead us to consider opportunities that do exist, or which we may help create, outside the academy for employment and activism and the implications of this consideration for how we should train students today.

Participants:

Martin Schoenhals, Organizer, Chair, Roundtable Presenter

Carol Mukhopadhyay, Roundtable Presenter

Yolanda T. Moses, Roundtable Presenter

Kathleen Fine-Dare, Roundtable Presenter

Linda J. Seligmann, Roundtable Presenter

Raymond Schwartz, Roundtable Presenter

Jeanne Simonelli, Discussant

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(3-2520) Alfred L. Kroeber: The Man, His Work and His Legacy (Invited Session)

Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM

Oral Presentation (In-Person)

Herbert S. Lewis, Organizer

Abstract. Alfred Louis Kroeber (1876-1960) was once considered the “Dean of American Anthropology.” He was Franz Boas’ first Ph.D. student at Columbia University and the heir to his reputation—despite their intellectual disagreements. Kroeber was the founder and the predominant

intellectual force in the University of California-Berkeley department of anthropology from 1901 until his retirement in 1946. He published more than 550 works—books, papers, reviews—on a wide range of topics in ethnology, linguistics, history, and archaeology. His subject was the whole world of humans and their cultures, their pasts and their interconnections. As Heizer et al. wrote, “The search for cultural patterns obtrudes in papers on such diverse subjects as changes in women's fashions, prehistoric South American art styles, Mohave epic tales, classificatory systems of relationship, arrow releases, basketry techniques and designs, aboriginal American Religious cults, or Romance languages.” His book *Anthropology* (1948) is a remarkable compendium of facts and ideas about the world's peoples and cultures, and his massive edited enterprise, *Anthropology Today*, encompassed the vast range of the field as of 1952 (1953). Kroeber became known outside of anthropology as a result of Theodora Kroeber's book *Ishi in Two Worlds* (1961), published soon after her husband's death. The legacies of his linguistics and ethnography are invaluable to many California Indian groups and individuals. In the light of the recent decision by the University of California, Berkeley to un-name Kroeber Hall it is particularly appropriate for the AAA, the ASA, the HOA, and GAD to offer a session to present a retrospective on the work of this important figure in the history of American anthropology.

Participants:

Herbert S. Lewis, Organizer, Paper Presenter
James Stanlaw, Chair, Paper Presenter
Stanley Brandes, Paper Presenter
Ira Jacknis, Paper Presenter
Paul Shankman, Paper Presenter
Jack Glazier, Paper Presenter
Nicholas Barron, Discussant

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(3-2330) Enduring Legacies of Ethnographic Field Schools, Part 1

Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM

Oral Presentation (In-Person)

James Tim M. Wallace, III, Organizer

Abstract. This session brings together anthropologists who have led an ethnographic field school for approximately a decade or more to discuss and examine the enduring legacies and outcomes of their programs. The ethnographic field school is the most direct and practical example of hands-on training in cultural anthropology and in the teaching of the skills required to do ethnographic fieldwork. Field schools require their leaders to have heavy, day-to-day involvement in the learning of those skills required for becoming effective anthropologists and ethnographers. These programs leave their mark not only on the students and but also on the communities in which they are held. While most field school participants do not go on to become professional anthropologists, all leave these field programs with valuable research and life skills applicable to careers in many fields. This session examines, with specific field school examples, how the ethnographic field school contributes to the career trajectories of its participants and how it affects the communities in which they have been held. Presenters in this session discuss the outcomes and legacies they perceive emanating from their informed understanding of what their programs have accomplished in human terms, as well as how their presence has had either intended or unintended consequences for the communities where they took place.

Participants:

James Tim M. Wallace, III, Organizer
Keri Brondo, Organizer, Chair
Suzanne M. Kent, Paper Presenter
A. Katherine Lambert-Pennington, Paper Presenter
Natalie Bourdon, Paper Presenter
Douglas W. Hume, Paper Presenter
Linda Easley, Paper Presenter
Quetzil E. Castaneda, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(1-0181) Anthropology of Smartphones and Smart Ageing: Exploring the future of multimodal-digital ethnography

Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM

Conversation / Debate (Virtual)

Jay Sokolovsky, Organizer

Abstract. This conversation will bring to the meeting Professor Danny Miller (Univ College London), director of a newly completed multisited global ethnography study, the Anthropology of Smartphones and Smart Ageing (ASSA - <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/assa/about/>), and two post-doctoral researchers from the project, Xinyuan Wang and Charlotte Hawkins. The project consists of simultaneous 16-month field-based ethnographies conducted in ten field sites across the globe, from February 2018 to June 2019, focusing on mid-age and older adults. Smartphones and other digital technologies are now central to the experience of older people, whether in terms of accessing information about health, socializing with others, or organizing their lives during retirement. The researchers also explored how generational understanding and use of smartphones, especially for accessing health information and enabling translocal systems of care might be impacted by inequality. Smartphones are equally important in creating a new form of collaborative and comparative anthropology which will be represented by the eleven volumes the project is publishing. The conversation will be moderated by Maria Cattell and Jay Sokolovsky who have each logged in over 4 decades of traditional ethnographic research with Sokolovsky having recently published one of the first multimedia enabled ethnographies. In the midst of rapidly transforming translocal and transnational engagement of generations this conversation ultimately explores three grand issues: 1. As a successor to the global “Project A.G.E.” (Age, Generation and Experience), carried out in the 1980s, how does the ASSA Project move forward a comparative, cross-cultural understanding of older adulthood in the 21st Century? 2. Can the methodological efforts of the ASSA project properly transcend what Gabriele de Seta calls “the three lies of digital ethnography”? These are: illusions of the networked field-weaver, the eager participant-lurker and the expert fabricator. 3. How do the methods of the ASSA project inform anthropology about the possibilities of fieldwork and research dissemination in the age of COVID?

Participants:

Jay Sokolovsky, Organizer, Speaker/Moderator
Maria G. Cattell, Speaker/Moderator
Daniel Miller, Speaker
Xinyuan Wang, Speaker
Charlotte Hawkins, Speaker

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(3-2200) Information / Disinformation, II: Help from Anthropology

Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 2:00 PM-3:45 PM

Oral Presentation (Hybrid)

Maria-Luisa Achino-Loeb, Organizer

Abstract. In the first iteration of this session, in Vancouver, we argued that the production of knowledge rests on the shaky ground that separates information from disinformation. We looked at aspects of theoretical models and of popular culture, underlined their shortcomings, as well as began to examine our responsibility in clarifying how anthropology can help develop trust in the possibility of truth. We asked ourselves whether our concern with the contextuality, and therefore relativity of truth has given theoretical justification to “alternative facts” narratives. This time, our object will be to peel the onion of the “alternative facts” narrative, which has become the foundation for the anything-goes posture on which we are mired and explore in some detail the avenues for the success of this narrative. How does it work? Why is it given credence? Can we unveil the motives that propel people to accept new information as evidence or to reject it? How can our anthropological tools help us in understanding this issue? Presenters in our panel deal with information from disparate geographic areas, Peru, Papua, New Guinea, the U.S., and with information derived from different domains, from ethnography to public policy to private dreaming. Mitchell, starts from the assumption that the use of misinformation has been endemic in situation of contrasting political motivation, which begs the question of our role as anthropologists: are we investigators of the truth or reporters of existing narratives? Similarly, Stewart & Strathern argue that alternative realities claiming validation are at the heart of misinformation and the role of anthropologists is to use the tools at our disposal, such as cognitive anthropological analysis. With similar concerns regarding the personal interpretation of public issues, Sherif invites us to be open to the ethnographic importance of dream states, seen here as windows on how we process “our hypermediatized public imaginaries.” Finally, Antoniello is unabashed in her critique of one evident trajectory of misinformation: the U.S. Government’s botched response to the COVID-19 crisis, which has ignored what anthropologists know about epidemics and the lessons that we can learn from them.

Participants:

Maria-Luisa Achino-Loeb, Organizer, Chair

Stephen Rea, Paper Discussant

Robin Sheriff, Paper Presenter

Peter Benson, Paper Discussant

William Mitchell, Paper Presenter

Patricia Antoniello, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(3-2320) Enduring Legacies of Ethnographic Field Schools, Part 2

Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 2:00 PM-3:45 PM

Oral Presentation (In-Person)

James Tim M. Wallace, III, Organizer

Abstract. See Part 1 of session.

Participants:

Keri Brondo, Organizer, Chair, Discussant
James Tim M. Wallace, III, Organizer, Paper Presenter
Bill Roberts, Paper Presenter
Walter R. Adams, Paper Presenter
James H. McDonald, Paper Presenter
Sharon Gmelch, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

**(3-1830) Time to be Woke: Method in Historical Sciences, Standpoints, Critical Thinking
Friday, 11/19/2021 -- 2:00 PM-3:45 PM**

Oral Presentation (In-Person)

Alice Kehoe, Organizer

Abstract. In 1958, Willey and Phillips published *Method and Theory in American Archaeology*. It presented "unit concepts" for ordering data, and a five-stage "historical-developmental approach" for interpreting those classes and clusters of data. Binford gave lip service to Willey and Phillips' line, "archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing" (p. 2), but his very limited ethnography is poor. Instead, he taught what he claimed was the scientific method, promoted by physicists involved in developing NSF as a Cold War weapon. Binford's followers published *Explanation in Archeology. An Explicitly Scientific Approach*, 1971, accepting this premise of science as a unitary exercise, and practice in physics as exemplary. Archaeologists have ignored the 1970 magisterial rebuttal by the great paleontologist G. G. Simpson, laying out the method of historical sciences, and more recent publications by philosophers of science about method in historical sciences. We also do not see *Critical Theory*, as such, nor *Critical Thinking* as it is taught. Yet many archaeologists do, increasingly, work from a critical standpoint, often labeling their approach "decolonizing" (better extended as "postcolonial"). This contrasts with what Lekson terms *Théorie*, borrowing from French philosophes. Paying attention to the range of empirical data and rejecting antiquated paradigms empowering elite academics can free archaeology to respond to the real histories we encounter. We also acknowledge epistemic humility, realizing uncertainties. In this session, we present the method of historical sciences, and discuss from postcolonial and feminist standpoints—which often overlap in archaeology—work that we consider to successfully demonstrate how archaeology draws upon anthropology and other disciplines for inference to the best explanation.

Participants:

Alice Kehoe, Organizer, Chair, Paper Presenter
Maureen Meyers, Paper Presenter
Elizabeth Graham, Paper Presenter
Sarah Baires, Paper Presenter
Geoffrey Clark, Paper Presenter
Miriam Stark, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by Archaeology Division

(4-2620) Unfinished Business! Part 1
Saturday, 11/20/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM
Oral Presentation (Hybrid)
Susan Kenyon, Organizer

Abstract. This session looks at an experience familiar to anthropologists: the unfinished project. Work we have yet to complete often weighs on our mind, because we intended to complete the task but were ultimately defeated by time, by other responsibilities, by forces beyond our control. Indeed, the reasons a project are left unfinished may differ, depending on the stage of our careers, on the priorities in anthropology at the time, or by a host of other reasons. Now as we consider our commitments and inclinations going forward, what role should completion of these projects take in the absorption of our limited time? The papers in this session consider such unfinished business. This may have been in a long-term field-site research or perhaps in a newly started project we had to leave for a while and always meant to return to. It could be ethnographic, conceptual, analytical – or a combination thereof, a manuscript half-finished that was abandoned for some reason now forgotten or a particular piece of research only half done. Such unfinished business preys on our conscience, because it was never written up, or it was dropped for reasons long forgotten, or was almost finished but put aside, perhaps temporarily, when circumstances forced us to move onto something else. This session offers the opportunity, in a relatively formal setting, to examine the whys and wherefores of this very common issue, to revisit the project itself, and possibly to provide the impetus for suggesting various ways of completing it.

Participants:
Susan Kenyon, Organizer, Chair
Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi, Paper Presenter
Jeffrey Ehrenreich, Paper Presenter
Judith Kempf, Paper Presenter
Moshe Shokeid, Paper Presenter
Ralph Bolton, Paper Presenter
William Mitchell, Discussant

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

(4-2611) Unfinished Business! Part 2
Saturday, 11/20/2021 -- 2:00 PM-3:45 PM
Conversation / Debate (Virtual)
Susan Kenyon, Organizer

Abstract. See Part 1 of session.

Participants:
Susan Kenyon, Organizer, Chair
Myrdene Anderson, Speaker
Anita Spring, Speaker

Kevin Kelly, Speaker
David Plath, Speaker
Jacqui Hill, Speaker

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

**(5-3630) Commodification of Natural and Cultural Resources in the Asia-Pacific Region
Sunday, 11/21/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM**

Oral Presentation (In-Person)

Rick Feinberg, Organizer

Abstract. This session grows out of an EU-funded project called Sinofon Borderlands, centered at Palacký University in the Czech Republic and focused on interaction between China and other Asia-Pacific nations. We will address commodification – the use of natural and intangible cultural resources for commercial purposes in four countries within the region. Two papers focus on the Philippines, one on the Solomon Islands, three on Papua New Guinea, and one on China, itself. The papers on the Philippines consider use of traditional tattooing practices and of the cultural, historical, and spiritual characteristics of special places on Luzon Island to attract tourists to rural villages. The one on the Solomons deals with harvesting of bêche-de-mer and shark fins and the effect that engagement with Chinese merchants is having on the marine environment of a remote island. One of the papers on Papua New Guinea explores the evolution of “storyboards” from sacred adornment of men’s spirit houses to instruments of cultural memory and commodities that may be sold to tourists. Two others take a broader perspective, examining China’s financial aid to developing Pacific Island nations, such as Papua New Guinea, a diplomatic strategy both predicated on and destined to promote further commodification of local economies. And the paper on Xinjiang, China looks at the commodification and political utilization of narratives of Uyghur suffering within global power struggles, giving special attention to the role of journalists and academics. It highlights tensions between different forms of responsibility, access to information, truthfulness, political activism, and personal gain.

Participants:

Rick Feinberg, Organizer, Chair, Paper Presenter

Jan Bláha, Paper Presenter

Rune Steenberg, Paper Presenter

Pamela Stewart Strathern, Paper Presenter

Andrew Strathern, Paper Presenter

Martin Soukup, Paper Presenter

Luzny Dusan, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by Society for East Asian Anthropology

Reviewed by Association of Senior Anthropologists

**(5-0010) Historical Consciousness and Historicist Reckonings with the Anthropological Present
Sunday, 11/21/2021 -- 10:15 AM-12:00 PM**

Oral Presentation (Virtual)

Grant Arndt, Organizer

Abstract. At a time when anthropology's historical self-consciousness can seem trapped between extremes of defensive hero-worship and paralyzing villainization, this panel explores the potential of ongoing research into the history of anthropology to enrich and inform contemporary disciplinary endeavors and move toward a more historicist reckoning with current disciplinary "histories, harms, and possibilities." The panelists explore how the sort of "affective, historicist orientation" long advocated by George Stocking and others with respect to past projects of anthropological research can help to historicize present practices (and presentist assumptions) in contemporary anthropology. We seek an approach to past projects that goes beyond either defensiveness or triumphalism to bring critical insights to our current situation. While all the papers critically interrogate past anthropological work, some also engage in what Ira Bashkow has recently characterized as "generous" efforts to recover forgotten and marginalized anthropological projects. All seek to mobilize historical research toward the creation of productively critical, rather than merely affirmative, insights into contemporary theories and practices. Panelists address a range of historical cases that will enrich the historical consciousness of the discipline, from a reconsideration of the notorious 19th century craniological researches of Samuel George Morton that recovers the unexpected diversity of political motives in that work, to the role of Malinowskian-style ethnographic methodologies in 20th century efforts to craft contemporary Ukrainian identity narratives, to contemporary practices of "autoethnohistory" that allow practitioners to reflect upon the assumptions, approaches, and engagements that have shaped the trajectory of their fieldwork careers. A specific concern of many of the papers is the practical and conceptual engagement of anthropologists with Indigenous communities, investigating the complex ways in which colonial complicities and anti-colonial sentiments may be seen as entangled in the work of Americanist anthropologists of the mid-twentieth century, and the ramifications of this entanglement for current disciplinary practice with stakeholder communities.

Participants:

Grant Arndt, Organizer, Chair, Paper Presenter

David Dinwoodie, Paper Presenter

Jim Weil, Paper Presenter

Kathryn Kozaitis, Paper Presenter

Nicholas Barron, Paper Presenter

Olga Glinskii, Paper Presenter

Paul Mitchell, Paper Presenter

Reviewed by General Anthropology Division