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Letter from the Former & Current NASA Presidents

It is with great pleasure that we launch this inaugural electronic journal of the National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA). NASA has had a long tradition of supporting student anthropologists. The creation of this e-journal marks a new foray for us as an association into the world of electronic publishing. We present in this double issue the first series of articles and commentaries that articulate the current state of students in the discipline today and the high caliber of work being undertaken across the globe by emergent anthropologists.

We would like to thank the members of the editorial committee as well as the NASA officers that have supported the creation of this journal—it has been several years in the making. We would also like to especially thank those members of our Editorial Advisory Board who served as reviewers for articles and commentaries. Finally, we encourage you to participate in this process yourself as a writer or volunteer on our Editorial Advisory Board. We are always looking for new individuals who feel they have something to contribute.

~Jason E. Miller, Past President of NASA, PhD Candidate, University of South Florida

~Marcy Hessling, Current President of NASA, PhD Student, Michigan State University

Editor's Note

This double issue represents a collaborative process worthy of adding my enormous gratitude to all those mentioned by Jason Miller and Marcy Hessling, as well as to Jason and Marcy specifically for their leadership in overseeing the e-Journal from its conception to publication. I would also like to welcome Sarah Taylor as the incoming e-Journal editor. She is a doctoral student of cultural anthropology at SUNY Albany who will undoubtedly learn from this privileged experience as I have.

The insights of undergraduate and graduate student authors in the e-Journal demonstrate great breadth in anthropological theory, methodology and analysis. As Editor, I am grateful for the contributions of these emerging scholars, beginning with Aisha Rios' description of cultural diversity training and its implications for perpetuating racial stereotypes. Rustem Ertug Altinay studies the lived realities endured by transgendered sex workers in Istanbul, Turkey, while Jennifer Heil critiques the U.S. Trafficking and Violence Protection Act as experienced by victims domestically. Brooke Bocast demonstrates how participant observation can be used as a method for urban ethnography and Ashley Elizabeth Smith contextualizes her ethnicity in relation to the study of indigenous peoples of North America. Andrea Sandor reflects on the differences in worldviews among students of international relations, Jamie Lundy takes readers through the sweatshops of East Los Angeles, Andrea Palley examines the multiple roles of being a researcher in Guanajuato, Mexico, and a team of students in Mexico (i.e., Miguel Duarte, Rodrigo A. Llanes, Rodrigo Perez, Emir Tepal and Nayelli Torres Salas) discusses the challenges of education and employment among anthropologists in the state of Yucatán. I hope you enjoy their work and are encouraged to submit an article for next year's issue. Submission details are found below.

~Marc K. Hébert, e-Journal Editor, PhD Candidate, University of South Florida

Reifying Culture: Training Volunteers at a Domestic Violence Agency

By Aisha A. Rios

During my second year of graduate school, I participated in a training program for prospective volunteers at a Domestic Violence Agency in a major Mid-Atlantic city (hereafter known as DVA). The DVA provides emergency shelter, transitional housing, legal advocacy, and helps operate a state-based hotline. During the program, the training coordinator presented a range of information regarding domestic violence, including varying cultural responses to such violence. Despite the programs' intentions to deconstruct cultural stereotypes, I argue that it created reified understandings of cultural groups, functioning to maintain differences between and minimize variation within groups. Anthropologists and other scholars have drawn attention to the way reified understandings of race, gender, socioeconomic class, and sexuality held by actors working in advocacy programs (Adelman 2004; Schow 2006), courtrooms (Allard 2005) and government institutions, such as welfare offices (Davis 2006), have shaped advocacy and policy responses to domestic violence in a way that negatively impacts victims. It is from this position of concern that I problematize the reification of cultural groups during my training at DVA.

All individuals with an interest in volunteering at the DVA shelter or the hotline were required to participate in forty hours of training conducted over a period of several weeks. The particular training I attended was divided over sixteen days with two and a half hour sessions over a five-week period. Two of the sixteen training days were devoted to the impact cultural issues have on the way women experience, understand, and respond to domestic violence. The training coordinator began with a discussion of stereotypes and how they can be problematic when advocating for victims. The trainer asked the trainees to

compose a list of common stereotypes of "African American," "Asian American," "White/Caucasian," "Disabled," and "Lesbian/Bisexual" women. After sharing what we wrote down, she led a discussion on how such stereotypes could negatively influence our volunteer work with victims. During this discussion, the goal was to break down stereotypes or to at least make sure we were aware of them and how they might negatively influence our ability to deal with victims. I found this discussion to be effective to this end and very helpful; however, immediately after this exercise our attention was directed to a section of the training manual providing fixed descriptions of cultural groups. The list of groups presented included, "African Americans," "Latinas," "Asians," "American Indian," "Alaskan Natives," and "Lesbian/Bisexual/Trans". Under each heading were a few paragraphs describing the ways members of each group respond to domestic violence differently. Notably absent from this list was the group "White/Caucasian".

Descriptors from the DVA Training Manual included:

"African American women are more likely to resist physically against their batterers."

Among Latinas, "cultural expectations around women's roles as mothers and wives may make responding to abuse difficult."

For Asians, "several authors stress the value placed on family and cohesion of the family unit as an inhibitor to leaving an abusive relationship."

I later discovered that the information was obtained from a literature review included in a research study conducted in Seattle, Washington, funded by and

submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice (Senturia et al 2000). The purpose of the research study was to evaluate access to and quality of domestic violence services for ethnic and sexual minorities in Seattle and to investigate how cultural issues affect experiences of domestic violence and the utilization of domestic violence services. The researchers specifically stated in the report that their findings were specific to the Seattle area; however, this information was presented in the training manual as information unto itself. This is problematic because the heterogeneity and variation within these groups, which was explicitly noted in the original study, was not given due attention in the training manual. Thus, statements about these cultural groups could easily be interpreted by trainees in a generalized manner, which would have the opposite intended effect of the discussion conducted immediately before these descriptors were presented. The trainer did make qualifying statements during the training to deter a generalized interpretation of the information and did not go into great detail explaining her modifications. Her adjustments to information were supplementary and not as detailed as the information presented in the training manual. For that reason, despite her verbal disclaimers, a central point that the training communicated was that categorical differences exist between those cultural groups, that such differences can be generalized, and have a distinct effect on the way victims respond to domestic violence. The problem here is not that there are *no* differences between the way domestic violence affects victims depending on their race, gender, socioeconomic class, and sexuality, but that fixed descriptions do not correspond to the reality of their experiences.

Anthropologists as well as other social scientists and scholars have spent much time

critiquing reified representations of culture (Rosaldo 1988; Merry 2003; Sokoloff and Dupont 2005), gender (Mohanty 1991; Scott 1986), race (Hyatt 1995; Mullings 1994), and socioeconomic class (Goode and Maskovsky 2001; Susser 1996). The DVA training coordinator definitely verbalized an understanding during the training that fixed understandings of race, gender, socioeconomic class, and sexuality were inaccurate and that such understandings could negatively impact how DVA volunteers respond to and deal with victims. I also believe the DVA training coordinator's verbal disclaimers to the training manual were supportive of the end goal of producing tolerant and understanding volunteers, despite the more reified descriptions of cultural groups in the manual. However, at the end of the day, the information provided to trainees was not simply that women's experiences, understandings, and responses to violence were shaped by their race, gender, socioeconomic class, and sexuality, but rather a *fixed* understanding of what these differences were. In order to prevent the reification of cultural difference, I would recommend that the DVA training manual be revised to include a description of the original study from which the cultural group characteristics were drawn from and expand the overall time available during the training to discuss stereotypes, heterogeneity in cultural groups, and how these issues relate to domestic violence.

More attention to the production of knowledge, dissemination of information, and advocacy work conducted by staff at domestic violence advocacy programs and shelters provides an important arena for further anthropological research. Anthropologist Madelaine Adelman (2004) uses the term "cultural competency" to describe the training of staff and volunteers of domestic violence programs that focuses

on cultural difference and how these differences affect experiences of and responses to domestic violence. Adelman expresses concern however “with the incorporation of cultural competency or of any rigid notion of how a certain delimited population is purported to act, in domestic violence interventions—or academic analyses” (Adelman, 132). Her unease with the use of “cultural competency” in domestic violence programs parallels my own concern with the DVA training program. Nevertheless, how the reification of cultural groups that I observed will affect the way trainees view and ultimately impact victims utilizing DVA services is still uncertain. Future ethnographic research at similar sites however, would provide valuable information to broaden the scope of the emerging anthropology of domestic violence and could simultaneously provide useful information for actors working in domestic violence advocacy programs and shelters.

Aisha A. Rios is a PhD student at Temple University in Philadelphia who is researching the production of knowledge and practice among domestic violence activists and the impact their work is having on domestic violence survivors.

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Violence, Forced Displacement and the Transgendered Sex Workers of Istanbul

By Rustem Ertug Altinay

Even though the transgender community in Turkey is fairly large and visible, the literature on the community is rather limited. Most literature about the subject seeks to interpret the experiences of trans people within the framework of psychology or psychiatry, or it focuses on popular culture to understand the power relations in and through which transgender subjectivities are produced. However, the literature on the history of the transgender community and Turkey's transphobic policies is fairly limited. In this article, I seek to focus on a particular period to discuss how different forms of violence targeting the transgender community in Istanbul subjected them to forced displacement in the city.

Contrary to the contemporary homophobic and transphobic discourses (Selek 2007:194), homosexuality and transgenderism were widespread in the Ottoman Empire. While some biologically male trans people worked in the entertainment sector, most others were sex workers of sorts (Bardakci 2005:94). With the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, the norms about gender and sexuality as well as the forms of popular entertainment changed, and it became increasingly difficult for male-to-female transgender people to find work in any other sector, and sex work gradually became the only alternative. By the 1960s, transgender sex workers started to work in the streets and gained visibility (Cingoz 2007). Working in the streets of central districts, they were easy targets for police. In 1973, the first brothels for transgendered prostitutes were opened in the Beyoglu district of Istanbul. In these brothels, they enjoyed relative security and regular health inspections. In the late-1970s, the government of the "social democrat"

Republican People's Party started a war against these brothels. They provided no alternative employment opportunity and simply tore the brothels down. Therefore, the workers had to move the brothels to less central streets within the same districts (Cingoz 2007).

The transphobic policies intensified with the military coup of 1980, and violence became part of the everyday life of the trans community, particularly among sex workers. Today, due to the stigmatization; the absence of any affirmative action, and despite the demands of trans activists, only a handful of transgendered individuals work in any profession (Ogunc 2007) and, to my knowledge, there is only one person, a medical doctor, employed by the government. Even trans people with a university degree are unable to find employment (Berghan 2007). Moreover, they usually enjoy little family support, and they are vulnerable to family violence in the name of honor. Hence transgendered people have few alternatives besides sex work. However, unregulated sex work in a city where the crime rates are considerably high makes sex workers the target of customer and gang violence.

The violence against the transgender community in Istanbul peaked in 1996, before the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II). The city attempted to look "modern" and "Western" for the conference. Stray dogs and cats were killed, some buildings were painted, and sidewalks were replaced. This was also a great opportunity for the middle-class to reclaim the districts which the trans community shared with other abject groups such as the Roma, illegal international migrants, children living and/or working in the streets, and the Kurds who

had to come to Istanbul as migrant laborers. This period of forced displacement witnessed the collaboration of different groups, exerting various forms of violence.

The Association to Protect and Develop Beyoglu, a civil society organization established by some of the wealthiest Turkish businessmen and important bureaucrats in Istanbul, combined a nostalgia for an imaginary past with the need to “clean and protect Beyoglu” from the “others” (Selek 2007:171). The association enjoyed great support from the media to reproduce these discourses, and to legitimize the forced displacement. In the streets, real estate owners collaborated with ultranationalist gangs to exert physical and verbal violence on trans people. They would stone their homes, break their doors or beat them in the middle of the street. These violent actions were often backed by the police who rarely did anything to protect the victims. On the contrary, police violence became an even more serious problem. The possibility of being taken under custody and tortured even on the way to the market became part of everyday life.

It was at this time Turkish media coined the term “transvestite/transsexual terrorism.” The term referred to disorganized incidents of violence allegedly committed by the trans community (Berghan 2007, 47). In the newspapers, magazines and on television, stories of “transgender terrorism” would stigmatize the trans community and feed the hatred towards them. Although they were victims of violence, they were often reported as being the perpetrators of it. They had nothing to do with the concept of terrorism, and yet they were victimized by the media through the attribution of being terrorists. The acts of violence perpetrated upon the trans community subjected them to a

discursive violence that would legitimize the violent acts of the police and the general public. Moreover, they were not given a voice in the media to defend themselves. Thus, the public image of the trans community as terrorists was established quite firmly. Many of them had to leave the districts where they used to live. Today, these streets are among the most expensive areas of Istanbul. The former inhabitants have found shelter in other spaces of abjection. This analysis shows how different groups employing violence unite to exclude “others” to spaces of abjection. It demonstrates how social “integration” is nothing but a far away dream for some, and social collaboration can be a tool that works against marginalized populations.

Rustem Ertug Altinay is a second-year M.A. student in the Philosophy Department of Bogazici University, Turkey. His main areas of interest are gender and sexuality studies, media studies, history, and bioethics.

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Human Trafficking and the Trafficking and Violence Protection Act: How the system can hurt the victims

By Jennifer Heil

Under the United States Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, trafficking victims who cooperate with law enforcement personnel are not subject to deportation (U.S. Congress 2000). These victims can be granted T-visas, which allow them to continue residence in the United States if they assist in the prosecution of their trafficker. In 2003, an estimated 14,500 people were trafficked into the United States, but of these, only 151 victims were eligible for T-visas (Newman 2006). In *The War on Human Trafficking*, Anthony DeStephano states that this low number is not due to victims' lack of knowledge about the TVPA, citing increased numbers of organizations, experts and lawyers working with these groups as the primary way victims would find out about the TVPA benefits (DeStephano 2007). The victims may have access to these resources, once rescued. However, in order for the TVPA to be effective, it must be known about by victims who have not yet been rescued so that traffickers cannot control their victims with threats of deportation.

The factors that contribute to the lack of applications for the TVPA benefits are two-fold. First, physical and psychological control exerted by traffickers prevents victims from knowing about the TVPA or being able to come forward. Victims are often imprisoned and at times chained to their beds (Nelson 2003). These victims do not have the connections to the people and organizations that have the power to protect them. In addition, the traffickers gain psychological control of the victims through repeated emotional and physical violence (Landesman 2004). Many victims are further trapped if they do not speak English.

Second, fear of the police and immigration officials serves to keep victims

from coming forward. Victims are often reluctant to report their traffickers to the police, because their traffickers have convinced them that the police will be even more brutal. A woman who was trafficked named Irina is an example of a case where her trafficker fostered fear of the police in order to gain control. Her trafficker burned her passport and then told her, "Don't try to leave... You will be arrested and deported. Then we will get you and bring you back" (Nelson 2002: 551). Some interactions that take place between trafficking victims and police officers, including police who are customers of brothels housing trafficked persons and officers who are complicit with the traffickers, serve to compound the problem (Landesman 2004).

Due to these factors, virtually the only networks that the trafficking victims have access to is the network of other victims, and specifically, the other victims who are trapped in the same place and situation. Therefore, it is likely that if they know of people who are helped by the police and the TVPA, they will have increased faith in the system. If they know of a victim who was arrested, detained, deported or otherwise not helped by the police, they in turn may be even more reticent to come forward. This demonstrates the utmost importance that the qualifications for T-visas under the TVPA must be extended to include those victims who are unable, due to psychological or other reasons, to assist in the prosecution of their traffickers. If these victims are not aided, the message sent to all trafficking victims is that they are not guaranteed helped if they come forward.

In addition, requiring victims to qualify for a T-visa in order to stay in the United States implies that trafficked persons are guilty parties in their own trafficking.

Trafficking victims did not consent to their transport and imprisonment, and so cannot be held accountable for breaking immigration laws. Giving trafficked victims T-visas, then, should not be seen as an act of amnesty, for amnesty implies the pardon of past offenses. These kinds of visa arrangements are reminiscent of a plea bargain, where a perpetrator exchanges his or her testimony for a lesser penalty. The traffickers and the governments who failed to prevent these abuses from happening across their borders are at fault here, not the trafficked victims. Therefore, victims who are abused in this way should not face the risk of deportation if they do not or cannot meet the conditions of the TVPA. To require them to do so is to imply their own guilt in their trafficking.

The 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act has many positive features, including the provisioning of T-visas for trafficking victims. These visas, however, are being under-utilized. An important goal of the T-visas is to keep victims in the United States in order for them to testify against their traffickers and therefore to increase the number of convictions of traffickers. Yet, this goal is being undermined by a system that denies benefits to some victims, namely those who are unable or unwilling to prosecute their trafficker, which allows traffickers to create fear among their victims. Thus, the restrictions on the T-visa should be eased so that more victims are empowered to report their situation if the

opportunity arises, without fear of deportation.

Human trafficking is possible because traffickers dehumanize their victims, and governments that stand by reduce these victims to numbers, not faces. By addressing their stories, anthropology can bring a face to the dehumanized victims. Real solutions exist, and the victims who are trafficked deserve a better system. Anthropologists are thus in a position to lobby for improvement on existing policies and contribute to the creation of new, more effective ones.

Jennifer Heil is an undergraduate anthropology and psychology major at the University of Notre Dame.

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Commentary: Forget the Forms: Participant Observation at an Urban Free Clinic

By Brooke Bocast

“Would you be interested in volunteering here?” I asked the homeless man sitting across from me.

“Sure, absolutely! Just tell me what to do.”

“Great! First, I need you to fill out these volunteer application forms. Then turn them in to the volunteer coordinator and she’ll get back to you. Be sure to include all of your contact information and relevant experience.”

“Yeah, ok, um, I’ll take care of that later.” The man took the forms and walked out of the room; he never came back to volunteer.

This interaction is demonstrative of countless encounters I had while interning at an urban free clinic (hereafter known as UFC) during my freshman year of college. This clinic provides a wide range of free services, including medical and dental care, food and clothing distribution, legal help, and social services. I worked there in the late nineties, and at that time, the clinic provided services to about 3,000 people per month. The UFC employed medical and administrative staff and a bevy of case managers. The UFC’s mission statement stresses its dedication to providing a comprehensive array of services to help clients prosper in the face of poverty.

I interned full-time at the UFC for one month during my college’s winter term. I conducted intake interviews, compiled a directory of community resources, and helped out wherever I was needed. In true intern fashion, I lurked around and peppered both staff and clients with questions. I had already declared an anthropology major, and with Anthro 101 under my belt, I felt poised to make an unique anthropological contribution to the clinic. While I did not

revolutionize UFC’s practices, I did use my observations and interactions in an attempt to improve its operations.

One of the director’s goals was to involve clients in volunteer work at the clinic. This goal served two purposes: to promote clients’ involvement in the clinic and to get extra help sorting food and clothing. I was told to recruit potential volunteers by asking, at the end of each intake interview, if the client would like to volunteer. If so, I was to give them several different forms to fill out and tell them to wait to be contacted by the volunteer coordinator. Clients were often enthusiastic about volunteering but usually failed to follow through. The volunteer coordinator, fresh out of college with an English degree, was at a loss for what to do. She chalked up the dismal volunteerism rate to clients’ general flakiness.

At first, I concurred with her. Clients often failed to show up for appointments, lost or forgot their paperwork, and gave us convoluted or conflicting information regarding their medical conditions, living situations, and employment histories. This behavior was not just annoying to clinic staff – it also seriously impacted clients’ abilities to receive government assistance. Many clients were eligible for benefits but did not receive them – either because they did not apply or because they applied incorrectly. Some clients could barely read the forms, others resented the intrusion of privacy the forms represented, and still others just did not want to bother with them. As a middle-class 18-year-old, already proficient at tedious paperwork, I found this behavior confounding.

I now know that there is a large, and somewhat contentious, body of anthropological literature regarding concepts

of time and obligation among low-income and homeless people (Lewis 1966; Wilson 1987; Susser 1982, 1987, 1996; Lazarus 1990; Gounis 1992; Lovell 1992; Urcioli 1992; Goode and Maskovsky 2001; Goode 2002). Particular attention has been paid to the idea that homeless and low-income people function according to a “present-orientation,” in contrast to the “future-orientation” of the middle-class (Lewis 1966). A discussion of the debates surrounding this concept is outside the scope of my argument; for the purposes of this paper, I follow Susser’s explication. She writes:

Without routine employment and a paycheck, people must be continually ready to react to each random or unscheduled opportunity as it arises. As a result, institutional routines are flaunted, and homeless people are categorized by service-agency providers as unreliable and without concepts of time (1996:419).

Susser’s words ring true to my observations at the clinic. Clients were ready to volunteer as soon as I asked them, but when told to come back later with completed application forms, their interest waned; clinic staff then pronounced them undependable. Having observed this cycle time and time again, I started to consider the disconnect between the goals and the methods of the volunteer recruitment process. Instead of writing clients off as hopelessly unreliable, why not find a way to capitalize on their initial enthusiasm?

Towards the end of my month at UFC, I shared my thoughts with the volunteer coordinator. I gave her two suggestions: 1) do away with volunteer application forms for clients; and 2) consider holding drop-in volunteer hours, following the clinic’s model of drop-in medical appointments. I do not know if the volunteer coordinator followed my suggestions, or whether they had any impact on the volunteerism rate, because I left the clinic shortly thereafter. I was a full-time student in another state so it was not feasible for me to stay in touch with

the UFC. My purpose at the clinic was to provide free labor while learning from the experience, which I did. Had I been conducting research rather than interning, I would have done follow-up work with the clinic. At the same time, and despite the limited usefulness of my contributions, I believe that this experience points to the value of participant-observation for understanding client behavior in service organizations. It also suggests the larger contributions to be made by urban ethnography, as noted by Goode:

Urban ethnography leads to new understandings of urban poverty in two ways. First, poor people are rehumanized as competent and moral social actors. Second, such descriptions of lived experience, especially when they are related to the context of larger political and economic constraints, helps to make sense out of seemingly irrational behaviors (2002:280).

The possibilities born from urban ethnography directly align with the UFC’s mission statement, which emphasizes collaboration between clinic staff, donors, volunteers, clients, and community partners to both combat the systemic roots of poverty and ameliorate its effects on the community. In order to ensure the smooth collaboration of all of these actors, we first have to understand each others’ motivations and behaviors; as I learned during my internship at UFC, participant observation is one route to such understanding.

Brooke Bocast is a graduate student at Temple University. Her research concerns gender, consumption, and higher education in Kampala, Uganda.

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Commentary: An Abenaki Anthropologist's Take on the Discipline

By Ashley Elizabeth Smith

Recently, a close friend stopped me in the middle of one of my family stories and said, "Wait, just how Indian are you, anyway?" This question has stuck with me and has driven me to explore what the utterance of such a question means for me, as a budding anthropologist, for Native Americans in general and for the discipline of anthropology.

At a time when anti-native racism is widely condemned, many people are still afraid to come forward and talk about their heritage because they are afraid of how others may react. My own fear of working in academia has come from a seemingly rigid concept of what academic work looks like. While being trained in anthropology, I came to understand Eva Garrouette's (2003) claim that academia does not recognize native worldviews as valid. I found it difficult to fit my work into the predetermined academic formulas for writing and knowing in anthropology. I could not help but notice how similar this is to structural and symbolic forms of violence. Structural violence can be defined as chronic oppression and social inequality (Bourgois 2004: 426). Bourgois claims that structural violence transmits itself into symbolic violence, wherein inequalities and humiliations become internalized and legitimized. Symbolic violence is then "exercised through cognition and misrecognition, knowledge and sentiment, with the unwitting consent of the dominated" (Bourgois 2004: 426). By structurally determining that there is a right or wrong way to define and express knowledge, are we not committing violence against those peoples who create and convey knowledge in ways different from us?

During my fieldwork among the Abenaki in the northeastern United States, I struggled

to understand how Abenaki identity has been affected by centuries of violence. I strove to learn just what had happened to my own family and how our history of oppression and erasure affected who I am today. The project evolved out of personal goals and worldviews, which led me to realize that it was imperative that I be part of my own study. My personal connection to Abenaki social networks and Abenaki, fragmented, historical memory allowed me to reflect on the data in a meaningful way.

Anthropologists have a long history of challenging our discipline, including questioning our research methods in order to improve them. My intimate connection to my research led me to challenge the role of the anthropologist in the production of ethnography. This is, of course, not the first time this role has been challenged. Ruth Behar's (1993) now famous likening of anthropologists to "priests taking confessions" demonstrated the problematic dynamics of the ethnographer/informant relationship. Behar felt that this dynamic led to the assumption that the ethnographer has more power or authority than the informant, which she felt was inaccurate.

My research expands on the questions Behar has raised, by exploring what happens when the ethnographer is part of the community about which she is studying and writing; can she then be part of the study? Furthermore, should the ethnographer be considered an insider or an outsider, and in what contexts?

The salience of these questions was highlighted for me as I began writing my ethnography. I found myself uncertain of how to incorporate the personal elements of my research within the discipline of anthropology as learned through college coursework. I asked myself: Is it alright to

talk about my own experiences with my research? What part of my family experiences is relevant to the discipline? Can I talk about being afraid to be open about my heritage depending on the setting that I am in? Can I discuss how hard it has been for me to take the step and say to schoolchildren at my hometown, “hey, the Abenaki still exist, because there’s one standing in front of you”? Can I include what it feels like to try to step out of hiding as I know it? These questions and uncertainties speak to the issue of erasure in that they are examples of internalized historical and contemporary fear of ridicule and discrimination, or what Bourgois (2004) has described as symbolic violence.

It seems that while personal experience is always part of anthropological research, it is often a different sort of personal experience, mainly the experiences of an outsider stepping into a new culture and trying to make sense of it. In my case, I was learning about my family story through studying the culture of people with similar family stories to mine. Like Kirin Narayan (1993:672), I have aimed to “incorporate personal narrative into a wider discussion of anthropological scholarship” in order to explore how a researcher can be both an insider, or “native,” and an observer. However, for quite some time I was unsure how to address this portion of my research, because I had been trained to think that this was not the way anthropology worked. I found myself fearing that my methodology and data were not “academic enough.” The feeling of uncertainty about how whether or not I could put my story as a Native woman into my research is a silencing that can be likened to the history of silencing Native Americans in the United States, particularly in academia.

My study is an attempt at the new kind of Native American scholarship that many

scholars, such as sociologist Eva Garrouette (2003), claim is needed. Garrouette (2003) asserts that this need arises because traditional forms of academia do not fully understand or accurately represent indigenous knowledge because it is not considered valid or rational. I believe that academia should be a way to open doors and end silence, not a mechanism which imposes another layer of silencing. Garrouette calls for a new type of scholarship which requires us to “enter tribal philosophies” and “enter tribal relations” and recognize tribal knowledge as a form of knowledge equal to Western knowledge. As someone who has entered tribal relations, I have particular insight into Abenaki cultural identity and, though positioned as an insider, I seek to also be recognized as an ethnographer whose work has the potential of being academic, relevant, rich and rigorous.

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Commentary: Remembering How to Imagine and its Cultural Implications

By Andrea Sandor

Last fall I attended an International Relations (IR) academic internship program in New York City, situated cozily near the Time Warner Building in midtown Manhattan. I enrolled in an ethics class, which focused on political realism. We would discuss to what extent states act purely in their self-interest. At times an important consideration was raised: "What about culture?" someone would suddenly ask. "Yes, what about culture!?" I, the lone anthropology student, felt like retorting. The other students grinned whenever I entered the conversation. As an anthropology student in a classroom of future policy makers, I felt out of my element. However, I think they were sincere when they said they appreciated my "anthropological perspective." I was asked to write an article for the student-run political journal, just so long as it was anthropological.

Sometimes I left class upbeat, excited to learn about transitional justice and truth commissions in South Africa, where story-telling and role-playing help a nation overcome its past. Other times I walked away disheartened, the global economy materializing as a game with fixed rules my classmates enjoyed playing. I was at the point of tears after one class when we had been discussing representation of third world peoples and how the global system addresses them. While I put faces to these people from past travel experiences, most of the other students had never visited such countries.

I thought back to my trip to Malaysia and the Philippines the previous summer on an ethnomusicology student-faculty grant study. In Malaysia, I had met Mr. Aasim (a pseudonym), High Priest of a certain indigenous tribe, when I attended a ritual

that is no longer exclusive to the tribe but is celebrated by Muslims and Roman Catholics. I was introduced to him by an English speaking Roman Catholic healer whom I had a conversation with earlier. Together we learned a little about Mr. Aasim's syncretic monotheistic-animist religion and discussed the history and future of his tribe. He showed me various ritual objects, including a tooth of a former leader with healing powers. Later, we moved to another room. Sitting cross legged on the floor in a small circle, Mr. Aasim did not speak until after he had played a ritual mouth harp. He needed to call off the rain, which threatened to end the ceremonial festivities early. When the rain began to fall forty minutes later, he laughed and said he had kept it from raining until it was time to go. And it was true.

I want to relate to the world like this. I want to play an instrument and engage nature with it. I want to develop my perception of "nature" in such a way that I do not relate to it as an object, as separate from myself and society. I looked around my class and realized that these future policy makers are not interested in relating differently to "nature." I doubt that any of them had tried to imagine what it's like to relate to a world where mountains are spirits. Then I realized that I had not imagined this myself for a long time. And then I began to think about the imagination. And this imagination was wiped away, incompatible as it is, with the ongoing discussion about the political economy. As I was becoming more and more aware of how complicated and serious this IR world is, rooted so firmly in a certain logic culture that leaves little room for the imagination, I realized that if I have this much trouble

understanding it, how is Mr. Aasim going to? And as his tribe discusses opening itself up for tourism, won't he have to?

My friend studying international relations told me last semester: "Don't you love IR! It explains everything! It explains how the world works!" It is true that IR explains how a world works. But after my anthropology of religion class this semester, I am convinced that I'd rather cultivate my autonomous imagination and see visions. And my previous IR classmates might say: yes, these metaphysical questions are interesting, but they aren't practical. But who's to say what's "practical?" As the Internet and this era of globalization give rise to a "fragmented and distracted world," evangelicalism is finding a foothold with its ideas of "portable charismatic identity" and is sending worshippers into trance (Meyer 2001). Arguably, religion is entering the global political realm in a new form, as a reactionary response to neoliberalism: a free market ideology that is a "programme for destroying collective structures," as its fixation on (fetishism of) economic efficiency eclipses social relations (Bourdieu 1998). While I am not reacting to neoliberalism by joining a church, I am searching for alternative worldviews, for like-minded individuals, for a vocabulary outside of the neoliberal discourse.

The last few years I have been gripped by my American college culture. I began thinking about how I should act in the world in narrow terms of "practical," "useful," and especially "productive." Creeping its way into my anatomy, I ate and exercised on a regimented schedule. This semester I am studying in Budapest, where the pace of life

is slower and the country is falling into "backwardness." Consequently, I am breaking out of my neoliberal conception of "productive" by taking long walks along the Danube, gazing at the Chain Bridge, and imagining the Industrial Revolution and comparing it to today's technological revolutions. I am writing poetry and feeling a creativity I associate with my adolescence. It is from this vantage point that Mr. Aasim's worldview becomes even more meaningful to me. And the perceptual divides between last semester and this one, between two schools of thought, takes on an unnerving new light.

Andrea Sandor is an undergraduate anthropology major at Bard College.

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Commentary: Transformation in East Los Angeles

By *Jamie Lundy*

"Do you think you'll need a bullet proof vest?" my mom asked as I packed for my trip. For three weeks I was to live in solidarity with the poor of East L.A. Bringing only the bare necessities, I would be sleeping on the floor of an empty building and forgoing showers. By the end of the trip I would realize the common humanity we all share, despite differences in culture, education, and/or economic status. The experience was so powerful that now, three years since my "immersion," I study anthropology with an emotional fervor charged with memories of East L.A. It was on this trip that my mind broke open and I began to understand myself as a citizen of the world.

Staring out of the dust-caked windows of a cramped van, I got my first glimpse of East L.A. as I passed from luxury to slum. The area was contained by a triangular boundary composed of two highways and a canal. Against the skyline stood stop signs, like warnings, riddled with rusted bullet holes, while a helicopter circled ominously overhead. Graffiti demarcated the boundaries of the many gang territories, each three block radius with its own soccer field and baseball pitch.

Full of misgivings, I entered Guadalupe Church. Vibrant murals and coarse bread replaced vacant statues and paper-thin hosts. The entire congregation exploded in song, led not by a professional cantor, but by children and parents. In complete contrast to the ominous outside, in the church the color, the music, and the palpable unity of the community filled my soul. The priest spoke in simple Spanish and moved among his people during the homily. Our common humanity bridged

cultural and social distances as we reached across aisles to hold hands during the "Our Father." As mass ended, the priest beckoned for me to join him. The parish community rose as one and extended their hands over me in solemn blessing. Somehow, I was home.

The following morning at 5:30am, I stumbled to breakfast with a group of homeless illegal immigrants. As we shared a simple meal, Juan shared his story. He had not been able to provide for his family in Mexico, so he paid a "coyote" to get him across the border. Eventually, Juan arrived in East L.A.; however, employment fluctuated with the crop seasons, and the wages were low and subject to the generosity of his employer.

"I had more respect in Guatemala than I do *here*," he spat. "People cross the street when they see me... 'dirty Mexican.'" I don't even know what my kids look like."

Juan worked in an "abandoned" building in the garment district. An elevator, hidden in a storage area and labeled "No Working," carried employees to America's secret slavery: rows of sewing machines squished up next to each other, mountains of fabric, armed guards, security cameras, and barred windows.

As a teaching assistant in the poorest parish, I worked with these immigrants' children. As I helped them with their homework, they helped me to see their world. The second generation had created a unique ethnic hierarchy: degree of "Mexican-ness" equated with power. The more diluted one's ethnic heritage, the more susceptible one was to bullying. A "pure" heritage gave children a sense of pride and a stable identity. Children used

the fluidity of Spanish, ethnic dress, traditional food, and gendered role-play to mark “cultural superiority.”

The teenagers of this generation hung out near the school. High school drop outs “dropped into” gangs. Adolescent disillusionment, fueled by the growing realization of the inequality of their living conditions and the stigma of their hometown, created a strong resistance to participate in normative rituals (e.g., high school, college and career). Instead, they looked for solace in other members who shared their experience, and with whom they created a unique culture.

I also worked with an organization that helps ex-gang members reintegrate into society. Milo, an ex-gang leader, joined a gang at thirteen for security, acceptance, and identity. He now works with passion to help others piece their lives back together. He bears his battle scars with regret rather than pride. Crushed inward in three places, his misshapen forehead is the living memory of the night a rival gang member attempted to kill him. Milo did not regret the pain in his past, he told me. “I believe there’s a diamond in every one of us, only it’s hidden in a rock. Every time someone hurts us, a piece of that rock is chipped away. You can’t go through life without being hurt, but if we grow a little every time we’re hurt, eventually the rock is gone and everyone can see the beautiful, priceless diamond we are.”

My entire life I’ve been a rock. I’ve been protected by a bulletproof vest of distance, ignorant of life beyond my comfort zone. Never before has the pain of the world filtered through this vest.

I’ve been naïve about actual hardship and tragedy. That summer I removed my vest. I walked with this community, learned from them, cried with them and loved them. There are no “wrong” people or “wrong” communities. People strive for the same things: happiness, and a sense of self respect and belonging.

In understanding the worth of *all* people and the complexity of *all* communities, we can begin to disassemble that which separates: prejudice, contempt, ideas of superiority. A transformative bullet of awareness *should* penetrate our protective vests, and allow the inward seeping of the different faces, ideas, and cultures of the world. The wound is to the soul, and this pain can only be healed through collective action for social justice. We need to acknowledge and embrace our common humanity, and respect our diverse cultural identities. We must flatten our cultural hierarchies, and create space in our collective consciousness for the integrity, autonomy, and valued identity of all cultures. We must correct the system that condemns people to lives of slavery and violence, and instead allow them the space to grow organically into a more creative unity.

Jamie Lundy is a junior at San Francisco State University, studying anthropology and English whose research interests include Irish-American culture and eating disorders.

Commentary: Intermediary in Mexico

By Andrea Palley

In the spring semester of 2007, I conducted a research project in a little village which I will call "Santa Maria", located an hour's bus ride outside Guanajuato, Mexico. This project was the culmination of a study abroad semester in Guanajuato. My initial goal was to learn about the social function of an elementary school in a small rural setting, and how it benefits the students and the community. Through interviewing a social worker, a teacher, parents and students, I was able to study the community from multiple perspectives. Together, they articulated one common theme – the school system has become a focal point for community organizing. Although as a study abroad student, my time was limited, my fieldwork in Santa Maria gave me personal insight into how anthropological research can be used to link distinct groups of people.

Although my focus was the elementary school, I also learned about the middle school and the absence of a high school. Everyone I interviewed in Santa Maria told me of the community's need for a high school. The parents said that without a high school their children do not have opportunities for economic success. After graduating middle school the girls help at home, while the boys help their fathers gather firewood: Santa Maria's primary source of cash income. Economic success must be found in a larger city, yet without a high school diploma this is very difficult. Thus, many leave to find jobs in the United States. Several students expressed their dreams of pursuing a university education – something unattainable without a high school degree. I saw this desire for a high

school and the resulting benefits for the youth as directly correlated to an overall push in recent years for educational changes in the community.

The school itself represents a catalyst for socioeconomic change, while education has come to symbolize the hope for a more prosperous future. The families of Santa Maria have already accomplished small-scale changes. The women appear to be the most active agents of change. For example, they commissioned the building of a short cobblestone road running by the main store and school, in an effort to bring the scattered hillside houses together into a more unified community. "Comida Caliente" (hot food), another program the women began, gives free lunch to each elementary and middle school student daily. The women are also the strongest advocates for a high school; however, this larger goal has hit roadblocks. Some of the women have tried to speak with government officials about building a high school, but their lack of formal education and low social status have hampered such efforts. They have found themselves in a trap: not having a high school education is preventing them from obtaining a high school for their children.

It is in this type of negotiation that I see the anthropologist as a potential mediating force, where familiarity with the values and needs of the groups involved could be very useful in facilitating action. I found that my resources and perceived social status as an outsider gave me the advantage of learning multiple perspectives on the situation and looking for alternative ways to articulate them together. My

informants in Santa Maria expressed a feeling of being stonewalled and ignored by the bureaucracy that allocates the permission and resources to build a high school. Once I realized this sentiment spread across various groups within Santa Maria, I chose to learn about the bureaucratic system in rural education. I met with a government official in the municipal education sector who explained the stipulations for opening a high school based on the number of students and the distance of the next nearest high school. I learned that the process was lengthy and complicated and would require speaking with the state education department in another city. Whereas in Santa Maria, I learned about the desires of the community, when speaking with the government official, I learned about the complex bureaucratic and political processes involved in accomplishing their goals. I also discovered the importance of being a third party mediator, especially one with a perceived higher social status, since the official was eager to give me information, while he spoke poorly of the village women. Being an outsider not only gave me this perceived higher social status by the bureaucrats, but also allowed me the necessary time and resources to travel to other cities to meet with them.

Unfortunately my research and my personal position as an advocate for the construction of a high school in Santa Maria ended with the termination of my semester in Mexico. In an effort to continue the momentum for change, I entrusted the data I had gathered pertaining to the process of building a high school to the director of my semester program in Guanajuato. It was he who had first introduced me to Santa Maria and who inspired me to begin my research there. While the bureaucratic

process of creating a high school is far from complete, I hope that I have helped to further the goals of the community.

Through my field study in Santa Maria, I learned how anthropological research can contribute to social change, and how I could become a link in that process of change. However, I also learned that outside mediators have limits. I did not have a long history with the community so their trust in me was limited and my understanding of their culture and needs was imperfect. Because I was there only temporarily, I was unable to personally see my project through to completion. Although a new high school has not yet been built, the residents of Santa Maria have continued to organize themselves for change. For example, they have started a women's weaving cooperative with the hope of moving themselves towards economic self-sustainability and increasing their participation in statewide community development programs. Through my experience working on this project of using anthropological research as a tool for social change, I have determined that the focus of my future career will be to work in the field as an anthropologist to link the needs and wants of local populations with an international non-profit advocacy or development group.

Andrea Palley is a 2009 graduate of the University of the Pacific with a major in Spanish and minors in international studies and anthropology.

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Commentary: Problems between the Academic Formation and the Nonacademic Labor Environment in Anthropology in the State of Yucatán, Mexico

By Miguel Duarte, Rodrigo A. Llanes, Rodrigo Perez, Emir Tepal and Nayelli Torres Salas

In the present article we would like to call attention to the problematic relationship between the education of social anthropologists in Yucatán, Mexico and the non-academic environments in which they are employed. Our argument is that, following the proposal of Juan Luis Sariago (2007) and Luis Vazquez (2002), the professional training that has been privileged in Mexican anthropology in the last three decades is that of the professor-researcher, even though, as a workplace, the academic environment is an increasingly reduced and competitive space. The problem then, is not that more anthropologists are working outside of academia, but rather, it is how academia is responding to the new non-academic environments employing anthropologists. Below we will illustrate this problem based on the specific example of social anthropology in Yucatán.

The educational process of social anthropologists in Yucatán began in the 1960s, with the creation of el Centro de Estudios Antropológicos (CEA) or Center of Anthropological Studies, which later became known as la Escuela de Ciencias Antropológicas (ECA) or the School of Anthropology Sciences. Today it is known as la Facultad de Ciencias Antropológicas (FCA) or the Department of Anthropological Sciences, located at the Autonomous University of Yucatán (UADY). Since its origins, the institutionalization of the teaching of social anthropology in Yucatán has had certain paradoxes that deserve to be mentioned in order to understand the current situation. To begin with, there is a strong presence of

indigenous Mayans, who number more than 59 percent of the population in the state of Yucatán, which also contains a number of pre-Hispanic Mayan pyramids. Social anthropology in Yucatán would appear to be a science born to investigate knowledge about the past and present state of Yucatecan Mayans. However, it was an area of research rarely studied by the social anthropologists of the ECA. What implications does this situation have for UADY students?

In order to respond to this question, we must consider the teaching of social anthropology in Yucatán as emerging in a context in which Luis Echeverría's government (1970-1976) supported the growing of institutions where anthropology and other social sciences could be practiced (see Lameiras 1979; Vázquez 1998), and "Marxism" became the predominant school of thought. Marxism in anthropology seriously critiqued previous practices, such as maintaining a close relationship with the Mexican government and it began to focus on the study and practical action of indigenous people in the country.

Therefore, the first social anthropologists in Yucatán could easily find a job in the academic field either inside the ECA or in other schools. Also, even when they maintained a critical attitude towards the governmental institutions, such institutions were a workplace that they did not completely reject.

However, the situation changed in the 1980s. First, the ECA, just like many other academic institutions, could no longer ensure the labor absorption of the growing number of anthropology graduates. There

continues to be “increasingly more anthropologists working outside the academic realm” (Krotz 1997:12). Secondly, neither then nor now have strong relationships been established between academic and nonacademic realms. Although there are some ties between them, there is usually a mutual ignorance between what happens in one area and the other. Even more, in both realms there are several stereotypes and prejudices that have relevance for anthropologists’ social relations. For example, the “academics” are seen as if they live in an “ivory tower” while the “non-academics” are seen as “outdated” and “bureaucratic” (Castro 2004:289; Krotz 1997:13).

Marxism and its values, such as conceiving of research as an instrument for revolutionary praxis, are losing its ground, while new values are strengthening, including “the value of theoretical knowledge, the objectivity in procedures and results, the disinterested investigation and the liberty of investigation and professorship” (Vázquez 2006:17). There is a new panorama in which undergraduate anthropology students do not know for certain if our training is effectively responding to new working conditions. Consider that more than half of the population in Yucatán speaks Maya and this language is not taught in the FCA.

A recent study (Ventura 2003) argues that anthropology students’ employment expectations do not complement graduated anthropologists’ employment prospects. While the main expectation is to be a professor or a researcher, increasingly anthropologists work outside of academia. The problem is not that more anthropologists work outside of academia, but rather that the training of anthropologists do not respond to the new working environments in which we find ourselves.

According to a handful of interviews we had with anthropologists employed outside of academia, many are working in governmental institutions, focusing on cultural policies, education and gender, among other areas. They are also employed in NGOs dealing with human rights and even in the private sector, in which we encounter companies such as Culture Management A.C. (Herrera and Lizama forthcoming). It is meaningful that many of these anthropologists consider that several of the useful tools they use in their current jobs were not acquired in anthropological courses. For example, working with archives and administration projects are usually considered historian and business skills, but they are frequently used by nonacademic anthropologists. Furthermore, these skills are not widely taught in Mexican anthropology. Another anthropologist said to us that it would be favorable to learn something about working in human resources. The timeframe that is estimated to complete nonacademic research projects is usually less than those in academia (see Pérez, Morin and López 2008). Furthermore, non-academic research is not necessarily published in academic journals, but is more often circulated within the organization employing the anthropologist. This limits anthropologists in academia from critiquing their nonacademic colleagues. From the various testimonies of these anthropologists one can deduce that those employed in nonacademic environments possess a different skill set than those in academia.

A difficulty that graduated anthropologists tend to find is the lack of acknowledgement regarding their professional abilities and potentialities. In the case of anthropologists in England (Shore 2006), this has led to the production of identity problems in some anthropologists who prefer to identify themselves with other

categories in the marketplace, such as “development specialist” or simply “social investigator.”

Our suggestions for a better relationship between anthropologists in academic and nonacademic working environments include the following: We need to have serious studies about the labor situation of anthropologists working outside of academia in order to know the real conditions in which they are working. We also should think of how to effectively integrate elements of nonacademic professional practice into the programs of study in academic institutions. We should know what research methods and technologies are frequently used by anthropologists working outside of academia, and compare them with existing pedagogy of methods in academic courses. We also need to think of how to use our research techniques for nonacademic uses. For example, in Mexico, Juan Luis Sariago offers an illustrative case. He and his students use their ethnographic data of the Sierra Tarahumara, Chihuahua, to improve tour guides (Sariago 2005). There is room for considering more “applied” learning techniques in academia.

Another proposal is to organize two kinds of conferences: One in which nonacademic anthropologists share their work experiences with students in order to open a dialogue between academics and non-academics. This would offer students different options for using their anthropology degree outside of academia and it may positively affect the expectations and perspective of anthropologists in training because they will be exposed to applied anthropological pedagogy.

The other kind of conference would come from academia, and include current workshops for anthropologists employed outside of academia. This is not about doing the common symposia where the researchers present their results. Instead, these

workshops would include issues relevant to government, NGOs, private, and other nonacademic interests.

Finally, we suggest that anthropology departments take into consideration the challenges of working in nonacademic spaces. This would encourage the creation of new courses such as administration and management, information systems (Internet, database and software), project design, paper presentations as well as research methods from different social sciences.

Miguel Duarte, Rodrigo A. Llanes, Rodrigo Perez, Emir Tepal and Nayelli Torres Salas are social anthropology students at the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY), Mexico.

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Overview of NASA & Guidelines for Contributors to the e-Journal

What is NASA?

The National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA) is the student section of the American Anthropological Association founded in 1986 to address graduate and undergraduate student concerns and to promote the interests and involvement of students as anthropologists-in-training. NASA is a four-field network of students, which directly addresses issues that are of interest to both undergraduate and graduate students, including finding jobs, attending graduate school, fieldwork programs and networking.

Why Join NASA?

- NASA offers two annual monetary awards to both graduate and undergraduate members: The NASA Travel Award and the Carrie Hunter-Tate Student Award for academic and professional excellence.
- NASA receives a large amount of allotted time for students to present at the annual meeting.
- NASA members elect their peers to serve as officers. These officers represent students within the governance of the larger association, which is a great leadership opportunity.
- NASA provides a host of resources for students attending the Annual Meetings.
- NASA members also have the opportunity to publish in the sections' column in *Anthropology News*.

How do I join NASA?

Any student member of the AAA may join NASA for \$5. Simply fill out the membership form and check the NASA box and mail it to the AAA or call (703) 528-1902 or email members@aaanet.org.

The National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA) e-Journal is designed to seek out exemplary scholarship done by anthropology students and provide a vehicle for students to publish in a supportive, nurturing environment.

We seek **scholarly submissions** from undergraduate and graduate students worldwide about the application of anthropological theories and methods outside of academia or across disciplines for the purpose of exploring, problematizing, or addressing social problems. These submissions should contain **original research**. Is there a paper you submitted for a service-learning class where you addressed a social problem using anthropological methods? Have you done fieldwork in a community where you sought to create positive social change in the process of gathering data? Tell us about it! Scholarly articles should be under 4,000 words in length and will be subject to a peer review process.

We also welcome innovative **commentary submissions** to the e-Journal. Commentaries are opinion or avant-garde pieces of work that are the original work of the authors. These submissions are to express the next generation of anthropologists' ideas, goals and beliefs of the direction our discipline should head, be it locally, nationally or globally. Have you worked in an internship, co-op or another job as a student anthropologist and wish to reflect on how you relied on your anthropological training? Perhaps you collaborated with students from other disciplines at a volunteer organization and seek to describe the value you added from an anthropological perspective? We seek a plurality of voices on this issue and intend to raise awareness among fellow students as well as more established anthropologists about the direction our discipline is heading. Commentary submissions might include such mediums as written pieces (approx. 1,000 words in length), photo stories (10 photos + 1,000 words of commentary in length) and videos/YouTube© clips (10-minute maximum in duration + 1,000 words of commentary in length)

Submission Guidelines & Deadlines:

The next call for papers will be announced after the 2009 AAA annual meeting. Any questions can be addressed to the following email address: [nasaejournal \(at\) gmail \(dot\) com](mailto:nasaejournal(at)gmail(dot)com).