



# The Australian Anthropological Society Newsletter

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how anthropology, with its focus on human cultural creativity as both the science and the art of life, can bridge the opposition that is often set up between these two domains. The analysis of mystical or magical practices and other phenomena which defy scientific logic will be an important component of this plenary. **'Towards Better Understandings of Environmental Transformations'** considers how various sciences and anthropology can work productively together to develop our knowledge and understanding of complex socio-ecological systems, particularly coastal and marine systems. This plenary will emphasize natural resource development, governance, and management. **'The Anthropology of Perception: Beyond Cognitive Science and Phenomenology'** brings together local and international scholars to discuss anthropology's potential to make more significant contributions to the cognitive sciences, and the degree to which anthropological approaches to experience are relevant to scientific theories of mind.

## AAS Annual Conference 2006

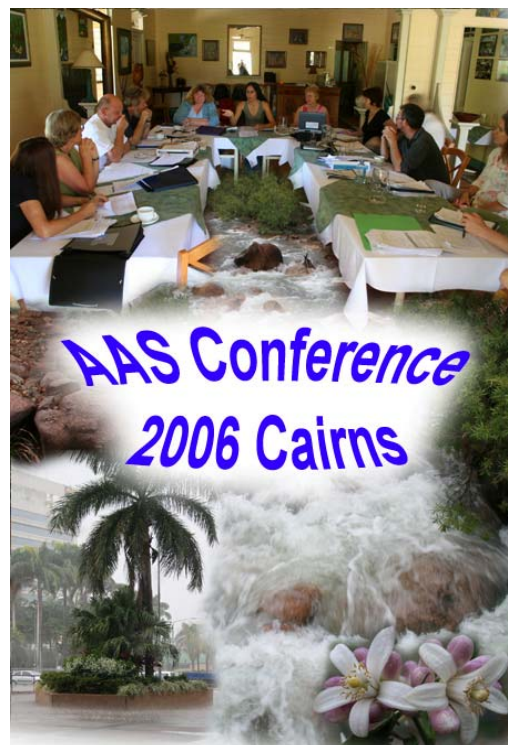
27-30 September, 2006

### Beyond Science and Art: Anthropology and the Unification of Knowledge

#### James Cook University, Cairns Campus

The Cairns campus of James Cook University will be hosting the AAS annual conference from Sept 27-29, 2006. The conference theme is 'Beyond Science and Art: Anthropology and the Unification of Knowledge', and a wide variety of renowned academics from Australian and international universities will be attending. As the title suggests, the conference will be focusing on interdisciplinary communication, on what the sciences can contribute to the humanities and what the humanities can contribute to the sciences. Anthropology combines theories and methods from both academic streams and has long been concerned with communication across cultural and social boundaries. The conference intends to bring anthropologists and other social scientists together with those working in the natural sciences, cognitive sciences, and the resource management sectors.

**Three plenary sessions** are planned for the conference. **'The Art of Science and the Science of Art'** considers



A wide variety of additional sessions are also planned, covering such diverse topics as the mind and perception, photography, cartoons, laughter, science and the environment, violence, crime and justice, youth and governance, gender and transnationalism, Aboriginal art, hospital anthropology, water knowledge, and Pacific regional studies. Visual anthropology will be an important element, as a number of significant recent ethnographic films will be screened by their makers during the conference. Finally, in keeping with the theme of 'Art and Science', a multimedia, arts and performance space will encourage multi-sensory reflection on the relationships between art, culture and science.

Two additional AAS events will be taking place on Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, the day before the conference starts. A postgraduate colloquium will provide a friendly and stimulating environment for postgraduate anthropology students to present their ideas and their research to other students. This colloquium is free for students attending the main conference. A second colloquium will focus specifically on Native Title issues, and the participants will include anthropologists, native title representative body staff, lawyers and state officials. One session of this colloquium will consider the issue of connection reports, the other will focus on the future of Native Title and anthropology.

The AAS conference dinner will be held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September in the beautiful and relaxing environs of the Cairns Yacht Club.

### **REGISTRATION**

#### **Win a surprise prize.**

Please register early. An early-bird rate applies to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Early birders will go into a draw for a surprise prize.

For your convenience a registration form is attached to the back of this issue of the Newsletter.

Further details can be accessed from the AAS website, [www.aas.asn.au](http://www.aas.asn.au) or from the 2006 Conference website at [http://www.faess.jcu.edu.au/saas/2006\\_aas\\_conference.html](http://www.faess.jcu.edu.au/saas/2006_aas_conference.html)

### **Proposed Panels**

Proposed panels and conveners are listed below. All proposals for papers and abstracts should be sent to the appropriate panel conveners by the 30th of June. Abstracts should be no longer than 200 words.

#### **Affect and the Politics of Intercultural Aesthetics in Aboriginal Art**

This panel brings together a number of scholars currently working in the area of Aboriginal art and affect. Recent work on postcolonial art situate affect as a crucial modality governing the present era. The violent certainties

of late global capitalism and neo-colonialism have seen the defining terms of identity irrevocably breached. Life worlds are now shaped by apartheid, genocide, displacement; gaps, fissures and silences in identity formation are now defining global conditions. The relationship between memory and event, language and experience - the taken for granted terms of the everyday - can no longer be guaranteed. To find a new language - any language - in which to speak has become imperative.

Contemporary Aboriginal art is in no sense exempt. This panel is concerned to explore in what terms Aboriginal art figures - what it does - in mediating between diverse subjects in an increasingly contested world. Approaching Aboriginal art and aesthetics in terms of its tactile and emotional sensibilities, and not simply its visual qualities, this workshop allows for critical exchange on the role of art as an embodied experience and expression. The intercultural role of art and the politics of the aesthetic experience will be explored in terms of contemporary art works from the Central and Western Desert, Northwestern New South Wales and elsewhere.

Convener: Jennifer L. Biddle (Macquarie University) [jbiddle@scmp.mq.edu.au](mailto:jbiddle@scmp.mq.edu.au)

#### **Anthropology and the Mind**

The relationships between culture and memory, cognition, subjectivity or the unconscious provide rich grounds from which to explore the dimensions of human life. While consciousness has been described as 'arguably the most philosophically resonant problem posed by the mind', it is 'also arguably the most intractable and impractical problem' (Horgan 2000:3). Geertz says that 'so far as anthropology is concerned, these ill-framed or elided double questions, the mental nature of culture, the cultural nature of mind, have haunted it since its inception' (2000:204). The problem of consciousness and mind has long preoccupied philosophers, and is today studied by neuroscientists, evolutionary biologists, psychologists and anthropologists, among others. Yet what the philosopher Levine called 'the explanatory gap' - the inability of 'physiological explanations to account for psychological phenomena' (ibid.:16) remains. What of the ability of anthropology to engage with the complex phenomena of mind and to engage in an interdisciplinary way with others who study it? What might such engagements reveal to us about the limits of science and anthropology, or how might they broaden or deepen our understandings of mind? The conveners of this session invite papers on any aspect of anthropology and the mind, particularly encouraging papers that draw on ethnography in their treatment of this subject.

Conveners: Katie Glaskin (University of Western Australia) [kglaskin@cyllene.uwa.edu.au](mailto:kglaskin@cyllene.uwa.edu.au) & Robin Rodd (James Cook University) [robin.rodd@jcu.edu.au](mailto:robin.rodd@jcu.edu.au)

#### **Connecting the Miles: Towards a Festschrift**

Douglas Miles has had an enduring interest in the politics of culture. His approach is epitomised in his American Ethnologist paper on the Finger Knife (ani-ani) which gives a political economy analysis of what had been seen

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as a cultural conundrum. This paper also captures another unique aspect of Doug's work - his significant fieldwork in at least four sites (Thailand, Borneo, Bali, Jakarta). He also has been an innovative and exciting supervisor, and has a devoted group of students who have been inspired (and are still inspired) by his work. Doug completed his formal academic career at James Cook University after teaching at Sydney and ANU. We invite former students whose honours, Masters, PhD theses were supervised by Douglas Miles to present short papers on that work in a session where we celebrate his approach to, and impact on Australian anthropology. We aim to bring the papers together as a Festschrift.

Conveners: Rosita Henry (James Cook University) [Rosita.Henry@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Rosita.Henry@jcu.edu.au) & Kathy Robinson (Australian National University) [kathryn.robinson@anu.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.robinson@anu.edu.au)

### **Consuming Emblems: The Semiotic and Political Uses of Psychoactive Plants in a Globalised Pacific**

Natural products are often embedded in complex semiotic and political relationships with the communities that consume them. This session focuses on psychoactive plants in Oceania, including Australia, which have inspired a great deal of scholarship but also warrant a fresh investigation in light of global processes. For example, plants such as kava have faced 'growing pains' in their development as international commodities, entangled in disputes over health regulations, the codification of market standards, and questions of intellectual copyright. Some psychoactive plants have come into focus as the targets of evangelical Christian efforts to transform local consumption practices, erasing anything determined to be within a wide orbit of 'intoxicating substances'. And many, if not most, psychoactive plants are taken up in processes of political signification, held to define people and places (both for speakers and audiences) through indexical-iconic relationships of emblematisation.

Psychoactive plants are an especially useful subject with which to address the conference's theme of 'the unification of knowledge' because they demand consideration of material properties as well as ritual-political significance. Fruitful analyses of psychoactive plants must treat them as objects of consumption as well as objects of representation embedded in performance.

Consider the example of kava, the plant made into an immensely popular beverage consumed in much of the western Pacific as well as in many overseas communities. In the 1980s and 1990s, several important scholarly publications appeared, establishing the fact that kava was not only a vital social elixir but also an emblem used in metacultural projects. By 'metacultural projects', I mean the ways in which people define local processes of social practice and the ways they frame historical trajectories. For both anthropologists and their interlocutors, kava has proven to be both good to drink with and good to think with, and it has become wrapped up in political projects of defining/contesting *kastom* and 'tradition' in many parts of Oceania even as it becomes an increasingly important crop for international export.

Papers are especially encouraged on such topics as legislation, commodification, and the development of global markets; indigenous subjects' commentaries on changing patterns of ritual practice; debates over health in a range of informal and institutional contexts; religious treatments of psychoactive plants, including evangelical Christians' oppositional discourse; and ritual consumption in overseas communities compared with communities 'back home'.

Convener: Matt Tomlinson (Monash University) [matt.tomlinson@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:matt.tomlinson@arts.monash.edu.au)

### **Cartooning Anthropology**

Anthropologists probably should be grateful when we are noticed at all! Stew pot metaphors, cultural exploiters and general despoilers of humanity that we are, we have provided the occasional humourist with inspiration. Krippendorfs Tribe, Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death and Lady Terminator (Indonesian) were aware of their satirical intent; In a Savage Land being less so. The lead film in the 2005 Berlin Film Festival, Man to man, examines anthropology's racist 19th century skeletons. Anthropologists have been represented in a variety of ways before; perhaps it is time to contemplate humorous ones. This session seeks to unite people who have collected and, even, commented on cartoons featuring anthropologists. Cartoonists are also welcome.

Convener: Grant McCall (University of New South Wales) [g.mccall@unsw.edu.au](mailto:g.mccall@unsw.edu.au)

### **Ethnography as Art and Science**

One of the main kinds of reaction to Clifford and Marcus's widely discussed (1986) volume *Writing Culture* was to see it as a threat to the status of anthropology as an empirical science. A sustained focus on ethnographic texts as texts, and on the question of what makes them persuasive or not persuasive, was seen to devalue their capacity for representing the way things are in the world, and to deflect attention from what should be taken as prior and more important questions, namely the empirical adequacy of those representations and the theoretical propositions they were meant to bear on as evidence. Perhaps especially in the U.S., there still seems to be a sizable contingent of anthropologists who feel this to be the case, and find themselves alienated from what they regard as the trendy 'post-modern' wing of the discipline, which no longer strives to be scientific in its aims and methods. (At Stanford University, for example, the anthropologists have split into separate departments along these lines, one of 'Cultural and Social Anthropology' and other one of 'Anthropological Science'.)

For their part, the textualists set themselves up for such a reaction by their wariness and frequently disparaging tone regarding the theoretical claims which the authors of 'realist' ethnography had tried to advance by means of it. While the worst excesses of this movement are perhaps behind us by now, there still tends to be a wide epistemic gap between those who take the descriptive content and theoretical claims of ethnography seriously and those who

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would focus upon on its textual form as an object of principled enquiry. In a recent publication (Rumsey 2004) I have argued that it is not only possible but necessary to do both of these things at once - that, far from being inimical to a serious treatment of its theoretical claims, a focus on the poetic features of ethnography is actually necessary in order to understand those claims, because ethnography is inherently figurative. That is, it makes use of tropes - poetic figures - not just as ancillary aids to vivid description, but as essential constitutive features of the form of knowledge which it enables.

Nor does that necessarily make anthropology unscientific. For the same is true of the 'hard' sciences, as elegantly demonstrated in a recent book by biochemist-cum-philosopher-of-science Theodore Brown (2003). What distinguishes them from the softer sciences and from the humanities is not that they are less metaphorical in their ways of describing or theorising things, but that they have more well-developed procedures for constituting the 'things' as objects of observation, and for producing what Rorty (1987) calls 'unforced agreement' among the scientific community about the adequacy or inadequacy of given theoretical accounts in light of the observational evidence. If the humanities and social sciences are necessarily less rigorous in this regard, it is not because their subject matter is any less substantial than that of the hard sciences, but because it is more complex, and in particular because it includes phenomena that are of the same order as that which is trying to comprehend them, i.e., other embodied human subjects and their ways of being and knowing.

Or so I have argued (Rumsey 2004). But rather than trying to force you to agree with me, I would like to invite you consider these issues in relation to your own work in anthropology and perhaps other disciplines, your reading of ethnography, and your understanding of the nature of the anthropological project in the contemporary world, and contribute to a panel on them at the 2006 AAS conference. In keeping with the overall theme for the conference, contributions to the panel could deal with any aspect of the relations among art, science and ethnography.

Convener: Alan Rumsey (Australian National University) [alan.rumsey@anu.edu.au](mailto:alan.rumsey@anu.edu.au)

### **Gender, Nation and Transnationalism**

The movements and migrations of peoples have been on the agenda of various academic disciplines over several decades. The concept of transnationalism, focused on networks of social relations of people spanning several places and nation states, offers a new approach to the study of transnational networks of people. While there have been extensive studies in anthropology of flows of people, capital, information and images, there has been far less discussion of gender in transnational space. Papers in this panel should consider several aspects of this: critical examination of transnationalism as gender-specific; how migration shapes and reshapes the gender relations of both hetero- and homosexual people; how men and women respond to such issues as 'long distance nationalism' and

the maintenance of ties with the homeland – including the question of remittances and of participation in virtual communities; what the subjective and discursive aspects are of gender and nation; how men and women approach the concept of citizenship; cross-cultural marriages and intimacies; gender specificities of cultural performances in transnational space.

Convener: Ana Dragojlovic (Australian National University) [Ana.dragojlovic@anu.edu.au](mailto:Ana.dragojlovic@anu.edu.au)

### **Haunting Images: The Affective Power of Photography**

The photographic image and the ghost are never far apart. From the 'ghost photography' that followed the invention of the modern camera (Cheroux et al. 2005) to contemporary photographs of 'unexplained' phenomena, ghosts and photographs seem intimately connected. Nor is this a peculiarly 'Western' phenomenon. Among the Banyankole of Uganda, the eyes of the deceased are regularly scratched out from the family album, to stop the dead from 'looking back' at the living (Vokes). Among the Bardi of Northwestern Australia, photographs may be used to bring 'luck' from the ancestors, despite the apparent wishes of the dead to remain undisturbed (Glaskin 2005). And in societies as far apart as the Canela of Brazil (Crocker 1993) and the Western Solomon Islands (Wright 2004), the word for photography is the same as that for 'ghost' or 'spirit'.

We think that this connection between photography and ghosts reveals something more general about the power or force of the photographic image. Walter Benjamin and Roland Barthes are among the many thinkers who have figured photographs as a 'return of the departed'; we presume this idea reflects what C.S. Pierce famously referred to as the 'indexical' force of the photographic image (1940) and its apparently metonymical relationship to 'reality'. Within anthropology, Pierce's work has informed Gell's approach to the 'abduction of agency', wherein the index is not only the outcome, but also the instrument of social agency (Gell 1998:13-15). Latour's theorization of technical mediation similarly points towards the ways in which the photograph's indexical nature enables it to reconfigure relations between social agents, including those relations which tie together the living and the dead (Latour 1999). The photograph's apparent ability to act as an 'agent' means that, like the ghost, photographs unsettle the Western ontological distinction between agents and things. These theoretical understandings of the 'agency' of images also have clear resonances with the ethnographic record, not least in work on the Indian notion of darshan, a visual exchange between image and viewer (Pinney 2004). Might cross-cultural comparisons of photography support the claim that '[t]he image sees more than it is seen', and that the force of images must be understood in the way in which 'the image looks at us' (Derrida 1996)?

Moreover, we understand the peculiar character of photographs to be closely linked to photography's affective power, which links the emotional impact of the photograph with its ability to reshape the world.

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Ethnographic accounts of both aspects of photographic affect are abundant, and often associated with the dead and mourning. This affective power of photographs can transform our relation to the living, as well as enable the return of the dead. Dussel, for example, suggests that photography exposes us to the face of the other, and in so doing reveals – in a moment of ‘epiphany’ – the presence of one ‘beyond the horizon’ (cited in D. Levi-Strauss 2003:47). The implications of such exposure in the context of anthropology are obvious, and complicate the association of anthropology and photography with simple ‘objectification of the other’ (Poole 2005).

The aim of this session, then, is to investigate the affective power of photographs across a range of comparative ethnographic contexts, and using various theoretical perspectives. One key question is whether or not the affective power of photographs is more clearly recognized in cultural contexts other than that of late-modern West, and if so why? Working outwards from the suggestion that the relationship between the photograph and the ghost is exemplary of the power of photography, we invite papers which rethink the ontology and sociology of the photograph, which investigate the ‘agency’ (Gell) or ‘force’ (Derrida) of photographs, and which examine the ways in which local understandings of photography can be used to shed new light on the medium. We are particularly interested in papers which examine the impact of new digital technologies, and the recent emergence of ‘post-photography’ (Batchen 2001; Mitchell 1992).

Conveners: Benjamin Smith (Australian National University) [benjamin.smith@anu.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.smith@anu.edu.au) & Richard Vokes (University of Canterbury) [richard.vokes@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:richard.vokes@canterbury.ac.nz)

### **Pacific Islands Social Anthropology**

This is a geographically focused panel to encourage those doing their anthropology (and Nissology) in the Pacific Islands to meet and discuss their work. Depending upon interest, there would be a mixture of papers presented, ideas floated (appropriate for the Pacific!) and open discussion and debate about themes and directions. Publication in one of the local anthropology journals also is a possibility. Island attire encouraged, but not mandatory. And, yes, PNG is a country of many islands.

Convener: Grant McCall (University of New South Wales) [g.mccall@unsw.edu.au](mailto:g.mccall@unsw.edu.au)

### **Perspectives on the Environment: Anthropology, Science, and Interdisciplinary Studies**

Science is an art. Anthropology, as a close social relative of the natural sciences, has the capacity to make this statement meaningful in all sorts of ways, and placing this immensely powerful system of knowledge production in an appropriate perspective is an important end in itself. Yet a critical and sympathetic understanding of the humanity and creativity within scientific practice also lays the foundations for developing fruitful interdisciplinary collaborations between the sciences and humanities. Because of its place within the academy, anthropology has a crucial role to play in this respect. However the

value of developing such interdisciplinary relationships within the university context; of finding the science in the arts and the art in science, is diminished unless the implications of that interdisciplinarity are drawn out in practical engagements with issues that, because of their scale or complexity, demand such approaches.

This panel explores these themes under the broad rubric of ‘environment’ and invites a range of papers which reflect on aspects of human interactions with, and knowledge of, their environments. These can be analyses of case studies in resource management and conservation, anthropological reflections upon peoples’ perceptions and understanding of particular environments, critical evaluations of the interface between scientific knowledge and that held by other groups of people about the natural world, or considerations of how anthropology may contribute to multi- and interdisciplinary projects investigating complex social and ecological problems. The panel is intended to provide a forum for further consideration of the conference and plenary themes, as well as providing a space for the presentation of new research and reflection.

Conveners:

Michael Wood (JCU) [Michael.Wood@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Michael.Wood@jcu.edu.au)

Marcus Barber (JCU) [Marcus.Barber@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Marcus.Barber@jcu.edu.au)

Bruce White [bruceanthro@yahoo.com](mailto:bruceanthro@yahoo.com)

### **Relationality, Rationality and Religious Experience in the Contemporary Pacific**

Joel Robbins (2004: *Becoming Sinners*) has recently argued that ‘relationality’ rather than individualism or holism characterizes Melanesian personhood and worldview, and that the tensions between the individual redemption offered by Christianity and dominant relational values produces a culturally hybrid system in which issues of morality are foregrounded and frequently troubling. This panel seeks to focus on Pacific islander engagements with Christianity, particularly in its Pentecostal and charismatic forms and other kinds of religious practice (broadly conceived) that encompass or are encompassed by spheres of rationality such as medicine, business, law and economic development. We invite papers that are ethnographically or theoretically focused on the theme of morality and culture change in the context of Christian engagement.

Conveners: Mary Patterson (University of Melbourne) [marycp@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:marycp@unimelb.edu.au) & Martha Macintyre (University of Melbourne)

### **The Anthropology of Childhood and Youth: Governance, Identity and Kinship**

Futures are created on the bodies of children. Fantasies of success or decline, utopia or dystopia are projected onto the characteristics children are imagined to possess. Conscious strategies for class advancement, social reform, and cultural identification are enforced upon children in regimes of discipline, naming, and schooling. Children themselves become active participants in these processes, to the delight and distress of adults, and it becomes difficult to distinguish the source for the agency of a

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particular act of social (re)production. Is the child internalizing or resisting the traditions/practices/disciplines around them?

Governance, in the Foucauldian tradition, is 'the conduct of conduct'. All, from state agencies to families, from corporations to self-disciplining individuals are involved in conducting conduct, and the trick is not so much to limit governance to the actions of states as it is to see how discourses and practices of governance circulate, permeate, contradict and complement one another at a variety of levels. Identity is one key site for the governance for children. The problematic is one of transformation, which is to say that in processes of identification children worry not so much about who am I but rather about who might I become and who might I never become. Kinship, or at least the post-Schneiderian new kinship studies, rightly takes the relationships of children seriously for problematics of both identification and governance. Processes of defining and producing relatedness, delimiting and governing the possibilities of future transformations children are everywhere inter-related.

While Anthropological studies of children and youth can be traced at least as far back as Margaret Mead, it is only in recent years that the anthropology of childhood has emerged as a specialist area within the discipline. In this panel, we seek papers on children and young people from a variety of anthropological perspectives in any contexts. From discourses on child raising and education emanating from state agencies to the ways in which youth perform class, ethnic, gender, or religious identities, from the darkest fears about the future of our children by parents, children, the elderly, or even the childless to the utopic dreams of the young and old, from the love and hate that children practice on each other to the games, practices and disciplines that adults feel compelled to teach, we are interested in how the study of various aspects of youth and childhood illuminate broader patterns of sociocultural evolution and reproduction.

Conveners: Martin Forsey (University of Western Australia) [mforsey@cyllene.uwa.edu.au](mailto:mforsey@cyllene.uwa.edu.au) & Andrew Kipnis (Australian National University) [andrew.kipnis@anu.edu.au](mailto:andrew.kipnis@anu.edu.au)

### **The Ethnography of Crime and Justice**

Increasingly, scholars are examining crime, social justice and human rights in terms of the interplay of local and global issues and forces. Local conceptualisations of social justice and human rights as well as patterns of and responses to criminal activity are affected by a global web of meanings and power relations. Ethnography is a major research tool in a range of disciplines, including anthropology and criminology, concerned with understanding crime, human rights and social justice. This panel seeks to examine the ways that anthropologists and criminologists use ethnography to assess crime, human rights and social justice in a globalised world. Papers from any discipline that reflect upon the use of ethnography for understanding crime, social justice and human rights in

terms of local-global relationships are particularly welcomed.

Convener: Garry Coventry (James Cook University) [garry.coventry@jcu.edu.au](mailto:garry.coventry@jcu.edu.au)

### **The Spectacle and the Substance of Rioting and other Violence: Anthropology to the Fray**

A series of overtly racialised disturbances in Australia recently has resulted in excessive hand wringing among liberal and left academics and a plethora of 'explanations', often centred on the current federal government. The papers in this session will range from an account of the savage consequences of rioting to the expressive, carnivalesque aspects of riots, and include the recognition that both hatred and love, as well as loyalty, courage and fear are expressed in these events. Anthropology's ability to go beyond popular 'social science' theories will be highlighted. We invite further papers interpreting the significance of both the events and the responses, including the extreme public anxiety at any overt expression of 'racism', which contrasts with everyday manifestations of racialised inequality. A critique of the responses to Macquarie academic Andrew Fraser's explicit racist comments may be included. We want to go beyond the liberal problem of injury becoming the basis for political identity (Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* 1995; Ch.3), but also to recognize secreted forms of violence that precede the events that attract so much public attention. Accounts of ethnographic experience among 'rioters' would be especially welcome.

Convener: Gillian Cowlshaw (University of Technology, Sydney) [gillian.cowlshaw@uts.edu.au](mailto:gillian.cowlshaw@uts.edu.au)

### **Water Knowledge: Spectrum and/or Rainbow**

There has been an explosion of interest in water, not only as a life-sustaining resource but also as a rich and varied topic of inquiry in the sciences, arts and humanities. Foci include environmental, ecological, historical, health and hydrological issues, aesthetic representations, land and sea claims, cultural interpretations of water, and complex human/habitat interactions. With water as defining theme, session convenors invite papers that situate water (in any one of its many manifestations and locations) as the lens through which knowledge is discerned and re-produced. Explicating an arts, science or integrated approach to guide the discussion, examples might include: different responses to fresh and salt water sources; the impact of irrigation on local groups and landscapes; water as evidence or metaphor in studies of belonging; the political economy of water; variegated approaches to water management; and so on. Whether the subject of water offers a unifying 'spectrum' and/or 'rainbow' for framing cross-disciplinary scholarship, is a line of inquiry that we anticipate will permeate individual presentations, as well as the session as a whole.

Conveners: Sandy Toussaint (University of Western Australia) [toussain@cyllene.uwa.edu.au](mailto:toussain@cyllene.uwa.edu.au) & Veronica Strang (Auckland University) [v.strang@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:v.strang@auckland.ac.nz)

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## When the Field is a Ward or a Clinic: Hospital Ethnography

'Anthropology at home' involves ethnographers entering an increasingly wide range of 'non-traditional' fieldsites. Hospitals are arguably the most complex institutions in industrialised societies, and hospital-based ethnographic research is well suited to elicit the shared understandings, ambiguities and contradictions of these complexities. Anthropologists, increasingly, are gaining access to hospitals at the same time as clinicians, especially nurses, are embracing ethnography as a research method. These developments present a range of opportunities and challenges for hospital ethnography. This panel invites ethnographically-focused papers which examine methodologies, ethics or any other aspect of hospital research, and/or portray ethnographic "tales" from wards, clinics, or other hospital fieldsites.

Conveners: Debbi Long (University of New South Wales) [debbi.long@unsw.edu.au](mailto:debbi.long@unsw.edu.au) & Cynthia Hunter (University of New South Wales) [cynthia.hunter@unsw.edu.au](mailto:cynthia.hunter@unsw.edu.au)

## You've Got to be Joking: Ethnographic Perspectives on Fun and Laughter

As anthropologists, our intellectual engagement with the lives of the people we work with and study tends to focus on the more serious aspects of social life: we have extensively covered the grounds of ritual, work, family life, health, religion, politics, and so forth. In this panel, we want to explore what people do when they have fun. Are fun and laughter universals? Why have fun, joking, and laughter remained so marginal in the ethnographic literature; and why have they been so difficult to theorise and incorporate into social analysis? How do fun and laughter relate to other actions and emotions in everyday life?

We seek papers presenting detailed case studies of fun and/or laughter and relating these to the larger social setting in innovative ways. Following, and hopefully transcending, the footsteps of Bakhtin and Mary Douglas this panel aims to further understandings of how fun relates to other aspects of social life. We invite papers situating fun and laughter in specific ethnographic contexts and examining what the rules underlying fun might look like; especially studies that explore fun through inversions, subversions and transformations.

We hope that a wide spread of papers from various ethnographic contexts will stimulate discussion about the cross-cultural aspects of fun. Papers should be solidly grounded in specific socio-cultural contexts and may cover a broad range of topics related to fun and laughter, e.g. from how to tell a Pintupi joke to what makes people smile in the corridors of power. Papers may also consider the role of fun and laughter in fieldwork and as a vital element in the fieldworker-subject relationship.

Conveners: Yasmine Musharbash (UWA) [Yasmine.Musharbash@uwa.edu.au](mailto:Yasmine.Musharbash@uwa.edu.au) & John Carty (ANU) [John.Carty@anu.edu.au](mailto:John.Carty@anu.edu.au)

## Changing Places

### From AAS Executive

Dr **Monique Skidmore** has been elected to the position of secretary of the Australian Anthropological Society. Monique is a fellow in the Centre for Cross Cultural Research at the Australian National University and Convenor of the Anthropology Graduate Program at the ANU. She gained a B.A (Hons) and B.Sc. at the Australian National University, followed by an M.A. and a Ph.D. in medical anthropology from McGill University in Montreal in 1999 where she earned several awards and grants for her research including a Wenner-Gren dissertation fieldwork grant, the H.B.M. Murphy Prize for Medical Anthropology, and Deans Honors for her dissertation. Monique taught medical anthropology at McGill University, and a variety of subjects during her five years as a Lecturer in Anthropology at The University of Melbourne. Before joining the CCR as ARC post-doctoral fellow in May 2003, she was a 2002-3 Rockefeller Visiting Fellow at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana.



Monique Skidmore

Monique's theoretical interests involve the anthropology of medicine, of violence, the body, peace and conflict studies, and cultural conceptions of time and space. In psychiatric anthropology, Monique is concerned with the conjunction of religion and mental health, which she combines with research in the anthropology of violence and terror. She is also interested in the anthropology of globalization and transnationalism, psychology, and human rights. Monique is especially interested in the medical anthropology of Southeast Asia. She has published on Cambodia and has several book chapters and articles about Burma published in journals such as *American Ethnologist* and *The Lancet*.

Monique has worked in Burma since 1994. She is the author of *Karaoke Fascism: Burma and the Politics of Fear* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), *Burma at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (University of Hawai'i Press 2005), a book currently in press with Notre Dame University Press, co-edited with Patricia Lawrence, *Women and the Contested State: Religion, Violence and Agency in South and Southeast Asia* (in press 2006) and a forthcoming book in the Public Anthropology series,

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University of California Press, entitled, *Complicity: Health, Human Rights and Global Culpability in the 21st Century*. In Burma she has conducted research at medical institutions including the Traditional Medicine Hospitals and Clinics and the Yangon Psychiatric Hospital as well as in villages and peri-urban townships. She is interested in issues such as heroin addiction, prostitution, “menstrual psychosis”, and dissociation. Monique also continues to work as a consultant for international development organisations on issues related to ethnopsychiatry, public health, qualitative research, and the relationship between biomedicine and indigenous medical systems.

## News from AAS

### *Free access to journals*

SAGE is offering free online access to all content of several anthropology and archaeology journals. Information to sign up has been provided on the members-only section of the AAS website.

## The AAS Thesis Prizes

In 2004 AAS instituted the award of prizes for the best thesis in anthropology, granted during the preceding 12 months, in each of two categories: Honours and PhD/MA (by research). Winners are announced during the course of the annual AAS Conference. Each winner receives \$500 and a commemorative certificate.

### Procedure of Award

1. The AAS will award prizes of \$500 in two categories: a) Honours and b) PhD / M.A. (by research). A written certificate will be issued to the recipient.
2. Each department or school or centre is able to nominate only one student for each category, and normally this will be the student with the thesis that achieved the highest score. The decision is made by the HOD or equivalent.
3. Submissions must include: a letter of recommendation from the supervisor (stating the thesis score awarded), all examiner reports, the thesis title, an abstract of the thesis (max. one A4 page), and the student's contact details.
4. The deadline for submissions is 31 August. This means that in Year 2006, we will be looking at Honours theses submitted around November the year before, and at PhD / MA (research) theses that have been completed (= degree awarded) at any time in the 12 months before 31 August of Year 2006.
5. The submissions will be examined and ranked independently by the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the AAS (i.e.: they will be assigned ranks declining from No. 1 to x).
6. The thesis with the highest ranking (the lowest composite rank number) will be awarded the prize. If there is a draw, the matter will be resolved through discussion. If no agreement is reached, another AAS executive member will be asked to decide the matter by choosing one out of the two or more equally ranked theses.

7. The decision will be announced at the following AGM. Recipients will be advised in advance, because their physical presence at the AGM will be seen as highly desirable. If the recipient cannot attend, he or she should nominate a representative, preferably the supervisor or another staff member of the home department, to receive the certificate on their behalf.

8. Submissions to be sent to: **Shane Silva, AAS, LPO Box 8099, ANU, Canberra ACT 2601**

## News from the Programs

### Deakin University

From **Rohan Bastin**

**Anthony Redmond** (PhD Sydney) has joined Anthropology and Australian Studies in the School of History, Heritage and Society at Deakin University as an ARC postdoctoral research fellow until the end of 2006 whereupon he will commence a continuing lectureship. Anthony had previously been based at the ANU.

**Holly High** (PhD ANU) joins Anthropology in the School of History, Heritage and Society at Deakin University in June 2006 as a full-time lecturer. Holly has spent the last 12 months as a postdoctoral research fellow in the agrarian studies program at Yale University after completing her PhD at ANU.

**Fiona Hill** (PhD Melbourne) will continue her involvement with Deakin Anthropology, which commenced at the beginning of 2006, while maintaining an active consultancy program based on her years of living, researching and working in Syria and elsewhere in the Arab-speaking world.

## ANSA - The Australian Network of Student Anthropologists

### Student Scholarships

ANSA have managed to raise funds for four postgraduate AAS conference scholarships to encourage student participation in the 2006 AAS conference.

Many thanks to Anthropos Consulting (<http://www.anthropos.com.au/>) and CAEPR, the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research at the ANU (<http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/>), for donating the funds for one scholarship each. Two others are kindly being funded by the AAS.

This means there will be four \$300 scholarships available to AAS and ANSA members presenting papers at this year's conference. We are hoping to raise funds for more scholarships. So.... if you know anyone who would be interested in funding a scholarship (or you have access to funds yourself) please contact Klara Hansen ([klara@ansa.asn.au](mailto:klara@ansa.asn.au)).

Details of the scholarships and how to apply will be posted on the ANSA website very soon. Just check [www.ansa.asn.au](http://www.ansa.asn.au) for information. Notices will also be sent out through ANSA-List and AASNet. For information on how to join AAS (and so be eligible to

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apply) go to [www.aas.asn.au](http://www.aas.asn.au). To join ANSA just join AAS and let us know by email.

### **Poster Exhibition**

We are also excited to announce that this year the AAS conference will host a student poster exhibition for the first time. The Department of Anthropology at Macquarie University has kindly donated a cash prize of \$100 to be awarded to the best entrant. More importantly the exhibition will provide a forum for students to present work in different formats and in absentia. ANSA subcommittee member Marie Seeman, from the University of Western Australia, will be organising the exhibition. More information will be posted on [www.ansa.asn.au](http://www.ansa.asn.au) and through ANSA-List and AASNet shortly.

### **Conference Billeting**

More news on the conference front includes the announcement that there will be billeting available to postgrads attending the conference. For more information contact [Kevin.mayo@jcu.edu.au](mailto:Kevin.mayo@jcu.edu.au) or [jennifer.gabriel@jcu.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.gabriel@jcu.edu.au).

### **Website- Call for Images**

Jovan Maud has made some improvements to the ANSA website. Images are being incorporated into the homepage through flickr but we are hoping to use images from ANSA members' own collections in this area. If you have any images you would like to have included please contact [jovan@ansa.asn.au](mailto:jovan@ansa.asn.au).

Jovan has also developed a blog page where information can be accessed and/or posted. There is a range of information that has already been posted in this area. Please visit <http://ansa.asn.au/blog2/index.php> and post anything you think is appropriate.

### **ANSA Subcommittee**

Membership of the ANSA subcommittee now includes a number of students from a number of institutions. However, some institutions are sadly un- or under-represented while others are well represented. If you are interested in joining the subcommittee please contact [ansa@ansa.asn.au](mailto:ansa@ansa.asn.au).

Work on ANSA subcommittee rules and the selection/election of a permanent postgraduate representative on the AAS executive committee is being undertaken. Fleur Smith, our newest subcommittee member, has kindly agreed to oversee this task. Again, details will be posted on the ANSA website (on the blog page and forum) and notices sent out through ANSA-List and AASNet.

## **Postgraduate Events & News**

### **AAS Conference Postgraduate Symposium**

The AAS Conference 2006 will include a specifically post-graduate symposium on Tuesday 26th September preceding the main AAS conference at James Cook University in Cairns. Further details available from [kevin.mayo@jcu.edu.au](mailto:kevin.mayo@jcu.edu.au)

### **The Contemporary Australian City: New Ethnographic and Narrative Accounts of Life in Australian Cities**

A Postgraduate Anthropology Symposium & Edited Volume

University of Melbourne Friday, August 4 2006

The city has long been the focus of scholarly interest. For the most part this focus has been a concerned one. In the first half of the Twentieth Century the city was often seen to have an alarming agency of its own, an agency that in its concrete immensity and unyieldingness was believed to be overwhelming the complex, indeterminate relations that inhabitants had between themselves and the environment in which they lived. In recent years scholarly focus has shifted from the city as a place antithetical to human relations to a place devoid of them altogether.

However, more recently this has been changing, in no small part due to the increased focus of anthropologists on cities. The increasing legitimacy accorded to 'urban anthropology' and 'anthropology at home' has seen the production of new accounts of the city emerge, accounts that foreground city life as something eminently 'human' and eminently 'lived'. These new anthropological accounts of the city have, in turn, helped produced a new anthropology, an anthropology as much interested with the dynamism and indeterminacy of cultures as with their stability, boundedness and power.

In Australia anthropologists have perhaps been a little slow to accept the invitation afforded by anthropology's expanded focus, but this too, it seems, is set to change. Across Australia a new wave of Anthropology students are studying aspects of the cities in which they live, in the process producing new, animated accounts of the Australian city, as well a new anthropology. It is these new accounts, and the new anthropology through which they have been produced, that this symposium aims to celebrate and promote.

Keynote speaker to be announced

Presenters will be asked to present an aspect of their city-focused, anthropological research in a 30 min format (20 min for presentation, 10 min for questions). Those who wish their papers to be considered for publication will be required to submit complete versions of their papers (5000-7000 words) at a later date.

Further information: Ben Killingsworth  
[b.killingsworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:b.killingsworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)

## **Forthcoming Conferences**

### **From Stars to Brains: Pathways to Consciousness in the Natural World**

20 – 21 June 2006

Manning Clark House, Academy of Science, Canberra

The conference, to be held in honour of Professor Paul Davies is sponsored by the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian National University.

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Further details: program and registration form available on request from [geospec@iinet.net.au](mailto:geospec@iinet.net.au) or [manningclark@ozemail.com.au](mailto:manningclark@ozemail.com.au)

### **Discovering Cook's Collections**

28 July 2006

Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences in collaboration with the National Museum of Australia

Visions Theatre, National Museum of Australia, Canberra

The symposium will explore the significance of ethnographic collections made during Captain James Cook's 18th Century voyages in the Pacific. Many of these remarkable objects will be on display at the Museum in an exhibition from late June to September this year. These objects from the University of Gottingen's Cook-Forster collection provide insights into the worlds of both European and Pacific peoples during the second-half of the eighteenth century. The history of the collections themselves since the late 18th Century, their importance to the descendants of their makers as well as to anthropology, art and museology will also be explored.

Further details: <http://www.anu.edu.au/culture/events.php>

### **The Contemporary Australian City. A Postgraduate Anthropology Symposium**

4 August 2006

University of Melbourne

Further details: see under Postgraduate Events in this Newsletter or email Ben Killingsworth [b.killingsworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:b.killingsworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)

### **Selling Yarns: Australian Indigenous textiles and good business in the 21st century**

Hosted by The Australian National University

13 – 14 August 2006, immediately following the 23<sup>rd</sup> Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin

The conference investigates best practice and sustainability in the Indigenous textile industry. The first day of the conference will focus on the making of textile art, from both an international and national perspective. Discussions will focus on an overview of current business and marketing practice in the production and promotion of work. The second day will explore business opportunities and examples Australia wide with speakers addressing government support and funding, copyright issues, small business endeavours, partnerships, export opportunities and options for a more sustainable future practice.

Further details: [www.sellingyarns.com](http://www.sellingyarns.com)

### **Land, Memory, Reconstruction and Justice: Perspectives on Land Restitution in South Africa**

13-15 September 2006

Houw Hoek Inn, near Cape Town, South Africa

The Urban and Rural Economic Development research programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Programme on Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, and the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University are hosting a multi-disciplinary conference on land restitution in South Africa, both rural and urban.

The conference aims to bring together academics, policy makers and analysts working in the broad area of land claims and land restitution, to provide a platform for current research, review the state of knowledge, and assess the challenges still facing this multi-faceted programme. It is not intended as a narrowly academic event but aims to engage the broad community of intellectuals, including policy makers, implementers and practitioners, researchers working in the university, state, NGO and donor sectors, journalists and other analysts. The intention is to promote critical but open-ended rather than polemical debate, and to explore a wide range of issues in a collegial atmosphere. While the focus is on South Africa, the intention is to place South Africa's experience with land restitution in comparative perspective. Contributions focusing on experiences from Africa and elsewhere will thus be welcomed. The maximum number of participants will be 100. The language for papers and medium of discussion will be English.

Further details:

<http://academic.sun.ac.za/sociology/restitutionconference/index.htm>

### **European Association of Social Anthropologists: 9<sup>th</sup> EASA Biennial Conference**

18 – 21 September 2006

Bristol, United Kingdom

Theme: Europe and the World

The theme encourages us to consider the global dimensions of particular ethnographic encounters. The wider interconnections, the spread of ideas, the dynamic relationships and processes which shape the everyday activity of social life; these lie increasingly at the centre of our methodological and theoretical preoccupations as anthropologists. Mediated by individual, institutional, national developments of enormous complexity, this link between global interchange and local creativity deserves our systematic attention and analysis.

Further details:

<http://www.nomadit.co.uk/easa/easa06/index.htm>

### **Everyday Multiculturalism**

28 – 29 September 2006

Centre for Research on Social Inclusion, Macquarie University & the ARC Cultural Research Network

The conference will be divided into two parts:

Day 1: Everyday Multiculturalism - Open theme. Papers in this section will engage with the quotidian dimensions of living with diversity.

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Day 2: Cronulla and the Everyday Politics of Cultural Difference in Suburbia. Papers in this section will present a collection of new work reflecting on the Cronulla riots - the causes, the riots themselves, and their ramifications.

Further details: [www.crsi.mq.edu.au](http://www.crsi.mq.edu.au)

**After 26 years: Collaborative research in Vanuatu since Independence**

6 – 10 November 2006

Port Vila, Vanuatu

This conference will bring together local and international researchers of Vanuatu society, language and history. The conference will primarily focus around the activities of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VKS), with its unique and highly innovative Film and Sound Unit and 'fieldworkers program'. The conference presentations can be given in any of Vanuatu's three official languages. One day will be a designated Bislama day in which presentations will be aimed at a local audience.

Further details: Nicholas Thieberger  
[thien@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:thien@unimelb.edu.au)

**Cultural Heritage and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights. A World Archaeological Congress Symposium**

3 – 5 December 2006

Burra, South Australia

This cross-disciplinary international conference will address the history of and contemporary developments in the intersections between cultural heritage and cultural and intellectual property rights in Indigenous customary and academic worlds. Key speakers include Julie Hollowell and George Nicholas, Canada; Maui Solomon, New Zealand; and Sven Ouzman, South Africa. The conference will be held in the heritage town of Burra, South Australia, in the traditional country of the Ngadjuri people. Burra is a significant location for discussion of this topic, since it was the site where the Burra Charter (the Australia ICOMOS charter for places of cultural significance) was developed. The significance of this charter is recognized internationally, and the planned conference also will be addressing issues of international significance. It is expected that selected papers from this conference will form the core of an edited book.

Further details:  
<http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org>

**ACSPRI Social Science Methodology Conference**

10 – 13 December 2006

The University of Sydney

The Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research, Inc. (ACSPRI) will host a conference in December 2006 in order to provide a national forum focusing on current issues in social science methodology.

Further details: [www.conference2006.acspri.org.au](http://www.conference2006.acspri.org.au)

**The Borderpolitics of Whiteness Conference**

The Department of Critical and Cultural Studies (Macquarie University) and the Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association

11 – 13 December 2006

Carlton Crest Hotel, Sydney

In recent years, celebrative rhetoric about the 'the global village' and the erosion of national borders appears to have shifted. Borderpolitics has become an organisational principle not only at the level of governmental concerns or media debates, but in the practices of everyday life. This is because the securing of borders is not simply about national sovereignty, but about the reconfiguring of zones of inclusion, exclusion, and the in-between in relation to social, political, economic, and cultural practices.

The practices and implications of borderpolitics open up a space for critical investigation especially in the area of Race, Ethnicity and Whiteness Studies. This field is concerned not merely with the politics of racial identities (although this is one of its concerns) but with the complex formation of colonial and racialised systems of knowledge. These knowledges permeate a range of disciplinary areas such as education, international relations, law, culture, geography, media, religion, management, tourism, terrorism, anthropology, sociology, politics, gender, sexuality, bodies, linguistics, philosophy, history, medicine, statistics, economics, biology and visual arts among others.

We invite speakers from a broad range of disciplines who are interested in examining borderpolitics with particular reference to the way in which whiteness is implicated in the construction of borders in their multiple configurations, and the manner in which Race, Ethnicity, and Whiteness Studies can intervene in and engage with border practices.

Deadline for Abstracts: August 30, 2006

Further details and enquiries: Elaine Laforteza at [borderpolitics@scmp.mq.edu.au](mailto:borderpolitics@scmp.mq.edu.au) and <http://www.ccs.mq.edu/borderpolitics>

**The 7th International Conference on Oceanic Linguistics (COOL7)**

2 – 6 July 2007

University of New Caledonia, Noumea, New Caledonia

Further details: <http://www.univ-nc.nc/COOL7>

**Previous listings** (see March 2006 AAS Newsletter)

Sustainable Islands – Sustainable Strategies [Kahului, Hawai'i: July 29 – August 3, 2006]

15<sup>th</sup> Congress of European Anthropological Association [Budapest, Hungary: August 31 – September 3, 2006]

Pacific Transnationalism: Tracing Ties to the Homelands [La Trobe University: 20 – 22 November 2006]

Dilemmas in Difference: New Approaches to Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam [ANU: 23 – 24 November 2006]

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## Recent Doctoral Theses in Anthropology

**Christine Adams**, School of Archaeology and Anthropology, Australian National University

Title: Melancholic attachments: the making and medicalisation of Aboriginal 'loss' (PhD 2006)

Abstract: This thesis examines the loss of Aboriginal Australians as both an embodied experience and a powerful form of identity-construction. The focus of research is on southeast Australia where Aboriginal people, having suffered profound and often violent dispossession and state-authorised intrusion into their lives and communities, have been consistently defined in terms of their 'loss' of those qualities seen to constitute 'authentic' Aboriginality. I show how Aborigines have taken up and interacted with these dominant ascriptions of their identity such that the experience of loss has become a constitutive quality of Aboriginality in southern Australia, a pivotal basis of identification in public and political arenas. Further, I demonstrate how Aborigines' experience of loss has been reframed in dialectic with dominant forms of knowledge in changing socio-political milieux. In particular, I contend that in the last decades of the twentieth century, Aboriginal loss has been subsumed and redefined within the categories of psychology and psychiatry. I argue that this psychologisation of Aboriginal experience has significant ramifications in terms of how Aborigines are known and come to know themselves.

**Rosemary Mann**: Centre for Health and Society, The University of Melbourne

Title: Look Wide- Searching for Health in the Borderlands. Experiences of disease prevention and health promotion in a Central Australian Indigenous settlement (PhD 2006)

Abstract

Until recently, place has been of little interest to health research. While fundamental to anthropological accounts, place has been largely relegated to the bounded and inert ground on which human agency is exercised. In this dissertation the relationship between people and the places in which they live is brought to the foreground. The thesis is interested in bridging the gap between human agency and the social structures that underpin health by examining the subjective experiences and narrative accounts of individuals linked to the social organisation of places and their histories. The social theory of Pierre Bourdieu's and his concepts of habitus, field and capital, brings analysis of these health encounters closer to the experience of everyday practice. The broader interest that runs in the background of the thesis is the interplay between the social determinants of health, the capacity to act and health inequality. Based in the Warlpiri settlement of Yuendumu in Central Australia, the ethnography critically examines the engagement between Indigenous understandings of health, well-being and being ill, and the dominant biomedical discourse that shapes disease prevention and health promotion

interventions. Against a landscape of a rapidly changing Warlpiri social world, the search for Indigenous health extends beyond the biomedical lifeworld and into the tensions of a wider social context. The sites of engagement are imagined as borderlands - emergent intra-cultural meeting places between *yapa* and *kardiya*. The search begins at the clinic in Yuendumu, the site of practitioners' biomedical practice, before moving into the settlement spaces to explore Warlpiri experiences of health promotion and disease prevention. Finally the thesis shifts beyond the cartographic boundary of Yuendumu to the symbolic boundaries of the nation. Issues of social exclusion and marginalisation are implicated in Indigenous health as the thesis explores the historicized connections between people, place and identity, both in Central Australia and within a wider national discourse of belonging.

**Mark Moran**, Aboriginal Environments Research Centre (AERC), The University of Queensland

Title: Contemporary Indigenous Settlement in Queensland: A Settlement Classificatory System and a Process Framework for Settlement Planning (PhD 2006)

Abstract

The principle and policy of self-determination holds that Aboriginal people should have the right to pursue a lifestyle of their choosing and to have control over their interactions with the wider society. Self-determination policy has been in place at a federal level since the 1970's, yet after thirty years of implementation, there is considerable disarray and disagreement over its merits.

This study investigated the transactions of decision-makers as they practised two of the main policy instruments of self-determination: participatory planning and self-governance. The research settings were Mapoon and Kowanyama, two discrete Indigenous settlements on the West Coast of Cape York Peninsula, in the state of Queensland, northern Australia.

Three typologies for settlements, planning, and organisations were established, which gave the context for the study, as well as a basis from which to generalise findings. From the types of planning in practice, a participatory plan at Mapoon was singled out for further study since it specifically recreated the language of self-determination. The Mapoon Plan was found to be successful technically, but it fell short of its stated social development goals. Planning proved to be a highly politicised and idealised activity, brokered by external consultants. The complex interplay among knowledge, ideology and politics, as observed, could not be described in terms of two separate domains, but rather in terms of intercultural production across an interethnic field. The anthropological literature tended to treat Aboriginal polities as cultural isolates, situated within administrative vacuums. To progress the study, it became necessary to apply a functional and administrative rationality to what needed to be done in practice.

Twenty case studies of decision-making forums were analysed in the main research setting of Kowanyama.

Each involved the contemporary practice of self-determination, as local decision-makers engaged with the wider society. In the majority of cases, all six proposed factors were found to be necessary, but not sufficient, for success: (1) participation, (2) technical expertise, (3) negotiation, (4) institutional capacity, (5) focal driver, and (6) jurisdictional devolution.

A typology of actors was established to define the different decision-makers involved. Of the 600 adults in Kowanyama, only 30 were found to be actively involved in decision-making. This was unexpectedly low given the quantity of government activity purporting to further Kowanyama's self-determination. Six determinants were found to influence the level of participation: efficacy in practice, jurisdictional devolution, representativeness, function, informality, language and motivation. In particular, form followed function, whereby the function of a decision-making forum decided the level of participation that was appropriate.

Contrary to accounts in the anthropological literature, the study found a fledgling system of representation in Kowanyama, complete with informal 'extra-constitutional' checks and balances. Factions were a powerful aspect of Kowanyama society, but they did not monopolise politics. The local polity was better conceptualised in terms of its political pluralism, encompassing a complex array of balancing and competing interests. Significantly, constituents were beginning to exert local political influence over their leaders.

The analysis found that notions of 'community control,' as promulgated in the community development literature, were not adequate to explain the intercultural production underway. The full spectrum of participation was relevant to the actors of governance, from political activism to ambivalent apathy. Community control was found in the absence of government interventions, imbedded within informal institutions and cultural norms. Yet, introduced political structures, including Councils, were no less a part of the local political arena. The notion of governance better encapsulated the array of decision-making activities and actors occurring across a broad range of institutional positions.

The study documented multiple dilemmas and indeterminacies as actors practised self-determination in the interethnic field, especially the interplay between local and external ideologies and knowledge. All of the examples of political innovation in the contemporary history of governance in Kowanyama involved productive social contexts developing locally between leaders and trusted outsiders. The complexity of problems and their solutions were only revealed through practice, one step at a time. Successful initiatives in Kowanyama were to a degree inadvertent; it was not until the end that actors understood what they had done right or wrong. Significantly, political innovation occurred in practice, often without any active intervention by government.

Ironically, one of the greatest obstacles limiting local capacity was the size of the task of administering the

programs of self-determination. An accepted role for leaders and employees was radical action to manipulate the system and to create the institutional space to permit the subjects of self-determination to participate. The analysis suggested that the importance assigned to government policy, legislation, and structure has fallen out of balance with their actual practice. Rather than fixating on policy solutions to self-determination, policy-makers should be focusing more on creating an enabling framework for practice. The six success factors proven in the study give the basis for such a framework.

**Maïa Ponsonnet:** Department of Arts, Université Paris 8 – Vincennes-Saint-Denis

Title: *Jeux de langage comparés - Manières de voir le monde des Aborigènes Dalabon d'Australie du Nord* [Comparing Language Games - Ways of Seeing the World of Dalabon Aborigines of Northern Australia] (PhD, 2005)

Abstract [English translation]

This work stands at the cross-roads of philosophy and anthropology. "Field" experience with Dalabon Aborigines, influenced by Wittgensteinian ideas, lead us towards this mixed approach.

Observing Dalabon language games, we find them free of some of the philosophical confusions which Wittgenstein, or Austin, for instance, have underlined: radical doubt, misleading conceptions of knowledge, of "signification"... At first sight, drawing inspirations from Dalabon language games so as to free ourselves from these confusions might seem helpful. However, comparing our games to theirs, we also find that their games do not suit our form of life. In fact, our philosophical confusions are part of our daily language games, to the point that they have become indispensable. They are also a means to produce "effective" theory and speech.

In this perspective, the inspirations drawn by some contemporary philosophers from the figure of traditional societies may be problematic.

**Daniel Aime Vachon,** Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto

Title: *The Serpent, the Word and the Lie of the Land: The Discipline of Living in the Great Sandy Desert of Australia* (PhD 2006)

Abstract

In this thesis, I direct my attention to two aims. I intend to provide an ethnographic description of an indigenous people's 'country' which is, among other things, a place where human beings and seemingly non-visible agents are said to co-exist and interact. This interaction has been occurring for an indeterminate period in a rather large area of the northern Great Sandy Desert and the southern margins of the Kimberley district of Western Australia. The people who consider this area to be their land are known by no single name; many of their customs are shared by others; they associate themselves and their country with several languages, some of which others

identify with and speak as well. While common identity may seem an elusive quality for them, I intend to show that the character and geographic limits of the land that these people once habitually occupied are discernable in terms of durable conceptualisations which they share and use in publicly understandable ways. For this purpose I use the concept of chorology. One focus of this study lies at the level once the preserve of the tribe, the cultural bloc and, more recently, the language-owning group. A closer look at the concept of the Western Desert cultural bloc is long overdue, and part of my argument is that the inclusion of the northern Great Sandy Desert in this rubric has served to mask its character and distinctiveness.

## New Publications

### Anthropological Forum

Volume 16, No. 1. March 2006

**Victoria Burbank:** "From Bedtime to On Time: Why Many Aboriginal People Don't Especially Like Participating in Western Institutions"

**Kathryn Coe, Nancy E. Aiken & Craig T. Palmer:** "Once Upon a Time: Ancestors and the Evolutionary Significance of Stories"

**Reed L. Wadley, Angela Pashia & Craig T. Palmer:** "Religious Scepticism and its Social Context: An Analysis of Iban Shamanism"

**Sally Babidge:** "Bodily Connections and Practising Relatedness: Aboriginal Family and Funerals in Rural North Queensland"

**Robert Tonkinson:** "Applied Forum (A section devoted to issues in Applied Anthropology): The Hindmarsh Island Affair: A Review Article"

### The Australian Journal of Anthropology

Volume 17, Number 1, April 2006

Ian D. Clark: "Land Succession and Fission in Nineteenth-century Western Victoria: The Case of Knenknenwurrung"

Andrew Lattas: "Technologies of Visibility: The Utopian Politics of Cameras, Televisions, Videos and Dreams in New Britain"

Pál Nyíri: "The Nation-State, Public Education and the Logic of Migration: Chinese Students in Hungary"

Alan Rumsey: "The Articulation of Indigenous and Exogenous Orders in Highland New Guinea and Beyond"

*Soapbox Forum:* The Schapelle Corby Show: Drugs, Media and Society, Laura Noszlopy (editor)

Laura Noszlopy: "Introduction"

Krishna Sen: "The Trials of Schapelle Corby"

I Nyoman Darma Putra: "Who is Corby? And Other Bewildering Questions"

Graeme MacRae: "Fear and Loathing in Our Own Holiday Paradise"

*Book Review Article*

Ute Eickelkamp: "'Inscribing' Freud: A Critical Review. Celia Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind: Race and Primitivity in Psychoanalysis*"

*Book Review Essays*

**Kerry James:** "No Apology Necessary: Sahlin's Dialectic History of the Fijian Wars. A Review of Marshall Sahlins, *Apologies to Thucydides: Understanding History as Culture and Vice Versa*"

**Rozanna Lilley:** "The Flexible Feminine in Vietnam: 'Ordinary' Goddesses and Extraordinary Ethnography. Review of Philip Taylor, *Goddess on the Rise: Pilgrimage and Popular Religion in Vietnam*"

### Dislocating the Frontier: Essaying the Mystique of the Outback

**R. Davis & D. B. Rose** (editors), ANU E Press, 2006

*From the publisher's announcement*

The frontier is one of the most pervasive concepts underlying the production of national identity in Australia. Recently it has become a highly contested domain in which visions of nationhood are argued out through analysis of frontier conflict.

Dislocating the Frontier departs from this contestation and takes a critical approach to the frontier imagination in Australia. The authors of this book work with frontier theory in comparative and unsettling modes. The essays reveal diverse aspects of frontier images and dreams as manifested in performance, decolonising domains, language, and cross-cultural encounters.

Dislocating the Frontier takes readers beyond the notion of a progressive or disastrous frontier to a more radical rethinking of the frontier imagination itself.

This book is available for purchase or free download at <http://epress.anu.edu.au/titles.htm>

### Black Glass: Western Australian Courts of Native Affairs 1936-54

**Kate Auty:** Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2006

*From the publisher's announcement*

Between 1936 and 1954 the Western Australian government operated Courts of Native Affairs that heard murder and manslaughter cases where the defendant and victim were Aboriginal. Cases, which for every other citizen had the status of Supreme Court trials, were reduced to summary hearings conducted by amateurs. Black Glass explores these little-known courts, along with the silence in which they were buried and the strategic silences exercised by their Aboriginal subjects.

### The Impulse to Preserve: Reflections of a Filmmaker

**Robert Gardner.** Other Press 2006

*From the publisher's announcement*

The life and work of an internationally acclaimed nonfiction filmmaker in words and images.

Despite Primo Levi's dire warning about the "inadequacy of documentary evidence", Robert Gardner's work shows that capturing the light reflected from actuality has its

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revelatory moments. Including nearly 500 photographs, *The Impulse to Preserve* contains the thoughts and images of a lifetime spent probing human experience in the world's most remote corners. In each undertaking, an issue or condition common to humanity is intently observed. In Neolithic West Papua in 1961, it is ritual warfare and revenge; in Nigeria 1965, ritual pain; in Ethiopia in the late sixties, male supremacy; in Niger 1978, envy; and in Benares, India, 1985, mortality and its expression in worship.

**Family, Gender and Kinship in Australia: The Social and Cultural Logic of Practice and Subjectivity**

**Allon J. Uhlmann.** Ashgate Publishers, 2006

This ethnographically based exploration draws on sociological, historical and demographic data to provide a comprehensive analysis of family, gender and kinship in Australia, with general implications for modern kinship and gender at large.

The author charts the cultural basis that underlies kinship practices and argues that the Australian family is characterized by deep cultural and social continuities rather than the common view that the family is undergoing substantial change. He further shows how the modern family both shapes, and is shaped by, broad social and economic processes.

This analysis provides new information about and greater insight into this critical field of practice as well as showcasing a novel analytical approach to practice that is rooted in the sociology of practice and in the anthropology of cognition. The book also suggests changes in the way in which social scientists currently treat family and kinship.

**Women Miners in Developing Countries: Pit Women and Others** (Voices in Development Management Series)

**Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt & Martha McIntyre** (editors). Ashgate Publishers, 2006

Contrary to their masculine portrayal, mines have always employed women in valuable and productive roles. Yet, pit life continues to be represented as a masculine world of work, legitimizing men as the only mineworkers and large, mechanized, and capitalized operations as the only form of mining. Bringing together a range of case studies of women miners from past and present in Asia, the Pacific Region, Latin America and Africa, this book makes visible the roles and contributions of women as miners. It also highlights the importance of engendering small and informal mining in the developing world as compared to the early European and American mines. The book shows that women are engaged in various kinds of mining and illustrates how gender and inequality are constructed and sustained in the mines, and also how ethnic identities intersect with those gendered identities.

**Teachers who Changed Lives**

**Andrew Metcalfe & Ann Game,** Melbourne University Press, July 2006

A phenomenological study of the relationships that allow teaching and learning to work. It is based on interviews

with well-regarded teachers and with well-known Australians who are talking about the teachers who changed their lives. It is a contribution to the anthropology of creative relationship.

**Population, Reproduction and Fertility in Melanesia**

**Stanley J. Ulijaszek** (editor). Berghahn Books, 2006.

The volume explores relationships between human fertility and reproduction, subsistence systems, the symbolic use of ideas of fertility and reproduction in linking landscape to individuals and populations, in Melanesian societies, past and present. Contributors are S. J. Ulijaszek, T. Bayliss-Smith, C. Gosden, Y. Ataka with R. Ohtsuka, M. Minnegal with P. D. Dwyer, M. Demian, S. Kingston, M. O'Hanlon, P. Bonnemère and P. Lemonnier.

**Slow Living**

**Wendy Parkins & Geoffrey Craig:** University of New South Wales Press 2006

'Slow Living' explores the philosophy and politics of 'slowness' as it investigates the growth of Slow Food into a worldwide, 'eco-gastronomic' movement. Originating in Italy, and now with over 80 000 members across the globe, Slow Food is committed to the pleasures of the table and a slower approach to life in general. Craig and Parkins argue that slow living is a complex response to processes of globalization, connecting ethics and pleasure, the global and the local, as part of a new emphasis on everyday life in contemporary culture.

**The Anthropology of Anonymity: Toilet Graffiti at the University of Melbourne**

**Ella Butler:** SAGES Research Paper No. 30, 2006, The University of Melbourne.

**Migration and Power: Discipline and Resistance among Filipina Foreign Domestic Workers in Hong Kong**

**Dylan Tromp:** SAGES Research Paper No. 28, 2006, The University of Melbourne.

**Refuge, Canada's Periodical on Refugees**

**A call for papers**

Vulnerability and Resilience: Psycho-social Dimensions of the Refugee Experience

Guest Editor: Arancha Garcia del Soto, Director of Refugee Initiatives, The Solomon Asch Centre, University of Pennsylvania

It is increasingly recognized that the personal and social well-being of refugees lies at the core of international refugee protection. However the simplicity of such a laudably humanitarian approach to refugee protection is belied by serious analytical conundrums. The very definition of communities through reference to their well-being, or its opposite suffering, engages both ethical and methodological issues. Furthermore, the well-being and suffering of refugees must be assessed, understood and addressed in the confounding context of the host society.

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Despite these unresolved issues, many innovative programs have been developed in recent years. At a concrete level, the cognitive, emotional and socio-economic burdens imposed on individual refugees, their families and communities are enormous. In response to these burdens, a multiplicity of programs by a wide array of local and international actors have been established in refugee camps, host societies, countries of reception and elsewhere.

Refuge invites contributions which address the theoretical and practical issues related to refugee well-being and which attempt to reconcile the theoretical concerns with practical realities of program development and administration. Refuge invites original articles, photography (black and white) and other forms of representation which focus on any aspect of any aspect of the individual and social well-being of refugees, and more generally forced migrants.

Further details:

<http://www.yorku.ca/crs/Refuge/refuge.htm>

Deadline: October 1, 2006.

## **Solidarity & Sustainability**

“Solidarity & Sustainability” is a free, monthly research newsletter on the social, economic, and ecological impacts of religious patriarchy. The May 2006 (Volume 2, No. 5) issue has been posted:

This issue continues the theme “Mimetic Violence in Patriarchal Religions”. René Girard's mimetic theory is applied to a concrete episode of psychological violence in a religious institution. The anticipated social and ecological impacts are described. A radical renunciation of violence is postulated as indispensable to make progress toward human solidarity and ecological sustainability. Religious institutions must show the way by renouncing the triple patriarchal addiction to wealth accumulation, absolute power, and worldly honors; thereby renouncing violence.

Luis T. Gutierrez, Editor, Solidarity & Sustainability Research Newsletter

Further details:

[solidarity-sustainability-owner@googlegroups.com](mailto:solidarity-sustainability-owner@googlegroups.com)

## **AAS Newsletter Contributions**

The Newsletter provides a vehicle for informing members about AAS matters and other issues of relevance. We welcome items such as Conference announcements; notable appointments, retirements or honours received; titles and abstracts of MA and PhD theses in anthropology that were awarded in the past 12 months; short book reviews or brief notices regarding important new publications; short articles on issues of importance to the discipline; reports on research-in-progress; postgraduate events of significance. The current editors are Peter Dwyer ([pddwyer@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:pddwyer@unimelb.edu.au)) and Mary Patterson ([marycp@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:marycp@unimelb.edu.au)), both at the School of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies, The University of Melbourne.

The next issue of the Newsletter will be published in September 2006. Back issues are available on the AAS web site: <http://www.aas.asn.au>



hosted by The School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology at James Cook University

## Registration Form & Tax Invoice

This document will be a tax invoice for GST when fully completed and you make a payment

**Please complete all the necessary details in the fields below and return by**

Fax to: 07 47816047

OR

Mail to: School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology  
James Cook University  
Townsville Qld 4811

Written confirmation of your registration will be forwarded once your payment has been processed.

PLEASE NOTE ALL AMOUNTS ARE IN AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS AND ARE INCLUSIVE OF GST JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY ABN 46 253 211 955

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### Registration Details

	Early Bird Registration (must register by Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> August)	Registration costs (after Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> August)
Full fee members	\$200	\$220
Full fee (non members)	\$220	\$275
Concession* fee members	\$100	\$110
Concession* fee (non members)	\$120	\$135
Daily rate members	\$110 (which day(s) ?	Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___
Daily rate (non members)	\$125 (which day(s) ?	Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___

#### Colloquiums

- Post Grad \$35 OR FREE if you register for full conference
- Native Title \$110

\* Concessions are for students, unwaged and retired attendees – proof required.

Please indicate if you are attending:

\* Conference Dinner at the Cairns Yacht Club on Friday September 29  
Tickets @ \$65 per person (cost includes a 3 course meal and a Band to dance the night away)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

### Cost Calculator

Registration Fees \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Conference Dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I will be making payment by:** Cheque \_\_\_\_\_ Direct Deposit \_\_\_\_\_ Credit card \_\_\_\_\_

# A.A.S. Annual Conference



*Beyond Science and Art: Anthropology and the Unification of Knowledge*

hosted by The School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology at James Cook University

**ACCOMMODATION** - please make your own bookings, refer to Accommodation Page  
[http://www.faess.jcu.edu.au/saas/AAS\\_Website/accommodation%20and%20activities/accommodation\\_and\\_activities.htm](http://www.faess.jcu.edu.au/saas/AAS_Website/accommodation%20and%20activities/accommodation_and_activities.htm)

Written confirmation of your registration will be forwarded once your payment has been processed.

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