



The Australian Anthropological Society Newsletter

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AAS Vice President – Call for Nominations

Congratulations to our current AAS Vice President, Mandy Thomas, on her appointment to the Australian Research Council, as Executive Director (Humanities and Creative Arts). We take this opportunity to thank Mandy for her dedicated service to the society and commitment to anthropology.

Mandy will be resigning her position as AAS Vice President to concentrate on her new position. The Executive Committee, therefore, calls for nominations for the AAS Vice President, to be elected at the 2004 AGM in Melbourne.

AAS Publications Officer – Call for Nominations

The Executive calls for nominations for the position of AAS Publications officer, to be elected at the 2004 AGM.

Under section 20 of the AAS Constitution 'the Publications Officer shall be responsible for the publication of a Newsletter at least four times a year and for the publication of such other material as may be produced from time to time'.

AAS Life Membership - Call for Nominations

Under section 5.3 of the AAS Constitution, 'the Annual General Meeting may confer the title of Honorary Life Member on any person, in recognition of that person's eminence in and contribution to the profession. That person shall thereafter be exempt from payment of all fees but shall enjoy all the entitlements of a Fellow of the Society'.

Please send all nominations for the above by 1 September 2004, to the AAS Secretariat: aas@anu.edu.au
Electronic nomination forms can be found on the AAS website:
<http://www.aas.asn.au/Organisation.htm>

Reminder! AAS Thesis Prizes

Submission Deadline: 1 August 2004.

In the March Newsletter the AAS Executive called for submissions from the heads of anthropology departments/schools/centres for the AAS thesis prizes to be awarded in two categories: a) Honours and b) PhD/Masters (by research).

New Books by AAS Members

Cowlshaw, Gillian 2004. *Blackfellas, Whitefellas, and the Hidden Injuries of Race*. Carlton South, Vic: Blackwell Publishing Asia

"In December 1997, in a small town in rural Australia, a riot broke out among Indigenous people which police tried to quell. In *Blackfellas, Whitefellas, and the hidden injuries of race*, anthropologist Gillian Cowlshaw uses this vivid incident as a means of launching a larger discussion about race, identity, and racialized violence. In this lively, highly readable ethnography, Cowlshaw brings Indigenous people into the contemporary global race discourse, a discourse dominated to date by discussions of African Americans and American Indians in the United States. Cowlshaw's work broadens and enriches discussions of the dramas of a racialised world. Cowlshaw uses the 'talk of the town' to uncover the entrenched racial binary evident on that hot summer night. In the second half of the book, Cowlshaw takes up questions of history/memory, citizenship/respect, interpellation/abjection, and national/local to explore the politics, the social science, and the psychology of these conditions.

Cowlshaw's style is known for its clarity, verve and accessibility. Written both for beginners and those well-versed in contemporary debates, *Blackfellas Whitefellas* introduces new readers to key theories of race relations and offers more seasoned readers her fresh perspective on racial and Aboriginal politics."

Davis, Richard (ed.). 2004. *Woven Histories, Dancing Lives: Torres Strait Islander Identity, Culture and History*. Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra.

Woven histories, Dancing lives is a collection of essays that communicates the unique histories and cultures of Torres Strait Islanders to a broad audience. Not only have Islanders long absorbed the cultural influences from two surrounding landmasses and, more recently, negotiated the development of two nations in the region, their lives have been transformed by a 150 years of immigration and new economic and political conditions. In this collection readers will discover the remarkable cultural diversity that has emerged out of this history.

The contributors offer new reflections on inter-ethnic relationships, identity concerns, gender relations and the political struggles of Islanders. As a scholarly resource, this collection of high-quality essays is empirically rich and theoretically innovative. As a creative endeavour, it embraces Islander and non-Islander visions of society and history. As a critical challenge, it contains insights that can be brought to bear upon fundamental issues regarding the place of Indigenous people in an Australia still profoundly uncertain of its relationship to, and recognition of, its Indigenous peoples.

Contributors include: Bill Arthur, Ephraim Bani, Anthony John Barham, Jeremy Beckett, Douglas Bird, Rebecca Bird, Melissa Carter, Richard Davis, Jenny Martin Davis, McRose Elu, Maureen Fuary, Sandra J. Kehoe-Forutan, Julie Lahn, David Lawrence, Helen Reeves Lawrence, Martin Nakata, Sue O'Connor, Jude Philp, Colin Scott, Anna Shnukal, Peter Veth

Macdonald, Gaynor 2004. *Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back: A Wiradjuri Land Rights Journey*. Canada Bay, NSW: LhR Press.

This study is unique for its insight into an Aboriginal Regional Land Council in New South Wales since its inception as it struggled over two decades to achieve autonomy and dignity within the Australian state. It demonstrates how Wiradjuri people used the land rights system to reinvigorate long-standing regional networks and through them to build up new social and economic foundations. It includes the author's own photographic record of these decades, bringing alive the character of Wiradjuri country as well as the Land Council's story. Imaginatively written to address the politics of positionality, it provides a fine example of collaborative ethnography.

Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back can be ordered direct from the publisher for \$20 (RRP \$25.00), plus \$8 postage/packing.

Taylor, Philip 2004. *Goddess on the Rise: Pilgrimage and Popular Religion in Vietnam*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. 344 pp. ISBN 0-8248-2648-5

"Philip Taylor's engagingly written study of pilgrimages to the 'Lady of the Realm' continues his unique

investigations into social and cultural changes in the south since the communist revolution.... This work is vital for understanding southern Vietnam today." --Grant Evans, University of Hong Kong

Since the early 1990s, the shrine of Ba Chua Xu, the Lady of the Realm, has become the most visited religious site in southern Vietnam, receiving more than a million visitors annually. Mother, benevolent creditor, healer, relationship advisor, business consultant, the Lady of the Realm is one of a group of goddesses whose shrines attract devotees from all corners of rural and urban society. *Goddess on the Rise* follows these pilgrims' pathways, taking readers on a journey through a cultural landscape of popular rites, beliefs, and exegesis into a world where female deities reign supreme.

Philip Taylor's in-depth study of pilgrimage introduces readers to the practical expectations, passions, and controversies that surround the goddesses, bringing to life the effervescence, creativity, and flux of modern Vietnamese religion. He offers important insights into people's everyday experience of the profound economic, cultural, and social transformations underway in this socialist country.

Philip Taylor is a Fellow in the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University.

Doctoral Dissertations, 2004

Congratulations to the following:

Dr Jan Andersen, University of Western Australia

Kin, Cows and Capital: Dairy Industry Deregulation and the Maintenance of Farming Traditions on the Atherton Tableland, Australia.

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis investigates links between agricultural industry restructuring and change and continuity in farming culture. It takes the Atherton Tableland, Far North Queensland, Australia, as its case study farming region, and Australian dairy industry deregulation (implemented in July 2000) as its focal example of an industrial restructuring process. The thesis engages social theory about farming culture, farming traditions and agricultural industry restructuring in order to articulate between macro-level depictions of the political economy of the Australian dairy industry, and a local-level ethnographic analysis of the ways in which people maintain and reproduce farming culture and traditions.

This is an Australian anthropological study, undertaken in a country where farm-related social science research is almost solely the preserve of rural sociologists, geographers and agricultural economists, and where the investigation of farming culture and traditions has to date been limited. As an anthropological perspective on Australian farming life, the thesis challenges some

popular assumptions about the consequences of Australian dairy deregulation on farms. In particular, it shows that dairy industry deregulation has not changed Atherton Tableland dairy farming culture from an outmoded, unchanging "traditional" family way of life to a newer, more dynamic "business-like" way of perceiving the world. Rather, farmers traditionally conceptualise dairying as a family way of life that can be transmitted over generations, and as an entrepreneurial, profit-seeking endeavour wherein innovation and change can be viewed positively. Farming traditions are flexible and malleable, incorporating new interpretations of changing every day realities while being passed from one generation to the next. Farmers integrate changes into their lives not so much in opposition to traditional rules of behaviour, but through them. My research examines what dairy industry deregulation meant to Tableland dairy farmers, and how existing local traditions have played an important part in shaping their responses to change.

Dr Susan Barnes, Department of Anthropology,
University of Sydney.

Pain-full Tales: Creating Meaning in Violent Relationships

Thesis Abstract:

Anglo-Australian women who have experienced domestic violence have not been a subject for social anthropology: indeed many might think they are not an appropriate study. This thesis challenges this omission by bringing to light the ways in which these women live out their lives and make them meaningful for themselves in circumstances in which they often seem to have little control. This study brings an anthropological perspective to bear on these lives by focusing on how such women create meaning out of their complex world. In doing so, it challenges a narrow focus in conventional approaches to the social policy of domestic violence.

I bring together discussions on gender, power, violence and civilizing processes, with analyses of everyday practice, meaning-making and struggle, in order to develop a better understanding of the ways in which different women negotiate their experience of violent relationships.

Methodologically, the task is a challenging one for anthropology. Women who have experienced domestic violence are neither a 'group' nor a community among whom one can conduct fieldwork in the traditional sense. This thesis draws on recent work on the use of narrative, developing an understanding of women's experiences of violence from interviews with them, and from their diaries, autobiographies and memories. Narrative is in itself a part of the process of making sense of experience providing the narrator with an opportunity to impose order on events, and to create continuities between past, present, and imagined worlds. An analysis of intersubjective narrative reveals the meanings that women subjected to violence are able to create for themselves, and which enables them to develop everyday practices by which to

resist domination, to attempt to wrest back control, and to reassert the right to govern their own lives.

However, this study seeks to go a step further. The meanings expressed in these narratives are produced in response to social and cultural processes that need to be understood historically and ideationally. The practices and ideas that become meaningful to an individual are themselves shaped and constrained by circumstances beyond their control, and of which they may be largely unaware. I examine the ways in which violence in intimate relationships is produced and reproduced in the Anglo-Australian 'western' world these women inhabit. This enables me to identify the dialogic relationship between their personal and family histories and the wider world of which they are a part. This study demonstrates how the bringing of anthropological insights into the complexities of meaning-making to an analysis of domestic violence has the potential to shift debate and thus policy into more fruitful directions.

Dr Murray Gard, University of Queensland

Social Deixis in Bininj Kunwok Conversation

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis is an ethnography of speaking approach to the situated use of person reference in Bininj Kun-wok, a language of some 2000 speakers in western Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. The focus is on social deixis, that is, contextual use of expressions which refer to the social identities of oneself and other people and social relationships amongst people, rather than on purely grammatical notions of person reference. Such a study is necessarily cross-disciplinary in nature, drawing on both linguistic and anthropological analyses from the theoretical and methodological perspectives of pragmatics and conversation analysis.

Like all Australian languages, Bininj Kun-wok has intricate and varied systems which achieve reference to other people in a variety of contexts. Situated reference to other people indexes a variety of factors including kinship and other kinds of social relationships amongst speech participants, as well as aspects of the context in which such reference takes place. Some reference to others is however, based on social identities of individuals which transcend context. In describing how such social deixis occurs (context-dependent or otherwise), I also describe a characteristic way of speaking and referring to others in Bininj Kun-wok which is often highly indirect or oblique. This way of speaking often appears to be a case of speakers maximising processing costs for hearers along a paradoxical principle of Obe brief, be oblique¹, but with the speaker intention that hearers should maximize their inferences from minimalist utterances.

The problems this may or may not create for addressees are discussed in terms of how speech participants pragmatically unravel intended meaning through the inferential process in a particular situation in the domain of discourse. Such unravelling reveals the interaction of linguistic knowledge with that of shared background

cultural and/or local knowledge. Shared knowledge may be drawn on from one or more of three sources; cultural shared knowledge, immediate physical contextual knowledge and knowledge established in the present discourse. By examining a variety of naturally occurring conversations and oral literature (fables and traditional narratives), I demonstrate how conversation participants draw on these sources of shared knowledge in order to succeed in establishing reference to an individual and if necessary, their position within the vast network of classificatory kinship. Referential problems, such as when addressees are unable to recognise a referent, are analysed so as to establish what are the factors involved in unsuccessful reference.

The first half of the thesis (part of chapter 2 and chapters 3-4) examine the complete repertoire of referring expressions at the disposal of Bininj Kun-wok speakers. Here I also describe the ideals or stated norms of use for such expressions. In the second half of the thesis I analyse a variety of conversations and narratives and examine the situated use of referring expressions and discuss how speakers also use and manipulate their systems of reference in order to interactively achieve particular goals within a conversation. Cultural factors which motivate the indirect and circumspect way of referring to others are proposed.

Supervisors: Professor Emeritus Bruce Rigsby, Dr. Mary Laughren and Dr. John Bradley.

Dr Annaliza Jackson, University of Western Australia

Constructing Masculinities Under Abusive Conditions

Thesis Abstract:

Given the preponderant identification of men with aggression and women with victimization in western culture, how do men who are abused by women understand their masculinity? This study explores the question of how men construct and re-construct self-representations under conditions of abuse within a cultural framework. My method includes interviews with a sample of eleven men who, provided life history accounts from early childhood to adulthood. Of particular interest to this study are the self-representations these men provided of their masculinities in relation to being a victim in abusive situations with women as perpetrators. The interrelationship between the extrapersonal world structures and intrapersonal mental structures are particularly significant to this study. I present an interpretation of the self-definitions and self-representations of the men who participated in this study using a framework derived from ideas about social construction, schema and attachment theory. I discuss abuse and various public and private definitions, how masculinities are understood at both the public, extrapersonal and private, intrapersonal levels and how the study participants constructed and reconstructed their self-identity and self-representation before, during and after the situations they described as abusive. My analysis of these interviews suggests that the diverse and complex

public or extrapersonal influences and experiences, interwoven with the private or intrapersonal interpretation that occurs at the cognitive level are significant in the construction and self-representation of masculinities under abusive conditions. As I argue, making sense of their day-to-day experiences via cultural schemas informs the intrapersonal re-construction and representation of their own masculinity. My analysis also suggests that positive or negative attachment experiences during childhood impact on public and private constructions about relationships in later years with romantic love partners.

Dr Julie Lahn, School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology, James Cook University

Past Visions, Present Lives: Sociality and Locality in a Torres Strait Community.

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis explores dynamics of sociality and local identity on Warraber Island in the Torres Strait. I argue that Warraber residents' representation of themselves as a distinctive collectivity needs to be understood in terms of indigenous conceptions of relatedness and difference and with reference to local moral terms of communal life, in particular a valorised striving towards the idealised vision of moral relations known as *gud pasin*. This value is informed by a dense network of cognatic connections existing among Warraber residents – encapsulated in the local discourse of “*ol wan pamle*” (all one family), in addition to shared identification as a Christian community.

Warraberans envision the past through ideas of temporal rupture, indexed to the arrival of Christianity in the region and linked to the positive transformation of Warraber life. This forms a reference point in local thinking about ancestors. Warraberans depict their ancestors as both 'natives' and 'foreigners' linked respectively to the pre-Christian period and the marine industries of the post-missionised colonial era. These temporal associations, and their implicit moral inscriptions, generate poignant areas of ambiguity concerning personal ancestry, and also prominent pre-Christian sites and dance performances thought to be associated with head-taking and sorcery. The image of the sorcerer is itself contentious, appearing partly as a moral Other, and partly as a source of local power.

Such dynamics of difference appear as integral to contemporary social life on Warraber. Differing Christian affiliations, ancestral emphasis and perspectives on the past certainly contain potential for contestation. Productive activities are markedly gendered and family networks involve strong personalised loyalties that compete with broader social obligations. However, the value of *gud pasin* is shown as ultimately valorising inclusiveness, generosity and a concern with community harmony. Moreover residence on Warraber Island emerges as an important context for common experiences that help distinguish the population as a distinctive,

emplaced community within the diversity of Torres Strait populations.

Intense attachments to Warraber Island are communicated in local notions of 'belonging' to place. This is characterised by knowledge and familiarity and also by birth and residence. In this context, the marine realm continues to be a central component within Warraber collective identification and notions of local distinctiveness. Warraberans represent themselves both in historical and contemporary terms as incomparable marine workers, hunters and fishers. Transactions in marine products, whether related to generating income or for consumption, continue to be a focus of Warraber life and are inextricably woven into the practice of familial relations, whereby marine resources are transformed by human activity into a 'currency' of relatedness shaped by moral understandings that inflect the landscape as much as the conduct of sociality.

Supervisor: Dr Maureen Fuary

Dr Tess Lea, University of Sydney

Between The Pen and the Paperwork: A Native Ethnography of Learning to Govern Indigenous Health

Thesis Abstract:

Drawing on over four years of participant-observation of government bureaucrats in the health department of the Northern Territory of Australia, this thesis is primarily about the work and passions of bureau-professionals who dream of solutions to the problems of Aboriginal health, and secondarily about what it takes to be a bureaucrat, together with what it takes to become one.

It is organised in two parts, covering firstly the institutional setting, and secondly the activities of bureau-professionals as they learn about and then attempt to execute their assigned tasks. The argument, in brief, is that while the issues surrounding poor Aboriginal health are undeniably real, how bureau-professionals formulate this as a dominant problematic is undeniably cultural. As part of my exploration of how health professionals enact the organisation and wider welfare logics in their dis/embodied encounters with Aboriginal people, I explore a number of specific issues: the physical or emotional discomforts, satisfactions or distastes associated with visiting communities or dealing with Aboriginal people; what counts as a good and bad reputation within the health organisation; the manifold ways in which institutional practices perforce re-elaborate themselves; and how the task of ordering the health behaviours desired of Aboriginal people in line with Euro-Australian specifications is reformulated as Aboriginal self-determination and community desire.

In all this, I am centrally concerned with exploring what makes bureaucratic formulations so compelling as systems of thought and action. Where the anthropology of organisations ordinarily looks to meta-social explanations to theorise the expansion of bureaucratic culture into everyday affairs, here I insist on looking inwards, at the practices of bureau-professionals themselves, to delve into

the magical, fantastical dynamics of a series of institutional practices which are largely unacknowledged and untheorised by all but a handful of anthropologists.

Dr Linda Low, University of Western Australia

Seeking a New Self: The New Age Spiritual Quest in a Western Australian Community

Thesis Abstract:

Basing my research in the small semi-urban community of Darlington, Perth, Western Australia, I examine the New Age quest for spiritual transformation. I argue that this quest, which is conceived of by participants as the perennial 'everyman' quest, entails a search for a new self for the Western individual. I demonstrate that while the New Age quest has an "options open" approach commonly associated with postmodernism (Bauman, 1996), it also displays essentialist traits commonly associated with a modernist perspective. Further, while the transformation of the individual is the dominant focus of New Age activity, a vanguard of transformed individuals is viewed by New Age proponents as the source of a collective evolutionary shift towards a new spiritual consciousness. As I show, such ambiguities and contradictions in New Age practice create difficulties in understanding the place of New Ageism in contemporary Western societies.

I locate the relevance of New Ageism within the anthropology of religion, arguing that it challenges the 'one way' philosophy inherent in formal Western religious traditions. In particular, I employ Weber's (1963) theory of social disenchantment to understand New Agers' attempts to create states of spiritual enchantment. I also use Turner's (1979) theory of sacred liminality, to show that New Agers utilise forms and concepts of sacred space as media for the confirmation and enactment of self-transformational states. I demonstrate the way in which New Agers commonly see themselves as special, chosen people able to discover what they understand to be authentically human from beneath the wrappings of materialist culture. I argue that New Agers, thus, consider themselves a community of spiritual seekers who stand apart from the normal mundane world of Western societies. I also document the way in which New Agers in Darlington construct, learn and perform a range of sacred rituals as a means through which to cultivate their potential for spiritual transformation. While New Agers constitute only a minority within Darlington, their beliefs and practices resonate with a commonly held view that Darlington is a community whose way of life is removed from the mainstream.

The aim of my research is to contribute to the anthropology of religion a greater understanding of the social and cultural relevance of spiritual mysticism, ritual and myth in contemporary Western

societies, and to emphasise the important role of spiritual experience for New Age adherents.

While New Ageism is mostly characterised by transitoriness, fluidity and individual choice, and adherents elude precise definition and categorisation, I argue that New Agers are linked by key understandings and practices that support their perceptions of belonging to a community dedicated to a quest for spiritual transformation.

Dr Darlene McNaughton, School of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology, James Cook University

Subalternity, Itinerant Trade and Criminality: An Ethnographic Study of Members of the Kathiawad Vaghri Community

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis is a study of the Kathiawad Vaghri, a depressed community of itinerant traders who hail from Gujarat and engage in various forms of trade all over India. It explores the history of the caste, examining their social marginalisation and ambiguity from the 1700s. As forest hunters and itinerant traders who maintained patron-client relationships with local Rajputs, worshipped goddesses and held origin myths connecting them to the Middle East, the Vaghri did not fit easily into the category of caste or tribe as these categories became more rigidly codified during the colonial era. At the same time, their ambiguous marginality is picked up by a regime that articulated a fantasy of occult criminality in the nineteenth century figure of the *thugg*. This resulted in the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) (1871) through which the social marginalisation of the Vaghri was greatly extended and a stigma attached that persists into the present day.

The second section of the thesis considers the adaptive responses of the Vaghri to this history of alterity, stigma and persecution. It traces their departure from Gujarat in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the nature of their migration, their emergence as hawkers and petty traders on the streets of Mumbai and their continuing connections with their original villages in Gujarat. These new practices made control under the CTA more possible as the Vaghri are increasingly identified as petty thieves who use trade as a cover for theft. De-notification of the criminal tribes occurs in 1952. However, the stigma of criminality persists and is reproduced in the development agenda, which the Vaghri largely reject. Their response was to create a caste for themselves, the Vaghri Sarvodaya Samaj through which a new Vaghri identity was imagined through a partial internalisation of the colonial surveillance apparatus as a moralistic and welfare-oriented control apparatus that articulates the Vaghri with the national project.

The removal of the Act also sees the Vaghri return to forms of mobility and trade not seen since the beginning of the century, through which an earlier Vaghri pattern of itinerant trade with a fairly strong sense of community is reproduced. Trade in embroidered Gujarati textiles and antiques emerges in the 1970s as a response to the

presence of a new and comparatively wealthy client base in the form of international tourists whom Vaghri call “the Hippies”. Bolstered by the careful arrangement of marriages within the caste and the role of the Vaghri Samaj as a trade guild, extensive familial and caste-based trade networks continue to develop and by the 1980s an increasing number of families are moving into handicrafts and travelling to tourist centres throughout India. However, the perils and ambiguity of itinerant trade continue. This is explored through a case study of a small tourist centre in Kerala, dominated politically and economically by members of the Ezhava community—a depressed caste with a history of exploitation and oppression who, unlike Vaghri, chose the affirmative action path. The thesis shows that social change in contemporary India continues to reflect the problems and difficulties of bureaucratic ‘capture’. The story of the Vaghri is one of struggle, prejudice and victimisation. It is also a story of adaptation and resilience that provides an ethnographic account of the history and contemporary practices of a depressed community.

Date submitted: November 2003

Supervisor: Dr Rohan Bastin

Dr Yasmine Musharbash, School of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Australian National University

Warlpiri Sociality. An Ethnography of the Spatial and Temporal Dimensions of Everyday Life in a Central Australian Aboriginal Settlement.

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis is an ethnography of contemporary Warlpiri sociality that focuses on the everyday life in a women’s camp (*jilimi*) at Yuendumu, 300 kms northwest of Alice Springs. It explores how, in the absence of work, daily life is almost entirely taken up with socialising, manifested in very high levels of residential mobility, expansive personal networks, intensive demand sharing, and frequent conflict. This inwardly-focussed, turbulent environment is the context in which most children grow up and against which the nation state’s attempts to deliver improved material circumstances have to be understood.

My consideration of everyday life at Yuendumu begins with a formal analysis of the spatial organisation of Warlpiri residences, outlining the residential flux throughout Yuendumu’s ‘suburbs’, ideas of private-public space within individual residences, and their gendered nature, as well as indicating the daily cycle of sociality within them. I examine the nature of contemporary marriage arrangements to underline crucial changes as well as some continuities that are a feature of life today. Contemporary marriage arrangements are shown to simultaneously be the cause and the effect of an intensification of residential mobility and ensuing living situations for both children and adults. This leads to a discussion of the emergent centrality of *jilimi* within the contemporary settlement context as manifested in their increased number and size and complexity of residential composition. Singling out one particular *jilimi* as the

ethnographic centre of the thesis, I introduce its spatiality and some of its main residents as protagonists for the ensuing chapters. I analyse the flow of people through the *jilimi*, categorising different types of residents by their varied lengths and reasons for their stays, which underscores the extreme mobility that is a paramount feature of contemporary everyday life. A detailed analysis of sleeping arrangements is shown to be a sensitive index of the state of interpersonal relations within the *jilimi* and to provide insights into Warlpiri personhood. I look at the activities that take place during the day outlining the movements of people in and out of the *jilimi* with an emphasis on those aspects to do with provisioning around the sharing of food and other resources. The contrast between the restedness of the night and the immediacy of intensified social engagement during the day is brought to the fore by examining the criss-crossing paths of social engagements during the day. This intensity of interaction, along with boredom, leads to frequent outbreaks of fighting which are considered in the context of a discussion of the various temporal dimensions within which everyday life happens. These incorporate both the mundane everyday and those occasions when social life is broadened out to encompass people from other kinship networks and communities. The thesis concludes with a reflection on the reasons for and impact of this intensified sociality on Warlpiri people's contemporary lives, as lived within a first world nation state.

Dr Amy Roberts, Department of Archaeology, Flinders University

Knowledge, Power and Voice: An Investigation of Indigenous South Australian Perspectives of Archaeology

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis presents a qualitative investigation of sixteen Indigenous South Australian perspectives of archaeology. The study is based upon results obtained from in-depth interviews conducted over a two-year period. The research reveals that there are fifteen supportive factors that are currently contributing to meaningful collaborative archaeological research between archaeologists and Indigenous South Australians. However, although it may be understood that these themes or 'lived experiences' are evidence that some or many of the relationships between Indigenous South Australians and archaeologists are improving and in some cases even producing real partnerships and sites for reconciliation, it must also be admitted that these experiences are tempered by or held in tension with the participants' inhibitive feelings, opinions and 'lived experiences' (explored in twenty-two themes). Thus, it is argued that relationships between archaeologists and Indigenous peoples can be improved further by taking a highly educative approach to cross-cultural awareness issues in relation to archaeology, Indigenous peoples, the public, university students, government and commercial organisations.

The implications of these findings are that new and structured approaches to working with Indigenous peoples

are required in order to overcome the taken-for-granted practices within the archaeological discipline and to make attempts to rectify these tensions in the future. As a result, it is proposed that professional archaeological organisations and institutions need to work more closely with Indigenous groups in an 'applied anthropological' manner, in order to facilitate the areas for change outlined by the participants, so that self-determination for Indigenous communities can be achieved through the archaeological discipline. A number of areas have been identified for structured discussions in this regard including: 1) Training students to understand power differences; 2) Teaching contested histories; 3) Creating policies to facilitate Indigenist approaches; 4) Teaching applied approaches; 5) Changing government policies and legislation in relation to – Indigenous control over report writing and other aspects of the archaeological research process, Indigenous control over choosing researchers, Indigenous control over research designs and interpretation, and Indigenous control over intellectual and cultural property rights; 6) Funding; 7) Multi-disciplinary re-casting; 8) Public education; and 9) Designing innovative collaborative approaches to facilitate Indigenous self-determination.

Date Submitted: 2003.

Dr Mandy Wilson, University of Western Australia

Where Trannies Tread: Taking the Private Public in the Gendered Spaces of Perth

Thesis Abstract:

This thesis explores the formation and construction of transgendered identities. It is based on eighteen months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted among transgendered people in Perth, Western Australia. I show that while a multiplicity of gendered identities circulate in various spaces, there is also a pressing need for many transgendered persons to ultimately define themselves within existing and recognisable 'normal' gender boundaries: instead of marking difference, many seem to eliminate it.

Identity was transformed from being 'liminal' and multiple where males can be females, females can be males, and public gender categories were temporarily and spatially suspended, to being ultimately singular, recognisable and stable (as demanded by wider medical, sociocultural and public understandings of gender). In another time and place, Victor Turner (expanding on the work of Arnold Van Gennep) has referred to this as the 'The Liminal Period', a theoretical framework which, relocated, helped to explain transgendered rites de passage in Perth. Among the people with whom I worked, a 'third' or alternative liminal space did not represent a site of gender potential but was viewed as a 'phase' to be passed through and out of. While recognising the large body of work from queer studies which turns its gaze toward social practices that are interpreted as organising a society and sexualising the bodies of its members, I draw on concepts proposed by Mary Douglas, especially her

notions of purity and danger. I use these concepts to explore how transgendered bodies are understood and interpreted in wider societal discourses of sex and gender, and to analyse how transgendered people in Perth accommodate and negotiate their perceived variance and anomaly.

Conference Notice

The Computing Arts 2004 Conference is being held in Newcastle in July this year.

A workshop entitled "Using Audio-visual Media in Research" will be presented by the Paradisec group from Sydney who have expertise especially in capturing and managing material from Indigenous cultures.

The workshop will

- * survey the range of research applications for recording and analysis of audio-visual media
- * consider questions of sustainability and archiving of audio-visual data
- * survey a number of tools and resources for archiving, analysis and presentation of digital audio

The website with full details of the conference, workshops and registration can be found at:

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/cllc/ca2004/index.html>

Australian Anthropological Society

Annual Conference 2004

This year's AAS conference is being hosted by the University of Melbourne between 28th September and 1st October. The theme is 'Moving Anthropology: Motion, Emotion and Knowledge', and participants are asked to explore the anthropological elucidation of movement in any of its manifestations.

The conference consists of three core activities – concurrent sessions, roundtable debates and keynote addresses – and a range of other events, including a postgraduate workshop and a large publishers' display. The **keynote addresses**, each of which consider one or more of the conference's three sub-themes, will be given by Akhil Gupta (Stanford), Kay Milton (Queens, Belfast) and Nigel Rapport (St. Andrew's). We await confirmation of an additional keynote address by Bruce Kapferer (Bergen). Also tied closely to the three sub-themes, the **roundtable debates** will consider the issues of rights and placedness, emotion and detachment, and the future of anthropology. Speakers include Ghassan Hage, Marcia Langton, David Trigger, Mark Mosko, Chris Eipper, Kalpana Ram, Victoria Burbank and Geoffrey Samuel. **Concurrent sessions** consider a range of themes as diverse as migration, the movement of objects and capital, the moving image, and the movement of bodies and

consciousness. Details of available sessions are listed below.

It is not too late to offer a paper.

Proposals for papers should be submitted directly to session conveners (see session outlines below), with final abstracts of accepted papers due to those conveners by **July 31**.

For full details of the conference, including registration procedures and information about accommodation options, consult the conference website:

<http://www.anthropology.unimelb.edu.au/AAS/index.html>

Conference enquiries and contacts:

Academic: Dr Monica Minnegal - mmam@unimelb.edu.au

Administrative: Barbara Hughes - bhughes@unimelb.edu.au

Session titles:

1. Responding to the water's flow: fluid maps of time, space and environments
2. Place in motion: locality, co-presence and subjectivity in a mobile world
3. Second generation transnationalism
4. Festivals and feasts: moving worlds and changing rhythms
5. Moved interveners and moving indigenes: affect, improvement and circulation
6. Material poetics
7. Public anthropology
8. Moving Imagery: visual media and cultural practice
9. Moving anthropological insights into public policy and practice: applied anthropology revisited
10. 'Casino Capitalism': the circulation of ideas, currencies and agents in the global economy
11. Shiver and passage: anthropological explorations in comportment, culture and everyday life
12. Memory and social inclusion in the museum context: the cultural meaning of memory
13. Contemplation, threat and engagement: theorizing people-environment interactions
14. Transforming the health agenda
15. Slow motion: the body and impaired mobility
16. Moving anthropological histories
17. Transnationalism and its discontents
18. Speaking relatively and moving on: the politics of kinship
19. Without the Home-field Advantage? Women, Men and Subordinate Masculinity
20. Challenges for anthropology in Native Title practice

AAS Conference Sessions

Responding to the water's flow: fluid maps of time, space and environments

Ideas and practices related to water's presence and/or its absence are central to understanding shifting human/environmental relationships. This session invites papers on the ways in which the flow of water in the environment is used to embody ideas about movement. We are interested in how water imagery describes social, spiritual, intellectual and emotional transformations, and larger conceptual frames in which sources of water facilitate complex discourses about the movement of people across cultural and historical landscapes. Papers that explore hydrological and environmental cycles as analogies of human existence are encouraged, as are those which consider how beliefs and practices related to notions of 'fluidity' inform systems of knowledge exchange, resource distribution and management in Australia and elsewhere.

Session Conveners:

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Veronica Strang

Social Sciences, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

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Place in motion: locality, co-presence and subjectivity in a mobile world

Place is usually considered as the backdrop for motion – the 'where' that people move to or from. Yet contemporary processes of migration and circulation of cultures are producing increasingly porous and even mobile places. Places are perhaps now better understood as processes, always linked by people to other places, continually reproduced across difference and similarity and producing distinctive subjectivities. Contributors to this session are invited to put place into motion by working between empirical case studies and theories of place and subjectivity.

Contemporary theories of place and locality differ in terms of their emphasis on the social relations and subjective experience of new forms of place-making. All papers should consider how mobile populations create and sustain their subjective experiences of place and explore the new subjectivities arising with mobility to, from and, potentially, of place. Panellists might consider how the co-presence required for place-making is mediated by technology, producing new forms of locality and subjectivity. Or papers could consider how locality is emergent from particular neighbourhoods, virtual or more traditional, and examine how translocality transforms more traditional 'place-based' neighbourhoods, mapping the new forms of place, subjective experiences of place, and subjectivities that arise.

Session Convener:

Deirdre McKay

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Second generation transnationalism

Migrants' transnationalism has been a significant feature of the processes and practices of "globalisation from below," however it is only recently that close attention has been paid to the issue of the intergenerational reproduction of transnationalism. Research on this topic thus far has had a strong U.S. focus, and has suggested that in many cases only a small minority of the "second generation" maintain the transnational connections established by their parents' generation. A range of factors appear to be influencing young people's transnational involvement, such as the extent to which they identify with the "homeland"; their experiences within the host nation, including racism and discrimination; and the degree to which they are embedded within existing transnational networks through their families. Migrants' practices, such as sending children and adolescents to live for periods in the home country, also seem to have an impact, as does the political situation in that country, with political instability and upheaval appearing to encourage "long distance nationalism" even amongst members of the second generation who have never visited their parents' homeland.

The aim of this session is to explore the forms and extent of transnational ties maintained by members of the second generation in migrant populations, particularly those within Australia. Also of interest is the potential impact on "home" nations of a decline in transnationalism – which could be profound in the case of remittance-dependent countries. Following the work of Georges Fouron and Nina Glick-Schiller on Haitians, the definition of "second generation" will be expanded to include the equivalent cohort remaining in the home nation, in order to explore the extent to which they are able to participate in transnational networks.

Session convener:

Dr Helen Lee

Sociology and Anthropology

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Festivals and feasts: moving worlds and changing rhythms

This session aims to explore the concept of ‘movement’ of peoples, bodies, objects and ideas in relation to various cultural practices and performances associated with festivals, feasts, fairs, spectacles, and other public ceremonial events. The session invites participants to consider ‘movement’ in terms of the articulation of motion, emotion and knowledge in the context of such events in local, national and international arenas. In addition, participants might consider how ‘movement’, in terms of live performance, is captured and represented through the use of various ‘technologies of enchantment’ (old and new) at such events.

The increasing number of national and international festivals bringing together Indigenous performers and artists (such as the Garma Festival, Laura Festival, the Festival of Pacific Arts) offers the opportunity to explore the performative dimensions of power relations and the construction and negotiation of indigeneity/and or ethnic identity at local, national and transnational levels. The complex social and political relationships at work in the organization, execution and interpretation of cultural expressions and knowledge through performances in these contexts are ripe for analysis.

This session invites consideration of a wide range of feasts and festivals including various religious festivals (for instance the Italian, Greek, Irish feasts in Australia, temple festivals in South Asia), folk festivals (eg the Woodford Festival), and metropolitan festivals (eg Adelaide Festival). We invite paper proposals that engage with festivals and feasts in terms of the central conference theme of ‘moving anthropology’ and in terms of any of the three sub-themes, ‘motion’, ‘emotion’ and ‘knowledge’.

Session Conveners:

Rosita Henry (James Cook University), Franca Tamisari (The University of Queensland), Marcia Langton (The University of Melbourne),

Discussant:

Barbara Glowczewski-Barker (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique).

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Moved interveners and moving indigenes: affect, improvement and circulation

This session aims to bring three perspectives on movement into conversation with Critical Indigenous Studies: the problematising of Indigenous movements; the affect of non-Indigenous people moved by Indigenous causes; and the directionality of state improvement projects.

Circulation: Indigenous movements have long been a problem in the bureaucratic imaginary. Although excluded from the census until 1971, Indigenous people were counted prior to that so they could be accurately excluded from white space. Since then, tracking

Indigenous movements has become part of the science of national reparation, guiding the distribution and effects of the state’s neo-liberal investments in postcoloniality. In turn, these investments direct a host of state-sanctioned Indigenous movements.

Affect: For more than a generation now, Australian cosmopolitans have been moved to support Indigenous causes. While postcolonial theorists have looked extensively at the psychoanalytics of the colonizer, similar examination of the humanitarian intervener is much less developed. There are at least two sets of affect here: that of urban white sympathizers, and that of whites who seek out local and distant Indigenous spaces in which to practice their politics, moving themselves to help. Among those so moved, some anthropologists are inhabiting new political and discursive locations.

Improvement: The project of addressing Indigenous disadvantage has been subject to many and varied critiques, some influenced by theories of governmentality and postcolonialism. The trope of movement might be productively applied to the principle of improvement, a project which arguably aims to incorporate Indigenous people into mainstream society and toward a future perfect. The anthropological task of tracking improvement discourses needs also to consider how they are inflected or diverted by the movement of Indigenous people into bureaucracies and academia.

At a time when the Government is signalling a change in the direction of Indigenous policy, anthropological attention to contemporary bureaucratic forms is crucial. This session will direct such attention to the affective and teleological aspects of improvement, and the way this field of knowledge problematises the moving targets of intervention.

Session conveners:

Dr Gillian Cowlshaw, Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Technology, Sydney.

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Assoc/Prof Teresa Lea, Director, School for Social and Policy Research, Institute of Advanced Studies, Charles Darwin University & Visiting Fellow, Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Cambridge.

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Dr Emma Kowal, PhD Candidate, Centre for the Study of Health and Society, University of Melbourne & Visiting Scholar, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley.

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Material poetics

Material Poetics: the juxtaposition of these two terms creates a delicate vibration. The materiality of architecture, artefacts, the physical environment, bodies and the senses is set in motion through the poetics of metaphor, imagination, the unconscious and emotions.

Material Poetics: the small gap that separates these two words is the invisible matrix which holds each word simultaneously apart and together. This gap, then, is not empty; rather, it is the space of endless potential. Similarly the material world is held by the immaterial, the thing by the not thing – yet we can only learn about the immaterial through the materiality of our sensual flesh. Likewise, knowing is dependent upon not knowing, consciousness upon the unconscious, and it is metaphor that allows us to make the jump between words and meanings.

The panel is interested in the sensate experiences of people and their environments – including those too-mundane-to-mention reflexive experiences of inspiration, field life, failures, writing and presentation that come to embody a research project. Papers are invited that move from everyday details of ethnographic practice to creatively engage with contemporary anthropology and allied theories in cultural studies, phenomenology, post-structuralism, feminism, psychoanalysis or Buddhist philosophy.

Material Poetics encourages presenters to consider the poetics of their practice, the inherent relationality of anthropological ways of being and knowing.

Session Convener:

Anita Lundberg

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Public anthropology

The notion of public anthropology as articulated by writers such as Robert Borofsky in the aftermath of the Yanomami controversy, by Richard Werbner in the African context, or by Richard Wilson or Paul Farmer in relation to human rights, has been little addressed in Australia. Here the debate has occurred mainly in the context of the relationship between ‘pure’ and ‘applied’ anthropology. Even events critical for anthropology in this country, such the Hindmarsh Island case, have not been cast in terms of ‘bringing the issues, concerns, and insights of anthropology as broadly understood to both an academic and non-academic audience’ (University of Oregon), or ‘illuminating the larger social issues of our times as well as encouraging broad, public conversations about them with the explicit goal of fostering social change’ (Borofsky, www.publicanthropology.org). Public anthropology requires us to move beyond our disciplinary boundaries (‘moving anthropology’) while maintaining the intimate knowledge based on careful ethnography that is anthropology’s strength.

Ethnography is not just our craft; it is an act of witnessing. As we know from local experience, anthropologists already engage as expert witnesses in the courts as well as in other facets of public life relating to policy and development. Public anthropology suggests that ethnography also carries with it responsibilities to

communicate our results in a way that is accessible to the public. Ethnographic writing can be powerful and moving in its description of individual lives and in its concrete examples of suffering, atrocity, social inequality, and injustice. There is no critical versus interpretive, no pure versus applied, or other ways in which we have traditionally sought to place barriers between ourselves and mass audiences on ethical issues. Public anthropology is a means for anthropology to confront the notion of anthropologists as pointy heads who ‘observe’ social phenomena and consign such knowledge to texts.

A commitment to public anthropology also asks us to act, not just as experts, but as public intellectuals and to address issues such as war or human rights that transcend the limits of local cultures. With the attacks, both national and international, on key institutions and conventions, up to and including the UN and UN Bill of Rights, and the shift towards violence rather than negotiation as a primary instrument of asserting strategic interests, anthropologists have the opportunity, and perhaps the responsibility, to engage the public arena much more consistently than we have in the past. The concept of public anthropology allows us to take up a range of these issues while at the same time requiring some refocusing of the way in which anthropology is positioned, both formally and informally, in the academy and in the broader consultancy and independent scholarly arenas.

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Moving Imagery: visual media and cultural practice

Visual media have become a fundamental component of everyday life. As Appadurai (1997) has noted, the warp of human subjectivity and experience is everywhere shot through with the woof of human motion. Visual media play a significant role in shaping the contours of this motion, as much for those who move at accelerated rates along idiosyncratic vectors, as for those who stay put. While individuals and communities experience new forms of travel, physically, socially and psychologically, media themselves are moving through increasingly complex and disjunctive networks, whether on film, television, video, or streamed through the internet, visual media transcend locality. They flow transnationally as commodity,

cultural practice, and modes of production. These transnational flows of visual media interact with human mobility in mutually constitutive ways. Visual media facilitate and maintain multi-local communities, they function to sustain affect for people, places and things, and they produce expanded or fundamentally changed ways of conceptualizing selves and lives.

This session invites papers that explore how transnational visual media (in terms of production, text, and/or reception) participate in, and are emblematic of the effects and affects of movement in contemporary everyday life.

Session Convener:

Sarina Pearson

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Moving anthropological insights into public policy and practice: applied anthropology revisited

At the AAS conference in Adelaide in 1995 a panel entitled “Critical applications of anthropology in Australasia” was convened, and resulted in the publication of *Applied Anthropology Australasia* (eds. S. Toussaint and J Taylor, 1999). That panel set out to explore changes in academic anthropology, and its relationship to the practice of applied anthropology. The twelve contributions to the resulting volume included critical discussions of theoretical, methodology and ethical issues in anthropology, and presented numerous examples of the application of the anthropological methods in addressing a wide range of subjects in various settings.

While critical reflection within the discipline has and will continue to be extremely important in maintaining its integrity, it is also useful to reflect on the encounter between anthropology and the “outside world” through the lens of the professional engagements of applied anthropologists. In this panel we will explore the impact of applied anthropology – whether and how anthropological insights gained through the application of anthropological methods, are translated into public policy and practice? Implicit in this question is the assumption that anthropologists engaged in applied work have a desire to see that work have some positive effect by bringing about changes that benefit those who have been the subject of their research. We call for papers that illustrate the processes and practices which facilitate or impede the transfer of anthropological knowledge and insight into policies and action.

Session Conveners:

Dr Richard Chenhall and Dr Jocelyn Grace

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Casino Capitalism': the circulation of ideas, currencies and agents in the global economy

The increasing ubiquity of neoliberal ideology and practice, has radically altered the ways in which capitalism, nationalism and politics are understood throughout the world, making their operations appear as the Comaroffs note, ‘opaque, even spectral’. Fostering the emergence of a culture of speculation in which gambling of all kinds is routinized at the state and individual level, ‘casino capitalism’ is frequently entangled in the developing world with new religious movements and local cosmologies but also with a wide range of practices emanating from the developed world such as illegal stock market manipulations, pyramid schemes and various other financial scams. Since the mid 1980s an increasing body of anthropological literature, much of it focused on Africa, has documented the ways in which the populations of postcolonial states have interpreted their disadvantaged positions in local and global systems of inequality. The diffusion of ideas about global capitalism in a wide variety of developed and developing regions of the world, suggests that the connection between post-modernity, late capitalism, globalisation, perceived secular rationalism, religious fundamentalism and occult involvement is complex and in need of further investigation. To that end, this session seeks papers that will address the issues of ‘casino capitalism’ in a theoretical and/or ethnographic context.

Session Conveners:

Dr Martha Macintyre and Dr Mary Patterson

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Shiver and passage: anthropological explorations in comportment, culture and everyday life

Every moment of human life is one of infinite motion from the pulse of blood and the rhythmic densities of ‘the body itself’ to those quickened sensations of ‘being alive’ and moving through space-time and life-cycle. As Mauss (1973) observed in ‘Techniques of the Body,’ culture exists in every human gesture, posture, stance and action. Exploring human comportment, motility and sensation illuminates the living quality of ethnographic facts and the corporeality of culture. The inherent sociality of gesture suggests that an exploration of corporeality is as critical to understanding cultural articulation as are other modalities of sociality. Bodily movement is vitally and affectively mnemonic. Through it people know, live, make, maintain and transform their worlds, experience process and themselves. Ultimately, an exploration of human comportment highlights the ways in which people live culture.

The convenors of this panel bring together interests in the broad movements of people around and across the world and the intimate movements of people in and through their worlds and lives. We invite ethnographically grounded papers which consider the ways in which corporeality, motility and kinaesthesia manifest human cultural experience, expression, embodiment and performance as well as the ways in which these modalities constitute forms of culturally concrete human knowing and being.

Papers might explore themes such as:

- Culture and bodily comportment, discipline, posture, and gesture.
- Human movement, sociality and the senses.
- The meaning of motility in work and leisure and the passage between.
- Kinaesthesia, transformation and cultural process.
- The notion and experience of 'passage' in life and life-cycle.
- The experience of performance.

Session Conveners:

Kalissa Alexeyeff

Gender Studies Program, University of Melbourne

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Roberta James

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Please forward all paper proposals to Roberta James.

Memory and social inclusion in the museum context: the cultural meaning of memory

The session will consider memory as an active social and cultural principle. It considers the connection between material object, representation and place in the making of cultural meaning. Memory generates new interpretations of these and inquiry into this element of museum practice will contribute to furthering understanding of the connection between memory and emotion.

Connerton (1989) has suggested that material objects can be less important in perpetuating memory than the ritualisation associated with them. Forty (1999:2) suggests that the act of forgetting might be just as significant to the way societies create meaning as is memory. This is particularly so in the Western tradition, where we commonly create analogous physical substitutes for human memory. Film and photography are examples of this, but only so long as the material artefact of the film that captured the image exists. Recent technological developments extend this metaphor somewhat, through the use of digital technology, but the principle remains the same. We commonly assume that material objects embody memory, and so prolong it.

Drawing on de Certeau, Forty (1999:7) suggests that when memory becomes fixed to particular objects, it begins to die. Forty sees memory as ephemeral, and

suggests it is the attempt to make memory material that leads to forgetfulness, so becoming the antithesis of memory in the collective creation of meaning. That is, what people choose to forget about the past, and why, is as important as any act of memorialisation. The question of how museums respond to their source communities therefore takes on added significance when they are viewed as 'storehouses of memory'. Interactions between indigenous people and museum collections can be seen to constitute memorial events in Forty's terms, for example.

Museum collections, both objects and images, as well as specific sites of historical events gain some level of significance as memorials to those with a strong cultural or familial link. Museums are now considerably more responsive to 'public interest' and its diverse expression, which includes a demonstrated sense of community responsibility, in which ethical practice takes account of matters of representation. The inclusion of the perspectives of source communities is as important to matters of representation and consequently important to contemporary museum practice as it is the public presentation of the knowledge it is concerned with.

References:

P. Connerton (1989) *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

A. Forty (1999) Introduction, In *The Art of Forgetting*, edited by A. Forty & S. Kuchler. Oxford: Berg.

Session Convenors

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Contemplation, threat and engagement: theorizing people-environment interactions

"Environment" – that which surrounds – may be understood and analysed on many levels: as an object of contemplation, as a domain of potential opportunity or threat, as that which grounds all experience. The relationships that people have with environment may, equally, be theorized and addressed on many levels. Does emotion shape people's understanding of environment or, as some evolutionary psychologists argue, have ancient environments shaped current emotions? To what extent do the uncertainties of a globalizing world come to dominate human environments and how might people manipulate local knowledge to manage new configurations of risk? If meaning arises through practical engagement with an environment that is, so seldom, still then how should we understand processes of reproduction and transformation? And with reference to either emotion, knowledge or the

“movement” that constitutes change what is the role of agency in people’s responses to and engagement with environment? These questions call to mind recent theoretical contributions by, among others, Kay Milton, John Tooby, Leda Cosmides, Anthony Giddens, Ulich Beck, Pierre Bourdieu, Tim Ingold.

This session invites both theoretically- and empirically-grounded papers that contemplate, threaten or engage with the ideas that have, too briefly, been alluded to here.

Session conveners:

Peter Dwyer and Monica Minnegal

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Transforming the health agenda

The increasing complexities in the modern world render health a fruitful focus of social theory and research. Biomedicine has been criticized for its focus on clinical aspects of illness and compartmentalization of health care, without taking into account the complex nature of individual lives. In response to the dominant biomedical pattern which lacks holistic approach, contemporary health-related movements, such as complementary and alternative medicine, position the individual patient as the main agent of transforming individual health outcomes. This individual responsibility, however, may only operate if the socio-cultural context facilitates these opportunities. By providing examples from cross-cultural research, this session will discuss how uncertainties associated with regaining and promoting health are tackled by the competing agendas of biomedicine and holistic health.

Session Convener:

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Slow motion: the body and impaired mobility

Physical impairment presents profound challenges to lived human experience: bodies that are changed, as a result of congenital or acquired impairments, disrupt personal biography and transform social relationships. While the often-contested discourses of medicine/rehabilitation and those of disability studies and identity politics have often framed explorations of impairment, the terrain of lived experience is often neglected. This session locates the experience of physical impairment in a “moving” world, engaging debates about embodied change, capability and social response.

Session conveners:

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Moving anthropological histories

Anthropology claims to be the study of “man” and for over a century has been marketed as the leading edge of “cross-cultural” knowledge, contact and communication. First promoted as “the science of diffusion”, its reality has rarely been so cosmopolitan. Like many academic disciplines, anthropology has typically focused on the parochial and particularistic questions and concerns of nation building. A quick comparison with disciplines as disparate as public health, philosophy, economics, and social psychology suggests that anthropology may actually be more tied to a national context and national questions than many other academic disciplines. There have, of course, been times when global concerns such as partisan and critical anthropologies of decolonisation, feminism, and third world development or the antinomies of modernism and post-modernism have created global, or at least trans-national, convergences. However, national anthropological traditions have often struggled to break with their 19th Century roots in *volkskunde*, or local and regional nation building ethnographies centred on the invention of a people and their traditions, most commonly the intellectual salvage of disappearing local peasantries. Whether anthropologists study the indigenous at home in Chiapas, Alaska, or Alice Springs, or travel to the most distant corners of the globe, the questions that are asked, the theories that are engaged and the answers that are provided often have the flavour of a cross-cultural *volkskunde*—moving research to distant lands and painting pictures of “home” using foreign colours.

This panel seeks to denationalise our discipline, by examining foundational moments and epistemological influences that have moved across international boundaries and regional divides, embedding themselves in national anthropologies and changing theoretical questions and lines of inquiry. In the hundred years since Franz Boas read Kant in an Igloo in Baffinland and returned to New York City to teach it to Mexicans, native Americans, and other “cultured others”, we have seen the British make an “American turn” to European identity and French theory, the US reaching across the Atlantic for function and adaptation, Columbia University graduates renouncing Boas for Marxist mentors in Mexico and the Caribbean, centrifugal great power struggles over moving theory in former Yugoslavia, and indigenous and non-indigenous Mexicans moving north to force often reluctant Gringos into battles over “the American turn.” Through a discussion of the history of the movement of

academic knowledge within and between the social formations that house national anthropologies, it is hoped that we may illuminate the ways in which nations and their political projects have created interpenetrated anthropologies that are all at once national and international.

Session convener:

Anthony Marcus

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Transnationalism and its discontents

Transnationalism, a process whereby migrants operate in social fields that transgress geographic, political, and cultural borders, has been celebrated as anthropology's most significant contribution to the study of contemporary migration. Consequently, recent years have witnessed a burgeoning of transnationalism studies and the development of a number of richly funded, large-scale and anthropology-led programs, such as the University of Oxford's COMPAS, for which the study of transnationalism is a core activity. The time has surely come to take stock of such developments. This session is dedicated to papers that explore transnationalism empirically, but also that consider critically the contemporary anthropological vogue for transnationalism. This is, simultaneously an empirical, theoretical, methodological and, indeed, political issue. For example, how have recent transnationalism studies contributed to anthropology's stock of knowledge?; what theoretical contributions have they brought to the discipline?; how, methodologically, have anthropologists sought to 'capture' transnational experiences? how does transnationalism serve a discipline that has been criticised for its geographic parochialism?; what are the relationships between the anthropological study of transnationalism and state policies on borders and immigration?

Session conveners:

Andrew Dawson (University of Melbourne)

Ghassan Hage (University of Sydney)

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Speaking relatively and moving on: the politics of kinship

After a little wrangling over the term, kinship has reappeared as a topic in Anthropology that offers to both move us and to take us across disciplinary boundaries. While recent research and writing on kinship in the English speaking world has taken us away from much that was seen to characterize kinship studies before its rather exaggerated 'death', emphasizing Euro-American concerns to do with new reproductive technologies, alternative family forms and so on, a great deal of sensitive and even sensuous scholarship has documented the enormously varied ways in which gendered ontologies, cosmologies and nurturance inform the ways

in which reproduction is imagined, practised and imaged in different cultures. There is frequently, some might argue, always an intersection between kinship's imaginary, the pragmatics of its use in everyday life and the domain of power. This session calls for papers that address what might be broadly termed the 'politics of kinship', namely the way in which 'kinship', however framed, is utilized in the field of power relations, the domain often neglected in formal accounts of 'kinship systems' or seen as merely the 'idiom' in which other relations are expressed. We encourage a broad cross-disciplinary and theoretical approach that might address areas including the pragmatics of terminological use for political ends, various forms of nepotism, the use of the rhetoric of kinship and family in relation to states and policy formation, the politics of marriage and reproduction.

Session conveners:

Violeta Schubert

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Mary Patterson

Anthropology Program, SAGES

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Without the home-field advantage? Women, men and subordinate masculinity

It is said that masculinity, like beer, does not travel well and is best consumed locally, and that the only thing more corrosive and threatening than local masculinity is somebody else's local masculinity, transplanted. Masculinity often does not move gracefully across town or from the top floor of a building to the basement, much less across highly defined and reified cultural, geographic, social, economic and political boundaries. Women, on the other hand, are often recognized as making the best anthropologists, being more socially and culturally adaptive and adjusting more smoothly to migration, as well as more easily accepting subordination, exile, and cultural deracination. This common representation of the plexus of gender, place, and power leaves subordinate men as little more than irrational, unruly and socially problematic ciphers and subordinate women as their long suffering appendages. This panel seeks to question these characterizations by revealing some of the complexities of the experiences of men and women, negotiating the challenges of masculinity when it does not have home field advantage.

Session Convener:

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AAS CONFERENCE PANEL DISCUSSION

Challenges for anthropology in Native Title practice

Recently, the National Native Title Tribunal commissioned Dr David Martin to produce a report on the capacity of anthropologists to deliver services in the native title area (available at www.anthropos.com.au). The report is based on a survey of around two thirds of the anthropologists working in native title in the academy, in Native Title Representative Bodies and as independent consultants, as well as on other sources including contributions to a recent debate on AASNet. It argues that there are a number of major interlinked challenges facing native title anthropology, including moves in contemporary anthropological theory and practice which some may argue have left native title anthropology exposed and often negatively valued, a view held by some that native title practice limits career development, and the domination of consultancy and academic anthropology by those aged over 50 and of anthropology in Native Title Representative Bodies by young women.

This session will involve a presentation of the study's findings by David Martin, with a panel of discussants critically evaluating the report's findings, and a forum for general discussion.

Session Convener:

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