



# SfAA Newsletter

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## President's Message



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## Anthems, Flags, Pledges, Projective Systems, and Enculturation: Personal Observations of a Somewhat Alien Anthropologist

I am a fan of Canadian football, so out of curiosity I attended a NFL football game after our board meetings in Minneapolis last year. I was struck by the fervor and emotion of the opening ceremonies involving the singing of the Star-Spangled Banner, presentation of American flags, and the displays of reverence and appreciation for military servicemen. As anthropologists, we all know that symbols and rituals of intensification count for a lot in understanding a people and how their values and identifications are constructed. One of the behaviors that struck me was the posture of the hand over the heart during the singing of the anthem and flag displays.

This brought to mind an incident that my former wife and I dealt with when we spent a year in Florida on a sabbatical. My stepdaughter, Jennifer, was attending a local public school and had been required to participate in the morning ritual of pledging allegiance to the American flag that involves that same posture and invokes the expectation, among other

things "...that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law...". We were fortunately met with easy cooperation from the teachers who exempted our daughter because she was Canadian.

But ironically, she is now American (a dual citizen) having followed her heart and her husband to Tucson where she is a social worker for the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs and is very active in local civic affairs. Yet her choice of identity and citizenship is arbitrary based first on the natural desire to build a family. Similarly, my American paternal grandfather (whose father fought in your Civil War) after 1905 crossed a border along with about 200,000 other Americans to take up homesteading in the Canadian West. They did not make this decision because of persecution in the USA. They did not do it because they fervently wished to participate in the British Empire and were eager to pledge allegiance as loyal subjects to British kings or queens. No, they did it because of the availability of large amounts of free land and because the Canadian government at the time recruited them because of the correct assumption that they would easily be assimilated.

So, what am I getting here at is that many people choose and switch their nationalities on the basis of very personal motives and agendas not because of any ardent nationalist desires to be citizens of their adopted homelands such as Canada or the United States. Some of those reasons may be for economic opportunity and many involve the need to escape intolerable conditions at home or forced expulsions. Yet at the same time, there are those who were forced to be citizens (although for a long time denied the rights and protection) of countries because they were conquered, many of their numbers exterminated, their lands expropriated, and were subjected to brutal policies of cultural genocide—obviously Native Americans, Canadian First Nations people, and Mexican Americans in the Southwest.

Then there are the subjects of recent controversies over different postures during the playing of national anthems—African American players of professional sports. Their collective experience, obviously, is that of a people who have suffered beyond that which most of us can imagine from the experiences of slavery, lynching, Jim Crow laws, and police shootings. Is it any wonder that their expressions of national pride might vary considerably and might include gestures such as kneeling or linking arms during the playing of national anthems to make particular points?

Anthems and pledges of allegiance as well as associated postures are not

without controversy here in Canada but in typical Canadian fashion more understated. Many point to the irony of the line “Oh Canada, Our home and native land” and change it as William Shatner has done in an amusing beat poem rendition of “Oh Canada, Our home ON Native Land”. Many of my First Nations friends and acquaintances do not participate in the singing of Oh Canada and some do not acknowledge the legitimacy of the Canadian nation state when promoting development on their traditional lands.

Also, when I was young there was the tradition of singing of two national anthems including “God Save the Queen” since Canada is officially still a constitutional monarchy. In my youthful rebellion, I would remain seated. Thankfully it is not played anymore. Yet in citizenship ceremonies, New Canadians are expected to recite an oath of loyalty to “Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth” something I have never had to do and would be loath to do even while recognizing it just as an archaic symbolic gesture.

One could make the argument that the nation state is a fictive community coming to the fore only in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century in the context of fierce European rivalries both at home and in their empire building conflicts abroad. Allegiance to those fictitious communities had to be constructed, and as many have pointed out by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century formal education

systems that inculcated patriotism were major institutions reinforcing nationalism to further the goals of nation states. Standardization of language and dialect, shared values and skills, being regimented and fulfilling assigned tasks, and, obviously, rituals of allegiance and anthem singing were among the methods.

Yet as Michel Foucault frequently reminded us, reinforcements of obedience through mass conformity are diffused throughout by what the Culture and Personality scholars of the 1960s called projective systems—sports, the arts, entertainment, stories and so forth. Aldous Huxley in his *Brave New World Revisited* puts national anthems in the same category as singing commercials with the similar pleasing, catchy sounds, melodies and rhythms meant to build loyalties through the expression of strong emotions.

My point in all of this is to suggest that we as anthropologists have important roles to play for our students and the public by deconstructing these institutions. In this case, the goal is not at all to question the role of patriotism as a way to perform valued civic duties but to point out the arbitrariness of the nation, nationalism, and the expressions of patriotism and to reinforce the facts that they are all subjective and arbitrary thus going largely unquestioned by most and are all based on techniques of social conditioning. Instead, performing

worthy civic or national duties through highly desirable improvements might also involve understanding and respecting others who have historic and contemporary grievances who have chosen to modify some of our standard rituals by changing their postures as symbolically pointing to the ways that we can improve the circumstances and justice within our respective nation states.

I am likely to be “preaching to the converted” here but I do think this kind of analysis is one way we can apply our anthropology or do what some folks have called public anthropology.

### **The Effectiveness of the SfAA**

We are now getting ready for our annual Fall Board meeting and so there is a flurry of activity among members of the staff and the Executive Committee. (A special “shout-out” to our Secretary Jane Gibson for keeping us organized). So once again this reminds me through now eight years of membership off and on on the Board, of what a remarkable organization the SfAA is. I don’t just say that as a customary clichéd president’s pep talk—I mean it—from the comparative experience of having served with many voluntary organizations. So much is done and so efficiently by so many volunteers on such a small operating budget of around \$500,000. Just imagine if all that work was converted into paid labor. What would the value be --\$10 million, \$20 million—who knows?

The only other organization that I have experienced similar effectiveness was an immigrant and refugee resettlement organization in my hometown of Saskatoon—a non-profit that oversaw the integration and adaptation needs of government sponsored immigrants or refugees. At the time, it served many instrumental and social support needs of almost 3,000 often vulnerable people representing 55 nationalities and ethnicities for about the same amount with which the SfAA operates. As president of that organization, I estimated the cost would have been about \$7,000,000 if the government did it all on its own—and the local newspaper in an editorial agreed and suggested the value to the community might be even more because it added valuable immigrant experience and culture to the city.

So, some organizations stand out for their remarkable capacities many others don’t because they may be too bureaucratized or may lose sight of their mandate. As applied anthropologists and as students of “human organization” we might be interested in why these are the cases.

I can only begin to speculate why this is so with the SfAA. For one thing, I think it is because we as members apply our anthropology where things need to get done and efficiently so. We are not satisfied with just academic theory building and we tend to do our work with strong passions for social justice. Another reason, one worth arguing —have we reached our

optimum size of now around 3,000? If we were much larger could we be as responsive as I think we are now? Could we still serve our members, especially students, the way we do and could we still have annual meetings as effective as the ones we now have?

Another reason seems to be our truly remarkable and long-term staff employed through Professional Management Associates (PMA) —Neil Hann, Trish Colvin, and Melissa Cope (now part time in Germany) and Tom May, of course, still doing amazing work for us in fund raising or development. What is remarkable is that they, all non-anthropologists, are just as dedicated to our goals as we. So, the organization is strong, resilient, and continues services to its members well. We do though need to extend ourselves more directly to society in these increasingly challenged times. It is hoped that our Immigration Initiative, started over the past year, will serve as pilot for similar more directly socially relevant actions.

Nonetheless, we do need to be mindful of some significant weak points though—one being our low minority group membership and a resulting lack of effective representation in some crucial cases.

# Countdown to Philadelphia



*By Carla Guerrón Montero, University of Delaware  
2018 Program Chair*

The 78th meetings of the Society for Applied Anthropology are well under way. The SfAA Program Committee and I are very excited about the multiple sessions, roundtables, workshops and films that will be featured in Philadelphia in April next year. In this short article, I highlight a few of them.

SfAA has joined forces with the Centre for Imaginative Ethnography (CIE), the Council on Nursing and Anthropology (CONAA), Culture and Agriculture, the Political Ecology Society (PESO), the Society of Anthropological Sciences (SASci), and the Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA) to organize sessions, roundtables and poster presentations of the highest caliber and on a variety of topics. Additionally, the meetings will have ample representation from the SfAA's Topical Interest Groups (TIGs), in areas such as immigration, business, tourism, museums and heritage, higher education, extraction, human rights, disaster and risk, and

gender-based violence. Other topics of interest include development, displacement and resettlement, agriculture, business, climate, fisheries and coastal communities, nutrition, land rights, and methods. A few examples of session titles include, "Immigrant Issues in the Trump Era: Threats, Security and Representation"; "Can Tourism and Heritage Preservation be Mutually Sustainable?"; "Let's Talk about Race, for Real"; "Innovative Ways to Address Food Insecurity," and "Spaces of Care: Models of Difference in Health."

The SfAA has characterized itself for its encouraging and warm environment for students. The 2018 meetings will honor this tradition by hosting a welcoming student party and by offering students multiple opportunities to share their work. Some of the student-led sessions and roundtables that will take place at the meetings include, "Young Researchers Tackle Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Development"; "The Everyday Vitality of Food and Agriculture in Latin America"; "The Unsustainability of Structural Violence" and "Creating Invisible Subjects."

Participants will also be able to select from a series of hands-on workshops to learn about topics as diverse as developing a literature of practice, assessing undergraduate anthropology programs, building a career in international development, and

implementation science for anthropology.

As noted in my previous article, the 2018 meetings will offer attendees the opportunity to engage in informative tours that highlight attractions or relevant policy issues of our host city. Some of these tours include participating in a Mural Arts Program trolley or walking tour; touring Independence National Historical Park; or visiting the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology's newest exhibition Bearing Witness: Four Days in West Kingston, or the Jean and Ric Edelman Fossil Park at Rowan University.

The call for film submissions for the SfAA Film Festival received wide international response. The members of the Film Festival Committee and I reviewed 139 submissions from 45 different countries to select the feature and short films that will be shown at the meetings. The festival will include films from Burkina Faso, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey and Estonia, among others, as well as a few focused specifically on Philadelphia and the Mid-Atlantic region. Do not miss the opportunity to watch shorts such as "The History of Intimacy" (USA) or "Young Inuk: Slices of Life" (France), and feature films such as "Brasilia: Life after Design" (Canada/Brazil), or "Home Sweet Home" (Switzerland).

I invite you to register for the meetings, attend many sessions and



films, participate in workshops and engage in the many tours available.

You will find more information about the conference and the annual theme (with translations to Spanish and Portuguese) at <https://www.sfaa.net/annual-meeting/theme/>. If you have any questions or recommendations, please feel free to contact me ([cguerron@udel.edu](mailto:cguerron@udel.edu)).

## New Annual Meeting Coordinator



Don Stull, University of Kansas  
([stull@ku.edu](mailto:stull@ku.edu))

### Don Stull Named New Annual Meeting Coordinator

This past summer Erve Chambers stepped down as the society's annual meeting coordinator. He pioneered this important position and worked masterfully with SfAA staff, program chairs and their committees, applied social scientists and institutions in and around meeting sites, to ensure that our meetings have been stimulating, germane, and entertaining. He was largely responsible for creating and institutionalizing our annual

meeting's highly successful "local day."

By way of background, I was program chair of the 1989 SfAA annual meeting in Santa Fe, which I believe was our first annual meeting to top 1,000 participants. I was also program chair for the 1994 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association meeting in Atlanta. I was editor-in-chief of *Human Organization* from 1999 to 2004; SfAA president from 2005 to 2007; and received the Sol Tax Award in 2009. I retired from the University of Kansas in 2015, so I am now footloose and fancy free—or was until I agreed to be the SfAA annual meeting coordinator.

I am more than a little nervous to follow in Erve's footsteps, but I hope to build on his exemplary efforts. I will collaborate with Neil Hann on site visits to future meeting locations; meet with local and regional institutions, academics, and practitioners to encourage participation; work with TIGS and LPOs to develop sessions and related activities that serve their interests and needs; assist and advise program chairs and their committees as needed; and coordinate activities between Professional Management Associates (PMA) staff and the program chair/committee. I believe strongly in promoting our meetings—and applied social science—to the general public, and will do all I can to keep "local day" a vital part of our meetings. What many of us call the "fun factor" is a big reason why our

meetings are so successful, and, with the help of local members of the program committee, we will develop guides for restaurants, walking tours, and other things of interest to members. I am eager to get started, and look forward to working with Carla Guerron Montero and PMA to make our 2018 meeting in Philadelphia successful and memorable.

## 2017 Mead Winner



Sameena Mulla, Marquette University

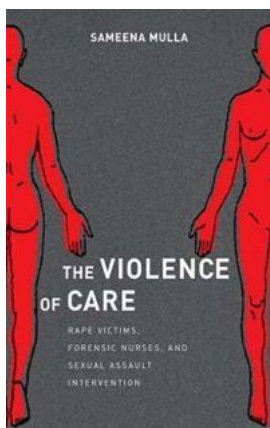
President Alexander Ervin announced that the Boards of Directors of the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) and the American Anthropology Association (AAA) had selected Prof. Sameena Mulla to receive the Margaret Mead Award for 2017. Prof. Mulla was selected for her book, *Violence of Care: Rape Victims, Forensic Nurses and Sexual Assault Intervention*, published by the New York University Press (2014). Prof. Mulla is currently an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Marquette University. She is a member of the Society for Applied Anthropology and the American Anthropology Association. She is an

active participant in the SfAA's Gender-Based Violence Topical Interest Group, which she chaired for two years.

The Mead Award will be presented to Prof. Mulla on April 6, 2018 at the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Mead Award was initiated by the Society in 1979 and with the approval of Margaret Mead. Since 1983, the Award has been sponsored and presented jointly with the American Anthropological Association. The Award is presented annually to a young scholar for a particular accomplishment, such as a book, which employs anthropological data and principles in ways that make them meaningful and accessible to a broadly concerned public.

The Award honors the memory of Margaret Mead, who in her lifetime was the most widely known woman in the world, and arguably the most recognized anthropologist. Mead had a unique talent for bringing anthropology into the light of public attention.



*The Violence of Care: Rape Victims, Forensic Nurses, and Sexual Assault Intervention (2014)*

Dr. Mulla received her Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University where she began her research for *The Violence of Care: Rape Victims, Forensic Nurses and Sexual Assault Intervention*. As she discusses in the introduction of the book, her interest in sexual assault intervention grew out of her experiences supporting a growing circle of victims and survivors among her network of friends, colleagues and students. Cultivating a dual focus in medical anthropology and legal anthropology, Mulla saw an ethnographic approach as having the potential to capture all of the complexities and nuances of sexual assault response. She undertook research in the emergency room in the role of rape crisis advocate, choosing a very embedded position from which to support patients navigating the medico-legal examination while doing research.

Like many anthropologists who have devoted their studies and their activism to human suffering, Mulla relies on a broad cohort of other scholars and activists to sustain her work. She is currently collaborating with sociologist Heather Hlavka on a courtroom ethnography on sexual assault adjudication in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While she resides in Milwaukee, she travels frequently to visit her family in Washington, D.C., and her in-laws in Petionville, Haiti. As the daughter of immigrants, she credits her diverse community of first generation and immigrant friends as attenuating her anthropological sensibility and preparing her for a career as an anthropologist at home,

researching the intricacies of gender-based violence in U.S. culture.

## New P.K. New Deadline



The **Peter K. New Student Award**, an annual student research competition in the applied social and behavioral sciences, has a new deadline: **November 30, 2017**.

Honoring the late Peter Kong-ming New, a distinguished medical sociologist-anthropologist and former president of the SfAA, this award offers an incredible opportunity for students to showcase their research and publish their work. There are three prizes available for first, second, and third place winners. The first place winner of the competition must be available to attend the Annual Meeting of the Society in Philadelphia, PA, April 3-7, 2018, and present the paper. The winner is also expected to submit the paper to the SfAA journal *Human Organization* for review and possible publication.

This competition is open to anyone registered as a student at the graduate or undergraduate level during the calendar year 2017. The research and the paper should use the social

behavioral sciences to address in an applied fashion an issue or question in the domain (broadly construed) of health care or human services. The first place winner of the competition will receive a cash prize of \$3,000. In addition, the winner will also receive a Baccarat crystal trophy. Second place will receive \$1,500, and third place receives \$750. All winners will receive a sum of \$350 to partially offset the cost of transportation and lodging at the annual meeting of the Society.

See [here](https://www.sfaa.net/about/prizes/student-awards/peter-new/) for submission guidelines, eligibility requirements, information on criteria/judging, and the work of previous winners who have now been published: <https://www.sfaa.net/about/prizes/student-awards/peter-new/>.

Please submit your paper to the Office of the Society by **November 30, 2017**. Judging for the competition.

## Student Travel Awards

### New Deadline, and Submission Portal

SfAA's Student Travel Awards now have a new deadline and a new submission portal! Please submit your applications by December 20, 2017, and see [here](#) for the new, easy-to-use submission portal. (Do not e-mail us your submissions. Any submissions sent via e-mail will not be considered.)

Here are the SfAA Student Travel Awards:

### John Bodley Student Travel

**Award:** honors an international scholar whose career focused on the impact of development on indigenous peoples. Awarded each year to a student presenting a paper/poster at the SfAA Annual Meeting.

### The Human Rights Defender

**Travel Award:** provides a \$500 travel scholarship each year for a student to attend the annual meetings of the Society.

The Del Jones Memorial Travel Award: intended to increase minority participation in SfAA, particularly African American participation. Supports a travel grant of \$500 for a student to attend the annual meeting of the Society.

### The Gil Kushner Memorial

**Travel Award:** in memory of Gil Kushner's pathbreaking work in anthropology and his dedication to students' ability to experience early field research. Two awards of \$500 each are available to students accepted to the annual meeting and presenting work concerned with the persistence of cultural groups.

### The Beatrice Medicine Award:

two \$500 awards offered in honor of Dr. Beatrice Medicine to assist students in attending the annual Society meeting.

### The Edward H. & Rosamond B.

**Spicer Travel Awards:** commemorating the Spicers' concern in the intellectual and practical

growth of students in social sciences. Two \$500 awards are available to students accepted to present a paper at the annual meeting discussing some concern for "community."

### Student Endowed Award:

a student-administered, \$500 award covering the costs of a one-year student membership and travel to the annual meeting.

### Involuntary Resettlement Travel

**Award:** A travel grant for students in Anthropology and related social sciences interested in researching and writing about development-caused population displacement and involuntary resettlement.

[Click here](#) for the Student Travel Awards online application form.

## Call for Malinowski Nominations



The Society for Applied Anthropology considers each year nominations for the Malinowski Award. This Award is presented to a senior social scientist in recognition of a career dedicated to understanding and serving the needs

of the world's societies.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is December 15.

A nomination should include a detailed letter, a curriculum vitae, letters of support, and sample publications.

A more detailed description of the Award and the nomination process is included on the SfAA web site at:

<https://www.sfaa.net/about/prizes/distinguished-awards/malinowski-award/>

The Malinowski Award was initiated by the Society in 1973. Since that time, it has been presented to distinguished social scientists including Gunnar Myrdal, Sir Raymond Firth, Margaret Clark, and Conrad Arensberg.

The nominee should be of senior status, and widely recognized for efforts to understand and serve the needs of the world through the use of the social sciences.

Please contact the SfAA Office if you have any questions or wish additional information by calling (405) 843-5113, or emailing at: [info@sfaa.net](mailto:info@sfaa.net)

## Immigration Initiative & Human Rights & Social Justice Committee



By Josiah Heyman, UTEP  
([jmheyman@utep.edu](mailto:jmheyman@utep.edu))

### Effective Policy Writing

Here, I offer insights on public policy articles and essays, written by applied anthropologists as experts. This derives from [my experience addressing](#) immigration and the U.S.-Mexico border. Such items overlap with other genres, including assisting community groups to document their experiences and assemble [policy recommendations](#). All communication is carried out in social and political fields—certainly working with advocacy groups is—so that stepping out of conventional academic work requires awareness and negotiating of scholar-organization-community relationships, involving questions of power and voice.

A crucial task is identifying a partner with communicative capacity. By capacity, I mean such things as

producing regularly appearing web content or essays, bringing essays to the attention of politicians and staff, diffusing them to the media, and so forth. For my work, the American Immigration Council has provided a talented and experienced editorial staff that discussed essay topics with me and reviewed my arguments and writing, and then an outreach staff that set up press conferences. Such diffusion in turn influenced reporters and political staff doing research on related topics, who then contacted me for further insights—building an effect above and beyond the original work. Partners may also provide services such as copy-editing and formatting for visual appeal, although poorly funded and smaller organizations may rely on the author to take on such tasks.

Of course, partners in communication—the writer, the issue organization, and if separate, the communicating organization—come with particular goals, positions, forms of knowledge and expression, and ways of operating. The choice of topic emerges from such give and take. Clearly, the topic must reflect the writer's expertise and passion. But the topic needs to be acceptable to the community and communication partners. (Perhaps a regular column or an op-ed gives the most freedom, but even then the publisher has some check.) The author may bring the initial topical inspiration, based on knowledge of key issues or breaking trends. In other cases, the topic is suggested by one of the partners, for



example approaching an expert to craft a policy statement or an essay addressing a specific concern. In each instance, there needs to be solid consensus not only on the broad topic but also on the main points to be made, so as not to waste time or generate misunderstandings.

As social scientists, we easily envision a holistic set of systematic causes and solutions, while advocacy organizations may focus on more narrowly delimited causes and solutions (sometimes glossed as “policy relevance”). Is the goal to identify one specific problem and press for improvements, or to help shift the public discussion around a major issue? In a similar fashion, scholars are used to reporting the results of original research or analysis. But, just as valuable are synthesizing information and secondary sources to render an expert assessment of a subject. Even further from typical scholarly practice is laying out concrete policy recommendations and rationales. Finding appropriate decisions in our topical choices, kinds of knowledge reported, and writing genres demands thoughtful awareness of oneself, partners, and short and long term scenarios for change.

The rhetoric and writing style depends on the audience, so envisioning the audience is crucial. This is not simple, as there are many possible audiences and genres that speak to them; having an experienced partner in communication helps, as does reading

comparable works. The vast majority of policy essays and position papers are written for a non-academic audience. The typical scholarly devices of references to theories and important authors usually are barriers to understanding. Methods rarely, but occasionally, help explain and justify positions. Simplifying vocabulary and syntax always helps. Scholarly jargon must be excised, but policy jargon may have uses; all jargon is to be used cautiously.

Footnotes or endnotes can be important, but for reasons that differ from scholarly work. The goal is not to cite previous authors but to provide sources and documentation of factual statements. That plays an important role in legitimating policy positions. Using the hyperlink function in on-line documents offers a less intrusive way to include these valuable source references. Some genres, of course, should not have notes, such as op-eds and similar brief essays. On the other hand, lists of key points—such as policy recommendations—play a heightened role, often set forth with bullet points or numbers. A flow of continuous prose paragraphs, typical of scholarly work, are less common, and other kinds of formatting are used that emphasize key points to a reader who glances quickly through a document. Finally, length depends entirely on the purpose of a document—is it a quick persuasive read, or a long summary of policy recommendations and their justifications? Often it is helpful for a lengthy document to begin with a

summary of no longer than one page. A readable one page document with key points separated by white space has genuine impact.

The most important consideration, however, is the writer becoming conscious of her background assumptions. This requires unsparing self-analysis alongside analysis of the target audience. We always communicate using a wide range of assumptions about knowledge, attitudes, values, feelings, and so forth; applied anthropologists, for example, bring many assumptions with them about how social relations and cultural frameworks operate in daily life. The audience cannot be assumed to share these background assumptions, particularly those of closed scholarly circles, so premises need either to be explained, or removed or reduced in their role in making the argument. Because background assumptions are pervasive, crucial, and often unconscious, this is a challenging task, but essential to effective communication.

For all that we aspire to obtaining relevant knowledge and achieving effective communication, however, the most important consideration in writing policy is the social mobilization surrounding it. Correct knowledge is entirely to be desired, but without political power it will be ignored. Effective communication can play a valuable role in facilitating that mobilization, and that is our fundamental task. Always remember

the ultimate political goal, the vision of which should govern more detailed writing decisions.

## Gender Based Violence TIG



By Dr. Melissa A. Beske

### Intimate Partner Violence in Western Belize: Continuities, Changes, and Challenges

In November 2010, I contributed a GBV-TIG column for SfAA News in which I addressed the prevalence of IPV (intimate partner violence) in Cayo, Belize, as well as the preliminary efforts of advocates to mitigate the problem. At the time, I was just finishing my dissertation fieldwork and felt cautiously optimistic about the consciousness-raising and fundraising initiatives beginning to take shape. Now seven years later, I am pleased to report that Belizean activism regarding this issue has steadily continued. Although many gender-based violence challenges persist in Cayo and other forms of interpersonal violence are on the rise, significant policy and resource expansions have greatly strengthened attention to women's rights and increased services accessible to survivors of IPV.

When I began my fieldwork in Belize, the Domestic Violence Act of 2008 set the standard for assistance available to victims. Building upon the 1992 Domestic Violence Act which criminalized IPV in the country (Beske 2009, 491), this policy extended the duration of protection orders obtained in Family Court and facilitated victims' ability to obtain child support from perpetrators. It imposed the confiscation of weapons from aggressors, required strict fines for those who violated court mandates, provided therapy for associated parties, and revised the law to apply to visiting as well as married partners and "violence" to include financial abuse rather than just sexual or physical (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2012). Despite there being only three IPV police units in Cayo, this policy enhanced the foundation for processing cases by prompting the development of the 2010 Domestic Violence Protocol for Police Officers, which entailed widespread IPV sensitivity training, updated measures for response and risk assessment, and revised complaint submittal procedures (Lewis 2010)—all of which worked to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement personnel historically notorious for victim-blaming.

Following the implementation of these policies, advocates in Belize have maintained primarily women-centered initiatives for handling IPV reports, as the vast majority of complainants remain women. The governmental Women's Department

began the Gender Awareness Safe School Program in 2011 to increase GBV awareness and understanding of gender-related issues in schools (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2012). They also led further training sessions for police officers, prosecutors, magistrates, medical personnel, social workers, and religious leaders to ready them for handling gender-based violence cases. Their informational sessions for professionals worked hand in hand with the country's two female-led "women's shelters," Haven House (est. 1993) and Mary Open Doors (est. 2008).

Since its inception, I have maintained a close relationship with the Mary Open Doors (MOD) NGO, and in the last decade they have overcome myriad difficulties yet expanded remarkably. While once just offering a shelter with enough space for three victims and their families in a building they rented from the local church, the organization has since gained ownership of additional land and constructed a much larger shelter in a remote, undisclosed location where it remains guarded from perpetrators attempting to locate their escaped partners. MOD now offers not only emergency housing for those fleeing IPV, but also assistance with life skills, healthcare, counselling, court support, childcare, skills training/job assistance, and education. In 2008, I initiated survivor support groups for those affiliated with MOD. Initially named Women at Work (WAW), the group focused on community

outreach and education, survivor empowerment, and shelter fundraising. Since that time, WAW has become entirely Belizean-run and changed its name to WEE (Women Empowering Each Other), and the group—which is still led by two of its original members—continues to aid victims by providing them shelter, assisting with job training and placement, and engaging in fundraising efforts.

In addition to these shelter and support group developments, significant changes have also occurred with regards to governmental policy and practice. The Ministry of Human Development, which contains the Women's Department, has become the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation, and Policy Alleviation—reflecting a broader, intersectional approach to GBV. As part of this expansion, they have appointed a new Special Envoy for Women and Children with efforts to strengthen sexual assault prevention and policy (Beske 2016, 156).

Notably, the 2010-2013 National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action was designed with a dedication to zero tolerance to GBV, adequate victim support in both urban and rural spaces, the reduction and eventual elimination of the crime, and ongoing measurement of the procedures in place to treat it (Lewis 2010, 5-6). This meticulously arranged policy arranged reforms for police, courts, healthcare, social services, education, and civil society; soon thereafter, the 2013 National Gender Policy was

enacted with the aim of achieving gender equality, as well (Beske 2016, 133-134).

Despite these reasons for hope, many challenges remain. Although policy has come a long way, partner violence still affects nearly three-fourths of the Cayo population (Beske 2016, 20), and increasing numbers of cases are heard in Family Court each year (Belize Judiciary 2017). While community consciousness raising has made great strides in helping victims to be aware of their rights and to come forward with their cases, many women are still hesitant to report due to economic dependency and social pressure from their families to remain with their partners. As a result, the majority of IPV cases still go unchecked. Furthermore, women's empowerment at times also leads to an increase in abuse rates, as perpetrators perceive their partners' defiance to longstanding GBV norms as a threat to their masculinity. In addition, law enforcement still lags behind enacted policy, and victim-blaming among police and magistrates still exists in the criminal justice system. The Office of the Ombudsman was established in 1999 to handle complaints regarding governmental personnel and practices, but because the office undergoes frequent periods of vacancy, these biases are seldom addressed (Ramos 2012).

Furthermore, while IPV prevalence has shown little change, other forms of interpersonal violence—such as

gang activity and the killing of tourists/expatriates—are certainly on the rise (Breaking Belize News 2015; Mehta 2016; Goudie and Markoff 2016; Thorbecke 2017). In recent years, Belize has increasingly become a corridor for illegal drug smuggling and human trafficking, and the once relatively-localized dangerous gang activity of Belize City has spread to more rural areas across the country; in addition, amid recent economic struggles and increasing wealth disparities, armed robberies are also becoming more common (OSAC 2017). With the third highest murder rate per capita in the world, Belize nonetheless only solves 3%-10% of homicide cases (Goudie and Markoff 2016; Thorbecke 2017), and though all within the country's borders are at risk, conditions are especially dangerous for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Clearly, continued activist effort is needed to increase safety in Belize.

At the completion of my fieldwork studies in 2010, I pondered the extent to which my research would make a difference and wondered whether sustainable survivor assistance initiatives could ever be achieved. Since then, despite ongoing struggles, the continued dedication to peace-promoting activism in Belize has consistently inspired me. While my personal role there has minimized, I remain particularly closely connected to the MOD and WEE support group members, as they continue to impress me with their latest endeavors amid terribly difficult circumstances. Via

text messages, emails, and visits every several years, we remain in contact as I continue to assist with fundraising, academic insight, and much-needed emotional support. In the summer of 2016, I brought copies of my dissertation-turned-book on Belizean IPV and advocacy to Cayo. By sharing copies with Galen University, the National Library, the San Ignacio Library, the Women's Department, and the office of Mary Open Doors, I hope my findings revealing IPV prevalence, contributing factors, and personal survivor stories will catalyze further action among the Belizean public and especially among those officials tasked with treating the problem. Lessening partner violence in Belize will likely remain an uphill battle for the foreseeable future, but the recent changes have made notable advances, and I am now pleasantly rather than just cautiously optimistic about the eventual outcome of such advocate endeavors. I look forward to witnessing further developments in the years to come.

## Members in the News



*Dr. Steve J. Langdon*

### Dr. Steve J. Langdon Receives Highest Non-Native Service Award from Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN)

SfAA member and University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Steve J. Langdon, received the AFN Denali Award, its highest honor given to a non-Native person for dedicated service to Alaska Natives.

The award has been given annually since 2001.

The award was presented to him at the Dena'ina Convention Center in Anchorage on Oct. 19, where the annual AFN meeting was held. Shawn Hegna, president of Koniag, Inc. nominated Dr. Langdon.

Steve conducted extraordinary research for four decades on behalf of the rights, traditions, history and cultures of Alaska Native peoples. He did not know he was being considered for this honor.

He served as the Program co-chair of the SfAA annual conference held in Vancouver, BC, 2016.

## Spotlight



### Anthropology at the University of Puget Sound

*By Andrew Gardner*

Tucked in the leafy historic district of Tacoma, Washington's north end, the [University of Puget Sound](#) was founded in 1888. The university and Tacoma are perched above Puget Sound, with vistas to the towering peaks of the Cascade Mountains to the east and the Olympic Mountains to the west. Over the past three decades, the university has distilled its mission around the provision of a residentially-focused undergraduate liberal arts education. With 2600 undergraduate students and a student-faculty ration of 11 to 1, the university draws diverse and high caliber students from around the United States and beyond. The university is particularly attractive to students with an interest in environmental issues, and to students with a globally-conceived interest in social justice. Amongst other noteworthy accolades, the University of Puget Sound perennially succeeds in placing graduates with the Fulbright Fellowship program, in the Peace Corps, and with Watson Fellowships for a post-graduate year abroad.

Like many liberal arts colleges, anthropology and sociology are joined in a single department. Puget Sound's [Department of Sociology and Anthropology](#) currently includes five anthropologists and six sociologists. While several of the sociologists in the department utilize ethnographic methods and have research sites



outside the United States, anthropological faculty bring regional expertise to the department that's focused on Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. The anthropological component of the department is primarily configured around sociocultural anthropology, with a durable commitment to its application. Students' interests in anthropology's other sub-disciplines is typically supported through summer research, internships, and independent study. Undergraduates in the anthropological ambit also explore a variety of related emphases and majors, including [International Political Economy](#), [Global Development Studies](#), and [STS \(Science, Technology, and Society\)](#), and [Environmental Policy and Decision Making](#).

Amidst the academic proliferation of programs in ethnic and regional studies, our vision of anthropology has distilled around our discipline's commitment to crossing thresholds of difference in this world, developing an empathic grasp on those diverse collective experiences, and tailoring real-world recommendations and solutions that reflect the understandings we seek to achieve. Students' pathways through the department's curriculum ensure that they emerge with a solid foundation in both sociology and anthropology, and our department strongly emphasizes and develops their capacity to design and conduct independent research projects configured around interests they cultivate during their time in the

department and at the University of Puget Sound.

Our students commence their journey through our curriculum with a pair of courses that introduce them to sociology and to anthropology. Students are additionally required to complete a course in theory, and then a pair of methodological courses that train them in quantitative methods and in qualitative methods. The latter methods course, entitled [Ethnographic Methods](#), requires all students to design and conduct a qualitatively-focused ethnographic project of their own design. Students also take the required course [Power and Inequality](#), and continue selecting from the diverse electives offered by faculty in the department. In their final year, students are required to complete a senior thesis, with the option of designing and conducting an additional independent research project that serves as a capstone to their undergraduate experience. The majority of our seniors present their original research at academic conferences, including the annual meetings of the [Society for Applied Anthropology](#) and the [Pacific Sociological Association](#). These conferences have validated the strength of our students' methodological and academic training through numerous undergraduate [paper and poster awards](#) over the last decade.

This curricular design includes two waypoints at which students design and conduct independent research

projects, but many of our students find additional opportunities to deploy their newfound skills. Our students have successfully competed for [summer research](#) monies on campus, which allow students to devote an entire summer to research projects of their own design, under faculty supervision. Additionally, we encourage our students to select study abroad programs that allow them to further extend their research skills in settings outside the United States, such as the [School of International Training's](#) many programs and offerings. We envision the capacity to conduct independent research projects as a valuable and transferable skill useful in the constellation of different pathways our graduates find in their post-undergraduate lives.

As faculty and anthropologists, we recognize that our university attracts students who are, typically, already skilled and experienced young adults. The anthropological prism that we present to our undergraduates — suffused in the academic, applied, and engaged traditions of our discipline — is intended to enhance journeys that, oftentimes, are already underway. Our sustained relationship with the [SfAA](#) has been of great benefit to our students as they begin to look beyond their undergraduate years to the trajectories, vocations, and training they'll pursue. We look forward to the upcoming meeting in Philadelphia!

# Interview with Barbara Rose Johnston



## The Intersections of Environment, Health, and Human Rights

By Barbara Rylko-Bauer

Barbara Rose Johnston is an anthropologist who has worked for many years on issues of environmental social justice. She has conducted major research in the areas of human rights, health, and the environment, nuclear militarism, water and energy issues, consequential damage assessment and the process of reparations, global climate change, biodiversity, and development theory and praxis. Her work has had wide-ranging impacts on public policy and she has served as expert advisor to several UN Special Rapporteurs and to the UN Expert Panel on water and cultural diversity. She is one of anthropology's foremost public intellectuals, moving comfortably between academic social and natural science, anthropological application and praxis, and social justice advocacy. This work has been recognized in anthropology with

numerous awards, including the Michael Kearney Memorial Lecture (2016), the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) Anthropology in Public Policy Award (2015), the Lourdes Arizpe Award (2007), and the Solon T. Kimball Award (2002).

Barbara Rose Johnston graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a B.A. in Anthropology and earned a M.A. in environmental science from San Jose State University and a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is a Senior Research Fellow with the Center for Political Ecology and adjunct Professor in Anthropology at Michigan State University. She is the author of nine books including *Consequential Damages of Nuclear War: The Rongelap Report* (co-authored with Holly Barker) which won the 2011 New Millennium Book Award, and of numerous book chapters, journal articles, and public and technical reports. She is also a frequent contributor to online publications, such as *Counterpunch*, *Truthout.org*, and *Anthropology News*.

This featured interview was condensed and edited from two separate interviews conducted by Barbara Rylko-Bauer for the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) Oral History Collection. Added material is presented in brackets. The first interview occurred in Denver, Colorado on November 21, 2015 during the annual AAA meeting; the second one took place in Vancouver,

British Columbia on April 2, 2016, during the annual SfAA meeting. Both interviews are available in their entirety in the SfAA Oral History Collection archived at the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries.

**Barbara Rylko-Bauer:** It's wonderful to have this opportunity to interview you. I thought we could start by having you describe how and why you decided to pursue a career in anthropology, a career that I would characterize as integrating theory with advocacy and practice.

**Barbara Rose Johnston:** Okay, good question. I did not start out with the intent to be an anthropologist, though I was certainly influenced by a number of concerns growing up, with social justice being paramount. In the "tribe" that I grew up in, one of eleven children, we were the folks who always were out there at all the marches and so forth. Every summer growing up we went to our friends' cabin on the Russian River where they did an outdoor movie—*Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1964). It is this incredibly poignant story of a Native California woman who is left behind as her whole tribe is taken to a mission where they die of disease. That had an indelible impact upon me. I also grew up reading fairy tales and religious books about saints' lives and all that sort of thing. So, that narrative and notion of suffering and justice is a facet of just who I am. I took a test in high school that predicted I'd be an urban planner. I

did planning initially in my graduate program. I did an undergraduate degree in anthropology, because you could take anything and get into a master's program in planning. I decided that since I was paying my own way through school, I would never take a class that I did like. I liked reading and writing and so anthropology and native California was my area of study.

**Rylko-Bauer:** Now, where did you go to school?

**Johnston:** Initially, in high school I did community college classes and after high school I went to San Jose State for two years and transferred to UC-Berkeley. I graduated after three years of college, because I was working and paying my way through school. One quarter I took 29 units, but it was reading and writing. I had the most amazing year. It was the last year of Robert Heizer's life, he was dying of throat cancer. He was an archeologist, native California and the Great Plains was part of his body of work. [This expertise led him to support tribal land claims and serve as] expert witness in 1950s era lawsuits over whether or not California tribes had the right to get the treaties that were never signed by Congress when gold was discovered in the 1800s. I learned so much that year about the [impacts of doing anthropology, especially the] ethical obligations to act if you have privileged information. You can't just sit on the sidelines. Robert Heizer's stories had a big impact on me.

Rylko-Bauer: I can see, yes.

**Johnston:** I worked for my honor's thesis with him and Albert Elsasser, doing an annotated bibliography of all the Native California manuscripts in the Kroeber archives. The Harrington collection of papers had just been returned to the Kroeber Library. They gave me a key to the locked shelves and I spent the whole year in the library. It was wonderful and I loved it. I pulled together this annotated bibliography that Heizer and Elsasser used in preparing one of his last books [The Natural World of the California Indian]. When I was done with this big, thick manuscript showing where California plants were used for medical purposes—medical ethnobotany, Heizer said, okay, you wrote the book, you might as well publish it. I thought, I'm twenty years old, I'm too young to do this. He really infused in me that notion, me and the other five students in the honor's class. I would say that was perhaps one of the biggest things.

That period had another big impact for me because it was one intense year to graduate. At Berkeley, the one class that I did the worst in was also the one class that I learned the most, and that was Laura Nader's class. That had a big impact on my life and career as well—the lifetime relationship that developed over the years, because of that brief time that I spent there.

And then I got a job at Santa Clara County Planning Department where I was brought in through a federal

program that paid for 18 months, for internships basically. At the end, I was offered a permanent position, but eventually decided not to take it. I was involved in documenting the cultural resources of the county and coming up with a long-term plan that protected these cultural resources. Reviewing the research on relationships regarding where and how Indians had lived, I came up with a predictive model, [map, and proposed changes to] the county environmental impact assessment code. If your home or property was in this shaded area, then you needed to have an archeologist come and do a Phase I survey [to assess presence or absence of cultural resources]. This county code became [the model for changes statewide. That was when I was 21.

**Rylko-Bauer:** It sounds like from the very beginning you have had this ability of figuring out how you can translate knowledge and research skills into a form that has policy impact. That's remarkable.

**Johnston:** I think that Heizer was really key in giving me the confidence to know that it didn't matter that I was 21, with my hair in braids and wearing overalls to work, and telling these developers who were millionaires that no, you can't build there. To have that kind of power was something that came natural I guess, in part because of the teachers, and in part because of the family that I grew up in—that we have rights. Those were the times when Wonder Woman was on TV and feminists were taking to the streets

and farm workers were protesting. Cesar Chavez started the early years of the farm workers union in our church, that's the context of the times.

**Rylko-Bauer:** Your PhD was from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, right?

**Johnston:** Right. I started with a semester or two of graduate work in planning at San Jose State and it was stupid. [I was working as a planner and] they were teaching me how to write an office memo. The environmental law class was good and I got a lot out of it. In the environmental impact fieldwork course, I got to go out and do surveys. And then I decided to go visit my brother in the Virgin Islands when my 18 months was up, to think about the job offer from the Santa Clara County Planning Department. I had never been a kid. I had never been to a bar, never done anything in that regard. I had just been a student. So I began living on a houseboat. I had hooked up with a new friend who was doing archeology and I volunteered on excavating a midden there. It just got me wondering. I had never been further east than the Nevada state line. I had never been anywhere like the Caribbean. I expected that it would be tropical, it would have rainforests, but instead I encountered a mountainous island that looked like Baja California.

One of the key questions I had was, why? What was the difference between my expectation and reality? I

decided to study on my own with my unemployment checks when I turned down the Santa Clara County job. I studied tropical ecology and this question of how did the landscape change over time—the difference between my expectations and reality.

Doing archeology as a volunteer meant asking paleoclimatology questions—what kind of plant and animal life was here. What did this look like thousands of years ago, because we had analysis of some of the shells. The site itself I think was about 3,000 years old, but it gave us that kind of timeline and information. And then I went back home for a family wedding and encountered Les Rowntree, a geographer at San Jose State, a friend of mine that I had gotten to know when I worked for Santa Clara County. He said, as long as you're studying this stuff, you might as well get a master's for it. I'll sponsor you and you do independent studies—because there was no master's at that time in environmental studies. I wrote my thesis for the Virgin Islands research and then spent the second semester back in California taking ecology everything—plant ecology, biological ecology, labs, fieldwork, human ecology.

**Rylko-Bauer:** So you weren't taking anthropology courses, right?

**Johnston:** No. I got a master's in interdisciplinary studies (that now, at San Jose State, is an environmental studies master's) that focused on the cultural construction of drought and

how an island changed over this long historical period. It got me reviewing all the history of the place, the relationships between land use and slavery, its relationship in geopolitical terms and so forth. That little kernel then was expanded into my dissertation.

I went to the University of Massachusetts-Amherst because they had a Caribbean program. I had a year of classes at U-Mass, and then, because they had accepted my master's, I went back to the Caribbean. I did another semester at U-Mass the second year, and then I was in the Caribbean the rest of the time to finish my research and write my dissertation. So I did not have a whole lot of schooling other than my undergraduate degree which was intense, and a full year of intense courses in anthropology and also political economy and paleoclimatology.

So, yeah, I did not feel like an anthropologist for many years. I feel like I fit in now, though I certainly didn't when I first started.

**Rylko-Bauer:** Listening to the path that you took, I can see the very early influences in what you did and how you've run with it and developed it over time in the work you've done. Who were some other people, both early on and throughout your career, that have had an impact on you?

*TO ACCESS THE FULL INTERVIEW GO TO THE ORAL HISTORY PAGE AT [WWW.SFAA.NET](http://WWW.SFAA.NET)*