

ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR ANTHROPOLOGISTS
FORMAL SCHOLARLY SESSIONS, SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND
SPECIAL MENTORING EVENTS

AAA/CASCA MEETINGS

TORONTO, 2023

**Prepared by ASA in collaboration with AAA, CASCA, the Textile Museum
of Canada and the Royal Ontario Museum**

SCHOLARLY PROGRAM

3124 -Conversations Across the Generations: Transitions from paper field notes and visual documentation to mixed methods and digital recording of ethnographic and archeological field data

Date: Thursday, Nov. 16th, 8:00 AM – 9:45 AM
Session Type: Roundtable/Town Hall
In-Person Organizer: James Tim Wallace

Presenters: James Tim Wallace, Dillion Cartwright, Dennis Wiedman, Sarah Taylor, Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi, Ruth Van Dyke, George Gmelch, John Page

Abstract:

This roundtable brings together senior scholars and young, emerging scholars to discuss and debate the associations between documenting ethnographic observations and recording the archaeological record. Ethnographers and archaeologists have for generations developed methods of recording observations and measurements in field sites. Each new generation creates new technologies and approaches for documenting field observations in ethnography, and handwritten notes in paper notebooks have been replaced by fieldnotes, spreadsheets, network analysis, photo and audio files, interview recordings, resulting in changes in ethnographic products in response to new methods of collecting data. In archaeology, mapping and photography have become much more sophisticated with drones, Lidar, and visualization techniques. But do these contemporary techniques replace or do they enhance the practices developed generations ago by our earlier colleagues? Do new technologies replace participant observation as a means of data collection, and objectify field experiences? Do they aid, change, enhance the recording of field observations? do they bias or constrain observations in new ways unlike biases occurring through participant observation?. Are they more or less inclusive of the interlocutor lens? Do they offer our interlocutors more or less opportunity to enter the ethnographic dialogue? Have archaeologists been able to better “see” and report their data with these new techniques? Or are archaeologists held hostage to new techniques that are delightful to look at but obscure the basic relationships between humans and the environment in which they lived? The scholars in this roundtable represent different generations of ethnographers. They will reflect on, share and critique earlier and current approaches to data collection and the implications of changes for ethnographic and archaeologic recording, interpretation and results.

2205 -A collaborative approach to anthropological ethics: revising the current 2012 AAA “Principles of Professional Responsibility.”

Date: Thursday, Nov. 16th, 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM
Submission type: Roundtable/Town Hall – In person
Organizers: Elizabeth Crocker and Stephen Schensul

Participants: Margaret Le Compte; David Stephenson; Jean Schensul; Elizabeth Crocker; Stephen Schensul; Robert Rubinstein

Session Abstract:

The 2012 "Principles of Professional Responsibility" (<https://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement>) represent the most current statement of the ethical principles of the American Anthropological Association. These ethical guidelines center on the anthropologist as ethical decision maker, identifying "the possible ways that the research might cause harm," "...what is in the best interests of others," "unintended consequences and long-term impacts," the "...potential impact of ... [the] research and ... dissemination of the results," "competing ethical obligations" and "asymmetries of power." Based on this ethical statement, the anthropologist has full, complete, and independent agency to determine all ethical aspects of the research endeavor, modified only by an institutional IRB with little knowledge of the specific field situation and investigation. The organizers of this session see field research, conducted by any four-fields, basic or applied anthropologist, as a complex negotiation in which ethical agency must be shared between the researcher and the people under study or the populations that are impacted by a study. The 2012 Principles of Professional Responsibility do not address these issues, nor the challenges of ethical autonomy, leading to the need to revise our ethics statement to address a more proactive relationship with the individuals, communities and populations that have previously been our "objects/subjects" of study. The goal of the session is to develop guidelines and suggestions for modification and expansion of the 2012 AAA Ethics statement to facilitate collaborative research engagement. The session will begin with analysis of the current ethics statement and examples of challenges anthropologists face that require more ethical guidance than the current principles offer. Each small group roundtable will be organized on one of the following themes:

- Negotiating entry and positionality
- Determining research questions
- Rapport, relationships, and reciprocity
- Collaboration in the research process
- Dissemination and voice
- Ownership and control of data.

Roundtable facilitators will briefly introduce the theme and a case example to facilitate discussion of appropriate changes to the current ethical guidelines. Using examples presented and their own experience, participants will draft principles or sub-principles related to these topics that reflect more specific concerns for the welfare, needs and perspectives of the people studied and/or potentially impacted by anthropological research. Each roundtable will report out. Organizers will collate the proposed additions and modifications and present them to the AAA and appropriate committees.

1763 -Between Professional Stranger and Auto-Ethnographer: Degrees of Belonging in Anthropological Research, Double Session

Date: Friday November 17th, Part I: 8:00 – 9:45; Part II: 10:15 – 12 PM
Submission Type: Oral Presentation Session – In-person
Organizer: Jim Weil
Chair: William P. Mitchell

Sessions Abstract

The title of Michael Agar's "The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography" implies a research focus on the so-called "other." In contrast, panelists in this session provide examples of ways anthropologists have been or become part of the groups in which they work. Their presentations consider the extent to which they bridge or efface the dichotomy between "us" and "them" in fieldwork. How have relationships between the extremes of complete stranger and auto-ethnographic subject developed? Have involvements intensified along a continuum during their careers through ongoing research? ...long-term residence? ...local employment or marriage? ...post-retirement engagements? This is especially relevant for senior anthropologists who have experienced transitions in their own professional approaches and witnessed profound changes in the discipline.

Now it may be more common to do research "at home" and less common in settings which, in one way or another, can be considered remote. Kirin Narayan (1993) raises challenging issues in what it means to be a "native anthropologist." Where anthropologists share an essential or existential identity with a local population, does a necessary element of professional detachment estrange them from their own neighborhoods, organizations, or other interaction sites and reference groups? Are we doing auto-ethnography when we debate over what it means to be an anthropologist, distinguishing our own identity within the discipline from identities we don't share with all of our colleagues (Goldschmidt 1977; Trencher 2000).

Over many decades, moreover, the shift of emphasis from holistic community studies to ethnographies with local manifestations of global problems has countered the exoticism of past orientations and practices (MacClancy 2019). Also, cultural hybridity makes us members of multiple groups in widening circles of inclusiveness. Might our personal backgrounds and choices of research sites have become less crucial now than a professional stance combining reflexivity, self-effacement, and ethical commitment?

In what ways have anthropologists developed their personal identity to resist and overcome the compartmentalization of the social contexts in which they live and work? (Bolles 1985). Many have carried out research in two or more contrasting settings (Gottlieb 2012). Accordingly, in an ideal world, what additional benefits can be expected when those who so choose, have opportunities to draw from at least one fieldwork project in a community or equivalent setting they define as their own and in at least one other as unfamiliar as possible?

Presenters and Paper Titles: Part 1 – 8:00 AM – 9:45 AM

Jim Weil – Introduction: reassessing positionality in anthropological careers

Lourdes Gutierrez Nájera – The intersectional ethnographer: the politics of recognition and the limits of belonging

Francine Saillant – Revenir chez soi, en assumer l'étrangeté -- Coming back home, assuming its strangeness

Phyllis Pasariello – Anthropologist as professional tourist: nurturing universalism and incorporating

semiotics

Susan Trencher – Discussant

Presenters and Paper Titles: Part 2 – 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM

Rena Lederman – Wherever we are and whomever we're with, insider or outsider identities aren't just ours to define

Fadwa El Guindi – Being in the field, doing anthropology: encounters among Nubians, Valley Zapotec, and Gulf Arabians

Yokho Tsuji – Being an outsider and an insider: cases of my research in America and Japan

Moshe Shokeid – An Israeli Anthropologist's engagement in Jewish and Non-Jewish field-sites at home and abroad

Myrdene Anderson – Supra subjectivity: ethnography has always transcended the subjectivity-objectivity false dichotomy

Virginia Domínguez – Discussant

1243 – Anthropology is Dying from a Thousand Cuts

Date: Saturday, Nov. 18, 2:00 PM - 3:45 PM

Submission Type: Roundtable/Town Hall – In-person

Location: TMCC, 801A

Chair and Organizer: Alice Kehoe

Presenters: Noel Dyck; Rick Feinberg; Yolanda Moses; Evin Rodkey

Session Abstract:

Franz Boas established Anthropology as a discipline with four subfields, reflecting: humans as biological organisms - genus Homo within Order Primates; human societies as culturally diversified; the archaeological past; linguistics. Anthropology's strength is its recognition that we cannot understand human behavior without taking into account our physical nature derived from ancestors, the patterning of behaviors through imitating and learning from other people, the influence of histories, and our unique capacity for expression and communication in words. Anthropology is rooted in the fundamental theoretical position that the four specialties are different facets of what it means to be human. Democracy—rule by the people—is natural in selection for gregarious living, while it is challenged by cultural patterns supported by aspects of our evolutionary heritage such as lust, hoarding, fear of strangers and bonding for defense. When the broad foundation of American anthropology is gutted by academic cuts and restructuring into capitalist enterprises exploiting possessive individualism, we lose not only our unique understanding of the empirical reality of the human organism Homo sapiens, but also opportunities to awaken our compatriots to the humane values integral to our discipline, transitioning from "silos" to solidarity. Our professional associations should work to increase community, technical and tribal colleges' outreach to all residents, and to support courses in anthropology that begin with a four-field introductory course understood to be relevant to every person, regardless of their employment strategies, because everyone is a Homo sapiens. All our professional organizations are doing outreach. In numbers there is strength.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Textile Museum of Canada: Talks and gallery tour of ethnographic/historical global fabrics and contemporary artist interpretations

Date: Wednesday, November 15th, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
(with option to remain till 5 PM)
Location: Textile Museum of Canada, 55 Centre Avenue, Toronto,
Ontario, M5G 2H5.
Nearest Subway station: St. Patrick Street Station

Coordinators: Lynne Milgram, Sarah Quinton and Roxanne Shaughnessy

The Textile Museum of Canada (TMC) is a unique museum space founded in 1975 by textile historians and anthropologists with expertise in global historical and contemporary textile material culture production, history and use. For anthropologists, the Textile Museum offers exhibits and a collection of historical textiles from around the world along with their stories. Exhibitions and educational programming also highlight the work of contemporary artists inspired by the collection and its traditions and demonstrate the Museum's commitment to engage in innovative ways with the communities whose stories and cultures are shared in gallery outreach and events. An example of its community participatory approach is the current exhibit, "*Gathering*", which presents pieces from the Museum's permanent collection of over 15,000 objects from around the world. "*Gathering*" explores themes related to migration and diaspora, the search for comfort in the domestic and familial, reclamation of ancestral traditions through contemporary artistic responses, and the relationship between textiles and the environment. To develop this exhibition, open online calls and partnerships with local organizations and artists' interventions produced choices of objects, responses, and retellings used to select and reflect on textiles and their makers.

This event will feature brief gallery talks by Dr. Lynne Milgram, co-founding TMC member and Professor Emerita (Anthropology), OCAD University and Sarah Quinton, Curatorial Director Emerita, Textile Museum of Canada on the history of the museum, historical textiles housed at the museum, and examples of combining historical and contemporary textiles in curated exhibitions. These short talks will be followed by an interactive gallery tour of the permanent collection (second floor) and current exhibit(s) (third floor) led by Roxanne Shaughnessy, Senior Curator and Manager of Collections. The current (third floor) exhibition highlights channels through which contemporary artists combine or adapt traditional textile styles and approaches and artifacts that can represent their historical situatedness. Small group visits of no more than ten people at the same time to the fourth-floor collection storage area are possible with advance reservations. Visitors who would like to discuss specific textile traditions with Roxanne will be able to indicate their interest in advance. This event offers anthropologists a truly special opportunity to hold conversations with experienced textile curators who can explicate these products in ethnographic contexts, both past and present.

Cost: Adults CAD \$15; USD \$12
Seniors CAD \$10; USD \$7.50
Register in advance and pay through the AAA annual meeting website

Participation: Participation is limited to 25 people.

Ten people maximum will be able to enter the textile collection storage area at the same time. Those interested in interacting with the TMC collections should inform the Program Chair one week in advance (jean.schensul@icrweb.org).

More information about the Textile Museum of Canada is on the Museum website (<https://textilemuseum.ca>) and additional information on the event will be available in advance on AAA All-Communities (<https://communities.americananthro.org/home>).

ASA Annual Member Luncheon at Pearl Harbourfront Restaurant

Time: Thursday, November 16, 12 noon to 2 p.m.
Location: Pearl Harbourfront Chinese Cuisine, 207 Queens Quay West, Unit 200, Toronto
Participants: ASA members and guests of ASA members (preferably preregistered)

The ASA is sponsoring its annual member luncheon at the AAA/CASCA meetings in Toronto at the Pearl Harbourfront Restaurant. The Pearl Restaurant is famous for its dim sum and will be serving a dim sum lunch for all, vegetarians and nonvegetarians. The restaurant is within easy walking distance from the convention center, or by Uber, and is on the train line from the conference center. The event menu is available on request from the ASA Program Chair Jean (Jay) Schensul (Jean.schensul@icrweb.org). Typical dim sum menu items are listed on the Pearl Restaurant website. Cost is free to ASA members. All ASA members are encouraged to take advantage of this membership benefit free of charge. Guests of ASA members will cover the cost of their lunches. Join with your ASA colleagues in spirited and shared conviviality.

Cost: Free to ASA members
(\$30.00 CAD or \$23.00 US in cash, paid directly to Treasurer Margo Smith.)
Capacity: 50 – 55 people.

Please let treasurer Margo Smith know (Margolane61@yahoo.com) if you will attend and if you will bring a guest. We look forward to seeing you!

Royal Ontario Museum Guided tour of Current Exhibits and Conversation with Dr. Chen Shen, Anthropologist and Co-Chief Curator of Arts and Culture, and Senior Curator, China.

Date: Thursday, November 16th, 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM
Location: Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queens Park, Toronto, ON M5S 2C6, Canada.
Nearest Subway station: Queen's Park at Charles Street West, beside the Royal Ontario Museum

The Association of Senior Anthropologists together with the AAA, CASCA and the Royal Ontario Museum is sponsoring an afternoon at the ROM. The visit has been organized by Dr. Chen Shen, the ROM's Co-Chief Curator of Arts and Culture and Senior Curator, China, an anthropologist/archeologist. The visit will feature tours of two exhibits, *Death: Life's Greatest Mystery*, guided by Dr. Shen, and *Being and Belonging: Contemporary Women Artists from the Islamic World and Beyond*, led by one of the exhibit's senior curators. Attendees will be able to experience both tours. Following the tours, the event will end with an opportunity to discuss the exhibits and the role of anthropology and community collaborations with Dr. Shen. Descriptions of these outstanding exhibits, each with historical, cultural, spiritual, anthropological and political implications, are featured on the ROM website. (<https://www.rom.on.ca/en/exhibitions-galleries>).

Cost: Regular adult: \$50 CAD = \$37.50 USD
Senior adult (aged 65 and over): \$46 CAD = \$34.50 USD
ID is not required

Participation: Participation is limited to 50 people (no exceptions) who are paid registrants for the American Anthropological Association/CASCA meeting.

Register for this event and pay in advance through the AAA meetings website. If space is available registration and payment will be accepted at the door.

More information about the ROM is on the Museum website, and information on the event will be available in advance on AAA All-Communities <https://communities.americananthro.org/home>.

[For inquiries about the program, please contact Jean Schensul, Program Chair \(jean.schensul@icrweb.org\); for inquiries related to registration and cost, please contact Margo Smith, ASA Treasurer \(margolane61@yahoo.com\).](mailto:jean.schensul@icrweb.org)

Mentoring Activities.

Compiling Fragments of an Anthropological Memoir

Date: Saturday, November 18th, 8:00:00 AM - 9:45:00 AM
Venue: Metro Toronto Convention Centre
Room: 715A

Participants: Marion Berghahn; Maria Cattell; Margaret LeComte; Paul Stoller;
Maria Vesperi; Diego Vigil; Jim Weil

Abstract

This activity is intended for anthropologists who have done some autobiographical writing and seek guidance in preparing partial or full memoirs that position their work in the broader contexts of the places and times in which they have lived. Such a memoir might emphasize one or both of the following: (1) settings, events, and experiences, beginning in childhood, that shape choices leading to an anthropological career; (2) ongoing influences of social positioning in personal and public life, and how these affect opportunities and choices in professional practice. One objective of the activity is to develop a shared understanding of the possibilities of synthesizing ethnography, ethnohistory, and autobiography in a hybrid genre which could be called auto-ethnohistory.

The event is led by senior colleagues who have worked on and thought about memoirs from an anthropological perspective. Potentially distinctive features of ethnographic approaches to anthropologists' own lives are addressed. Relevant concepts and methods include auto/ethnography (Reed-Danahay 1977), the ethnographic self (Collins and Gallinat 2010), anthropological autobiography (Okely and Callaway 1992), self-narrative (Chang 2008), and social memory (Climo and Cattell 2002). Refinements in epistemology and representation are considered (Zenker and Kumoll 2010), and suggestions about writing forms, techniques, and strategies are offered (Waterston and Vesperi 2011; Wulff 2016).

Some of the participants read brief passages of their autobiographical writings which demonstrate the mutual interactions between their personal and professional orientations. The convenors discuss these readings and respond to questions and comments from other attendees. The mentoring concludes with breakout groups or one-on-one conversations to help colleagues draw from their own lives in selecting scenarios to portray in analytic vignettes. Likely take-aways include the reintegration of neglected memories, enabling further evaluation of underlying purposes and resulting practices, which in turn may lead to new directions in later career development.

Critical assessments of anthropology have made it increasingly difficult to ignore the historical matrix that channels the interests, explanations, interpretations, and goals of each practitioner in a distinctive way. Memoir writing, while promising personal insights on its own terms, can address perplexing issues involving anthropological reflexivity in approaches, encounters, and responses that remain controversial within the discipline and beyond.

Beyond Retirement: Strategies for successful transitions to “works after work.”

Date: Saturday, March 18th, 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM
Venue: Metro Toronto Convention Centre
Room: 802b

Participants: Tim Wallace; Stephen Schensul

Abstract.

The term “retirement” is defined by Miriam Webster in two alternative parts, first by “withdrawal from one’s position or occupation” or second, “[withdrawal] from active working life. In this special mentoring event conducted by the Association of Senior Anthropologists (ASA), we reject the notion of withdrawal from active [working] life and the “r” word that characterizes this sometimes-maligned status, to explore the opportunities for “works after work.” For anthropologists entering the latter stages of their careers, works after work can be defined broadly to include the incorporation of both anthropologically related and unrelated activities that enhance our lives and contribute to ours and others’ well-being. This event will bring together senior anthropologists who have established a wide variety of pathways that include continuing full, part-time, or volunteer teaching and research, applying for government grants and awards (e.g., Fulbright), consultation to non-profit organizations, archiving the products of lifetime work, “fixing” and “defending” anthropology or engaging in non-anthropological activities (e.g., art, boat building, bike riding, travel) that create or expand on new skills and social networks. These pathways are presented to provide and discuss examples and models to assist in defining an individual’s own works after work.
