

The Participant Observer

Department of Anthropology
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627

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"TALKING TO CHILDREN AND THE LIMITS OF CULTURE"

PROFESSOR ELINOR OCHS IS THIS YEAR'S MORGAN LECTURER

This year's Morgan Lecture Series, entitled "Talking to Children and the Limits of Culture," featured Professor Elinor Ochs from the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles. The lecture was held in Lander Auditorium on Wednesday, November 12th at 7:00 pm. Ochs' lecture focused on how children are socialized through communicative practices and how they are socialized into communicative practices.

The first type of communication that Ochs spoke of was child-directed communication (CDC), which begins to shape children's worldview and practices. In order to answer how CDC does this, Ochs suggests looking at the details. There are four linguistic features of CDC: Phonological, grammatical, lexical and discourse features. These linguistic features encode a social order. Not only do positions of the body and gaze orientation begin to mediate the linguistic features of CDC, but also artifacts within culture (i.e. books, writings tools, toys and objects of the environment) mediate them as well.

Through her work with The Center on Everyday Lives of Families, Ochs has been able to observe US families communicate and draw some comparisons between US families and Samoan families and the way they communicate to their children. There are many differences between the way that caregivers and adults, or in Samoa's case, older siblings communicate with young children. Some of these differences are orientation of the speaker to the recipient and the expressiveness that is acceptable between a caregiver and a child. Though these examples are only a small crosssection of the differences that could be drawn on, Ochs main point was that Samoan's CDC is different from American's.

Ochs turned later in the lecture to the issue of CDC and Autism. Autistic children's communication is usually delayed and leaves them the limited receptor of communicative practices. Cognition is sometimes difficult from them because of their disability. Her question is how may our cultural preferences surrounding communication with children limit efforts to penetrate the barriers of autism? In many cases, a Samoan method of communication may be beneficial to optimizing communication and, therefore, challenges the assumed link between non-verbal children with Autism and mental retardation. As the Samoan's seem to do generally with children, we must begin to approach communication with a simplification attitude for autistic children. We must understand the limits of our culture and the limits of our communication techniques and transcend them, creating a new social and community practice.

From the Editor's Desk

This year has been absolutely insane so far. I know that the fall always seems like a shorter semester, but with Thanksgiving being so late in the month it became evident that two Participant Observers were not going to happen. So here is this semester's edition. We were hard pressed to fit all of the semester's information into one edition, but I think we did it!

As the end of the fall semester is drawing near, I can't believe that I am five months away from graduating. I want to scream, "I'M NOT READY! DON'T MAKE ME BE A REAL ADULT!" However, that would not be doing myself, or those who have spent the last three and a half years teaching me, justice. I am ready and ready or not, here I come.

However, since I am soon to be leaving the fine establishment that is the University of Rochester, we are in need of a new editor.

Questions or comments on any articles or upcoming events? Please feel free to contact us!

Ellen Ray:
er003j@mail.rochester.edu

Anthropology Dept.
anthro@mail.rochester.edu

I have thoroughly enjoyed the last 2 and a half years of editing, writing and stressing over this eight page occasional nightmare and it has ultimately been an extremely fulfilling experience. I would recommend any undergraduate who enjoys writing and who, above all, enjoys anthropology to volunteer to tame this beast after I leave. The PO has been a wonderful way for me to get to know faculty, keep up on current anthropological events and, I won't lie, add to my resume.

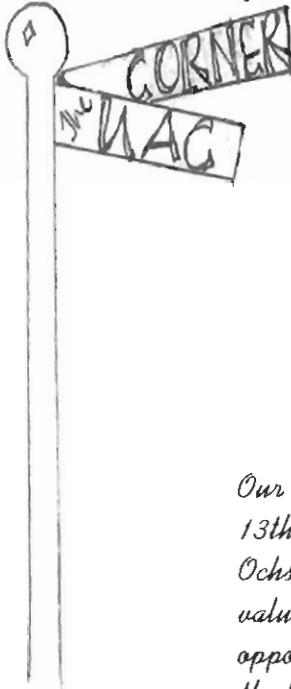
So, if you know of someone or you are someone who is interested in taking on the PO and working with me next semester to learn the ropes please get in touch with either myself or the Anthropology Department as soon as possible.



Mark Your Calendar

- * December 1, 2003 4:30 PM Lattimore 441
"CNN and the Reproduction of the Discourse of Globalization: Culture, Power and the Reality of the Imaginary" Presented by Alvaro Tanago, Ecole Des Hautes Etudes in Sciences Sociales
- * December 12, 2003
Last Day of Classes
- * December 13-15, 2003
Reading Period
- * December 16-22, 2003
Exam Week
- * December 23-January 13, 2003
Winter Break
- * January 14, 2004
Classes Resume

The Undergraduate Anthropology Council Corner



This semester's first event was part of Meliora Weekend in October. Every year the Anthropology Department hosts an open house aimed at anthropology students and their parents. In past years, we've had a little trouble getting a high parent turn-out, but this year was a huge success. All of the faculty attended as did many alumni, parents and students. We were very happy with the event in general, as it allowed faculty a rare opportunity to directly interact with the parents of many of our students. Many thanks to the at-large members of the Undergraduate Council who helped make this event a success, including Anna Barnes, Cecilia Ponce and Jessica Gale.

Our second event was a lunch with Morgan Lecuturer, Elinor Ochs. On November 13th, at 1:00, members of the Undergraduate Council were able to talk to Professor Ochs about her work, their research and future career steps and goals. It is always valuable to meet with the Morgan Lecuturer as it provides students with an unique opportunity to network with and receive valuable information from individuals in the field of anthropology outside our faculty. We appreciated that Professor Ochs took the time to share with us more personally.

For next semester, the UAC is planning a film screening to take place in sequence during the months of February, March and April. We have yet to determine the details, but we will be publishing more information as we plan the events. If you have some suggestions for a three film series on a topic of anthropological relevance, please feel free to contact the Anthropology Department! We would love to have your input.

Also next semester, we are organizing a seminar on graduate schools and life after your bachelor's. We have done an event of this nature for the last two years running and it has been a great success. If you are going to be in the Rochester area in the spring and would like to set up a time to meet with anthropology students, please contact the Anthropology Department to make arrangements with the UAC.

*To check out more events sponsored by the UAC and the Anthropology Department
check us out at*

<http://www.rochester.edu/college/ANT>

or

<http://www.rochester.edu/calendar>

FORMER ANTHROPOLOGY CHAIR DIES AT AGE 75

Bernard Cohn, an expert on modern Indian culture and society who helped establish the University's Department of Anthropology, died November 25 after a long illness.

Cohn first came to the University as an associate professor of anthropology in 1960 and was appointed chair of the department in 1961, a position he held for four years. As chair, Cohn laid the groundwork for the department's graduate program, which began in 1963, and founded the Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures, one of the oldest and most prestigious lecture series in anthropology in North America.

After leaving Rochester, Cohn went on to a long career as a professor of anthropology and history at the University of Chicago, retiring in 1995. One of his former students from Chicago, current chair of Rochester's anthropology department Robert Foster, says Cohn left an enduring legacy both as a scholar and as a teacher. "As an anthropologist, Barney was absolutely instrumental in bringing together anthropology and history, two fields that had drifted apart in the 20th century." Cohn was intensely interested in the role British colonialism played in shaping modern Indian society. He felt that in order to develop a full understanding both the cultural and political factors at work needed study. His scholarship was the foundation of the anthropology of colonialism, a field of study led today by many of Cohn's former students. "As a teacher and friend, he was a man of great humanity with an incredible sense of humor, a real mensch. His students felt genuine affection for him. I know he will be deeply missed," adds Foster.



Bernard Cohn

Born in Brooklyn in 1928, Cohn graduated from the University of Wisconsin, completing his graduate work at Cornell University and his postdoctorate at Chicago. During his career, Cohn held visiting professorships at New York University, the University of Michigan, and the California Institute of Technology. His highly regarded published works include India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilization, An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays, and Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India. He is survived by his wife, Rella Israly; three daughters, Jenny, Abigail, and Naomi; a son, Jacob; a brother, David Cohn; and two grandchildren.

ALUMNI UPDATES:

Kristin Loos (BA '01) started teaching for the third year at Berkshire Country Day in Lenox, MA. She's actually teaching a fascinating course on health and healing and she's using a lot of her UR anthropology reading materials again. She also had a fantastic summer chaperoning some students in London. She did leave the country before the heat wave, which was a great thing, because London is certainly not designed to cope with hot weather. In more recent news, she is applying to the biomedical anthropology MS degree program at SUNY Binghamton for next fall.

Maria G. Swora (PhD '96, MPH '98) has accepted a tenure track position as an assistant professor of sociology at Benedictine College, a private Catholic college where teaching is emphasized, in Atchison, Kansas. She teaches all the anthropology courses, aging and two sections of introduction to sociology. Her new e-mail is mswora@benedictine.edu.

Nancy Jaquith Kneiss (BA '97) is working as a graphic designer for ADD Inc., an architectural, interior & graphic design firm in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She writes, "My anthropology studies do come in handy since design involves a lot of 'reading' and understanding of situations to deliver an effective message (do I sound like a marketing person or what?)."

Nancy is playing a great big pipe organ every now and then at her church in place of the piano she played at Eastman. She also is keeping busy with TaeKwondo. She is planning to test for her "black belt" in the Spring of 2004.

Heidi Durbeck (MA '96) has a new job as a tech/writer and software designer (for public health and epidemiology) and she was recently married to her fiancé Chad on October 12, 2003.

Heidi taught Spanish to public school students for approximately two years and enjoying many aspects of her experience. She traveled to Mexico three times and to Spain as part of her training for that position. However, when the opportunity came up to try something new, she took it.

She began work in a small software company (there are about 12 employees) in downtown Ann Arbor called BioMedware in July of 2002. Her work has included writing manuals and online help for a statistical software, web page management, project management and software design. Most recently, she designed a piece of disease modeling software for epidemiologists. As part of the design process, she used participant observation and interviewing to gain a sense of what type of product the end-users needed. She is now collaborating with the software engineers and acting as a "voice of the user" to make sure the software meets the needs of the target audience.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease are funding the disease modeling software project of which Heidi is a part. Many of the other projects she works on at BioMedware are funded by The National Institutes of Health. She can be reached at Durbeck@biomedware.com.

Got an announcement or an update?
Want to share it with us?
E-mail us at anthro@mail.rochester.edu
and we'll be sure to get you into the next
edition!

EVENTS OF
ANTHROPOLOGICAL
INTEREST

“CNN and the Reproduction of the
Discourse of Globalization:
Culture, Power and the Reality of the
Imaginary”

A seminar presented by Alvaro Tarrago, Ecole Des Hautes Etudes En Sciences Sociales. It was held in Lattimore 441 on December 1st, 2003 at 4:30 p.m. The event was sponsored by the Department of Anthropology, Graduate Program in Visual and Cultural Studies, and the Global Studies Faculty Cluster

“MONITORING HEALTH AND
POVERTY: SAVVY SYSTEMS OF
DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEILLANCE”

Presented by Philip W. Setel, Ph.D. from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne (UK), this event was Co-sponsored by the Departments of Anthropology, Community & Preventive Medicine, The Frederick Douglass Institute of African and African-American Studies, and the Health and Society Program. Setel is the Senior Technical Advisor of the Adult Morbidity and Mortality Project undertaken by the Tanzanian Ministry of Health & Reader in Health Transition Studies. The event was held on September 12th, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. in the Gamble Room of the Rush Rhees Library.

Modern Languages and Cultures

Speaker Series Examines Topics of “Home and Exile”

The Department of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Rochester is hosting a series of lectures, titled “Home and Exile,” that featured Jaume Marti Olivella of the State University at Albany and Carlos J. Alonso of the University of Pennsylvania in the fall. The series will host one other lecturer in the spring semester.

NEW COURSES FOR THE SPRING OF 2004

ANT 278, SOLVING POPULATION PROBLEMS – GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES, will be offered for the first time in the spring semester, 2004, and regularly in the spring semester thereafter. Offered by Professor Anthony Carter.

ANT 278 examines programs carried out by governments, multilateral organizations such as the UN and the WHO, and non governmental organizations such as the Population Council or Oxfam to deal with ‘public problems’ connected to population: communicable diseases such as TB, malaria, and HIV/AIDS, famine prevention and relief; child survival, especially malnutrition and infant diarrheal disease; safe motherhood; teen pregnancy; contraception and abortion.

ANT 267, FASHION, BEAUTY, POWER will be offered by Professor Beth Buggenhagen.

ANT 267 will examine the historical relations between colonial metropolises and their possessions in India, Africa and elsewhere. This course examines the politics of dress in colonial, post-colonial and contemporary global contexts. This course follows debates about photography, clothing and fashion from colonial dissemination of the ideas and technologies to local appropriations and self-representations of beauty and aesthetics. We will consider the relationship between ideas about the body and self presentation and ideas about gender, family, race and national consciousness.

FACULTY TRACKS

THE ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT HAS A NEW ADDITION! MEET PROFESSOR BETH BUGGENHAGEN...

Professor Buggenhagen received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Prof. Buggenhagen has conducted field research in Senegal and the U.S. and is interested in gender, domesticity, the post-colony and the historical development of global circulation. Her research on the remittances, religious offerings and household structures of disciples and traders of the Senegalese Murid trade diaspora in Dakar and Tuba, Senegal from 1999 to 2000 in the summer of 1997 and 1998 has been supported by the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, the Center for Gender Studies at the University of Chicago, the Ford Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation. She also conducted research on the religious organization of Murid disciples in Chicago, Illinois from 1996 to 1997. She is currently working on a project on Senegalese portraiture, gift exchange and family ceremonies in relation to Murid trade networks in New York City.



PROFESSOR FOSTER GOES TO PARIS

Robert Foster, Associate Professor and Chair of the Anthropology Department, spent four weeks in late Spring as Professeur Invité at the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. Foster presented his research on the cultural dimensions of globalization in four different seminars. He also gave a seminar at the Centre de Recherche et de Documentation sur l'Océanie at the Université de Provence in Marseille.

NEW PUBLICATION BY THOMAS P. GIBSON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY

And the Sun Pursu'd the Moon:

Symbolic Knowledge and Traditional Authority among the Makassar,
Thomas Gibson

To be published by the University of Hawaii Press.

This book analyzes the symbolic basis of traditional authority among the Makassar. The symbolism involved is embedded in ritual, in myth and in a variety of written texts, including local chronicles, Islamic scriptures and bureaucratic documents. By undertaking a systematic study of the whole corpus of symbolic knowledge, the book provides a general introduction to the peoples, cultures and histories of Island Southeast Asia, from the original migrations and adaptations of the Austronesian people, through the development of maritime and agrarian states following Indic models to the clash between Islamic and colonial forces in the modern era. The book is designed to appeal to a wide readership, including not just anthropologists and historians of Island Southeast Asia, but all those interested in emerging interdisciplinary fields such as those that study the relation between oral and written literature, the relation between classical and popular Islam, cultural studies, subaltern and post-colonial studies, globalization and transnationalism.

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS 2002-2003

Gerald Williams Memorial Prize for Language and Culture

The Department of Anthropology established the Gerald E. Williams Memorial Prize in order to recognize and encourage the research of students on questions of language and culture, and cross-cultural communication. This year the prize is awarded to **Aarthi Iyer**, who consistently went beyond the requirements of the assignment, in recognition of her creativity, excellence of research design and astute linguistic and cultural analysis. Aarthi was a member of the Language and Culture class, a core course in the anthropology curriculum. Students in the class carried out a series of five short projects that explored a wide range of language contexts and subjects, including speech patterns in campus talk, graffiti, and children's literature; attitudes toward bilingualism; and the dynamics of political interviews and talk shows.

Alumni Award for Promoting Anthropology and the Public Good

For the past several years, the Department of Anthropology has oriented part of its curriculum to social issues of pressing public concern—issues such as racism, poverty and the challenges confronting American cities. In this regard, the Department has responded to a renewed sense in the field of anthropology that the discipline must apply its methods and insights to the world beyond academe. In short, anthropology must become more of a public anthropology. This year's recipients are **Sheri Karđooni** and **Julie Dreyfus**.

Sheri Karđooni for her deep, abiding, and outspoken commitment to public anthropology. As an undergraduate she took her insights of culture to other fields in various research capacities. Sheri was part of an interdisciplinary effort to improve the quality of health care. She worked with the Monroe County Department of Health, and the University of Rochester Medical Center and the Department of Community and Preventive Medicine as an interdisciplinary team member on an intervention Perinatal Depression project. Sheri designed the project and convinced the team of the value of conducting anthropological fieldwork. She presented some of her fieldwork results in a paper she gave at the 2003 Spring Conference "Challenges to Communities."

Julie Dreyfus for her work with the youth in the Greater Rochester Urban Bounty program and the conference paper that resulted from it and for her determination to take what she learned about anthropology and community development in that project and apply it after graduation. Julie will be working in the Catskills with Americorps this summer and is hoping to create a community garden where children can come to learn about food, gardening and sustainable agriculture. In the fall she will move to Pittsburgh where she is faced with several choices: working on literacy with adult prisoners, foster children or those recovering from substance abuse; taking over an existing community garden; or designing a service learning program. That she contemplates all these alternatives with equal enthusiasm makes the Department of Anthropology privileged to have had her as a major and speaks volumes about her commitment to promoting anthropology and the public good.

The Helen S. Jones Award

The Helen S. Jones Award is a prestigious undergraduate prize given annually to a student who demonstrates significant achievement in the areas of Sociology and/or Political Science. This year's recipient is **Radhika Dewan**. Radhika conducted important ethnographic research in local communities. Because of the high caliber of this research, it has been very useful to local officials and community members. Radhika's work reflects a strong commitment to partnership between the university and the community.

Radhika Dewan has produced ethnographic research results beneficial to several local communities. Her work and involvement with people in these communities shows the contribution that anthropology can make to understanding city life and addressing urban problems. Her commitment to public scholarship is exemplary.

Thank you to the following alumni for supporting the Alumni Awards:

Rose Marie Garvin Aquilino (BA 1984)	Joseph R. Gibino (PhD 1990)	Alison L. Martinez (BA 2001)
Kevin (BA 1985) and Margaret Birth	Elizabeth Hochberg (BA 1993)	Kate R. Navarra (BA 2001)
Machaon Bonafede (BA/MPH 2001)	Christina A. Joseph (PhD 1994)	Wendy J. Nicodemus (BA 1998)
Lawrence Breitborde (PhD 1978)	Nancy Jaquith Kneiss (BA 1997)	Karen S. Niemel (BA 1993)
Rose-Marie Chierici (PhD 1986)	Mathew Kaminsky (BA 1996)	Karen Porter (PhD 1997)
Martha A. Coria (BA 1997)	Emily Kaminsky (BA 1996)	Robin L. Weintraub (PhD 1988)
Jean (Shapiro) Dowdall	Susan Kellogg (PhD 1980)	Lorraine E. Weiss (BA 1979)
Elizabeth C. Dunn (BA 1991)	Melissa A. Kucinski (BA 2001)	
Tessa R. Farmer (BA 2001)	Martin F. Manalansan IV (PhD 1997)	