The Convergence of Applied, Practicing, and Public Anthropology in the 21st Century

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The interests of applied anthropologists, practicing anthropologists, and those engaged in public interest anthropology are converging. More anthropologists are creating collaborative relationships with the communities they study; they are presenting their research to a wider public through museum exhibits and Web sites, and they are working to change public policy. This article summarizes innovative, ongoing work in each of these areas and suggests how training in collaboration, outreach, and public policy research can be incorporated into graduate programs.

Key words: public anthropology, collaborative research, public policy and anthropology

Anthropology is in the midst of a “sea change.” This is a culmination of three decades of transformation in the communities we study, the topics that command our attention, and the relationships we forge with the subjects of our research. Though anthropologists continue to study tribal societies, rural populations, minorities, and the poor in urban settings, these populations themselves are encountering new problems brought on by greater incorporation into (and even exploitation under) national economies, environmental degradation, declining health, lack of education and technical skills, and assaults on their cultural values, languages, and identities. Influenced by the social movements begun in the 1960s and 1970s (civil rights, the women’s and lesbian/gay rights movements, the environmental movement) as well as by changes in the populations we have studied, increasingly anthropologists are examining the critical issues facing local populations. And many more anthropologists are conducting research “at home” — for many of us this means the United States.

Furthermore, the relationships we have established with communities have been reshaped from that of outside experts and scientists studying “others” to more collaborative and partnership arrangements. There are several sources of this change. First, communities are demanding more control, particularly Native Americans empowered by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). They have transformed their relationships with archaeologists, establishing their own archaeological offices and putting in place their own institutional review boards (IRBs), which grant or deny research permits to cultural anthropologists, medical researchers, and others. Second, postmodern critiques of ethnographic writing and the way social scientists have constructed “the other” have pushed cultural anthropologists in the direction of collaboration. Third, anthropologists continue to transform their role as experts into one of collaborators, giving much more attention to how community members can shape a research agenda and become equal participants and how anthropologists can help build the skills and capacities of local populations through their participation in the research process.

Now, more than ever, there is interest in bringing anthropological knowledge to publics outside the academy and to influencing public policy. And more students are demanding training that will give them access to careers not only in academia, but in a host of nonacademic public and private organizations. Much of this interest in communicating with and influencing the wider society builds on the work of applied and practicing anthropologists. But rather than seeing some archaeologists and academic cultural anthropologists as Johnny-come-latelies, I want to emphasize that the goals and research interests of applied anthropologists, practicing

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anthropologists, and those engaged in public interest anthropology or public outreach archaeology are converging.

In this article, I want to point out three areas that particularly need our attention if we are to make the most of this convergence and transform the discipline for ourselves and our students. These areas are: 1) increased collaboration and partnership with the communities and members of populations we study; 2) expanded outreach to the public so that the results of our research become broadly disseminated; and 3) concrete efforts to influence policy in areas where we have expertise and where our research points to important changes that need to be made. I will draw on examples that point to innovative ways to increase either collaboration, outreach, or policy initiatives. Finally, I will suggest changes we need to make in our master’s and doctoral programs so the next generation is fully trained to enact meaningful collaboration, outreach, and policy work as part of the very definition of anthropology.

Before I begin, a caveat. To support this convergence, it is crucial that we avoid struggling over terms and definitions, such as the differences between applied and practicing anthropology, on the one hand, and public interest anthropology or policy-oriented anthropology, on the other. Instead of an intense debate over which approach is best, it is important to see this as an a “umbrella effort.” We are a growing majority within the discipline (including many archaeologists, linguistic anthropologists, and biological anthropologists). The more inclusive we are and the less time we spend defining terms and drawing boundaries, the more likely more of our colleagues are to join us. Our students will also come to realize that they are part of a greater endeavor.

Most of us have been content to conduct research on issues of contemporary importance with an eye to “redefining an issue”; that is, collecting data to reveal particularly problematic relationships, bureaucratic difficulties, or conditions harmful to local populations. Many of the articles in Human Organization over the last six years—for example, the special collections on industrial agriculture (Vol. 59, No. 2, Summer 2000), the U.S.–Mexico borderlands (Vol. 60, No. 2, Summer 2001), and sustainable development (Vol. 62, No. 2, Summer 2003)—are models for this kind of redefinition and exposure. They report research, provide critical evaluation, and call public attention to issues that have national or even global impact. This is much needed research, but we must go further; as indeed some projects reported in recent issues of Human Organization have.

I have selected an article by Noel Chrisman, June Strickland, and their colleagues (1999) using community partnership research to study cervical cancer on the Yakama Reservation and an article on community-based resource management on the Little Red River Crec Reservation by David Natcher and Clifford Hickey (2002) for comment below. I feel they complement projects done by others who might not consider themselves applied anthropologists, but who are adopting some of the same approaches.

Community Collaboration

The first area we need to expand is that of collaboration with our research subjects, seeing them as partners in research, dissemination, and policy change. Collaboration conjures up several different meanings. For some it denotes research across disciplinary and professional boundaries; for example, projects involving anthropologists and physicians, epidemiologists, and clinicians, or studies directed by anthropologists in conjunction with biologists and environmental scientists. For others it means team research involving students, research assistants, and other social scientists. I consider both team research and interdisciplinary research to be a type of professional collaboration unless they involve extensive efforts to include community members. Here, I am more interested in collaboration that involves members of the subject populations and shifts the balance of power toward partnership. The ease with which it is possible to incorporate “community members” depends on how the population is organized and who might be “representatives” or “partners.” Welfare recipients, cancer patients, or Medicaid clients are a large and dispersed population in any city or state, and those who want to incorporate their views often rely on advocacy groups or individuals who may have a position in a nongovernmental organization (NGO) or state-run bureaucracy who are members of the target population. At first glance, a small Native American reservation, immigrant hometown association, or a local community-based environmental organization might seem ideal in terms of negotiating collaboration. But there are differences between leaders in these units and members of the population the organization represents. There may be factions, and some may actively stay away or oppose the leadership. As my examples below will show, anthropologists are constructing strategies to deal with these complexities as they incorporate subjects into the conception, implementation, and dissemination of research. There are a few good models being put into practice, but many of us still fall short of equal partnership.

Meredith Minkler and Nina Wallerstein (2003) point to two different traditions within health research that focus on collaboration. The first, the Northern tradition, based in the work of Kurt Lewin, sets out to solve practical problems through planning, action, and investigating the results of actions. This research uses the canons and methods of science and has often been conducted within organizational settings such as schools or workplaces. Researchers are seen as experts who, through the research process, are able to make recommendations that will generate new scientific knowledge and contribute to social progress. The Southern tradition, based on the work of Paulo Freire and influenced by various Marxist, feminist, and postcolonial thinkers, adopts the goals of critical consciousness, emancipation, and social justice. Communities of the poor and the oppressed are viewed in this tradition, not as objects of study, but as subjects of their own experience and inquiry. Intellectuals are seen as catalysts and supporters of change that emanates from the community (Minkler and Wallerstein 2003:29-31).

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Applied anthropology as it developed in the United States in the 1930s through the 1950s embodied many of the elements of the Northern tradition, particularly the emphasis on the use of experts to produce scientific knowledge for the solution of human problems. By the 1980s, this approach had been modified to include the involvement of community members in defining the project, collecting the data, and participating in dissemination. In 1987, Donald Stull and Jean Schensul (1987) published a collection of field projects that featured research-and-action partnerships. A few years later, William Foote Whyte (1991) championed what he called participatory action research, or PAR.

Some anthropologists, particularly those interested in health, have adapted the Southern tradition to community-based research, emphasizing the importance of empowerment (Israel et al. 1994; Minkler 1997; Wallerstein 1992). The principles governing community-based participatory research (CBPR) emphasize a collaborative equitable partnership between researchers and community members, co-learning and capacity building as part of the research process, the involvement of all partners in the dissemination process, a balance between research and action, and long-term process and commitment (Israel et al. 2003). These authors are all cognizant of the problems of defining a community, dealing with power relations between researchers and the community partners, and confronting the fact that theory and knowledge have traditionally been in the hands of educated elites, rather than also residing in the expertise and views of local residents.

Some anthropologists have gone further than others in redefining their relationship to those they study. At the minimalist end of a continuum are those who have begun a transformation by working with a community to give back something after years of research there. At the other end are those whose relationship is determined by the community or organization itself. Alma Gottlieb and Philip Graham are an example of the first process. They returned to two Beng villages in the Ivory Coast to distribute royalties from their book Parallel Worlds (Gottlieb and Graham 1994). Their account is embedded in the language of repayment for hospitality rather than collaboration, but in finding a project that community members wanted, they engaged in negotiations with village leaders (who often wanted projects for their own individual benefit), village women, and elders. The end product was a mill for one village and repairs to a pump, blue plastic chairs, and a stereo system for the other (Gottlieb and Graham 1999).

An especially intriguing example of the second process, where the community retains control, is recounted by Jeanne Simonelli, Duncan Earle, and Elizabeth Story (2004), and involves a service-learning program where students from Wake Forest University and the University of Texas-El Paso traveled to Chiapas to “serve” two Zapatista communities. Instead of building a school, the students discovered they were to be the learners, spending time communicating and being involved in everyday activities. At first the students felt they were just dancing and singing and making tortillas. “We aren’t doing any service,” they complained. Eventually, they began to understand the Zapatista notion of service as “accompaniment.” In 2003, the Zapatistas reorganized international visitors and aid programs to have much more control over NGOs, churches, and universities, including villages where students would be living and participating. A primary Zapatista goal is to gain more control over what happens in their communities, and negotiating their relationship with outsider visitors and international donors is a key element in achieving this aim.

A model for constructing collaborative relationships that work toward an equal partnership has been suggested by Charles Menzies. An anthropologist of Tsimshian and Tlingit descent, his principles are derived from his experience with the Gitksan Nation in British Columbia. He emphasizes the importance of clearly identifying “the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of the research partner and researcher” and creating a respectful research relationship. There are four steps to his protocol that include: 1) an opening dialogue initiated by either the researcher or the community, in which the researcher would be prepared to modify plans to accommodate the needs of the community; 2) defining the research in consultation with the community; 3) conducting research using teams comprised of community members and university-trained researchers; and 4) continuing meetings to discuss and analyze the research results, with finished research reports, data sets, and document banks of secondary literature deposited with the community (Menzies 2001:5-6).

As the projects I discuss below suggest, anthropologists engaged in participatory research (either PAR or CBPR) have used a panoply of research methods and techniques to encourage partnerships with communities. Some projects have included focus groups with community participants to shape issues to be studied, while others have employed community researchers to interview and collect life histories from community members. Still other researchers have created community action boards to consult on research. Some projects have brought students together with community members through internships and service-learning programs. Finally, a few anthropologists and archaeologists are submitting their research reports and publications for review by community bodies or copublishing with community members. In the sections that follow, I examine this broad range of methodologies and the extent to which anthropologists have brought community members into their research in three areas: studies of the environment, urban research, and research on health issues.

Collaborating on Environmental Issues

Where environmental concerns intersect with economic development, researchers have found fertile ground for two kinds of collaboration: one with local officials or community-based organizations and another that goes beyond working...
with local leaders to involve elders and community members in the research process and hires community researchers as interviewers and data analysts.

Max Kirsch’s work with community organizations and advocacy in the Florida Everglades is an example of the first approach. Kirsch’s (2003) analysis reveals that a multitude of organizations support or oppose the Everglades Restoration Plan, and many of the local organizations are headed by African American women. Though local organizations often demand input, Kirsch’s analysis indicates that they are often bypassed and excluded. Kirsch is best at understanding the macrolevel forces that have impact on the local level and at exposing the powerful political interests that work to exclude small organizations, while his collaborative work remains unexplored in his published works.

Jessica Vernieri, a Ph.D. candidate at Michigan State University, is also working with NGOs, in this case in Akumal, Mexico, where a state-level ecological development plan was introduced in November 2004. As stated in its enabling legislation, implementing the plan will increase Akumal’s population from 20,000 to 200,000 by 2025. Since Akumal is both a profitable tourist destination and a haven for nesting sea turtles, environmental NGOs in the region are contesting the plan by making ecological, social, and cultural arguments against it. Using focus groups that bring together town officials, NGO environmentalists, and politicians who hold seats on the plan’s development committee, participants hope to minimize the worst aspects of the plan (continued ecological damage, exorbitant land prices) and publicize the more positive ones (increased water supply, electricity) to meet both the needs of the residents and the needs of the endangered species (Jessica Vernieri, personal communication, June 2004).

Those working with Native American communities conduct research not only with the approval and input of the formal leadership structure, but they often incorporate community researchers into the project and consider interviewees who are not part of formal organizations as collaborators rather than subjects. Charles Menzies’s (2004) study of traditional ecological knowledge as part of the Future of the Forests project involved careful negotiation of informed consent and who owned the recorded knowledge contained in interviews, tapes, reports, and articles. John Lewis, a member of Gitxsan Nation and the chief negotiator, was a coresearcher with Menzies (Lewis 2004), and the project had three goals: a report that supports Gitxsan land rights; an educational curriculum summarizing Gitxsan resource use and the relationship of traditional knowledge to modern Western science; and academic articles.

Also at a grassroots level, David Natcher and Clifford Hickey (2002), of the Sustainable Forest Management Network based at the University of Alberta, have worked with the Little Red River Cree Nation to develop a program of community-based resource management. As community members became more divided over the desirability of timber cutting by logging firms, the project developed a set of evaluation criteria to help the community make decisions about preserving and managing the environment. A research team including both community researchers and university anthropologists was assembled. Interviewing in both Cree and English, the local researchers conducted 235 open-ended interviews and 345 surveys. Other more informal methods were used to capture Cree narrative forms and relationships with the environment. The result was a series of charts that summarized communities priorities, such as reducing negative impacts on wildlife species, ensuring community access to resources, and increasing economic opportunities. The researchers also outlined specific goals and actions to help put these broader priorities into effect. This participatory process will allow the Little Red River Cree to visualize their common goals and potential differences and set out some specific actions.

These two projects partake of much of what the Southern tradition emphasizes: partnership between researchers and community members, capacity building, and knowledge for empowerment. Most importantly, community researchers were crucial in carrying out the research, serving as translators, interviewers, and data analysts.

**Urban Research: Utilizing Organizations for Collaboration**

Collaborative research in urban environments often is based in an organization, ranging from large federal bureaucracies, like the National Park Service, to independent NGOs, small collections of professionals, or community clinics. In the United States, anthropologists have often focused on refugee communities or minority groups, either by conducting research about how organizations can better serve these populations or by using the organization as a venue for disseminating histories and personal documents from these communities.

In a study of park users and park neighbors for the National Park Service, Brett Williams used rapid ethnographic assessment to explore how people used Anacostia Park and Fort Circle Parks in Washington, D.C. Four community ethnographers and eight anthropology students helped plan the research, organize interviews, and conduct focus groups with a wide range of park users (soccer players, boaters and fishers, family reunion organizers, and traditional gardeners). Since one of the purposes of the study was to make the parks more responsive to African American history and culture, the researchers recommended commemorating little-known civil rights activities and the experiences of freed slaves. In addition to writing a report, the project organizers, Williams, and her team worked with the National Park Service to implement the plan. (Brett Williams, personal communication, June 2004).

At the other end of the continuum, Julie Hemment established a Freirian-style participatory relationship with Women’s Light (Zhenski Svet), a small group of women activists and feminists in Russia, who gave lectures on Russian
women’s history, seminars on women’s health, and computer classes for unemployed women. Founded in 1991, in the era of perestroika, Women’s Light resisted “professionalization” (i.e., becoming a bureaucratized organization with a formal structure dependent on funding from grants, as many other women’s groups had done). In combining collaborative research and activism, Hemment brought the perspectives of PAR to the project, which explored the “gendered interventions” constructed by Women’s Light and its members’ evolving critique on “the NGOization” of women’s groups and the impact of neoliberal policies and globalization on their own situations (Hemment n.d.). In between researchers working with large bureaucratic organizations and small networks, are those who have collaborated with community NGOs, medium-sized organizations made up of local residents rather than professionals in service occupations. Eric Chrisp, a graduate student at the University of South Florida, trained volunteers to collect 40 oral histories of African Americans in St. Petersburg, Florida, for the Olive B. McLin Neighborhood Center. For the “Bus to Destiny” project, Chrisp and faculty member Jay Sokolovsky developed a handbook for training community members in how to collect oral histories (Chrisp and Sokolovsky 1998). They forged new techniques, including “history expeditions,” to interest young people in collectively interviewing community members, like a local jazz musician in front of an important segregation-era nightclub. The project utilized a community action board to plan a history day to showcase the multimedia history archive the project developed. The event also provided feedback for a CD-ROM that has been distributed free to St. Petersburg’s community centers, public museums, and city libraries. One of the most important applied uses of the CD-ROM and the Web site has been to get these materials into the local school system to assist teachers in fulfilling a state mandate to teach about African American history. Overall, by combining collaborative research with innovative outreach (the history day, the CD-ROM, and the Web site), the project has the potential to alter young African Americans’ interest in history, allow community members to explore the many layers of their heritage, and help promote neighborhood economic development (www.nelson.usf.edu/ncclin).

A number of anthropologists have conducted collaborative research with immigrant and refugee communities. Sometimes this has involved consulting with immigrant-run organizations and sometimes it has meant working with an NGO that serves a refugee group. Beth Baker-Cristales (2004) consults with Salvadoran hometown associations in Los Angeles and NGOs in El Salvador with links to the U.S. Salvadoran community. They are writing community histories and assessments in Los Angeles. In El Salvador, teams of local researchers are conducting surveys to understand community needs and resources. With these results, associations have designed some “productive” development projects to provide job training and develop small cooperatively owned businesses in towns in El Salvador affected by high rates of emigration.

Sylvia Escareega and her students are carrying out research on remittances through Enlaces América, a program of an NGO in Chicago, Illinois, called Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights. Enlaces works to strengthen Mexican hometown associations and the kinds of social investments they make. Students have designed a survey with Enlaces América, conducted interviews, and analyzed data. The results will be included in two reports (Escareega et al. 2004).

Janet Bauer has also utilized students in her project on the adaptation of refugee families in the greater Hartford, Connecticut, area. A number of articles are being written on the project (Bauer and Akaratovic n.d., 2004).

Collaborative Research and Health

When working in health and social services, anthropologists often emphasize professional collaboration with health providers or clinic staff. Drawing on the Northern perspective, academic articles are often the major outcome of such collaborations. Much of this work—for example, Philippe Bourgois’s research on HIV and hepatitis C prevention and drugs (Bourgois, Prince, and Moss 2004; Walter, Bourgois, and Loinaz 2004)—involves research in conjunction with epidemiologists and clinicians. Others in the Department of Anthropology, History, and Social Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and in the Social Medicine Program at Harvard, are actively engaged in similar cross-professional collaborations. Research by David Hess and his student Margaret Woodell on women and alternative methods of confronting cancer involved collaboration with women activist leaders. The research and resulting book led one of the activists to become a patient advocate on a national board (Woodell and Hess 1998), and Hess has written policy-oriented articles, conducted radio interviews, and written a letter for a direct-mail fund-raising campaign (Hess 1999, 2002).

Those working with indigenous communities in Canada, the United States, and Mexico are more likely to have negotiated the content of the research and to have involved local researchers than those working elsewhere. One example comes from a project initiated by Martha Yallup, deputy director of the Department of Human Services for the Yakama Indian Nation (Chrisman et al. 1999). Responding to the request of tribal leaders who were concerned over recent deaths from cervical cancer, Yallup contacted Judith Strickland and Noel Chrisman at the University of Washington School of Nursing. They formulated a research project designed to increase the use of pap smears, and, at the same time, to build capacity for research and program development. The tribal council approved the project, and community members participated through the health center’s cancer committee that reviewed the proposal and gave feedback. Throughout the project, Yallup and Chrisman were motivated by the goals of community participation and empowerment that lay behind the Southern tradition.
Interviews conducted by trained local women revealed that Yakama women were less concerned with cancer than with family, community, and spiritual issues. A video on women's lives, a day of "talking circles," presentations on cancer, and a feast and giveaway provided feedback to the participants and larger community. A female Yakama program assistant was hired during the next stage of the project, and two local Yakama women developed a series of workshops combining health education with tribal crafts. By the end of the project, the clinic developed more culturally sensitive ways of notifying women of pap smear results, and clinic personnel began to discuss how to create a more welcoming atmosphere. Three Yakama women became skilled interviewers and several others gained experience in presenting results, writing publications, and relating research results to interventions and program development.

It is not hard to find other anthropologists just beginning to develop collaborative projects in health research with indigenous peoples. Linda Green received a National Science Foundation grant, entitled "The White Plague: A Historical Ethnography of Tuberculosis among Yup'ik Peoples of Southwestern Alaska," to study the tuberculosis epidemics that severely impacted Yup'ik peoples between the 1930s and the 1950s. The lives and stories of people's encounters with Western medicine and tuberculosis are one way of viewing how Western cultural notions of modernity and progress have influenced public health policies and how these cultural ideologies may still affect communities today. Two local Yup'ik will be field research assistants, and a local advisory council will meet with the research team over the course of the project. The team also plans a traveling historical exhibit for the schools to disseminate results.

While Green is new to research in Alaska, Magdalena Hurtado has over 20 years of experience developing collaborative relationships with the Aché, former foragers in Paraguay. Both she and Kim Hill have recently focused their attention on the two most pressing issues for the Aché: obtaining rights to a portion of their aboriginal territory (Hill and Hurtado 2004) and reversing the recent incidence of debilitating disease (tuberculosis, parasites, syphilis). Hurtado's most recent research proposal aims to compare the efficacy of community-based participation with standard interventions concerning health programs designed to better eliminate macroparasites (Hurtado 2004).  

The Shift to Collaboration in Archaeological Research

Archaeologists over the past decade have been more involved in what might be termed public outreach archaeology, which uses community volunteers and students in excavation and disseminates the results of research through public access to sites, lectures, videos, and CD-ROM. The Center for Community Research, affiliated with Cayahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio, and directed by Mark Lewine, offers one of many examples. Here, a team of students and local citizens under the direction of Al Lee excavated a historic site on property owned by the community college, uncovering evidence of rural-to-urban development dating from the 1840s to the early 1900s (Lee and Lewine 2003). A second site, the home of Dr. David Long, a prominent 19th century physician and businessman, has stimulated students and interns to investigate historical records that contain information about Cleveland's early African Americans and activities in support of the rights of women. Long and his extended family were key figures in both of these social movements from the 1830s on. Academic and public presentation of this work at Cayahoga brought national attention to the effective use of archaeology for historical community research and has led to a network of other community college archaeology programs.

Sarah Miller and Gwynn Henderson, with the Kentucky Archaeological Survey, cite a case where even a completely disturbed site can bring community members an appreciation of local history. Residents of Crab Orchard, Kentucky, contacted the survey because they thought that a bona fide archaeological excavation of the ruins of a famous local hotel and hot springs would give the failing town a new sense of pride. After discovering that the site had been destroyed in the construction of a school and athletic fields, the archaeologists made the best of the situation. At the behest of the students and the school principal, researchers set up a 14-week unit on archaeology that introduced children to field techniques. The hands-on fieldwork experience included a test unit, shovel probe, and trench excavation. A public day allowed the students to interview elders concerning the hotel and its meaning to the community. Though no intact remains relating to the hotel were found, students and community members gained valuable knowledge of archaeology and local history (Miller and Henderson 2004).

Exciting trends in collaboration are also emerging from Native American communities. Some archaeologists were already forging connections to American Indian groups affiliated with archaeological sites before national legislation intervened. For example, during the 1980s Janet Spector (1993) worked with the Upper Sioux community to interpret the Little Rapids site. Another example was the collaboration between the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPC) and the Narragansett Indian Tribe in 1982. When an earth-moving machine struck a 17th century Narragansett burial ground, archaeologists with the RIHPC and the tribe agreed on a plan to excavate, study, and rebury the remains (Brown and Robinson 2004).

Relationships between Native American tribes in the United States and archaeologists were altered when the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was enacted in 1990. The act mandated that archaeologists and physical anthropologists consult with Native Americans about the treatment and disposition of human remains recovered from archaeological sites (see Killian and Molloy 2000; Mihesuah 2000; Watkins 2000). Rather than viewing archaeology as a discipline based only on Western
notions of sciences, archaeologists have come to value Native American views of their own history and what Western researchers call archaeological sites.

Consultations with tribal groups have been ongoing and many have resulted in the repatriation of sacred objects (for example, the Zuni War Gods or Ahayuda) and the reburial of human remains from archaeological sites (Dongoski, Aldenderfer, and Doehner 2000; Ferguson, Anyon, and Ladd 2000). Museums, including the Smithsonian Institution, continue to repatriate human remains from Native American tribes where cultural affiliation has been demonstrated.

In the last few years, Native American cultural advisors, students, and trained archaeologists have gone beyond NAGPRA to more thoroughly transform the older dichotomy between the researcher and researched, scientist and subject. One such network involved archaeologists Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh (Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson, Arizona) and T.J. Ferguson (Anthropological Research, LLC, Tucson, Arizona). In the San Pedro Ethnohistory Project, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, they worked with the Tohono O'odham, Hopi, Zuni, and Western Apache on the ethnohistory of settlement and cultural interaction in the San Pedro Valley in southeast Arizona. This network has formulated a new basis for collaboration based on “virtue ethics,” a set of moral motivations that emphasize cooperativeness, friendliness, generosity, and honesty. These values form a basis for constructing relationships of trust and respect, virtues emphasized by Menzies and his collaborators as well (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2004:19-20).

Like Menzies, Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson found it necessary to first agree on the goals of the project and then make sure all participants had some measure of power. It was essential to blur that line between observers and observed, and the Hopi advisors and others took notes on and videotaped the archaeologists as they worked. More important was altering who gets to define the categories and terms that shape the project. For example, archaeologists were sensitized to the fact that categories for archaeological cultures (Mogollon, Anasazi) are at odds with how groups like the Hopi think of their ancestors. In addition, Southwestern tribes have objected to the term “abandonment,” since it runs contrary to their beliefs that sites continue to be inhabited by spirits. Ancestral villages are likened to cemeteries, places full of cultural and religious meaning (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2004:14-16). Archaeologists have learned a great deal from listening to Native American views and have begun to modify how they think about archaeological sites. This approach offers a model for building sustained collaborative relationships between archaeologists and communities where they work.

A new collection of articles on Cross-Cultural Collaboration: Native Peoples and Archaeology in the Northeastern United States (Kerber 2004) includes 20 chapters by 9 Native Americans and 26 archaeologists. Material comes from 11 northeastern states and portions of the maritime provinces of Canada and represent a wide variety of relationships from NAGPRA consultations to voluntary cooperation around educational, research, and museum-related projects. To take one example, Richard Hill (assistant professor of American studies at State University in New York and member of the Tuscarora Nation) documents state agencies' disregard for Haundenosaunee (People of the Longhouse, or Iroquois) views of the sacred nature of their burial sites and traces their long struggle to repatriate human remains. Several chapters describe power struggles between Native American tribes and museums, as well as state and federal agencies, over who controls the archaeology of native human remains (e.g., Brown and Robinson 2004). This collection, which includes the perspective of so many Native Americans, indicates a new level of communication.

Outreach to the Public

Complementing the emphasis on collaboration is the greater attention being given to communicating anthropological insights on critical social issues to the general public. We are gaining more experience, for example, in writing op-ed pieces and intervening in public controversies. In 2004, the Board of the American Anthropological Association joined the debate on same-sex marriage and passed a resolution containing President George W. Bush's (2004) statement that marriage between a man and a woman was “one of the most fundamental, enduring institutions of our civilization.” The board argued instead that “anthropological research supports the conclusion that a vast array of family types, including families built upon same-sex partnerships, can contribute to stable and humane societies” (AAA 2004a). The statement was publicized in the Boston Globe (February 29, 2004) and the San Francisco Chronicle (February 27, 2004). A column by Peter S. Cahn (2004), distributed through Pacific News Service, appeared in several newspapers. During the spring 2004 conflict in Haiti, Paul Farmer wrote an open letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell using his experience and expertise as an anthropologist to call attention to the need to keep Haiti's hospitals and medical training programs open. These are only two instances when anthropologists called attention to the relevance of our knowledge to issues that make headlines and critiqued policies that run contrary to careful social science research.

As many of the projects I have already summarized indicate, anthropologists are also engaged in communicating the results of their research through educational programs, museum exhibits, and writing for accessible publications that translate anthropological research to broader audiences. Museums have long been sites for the communication of anthropological knowledge, but exhibits now are being transformed through dissemination on the World Wide Web. One example is “Growing Old in Spanish Harlem,” a 1992 exhibit for the Museum of the City of New York. Much of Judith Freidenberg's (2000) research for this exhibit is also part of a virtual exhibit, “Inside Out/Growing Old in the United States,” that was produced for the Latino Virtual Gallery, a
project of the Smithsonian. The exhibit featured commentary
and realistic views of Latina/o senior citizens, along with
educational activities that engage students in interviewing
and conducting historical research on the elderly in their
own communities (see http://latino.st.edu/virtual/gallery/
GrowingOld/GrowingOld.htm).

A second example is the Chicago Field Museum’s project
on environmental revitalization called “Journey through Calu-
met,” which focuses on declining industrial communities
in the Chicago area and nearby Indiana. Under the direction of
anthropologist Alaka Wali, nine undergraduate and graduate
students and two research assistants carried out the research
during the summers of 2001 and 2002. The Web site
summarizes results of the project and uses videos, photos, and
texts to introduce visitors to the different communities and
the various forms of activism and organization around community
and environmental issues (Field Museum 2003).

In November 2001, the American Anthropological As-
association (AAA), with the help of a Ford Foundation grant,
launched a project on “Understanding Race and Human
Variation.” The goal is to create a better understanding “that
while human variation is an aspect of nature, ‘race,’ as the
term is commonly used, is not a biological phenomenon, but
a dynamic and sometimes harmful cultural construct” (AAA
2004b). Although interdisciplinary in scope, the project in-
tends to alter public perception of anthropology by taking a
more direct and meaningful approach to the study of racial
and other forms of inequality. It is a project that is being
embraced by anthropologists and other scholars who work in
this area (ibid.).

The AAA has also received funding from the National
Science Foundation to work with the Science Museum of
Minnesota to develop the exhibit on race that will open in fall
2006. The grant of nearly $3 million will fund displays and
interactive media that will explore the history of the construct
of race, explain the difference between physical appearance
and genetics, and show why the physical characteristics of
individuals and populations do not constitute race. Other
parts of the exhibit will provide a cross-cultural perspective show-
ing that race is not a universal but rather a cultural construct
which varies in meaning and interpretation around the world.
Finally, the origins and consequences of racism will also be
explored, and exhibits will show how discrimination results
disparities and divides populations within and among
nations (AAA 2002:2-4).

A museum exhibit is an extraordinary opportunity to
present anthropological knowledge on a variety of different
levels through the use of objects, graphics, interactive
video, and text. Concepts become three-dimensional rather
than just linear, and visitors can absorb and interact with the
material at their own pace, focusing on the learning style that
best suits them. An exhibit can also appeal to a much wider
population than college students—younger children, high
school students, middle-aged adults, and older citizens. This
is the AAA’s first attempt to reach out to the public in such a
multilayered way, and it represents an important prospect for
engaging with the world.

Public Policy

Anthropological research in the public policy arena in-
volves three issues: getting anthropology a seat at the policy
table, collaborating with other social scientists, and working
to get a particular policy enacted. We are making progress
on each of these fronts, but moving from research to policy
making is still a difficult step for most anthropologists.

Where the stereotype prevails that anthropologists only
deal with small-scale exotic peoples, anthropology still has
difficulty finding a seat at the policy table. The most progress
has probably been made by medical anthropologists, who are
becoming members of important health care commissions and
standing committees at a national level. In some respects this
entails making it clear that anthropologists have something to
contribute. At the table we must work with other social
scientists who rely on very different methodologies and
theoretical assumptions. The anthropologist is often the lone
voice for the discipline and sometimes has a difficult time
being heard. However, it is just these sorts of coalitions and
the advantages of putting together multimethod and transdis-
ciplinary research that can make a policy-oriented argument
much stronger.

Anthropologists are often engaged as consultants who
can conduct research and write reports. This involves working
with local communities, NGOs, or coalitions, particularly at
the state and local levels. Catherine Lutz, for example, has
worked with American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
and written a report on “Making Soldiers in the Public
Schools: An Analysis of the Army JROTC Curriculum” that
is posted on the AFSC Web site. Highly critical of the JROTC
curriculum and noting the lack of evidence to support claims
that it prevents dropouts and drug abuse, the report is useful
to local school boards or parent groups that are considering
a JROTC program (Lutz and Bartlett 1995).

Working at a more local level, Don Stull and his
colleague Michael Broadway, a social geographer, have
consulted with rural communities in the United States and
Canada on the impact of meat and poultry plants on their
local housing, schools, and social services (Stull 2004; Stull
and Broadway 2004). Although the team’s descriptions of
the negative effects of the meat and poultry industry are often
unwelcome, especially by boosters of a new operation, several
communities have mounted campaigns that have resulted in
plans for a plant being scrapped, and others have developed
successful approaches to mitigation. Stull recounts how their
team has gained public attention and helped shape the Sierra
Club’s campaign against air and water pollution created by
the poultry industry. Yet, he argues that advocacy is more
than making relevant facts known to appropriate parties, it
involves pressure politics as well.
Moving beyond providing information, anthropologists sometimes become directly involved with bodies trying to implement laws or respond to legal mandates. Joanna Davidson, while working among the Diola in Guinea-Bissau, became involved in a collaborative effort to develop appropriate methods and institutions to implement a 1998 land law. Given her background on Diola customary land tenure and traditional political structure, she was able to prepare a case study and participate in several workshops that explicated the law, described the next steps, and heard from local participants about a range of local issues, including land disputes (Davidson 2002, 2003).

After conducting dissertation research on the homeless in Tucson, Arizona, Trena Valado was selected to chair a committee to create a ten-year plan to end homelessness in the city. As she says of her role, “I am bringing homeless people’s voices into the planning arena, including their recommendations for how to improve services. Of course, through my interviews with people responsible for actually creating and implementing policy, I have also learned about the constraints they face, and will thus be able to make policy recommendations that are realistic” (Valado, personal communication, May 2004).

Sandra Morgen’s research on welfare policy in Oregon demonstrates that it is possible to “sit at the policy table,” conduct multimethod research with economists and sociologists, and have a concrete impact on public policy. Morgen and her research team conducted surveys and intensive interviews with those who have left Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to find out how welfare reform was affecting their ability to take jobs, get child care for their children, and raise their standard of living (Acker and Morgen 2001). In addition to presenting their report to the state agency that funded them, they posted it on their Web site, made brief “cameo” reports on issues to legislators and others interested in welfare reform, got their results widely publicized in the press, and testified at legislative hearings. Morgen makes it clear that such work is not a “one shot” effort, but because research results are the last thing that actually gets legislation enacted, change comes only with slow lobbying efforts, work with friendly legislators, and collaboration with community groups. Her outreach efforts paid off, and in 2004 Morgan’s team helped change Oregon state policy so that some TANF recipients can count postsecondary education as part of their work requirements.

Bringing Collaboration, Outreach, and Policy into Graduate Programs

As these and other projects become more common among anthropologists, we need to incorporate their principles in our graduate training programs more broadly. Collaboration, outreach, and policy-oriented work may be assumed to be part of many applied training programs, but they need to be part of other programs as well.

Those of us in Ph.D programs need to find ways for collaboration to become a normal part of dissertation research. For example, as part of dissertation proposals, candidates could outline to their committees’ plans for collaboration (in research design, topics to be covered, and important questions to be asked) with the community or research subjects. They could also outline steps to give feedback on the results of their research back to the community or research subjects, both during the research period and when the dissertation is completed. Finally, candidates might also be encouraged to specify service activities that could be offered to the research community. These may include grant writing, training in research skills, computer instruction, English-language lessons, translation, or preparation of a community video. If departments put these kinds of expectations into the dissertation process at the proposal stage, with additional feedback when the student defends the dissertation, both faculty and students can plan, discuss, and evaluate which activities work best given the student’s topic and the nature of the research population.

Already most of my students at the University of New Mexico (most of whom conduct research in the United States or Latin America) are engaging in some kind of service activities in the communities they study. They are teaching citizenship classes, volunteering in a local health care or senior clinic, working for a community radio station, or helping local NGOs conduct research. These activities are essential to gain entrée into a study community or organization, but students also are building collaborative methods into their dissertation research.

Melissa Hargrove (personal communication, May 2004) at the University of Tennessee is conducting research among the Gullah/Geechee of the Southeastern Sea Islands, who are facing the loss of family lands through the development of gated communities and tourism. She is working closely with the chief activist, scheduling focus groups and interviews with both the Gullah and property owners. Emily DiCicco (personal communication, May 2004) is studying South American immigrants in Arlington, Virginia, and has formed “community learning circles” to participate in the research process and guide her. It makes more sense for these efforts to become a valued part of the dissertation process, rather than to leave them unacknowledged and less connected to feedback and capacity building.

Outreach can also be built into a Ph.D. curriculum. The University of California, Berkeley, Archaeology Program is perhaps one of the most innovative in expecting its students to engage in outreach. Graduate students in archaeology are expected to register for a one-unit course in public archaeology every quarter. These include visits to a school classroom, helping with mock excavations that many teachers stage, making presentations for visiting school groups, or participating in group activities at Cal Day, when the campus is open to the community. Graduate students have shared their experiences as archaeologists in a workshop intended to introduce middle school girls to careers related to math and science. The program also has organized a teachers’ workshop at the recent Archeological Institute of America meeting on the

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archaeology of native California, with lesson plans, a collection of resources for teachers, and presentations by faculty and students.

Graduate students also learn how to do outreach to young children. For example, teachers have come to UC Berkeley, to give workshops on how to construct a lesson plan and deal with the different learning styles of 6th graders. As Margaret Conkey, who helped develop the program, commented, “There have been some wonderfully elaborate projects, such as having the kids at Martin Luther King Middle School [in Berkeley] do the archaeology of the plot of land near the school. After the excavation, Alice Waters [of the restaurant Chéz Panisse] worked with them to build their own gardens. It was a historic site” (Margaret Conkey, Berkeley professor, personal communication, March 2004). Another program that involved graduate students in outreach was the “Big Dig,” a week-long mock excavation organized each year between 2000-2002 for 6th graders at a middle school in Alameda, California. Students were excited to uncover an obsidian blade or maize cob, which they carefully recorded, mapped, and bagged, learning mathematical skills at the same time. If these kinds of programs could be part of graduate programs everywhere in the United States, the next generation of anthropologists would see outreach as part and parcel of their professional work as anthropologists, whether they are archaeologists, cultural anthropologists, linguistic anthropologists, or biological anthropologists.

At the University of New Mexico, we have developed a public policy focus that students may complete as part of their master’s program. Students select a broad subject with policy relevance, such as health, education, the environment, labor and the work place, immigration, or human rights. In addition to required courses, they take three courses (seminars or undergraduate courses that carry graduate credit) that will allow them to explore their policy topic and learn the social science literature in that area. Finally, they enroll in a three-credit course with a faculty member to work with a community organization, NGO, or government agency and conduct some ethnographic research on their policy focus. In addition to exploring the group’s conceptions of particular policies or the impact of those policies, the student can conduct research for an organization or be involved in advocacy efforts. At the end of the semester, students write a paper discussing their ethnographic insights into how policies, policy formation, or policy implementation are perceived and the connection between anthropological research and policy.

The policy focus helps students learn how to craft empirical research that examines a critical social issue in terms of how policies are currently implemented, taking into account the impact on local populations, the views expressed by those populations, and the larger political and economic environment in which policies are made and implemented. Students also have an opportunity to critically evaluate policy, devise alternatives, and work with local organizations to implement policy change.

**Conclusions**

Throughout this article I have drawn on examples of recent research by applied or practicing anthropologists and anthropologists who engage in what is becoming known as public anthropology and public outreach archaeology. I have argued that the changing relationships to our research subjects, increased effort to reach out to various publics, and new attempts to influence policy amount to a “sea change” in the discipline. These three aspects are complementary and sometimes, but not always, overlapping. Those working out partnerships with research communities often end up putting together dissemination strategies that feed back research results to local communities and wider audiences (though a CD-ROM or Web site, for example). Likewise, collaborative research in local communities can lead to an analysis that is helpful in pushing for policy changes. On the other hand, some outreach activities, such as museum exhibits, may not entail collaborative research with communities or have policy implications. Finally, a good deal of policy research, especially in urban areas, is based on traditional researcher-subject relationships.

Not only are anthropologists, cultural anthropologists, and museum specialists joining applied and practicing anthropologists in conducting research on critical social issues that involve health institutions, the environment, educational systems, workplaces, and political processes in our own and other societies, but we are also converging in terms of the techniques that will change our relationship to the communities we study and to the broader public. These trends will transform stereotypes that still associate anthropology with the exotic and the “primitive.” At a time when some of our colleagues are still decrying the unicity of our discipline, there are signs of increased unity and the potential for increased communication across subfields as we look for better strategies for collaboration, outreach, and advocacy. There is still much work to be done, particularly in institutionalizing techniques for collaboration, outreach, and policy research as part of our graduate training. Nevertheless, the current sea change within the discipline suggests that anthropology is and will continue to become a more respected, better known, and unified discipline.

**Notes**

1 In addition to using examples from my colleagues at the University of New Mexico and from those who conduct research in my areas of interest, I examined articles published in the last six years of *Human Organization* under the editorship of Don Stull. I also posted an inquiry stating that I was looking for examples of collaboration, outreach, and policy implementation on the list serve of the American Ethnological Society (AES), the Society for the Anthropology of North America (SANA), the National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA), and the Society for Urban, National, and Transnational/Global Anthropology (SUNTA). I received many replies, some from colleagues I know and others from students, practitioners, and academics who felt their research fit my interests. This is not a “scientific” sample, but the cases I cite represent the wide range of anthropologists who are...
engaged in collaboration and outreach, particularly in archaeology and sociocultural anthropology. I have not been able to mention all the examples I received via e-mail, but I want to thank everyone who responded to my request. They all gave me a sense of how widespread these trends are.

I have always considered the team research I have been involved with on topics as diverse as the workplace, immigration, and Medicaid-managed care to be policy relevant. It is only my most recent project, writing a biography of three Navajo women in one family, that is more collaborative in the sense of involving my subjects in shaping the research process. I am, however, writing the book itself (with feedback from my interviewees). In this article, I am emphasizing research that has gone further than my own attempts at collaboration, as we bring instances where anthropologists have made greater effort than I have to work toward policy change rather than primarily writing books, articles, and reports for agencies.

In these decades there were some collaborative projects. Perhaps the best example is the Cornell Medical/Indian Health Service Project at Many Farms, New Mexico, participated in by anthropologists John Adair and Clifford Barnett (Adair and Deutscher 1970). The Many Farms clinic and the project were authorized by the Navajo Tribal Council. Navajo health workers were trained by the medical team and Navajo medical interpreters were used throughout the project, the aim being to find ways to adapt Western medicine to Navajo culture. Though Anglo American professionals may have dominated the project, Navajos were important participants and had some say in its conception.

Kirsch's approach to collaboration is to work within organizations by offering his services, such as grant writing. This has opened up contacts with both the leaders and members of the communities an organization serves. His students are likewise working in community organizations, also offering their time and skills. He brings community leaders to university classes and conferences as local experts who are paid for their time and contributions. Kirsch has found that the most successful organizations are composed of local residents rather than representatives from national organizations; the latter develop bureaucracies and distance themselves from local members.

Collaborative relationships and PAR models have also become part of educational research. For example, Marlene J. Berg and Jean J. Schensul (2004) report on the uses of youth participatory action research in the Hartford, Connecticut, public schools. Anthropologists often engage in collaborative research in mounting museum exhibits. Marilynn Salvador's recent exhibit, The Art of Being Kuna, shown at the University of New Mexico in 2003-2004, is based on many years of collaboration between anthropologists and the Kuna of Panama. The exhibit involved Kuna cultural specialists in all aspects of planning, and Kuna representatives participated in the inaugural opening as well as a series of special public programs in the fall of 2002 (Alfonso Ortiz Center 2002). Other examples of museum collaboration, particularly in conjunction with outreach, are discussed in a later section of this paper.

Another collection (Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang 1997) also incorporates native voices as authors and commentators on the topic of third-gender or Two-Spirit roles (formerly labeled hermaphroditism). It indicates that cultural anthropologists have also been collaborating with Native Americans for a number of years and have been willing to redefine categories, listen to native perspectives, and participate with them in publishing. As in archaeology, collaboration has often been fostered through the increasing number of Native American anthropologists who work in the field of Native American archaeology and anthropology, though they are still small in number.

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