



## SECTION NEWS

Recognizing that the association's sections represent the rich diversity of the discipline's subfields, *AN* includes Section News, which provides news of specific relevance to members of each section (eg, summaries of section business meetings, section meeting presentations, section awards). Members are encouraged to make full use of other *AN* editorial sections to report items of more general interest (eg, meeting dates, death notices, commentaries). Contact information for section contributing editors is available in individual columns and on the AAA website.

### American Ethnological Society

CAITRIN LYNCH, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

#### Reaching out to Graduate Students

By Jessica Hardin (Brandeis U)



I am a PhD candidate in the anthropology department at Brandeis University, and AES's new graduate student board member. My research focuses on how health and chronic disease are addressed in evangelical churches in the Samoan Islands. I decided to get involved with AES after attending the joint CASCA/

AES meeting in 2009, which was one of the most fruitful anthropology meetings I have attended because of the small environment, committed discussion and cutting-edge engagement with the current state of anthropology.

As the graduate student board member from 2011–13, I would like to develop greater graduate student opportunities for professional development. Here I discuss some things graduate students may want to know about.

Workshops are often among the most useful opportunities for participation during conferences. They offer a small environment, amid a very busy meeting, to network and learn from those with more experience. Additionally, workshops allow students to take the time to learn new things and ask questions that might otherwise go unaddressed in everyday life. Look for a workshop led by AES's board members at the Montréal meeting.

AES hopes to have more student-organized panels at the AAA annual meeting. One way to familiarize yourself with AES concepts and concerns is to attend AES-sponsored panels in Montréal. To get an idea of the kinds of panels that AES sponsors please visit our website ([www.aesonline.org](http://www.aesonline.org)) for a list of AES invited panels from 2007–10.

AES is committed to expanding Working Projects, which is AES's initiative to engage members in developing projects and programs on contemporary, pressing issues that reflect ongoing concerns regarding new ways in which governments, foundations and corporations are seeking to use anthropological knowledge, to redefine the parameters of that knowledge, and to restructure anthropological research. I am soliciting comments, ideas and suggestions on possible Working Projects. What kinds of concerns do you think should

be at the forefront of politically aware anthropological engagements? What kinds of support are most crucial to making such projects viable? What forums are best suited for these discussions?

Each year AES awards the Elsie Clews Parsons Prize for an outstanding graduate student paper based on ethnography. The winner traditionally delivers the paper at the spring AES meeting. Check out our website to read past winning papers. Please keep your eyes open for this opportunity in the fall. The deadline is typically mid-February.

In order to maximize graduate student professional development and cross-institution and section discussion, I am interested in cosponsoring workshops and events at future AAA meetings with other graduate student section representatives and members. One idea I have is to organize a mentoring workshop, which would help students develop optimal connections between their research and politically engaged concerns. If you have specific ideas on possible points of collaboration please get in touch with me.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to email me with any other suggestions and ideas you have that could further develop AES and graduate student professional development.

Contact Jessica Hardin at [jahardin@brandeis.edu](mailto:jahardin@brandeis.edu). Contact contributing editor Caitrin Lynch at [clynch@olin.edu](mailto:clynch@olin.edu) with ideas for future columns, comments and submissions for our occasional *Film Notes* feature.

### Anthropology and Environment Section

TERRE SATTERFIELD, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

#### Ethical Consumption and Academic Production

By Marty Otañez (U Colorado–Denver)

Corporate social and environmental responsibility schemes are popular among cigarette manufacturers Philip Morris and British American Tobacco. Companies invest money in plans to eliminate child labor and reduce tree cutting in tobacco growing countries such as Malawi. To aid their efforts, cigarette manufacturers fund non-government organizations and university professors. In September 2010, Philip Morris announced that it awarded \$2.5 million to an NGO, Total LandCare, for projects in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania through Washington State University, Pullman. Through these kinds of arrange-

ments manufacturers legitimize their interventions and portray themselves as stewards of the environment and advocates for tobacco farm workers. Malawi derives over 70% of its foreign earnings from tobacco and has extreme rates of tobacco-related child labor and deforestation. Government officials in Malawi who own tobacco farms or benefit from tobacco leaf earnings are reluctant to enact restrictions on marketing campaigns that target women and children as new smokers, or are hesitant to promote alternative crops to tobacco. As tobacco families in Malawi and other developing countries experience increasing poverty and environmental degradation, tobacco companies use Malawi's leaf in Marlboro and Camel cigarettes. I doubt many consumers view cigarette companies and their supply chain activities as ethically sound. Rather, cigarette companies that profit from child labor and deforestation in Malawi have moved me toward a more politically engaged approach to ethical consumption, with the determination to make anthropology more public through video.



Child laborer on a tobacco farm in Kenya. Photo courtesy Marty Otañez

The take home message of my work in the classroom, during fieldwork or at the conference podium is sharing with others the excitement of taking power away from global cigarette manufacturers. Conversations in these venues cover the absurdities of tobacco companies' corporate social and environmental schemes. Cigarette manufacturers, who are responsible for nearly six million smoking-related deaths worldwide each year, profit from child labor and deforestation in economically disenfranchised communities. They also recruit new smokers with "organic" cigarettes or cigarettes produced following Native American cultural protocols. My message is delivered with a confession that I don't really care about tobacco. I care about a social justice approach to the analysis of corporations and their socio-ecological practices.

In Malawi, children as young as five years old have been removed from school to harvest tobacco. Children and other family members suffer from respiratory sicknesses from tobacco dust and are exposed to green tobacco sickness through dermal absorption of nicotine. Cigarette manufacturers address farm-level problems through school construction projects and reforestation schemes that have a nominal impact on tobacco families and ecologies. In reality, companies invest comparatively small amounts of money in Malawi and elsewhere that are paltry compared to the economic benefit for companies of unpaid child labor and money saved by avoiding genuine protection of the environment. Alternately, the case study with which I'm engaged includes examples of

alternative livelihoods through permaculture, and crop diversification initiatives to replace tobacco plants over one or more generations with crops that increase food security among producing families.

My approach to ethical consumption also extends to academic production. Faculty and students are consumers and producers of knowledge, representing a range of shifting moral standpoints. In my courses I use digital stories (three minute, personal narrative videos) to get students excited about anthropology as a vehicle for responsible behavior along ethical, social and ecological lines. I collaborate with students to create scholarly digital stories in assignments with themes about stereotypes, urban gardens and ethnographic theories. Students increase their media-making and analysis skills while augmenting skills developed through traditional research paper writing. I've had some success working with faculty and students to broaden the peer-reviewed publication concept in rules for promotion and tenure to cover videos, and update thesis policies for students to include videos as legitimate projects. Students' use of digital media contributes to a context to rethink how we train anthropology students, and helps me break free from the "publish or perish" trap to produce policy-influential videos that make visible the health and socio-ecological costs of unethical corporations.

*Marty Otañez thanks students in his spring 2011 course "Culture and the Environment" (U Colorado-Denver) for their suggestions. Please send your articles to A&E Contributing Editor Terre Satterfield (satterfd@interchange.ubc.ca).*

## Archeology Division

E CHRISTIAN WELLS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### Archaeology, Climate Change and the Sustainability of Human Ecosystems

*By Christopher I Roos (Southern Methodist U)*

Understanding the past is important for contemporary environmental conservation and restoration efforts. Knowledge of past ecosystem structures, composition and processes forms a baseline for current studies and allows us to determine how modern ecosystems are changing. Historical data are fundamental for justifying many conservation efforts and guiding restoration of altered ecosystems. Applied historical ecology links the science of past environments to discourse on contemporary environmental problems (Swetnam et al in *Ecological Applications* 1999), thus providing a framework for anthropological archaeologists to contribute to applied research on ecological sustainability.

But are environmental conditions that predate global warming relevant for modern conservation-restoration efforts (Millar and Woolfenden in *Ecological Applications* 1999)? Is historical information from time periods with smaller human populations, less complex technologies and ambiguous records of human impacts useful for contemporary environmental decision-making? Such questions are worth considering, but criticisms that dismiss the past as irrelevant for a post-

industrial era of global climate change deserve critical evaluation themselves. Greenhouse gas concentrations may have no analog in the last 700,000 years, but climatic change has been axiomatic in human history and environmental problems were quite common for ancient foragers, farmers and state societies alike (Redman, *Human Impact on Ancient Environments* 1999). Rather than being exceptional today, humans have always been a part of the ecosystems in which they have been present and human ecosystems have always been faced with climate changes.

As practiced by anthropologists and archaeologists, historical ecology emphasizes the dialectical human-environmental relationship across space and through time, thus providing a set of conceptual tools by which archaeologists can address human-environmental questions in a dynamic, non-determinative fashion (Crumley, *Historical Ecology* 1994). The relevance of this approach for addressing applied research problems has been underappreciated, however, because the research has often been restricted to human-centered questions. For archaeologists to contribute to applied historical ecology, we must broaden the questions we ask to include those necessary for informing ecological conservation and restoration, such as the historical range of variation in key ecosystem dynamics and processes (Falk in *Journal for Nature Conservation* 2006).

Anthropological archaeologists should be at the center of applied historical ecology for the very reasons that skeptics have cast doubt on the value of historical information; ecosystem management in an era of global climate change and far-reaching human impacts requires that we understand how human ecosystems respond to a wide variety of climate changes under different human-environmental interactions. Archaeologists can be leaders in such projects precisely because we have the training to sample space and time in ways that generate data relevant to different scales of human behavior and because of our ability to consider the full range of nature-culture feedbacks (van der Leeuw and Redman in *American Antiquity* 2002). If we are to lead research in applied historical ecology, archaeologists must begin to ask non-anthropocentric research questions—questions that are driven by ecosystem restoration and conservation problems.

An expansion of the archaeological research domain does not render archaeology less anthropological. Rather, such an enterprise makes anthropology more relevant to a broader range of contemporary problems and further establishes a domain for archaeology within applied anthropology. Because of our diachronic perspective, archaeologists are ideally situated to evaluate hypotheses concerning social, economic, and ecological sustainability (Wells in *Anthropology News* 2011). Our background as anthropologists means that we tend to emphasize human-centered research questions, but to genuinely contribute to ecological sustainability, archaeologists should embrace their abilities as interdisciplinary scientists and expand our range of questions about human ecosystems.

To support, conserve, restore and sustain human ecosystems in the era of global warming, we need to understand how human ecosystems have responded to different climatic, demographic, technological and land-use changes in the past. Rather than being irrelevant to environmental problems in a warming future,

the past is the key to understanding how coupled human-natural ecosystems respond to the changes we may anticipate in the future, as well as changes that may come as a surprise. Given the uncertainty about the local and regional consequences of global warming, these lessons from the past may prove invaluable as we consider alternative management scenarios that range from conservation to adaptation but inevitably hinge on social-ecological sustainability.

*To learn more about the Archeology Division, visit our website at [www.aaanet.org/sections/ad/index.html](http://www.aaanet.org/sections/ad/index.html). Send news, notices, and comments to Christian Wells at [ecwells@usf.edu](mailto:ecwells@usf.edu).*

## Association for Africanist Anthropology

JENNIFER E COFFMAN, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### AfAA Awards Deadline Approaches for Undergraduate and Graduate Papers

Attention burgeoning scholars in Africanist anthropology: have you recently written something about which you are proud? Please share it by entering it in



**2010 AfAA Student Paper Award winners Narisa Silver (UC San Diego undergraduate student) and David Platzer (Johns Hopkins U graduate student) at the AfAA awards presentation in New Orleans.** Photo courtesy Jennifer E Coffman

the AfAA Awards competition. We welcome papers from undergraduate and graduate students who are contributing to the fields of Africanist anthropology, African studies or African diaspora studies. The deadline for submissions is June 15, 2011. The prize to the best graduate student paper in Africanist anthropology will be presented during the AAA Annual Meeting. Contributions from all subfields of anthropology are welcome. Submissions should be sent to David Turkon ([dturkon@ithaca.edu](mailto:dturkon@ithaca.edu)). In determining the award, the following criteria will be applied:

- Originality of scholarship, creativity of insight and quality of writing.
- Clear potential for contribution to the fields of Africanist anthropology, African studies or African diaspora studies. Special consideration will be given to work that incorporates emerging perspectives or interdisciplinary methodologies, which promote the further understanding of