

PUBLICATION IN ANTHROPOLOGY
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Context

Anthropology is vast in scope of topics and specialties, hence also in varieties of settings and publications. Geographically it covers the world, temporally it reaches from prehistoric times to the present, and topically it ranges from biological anthropology and archaeology—which involve the physical and biological sciences—to social scientific and humanistic fields such as linguistics and cultural anthropology. Fieldwork, whether among the living or the dead, is the signature method, but laboratories and libraries as well as electronic sources are also important. Media through which to report and analyze include not only print but also film and television (think “Discovery Channel”) and museum exhibitions (“Public or perish” is a slogan of the society for museum anthropology: the Smithsonian exhibits at the Museum for Natural History are only a few—and not particularly good ones—of the thousands mounted by anthropologists, especially archaeologists).

The American Anthropological Association is reportedly the largest among the many anthropological organizations around the world, hence serves as an example of activities and associated publication processes. AAA recently celebrated its first century; it was founded in 1901. It has some 12,000 members who also belong to some forty sections. These sections are divided by specialty (biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, ethnology or cultural anthropology—the traditional “four”—and also many others, such as psychological or medical anthropology); by region of the world as a research interest; and by other identities, such as the Association of Black Anthropologists or the feminist or gay/lesbian sections. Anyone may belong to any of them, and many members belong to several; they are not mutually exclusive.

Publications by AAA link to this organizational structure. AAA as a whole publishes a journal, *American Anthropologist*, and a newsletter, *Anthropology News*; these go to all members and AA also is subscribed to by major libraries. AAA also publishes journals or newsletters for many of the sections. Some are quite substantial, for example, *American Ethnologist*, published by the American Ethnological Society which is actually much older than AAA (AES was founded in 1842) but was incorporated by AAA, *Ethos*, by the Society for Psychological Anthropology, or *Cultural Anthropology*, by the Society for Cultural Anthropology. Publishing several major journals and more than twenty section journals is a large endeavor of AAA. It is organized by the head of its publication department, overseen by the executive board, and each section selects editors for the section journal. Editor of AA is a major position, appointed by the AAA President and executive board. In addition to journals, AAA publishes books, monographs, directories. In December 2004, AAA launched an electronic system AnthroSource. Organized in

cooperation with a librarian at UC-Berkeley, AnthroSource is funded by grants of several million dollars from Mellon and Ford foundations, and it will, among other things, have on-line AA back to the earliest editions. (For more information, go to the web site of American Anthropological Association: <http://www.aaanet.org/>)

A crucial link to publication activity is the annual meeting of AAA as well as meetings of the various sections. AAA has a high participation rate at meetings. Approximately five thousand persons attend the annual AAA meeting, which alternates between Washington, D.C. (site of the headquarters) and a West coast and mid-West location, usually San Francisco and Chicago, sometimes elsewhere such as New Orleans or Atlanta. At the meetings several thousand papers are presented in a five day period, and films are shown continuously by the Society for Visual Anthropology. More than a hundred publishers exhibit books, journals, videos, and electronic systems that treat anthropological studies and topics.

Publishers with large lists for anthropology include Cambridge University Press, the University of Chicago Press, the University of California Press, Oxford University Press, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Duke University Presses; regional presses or presses specializing in regions of the world; commercial presses such as Routledge, McMillan/Palgrave, Altamira; and specialized presses such as HRAF (Human Relations Area Files). (UNC Press is one of the few major university presses that does not have a notable list in anthropology, but it does usually exhibit at the AAA meetings.) While the majority of exhibitors are British and American, an increasing number of global or international interests and exhibitors are evident. The meetings offer an opportunity to survey and highlight new publications, meet editors (most of the major presses send their Anthropology editors to the meetings), and arrange to submit manuscripts. At the meetings, AAA offers workshops on publication in which prominent editors discuss the publication process.

Aside from AAA, which is the largest and which I know best (I was president of AAA a few years ago), a few other publication-relevant organizations should be noted. Most estimable is the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. RAI published the RAI journal, formerly titled *Man*, a newsletter, *Anthropology Today*. Based in London, it is less vast in organization and membership than AAA but equal in prestige, including that of its signature journal. Moving out from Anglo-America (and the Anglo part extends throughout the Commonwealth, through Africa, Asia, and Australia), virtually every country has its own anthropological organization and publications in its languages. These range from *Anthropos* in German to *Tijdschrift tot Land, Tal en Volkenkunde* in Dutch to journals in Japanese. There are also, of course, a large number of publications in Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese (the Brazilian anthropological enterprise is very active and large).

Within USA, many regional organizations and publications are evident. SAR, School for American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is perhaps most prominent. SAR sponsors research, provides a major prize for publication, and has a large publication series itself, SAR Press.

One umbrella, international organization is the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES). The IUAES meets every four years in a different country (last in Italy) drawing several thousand attendees and presenters from more than a hundred countries. While many publications result from the congresses, it does not sponsor a publication program. One entrepreneurial organizer of meetings in Chicago several decades ago did attempt one ambitious publications project. Contracting with Menotti (composer of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*) to compose and direct an anthropological opera, he also contracted with Mouton press to publish the presentations in a large series; both the opera and the series did happen, but at financial loss.

Finally, mention should be made of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Founded by Paul Fejos, formerly housed partly in a castle in Austria, currently in New York, the Foundation is endowed by Axel Wenner Gren sufficiently to underwrite both international fieldwork and publication. SAR and Wenner-Gren are the major anthropology-specific funding sources; otherwise anthropologists seek funding from National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, and other government or private agencies.

Issues

- 1) Relative importance of monographs versus journal articles. The scientific wing of Anthropology (biological or physical anthropology) credits articles more than the humanistic wing which credits books more. For the latter, a book is essential for getting a job and several virtually essential for keeping one and gaining tenure and promotion at a major institution; for the former, articles may suffice.
- 2) Speed to publication. This issue is probably similar to other disciplines. Journals such as AA continuously strive for quicker review but still honor the peer review process, as do the presses, which delay publication.
- 3) Online journals. AnthroSource was noted for AAA. CA, *Current Anthropology*, a major journal supported by Wenner-Gren, is also on-line. CA does not replace its print journal but offers the on-line alternative. Libraries, such as York in Canada, which are converting to electronic sources and reducing print holdings, of course, influence what a discipline does. Readers express alarm or concern at the library trend (I noted this in reviews I have done of anthropology departments in various institutions, from Harvard and Brown to LSU and UC-Santa Cruz to York). This is not because of concern about peer review standards but about the process of reading electronic versus print copy.
- 4) Determining journal in which to publish in an increasingly multidisciplinary field. This is an issue because of increasing multidisciplinary both within anthropology and between anthropology and other fields. Biological anthropologists are as likely to publish in biological journals, cultural anthropologists in cultural studies or women's studies as in anthropological journals, and within anthropology, as is illustrated by AAA, sub-specialty journals compete with the central one. As a result, AA is no longer the single source for the most important articles. Consequences affect not only the scholar, who cannot

- depend on earning credit in a single central journal, but also the journal and the supporting organization which cannot depend on support by membership of the core journal. AAA attempted to meet this challenge by making AA the one journal which automatically comes with AAA membership and by defining the mission of AA to firmly focus on issues central to the field as a whole. This effort has succeeded somewhat, but the splintering of the field and of disciplines generally renders centrality a difficult identity.
- 5) Getting reviewers to recognize A-list journals when they are in a different sub-field. Same issue as with #4: central journals like AA are recognized but sub-field journals known as A-list within subfield X are likely not known by those in sub-field Y because sub-fields have proliferated as have associated journals. 4 and 5 pertain not only to different lists but different epistemologies, as is illustrated below by a death threat issued by one specialist to an editor in another specialty/epistemology, related to AA.
 - 6) Encouraging publishers to offer electronic access. This is being done for books as well as journals by some publishers. Obviously publishers want to offer access to sustain interest while not crippling sales of hard copy. Rendering journals electronically is one thing, diminishing books with electronic versions is another. To entirely replace hard copy books by electronic ones would have numerous disadvantages for readers that have been noted frequently, in general and in many disciplines. Disadvantages include: a) strain of reading on-line, b) inconvenience of printing out large numbers of pages, c) losing creative process of browsing by walking through stacks, eyeing shelves, perusing displays as opposed to sitting at a computer screen. Add to this the loss of community and sociality; wandering through the bright array of book exhibits together with hundreds of colleagues is the favored way of collegiality at meetings such as AAA, as people scan new books, proofs of in press books, talk to editors, collect order forms, look at illustrations that cannot be seen on-line so easily or vividly. Observation of the few on-line exhibits demonstrates the danger of converting to that mode: compared to the large numbers of persons conversing as they collectively view exhibits, the few seated at consoles are isolated and solitary, their attention focused on the technical procedures necessary to elicit the information compared to the strollers/browsers who easily skim and peer at the thousands of books.
- LIBRARIANS AND INFORMATION EXPERTS PLEASE NOTE;
FIELDWORK IS NEEDED, LIKE THIS CASUAL TYPE THAT CAN BE
CARRIED OUT AT BOOK DISPLAYS IN MEETINGS AND STORES, TO
DETERMINE BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES OF ELECTRONIC AS
OPPOSED TO PRINT PUBLISHING. IN DISCUSSIONS I HAVE HAD WITH
LIBRARIANS I HAVE NOT DISCOVERED EVIDENCE OF OBSERVATION-
BASED INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING ON WHICH TO BASE
DECISIONS ABOUT CONVERTING TO ELECTRONIC MODES.**

Overarching Issues (in additional to above)

- 1) Role institutional repositories can play in addressing issues in the discipline?
Perhaps repositories should more strongly consult disciplinary organizations

- which are equipped to survey members to determine answers to questions such as:
- a) what mix of electronic and hard copy do you prefer, b) what do you regard as A-list journals or A-list publishers of books, or specialty journals or publishers of special interest to your discipline?
 - 2) Links between publishers and repositories? See #1; surveys might help repositories decide which publishers/publications to select, though standard lists (e.g. all major publishers) should remain mainline.
 - 3) How to encourage peer and tenure reviewers to accept publications in institutional repositories and otherwise outside of “traditional” publishing venues? As noted, anthropology has a wide range of venues, from museum exhibits and films to books and articles. Within specialties, such as Visual Anthropology or archaeology, films and exhibits are appreciated, but attention should be given, perhaps, to interpreting such contributions for standard academic reviewers e.g. at level of dean’s committees. The place to start is at the specialty, where the case can be made then “translated” into administrative standards, hopefully enriching those standards in the process. (This is happening to a degree already, for example, in a recent reversal of a negative tenure decision when a performative venue was accepted by a chancellor-level committee as a substitute for standard publication.) A cautionary note is needed, however. Peer-review processes, whatever their limitations, would seem logically the best way to assess contribution to research on the grounds that “it takes one to know one,” generally speaking. Therefore, peer review rather than administrative fiat should be the source of thinking through the issue of what range of genres to accept as “publication.” Collaborative exploration of possibilities as occasioned by this conference is useful.

Further Questions

These range from technical to philosophical. On the technical side, what about links between repositories electronically? Smithsonian harbors the Anthropology archive, which houses fieldnotes, photographs, etc. (including mine) from many anthropological studies and careers. Robert Leopold, the archivist, is considering recording some of this in AnthroSource, the AAA electronic archive. Could this, then, be shared electronically with locally based archives, such as the Southern Historical Collection? (Some of my materials are relevant to the Collection, but I put them in the Smithsonian because they requested them.)

On the philosophical side, an anecdote illustrates the fervor ignited by specialized epistemologies reflected in a journal. AA, signature journal of AAA, was recently edited by a husband-wife team of literary, post-modernist tendency. Their approach so angered biological anthropologists and others of a scientific, positivistic persuasion that one issued a death threat and others attempted to impeach the editors. (I chaired the AAA meeting at which this issue was debated, ending satisfactorily though with sturm und drang.)

Finally, please note the strong need for observation as opposed to surveys or ignorance as a basis for assessing plusses and minuses of electronic as opposed to print media. An anthropological approach to this question is in order! (See above, Issue six.)

Reflecting on the questions raised about publication, I am surprised to discover more issues relevant to the soul of inquiry than I had expected!

Acknowledgement

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