



NEAA NEWSLETTER

~~~*WE ARE GOING ONLINE see inside for details*~~~

The 45<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Northeastern Anthropological Association was successfully held in Lake Placid at the Hilton on April 3-6, 2005. Sixty-five professionals and 132 graduate and undergraduate students, as well as avocationalists attended two-and-a-half days of packed programs. Throughout the conference, Jason Price (New York University) screened a thoughtfully selected and annotated series of anthropological videos. James Armstrong arranged a well-stocked and -staffed book exhibit. The SUNY Potsdam anthropology students ran a t-shirt and Amish quilt sale.

Following an hors d'oeuvres reception in the Dancing Bear Lounge, the conference began in earnest with an evening plenary panel discussion on Anthropology's Perspectives on Globalization. The moderator, James Armstrong (SUNY Plattsburgh), guided the packed room in stimulating conversation with panelists Richard Robbins and Mark Cohen (SUNY Plattsburgh) and Louis Vivanco (U Vermont). Later in the evening, the undergraduate students held a games party at a restaurant across town.

Organized sessions and volunteered papers commenced Monday morning and ran through Tuesday afternoon with 5 or 6 sessions per half-day. Over 100 presentations were made, involving over 110 presenters and co-presenters. The entire program and abstracts are available online at [www.neaa.org](http://www.neaa.org).

Monday's special afternoon event was a panel on the archaeological career of Ruth Carol Barnes (RI College). Monday evening featured the insightful songs and fine guitar picking of Eddy Lawrence.

Tuesday's mid-day special event was 16 poster presentations in the Promenade. The late afternoon session featured a career workshop for undergraduates led by Jessica Skolnikoff (Roger Williams University) and John Omohundro (SUNY Potsdam).

The Members' Meeting, followed by a cash bar, preceded the Adirondack Buffet in the Terrace Room. Dr. Carmen Lambert (McGill University) gave the keynote talk on the work of Canadian anthropologists to assist indigenous peoples in their cultural preservation efforts.

After the banquet, the graduate and undergraduate students adjourned to another restaurant in town to swap tips on maintaining strong anthropology clubs.

The co-organizers of this event were SUNY Potsdam, SUNY Plattsburgh, and Clarkson University, with the assistance of North Country College. We've hosted the NEAA meetings every decade now since 1975, and it's always gratifying to work together to such a satisfying purpose.

John Omohundro, SUNY Potsdam

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## Message from the Editor

With this newsletter I have completed my first yearly cycle. I wish I could say the process has been seamless, but alas it has not. Luckily, I have enlisted the assistance of a good copy editor and contributing editors. And, I do appreciate everyone's patience through this transition period.

Meanwhile, I would like to reiterate what President Fraser has written in her President's Message. The organizing committee of the 45th NEAA Annual Conference did a fabulous job. I was especially impressed with the students who helped organize and run the event. All the presentations were very interesting and to me the student presentations stood out.

I would be remiss not to mention how proud I was to have my school, Roger Williams University, represented well by our four students. I told them they might present in front of 10-15 people and they all presented with audiences of 20-30 people—luckily they all forgave me. What was also so valuable to me was that they allowed me to experience the conference through their eyes and again remember how important the NEAA is as a student-friendly organization.

**THE BIG NEWS!** The NEAA newsletter is going electronic this fall. The executive board decided in April to save a few trees and become electronically savvy. This fall you will start to receive your newsletter to your email account. For all of you who still like to read things on paper (like me) you can just send me an email ([JSkolnikoff@rwu.edu](mailto:JSkolnikoff@rwu.edu)) to request a snail-mail copy.

Remember... we are always looking for submissions.

Jessica Skolnikoff

### NEAA NEWSLETTER VOLUME 27 NUMBER 3

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## Message from the President

Although John Omohundro has written a succinct account of the 2005 Lake Placid Conference elsewhere in this issue, I feel the need to add a few observations. I was able to attend several sessions organized around student research and I cannot begin to express how very impressed I was with the high standards of research and presentation that these students demonstrated at the paper and the poster sessions. Congratulations to all student participants and I extend a special thank you to the faculty mentors who work tirelessly behind the scenes offering advice and encouragement.

On behalf of the membership of the NEAA and the Executive Board, I wish to thank the organizers. Their ability to collaborate and coordinate responsibilities created a highly successful conference and perhaps a model to be used by future organizers. This leads me to another point: the NEAA needs your help in establishing meeting venues. Please think about hosting an annual conference on your campus; or perhaps it could be done in cooperation with other colleges and universities in your area.

We tentatively were scheduled to meet at UMASS/Amherst in 2006 but the report that Martin Wobst gave to the Executive Board in April was discouraging. Holding the conference at UMASS would be prohibitively expensive unless that institution agreed to a considerable reduction in fees; we are waiting to hear the results of the negotiations. Our alternative venue for 2006 is Lake Placid.

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My thanks to everyone for expressing such interest in the talk I gave at the President's Luncheon on SIDS (Small Island Developing States) and tourism in the Caribbean on Monday, 4 April. I'm taking the liberty of answering the most frequently asked questions here (and do keep the emails coming). Yes, there have been attempts to unify the small islands for various political and economic purposes. The Caricom islands advertised as a unit very successfully in 1992 with their "Beach Boy" campaign. Generally, however, the small islands are afraid they will lose their identity but at the same time don't have enough money to advertise on their own. The most recent attempt at unification is the ONECARIBBEAN.com campaign.

Even if the small islands manage to form a coalition, it likely does not stand a chance against a huge corporation. A case in point is the 13 island nations who banded together to raise the per/cruise ship passenger tax from \$6.50 to \$15 per head. The cruise lines announced that they would not come to these islands if the increase went into effect and the coalition fell apart.

The major beneficiaries of visits by cruise ships are the corporations themselves. Cruise lines make 65% of their income from the Caribbean. Only 7% of the employees, however, are from the Caribbean and only 1% of the taxes the lines pay go to the region. Even when passengers do go ashore, the lines still get a cut. The sale of t-shirts, hats and baskets doesn't begin to offset the cost of harbor dredging, building new cruise terminals and coping with crowding, traffic, garbage and rudeness. The islands seem to operate under a flawed model that expects cruisers to

come back as hotel guests but this just doesn't happen. In 1998 the number of cruise visitors doubled while the number of hotel rooms shrunk.

Recently there have been recognition of the link between tourism and diaspora and increasing efforts to develop the VFR market. The VFR are visiting friends and relatives who are Caribbean nationals living in Britain, the US or Canada. Targeting this market also may promote greater emphasis on 'ancestral' or 'heritage' tourism for and of the local descendants of slaves and not of white colonialists.

One final group of questions centered around sex tourism in the islands. Of course, this phenomenon exists but it assumes characteristics unlike those found in other parts of the world. In the Caribbean the tourist looking for sex is just as likely to be female as male and she comes from the North, has money and is looking for the stereotypical young, handsome man. This pattern, sometimes called "romance tourism", is well over a hundred years old but only recently has come under scrutiny by researchers. Whether these men are called "rent-a-dreds" as on Jamaica or *pingueros* as on Cuba they view their services as a way to get ahead and to enhance their status among their peer group. But, space limitations prohibit longer discussion here – perhaps this can be pursued in the next issue.

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Good wishes for a long, relaxing and productive summer! Please do give some thought to hosting the NEAA sometime in the future.

Grace Morth Fraser

## Mexican Women's Narratives on Migration

By Louise Tokarsky-Unda SUNY Buffalo

This paper developed out of research on Mexican migrant farmworker women in New York and New Jersey (the complete paper may be requested from author at [cultural\\_anthro@yahoo.com](mailto:cultural_anthro@yahoo.com)). Several gender-specific themes emerge from their narratives: women come to the U.S. out of necessity, but often do so following their husbands in order to avoid abandonment; they do not want to deprive themselves or their children of the social and financial support of their spouses; and they feel that keeping family together improves the quality of living for their children. These same themes emerge in other studies of migrant women (see, for example, Curry-Rodríguez 1988, Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). Additionally, many of the narratives suggest women more than men feel a greater obligation to help their families. Women are more likely to invest money into the health and education of their children, and to regularly send money to relatives in Mexico.

The following are some excerpts taken from taped conversations with migrant women in 2004:

*It's typical for women to come because they do well in the end. Like us right now: I'm working in a camp, and what little I earn I use to make a better future, to provide food... That's why we come. Men don't want their wives to come. They don't want women to suffer while crossing the border. And when women come, they come with their husbands because they don't want to stay in Mexico alone. That's because men come here and they don't send money. Sometimes they*

*forget... You arrive here because the men forget about their children...The children suffer and that's why the women come...Men who are with women make a better future for their children. Men alone don't do this because they do nothing but drink...*

Another woman explained her situation this way:

*I came here because my husband arrived four months ago. And on top of that I brought my baby with me. I wasn't going to stay in Mexico. My family told me, "Don't go! You'll die! The migra shoots people who run from them! Better to stay here and starve with us than go there and die alone." And then when I was determined to go they said, "At least leave the baby here with us so that he'll be safe." But I said, "No, I will not leave him behind. I will not leave him behind because who knows if I will ever see him again?" And so I brought him. But I was not going to stay in Mexico. Maybe my husband wouldn't have sent any money. Maybe he wouldn't have come back and I would be abandoned there, all alone with my child and no one to help us financially... I had to come.*

Narrative is an effective tool for familiarizing people with an unfamiliar subject (Hinchman 2004). Anthropology itself is dialogical in nature because fieldwork involves conversations between anthropologists and others (Tedlock and Manheim 1995). Often, anthropologists present data from field interactions in their own words, rather than the words of informants. But by taking a narrative approach the voices of others can present an understanding of their world in their own words. The context is preserved, allowing audiences to find their own interpretations of the data. However, anthropologists must be careful not to seek out quotes to illustrate their own viewpoints. Such a reversal of hermeneutics forces the voices of others into support of the anthropologist instead of allowing themes and patterns to emerge from the data.

Exploring people's words, searching for meaning in the stories they tell is how anthropologists learn from and make sense of informants in the field. It only makes sense for anthropologists to convey their data in a similar way.

### **Works Cited**

Curry-Rodríguez, Julia E.

1988 Labor Migration and Familial Responsibilities: Experiences of Mexican Women in Margarita B. Melville (ed.) *Mexicanas at Work in the United States*. Mexican American Monograph no. 5. Houston: University of Houston Press.

Hinchman, Lewis P. and Sandra K. Hinchman, eds.

2004 *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette

1994 *Gendered Transitions: Mexican Experiences of Immigration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tedlock, Dennis and Bruce Manheim

1995 *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

## Book Reviews

By Riva Berleant, Cultural Anthropology Contributing Editor

Clark, Michael P.

2003 *The Eliot Tracts, with Letters from John Eliot to Thomas Thorowgood and Richard Baxter*. Contribution in American History, 199. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Stevens, Laura M.

2004 *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

In this space a few years ago I reviewed four books on the Native Northeast published in 2000 and 2001. I found that Native perspectives and the use of Native sources were prominent features, as were historical perspectives and issues of politics and identity. Now I have been looking at books published in 2003 and 2004 to note the trends in Native American studies. I begin here with works by Michael Clark and Laura Stevens. The study of Indian missionization is part of an exploration of Native-European engagement and the impacts of colonialism that has burgeoned since the mid-1970s. Most of the sources are, of course, missionary writings. As ethnographic sources they are full of hazards, but for cultural analysis they are rich material. Michael P. Clark, the editor of *The Eliot Tracts*, tells us in his excellent introduction that this collection of printed works was written mainly by John Eliot, a Puritan minister in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and published in London from 1643 to 1671. The tracts are a New England counterpart to the French Jesuit Relations and the Spanish mission activities described in many of the narratives of New Spain. They were designed to elicit funds from England in support of missions in New England. Eliot also aimed, if I may put it more baldly than he did, to use conversion to push Indians of the colony into new ways that suited English convenience. These tracts illuminate mission origins in New England, the founding and missionary philosophy of the well-known Praying Towns, and the nature and theology of Puritan missionization. They are thus about missionization as much as about the Native Americans of Massachusetts Bay. The book is an admirable work of scholarship, editing, and bibliography by a specialist in English and Comparative Literature.

Literary scholar Laura Steven's *The Poor Indians* makes a good partner for *The Eliot Tracts*. It too deals with English and British missionary writings from 1642 to about 1776, and has a lot to say about Eliot. It focuses on the ideology, rhetoric, and consequences of missionary writings. These writings aimed to rouse both moral and monetary obligations in British Christians. They were successful, and in the process they reinforced Christian faith and imperial ideology in the donors. Missionary writings also shaped prevalent images of Indians in significant ways, as Stevens's title, *The Poor Indians*, reveals.

All of us know that missionaries accompanied and abetted the colonizing process. If the numbers of permanent converts defines success, most missions must be reckoned failures. But that measure of success is too narrow, for missions had latent functions and effects. From the colonial point of view, they helped thwart resistance and undermine native culture. From the Native

*Continued on the bottom of page 7*

## 2005 Student Paper Awards

### ***Mzunguism: How Visions of Whiteness Control Our Developing World***

By Laura Douglas, University of Vermont

This paper explores the concept of the 'power of whiteness' in and around development work in the Third World. Its objective is to demonstrate the existing forms of racism in 'developing' countries going both ways, and to address whether or not this issue is readily discussed, or discussed at all, in development literature. The main source of analyzation is through my firsthand experience volunteering in Africa, and the journals I kept while living there. In addition, a series of texts on development and aid have been looked at for any references to the aspect of race in development work. Results show that this highly important issue has been paid little attention in the development field or literature to date, and yet that it remains an increasingly influential and decisive factor in the outcome of development work itself. Conclusions, therefore, are that until the issue of race and the power of whiteness have been fully addressed, they cannot be dealt with, and that current development work is merely serving to perpetuate those inequalities. Partially due to this, much of that work will continue to be almost entirely ineffective in its attempts.

### ***Sex Differences in the Activity Budget and Foraging Patterns of the Mantled Howler Monkey (*Alouatta palliate*)***

By Jennifer R. Miller, Bloomsburg University

The general behavior and foraging patterns of *Alouatta palliate*, the mantled howler monkey, were studied at La Suerte Biological Field Station in Costa Rica during the December 2003-January 2004 fieldseason. Continuous focal animal sampling was utilized to generate a general activity budget. Data was collected to determine foraging patterns and behavioral patterns within the species. A major thrust of the project was to analyze the presence of sex differences in activity budget and resource preferences. The results indicate that *Alouatta palliate* exhibits significant sex differences in behavioral and foraging patterns. Discussion focuses on the application of the results to current primate research and suggests approaches for future research.

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### **Book Reviews** *Continued from page 6*

point of view they could and often did teach European literacy and other coping tactics. Sometimes, paradoxically, they functioned to promote Native personal and cultural survival, as did Moravian missions to the Mohicans in the eighteenth century. Both books help us understand the range of working missionary functions. The two books exemplify a trend that once upset me, but now seems to be an inevitable development: the encroachment of cultural studies onto what I used to think belonged to anthropology. But if we are not going to analyze those texts, someone else will and did, and surely we can welcome the breakdown of historically derived disciplinary barriers. What we continue to see is that the anthropological monopoly on Native America that prevailed until forty or more years ago continues to yield to multidisciplinary Native American studies.

Fall 2005 Newsletter Part II



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