

NEAA News

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Message from the Editor

Fall Greetings!

I do like this time of year when the leaves turn colors and the weather cools. When I was a student – and then later as a coach – I loved this time of year because it meant it was field hockey season. Now I find this time of year exciting for two different reasons. First, in the Fall I teach two sections of Introduction to Cultural Anthropology and I enjoy seeing the students emerge from their summer haze and begin to open up to the new ideas and ways of thinking presented in the course. Second, I find great pleasure in observing how our seniors have progressed and developed during their years on campus. I remember how shy and unsure many of them were as I now watch them working on challenging senior projects. There are still moments, of course, when they are unsure and overwhelmed, but they take pride in telling me how their classes and interests are coming together. I am proud of the ways in which my colleagues and I have worked together to provide a range of ideas and perspectives so that our students have options to expand their own ideas and perspectives as they consider their future lives and careers. I know I speak for all the faculty in expressing the hope that we will hear from our alumni and finding out what they are up to.

I may be particularly nostalgic this year as we have a very strong senior class, many of whom I have had in a number of classes. I will be out on maternity leave during their last Spring semester and may not have the chance to say good-bye. So I guess my real reason

for this message is to express my hope that they will find their own passions and careers that make them as happy as I have been with mine. It's been wonderful being part of their lives during their college years. Good luck to the class of 2011!

For this Fall News we have two exciting contributions. The first is the Preface to Marc Bogliolo's recent book *A Matter of Life and Death: Hunting in Contemporary Vermont*. The second, "Global Health in Boston's Inner City" by Linda Barnes (Associate Professor, Department Family Medicine, Boston University School of Medicine), is about BU's new innovative Master of Arts program in Medical Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Practice (MACCP).

Please remember we are always looking for submissions to the NEAA News. I hope to see everyone at the NEAA Meetings March 25 & 26, 2011 to be held at Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, New Hampshire.

Jessica Skolnikoff
NEAA News Editor

MARCH 25 & 26, 2011
NEAA Conference @ Franklin Pierce University
Rindge, New Hampshire

Call for Papers coming soon
<http://www.neaa.org/>

Organize a panel, Give a paper, Meet new colleagues, Network,
Run for a NEAA position, Apply for a Student Travel Grant,
Enter your paper or poster in the graduate or undergraduate paper
contest, Explore New Hampshire, And so much more.....

A Matter of Life and Death: Hunting in Contemporary Vermont

By Marc Boglioli, Assistant Professor, Drew University

Preface from A Matter of Life and Death: Hunting in Contemporary Vermont

When I turned nine I got a gun. As the official ninth birthday present for the boys in my family, it was one of the most anticipated events of my young life. In anthropological terms, it was a classic rite of passage. With this cherished gift I came one big step closer to the adult male world. And in my family this world still had a lot to do with classic indicators of American masculinity: physical conditioning, self-reliance, and, among other things, knowing your way around firearms.

Like those of my brothers before me, my first gun was a .177 caliber air rifle. Although an air rifle may not seem like a real gun, with only eight wobbly-armed pumps my Sheridan Blue Max could deliver a blow comparable to a .22 caliber rifle—or so I was told. Not surprisingly, gun safety was a serious subject in my house, and I dreaded the thought of my father learning that I had done something stupid with my gun. But along with the deadly seriousness that accompanied gun ownership came a level of trust and personal freedom that many contemporary American parents (particularly nonrural ones) would consider recklessly irresponsible. Yes, those were the days when a preteen New Jersey boy could roam the woods with his gun for an afternoon and his mother would be glad that he was out having some good clean fun.

For my first shooting lesson, my father, a former Marine Corps shooting champion, took me into our old dirt-floored wagon shed and set up a target against the fieldstone foundation. He showed me how to steady the gun by exhaling as I gently squeezed the trigger. After honing my marksmanship skills on targets, my next step was to start shooting live animals. That generally meant shooting “black birds,” such as starlings and grackles. Killing a bird carried great importance for me. It was the next critical step in my adolescent march toward masculine self-reliance.

My opportunity came that spring. I stalked across the pasture from the barn to the old black walnut tree and huddled against its trunk, shielding myself from the grackle that was perched on a limb about thirty-five feet away, next to one of our chicken coops. I can’t remember if I was standing or if I shot from one knee, but I do remember leveling the rifle with a smooth back-and-forth swing, exhaling, and squeezing the trigger—just as my father had taught me. The shot was perfect. When I inspected the grackle’s body I found a bloody spot high under the wing where the pellet had entered. The bird had fallen the fifteen or so feet to the ground with nary a twitch. I swelled with pride.

As it turned out, the marksmanship was the easy part. Now I had to do something with the dead grackle that I held in my hand. I walked over to the wagon shed where, in addition to holding shooting lessons, we also kept our garbage cans. The only conclusion I had ever known to the process of killing nongame animals (groundhogs, rats, grackles, and so forth) was to throw them out—in the garbage, over a bank, or maybe even in the manure pile out behind the barn. What occurred next would prove to be one of the most significant moments of my life.

I tossed the grackle on top of the garbage and just stood there looking at it. My nine-year-old mind began to swirl. Only ten minutes earlier I was taking aim at my first kill with the steely resolve of a

Louis L'Amour character, but now I was wondering why I had ever pulled the trigger. And it wasn't the actual death of the grackle that was bothering me. Growing up around farming, I was comfortable with the idea of killing animals. What was bothering me was one simple question: Why was this bird in the garbage? I'd practically have a funeral procession for a dead hamster, and this wonderful wild animal was headed to the town dump.

Sociologically speaking, I should not have been such a conflicted hunter. My father grew up on a hardscrabble farm as a hunter and trapper, my brothers hunted (one even trapped), my mom wasn't opposed to hunting, and I lived in a rural area. Nevertheless, after I killed that grackle my feelings about hunting were never quite the same. I wanted explanations. I wanted to really understand what people were doing when they went hunting. And, like many social scientists, I eventually sought out the answers to these deeply personal questions in my research. People often ask why I study hunting, and I usually just tell them that I've always been interested in understanding why people hunt and how different people interact with animals. And that is absolutely true. A more complete answer, however, would include the story of a nine-year-old boy staring at a dead grackle on a pile of garbage.

In the years between the grackle and graduate school I would do a little hunting, take wilderness survival courses, attend my father's funeral, raise pigs for slaughter, rescue and raise a newborn gray squirrel, spend dreamy moccasin-clad hours in the forests around our house, and generally fan my deep primitivist desire to live off the land. All the while my ambivalence toward hunting remained. But it had become more refined: my gripe with hunting was mostly with hunters, not hunting. Increasingly, I found myself in the ironic—but probably not uncommon—position of being pro-hunting but anti-hunter.

A prime example of my trouble with hunters occurred in the late 1980s or early 1990s as I was driving west on Route 22 in Whitehouse, New Jersey. A man was pulled over on the shoulder of the highway with a dead deer tied to the roof of his car. Another man immediately pulled over next to him and, as I was approaching in the oncoming lane, they exchanged a jubilant high-five. At the time, it struck me as one of the most disrespectful acts toward animals that I had ever seen, and it became symbolic of all that I thought was wrong with hunters: *they didn't care about animals!*

That moment also galvanized my interest in studying hunting, yet I never anticipated carrying out an academic study on the subject. For some reason, I assumed that high-minded professors would deem the topic far too mundane for serious intellectual scrutiny. It wasn't until my senior year in college, after my adviser at Rutgers, Uli Linke, assured me that hunting was a suitable topic for graduate studies, that I started to think about writing an academic book on hunting. Until then, I had dreamed of being a freelance writer and producing the Euro-American hunting version of Barry Lopez's *Of Wolves and Men*.

Finally, in the fall of 1996, after three years of graduate classes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I headed off to begin my ethnographic fieldwork on hunting in rural Addison County, Vermont. For the next eighteen months—in homes and small-town diners, over beers and on the trail—I made it my business to try to understand what hunting means to people in a rural community where hunting comes as “natural” as some people's daily visits to the local Starbuck's.

Like most anthropologists, I was treated to several crucial ethnographic moments during my fieldwork. These moments can be community-wide conflicts or seemingly mundane off-the-cuff comments made in

passing. One of the most memorable occurred at a deer hunting camp in the Green Mountains during the second week of Vermont's 1997 rifle deer season.

Night had fallen and all the men had returned from the woods. They basked in the warmth of the camp, shedding their woolen coats and easing into their post-hunt routines. Some played cards, some sat on their beds fiddling with equipment, others started preparing dinner. I sat at a small wooden table with the card players—trying to learn a new game before my spare change ran out.

This was the third camp I had visited that year in search of data for my dissertation. As usual, I felt incredibly grateful to be at a camp. The Vermont firearm deer season is short, and hunting camps are enormously special places for many men. Considering that I had generally met the camp owners only once at their homes during the course of interviews (or, in one case, only over the phone), I was always quite impressed with the willingness of these men to allow an anthropologist to visit them while they were on vacation.

The camp I was staying at that cold November night was, and still is, located near Bread Loaf Mountain, not far from the site of the annual Bread Loaf Writers' Conference hosted by Middlebury College. Unlike most of the other camps I have visited over the years, this camp is not owned by one of the hunters; it is owned by Middlebury College and rented each year by a consistent core group. It is large and relatively modern by Vermont deer camp standards, but it was deer camp just the same: an easy-going, fun-loving, relaxing place where friends and family gathered every fall to joke about old times, ponder the mysteries of the natural world, and dream of future adventure.

As I soon learned, deer camps are eminently social places and, to a certain degree, the pursuit of deer simply serves as a good excuse to get folks together for a week or two in the woods. Hunting sets the tone and provides the reason for the gathering, but in the end it is probably the inner nourishment from deer camp's special camaraderie that keeps hunters coming back year after year, regardless of whether or not they kill, or even see, a deer.

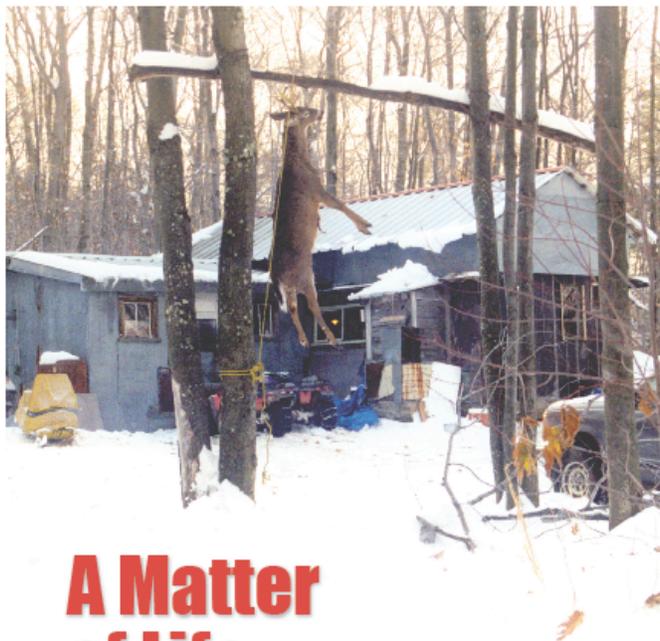
So there I was drinking my beer and settling into life at a new camp when suddenly there was a wild-eyed man standing in the doorway. He seemed to bristle with excitement. Seconds later, I learned that he had come to let the guys know he had gotten a deer earlier that day. The man sitting to my right, a Middlebury native whose brother also attends this camp, gave me a quick nudge and encouraged me to go talk to the visitor.

After we'd been introduced and had talked for a little while, I followed this man out to his SUV to take a look at "his" deer's antlers. As I rounded the front of his vehicle, I was shocked by what I saw. There on the passenger seat, on an old newspaper, was the complete severed head of the deer. Dead deer are a common sight for me during my research; I've seen enough eighteen-month-old, one-hundred-twenty pound bucks to sink a ship. But for some reason, on that particular night, seeing a wide-eyed, bloody deer head sitting on a car seat seemed particularly shocking and, frankly, vulgar. I distinctly remember thinking about how important it must be for this guy to prove to his friends that he got a deer. To be completely honest, I was wondering if he was a nut. Or was he simply the personification of the "slob hunter" stereotype that informs so many nonhunters' opinions of hunters?

On the bright side, it was shaping up to be a beautiful night—the kind of night that the local Chamber of

Commerce must dream of. The air was cold and crisp. The snow glistened under a clear, starlit sky. Smoke from the camp fireplace hung in the air, drifting ever so slowly across the distant face of Mt. Romance. Every now and then a tattered end of birch bark would rustle in the breeze.

The stranger and I talked for quite a while out in the driveway that night. As the minutes passed and I tried to will my teeth from chattering, the guy with the bloody deer head on his passenger seat seemed increasingly less scary. He told me how much he values his time in the woods, that he has a master's degree in Recreation, and how "complete" he feels when he kills a deer. I never did get to ask him what specifically he meant by "complete." But when the time seemed right I asked for his thoughts on an issue that I have discussed with numerous hunters over the years: the simultaneous violence and affection that is involved with hunting. He quickly said he knew just what I meant. Then he looked away into the shadowy woods—thinking. He turned back to me and shook his head, as if he were trying to put words to something he knew would be belittled by the constraints of our language. Finally, giving up on perfection, he shook his head again in what seemed like frustration and simply said, "Yeah, it's the ultimate paradox."



A Matter of Life and Death

Hunting in Contemporary Vermont

MARC BOGLIOLI

This relatively brief, chance encounter would prove to be thematically emblematic of my research in Vermont and, more generally, of the national discussion on hunting as well. People are killing animals they claim to love. Women are taking to the field, guns slung over their shoulders, in unprecedented numbers. Over ten million Americans are hunting in the early years of the twenty-first century. It's not hard to see why contemporary American hunting strikes many as a paradoxical endeavor. Perhaps most importantly, however, this exchange beautifully encapsulates the deep, sometimes conflicted emotions that inform so many heartfelt conversations and bitter arguments about hunting in America today.

Special thanks to University of Massachusetts Press for allowing us to publish this *Preface*.

Global Health in Boston's Inner City

By Linda L. Barnes, Associate Professor, Department of Family Medicine, Boston University School of Medicine

In 2009 Boston University launched an innovative Masters of Arts program in Medical Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Practice (MACCP) that focuses on diverse health cultures within the United States. The two-year program grew out of the [Boston Healing Landscape Project](#) (BHLP), an 8-year interdisciplinary study funded the Ford Foundation, which has explored the interface between cultural, medical/therapeutic and religious pluralism in racial/ethnic minority communities of Boston, Massachusetts. Through the collaborative engagement of a group of anthropologists, religion scholars, physicians, sociologists, students, and community intellectuals and practitioners, the BHLP transcends disciplinary boundaries to integrate the best insights of each of these perspectives to promote a culturally sensitive vision of health care that transforms conventional practices. The program is housed in the [Division of Graduate Medical Sciences](#) (GMS) at [Boston University School of Medicine](#) (BUSM), which awards the MA degree in MACCP.

One of the program's strengths is its interdisciplinary curriculum. Half of course work (2 seminars per semester) focuses on medical anthropology research methods and theory. Students customize the other half of their program according to their own career aspirations, a design that allows them to select their other courses not only from MACCP electives, but also from courses throughout the various schools and colleges of [Boston University](#) (BU) as a whole. The medical anthropology seminar courses prepare students to conduct intensive thesis fieldwork in a local community, but the program also provides training for clinical and social service careers through professional-development workshops.

The faculty members in the MACCP have played leadership roles in fostering interdisciplinary scholarship on health and healing among minority groups in the United States. Director [Linda Barnes](#) and Assistant Director [Lance Laird](#) are both cross-trained in medical anthropology and comparative religious studies. Barnes's research focuses on the history and anthropology of the dissemination of Chinese medicine and related healing arts throughout American culture. Laird's work examines interfaces between American Muslims, biomedicine, and Islamic understandings of healing. The newest member of the faculty is [Diane Weiner](#), who also teaches at the BU School of Public Health. Weiner works largely with American Indian tribal, rural, and urban communities to develop cancer and diabetes education and support interventions. The program's core faculty is complemented by the presence of three additional medical anthropologists and four medical sociologists on the greater medical campus at BUSM. Additionally, students benefit from the program faculty's academic network on the medical and main campuses of BU, and with faculty and community leaders throughout the city.

The location of the program in Boston's South End places students at the center of several culturally rich and complex communities, many of them racial/ethnic minorities. Our neighbors span the cultural and class spectrum, and include longstanding groups (e.g., African American, Cape Verdean, and Chinese), groups who have settled in Boston over the past half century (e.g., Puerto Rican, Vietnamese, and Haitian), and groups who represent the city's New Americans (e.g., Somali, Bosnian), among many others. (For examples, see the program's [Country Guides](#)). The extensive cultural diversity in the area is reflected in the large interpreter staff at [Boston Medical Center](#) (BMC)—the teaching hospital for

BUSM. The full-time staff offers interpretation services for 17 languages and there is additional assistance for over 60 languages and dialects through contract interpreters. The Medical Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Program is designed to train students to engage in local fieldwork in this diverse Boston region, which incorporates transnational communities. Hence, we define Boston as a part of global health.

Students enter the program from a variety of backgrounds. Some majored in anthropology as undergraduates, but others specialized in the humanities and the basic sciences. The program has attracted students who have worked in health agencies and other service settings as well. When asked what we look for in applicants, we suggest that, in addition to reviewing an applicant's grades, GRE scores, and support letters, we also look at what he or she has to say about their engagement in interdisciplinary work. What experience have they acquired in connection with the topic or group with whom they want to work? Have they volunteered, interned, and/or worked in settings with cultural groups other than their own? And last, but not least, do they like to color outside the lines?

The MACCP program is designed to prepare students for three broad kinds of work and study: To apply to a doctoral program, particularly for someone who has no previous training in Medical Anthropology (or even in Anthropology); to work in government, social service or regulatory agencies, advocacy organizations, or similar programs; and/or to enter clinical training or practice with strong cross-cultural research and competency-based skills. Even for those expecting eventually to work overseas, we suggest that working with related immigrant groups provides an experiential as well as an intellectual and academic perspective on globalization.

As a new program, we have yet to graduate the first class of MA students. However, students we have mentored over the years—experiences that led us to start the MACCP—have gone on to do the following: play leadership roles in health services (Director of Research and Client Services, Manhattan Research, New York; Program Manager, Multicultural AIDS Coalition, Inc., Boston; Program Coordinator, A Balm in Gilead); attend medical school and residency programs (Johns Hopkins; the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Columbia University; Stony Brook, SUNY; Brown University School of Medicine; Oregon Health & Science University School of Medicine); enter doctoral programs in anthropology (Harvard, U. of Chicago, UC Santa Cruz, McGill, Emory); and engage in graduate study in other fields (BU School of Public Health, the law schools at UC Berkley and Duke; Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University; School of Social Work, Salem State College).

We welcome inquiries. To learn more about the MACCP, visit the program's [website](#). To request further information in relation to your own interests, visit:
<http://www.bu.edu/bhlp/Education/Masters/request/form.html>.

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