

Newsletter

Society for Applied Anthropology

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Human Terrain/Department of Defense - Anthropologists and the Military

By Susan L. Andreatta [S_Andrea@uncg.edu], President and the SfAA Executive Board

The Department of Defense (DoD) recently initiated a new program to enhance the collection and analysis of data in combat zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. The DoD now seeks to recruit personnel with graduate training in anthropology and sociology to staff this program; language skills are similarly valued. The name of the effort is the Human Terrain System (HTS).

The HTS Program came to the attention of the SfAA leadership in the winter of 2006-07. At that time, the DoD submitted a personnel ad to the SfAA for distribution through the Society web page. Prior to accepting the ad, the DoD request was referred to the Board, which voted at the Spring Meeting, March 2007, not to accept the ad for distribution. Opinion within the Board on this matter was almost equally divided.

The HTS Program gained wider publicity in October 2007, when an article on the topic was published in the New York Times and widely distributed thereafter. Subsequently, the Times published a letter commenting on the topic and over the signature of the current President of the American Anthropological Association (AAA). Following this article, the op-ed letter, and subsequent publicity, the HTS Program apparently became a topic of considerable concern within the leadership of the AAA.

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The discussion about the HTS Program has been set in the context of the broad issue of 'anthropology and the military'. This topic was the subject of a very popular session at the 66th Annual Meeting of the Society in Vancouver, B.C., Canada, in March of 2006. The HTS Program debate will also be discussed at a general session at the 68th Annual Meeting of the Society in Memphis in March of 2008. Finally, the topic will be the central theme of a plenary session at the 69th Annual Meeting of the Society in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in March of 2009. That Plenary Session in Santa Fe will be co-sponsored by the School of Advanced Research in Santa Fe.

The Society is keenly interested in the world beyond the academy, and indeed was founded in 1941 to support and encourage the application of the social sciences. We encourage and seek to facilitate the active engagement of our members and colleagues in the issues and problems of the contemporary world and have done so for the past sixty-six years.

The leadership of the Society has received inquiries from members and interested parties regarding the HTS program. In particular, the leadership has been invited to prepare and distribute an opinion which would either formally or informally bind the behavior of the membership relative to the HTS. However, the Society will refrain from issuing a formal opinion in order that further exchange and discussion may proceed in a productive fashion and to the benefit of our members. There are other reasons which have led to this decision.

1. Multiple Disciplines Within the SfAA. The SfAA is not a discipline-specific association and thus we do not feel equipped to decide whether there are particular aspects of the disciplines of "anthropology" and/or "sociology" or of other disciplines represented in the SfAA membership which are violated by the participation of its members in the HTS Program. For a similar reason, we do not feel that we should function as a spokesperson for the discipline of Anthropology to inform the general public.
2. Ethics. The SfAA was the first professional association to prepare and disseminate a "code of ethics". We regularly publicize this to our membership and encourage the widest affirmation of its principles. There is nothing in the SfAA Code of Ethics which is directly affected by the HTS or participation in the HTS.
3. Relationship with Members. The Society seeks to provide the widest possible venue for the reasoned exchange on complex, contentious or controversial issues. Through this exchange and discussion, we seek to provide members with the greatest opportunity to understand an issue and craft an individual interpretation or position on such issues. It is therefore the Society's position that members should seek out the information they need to make individual interpretations and respond accordingly. The Society will not position itself as the voice of all applied and practicing anthropologists, sociologists, geographers etc., as this prevents differing opinions from being recognized. When many voices are heard on such a complex issue there will be discussion, debate and a greater opportunity for a sharing of ideas.

The current discussion may be followed through the following sources and sites:

- http://www.army.mil/professionalwriting/volumes/volume4/december_2006/12_06_2.html
- http://marcusgriffin.com/blog/2007/05/the_human_terrain_system_1.html
- <http://www.spaceandculture.org/2007/05/human-terrain-systems-and-other-ways-of.php>
- <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9d04e3d81130f936a35753c1a9619c8b63>

Matthew Boehm's project is still in progress. Nearly two years ago Kaiser Family Health Plan (KFHP) provided funding to the Children's Discovery Museum in San Jose (CDM) for a number of health education initiatives to be carried out within the museum. Matthew is currently conducting research to evaluate and potentially re-design one of the proposed initiatives. He is also assessing the relationship between KFHP and CDM. In addition to the immediate initiative, this project can shape future collaboration between the two organizations. Matthew states that "department professors have established strong relationships with a number of organizations and individuals in the Silicon Valley and elsewhere providing significant placement opportunities for students. The department has also cultivated relationships with other departments within SJSU. For example my particular project involves collaboration with the Industrial Design. The education I am receiving is strongly rooted in the intellectual and ethical traditions of the discipline while clearly establishing the relevance of anthropology to a variety of scenarios inside and outside academia."

Andrea Arjona, an international student from Columbia, returned to her home country to evaluate an academic program in environmental law to assess the competency of this particular program in developing curricula on climate change issues. Such issues are salient in Columbia, which is particularly vulnerable. Andrea, who came to the program with a passion and knowledge of the legal landscape of climate change, was able to customize her curriculum to her needs. She feels that the "The MA in Applied Anthropology at SJSU encourages students to combine their knowledge about a particular area with students' expertise or interest on particular issues, such as climate change, agriculture, design, etc."

These examples illustrate the kind of applied anthropology being developed at SJSU. It is grounded in the classical theories, methods, and modes of application, while it attempts to adapt them to the needs of a broad range of partners and clients. The program can, we hope, become a magnet for imaginative thinkers who appreciate the value of a solid academic foundation that prepares them to be true to their own interests and commitments, while taking applied anthropology into new and unconventional places. [Acknowledgement: A special thanks goes to our community partners and Sarah Clementson, Gregory Cabrera, Matthew Boehm and Andrea Arjona for sharing their projects.]

Public and Applied Anthropology at Northern Kentucky University

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The anthropology program at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) is a dynamic and growing community of applied cultural and archaeological anthropologists. Eight full-time professors, six part-time professors, one professor in another department, and one emeritus professor serve almost 100 students majoring in anthropology; additional students minoring in anthropology, archaeology, and Native American studies; and thousands of other NKU students in a diverse, learner-centered environment that meshes education, research and publication, and service to the community, the university, and the profession of anthropology. With a student enrollment of approximately 14,000, NKU is not as large as several other Kentucky universities, and yet NKU's program has more undergraduate anthropology majors than any of them. Our strategy for achieving a strong undergraduate program in anthropology is within the grasp of most



anthropology departments, and we would like to share our history and plans for the future.

Currently, NKU's anthropology program includes the following eight full-time anthropologists who are actively involved in public and/or applied anthropology:

- H. Thomas Foster, II (archaeology; historical and behavioral ecology; anthropogenic effects on the environment; quantitative models of economic and evolutionary behavior; North American Indians; GIS and spatial analysis; public education and heritage preservation)
- MaryCarol Hopkins (cultural anthropology; Africa; Southeast Asian refugees; arts; gender roles; ethnographic methods; cultural transmission)
- Douglas W. Hume (cultural anthropology; applied anthropology; ethnoecology; analysis of inter- and intracultural variation; cultural models; ritual; conservation; agriculture; linguistics; Internet culture; Madagascar; North America)
- Timothy D. Murphy (cultural anthropology; Latin America; Mexican Indians; religion; peasant societies; economic anthropology; kinship; gender roles; film-making; culture theory)
- Sharlotte K. Neely (cultural anthropology; applied anthropology; ethnohistory; North American Indians; Native Australia & Oceania; the environment; social organization; kinship; ethnicity; politics)
- Michael J. Simonton (cultural anthropology; applied anthropology; Celtic Europe; Afro-Caribbean; North American Indians; psychological anthropology; culture change; gerontology; peasant studies; religion)
- Barbara J. Thiel (archaeology; physical anthropology; Southeast Asian Archaeology; North American archaeology; field and lab methods; archaeological theory; early agriculture; human ecology; Neolithic; early hominid evolution; hunters and gatherers)
- Judy C. Voelker (archaeology; cultural anthropology; museums; Southeast Asian archaeology; Mesoamerican archaeology; cultures of Southeast & East Asia; ceramics; ethnoarchaeology; women in antiquity; prehistoric ecology).



It is hoped that in the near future both a forensic and a medical anthropologist will be added to our list of full-time professors providing an even more extensive and comprehensive department. The university is also encouraging us to explore the development of a Master's degree in applied anthropology, which will be the only applied anthropology graduate degree in the region.

The development of the department into its current composition has been a steady period of growth. In the 1970s, early in the development of the NKU Anthropology Program, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology James F. Hopgood created two degree routes for undergraduate majors: the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology

(http://www.nku.edu/~anthro/academic_programs/anthropology_major.htm). The BS degree was designed for students planning to join the work force upon graduation while the BA degree, which added statistical and foreign language coursework to the BS degree, was for students planning to enter graduate school. From almost the founding of Northern Kentucky University in 1968, the anthropology department has had to answer the question, "why should a student with no plans for graduate study major in anthropology." What we discovered was that those with a Bachelor's degree in anthropology develop many of the skills sought after by employers (e.g., adapting to new problems and working with multicultural teams). By the 1980s, we had collected specific examples of companies, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations that had employed our anthropology alumni. Via our email list and other efforts, we have kept in touch with anthropology alumni who have been eager to mentor and network with our current students, which allows us to demonstrate to prospective majors what they can do with anthropology after they graduate.

We found that most of our majors who went on to graduate school were interested in jobs outside academia, mostly in contract archaeology or applied cultural anthropology. NKU created the interdisciplinary Master's of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) degree in 2005. In 2006, Eric Bates, who now teaches part-time at NKU, was the first to graduate with a MALS concentration in anthropology. Our anthropology majors have pursued other NKU graduate degrees, most frequently the Master's of Public Administration (MPA) and Jurist Doctorate (JD). Though many anthropology graduates do go farther a field to pursue both their MA and PhD degrees in anthropology, with a student body that often has difficulty due to family or economic constraints in leaving the Greater Cincinnati/Tri-state area where NKU is located, it is necessary to have locally available opportunities for graduate work. In addition to NKU's MALS, MPA, and JD degrees, the University of Cincinnati, a twenty-minute drive from NKU, offers an MA in anthropology. Within a two-hour or less drive from NKU, there are the University of Kentucky, Miami University, Ohio State University, and Indiana University, which offer MAs and PhDs in anthropology. The Union Institute, one of the early distance-learning universities, also offers graduate degrees in anthropology and is based in Cincinnati. We plan to provide a locally available Master's degree in applied anthropology at NKU so that our non-traditional students with local family and work obligations have the opportunity to continue their education.

Currently, in addition to working with the anthropology faculty, students at NKU have the opportunity to apply anthropology and get resume-worthy work experience with NKU's Center for Applied Ecology, Center for Environmental Education, Institute of Freedom Studies, Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement and Nonprofit Development, and the Museum of Anthropology. Our newest applied anthropologist, Douglas Hume, is currently designing an applied environmental anthropology course with a service-learning component. Students will collaborate with the local county conservation district as they develop and implement conservation education programs for local farmers.

By going to our anthropology web site at <http://www.nku.edu/~anthro/> and clicking on "Anthropology Careers," a student can learn about not only national and international job prospects but local ones as well. We have also increased our majors by literally cataloging many of the local companies and agencies who hire anthropologists to demonstrate to our students where they can get a job in anthropology.



The site also attempts to answer the question of "What can I do with Anthropology?" as does our annual Anthropology Careers Day in April. Careers Day provides an opportunity for students to hear and interact with applied anthropologists, often our own alumni, with real careers as anthropologists. The three speakers scheduled for this spring are NKU Assistant Professor of Anthropology Douglas Hume on applied cultural anthropology, professional archaeologist and NKU part-time anthropology instructor Michael Striker on contract archaeology, and Kentucky State Park Naturalist and NKU anthropology alumnus Todd Young on public anthropology.

Add some refreshments, a showing of one of the films on anthropology careers, and some brochures from the NKU's Career Development Center to some local speakers and any anthropology department can host a successful anthropology careers day at nearly no cost. A successful anthropology careers web site can be developed in the same way by contacting alumni and networking with local practicing anthropologists.

Because of the vision of Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, James Hopgood, NKU Anthropology established a small Museum of Anthropology to further the goal of public anthropology. The museum's current director, Assistant Professor of Anthropology Judy Voelker, has dramatically expanded the role

of the museum in the community through educational and outreach programs and continues to teach the museum methods course developed by Jim Hopgood.

Several student organizations help to establish a sense of community that persists beyond graduation. Currently NKU Anthropology is home to the Student Anthropology Association, a chapter of Lambda Alpha National Anthropology Honor Society, the First Nation Students Organization, and the Anthropology Alumni Club.

The anthropology program at NKU has a long history of helping our students apply anthropology and discovering new ways to make anthropology relevant for our students' lives and careers. For more information about the Anthropology Program at NKU, please visit our web site at <http://www.nku.edu/~anthro/>.



Planning for the SfAA Podcasts

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Planning for the SfAA podcasts at the 68th Annual Meeting in Memphis, Tennessee is well underway. The goal for the project in the upcoming year is to create a solid foundation for a sustainable program so that the project can continue in the many years to come. The project has proven to be of interest to many people, both anthropologists and non-anthropologists, nationally and internationally. In planning for next year, we are considering the valuable feedback we have received, as well as the lessons we learned ourselves during the first year of the project at the Tampa, Florida Meeting in 2007. Moving forward, our plans are to gather funding for the project, create training guides for team members, document the entire process of the project for future reference, and make improvements to the website.

Last year I headed up the podcast project with only volunteer assistance. For next year, I have asked Diana Harrelson to co-manage the podcast project with me in hopes that she will take over the project when I graduate. Diana is also a student in the online master's program at the University of



North Texas. Diana is in her first year of graduate school and is studying business and cyber anthropology. She has experience in web design and audio recording. I'm really looking forward to working with Diana and I believe her experience will be an invaluable asset to the project. Christina Wasson of the University of North Texas will continue to be our mentor.

Diana and I will be working on getting the podcast project funded in the upcoming months. The funding will cover the costs of the project and will allow for us to hire six additional student team members to help record sessions at the Meeting. We are excited at the possibility of being able to expand the participation of the project to other students at a variety of universities! We expect to have the application for team members ready in early December and will advertise the positions via