



# The Participant Observer

Department of Anthropology  
University of Rochester  
Rochester, NY 14627

## ***Including:***

*Recollections  
From Abroad  
page 7*

*Conference  
page 2*

*Visiting Speakers  
page 6*

*Alumni Update  
page 5*

*Undergraduate  
Council  
page 4*

*Culture Shock  
page 3*

*From the Editor's  
Desk  
page 8*

## Morgan Lectures Discuss Foreign News

This year marked the 40th annual Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures. It is the longest running lecture series in history, and our very own Anthropology Department hosts it. Morgan, a lawyer in the Rochester area, focussed on local issues and had an interest in human evolution. His theories crossed borders and oceans, and he helped increase the consciousness of the world and humanity into one.

On Wednesday, November 1, 2000, a public lecture called "Foreign News: Media and the World as a Single Place" was held in Morey Hall. Professor Ulf Hannerz from Stockholm University presented a paper on the working life of foreign correspondents. These men and women are working professionals who have a large influence on the world as a whole and in parts. With globalization, the world is turning into a single place, and people are beginning to pay attention to places not geographically close. Hannerz's idea of global citizenship extends to those active and responsible public participants concerned with humanity. He also examined the idea that as the world is turning into a single place, most people have not experienced the same things as others have experienced around the world. Thus, the news media plays a major part of the flow of information from other parts of the world into the daily lives of people.

On Thursday, November 2, there was a panel discussion held in the Welles-Brown Room in Rush Rhees Library. On the panel were Hilary Appelman, a correspondent from The Associated Press, Ethan Bronner from the New York Times, and John Schidlovsky from PEW Fellowships in International Journalism. Bob Smith, a producer and host of WXXI-AM 1370 Connection in Rochester, served as the moderator. Each panel member opened by explaining what their job was at their respective institutions of business, as well as told stories of various foreign assignments.

A seminar was also held on Friday, November 3, inviting close faculty and students to discuss more openly the issues brought up at both the lecture and the panel discussions.

The Morgan Lectures were sponsored by The Department of Anthropology and College Deans' Office, University of Rochester.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed citizens can change the world."*

*-Margaret Mead*

### Tentative Conference Schedule

#### Friday, March 30

4:00- 5:00 PM – Registration

5:30 - 7:30 PM – light dinner

7:30 PM - view documentary

"Observer Observed";

Nancy Lutkehaus speaks

#### Saturday, March 31

8:30 – 9:00 AM - Continental  
breakfast

9:00 AM - Opening of the  
Conference: Introductory  
Remarks

#### *Morning Session: Papers*

9:45 AM – paper one

10:00 AM – paper two

10:15 AM – paper three

10:30 AM – paper four

10:45 AM – discussion (15 min)

11:00 AM – break for 10 mins

11:10 AM – paper five

11:25 AM – paper six

11:40 AM – paper seven

11:55 AM – paper eight

12:10 AM – discussion (15 mins)

12:25 PMpm – catered lunch

#### *Afternoon Session: workshops*

1:00 PM – 5:00 pm Workshops  
and Roundtable  
Discussions

6:00 PM – dinner at Meliora for  
invited participants;  
awards presentation

Margaret Mead, through her work, has inspired original thinking and activism in the community. Her idea of the power of cooperative action has also inspired hundreds of organizations. The University of Rochester Department of Anthropology has decided to celebrate Mead's open mind when thinking about the public. The "Change



the World" Conference honoring Margaret Mead's centennial will be held on Friday, March 30 and Saturday, March 31. The main conference, including papers and roundtable discussions, will be held on Saturday in the Welles-Brown Room in the Rush Rhees Library. Those who attend the paper session are welcome to stay for lunch. This conference plans to celebrate anthropology pursued in the spirit of Margaret Mead. Topics include poverty, gender issues, leadership and activism in the community, diversity and race issues. All students, faculty, professors, community members, and alumni are welcome to hear the papers and participate in the roundtable discussions. There is no previous anthropological experience required! Students from other universities will be attending, as well as giving papers in the morning and participating on the roundtable discussions in the afternoon. We encourage anyone interested to attend. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kate Navarra or Tessa Farmer at 716-274-4232. Hope to see you there!

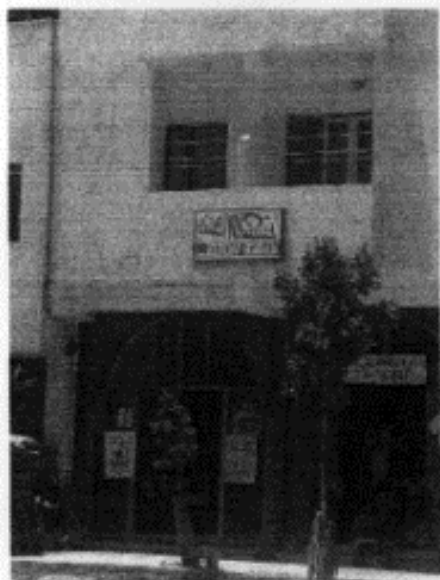
# Headin' Home

by Tessa Farmer

One of the most common questions that I have been asked since returning to the US from abroad is, "How are you dealing with the culture shock?"

The question always gives me pause. "Things are much cleaner," and "It's really COLD over here," are accurate, but not very interesting possible answers". I find it totally overwhelming to make choices in grocery stores and totally underwhelming talking to the cashier because we speak the same language," is another option, but it didn't go over well the first time I tried to use it. So what's left? To be very simplistic about it, if returning home and finding everything that use to be familiar to be strange is reverse culture shock, I've experienced it in spades. For one, everyone has gotten much smarter while I was away. American politics have gotten much crazier (and I left AFTER the last President was almost impeached because of an affair). The American media has taken a real turn for the worse. Eating pork, carrying guns, and binge drinking all seem bizarre. Skirts above the knee seem indecent. Polkadots and stripes seem like a good combination.

I guess the other part of reverse culture shock is missing what you came to know as familiar. What do I miss about Egypt? Lots of things, really. I miss missing home. When I was in Cairo, home seemed so safe, familiar, and desirable. Now that I'm here, the excitement has worn off a bit. I miss hearing and speaking Arabic, and the surprise and pleasure with which people greeted the most basic statements I eked out in their language. I miss the feeling that every weekend I could head out to parts unknown- without killing my budget. I miss taking taxis for the equivalent of 10 cents a minute and meeting a part time physician with a passion for American politics. I miss eye contact and friendly smiles from little old ladies on the street, and having someone hand me their baby to hold on the metro. I miss cheek kissing as a valid form of greeting. I miss the feeling of uncertainty that greeted me each time I walked out my door. I miss having at least one person each day challenge my perspective.



*Here is a local shop, called the Alexander. There is an Alexander abwa (coffee shop), hotel, and craft store in a row on the road that leads into the Oasis from Marsa Matrouh. The hotel caters to the backpacking set, and the Siwa owner of all three "Alexanders" promotes his hotel to visitors arriving into town off the buses. Young and recently married into a wealthy Siwa family, the owner is now looking to close down his craft store because of its poor location as "cheap hotels" are built along different access roads and because of the profusion of craft stores that have flooded the market. The Alexander Handicraft store is one of the few places in Siwa where a map created by Swiss ethnologist Bettina Leopoldo in the mid-Seventies is still distributed. The Alexander abwa shares its name with another local restaurant, literally on the other side of the building, facing the opposite direction. The name Alexander is popular in tourist related projects in Siwa, as the Oasis is home to the Oracle that Alexander the Great visited to prove his divinity as the Pharaoh of Egypt.*

Check out the Anthropology Department at  
<http://www.rochester.edu/College/ANT>

## **Northeastern Anthroppological Association Annual Meetings**

The 40th Anniversary Conference will be held Friday/Saturday March 30/31, 2001 in Hartford Connecticut. It will be held in the Crown Plaza Hotel. The NEAA will celebrate their fourth decade with a conference to remember, with well organized sessions, provocative plenary sessions, career workshop, a first-rate banquet with world-class speakers, reasonable accommodation and dining. Departments can still register, undergraduates and graduates. Graduate students are invited to contact Graduate Representative Elizabeth Fuller-Tarbox for advice and assistance. For more information, check out <http://www.neaa.org/Conference.htm>.

The Undergraduate Anthropology Council (UAC) works to plan activities for anthropology majors, minors, and anyone interested in anthropology. The Council is open to all interested parties. It works to plan social and educational events to bring students and professors together in the pursuit of common interests. Anyone interested in finding out more about the UAC can contact Kate Navarra at x44232, [kn001g@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:kn001g@mail.rochester.edu) or Tessa Farmer at x42624, [tf001g@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:tf001g@mail.rochester.edu).

## Faculty Updates

Professor Kamran Asdar Ali attended a workshop titled "Cities and Citizenship II: Questions of Comparison." He attended the conference in Beirut, Lebanon on February 5-7, 2001. The title of his talk: "Responsible or Impotent: Choices for Men in Egypt." This workshop was the second in the series of activities organized by the Social Science Research Council's "Iran Initiative" which aims at enhancing dialogue and linkages between social scientists in Iran, regionally and internationally, as well as encouraging non-Iranian scholars and researchers to engage with the dynamics of the Iranian case. The workshop focused on the meanings and practices of citizenship in the urban arena, including examining the relevance of the notion of urban citizenship in different contexts. One focus was on different social groups who may experience citizenship in different ways and contest various processes of marginalization: women, youth, nomads. Another focus was on channels through which notions of citizenship, and practices of citizenship are organized: development, education, civic associations.



*Traveling around the world is often a necessity for professors and other faculty who attend conferences and give papers.*

## Alumni Update: Where are they now?

◆ Andrea Janovic is an adjunct professor at Northern Kentucky University, in Highland Heights, KY. She currently teaches Cultural Anthropology, and is developing both "People and Cultures of the Middle East" and "Medical Anthropology" to begin in the summer session 2001. When she's not teaching she is consulting (e.g. utilizing my training in legal/political anthropology in cases referred to a client by the State Department) and working for a local health insurance company. Andrea is also the editor of a newsletter serving the Baha'i community of Greater Cincinnati. Her email is [Ethnomatrix@aol.com](mailto:Ethnomatrix@aol.com).

◆ Nancy Jaquith Kneiss graduated from the University of Rochester Anthropology Department with a BA in 1997. She is currently working as a graphic designer for an architectural firm in the Boston Area. She and Aaron Kneiss, who was also a graduate of the University of Rochester, were married in September of 1999. Her current address is ADD Inc 210 Broadway, Cambridge MA 02139. In an email to the department, she expressed wishes to extend a big "Howdy" to Professors Robert Foster, Kamran Ali and Anthony Carter.

### Forgotten Memories?

Have you forgotten your graduating class? Did you lose your yearbook? Do you want to buy a yearbook for this graduating class? For information regarding yearbooks from past graduating classes or to purchase one for this year, please email [yearbook@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:yearbook@mail.rochester.edu) or call 716-275-5357.

### *Attention Alumni!!*

What are you up to? Do you have a new job? Have you traveled to exotic places? Tell the University of Rochester Anthropology undergraduates, alumni and university community what you are up to. Other alumni have responded and have inquired about friends and former classmates. Please send an email to [anthro@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:anthro@mail.rochester.edu).

## SEARCH THE WEB

For those interested, there are great resources on the web to learn about anthropology, what anthropologists are doing, university programs in anthropology, field schools, internship opportunities, research and traveling opportunities. Here is a list compiled from some of the most visited websites in our department:

American Anthropological Association  
 Northeastern Anthropological Association  
 Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities  
 Archaeological Institute of America  
 Society of American Archaeologists  
 World Email Directory Anthropologists

College and University Home Pages  
 Ethnographic Studies Internet Resources Page  
 Anthropology, American Indian Sites on the Internet

[www.ameranthassn.org](http://www.ameranthassn.org)  
[www.neaa.net](http://www.neaa.net)  
[www.sscnet.ucla.edu/foa/cgi-bin/show-opp.pl](http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/foa/cgi-bin/show-opp.pl)  
[www.archaeological.org](http://www.archaeological.org)  
[www.saa.org](http://www.saa.org)  
[wings.buffalo.edu/academic/department/anthropology/weda/](http://wings.buffalo.edu/academic/department/anthropology/weda/)  
[www.findaschool.org/](http://www.findaschool.org/)  
[lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/other.html](http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/other.html)  
[dizzy.library.arizona.edu/users/jlcox/first.html](http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu/users/jlcox/first.html)

## *Visiting Anthropology Speakers*

### Satanic Verses and the Formation of Islamic Orthodoxy

On January 26, the Anthropology Department was honored to host Dr. M. Shahab Ahmed, who is presently a Fellow at Harvard University. Dr. Ahmed presented a paper entitled "The Problem of the Satanic Verses and the Formation of Islamic Orthodoxy." The topic of the presentation was not Soliman Rushde's controversial book, rather it was on the historical accounts of a set of verses reportedly given to the Prophet Mohammed by the devil. These verses challenged the revelatory process that legitimizes Profits, and the accounts of their revelation have been both accepted and denied historical accuracy by Islamic Scholars over the ages. Dr. Ahmed traced the treatment of these verses from early Islamic literature to modern day, and used his conclusions to challenge the widely accepted time frame of the establishment of Islamic Orthodoxy.

### AIDS in Africa

On February 7th, Dr. Wende Marshall visited the Department to give a talk on AIDS in Africa. Dr. Marshall's talk problematized biomedical discourses on the origin and construction of AIDS in Africa as ahistorical and purely biological. Her work explores the socio-economic, historical, and structural forces that shape the endemic of AIDS on the African continent. Her interests are in the articulation of power, resistance, and race, and the role of biomedicine in issues of nationalism and decolonization. Dr. Marshall did her Ph.D. dissertation on related issues in Hawaii for Princeton University. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Yale University.

### Urban Structure and Politics in North Carolina

On January 31st, Dr. George Baca visited the Anthropology Department to present his Ph.D. dissertation and a chapter from his upcoming book, "The Culture of Governance: Rituals and Symbols of Post-Segregation Racial Politics." Dr. Baca, who received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, is trained as an urban anthropologist. His work on Fayetteville, North Carolina focused on an attempt to come to terms with post-civil rights movement racial relations in the South. Dr. Baca is interested in race relations, class, and cities as cultural and political entities in modern America. He is currently teaching cultural anthropology classes.

# Recollections from Abroad.....

by Tessa Farmer

*While in Siwa, I had the opportunity to try my hand at charriot racing...*

Okay, so it was just a donkey cart, but it *was* an experience to remember. One morning, I was offered a trip to a building site a bit outside of Siwa town proper. Always up for a change to my routine, I was excited at the opportunity to practice my ethnographic skills and take copious notes. As this was prior to the point in time at which I discovered that I have a completely impractical understanding of the way the world works, I failed to take into account the time involved in travel by donkey cart. I spent a blissful morning, having all sorts of fuzzy conversations about land usage and the history of local property rights.

As I had to get home before they were ready to leave, my friends gave me the donkey and cart and said that the donkey would find his way back. Well, on the way out, they had beaten the donkey with what was, in my admittedly biased opinion, an unnecessary amount of force. I, cultural relativism be damned, asked that they not do that to the poor creature and had done a bit of commiserating with it once we had reached our destination. Of course, irony being what it is, I was just setting myself up for the punch line to this story.

The donkey, once I had convinced it that we wanted to move forward, ambled out on the road to the left. Now, I have a notoriously bad sense of direction, and had been told that the donkey would find his way home. However, when looking down a long desert road and faced with trusting my own instincts or that of a...donkey, I realized that I now had to convince it to go forward in the *other* direction. After Land Rover (either a piece of brilliant satire, or a complete misnomer) and I seized up each other's physical strength and sheer determination, we were headed back in the direction of water within 100 km. Unfortunately, at the pace he set, we weren't going to get to the water in this direction any time soon. Of course I couldn't hit it, as "When in Rome" just wasn't a strong enough mantra to overcome my western orientation to animals. Finally, they sent one of the brothers out to drive the donkey cart (amid much laughter, naturally). I opted to play the hypocrite and was content to be the passenger once again. Traveling abroad certainly does test your ingenuity.



Juxtaposed buildings show us the change in building style that has taken place in the Oasis over the last 15 to 20 years. The building to the left is made of kerchief, a mud brick building material that is obtained by scraping the top layer of highly-salinated soil off agricultural land prior to cultivation. The building to the right, which is intended to replace its older counterpart, is made of white stone and cement. When cement first became available as a building material, families who used it to build extensions or new houses enjoyed a rise in social status. Recently a kerchief revival movement, sparked by a large scale kerchief building project, has focused local attention on the issue of building style and kerchief has become the much lamented "victim of progress." However, craftsmen skilled in traditional building methods have become rare, and stone and cement buildings are the economic option for most Siwan families.

# From the Editor's Desk

The first semester of classes came and went quite rapidly! Welcome back, and welcome 2001! This semester is full of activity, ranging from many interesting speakers giving papers, the Change the World Conference honoring Margaret Mead, and the Senior Seminar Presentations at the end of April, held in Wilson Commons. We highly encourage all who are interested to attend the events to see what the department is doing lately.

Tessa is back from Cairo, and has interesting stories to tell. She will continue to write about her adventures in the "Letters from Abroad" section of the newsletter.

On a very important note, we are looking for inspired, hard-working, students to take over our positions as editor of the Anthropology Department newsletter. An editor's job includes seeking

Questions or comments on any articles or upcoming events? Please feel free to contact us!

Kate Navarra :  
kn001g  
Tessa Farmer:  
tf001g

out events around campus, attending them to write articles, keeping in touch with alumni of the Anthropology Department, knowing basic editing skills as well as knowing (or learning how to use) desktop publishing software. It is important that the Participant Observer continue its legacy of informing the community, alumni, and the university students, faculty and staff of the events and projects the Anthropology Department is sponsoring, planning or attending. The public must continue to be informed if anthropology can take its true role in a domain that is available to the masses. Please let Kate Navarra (kn001g@mail.rochester.edu) or Tessa Farmer (tf001g@mail.rochester.edu) know if you are interested. Good luck with the semester!

*Tessa Farmer Kate Navarra*

## \*Mark Your Calendar\*

◆ **Friday, February 16, 2001, 3 PM Gamble Room, Rush Rhees Library**  
Brackette F. Williams, Ph.D., recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Award, will present a seminar entitled "Potable Mirages and the Will to Kill: Notes on Life in the Cravenhood"

◆ **Wednesday, February 21, 2001, 5 PM Lattimore 441**  
Marilyn Thomas-Hurston, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and African American Studies from the University of South Carolina will present a seminar entitled "mo'...than meets the eye: The Significance of Blackness as Identity for Intra-group Interaction and Social Change"

◆ **March 3-11, 2001**

Spring Break! Have Fun!

◆ **Friday and Saturday, March 30-31, 2001**

Change the World Conference Celebrating Margaret Meads Centennial

◆ **Wednesday, April 18, 2001**

Honors Theses Presentations

◆ **Wednesday, April 25, 2001**

Senior Seminar Anthropology Exposed  
Wilson Commons Hirst Lounge