

The Participant Observer

Department of Anthropology
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627

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Thoughts On Experiencing Peru

By Anna Barnes

Anna Barnes is a third year anthropology major at the University of Rochester.

Dirt engulfs the people as the land and its inhabitants mesh into one fluid landscape of gray. Most forms of life appear barely alive: tree leaves are covered with a thick grime appearing as if they had just recently been spewed by volcanic ash. Dogs nestled on top of garbage piles are barely noticeable. Yet, there's always a persistent patch of sunflowers to be found growing high among the dirt persevering and surviving in what at first glance seem to be unsupportable conditions.

It's not everyday one is presented with an opportunity to learn about how a Latin American country functions within its own borders while at the same time operating in the global society. This summer I was able to travel to Peru and work with local community groups, hear lectures from renowned professors and listen to pastoral activists in communities all across Peru. As an anthropology major, I was overwhelmed with the endless amount of topics I could explore through fieldwork. While the trip in its entirety was meaningful and intense, one of the more noteworthy experiences was my time spent in the pueblos juvenas, or the shantytowns surrounding central Lima.

Throughout my journey, the Peruvians I encountered reminded me of the persevering flowers; even among the chaos and corruption of society they possessed strength, endurance and powerful spirits. (For approximately 12 years part of the country was controlled by a terrorist regime called the Shining Path and military corruption was common in the rest. This destruction, along with the revelation that President Fujimori was smuggling money, left the country in a state of trauma.) Residents of San Juan del Rigancho, the community in which I stayed, demonstrated their ability to survive and endure hardships that to me seemed insurmountable such as not being able to feed a family day after day or fighting for 9 years to have running water.

Though these people lacked material possessions and wealth, their lives were filled with other kinds of riches that are sometimes sparse in America. Peruvians were strongly rooted in the community, the church and family. Americans on the other hand, do not have the same sense of commitment to such social groups but rather only truly identify obligations to themselves. The concept of individualism, though infiltrating Peruvian society through mass media, was not well conceptualized by the people.

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However, Peruvians I met frequently commented on how Westernization has impacted family and community structure particularly because individualism is slowly beginning to influence the youth in both negative and positive ways.

By connecting with those around them, Peruvians seem to establish a sense of order and stability. Establishing comedores (soup kitchens) is just one example of how people come together with the little resources they have to work for the improvement of the community. Not only do people commune in action but also in celebration. Rituals such as birthday parties, baptisms, weddings and saints days hold much significance.

Though it was a quick three and half weeks, I felt like I acquired more knowledge than I could process in a lifetime. By no means do I consider myself to fully understand Peruvian life or even possess much of a capacity to explain it. Yet upon returning one thing I hoped to accomplish was to share my experience with others in hopes that each will be in some way inspired to travel to a place that challenges their beliefs and presents a momentary, yet detailed, snapshot of how other societies exist as separate yet global entities.



MELIORA WEEKEND IS QUICKLY APPROACHING!

OCTOBER 11-13, 2002

This year's theme is "Leadership."

Guests include:

Ted Turner

Bill Bennett

Earl G. Graves

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Fareed Zakaria

Jeffrey Bleustein

Salman Rushdie

and entertainer, Jon Stewart

"Register on-line" link available at

<http://www.rochester.edu/alumni/meliora2002/>

MELIORA

2002

CELEBRATE ROCHESTER

RIT's Gannett Lecture Series

The Rochester Institute of Technology is sponsoring a series of events that might be of interest to individuals concerned with issues of economic globalization and global culture. Some of the lectures fit nicely with course themes, not to mention this year's Morgan Lecture Series.

RIT's Gannett Lecture series this year is again "Globalization, Human Rights, and Citizenship." You can visit the series' webpage at

<http://www.rit.edu/~gannett/>

The "Events Calendar" link changes each quarter, so if you're interested, make sure to revisit the website each quarter.

The fall line-up includes George Ritzer ("The McDonaldization of Society"), Lori Wallach (of Public Citizen), and Saul Landau (sociologist and filmmaker, his most recent film is "Maquila").

"Our Sisters' Promised Land" in Second Edition



Professor Ayala Emmett's book "Our Sisters' Promised Land: Women, Politics and

Israel-Palestinian Coexistence" is coming out in a second edition with a new introductory chapter. Michigan University Press is planning to issue the new edition in 2003 and to include it in its Spring 2003 catalogue.

**Anthropology Course Schedule
Spring 2003**

- ANT 101 Cultural Anthropology
Professor Freeman
- ANT 103 Women in Society
Professor Fordham
- ANT 110 Intro to Linguistic Analysis
Professor Gunlogson
- ANT 193 Community and Diversity
Professor Asbury
- ANT 203 Language & Culture
Professor Forand
- ANT 205 Theories & Debates in ANTHROPOLOGY
Professor Carter
- ANT 209 Worlds of Music
Professor Koskoff
- ANT 218 Birth & Death
Professor Carter
- ANT 226 Culture and Consumption
Professor Foster
- ANT 227 Local & Global Market Research
Professor McCabe
- ANT 244 American Families & Communities
Professor Emmett
- ANT 251 Asian American Experience
Professor Hauser
- ANT 263 Religion & Society
Professor Gibson
- ANT 264 Islam and Global Politics
Professor Gibson
- ANT 270 Urban Schools: Race & Gender
Professor Fordham
- ANT 274 Creative Ethnography
Professor Emmett
- ANT 277 The Museum & the Other
Professor Berlo
- ANT 292 Senior Seminar
Professor Gibson
- ANT 330 Action for Health
Professor Andrus
- ANT 390 Supervised Teaching
- ANT 391 Independent Study
- ANT 392 Practicum in Anthropology
- ANT 393 Honors Research & Anthropology

For more information on upcoming anthropology events go to

<http://www.rochester.edu/calendar>

or

Check out the Anthropology Department at

<http://www.rochester.edu/college/ANT>

ALUMNI UPDATES

Melissa Kucinski (BA '01) successfully completed her first year of law school at the New England School of Law in Boston last May. She then moved to suburban Washington, D.C. and clerked for Judge Andrew Sonner of the Maryland Court of Special Appeals. She authored several court opinions, one expected to be reported this fall. She chose to remain in Washington, D.C. this school year and is taking the fall semester off before returning to law school to get her master's degree in International Relations. She is also going to attend training this fall that would certify her to mediate court cases in the state of Maryland, as well as private disputes. Please feel free to e-mail Melissa at mkucinski@dberlin.org.

Andrea Janovic (MA '92) completed a six month internship with the Hon. James A. Kidney, Jr. in Campbell County, Kentucky. Andrea intends to begin law school in August, 2002. She intends to utilize her training in anthropology to become a resource for the State Department in the Greater Cincinnati area in domestic law when cases involve parties from other countries (i.e. custody disputes).

Kate Navarra (BA '01) is going back to school part time; as a non-degree student. She is going to pursue public history at Umass Amherst. The department seems to be really great. She has met with the graduate advisor and a couple professors and they seem to be really enthusiastic about helping students get internships in museums and historical places. All her classes seem to be very hands-on and lead to almost guaranteed jobs after she gets her Masters degree. She hopes to be done with that program in approximately two years.

Sunny Chung's (BA '97) time in Guinea has come to a close. She appreciates everyone tuning in. She's completed her teaching and administration of exams, said her good-byes to friends and was running around Conakry trying to get all the paperwork done before she left when we received her update. Around June 1st she expected to be back on American soil and was overwhelmed by the emotions associated with the experience of coming home. It was exciting and petrifying at the same time as she described it. Two years didn't seem so long when she signed up, but a lot has changed since June 2000. There are many lessons learned while she was in Guinea. She loved her Peace Corps experience — not all of it was easy. There were many, many frustrating times. But those hours are the ones that build character. So, she believes she has lots of character now. Sunny is considering signing up for the Peace Corps again after retirement.

David Russo (BA '96) is currently living in Washington D.C., helping run the D.C. Indymedia Center. Visit the center's site at <http://dc.indymedia.org>

Mei Yue (PhD '94) completed her temporary duty (TDY) assignment for WFP Afghanistan on July 10th and spent the next two weeks on another TDY at WFP Pakistan country office (CO) in Islamabad. She spent her time there writing up a proposal for a new Pakistan emergency operation (EMOP) for assisting Afghan refugees in its two border provinces.

On July 28th she flew back to Beijing, WFP China CO. She had about ten days to pack, and on August 10th she departed for WFP North Korea CO in Pyongyang to take up a 1-year post there. Mei Yue had thought about taking up this post 7 years ago for a cross-border study and now it is finally coming to reality.

Mei Yue was able to go to a Pakistan and India border flag ceremony in Lahore in early July and found it extremely interesting. She observed it really dramatizes the patriotic passion on both sides, well theatrically performed. In fact it is so well done, so symmetrically done, that the viewer could almost be convinced that they collaborate in rehearsal. She states, after recalling the event, "See, that's what is happening to me; I've seen a lot on this trip in the past 4 months, but don't have time to describe them in detail. Thanks to my digital camera, it will keep all the memories."



2002 Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures

**AS NATURAL AS LIFE: WHAT A PAPUA NEW GUINEA SUGAR
PLANTATION CAN TEACH US ABOUT HUMAN HISTORY**

Presented by:

Frederick Errington, Professor of Anthropology, Trinity College

and

Deborah Gewertz, Professor of Anthropology, Amherst College

PUBLIC LECTURE:

Culture and Cargo: On Avoiding a History of the Self-Evident and the Self-Interested

Wednesday, 16 October 2002

7:00 PM - Lander Auditorium, Hutchison Hall

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Economic Globalization: Let Free Trade Rip?

Thursday, 17 October 2002

2:00 PM - Welles-Brown Room, Rush Rhees Library

Discussants:

Robert J. Foster

Associate Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of Rochester
Rochester, New York

Christine A. Kray

Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
and Anthropology
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rochester, New York

Joseph E. Inikori

Professor
Department of History
University of Rochester
Rochester, New York

James Schmidt

Executive Director
Farm Worker Legal Services
of New York, Inc.
Rochester, New York

From the Editor's Desk

Welcome back to another school year and another volume of the Participant Observer! The Anthropology Department and its students are already off to a fast-paced start. With Meliora Weekend and the Morgan Lectures quickly approaching the Department is busy, to say the least.

The Undergraduate Anthropology Council has a new advisor, Professor Tom Gibson. The year began for the U.A.C. with its participation in the Student's Activities Fair early in September. The initial results were promising as four freshman showed interest before the fair and a number of others signed up for more information at the fair itself.

The U.A.C. is intent on providing as many, if not more, opportunities for anthropology students to network and provide resources for one another as they did last year. On their plate already is a co-sponsorship with the Department on a lunch with the Morgan lecturers as well as a renovation of the Anthropology Department lounge to make it more "student friendly." The Undergraduate History Council has also showed interest in co-sponsoring an off-campus event in the Rochester area with the U.A.C.

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

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er003@mail.rochester.edu

Anthropology Dept.
anthro@mail.rochester.edu

If you are going to be in the Rochester area and would like to stop in to meet with students at a U.A.C. sponsored event, they would love to host an event at which you would be the guest of honor. Feel free to contact me or the Anthropology Department to make arrangements as we always love to network current students with alumni.

Also, we hope to see you at Meliora Weekend and the Morgan Lectures, if possible. On the Friday of Meliora Weekend, the Anthropology Department will be hosting a reception in the Anthropology Department lounge in Lattimore.

Closely following Meliora Weekend are the Morgan Lectures, which are a proud Anthropology Department tradition. As globalization is an issue that strikes the heart of many anthropologically-minded people, I believe this year's Morgan Lectures will prove to be interesting and relevant.

Stay tuned for more news on the Department's and the U.A.C.'s events as they happen. Feel free to send us your updates or articles you wish us to include in an edition of the Participant Observer. We always appreciate your submissions. Thanks for your readership!



Mark Your Calendar

- * October 7, 2002
Fall Break
- * October 11-13, 2002
Meliora Weekend
- * October 16-18, 2002
Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures

- * November 11-15, 2002
Early Registration for Spring 2003
- * November 20-24, 2002
American Anthropological
Association Meetings
New Orleans, Louisiana
- * November 27-December 1, 2002
Thanksgiving Break