Mexican nationals constituted almost all of the international migrant workers utilized in Oregon from 1942 through 1947. Beginning in 1942, the Bracero Program (the name given to the wartime labor agreement between the US and Mexico) placed over 15,000 Mexican men on Oregon farms. They were used as "shock troops"—moved from place to place throughout the state where critical labor shortages occurred. [P20:790, Courtesy OSU Archives]

litical contexts and relations between our two countries.

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Please send comments, pictures, short articles and anything that could be of interest to our readers to Gabriela Vargas-Cetina, Facultad de Ciencias Antropológicas, UADY, calle 76 #455-LL, Merida, Yucatan 97000, Mexico, gvargas@webtelmex.net.mx, gvcetina@tunku.uady.mx.

Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists

DAVID L R HOUSTON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Buried Twice: Invisibility and Identity in the Service Sector Economy

The degree of invisibility that is simply a part of life for those laboring in the service sector is striking to me. This was somehow more evident than usual as I made my way home during a delayed flight back from a recent family visit.

Most of us are all too aware (I would hope) of the extent and depth of the service-sector part of the economy. We all work, play and function within it and largely as a direct result *of* it. It is all too easy to forget how hard it is just to make a living if you earn server's wages (plus tips) working at an airport food court, and must travel 30 miles to and from work each day. With a family, it is tougher still. Compounding this struggle is the

harsh reality of identity: you labor for (and under) others who often do not even know you exist. Tips are a means of supplemental income, but they certainly do not mean that you are "seen" or are even "valid" as an individual. The deeply entrenched attitudes that separate "us" from "them" (generally, those "with" and those "without") rarely spill over into personal recognition, rarely take more than a few seconds to say "hello" in a way that speaks to concern for the welfare of the Other.

What does all this have to do with queerness? Imagine a life laboring in the hidden economy, where your identity as a human being is not infrequently overlooked or typecast away as a matter of course. Now add to this another layer of identity—being queer (The term "queer" is certainly fraught with meanings. For this article, I use it—with affection and respect—to connote the sense of difference, of nonstraightness, and the challenge to normative heterosexuality and a rejection of "stable" categories). Here we have an invariably marginalized, often despised, frequently politicized label applied to a measurable segment of the population, one that can serve as a marker of identity whether internalized or externalized. For those members of the service sector economy who also happen to identify as queer, it is as though one is buried twice. Invisible first through thankless labor, one must further compromise and obscure one's identity simply by being part of an already castigated group.

It is difficult to imagine how participants in the service sector economy might somehow achieve an outwardly visible, shared sense of collective identity other than through labor and being perceived as workers at work. As I waited at 5:30 am

in the nearly empty airport, the usually invisible workers were visible and engaged. Signaling each other with warm smiles and the display of the requisite security badge (a primary means of identification at many levels), this early morning shift accepted and welcomed each other as they geared up for another day. For those of an ethnic or other shared *cultural* identity, it was an added boost to self-esteem and solidarity as the anticipated round of sometimes-surly upper class "others" began another day's round of incessant demands. The markers of identity were, at this time and in this way, open and fully accessible.

All of this makes it difficult to even imagine this same second level of shared solidarity happening along queer lines in this kind of environment. How many of us have ever seen a service sector worker who *openly* wore a rainbow pin? Or whose clothing, demeanor or attitude unambiguously signaled to *all* observers that she or he was in some way queer? I suspect the number is rather small.

Being buried at all in the habitus of daily life is hard enough. Being buried twice must be at least twice as difficult, and many more times as painful. I have been fortunate in having a close friend who overlaps both of these worlds—service sector work and queerness. Each time he and I share any time that takes us into the service economy such as a modest meal, his concern and proclivity for exceedingly generous tips and open caring for those who make our experience "go" helps me remember how difficult it all is. And I'm now a much more generous tipper!

Please send any comments, suggestions, and ideas for new columns or other material to David Houston at dlrh+an@uvm.edu.

Society for Linguistic Anthropology

JAMES STANLAW AND MARK PETERSON, CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Inaccessible Data Mean Lost Languages, and a Lost Language Is as Good as Dead

By James Stanlaw

Most anthropologists and linguists are well aware that a majority of the world's languages are endangered. Depending on the estimate, anywhere between 50-90% of all languages in current use could be extinct within the next hundred years. In the past decade, many valiant efforts have been undertaken to record, transcribe, and videotape these vanishing voices, if nothing else, to do a "salvage linguistics" of these priceless assets. However, what is sometimes lost in these efforts is the not-so-well-recognized fact that it is the recorded medium—and not only the languages themselves—that are equally at risk.

There are at least two problems. First, all electronic media are inherently unstable and degenerate over time. The life of an audiotape or com-

puter hard drive is less than 15 years. Mechanical media such as vinyl, CDs or DVDs are better, though probably not as long as their manufacturers claims. But even if the medium is stable, there is no guarantee the technology will be. Anyone who bought a laserdisc player, a Betamax, an eight-track tape deck—or who wrote their dissertations on 5 1/4" floppy disks—know this only too well. The digital world is in flux, and no one knows if their recordings of a disappearing Native American language made today in MP3 format could be retrieved in even a few decades' time.

But, secondly, if the storage media were the only problem, archivists could at least try and keep pace by constantly upgrading and reformatting to new technologies (though this in itself would be an expensive and time-consuming task). The special difficulty for linguists, however, is that more and more of us are using video and image files to augment the audio recordings that have been the traditional stable of linguistic analysis. How, then, can all these different types of data be permanently stored, and integrated and retrieved?

The Open Language Archives Community (OLAC) is one attempt to solve both these problems (www.language-archives.org). Guided largely by the efforts of Steven Bird (Dept of Computer Science at the U of Melbourne and the Linguistic Data Consortium at the U of Pennsylvania) and Gary Simons (Summer Institute of Linguistics), the OLAC is an international partnership of individuals and institutions which began in December, 2000, under the auspices of an NSF-sponsored workshop. Their mission is to develop a consensus on the best techniques for the digital archiving of linguistic data (what they call *resource creation*), and establish a set of standards allowing for various repositories and users to network and interact in a common format (*resource discovery*). Ideally, material from all participants would be eventually pooled together to form a single virtual library.

It turns out the problems of physical storage and archiving are inexorably tied to data structure and format. This is because in order to have a viable set of materials that can be widely distributed and easily accessible, it is impractical, if not impossible, to have them all in one location. Thus, a web-based archive is the only real alternative. However, just throwing everything on the web is no solution, regardless of how good search engines become. The different types of materials and encodings from each individual contributor would make retrieval impossible unless a common and precise means of data representation is adopted. For example, even the 6,800 languages listed in the latest edition of *Ethnologue* (www.ethnologue.org) have 41,000 alternate names.

The Open Language initiative applies the Dublin Core "metadata standard" (DCMI) and Extensible Markup Language (XML) for formally describing data records and parameters, allowing for easy retrieval regardless of hardware platform and kind of material. The OLAC search engine and record editor, and access to a catalogue of 27 major

archives, are available online (www.linguistlist.org/olac). Information can be found on a variety of data: audio and video recordings, grammars and field notes, as well as the usual word lists or corpuses.

New SLA Student Representative
On an initiative by Lori Johns, acting through the National Association of Student Anthropologists, the SLA Executive Board decided to have an elected student representative beginning next year. Until elections are held, Lori Johns has been appointed to be the first SLA Executive Board student representative. Lori is a PhD candidate in linguistic anthropology at the CUNY graduate school with an interest in language rights and policy issues. Lori very much would like to "establish contact with our student members to hear ideas and concerns, and to establish a forum where students can support each other." She can be reached at LJohns1@hvc.rr.com.

Please send your comments, contributions, news and announcements to SLA contributing editors Jim Stanlaw (stanlaw@ilstu.edu) or Mark Peterson (petersm2@muohio.edu).

Society for Medical Anthropology

NANCY VUCKOVIC AND JANELLE S TAYLOR, CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Medical Anthropology Course Syllabi
This month, we have decided to highlight some especially exciting medical anthropology course syllabi. This seems to us an appropriate complement to Morgan and Trostle's essay that was originally slated to appear in this space (but was moved by the *AN* editor to the Public Affairs section), because course syllabi are, like the Op-Ed pieces that Morgan and Trostle discuss, genres and venues for presenting insights from medical anthropology that garner little recognition and are not highly valued within our profession, even though they arguably "engage" a far broader audience, and with potentially greater impact, than the articles we publish. Most of the syllabi highlighted here are among those posted on the SMA website, at www.medanthro.net/academic/syllabi/index.html. To post your own syllabus there, please send it to Betsey Brada (webmaster@medanthro.net).

Intersectionality and Women's Health: Ethnographic Approaches to Race, Class, Gender, and "Difference" (*Marcia Inhorn, U Michigan, 2003*): This interdisciplinary graduate seminar is designed to explore in an in-depth fashion how the intersections of race/class/gender and other axes of "difference" (ie, age, sexual orientation, disability status, immigrant status) affect women's health in the contemporary US. In this course, recent feminist approaches to intersectionality and "multiplicity of oppressions" theories will be introduced.

Anthropological Approaches to Institutions (*Lorna A Rhodes, U Washington, 2003*): The first part of the course centers on enclosed forms of institutions—particularly prisons and asylums—and explores their history, effects, and centrality to contemporary theoretical work across several disciplines. In the second part of the course we extend insights gained from the total institution to more diffuse institutional structures and consider some contemporary situations that manifest aspects of the modern institutional form while departing from it in significant respects. Throughout, we will look at resistance and reform as integral to institutional history and practice.

The Social Roots of Health and Disease (*Paul Farmer, Arachu Castro, Joyce Millen, and Heidi Behforouz, Harvard U, 2003*): This course is intended for students interested in working with underserved populations in the US and internationally. By closely examining pressing problems in global health, the course helps prepare students to become leaders in international health, and guides them in their efforts to improve the health conditions of those overburdened by poverty, marginalization and social injustice. By the end of the course, students will have gained an understanding of how social forces become embodied as pathologies and how specific political, economic and historic processes influence the distribution of disease among different populations.

Human Taxonomies and Bioscience: A Social and Cultural History of the New Genetics in Relation to Race, Gender, and Other Distinctions among People (*Troy Duster and Emily Martin, New York University, 2002*): The course will focus on recent developments in biotechnology such as the human genome project, exploring their impact on cultural concepts of race, gender, normality, abnormality and reproduction. We will approach the topic historically, looking at the early history of the race concept in anthropology, the eugenics movement in the US, and eugenics in Nazi Germany. Then we will consider more recent anthropological and sociological accounts of race in relation to shifts in concepts and practices concerning the body brought about by molecular genetics and genetic screening. Sources will include historical materials, ethnographies, novels and mass media, both print and film.

Please send substantive, provocative, informative short essays (650 words or less) on our featured themes of "IRBs" and "the pragmatics of funding," or on other topics of interest, to the SMA Contributing Editors Nancy Vuckovic (nancy.vuckovic@kpchr.org) or Janelle Taylor (jstaylor@u.washington.edu).

Society for Psychological Anthropology

KATHLEEN BARLOW, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

This is my first column as contributing editor for the Society for Psychological Anthropology. I would like to thank Rebecca Lester for the great