

not separable from the subjective self. She believed who we are, what we can be, what we can study and how we write about what we study needs to be done as "ethical subjects" who constantly check their motives and actions. I am trying to be that ethical subject.

You see, before my fieldwork I became comfortable in "the feminist literature," reaping the rewards that accompany a command of a well-intentioned theoretical wand. I could conjure evidence to support how women face inequality in the world, the problems with men and masculinities, and how lesbians and gay men suffer as victims of homophobia and heterosexism. What I couldn't know then, however, is what I know now; we must explore the intersections of gender and sexuality simultaneously in our lives and in the field.

In my ethnography of Saddlebags, a country-western gay bar, I set forth to understand how gay men challenge traditional gender ideologies. What I found, however, is that gay men (and in some instance precisely because we are gay), are often responsible for (re)creating andocentric biases, reinforcing male privilege and erasing the important position of women. On several occasions throughout my fieldwork, I caught myself protecting "gay male space" in a variety of ways. Did I notice it at first? Unfortunately, no. However, women close to me pointed to my unwitting participation in the Othering of lesbians, forcing me to confront and examine my own unconscious misogynist and internalized homophobia.

Further examination revealed that the gay men of Saddlebags (myself included) created an atmosphere patterned on the practices of dominant culture, where men are not only privileged in leisure space, but enact a misogynistic discourse and use oppressive tactics to remind lesbians that public space is reserved for men, and that private space is for women. Yet, these tensions, though somewhat embarrassing, encouraged me to question the hidden assumptions around the legitimacy of power relations; a question I hadn't considered thoroughly. Ultimately, recognition and interrogation of my anti-feminist feelings, attitudes and behaviors provided starting points for exploring how my experiences were similar to the anti-feminist actions of other gay men in the bar.

Based on the exploration of these tensions, I now understand the necessity of field research that explores the intersections of gender and sexual identity—removed from the comforts of our classrooms and the confines of our computers. In Saddlebags, I experienced the reward, fear, frustrations, epiphanies, mistakes and ethical dilemmas of a male ethnographer doing feminist ethnography. I recognize that while my participation in the emancipation and liberation of women and sexual minorities is critical, I also see how easily our behaviors can extend and rein-

force dominant discourses of power. There are moments of social justice to be found in our mistakes, if we have the necessary support to look inside ourselves and be critical. I now know that feminism, at least for men, requires incessant questioning of our own male privilege, and requires having feminist peers evaluate/collaborate in our work. Though it hasn't always been a pleasant process, it remains imperative that I keep my male power and privilege under close scrutiny.

Here at the end, I appreciate the ways in which my struggles in the field have helped me grow as a researcher and a feminist. Only by embracing and participating in feminism will men truly be able to undermine and change the ever-emerging signs of our own gender privilege—allowing me to leave here a little bit of a better man.

To join the SOLGA listserv, please send an email with "Subscribe SOLGA" in the body to [listserv@american.edu](mailto:listserv@american.edu). If you have a fieldwork story of your own to tell, contact me at [bwest@uop.edu](mailto:bwest@uop.edu).

## Society for Linguistic Anthropology

MARK ALLEN PETERSON AND JAMES STANLAW,  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### Down to Business

We're thriving.

That's the short version of what was reported at the SLA Business Meeting, held Nov 22, 2002, at the 2002 AAA Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

The 2002 SLA program consisted of 14 single and four double sessions. There were two Invited Sessions, "Children Socializing Children Through Language: New Perspectives on Agency, Play and Identities," organized by Marjorie Goodwin and Lourdes de Leon; and "Intertextuality in Discourse and Culture: Problems and Prospects," organized by Stanton Wortham and Asif Agha.

The 2002 program was organized by Jack Sidnell, who reported that selection was particularly difficult. The SLA received 43 independent papers this year (compared to only eight last year), as well as 15 panel proposals and eight proposals for Invited Sessions. In all, Sidnell had 60 hours of proposals to review, but was allotted only 39.5 hours, requiring an 18% rejection rate. Papers were prioritized according to whether they 1) addressed the meeting theme ("(Un)Imaginable Futures"), 2) were timely and relevant, 3) related to other papers in the panel, 4) developed their themes, 5) represented a good mix of scholars from different institutions. Sidnell said the AAA Program Committee cut some of the panels the SLA had recommended.

Overall, our little group's finances are in good shape. The *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* loses money, but there is little that can be done to cut those costs, since expenses are set by the AAA. So far, these losses have been more than offset by the revenues coming in from such projects as

Alessandro Duranti's *Key Terms in Language and Culture*, royalties for which are paid to the SLA. The journal itself, under the co-editorship of Mary Bucholtz and Elizabeth Keating, is successfully reaching out to larger publics and submissions are up.

Leanne Hinton was introduced by President Elinor Ochs as the new president-elect. Hinton is one of four new officers, including Betsy Rymes, secretary-treasurer; Nico Besnier, member-at-large; and Bambi Schiefflin, member-at-large. The nominations committee for last year consisted of Stanton Wortham, Bill Hanks and Jim Wilce, chair. Next year's committee will be chaired by Wortham, with Wilce and Hanks replaced by Kit Woolard and Debra Spitulnik.

Ochs and Hinton announced their intention to work together to try to resolve the problems that led the Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas to not meet together with the SLA in New Orleans this year. The membership voted unanimously to fully support their efforts.

A site of contention at the 2002 Annual Meeting, resulting in the establishment of a splinter group focusing on "scientific anthropology," was the low rate of acceptance of papers taking a positivist approach to anthropological science. Linguistic anthropology, with its tradition of empirical data and its strong cognitivist strand, on the one hand, and its interest in interpretation, symbols and representation on the other, was discussed as a possible locus for bridging what seems to be emerging anthropological moieties distinguished by disparate epistemologies.

But how, given its modest membership, can the SLA influence the larger organization? One way is through active participation in organizational politics. In spite of its small size relative to the AAA, the SLA has had a large number of its members elected to offices within the larger organization. This year, these include the elections of William O Beeman to the AAA Executive Board, Asif Agha to the Nominations Committee, Misty Jaffee to the Long-Range Planning Committee, Marco Jacquement to the Committee for Human Rights, Jan Blommaert to the Committee of Public Policy and Christina Wasson to the Committee on the Status of Women in Anthropology.

Recognition is another important advantage for the SLA. John Rickford was the recipient of this year's Anthropology in Media Award. During the ebonics, Rickford braved the media storm to offer articulate (and often unpopular) linguistic perspectives on African American Vernacular English. He was interviewed by such publications as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek*, *Jet*, *USA Today*; on TV by ABC News, Nickelodeon's TV and others; and on radio by NPR's "Talk of the Nation," "Forum" and "To the Best of Our Knowledge."

Please send your comments, contributions, news and announcements to Mark Allen Peterson ([mpeterso@gettysburg.edu](mailto:mpeterso@gettysburg.edu)) or James Stanlaw ([stanlaw@ilstu.edu](mailto:stanlaw@ilstu.edu)).

<http://>

Visit the AAA homepage:  
[www.aaanet.org](http://www.aaanet.org)