

But whatever our positions, we all debated the changes, our opinions on them and the possible outcomes. The AAA's Executive Board, officers and staff engaged in considerations that addressed the interests of individuals, sections and the larger association. The language of ethical choice permeated most discussions, often overriding the practical sides of each question. We discussed the opinions of professors, graduate students, section representatives and members in general. Staff reports were used to make decisions. Labor representatives posed problems and we all took, whether outspoken or silenced, personal positions. Officers consulted with their boards on many occasions. And last but not least, groups of anthropologists met in San Francisco, in Atlanta and through teleconferences and electronic fora, while others rescheduled their sessions for next year's AAA meeting. We discovered that we highly value our meetings and the exchange of results and news. In short, turning again to Hegel and neo-Hegelian philosophers, we all recognized each other and our collectivity as valid interlocutors deserving recognition.

May we keep this collective spirit to face the new and upcoming challenges, including the great strain AnthroSource is about to put on sections' annual budgets, and whatever new crises we might encounter next on our way.

### The Mennonites in Latin America

By Iyo Kunimoto (Chuo U)

The Mennonites are small ethnic groups in any Latin American countries that remained outside the cultural mainstream of the receiving societies. Nevertheless they are renowned for their contribution to agricultural development wherever they have settled and have added something very unique to Latin American societies. Although there are Mennonite colonies in Mexico, Paraguay, Bolivia, Belize and Argentina, they have received little academic attention.

The Mennonites were received in Mexico at the beginning of the 20th century and they settled in the state of Chihuahua in the midst of the conflicting period of the Mexican Revolution in the 1920s when large landowners in that state sold their lands to escape confiscations during the agrarian reform. Through the struggle of over half a century, the Mennonites in Chihuahua have expanded into the states of Durango, Zacatecas, Tamaulipas, Coahuila and Campeche. Mexico was the base from which the most conservative groups left for other Latin American countries in search of new frontiers to establish their own traditional communities.

Mennonite colonies in Latin American countries maintain strong ties with each other by keeping close family relations and traveling long distances to visit each other. Most of the Mennonite colonies in Latin America are very conservative. They live in isolation from the rest of local society and reject public education. An exception to this are some colonies in the state of Chihuahua in Mexico and in the Chaco region of Paraguay.

In Bolivia, where the most conservative groups of Mexican Mennonites settled, they deal in agri-

cultural products. They have also contributed to opening the undeveloped eastern lowland of Bolivia. The Paraguayan Mennonites have developed the desolate and barren region of Chaco, becoming prominent agriculturalists. In Belize they have opened the tropical rainforest and transformed it into modern agricultural centers. In Argentina they established an isolated colony in the province of La Pampa in the 1980s, and in the 1990s they challenged the State that tried to control them at that time.

[Iyo Kunimoto is the author of books and articles on Mennonite and Japanese settlements in Latin America. She can be contacted at iyo@tamacc.chuo-u.ac.jp.]

Please send news items, photos and comments that could be of interest to our readers to Bruce Mannheim, upcoming SLAA Contributing Editor, at [mannheim@umich.edu](mailto:m Mannheim@umich.edu).

## Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists

DAVID L R HOUSTON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### Governance and the Power of Few Voices

The change in venue for the annual meeting is by now old news. The ensuing discussion is just begun. In the months to come, part of who "we" are must be subject to a particular scrutiny. The hope is to avoid an encore performance. As an organization and as sections within the organization, we are all invited to participate in the discussion.

Governance of many organizations is typically a mixture of elected or assigned officers, non-governing members and administrative units that make it all "go." Each of these components acts as part of the larger whole: it works for many different sizes. Organizations remain viable through a combination of official actions by officers, input from the members and facilitation by the administrative units. In one sense, each of these parts consists of members of that organization; each individual has a stake in the viability of the whole. When something goes right, all are rewarded; when something goes wrong, all are—ideally—involved in any corrective actions. As members of the AAA, as officers of the various sections and executive offices, and as part of the administrative units, all of us are an essential part of addressing the issue we now face.

During the halftime show for the 2003 Super Bowl, television audiences gained a new understanding of "wardrobe malfunction." The crisis of decency that followed reshaped an endless list: millions of viewers were outraged, children were exposed to indecency and Hollywood morals were polluting the nation: journalistic orgies of exposure followed. The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) chair Michael Powell told the US Congress that there had been a "dramatic" rise in the number of complaints lodged about concern and outrage over the content of broadcast television.

What, you may ask, does Janet Jackson's breast have to do with governance and the AAA? More

than a year after the 2003 Super Bowl, a Freedom of Information Act request revealed that 99.8% of *all* complaints filed come from a single organization. In the matter of complaints directed to the FCC over the wardrobe malfunction, 90 (not the 159 claimed) complaints were received. Only 23 different individuals had actually filed those complaints. This is new math.

The aftermath of the Super Bowl led to a *perceived* increase in the furor level, a supposedly nationwide backlash about the problem of indecent content. Innumerable groups claiming cultural supremacy embrace these reports as fact. An assertion that the recent elections were won over the issue of moral values fuels an already large bonfire of discontent. As the FOIA request demonstrates, however, the reality of "perception-as-truth" leaves interesting questions. Precisely how many really *are* outraged, really *are* motivated to the point of filing formal complaints? Apparently, not too many.

What of governance and our own organization? Our viability depends upon the full participation of the *entire* organization. Whether outrage or reasoned discussion, results demand a multivocality, not a tiny minority of loud voices. Without broad participation, we agree to a consensus borne of listlessness.

All parts of our organization must be part of the process. Clearly, the AAA Executive Board has participated. Statements of policy and decisions made are clear indicators of such participation. Given the flurry of electronic mail about San Francisco, members seem to have participated as well—although to what extent is an open question. What may be missing is the recognition that, while acting as the engine, AAA staff also has a place in this process. Matters of ethics or commitment to principles will only succeed when all parties are involved and engaged. Past practice hints that perhaps the divide between sections and staff is wider than generally understood. As we thread our way through the maze of issues, it is worth keeping in mind the Super Bowl and the nature of governance. Clearly, it is possible for a tiny—even insignificant—number of participants to drive not only perception, but also resulting outcome in the form of policy or law. We must do better than this.

Please send any comments, suggestions, ideas for new columns or other material to David Houston at [dlrh+an@uvm.edu](mailto:dlrh+an@uvm.edu).

## Society for Linguistic Anthropology

JAMES STANLAW AND MARK PETERSON,  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### Language, Linguists and the FBI

By James Stanlaw

On September 10, 2001, the National Security Agency intercepted an al-Qaeda message saying "Tomorrow is zero hour." This was not translated



until days later. Ever since the war on terrorism began I wanted to do a story about languages and language training at federal law enforcement agencies. About a year and a half ago I talked by phone with Margaret Gulotta, chief of the Language Services Section of the FBI. While Gulotta was very nice and forthcoming, she could not be interviewed officially unless I had approval from the FBI press office. In spite of several emails and phone calls, no action has been taken on our request (even though I submitted my department chairman's phone number, Stacy Lathrop's contact information, and a list of questions I would ask). As the tenacious *Anthropology News* will never let a good story go, I have compiled the following "interview" from public sources. Besides Margaret Gulotta, our participants also include FBI Director Robert Mueller and Glenn Fine, the agency's inspector general. (Last September, Fine's office publicly released a redacted and unclassified executive summary of a 157 page audit concerning the FBI's linguistic capacities and vulnerabilities.)

**AN: Let me start by asking how important the FBI language specialist is in insuring America's security?**

**Margaret Gulotta:** "The need for a high level of proficiency in foreign languages to protect our nation's security is obvious to all of us. As a matter of fact, I am usually on the soap box hailing the need to hire qualified linguists to provide timely translation of foreign intelligence—because foreign intelligence usually presents itself in a language other than English."

**Robert Mueller:** "The FBI needs to have linguists who not only speak the language, but also understand the culture and the country. The translator has to also be able to pick up subtleties that would assist investigators. It is important that the FBI have a strong translation capacity spanning the full spectrum of foreign languages, so we can respond to every investigative challenge, and meet all emerging threats."

**AN: By how much has the FBI increased the number of language specialists, and the funding of language programs, since 9/11?**

**Glenn Fine:** "Through April 1, 2004, the FBI hired 626 linguists . . . However, considering attrition through this time frame, the net increase in linguists . . . was 331.

The number of linguists has grown from 883 in 2001 to 1,214 . . . stationed across the United States in 52 field offices and headquarters. Language program funding increased from \$21.5 million in fiscal year 2001 to nearly \$70 million in FY 2004."

**AN: What is the average workload of an FBI linguist?**

**Glenn Fine:** "The standard used by the FBI for resource planning is that one full-time linguist

**Sources on Language, Linguists and the FBI**

**Fine, Glenn,** The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Foreign Language Program: Translation of Counterterrorism and Counterintelligence Foreign Language Material. Report No. 04-25, July 2004. Office of the Inspector General; Redacted and Unclassified Executive Summary; [www.4law.co.it.tap27904.html](http://www.4law.co.it.tap27904.html)

**Gulotta, Margaret,** FBI Employs TRADOS Solutions to Cope with Increased Translation Volumes; [www.transation-zone.com/news.asp?ID=18](http://www.transation-zone.com/news.asp?ID=18)

**Gulotta, Margaret,** Proceedings of the National Language Conference, June 22, 2004; [www.nlconference.org/papers.cfm?CFID=&CFTOKEN=](http://www.nlconference.org/papers.cfm?CFID=&CFTOKEN=); click on Present and Future Needs for Language Skills in the Federal Sector, Remarks: Gulotta

**Lichblau, Eric and Dan Eggen,** *The New York Times, The Washington Post*, September 29, 2004; [www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/09/28/1096137242537.html?from=story/hs%oneclick=true](http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/09/28/1096137242537.html?from=story/hs%oneclick=true)

**Mueller, Robert,** Audit Finds Large FBI Translation Backlog. Curt Anderson, Associated Press, September 28, 2004; [www.ladlass.com/intel/archives/007224.html](http://www.ladlass.com/intel/archives/007224.html)

can review 1,000 hours of audio or 50,000 pages of text a year."

**AN: Is there a terror surveillance backlog at the FBI?**

**Glenn Fine:** "Since September 11, 2001, more than . . . 119,000 hours of audio in . . . counterterrorism languages have not been reviewed [as of April, 2004]. Additionally, over 370,000 hours of audio in languages associated with counterintelligence activities have not been reviewed . . ."

**AN: Does the FBI appreciate the gravity of the language problem in its counterterrorism efforts?**

**Robert Mueller:** "We agree (with the inspector general) that more remains to be done in our language services program, and we are giving this effort the highest priority."

**AN: What is the biggest obstacle for the FBI in acquiring more translators and interpreters?**

**Glenn Fine:** "[After September 17, 2001, when] the FBI director announced the FBI's critical need for additional Arabic, Farsi, Pashto and Mandarin . . . linguists, . . . more than 20,000 applications spanning the foreign language spectrum were received . . . within the next 30 days. The . . . vetting process eliminates over 90% of the applicants processed for hiring. For those applicants who pass the vetting process and are hired, the applicant processing cycle is about 13 months."

**Margaret Gulotta:** "One of the biggest issues we are facing is finding expert language specialists who are qualified to work on the sensitive data we process. Even when we find resources with the appropriate language skills in the first place, only a small percentage of them ends up qualifying for the level of security clearance that is needed to work on the type of material we translate."

**AN: Do you think the American school system might also be a contributing factor in finding people with appropriate language skills?**

**Margaret Gulotta:** "You may have heard the comment, 'If you speak three languages, you are

trilingual. If you speak two languages, you are bilingual. If you speak one language, you are American.' Well, that has got to change. Our educational system is not producing these individuals in sufficient numbers or in the languages we really need today . . ."

And *that* is the subject for a future column. For those who would like a list of sources of the quotes above, please contact me.

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

**Society for Medical Anthropology**

NANCY VUCKOVIC AND JANELLE TAYLOR, CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

**2004 SMA Prizes Awarded**

*By Vincanne Adams (UCSF)*

The SMA awards were presented at a special ceremony at the SMA meeting at the Canterbury Hotel in San Francisco on November 19, 2004. We sincerely congratulate each of the winners for their success and contributions to the field of medical anthropology.

Charles Briggs (UC-San Diego) received the Polgar Prize for his essay entitled: "Why Nation-States and Journalists Can't Teach People to be Healthy: Power and Pragmatic Miscalculation in Public Discourses on Health." The Polgar Prize is selected from the articles appearing in a single volume of *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. This year it was selected from volume 17 (published in 2003). The Polgar Prize committee included Pamela Erikson (our current MAQ editor), Lorna Rhodes (U Washington) and Peter Guarnaccia (Rutgers).

This year's winner of the Rivers Undergraduate Prize is Tiffany Star Behringer (U Pennsylvania) for her essay "Changing Paradigms of the One-Child Policy: Exploring the Cultural Model of Reproduction and Gender Role of Chinese Immigrant Women." Members of the Rivers Prize committee are Paul Brodwin (U Wisconsin-