

A profound disconnect occurs in other contexts where sexual orientation is not just acceptable, but is the primary focus. The current Showtime television series, *The L Word*, for example, depicts lesbians in Los Angeles. *Queer as Folk* is a hot rental item in video stores. Entertainment is a palatable context.

Anthropologists (usually) make a practice of listening. Despite ethnographic intent, however, what people openly talk about does not always agree with what they practice. Much of what we simply observe as practice is an unspoken part of individual identity. Society works in part because self-recognition is possible; the individual can "construct" her or his identity in accordance with the self-realization that comes from many sources. When "talking out loud" about the truth of ourselves yields only political entanglements and social alienation, identity becomes a struggle for some segments of our population. As anthropologists, we can contribute to an environment where "talking out loud" can take place irrespective of any marginalized place in a society, and where words are no longer weapons of mass confusion.

Elections

SOLGA elections earlier this year gave us a new co-chair. On November 20, 2004, Tom Boellstorff stepped down and Rudi Gaudio took his place. This past year has been a challenge, and Tom has done a superb job. We also want to extend a very special thank you to Christa Craven, our other co-chair through November 2005. We will be contacting members via our listserv for nominations for a co-chair to replace Christa.

Benedict Prize Winners

Each year, SOLGA awards the Ruth Benedict Prize for outstanding anthropological scholarship on a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered topic. This year's Benedict Prize Committee is pleased to announce winners of the Benedict Prize for both monograph and anthology. For the monograph: *Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand*, by Megan Sinnott (2004). For the anthology: *Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology*, edited by Ellen Lewin and William L. Leap (2002). Please join us in recognizing these contributions to the field.

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

Society for Linguistic Anthropology

MARK ALLEN PETERSON AND JIM STANLAW,
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SLA Panels at the AAA Meeting

By Mark Allen Peterson

San Francisco vs Atlanta

Five panels sponsored by SLA were held in California during the November dates originally

scheduled for the AAA meeting, although the business meeting and several panels were held in Atlanta in December as part of the official AAA meeting in the alternative venue. The panels were organized into two separate events. One set of panels was organized as an all-day mini-conference, while the other was expanded to a full-day "think-tank" format.

Participants at both events said they enjoyed the more intimate, less hectic format of the California panels.

"It's really great having a meeting like this where you didn't have a lot of things to choose between," said SLA president Leanne Hinton. "At the AAA I would probably not have been able to attend all four of these sessions."

Hinton was speaking of the four panels held Friday, November 19 at UC Berkeley. These included "French Language and Ideology and the Notion of la Francophone," organized by Kathleen Riley, "The Leaky Boundaries of Language Ideologies: Code-Switching among Speakers of East Asian Languages," organized by Elaine W. Chun, "Discourse, War and Terrorism," organized by Adam Hodges and Chad Nilep, and "Reframing Framing: New Approaches to Interaction across Cultures," organized by Joseph S. Park and Hiroko Takanashi.

"Even though it was a random set of sessions, put together only because they choose not to go to Atlanta, the panels all fit together beautifully," said Hinton, who, along with Susan Ervin-Tripp, arranged for Berkeley's hosting of the event. "We could even have given them a collective title, something like, 'Language, Politics and Identity.'"

Between 50 and 60 people attended the event, which was held in the Murray B. Emeneau Conference Room in the university's Dwinelle Hall.

Another SLA panel was held Thursday, November 18 at the Best Western Canterbury Hotel in San Francisco. The panel, "Deaf studies' Critical Challenge to Social Theory" was organized by Frank Bechter and Peter Graif of the University of Chicago. Participants took advantage of the venue change to reform the double-length panel into an all-day "think tank."

"It was great," said Richard Senghas of Sonoma State College, who attended as a member of the audience. "There were about 30 or 40 of us. The discussions afterward were excellent, and many of us went out for dinner, so the communication went on and on."

"I really enjoyed the amount of time we got for our session," said panelist Leila Monaghan of Indiana University. "It ran officially from 10 to 5 but it lasted even longer than that."

Participants said they were pleased with the number of persons who attended who were themselves members of the deaf community. "The AAA was very supportive and paid for the interpreters," Monaghan said.

SLA held its business meeting in Atlanta, as well as a reception in honor of Jane Hill, co-hosted by Cambridge University Press.

SLA joined a number of other AAA groups, including Center for the Anthropology of

Education, Society for the Anthropology of Work, Association for Africanist Anthropology, American Ethnological Society, Society for East Asian Anthropology, Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists, Society for North American Anthropology, Anthropology and Environment Section, and the Association for Feminist Anthropology, that held some or all of their meetings in November in California to show solidarity with the union.

A number of activities were organized to help anthropologists attending the California sessions to demonstrate solidarity with the union, including joining the picket lines, and a workshop on labor rights.

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

Society for Medical Anthropology

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[Craig Janes presents a thoughtful message below about lessons that can be learned from events surrounding the recent decision to move the AAA annual meeting to Atlanta. The complete text of Janes's message can be found on the SMA website at www.medanthro.net/. Due to space constraints and the importance of this message, we are unable to post the names of winners of SMA Awards in this month's column. We offer recipients our heartiest congratulations and a promise to post the award announcements in the February AN. You can also find award announcements on the SMA website.]

On the 2004 Annual Meeting

By Craig Janes, SMA President

The labor action and subsequent lockout of workers by the majority of major hotel chains in San



Craig Janes

Francisco and the subsequent AAA crisis likely produced a number of conflicting sentiments among the SMA membership. Whatever one's eventual position on the matter, this crisis highlighted a number of weaknesses in the governance of the AAA and in the ability of large AAA sections,

like the SMA, to take a timely public stand. If there is anything to learn here it is that we need to improve the responsiveness of the SMA and its parent association. This is in our collective best interest, because the issues and concerns central to this particular labor-management conflict are also fundamental to our subject and the work we do as medical anthropologists. These problems include the globalization of capital and effective