

homeland and belonging from the perspective of several waves of migration to Spain, a country that has a growing Latino population. This raises many compelling questions about the relationships migrant populations have to their “homelands” and the way they can shift over time. Other articles, too, challenge the scope of anthropological enquiry: Ellen Moodie’s paper on *Cuatravisión* in Salvador takes us into the realm of the role of television in peoples lives; Joy Logan’s article examines the ways tourism both draws on and actively shapes indigenous identities; Ronda Brulotte discusses the intersections of race and indigeneity in Oaxacan craft production; Ton Salman and Koen de Munter take an anthropologically informed look at the politics of mobilization and citizenship in Bolivia; James Mackenzie looks at the complex debates about local culture and authenticity in Guatemala; and Pirjo Kriistina Virtanen studies the nature of being human and interethnic relations in the Amazon. This single issue spans a range of approaches and topics, from cultural studies to political science, and from the globalized economics of tourism to what it means to be human.

In 2010 we will introduce a new section to the journal titled “Voces/Voices.” This is intended to give a platform to non-academic voices and, specifically, offer a platform for activists in Latin America to talk about their work. This was inspired by a recent trip to Mexico where I had the privilege of being in a two-day workshop in Mexico City that included indigenous people from Guatemala and Mexico in a fascinating exchange of ideas and perspectives. Many anthropologists are increasingly concerned with collaboration with indigenous and other intellectuals and activists, and “Voces/Voices” is intended to provide space for activists and intellectuals and open up dialogue between academia and activism. Indeed, in the November 2009 issue a very stimulating discussion on this theme is offered by Shannon Speed and her colleagues as they develop their collaborative methodology. The November 2010 issue will likely be the first in which “Voces/Voices” will appear.

Regular readers of the journal will have noticed the development of the reviews section under our reviews editor, John Collins. He is committed to putting together a range of sharp, engaging and critical reviews of books, and commissions outstanding review essays. Having a vigorously engaging reviews section is something both John and I are committed to and this part of the journal is certainly one of its strengths. We welcome contributions from across the range of anthropological enquiry and look, above all, for sound scholarship and an anthropological imagination.

The *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* is SLACA’s peer-reviewed journal and appears twice a year. For submission guidelines see [www.essex.ac.uk/jlaca](http://www.essex.ac.uk/jlaca).

*Please send any comments, suggestions and ideas, including photos for future columns, to Annelou Ypeij at [j.l.ypeij@cedla.nl](mailto:j.l.ypeij@cedla.nl) or to CEDLA (Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation), Keizersgracht 395-397, 1016 EK Amsterdam, Netherlands.*

## Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists

DAVID LR HOUSTON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### The Immutability of Labels

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “We must become the change we want to see.” He was referring to what he so deeply wanted—peace—while the anger of a Sundered nation seethed. So often change appears as a goal: something to go to, rather than something we have no choice but to accept. The inevitability of change reveals our deeper humanity.

In the United States, there’s been a lot of change recently around queer issues: marriage and employment rights have found new strength. It is not surprising to also discover that schools, often sources of pain for youth identifying as queer of any stripe, are also changing. Coming out takes on new meaning in these settings. To make it work, many youth adopt some sort of label.



Gay, lesbian, trans—labels are part of how these young people assert their sense of self. Though

Goffman may have been right about dress and personal expression, it seems that often it is the label (not the clothes) that makes the person. Within the self-identification and self-labeling process lies a real irony. Labels can become permanent fixtures. They aren’t something that, like the stickers donned at meetings and other get-togethers, simply peels off afterwards. The moment we claim labels as part of an identity process, they become permanent—stitched onto our persons, worn with every outfit we put on. Therein lies the challenge.

Adopting a label can be a momentous realization. It is a hard won battle with the self that leads to the kind and degree of recognition that can say, “This is who I am!” The label, at first something viewed with fear as the self is confronted, becomes a way through the thicket of emotional pain. It quickly becomes a centering mnemonic, a means to forge ties, build a community. This aspect of the label is a powerful and, arguably, vital and useful thing. What happens, though, when change happens... again? The label becomes, or has the potential to become, a detriment to personal growth.

Youth in middle school are undergoing enormous change. Physically, they are changing daily: bodies grow and hormones take over. Emotionally, they are often Jekyll-and-Hyde in their interactions with the rest of the school body, teachers or parents. It seems that, at this point in life, at least, the *last* thing needed is an indelible ink-mark of who they think they are. It is highly problematic.

On the one hand, the label is a kind of gateway to freedom, something many young people at that age crave. The process of self-discovery can be hard, and the underground “peer review” process (aka bullying) even harder, sometimes dangerous. The ability to step past that and claim a label is

potentially a source of great strength. At the same time, however, the extent and scope of change is undeniable. What happens when, after undergoing a self-examination that leads to self-identification and the public adoption of a particular label, bodily or emotionally change gives rise to a completely *different* set of feelings a year or two or three later? Does that same label proudly worn as a badge demarcating personal growth and affiliation with a particular sub-community within the school environment simply peel off? Alas, the answer is no. Labels are often very permanent, or at least can affix themselves to the individual regardless of claims or denials to the contrary. Part of this is human nature: we are enamored with a process of classification, and once people are classified, we tend to hold that in our minds.

Though the emerging awareness at the middle school level of queer lives by both school personnel and young students is a potential harbinger of good change, it may be lamentable when the articulation of an identity is followed by more change. In an interview in the *New York Times*, one mother of a middle school student asked her son, “Do you just wake up in the morning and willy-nilly decide what you’re going to be that day? Straight yesterday, bi today, gay tomorrow?” And therein lies real challenge: the immutability of the label.

*Join us. SOLGA wants you! Visit [www.solga.org](http://www.solga.org) for news, mentors, listserv and more. Please send any comments, suggestions and ideas for new columns, or just say “hi” to David Houston at [dlrh+an@uvm.edu](mailto:dlrh+an@uvm.edu).*

## Society for Linguistic Anthropology

JAMES STANLAW AND MARK ALLEN PETERSON, CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### Learn a Tone Language, Develop Musical Skill, Part 2

*By James Stanlaw*

Last month we discussed the latest work of UC San Diego psychology professor Diana Deutsch, whose experiments showed a remarkable correlation between speaking a tone language and possessing “absolute” pitch—the ability to identify a musical note without reference to any other. This ability is said to be quite rare. However, talking with Deutsch by phone about her recent work, her findings indicate that speakers of tone languages like Chinese or Vietnamese have absolute pitch at levels never before imagined. For example, in tests of music conservatory students in the US, 90% of those fluent in a tone language possessed absolute pitch compared to less than 5% of Caucasian students unfamiliar with tone languages. Those that spoke a tone language less fluently showed correspondingly less absolute pitch ability.

Ironically, it was hard at first to do these studies because “the people in China said this is a waste of time because we all know every decent musician

has perfect pitch. And people in the US said this is a waste of time because you'll never get enough subjects." But assuming these findings are robust—and Deutsch and her colleagues have now amassed a sizeable number of experiments in support—we are left with some very intriguing questions, not the least of which are why such a connection exists and what the evolutionary significance of these findings might be.

Part of the answer may lie in what former SLA and AAA president Jane Hill called the "foreign accent phenomena" in the early 1970s. She suggested that an apparently biologically-based upper age limit on efficient phonological language acquisition results in people learning another language past the age of puberty as always being identified as an outsider. That is, people's accents always mark their social connections. During the course of human evolution, these "dialect tribes" may very well have been the most significant unit of demographic organization. And due to their presumed small size and endogamous nature, extremely rapid change could take place, giving them great adaptive flexibility.

Might tone languages be important in such a model? Deutsch thinks they were indeed critical. "It does look like the most critical period [of childhood linguistic development] is the phonology; and that would be true of tones as well... [Evolutionarily,] I'd be willing to bet tone-languages came first, which then deteriorated into non-tone languages." We can see residuals even today. An example might be "pitch languages" like Japanese, where high or low pitch marks a difference in the meanings of some—but not all—words (eg, *HAsHi* meaning "chopsticks" and *haSHI* meaning a "bridge"). Another example could be of tone-language speakers who come to America. "After a while their tones really start to deteriorate; there's an attrition effect. It's huge for people who come as kids," and even for adults who often do not realize how their tone pronunciations are changing. In essence, we see incipient dialects develop: "So you get San Diego Mandarin and San Diego Vietnamese, and New York Mandarin and New York Vietnamese, and so on."

Also, speakers of tone languages are remarkably attuned to each other's speech levels. Deutsch noted, "We did a study of two Chinese villages in 2009 ... that were [geographically] quite close to each other ... [and] you can see a very clear difference between the two in terms of pitch." In other words, regardless of physique, the women in each village spoke in a similar manner, at least in terms of pitch range.

Those who do not speak a tone language often have trouble conceiving that something apparently so complex and different could be a critical evolutionary feature, but "the absolute pitch component of tone is really useful for communication. It's simple. Looking at it from an anthropological point of view, it is very useful to be able to tell from a person's pitch range where they're from. [...] You get a lot of information immediately... Evolutionarily ... I would unquestionably think that the ability to speak a tonal language, such as Mandarin, well—with proper pitches, and so on—

has to confer a communicative advantage; ... it would certainly confer a musical advantage!"

*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

KATHLEEN RAGSDALE, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### CES4Health.info: An Innovative Online Resource for Peer Review

*By Kathleen Ragsdale (Mississippi State U) and Cathy Jordan (CES4Health.info and U Minnesota)*

CES4Health.info is a free, innovative online mechanism created to facilitate peer-review and online publication and dissemination of health-related community-engaged scholarship (CES): scholarship that is developed in partnership with communities. CES4Health.info moves beyond the traditional journal article format to include new media formats such as film, video, websites, online tools, DVDs, CD-ROMs, and slide presentations, as well as training manuals, curricula, toolkits and policy briefs.

Why was CES4Health.info created? Health-related CES encompasses the wide range of work that faculty do in partnership with communities through community-based participatory research (CBPR), service learning, community-responsive clinical and population-based care, and community advocacy and service. Peer-reviewed journal articles are essential for communicating the results of health-related CES to academic audiences but they are not sufficient, especially in the light of the rapid expansion of new media technologies.

Likewise, journal articles are often not the most important mechanism for disseminating health-related CES results to communities that can most benefit from this scholarship. Diverse CBPR, service learning, and other types of health-related CES require equally diverse pathways for dissemination in order to reach and benefit the widest array of communities. CES4Health.info is designed to fill this gap, thereby helping researchers, health activists, community members and policymakers who do not always have ready access to the most innovative and cutting-edge health-related CES to avoid reinventing the wheel.

Because health-related CES products that are in new media formats are usually not peer-reviewed, published or widely distributed, they may be perceived by faculty review committees as being of less importance, quality, credibility and value than peer-reviewed journal articles. Further, these forms of CES are rarely seen and used beyond the community within which the work was conducted or produced. Broadening the reach of peer-reviewed, cutting-edge CES to diverse audiences such as academic institutions, promotion and tenure committees, community organiza-

tions and policymakers is a vital link in improving community health.



What does it mean to be peer-reviewed through CES4Health.info? A product peer-reviewed and published through CES4Health.info is comparable to an article published through a peer-reviewed print journal. CES4Health.info maintains an editorial staff and board and follows a rigorous peer review process based on accepted standards of scholarship. A distinctive feature of this process is that every product submitted to CES4Health.info is reviewed by both community and academic reviewers. Faculty members who author products that are published through CES4Health.info can note them in the peer-reviewed publications section of their curriculum vitae and describe them as peer-reviewed scholarly products. CES4Health.info also provides authors with a measure of impact by tracking how often each product is accessed or downloaded. Evaluation of CES4Health.info will also include solicitation of feedback from users of the site, including impressions of utility and quality of the products downloaded. This information will be communicated to authors.

CES4Health.info is a component of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health's (CCPH) "Faculty for the Engaged Campus" project, which aims to strengthen CES in the academy and is supported by a grant from the US Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. CCPH is a US-based non-profit organization that promotes health through partnerships between communities and higher education institutions. For more information, including instructions for submitting a health-related CES product for peer review, or to become a peer reviewer, visit [www.ces4health.info](http://www.ces4health.info). To receive regular email updates, sign up for CCPH's monthly eNews at [www.ccphe.info](http://www.ccphe.info).

### Cancer, Culture, and Literacy Conference

The 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Cancer, Culture and Literacy Conference, to be held May 20–22, 2010 in Clearwater Beach, FL, provides a national forum for the exchange and dissemination of important information covering current research and education in the areas of cancer, culture and literacy. This conference will offer learning opportunities on the roles of culture, language and literacy in cancer communications, programs and educational interventions. Sessions and workshops will address cultural and literacy considerations that are important for continued health and well-being across the cancer control continuum. The conference call for abstracts and poster presentations is posted on our website. Healthcare professionals of all disciplines involved in creating effective culturally, linguistically and literacy relevant cancer communications, innovative materials, programs and interventions are invited to attend. For more information, contact Conference Director Cathy D Meade or Conference Planner Chrystyna Pospolyta at [CCL2010@moffitt.org](mailto:CCL2010@moffitt.org) or visit [www.moffitt.org/ccl](http://www.moffitt.org/ccl).

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