

always draw a good number of participants, so we urge you to register early. We also keep our registration fees at a reasonable level, recognizing that many of the people who would benefit from these offerings are students.

### Membership and Money

Speaking of maintaining a reasonable level, we've kept our membership rates constant for some time, and we plan to continue to do so. We run a tight ship, with lots of volunteer labor, and we all enjoy the work we do for the Society. But our budget is increasingly tight, and we may have to consider a modest increase in membership dues within the next couple of years. We will keep everyone informed, of course.

An alternate remedy is to get more members. We know that some people were disappointed when *Anthropology and Humanism* was delayed in publication this year, and dropped their membership. This delay had nothing to do with anything within SHA, but rather with an unexpected, temporary delay with AAA publications. We hope that everyone will rejoin; we do not anticipate another such delay.

*Anthropology and Humanism* is a fine journal, easily worth the cost of membership by itself. But members also get to enter our competitions at a reduced entry fee, and get to participate in our business meetings—for many societies that's a chore rather than a treat, but ours are much more fun than most. There's also the opportunity to join in leadership roles—again, more fun than in most societies.

President Dan Ingersoll (St. Mary's C-Maryland) is organizing a membership drive. But why wait? If you're not already a member, please join! If you are, please talk to others about us!

Contact either of us at Dept of Anthropology, 265 McGraw Hall, Cornell U, Ithaca, NY 14853; tel 607-255-6773 (Vilma) or 607-254-5026 (Fred); fax 607-255-3747. Email Fred at [fwg1@cornell.edu](mailto:fwg1@cornell.edu) (that's the number 1 after fwg, not the letter l) or Vilma at [vs23@cornell.edu](mailto:vs23@cornell.edu).

## Society for Latin American Anthropology

FERNANDO SANTOS-GRANERO, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### Conflict Resolution in Colombia

By Cristobal Gnecco (*U del Cauca-Colombia*)

The ongoing and rapidly escalating war in Colombia has taken a high toll on all sectors of Colombian society. Civil society has been trapped between warring parties that have committed all manner of atrocities against unarmed peoples. Native peoples comprise one of the social sectors that has most suffered in the recent escalation of violence.

After centuries of neglect and outright exploitation, in the last 30 years native Colombians have fought hard to acquire political legitimacy and managed to obtain recognition from

the state. Land has been reclaimed as a means of strengthening a territory-based conception of culture; local histories are being written; native languages and cultural curricula are taught at schools in the *resguardos* (communities); native political structures have been recreated and are fully operational; and native legal practices are increasingly accepted by the judiciary, as mandated by the 1991 Constitution. Yet all these accomplishments, the aims of which are to further unity and promote a sense of belonging in contemporary Colombia without compromising native identity, are threatened by the interference of armed actors who do not respect the autonomy for which native peoples have so dearly fought. Foremost among these threats are the invasion of native territories and an overt disregard for traditional strategies of conflict resolution.

Two months ago, 20,000 native people marched in Cali, the largest city in southwestern Colombia (the region in which the majority of the indigenous population currently lives), to demand from the armed parties respect for their territories, cultures and strategies of conflict resolution. The reaction to their demand was swift: the attacks on native peoples (including intrusion in their territories, kidnappings and murders) have increased dramatically. As I was writing this note, two native leaders were attacked. One of them, Paez leader Cristóbal Secué, recognized worldwide for his peace efforts, was brutally assassinated. Another important leader, the Embera-Katio Kimy Pernia, is missing. It is feared that he also has been killed.

As the conflict in Colombia escalates and, especially, as the US-backed "Plan Colombia" insists on the use of force to the virtual exclusion of other means, we must employ a broad array of measures to bring about both awareness and action about the plight of native peoples and Colombian society in general. I therefore fully endorse the proposal made by Colombian anthropologist Augusto Oyuela, inviting the AAA to form a commission to examine the impact of political violence on the indigenous peoples in Colombia. An informed report on the situation of native peoples researched and published by a respected academic community can bring the war in Colombia to the attention of international community and encourage it to take actions against it. Although native peoples are not the sole victims of Colombian violence, their anthropological visibility can help focus international attention on the devastating effects of war in Colombia. No efforts should be spared in bringing this war to an end, especially given that it can escalate even further and become even more vicious.

In claiming autonomy and respect, native peoples are not seeking to isolate themselves from the general Colombian situation its prevalent social inequality, its pathological corruption, the inefficiency of its state and the blindness of its leaders. Native peoples have been one of the most active social sectors in confronting social inequality, discrimination and neglect. Their decades-long courageous fight for recognition and

legitimacy is only now beginning to pay off. Native peoples want to show Colombian society that there is a negotiated way out of the conflict, that mass killings and displacement can be avoided through finding common ground for negotiation.

Those who work towards bringing the Colombian conflict to an end must approach the task with creativity and political imagination. The recent request of Colombian native peoples to the UN to send troops to their territories to protect their autonomy may well be a symbolic appeal to the world community, but it also underscores the urgent need for world mediation in this conflict.

Please send brief contributions of no more than 670 words to [santosf@tivoli.si.edu](mailto:santosf@tivoli.si.edu).

## Society for Linguistic Anthropology

RICHARD J SENGHAS AND JAMES STANLAW,  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### Collins Named SLA Board Member

The Executive Board has named Jim Collins Member-at-Large on the board, replacing Ana Celia Zentella, whose term ends this year. Jim is a valuable member of the SLA, active in organization and participation in conference sessions, and a fine scholar with a broad range of interests. Jim's work draws on several aspects of linguistic anthropology, including grammatical and historical linguistic analysis; everyday communicative practice; language and education, especially literacy; and theories of discourse, semiotics and ideology. His scholarly breadth suggests that he will be a highly effective Member-at-Large, since his understanding of linguistic anthropology is inclusive of the field's many different approaches. "Given that my abiding interests are in the links between language, culture and political economy, that is the particular intellectual orientation I will bring to my activities as Member-at-Large," said Jim in his platform statement.

Higher education is one of Jim's research interests, so he brings useful perspective to professional issues facing our membership. His ties to other organizations under the AAA umbrella such as SSILA and CAE will be useful in his service to the SLA. A full professor at SUNY-Albany, Jim draws on a wealth of experience to make significant contributions to the Executive Committee's many tasks and projects.

Jim will serve as Member-at-Large for one year. Following the AAA Annual Meeting in November, the SLA Nominations Committee will propose the next slate for Member-at-Large and for President-Elect. Current SLA President Susan Gal has asked Mary Bucholtz and Jim Wilce to be chair and member, respectively, of the SLA Nominations Committee. Another (as yet unidentified) member will join the committee.

**Irvine Elected to AAA Executive Board**

The SLA nominated Judith Irvine to serve on the AAA Executive Board, and we are pleased to announce that she has been elected to that position. Judith has a long history of active participation in the AAA and the SLA. As former president of SLA and former editor of the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* (among numerous other posts in the SLA), Judith will provide informed and experienced representation to the AAA. Judith is a professor of anthropology at the U of Michigan.

**New Edward Sapir Book Prize Announced**

The SLA announces the Edward Sapir Book Prize of the Society for Linguistic Anthropology, awarded to a recently published book that contributes significantly to our understanding of language in society or the ways in which language mediates historical or contemporary sociocultural processes. The award marks an outstanding book while also raising the visibility of the SLA as a representative of professional linguistic anthropologists. For details, see this issue's Awards Alert column.

**SLA 2001 Student Essay Contest Winners**

The SLA is pleased to announce the 2001 Student Essay Contest winners. Sarah Meacham (UCLA) receives first place for her submission, "Getting Schooled: Rehabilitative Practices in a Los Angeles Court School." Angela Reyes (U Penn) is given honorable mention for "Emergent Paradigms of Asian-American Identity." The SLA appreciates the contributions of Bonnie McElhinny and John Haviland as reviewers. For more details, including the call for submissions for this year's competition, see the Awards Alert column of this issue.

**Duranti Awarded Mayfield Award**

The AAA awarded Alessandro Duranti the Mayfield teaching award. Alessandro is past president of the SLA and a professor of anthropology at UCLA. His teaching efforts go beyond the classroom; his recently published *Linguistic Anthropology: a Reader and Key Terms in Language and Culture* (both available through Blackwell Publishers) are fast becoming standbys for courses in linguistic anthropology. Alessandro also currently is editor of the SLA's *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*.

**Future Co-Editors of JLA Identified**

Elizabeth Keating and Mary Bucholtz have agreed to take on (together) the editing of the *JLA* when Alessandro Duranti steps down from that position in January of 2002. Mentions of these two have appeared frequently in this column (e.g. see above!), supporting their reputations as well-informed and active contributors to the SLA.

Send news, contributions and comments to SLA contributing editors Richard J Senghas at [Richard.Senghas@sonoma.edu](mailto:Richard.Senghas@sonoma.edu) and Jim Stanlaw at [stanlaw@ilstu.edu](mailto:stanlaw@ilstu.edu). SLA President Susan Gal can be reached at [s-gal@uchicago.edu](mailto:s-gal@uchicago.edu). Alessandro Duranti, editor of the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, can be reached at [jla@anthro.ucla.edu](mailto:jla@anthro.ucla.edu).

## Society for Medical Anthropology

ANN MILES AND FRED BLOOM, CO-CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

**Methods on My Mind**

By Bill Dressler (U of Alabama)

I write this from my apartment in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil, a city of about half a million in the state of São Paulo. I've been working for a little over six weeks, starting a three-year project on social and cultural dimensions of cardiovascular disease risk. Needless to say, I've got methods on my mind, since I'm in the process of continuing work on the integration of ethnographic and epidemiological methods.

But there are other good reasons for my state of mind. I'm approaching the last few months as SMA President. In November I'll become Past-President, doing what Mark Nichter tells me, so I'm thinking back over the past few years. I've tried to do a little to reinforce connections between the SMA and the major health research funding agencies in the US, namely the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. We participated strongly in an NIH conference, had some very productive sessions on grant writing at our annual meeting, and in Spring 2002, we will meet jointly with the Society for Applied Anthropology in Atlanta, where we hope to organize activities with the CDC.

What's the point of this? Frankly, I want anthropology to have more seats at the table on a national level when it comes to health research. I guess I'm a little sensitive to this because, over the years, I have found myself more than once in the position of being what seemed the "token" anthropologist at conferences on cardiovascular disease risk, as many of you in other areas have no doubt found yourselves. On the one hand, what we write appeals to researchers in other areas. On the other hand, there is often a multidisciplinary subtext in these conferences, hence the need to hear from at least one anthropologist.

What impact, however, does medical anthropology really have? Certainly people take notice, at least for the moment. But I get the queasy feeling that the impact is mostly momentary, that there is little lasting effect on the thinking of fellow health researchers. Why? My fear is that we don't have the body of research that others have—and this is the important part—that has been carried out with research methods that can be read across disciplines.

My old professor, Bert Pelto (I come by my obsession with methods honestly), once remarked that we don't really learn anthropology so much as we hang around long enough to absorb a good bit of it. From a conceptual standpoint, I think that is true of just about any social science. So, to understand what a health psychologist means by "attributions," I think one needs to hang around psychology for a long

time. But that usually doesn't interfere with our ability to read a study in health psychology, figure out what people did and make some sense of their findings.

My fear is that in anthropology, our research methods continue to be too obscure, idiosyncratic and hidden from the reader. And no matter what our theoretical orientation might be, it is virtually impossible to divorce what we've found from how we found it.

So, my point is, if we want more seats at that table, we need to be able to communicate more clearly what we are doing. The impact we have will depend on our collective ability to carry forward a health research agenda that includes the continuing refinement of public, replicable research methods.

**SMA/ SFAA 2002 Atlanta Meetings**

By Ruthbeth Finerman (U of Memphis)

The SMA will meet with the Society for Applied Anthropology in Atlanta in 2002! In addition to the medical anthropology sessions at the SFAA meetings, the SMA will hold an independent plenary session and a series of panels featuring cutting-edge work. The SMA portion begins with the plenary Wednesday, with distinguished speakers exploring the dynamics of individual and institutional agency in health issues.

Additionally, there will be special sessions focusing on similar themes organized by SMA board members. The SMA welcomes the participation of medical anthropologists throughout the SFAA program, and discussions are ongoing for joint SFAA/SMA sessions. Keep your eyes posted here and on the SMA and SFAA Web sites.

For expanded news see [www.cudenver.edu/public/sma](http://www.cudenver.edu/public/sma). To submit, contact Ann Miles: tel 616-387-3983; fax 616-387-3999; Miles@wmich.edu.

## Society for Psychological Anthropology

KEVIN BIRTH, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

**2001 Biennial Meetings**

The SPA Biennial Meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn Select in Decatur, GA, from October 18 to October 21. Decatur is known for its picturesque courthouse square and exceptional restaurants, many of which are within easy walking distance of the hotel.

Registration information is posted on the SPA Web site ([www.aaanet.org/SPA](http://www.aaanet.org/SPA)). The deadline for advance registration is September 7; there also will be on-site registration at the meetings. The registration fee is \$50 for SPA members, \$30 for students and \$60 for nonmembers.

There will be a banquet on Saturday night; reservations are \$45. Prizes will be announced during the banquet, including the Lifetime Achievement Award.