

ANTHROPOLITAN

ISSUE NO. 12 SUMMER 2015

 UCL



Welcome

The academic year 2014/15 has ended well for staff and students alike. It was certainly a very busy year during which two ERC-funded research groups commenced their preparatory research work in the department as part of a total number of 27 post-doctoral research staff. On the other hand, we were very sad to have to say goodbye to our esteemed colleague Dr Matthew Skinner, who joins his partner at the University of Kent, but have welcomed two new teaching staff, Dr Kimberly Chong and Dr Galina Oustinova-Stjepanovic, who both joined us for a period of three years. We were also successful in appointing two new permanent lecturers, Dr Emily Woodhouse to Human Ecology and Dr María Martín-Torres to Paleoanthropology. To our delight, our other Teaching Fellows are staying with us for a further academic year.

The department's newly inaugurated joint seminar and lecture events have been a resounding success. The joint departmental seminars in November included memorable visits by Professor Emily Martin and Professor Douglas P. Fry, and three riveting presentations by three of our ERC grant holders. The Mary Douglas Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Paul Richards from Wageningen University in Holland and the Daryll Forde Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Bruno Latour in February at the inception of CAOS, our new Centre for the Anthropology of Sustainability. These were giant celebratory

events that brought the whole department together. As usual, we were also able to help fund a series of workshops organised by staff and students and continue to support activities emerging from our busy Research and Reading Groups.

New activities have also extended to students. AnthroSoc has hosted its first ever Alumni evening at which five of our former students spoke about their post-student lives in the fields of law, rights, marketing, fashion, and filmmaking. The Anthropology in the Professional World Occasional Lecture Series saw a number of presentations by anthropologists working at AECOM, the Open Society Foundation and Visual Signo.

We have continued with our acclaimed new 2nd year module Being Human, taught in an Oxbridge style tutorial system, enabling our students to discuss readings with staff in small groups. This innovation in teaching has been welcomed by students and praised as a model to be followed by other departments within the Faculty.

The year was brought to a close by Michael Stewart's Inaugural Lecture in May.

Finally, we are looking forward to celebrating the success of our most recent graduates and wish them and all our students and staff a much-deserved holiday.

Professor Susanne Kuechler
Head of Department

4



4

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND
Sara Randall

6



6

TECHNOLOGICAL ENCOUNTERS
Gill Conquest

8



8

HEALTHY HUNTERS
Wallace Hobbes, Abigail Page and Andrea Migliano

13



10

GAS, COMPENSATION, COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND THE DIVERSIFICATION OF LIVELIHOODS IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON
Cynthia del Castillo Tafur

13

DISCOVERING LOST LANTERN SLIDES
Jane Pettitt

18



16

A YEAR IN THE MONGOLIAN COUNTRYSIDE
Interview with Joseph Bristley Hayaat Stuart-Khafaji

20



18

EARTH SPIRIT
Jordan Murr, Lily Fox, Caitlin Allen and Mahalia Changlee

25



20

LANDSCAPE, IMAGINATION, AND REALITY: STONEHENGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSPECTIVE
Nicole Cyrier, Joseph Cook and Glenn Bullivant

22

THE FREEDOM OF THOUGHTFULNESS: WHAT ONE DISCUSSION ABOUT CHARLIE HEBDO LOOKED LIKE
Martin Holbraad

25

CHARLIE, RITA AND MONICA: LOOKING AT PERFORMATIVITY AND DIGITAL SHUNNING
Nadia Elmrabet

28

“RISK AND POWER IN MATERNAL HEALTH” SYMPOSIUM: A SUCCESSFUL INVITE TO FURTHER DISCUSSIONS
Rebecca Williams and Annie Davidson

30

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Contributors

Susanne Kuechler, Sara Randall, Gill Conquest, Wallace Hobbes, Abigail Page, Andrea Migliano, Cynthia del Castillo Tafur, Jane Pettitt, Joseph Bristley, Hayaat Stuart-Khafaji, Jordan Murr, Lily Fox, Caitlin Allen, Mahalia Changlee, Nicole Cyrier, Joseph Cook, Glenn Bullivant, Martin Holbraad, Nadia Elmrabet, Rebecca Williams, Annie Davidson, Emily Woodhouse, María Martín-Torres, Chris Russell

Editors

Allen Abramson, Paul Carter-Bowman, Man Yang

Copyeditor

Nourane Clostre

ANTHROPOLITAN is published by UCL Anthropology © 2015



Stranger in a Strange Land

Sara Randall

Professor in Medical Anthropology

A three-month academic visit to the Université de Montréal – or an interesting interlude in my year-long sabbatical in which I am recovering from five years as Head of Teaching in the Anthropology department.

At times, life in Montreal makes me feel as though I am deep in the ‘Ba-Li Ethnographic Experiment’ that most of our students experience as an introduction to anthropology. This is surprising because I speak both the languages which are a feature of this bilingual city (even if my French, which was largely learnt in the hot Sahelian countries of Mali and Burkina Faso, doesn’t include much of the requisite vocabulary for dealing with ice, snow and freezing temperatures).

So what is so strange? I need to clarify that I have only ever spent three days in the USA and made brief visits to Quebec, and much of the strangeness is probably just the social evolution that has gone on this side of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, we (my equally bilingual partner and me) keep getting caught out by things which we ought to understand but don’t. Situations such as:

Why do many crossroads say “Arrêt” (“stop”) in big red letters for all four directions? How do you know who should go first after you have all stopped? From the glares we get, clearly we have not understood the mysterious protocol.

Why do estate agents’ boards outside houses for

sale all have photographs of the estate agent? We thought for weeks that they were election posters until we looked closer. But if we were buying a house (which we are not), we really would not need to know what the agent looks like: the vendor possibly, but not the agent.

Why do prices not include taxes? All I am interested in is how much I have to pay for something – I really don’t care where the money goes, but I do care what has to come out of my purse. But then some things do include taxes – like petrol prices and some other things. How is one supposed to know which do and which don’t?

Why are maps so bad? In fact where are the maps? We have now been to two national parks to go walking and snowshoeing. The only maps available are little leaflets which have an artist’s impression of the different pathways. They are only approximate and not to scale, and their contours bear no relationship to reality. As one walks along, there are copies of these maps on boards at strategic intervals – saying “vous êtes ici” (“you are here”), except that often one isn’t ‘here’ because the arrow is in the wrong place. There seems to be a disproportionate amount of mistakes – but with our little bit of paper covered in multiple brightly coloured, spaghetti-like lines we have no way of really knowing whether we should have turned right or left earlier and whether the mistake is ours or theirs. Luckily the bears are still hibernating.

Some things, however, are very familiar. Take the number 51 bus. It is clearly close kin with the 73 in London, which used to take me from my house in Stoke Newington to UCL. The 51 also takes me from where I live to the university, and, like the 73, it hates travelling on its own. It is much happier when accompanied by one or preferably two others of the same number. The other day was a record. While I was walking to my bus stop (about 300 yards), five number 51 buses passed going the other way. This flock-like habit means that, just like with the 73, you get long waits in large queues for the next bus, which is then unbelievably crowded. A wait of 15 or 20 minutes in Stoke Newington is boring and irritating. When it's -20°C with a substantial wind chill factor on top, it becomes dangerous.

Montreal has just had the coldest February on record. In our first eight weeks here, the temperature never went above 0°C , and much of the time it was well below -20°C . This was what we came for so we are not complaining. We wanted to see 'real winter' and we have experienced it. What is curious is the apparent surprise that everyone here expresses about the cold weather – you'd have thought it was



Until this last week, life here has been very slippery. Under every coating of snow on the pavement there is a thick layer of ice, which regularly takes us by surprise. The most dangerous time is during *déneigement* (literally 'de-snowing', or snow clearing). They have a large number and variety of different machines for *déneigement* in Montreal – all of which are focussed entirely on moving snow and ice about and pay absolutely no attention to humans, property or landscape which might get in their way. There are complex, and impenetrable, parking laws which mean that on certain evenings you cannot park your car on one side of the street so that a huge snow plough can scrape the snow off the centre and that side of the road (leaving a large ridge of snow and ice on the other side, so that the cars parked there cannot get out). If a car or bike happened to be in the way of the snow plough, it would just get tossed to one side. Then there are the smaller machines with a plough in front which race along the pavements, driven by maniacs – you have to get out of their way because they are certainly not going to slow down for you! Then there are other contraptions which load surplus snow into lorries which go in convoys through the night to dump it somewhere mysterious. Apparently, in the spring, if you find the *déneigement* service has removed your hedge or the top of your lawn, you can claim compensation provided you had followed all the bye-laws and regulations.

And yes... I am doing some research, some thinking and some writing. However, studying daily life in this familiar but strange land is an interesting side activity.

(Written in March 2015, Montreal)



normal life and therefore not worthy of comment. Last week, however, we had three warm days. All the ice on the roads and pavements went, and much of the snow on the verges. A relatively attractive town has become utterly disgusting. All the litter (a lot) dropped since December is reappearing, and outside every office block, university entrance and metro station there are now dunes of cigarette ends. My battle against cigarette butts discarded in the flowerbed outside the UCL Anthropology department pales into insignificance next to the newly emerged mountains of butts here.



Technological Encounters

Gill Conquest

PhD Candidate in Anthropology

Under the shade of the banana tree where we have set out our equipment – smartphones, laptops, tablets and two quadcopter drones – we ask Mari, a Mbendjele woman who has just participated in testing a smartphone application for us, to tell us if she has ever used a mobile phone before. Mari laughs incredulously. “Who is going to buy me one?” she exclaims. We, three UCL PhD researchers – an anthropologist, a geographer and a computer scientist – are in Gbagbali, a small Mbendjele camp in northern Congo-Brazzaville. The so-called ‘mobile revolution’ that has swept through much of the African continent hasn’t reached the rainforests of this region; network connectivity is rare outside of major logging centres, and most people, especially the semi-nomadic, forest-dwelling Mbendjele, see no need for the expense of a mobile handset. Working with smartphones presents our research assistant with an interesting challenge – how to render concepts such as ‘screen’ and ‘image’ into the local language, where there are no equivalents. (He tells me he uses the word ‘*edingidingi*’, a term usually used to refer to shadows and other things you can see but that aren’t really there.)

We are part of the multi-disciplinary Extreme Citizen Science (ExCiteS) research group, an initiative co-founded by Jerome Lewis of UCL Anthropology and Muki Haklay of UCL Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering (CEGE). Over the past three years ExCiteS has been working to develop Sapelli, a multi-purpose data collection tool for Android smartphones with a pictorial user interface that can be adapted on site, enabling the people who will use the tool to design what it will look like, how it will work, and what it can be used for. Sapelli is an experiment in what Arturo Escobar (2011) has called “design for the pluriverse”, and the projects into which it will be incorporated in the Congo and elsewhere seek to empower local and indigenous populations to participate in forest management and conservation activities on their own terms. However, this is a complicated proposition which involves a messy network of engagements between academic disciplines, global technological processes, NGO and industry agendas, national and local politics and the life projects of indigenous peoples. Moreover, it involves an assumption of some degree of ‘universal usability’ – the idea that a single underlying software system can be rendered

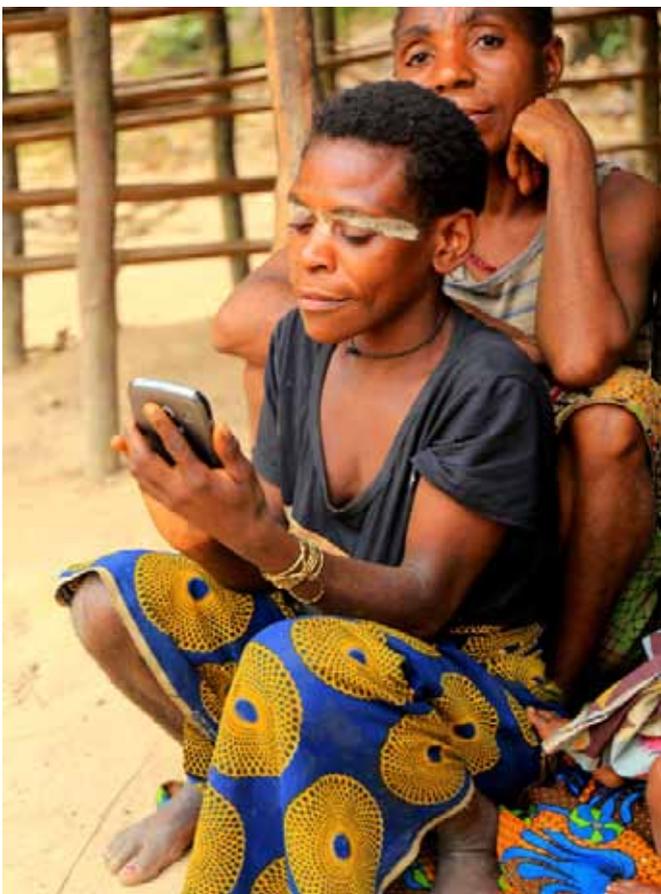
culturally coherent and usable in any situation through a process of participatory design and adaptation.

In Gbagbali we are testing a beta version of Sapelli, each of us approaching the question of universality from a different disciplinary perspective. Michalis, the computer scientist, is running usability tests and experimenting with features such as audio prompts that he believes may make the interface easier for non-literate populations like the Mbendjele to interact with. Julia, the geographer, is researching whether aerial photos are comprehensible to populations who don't normally use pictorial representations of land such as maps (Sapelli is mostly used to collect geo-located data). Meanwhile my research, as an anthropologist, involves documenting and making sense of these brief but influential encounters between technologists, local people and digital devices. How do my colleagues come to conclude for or against the universality of Sapelli's design, how does this match up with local perceptions, and what happens in the longer term as projects aimed at empowering indigenous people play out?

Sapelli was released on the Google Play Store in February, and over the next year a number of new projects will get under way. Carolina, another PhD anthropologist with ExCiteS, plans to work with an Ashaninka group living on the Brazil-Peru border who want to use Sapelli to monitor illegal encroachments on their indigenous land. Other projects in Namibia, Indonesia and Alaska will look respectively at land tenure, palm oil certification schemes and climate change. Each will present a wildly different set of technological encounters through which the assumptions behind the ExCiteS methods and tools will be thoroughly tested. Our work now will be to follow what is challenged or supported and what new developments, ideas and designs might emerge from the process.

REFERENCES

Escobar, A. (2011). Sustainability: Design for the pluriverse. *Development*, 54(2): 137-140.





Healthy Hunters

Wallace Hobbes, Abigail Page (PhD Candidates in Anthropology) and Andrea Migliano (Lecturer in Evolutionary Anthropology)

Last year we went to the Isabela Region of the Philippines to meet the Agta, one of the three Hunter-Gatherer populations in the Philippines (the other two being the Aeta and the Batak) and a community of about 9000 people in total in the country. During our time there, we put aside three months to conduct some health-related research. It is fascinating that this crucial aspect of hunter-gatherers' life doesn't get more attention. Also, for us it was important to conduct this research not only to gain an understanding of the Agta's health profile, but to work towards solutions which ease the Agta's access to medical resources.

Given the environment, we had to bring medical screening to the Agta camps. A key problem with medical care is that the local government struggles to find resources to get its staff to travel for many hours to reach these remote camps, which can be situated as far as 30km from the first town, often in

places only accessible by foot. We worked with the help of a retired nurse in order to provide a wide range of tests: red blood cell and white blood cell counts, parasites tests, TB smears, anthropometrics and detailed symptom history questionnaires.

The results of these tests proved very useful in convincing the local government of the real need for medical support for the Agta. This should be automatic, as the national government has a specific set of rules for its indigenous populations stating that, for them, medical treatment is free of charge. We were able to show that while this system was good in theory, the distance, both physical and emotional, between the foragers and the local government was playing to the disadvantage of the Agta.

With our medical results in hand, we thus spent the last few weeks in the field organising and running a

two-day workshop with the Agta, members of the local government from the Health Department, and also members of the NCIP (National Commission on Indigenous Peoples). We were really thrilled to have the latter coming from Manila to both witness the difficulties and work towards finding solutions.

The negotiations proved successful, if a bit difficult at first. The major problem was the local taskforce's lack of cultural understanding. The rural health workers understood the Agta to be a group of laid-back and strange "half-people", separated from the rest of the population. This type of stigmatisation is not a rare phenomenon for hunter-gatherers (a few dozen populations altogether) throughout the world, and the integration of the minority in the whole is always a complex process.

However, with the kind assistance of individuals who work with the complex cultural interactions of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples of the Philippines, we were able to work together to show the reality of Agta life. What was most special for us about this workshop was that it gave the Agta a platform to tell the health care providers what the Agta community needed. The outcome of this is the plan to both train members of the Agta community to become rural health workers and help decrease the stigma associated with their mobile and non-farming way of life.

Of course, this is a small victory in a world which needs some profound change, but as Laozi told us, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step". What is now left to decide is when the next step can occur.





Machiguenga Native Community of Cashiriari, Bajo Urubamba, Cusco, Peru

Gas, Compensation, Community Projects and the Diversification of Livelihoods in the Peruvian Amazon

Cynthia del Castillo Tafur

MSc Anthropology, Environment and Development 2014

Machiguenga indigenous people living in the lower Urubamba basin in the south-east Amazon in Cusco, Peru, are undergoing great economic, social and cultural transformations. This is because in their territories lies one of the largest natural resource extraction projects in Latin America, the Camisea Gas Project (CGP). The native community of Cashiriari, where I did research, is directly impacted by the CGP as one of the project's lots in current exploration (Lot 88) overlaps with the community's

territory. This community's territory adjoins the Camisea River, the Kugapakori, Nahua, Nanti and Others' Territorial Reserve, and the buffer zone of the Manu National Park. Cashiriari is the most distant Machiguenga village in the lower Urubamba basin and was once the least connected to Western society. However, since 2000, when exploration of gas in Lot 88 began, the community has been gradually incorporated into the market economy, and this has made the Machiguenga become more

dependent on money. As a consequence, new dynamics, necessities and challenges have emerged within this society.

Camisea Gas Project investors have provided Cashiriari with millions of dollars as compensation for the environmental impacts in the territory¹. Money now has a great presence in the village, and local people, particularly women, have actively started diversifying their livelihoods. Income-generating activities (labour, petty trade, logistic assistance for NGOs and gas companies, etc.) have been added to the Machiguenga's traditional means of support (hunting, fishing, gathering, horticulture), and this addition has brought about household rearrangements and a reorganisation of the division of labour.

One document that illustrates this urgency for incorporation into modernity is Cashiriari's Development Plan for 2013 and 2014, which entailed the execution of ten CGP compensation-funded projects, seven of which were related to construction. According to the President of the community, money received as compensation had to be used properly. In this sense, the goal of the construction projects was to improve the quality of life of the *comuneros* and *comuneras*² through better housing and public spaces, and to provide paid employment through the payment of wages to the local workforce, with a new component which included local women's participation in the workforce.

Involvement in community-based projects was significant, particularly in construction. Thirty households were surveyed during my fieldwork³. Twenty-nine responded that one or more of their members had worked at a community-based project between January 2013 and June 2014. 23.27% of the total male population and 27.96% of the total female population in the village had worked at a project in the community. The occupation most Machiguenga men and women were hired for was construction labour, followed by reforestation in the case of women, and by carpentry in the case of men. The number of women working as manual labourers was larger than men.

The 'Housing Improvements' project was being carried out at the time of my fieldwork. Bigger



Machiguenga women also work as laborers at the "Housing Improvements" project

houses were being built for every household in the community. A high proportion of the local workforce was required to perform unskilled tasks such as carrying rubble, timber and slats and transporting them from one site to another. For more skilled jobs such as topography, construction of the houses' concrete bases or operating the sawmill, trained male workers from the nearest cities had been hired and were temporarily living in the community. For the housing project, *comuneros* and *comuneras* hired as manual labourers had a fixed-term contract; the contract lasted 21 days, and after reaching its end the labourers decided if they wanted to renew it. Work started at 7am sharp and ended at 4pm, with a one-hour break for lunch at noon, from Monday to Saturday. Workers were paid in cash at the end of the month (10.00 GBP daily).

What principally retained my attention in the housing project was the massive involvement of Machiguenga women. A reason that came to mind for this involvement was the desire of women to become visible and challenge their traditional roles in their households and community, and to speak up for their needs. The traditional division of labour among the Machiguenga has been changing progressively because of Camisea's indigenous labour policy which exclusively contracts male workforce to work at the gas fields on a migratory basis, leaving women in their communities in charge of their households. This dynamic has gradually been shaping money earning as a male domain and has legitimised men's role as breadwinners, belittling

women's essential role in the household production, even though more burden had been placed on them. On top of that, according to Machiguenga women their husbands did not share the money they had earned at the Camisea project with their wives, and on the contrary the men spent it all buying beer. One of my female interviewees stated:

"Women work in construction because their husbands do not share the money they have earned at the company and instead go to drink. When there is a community project women think 'I am going to work, save money and support my family'. When there is a community project women go to work. Then they buy notebooks, clothes. When men are working at the gas fields, they return to the community and buy expensive things and rapidly run out of money. When women ask their husbands for money, the husbands yell at their wives and say 'I work, I suffer and make my own money'. Men who don't know about money, waste it all".

It is as a response to their frustration and disappointment at the lack of equity that women demanded that the President of the community open job positions for them in the village. Women needed to earn their own money in order to cover the needs their husbands were not providing for. Machiguenga women in Cashiriari had already begun diversifying their livelihoods since their husbands had started working at the CGP. The women had remained responsible not only for their households, but also for their *chacras*⁴ (traditionally a male domain) and the running of their shops. Now, they have also started working as workforce in construction projects in the community. Even if the community projects were just temporary, women's

involvement signified a statement for visibility, a search for equal opportunities and a possibility for change.

The outside gas project operating in the lower Urubamba area has influenced Machiguenga peoples to a considerable degree. The clear movement of women into areas that were previously male domains tells us about Machiguenga women's will/need/desire to diversify, become visible and empower themselves within the household and community. The male-centered conception of wage labour (Kuokkanen 2011) makes it difficult though for women to legitimise their contribution to the household as providers. However, through their active involvement in different spaces, Machiguenga women from Cashiriari in Peru may be taking the first steps ahead towards visibility and empowerment and, with this, towards more egalitarian relationships within the community.

¹ In 2011, it was announced in a community assembly that Cashiriari had received 16 million dollars as compensation funds (information provided through informal conversations and interviews).

² Spanish words for men and women, respectively, who are members of a community (here, referring to members of the Machiguenga community of Cashiriari).

³ Cashiriari's population at the time of fieldwork was 234; the total number of households in the community was 36.

⁴ Spanish word for a garden plot where food is grown.

REFERENCES

Kuokkanen, R. (2011) Indigenous Economies, Theories of Subsistence and Women: Exploring the Social Economy Model for Indigenous Governance. *American Indian Quarterly*. Spring, Vol.35, No2.



Left: Houses with interior divisions and two floors being built in Cashiriari



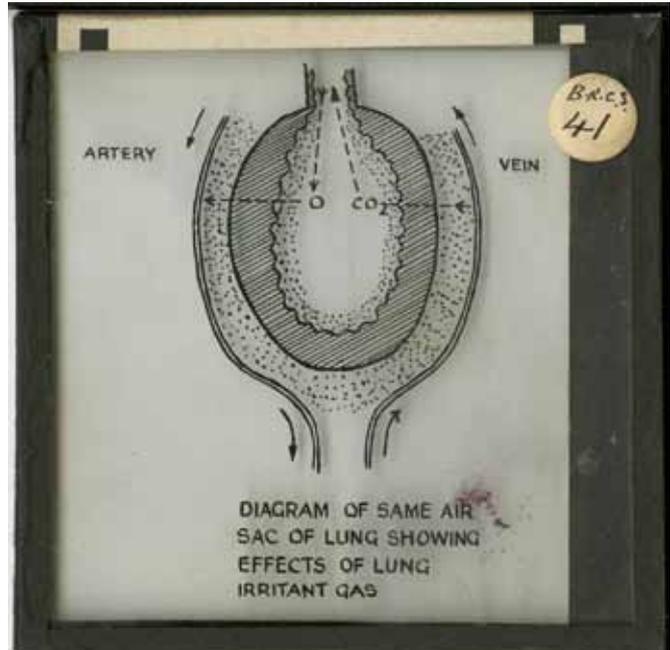
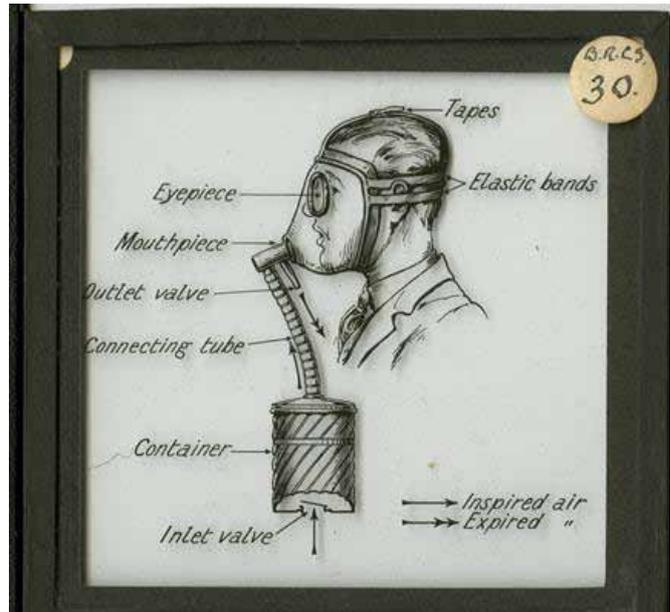
a collection identification code, and the smallest, measuring 6mm, was blank. After discussion with my grandfather, Raymond Pettitt, who has been a keen photographer since the 1940s, I was able to gain an insight on what was deemed acceptable as the general standard for the presentation of lantern slides. Such expectations consisted in the presence of a uniform adhesive tape border around the outside and a 'mask' framing the inside of the slide, as well as two identification labels at the bottom of the slide to indicate the correct orientation for projection. This latter layout is consistent with the prestigious Ilford manual's description of similar assembly guidelines for early lantern slide production (Horder 1958). Intriguingly, being at the top of each slide, the labels on the slides in the collection are incorrectly located, which would have caused them to be projected upside down, an embarrassing prospect! This leads to speculation of three causations. Firstly, it was commonplace for the Red Cross to employ volunteers, and, taking the rushed and messy appearance of some of the slides into consideration, the incorrect placement of the labels may have been a simple error by an inexperienced volunteer. Secondly, such a mistake



may have also been the result of rushed production due to the pressures of the war and the demand for educating the home front. Or thirdly, as the mixed quality itself of production within the collection seems to indicate, the errors may have been the result of later repair by someone unfamiliar with the assemblage techniques. This begs the question as to whether the slides were ever projected and used for their intended purpose as educational tools. Such quality issues would surely have been recognised and put right with use. However, without a confirmed provenance, this all remains conjecture. As would be the case for the context of any of the objects in the ethnographic collection, now the context for the lantern slides is lost it is very hard to recapture; this leaves objects surrounded in mystery, emphasising the importance of continued careful curation.

REFERENCES

Horder, A. (ed.), 1958. *The Ilford Manual of Photography*, 5th edition. Ilford Limited: Ilford, London.





A Year in the Mongolian Countryside

Interview with Joseph Bristley
by Hayaat Stuart-Khafaji (1st Year BSc Anthropology)

Joseph Bristley, a PhD student in the anthropology department, was kind enough to let me interview him about his work, following a year's research looking at pastoralism and contemporary economy in Mongolia.

NOW YOU ARE BACK AT UCL, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I've spent a good deal of time looking over my field notes, and I am currently writing up my thesis. My field site is in an area of Mongolia populated by lots of horses, and I'm currently writing a chapter about their importance in local economic activity. Equestrian culture is closely associated with masculinity in Mongolia, and I am also drawing out how engagement with horses is related to local ideas of personhood and gender.

AS AN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT, A PHD SEEMS LIKE A DISTANT DREAM. JUST WHAT EXACTLY DOES DOING A PHD ENTAIL?

After a year's preparatory study, I visited Mongolia

for a year-long period of fieldwork, with an additional period of language training supported by the Economic and Social Research Council. I was based in a rural area, and I tried to integrate into local life as much as possible. It was difficult at times, but I enjoyed my time in the field. Now I'm back at UCL, I'm writing up my thesis.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE MONGOLIA AS A FIELD SITE?

I completed a Master's degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology at UCL in 2011. Before I started, I knew I wanted to do PhD research, maybe in India. However, by the time I began my Master's dissertation, I knew I wanted to work in Mongolia. The country has undergone massive changes since the collapse of communism in the early 1990s, with the transition to a market economy, re-establishment of religious life, and recent 'mineral boom'. The Mongolian countryside is stunningly beautiful as well as amazingly interesting from an analytical point of view.



HOW DID YOU FIND A FIELD SITE FOR YOUR WORK?

Before beginning my PhD, I went to Mongolia for three weeks to begin learning Mongolian. My language teacher, a lecturer at the National University of Mongolia, took us to visit his family home in the countryside. The area was ethnographically interesting, and the family were happy to let me stay with them for a year, during which I conducted much of my fieldwork. And, in fact, I'm really looking forward to visiting my field site again this summer.

HOW DID YOU CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR FIELD SITE?

In the Mongolian countryside people don't have the kind of jobs they might have in cities, so there is more flexibility for participant observation in local

work – even if my 'help' with day-to-day work wasn't always really that helpful! As my language skills improved I conducted more interviews. Each topic I brought up would lead to a doubling of questions I wanted to ask and would often end up revealing a whole new area to look into! So my fieldwork was very busy to say the least.

Fieldwork and his PhD have been a formative experience for Joseph. He says you learn about yourself in a way that you otherwise wouldn't. You also have a unique opportunity to really embed yourself in a culture and research an idea over an extended period of time. Essentially, this is what social anthropology is all about.

*Top left: Sheep at a herder's winter encampment
Top middle: The hangai (mountainous pastureland) of north-central Mongolia
Top right: Shelter for calves built in an area of temporary pasture
Below: Sheep and goats being corralled at night fall
All photographs by Joseph Bristley*





Earth Spirit

Jordan Murr, Lily Fox, Caitlin Allen and Mahalia Changlee

1st Year BSc Anthropology

We arrived at night time. We were wished clear and vivid dreams. A vast array of hot drinks to choose from and a warm bed (to our surprise) to sleep on satisfied our creature comforts, but we would not have painted such exotic and elaborate reveries without our very own Grandfather Jem. He whipped out his very best stories and instruments, enlightening us with incredible cosmology, binding the physical with the impalpable. The wooden floors and stonewalls only added to this illuminating presence he seemed to hold. Heightened sensory experience took centre stage, and we were challenged to use our bodies in unusual ways, in order to loosen our preconceptions and sharpen our perceptive ability.

We felt the passions and experienced the communicative abilities of real ethnographic subjects. We shared a mutuality with the Central African Azande, our voices meshed together to form a blanket of dialogue. Our voices and

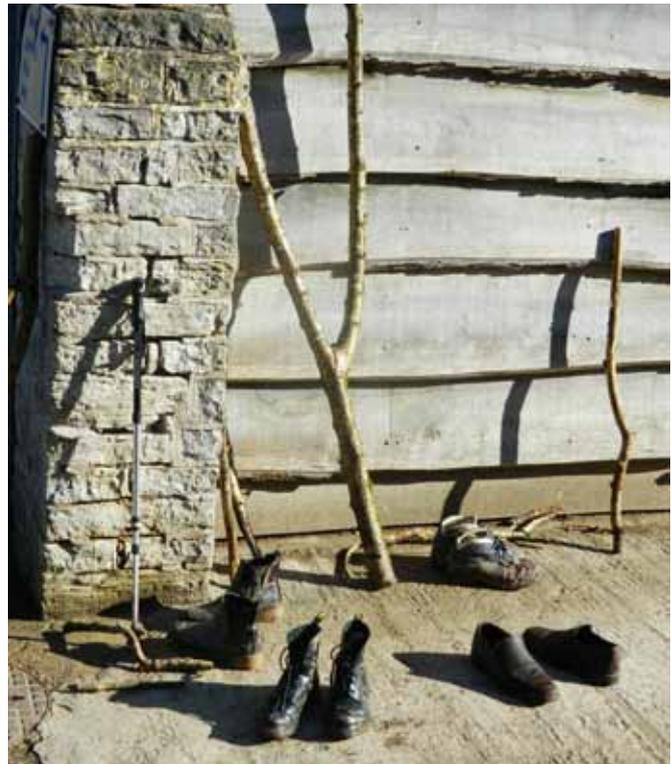
our attention to detail were tested by complex polyphony and by being required to listen for each other across a crowded noisy room and yet hear the silence. For silence is a powerful presence in itself. We heard noises in between noises, and the melodies created have stuck with us to this day. Following the egalitarian example of the Congolese Mbendjele, we sang with equal voice, allowing none to be overpowered. We trod so lightly that the birds did not sing their warning song. Our approach had not worried them; we had become a part of the embodiment of nature. As we sat on the hillside each with a new friend, we shared a moment of intimacy and were reminded of how easy it is to hear yet fail to truly listen.

It was as if we had met our distant relatives and felt the essence of global conflict between citizens and the state, residents and non-residents. We experienced the contrast between a busy motorway meandering through the landscape and

us sitting on reused, recycled carrier bags that I'm sure will be used again, sliding and squelching down silent landscapes.

Movement of the body was integral to our experience. We were instructed to move quietly, slowly, carefully, to move past dangerous fiery heat safely and coexist peacefully with the environment. At other moments, we lost our inhibitions, danced with our ancestors, with each other, with our own inner emotions and self. Rather than dancing with our bodies, we let our bodies dance with us, cathartically letting go. With this taste of fieldwork, we learned that the body is a tool for phenomenological observation. It is in the attempt to observe as a participant that, as fledgling anthropologists, we were stuck in the oxymoronic paradox of studying culture.

Encouraged to enjoy the scents and tastes of wholesome meals and fruity country air we soon began to feel health creeping upon our neglected bodies. Not only were our physical selves cared for, but also our minds. We meditated together, shared personal concerns and experiences, culminating in the most spiritual and most intense moment, where we became one unified entity. After each searing season was encountered and each ancestor welcomed, we supported and reassured each other of the certainty of cool air and water to come. The days were long, the air was cold, the food was warming and the experience was unforgettable. We left feeling invigorated, having bonded over tea, sweat, Ba and Li.



Photos by Ayano Goto, Luke Reilly and Emily Gotch





Landscape, Imagination, and Reality: Stonehenge and the Importance of Perspective

Nicole Cyrier, Joseph Cook and Glenn Bullivant

MSc Social and Cultural Anthropology

Stonehenge, the jewel in the crown of English Heritage, is a mecca for tourism and is adored by many. What makes this place so interesting and worth visiting? Students from both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels met early one April morning, with the hopes of seizing the adventure and learning from our beloved

Professor, Christopher Tilley. Leaving London for greener pastures, we left tight city roads and entered a landscape modified to suit agricultural, historical and military needs. With such changes of environments, we prepared for an exhilarating hike through a land of the real and the imagined, where the difference between mythical and ancient

would become a boundary too blurred to distinguish.

Upon arrival though, the experience felt more like a reliving or a retelling of a story rather than entirely new. The picture-postcard image, with tourists carefully cropped out and sunset in perfect position, has become a powerful representation of



a site many find quite different in reality. Stonehenge cannot actually be described as visually shocking. Our preconceptions of the monument were crafted with optimism and built up for greatness. Whether for use on fridge magnets or tourist pamphlets this imagery manipulates the viewer's idea of the stones by emphasising in turn the fantasy or the reality, the story or the spectacle, the ancient past or the selfie-friendly future.

Having taken the highly contrived tourist path (mildly underwhelmed, perhaps), we were then asked to reconsider our perceptions. Under the leadership of Professor Chris Tilley, we left the controversially paved pathways surrounding

Stonehenge, and we began to once again meet the monument from its intended ceremonial path, like those who assembled and reassembled the structure might have done. It seemed the group, as a whole, agreed that when this monument was approached from its intended angle, the stones took on a life of their own. They seemed to dance and move rhythmically, and to move with every step. Noted as "a bit of theatrics" as one student pointed out. Although appearing full of life, the monument began to slow in its movements as we rounded the path and, as we neared several steep hills, to eventually slow down to a static pose and sink behind a large bank of earth. When we climbed that final mound, it elevated into sight in a heroic pose.

In a fulfilling way, it was in such a vivid way that Professor Tilley utilised this field trip, as he expressed the significance of landscape simply by way of approach. Landscape is not simply ordinary, as it is an active participant in providing a setting for experience and engages with each physical and social element to create a memorable story. It is not enough to gaze plainly upon the landscape; you must allow it to consume your senses, envelop you into its unique story, and perhaps, for some, connect you to the landscape's ancient past.

*Top: Chris Tilley attempting to separate truth from fiction at Stonehenge
Photos by Joseph Cook*

The Freedom of Thoughtfulness: What One Discussion about Charlie Hebdo Looked Like

Dr Martin Holbraad

Reader in Social Anthropology

Freedom of speech? Absolutely. Speech of whatever kind? At least for the sake of argument, sure. But what kind of *freedom* are we (freely) speaking about here? With the repeated proclamations of democratic principle in the face of threat, in turns anguished, heroic or bellicose in the wake of the recent¹ events in Paris, the question of how to conceive of the freedom we acclaim deserves more attention than it receives. As a social anthropologist with no expertise on the immediately relevant fields of study (French society, Islam and politics, migration and social exclusion, etc.), I can only address this question with an ethnographic sensibility. Rather than taking a position within the debate about

freedom and responsibility that has inevitably erupted in response to the attacks at Charlie Hebdo, I look at how these notions play themselves out in the very conduct of the debates we have about them. A discussion we held with staff and students in the anthropology department here at UCL is a case in point.²

The meeting was motivated by the sense of numbness many of us felt in the days after the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Our tongues felt tied, perhaps by the double bind of events that are at once so big that they compel an immediate response, and so intricate that they demand that that response be nuanced if it is to avoid adding to the harm. In

search of nuance we turned to anthropology, the discipline that brings our department together as a community of sorts. We would run an open meeting in the form of a reading group for staff and students to discuss the Charlie Hebdo attacks and their aftermath, with the aid of essays written by prominent anthropologists of Muslim societies Talal Asad and Saba Mahmood following the Danish cartoons affair of 2005 (in Asad *et al* 2009), which seems in so many ways to have presaged what we are now living through, again.

I can't summarise all that was said in the meeting, which lasted for two hours and involved





Photo: Olivier Ortelpa, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)

approximately 40 students and staff from across our department and beyond. But what became clear almost from the outset was that this was going to be far more than just an occasion to “think through the significance of the events [in Paris] anthropologically”, as we had put it in our original invitation. A Master’s student, who also brought his young son to the meeting, spoke of the need to think about the violence of symbols in order to understand the context surrounding Charlie Hebdo. A French undergraduate student, struggling to check her emotions, argued for nuance in our understanding of what Charlie Hebdo cartoonists saw themselves as doing and of their complex stance vis-a-vis the French state. Another French student reported on the forms of identification he had witnessed on the national marches in France on 11 January, from which he had just returned. What does one say about oneself when one declares “je suis Charlie”? Later in the discussion the experience of multiculturalism was pitted against its ideological

representations. A Brazilian PhD student suggested that, rather than the metaphor of sharing, perhaps the idea of “bumping into each other” better captures the condition of multicultural society. A first-year undergraduate, speaking of her own experience as a Muslim growing up in Scandinavia and the UK, explained that in her life there has been a strong element of trying to fit in, and that this may be as it should be since, as she put it, “we are all human in the end”. How does the universalising impulse of that sense of common humanity, asked a postdoctoral researcher working with North African migrants, sit with the relativising insights we so often glean as anthropologists in our ethnographic engagements with people? And so it went on.

One could, if one wanted to, describe the meeting as an exercise in free speech, understood as the unfettered expression of divergent opinions. Certainly, the peculiar intensity of the discussion was owed in great part to the care taken by everyone who took it upon

themselves to speak – the care to show respect not just for the views they addressed, but also for the people who had themselves ventured respectfully to express their own. Indeed, as someone said in the meeting itself a propos Charlie Hebdo, free speech has to be about respect. But then one could turn that statement around, to ask: was the respect with which conversation was conducted a matter of free speech – a matter of unfettered opinion, the right to offend and so on?

Far from it, it seems to me. As an ethnographer, what I witnessed in that room was not people allowing each other the space to say what they wanted, free from constraint. This we all did, of course, but that was not the issue in the conduct of our conversation. What was at stake was something much more intricate and delicate – indeed fragile: namely, the care required for what one might best call *thoughtfulness*. If the people assembled in that meeting felt that they were freeing themselves from anything, that

may have been most of all from their own tongue-tied numbness in the face of events they sensed were enormous – enormous, perhaps, in that they could not be encompassed by the forms of thought already at our disposal. The care and respect of the meeting, then, was to be found in the mutual condition of trying to find manners for genuine expression to emerge: expression as the adventure of thought unfolding itself, with people trying to find ways to say something adequate, not only to the events under discussion and the issues that those events press upon us, but also to their own sense about them, the feelings of others, indeed to the very situation of having, precisely, a genuine conversation.

The hardest thing is not to say something at all, but to say something thoughtful. As Igor Cherstich (also a participant in that meeting) puts it, freedom of expression entails the responsibility of what Aristotle called *phronesis* – the manners of practical wisdom (Cherstich 2015). I would add that this kind

of wisdom turns most deeply on a concern for freedom. Only here the freedom that matters is the freedom entailed in the very act of expression: the freedom exercised by one's thoughts as they emerge, tentatively, provisionally, experimentally, often precariously, in a spirit of respect, exploration and care for the value of thought and for the difficult enterprise of allowing it to speak itself. This may be what Hannah Arendt (1960) had in mind when she spoke of political freedom as the work of spontaneous thinking.

Thinking oneself into the question of 'freedom of speech', then, is an act that itself presupposes the *freedom of expression*. We may wonder what difference such a conception of freedom – the freedom of thoughtfulness – might make to our thinking about what happened at Charlie Hebdo.

REFERENCES

Arendt, H. (1960). Freedom and politics: a lecture. *Chicago Review*, 14(1): 28–46.

Asad, T., Brown, W., Butler, J. and Mahmood, S. (2009). *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech*. The Townsend Papers in the Humanities No. 2. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Cherstich, I. (2015). Charlie, secular culture and practical wisdom. *Huffington Post*, Available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/igor-cherstich/charlie-secular-culture-a_b_6508328.html

¹ This article was written in the month following the Charlie Hebdo attacks, which took place on 7 January 2015 in Paris. We have preserved the immediacy of the text since it is pertinent to the topic, namely the kinds of reactions such events might elicit.

² The meeting was held on 16 January 2015 in the Student Common Room at UCL Anthropology. It was organised by Alice Elliot, Martin Holbraad and Allen Abramson under the aegis of the Cosmology, Religion, Ontology and Culture (CROC) departmental Reading and Research Group (RRG), which brings together students and staff interested in such topics as religion, ritual, myth and cosmology and their implications for anthropological thinking.



Left: Hannah Arendt with cigarette and her famous slogan "Nobody has the right to obey", Bernd Schwabe in Hannover, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)

Charlie, Rita and Monica: Looking at Performativity and Digital Shunning

Nadia Elmrabet

PhD Candidate in Digital Anthropology

For the last six months, as a French and Panamanian national, I have been on fieldwork in Panama studying the relation of Panamanians to technology, trying to deconstruct the idea of digital literacy. My method includes floating thick description, participant observation in technology-related programs and online digital ethnography. That's when I came across Charlie, Rita and Monica, whom I have never met except as media personas.

“Ceci n'est pas un Charlie” (“this is not a Charlie”): the case of Charlie

An early morning of January, I first heard of the attacks on the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris from a friend through the mobile chat service WhatsApp. I was glued to my TV the following days, watching international news channels while checking social networks and talking over the phone with friends and family. As everything unfolded, I felt out of place and felt I should be there rather than here. What I felt was that my country and my city and my people had been hit. Being this far away, I found solace in social networks and media, following the republican gathering on Sunday, listening to testimonials



Slogan projected on the French Embassy in Berlin, Informationswiedergutmachung, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

the following days of the ‘everyday man’ in mourning, and to my relief, much of the talk was grave but balanced and mostly didn't look for culprits in French society. I was, in fact, very tense at the thought that Arab and Muslim communities would be pilloried.

On social networks and in the media, #jesuischarlie was everywhere. An implicit and, at times, explicit demand for Muslims to publicly condemn these acts grew louder. The platforms acted as a space of solidarity, of fellowship, of fraternity, enacting France's trinity (“Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”). The hashtag became a relay but it also proved a challenging

statement, and challenging it was mostly frowned upon and interpreted at best as a lack of respect and humanity, at worst, as an endorsement of terrorism. Adding other names – the names of the victims or of targeted groups (#jesuisahmed #jesuisjuif) – allowed a compromise and included even more people beyond the problematic mention of the satirical newspaper.

Unfortunately, this tagging further alienated an already relegated part of the society. French people of Arab heritage have a long history of being marked as alien, considered dangerous at times, and mocked. While France has been made up of an aggregate of migration

waves for a long time, including Arab ethnic groups as a core component, there is a difficult (if not taboo) acceptance of the self-perception as a mixed country. Thus, whereas this diversity should be perceived as an intrinsic reality, it is often placed under the rug. Talking about it is seen as politically incorrect and is relegated to far-right rhetoric about an imminent dystopic future. It thus perpetuates the construction of an entire part of society as being exogenous and constantly on 'performative probation'.

In the Charlie case, it was soon demanded from an already ostracized community that they join the shunning of terrorists who were associated with the Arab community at large, with the promise to confirm their allegiance rather than merely belonging to the republican pact. But actually, the question was: what is it exactly they were asked to shun? No good answer could come from asking people to adhere to an identity and values they could not rally with (especially because Charlie Hebdo was a vitriolic tribune). I later came across alternative voices online, arguing that there was a form of "white privilege" in #jesuischarlie, as it acted as a coercive way of shutting down any debate while maintaining the prevalence of one speech, one display of power, and one legitimate underlying order of things. Besides the unjustifiable act of terror and senseless butchery that pretended to be an act of retaliation against religious injury, questions needed to be asked about whether or not we should humorise



anything and everything up to the point of insult and broadcast it as an opinion. Perhaps freedom of speech is not above all else; maybe "building dialogue" in a community of difference should be more important.

"A country is not a house": Rita's and Monica's case

Rita's case in Panama is rather more banal. Rita Garcia de Zedde is one of the many Venezuelans emigrating from their country to look for new opportunities in Panama. Over the last years, the influx of Venezuelans has unnerved Panamanians who feel antagonistic against them, much like towards the Colombians. Venezuelans are almost perceived as asylum seekers fleeing the left populist government in Venezuela. It is also important to note that they are mostly whiter than the Panamanian population. A couple of months ago, Rita published on Facebook a racist rant against Panamanians which she called "monos" ("monkeys"), denying Panamanians their legitimacy over the territory and claiming that Panamanians should be so happy to have so many

Venezuelans coming to their "selva" ("jungle"). As a result, Panamanians may have re-lived a tense recent past where up until the end of the 20th century, the US still occupied a great part of the isthmus known as the Canal Zone. The Canal Zone was absolutely out of bounds for Panamanians and they didn't have any sovereignty or jurisdiction on it. The "gringos" also used to call Panamanians "monos". Shortly after Rita posted her rant, things escalated quickly, and more and more people outside the platform shared and commented on it to call out the now "unwelcomed guest", appealing to immigration laws which can expel an immigrant insulting Panama. Even taking down the message didn't appease the crowd: broadcast media offered even more potency to the outrage.

In Rita's case, the crowd ended up "unveiling" her, plastering her Facebook photos on Twitter and the Web; they went as far as to publish photos of her at a airport, fleeing the country, and posted them online, much like for a criminal being tracked down: she could delete her account and flee, but she couldn't hide. Moreover, the authorities and institutional actors (the company where she worked at – a big bank group) joined the witch hunt and condemned and distanced themselves from her.

This process of offering one's face to the manipulation of a vindictive faceless gaze is a recurrent template of shunning practices. Similarly in Monica Lewinsky's case – the notorious intern to US President Bill

Clinton in the 90s – regaining control over one’s face is a difficult process for a shunned person, especially in a mediatized context. Recently, Monica reappeared in the limelight, voluntarily, to spearhead an anti-cyber-bullying movement. She used an extremely viral digital landmark – the TED Talk video. She started by explaining how she has come back after years of being silenced and of having her face known all over the globe and eventually becoming “patient zero of Internet humiliation”. The strategy here seems rather straightforward: the TED talk was a way to reclaim her face. Actually, one’s face acts as a metonymy for one’s body and we can see in Rita’s case, the shift from her face to her body, much like the way in which the public placarded Monica’s face with intimate detailed accounts of her sexual experiences with the American President.

Aristotle is often cited as explaining the role of friendship in social networks. He demonstrated that friendship is at the core of democratic life and acts as a barrier against tyranny. Although social networks may function as a structure articulated around the performance of friendship, it might be difficult to argue in the light of these cases that these platforms also function as democratic spaces. While they allow for speech to occur seemingly more freely, they engage just as much in implicit as well as explicit constraints, bringing the controlling gaze of the masses to bear upon the uncertainty of the private / public domain online. Indeed, in Rita’s case, debates emerged

through (digitized!) print media arguing that a country should not function as a house: while there can be a form of free speech (usually tolerated behind closed doors), an authoritarian mechanism should also come into play (“my house, my rules or get out”). Indeed, in Panama *bochinchar* (a form of small talk often turning into full gossip) is central in everyday life and is usually accompanied by using what could pass for defamatory or racist turns of speech – albeit always considered by Panamanians as not racist, but affectionate or matter of fact. And, one could argue, in their defense, that by attacking racism, by looking to stand against terrorism or by holding accountable a public figure by demanding the truth about his or her moral character, crowds present themselves as stabilizing figures, protecting values of a certain social contract.

However, we can see the role of the crowd in these cases as being one of speech-cleansing. In Charlie’s and Rita’s case, speech-cleansing actually tends to only authorize a certain kind of speech. It makes for a silent asymmetrical polarization of opinions and positions – similar to the process on Facebook where the selection of friends, through affinities, and the interplay of algorithms tend to strengthen pre-existent views and similarity of opinion. Then, when a discordant element voices its opinion, it suddenly appears as an act of violence, poking and violating our own corner of the universe. Especially once they have been flagged, there is little or no room left for individuals to speak let alone defend

themselves, because the act of pointing, in all its cathartic and rightfulness and gregariousness, appears more important than the object.

What is left masks rather than makes visible and addresses social inequalities. It also makes people more afraid of speaking rather than fostering conditions for dialogue, injuring the very democratic structure it deems to stand for. While Charlie, Rita and Monica have resolved nothing in the underlying turmoils they stemmed from – besides providing relief at a high cost - I surprised myself musing about the strangely naïve proposal at the end of Monica Lewinsky’s TED Talk where she argued that as a society, we should be going for kindness over humiliation whenever possible.

Full text available online on Medium: <http://bit.ly/1dBeLnT>
Nadia’s twitter account with updates from the field: @zewiskas

Below: Monica Lewinsky, Mingle Media TV, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)



“Risk and Power in Maternal Health” Symposium: A Successful Invite to Further Discussions

Rebecca Williams and Annie Davidson

3rd Year BSc Anthropology

In February this year, UCL Anthropology held an event that sought to address the often silent paradoxical dimensions of maternal health. Using a framework of power and risk, panellists were asked to address the changing landscape of maternal health practice. Topics covered a diverse range of issues stretching from medicalisation, consent and coercion to the relationship between reproduction and female social status. The event was hugely successful, attracting a broad range of attendees from outside of the department, including key theorists, practising clinicians and midwives, many of these attendees themselves mothers reflecting on their own birthing experiences.

Within anthropology, risk and power have long been used as analytic through which society can be better understood. Ethnography has demonstrated how risk discourse itself operates as a technology of power and is employed within medicine to justify intervention: power working in a variety of directions,

and not always ‘top-down’. Speakers offered both practical and ethnographic experience from around the world, exemplifying the pervasiveness and variability of issues relating to risk and power in maternal health. These discussions reached further than the usual remit of global health, probing areas that form the very basis of society: kinship, gender, technology, agency and rationality.

In her introductory talk, event chair Dr Sahra Gibbon demonstrated how interventions aimed at addressing and improving maternal health are linked to a range of biomedical techniques that are in fact not value-free but are embedded in institutional cultures and practices. Consequently, these interventions are linked to the specific politics of public health, to international and economic goals of development and family planning as well as to ‘local moral worlds’. Catarina Morais’ presentation extended this last point. Thus, in the child-birthing arena in Portugal, power has moved decisively

from the community to medical practitioners. This is reflected especially in the power of language in childbirth representations, where, rather than empower, the mother’s induction into the logic of medicalised discourse tends to undermine women’s understandings of their own bodies. In a similar vein, Mars Lord, from Doula UK, demonstrated how clinical approaches often act to constrain women, from the lighting of a birthing room to women’s ability to move freely whilst in labour. Mars highlighted the role of technology in displacing agency away from women, undermining their ability to birth their own children.

Rebecca Ashley discussed how technologies are employed to manage risk in maternal health settings. She showed how clinical protocol, hospital guidelines and algorithms circumscribed notions of risk. Her presentation emphasised the power of such technologies in surveilling women during pregnancy and childbirth despite these technologies’ everyday and habituated use. Addressing

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) on an earlier occasion, Rebecca had indicated how research helps to shape clinical guidelines but also that there remain numerous technologies that warrant critical analysis. On the other hand, Professor Maya Unnithan focused her talk on maternal health in rural Rajasthan, where maternal mortality rates are extremely high. She discussed the Safe Motherhood Programme implemented in 2005, which aimed to increase the number of women giving birth in public institutions – highlighting that the shifting context of the birthing arena is not confined to advanced medical practice.

Dr Susie Kilshaw spoke about Qatar, where fertility works to define a woman's familial standing and position within society. Her discussion highlighted both how kinship structures and familial expectation colour the social perception of fertility and the mechanisms women employed to manage the disruption of fertility. Miscarriage and risk in Qatar are exclusively linked to female social role. Personal grief

and social stigma are managed by recognising Allah's will in the loss of a child, but this is simultaneously countered by attributing personal responsibility to mothers.

Afterwards a passionate discussion took place. The power dynamics that manifest themselves within the medical community and the implications this has for maternal health was an issue repeatedly raised. In addition, questions emerged concerning conceptualisations of what 'maternal health' actually entailed. And, whilst many of the speakers addressed issues directly relating to pregnancy and birth, the audience also emphasised the need to consider contraception as a topic fundamental to maternal health, men's role in maternal health, and a woman's role in child care and upbringing. One issue in particular was emphasised: that there was a need for further action, and that discussions had to evolve into culturally sensitive, collaborative and practical approaches that could be effectively implemented.

Recently Awarded PhDs

Emily Emmott – *Allomaternal investments and child outcomes in the United Kingdom*

Katharine Balolia – *Sexual dimorphism, growth and development beyond dental maturity in the cranium of extant hominoid primates*

Elizabeth Dickson – *Greenroofs: phyto-materiality and ecotopia*

David Cooper – *Productive dilemmas: assistance and struggle in a Nicaraguan agricultural cooperative*

Caroline Uggle – *The evolutionary ecology of health-related behaviours*

Timothy Carroll – *Becoming orthodox: of people and things in the making of religious subjects*

Julie Shackelford – *Heritage matters: understanding value in crisis Syria*

Nicolas Montalva Rivera – *Adaptation to milk drinking and evolution of lactase persistence in pastoralist goat herders in central-northern Chile*

Daniele Stolfi – *Refracted truths: mediating constructions of identity through the illness and healing experience of homeless Native American men along the Wasatch Front, Utah*

Charalampos Kontarakis – *Muslims possessed: spirit possession and Islam in Cairo*



New Appointments

Dr Emily Woodhouse

Lecturer in Interdisciplinary Environmental Anthropology

Emily's research focuses on the cultural, institutional and livelihood dimensions of human–environment relationships. She studies how conservation and development processes impact upon these relationships, with implications for both justice and sustainability. She is particularly interested in pastoralist and agro-pastoralist systems and their changing governance. Emily has experience working on the Tibetan Plateau where she explored religion and the environment in the context of Chinese state policies and transformations of the rural

economy. More recently, she has conducted fieldwork on the rangelands of Tanzania to study the impacts of payment-based conservation projects on human wellbeing, and in particular on gendered experiences. Emily draws upon approaches from natural science and social anthropology and is interested in promoting interdisciplinary research in studies of sustainability.

Emily gained her PhD from Imperial College London in the Conservation Science Group, and has been in the UCL

Anthropology department for the last two years as a post-doctoral researcher working on the ESRC-DFID funded project 'Measuring complex conservation outcomes' (MCCol) in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Imperial College.



Dr María Martínón-Torres

Lecturer in Palaeoanthropology and Human Evolution

María Martínón-Torres, PhD in Medicine and Surgery (Santiago de Compostela, Spain), MSc in Forensic Anthropology (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) and MPhil in Human Origins (University of Bristol) has been a member of the Research Team of the Pleistocene sites of Atapuerca since 1998. Her research interests include hominin palaeobiology as well as the reconstruction of an evolutionary scenario for the first Europeans considering hominin variability and biogeographic and climatic variations.

For the past eight years, she has been Research Leader of the Dental Anthropology Group at the National Research Center on Human Evolution (CENIEH) in

Burgos (Spain) where she set up a Virtual Histology Research Line through the application of mCT techniques to the dental evidence and a Palaeopathology Research Line that aims to integrate the identification of the diseases of past populations within an ecological frame. She has led and participated in several international projects related to the study of the hominin dental evidence from China through the Republic of Georgia to France and the Iberian Peninsula, and spanning from the *H. georgicus* to modern *H. sapiens*. She has published more than 60 book chapters and scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals such as Nature, Science, PNAS or the Journal of Human Evolution, as well as making numerous contributions to mass media and

public engagement. Her work has been highlighted as ranking in the Top 1% of most cited authors in the field of Social Sciences according to Thomson Reuters Essential Science Indicators. Her research has received funding from Barrié de la Maza-British Council, The Royal Society of London, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Spanish Ministry of Culture.



Events in the Department



23 October 2014
Mary Douglas Memorial
Lecture 2014 by Professor
Paul Richards – Irreconcilable
Conflicts? Civil Wars
from the Perspective of
an Institutional Theory of
Culture



5 May 2015
Inaugural Lecture by
Professor Michael Stewart
– The Porous University:
Creating Partnerships in a
Global City



31 October 2014
The Work of Games in the
Age of Digital Production – A
Talk by Thomas Malaby



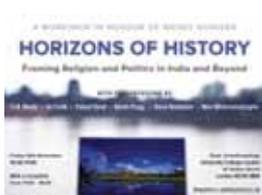
6 May 2015
Workshop – Aesthetics and
Ethics: An Enquiry into Their
Relationship



6-7 November 2014
Workshop – Ordinary
Extraordinary: The
Anthropology of Risk, Limits
and Exposure



7 May 2015
Workshop – Social Media and
Education



14 November 2014
Civilisation and Its Critiques
– Horizons of History:
Framing Religion and Politics
in India and Beyond



28 May 2015
The Subjectivity of the
Body in Mental Health: An
Anthropological Workshop



25 November 2014
Anthropology Alumni Meet
and Greet



4-5 June 2015
Conference – The War of
Worlds: Self and Society in
Social Movements



26 November 2014
Where is the Field?
Anthropology of the Past,
Present and Future



9 June 2015
Workshop – Figuring out the
Future: Emerging Subjects
and the Flux of the Economic
Present



12-14 February 2015
Daryll Forde Lecture by
Professor Bruno Latour
and Inaugural Conference:
Anthropological Visions of
Sustainable Futures



15 June 2015
Conference – Anthropology
in London Day 2015:
Anthropology on the Move



27 February 2015
Seminar – Risk and Power in
Maternal Health



30 June 2015
Cosmologies of Destiny:
One-day CROC Workshop
on the Ethnography of
Predestination, Temporality
and Freedom



10 July 2015
Symposium – Body Plasticity:
Intrusions and Extrusions



[/UCLanthropology](#)

Cover photo courtesy of Wallace Hobbes

www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology