

4th Annual Western Anthropology Graduate Student Conference

Competing Voices in Cultural Spaces
March 4th-6th, 2016

Session 1: Memory and Health

Part of a system one hates: Creating practically-oriented solutions while critiquing structural and theoretical constraints

Hilary Agro
University of Western Ontario

In response to community needs, public health measures such as harm reduction have often been the focus of practically-oriented medical anthropology. However, critics argue that harm reduction research and techniques reduce drug users' experiences to addiction and problematic use, which reflect a compromise with historically inadequate and pathologizing abstinence-only programs, but are hamstrung by a fear of taking seriously the voices of drug users calling for full legalization and acknowledging the pleasures and benefits of recreational drug use for many people. Harm reduction is also framed in terms of analytics of personal risk and harm, and implemented at the level of the individual body, with the result that attention is deflected away from risk factors at the population level caused by structural inequalities and prohibition itself. Finding a balance between attempting to reduce the harm a system causes without legitimizing and being complicit in the system's tyranny is a theme which has found few easy answers in anthropology. Drawing on fieldwork among drug users in Toronto, ON, this paper will think through the difficulties of reconciling a commitment to incorporating immediate community needs into research design while being critical of the potential for some solutions to further entrench structures of oppression.

Decolonizing the Epidemiological Transition on Manitoulin Island: Re-discussing Mortality in Indigenous and Settler Populations, 1869-1940

Toni Valenti

Laurentian University

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Darrel Manitowabi, Laurentian University

This study presents a critical perspective of historical accounts regarding settler and Indigenous population health on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, between the years 1869- 1940. Early ethnographic studies, including Jesuit missionary accounts and local historical records are re-examined through a contemporary colonial lens to reframe Indigenous health transitions in a colonial setting, and from an under-represented viewpoint. This study utilizes qualitative research design, critical historical analysis, and literature informed by contemporary colonial theory to contextualize historic and present day health data and help facilitate a new, more inclusive health narrative. Throughout this research, diet, accidental deaths, and infectious disease narratives will be addressed and critiqued as a way to distance health realities from early ethnographic accounts published by colonial forces. It will also be explored whether these colonial narratives helped facilitate present day health discrepancies and perpetuate a legacy of structural violence against Indigenous peoples who now share a cultural space with settler populations (and vice versa). In conclusion, this research will address why and how health inequalities were born, specifically in regards to infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, accidents, and diet related inflictions from a cultural anthropological lens.

Keywords: Colonialism; Ethnography; Indigenous; Health

The abject body and disability: How individuals with mental health issues lose their voice within university

Adam Grearson
Trent University

This paper uses Judith Butler's concept of the abject body to suggest that all oppressed and marginalized social actors are illegitimated by more powerful social groups. Drawing upon Butler's comparison of the abject and the subject, I suggest that the very status of abject forces actors into a status which prevents them from having a formidable voice in economic, political, and social aspects of their lives due to having poor life chances. I specifically focus on one type of abject body: individuals with mental health issues. Drawing upon my original undergraduate research at Trent University, I discuss how students with mental health issues do not flourish¹ within their communities due to the negative emotional states that result from a lack of necessary help-seeking behaviour. I used this research to learn that many students who needed help did not seek it, which further silences the struggles these students are facing within their university experience. I conclude by offering ways in which to better support help-seeking behaviour and students with mental health issues in general so that they may have greater opportunity to flourish in university.

Key words: abject body; mental health issues; flourishing; emotional states

¹ I provide my own definition of flourishing and contextualize it within what I refer to as a "ladder of wellness" which includes the experiences of happiness and subjective well-being. All terms will be defined.

Exploring the use of biomedicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine in Singapore

Sarah Williams

Laurentian University

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Darrel Manitowabi, Laurentian University

This study reviews cultural relevance to current health care practices in Singapore. Singapore is a city-state with successful integrative care practices demonstrating traditional Asian family culture within their health policy. Research will utilize historical documentation of settlement of Singapore as appreciation for the kinship patterns emergent in the Asian family system, which will embolden the requirement of articulating cultural context in health care policies under observation. For Singapore, the value of kinship has contributed to its emergence as a world leader in affordable health care for all. Anthropological interpretation of details surrounding this country's current use of biomedicine and TCM is instrumental in framing how traditional kinship patterns are contributing to their modern health care status, and these links will parallel the obvious need for restructuring of Western health care. As anthropologists the value we bring in disseminating our interpretation of data defines outcomes of proposed policy changes, the forthcoming institutional results, and academic contribution to the field of study. As key informants to cultural dialogue the importance of an Anthropologist is the placement of their position in research and the intention of study. When conducting research to gain insight into lifestyle practices, what ways does an anthropologist attempt to accurately receive then convey the data they acquire? Sometimes the research intention navigates the acquired information, eliciting a need for researchers to apply themselves to the integrity of their data collection.

Keywords: Tradition; Kinship; Singapore; Biomedicine

Session 2: Institutions

The voices of scientific knowledge production: how is a physics lab becoming the hybrid fieldwork of an anthropologist?

Christine Beaudoin
University of Ottawa

Built around knowledge production, scientific laboratories are entanglements of human and non-human forces who interact and whose voices arise. Not only have these scientific spaces got their languages: chemical syntax, biological terminology and physical equations; they've built a sense of homogeneity with strict research protocols and the scientific method. My concern for the cultural spaces of laboratories and the various forces within science stems from 6 months of fieldwork in a biophysics laboratory where I work not on or for but with these forces. I am surrounded by scientists, institutions and politics where I've been learning the biophysical language to further involve myself in experimental protocols. The fascinating voices of non-humans exclaim themselves in their own fashion: gloves and pipettes enable me to handle from afar the cells that I'm cultivating. Speaking of cells, our relationship is fragile and much silence stands between our respective voices. How can we better understand a laboratory who engages in cell culture as a cultural space of human-cell interaction? Furthermore, I suggest that cells but also the machines and tools as well as researchers (me and them) form an ecology. I will present the scientific laboratory as a cultural space with a relational methodology inspired by Latour (2013) and Ingold (2013). I center my efforts on being attentive to the entanglement of posthuman forces (Lestel, 2010; Haraway, 2008) within scientific research. It is here that I find back the voice of the researcher that is, has been and will continue to be mine.

Keywords: human-cell relationship, research design, voices, cultural spaces

What does the term "sacred" bring to the archaeology of Indigenous heritage?

Rastko Cvekic
University of Toronto

Over the past century, Indigenous rights activists and allies have underscored the concept of the "sacred" when attempting to protect Indigenous heritage. Archaeology, however, has always had an uneasy relationship with this term, and archaeologists of religion have increasingly pushed back against it over the past two decades, emphasizing "ritual" in its stead. The 2015 Western Australia Supreme Court decision in *Robinson v. Fielding*, however, sheds light on some of the problems of "ritual" as a replacement. In this theoretical paper, I review archaeological uses of the competing terms of "sacred" and "ritual" over the past 100 years, drawing examples mostly from the Northwest Coast of North America.

Key Words: archaeology of religion, sacred, archaeological ontology, Indigenous heritage

The Feminist Revolution in Rojava

Ashna Ali
Western University

Rojava refers to the western part of Kurdistan, which covers North West Syria. In 2013, the Syrian Civil War led to its autonomy. This was a revolutionary victory for the 40 million, nationless Kurds. With this autonomy, the people of Rojava implemented a governing method called “democratic confederalism.” This political system was drawn by Abdullah Ocalan, leader of Kurdistan’s Worker’s Party (PKK), an alleged terrorist movement that has long fought a war of independence against Turkey. The system is founded on positive ideologies such as stateless democracy, ethnic and religious inclusivity, and gender equality. Self-defense is practiced through the People’s Protection Units (YPG) and its all-female brigade, YPJ. When the YPJ were first formed in 2011, they actively fought against Assad’s regime, and today, the Islamic State. Although not the initial intention, their unit has become a celebrated feminist movement in the Middle East. Today, we live in the information age and the new landscape of war is both online and offline. Fueled by propaganda, the access to information and its liability create ambiguity as instruments for interpretation. These different voices fog the essence of the experience and the reality of a timeless democratic “revolution.” What is the role of the anthropologist in this manifestation? Can the imperative role of the YPJ women be studied aptly? Muslim women are instantly portrayed to the west as oppressed and YPJ fighters as free. While the anthropologist must remain objective, it’s important to give both members a voice in such a space. But whose voice will be heard?

Key words: feminism, politics, ethics

Community-based Indigenous Language Revitalization and Public Policy in Canada

Hannah McGregor
The University of Western Ontario

One of the major goals of my Masters research is to suggest ways in which my work with community-based Indigenous language revitalization programs in Canada can contribute to the development of policies that better support these initiatives. This goal is borne out of a mindset that suggests that my work needs to be helpful and relevant to the communities I work with, but also needs to produce conclusions that the settler-state can use in its stated goal of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. One major issue that arises is whether or not this research, in essence, is prescriptive because it includes reference to state-level policy. The question that arises is whether or not my goal towards including both the needs of Indigenous peoples and the needs of the state automatically forces my project to select one side over the other. In this presentation, I discuss the ways in which anthropological language research can benefit both the community and the state, and the ways in which I have worked to maintain this goal thus far. In addition, I will address the ways in which anthropology has done a disservice to Indigenous communities in the past, but is subsequently working towards a more collaborative anthropology. I argue that despite this historically contentious relationship, anthropology can engage in both policy-relevant research while supporting community projects, goals, and aspirations.

Keywords: Indigenous language revitalization, Community-based research, Public policy

Who Owns Antiquity? The Battle Over Cultural Heritage

Jennifer Willoughby
University of Western Ontario

Cultural heritage, specifically archaeological sites and artifacts, constitutes a valuable resource in both monetary and cultural terms. Both of these aspects have been hotly debated for decades, revolving around questions of who should control access to different forms of cultural heritage. Should museums or private citizens be allowed to own and display ancient artifacts? Since ancient civilizations do not always correspond with modern political boundaries, should governments be allowed to control cultural heritage with which they have no historic ethnic link? Recent events in the Middle East have brought the issue to the forefront of popular culture. Museums, governments, archaeologists, tourists, and antiquities dealers all have strong opinions about who has the right to control cultural heritage. Each side has different priorities and reasons behind wanting to control access to cultural heritage. Governments in many countries make a significant portion of their income from tourism of archaeological sites and museums, while the antiquities trade is a multi-billion dollar industry that profits from illegal looting.

This talk will explore the debate over cultural heritage ownership, outlining the different perspectives and how they make their voices heard. It will also explore how governments, museums and archaeologists are addressing these issues through policy change, social media and mobilizing citizens.

Session 3: Identity

The Insider Dilemma: The Intricacies of An Anthropologist's Positionality

Tali Pelich
York University

Drawing on my own fieldwork experiences at 'home' in Winnipeg, Manitoba, my presentation will examine issues and discourses surrounding 'insider' or 'home' anthropology, considering the ethical and methodological implications of my positionality as an Argentinian Jewish immigrant conducting research on immigration within Winnipeg's Jewish community. During my presentation, I hope to engage in a reflexive examination of my (varying) 'insider' positionality as well as problematize anthropological conventions and dichotomies of home/field and insider/outsider, utilizing the vast available (feminist) anthropological literature to support my arguments. Throughout the course of my research, I was often reminded of my ties to the people and community that I was seeking to study, adding another layer of complexity to my relationship with participants as well as the text. "Who would your mother call if G-d forbids something happens...she can't call her parents or her sister...who would she call?", asked one of my informants as we discussed the role of immigrant compatriots within the larger Jewish community. Questions regarding my personal or family's experiences would often seep into conversation, turning me into the informant and the informant into the interviewer. Although multiple levels of commonality established a sense of rapport and provided access to certain individuals, I was also compelled to question whether my supposedly 'insider' status was indeed advantageous, or possibly inhibiting participants from revealing personal information. Moreover, as I realized upon entering the field, my 'insiderness' was fluid and dynamic, only facilitating access to particular spaces, pointing to anthropologists' shifting and intersectional subjectivities.

Key words: Reflexivity, Positionality, Insider/Outsider, Home/Field

Borders in Globalization – Pre-contact Boundaries of Indigenous Peoples in the Lower Great Lakes

Amy St. John
University of Western Ontario

This paper is based on work completed as part of an internship position made available by Mitacs and Archaeological Services Inc., as part of the Borders in Globalization SSHRC initiative. The internship involved a comprehensive literature review on the nature and function of borders and boundaries with a focus on the archaeological and early historical record of Algonquian and Iroquoian societies indigenous to the lower Great Lakes. We began by generally exploring border studies and “border theory”, then examining how archaeology can access notions of borders and boundaries. Anthropologists are well equipped to investigate the cultural and social dimensions of borders, as they are accustomed to studying marginalized peoples, taking into account multivocality, the construction and maintenance of identity, and the differences and relationships between physical and conceptual boundaries (Donnan and Haller 2000; Paasi 2011; Pellow 1996; Wendl and Rosler 1999). Drawing on these aspects of anthropology, archaeology’s strength in border studies may be found in the ability to examine ancient social boundaries, and constructions of group and individual identities in the past. In archaeology, there were pioneering frontier and border studies in the 1980s (De Atley and Findlow 1984; Greene and Perman 1985) and again in the mid-1990s (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995). However, concepts of frontiers and boundaries, the experience of living in between or on the edges of cultural groups and what this means to the groups involved has not been a main focus of archaeological attention until the last decade or so (e.g. Boozer 2013; Chase et al. 2014; Cusick 2000; McCarthy 2008; Mullin 2011a, b, c; Naum 2010, 2012; Parker 2002; 2006; Parkinson 2006; VanValkenburgh and Osborne 2013; Ylimaunu et al. 2014). We hope to build on and contribute to this growing field of borderland archaeology and help establish archaeology’s place in multidisciplinary border dialogues.

Keywords: border theory; borderland archaeology; identity construction; Great Lakes pre-contact archaeology

Little Tibets: the making of the Global Tibetan Diaspora

Diyin Deng

University of Western Ontario

Following the 1959 Chinese occupation of Tibet that displaced many Tibetans to India and Nepal, the first wave of 228 Tibetans migrated to Canada in 1970-1971. Presently, Canada contains a Tibetan community in exile of around 6000 (Government of Canada 2014), and yet there have been very few recent studies that focus on how Tibetan newcomers have experienced life in Canada.

The first part of the presentation will be a literature review of the history of Tibetan migration to Canada, the multifaceted sense of Tibetan identity; as resistance, remembering the “homeland” (real and imagined) and creating diaspora “spaces of belonging” (Robins 2001). The second part of the presentation will touch upon the recent paradigm shift from viewing Tibetan identity as resistance to a decolonizing project, and ending with the objectives and methodologies of my proposed research with the Tibetan community in Toronto this summer. The proposed research on contemporary Tibetan identit(ies) will contribute to transnational, refugee and migration related studies.

The Tibetan identity first emerged as “resistance” (Winland 2002; Scott 1990). The united pan-Tibetan identity did not originally resonate with the diverse group of ethnic minorities living on the Tibetan plateau until post-Chinese occupation. Then, all the groups saw the mutual benefit of adopting the united Tibetan identity against what they perceived as the greater threat to their culture and values. As such the initial Tibetan identity that is projected internationally was harnessed as a “weapon” (Bauman and Vecchi 2004:74) against homogenizing Chinese citizenship and was intimately intertwined with activism.

Key words: Tibetan, migration, identity, transnationalism

Rebecca Goodwin
University of Western Ontario

Kiksit, aulatjuti, & kiviqiqun (hook, lineholder and sinker): investigating Inuvialuit fishing techniques

Ethnographic accounts show that fishing and fish consumption have long been an important part of Inuit culture, even when higher value prey is available. The Lower East Channel of the Mackenzie Delta, NWT, is particularly rich and diverse in fish species and has been occupied by the Inuvialuit and their ancestors for thousands of years. These large Inuvialuit sites contain some of the best-preserved examples of fish exploitation in the entire arctic, yet the diversity and intensity of this fishery is rarely explored. The faunal data from a newly excavated cruciform dwelling at the winter beluga-hunting site of Kuukpuk will be used in order to investigate seasonality and methods of Inuvialuit fishing.

Making a Victim: Altering Identities through Sacrifice in the Moche and Inca States

Arwen M. Johns

University of Western Ontario

That bodies and social status can change with sacrifice is well documented cross culturally, especially for ancient Andean groups such as the Moche and Inca; I seek to demonstrate that different identity classes were also constructed by both sacrificers and victims, thus creating new identities associated with victimhood. These took variable shapes across Andean states, and with examples from the Moche and Inca states, I will discuss the implications of these “identities of victimhood” for the individuals being offered, and those in charge of sacrificial rituals.

Session 4: Community

Healing the Community! Social Relevance of the Trokosi

Evelyn E. Arhin-Sam
University of Alberta

Trokosi is a sacrificial religious practice among the Ewes, an indigenous group at the south-eastern part of the Volta region of Ghana where young female-virgins (trokosi females) are made to serve the god(s) for a transgression committed by a member or members of their family. The transgressions may range from quarrelling among community members to murder. These females, at times as young as eight years, are made to live with the priest or the “mouth piece” of the god(s) in the community until the transgression has been atoned for. The length of the girl’s stay with the priest is determined by the grievousness of the transgression. Even though the family and the entire community decide who becomes the trokosi female, their decision is somehow limited in the sense that the trokosi female has already been “divinized” by the gods, a divinity that the priest recognizes and reveals. Such “divinization” makes these females appropriate for such a sacrificial service.

Using Rene Girard’s theory of *sacrificial substitution* the presentation will show how the practice of trokosi maintains social order in the Ewe community regardless of its anti-feminine and dehumanizing nature. Also, based on ethnographic research, the presentation will account for why the practice of trokosi still persists despite its legal ban in 1998.

Key words

Atoning, Trokosi, Social order

Field diary: Archaeological Survey conducted in the Upper Flona-Tapajós, Lower Amazon, Brazil, in 2014

Camila Guarim Figueiredo
University of Toronto

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how a combination of different survey methods and collaboration with traditional communities contributed to a better understanding of the landscapes modifications caused by the inhabitants of the past and present, along the years, in the Amazon rainforest environment. In addition, collaboration with traditional communities assist in the planning for future archaeological work and future workshops for local communities. Specifically, I will discuss the methods used and the results of an archaeological surveys conducted in 2014 in four pre-colonial sites located in Flona-Tapajós, Belterra, Brazil: Serra do Jamaraquá 1, Serra do Jamaraquá 2, Dona Rosa and Piquiatuba.

The participation of local community members in the survey facilitated locating and mapping a greater number of archaeological sites in the rainforest environment and record landscape changes. It also contributed for a better understanding of the uses of archaeological sites over the years, for an engagement between archaeologists with the local community, and with the local community with the archaeological project. Ultimately, this presentation aims to advocate for a combination of collaborative archeology methods (e.g. Beale 2012; Gomes 2006) with more traditional survey methods (Banning 2002) in the rainforest as it add richness to the data collected and help research to find easily sites and features.

Key Words: Survey methods; Collaborative Archaeology, Lower Amazon.

Reflections on Utopianism in the Eco-Village Movement

José Guillermo Sánchez
Trent University

Utopianism, the formation and search for idyllic and intentional communities, has been an ideal which has taken many forms and functions throughout history. Sir Thomas More coined the term in his 16th century book *Utopia*. More envisioned an island nation populated with wise rulers and learned citizens to symbolically contest the realities of rule under Henry VIII. In the 20th and 21st centuries, sincere efforts to realize utopian ideals are widely explored within the eco-village movement: a network of ecologically centred dwellings focusing on sustainability, conservation, and personal growth. Anthropological and ecological research has identified intensive, extractive, and consumerist behaviours maladaptively utilizing precious and finite resources. Finding ideological and practical solutions to these problems has been a consistent investigative endeavour. The eco-village movement presents solutions in both. Communal solidarity, bioregionalism, and permaculture are some of the main practical solutions highlighted by the eco-village lifestyle. These practices, utilizing new and traditional technologies, seek to design spaces consciously designed to integrate with the environment and mimic patterns and relationships found in nature. Consequently, this activity informs and instills a deep ecological ethos; citizens are empowered to become responsible consumers with an intimate connection to their environment. Simultaneous care for the Earth and for people is a central theme in the design of these spaces. These adaptive and sustainable features provide potential applications toward achieving environmental and economic sustainability in broader global society.

Keywords: Eco-village, Utopianism, Ecology, Sustainability

A Preliminary Spatial Analysis of Longhouse Structures and Attributes at the Tillsonburg Village Site

Rebecca Parry
University of Western Ontario

Through the use of geographic information systems, a preliminary analysis of spatial relationships among longhouse structures, and a subset of associated attributes, was undertaken for the late 14th century, ancestral Iroquoian, Tillsonburg Village Site. The Tillsonburg Village Site exhibits an atypical settlement pattern that challenges current understandings of Iroquoian settlement patterns during this time period. This spatial analysis will serve as an initial investigation to either support or challenge the hypothesis that the Tillsonburg Village site is a form of coalescent community, resulting from previously geographically separate groups aggregating into one communal settlement. A polygon shape file of the longhouse features was situated onto a digital map of the site area, and an attribute table was generated that includes a built-up dataset of available social and temporal indicators. Spatial patterning tools were then used to test this hypothesis, and indicate any presence or absence of house or artifact clustering in regards to longhouse attributes. The results of the analyses indicate random distribution for a majority of attributes, however four attributes show evidence of clustering.

Keywords: Iroquoian, Tillsonburg, Ontario, Coalescence, Longhouse, Geographic Information Systems

Session 5: Methods

Community Archaeology and The Stélida Naxos Archaeological Project: Building Relationships and Creating Accessibility

Trent University
Natalie Faught

In the last two decades community engagement has made participatory and inclusive procedures common practice for archaeological projects. Community archaeology aims to involve local people in ways that benefit both the discipline and the public, creating collaborative projects with the local communities and the multiple voices present. These theoretical changes have affected approaches to fieldwork, encouraging more reflexive and inclusive practices. The ongoing Stélida Naxos Archaeological Project (SNAP) is used as a case study in this paper, exemplifying a project that aims to integrate the practices of community archaeology. The incorporation of community engagement into the project has enabled SNAP to share the knowledge of their findings with locals at the Naxos museum and at public lectures. Despite these efforts, many of the voices in Naxos remain unheard, including those residing in the village of Vivolos, where the archaeologists take seasonal residence. A critical reflection of the current methodologies and an investigation into the dynamics of the existing relationships will highlight the benefits and difficulties of community-engagement. This upcoming field season, SNAP aims to continue these practices in hopes of including more of the local voices, allowing for dialogues that encourage participation and enable a working relationship to exist between the archaeologists and interested community members. Critically examining SNAP's community engagement, I argue that implementing and improving methods of community engagement increase accessibility, participation, and accountability across anthropology.

Key Words: Community Engagement, Multivocality, and Accessibility

Gender(ed) Encounters: Establishing the Boundaries of Male/Female Relationships in the Field

Cassandra Preston
York University

The relationship between the researcher and their informants is an essential piece of ethnographic fieldwork. Through the means of strategic reflection on positionality ethnographers must negotiate how they engage with each informant based on many variables, including their respective gender. My presentation will examine methods of personal re/presentation by researchers in the field when interpreting male/female informant relationships based on my personal male/female interviews of male actors during my fieldwork in Athens, Greece. The sensitive relationship between male/female dynamics in the field is one that is experienced differently for female researchers compared to male researchers. Female researchers can experience added risks when interviewing male informants in the form of unwanted sexual passes or advances. Entering my interviews and field sites required self-reflection and active surveillance of my appearance towards a manner that was approachable enough to gain rapport, yet also project a neutral, non-sexual, professional presence. It became a priority to assess the cultural norms of male-to-female relationships as well as anticipate the relational and situational position of each informant and to then navigate the interactions accordingly. To my own discomfort, interactions were still met with misunderstandings and compromising situations in the field. Throughout this methodological analysis of ethnographic fieldwork I will also discuss issues of boundaries and limitations regarding access in the field. In bringing to light the risks and restrictions for women in the field a discourse on methodological approaches to male/female informant relationships can emerge.

Key Words: Positionality, Reflexivity, Gender, Women

Shared Walking Experiences: Facilitating Fieldwork through Volunteering

Jenna Coutinho
York University

My presentation will explore volunteering as a method for facilitating fieldwork and “*working with*” communities. Drawing on recent fieldwork experiences in Greece, I aim to examine how the choice to volunteer in a medical setting is beneficial for a researcher by allowing for the social experience of palliation and the element of community in both receiving and giving care. First, I will describe the context of my research in Greece since the economic crisis where both grassroots social welfare projects and international medical nongovernmental organizations occupy the same space. With the aid of slides, I will describe my participation with three medical organizations in Athens and how I negotiated my relationship with each organization as both a researcher and a volunteer with set contractual responsibilities and obligations. I will then discuss the advantages to volunteering, such as rapport and providing access to informants, as well as the limitations of being associated with a particular group. This presentation will contribute to the discussion of how anthropologists can work *with* communities.

Keywords: volunteering; facilitating fieldwork; methodology; medical anthropology.

Beyond the shores of an 'island': Modelling space in its shared socio-ecological dimensions and implications for conservation action in Madagascar

Fernando Mario Mercado
University of Western Ontario

It is reported that around 90% of the original vegetation cover in Madagascar has been lost as a result of human activity. Of the remaining forest cover, it is estimated that the ecosystem quality of the island continues to be significantly reduced by fragmentation and loss of habitats. Based on these deforestation trends, it has become increasingly necessary for conservation research to consider the importance of establishing species management strategies in disturbed forest habitats and the human-dominated spaces that surround them. This perspective is an alternative to conservation action that is limited within specific protective boundaries, and ignores the very real human influences that surround them.

With this perspective in mind, conservation action recognizes that for many endangered species, survival will depend in their ability to continue to use human-dominated space. As well, it stresses the idea that sustainable conservation will demand the successful negotiation of space between conservation authorities, local stakeholders, and the non-human primates we seek to conserve.

Here I explore a modelling approach that has been used in Madagascar, as well as other parts of the world, to contextualize the relationships of human and non-human primate communities in shared social and ecological spaces. Through this modelling approach, it is possible to understand how conservation problems come to be, how they are sustained, and through enough effort... how to come at successful management approaches.