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Editorial Notes: We have all experienced a wide range of emotions following the tsunami in South Asia. For many of us, the news media and internet have been the primary sources of information and, while these outlets can provide wide coverage of the effects of the tsunami across the world, they do not always convey the emotional and personal stories that can speak to us more deeply. The media blitz has passed. We have had some brief time for reflection and to think about the future.

Following events of such magnitude it is a common human response to turn to people near to us for perspective. In this issue of **AnthroNews** we have asked several members of our community who have connections to Southern Asia to write of their personal and professional connections to the tragedy. Stanley Thangaraj was with his family in Tamil Nadu during the crisis, Ida Fadzillah and Will Leggett are cultural anthropologists with both family and professional connections to South Asia, and Joy Sather-Wagstaff seeks to understand the human costs of violence through her studies of the aftermath of disastrous events. Our goals were several: to understand the impact of the tsunami on a few individual lives - as one of our contributors has indicated, this disaster was so large that one cannot truly comprehend its scale. We wanted to know how this tragedy has impacted members of our community. We also hope to stimulate thought about the future, and to consider the role of anthropology in the aftermath. For some of these goals it may still be too early. We are very grateful to Will, Ida, Joy and Stan for sharing their thoughts and experiences.

John, Margaret & Donna

A brief conversation:

Providing context to the tsunami disaster is very tough because there is so much emotion involved I was in India during the wrath of the tsunamis. I was in the state of Tamil Nadu which got hit the hardest. My stay in India lasted from Dec. 17th till Jan. 6th.

How did this natural event affect your life professionally or personally?

It illustrates to the extent in which I have to have more activism with my academic experience, I cannot and should not separate the two. Being in India amidst such tragedy also made me feel quite powerless and helpless, I did not know where to begin with helping. Yet a certain sense of normalization pervaded in areas not hit by the tsunami and that made the entire experience surreal.

What do you see in the future of the countries/cultures affected?

I feel the most for Sri Lanka as it was completely devastated. I spent a day in Sri Lanka and I saw visual signs everywhere in Colombo asking all those within and without the nation to assist in relief efforts. On a civil level, the civil war between the Tamils and Singhalese has been pushed to the background as both ethnic groups are jointly partaking in relief efforts. It will take some time for Sri Lanka and Indonesia to heal, they need money the most so that they can create normality on their own terms.

What is the role of anthropology in that future?

The role of Anthropology is multifold in this respect. We, as a discipline, have a role in not utilizing this as an area of study but rather taking our academic expertise and applying it in the support efforts. We also have roles as

the bridges between our students and the outside world, we need to illustrate the connections between all in this global environment. Finally, we can play tremendous roles in the social consulting we can provide for governmental and nongovernmental institutions in the recovery efforts.

What, if any, are some positives to come out of this natural disaster?

It is very difficult to think of positives during a time of such tragedy, those that have lost a loved one or suffered in some way from this tragedy see no positives. It feels absurd talking about positive outcomes from a devastation of this kind. If we are talking about the power of the human heart then one can see the ways that many peoples and nations joined in communal ways in the relief effort. I have seen Muslims and Hindus working together as were Tamils and Singhalese. Times of such destruction make blurry lines of distinction and differentiation, empathy is found during these times. I am very happy about the way the world has reached out at this time.

Stanley Thangaraj

Stan is a first year graduate student in sociocultural anthropology

Thoughts on an applied anthropology of disaster

As I checked the news each morning following the December tsunami and the death toll continued to grow, I tried to wrap my mind around the fact that the physical and cultural geographies of the world had been violently altered. While relieved when I received email from friends in coastal India that they and their families were unharmed, I could not help but continue to contemplate the human lives lost, children orphaned, communities, ecosystems and subsistence bases destroyed, and the beginnings of a long, costly and complex reconstruction effort. I followed media reports that forensic anthropologists had begun to stream in, aiding in the task of victim identification and Indian government anthropologists had begun assessing the damage to communities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, leading me to wonder: What else might anthropology and anthropologists be able to do, not only in this case but also in others, yet unforeseen? What are we trained to do, what could we be trained to

do, and what resources are needed?

Approaches from wide range of subdisciplines could be of value to issues with relief facilitation for surviving populations and reconstruction processes. For example, there is a call to address the present and future health and cultural costs of temporary resettlement and the devastation of primary food resource sites for the surviving tribal populations of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Even more generally, there is a need to look at the efficacy of the interface between individuals, communities and rapid-response plans with regards to social knowledge and actual practices before, after, and during emergencies. Knowledge about and the availability of culturally-appropriate and timely physical and mental health assistance is key to the well-being of survivors both short and long-term. And understanding the ways in which local, national, and international politics and funding affect approaches to and social outcomes of relief and reconstruction is central to effective present and future aid and intervention.

A number of these issues provide simultaneous opportunities for instant application and environments for research that can be of immediate benefit following future disasters. One of the fundamental problems with doing such is the unexpectedness of disasters, be they natural or man-made. To ameliorate this problem and as a result of the events of September 11, 2001, the National Science Foundation offers Small Grants for Exploratory Research that provide quick funds for immediate-response research and application in high-risk, disaster situations. The goal of such grants is to find increasingly better and grounded means to restore the physical, emotional, economic and cultural well-being of individuals and communities following disasters through serving the aid needs of the immediately affected community. They are also intended to serve as precursors to larger projects falling under cross-disciplinary priority areas such as the Human and Social Dynamics area. We should consider the possibilities this offers as a means to develop additional practices and lines of academic inquiry within anthropology that will directly benefit communities in need following disasters and other destructive events.

Joy Sather-Wagstaff

Joy is a PhD candidate in sociocultural anthropology

Effects of the Tsunami: On Invisibility and Loss

I have found the task of writing about the repercussions of the tsunami on South and Southeast Asia to be particularly difficult, though at first I was not quite sure why. After all, my ties to Southeast Asia are vast: I conduct my fieldwork in Thailand (albeit in the North) and am Malaysian by birth. My relatives reside in Malaysia and Singapore, and my husband conducts his own field research in Indonesia. But while my professional and personal connections to the region are clearly defined, the overwhelming effects of the tsunami were much less clear. When I tried to envision the event in terms of consequences, it seemed literally unimaginable.

One reason for this blankness was because I saw no photographs of the actual waves, no television footage of mighty seas looming high in the air and descending onto entire villages, and thus had no visual sense of the immensity of the forces in those critical hours. CNN and other news agency have played the role of celluloid memory in our society for so long that the absence of stock footage played over and over again had made the tsunami disaster almost invisible, at least in my mind.

Another level at which “invisibility” had come into play is in the representation of the victims by the American popular media. *People Magazine* put out an issue in which tsunami survivors were highlighted, but on the magazine cover three out of the four people featured for that story were white tourists. While it is true that many of the victims (and survivors) were white, the overwhelming majority was not. But *People* reflected a trend that could be seen in several media outlets, of finding particular joy in relaying the stories of survival by those with whom “we” could better relate.

On Internet news sites, images of the survivors were flashed across the screen at increasing intervals as casualty numbers climbed and the need for emergency relief became more urgent. These images were not of western tourists; rather they seemed to me to lean heavily on those of young children with tattered clothing and huge, round eyes. These images tore at my heart for these children looked very much like my own daughter, and nearly succeeded in giving me that emic perspective anthropologists continuously seek. However these pictures too did not tell the whole story, for tsunami victims were old as well as young, dark and fair, rich and poor. The available images did not help

me understand what actually happened on that day, or the resulting medical and economic emergencies with which these nations must now contend.

Nonetheless, despite the dearth of images – and indeed, no images could do this catastrophe justice – the tsunami happened, and hundreds of thousands of people were washed away. And here lies the final level of invisibility: the statistics involved are so high as to be quite incomprehensible. When the casualties reported reached the 50,000 mark, I thought that was too much. Then the numbers climbed and climbed, until they broke 200,000, and at that point human beings simply transformed into statistics. Not out of insensitivity, not out of ignorance or lack of compassion, but perhaps because my psyche lacked the capacity to feel for so many losses. The difference between 150,000 people and 200,000 seems miniscule, because there are too many stories to hear, and memories to share, and emotions to feel.

So how does the invisibility of the tsunami victims get reversed, bringing them to the forefront of our understanding of the impact of this disaster? This is a question with many answers, but I have only my story to tell. I live in Tennessee but my parents live in Malaysia, which was shielded from the brunt of the tsunami by the Indonesian island of Sumatra. However, a part of the Malaysian northwest coast did get hit and consequently over 50 people died. When I talked to my mother on the phone, I asked her about the victims. Yes, she said, a lot of them were picnicking on the beach in Penang (an island off the coast of northern Malaysia). She said it had been during the school holidays, and several families had taken their children out to the beach to enjoy their vacation. And so entire families were washed out to sea. She told me the story she had read in the newspaper of the man who had not been able to get time off from work to go to the beach with his family, and so his wife and children went without him. And, my mother said, now he would never see them again. Hearing this story finally brought the effects of the tsunami into clear detail for me: it is about loss, it is about luck, it is about oceans of grief. For me, the tragedy of the loss of thousands upon thousands of lives lies sadly and heavily reflected in the story of one man.

Ida Fadzillah

Ida is a recent Anthropology alumnus who is now an assistant professor of anthropology at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, TN

Thinking Back

I used to live in a little room off the kitchen of an old, once grand-house in a once-grand suburb of Jakarta. The room smelled of burnt cooking oil and fried rice. It's walls, once white, had turned an ochre that darkened as the day got old. I spent an unhealthy part of my "fieldwork" lying in that room in a short bed listening with guilt to busy bodies coming and going, cooking and cleaning, and noisily repairing the most aged bits of the house. At that time Indonesia was for me little more than what I could see shining through the narrow window at the top of my wall.

When I found enough courage to venture out into the neighborhood it was for short trips. I would slip out of the house and scurry from one safe-spot to the next practically screaming, "Don't look at me!" through my slumped posture and hurried gait. I found a restaurant that appeared inviting. An older woman, short and thin, managed a warm greeting as she grabbed me by the elbow and rather forcefully led me to a seat. She brought over a variety of dishes and pointed to each repeating its name slowly, sometimes including a pantomime of a bird or a fish to make sure I was clear. Later I learned the name of the cigarette vendor on the corner. And he learned mine. One morning, while I was waiting on the street for my taxi a group of school children passed by. One young boy stopped and asked, "What's your name mister?" I told him and from then on I could count on starting my day with a "Good Morning Pak Will."

Eventually I left my room with more frequency. I walked the neighborhood at a more leisurely pace. I

held my shoulders back and my head a little higher. I found some purpose to my fieldwork and developed a schedule that took me into the city five or six times a week. I became close to a number of people in offices throughout Jakarta. They became not only my closest friends but also my primary informants. They knew where I lived and didn't hesitate to drop by. Nugi often appeared at my door just as I was feeling the early evening pangs of hunger and took me to his favorite restaurants. When I became sick, Vina somehow knew and brought me medicine. Later, when the city turned to chaotic rioting, Indra showed up to take my family to the airport.

When I first heard about the tsunami I emailed Nugi, Vina, and Indra. They responded, quickly reassuring me they were safe and sound, as were their families. Each took the time to catch me up on recent events – mostly marriages, funerals, and births. We made jokes at each other's expense and planned our next get-together. After a couple of emails back and forth we all felt sufficiently up to speed and we haven't communicated since.

As for the people from my neighborhood, I don't know. I don't know where they are. I don't know if they are alive or dead. I never wrote down their names. It never occurred to me to do so. I think about them and can see their faces when I lie in bed and stare at the ceiling. I only hope for the best.

Will Leggett

Will is a recent Anthropology alumnus who is now a visiting assistant professor at the University of the South in Sewanee, TN



Abuelita Mercedes in her garden. June 2004

Photo by *Sujey Vega*
Graduate student in sociocultural anthropology

Graduate Students and Depression

A new study by graduate researchers and staff at UC Berkeley suggests that depression and other forms of mental distress are a serious problem for students in graduate school and professional programs (i.e. medical, law, and business schools). The Berkeley study, which included over 3100 graduate and professional students at UC Berkeley, is the first of its kind at the university. The survey results are discussed in a report released in December by the Berkeley Mental Health Task Force, a graduate student group advancing mental health as a campus priority.

Nearly half of all survey respondents (45%) reported an emotional or stress-related problem that significantly impacted their academic performance or well-being. 67% reported that they have felt hopeless at times, 95% have felt overwhelmed, and 54% have felt so depressed that it was difficult to function. 10% reported that they had seriously considered suicide, and ~1 in 200 respondents reported that they had attempted suicide at least once in the last 12 months. The full report is available at www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~gmhealth/.

Students at Illinois experiencing problems with depression have a number of counseling services available to them, including the Counseling Center and the McKinley Health Center's Mental Health Unit. More information on counseling services is available at www.grad.uiuc.edu/gradhandbook/chapter10-10.cfm

First Annual Midwestern Conference for Culture, Language, and Cognition

This is the inaugural conference of what will become an annual conference which will focus on research that cuts across the boundaries of culture, language, and cognition. We welcome presentations involving links between at least two of these three disciplines. Both graduate student and faculty presentations are welcome. All presentations will be paper presentations. Faculty and graduate students from anthropology, psychology, linguistics, and communication studies have all been invited to present, and we invite you to attend and present your work at this multi-disciplinary and highly integrative conference. The conference will be held at Northwestern University, Chicago, IL between May 13 - 15, 2005. Abstracts are due March 15; registration is \$10 for students and \$20 for faculty. All graduate student abstracts on relevant topics will be accepted.

Please e-mail an abstract as a Word attachment (maximum 150 words) to s-unsworth@northwestern.edu by March 15, 2005, using the following format:

Name of Researcher (s):

Affiliation:

Title of Talk:

Abstract:

website. The URL for this website is:

For more information see: www.northwestern.edu/culture

Unjust

If all was fair in the world
no one would cry,
no one would fight, no one would die
If all was fair
you'd be here tonight,
instead of a vision unable to subside
If life was fair
our fates would be sealed,
our passion eternal, our wounds would be
healed
But nothing is fair, and the world's not right-
utopia only exists in the mind
because promises break, and lies are spoken,
pain is real, and hearts are broken
So maybe in another world,
you and I could be free-
to live without expectations;
to live the way we're meant to be.

Elaine Kandalepas

*Elaine is a junior in Anthropology and
Psychology at UIUC*

Best wishes to new parents:

MJ Walker (Anthro grad student) and Wendy Heller on the arrival of their baby girl on November 23rd, 2004.

Her name is Eleanor Mae Heller-Walker.



The Urbana Conference on Archaic Societies of the Midcontinent

The Urbana Conference on “Archaic Societies of the Midcontinent” organized by Thomas Emerson, Andrew Fortier, and Dale McElrath and sponsored by the Illinois Transportation Archaeological Research Program (ITARP) brought together leading scholars from across the eastern United States and Canada to discuss the latest issues in Archaic period (ca. 8000 to 1000 BC) research. An intense two-day session in early December 2004 included nineteen research papers, a workshop featuring Archaic collections from the northern mid-continent, as well as much stimulating discussion. Recent investigations in the lower Mississippi River valley and the southern Atlantic coast have transformed our understanding of Archaic period lifeways with the discovery of large mound centers dating to between 5000-3000 BC. Long characterized as a time dominated by societies following a simple hunting and gathering pattern, regional archaeologist must now consider the possibilities that some of these populations were, in fact, politically and socially complex. This new information and emerging interpretations of complexity are challenging the long-held cultural evolutionary paradigms of many Eastern Woodlands archaeologists.

The conference organizers are currently organizing the resultant papers into a volume for publication by the University of Nebraska Press.

Tom Emerson

Tom is the director of ITARP and adjunct professor of anthropology



The Laboratory of Anthropology Collection Transfers

The Department’s LOA has been responsible for the curation of the various collections accumulated as part of Anthropology’s academic and research activities. Over the years these collections have included a wide array of materials such as papers and photos from such scholars as Julian Steward and Warren K. Moorehead, extensive ethnographic collections, as well as over 2000 boxes of archaeological collections from such world-renown sites as Cahokia in Illinois, Real Alto in Ecuador, and Isamella in Africa.

For much of its history the archaeological collections have been primarily stored in the basement of Lincoln Hall. Given the planned 2005 major renovation of Lincoln Hall the Department has lost its curation space and has been forced to relocate or transfer most of its archaeological collections. The Illinois Transportation Archaeological Research Program (ITARP) has agreed to assume curatorial responsibility for the LOA’s North American materials. The Illinois archaeological collections include historically significant materials from important sites like the Cahokia World Heritage site, Fisher Mound site, and many Illinois River valley mortuary and village sites that were collected, beginning in the first few decades of the 1900s, by such famous practitioners as A. R. Kelly, Warren Moorehead, J. B. Taylor, John McGregor, and Charles Bareis. This transfer also included the non-human osteological materials that comprised the North America comparative faunal collection.

Requests for research access to the North American archaeological and faunal collections should be directed to Dr. Laura Kozuch, Curator, ITARP. The final disposition and/or transfer of materials from Real Alto and Isamella is being handled by Dr. Garber and questions related to access to those collections should be directed to him.

T. Emerson & P. Garber

Dr. Christopher Ellis, University of Western Ontario, Jack Ray, Southwestern Missouri State, and Dr. Bruce McMillian, Director, Illinois State Museum examine artifacts from newly excavated Archaic period stratified sites from the midcontinental US.

Recent Anthropology Publications:

Ed Bruner. Culture on Tour: Ethnographies of Travel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2005.

Alma Gottlieb. The Afterlife Is Where We Come from: Infancy in West Africa. In Expeditions (special issue: "Ethnography") (published by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology) (Winter 2004-05):13-21.

Alma Gottlieb. From Pollution to Love Magic: The New Anthropology of Menstruation. In Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective (3rd ed.), ed. Carolyn Sargent and Caroline Brettell. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Pp. 256-267. Published, fall 2004.

Steven Leigh, Joanna Setchell, Laurel Buchanan Ontogenetic bases of canine dimorphism in anthropoid primates *Am J Phys Anthropol* (Early View). Published Online: 6 Dec 2004

John Polk Influences of limb proportions and body size on locomotor kinematics in terrestrial primates and fossil hominins. *J. Hum. Evol.* 47 (4): 237-252 Oct 2004

Helaine Silverman Subverting the Venue: A Critical Exhibition of Pre-Columbian Objects at Krannert Art Museum. *Am. Anthropol.* 106 (104): 732-738

Helaine Silverman Museos y Patrimonio Cultural en la Ciudad del Cusco in *CRONICAS URBANAS*, published by Centro Guaman Poma de Ayala, Cusco, 2004

Rebecca Stumpf & C. Boesch (2005). Does promiscuous mating preclude female choice? Female sexual strategies and mate preference in chimpanzees of the Taï Forest, Côte d'Ivoire. *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*. published online on Dec 14, 2004.

Sarah Wisseman, Thomas Emerson, Mary Hynes, and Randall Hughes. Using a Portable Spectrometer to Source Archaeological Materials and to Detect Restorations in Museum Objects. *J. Am. Inst. Conserv.* 2004, 43(2):129-138.

Congratulations!

To our grad students who have recently completed degrees.

Dana Beehr - MA - Investigating maize usage patterns through stable isotope analysis of potsherd residue.

William Hope - MA - Cuban Musical Performance and Social Revolutionary Process

Rui Wang - PhD - Fishing, farming and animal husbandry in the early and middle neolithic of the middle Yellow river valley, China.

Barth Wright - PhD - Ecological distinctions in diet, food toughness, and masticatory anatomy in a community of six neotropical primates in Guyana, South America

To our students who have completed their preliminary exams! Best of luck with your diverse research projects! (predissertation papers topics are listed)

Greg Blomquist LeMont Cole's Contribution to the Development of "Life History Thinking".

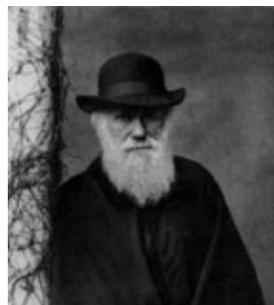
William Hope - Cuban Musical Performance and Social Revolutionary Process

Shanshan Lan - Situating Interethnic Relations in Chicago: The Chinese American Experience

Brian Montes - Remembering the Caste War: Intersections of Race and Class Among the Maya of East Central Quintana Roo

To Eugene Giles:

on being the recipient of the Charles R. Darwin Lifetime Achievement Award. This award will be presented at the April meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists Annual Meeting in Milwaukee WI April 6-9, 2005.



Charles R. Darwin NOT Eugene Giles

Update on the “Chief Illiniwek” Problem –How can you help?

Despite some positive developments on campus, such as the establishment of a new Native American House and an emergent American Indian Studies program, the racializing imagery surrounding the UIUC sports mascot continues to divide the community along disturbing racial lines. Native American students at UIUC continue to experience first hand the negative backlash towards real Native people who object to the mascot. “Honor us by acknowledging that we are not elements of the past...that we are not ‘noble savages’, that we are not romantic idealizations...or exotic specimens to be brought out of the museum and displayed to the awed masses of the dominant and privileged class” said Native student leaders Siobhan Beaver (law) and Genevieve Tenoso (anthropology) to the Board of Trustees last Spring. In response to the ‘tingly’ sensations’ and other pseudo-religious, emotional experiences described by fans when watching the mascot, they note, “We also have tingly sensations on this campus ...sensations of fear, sadness and frustration every time we see one of the “chief” heads branded over the hearts of a people who fail to hear us, understand us or even care about us.”

As anthropologists, we remain committed to a campus where all people—including Native Americans—feel welcome and are treated with respect. Want to help? Below is a range of suggestions.

ACT – Do something--apathy will be interpreted as acceptance.

- Write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees (leppley@bellboyd.com), and all Board members via mthompsn@uillinois.edu or at 352 Henry Administration Building, 506 S. Wright St., Urbana, 61801.
- Write to President Joseph White (bjwhite@uillinois.edu) or 364 Henry Administration Building, 506 S. Wright St., Urbana, 61801
- Boycott stores selling merchandise that racializes Native people. Let the store manager know why.
- Raise the issue, or engage people in discussion whenever the subject arises. Let people know that the imagery they are wearing offends you and why.

UNITE –organize a group of students, alumni, friends or allies from church or clubs—gather ideas from everyone and get everyone involved. Join a list serve such as the multicultural coalition of anti-chief groups at coalition-subscribe@iresist.org.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK -- find accurate information from websites such as www.retirethechief.org, www.nativeculturelinks.com/mascots.html and www.iresist.org. Compare with the misinformation at honorthethechief.org and savethechief.org.

Brenda Farnell

Brenda is an associate professor of anthropology

Celebrate Winter!

(what’s left of it)

Anthro Department Ice Skating Expedition

Sunday February 27, 2-4pm

UIUC Ice Arena

406 E. Armory Ave. • Champaign





Juan Venturru teaches weaver apprentices natural methods of dying wool in Northern the Peruvian Andes

*Photos by Eric Dangoy
Undergraduate in Anthropology*



Why would academics turn happy faces into abstract art?

On the evening of Saturday, December 4, 2005, anthropology graduate students held the first “Miscommunication Workshop”. It was an opportunity for participants to miscommunicate with each other, talk about instances of misunderstanding, and still maintain a blame-free, friendly environment. The results were a very positive climate among participants and the sense that miscommunication can be overcome if participants cooperate in creating enjoyable patterns of interaction.

Participants engaged in two sessions marked by specific activities, which were repeated several times before a break for food and drink. For this first workshop, organizers demanded a core element of reciprocity: participants were not permitted to get their own refreshments before and after sessions, but had to ask an assigned pair-mate to do so, and to do the same for their “buddy”. Organizers assigned new “buddies” for each break. A discussion came at the end of the workshop.

The seemingly childish activity dubbed “Drawing Fun” revealed the greatest potential for examining miscommunication. Participants formed a line and, in sequence, passed on a “message” they received through graphic-kinaesthetic means. One person began by imagining a figure and “wrote” it with their finger on the back of the person immediately in front of them.

Continued next pg.

AnthroNews

is compiled and edited by John Polk, Margaret Enrile and Donna White.

Submissions, ideas and assistance are all welcome. Please send me an email, drop things in my mailbox or come and see us. John can be found in:

188 Davenport Hall
607 South Mathews Ave
Urbana IL 61801

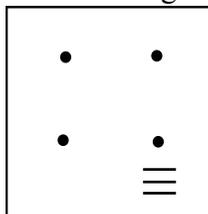
email: jdpolk@uiuc.edu

Department of Anthropology

We Know People

Happy Faces continued from previous pg.

The last person in line wrote on a whiteboard, rather than on a person. The person who started, wrote their original image next to this drawing, to exhibit how their message had evolved. One image—an iconic happy face—was transformed into four dots arranged in a rectangular pattern with three lines underscoring the lower right dot (see illustration).



A Happy Face
Transformed

The most significant part of the evening was a fruitful discussion of how people can respond to the fact that messages are not always understood in the way intended. This centered on the “overload” of meanings and sensations received in the Drawing Fun activity and the difficulty this creates for charitable interpretation. Surprised by how

simple messages can seem ambiguous and confusing, some used the activity to speak about feelings of vulnerability that arise in ordinary communication. Participants recognized several responsibilities that communicators have to each other in the face of ambiguity. Importantly, participants reached the conclusion that they must try constantly to create community, even when they would rather not deal with uncomfortable situations.

Probably every workplace suffers from some tensions. This workshop was organized to help anthro grads develop healthy habits and to build rapport among themselves as people who hope to be faculty members in the near future. Organizers are planning future events and invite all grads to participate.

Steve Maas

Steve is a graduate student in sociocultural anthropology

The Water Lily

The treacherous heat of the plains,
Coupled with the unpredictable
Monsoons, make the balance between
Life and naught agonizing and unbearable.

Conditions, ever so unsuitable for life
And beyond give birth to desperation.
Yet, birth and rebirth of beauty
Is reaffirmed in the Water Lily's situation.

Such magnificence and extravagance
Survive nature's wrath and anger.
Life and brilliance are proclaimed
With each Lily's dance on water.

The water of life, never constant
Moves from the streams of non-relevance
To the heights of purity with the Ganges
To the Indian Ocean's grandeur and significance.

Regardless of place or circumstance
Home is always around the bend,
Goodness and future will come
To that for which beauty has no end.

The water Lily's situation, as dynamic
As that of the medium of life,
Does not wither its capacity to awe
The world with glory in spite of strife.

Roots, powerful and true
Not only give proof of past and present
But that of splendor and joy that
Go beyond time or time's restraint.

Purity so exemplified in its being
Petals of milk and petals of sunrise
Mingle in harmony so as to excite
And overwhelm my eyes.

From sunrise to sunset, From stream to ocean
You are magnificent and breathtaking
And forever remain in my dream, reality, and vision
For none, to my soul is more pleasing and capturing.

Sweet water Lily, your paths are numerous
Rough, exciting, new, peaceful, and crazy.
However, you will always be in my thoughts
Till the next chance I swim to your company.

Stan Thangaraj