The Grandfather of So/An: Franz Boas

What's Inside:

Fall Term 2008 Classes............................................2
Welcome New Majors!............................................3
Major Profiles: Senior Edition...................................4
2008 Comps Titles..................................................6
Sociology Crossword.............................................7
Guatemala Stories..................................................8
A Peek into the Suggestion Box..............................10

Newsletter of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton College
THE EMIC is the newsletter of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Carleton College.

Contributors to this issue:
SDA’s: Paul Caine, Monica Diaz
DCC’s: Ebun Odeneye, Sabrina Peterson, Ariel Vandevenorde

MAY/JUNE 2008

A Note from your DCC’s

Spring term is an incredibly exciting term, most especially for the So/An department. We’d like to congratulate all the seniors, who very soon will be presenting their comps and putting the lid on the comps process. This will be the last issue for Paul, Monica and Ebun—our three senior contributors. We are also delighted to welcome the class of 2010 to the department.

Finally, don’t miss the picnic. Seriously, Jean makes a wicked root beer float.

Welcome To Leighton
An Exercise in Questionable Ethics: The New Majors Internet Adventure
*NOTE: Not a completely viable source of information*

Melissa Abecasis
Melissa is from Bolivia and works/volunteers for the Northfield CAC and the Laura Baker Center. She enjoys walking on the beach, sunsets and reading cheap romance novels for fun (preferably all three together).

Kelsey Antle
Kelsey is from Illinois; she enjoys the underground music scene and is known amongst her friends as “the popsicle.”

Yara Antonio
Yara is also from Illinois, she does not watch television because she spends most of her time playing volleyball and listening to R&B. She does not appreciate conflict and eats fortune cookies.

Emily Cousins
Emily comes to our department from Tokyo. She enjoys cooking, baking and watching squirrels from her porch.

Tess Dorrfield
Tess hails from nearby Owatonna, MN. She lives in a canoe and is often seen sitting Ben Franklin and Mark Twain on the shores of Lake Seward.

Becca Dougherty
Becca is from New York City. She collects clocks and enjoys traveling to places where people wear hats. She really likes hats, and clocks.

Carrie Gardner
Carrie is from Iowa and works at the Office of Intercultural Life as an Intercultural Peer Leader. She makes bread in her spare time and collects antique lamps.

Kaitlin Justin
Kaitlin is from nearby Saint Paul; she enjoys training dogs as well as high art such as painting and poetry. She sings Bulgarian folk ballads, appreciates efficiency, and believes the world is flat.

Margaret Kucher
Margaret hails from Markato, a town said to have been chosen for its prime location by Chief Sleepy Eye of the Sisseton Band of Dakota Indians. The word on Margaret is that she holds the world record for the most pickles eaten in a minute.

Kat Morris
Kat is from the home of the Longhorns in Austin, Texas. She is an Aquarius and a very talented vocalist, crossword puzzler, and fort builder.

Anh Nguyen
Anh joins our department from St. Louis. He is a veritable goldmine for readings on nonwestern philosophy and loves spending his weekends wandering farmers markets and community gardens.

Tenzin Noryang
Tenzin joins our department as an accomplished traditional Tibetan folk dancer. She also is a language enthusiast fluent in English, Hindi, and Tibetan, and she speaks some Spanish.

Anne O’Gara
Anne is from nearby Mendota Heights, MN. She does not sleep because she spends all her time surfing the radio waves. Sometimes she likes to drink juice straight from the carton—I would watch out for this one at the picnic.

Martha Szaev
Martha is a student of cultural trends. She grew up in Austria, Switzerland, Israel, Russia and New York. She spent some time studying fashion in Milan, but she credits much of her individualistic sensibilities to annual summer visits to her Finnish homeland.

Joe Sigino
Joe hails from St. Paul and considers himself a sushi connoisseur. He enjoys swimming in the Baltic ocean and Margaretha Thunberg. His latest obsession is on prehistoric global politics.

Robert Stephens
Robert joins the club from Kansas City. He is planning on performing the first Carleton Sociology and Anthropology theme song. After he writes it, of course.

Mike Stevens
Mike is from a suburb of Memphis, Tennessee. He used to alphabetwork things that did not need to be put in order but has since re-formed and now tries for something a bit more spontaneous.

Anne Trestt
Anne comes from Newton, Massachusetts. She has a deep and life-sustaining love of Dr. Seuss literature and enjoys sunlight and surprises.

Lina Walkinshaw
Lina is from Bellinchan, Washington. She is spending all of next year in Spain because of her love for Spanish opera and Lipizzan Stallions. She can jump 5 feet in the air when she is really excited.
Yen Cao

Why did you choose SOAN?

I was pre-rored for a while and contemplated whether I should major in Biology or Sociology. On the due date for the major declaration submission, I wrote down Sociology and Anthropology because I recall that medicine centers around human lives. People are important to me and I knew that knowledge about society and human behavior would be indispensable to my career in health and medicine.

I also thought there will be many years of hard science ahead but this may be the only opportunity for me to major in a field that is not related to hard core science. What I learn from Sociology and Anthropology have contributed to my ability to assess current issues from various perspectives. I have met some of the greatest people through my field works and am very glad that I chose to major in Sociology and Anthropology.

Advice for Potential/Current Majors?

Don’t let school get in the way of your education.

Becky Derbanch

I’m from Camp Hill, PA, right outside of the capital of Harrisburg. My sister is coming to Carleton next year and that is exciting. This year I have been learning Spanish for the first time, which is extremely fun. I really love children’s books and have most of The Lorax memorized. One time I found a box of letters in an art, but that’s a long story.

Why did you choose SOAN?

I chose SOAN because it allowed me to study people in a social context by causing me to question the things I grew up accepting as normal and studying the systems and structures that create my own worldview.

Advice for Potential/Current Majors?

Pick a comp on something you will love. If you love hearing people’s stories, listen to people’s stories. Also, I think the worst part about comps is everyone else getting stressed about comps. You don’t have to buy into that if you don’t want to.

What’s next after Carleton?

Next year I hope to be a healthy, happy person living a balanced life.

What is your COMPS on?

Does your reason for choosing SOAN as a major relate to your COMPS topic? If so, why? If not, how and why?

My research examined the role of social capital in the context of natural disasters. I was interested in how social capital contributed to the successful rebuilding of communities after Hurricane Katrina. I traveled to New Orleans to study two different communities, the Mary Queen of Vietnam Community and the Holy Cross Community. It was a great experience for me to meet the residents of these resilient communities and learn about their struggles as well as accomplishments. I saw how fragile human beings can be during hard times like those following Katrina. I also saw how the beauty and strength of the human spirit can overcome such hardships.

What’s next after Carleton?

I’m going into cancer research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Research Center in Manhattan, New York. I think it will be very different from Northfield but I am looking forward to this big change. My ultimate career is in medical practice and research.

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They Said What??

“When anthropologists do fieldwork they don’t have refrigerators, sociologists do.”
- Marshall Sahlins
- Jim Fisher
- Eric Trubek

“Anthropology is the most animalistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities.”
- Jay Levi
- Annette Nierobiz
- Alfred Kroeber

“People keep asking how anthropology is different from sociology, and everybody gets nervous.”
- Adrienne Falcon
- Bob Oden
- Clifford Geertz

“Every relationship between two individuals or two groups will be characterized by the ratio of secrecy that is involved in it.”
- George Simmel
- Nader Saeidi
- Auguste Compte

“Sociology is the art of making the world safe for human differences.”
- Ruth Benedict
- Margaret Mead
- Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg

“There is no definition of ‘should.’”
- Socrates
- Eric Trubek
- Jean Goss

**Bonus Question**
What so/An major’s mom runs a bowling alley?

Answers in the first issue next year.
Stories from Guatemala

The following three SOAN majors participated in the Guatemala Program during Winter term. Below, they share some particularly meaningful memories.

Lina Walkinshaw, ‘10

On the last day of our rural home-stays, my family rushed into my curtained off room at approximately 4am yelling, “Lina! Aq! Aq!” They quickly urged me outside, and I immediately caught on as we saw all the neighbors gathered around their two massive pigs. Front legs tied together, back legs tied together, one person pulling each rope stretching the pig out. The decapitating squash were silent moments later, after a large kitchen knife opened the pig’s chest. The heart was removed, and placed in a Tupperware container. The pig was then quickly bundled up in a gunny sack, loaded onto a man’s back and carted off to what I understood as “have his heart cooked out.” Truly a wonderful way to end my eventful stay.

Krystal Stackhouse, ‘09

I would have to say that my favorite experience was taking a bus from San Andrés Xecul to a beach in Tuliable, which was 5 hours away. After and I took three buses to get to this beautiful beach and depended on a tour guide book, our Spanish, and citizens of Guatemala to help us find it. When we arrived, we realized that we were not in the cool highlands anymore but in the humid lowlands where the people had a different style of dress, culture, and physical appearance. The beach was very quiet and peaceful, which was necessary at that time because of the many deaths that were happening during our field research. During our stay, we stayed in a very bad hotel and had typical food from the coast of Guatemala: bananas, eggs, omelets, and fish. The one thing that made this trip memorable for me was the fact that I forced myself to travel to a place that I was not familiar with. I had no set plans and acted spontaneously that entire weekend. I learned that I was able to find my own way and be independent instead of relying on the program.

Stories from Guatemala (continued)

Donald Smith, ‘09

During my home-stay in San Andrés Xecul, Peru Jones and I discovered a dirt path that townsfolk used to climb to an aldea on the other side of a mountain called Nimesa. I climbed this trail several times with Hope Harvey to exercise and see the expansive views of the valley that stretched for what seemed like hundreds of miles. However, it was once when I climbed into the aldea alone that I had my most significant experience in the small town. The principal of Nimesa’s Cofradia let me interview him, and as I sat in a very dark and dilapidated but surrounded by the Cofradia’s staffs and representations of their Gods, I was struck by what I felt was the utter ‘looseness’ of that place. The principal spoke only K’iche’, and my ability with the language was far from conversational. One of the other members of the Cofradia translated into Spanish for me, and as I listened to Don Luis* bearded distribute on the modern Guatemalan government, the diminishing power of the Mayan religion, and his hatred for tourists, I realized (with great surprise and pride) that he didn’t consider me a tourist, or at least not in the same way he did the “stupid ones with cameras.”

*Being lectured by a Mayan shaman on the meaning and future of his ancient belief system is breathtaking. The single most important element of the program in Guatemala was the chance to be taught by the people rather than by text or lecture. I was taught both humility and perspective during my time in Guatemala, and I’ll be grateful for that gift forever. Sélo quememos earlier.

*“Don Luis” is a pseudonym.
Have a great summer, and we’ll see you in September!