

Native American culture is strongly related to Native students' sense of self-efficacy in science. Specifically, students who say that their tribe has always used science and continues to use science to manage natural resources are more likely to say that they like science, that becoming a scientist is easy, and that they could be a scientist and maintain their cultural way of life at the same time. Importantly, simply thinking that scientists and tribal members agree was unrelated to self-efficacy in science—only awareness of tribes using science was related to students' perceptions of becoming a scientist. In addition, students who say that they know more about their culture are more likely to say that they could be a scientist and maintain their cultural way of life at the same time.

Other results show that AIR mentors are more likely to say that Native American tribes use science to manage natural resources at the end of the program (compared to the beginning), suggesting that a culturally-based approach to the promotion of higher education helps Native American students make connections between culture and science. This implication is particularly important given an additional finding that Native American mentors are *less* likely than non-Native mentors to think that what they learn in school is important to their family and community. Overall, our research results highlight the importance of culturally based educational programs that draw connections between Western educational contexts and students' cultural ways of life. These efforts may not only benefit minorities in the United States by increasing minority representation in the sciences, but may also benefit the sciences by increasing diversity in perspectives and worldviews.

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## Society for the Anthropology of Religion

JENNIFER SELBY, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

This month we turn to an introduction and review of Thomas Gibson's *Islamic Narrative and Authority in Southeast Asia: From the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Palgrave 2007). Gibson's book won honorable mention in SAR's 2008 Clifford Geertz Book Prize competition.

### 2008 Clifford Geertz Prize Honorable Mention

By Daniel Varisco (SAR Book Prize Jury Member)

In this book Thomas Gibson builds on his ethnographic fieldwork in South Sulawesi, Indonesia to construct the historical background of conversion to Islam and resistance to Dutch colonial control that have ultimately led to rising Islamic militancy in the region. Were Clifford Geertz alive today, I believe he would be pleased that this carefully

documented anthropological work is receiving honorable mention for the SAR Geertz Prize. It not only focuses on Indonesia, where Geertz first walked village paths, but ranges across eras and disciplines for its narrative power.

Within our discipline today the seeming disconnect between field ethnography and critical theory makes it difficult to judge the quality of contemporary research in the study of religion. Gibson provides the best kind of critical scholarship, demonstrating a firm grasp of the historical context of Islam and politics in Indonesia, as he analyzes relevant indigenous Indonesian and Dutch colonial texts. Working both sides of the academically defined colonial divide, his book combines the insight of an ethnographer familiar with recent critical theory, with the old masters in the field, and with relevant ethnography by colleagues.

This book is the second in a planned trilogy on the development of symbolic knowledge and political authority in Indonesia. Drawing on an updated conceptual frame of Weber's ideal models for behavior, Gibson articulates seven models that serve to illustrate the evolution of traditional, charismatic and bureaucratic forms of authority in Southeast Asia. The result is a poignant, historically informed narrative explaining the role of symbolic knowledge in the South Sulawesi context with broader implications for studying Islamic resurgence movements worldwide.

### Islamic Narrative and Authority: A Book Review

By Elizabeth Fuller Collins (Ohio U)

Thomas Gibson's account of the impact of Islam on the societies of South Sulawesi focuses on the five centuries from 1500 to 2000 during which the people of South Sulawesi adopted the cosmopolitan symbolic code of Islam. He describes the dynamic relationship between changes in political circumstances and the emergence of new forms of symbolic knowledge. This history includes the development of narratives about unique individuals born in humble circumstances who left their places of origin to seek religious knowledge and returned as charismatic *shaiikhs*. Gibson describes shifts in the seventeenth century, as the power of Islamic rulers in Indonesia was eroded by the conquests of the Dutch East India Company and a narrative about the rejection of colonial authority emerged to provide a model for mystical retreat from the world of political power relations. In the nineteenth century, as local populations came to accept the bureaucratic authority of the colonial state, a narrative of exile and return modeled on the life of the Prophet Muhammad authorized a form of individual piety and claims to power that were enacted through performance of the *hajj*. The introduction of schools by the colonial state created an educated class that could access modernist critiques of traditional Islamic practices and nationalist critiques of the colonial state, leading to rebellion in the 1950s in support of an Islamic state. During the New Order (1966–98) Suharto was remarkably successful in claiming authority on the basis of symbolic models of tradi-

tional royal authority combined with the centralized bureaucratic authority of the Dutch colonial regime. As his power began to wane in the 1980s, he sought to bolster it by performing the *hajj* and claiming the authority of an Islamic nationalist.

Gibson presents a stimulating and expansive theoretical synthesis that draws from Durkheim, Weber, Sahlins, Nietzsche, Foucault and Gramsci. Following Lévi-Strauss, Gibson distinguishes among societies organized on the basis of kinship, those centered on a centralized royal power, and modern bureaucratic class-based societies. In his study of the history and narratives of the Makasar and Bugis peoples of South Sulawesi he shows how societies represent symbolically the principles that construct power and authority.

This book is a tour de force in explicating how symbolic knowledge works and how it evolves in response to changing political realities. The detailed kinship charts and accounts of narratives in their complex social and political contexts recall the great ethnographies of the past that were based on years of study and experience in a culture. The theoretical expanse and analysis demonstrates the power of classic theoretical formulations that underpin the discipline of anthropology in a way that is seldom reflected in contemporary ethnography based on a single "new" paradigm. This is a book that will be savored by Indonesianists and should be required reading for all anthropologists.

Please send column ideas, news and comments to Jennifer Selby at [jselby@mun.ca](mailto:jselby@mun.ca).

## Society for the Anthropology of Work

ANGELA JANCIUS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### Modern Slavery and Student Activism

By Edward González-Tennant (U Florida-Gainesville)

In Florida, farm labor exploitation is not simply an "immigrant" problem. The exclusion of farm workers historically from the New Deal and subsequent labor reforms has sustained the legacy of American slavery. In 2007, a Florida-based grower was sentenced to 30 years for enlisting African Americans from local homeless shelters with the promise of good jobs—only to deduct rent, food, drugs and alcohol from their wages, tying them into a form of debt bondage. Other growers, employing Hispanic and Latino/a immigrants, have pistol whipped workers, threatened them with death, and placed them under armed surveillance. In 1999, a grower hunted down three escaped workers and ran over one with his car, yelling that he "owned" them. While such examples are extreme, farm workers in this state usually live along a continuum of violence, including sweatshop labor conditions, sub-poverty wages, and violent opposition to organizing efforts. During the winter months, upwards of 95% of fresh tomatoes consumed in the US come from Florida. Indeed, a nationalized and globalized food

industry means that the labor conditions in Florida should concern us all.

The Coalition for Immokalee Workers (CIW) formed in 1993 in response to the conditions above. Initially, the CIW used standard activist strategies, including community organizing, work stoppages, hunger strikes and marches. However, the vulnerability of poor Americans and immigrants allowed the growers to circumvent these actions. Eventually, the CIW changed its tactics and targeted a different segment of the supply chain—large buyers in the fast food and food service industries. This new direction called upon companies to take responsibility for the conditions of food production. The CIW's "Campaign for Fair Food" initiated a strategy centered on the creation of partnerships with various corporations. Since 2001, several agreements with fast food companies and food service providers have been signed. These agreements have resulted in wage increases, supply chain transparency, and the formation of third-party mechanisms for monitoring the food service industry. However, protecting farm worker rights still requires an active commitment from a wide range of the US public.

I first became aware of the CIW in 2006 while attending a Florida Immigrant Coalition training conference. Prior to this, I was active in the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle and the antiwar movement in the US and New Zealand. However, although the aforementioned protests fed my desire to "smash capitalism," I (like many protesters at these events) understood that our efforts often had little immediate effect. In contrast, the CIW and partner groups, such as the Student/Farmworker Alliance (SFA), have the experience and insight to instigate change benefiting present communities. These effects are visible first-hand to anyone attending the SFA's *Encuentro*, an event involving one-on-one interaction between the CIW and area farm workers, held in Immokalee each September.

My principle involvement with these groups takes place on the University of Florida campus, where I am a PhD candidate in anthropology. Those of us adopting an openly activist stance in the academy understand the unique set of challenges that lie ahead. Graduate students are often specifically discouraged from being involved in such work. The time commitment is daunting. The combination of heavy workload and high turnover in graduate programs makes it difficult to sustain energy. The malaise and de-politicization that many graduate students observe is another serious hurdle. Such attitudes not only hinder involvement, but in the worst cases they can result in an atmosphere of hostility, where individuals who choose not to engage openly mock those who do. I believe modifying attitudes of hostility toward activism is both possible and necessary.

As one way to address these concerns in Gainesville, anthropology students from the University of Florida and Santa Fe College have started a group called Engaged Anthropologists of Alachua County. We are an informal support system that coordinates with local groups and projects and meets off-campus at a community center. One of our central projects this semester



**Members of the Student/Farmworker Alliance prepare to meet with Aramark representatives in Philadelphia, spring 2009.** Photo courtesy Marina Saenz-Luna

centers on the SFA's "Dine with Dignity" campaign, which calls on campus food service providers to sign an agreement with the CIW. This year's AAA Annual Meeting is taking place in Philadelphia, home to the corporate headquarters of Aramark, which is one of the largest food service companies in the US. Aramark has contracts with universities, high schools, school districts and jails, and their high-volume, low-cost purchasing practices perpetuate poor living standards among the nation's farm worker communities. We're asking anthropologists from around the country to volunteer. If you are interested, please visit <http://activism.anthrotyeti.com/AAAActa> to get involved.

*Edward González-Tennant (etennant@ufl.edu) currently serves as the University of Florida's contact person for the Student/Farmworker Alliance's "Dine with Dignity" campaign. Send contribution ideas for the SAW column to Angela Jancius at [jancius@ohio.edu](mailto:jancius@ohio.edu).*

## Society for Cultural Anthropology

JEAN M LANGFORD, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### SCA Spring Meeting: Natureculture

The next SCA biennial conference will be held May 6–8, 2010 at La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, NM on the theme "Natureculture: Entangled Relations of Multiplicity." In recent years, a number of theoretical developments in anthropology, geography, and science and technology studies have problematized the modernist ontological divide between nature and culture and a whole series of binary oppositions that follow from it. The applications of these problematizations have been on topics as diverse as the concrete issues from which they arose: human/animal relations; the "imbroglios" of natureculture produced by technology; shifting notions of personhood; the status of "things," substance and property; and approaches in terms of "rooted networks," "relational webs," and "intra-action," to mention a few. Current events—ranging from global warming, opposition to mining technologies by indigenous groups, forms of human kinship emerging

from new reproductive technologies, animal cloning and, most recently, swine flu—indicate the timeliness of these conceptual developments.



This concern with natureculture has generated a host of useful conceptual tools: partial connections, the cyborg, multinaturalism, cosmopolitics, actor-network, intra-action, and ontological politics. The epistemic and political implications of these tools go beyond their analytical usefulness as innovative devices to explore novel phenomena. They complicate well-established fields of inquiry, such as political ecology, sexuality and human reproduction, kinship, modern politics, and even history; as well as categories like space, place and scale, and, indeed, the singular ontology that these fields sustain. As an expansive notion that ignores traditional divisions among spheres of life, natureculture also blurs disciplinary boundaries and creatively connects fields of knowledge—indeed the natural and the social sciences can creatively collaborate, each becoming more than one.

At the 2010 conference we seek to encourage inquiry into the ways that anthropological and specifically ethnographic inquiry present opportunities to interrogate both the ontology of Western notions of history (and effectively provincialize it) and to historicize the notion of ontology, thus pluralizing it. How are diverse ontologies made and deployed? How are distinctive ontological claims that sustain scientific, economic, domestic, ritual and governmental projects articulated both within and across orders of natureculture? Anthropological exploration of these questions (that suspend "ethnographic" and "theoretical" divides) may enable an iteration of ontologies as a relational analytic device, displacing its version as a pre-established reality-out-there (even if an open and shifting one)—the end-goal of investigative endeavors.

The conference invites papers, films, photo essays and multimedia installations that track, propose or otherwise reveal and interrogate paradigmatic, disciplinary and ethico-political ruptures effected through the analytics of naturecultures. We are as interested in topics "traditional" to anthropology (magic, ritual and kinship, to name a few) as we are in thematic newcomers (animals, climate, oceans, air and GMOs) and, of course, those fields—such as race, the state, the environment, art, health and bodies, neoliberalism, sexuality and globalization—that have occupied our discipline in the last generation. Multidisciplinary presentations as well as contributions by non-anthropologists will also be considered. Submissions may be made on the SCA website.

### Culture-at-Large—Sex and Secularity: Conversations with Michael Warner

Culture-at-Large, SCA's signature event at the AAA meeting, presents five anthropologists in conversation with an interlocutor from outside the discipline. This year's event, organized by SCA Student Representative Mary Murrell for the 2009 AAA meeting in Philadelphia, features Michael Warner, Seymour H Knox Professor of English and American Studies at Yale University. Warner is the author of *Publics and Counterpublics* (2002);