

1997 AAA Survey of Anthropology PhDs

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In 1950, 22 anthropology PhDs were awarded in North America. In 1974, 409 anthropology doctorates were awarded, and PhD production exceeded 400 for the first time. During the last 23 years, PhD production has held stable--at about 400 per annum--ranging from 476 in 1996 to 360 in 1982 (mean = 403; Fact File 5). From 1948 to 1996, 11,599 anthropology doctorates have been awarded by North American universities listed in the Association's *AAA Guide*.

Biennial Surveys. Recognizing the need for longitudinal data about anthropology PhDs, the American Anthropological Association began, in 1982, a series of biennial surveys. In 1997, questionnaires were sent to 389 1996-97 anthropology PhDs for whom mailing addresses were provided by departments. A total of 163 usable questionnaires was received, for a return rate of 42% (1995 = 50%; 1990 = 68%; 1988 = 67%; 1986 = 65%; 1984 = 74%; 1982 = 41%).

Quantitative Summary & Analysis

Modal PhD. The modal 1996-97 PhD recipient (based on arithmetic means, medians and modes) is "Cynthia," a white, 39-year-old female who found employment in the academic realm. Cynthia's doctorate in sociocultural anthropology was based on fieldwork in North America on a non-applied topic; she took 8.5 years to complete her PhD degree.

At time of degree, the youngest PhD recipient in 1996-97's cohort was 27 years old and the oldest was 67. To date in the 1990s, the 400 PhDs awarded each year in American anthropology represent about 0.9% of the total number of doctorates awarded in all fields (anthropology MAs = 0.3%; anthropology BAs = 0.5%).

Field of Study

Five Fields. Rates of PhD production in each of anthropology's traditional subfields have been relatively stable since the mid-1970s (Figure 1). For the past 20 years, cultural anthropology accounted for an average 50% of new PhDs awarded in the U.S.; archaeology = 30%; biological/physical = 10%; linguistic anthropology = 3%; applied/other = 7%. Figures for 1994-95 were, respectively, 52%, 24%, 10%, 1% and 12%; figures for 1996-97 are 53%, 26%, 12%, 1% and 7%. (*Note:* Fewer practicing anthropologists receive specific training in applied anthropology itself than in sociocultural.)

Sociocultural PhDs. Cultural anthropology offers its doctoral students an array of competing theoretical approaches. In their dissertations, PhD candidates emphasize aspects of one or more of the following viewpoints: (1) *science* (i.e., test a hypothesis; use replicable observation techniques and formal methodologies; anti-subjective), (2) *advocacy* (i.e., further a political agenda--e.g., champion health-care, pursue economic parity, redress past wrongs--value subjects over science), (3) *interpretive* (i.e., study the interplay between data and observer; speculate

rather than replicate; may deny that objective meanings even exist) and (4) *postmodern* (i.e., write ethnography as biography; emphasize written texts; prefer subjectivity to science; may be anti-objective). To date, there has been little synthesis among the four views.

Dissertations listed in the *1996-97 AAA Guide* include "Attitudes toward Homosexuality in Hawaii" (Sue Aki); "Dawning of the Fourth Age: Culture Change and the Urban Elderly in Southern France" (Diane Athanas); and "Daily Survival vs the Threat of AIDS: Street Youth Economy in New York City" (Aylin Atillasoy).

Archaeology PhDs. Doctoral candidates in archaeology are in a synthesizing mode. Drawing on previous archaeological field studies, they also use cultural, physical and linguistic anthropology to understand political development, trade, land use, nutrition, and migration routes within larger regions of study than the single site. Ethnoarchaeology, historical archaeology, Old World archaeology and the rise and fall of New World civilizations (e.g., the Maya) are popular topics. High-tech instrumentation, remote sensing and sophisticated imaging software add energy and excitement to the subfield.

Recent dissertations include "The Middle to Upper Paleolithic Transition in the Bukk Mountain Region of Central Europe" (Brian Adams); "Exchange, Trade and the Development of Urbanism in Somalia" (Hussein Suleiman Ahmed); and "The Evolution of Complex Social Systems in the Quibor Valley, northwestern Venezuela" (Lilliam Arvelo).

Biological/Physical PhDs. Doctoral research in physical anthropology includes biomolecular data-gathering, toward an evolutionary synthesis with paleoanthropology. The latter itself benefits from high-tech instrumentation, including thermoluminescence (TL), electron spin resonance (ESR) and 2-D/3-D computed-tomography (CT). Research proceeds on early hominid and hominoid taxonomy, New World Paleoindians, primate social behavior and the biology of aging. Paleoanthropology is more holistic, and has become an experimental science based on actualistic studies, microwear analysis and tool replication.

Recent dissertations include "The Effects of Habitat Modification on the Psychological Well-Being of a Colony of Emperor Tamarins (*Sanguinas imperator*)" (Joyce Altman); "The Use of Platyrrhine Hand During Locomotion and Skeletal Implications from the Distal Carpal Row and Metacarpals" (Diana Ayers-Darling); and "Maternal Physique, Prenatal Growth and Neonate Viability in a Mexican American Population" (Richard Campman).

Linguistic-Anthropology PhDs. Doctoral research in linguistic anthropology emphasizes the centrality of speech in human culture. Passage of the Native American Language Act of 1990 increased the study of endangered languages (and their role in understanding the peopling of the Americas). Linguistic anthropology holds great potential for studying the multilingual and multicultural world, and the multimodal human mind.

Recent dissertations include "Prayer-Songs to our Elder Brother: Native American Church Songs of the Otoe-Missouria and Ioway" (Jill Davidson); "The Syntax of Noun Phrase Complement Construction in Chiconcuac Nahuatl" (Rand Foster); and "Creating Showa Memories in Contemporary Japan: Discourse, Society, History and Subjectivity" (Keiko Matsuki).

Applied-Anthropology PhDs. In the 1990s, applied anthropology is a growth industry. Dissertation research is conducted in all quarters of the world, by practitioners in all four subfields. Scientific paradigms predominate over interpretive or postmodern approaches; the latter may be less workable in applied's world of quantification and objective data. Recent topics include studies of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other social-change agencies; finding ways to build local-level knowledge into models of social change; and research on biomedical problems, such as AIDS, in Third- and Fourth-World nations.

Dissertations include "Taming the Mountain: Human Ecology, Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Resource Management in the Doko Gamo Society of Ethiopia" (Daniel Cartledge); "The War on Drugs in Brooklyn, New York: Street-Level Drug Markets and the Tactical Narcotics Team" (Richard Curtis); and "Quality Health Care for Poor People" (Ronald Habin).

Graduate Enrollments

In 1997, graduate enrollments in U.S. anthropology programs (the mean for a selected sample of departments reported in the *AAA Guides*) increased 0.5% over 1996, 5.0% over 1995, 13.3% over 1993 and 35.5% over 1989. Meanwhile, undergraduate enrollments in U.S. anthropology programs (same selected sample), the pool from which most PhD anthropologists emerge, increased 4% over 1996, 13% over 1995, 15% over 1993 and 78% over 1989.

Age & Elapsed Time

Age at Graduation. The age of doctoral recipients in anthropology has steadily increased from 34 years in 1973 to 39 in 1990; the average age at graduation for 1994-95's cohort was 40; 1996-97's cohort is 39 (male = 38; female = 39). Older age is due, in part, to fewer fellowship opportunities (see below, *Funding*).

Elapsed Time. Since the mid-1980s, time spent after a BA degree--actually enrolled in graduate school--to attain a PhD in anthropology has averaged 8 to 10 years. Average elapsed time-to-completion for the 1994-95 cohort was 8.5 years (women = 8.4; men = 8.6; range = 4 to 21 years); 1996-97's cohort is 8.5 years (women = 8.5; men = 8.4; range = 3 to 19 years). These figures compare to 6 years for engineers (the shortest time to completion), 7 to 8 for social scientists generally, and 8 years for humanists (reported in the National Research Council's *Summary Report 1992: Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities*). The longer time required for anthropology doctorates is due, in part, to learning exotic field languages and/or completing 12- to 30-month field studies far from home.

Ethnic Identity

Minority representation in anthropology-PhD cohorts increased from 13% in 1990 to 15% in 1997 (Table 1; Figure 2). Meanwhile, the percentage of white anthropology PhDs decreased from 96% in 1972 to 85% in 1997. (Comparative figures for all U.S. PhD degrees conferred, by racial and ethnic group, in 1991-92, are as follows: American Indian = 0%; Asian = 5%; Black = 4%; Hispanic = 3%; White = 87%; data source: U.S. Department of Education reported in *Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac Issue*, September 1, 1994, p. 31.) As stated in the

National Research Council's *Summary Report 1992: Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities*, "Just over 10 percent of all PhDs awarded to U.S. citizens in 1992 were earned by racial/ethnic minorities--Asians, blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans" (p. 5).

Most minority PhDs are in cultural anthropology. Representation in the subfields, computed for the 1994-95 PhD cohort, was as follows: archaeology = 0%; sociocultural = 74%; biological/physical = 4%; linguistic anthropology = 4%; applied/other = 17%; for the 1996-97 PhD cohort, the following figures were obtained: archaeology = 16%; sociocultural = 71%; biological/physical = 6%; linguistic anthropology = 0%; applied/other = 6%. (*Note: based on small numbers, these percentages are volatile and imprecise.*)

Sex

Women anthropology-PhDs increased from 32% of the 1972 cohort to 57% of the 1997 PhD cohort (Table 3; Figure 3; breakdown: sociocultural = 61% female, archaeology = 36% female, physical = 68% female, linguistic = 100% female, applied/other = 83% female). (Comparable figures for 1995 were sociocultural = 64% female, archaeology = 43% female, physical = 54% female, linguistic = 100% female, applied/other = 65% female). As a percentage of their own sex, 56% of 1996-97's female cohort received PhDs in sociocultural (males in male cohort = 49%); archaeology = 16% (males = 40%); physical = 14% (males = 9%); linguistics = 2% (males = 0%); and applied/other = 10% (males = 3%).

The Association's *1996 Survey of Departments* (see *AAA Guide 1996-1997*) reported that since 1992-93, women gained 6 percentage points toward parity in the full-time faculty (all ranks combined = 36%), and attained record levels in the ranks of full and associate professor (Table 4.)

As a percentage of their own sex, women anthropologists are more uniformly sorted into grades (professor = 35%; associate = 31%; assistant = 31% [instructor = 3%]) than male colleagues, who are bunched together at the full-professor level (55%; associate = 26%; assistant = 17% [instructor = 2%]) (source: *1994 Survey of Departments*).

Although parity between the sexes has been attained at the assistant-professor level (women = 54% in 1994-95 [breakdown: in BA departments = 49%; MA = 55%; PhD = 55%]), as a category, the latter accounted for only 18% of the full-time U.S. anthropology faculty in 1994-95 (breakdown: in BA departments = 23%; MA = 16%; PhD = 17%).

Funding Sources

Training. Funding patterns for doctoral classroom training in anthropology have changed dramatically since 1972. Federal monies account for a far smaller slice of the pie. We asked 1996-97 PhDs to indicate their major source of financial support for graduate training *excluding fieldwork*. Federal sources (fellowships, traineeships, grants, loans and "other") improved, accounting for 25% of major support (1972 = 39%, 1977 = 36%, 1982 = 19%, 1984 = 20%, 1986 = 18%, 1988 = 16%, 1990 = 19%, 1995 = 16%). Nonfederal sources (university or foundation fellowships and grants, teaching and research assistantships) accounted for 52% (1972 = 27%,

1977 = 33%, 1982 = 48%, 1984 = 49%, 1986 = 46%, 1988 = 38%, 1990 = 41%, 1995 = 56%). And personal sources (savings, family loans or gifts and personal employment) fell, accounting for 23% (1972 = 32%, 1977 = 32%, 1982 = 36%, 1984 = 30%, 1986 = 35%, 1988 = 36%, 1990 = 42%, 1995 = 27%).

Major Support During Fieldwork. Funding patterns for doctoral field research in anthropology have remained relatively stable since 1972. We asked 1996-97 PhDs to indicate their major source of financial support for doctoral field research. Federal sources (fellowships, traineeships, grants, loans and "other") accounted for 31% (1972 = 51%, 1977 = 44%, 1982 = 36%, 1984 = 33%, 1986 = 29%, 1988 = 17%, 1990 = 44%, 1995 = 30%). Nonfederal sources (university or foundation fellowships and grants, teaching and research assistantships) accounted for 40% (1972 = 21%, 1977 = 24%, 1982 = 35%, 1984 = 35%, 1986 = 35%, 1988 = 41%, 1990 = 34%, 1995 = 41%). And personal sources (savings, family loans or gifts and personal employment) accounted for 28% (1972 = 26%, 1977 = 31%, 1982 = 32%, 1984 = 32%, 1986 = 36%, 1988 = 32%, 1990 = 29%, 1995 = 29%).

Careers

A doctorate is recommended for full professional status as an anthropologist, although work in museums, physical anthropology labs and field archaeology is often possible with a master's degree. There are more nonacademic career opportunities available to PhD anthropologists, currently, than there are jobs in the academy itself.

Increasingly, PhD students begin their training with academic as well as nonacademic careers in mind, and seek admission to programs that have some applied anthropologists on board. In their planning, PhD departments may be advised to hire applied anthropologists, both to meet changing student expectations and to bolster the department's official mission on campus.

Academic/Nonacademic. In the early 1970s, 88% of PhDs took jobs in traditional academic departments (i.e., in anthropology departments, or in non-anthropology departments, such as sociology, biology and ethnic studies), and 12% took nonacademic jobs (e.g., in research institutes, museums, government and the private sector). From the mid-1970s, the percentage taking jobs in traditional academe decreased, reaching the level of 59% in 1990 (41% took nonacademic jobs that year; Figure 4). In 1997's PhD cohort, 71% of those who found employment took academic jobs (nonacademic = 29%). (*Note:* Nonacademic careers are defined as jobs outside of traditional academic departments and campus centers, where tenure is not a possibility. Comparable figures for previous cohorts are as follows: 1972 = 88% academic; 1977 = 69%; 1982 = 61%; 1984 = 68%; 1986 = 58%; 1988 = 46%; 1990 = 59%; and 1995 = 72%.)

Tenure Rates. Of those 1996-97 PhDs who are academically employed, 6% are tenured, 25% are on a tenure track and 69%--two-thirds--are not on a tenure track. Comparable figures for "not on tenure-track" for 1985-86 = 61%, 1987-88 = 66%, 1989-90 = 49%, and 1994-95 = 63%.

Rating Advisers. Since 1982, recent PhDs have consistently rated the job-hunting assistance they received from departmental advisers as "poor." For 1996-97's PhD cohort, the ratings are much the same (poor = 32%; fair = 24%; good = 17%; very good = 12%; excellent = 14%). Through

the 1980s, "excellent/very good" averaged 16%; 1997's figure has improved: 26%. In planning for the future, PhD departments should consider offering tutorials on careers and job-hunting techniques, for applied as well as academic opportunities. (*Note: To probe beneath the statistics, see below under Mentoring.*)

Job Satisfaction. Ironically, more nonacademic job holders from the 1996-97 PhD cohort (25%) rate their career's intellectual stimulation as "excellent" than do colleagues employed in academe (22%). Table 5 summarizes job satisfaction among holders of academic and nonacademic jobs for six anthropology PhD cohorts. Note especially the different perception ratings for salary, security, and job overall.

Academic Job Availability. One measure of the academic job market is the number of position-open ads listed in the *Anthropology Newsletter*. The *AN* carries well over 90% of all academic anthropology jobs available at U.S. four-year colleges and universities. In 1996, 302 positions were listed: 63% as many jobs as new PhDs available ($N = 476$) to fill them (1995 = 308, 1994 = 215, 1993 = 353, 1992 = 310, 1991 = 387, 1990 = 350, 1989 = 473, 1988 = 423, 1987 = 318, 1986 = 242, 1985 = 247; Figure 5).

Nonacademic Work Setting. Departments of anthropology at institutions of higher learning currently employ the largest proportion of anthropology PhDs; however, far fewer recent graduates are so employed, compared to earlier cohorts (Figure 4).

Presently, there is no discernible ceiling or cap--like that prevailing in the tightened academic job market (Figure 4)--for PhD anthropologists targeting the nonacademic realm for employment. With its focus on internationalism, information and research, it would seem that the expanding economy of the 1990s could absorb more anthropologists than the average 400 PhDs produced annually in the U.S. (*Note: The diversity of professional-level jobs currently available to anthropology PhDs is evident in the Association's NAPA Directory of Practicing Anthropologists, available from AAA.*)

Finding a Job. As in previous cohorts, the most successful job-hunting technique--accounting for 44% of all positions obtained by 1996-97 graduates--was "hearing of an opening through friends and contacts" (1994-95 = 34%). Contacting employers "cold" (i.e., without any foreknowledge of opening) = 14% (1994-95 = 17%), and answering ads in the *Anthropology Newsletter* = 9% (1994-95 = 15%). (*Note: The AN has averaged 10% since 1972.*) Additional methods used by the 1996-97 cohort included departmental job bulletins (6% [1994-95 = 3%]), other help-wanted ads (10% [1994-95 = 10%]), AAA annual meeting (2% [1994-95 = 1%]) and employment agency (0% [1994-95 = 0%]) ("other" = 16% [1994-95 = 19%]). Since 1972, use of employment agencies has averaged less than 1%; AAA's annual meeting has averaged 3%.

Salary Figures

Average academic salaries for PhD anthropologists range from \$34,000 to \$64,000 for the 9- to 10-month school year (Fact File 2). Salaries outside the academy are higher. Many anthropologists work in nonprofit organizations, where salaries for positions held by PhDs range from \$42,000 to \$95,000 for a regular, 11- to 12-month year (Fact File 3). (Salaries for research

directors in the for-profit realm are the highest, and most variable, of all; average figures are unavailable.)

PhD Production

Presently. Since 1974, anthropology PhD production has stabilized at plus-or-minus 400 per year (Fact File 5). At present, 93 academic anthropology departments in the U.S. award a doctorate. Based on present and likely future trends, there is little reason to assume a substantial increase in anthropology-PhD production over the next several years, either in greater output from existing departments or from the creation of new doctoral departments.

Assumptions. Assuming 400 new PhDs are produced per year indefinitely, what might American anthropology look like in 30 years? To boldly guess this far ahead one might also assume (1) a retirement age of 65, (2) a lifespan of 76 years and (3) a mean age of 36 at time of degree. Thus the average career "shelf life" of a PhD anthropologist today is about 30 years (and less for recent PhD cohorts).

Year 2025. By the year 1996, approximately 11,500 men and women (representing 0.004% of the U.S. population) had received a doctorate in anthropology (Fact File 5). By the year 2025--using the assumptions noted above--straight-line forecasting yields a grand total of 12,000 U.S.-awarded anthropology PhDs--1,000 more than today. If the value of a commodity is determined by its scarcity alone, future anthropologists will be valued indeed.

Would They Do It All Again?

The answer is--yes. As in all previous cohorts sampled, most graduates (85%) would choose anthropology again if they had it to do all over (Figure 7). (Comparative figures for 1972 = 90%, 1977 = 80%, 1982 = 72%, 1984 = 74%, 1986 = 81%, 1988 = 84%, 1990 = 85% and 1996 = 85%.) Of 1996-97's anthropology PhDs, 68% (1994-95 = 67%) would complete their graduate training "more or less as they did"; 15% (1994-95 = 15%) would choose a different specialty within their subfield, and 2% (1994-95 = 3%) would choose a different anthropological specialty. Fifteen percent (1994-95 = 16%) would "not pursue training within anthropology again."

(For purposes of planning, academic departments are invited to request further statistical details by contacting the Department of Academic Relations, American Anthropological Association, 2200 Wilson Blvd, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201; 703/528-1902, ext 3010; fax 703/528-3546; pevans@aaanet.org).

Qualitative Findings

To supplement the quantitative analysis of the *1997 Survey of Anthropology PhDs*, we asked new PhDs to respond to three open-ended questions. Responses were virtually identical to those published in the 1995 Survey, which are reprinted below for a glimpse beneath the statistics.

Advice File: Summary

New PhDs in anthropology offered the following advice to prospective graduate students:

1. "Go for the doctorate only if you have a passion for anthropology and adventure."
2. "Make the best of an uncertain mentoring environment."
3. "Get some training in applied anthropology."

Advice to Graduate Students

In the *1995 Survey*, we asked, "What advice would you give to a prospective PhD student in anthropology?" Constructive opinions, presented in their own words, are from anthropologists who received their PhD degrees in 1994-95.

(1) *Strategies (in no particular order)*. Have confidence in yourself and take responsibility for yourself and your program. Go to a school with a large endowment (more likely to give financial support). Go to the school that supports unconditionally the kind of research you wish to pursue. Choose your adviser carefully. Talk to previous graduate students about their advisers before enlisting your own. Begin publishing in graduate school. Be strong not only in theory and method--but in applying them to the real world. Get a complete education. Know what science is. Go for the "big-three": grants, publications and a powerful adviser. Get all the "human" support you can from the department. Remember--everything is ultimately *your* decision.

(2) *Tactics*. Obtain teaching experience. Learn statistics. Take technical classes in analytical methods. Do as much field research as you can. Take classes in all the subdisciplines. Learn to write. Master public speaking. Get a background in budget management. Get some experience in an interdisciplinary project. Give conference papers and publish before completing the degree. Do not go into debt to finance your graduate studies. Finish quickly and get back into the real world ASAP. Have fun and enjoy what you're doing.

(3) *Topics*. Choose a topic for which there is already plenty of available data--don't waste time looking for what isn't there. Try to specialize in two geographic areas, if possible. In cultural anthropology, avoid working in the U.S. Don't treat the PhD as the "end" of something--but instead as part of a career trajectory.

(4) *Teachers*. Choose a program that encourages close communication with faculty. Choose your committee carefully. Develop a good working relationship with your adviser. Make sure the faculty members you pick are compatible and generous with their time--and that they, themselves, are getting funding. Find out whether faculty members coauthor articles with students. Do not let faculty push you into areas where you'd rather not go. Realize that faculty members fail to discourage many students who would be far better served doing something else.

(5) *Funds*. Always think in terms of fundable research. Pick a geographic area that is being funded by the U.S. Government. Do not enroll in a PhD program unless you are assured of funding (without funding, many drop out after a few years).

(6) *Speed*. Work hard, focus early. Choose a program that encourages rapid progress. Establish social networks early. Get through the program quickly.

(7) *Jobs*. Be aware of job prospects and choose courses accordingly. Be well-informed about job placement. Take time to build contacts with professionals outside your institution. Go to meetings and make contacts as early as possible. Make yourself highly visible. Don't overestimate your opportunities in the future job market. Find a niche that is not overpopulated. Upon completion of your PhD, be willing to wait up to four years for a position in academics. The sense of achievement after a PhD--without future employment possibilities--will soon fade.

(8) *Adaptability*. Diversify your interests and skills. Don't choose such narrow training that you are less "sellable" after receiving the degree. Link your anthropological training to other fields--e.g., to agriculture, business, psychology, etc. Cross-train in other disciplines (e.g., computers, anatomy, engineering). Gain practical skills for alternate positions (e.g., CRM, computers, GIS). Be flexible in terms of job options. Conduct marketable research. Try to get some training in applied.

(9) *Ultimately*. Are you sure? Be very sure that this is what you want to do. Know *why* you're doing it. Go for it only if you have a passion for anthropology and adventure. Do not enter for the sake of a career--only for love of anthropology itself. Don't do this unless you are obsessed with the field and are willing to work for very little money. Weigh carefully your love for the profession versus your desire for economic stability. Accept that a career in anthropology is more like an artist's career than a lawyer's. Study what you love and care about, and don't worry about the future. If it's *your dream*--Go for it!

Mentoring

We also asked, "How would you describe the mentoring process you went through in graduate school?" As one woman answered, "Poor, in terms of preparing me for obtaining a job in academia--or perhaps I should say preparing me for the lack of jobs in academia."

Another member of 1994-95's cohort responded, "I did not receive a lot of 'mentoring', and did most of my research independent of advisers. As a result, I don't feel I got good advice on how to prepare for an academic career."

Apart from career counseling itself, faculty received mixed reviews on mentoring--from "excellent" to "so-so" (and from "zilch" to "nil"). One woman wrote, "Superb. I had wonderful outside contacts in academia who provided introductions, support and intellectual stimulation." Another wrote, "A mixed bag." A man answered the question with a question: "What mentoring process?" A woman's interjection: "Poor!"

Miscellaneous comments reveal the range of mentoring quality--high positives, high negatives--and the depth of feeling shown by those being mentored:

I had excellent access to all faculty; they provided excellent intellectual mentoring. My mentoring was meager in the extreme--the word hardly applies. Haphazard. Excellent. Not

enough hands-on experience. Socialization into the discipline was largely hands-off. My mentoring was very effective--it kept me going. The majority of professors had very little time for graduate students, so we banded together ourselves. I like to work on my own.

I was never advised to attempt to publish anything, nor to present papers. The faculty did nothing to help guide first-year students. Mentoring was good to very good at the level of the main adviser; fair for the rest of the faculty. My adviser did not have any real advice except on academic issues; I was not prepared for the consulting side of anthropology. I was disappointed by the mentoring from my adviser, but other members of my committee were very helpful. Most support came from nonanthropologists in my area studies. Unstructured--but I got what I asked for.

Suggestion. The modal word to describe mentoring was "nonexistent." Thus, the following comment from a member of the 1994-95 PhD cohort may be helpful to current and future graduate students: "*Mentoring was OK--but I had to be very aggressive to get it.*"

Professional & Academic

Finally, we asked, "During their training, should anthropology PhDs prepare for careers in *both* the applied and the academic realms?" The following list of responses summarizes this cohort's strong opinion that anthropology PhD programs should prepare students for careers in both:

Absolutely (2*)
Definitely (3)
Depends on interest of individual
Generally, yes
I would have to say yes
If they can
If they want jobs!
It depends
It would be an excellent idea
It would be foolish not to
It wouldn't hurt
It's a good back-up
Most but not all should
Most definitely
No
No, unless so desired
No opinion
Not a bad idea
Perhaps
Probably
Realistically, they should
Silly to think otherwise
They should be offered the choice
They should prepare for both

Yes (23)

Yes

Yes! (4)

Yes!

Yes!!

YES!

Yes, a resounding yes

Yes, absolutely

Yes, definitely (2)

Yes, if they want jobs

Yes, life is applied

Yes, we need money

Yes, yes, yes (2)

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Yes, you never know

(*Numbers in parentheses indicate frequency of written response.)

Placement Service Statistics

AAA Placement Service. The American Anthropological Association administers a Placement Service with a yearly subscription of approximately 200 job seekers. After 12 months of enrollment in the Placement Service, registrants are asked to complete a questionnaire about the job-seeking process. The following data, compiled from 144 Placement Service questionnaires, is presented here to supplement the information provided above.

Demographic Profile. The modal AAA Placement Service member is a 37-year-old female who received her PhD within the past 12 months. Despite publishing three journal articles and receiving three grants, she took an academic position without possibility of tenure. Though employed, the "statistically average" Placement member still seeks a tenure-track post in academe.

Did you find a job in anthropology?--"YES"

Jobs & Grants. Sixty percent of the 144 Placement members ($N = 87$) found a job. As a percentage of their own sex, men (67%) were somewhat more successful than women (57%), though twice as many women ($N = 58$) as men (29) actually found jobs. Job finders had more grants (mean = 3.4) than those who did not find jobs (mean = 2.6).

Tenure. Regarding tenure, 34% of the jobs ($N = 27$) were tenure track (by sex: male = 48%, female = 35%), and 66% ($N = 52$) were non-tenure track (by sex: male = 52%, female = 65%). Of those in the non-tenure category, 90% were actively seeking alternative employment.

Publications. In the sample of 144, job finders published as many articles (mean = 3.8) as non-finders (mean = 3.9). Women job finders published more articles (mean = 3.2) than women non-finders (mean = 2.4). Overall, men published more articles (mean = 7.4) than women (mean = 3.4). Men job finders published fewer articles (mean = 5.0) than men non-finders (mean = 8.6;

the latter figure is due to sampling error relating to the small number ($N = 14$) of male non-finders). Regarding job success, the number of books, chapters, and review articles was small and statistically unrevealing in the Placement Service sample.

Where? Placement members with jobs were asked where they found them. Almost half (49%) found their jobs through the AAA Placement Service; 27% through personal contacts; 19% through non-AAA job ads (e.g., notices posted on campus, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, WWW listings, *Science* magazine); 3% through impromptu office visits and telephone cold-calls; and 1% by being promoted to a new job.

Did you find a job in anthropology?--"NO"

Forty percent of the 144 Placement members ($N = 57$) did not find a job. These individuals sent out more vitas (mean = 82) than did job finders (mean = 60), and had been seeking employment longer (mean = 22 months) than their employed colleagues (mean = 17 months).

The most cited reason for not finding a job was "too few job openings/too many job applicants" (23%). Twenty percent replied "PhD not in hand." Fourteen percent, each, stated, "My specialty is too narrow (unusual or peripheral)"--or "I need more publications." Other reasons given were "too old," "not yet seriously looking," "lack of faculty support," "affirmative action," "sexism," "non-U.S. citizen" and "too short."

Apart from the Ph.D. degree itself, we could isolate neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for getting a job in anthropology.

Answers to Questions

What do you think was most effective in your job interview? Representative comments of job getters include "Polite but persistent describes my approach. Personal contacts and being in the right place at the right time meant a lot." "My employer was impressed by my publications and research experience, but probably most of all by my letters of reference." "Phone and AAA on-site interviews were helpful before going on campus: I was treated well." "Persistence, honesty, thoroughness of application and follow-up; support of my dissertation committee."

"I found the entire process to be highly subjective and dependent upon departmental agendas." "Ultimately, all the formalities were irrelevant; I got the job through connections." "The on-paper process was haphazard--I never made a short list; but after I actually *met* people involved in the process [by bumping into interviewers at the AAA meeting], things went very well."

How important is age? Though age barriers do exist, and are increasingly difficult to overcome after 50, prior to this time in life age seems to be relative. As one respondent remarked, "Interviewers volunteered that my 'maturity' [age 40] was a plus." And while a number of 46-year-olds were hired, a 41-year-old considered herself "too old."

How important is being from a "prestige" graduate department? The authors of this report do not dispute the prevailing wisdom: receiving a doctorate from a prestige program ranked in the

National Academy's top 10 still gives an advantage in the academic career realm. But an important reason for this success is not the program's quality or status per se--but the funding and publications opportunities such programs afford. In a nutshell, financial and networking resources for graduate students are greater.

(For assistance in the planning process tailored to your department's size and special needs, please contact [Kathleen Terry Sharp](#), Director, Department of Academic Relations, 2200 Wilson Blvd, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201; 703/528-1902, ext 3010; fax 703/528-3546)

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