Crossing Boundaries

The Future of Anthropology Graduates and the Non-Academic Job Market

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The AAA Annual Meeting in Montreal brought together the Committee on Practicing and Public Interest Anthropology (CoPAPIA). This meeting was exciting and productive for CoPAPIA, which continues to work on a variety of projects related to practicing anthropology. The 4th Annual CoPAPIA Section Summit, “Linking Graduates to the Job Market,” organized by Mary Odell Butler, Keri Brondo and Wendy Bartlo, took place Saturday, November 19 in Montreal. This year’s focus came from a topic identified at the previous Section Summit in New Orleans in 2010. In Montreal, close to 50 anthropologists came together to discuss the changing job market within anthropology. During the course of the two-hour summit, the challenges and opportunities for practitioners, departments, faculty and students were discussed. What emerged was a lively discussion. Some acknowledged a wide range of prospects for graduates of anthropology programs at all levels (BA, MA and PhD). Others pointed to the continuing divide between students and faculty within anthropology departments, and practicing anthropologists. However, if that divide were crossed successfully, increased opportunities for anthropology students could result post-graduation.

Many participants expressed overwhelmingly positive beliefs about what anthropology graduates had to offer potential employers. They noted that due to anthropological training and understanding of a wide-range of issues, anthropology graduates frequently have an advantage over graduates of other disciplines. There was also much discussion about the variety of positions that anthropology students engage in post-graduation. Anthropological methods, mindset and orientation were widely believed to be assets to anthropology graduates. As Tony Whitehead (U Maryland) stated about the wide-array of positions in which anthropologists are qualified for: “Have methods, will travel.” Additionally, many participants offered useful insight from their own training experiences, or strategies employed by their departments. It was common for departments to include practicum or internship elements in their curricula. Frequently faculty have exercises built into class syllabi that encourage students to think about future careers and skills needed, and encourage students to talk to people employed in their chosen field. In addition to classroom activities, other departments provide mentoring opportunities, workshops on resume and cover letter writing, and other professional skills.

In spite of the positive comments about what anthropology graduates have to offer potential employers, there emerged a number of challenges to both the training and future job-seeking of anthropology students. Many participants expressed concern about the bias of a two-tier system that exists in many anthropology departments: only those not “good enough” to get tenure track academic jobs look for employment as practicing anthropologists. There were several students, faculty and practicing anthropologists who questioned if faculty in anthropology departments were well suited to advise students interested in practicing careers, as they often are not engaged with the world of practice.

A number of actionable items emerged from our conversation. Participants were interested in exactly how many anthropology graduates at all levels (BA, MA, PhD) work outside of the academy and curious about the types of positions they hold. A number of participants suggested that their own departments could do a better job tracking their graduates and ask them to return for networking events. Another suggestion was to help students develop strategies for articulating to potential employers the value of anthropological training. Many felt also that students should be encouraged to attend meetings like AAA to participate in training workshops provided at little or no cost for students. Many believed that faculty should also be encouraged to cross boundaries and make connections with community organizations and help foster internship and future employment opportunities. One more suggestion that involved crossing boundaries was to have anthropologists reach out to people in the business world, and seek out potential employers and headhunters to understand the hiring processes and needs of the non-academic sector of employment.

As CoPAPIA looks forward to projects for 2012, it is interested in exploring the various boundaries to be crossed and bridged in bringing together practicing anthropologists, students, and anthropology departments. It also continues to explore ways in which the AAA can support anthropology departments to effectively prepare students for both academic and non-academic positions as anthropologists.

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Wendy D Bartlo and Antonio Chavarría are contributing editors of Anthropology Works, the AN column of the AAA Committee on Practicing and Public Interest Anthropology.
### JOB PLACEMENT

**Ball State University** announces contract faculty position available August 17, 2012, in cultural anthropology as a one-year replacement. Major responsibility: teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in anthropology. Send cover letter that details experiences and interests, curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information for three references to: Cultural Anthropologist Search Committee Chair, Department of Anthropology, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306. Review of applications will begin January 30, 2012, and will continue until the position is filled. Grinnell College offers health insurance benefits to eligible gender identity/expression. This employer does prohibit discrimination based on gender identity/expression. This employer offers health insurance benefits to eligible same-sex domestic partners.

**Grinnell College** announces one-year leave replacement position in linguistic anthropology, starting fall 2012. Assistant professor (PhD) preferred; instructor (ABD) possible. Grinnell College is a highly selective undergraduate liberal arts college. The anthropology department has a large number of majors and a four-fields orientation. The College's curriculum is founded on a strong advising system and close student-faculty interaction, with few college-wide requirements beyond the completion of a major. The teaching schedule of five courses over two semesters will include a four-fields introduction to anthropology, a class in ethnographic methods, and advanced courses in linguistic anthropology. In letters of application, candidates should discuss their interest in developing as a teacher and scholar in an undergraduate, liberal-arts college that emphasizes close student-faculty interaction. They also should discuss what they can contribute to efforts to cultivate a wide diversity of people and perspectives, a core value of Grinnell College. To be assured of full consideration, all application materials should be received by March 1, 2012. Please submit applications online by visiting our application website at https://jobs.grinnell.edu. Candidates will need to upload a letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (copies acceptable), a course syllabus for a four-fields introduction to anthropology (under “Required Documents” upload as one file under “Other”), and a list of three references. Questions about this search should be directed to the search chair, Professor Maria Tapia, at AnthropologySearch@grinnell.edu or 641/269-4343. Grinnell College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer committed to attracting and retaining highly qualified individuals who collectively reflect the diversity of the nation. No applicant shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, religion, creed, disability or veteran status. For further information about Grinnell College, see our website at www.grinnell.edu. Notes: Employer will assist with relocation costs. Additional salary information: Competitive. This employer does prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation/preference. This employer does prohibit discrimination based on gender identity/expression. This employer offers health insurance benefits to eligible same and opposite-sex domestic partners.

**St Lawrence University** Department of Anthropology invites applications for a visiting assistant professor position in biological anthropology (potentially renewable for up to three years), beginning August 2012. Qualified candidates will teach our required introductory course in human origins as well as an upper-level research seminar in biological anthropology. Course load is three per semester; the particular array of remaining courses is open but should complement the offerings of a four-field anthropology department and take advantage of the department’s physical anthropology teaching collections. Candidates with PhD in hand preferred; ABDs also acceptable. St Lawrence University is a small, liberal arts college in upstate New York and an equal opportunity employer wishing to increase the diversity of our faculty; candidates from ethnic backgrounds typically under-represented in higher education are strongly encouraged to apply. Strong evidence of desire and ability to teach in a small liberal arts college setting is essential. To apply, please send a detailed cover letter that addresses teaching philosophy and desire to teach in a small, liberal arts environment; CV; teaching evaluations; and names and addresses (including email contacts) of three references to: Shinu Abraham, Search Committee Chair, Department of Anthropology, St Lawrence University, Canton NY, 13617. Formal review of applications will begin on February 1, 2012 and continue until the position is filled. For additional information about St Lawrence University and the anthropology department, please visit our website at www.stlawu.edu/academics/programs/anthropology. St Lawrence University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Notes: Employer will assist with relocation costs. Additional salary information: Competitive. This employer does prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation/preference. This employer does prohibit discrimination based on gender identity/expression. This employer offers health insurance benefits to eligible same and opposite-sex domestic partners.

### NEXT DEADLINES FOR JOB PLACEMENT ADS:

- **February 29, 2012** FOR April 2012 AN
- **March 31, 2012** FOR May 2012 AN

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**CONTACT:** RICHARD THOMAS at rthomas@aaanet.org or 703/528-1902 ext 1177

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