Message from the Editor

These articles represent a diversity of methods, regions, and sub-disciplines of anthropology. Two prominent themes have emerged from this collection: the enduring importance of methodological innovation in ethnographic and anthropological research and the relevance of these methods towards cultivating an understanding of politics, and in particular cultural politics.

The articles in this volume span methodological approaches in order to critically engage with pressing contemporary social issues, including but not limited to the global financial crisis, migration policy, and bribery. Employing historical and visual methods, Backe analyzes images of freak shows from the late 19th century in the United States, using aesthetic and visual analysis to contextualize the creation of stigmatized freaks. Brown, as an applied anthropologist, combines quantitative household measures with ethnography of tourism to depict the shrinking of a tourism economy. In order to understand bribery practices, Fedirko relies on legal case documents of bribery in real estate in Ukraine to illuminate bribery as an embedded everyday practice. Protner draws from team research on the erasure of citizenship in Slovenia to reveal the administrative circle that these non-citizens must navigate. Otten uses photographs to bring to light the experience of a changing economy under neoliberal conditions.

The second emergent theme in this issue is a concern for everyday politics and cultural politics. Portney and Rosenthal work against popular American assumptions and stereotypes of aging. Portney reveals, through detailed linguistic analysis, the ways stereotypes are realized through language use. Rosenthal explores the identity work of older Americans in the greater Boston area and Florida; she finds that her interlocutors construct success in aging that is both in line with and working against the popular-scientific notions of “Successful Aging” emerging today. Based on fieldwork at the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York City, Subramani explores virtual and embodied technologies in the creation of an emergent counterpublic. Shaker and Matteson examine how college students with restricted diets navigate social life and institutions and reveal the effect that the pathologization of such restrictions have on these students. Ali explores the culture of shaming that emerges from microcredit practices in Bangladesh.

These articles are vastly different in their approaches, theories, and arguments. However, each engages with pressing social and political issues and as such represent the expansiveness of student ethnography and anthropology. The National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA), the AAA section that sponsors Student Anthropologist, has also made some exciting developments this year. Last year, NASA spread headed the exciting new program, the Emerging Leader in Anthropology Program (ELAP). The program is expanding and continuing this year, although this year’s deadline has already passed. Program participants will receive training in AAA and NASA governance, contemporary issues in anthropology on specific themes, as well as mentoring from anthropologists engaged in participants’ areas of interest. A small scholarship towards attending the meeting will also be provided. You can follow NASA updates on our Facebook page, through the listserv or on our website and consider applying next year.

This issue is truly a collective effort and as such I need to thank many people. First, many thanks to Fabienne Labbé for her continued efforts working with book review authors to present the best reviews possible. The Book Review section was made possible by the
generous funding of Brandeis University. Laura Thompson was an invaluable resource to me as editor and to many authors in this volume. She is an exquisite editor. Paul Keil, thank you for continuing to manage our twitter account and the website. The journal has grown immensely because of this work. Finally thank you to all the Student Anthropologist board members, the NASA board members, and peer reviewers for their careful reviewing, reading, and proofing.

The editorial work for this issue was completed as I write my dissertation. As such as I wrote everyday, I admired the diligent work of the authors as they exhaustively worked with myself and Laura Thompson through the revision process. I want to thank them for their dedication and patience. Bravo! This reflects the mission of Student Anthropologist, to collaboratively guide students through the publication process, including peer review and revision. It was a great privilege to work with you all. Finally, I am thrilled to welcome our new Editor, Sara Smith, PhD student at Yale University. I look forward to watching the journal grow under her leadership.

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