

and seeing how people solve them. People want to know that others can be trusted to follow the rules, that any costs are apprehended as being equitably shared and that cheaters are detected and punished. This theme links our field to developments in political science, psychology and economics (see chapters by Kahan and Ostrom in *Moral Sentiments and Material Interests* by Gintis, Bowles, Boyd and Fehr [eds] 2005). Kahan's chapter discusses the counterproductive effects of punitive law. Ostrom's chapter shows how a combination of government policy and local control is an effective way to promote cooperation in what she calls a dynamic polycentric system; the concept is analogous to what is described in the case studies in *Northern Ethnographic Landscapes*.

Trust or punishment—can one exist without the other on any level? A recent publication by Joe Henrich et al, titled "Costly Punishment Across Human Societies," addresses the question in *Science* (312[5781]:1767–70). Reporting on an NSF-sponsored project (# 0136761), these anthropologists working in 15 diverse populations found that people's willingness to pay a cost to punish increased as unequal behavior by others also increased. They also found patterns in between-group and within-group variance, and theorize on co-evolutionary relationships between altruism and punishment.

*Contributions to this column are welcome and may be sent to John Ziker (jziker@boisestate.edu). Columns are archived at www.evanthsoc.org.*

## General Anthropology Division

LUKE ERIC LASSITER, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### GAD Committees and Interest Groups

The General Anthropology Division benefits from several committees and interest groups, all of which provide ways to engage our membership in the mission of GAD. In the next several columns, we'll feature several of these committees and interest groups. This month, John Rhoades (St John Fisher C) offers a brief synopsis of the Federation of Small Anthropology Programs (FOSAP), a Standing Membership Committee of GAD.

### The Federation of Small Anthropology Programs

*By John Rhoades (FOSAP Chair)*

FOSAP began in 1991–92 under the guidance of Pat Rice (West Virginia U) and Frank Young (U San Diego). Pat and Frank saw that there was a need for a forum dealing with the interests of those anthropologists operating in "small" programs (five or fewer full-time faculty, and mostly fewer) on whose shoulders sat the responsibility of presenting our discipline as a holistic, four-field enterprise, and who were usually in a condition of disciplinary isolation in combined programs. They secured a good

response to this idea, and were able to become a standing committee of GAD.

Since then FOSAP has been an active group, putting out a yearly newsletter (now titled *ANTHRO-AT-LARGE*), organizing paper sessions at the AAA Annual Meeting, and, more recently, setting up a FOSAP listserv for email discussions and announcements. The paper session topics serve as a good chronicle of the interests and concerns of FOSAP members. The first session, in 1992, was titled, appropriately, "Problems and Issues in Small Programs." Over the years sessions have been organized on teaching in a combined department, content of an introductory course, presenting all four fields effectively, ethnographic methods, using electronic tools in teaching, viewing the US from an anthropological perspective and, more recently, assessment and program review. This last topic was the subject of the GAD/FOSAP invited session at the 2007 meeting: "An Investigation of Assessment: History, Language, and Sociocultural Practice," organized by Debra Picchi (Franklin Pierce C). Although the application of assessment standards concerns most academic departments, small programs are often especially vulnerable to restructuring initiatives linked with assessment, and this topic will necessarily continue to be of interest.

FOSAP membership reflects the range of interests of the larger discipline, including a wide variety of specialized interests, but with the condition of serving in an academic setting where one might be the only anthropologist. The viability of a holistic, four-field approach has been, and will continue to be, debated, but it lives on by necessity in small programs. Our orientation is that this presents an exciting challenge, not a burden. Anthropologists in small programs need only look over past issues of *ANTHRO-AT-LARGE* to read stimulating and useful ideas about dealing with the presentation of anthropology as a discipline and maintaining its presence as a valued, although small, program. The FOSAP website can be accessed through the AAA site under Sections and Interest Groups, General Anthropology Division, and then Committees.

The current FOSAP officers are: John Rhoades (St John Fisher C), Chair; Carol Morrow (Southeast Missouri State U), Membership Chair and Listserv Facilitator; Robin O'Brian (Elmira C), Executive Secretary; John Gatewood (Lehigh U), Webmaster; and Carol Morrow and Julie Pelletier (U Minnesota-Morris), *ANTHRO-AT-LARGE* Coeditors.

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*Please submit news, items of interest and ideas for future AN columns to Luke Eric Lassiter (lassiter@marshall.edu).*



**Debra Picchi** introduces the FOSAP Session "An Investigation of Assessment" at the 2007 Annual Meeting. Photo courtesy John Rhoades

## Middle East Section

EMILIO SPADOLA, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### Inscribing the Body: Tattoos in Traditional and Modern Cultures

*el-Sayed el-Aswad (U Bahrain)*

From ancient Egyptian culture, whence comes early evidence of tattooing, to contemporary art, the body has been employed as a living canvas for inscriptions and designs such as those of tattoos embodying symbols, icons, archetypes and mythological or folkloric themes. Tattoos, especially those consisting of lines and dots, have been found on preserved mummies, including that of Amunet, a priestess of the goddess Hathor at Thebes, dating back to the XI Dynasty, 2000 BCE. Although amulets are widely used for protective, magical and ascetic purposes (and were predominantly used in ancient Egypt), they are replaceable or not permanent. Notions related to authenticity, ethnicity, gender, identity, sanctity, fertility, femininity, masculinity, class and aestheticism, to mention a few, are inscribed permanently in various forms on the body.

Though tattooing is prohibited in Islam, because it is viewed as a factor in mutilating, maiming or altering the body's physical features, local or traditional practices still exist among the folk in various Muslim societies. For example, among the fellahin of Egypt, especially Upper Egyptians (Sa'idi), tattoos (called *washm* in Arabic, but colloquially called *daggah*) can be identified with specific forms based mostly on gender, religion and locality. The gendered *daggah* takes different shapes, ranging from that of a little bird (*'asfura*) to those depicted by a dot or three small lines. Men, for example, have the latter shape on their faces between their ear and the eye, while women prefer to wear the tattoo on their chin. Reflective of their religion, Copts prefer to have tattoos of the cross on their hands or arms. It is worth noting that Sa'idi tattoo patterns of dots and lines are similar if not identical to those found on the mummy of Amunet. Furthermore, one might ponder a relationship between the tattoo patterns of 'asfura, used by Upper Egyptians and mythical Horus (depicted as falcon) in ancient Egypt.

Moving from traditional societies to modern cultures, one finds that tattooing, a reputable and profitable art, has become trendy and popular among both men and women in different parts of "high-tech" societies, such as the US and Japan. However, the full body art of the US and Japan differs from that of the small, carefully placed icons or symbols of the rural Egyptian, although some western people may opt for simple line drawings or icons.

In November, this year, I conducted an interview with John MacIntyre, an innovative artist practicing tattooing in Los Angeles, to know more about the advancement of this global art. He recounted that despite the technological advancements of contemporary