

# C-SAP Project 2002-2003 Report

## Project Reference

49/A/01

## Title

Anthropologymatters – [www.anthropologymatters.com](http://www.anthropologymatters.com)

## Keywords

Journal, Internet, Post-Graduate. Anthropology.

## Summary

The *anthropologymatters* web-site represents the efforts of a group of post-graduates to encourage and facilitate the creation of a national (and international) anthropological network. Since early 2003 it has also acted as the official ASA postgraduate network. The overall aim of the project is to encourage critical engagement with the process of being disciplined into anthropology. In order to stimulate discussion on the production of anthropological knowledge *anthropologymatters* focuses on training and teaching techniques, and the process of research and writing. Currently the web-site features an academic journal (with five editions on-line and recognised by SOSIG), a directory of anthropological researchers and a JISCMail e-mail list for the dissemination of information.

## Activities

From the beginning the project has attempted to be process-oriented. Although initially emergent from SOAS, a steering group evolved from those interested in the project, facilitated by the project leader, and now includes postgraduates and junior staff from SOAS, Brunel, Kingston University, and Birmingham. Currently we are:

Sarah Bilby, SOAS  
Christine Barry, Brunel University  
Sheila Fish, SOAS  
Ian Harper, SOAS  
Celayne Heaton, Kingston University  
Andrew Irving, SOAS  
Rebecca Marsland, SOAS  
James Staples, SOAS  
Stuart Thompson, SOAS  
Damian Walter, SOAS  
David Mills, Birmingham University  
Mario Guimarães, Brunel University

In this reporting year we have continued and expanded our activities as outlined below. Our greatest challenge remains the time that can be committed to learning and overcoming the technical requirements for a dynamic relationship with the site. As busy and generally under-resourced (despite the C-SAP contribution) post-graduate students, this is difficult. Despite this, two issues of the journal went on line in this reporting year, and another edition is ready but has been delayed in going on-line because of time commitments of the team. Quickly updating our site remains our biggest challenge.

The team remains committed and we met half a dozen times in the year, to discuss the project and its development, resolve difficulties and minute these meetings (which are available on request). This has helped strengthen the team and has involved a huge amount of hard work from all involved. It is this committed resource, a strong largely voluntary team, which is the foundation for the future of the project. We have managed to stabilize ourselves by becoming recognized as the ASA postgraduate network. We are also currently involved in developing a conference with Oxford University around issues related to fieldwork.

As stated above, the main aim of the project is to develop a national and international network of anthropology postgraduates. Our contacts section continues to expand and now has over 90 researchers registered on it. The JISCMail e-mail list has around 215 signed up to it, and the numbers continue to rise each week. We have five editions of the journal on-line, one a special edition on "teaching rites of passage". We currently await the uploading of another edition, and a call for papers for a special edition on cities has been met with a number of submitted articles already. The resources section is yet to be developed.

The learning / teaching dimension to the project is specifically intended to encourage journal contributions from those who are writing their PhD theses, or are in the process of entering into a working and teaching relationship with the discipline. It is intended as a site where new academics can gain experience in both writing and getting feedback on their work. The articles we encourage for submission focus predominantly on questions of learning, doing and teaching anthropology. An active editorial collective has been established to help widen our departmental links. We were contacted by the internet gateway SOSIG and added to their site as an example of good social science writing available on the internet. Already a number of the articles have been included on reading lists, for example at Edinburgh, SOAS and Brunel. We have advertised the journal and site via the Internet, and have sent covering letters and posters to all UK anthropology departments.

### **Outcomes**

- An expanded Steering Group including representatives from SOAS, Brunel and Birmingham, committed to the continuance of the project.
- A web-site, with 5 issues of a journal on-line, increasingly recognized for the quality of articles. One further edition is ready to go on-line, and a special edition on cities is in the pipeline.
- A contacts section with 90 researchers signed up to it.
- A JISCMail e-mail list with around 215 signed up.
- Officially acting as the ASA postgraduate network

### **Resources**

- An expanding contacts list
- A JISCMail list being used to advertise conferences and seminars.
- Well edited articles on a range of ethical, practical and political issues on doing ethnography, now linked to SOSIG