

Anthropology in the Real World Year IX

A multi-year project showcasing student research

Situating Thailand's Ladyboys within Southeast Asian gender studies

Angela Ashman, B.A. Anthropology, Class of '15

Gender fluidity within South East Asia is well established in the ethnographic record of the region. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of how gender is culturally constructed in various traditional South East Asian societies, and to focus on the lives and circumstances of Thailand's Ladyboys in the contemporary context. During a summer study abroad trip in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand, I learned about Ladyboys and their role within Bangkok's sex-tourism industry. I will present the results of my research into the broader regional context of multiple transgender identities such as among the Dou Donggo, Kodi and Bugis societies in Indonesia, and relate my findings to the Thai case. I will discuss how Ladyboys make use of actions, dress and self-identifiers to express their gender identity as entertainers within the Thai sex tourism industry, and how this category may include biologically female performers as well. I will also make the distinction that not all Ladyboys work in this industry and that a significant segment enter into stable relationships as heteronormative females with men who in many cases support the Ladyboy as well as their families. Finally, I will present some data on sex-reassignment surgery in Thailand, one of the highest ranked countries for frequency as well as low cost, and how these radical body modification strategies profoundly change their lives.

The elusive Brush Dance: exploring Yurok identity through material culture

Catherine St. James, B.A. Anthropology, Class of '15

The Yurok peoples are an indigenous group from northern California. While their traditional lifeways have been altered by Euro-Americans, large-scale contact with outsiders didn't happen until relatively late (during the Gold Rush of 1850). Currently, there are approximately 5,000 enrolled members of the Yurok Tribe. Although many of their customs have stood the test of time, there have been significant transformations in their ceremonies. This paper focuses on the Yurok Brush Dance studied through a related museum artifact at the Montclair Art Museum, and studied using additional research of historical and ethnographic sources. I will describe the artifact and its specific contexts both as object in a museum as well as part of a broader Yurok interpretations of health and gender. Combining health with gender painted a more accurate picture of the Brush Dance and Yurok identity in general, shedding new light not only on the Brush Dance but allowing me to make inferences about the Montclair museum artifact itself. In this way, I hope to show that this headdress that was once just another object on a museum shelf has become a voice for the forgotten — female shamans.



Seton Hall University Anthropology Program

Dr. Rhonda Quinn
Dr. Cherubim Quizon
Dr. Peter Savastano

This year's host class:
Dr. Quizon's ANTH
1202 Introduction to
Cultural Anthropology

This year's discussant:
Edward Millar
BA Anthropology '15
MA Folklore

Find the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work at Jubilee Hall, 5th Floor.

Visit the Anthropology webpage at
<http://blogs.shu.edu/anthropology>

**22 April 2013, Wednesday
SH 110 9:30-10:45 am**

Past participants and discussants

Past participants in the series (Anthropology majors unless otherwise indicated)

- 2003: *Reimi Takeuchi, Leandra Alejandro*
- 2005: *Megan Quinn, Paul Bryant*
- 2007: *Deborah Durant, Stephen Daly, Nicole Lebron along with Sociology students Sandra Spino, Jeffrey Cruz and John Tomaselli (Economics)*
- 2009: *Rachel Veclotch, Gillian Bath (Anthropology & Diplomacy), Amanda Meehan (Biology)*
- 2012: *Edward Millar, Kiyomi Juillerat*
- 2013: *William Torres, Nicole Benigno*
- 2014: *Mary Donnelly (Modern Language & Philosophy), Ruth Dorton, Michael Laguerre*

Past discussants include Seton Hall University Anthropology professor Peter Savastano (2003, 2007, 2012) ; Rhonda Quinn (2014); former SHU faculty members Alyshia Galvez (2005), Kristen Weis-Bourgerie (2007) & alumnus Stephen Daly (2009)

The Anthropology in the Real World Series is organized by the Anthropology Program of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work approximately every two years as part of the annual Seton Hall University Petersheim Academic Exposition. The series showcases original student research that relates to various modes of anthropological research, presented to an audience of peers, and with the formal participation of a faculty member or graduate student as discussant.

Students need not be Anthropology majors or minors but the papers themselves must actively incorporate anthropological research methods such as ethnography, or engage in related research issues of anthropological import. If you have a paper that you wish to be considered for the series, or have questions about how to present your research in similar venues, please contact any member of faculty in the Anthropology program.



Drop in at Jubilee Hall 5th Floor or visit the Anthropology webpage at <http://blogs.shu.edu/anthropology>