

Anthropology in the Current Moment

Town Hall Meeting

Monday, April 17th, 3:30-5:00

NOTE: This is a public forum. The following speakers will give brief remarks and open the discussion to the room. Paul Christians and Pablo Seward will moderate the event.

Keynote, James Ferguson: “Anthropology, Politics, and the University” (3:30-3:35)

To what extent does the changing economic and political structure of the university impact scholarship? How can up-and-coming scholars navigate university politics?

Panel Session 1: Thinking Critically with Communities (3:35-4:15)

What is the place of collaboration with ‘communities’ in anthropology today? Is ‘community’ the right concept for framing public engagement in the first place? Are the boundaries between academic knowledge production and communal knowledge production important? Does collaboration with ‘communities’ disproportionately tax academics from disadvantaged backgrounds, and if so how can we address this?

Panel speakers:

1. Koji Ozawa, “On Outreach on Japanese Internment Camps”
2. Angela Garcia, “On Community Engagement in the Bay Area and Beyond”
3. Mike Wilcox, “Beyond the Dissertation”

Panel Session 2: Thinking Critically with Institutions (4:15-4:55)

Anthropologists tend to focus their work on communities and like to think of themselves as working on behalf of communities. But we rely on institutions both for funding and for providing us access to said communities. Is there a place for thinking critically with these institutions? Or should we limit engagement with these institutions to pragmatic issues? What are the stakes of sharing knowledge with these institutions?

Panel speakers:

1. Nethra Samarawickrama, “Anthropology and Transitional Justice in Postwar Sri Lanka”
2. Firat Bozcali, “The Academics for Peace Movement in Turkey/Kurdistan”
3. Barb Voss, “National Funding Agencies”

Closing Remarks, Sharika Thiranagama: “Moving Forward” (4:55-5:00)

What did we learn from this meeting and what are some concrete ways in which we can move forward?