



# The past, present and future of **practitioners in the AAA**

Daniel Ginsberg

American Anthropological Association

AAA Annual Meeting – Vancouver, BC

21 November 2019



Anthropology PhDs  
(N = 11,500)



■ Academic

■ Business  
Government  
Nonprofit

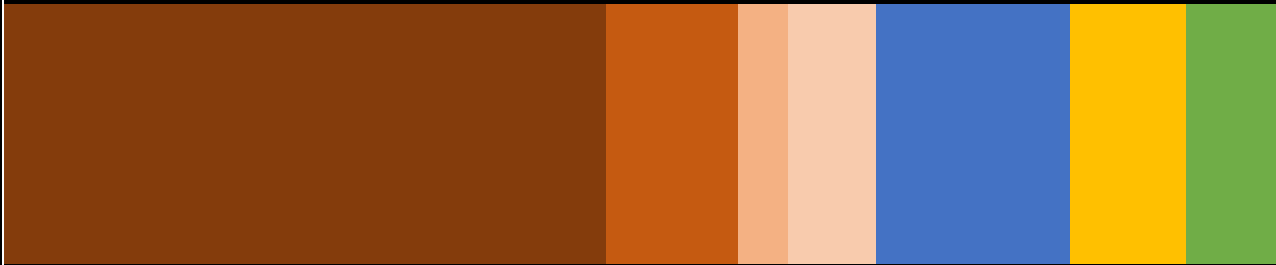
AAA Member Survey  
(N = 185)



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

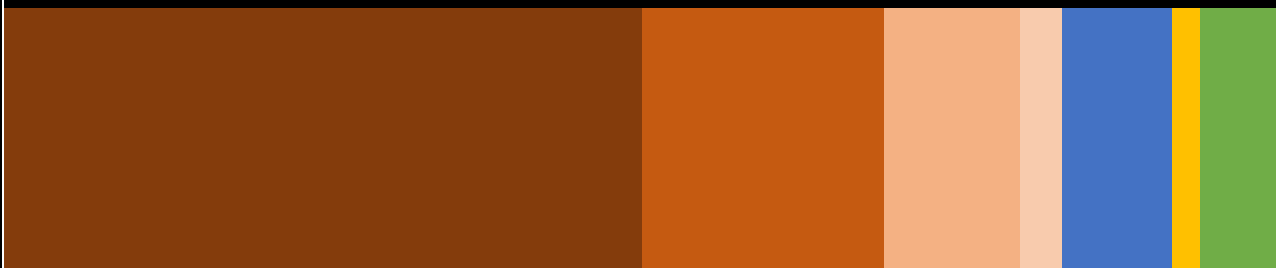


Anthropology PhDs  
(N = 11,500)



- Social science faculty
- Other faculty
- University non-faculty
- Two-year college or K-12
- Business
- Government
- Nonprofit

AAA Member Survey  
(N = 185)



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%



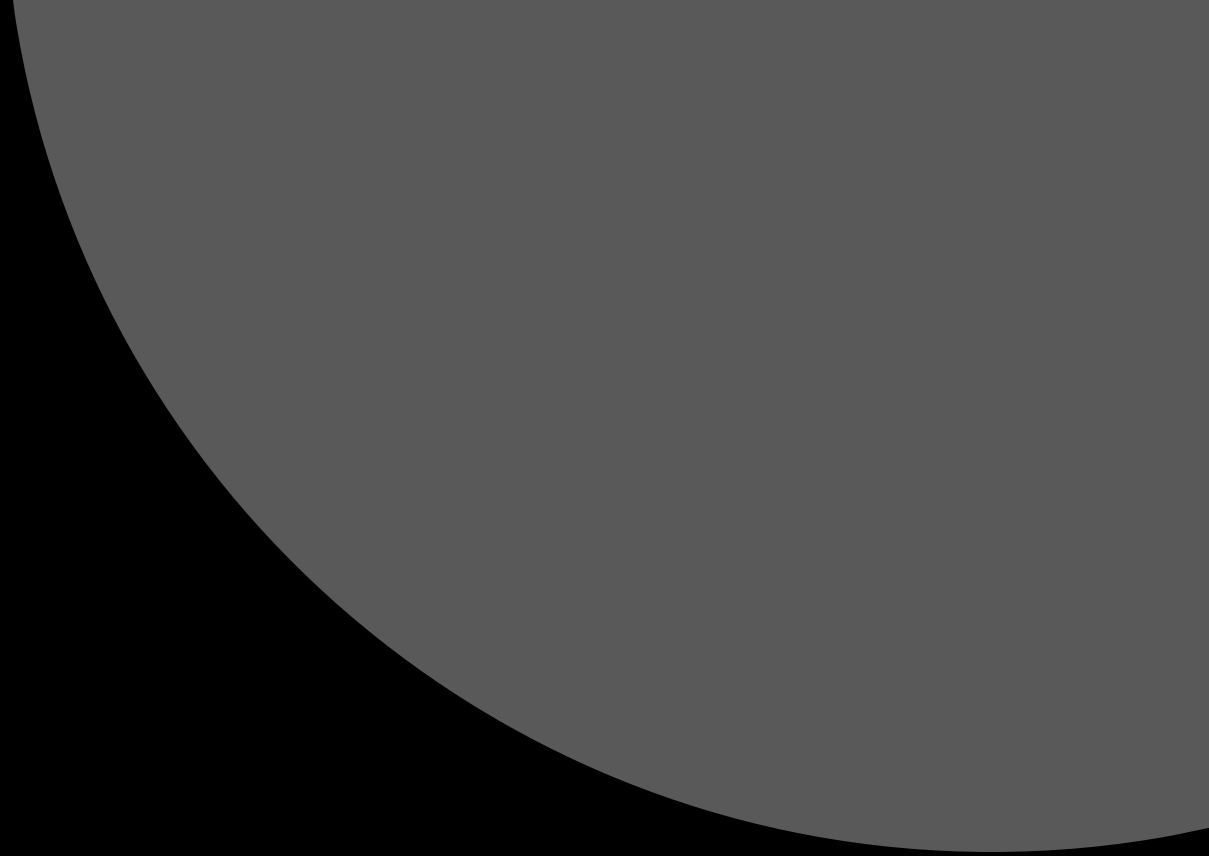
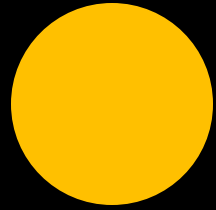
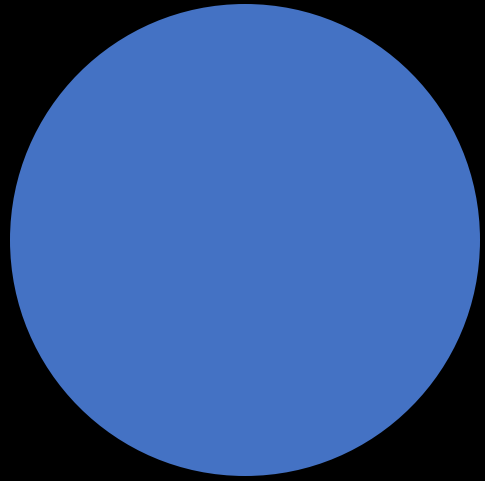
Someone like me, just out of grad school and looking to begin a non-academic career in our field, finds **very little help** through AAA ... it's an organization for **university professors of anthropology** ... I also lack the political clout for me or my work to be professionally **respected**.



many [practicing, professional and applied] anthropologists are **not motivated** to, nor supported to participate in the AAA and its **traditional conference and publishing** activities, which are often perceived to be **irrelevant** to their careers.

Jean J. Schensul et al., "A home for professional, practicing and applied anthropology" (2017)





1980s

The birth of NAPA





**PUBLICATIONS:** THE FISHING PORTS OF MAINE & NEW HAMPSHIRE: 1978; NOMADS IN TOWN: THE KUTCHIN OF OLD CROW, YUKON TERRITORY, CANADA.

**ACKERMAN, Lillian A.** Department of Anthropology, Washington State University, Route 2, Box 559, Pullman, WA 99163. 509/335-4426(B) 509/334-1627(H). **WORK:** Washington State Univ, Center for Northwest Anthropology. Associate in Research. **DEGREES:** PhD Cultural Anthropology Washington State U '82; MA Anthropology U of Michigan '51; BA Anthropology U of Michigan '50. **LANGUAGES:** Russian, French, Spanish. **GEOGRAPHIC & CULTURAL SPECIALTIES:** Plateau of N. America; Yupik Eskimo of SW Alaska; Sexual Status Cross-Culturally. **PROFESSIONAL SPECIALTIES:** Ethnohistory; Subsistence Management; Social Analysis. **PUBLICATIONS:** The Culture of the Yupik Eskimo of the Yukon-Kuskohueim Delta; An Ethnographic Sketch of Goodnews Bay, Alaska.

**ADGER, Carolyn Temple.** 1616 S Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. 202/332-2635(B) 202/332-2635(H). Independent Consultant. **DEGREES:** PhD Sociolinguistics Georgetown U '84; MS Sociolinguistics Georgetown U '78;



# NAPA Mentor Program

NAPA's Mentor Program provides information on anthropology careers, and tries to match students, new professionals, and mid-level and senior career changers with professional anthropologists for an ongoing professional relationship.

[About](#)

[Mentoring Agreement](#)

[Mentor Match Form](#)

[Mentors](#)

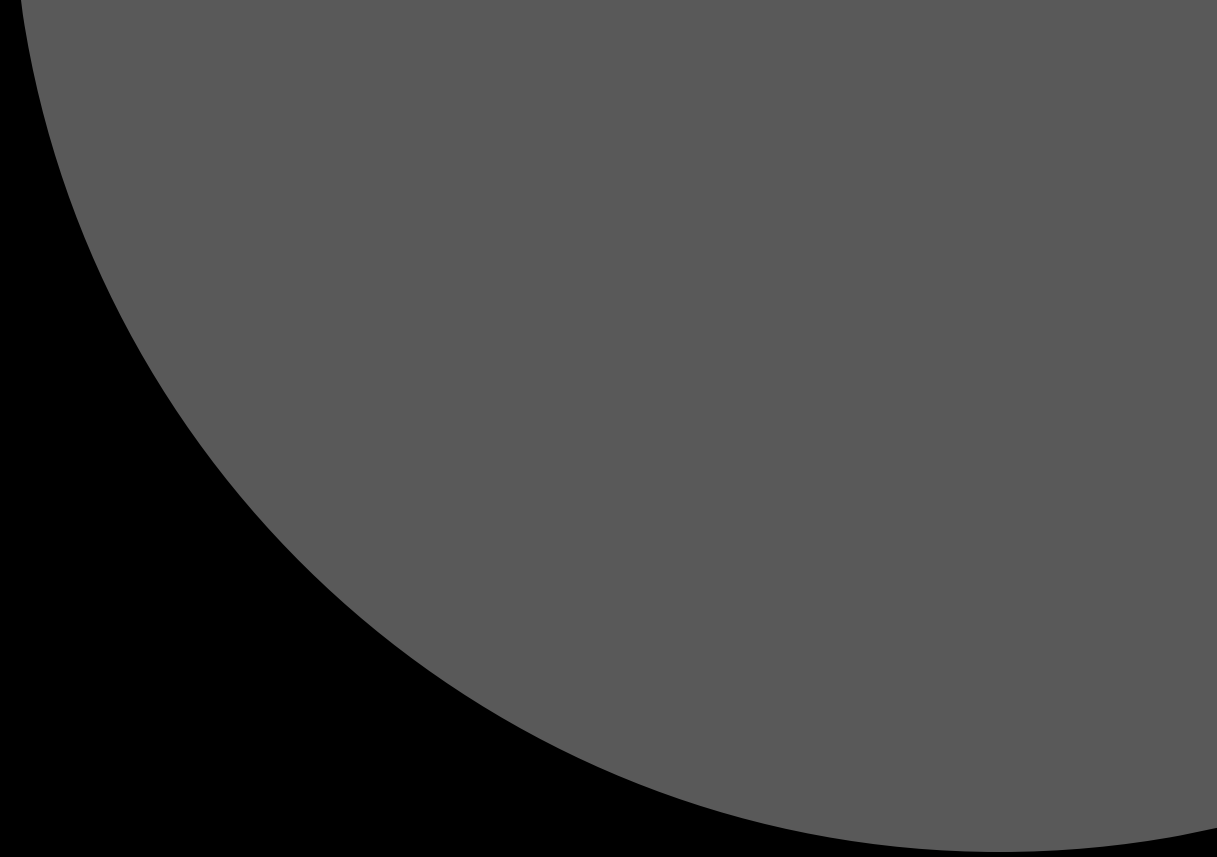
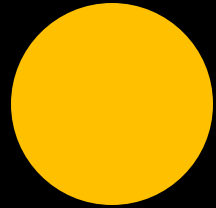
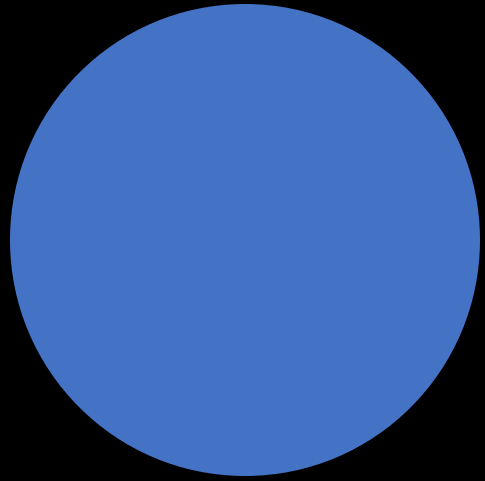
[A mentorship can...](#)



All ten protégés [we interviewed] ...  
mentioned the **invaluable**  
**assistance** [NAPA mentoring]  
provided to them and to others like  
them. They reported that **schools**  
**have not done an adequate job** of  
providing information about careers  
in applied anthropology



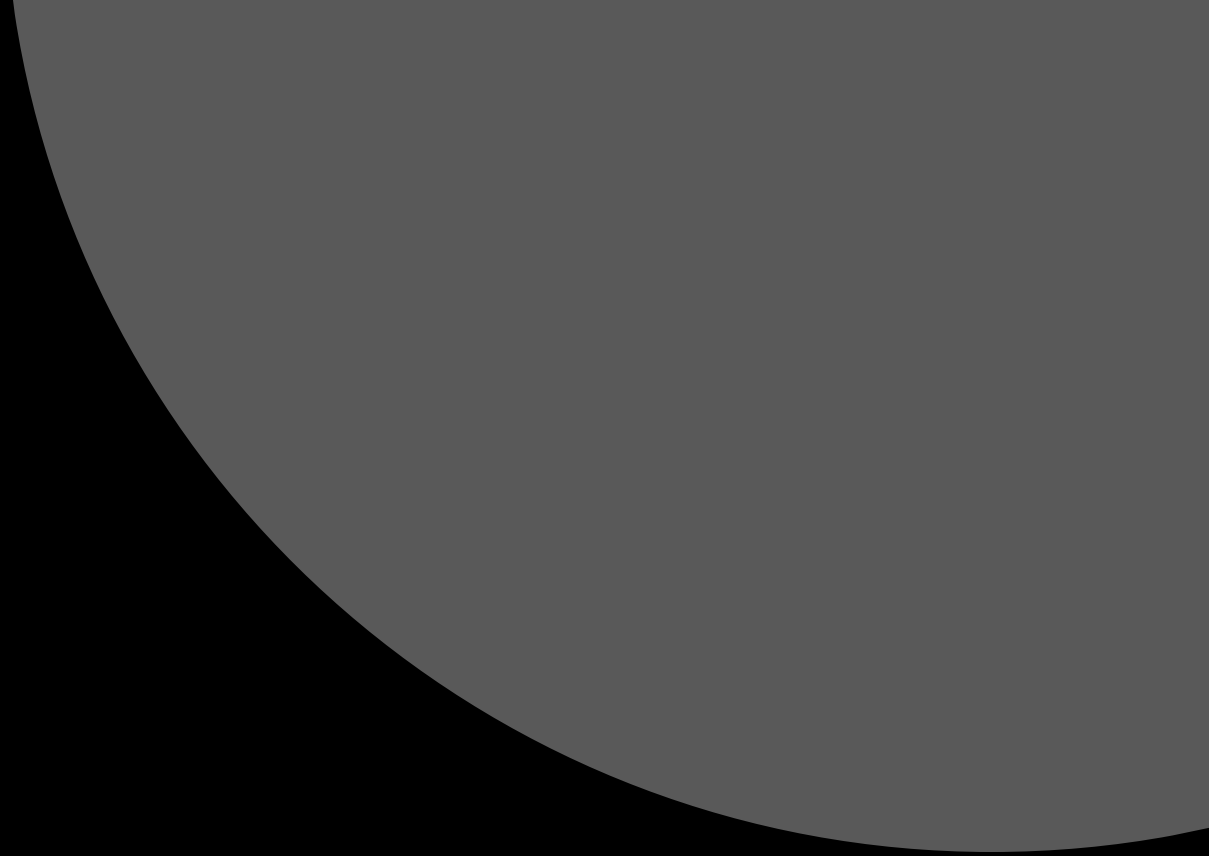
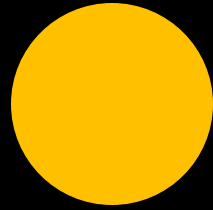
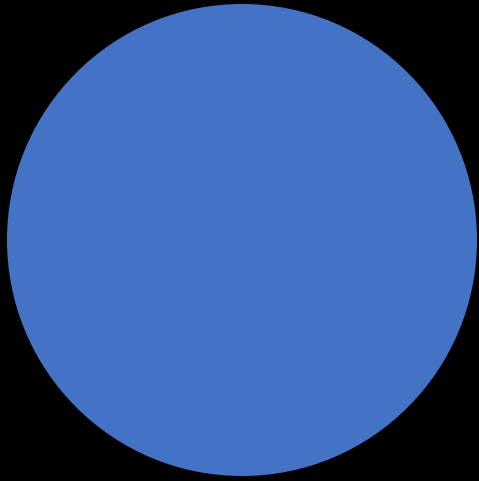




1990s

Executive leadership  
reorganization





2000s – 10s

From working group  
to committee



# 2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working Group





## PAWG Presents Recommendations

### For Better Serving Practicing Anthropologists

AAA PRACTICING ADVISORY WORK GROUP (PAWG)

Less than half of all anthropologists holding a doctorate degree and virtually all anthropologists with a master's degree work outside of full-time academic positions. In short, a majority of anthropologists practice anthropology in highly disparate work settings. At the same time, many anthropologists working outside of academia do not join nor retain

which the AAA presents itself to practicing anthropologists and the public interested in anthropological research; considering the provision of improved group rates for health and liability insurance; and integrating practicing anthropologists better into AAA publication programs.

Many of these recommendations can be implemented at little cost to the AAA. For instance, increasing the representation of practitioner anthropologists in the leadership and publications of the AAA and recruiting a practicing anthropologist to edit a new column on practicing anthropol-



Members of the AAA Practicing Advisory Work Group (PAWG) met during the 2006 AAA Annual Meeting in San José: (L to R) Dennis Wiedman, Chair Linda Bennett, Tony Paredes, Susan Squires, Judy Tso and T J Ferguson. Kathleen Terry-Sharp (not pictured) serves as AAA liaison to the group.

Photo courtesy of Judy Tso

for the association to work collaboratively with its sections, including NAPA; Local Practitioner Organizations (LPOs) across the country; the 24-member departments of the Consortium of Practicing and Applied Anthropology Programs



2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working  
Group

2007 – 2017 Committee on Practicing,  
Applied, and Public Interest  
Anthropology





# **The Changing Face of Anthropology**

**Anthropology  
Masters Reflect  
on Education,  
Careers, and  
Professional  
Organizations**

**The AAA/CoPAPIA 2009**

**Anthropology MA Career**





AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
FOUNDED 1902

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING SCHOLARSHIP IN THE REALM OF PRACTICING, APPLIED, AND  
PUBLIC INTEREST ANTHROPOLOGY FOR ACADEMIC PROMOTION AND TENURE

AAA STATEMENT

Produced by the

Committee on Practicing, Applied and Public Interest Anthropology<sup>1</sup>

Adopted by the AAA Executive Board May 28, 2011

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) recognizes the growing number of anthropologists who identify as practicing, applied, public interest, or engaged anthropologists

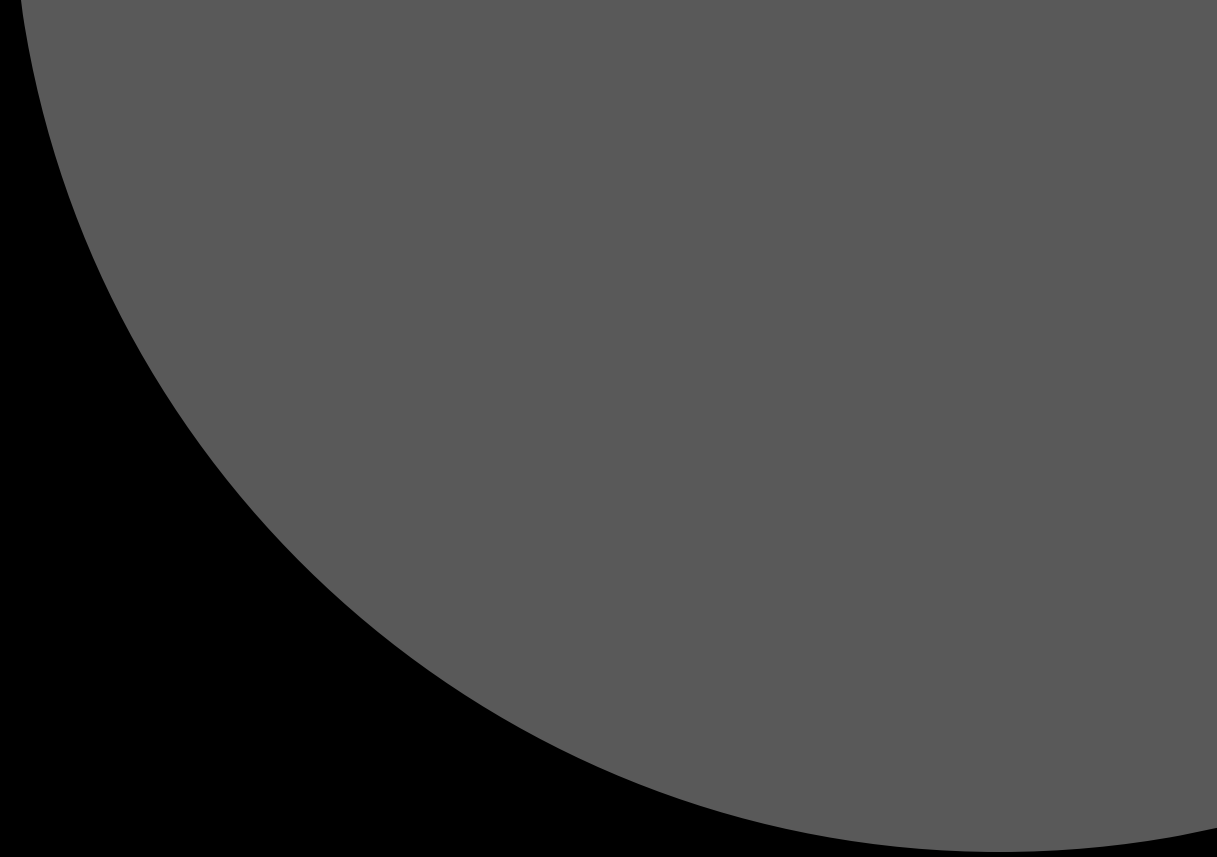
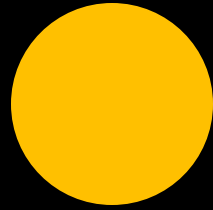


2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working Group

2007 – 2017 Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology

2018 – Members Programmatic Advisory and Advocacy Committee

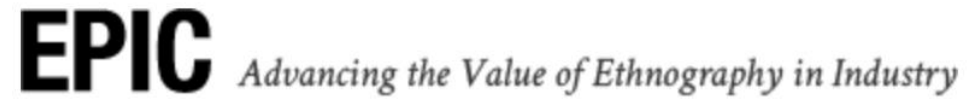




# Looking ahead

AAA's place in a thriving profession







American Anthropological Association

# Department Leaders Summer Institute

June 11-13, 2019

Loyola University  
Lake Shore Campus  
Chicago, IL

Register  
Today





# SOCIOLOGY IN PRACTICE SETTINGS SYMPOSIUM





People talk about [anthropology] like it's some  
giant livin in the hillside  
comin down to visit the townspeople

**We are [anthropology]**

Me, you, everybody, we are [anthropology]

So [anthropology] is goin where we goin

So the next time you ask yourself where

[anthropology] is goin

ask yourself.. **where am I goin?** How am I doin?

[with apologies to] Mos Def, "Fear Not of Man" (1999)



# Thanks to ...

Elizabeth Briody for the opportunity

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CoPAPIA for inviting me to be part of the story

Palmyra Jackson for data wrangling

