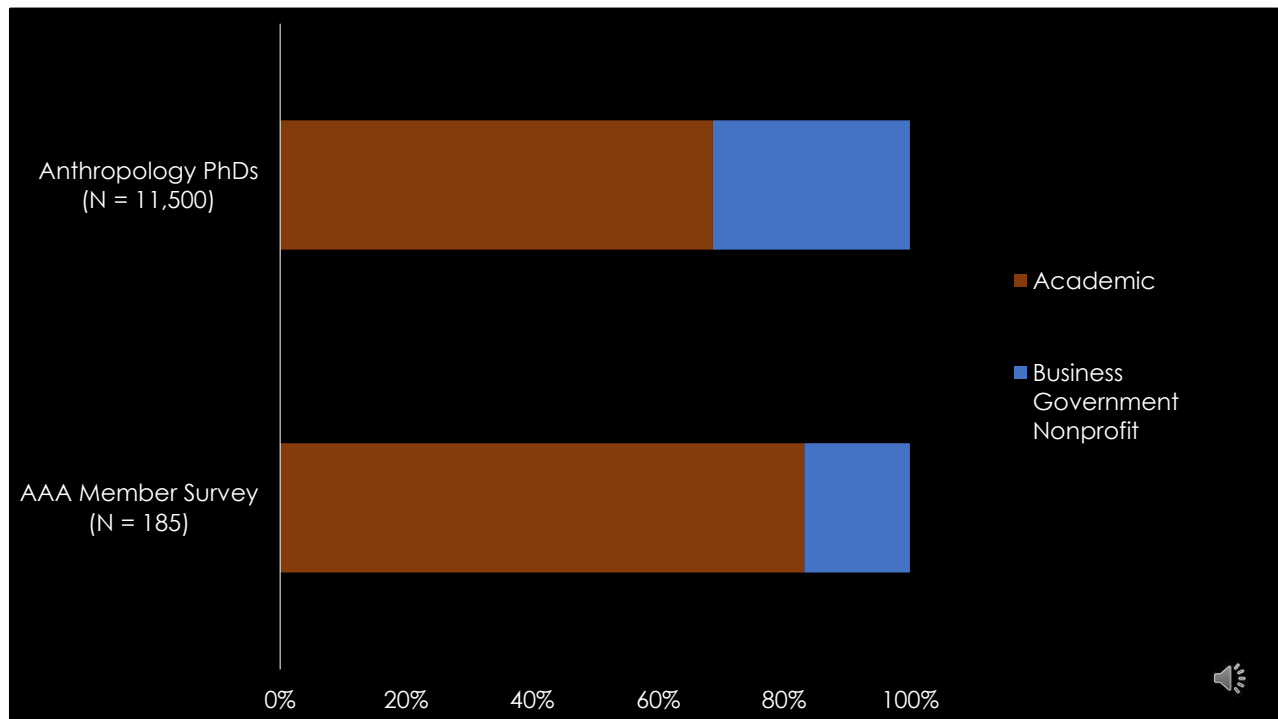


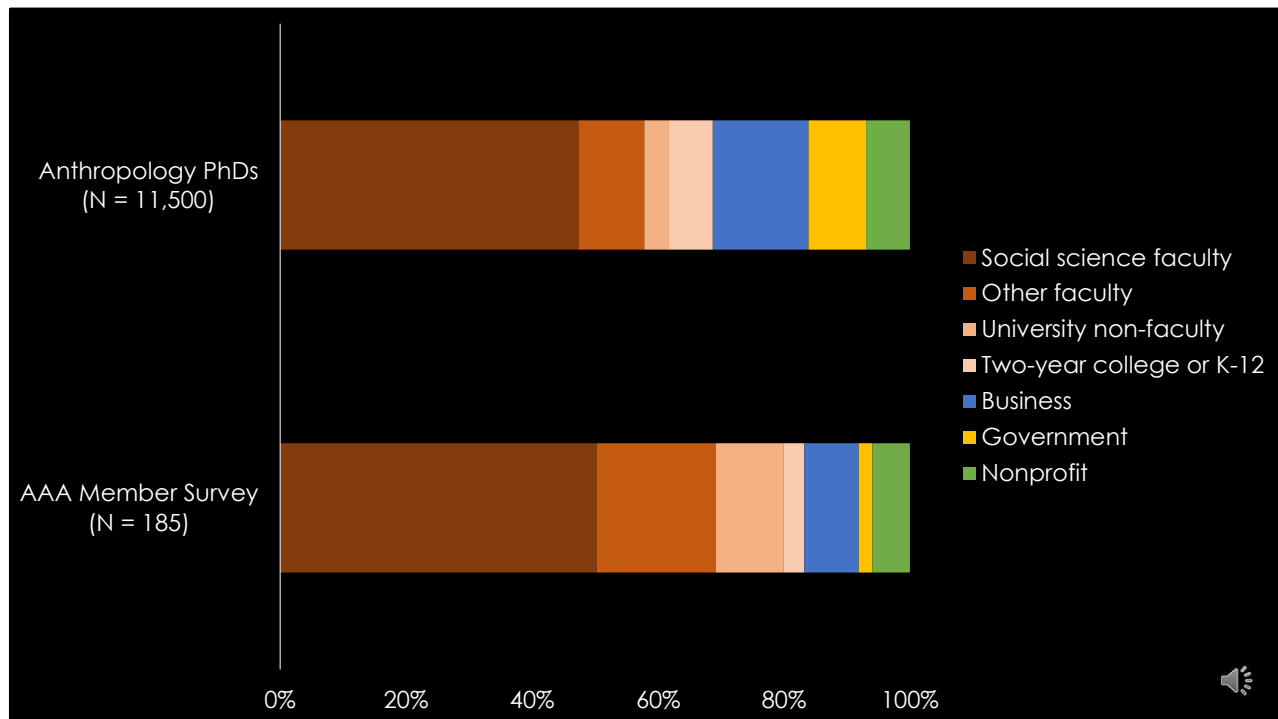


I'm Daniel Ginsberg and I work at the AAA staff office as director of education and professional practice.

The aim of this session, as I understand it, is to discuss ways to better integrate anthropologists within our discipline across diverse types and sectors of employment. And specifically, we're talking about the role that this association might play. To provide some context for this discussion, I'm going to use my time to talk through the history of practitioner inclusion in the AAA, and I'll end with a peek at where we're going next.



To begin with, there is a perception that the AAA's membership is primarily made up of academics, and that perception does seem to hold up empirically. This is a bar chart that shows that about 83% of employed AAA members are employed in academia, compared to about 69% of a reference population from the NSF's Survey of Doctorate Recipients made up of people with PhDs in anthropology. Of course, many AAA members don't have PhDs, but among these members you find fewer practitioners with MAs than grad students working on their PhDs, which is another kind of academic labor.



Of course, if you drill down, things get more complicated. About half of employed AAA members are faculty in social science departments, and about half of employed anthropology PhDs, the same. Six percent of AAA members and seven percent of anthropology PhDs work in nonprofits. Compared to this baseline, AAA members are much more likely to be faculty in humanities, natural science or professional departments, and academics in non-faculty roles; much less likely to be employed in government or the private sector; and somewhat less likely to be educators at the pre-baccalaureate level.


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**.

Anonymous AAA member 

But of course, as we anthropologists know, quantification will only get you so far. Even if nonprofit employees are represented among AAA members proportional to their numbers in the discipline overall, there's a persistent feeling that their perspectives and concerns are marginal within the association. This is from a message I received recently from a member on the point of leaving the association, who wrote to me, [read slide text].

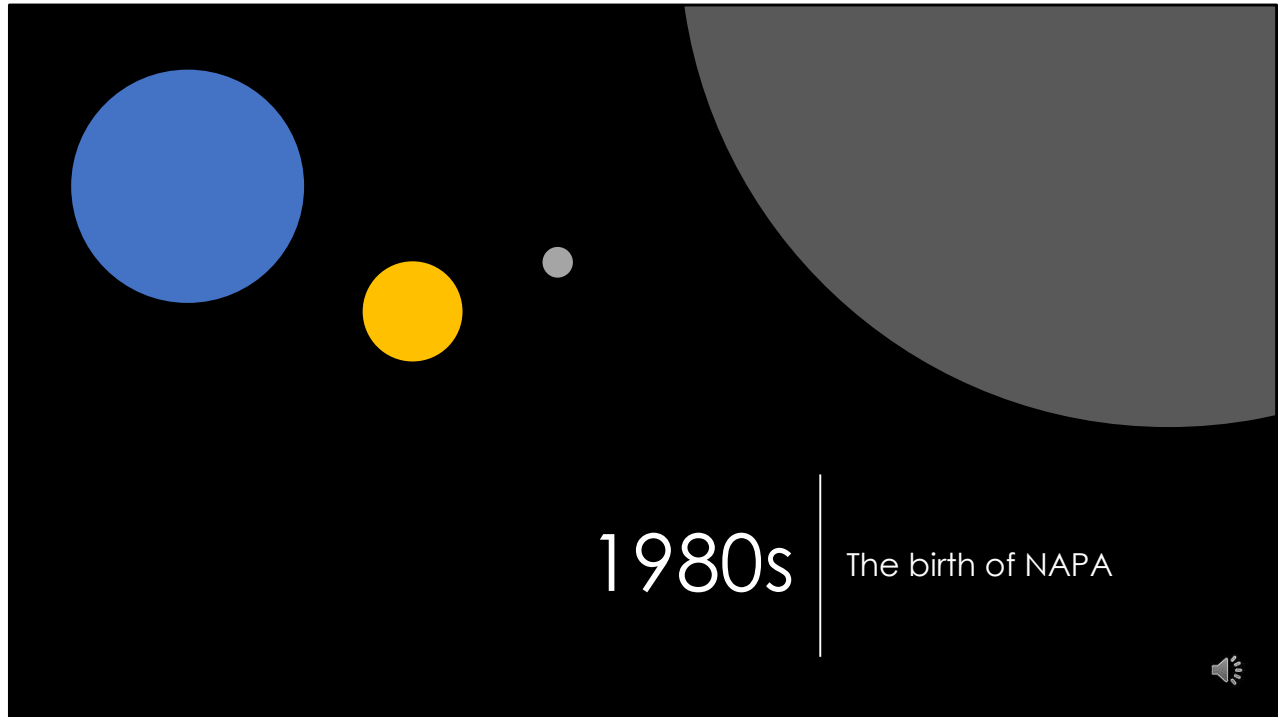
I could respond to them and let them know about some of the great things the association is doing for grad students and professional practitioners, and yet, ...

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) 

... this perspective is shared by many long-time members from the professional and practicing world. This quote comes from an Anthropology News column written by a group of professional and practicing anthropologists who had been deeply embedded in the life of the AAA, led by Jay Schensul and Cathleen Crain, and their conclusion after many years was that [read slide text].

So these concerns are not new to the association. What I propose to do today is to go through the history of practitioner engagement in the AAA to trace how we've attempted to address these issues over the last few decades, showing how far we've come, how far we still have to go, and where we might go from here.



The story begins in the 1980s with the birth of NAPA, which as many of you know is the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology, the AAA's section dedicated to professional, practicing and applied anthropology.



Up until the early 1980s, in addition to its core activities as a professional association of anthropologists, the AAA provided association management services to a number of sister societies. It was determined that the fees the association collected in this way represented too much income not related to its core mission, putting its nonprofit status at risk. These sister societies were given a choice: to become sections of the AAA, or to become entirely independent. Some, such as the American Ethnological Society, became AAA sections; others, such as the Society for Applied Anthropology, decided to go their own way. And to fill that void, to create an institutional structure within the AAA for highlighting practicing and applied anthropology, NAPA was created.

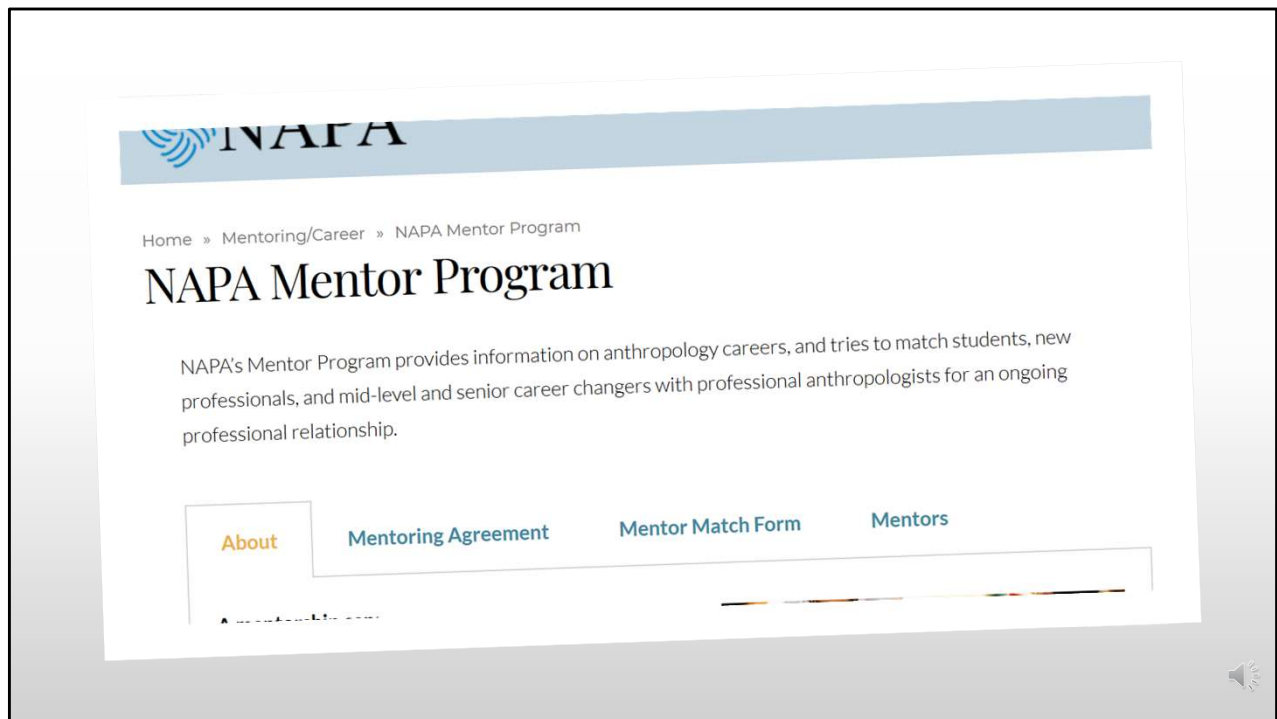
**PUBLICATIONS:** THE FISHING PORTS OF MAINE & NEW HAMPSHIRE: 1978; NOMADS IN TOWN; THE KUTCHIN OF OLD CROW, YUKON TERRITORY, CANADA.

**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 has always taken a leading role in developing new member services to benefit its particular constituency. In 1985, the first NAPA Bulletin was published, a directory of practicing anthropologists. This publication met a need that wasn't addressed by the AAA Guide, which still remains primarily a guide to departments of anthropology. This image is taken from the first page of NAPA listings.





Then, in 1987, the NAPA Mentor Program was established to help students, early-career professionals and career changers to connect with senior colleagues and learn more about diverse careers in anthropology.

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

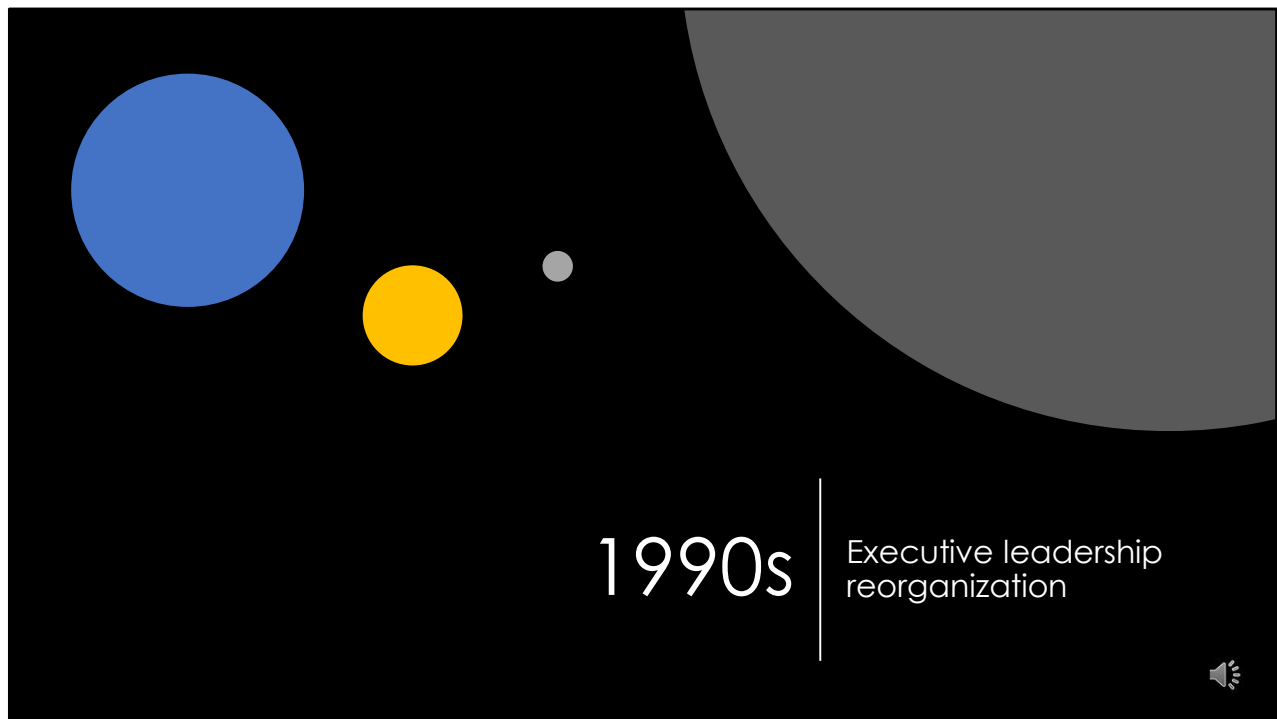
Ed Liebow & Shamila Jiwa, "Evaluation and professional development: The NAPA mentor program" (2005)



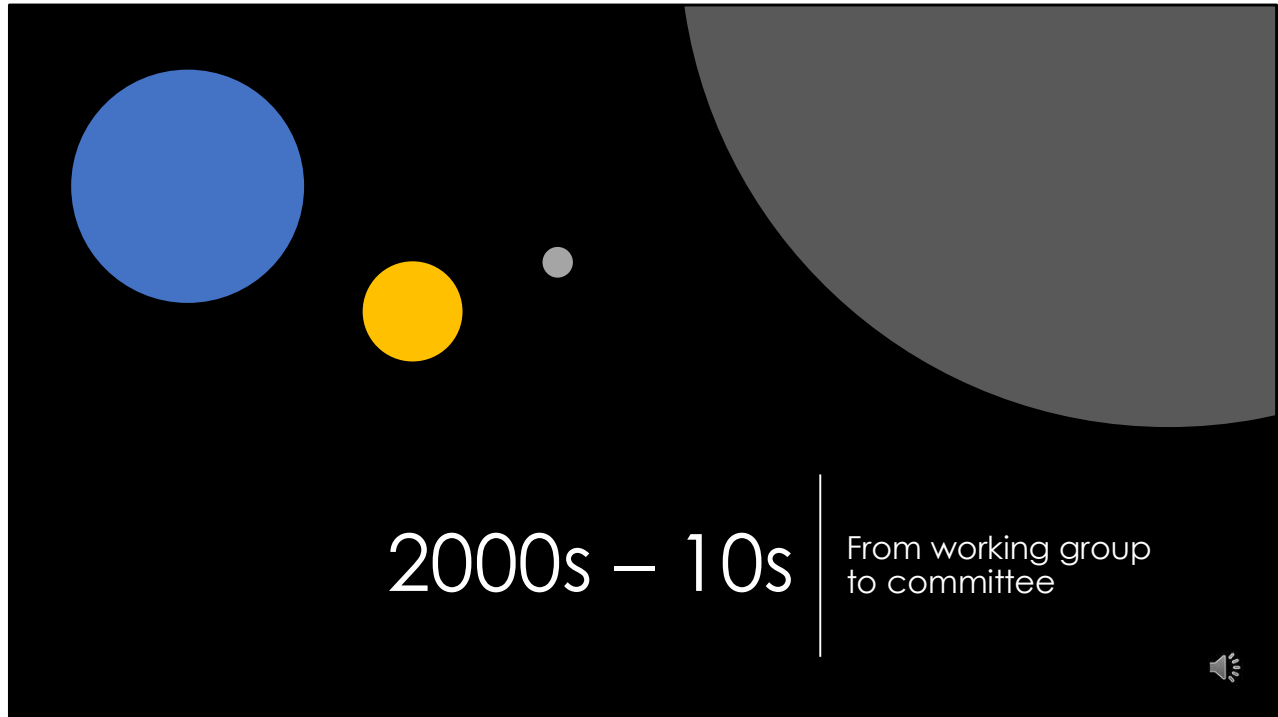
In a 2005 evaluation of the NAPA mentoring program, Ed Liebow and Shamila Jiwa found that [read slide]. This suggests that the problem of practitioner exclusion doesn't originate with the AAA – in this case, NAPA mentees are seeing the association as an “invaluable” attempt to mitigate a problem they're experiencing in their home departments. And keep this in mind, we'll come back to this – it's an important insight even when we're talking about members in professional practice, and even when they feel less welcomed by the association. University departments play an important role.



And this is skipping ahead a bit in the chronology, but while we're talking about NAPA, in the mid-2000s they introduced the Careers Expo, which offers AAA Annual Meeting attendees the chance to spend a few minutes meeting and talking with professional practitioners about their work. It's a broad and shallow intervention, a counterpart to the narrow and deep engagement available through the mentor program.



As we entered the 1990s, all of the former client associations that chose to remain with the AAA had been fully integrated as sections, and the association's executive leadership was made up of representatives from the sections. At a certain point, this became unwieldy; according to our 1997 member survey, members were feeling a fragmentation in the association that mirrored the fragmentation in the discipline, not just between academics and professional practitioners, but also among the subfields of anthropology. As a result, the Executive Board reorganized itself along the lines that we currently have, in which Board members are directly elected by members, with seats reserved for representatives of all four subfields – and one seat reserved for a practicing or applied anthropologist.



In 2001, Dennis Wiedman took office as the first holder of the Practicing / Professional seat on the board. He took an interest in the strategic planning process that was ongoing at that time, something that was familiar to him given his professional experience in anthropology and organizational culture.

## 2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working Group



One outcome of this strategic plan was the Practicing Advisory Working Group, chaired by Linda Bennett, which was created in 2003 and completed its work in 2006.



## ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

### 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

The working group's final report presented the Executive Board with an overview of the state of professional anthropology at that time, as well as a recommendation that their work be continued through the establishment of a more permanent group.

2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working  
Group

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

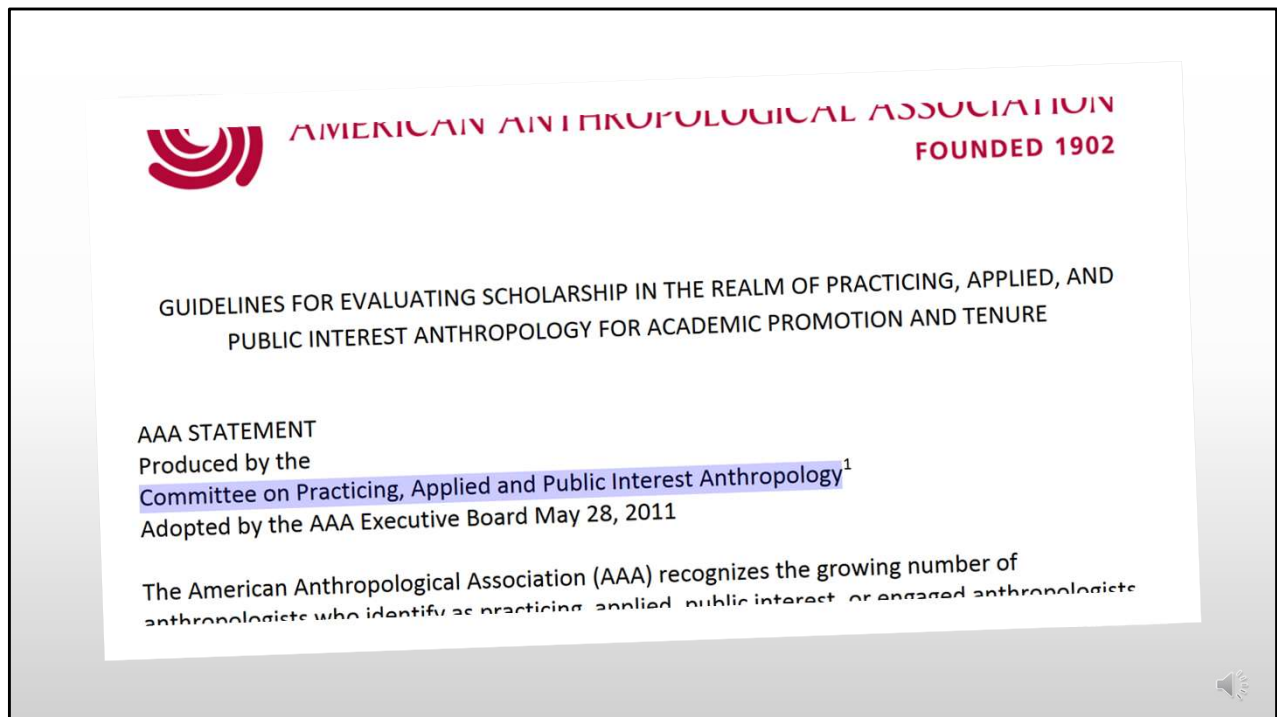


So, in 2007, the working group was replaced with a standing programmatic committee: the Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology, or “CoPAPIA.”





Now, remember the key role that university departments play in this story? Much of the work done by CoPAPIA took place in the border area between professional practice and academic institutions. For example, in 2009, they conducted a survey of anthropology MAs that is still the gold standard research on this population. It addressed the kind of educational opportunities that master's programs provide, as well as how well MA practitioners felt this training had prepared them for their professional lives.



CoPAPIA also created a set of guidelines for evaluating practicing, applied, and public interest scholarship as part of an academic anthropologist's tenure and promotion dossier. This statement applied the official AAA seal of approval to the idea that evaluation reports, museum exhibition catalogues and community consultations might "count" for tenure, just as much as journal articles and monographs. In this way, practitioners might be able to find a place in the academy, and to take part in the training of subsequent generations of practitioners.

2003 – 2006 Practicing Advisory Working Group

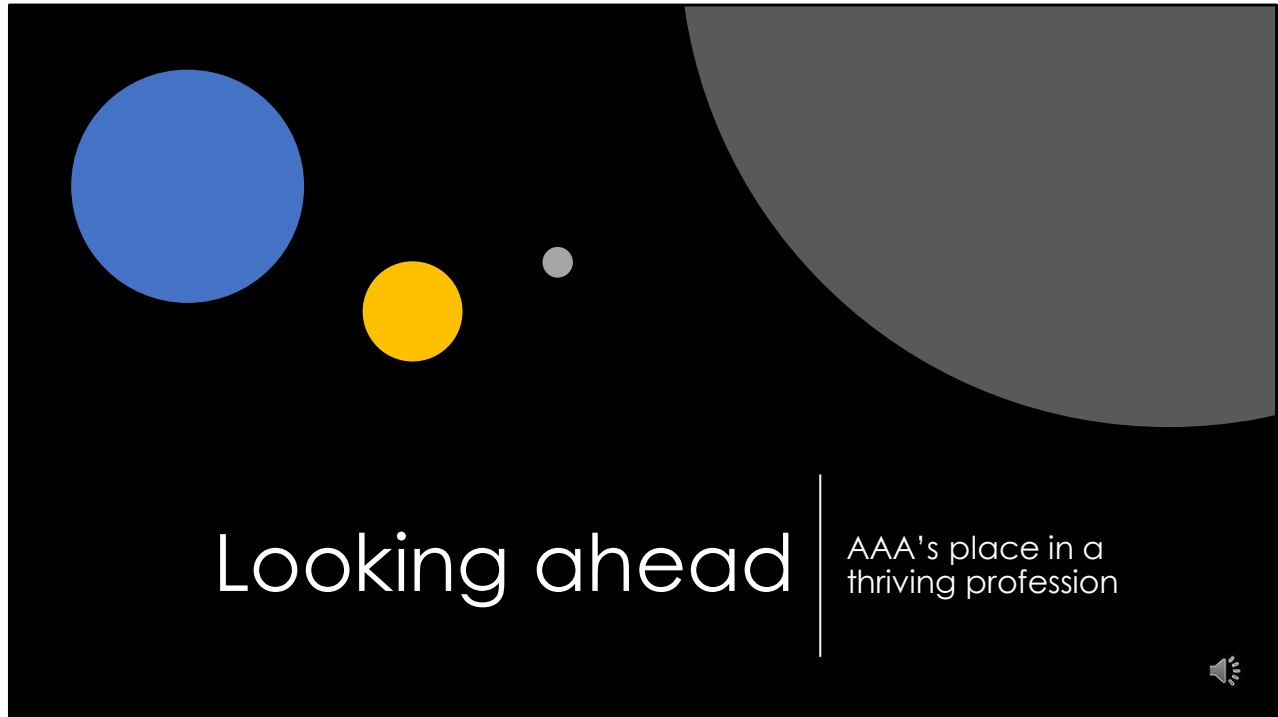
2007 – 2017 Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology

2018 – Members Programmatic Advisory and Advocacy Committee



In addition to these products, CoPAPIA also served as an internal advocacy group that was responsible for raising issues of concern to professional practitioners and drawing the attention of executive leadership.

So in 2018, when the AAA's committee structure was reorganized and CoPAPIA folded into the new Members Programmatic Advisory and Advocacy Committee, this presented both an opportunity and a challenge. It was an opportunity in the sense that practitioners' concerns were no longer segregated from the work of the association overall, but instead were integrated with discussions about other important topics in MPAAC's mandate, such as diversity, equity, accessibility, inclusion, ethics, labor relations, and human rights. But it was also a challenge in that there was no longer a dedicated group tasked with advocating for practitioner issues specifically.



At this point, whatever the AAA is doing, the prominence of professional practice within ANTHROPOLOGY is as good as it's ever been.



The AAA exists as part of a vibrant community of anthropology organizations, many of which are more explicitly professional in their mission and membership. We might think about a credentialing body like the Register of Professional Archaeologists; local practitioner organizations like WAPA, the Washington DC Association of Professional Anthropologists; sector-specific interest groups such as the community of business anthropologists; and interdisciplinary groups such as EPIC, the Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Community.



And yet, in all of these discussions, the AAA is a sort of 500-pound gorilla in the room. Whatever these other groups are doing, however well they're representing their particular constituencies, we are the group that claims to represent the full breadth of the field, and reflecting the fact that anthropology does not end once you get off campus is essential not just to our future viability as an association but also to our mission. So I'll leave you with a sense of what the near future brings.



In 2018, the AAA had its first summer institute for chairs of anthropology departments. The goal of this program was to offer department leaders a chance to network and discuss issues of common concern, and of course one of the main topics of conversation was, what sort of jobs are we preparing our graduates for? So, practitioner voices have always been a part of this: Susan Mazur-Stommen gave a keynote at the 2018 Institute, and the 2019 Institute included Elizabeth Briody on the organizing committee and heard a panel discussion from Samantha Solimeo, Natalie Hanson, and Edward Davis. In future years, we're considering an entire institute focused on lessons to be learned from applied departments. This is a key opportunity for us because, as the NAPA Mentoring evaluation report pointed out, departments are often where prospective practitioners start to feel alienated – and they're a key point of intervention if we want to change that dynamic.



We're also thinking about our Annual Meeting and in this case taking a page from our sister society, the American Sociological Association. Currently, the typical session format is an hour and a half in which six presenters each talk about their own research for fifteen minutes, a format that isn't used anywhere but in academia; this sends a clear message to meeting attendees that the AAA is an association for graduate students and professors. For the 2020 Annual Meeting, we're starting to put together a suite of panel discussions and workshops on issues of concern to professional practitioners, to be scheduled as a block of programming on the Saturday of the meetings that we're calling "Practice Day." Our aim is to present this as a clear selling point on meeting attendance to anthropologists in business, government and nonprofit settings, which will hopefully be the first step toward expanding our community of members.

And the need for a dedicated body that reports to executive leadership has been recognized as well. Practice Day is among the slate of initiatives to be spearheaded by the newly created Task Force on Anthropology in Practice Settings.



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)



But ultimately, the association is made up of its members, so whatever we do, it's because members want to do it. The musician Mos Def said this about hip hop, but you can replace "hip hop" with "anthropology" and the point still holds: [read slide]

So, to anyone who's concerned about practitioner representation, excited about the new initiatives we're proposing, or otherwise wants to be involved: The AAA can provide a platform for what you want to do.

You know where to find me.

# Thanks to ...

Elizabeth Briody for the opportunity

Ed Liebow for oral history

CoPAPIA for inviting me to be part of the story

Palmyra Jackson for data wrangling



Thank you.