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"Something You Love And Something More Practical": Undergraduate Anthropology Education In The Neoliberal Era

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**"SOMETHING YOU LOVE AND SOMETHING MORE PRACTICAL":
UNDERGRADUATE ANTHROPOLOGY EDUCATION
IN THE NEOLIBERAL ERA**

by

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DISSERTATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement Of The Problem

This dissertation research began with a question: why would someone choose to major in anthropology, a liberal arts discipline without a linear career trajectory, in the current neoliberal environment, which tasks higher education with training students to be the global work force? The quotation that is the title of this dissertation, "Something You Love and Something More Practical", comes from a research participant who was trying to explain what she would advise students to major in among all of the potential majors one could choose in college. This phrase is a concise illustration of the tensions inherent in the relationship of undergraduate anthropology education to jobs and careers in the contemporary work environment. The first part of the title, "Something You Love", refers to the subject of anthropology and is a partial answer to why students choose to major in that subject. The second part of the title, "And Something More Practical", refers to a set of widely held underlying beliefs and assumptions in American society about how a college education relates to work and careers and making a living.

This dissertation is an ethnographic case study of the academic advisers, career counselors, anthropology faculty, students and recent graduates of one university in Southeastern Michigan during the 2008-2009 academic year. This study attempts to develop a local understanding of the broader issue of how undergraduate anthropology education fits in the neoliberal era.

Anthropology is a liberal arts discipline that places emphasis on understanding the human condition across space and time. An undergraduate anthropology education provides the content, theories, methods, and holistic approach of anthropology's four fields. Anthropology's breadth means it takes both a comparative and a holistic approach; the challenge to a discipline with such a broad scope means it is difficult to narrowly and specifically define its utility and value. Considering education in terms of its utility and value reflects a neoliberal orientation.

Neoliberalism is a term that characterizes the global political and economic climate that has prioritized deregulation, privatization, and the free market economy since the early 1980s (Collins 2008: xiii). The "virtues of free trade, flexible labor, and active individualism", hallmarks of neoliberal ideology, are taken-for-granted assumptions in free-market economies (Peck and Tickell 2001). Though its beginnings are rooted in economic policies aimed at global lending agencies for restructuring non-market economies, the neoliberal ideology has infiltrated many non-economic aspects of life, including language, beliefs, and practices (Ong 2006, Richland 2009). One of the many consequences of neoliberal policies is the "transformation of higher education into a global commodity" (Naidoo 2008: 86).[1] In other words, higher education is seen as a

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[1] There are many anthropological and non-anthropological critiques of neoliberalism and its effects. Transformations related to neoliberalism include increases in poverty and inequality, decreases in access to environmental necessities, and devaluing of labor and progressive social movements (see, for example, Duggan, L. 2003. *The Twilight of Equality?: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press., Davis, D. K. 2006. Neoliberalism, environmentalism, and agricultural restructuring in Morocco. *Geographical Journal* 172:88-105., and Bousquet, M. 2008.

required part of the attainment of skills necessary to compete and succeed in today's global economy (e.g., Michigan's No Worker Left Behind Program[2]), and the university is the site of education and training for productive participation in the world today. The skills provided by higher education are seen as "the key to success in the global economy" (Karoly and Panis 2004: 200, Spring 1998: 5). Neoliberalism and its relationship to higher education is discussed further below.

Liberal arts education, the broader type of education that anthropology fits into, is called into question in the neoliberal era because its goal is not to train workers but to educate liberally. Discussion over the value of liberal arts education in general has become more prominent recently in news outlets with provocative titles such as "End the University as We Know It" (Taylor April 27, 2009), stating that American graduate education no longer works because subjects are too narrowly focused and there are not enough jobs for graduates. The author recommends completely restructuring graduate and undergraduate education to be more appropriate for the current environment by eliminating majors and focusing on "zones of inquiry". An example of one "zone of inquiry" would be the technological, ecological, political, and economic aspects of water. Next, "Graduate School in the Humanities: Just Don't Go" (Benton January 30, 2009), essentially warns undergraduates considering graduate school in

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How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation. New York: New York University Press.). This dissertation focuses on neoliberalism as it specifically relates to undergraduate anthropology education.

[2] In 2007, Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm launched the No Worker Left Behind Program to provide funds for education and training to help adults transition from unemployment or low-wage manufacturing jobs to knowledge-economy jobs to "contribute to the state's economic transformation and global competitiveness" www.michigan.gov. 2010. *No Worker Left Behind Fact Sheet*.

humanities subjects not to even consider it because there is no guaranteed employment at the end of a long, expensive journey. "Reinvent Liberal Arts Education" (Coleman 2009) declares that true liberal arts education no longer exists because it has been professionalized to the point of "no longer provid[ing] the breadth of application and the enhanced capacity for civic engagement that is their signature". The author sees the professionalization of liberal arts as limiting the liberal arts' ability to question the nature and meaning of the world. Finally, "The University's Crisis of Purpose" (Faust September 6, 2009) asks whether the neoliberal model should have the emphasis it does in higher education: "Have universities become too captive to the immediate and worldly purposes they serve? Has the market model become the fundamental and defining identity of higher education?" These pieces recommend different strategies for shaping current educational models but they all share concerns about the purpose, meaning, and value of liberal arts, of the university, and of education at a time when jobs are scarce.

Historical data show a trend away from liberal arts degrees towards technical and professional degrees over the last thirty years (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). This trend may be due at least in part to the fact that liberal arts bachelor's degree holders require additional education and training to increase the likelihood of finding jobs in their major field of study (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). Specifically in the discipline of anthropology, bachelor's degree holders either go to graduate school in order to receive further qualifications or they find employment in fields other than anthropology

(American Anthropological Association 2009b, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008). In fact, only twenty percent of those who graduate with a bachelor's degree in anthropology report that their jobs after graduation are closely related to their major (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). In general, how anthropology educators deal with the relationship of undergraduate anthropology education to work is not well represented in the literature, and this lack is part of the development of the research question.

In addition, the most important reason for earning a bachelor's degree cited among college freshman is improved career opportunities (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). This statement indicates undergraduate students are aware of the applicability and relevance of their education to the world outside the university. Concerns over whether there is a direct relationship between a college major and a career may influence students' choice of major, especially in the context of the neoliberal assumption that completing higher education makes workers more competitive. Whereas undergraduate majors such as business, pre-med, or pre-law have more explicit career paths, anthropology does not. What, then, are the expectations of those who participate in anthropology education (i.e., academic advisors, career counselors, instructors, and current and former students) regarding the employment and lifestyle they envision for themselves after university education? How does neoliberalism, which emphasizes education for employment contradict, complement, or coexist with the values of the liberal arts discipline of anthropology in the context of higher education? This dissertation

ethnographically reveals how tensions and dynamics in undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era are navigated and negotiated in patterned ways, and discusses how these patterns relate to contemporary issues in the discipline of anthropology.

Study Aims and Scope

One way to examine more closely the dynamics and tensions between undergraduate anthropology education and neoliberalism is to ethnographically examine a case in a regional context where the impact of neoliberalism is deeply felt. The Detroit Metro area suffered perhaps the greatest American impact of the recent global economic crisis, as manufacturing industries crumbled and unemployment and foreclosure rates skyrocketed to be among the highest in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009, Kinchen 2009). In fact, Detroit is seen as an important indicator economic and social issues in the United States because of Detroit's history in manufacturing industrialization and race and class relations (Huey 2009). An assumption of this study is that the study population, being in the Detroit metro area, will have specific concerns about employment and life opportunities because of the local conditions. One major criticism of the "abstract machine of neoliberal reform" is that it "takes little account of historical, national, and local conditions" that create specific and variable particularities (Johnson 2008: 293). The geographic location of this study allows for examination of the local impact of neoliberalism and its relationship to undergraduate anthropology education.

This study used primarily ethnographic methods to explore the social, institutional, and personal factors that shape 1) student motivations for choosing a major in anthropology, 2) the delivery of anthropology education from faculty and departmental perspectives, 3) advising regarding academic course work and career preparation and career options, and 4) anthropology graduates' reflections on the education they received and the relationship it has to their work experiences to date.

This study took place in one anthropology department at one American university in the greater Detroit metro area over the course of the 2008-2009 academic year. Ethnographic observation and interviewing provided deep and detailed information from advisers, faculty, students, and graduates. Studying undergraduate anthropology education in this particular local context from these perspectives provided a unique view of the competing and coexisting value systems of anthropology and neoliberalism.

The specific aims were to:

1) Identify and describe the social, institutional, and personal motivations, perceptions, and expectations of students regarding an undergraduate degree in anthropology and their perceptions of career opportunities, and the relationship these have in terms of identity development.
2) Identify and describe full- and part-time faculty perspectives on the value and importance of an anthropology education and the career opportunities available to students, and their perceptions of social, institutional, and personal factors influencing curriculum and career development.
3) Identify and describe academic advising and career counselor perspectives on the value and importance of an anthropology education and the career opportunities available to students, and their perceptions of social, institutional, and personal factors influencing career development.
4) Identify and describe recent graduates' perspectives on the education they received and the relationship it has to their work experiences to date.

5) Analyze the data collected to contribute to literature in the discipline of anthropology on undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

Literature Review

In order to attempt to understand undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era, it is important to discuss relevant and related issues in the literature from multiple disciplines that provide the foundation for the study of this topic.   First, neoliberalism is defined as a pervasive global ideology where values regarding productivity filter into higher education, turning a university degree into a commodity.   Second, a section on higher education discusses education as both a means of improving social status and a process of identity development.   Third, what constitutes proper anthropological education and training is discussed from various perspectives and debates within the discipline of anthropology.   Finally, a section discusses how anthropologists have approached the study of education and what results from social and institutional processes of education.   Together, these sections provide the basis for examining undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

Higher Education in the Neoliberal Era

Neoliberalism

Today's world is characterized by terms such as *post-industrial* (Bell 1999 [1973]), *flat* (Friedman 2005), *networked* and *informational* (Castells 2000), *globalized* (Steger 2003), and *neoliberal* (Harvey 2005). These terms are often used synonymously to indicate how interconnected the world is.   The social

forecasters cited above each note that the shift from goods production to service production meant the decline of agricultural and manufacturing employment and a shift to managerial, professional, and technical occupations. The term *globalization* glosses the changes in technological advances, new forms of production and organization, and economic developments and restructuring since World War II through the present day. Technological developments in information and communication technologies, such as proliferation of the internet and affordable computers have created what Thomas Friedman (2005) calls a "flat world" where everyone is presumably (but problematically) united in one global system.

Similarly, *neoliberalism* is a term that broadly describes the global economic policies, practices, and processes that prioritize capitalist market values. Neoliberalism is:

> a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. (Harvey 2005: 2)

As mentioned earlier, neoliberalism originates in economic policies that emphasize deregulation, privatization, and the free market economy. The beliefs that underpin neoliberal economic policies, such as open markets, privatization, efficiency, and consumer choice in consumption of goods pervade non-economic aspects of life. Neoliberalism "seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey 2005: 3). It is important to note that neoliberalism is not an "end state" but a process that affects social life (Gledhill 2004: 334, Peck and

Tickell 2001). The processual and social implications of "neoliberal logics" in contexts beyond economic policy have been explored recently by sociocultural anthropologists in issues of public health, the environment, and agriculture (Richland 2009: 171). This dissertation examines the implications of neoliberalism in the liberal arts discipline of anthropology, and neoliberalism's influence in higher education is explored further below.

In addition, neoliberalism is one dimension of the global social changes that resulted from information and communication technology developments (Olssen and Peters 2005). Bell, in <u>The Coming of Post-Industrial Society</u> (1999 [1973]), forecasted a vision of society called the "post-industry", as opposed to the "information age" or "information society", because he saw society being transformed on a global scale in relationship to information technology developments. He contrasts this post-industrial society to the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution with the following key differences:

1. a shift from a manufacturing to a service economy
2. the rise of professional and technical workers, specifically in the fields of health, education, government, and in office work, and the decline of skilled and semi-skilled workers, and a reduction in machine-operator jobs
3. education as the form of social mobility, instead of property
4. social capital, where people rely on human contacts and the reach of networks instead of financial capital or family members
5. "intellectual technology", or the development of software programs that imitate human decision-making processes
6. widespread availability of information and communication technology and the infrastructure to support it
7. knowledge as the source of value, as opposed to capital or physical labor

Whereas labor was the commodity during and after the Industrial Revolution, now knowledge, or as Bell calls it, the application of information, is the commodity.

If knowledge is a commodity in the neoliberal era, so too is a university degree. Educational anthropologist Wes Shumar frames the commodification of higher education in the context of globalization as described above. Higher education was specifically impacted by a reduction in funding to public institutions in the 1970s, which led to creating market-based strategies to increase revenue by improving enrollment and retention in the 1980s (Shumar 2008: 69). In addition, universities benefited from developing corporate partnerships through increased federal funding for applied research. Thus, higher education is

> imagined and structured according to at least two neoliberal assumptions: first, that its institutions should compete to sell their services to student 'customers' in an educational marketplace, and second, that these institutions should produce specialized, highly trained workers with high-tech knowledge that will enable the nation and its elite workers to compete 'freely' on a global economic stage. (Canaan and Shumar 2008: 4-5)

Shumar, following anthropologist Laura Nader's (1972) call for "studying up", draws from sociological studies of education (e.g., Bowles and Gintis 1924), Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977, Bourdieu and Passeron 1990), and Bourdieu's (1986) definition of institutionalized cultural capital to examine the culture of power in higher education, where a degree is a marker of knowledge (Shumar 1997, Shumar 2004b). In addition, Shumar draws on Marx's conception of the exchange-value of a of commodity (Marx 1990 [1976, 1867]), to

understand the relationship between education and work. For example, a commodity, a bushel of wheat, can be consumed for its use-value or it can be exchanged for a price or some other commodity. In neoliberal terms, the educational degree is a commodity that can be exchanged for a job. Because the university degree is a valuable credential that has an exchange-value, by extension, a degree-holder is an educational product, a skilled worker.

Viewing education as a commodity has several consequences. First, the place of the university in the local economy becomes intimately connected to the global changes occurring today. Because the university is a state apparatus in the neoliberal model, education is "caught between the needs of the economy and the needs of a democratic polity and . . . these needs are seen as contradictory" (Shumar 1997: 61). Shumar describes a neoliberal-ideal transformation from a manufacturing factory town to a new university town (Shumar 2008:76). He uses the example of Philadelphia, where his university is located. Philadelphia, an example of a "traditional de-industrialized . . . city", promotes economic growth by positioning itself around "higher education, healthcare, big Pharma, finance, and . . . nanotechnology" (Shumar 2008: 77). A recent book by the president of the University of Pennsylvania explains the economic and social connections between the university and its communities (Rodin 2007). The university fuels the economy in its city by being both an employer and a consumer of goods and services, and therefore needs to revitalize its communities with "economic and retail development, improved housing and increased housing options, improvements in local schools . . . and

making the area clean and safe", which means the university's "destiny is entwined with that of its neighbors" (Rodin 2007: 14-17). Though there are many benefits of improving town-gown relations, Shumar critiques this reshaping of the university/community relationship because it means "universities must come to resemble a profit-making entity" (2008: 68). Transnational chains like Starbucks, Barnes and Noble and Gap transform the spaces in and around the university, and this "hypercommodification" reshapes consciousness and the production of knowledge (Shumar 2008: 70-73). For example, like products in the retail stores mentioned above, so too are "the products of knowledge, the deliverables for a project, and the knowledge economy" envisioned as commodities, to the point where some think they can claim "consumer rights" and sue if they do not think they get what they paid for their education (Shumar 2008:73).

A second consequence of the commodification of education is that the university is tasked with producing workers. Further, this ideology is "leading to the assumption that university education can now enable us all to obtain higher-paying jobs if we just work harder" (Shumar 2004a: 835). The neoliberal ideology is

> bringing students to universities to solve their own contradictory relationships to the economy in personal ways. Rather than seeing the lack of decently paying manual labor jobs as a problem that must be addressed socially, the individual is encouraged to see this as a personal problem to be fixed by becoming a professional. Thus, a new discourse of individual professionalism and credentialism is central to the ideology of the new economy. As a consequence, the university is not only being fragmented by marketizing and commodifying forces from the outside, but by individuals who think they have individual needs see consumption—getting a credential—as the solution to their individual problems. (Shumar 2004a: 832)

If the university is supposed to produce workers, a direct relationship between the university and employment is created. Educational policy analyst and academic Joel Spring (1998) notes that a common neoliberal call in the United States is to "educate students to meet the needs of a global economy" (151). This call illustrates how the neoliberal ideology links education directly to jobs (Spring 1998: 150). In this view, a university education is a means to achieve a specific end: employment. The exemplar is law school, where one receives both an education and training for a profession, a specific type of work (Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996: 7). For example, in law school, the professor teaches students how to discuss and compare legal briefs and opinions through Socratic dialogue, a method of direct question-and-answer exchanges. The students are not directly or explicitly taught how to read and analyze cases; the students learn through the process of the instructional method (Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996: 8-9). The skills of the profession are embodied by the professor and are learned in use in appropriate context by the students. This process creates specific literacies, discourses, beliefs, and values (Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996: 22); it creates a kind of person (Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996: 10-11). Becoming a certain "kind of person" is dependent on the context, or contexts, where learning occurs. It follows that if there are multiple contexts, such as different departments within the university, one student may be in fact learning to be different "kinds of people" simultaneously, and these different "kinds of people" may have differing and conflicting beliefs and values.

A third consequence of the commodification of education is if the marketability of the credential that is most highly valued, there will be an emphasis on practical and vocational degrees and the liberal arts will decline:

> We have marketed to students and promised them a credential that is valuable. But at the same time the world we inhabit gives less value to traditional liberal arts knowledge that many universities offer than previously. Therefore basic knowledge production is in its own sort of legitimacy crisis, while applied and market-oriented knowledges are more highly valued. (Canaan and Shumar 2008: 10)

Finding a job related to the subject one studied in school becomes particularly problematic in the liberal arts, where

> Unlike training-oriented college programs like business administration, the dilemma for students in liberal arts schools is: what on earth does one learn in English or anthropology or music courses that one can "use" in a career?[3] Not really the course content. By and large, liberal arts education initiates students into ways of thinking about what knowledge is, how it fits together, how the world works, and who they are in that world. Such knowledge may include specific skills but cannot, en masse, be reduced to a skill set. (Urciuoli 2005a: 170)

In a world where jobs are difficult to get for college graduates with business-oriented educations, liberal arts graduates are more disadvantaged because they often cannot articulate the skills they get through their education and they often cannot relate those skills to those seen as necessary in the global economy. Bonnie Urciuoli, a linguistic and cultural anthropologist, studies public discourse and how terms are constructed. Her research illustrates how key phrases or terms are "fetishized" and strategically deployed (Richland 2009:

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[3] I think the author of this quotation means that the liberal arts skill set is not literally defined in liberal arts programs. Further, developing a skill set while in school is a neoliberal concept, not a liberal arts education concept.

171). These strategically deployable shifters (SDSs) are terms that may be shared among groups but connote different meanings (Urciuoli 2005a). One example is the term *communication*, which may have very different meanings or functions in a corporate compared to an academic environment. Another example is the term *excellence*: the term is connotative of many things but it is also vague. Ultimately, if students are not aware of or do not use key terms in the same ways employers use or understand them, there may be a mismatch between what employers are looking for and what students are marketing themselves as, which will negatively impact a liberal arts student's ability to compete for scarce jobs.

Educational anthropologists Joyce Canaan and Wes Shumar, in their analyses of neoliberalism in higher education, see the valuing of market-oriented degrees as the "ghettoization" of humanities and social science disciplines (2008: 16), where decreased university funding for such programs is one outcome, and decreased enrollment may be another. The commodification of education could have significant negative consequences for liberal arts education.

In summary, this section outlined how the global neoliberal paradigm with its emphasis on productivity extends into beliefs and practices within higher education. The next section will discuss purposes and outcomes of education in American society: first, educational attainment is a means of improving social status in American society in addition to acquiring both subject knowledge and practical training. Second, identity development occurs in the learning environment during the process of schooling. A foundational understanding of

these aspects of education is necessary in order to examine a case study of undergraduate anthropology education.

Education as a Means of Improving Social Status

One of the earliest references to education as the means for occupational success and transcending class and social categories was found in an ancient Egyptian text (Nash 1981). Class and status, from sociologist Max Weber's perspective, are dimensions of social structure that have implications for the individuals' lived experiences. According to Weber, *class* primarily refers to possession of and access to material resources and the resulting privilege, control, and level of satisfaction those material resources provide (Gerth and Mills 1958: 180-181, Weber 1978: 302). Status is not solely determined by class position, but it is associated with it. Because material resources and their advantages increase standards of living and styles of life, class and status are closely related. However, *status* is a social estimation of honor and prestige (Weber 1978: 305). Education is a means to increase one's status: education leads to employment opportunities and therefore occupational status and prestige. The implication for this discussion is that educational attainment is desired because it is seen as a step up in social estimation and occupational achievement.

Historian Burton Bledstein describes how by the middle of the 19th century, higher education was a means of promoting professional authority and status in an emerging middle class in American society (Bledstein 1976: x). The

middle class American had a means of acquiring skills and abilities to provide a service as a way of making a living (Bledstein 1976: 4). Members of this middle class moved from farming as a means of making a living to pursuing opportunities for advancement[4] through further education. Bledstein defines "the culture of *professionalism*" as a "set of learned values and habitual responses" as part of the *belief that achievement and success occur through education and acquisition of skills* (1976: x) (my emphasis).

As of about 1850, a university education was the minimum standard for entering into an occupation, intimately tying the process of education to employment (Bledstein 1976: 6). Establishment of professional associations, standards for occupations, and academic credentials provided legitimacy and authority. A *profession,* at this point, was considered to be a full-time occupation that earned income, requiring mastery of a body of knowledge and theoretical and practical training with a degree or license from a recognized institution (Bledstein 1976: 86-87). A professional has authority conferred, as contrasted with the tradesman or craftsman who may be called to a vocation, and is legitimized by education and degree (Bledstein 1976: 124). From around the 1850s onward, graduates of higher education institutions were the sources of leadership in America, and degrees conferred a sense of authority for those who obtained them.

However, the path to professionalization was not necessarily linear and logical. Often, there was a gap between gaining practical experience and

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[4] It can be argued that educational opportunities for advancement were a privilege primarily of white males.

achieving the credential. Ideally higher education was to serve the needs of society and define professions, but a "prescribed curriculum, limited goals, [and] a ritualized way of life" sometimes resulted in higher education remaining distanced from the needs of society (Bledstein 1976: 226). Earning a college or university degree did not guarantee success though it was and is seen as the basic standard for entry into a job or career.

Additionally, degree requirement does not necessarily indicate the degree holder has the skills for the job. With origins in Weber's (1922/1978) discussion of educational diplomas and certificates creating a privileged class, Brown's credentialing theory (2001) suggests that

> educational certification is a historical legitimation of advantages that empower degree holders in organizational and occupational recruitment. Credential requirements for jobs are less concerned with concrete work skills than with demanding that recruits hold similar, school-taught cultural dispositions. (20)

Credentialing theory indicates two potential consequences for degree holders and employers: first, that credentials make actual competencies abstract, and second, that employers may tend to look for degrees that are familiar to them. Credentialing theory predicts that if anthropology is not familiar to an employer, the applicants with that degree may be overlooked, which follows a neoliberal way of valuing university degrees. However, the opposite scenario may also be true, that employers might find the unfamiliarity of the anthropology major appealing and appropriate. The meaning of an anthropology degree in the neoliberal era is examined in the data chapters; employers' interpretations of the meaning of an anthropology degree are not addressed in this dissertation.

As stated before, In the 18th and 19th centuries, a liberal education was a privilege of the upper classes (Bledstein 1976: 6, Brubacher 1997: 70). But as a university education became a prerequisite for moving into occupations, aspects of vocational and professional training were required out of necessity (Bledstein 1976: 87, Brubacher 1997: 75). Though higher education's purpose is to inform both the mind and the body, higher education cannot ignore the necessity of working for a living: higher education requires specialized training for earning a living (Brubacher 1997: 80). The duality of higher education is perceived by some scholars of educational philosophy as a conflict between the liberal arts and the technical, professional, or vocational arts, and this dichotomy has persisted into the 21st century and into perceptions of the value of one degree over another. As A.N. Whitehead, a mathematician, physicist, philosopher and teacher, writes in The Aims of Education,

> The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical: that is, no education which does not impart both technique and intellectual vision. In simpler language, education should turn out the pupil with something he knows well and something he can do well. This intimate union of practice and theory aids both. (1929: 74)

Brubacher concurs that it is important to "undergird liberal education with a pragmatic base . . . especially in times of economic hardship" (1997: 79). But how to create that union of practice and theory in undergraduate education, and in anthropology, as is discussed further below, is an ongoing debate.

However, there is a call to return to "manual competence" (Crawford 2009a: 2), which at best reemphasizes the conflict between vocational and liberal

education, and at worst, creates a value judgment about, as Crawford calls it, the useful arts. Matthew Crawford, a self-described philosopher-mechanic, emphasizes the value of working with one's hands over the intellectual pursuit of knowledge work (Crawford 2009b). Though Crawford has a Ph.D. in political thought and is affiliated with a research institute at the University of Virginia, he claims that by pursuing an open future in college, students "don't learn anything of particular application", and acquiring a practical skill set is equated with proscribing, and therefore limiting, a career path (Crawford 2009a: 19). Crawford attributes this fear to Braverman's description of the degradation of work, where the cognitive aspects of a job are taken away from a worker and given to the management class of worker (Crawford 2009a: 38-39). Crawford goes so far as to advise the college-minded

> If you have a natural bent for scholarship; if you are attracted to the most difficult books out of an urgent need, and can spare four years to devote yourself to them, go to college. In fact, approach college in the spirit of craftsmanship, going deep into liberal arts and sciences. But if this is not the case; if the thought of four more years sitting in a classroom makes your skin crawl, the good news is that you don't have to go through the motions and jump through the hoops for the sake of making a decent living. Even if you do go to college, learn a trade in the summers. You're likely to be less damaged, and quite possibly better paid, as an independent tradesman than as a cubicle-dwelling tender of information systems or low-level creative. To heed such advice would require a certain contrarian streak, as it entails rejecting a life course mapped out by others as obligatory and inevitable. (2009a: 53)

Crawford cites cases of an inverse relationship between educational achievement and job performance, where employers do not see any relationship between how well one does in school and how well one does at one's job (Crawford 2009a: 145). His argument drives a wedge between liberal and useful

arts, and further, contradicts the struggle to unite mastery of knowledge and practical training in higher education.

An element of Crawford's argument is drawn from sociologist Richard Sennet's (2008) work, <u>The Craftsman</u>. Sennett defines craftsmanship as "the skill of making things well", which connotes both a desire to do a good job because it is important to make good things, but it also implies a relationship between head and hands that incorporates "skill, commitment, and judgment" (Sennett 2008: 8-9). It is the specific skills, learned in context, practiced over time and adjusted with feedback, that define the craftsman. As anthropologist Allen Batteau (2010) says, education is, in part, learning by doing, implying deep specialization and "bodily practices" (Sennett 2008: 10). The process of learning allows for practice and development of skills in context.

This discussion shows how American higher education has multiple purposes and outcomes. Conflicting beliefs about the purpose of education are examined further in the data chapters.

Education as a Process of Identity Development
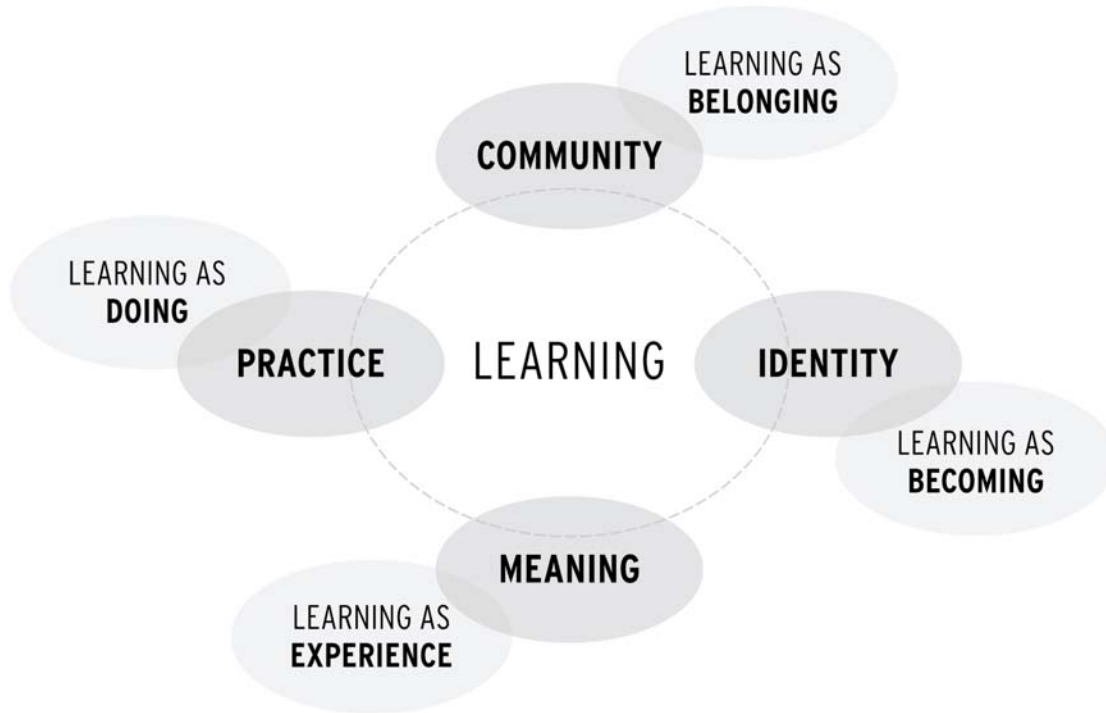
Higher education provides both educational content and socialization resources for identity development. It is widely accepted that the process of schooling trains students to respond to rules regarding behavior, performance, and time constraints (Applebaum 1984a). In addition, values are communicated through the process of education (Applebaum 1984b, Willis 1981). Schooling, beginning at the lowest levels and continuing through higher education, is the site

where identity is developed through interaction and learning. Understanding how neoliberal and anthropology values influence identity development in the learning context of undergraduate anthropology education will provide the basis for the analysis in the data chapters.

Communities of Practice

"Communities of practice" is a social theory of learning presented by cognitive anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger which says "being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities" shapes "not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do" (Wenger 1998: 4). An academic department at a university can be conceived as a community of practice, because it provides the learning context and social group community where identity is developed.

Wenger's model (1998: 5) of learning demonstrates how interrelated and interactive the process of learning is with *community*, which is a space created by the community where members produce knowledge; *identity*, which is created and re-created in the context of learning and becoming within the community; *meaning*, which is created individually and collectively within the community; and *practice*, which includes the ways members begin and sustain methods of being (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: Wenger's Components of a Social Theory of Learning

Reprinted with permission from Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, p. 5. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Identity development is both an individual and a collective process. The learning environment provides the social perspective of group members and reflects the larger social and cultural contexts which are integral to identity development. In the learning environment, identity is developed and negotiated in the process of interacting and participating with others (Wenger 1998: 146). Learngin scholars John Seeley Brown and Paul Duguid emphasize the following about the relationship between learning and identity:

> Learning needs to be understood in relation to the development of human identity. In learning to be, in becoming a member of a community of practice, an individual is developing a social identity. In turn, the identity under development shapes what that person comes to know, how he or she assimilates knowledge and

information. . . . What people learn about, then, is always refracted
through who they are and what they are learning to be (2000: 138).

Community of practice membership allows individuals to negotiate and renegotiate identities through experience, practice, feedback, participation, and interplay: it is a process of becoming and belonging (Wenger 1998: 163). This social process of identity development in the learning context is a key part of the analytical framework, and a further discussion of identity is presented below.

Identity

Much work has been done on identity in many fields, such as psychology, education, sociology, as well as anthropology. According to psychologist Erik Erikson, identity is the "direct perception of one's own consistency and continuity over time . . . and the associated perception that others, as well, recognize this consistency and continuity" (Erikson 1980: 18).

A study of identity development is a study of interactions between individuals and their surrounding contexts. Building from social psychologist George H. Mead's (1934) work on how the mind and self emerge through social interaction, sociologist Herbert Blumer (1969) conceived "symbolic interactionism" as a perspective that examines how individuals negotiate, interpret, and create meaning in response to interacting with others. This process of negotiation, interpretation, and creation of meaning is what sociologist Erving Goffman calls "the presentation of self in everyday life" (Goffman 1959), and is how individuals learn how to act appropriately. Individuals frame their behavior and ideas about the self, select appropriate actions, and monitor

outcomes in reference to how others perceive them (Giddens 1984b). As individuals go through the process of higher education, they interact with and in various contexts and departments of the university, developing their identities as they go along. This development and negotiation process is similar to American organizational theorist Karl Weick's sensemaking, where "reality is an ongoing accomplishment that emerges from efforts to create order and make retrospective sense of what occurs" (Weick 1993: 635).

More specifically, thinking about identity as a flexible, emergent process better captures how individuals "are continuously reconstituting themselves into new selves in response to internal and external stimuli" (Ewing 1990: 258) Here, flexible identities are conceived as self-representations that are shaped by contextual interactions and interpretations (Ochs and Capps 1996, Sokefeld 1999).

In negotiating and managing these flexible, emergent identities, individuals may experience identity consonance or dissonance (Costello 2005: 25-28). Identity consonance occurs when the emergent identity blends smoothly or is consonant with existing identities; identity dissonance is the discomfort or clash an individual feels when the emergent identity does not mesh well with the existing identities. Costello uses the concepts of identity consonance and dissonance in the context of professional education as students are socialized in the schools of law and social work. Her research shows that those students who experience identity dissonance are disadvantaged compared to their identity-consonant peers (Costello 2005: 16). Disadvantages take the form of faculty

disfavor, loss of self-esteem, negative academic performance, and changes of career trajectories (Costello 2005: 210). Further, success in professional schools is primarily due to how well personal identities mesh with the professional identities and roles associated with their fields. Costello argues that information for identity development is transmitted by and embedded in institutions, and this dissertation holds that perspective as well. She focuses on professional identity development in professional schools, where individuals are expected to develop professional identities; this dissertation takes undergraduate education in a discipline without a professional preparation orientation as its focus for an examination of identity development

Identity dissonance has been used as a concept in studies of identity across social science fields. In sociology, a study of gay Evangelical Christians shows how they negotiate incompatible aspects of their religious beliefs and sexual orientation into a consonant identity for themselves (Thumma 1991). In one organizational studies example, organizational members resolve dissonance that comes from threats to their perceptions of their organization's identity (Elsbach and Kramer 1996). In anthropology, a study of mothers who did not have custody of their children revealed dissonance between identity as a mother and the normative cultural standard associated with motherhood, resulting in attempts to change the identity standard (Babcock 1998). Also in anthropology, anthropologists may encounter dissonance between the role they are supposed to play as researcher and an inner sense of self (Tsuda 1998). These examples show the use of the identity dissonance concept in various settings; they each

explore individual identity development and negotiation within larger social groups and structures. This dissertation uses the identity dissonance concept as a way of understanding how individuals interpret the multiple values and beliefs about education and work in the context of undergraduate anthropology education.

This dissertation defines identity as an individual and collective emergent process of negotiation of the multiple values, beliefs, norms, and relationships in the educational setting. This dissertation analyzes how students negotiate identities among the coexisting and competing values of anthropology and neoliberalism in the context of undergraduate anthropology education.

In summary, this section explored higher education's relationship to training students to be productive citizens in today's global economy. The influence of the global market shows up in educational processes and in educational discourse, creating beliefs and discourses of education as marketable commodity. Attainment of higher education enables individual class status mobility. And, as a minimum requirement for entry into most knowledge work positions, a higher education degree comes with assumptions of competence and comparability, and may devalue deep specialization. This section also described identity development as a complex, emergent process that is shaped in part by the social context of education and interaction among individuals and groups. If aspects of identities are not consonant with each other, negative consequences are produced. How the values of neoliberalism and anthropology affect identity development are explored in Chapters 3-5. The

next section focuses specifically on anthropology education and discusses perspectives and debates within the discipline of anthropology on what constitutes proper anthropological education and training. This background provides the basis for a case study of undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

Perspectives on Anthropology Education And Training

An undergraduate anthropology education provides the content, theories, methods, and holistic approach of anthropology's four fields. Few resources explicitly describe career preparation for anthropology undergraduates. Notable exceptions include a series of practitioner profiles in Anthropology News, the monthly publication of the American Anthropology Association; a now out-of-print workbook which offers exercises for exploring personal fit with anthropology and practical suggestions for starting careers (Omohundro 2001) and a text on non-academic anthropology careers (Nolan 2003). Additionally, one recent book aims specifically to help anthropologists at various career stages, but particularly students, envision their anthropology careers as a lifetime endeavor with exercises to help them articulate their personal and professional histories, abilities, and goals (Briller and Goldmacher 2009). These sources attempt to connect anthropology preparation and work for students and professionals who wish to have anthropological careers.

Other materials describing jobs and careers for undergraduate anthropology degree-holders include a discussion of applied anthropology

undergraduate programs, where job placement is a criterion of the success of a program (Keefe 1988); an introductory anthropology text that emphasizes real-world application of core anthropological concepts (Ferraro 2008); an introductory applied anthropology text that discusses the relationship of anthropological methods and theories to other career fields (Gwynne 2003b); a collection of lists of readings, journals, advanced degree programs, organizations, or websites (Gwynne 2003a); a compilation of character career profiles (Stephens 2002); a journal documenting the varied career paths to anthropology for women anthropologists (Wasson 2006); and videos describing the range of anthropological careers available to anthropology degree holders provide examples of anthropologists employed in jobs that require degrees beyond the baccalaureate (American Anthropological Association 2006b, National Association for the Practice of Anthropology 1995, Northern Arizona University 2005).

These sources present potential careers available to anthropology degree holders, but they do not explicitly make a link between undergraduate education and getting a job. Much has been written on graduate-level training, for example, whether anthropology graduate programs properly prepare students for careers (Price 2001); whether training should include experiential components outside the academic curriculum (Hyland et al. 1988, Simonelli 2001); what the graduate academic curriculum should consist of (Chapple 1953, Kent 1983, Kushner 1994, vanWilligen 1982); differences in applied and academic training (Chapple 1953, Kent 1983, Kushner 1994, van Willigen 1982); and recently, graduate students'

perspectives on their professional preparation (Thorkelson 2008, Thorkelson 2010). The same degree of attention does not exist regarding undergraduate education, though a recent discussion of ethnography instruction suggests the undergraduate educational setting is just as appropriate as in graduate training to achieve anthropological goals of "community involvement, co-citizenships, and even collaborative modes of local and community-based change" (Lassiter and Campbell 2010: 4). Discussion is ongoing within the anthropology community with articles on "promoting [anthropology's] utility in diverse contexts" (Ensworth 2009) and "preparing anthropology students for life after a B.A." (White 2009). These articles indicate some attention to the relationship between undergraduate anthropology education and the broader neoliberal context, and the ongoing attention and discussion is important. Having an understanding of what anthropology can do is especially relevant at the undergraduate level, as this is the moment at which students are actively facing finding a job immediately after graduation or continuing towards a graduate degree for further specialization in anthropology or other disciplines. Though attention to anthropological preparation is critical at the undergraduate level, it is important to note that discussion of preparation and training is relevant at all professional levels.

The ongoing debate over anthropology preparation and training is rooted in anthropology's beginnings. George W. Stocking, Jr., considered by many to be anthropology's historian, has reflected extensively on the history of anthropology (Stocking 1992c, Stocking 1995) as a way to rethink and problematize the field. His research on anthropology's origins as a profession

and a discipline shed light on how anthropology's domains of knowledge were constructed by its practitioners (Stocking 1960, Stocking 1995). Before anthropology was established as an academic discipline in the late 1800s, anthropologists were employed by governments to provide detailed cultural information on local populations in order to contribute to policy development (Baba 2006, Baba 2008, Ervin 2004). This means academic anthropology has its origins in applied work. Though the academic job market grew through the 1960s, beginning in the late 1970s, the number of anthropologists graduating with Ph.D.s exceeded the number of available academic positions in the U.S., so anthropologists turned back to public and private industry for employment (Baba 1994).

Also in the 1970s and into the present, literature proliferated on practitioner-oriented applied anthropology training, where it was emphasized that "properly educated practitioners have all of the traditional knowledge a program can provide. . . . it is also necessary that they gain some additional skills to make them more competitive in the current job market" (Trotter 1988: 2). A recent estimate reports that more than half of all anthropologists work outside of academia (American Anthropological Association 2006a), so there is a distinction between the career paths of anthropologists who work in academe and those who have non-academic jobs. Essentially, practicing and academic anthropologists are distinguished by whether they are primarily employed by an academic institution, even though practicing anthropologists may occasionally teach, academic anthropologists may participate in short-term, consultative

engagements, and applied anthropologists are university-based but their teaching, research, and external engagements focus on applied areas (Nolan 2003: 5). However, the formal training of anthropologists occurs within academia; the discipline is the basis of professional legitimacy, whether one ultimately works within or outside academia (Baba 2008). Similar to the general social trend in the United States in the 19th century as described earlier, university education was available to members of the middle and upper class[5], and a degree conferred professional authority to anthropologists.

With increasing career opportunities for anthropologists outside of academia (Baba 1986, Brondo et al. 2009) and ever fewer available tenure-track academic jobs (American Anthropological Association 1998, American Anthropological Association 2009a, Bousquet 2008)[6], there is much discussion over what the theoretical and practical training of anthropologists should consist of, because the objectives and outcomes of anthropological work differ in academic and non-academic settings (Nolan 2003). This discussion over how to best train anthropologists for careers is still a major topic in the discipline, as evidenced by a recent National Association for the Practice of Anthropology (NAPA) Bulletin devoted to the subject, offering specific experienced-based

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[5] Again, educational opportunities for advancement could be argued as being the privilege of white males.

[6] Referencing to these sources glosses over a larger debate about university labor issues, which is not discussed in this dissertation. Briefly, Bousquet (2008) writes that universities are systems of domination where administrators manage education like a corporate model to reduce costs and replace tenure-track academic jobs with lower-paid, non-tenure track positions. Reports by the American Anthropological Association suggest declines in numbers of academic jobs are due to university budget cuts in tough economic conditions.

advice to students on the benefits and challenges of careers in applied anthropology, whether academic or not (Guerron-Montero 2008).

Currently, tension exists in the discipline of anthropology around attempts to discretely distinguish academic, applied, and practicing anthropology (Ervin 2004, Gwynne 2003b, Hill and Baba 2000, Nolan 2003). One complexity of providing appropriate career preparation may be related to what is considered by some as a divide in the field of anthropology. Baba and Hill, together and separately, discuss how trying to create boundaries around the realms of academic, applied, and practicing anthropology occurs in primarily Western countries, and they trace the difficulty in defining the fields of anthropology to a fracture in the relationship between theory and practice (Baba 2000, Baba 2005, Baba and Hill 2006, Hill 2000).

Academic anthropology is defined as having a theoretical emphasis and orientation, and traditional academic research has a goal of solving theoretical problems and is expected to contribute to anthropological knowledge (Baba 2000, Hill 2000). Applied anthropology's objective is to solve practical problems (Gwynne 2003b, van Willigen 2002) and problems are often approached from multiple disciplinary perspectives (Hill 2000). The macro-level disciplinary dialogue regarding academic and applied anthropology is reproduced at the micro-level in anthropology departments, where educators wrestle with their orientation to academic and applied anthropology as part of providing both theoretical and practical preparation for anthropology students.

This discussion also exists among practitioners outside of academia because of the nature of anthropological work in industry (Cefkin 2009, Schensul, Baba, and Hyland 2003). Though this dissertation does not address employer and professional perspectives on the value and importance of anthropology education in workers' careers, it is important to note that the topic of anthropological preparation does not exist only in academia, and is of concern among practitioners because often they are the ones who may hire academically trained anthropology graduates. Presently, "few anthropology graduates are trained specifically for the demands of practice" and

> the result is that most anthropology graduates – unlike, say, their counterparts in business, medicine, law, or engineering – enter the job market underprepared for the challenges and opportunities that await them. Instead, with a few notable exceptions, anthropological training in the United States prepares students primarily as academics. (Nolan 2003: x)

Perhaps at the root of the debates within the field is the question of how to use one's anthropological education, because "knowing 'that' is not a substitute for knowing 'how'" (Nolan 2003: 12). Anthropology students who wish to work outside of academia will need to put their educational backgrounds to use, and these students will need situations where they can practice "doing" anthropology so their knowledge of anthropology's history, theories, and methods become relevant and salient. Preparation for working inside or outside of academia is the crux of the issue of anthropological education, because academic training prepares one to be an academic, but "practitioners learn experientially" (Nolan 2003: 14).

Anthropologist Marietta Baba, considered by many in the field to be the founder of modern business anthropology, has written extensively on the development of business anthropology, key issues in the sub-discipline, and on the relationship of theory and practice in the discipline of anthropology. Given her status and experience in this field, she is well positioned to comment on the relationship of the historical development of anthropology and its contemporary landscape. In an invited Presidential Plenary keynote address entitled "The Art and Science of Applied Anthropology in the 21st Century" at the Society for Applied Anthropology annual meeting in 2008, she carefully discusses the distinction between the discipline and the profession of anthropology:

> When I use the term discipline as in the discipline of anthropology, I mean a structured body of knowledge that is distinct from other such bodies with its own epistemology, theory, and intended methodology . . . The term discipline means knowledge that has been given to or received by a disciple. The term denotes a sphere of knowledge that an individual has chosen to study and there is a notion that in such a study an individual will be molded with respect to his or her mental faculties and moral character toward orderly or prescribed conduct through certain rule governing behavior or activity. So the focus here is on knowledge embodied or in the mind. Profession, on the other hand, pertains to a calling, a vocation, a means of employment or a livelihood. Which often requires the specialized knowledge from long intensive academic preparation that I just referred to, and it usually means mental rather than manual work although in anthropology we certainly do both and they interact with each other. . . . Professions rest on bodies of knowledge . . . and these must have legitimacy and authority within the academy for a profession to arrive and thrive. So disciplines and professions are closely connected; as the fate of one goes, so goes the fate of the other, and this is a crucial point. (Baba 2008)

Baba concludes that a profession cannot exist without a discipline, meaning the professional values and training models need to be aligned in the education of anthropologists.

This section summarized perspectives and debates in the discipline of anthropology that relate to education and professional preparation. There is no consensus on what constitutes proper education and training for anthropology undergraduates and few resources which specifically address career preparation at the undergraduate level. Though anthropology's origins as a profession predate its creation as an academic discipline, professionalization still requires legitimization with an advanced academic degree. This tradition points to the tensions between anthropology's disciplinary values and neoliberalism's emphasis on education for employment.

The next section discusses how anthropologists have approached the study of education. Using anthropological theories and methods to understand what happens in the educational context is a well-established area of research. This section describes major research traditions in the field to position the dissertation as an anthropological study of undergraduate anthropological education.

Research Traditions in Educational Anthropology

Anthropologists among others have long been interested in education as it is both a means of achievement and a process of development. Specifically, educational anthropology examines the social and cultural influences in the

relationship of the individual to institutions of learning.   Beginning in the 1950s with George Spindler's work and going forward, educational anthropology became a form of scholarship on schooling in social and cultural contexts (American Anthropological Association 2008, McDermott 2008). Social science research conducted in the 1960s and 1970s built on the Durkheimian structuralist tradition which viewed institutions, including schools, as systems of representation of the rules and norms of the culture (Moore 2004), and refined it to say that structures and systems have a partial influence, but it is the individual, or the agent, acting and interacting within and against structure that produces meaning (Ortner 1984). This theoretical perspective was advanced through the development of symbolic interactionism, structuration, and practice theories, where individuals constantly negotiate meaning through an ongoing process of interpretation (Giddens 1984a, Ortner 1984). In particular, Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977) attempted to explain the relationship between the individual and the system (Ortner 1984).

Critical education studies in particular focused on the relationship of the institution to the individual. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) influential work indicated that institutions reproduced existing social inequalities. This theme of research in critical education studies contributed to the development of reproduction theory (Levinson and Holland 1996). Reproduction theory argued that institutions reproduce rather than reduce social inequalities, and was a popular analytic tool between the 1960s and 1990s (Collins 2009, Foley 2010).

However, reproduction theory was criticized for being deterministic and too narrow to explain the interaction of the individual and the larger system (ibid.).

The introduction and use of ethnography in educational studies (e.g., Foley 1990) refined reproduction theory to include production of resistance as an ongoing process of transformation (Levinson and Holland 1996). In a notable example of the use of the cultural production framework, Eisenhart (1996) explored the meaning of being a scientist through the negotiation of identities produced within and against university institutions and workplaces. This study illustrates how the "educated person" is constructed, contested, and negotiated by individuals and institutions (Eisenhart 1996, Levinson and Holland 1996). It is at this level of schooling, where individuals make voluntary educational choices such as major selection and career direction within and against social and institutional values, that require more study (Jensen 1999).

Though there are no studies of undergraduate anthropology career preparation, there is a body of ethnographic case studies on university life, undergraduate experiences, and academic socialization and professionalization. For example, Moffatt's (1989) ethnography of the undergraduate college culture at a New Jersey university described what college was "really like" from the point of view of the students. Similarly, Nathan (2005) provided an undergraduate perspective of the culture of an American public university through her ethnographic transformation from faculty member to student. Holland and Eisenhart (1990) studied the impact of college culture on women and found that expectations of "doing well" changed over time due to peer pressures and

achievement was measured by success in romantic relationships. In terms of anthropology as a discipline, Loewen (2005) conducted an ethnography of North American academic anthropologists to discover how anthropological knowledge was constructed by its academic practitioners. Williams (1993) studied one anthropology department's faculty members from 1959-1979 as a way to understand broader social implications of race and class. These ethnographies illustrate the utility of using anthropological theories and methods to study issues in higher education and relate them to larger social issues, and these works provide the foundation for the anthropological study of undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

In summary, building from anthropological and sociological theories that examine the relationship of the individual to the social system, educational anthropology studies the relationship of the individual to institutions of learning. These studies of higher education show that education is a social process influenced by group, and institutional, and cultural factors in the world. With this grounding in the literature, the data from the study are examined within the following framework.

Analytic Framework

As previously discussed, neoliberalism's emphasis on "market relevance" demands universities produce workers (Demerath, Lynch, and Davidson 2008). In addition, university education historically was a means of status improvement

and occupational achievement. Neoliberalism's influence in higher education redefines the purpose of university education for employment.

Historically, anthropology as a liberal arts discipline has struggled to come to consensus on its purpose, and because of its broad scope and emphasis on broad knowledge, does not have a linear career path for those interested in the subject. How anthropology complements, contradicts, and coexists with neoliberalism can be examined by ethnographically focusing on undergraduate anthropology education at a university. In the process of education, students' individual identities develop as they learn in a group setting, as they practice their understandings of their developing knowledge, and as they experience interaction with others (Wenger 1998). At the university, the "institutional practices influence student identities and possible futures" (Demerath, Lynch, and Davidson 2008: 288). The university setting is envisioned as illustrated by the community of practice model discussed earlier, where academic advisers, career services staff, faculty, and students actively participate in the learning and career preparation process.

The different departments at the university are strategically bounded fields of activities (Batteau 2000: 728). The academic advising and career services departments serve different functions than the anthropology department. Departments, as groups within the university setting, "create and sustain relatively unique . . . cultures consisting of, among other things, task rituals, standards for proper and improper behavior . . . codes surrounding relatively routine practices and, for the membership at least, compelling accounts attesting

to the logic and value of these rituals, standards, and codes" (Van Maanen and Barley 1984: 287)[7]. These groups each have their own symbols, values, discourses, and authorities that are learned and shared among members. For the purposes of this dissertation, these learned and shared value systems are group cultures. A culture is "a system of reference that can generate both shared understandings and the working misunderstandings that enable social life to go on" (Batteau 2000: 726). The academic advising, career services, and academic anthropology departments are analyzed for their different shared meanings, values, and beliefs about anthropology education and its relationship to work.

Students become enculturated with the characteristics, norms, beliefs, symbols, and languages of those multiple and potentially conflicting group cultures of departments at the university. When students select a major, they spend more time in that department, and become socialized in the culture of that department. Identity develops as a set of "symbols, affiliations, separations, and norms" that define a person (Batteau 2010: 79) in relation to others. Anthropology majors take on the group culture of the anthropology department in addition to the overarching neoliberal orientation of the university and society through participation in that community of practice. They are active participants in the learning process, and they develop and negotiate their identities through interaction with anthropology concepts, faculty, and peers. Neoliberal and anthropology department group cultures include various practices, beliefs, and

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[7] Van Maanen and Barley call these groups "occupational communities". Since this study takes place in a university setting and focuses on education as opposed to being located in a work environment and focusing on employment, I am not using their term even though their definition is appropriate.

values about what might be appropriate career paths beyond the university that influence identity development; these are explored in the data chapters.

As previously discussed, conflicting beliefs and values produce identity dissonance, which must be resolved to be consonant with other internal and external beliefs and values. How individuals resolve dissonance is a way of making sense of the world, and the ethnographic data in Chapters 3-5 illustrates the ways in which conflicting beliefs and values about education and work impact individual identity development. Becoming an employed college graduate means having a "suitable, subjectively internalized professional identity" (Costello 2005: 23), and this dissertation examines what suitable, subjectively internalized identity development means in the case of undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

Another way of looking at resolving identity dissonance is through Weber's concept of social status. Status includes notions of honor, prestige, appropriateness, exclusiveness and social capital regarding positions in society (Gerth and Mills 1958: 180-195). Choosing a major may be related to the perceived status or prestige of that degree. Finding employment with a college degree relies heavily on status: an individual may rely on a social or professional network for access to jobs, and will have to demonstrate that she has the appropriate symbols, language, and values of the reference status group. Finding employment with a college degree also assumes congruence: status determines what is "suitable" work. For example, a college graduate may assume that working at a fast food establishment is not congruent with her level

of education. The investment of going to college carries with it an expected reward in the form of a job. A status inconsistency occurs when the investment (college) and reward (job) statuses do not match (Stryker and Macke 1978: 63). Status inconsistencies produce feelings of dissonance, that is, tensions or clashes resulting from the inconsistent or unsuitable elements. The expectation that education leads to a job, along with beliefs about what might be suitable work for an anthropology major, for example, may result in identity dissonance when expectations are not met. Further, status inconsistency theory predicts that a higher status will be selected or emphasized when individuals have the option to choose between statuses, which may have implications for anthropology as a major and as a discipline. Resolving identity dissonance is intimately connected to social status identity, but for the purposes of this dissertation, identity dissonance is the main analytic concept.

In summary, this dissertation takes an ethnographic focus at one university to better understand how undergraduate anthropology education fits in the neoliberal era. Tensions between neoliberal and academic anthropology values in the higher education context influence identity development, and how identity dissonance is negotiated and managed is analyzed in the following chapters.

Description of Chapters

The remaining chapters of this dissertation are as follows: Chapter 2 describes the site of the research, the methods, data sources, and sample, and

the data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter 3 describes findings from administrative groups within the university. Chapter 4 describes the findings from the academic groups of the study. Chapter 5 discusses the findings from the interviews with recent graduates. Chapter 6 concludes with answering the aims of the study, discussing the implications and limitations of the study, and describing future directions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

Introduction

This chapter includes 1) the description of the research site, 2) the methods, data sources, and sample, 3) the data collection procedures, and 4) the data analysis procedures.

Research Site

The Detroit Metropolitan Area, also known as Metro Detroit, generally refers to the part of Southeast Michigan centered around the city of Detroit, Michigan's largest city. It is considered to be the automotive center of the world as it was the home of The Big Three auto companies: General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler. In addition to manufacturing and engineering Metro Detroit is considered the birthplace of the Motown sound and techno music. A port city bordering Canada, Detroit is one of the oldest cities in the United States, founded in 1701. Because of its location, its industry and the industrial need for unskilled labor, the Detroit Metro area historically has attracted foreign immigrants and migrants from the South. With the rapid growth and influx of people from different communities, racial tensions have deeply influenced work and social relations in Detroit Metro's history. Much literature written about Detroit takes race and its impact on peoples' lives as a focus. The flows of immigrants and migrants into the area for work opportunities in Ford's automotive plants in the early 1900s, the flight of whites out of the city into the suburbs between 1950-

1990, and the race riots of 1943 and 1967 certainly shaped the chronic and ongoing segregation of neighborhoods and communities and institutional racism (Kapell 2009: 87). It is important to note that race played a role in "carving out this landscape" (Hartigan 1999: 10), and therefore, issues of race are never absent from local phenomena. Further, events such as the global financial crisis, national election, and local elections, cannot be separated from discussions of race in the Detroit Metro area. However, this study did not address the topic in any direct way by asking questions about race and racial issues did not emerge as a theme in the analysis. This is not to say that race did not figure in the study, but rather, it was not a central focus[8].

This study occurred against the backdrops of the 2007-2010 financial crisis and the 2008 presidential campaign and election. Fieldwork took place between September 2008 and May 2009, during the height of the Great Recession. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Detroit Metro area experienced higher unemployment rates than the rest of the country. In September 2008 the Detroit Metro area's unemployment rate was 10.3% compared to the national average of 6.2% (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009)[9]. Metro Detroit's foreclosure rate ranked as the country's tenth highest in 2008, with 4.52% of its housing units, or one in 22, in foreclosure (Kinchen 2009)[10].

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[8] Preliminary findings of the study were presented at the American Anthropological Association meetings in Philadelphia, PA in November 2009. The discussion after the presentation and the questions how race factored in this study inspired reflection on the topic.
[9] Those rates would climb to 18.2% and 9.8% for September 2009, respectively.
[10] And the state of Michigan would rank seventh nationwide for its foreclosure rate in October 2009 (Guest, G. 2009. "Michigan No. 7 in U.S. foreclosures.")

These effects of the economic crisis were deeply felt in the Detroit Metro area because of its reliance on manufacturing: as the automotive industries crumbled, jobs disappeared, leaving people unable to financially support themselves and keep their houses. It has been estimated that for every automotive job lost, five people are impacted (Carey 2009). But in addition to the despair associated with the economic climate, there was passion and enthusiasm for the presidential election, hope for a better future, and much media attention to Michigan's role in it.

In this regional context is Neoliberal University. Neoliberal University is a co-ed, public institution offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. It has an enrollment of approximately seven thousand undergraduate students and two thousand graduate students, with about twice as many undergradutes attending full-time than those that attend part-time. Neoliberal University is currently ranked among the top 50 Best Colleges in Regional Universities Midwest in U.S. News and World Reports. Approximately 80% of incoming undergraduates students each year are transfering from another school. Undergraduate gender breakdown is just about 50% male, 50% female. Across the entire undergraduate and graduate student body, approxomately 60% of students are white, with "unknown" being the next highest percentage ethnicity category. The remaining percentages of ethnic categories each under 10% in descending order are African American, Asian, Hispanic, and American Indian. Approximately 20% of the students are between the ages of 22-24.   Another

20% of students are between the ages of 25 and 29, with about 20% of students 30 years and older, and about 40% of students are 21 and under.

Neoliberal University's origins were shaped by the history and needs of the region and its relationship with business, government, and industry. It claims its educational opportunities correlate to the needs of southeastern Michigan and it aims to produce positive changes in the local economy through its educational offerings. A campus with a high percentage of commuters, Neoliberal University's parking lots are full to capacity and cars circle looking for a place to park. Like a typical university, the campus is filled with students, staff, and faculty walking to and from buildings, carrying books and bags.

Neoliberal University's anthropology department is one of several social science disciplines in a combined department in the College of Liberal Arts. The academic advisers and career counselors who work with liberal arts students and faculty are described in Chapter 3. The faculty and students in the anthropology department are described in Chapter 4, and graduates with anthropology degrees are described in Chapter 5. In the following chapters, all names have been changed and some personal details altered to protect confidentiality.

The next section discusses the methods used and the sources of data collected and analyzed to better understand this specific ethnographic case of undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal context.

Methods

Qualitative methods are generally recognized for their ability to capture the complexity of human behavior in a specific context in descriptive terms, and have been used extensively in institutional settings such as schools and businesses to provide the "thick description", the detail, of what the experience is like (Geertz 2001).

Ethnography illustrates the ways individuals and groups interact and create meaning, because it allows for the exploration of the context of the phenomena (Pequegnat et al. 1995). Smith (2001) describes how ethnographic methods can be specifically used in institutions to understand the context of work: ethnography is "observation, participation, and/or immersion" that allows researchers to experience the same structures, processes, and relationships as their participants, which provides the kinds of data that cannot be captured through other methods (Smith 2001: 220). The ethnographic approach, originated and honed in the discipline of anthropology, is essential for understanding behavior and action in context.

The goal of this research project was to obtain a holistic and contextual understanding of undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era by examining one institution in a regional setting impacted by current economic trends. In order to do this, this study took place in one American university in the Detroit Metro area over the course of an academic year, from September 2008 through May 2009, to ethnographically gather the many factors and perspectives regarding undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

Data sources

Multiple sources of data were collected in order to gain this systemic understanding. Data sources included:

1) <u>Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with anthropology majors.</u> This method captured students' descriptions of how and why they make decisions regarding their educational career, what their motivations are, and articulate their feelings and beliefs about the value of anthropology and their perceived and expected career opportunities.

2) <u>Observations in weekly Anthropology Club meetings and general social environment observations in the department.</u> This method captured social interactions about career-related topics among student peers.

3) <u>Observations in anthropology classes.</u> This method captured how departmental and individual faculty plans were deployed and how the implementation is received by students in the classroom.

4) <u>Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with faculty.</u> This method captured how full- and part-time faculty describe their values regarding educating and advising students in anthropology and their perceived career opportunities for students.

5) <u>Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with career counselors and academic advisers.</u> This method captured career counselors and academic advisers perspectives as they described their values regarding advising students in anthropology and their perceived career opportunities for students.

6) <u>Observations in student advising sessions.</u> This method captured what students are asking for and what advice is being given in terms of educational preparation, training, and career development.

7) <u>Observations in campus activities.</u> This method allowed capture other campus events, such as career fairs, to see what happens between students and staff.

8) <u>Electronic survey of recent (within 10 years) graduates.</u> This method could reach those who graduated within the last 10 years with a major in anthropology. This method captured descriptions of the experience of what comes after leaving the university with an anthropology degree and find those willing to participate in interviews. A question in the survey instrument asked respondents to provide contact information if they would allow themselves to be interviewed[11].

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[11] According to the alumni office's records, 80 students graduated with a major in anthropology between 1998-2008. Of those, 39 had email addresses on file with the

9) <u>Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with recent graduates.</u> This method allowed me to collect descriptions of how those with anthropology degrees found jobs and how they perceive the relationship of their undergraduate education and training to their current jobs.

10) <u>Document and artifact collection.</u> These data, such as course catalogs and class syllabi, provided historical and current information on the content and structure of anthropology education.

The following section describes participant recruitment and the specific data collection and analysis methods.

Sample

The criteria for the sample of participants were based on the specific aims, which were to identify and decribe student, faculty, and academic and career counselor, and recent graduate perspectives on undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era. Therefore, a purposive sampling strategy was used for this study in order to reach those types of participants at Neoliberal University. The purposive sample consists of the following groups, represented in Table 1: Purposive Sample of Participant Types at Neoliberal University. The number is the actual number of participants who consented to participate in the study, not the number of the potential participants.

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alumni office. The survey was sent electronically to those 39 alumni. Nine people responded to the survey, and of those, six indicated they were willing to be contacted for an interview.

TABLE 1: Purposive Sample of Participant Types at Neoliberal University

PARTICIPANT TYPES	NUMBER
Current Students	12
Recent Graduates	6
Full Time Faculty	5
Part Time Faculty	4
Career Services, Co-Op, and Internship Staff	5
Academic Advisers and Admissions Officer	6
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	**38**

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection methods consisted of semi-structured face-to-face interviews and observations. In addition, an electronic survey was conducted with alumni anthropology graduates to recruit for interviews. Each participant was interviewed at least once for a total of 51 interviews (see Table 2). Observations were conducted in various university settings on different occasions, including a mandatory admissions orientation for new students, academic advising events, anthropology club meetings, anthropology classes, career services events, and a faculty meeting for a total of 36 observations see Table 3).

TABLE 2: Number of Interviews Conducted at Neoliberal University

INTERVIEWS AT NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY	NUMBER
Current Students	13
Recent Graduates	8
Full Time Faculty	10
Part Time Faculty	7
Career Services, Co-Op, and Internship Staff	6
Academic Advisers and Admissions Officer	7
TOTAL INTERVIEWS	**51**

TABLE 3: Number of Observations Conducted at Neoliberal University

OBSERVATIONS AT NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY	NUMBER
Academic Advising Events	12
Anthropology Club Meetings	9
Career Services Events	5
Classes	8
Faculty Meeting	1
Admissions Orientation	1
TOTAL OBSERVATIONS	**36**

All data were collected by the end of May 2009, and data analysis began as described in the next section.

Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative analysis included typing up fieldnotes and transcripts into electronic Word documents for import into Atlas.ti 6.0, a software program that allows for storing and sorting of data. The data were were sorted into meaning units and coded. Open codes emerged from the meaning units, and closed codes were based on topics from the literature (LeCompte and Schensul 1999, Miles and Huberman 1984). The meaning units and codes were grouped and arranged thematically, and analyzed using the framework described in Chapter 1.

Additional analysis was conducted with the grounded theory analysis process for qualitative research as described by (Corbin and Strauss 2008: 87-115). Corbin and Strauss recommend looking for conditions, inter/actions and emotions, and consequences to identify the contextual factors and the relationships between context, structure, and process. Following Corbin and Strauss' process for analysis, the following questions were asked of the data:

> What is going on here? What are the problems or situations as defined by participants? What are the structural conditions that gave rise to those situations? How are persons responding to these through inter/action and emotional responses? How are these changing over time? Are inter/action/emotions aligned or misaligned? What conditions/activities connect one sequence of events to another? What happens to the form, flow, continuity, and rhythm of inter/action/emotions when conditions change; that is, do they become misaligned, or are they interrupted, or disrupted because of contingency (unplanned or unexpected changes in conditions)? How is action/interaction/emotion taken in response to problems or contingencies similar or different from

inter/action that is routine? How do the consequences of one set of inter/actions/emotions play into the next sequence of inter/actions? (Corbin and Strauss 2008: 100)

These analysis strategies produced the findings and conclusions presented in the remaining chapters. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 present the findings within this analytical framework, and Chapter 6 presents the conclusion regarding how dissonance and tensions are navigated in undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS: ACADEMIC ADVISING AND CAREER SERVICES

"You're here to get the degree that distinguishes[12]." – Admissions Officer

Introduction

In a mandatory orientation session for incoming students prior to the start of the semester, Betty Kelly, a dynamic African American admissions officer in her late 20s, rouses the conference room of eighty admitted students with an enthusiastic "Hi!" Her job is to introduce admitted students to the business of getting ready for the start of classes in the upcoming semester. Betty says to the group, "You're here to get the degree that distinguishes", implicitly referring to Neoliberal University's high standings in U.S. News and World Report in several categories, its accreditations, its emphasis experiential opportunities to prepare students for work after university, and its renowned history of academic excellence.   This quotation illustrates the neoliberal orientation of the administrative departments at Neoliberal University, and this chapter describes and discusses how those who work in these departments understand anthropology as a major and a potential career for students.

Administrative Departments

Students flow through the university system as though it is a pipeline, beginning with their orientation and ending with graduation, when they exit as

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[12] This quotation has been altered to protect confidentiality, but the meaning is similar.

alumni. After notification of admission, a student's university experience begins with the orientation conducted by a staff member the admissions department. Next, a student inclined to choose a liberal arts major will have contact with the Liberal Arts academic advising department to get enrolled in courses and to make sure they fulfill graduation requirements. At Neoliberal University, there are five full-time professional advisers on staff who participated in this study. All are female; two are African American and three are white, and they range in experience from new hire to more than twenty years. In addition to academic coursework, a student might choose or be required to interact with internship, Co-op, or Career Services staff. The Co-op experience is managed by one woman. Internships are directed by department faculty in certain majors, including criminal justice, economics, social work, psychology, health policy, public affairs, and environmental studies, but one woman coordinates internships for the discplines with fewer majors, including humanities, history, and anthropology. The Career Services department has six counselors and coordinators, all female. Four women are white, one is African American, and one is Arab American, and they range in age from early 20s to late 40s. Because the number of people from these departments who participated in this study is so small, some details have been altered to conceal identities.

As indicated in the previous chapter, approximately 80% of incoming students at Neoliberal University are transfers from other schools[13]. Betty Kelly,

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[13] Recent data indicate one in three students nationally is a transfer student, so Neoliberal University is just slightly above the national average. National Association for College Admissions Counseling. 2010. *Special Report on the Transfer Admission Process* .

the admissions officer who conducts the mandatory orientation sessions twice a year, says "transfers already have a clue why they're coming back to school. They're older, or making a career change, or if they're younger they figured out what their career is. If they weren't getting what they needed at one school, or if it's more cost effective, they come here." Cost-effectiveness and efficiency, both neoliberal values, are reasons for transferring to Neoliberal University cited by students and admissions counselors during this research on multiple occasions.

Once students are officially admitted in writing, they must attend a day-long mandatory orientation before the start of their first semester, as mentioned above. The first part of the orientation is run by the admissions office, and is the last step to official university admission. Betty Kelly conducts the orientation, covering topics of Registration, Financial Aid, Campus Safety, Parking/Transportation, The First Semester and Beyond, Study Abroad, Coops and Internships, Women's Resource Center, Athletics and Recreation, Volunteering, Counseling and Support Services, Career Services, Employment on Campus, Academic Support Services. The presentation and corresponding handouts are coordinated in the school's colors, and students flip anxiously through their materials in the darkened conference room trying to anticipate what comes next. After the 45-minute presentation introducing the highlights and functions of the university, the students are broken up by academic unit for the advising portion of the orientation. The students self-select their intended college areas of study: education, management, engineering, or liberal arts, and are led by an academic adviser from that unit to another presentation room. About thirty

students follow the Liberal Arts adviser to a classroom for their college-specific orientation.

Irma Mills, an African American woman who has worked as an advisor at Neoliberal University for twenty years, goes over a 32-page handout that thoroughly discusses the processes and requirements of the university for those students who selected Liberal Arts as their intended majors. A few students raise their hands and ask anxious variations on "do I have to take x class for y major?", revealing their concern about doing what is necessary to fulfill requirements efficiently. Irma's straightforward advice for the students is to "choose a major you'll do well in and plan your distribution requirements that way." Irma's approach is to help students figure out what their inherent inclinations are as a way to efficiently satisfy requirements without undue stress on the student.

After this 45-minute session, the students are told to go to their next session of this orientation event where they register for their classes. At this point, the students are ready to begin taking classes at the start of the new semester. Once they reach sixty credit hours (students tend to take twelve to fifteen credits a semester), a hold is placed on their registrations, and they are required to meet with an academic adviser and declare a major in order to have the hold taken off their accounts, but they can change the major with a bit of paperwork at any time. Meeting with an adviser is a required step towards formally choosing a major. The next section describes what happens in the academic advising department.

Academic Advising

The academic advising department in the College of Liberal Arts is responsible for advising 3600 undergraduates, roughly half of the total number of undergraduates at Neoliberal University. Psychology is the largest major in terms of the number of students; anthropology is a smaller major with many fewer students, about forty declared majors. Because the one-on-one demand for academic advising is so great throughout the semester, the advising department has a couple of days at the end of the semesters where students can walk in on a first come, first served basis to clear the backlog. For each day of walk-in sessions, the advising department's five academic advisers can see close to sixty students.

The academic advisers, all female, range in age from mid-to-late twenties to early 60s. Two women are African American and three are white. Two of the advisers have been at Neoliberal University for twenty years or more; the others have been hired in the last few years. They each indicate they were strongly drawn to university advising because they liked to work with people, and the more traditional office jobs did not interest them.

Advising's job, as Irma indicates, is to help students navigate the structures and the requirements of getting a degree. In terms of helping students decide what they want to major in, academic advisers provide information and resources within the scope of academic advising.

Adviser Andrea Reynolds, a white woman in her mid-20s, has a neatly organized office that reflects her strategic approach to helping students. She notes how students today seem to want more guidance: "This generation likes to be led. Students say 'someone please tell me what to do' or 'my mom wants me to...'." She gives students a list of majors and asks them to pick what they already know they are not interested in as a way of narrowing down the options.

If academic advising can't provide the answers, students get directed to other resources, such as Career Services' career planning course, career assessments, or other events sponsored by that department, such as career chats, career fairs, Co-ops, and internships. Andrea likes to encourage internship or Co-op experience because "it's important for the resume." In order to find work after college, experience is key. Advisers know employers are looking for work experience, and the resume is a way for students to show they have what employers are looking for. The resume, loaded with previous work experience, is a symbol of the appropriate identity of the college graduate who is ready for work.

Advising uses a tool to help students decide on a major: the 'What can I do with an X degree?' handout", where X stands for a major within the College of Liberal Arts. For example, the "What Can I Do With An Anthropology Degree?" handout describes anthropology in two paragraphs as the study of what it means to be human, the types of questions anthropology considers, and lists the four fields. The handout then offers three suggestions to "improve your employment or graduate study chances": consider a minor or double major in a

complementary field, learn word processing, database management, and statistics in order to do research on the Internet and extract data, and get "as much experience as you can" by considering internship, Co-op, or independent study options. Next, the handout summarizes the skills and abilities, including project development, interpersonal, research and analysis, and communication skills that are associated with an anthropology degree. The handout identifies careers options in health and human services, research and education, government and public service, and business to pursue, and indicates that "some career options may require additional education and/or training beyond the bachelor's degree." Finally, the handout lists several web sites as "resources for anthropology", including the American Anthropological Association's and the Society for American Archaeology's website[14].

According to the advisers, part of the challenge of advising liberal arts majors is the belief that "you can do anything with a liberal arts degree." Because liberal arts majors give you a wide variety of options in terms of careers, it gets more "confusing" than if one majored in teaching or nursing, as Andrea puts it. The range of options means some students "agonize" over making the major decision, "because they're conflicted", as Irma describes. What advisers see as student distress over major decision-making is a form of dissonance. Liberal arts majors may be appealing, but they are not directly related to what

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[14] Though the advisers provided me with the "What Can I Do With An Anthropology Degree?" handout, I did not see it handed out in any advising sessions, which may be because I did not observe any advising with students interested in anthropology. Nor did I hear about it or see it in my interactions with the anthropology faculty and students, which could mean either they didn't know it existed or it did not register with them as an important or relevant document.

comes after college, whereas teaching or nursing make logical sense. The need for guidance may be related to concerns and insecurities about what comes after college.

Advisers understand there is a belief that the major is matched to a career, and this belief stresses students out because they feel like they need to make the right choice when it is time to decide on a major. Advisers attempt to lessen student anxieties by focusing on what they see as the value of a liberal arts major. Irma says,

> "If a student asks me, what can I do with X degree, I say, what do you want to do? Most people aren't doing what they majored in. There's this notion that there's a 1 to 1 match between the major and the career. The liberal arts are about acquiring skills to you can use in the work environment, be organized, find information, and communicate. I try to help students see the value of a liberal arts education in being an individual in the workplace."

Academic advisers say ultimately it doesn't matter what students major in, because they have the perspective to see that in the long term, a career may not be related to the undergraduate major. But students feel the opposite. In an advising session with Benita Plumber, a senior African American adviser, an undecided white sophomore woman in her early 20s named Marjorie was torn between majoring in biology and business. Marjorie said she wants to be a doctor and she wants to own her own clinic, and she's concerned about majoring in the "right" subject to be admitted to medical school eventually. Marjorie said to Benita, "I feel like I'm making it harder on myself. I know what I want to be, I just don't know what I want to major in." Students seem to have an idea of what they

would like to become, and creating this identity requires streamlining or making consonant the major with the desired career path.

Resolving inner conflict and dissonance plays out in advising sessions, where students have an idea what is practical or "realistic" in terms of careers and how that idea maps onto choosing a major. In an advising session with Irma, an Arab American young woman in her early 20s named Fatima discusses her reasoning for choosing math as a major with the academic adviser:

Irma: What made you decide [to teach] math?

Fatima: I always liked math. I don't think there are careers out there for math by itself. I never thought teaching, but it's the most realistic. There are benefits for teaching.

Irma: Some would say there are things you can do with math. Talk to the faculty. Also, talk to the Career Services Office. There certainly is a need for good math teachers, but don't choose teaching as a default if you want to do something else.

Fatima: I'm doing it because I like teaching students and a secondary license is a lot better for me than elementary.

Irma: Here we feel like we have the option to do math. If you want to be a good math teacher, that's commendable. Do more research to see what excites you.

Irma makes a copy of the math major handout for her; Fatima texts on her phone.

Fatima: I was thinking about actuary science, but I decided on teaching. Is there a minor for psych? Four classes and I get the minor?

Irma: Let me grab that [handout] for you. You probably have 4 years taking spring and summer courses. If it's efficient, take what you need to take. Use the website to explore majors and careers.

Fatima: If I ever decide not to go into teaching, I'd be fine with a math major and psych minor?

Irma: Minors aren't required, but it's easy to work in. Here's my card. Good luck with finals!

Fatima: Yeah, I'm gonna need luck.

In this advising session, the student sees a relationship between a math major and a career in teaching high school math. Knowing there is a relationship between the major and a job assures the student and resolves the dissonance or anxiety she feels. The adviser emphasizes that others (faculty, Career Services) may be able to provide more advice, and that there may be other options that are more appealing, but finding these options and getting more specific advice will take some effort on the student's part.

Some students do have an idea of what they want to do, and choose majors based on these ideas of their future careers, such as being a doctor. Advisers find they have to infuse "reality" into major selection. Andrea says,

> "I want to help students have a balance between reality and career choices. For example, if a student is on probation or has a 2.3 and wants to go to grad school, they might want to consider other options or a Plan B. A lot of students want to go to med school. There's a lot of reality advising. We don't want to discourage but we have to be realistic. Not everyone is meant to be a doctor or a lawyer."

In other words, there may be certain careers for certain types of people, and to some extent, grades determine that career path and that identity.

Parental pressure and other social expectations influence major selection as well. Andrea says about parental pressure:

> "But students are told by parents to make money, students say they want to make money. What about the fit with personality and enjoyment? If you're a lawyer and you hate your job, the money is not worth it. This is a different generation. It's a challenge to see where they're coming from. I grew up to be independent and they

seem to be the opposite. It's fostered in them, they have close ties
to their parents and it ties in to their career choice."

Irma noted that "to some extent, parents drive the major decision. There's a delicate balance to get a job in this economy, and to make your own decisions. Younger students are not as likely to choose anthropology; they're more likely to have parents involved."

Another factor that determines major selection is the path of least resistance. The academic advisers can help students find the fastest way out by matching educational requirements to what students are interested in and what students are willing to take, even though the two are sometimes at odds. In one walk-in advising session, Benita and Miriam, a matter-of-fact Arab American young woman in her early 20s, find a way to fulfill the rest of her requirements in the most efficient manner:

Benita: What brings you in today?

Miriam: I don't know what else to take.

Benita You've got all your distribution requirements done. You
need 12 more elective hours. How about another African Studies
or Sociology class?

Miriam: I like Sociology.

Benita: You could have a Sociology minor with one more course.
What interests you and we'll see if it's open?

Miriam: I'd like to find something during the days I'm already here
for classes. It's hard to come over here for one day for one class.

During another advising event, Lakisha, an African American transfer student in her mid-20s told me what made her decide to come to Neoliberal University: "I used to be a dental assistant and was going to be a hygienist but

classes were eight to five every day. I dropped it and am now going into the elementary education program because sixty two credits transfer. It works for me." The neoliberal imperative to get the degree and get out as quickly as possible plays a part in determining the major to the point that it may restrict or alter career paths.

The advisers see students finding their way to anthropology by taking an introductory course or two to satisfy distribution requirements. Anthropology is a liberal arts discipline that fulfills university requirements, so a student who has taken one or two anthropology classes to satisfy requirements can have a double major or a minor with just a few more classes. Andrea explains,

> "Anthropology is not very restrictive in terms of courses. It's easier to complete the requirements. Sometimes there's parental pressure to double major. I had a student this morning who wanted to go from a double major in bio and psych to psych and anthro. Not because of any love of the subject, but because she was so close to having the major."

Though advisers value anthropology as an interesting and relevant discipline, they are not sure how to conceptualize it as leading to careers or how to advise students beyond choosing classes for the major. They see it, as Irma phrases it, as "abstract" and encompassing "culture and language and race and history and religion." Therefore, beyond the "What Can I Do With An Anthropology Degree?" handout, the advisers say they do not know how to specifically point students to potential careers, salaries, or job outlooks for the field. Advisers see graduate school and teaching as the career path for anthropology majors, and say as much. Advisers do not know what realistic, available, and practical outcomes are for those interested in anthropology.

Advisers direct students to talk to faculty or career services for more information, again, telling student to do more research about the field and take initiative.

Ultimately, the advisers rely on their belief in the value of general liberal arts education. Irma sums up thoughts on the value of liberal arts education:

> "All we can do is talk to students, tell them to stop and think about it, what skills do you need when you go to a job. We rarely get the opportunity to talk to employers. Why do you think we're having you take these classes in the first place? Skills translate, not subject matter. The employer will have to teach you the job. The skills you learn here will mean you have skills to learn the job when you get there. Liberal arts students who stretch themselves will be able to do that. Those things propel you to a higher level. That's all we can do, is tell them what we believe, broaden their perspective and make them feel comfortable with what they're doing."

However, non-specific beliefs and ideas about anthropology lead to non-specific advice for students, which is what produces anxiety for them in a neoliberally-oriented context.

Career Services

Students have the opportunity to, but are not required to, interact with a few other student services departments on campus. Some undecideds take a one-credit career planning class offered by the Career Services department where they explore the relationship between careers and majors and values and motivations that lead to occupations. Barbara Crowe, a white woman in her late 30s dressed in a Neoliberal University button-down shirt says,

> "The class is more about how to research careers, how it's a lifelong process and journey. [The students] have to do informational interviews and they do interest assessments to help them figure out what their skills and values are. They write a paper about what they learned about themselves. They learn about the

career advising resources in the office and on the website. The career decision-making process depends on the person. Some students like to have it all mapped out and some don't."

The course is an opportunity to do some self-exploration with personality inventories. Further, how these personality traits connect with career areas give students higher-level ways of envisioning areas of employment. Using the results of a personality inventory in class, Barbara suggests those that identified themselves as being interested in informing, enlightening, helping, training, developing, curing, and being skilled with words might be interested in socially-oriented majors, such as anthropology, social work, and psychology. Careers associated with this personality type tend to involve working with people, such as helping, curing, and teaching occupations such as counselor, minister, teacher, or principal.

Barbara adds, "I don't track what happens to students after the class ends", so she feels it difficult to know how successful the course is in helping students figure out what they want to major in or what they want to do for work after they leave the university.

Another option for students is Co-op. According to Tracy Tackett, a tall African American woman in her mid-30s, Co-op provides "experience" for "building a resume." Students can either meet with Co-op staff to find out about opportunities, or they can come in with specific ideas about how to get credit and/or pay for work related to their major. Co-op is positioned as the "competitive edge" that will help students stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs after college.

Tracy is sometimes invited to classes to talk about the value of the Co-op experience. She visited Barbara's career planning class to promote Co-op for those that were concerned about finding a job after graduation. Tracy tells students, when she graduated college 20 years ago, nobody was hiring, but she got a job because of her Co-op experience. Roy, a white male student in his early 20s in the class, responded to Tracy's suggestion to find work opportunities by mentioning his internship experience, because "internships were more valuable than coursework, because it solidified what I wanted to do, rather than waste time." Tracy concurred, saying,

> "you could have a wonderful experience and figure out what you want to do for the rest of your life. In this economy, I have more jobs than students. I have jobs from [a major airline], [a local public radio station], the [local professional baseball team]. The experience on your resume will speak volumes for you. Who do you think they're going to hire? I hear a lot of students what they're about to graduate and they need one credit. I can do that. I have jobs that pay $7.40-$17.40 an hour. Science majors get paid more but everything goes in cycles. See the website. There's a section that says what employers are looking for when they hire students."

The way students find out about Co-op opportunities, if they don't find them by doing their own research, is through the professors. Co-op has to have a good relationship with the professors to be able to get to the students. Tracy says, "I try to work with the faculty. Every semester I send them emails requesting the opportunity to speak to students regardless of major. I try to reach them through flyers, emails, presentations. . . . It's not unusual that the anthropology faculty haven't responded." The anthropology faculty may not be responsive to Career Services staff inquiries for many reasons, one of which might be if they do not see how the opportunities are relevant for their students.

In addition, Career Services may not be positioning their services in a way that reaches the faculty. There has to be a meaningful relationship between the Career Services staff and the anthropology faculty in order to get the message to the students. The lack of a meaningful relationship between Career Services staff and anthropology faculty indicates a difficulty communicating with and relating to each other which may indicate differences in their group cultures.

Further, in the current economy, available positions tend to be business-oriented entry-level sales positions, as indicated by Tracy's comments above. Tracy struggles to see the relationship of anthropology to business, and indicate that employers may not make a connection between their businesses and the anthropology major as well. Tracy notes,

> "There's a push for business careers to help people get out of this recession. Things go in cycles. Right now, the sciences are not doing well. I see teaching, humanities, politics, research and development as careers for anthropology majors. There's a list of employers online and some new companies. This may be the summer of communication and writing. Chemistry and bio research positions make $17 an hour. . . . It's competitive. Employers need to consider students majoring in x. Large companies know what they want in terms of majors. Medium to small companies have room to be educated. Now we're going to smaller employers. 90% of employers will take any major in this college. I recommend anthropology majors list their relevant courses, because employers may not know what anthropology is. I encourage employers to come to campus to learn about students. That's the challenge with liberal arts students. Students in business and engineering know exactly what they want. In the liberal arts, they're seen as experimenting. Employers interpret this as anthropology students don't think about careers but business students do. Those that are getting ready to graduate and want some work experience are mostly liberal arts students. In the school of management, Co-op is required. For liberal arts students, you will be more competitive to secure a position with Co-op experience."

Tracy asks, when she goes to classes to explain the benefits of Co-op, "do you want to get a job when you leave here? You will be competing with people with experience." Tracy advises students to get work experience while in school because it is valued by employers.

In addition to Co-op opportunities, College of Liberal Arts students have the opportunity to find paid internships if they are available, or unpaid internships to complement their academic experiences. Some majors require an internship, but most do not. This office caters primarily to those majors that require the internship as part of the major. If the internship is required, then professors and department chairs usually invite the internship coordinator into the class to talk about internship opportunities and promote it to students. This is not the case with anthropology. Joy Davison, a white woman in her early 30s, helps Liberal Arts majors coordinate internship experiences:

> "We typically don't visit anthropology classes. It's not our focus or specialty. We tend not to have anthropology placements on hand. . . . . I'm willing to help any major, but they have to be sold on the idea of an internship. A student would have to have forethought, that this would build their resume up. What I tell them when I go to classes, especially in this economy, you can take 12 credits or 4 internships and build a really good resume. Are they motivated that far in advance to build a really good resume? Someone in charge of the department would have to say it's an option or an adviser would have to talk about it. Or make it a requirement."

Because it is not a requirement for the anthropology major to have work experience, it is not even known as an option, unless students hear about it through other students. However, administrative departments promote to students that work experience during college leads to a greater likelihood of employment.

In order to increase the likelihood of a successful internship, students need to have at least some idea of what they would like to do; they can't come in to the office without any direction. The internship office relies on students to come in with ideas and potential placements. In the current economy, though, placing students in a work situation is more complex than it has been. Joy says:

> "I'm not having trouble placing students but some companies have said no because they've had to let people go and thought it would look bad if they brought in interns. . . .Times are tough. You have to build your resume up to get a better job. There's varied places to get a ton of experience. . . .They say that with a psych degree you're qualified for anything but that's so unspecific. . . . I advise students to do [an internship], and take as many as they possible can to get on their resume."

One anthropology major had an internship at a local museum. Though museum work was not ultimately what she was interested in, it was an opportunity to do work related to anthropology and to make connections in the anthropology community. This example illustrates the difficulties both students and staff face in finding a placement that is appropriate in terms of student interest and relevant work setting.

Other free and open to the public events hosted by the Career Services Department include webinars by popular industry speakers, such as "Hidden Secrets of the Job Market", Career Fairs, and Career Fair Preparation Workshops including Resume Writing, Portfolio Preparation, Resume Review, Mock Interviews, and Business Etiquette Dinners. Additionally, the Career Services offers one-on-one counseling by appointment and Career Advice outreach programs to other departments on campus by request.

Frances Hickox, an African American woman in her early 40s dressed in a smart business suit, facilitates interactions between Career Services, employers, university units, students and alumni. The office's emphasis is on academic success, which includes helping students and alumni find job placements in addition to making sure students achieve success while enrolled in classes. Career Services relies on the departments or individuals to approach them with their needs because the ways they reach out may not be accepted. Though Career Services sees their opportunities as relevant throughout a student's university experience, they acknowledge that they don't quite know how best to reach and support anthropology. Frances notes, "anthropology is not the major that comes on campus for career resources." She explains,

> "The liberal arts mindset is different from the public university which is more pragmatic and focused on careerism. Faculty hate that. It's anathema to them. They are about the love of learning, the life of the mind. There are different cultures in each academic unit and it creates silos. . . . The core values of the campus are rooted in the academic mission. [We] need to be a part and reflect that academic ethos. There shouldn't be a conflict. There is a 'the department can do it better' culture. But each department is different and it's far more effective and productive if we don't have to have [career counseling] in each department. . . . The management school wants their own career services center, but there are not enough students and therefore they're not getting it. If the faculty required students to register, you'd have enough. Build it into the curriculum. They say, 'we're here doing what we love, leave us alone'. . . . How beautiful is it to have a whole group of people who want to help you be the best professional you can be?"

As with the other administrative departments, Career Services sees the opportunity to make a meaningful connection with anthropology but doesn't know how to do it. The current method of mass emailing professors and students once a year doesn't work; perhaps it is the language of the message that is not being

heard, or perhaps the beliefs and values of the administrative and academic departments are too different regarding the importance of career services.

Discussion

The administrative departments are looking for ways to connect with anthropology, but they do not know how to best reach anthropology faculty and students. What they see as the core aspects of anthropology do not fit in with a more neoliberal vision of the relationship between education and work. They see there is a disconnect between their services and what anthropology needs. This disconnect is clear in the differences in language used by academic advisers and career counselors.   An example of this difference is in the emphasis on developing a resume and relevant work experience while in school by academic advisers and career services staff. Developing a resume based on experiential opportunities are consonant with neoliberal beliefs and values about work and careers as outcomes of university education. Those majors that are closely aligned with the neoliberal model benefit by having access to and participation in those networks and communities, as predicted by Costello's theory of identity consonance and dissonance.

The administrative departments' means of advising students about majors or directing them to jobs requires that students have some idea of what they like, what they are good at, and what they can forecast for themselves. This is more straightforward if a student is a business major: they can find a Co-op opportunity in sales or marketing because opportunities as labeled as such, and

it is fairly traditional for these majors to have internships or Co-op experiences while in school. It is more problematic if the student doesn't have an idea that they should have some practical experience to complement their academic activities, if they aren't sure which department can help them, or what it is they can do. Students are tasked with doing more self-searching and looking for information themselves to see what excites them, but students do not think about their skills and interests in the specific terms that match existing labels. For example, students report that the method of searching for the term 'anthropology' as a key word, discipline field, or job descriptor in job databases yielded no results and created frustration.

The way the administrative departments talk about the relationship of the undergraduate major to careers and the acquisition of skills during university years indicates how they have incorporated the values of the neoliberal model into their practices. Advisers have difficulty advising anthropology students as to how to get jobs with the major; career counselors and Co-op and internship staff have difficulty reaching anthropology faculty and students and finding a match with potential employers. It is more difficult to match the anthropology major to careers because there are so many options, and multiple options makes creating a consonant identity and status more difficult.

Students come to advising with neoliberal ideas about efficiency and effectiveness that permeate their educational choices. Students are willing to choose majors based on apparent and likely guarantees of jobs after graduation with the least amount of time and money investment involved. Further, selecting

a major that streamlines the process of finishing college and finding a job resolves some anxiety or dissonance that students may feel. Advisers facilitate efficiency by directing students to time-effective choices. These strategies match with the values of the neoliberal ideology.

Neoliberalism says one gets an education to get a job, and the faster one can get the degree, the faster one can get into the workforce. Being able to get a degree fast means quickly identifying the "right" major and fulfilling educational requirements. In the neoliberal educational system, education prepares one for a professional role as an employee. Motivating and directing one's self to employable ends are valued characteristics. Becoming a more attractive potential employee means having "the degree that distinguishes" and a resume with demonstrable work experience. Being associated with the university and its networks of past graduates and employers means one also belongs in that network, and can contribute to the development of and support other individuals in their career development. Therefore, if one's identity is consonant with neoliberal values, discourses, practices, and objects, one will be successful. Identity dissonance happens when students' internalized personal beliefs about work after university do not align with the educational opportunities available to them. Dissonance and anxiety may impact efficiency by increasing the time it takes to graduate; for example, changing majors or having to repeat courses after transferring means taking more time in school. Further, dissonance or anxiety is reduced if one aligns one's major with a potential career while in school.

The next chapter describes and discusses the values in the academic anthropology department.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: ANTHROPOLOGY FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the group culture of anthropology at Neoliberal University. As previously discussed, the university consists of multiple cultures that may share some, but not all features, values, and meanings (Batteau 2000). The group culture of the Anthropology Department includes the beliefs and values of the professional discipline of anthropology in which the faculty were socialized, and the faculty in turn embody the disciplinary values to the students. Disciplines are "value-laden cultures that frame the beliefs and behaviors of the faculty members" (Austin 1990: 64). The disciplinary values of the Anthropology Department are incorporated by students through participation in the learning environment. How faculty and students negotiate the tensions inherent between beliefs and values of anthropology and the neoliberal beliefs and values of the outside world are discussed.

Anthropology Department

Neoliberal University's Anthropology Department is one of several social science disciplines in a combined department in the College of Liberal Arts. The anthropology faculty offices and student workroom are grouped together in one wing of a Liberal Arts building, and will be considered a department for the purposes of this discussion. The Anthropology Department has approximately forty declared majors on average every year, but is a smaller department

compared to the other liberal arts departments at Neoliberal University. Hundreds of non-majors take anthropology classes to satisfy educational requirements for their chosen majors. The Introduction to Anthropology class is not a prerequisite for upper level anthropology classes, though it does satisfy distribution requirements, so the Intro class tends to have mostly non-majors. Sometimes students who take the Intro class are inspired to declare a major in anthropology.

Among the Anthropology Department's course offerings is an upper-level class designed around topics in applied anthropology, offered yearly for majors and non-majors. In addition, interested students participate in an active Anthropology Club that meets weekly on campus in the student workroom to engage with each other and a faculty adviser on topics related to anthropology.

Before a discussion of faculty and student beliefs and values is a brief summarization of the history of the discipline of anthropology and the development of an anthropology profession.

The Anthropology Discipline

The history of the discipline of anthropology and the development of an anthropology profession provides some insight into what values and beliefs about anthropology are transmitted through anthropology education. Anthropology's "main lines of disciplinary development" shows how the current education and training model for undergraduates developed (Stocking 1992b: 9). The history of the development of the discipline was summarized in Chapter 1; briefly,

anthropology originated as the study of foreign and exotic people, which was then appropriated in the service of colonial administration. During this time, there was no educational foundation to anthropology; it was a "technical skill" (Baba 2009a: 381). An educational strategy to support "colonial ethnography" developed, and from then, anthropology had an academic base from which to operate (Baba 2009a: 382). Once anthropology was a legitimate academic discipline, an academic post became a legitimate profession (Baba 2009a: 382). But once there were not enough academic positions to employ all the academically-educated anthropologists, anthropologists went to industry, and "one discipline" had "multiple professions" (Baba 2009a: 383). The multiple professions create tensions, or, as (Stocking 1992a: 116) has called it, "fragmentation", in the discipline. Of special note is a discussion of the development of the discipline and its relationship to professional training by anthropologist Marietta Baba:

> The term *discipline* . . . concerns the transfer of knowledge and ethics to students in an educational context, while the term *profession* signifies a promise to deliver skills that will enable a practitioner to earn a living through service to others. Most, if not all, professions rely upon disciplines to provide the skills that practitioners offer as a means of earning their living. Thus, many professions rest upon the knowledge and courses of instruction provided to students within disciplines. Disciplines and professions appear to be interdependent in that professions are the means to livelihoods, and disciplines often hold a monopoly on granting credentials that are the gateway to the professions. (Baba 2009a: 380)

There has been much discussion over whether it is useful to distinguish between academic anthropology and practicing anthropology, some of which was summarized in Chapter 1. Though there is no conclusive categorization, the consequences of the tensions show up, for example, in the American

Anthropological Association's Code of Ethics. A Code of Ethics is, in general, a "normative structure" that "embod[ies] a deeper structure of moral (socially constructed) meanings regarding what is "good" or "right" (and, by implication, what is "bad" or "wrong") within a professional context" (Baba 2009a: 385). Further, the American Anthropological Association's Code of Ethics reflects the discourses, values, and norms of the Association's member majority, academics, indicating that the Code may not fully serve the interests of its non-academic members[15] (ibid.) The tensions between academic and practicing anthropology are evident when the Code "does not always recognize the nuances of professional practice in non-academic settings" (ibid.).

Tensions in the discipline are revealed in discussions of anthropological career paths:

> Where is the money? Where are the jobs? Anthropological career paths vary considerably and are largely formed by the realities of the political economy. These choices are usually interpreted as personally constructed. Anthropologists develop rationales for their relationship to the discipline partly based on their underlying interests. They end up acting on these rationales, which result in different career paths associated with different views of the discipline. (van Willigen 2009: 393)

Students who are educated in anthropology may not see the range of options beyond the academy that are available to them. Students see anthropologists as professors, as academics, as employees of the university. Further, those that teach anthropology have been educated and trained in the academy themselves and embody those behaviors and values:

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[15] The Code of Ethics has been undergoing extensive revisions by American Anthropological Association's membership since early 2009 with a goal of completion of May, 2011.

the academic settings in which anthropologists have most traditionally been employed have helped structure the way we do our work, and more particularly how we come to position ourselves in the world of academic work. (Chambers 2009: 375)

In the case of anthropology education, "the discipline [i]s a mechanism of regulation" (van Willigen 2009: 393).

However, the environments that anthropologists operate in have changed. In summary, the academic job market has shrunk, and more anthropologists are primarily employed outside academia. Information and communication technologies have enabled the global spread of the increased neoliberal emphasis on practical training for employment. There has been movement towards releasing some of the tension between the multiple professions recently, as the American Anthropological Association's website has become more robust with career-oriented resources and groups such as CoPAPIA (Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology) "to explore the range of opportunities and challenges the discipline and the AAA face in responding to a major increase in the number of anthropologists employed outside academia" (Bennett 2010: 15). The following sections will discuss how those disciplinary tensions play out for faculty and students in the context of Neoliberal University.

Faculty

> "The core of the discipline should be cultural. It's about being citizens. . . Someone should major in anthropology because it's worth knowing about, it's fun to know about, it makes better citizens. It doesn't necessarily get jobs. You shouldn't be here just to get credentials to get jobs." – Anthropology faculty member

Professor Olsen's office chair creaks as he leans back, stretches his arms up and locks his fingers behind his head. His office door is open to the quiet hallway, signifiying his availability to students or colleagues who may walk by. He muses for a moment in this pose on the question at hand: why should someone major in anthropology? He lowers his arms to rest in his lap and says, "Someone should major in anthropology because it's worth knowing about, it's fun to know about, it makes better citizens. It doesn't necessarily get jobs. You shouldn't be here just to get credentials to get jobs." Professor Olsen's thoughtful statement illustrates the contrast between anthropology education and the neoliberal imperative to get an education to get a job, which will be discussed further below.

Anthropology faculty at Neoliberal University occupy part of an upper-level floor in a four-story office-style building. One wall of the building is all windows, providing natural light into the center of the building. In the Anthropology Department, open office doors along blue-gray carpeted hallways reveal shelves piled high with books and papers. Where staff in administrative offices tend to wear suits, ties, and more formal dark-colored business attire, faculty wear more casual and approachable attire, such as button down shirts and khaki or casual pants. The casual attitude is apparent in the classrooms when teaching: some faculty sit on the desk or lean against the blackboard when teaching, rather than taking a more formal posture, as in sitting behind a desk or standing behind a lectern. In general, the Anthropology Department offices and classes share a collegial and casual atmosphere.

Nine faculty members participated in this study. At the time of this study, the Anthropology Department was in the process of hiring a new full-time faculty member to add to the four existing full-time members, one of whom was also an administrator. There are three male faculty members and six female faculty. One faculty member is African American, one is Arab American, and seven are white. The faculty range in age from late 20s to early 60s. In order to protect the confidentiality of the members of this small group, pseudonyms conceal gender and ethnicity, and some personal details are altered.

Each full-time faculty member has his or her own office with a desk, one or two chairs, bookcases, and file cabinets; part-time faculty members shared a common office large enough to accommodate four desks, five tall bookcases, and two desktop computers. Large posters displaying local activist and art events from years past serve as both announcements and decorations on the walls.

This is a relatively new location for the Anthropology Department. Professor Kimble, a faculty member who says he has been around for a long time, fondly recalls their old location as "an anthropology space" where students and faculty could interact and spend time together in a room with a couch, a kitchenette, tables, and mailboxes. Professor Kimble says, "A space like that draws people together." Though there is a student workroom and an anthropology lab in the current departmental setting, these rooms are not generally open and unlocked during university operating hours for students and

faculty to spend time in, and Professor Kimble thinks the lack of common space inhibits faculty and student interaction.

Interaction, therefore, takes place in classrooms and offices. Especially for the part-time faculty, who may only spend an hour a week in the part-time faculty office, the classroom is the place where they connect with students. Professor Dennard says she can "see the lights go on" for her students when she teaches her anthropology classes. This is true for all of the faculty, who say they teach because they like the subject matter and they like exposing students to the concepts of anthropology, and it gives them a sense of accomplishment when students engage with the subject matter, when they ask questions in class, when their stereotypes are challenged, or when they debate topics in small groups. Professor Breen reports that some students will declare or change their majors just two weeks into the semester because they fall in love with the subject matter.

However, a negative aspect of limited interaction with students is that faculty may not have enough contact with students to develop a deeper relationship, which may impact the amount of time available for talking about anthropology careers. In addition to introductory and lower-level general anthropology classes such as History of Anthropology or Anthropological Theory, faculty may teach upper-level specialized classes, such as archaeology or linguistics, and these specializations may limit their ability to spend time on subjects that are beyond the scope of the class. They may not be able to talk about fieldwork opportunities or careers in anthropology because they need to cover the essential content of the subject. Faculty talk about different areas of

anthropology, such as education, archaeology, conservation, museum work, and non-profits as examples of the kinds of work one can do with an anthropology background. Some faculty show the "Anthropology: Real People, Real Careers" DVD from the American Anthropological Association in class, or they bring in guests to speak to their classes. But often, the subject matter of the classes does not correlate directly to jobs, and it is difficult to link classroom content to jobs because, as Professor Olsen says, "the jobs are not dictated by the field." Professor Dennard is hesitant to advise about anthropology graduate school or job prospects because, she says bluntly, "there are no jobs." Instead, faculty say they tell students to think about how they can work anthropology along with some other interests to create a job for themselves. In her classes, Professor Dennard focuses on topics of race and ethnicity in schools, and politics, because she sees these as relating to what students currently face or will face in their jobs or family lives. Faculty may talk about people they know who are employed in fields other than teaching by way of example, but explicit connections about jobs for anthropology majors and how to get them are not made.

Faculty note they feel there is not enough time or resources to do all the things they would like to do. Most faculty, in addition to teaching responsibilities, serve on committees and have other projects that take time and effort, such as preparing publications or consulting on external projects. There is a sense of being pressed for time among the faculty, where faculty pop in and out of meetings, try to grab lunch or bathroom breaks in between meetings and classes, or ask colleagues questions on the run.

The faculty talk about creating good citizens. Professor Kimble says, "The focus of the discipline here has been less on directing students to careers and more on how anthropology makes for citizenship, national or global. How does one become an aware citizen and have a larger vision." Professor Sievers says, "They will be an employee and a professional and a citizen. They will not simply be their jobs." The good citizen is an example of an identity that is appropriate for an anthropology graduate, and this ideal is what should be created through the process of education, from faculty perspectives.

Being a good citizen means, in part, having broad skills. The skills critical to anthropology are, Professor Sievers animatedly says, being able to

> "go beyond conventional and ordinary thinking . . . you can think creatively and critically and problem solve. You will have the knowledge to analyze problems in their social, historical, and cultural context. You will learn how to communicate orally and in writing, visually and through other means. With that, you will be prepared for whatever you decide to do in the course of your career."

Professor Breen also talks about broad skills. She says, "At the B.A. level, you're acquiring skills that can be used anywhere, such as communication, writing, speaking . . . you learn ways to gather and analyze data." Professor Allan describes "one of the things from anthropology, how to do research, is a skill a lot of jobs need: how to gather information, trust, summarize, figure out theses." Because these skills are rather general, it be difficult for students to articulate these as the core skills they bring to any work situation, as neoliberalism emphasizes a more direct relationship between education and work. Professor Professor Allan sums it up: "[anthropology] education doesn't provide us with

practical skills for getting jobs, but on the other hand, we have a lot of skills that make us good at the jobs we get."

Faculty try to emphasize developing these broad skills in their courses. Professor Sievers says, "I try to give students as much public speaking and writing opportunities as possible." Professor Kimble has students develop writing portfolios. Professor Dennard has students work in small groups because it "makes them responsible." Professors Breen and Mahone have students give presentations. The emphasis is on communication, writing, and presentation skills.

Developing anthropology skills tends to get associated with following a graduate school path and an academic trajectory. Professor Sievers points out that a competitive funded summer field research opportunity for students "gives them a step up for grad school" because it is a specific anthropology experience that is valued by other anthropologists. Some anthropology students are offered student mentor positions, a minimum-wage job where they assist the professor with teaching, grading, and exam preparation activities. These anthropology opportunities associated with pay are experiences that are most directly related to graduate-level anthropology and reinforce the idea of an academic anthropology path.

Professor Kimble notes that though, for the most part, one does have to go to graduate school to find an anthropology job, "it's ridiculous to think you're training people to go to grad school." Professor Mahone concurs, saying gently,

> "I don't see my job as creating Ph.D.s in anthropology, though I like having a Ph.D. in anthropology and doing what I do. My

> contribution, and the discipline's contribution, is not necessarily that anthropology is a major that leads to a Ph.D. but it's a good liberal arts major with a broad education. I really believe in a liberal arts education. . . . You're exposed to many different things but you have some depth."

The very nature of anthropology education seems to be conflicted: the goal of anthropology is to educate students to think broadly, not to put them on a specific career path. But by instilling a love for anthropology and an interest in anthropology as a career, graduate school is a likely next step, even though professors aren't intending to direct students to graduate school.

The faculty do see the current economic challenges facing their students particularly in this region at this time, and hope that the value of anthropology is still apparent to them even when faced with difficult economic choices. Professor Sievers comments that "many students are leaving the state for jobs. It's scary." Professor Allan sees that "students are worried about jobs because of the economic crisis." Professor Mahone notes that two students recently left Neoliberal University because their husbands moved out of state for work, and one student transferred to another university because the scholarship was better. Professor Mahone says,

> "It's different to be a student now. It's hard to finish without debt. It's always there, and students think about it consciously and worry about it, or take it as a fact of life. Or, they think, if I go into debt, I need skills that will help me get out of debt eventually. The cost of the degree impacts the choice of degree. A junior said to me yesterday that people are choosing based on what it will do for them."

Students who choose a major based on "what it will do for them" are following the neoliberal assumption that their education will get them a job. Professor Allan

advises students to "follow your passion" and "find your life's work", but these broad suggestions may be too overwhelming for students who are more concerned with just starting out and who may not have a long-term perspective on a career rather than immediate employment. Their suggestions and strategies could be seen as not explicit enough to help a student who feels the need for a guarantee that she or he will be able to find a job with an anthropology degree.

Students

> *"I would be considered a sell out, and I would consider myself a sell out, if I took a job in pharmaceutical sales." – Anthropology student*

A small but brightly lit conference room hosts an informal gathering for an anthropology faculty job candidate, and students and faculty take the opportunity to get to know her through casual conversation. The candidate, a white woman in her early 30s, asks an Arab American young woman in her early 20s named Ghausia what she is interested in. Ghausia replies, "I'm going to be in school for a while because I'm interested in medical anthropology, but I don't know about what kinds of jobs are out there." The candidate suggests pharmaceutical sales as a way to combine her knowledge of health systems with an actual employment opportunity. Ghausia says casually, "I would be considered a sell out, and I would consider myself a sell out, if I took a job in pharmaceutical sales." This off-the-cuff statement reveals worlds about what this student thinks is appropriate for an anthropologist and what is not. Clearly are some types of

work that are appropriate for anthropologists, and some types of work that seemingly go against the central principles of anthropology. This student's ideas about what it means to have an identity as an anthropologist shows that sales is not considered appropriate anthropological work. Students' beliefs and values regarding anthropology are discussed further below.

Twelve anthropology majors consented to be interviewed for this study. Most were recruited through their participation in the Anthropology Club, and a few were recruited in upper-level classes. These students range from being a second-semester freshman to being seniors about to graduate. Two students are male, ten are female, one is African American, and ten are white. All names have been changed and some personal details have been altered to protect confidentiality. In addition, some students were observed in departmental and general social environment activities. These students are not counted among the study population as they were not interviewed, though they were made aware that research was being conducted and they were being observed in that setting.

Students are drawn to Neoliberal University because it is an affordable, conveniently located four-year university. Many live at home and commute to school to save money. At Neoliberal University, students involved in the Anthropology Club are interested in the subject matter of anthropology. They watch the History Channel, Travel Channel and National Geographic Channel; they read anthropological or archaeological fiction; they have a deep interest in science, stories, and exotic travel. They either know about anthropology from various sources before arriving at the university, or they are exposed to it as a

general education requirement and fall in love with it. They are able to pick up the anthropology major in the course of their education because they have taken so many credits in anthropology and it is interesting and close enough to their other interests. A double major is an advantage because it literally does not cost too much more. Students say they might as well get a double major or minor in anthropology because it complements other majors, so students see anthropology as adding value to their undergraduate education, but they do not necessarily see it as a career or as relating to work outside the university.

Though anthropology is an interesting area of study, there is no connection to paid employment. Violet Isaacson, a white second semester freshman in her early 20s who transferred to Neoliberal University, explained her attraction to anthropology by saying, "it's not about money or job security. . . It's not about a career—it's about satisfying an interest." Students are not sure how anthropology will apply to their lives beyond the university. Clyde Packard, a white junior in his very early 20s said, "it's useful and interesting but not relevant." Serena Battle, an African American junior in her early 30s, said: "I don't see anthropology playing a huge role in my future. It gives me a background and a perspective." The implicit statement is that anthropology is merely interesting and is therefore secondary to something that is more valuable.

There is not a lot of talk about careers for anthropologists in classes, and there is not widespread information about what to do with anthropology in terms of a job. Students are aware of general fields of opportunities, such as development anthropology, museum work, and archaeology. Clyde says the

only career he knows of is working for the US military in intelligence. Another white junior in his early 20s, Travis Meeks, says employers "ask what anthropology is." Students say they know that some employers don't know what anthropology is, which immediately creates a barrier when looking for employment.

For questions about employment, students could turn to the resources on campus outside of the department of anthropology, but students do not have a connection with Career Services. If students have even heard of Career Services, they don't see Career Services as a helpful resource on campus. Students have either had a negative experience with Career Services, where they attended a presentation that wasn't useful for them, or they tried to get some help with a resume or the online jobs search tool but found the assistance unsatisfactory, or students have heard from others that Career Services' advice is not specific to anthropology students. Kathleen Desmond, a white senior in her early 20s, says she "asked for help from Career Services on her resume, but everybody tells you something different. I wouldn't go back. It's not necessary. They weren't that helpful." Travis says, "Career Services came to a class, and I've seen their handouts, but there's nothing pertaining to anthropology."

In general, undergraduate students are focused on the here and now, consisting of what assignments are due this week, and not thinking too far ahead in terms of work or their future lives. The present, with its papers and exams and grades and cost of living is what is in focus. Clyde puts it succinctly: "I have a test later today, so pondering my future only goes as far as 9pm tonight." Travis

too says, "Right now I'm just focusing on this summer and graduating. I haven't thought that far ahead. My biggest concern as a student is getting assignments done on time." Rhonda Anders, a white junior in her mid-30s, says "I'm overwhelmed but I focus on what's going on now."

The economy is a factor that constrains some decisions, such as staying close to home or looking out of state for the future, or putting off graduate school for a while because of the cost, and students make practical decisions based on their economic calculations. Rhonda, who works several part time jobs and cares for an elderly parent, worries that "my car is falling apart. Am I going to have to quit school?" Clyde, who wants an internship in politics to help him cement his academic future as a lawyer, says

> "Now I'm taking two classes a semester and avoiding repaying loans by taking more classes. . . I'm well into debt. . . I don't see myself being able to pay it off right away or ever. I'm looking at internships but they cost money. . . I'll make a decision based on what I can afford to pay."

Students in the anthropology program learn that graduate school in anthropology is a necessary next step if they want to go into anthropology. Further, going into anthropology seems to mean going into an academic career. In fact, Clyde reports, "anthropology isn't very good unless you're going into academics." Some students see graduate school as the logical next step and some see it as a fall back plan, if they can't get a job doing what they want, such as museum work or development anthropology with their degree. Rhonda, who loves going to school, asks, "I'm assuming I need to go to graduate school. No one's going to hire an anthropologist with a Bachelor's degree. . . Why major in

anthropology if I'm not going to do something with it?" Serena wants to "do research and I'd like to be a professor and work at a university" so she knows she has "to get advanced degrees to further my career." Clyde reported that one professor said "the point of anthropology is to do research and come back and teach it", reinforcing the idea of the academic career path for anthropologists.

One option for paid employment for select students is to become a mentor. Ten years ago the Anthropology mentoring program was created, a minimum wage job that allows students to take on a professor-like role and help other students. Mentors are used by faculty primarily in large introductory-level classes to create extra credit assignments, grade assignments, and lead study groups. As Professor Kimble described it, "It is not a teaching assistant position but it bridges the age gap between professor and student. Mentors tend to be the core of the Anthro club." The mentor position appeals to students because it is a paid position and it gives them experience that can be applied towards being a teaching assistant in graduate school.

Mentors take on the behaviors of the professor in the classroom. In one classroom interaction, Professor Palmer left her mentor in charge while she gave the students a short writing assignment and left the room for a few minutes. Travis, the mentor, was dressed in khaki pants and a blue button-down shirt and clearly looked more professionally dressed than the students in the class who tended towards sweatshirts and sweatpants. Once Travis was the only authority figure in the room, he looked around the class slowly, walked up to the desk at the front of the room, sat on the corner, crossed his arms, and looked sternly at

the students.   A student came in late, so Travis explained the assignment to her. The students scribbled away on paper as Travis looked on. Travis said to the class, "When you're done, pass your papers up." Another student came in as Travis collected the papers. The student asked if they were handing in the assignment that was due today. Travis explained the current writing assignment again and said, "since I'm more forgiving Professor Palmer, I'll let you do it. I had to write a 4-5 page paper on this topic when I took this class--you guys are lucky." Travis's tone and demeanor expressed to the students that he has taken on a sense of identity as a professor. As a student privileged by experience and responsibility, Travis shows that he can act like a professor and look like a professor; he has internalized a version of a consonant personal and professional identity.

Discussion

In the academic department of anthropology at Neoliberal University, faculty model what it means to be teachers and scholars for the students. Faculty draw from their own experiences as anthropologists to advise students about work and careers, which, as Professor Allan says, leaves her "ill-equipped to help students who didn't want to become academics." Students are socialized in the culture of anthropology by the faculty in the learning context. As students develop meaningful relationships with faculty through coursework, mentorship opportunities, advising, and participation in the Anthropology Club, they pick up more of the academic beliefs and values that influence their thinking about graduate school and/or the role anthropology will play in their lives beyond the

university. For example, Professor Sievers says, "The values of anthropology, as I see them, are to promote democracy, tolerance of difference, fight racism, and be an advocate for those at the bottom. I push non-profits and education. If you're going to get your Ph.D., pick up as many technical skills as you can because the world has a peculiar idea of what anthropology is." Academically-trained faculty embody the culture of the academic profession for the students they teach, and these values, beliefs, and practices are part of the anthropology education the students receive, whether the faculty intend to do so or not: "faculty not only produce knowledge but transmit culture as they educate young people" (Austin 1990: 62).

Students want to see what jobs might be available to anthropology majors. Several students asked me in the course of their interviews what kinds of jobs are available for anthropology majors. Violet says, "I know what archaeologists do, and that anthropologists live among the people they study, but what kinds of jobs do they get?" It is in this contradictory context where beliefs about what is an appropriate anthropology identity are navigated, including accepting or resisting the idea of academic anthropologist as an ideal of what one wants to be.

Professor Olsen told the following story on several occasions: A guest presenter, talking about careers in this economy, who pointed to a young woman in the audience and asked "What do you want to do?" The young woman answered, "I want to be a development anthropologist." The presenter said in response, "Then you'll be making about seven thousand dollars a year!" From

this presenter's perspective, a low salary is not an incentive to choose a career path. However, an identity as a development anthropologist incorporates the good citizen ideal that the anthropology faculty hope is the outcome of an anthropology education. In addition, development anthropology includes many of the exciting aspects of anthropology: travel, exotic locations, solving problems, meeting new people and experiencing foreign cultures. These aspects of identity are more valued than a particular salary level. However, a four-figure salary is less than ideal to the neoliberally-oriented. For the student, choosing a career path that provides a valued anthropology identity and status is more important than an identity associated with a higher salary.

In an Anthropology Club meeting, where students were casually hanging out in the student workroom during their weekly meeting time, Arthur Baggs, a white anthropology major in his mid40s returning to school as part of his soon-to-expire employer benefits, told the story of his wife who had a conversation with another mom who had a degree in anthropology. In her senior year she found out that she could make thirty thousand dollars a year with her degree if she wanted to teach. She went into Human Resources instead and is making four times that amount. In this scenario, the status and identity associated with a higher salary is more valued than the status associated with the lower salary and identity as anthropology teacher. The status and identity of anthropologist is different than the status and identity of other more neoliberal career options.

In summary, anthropology faculty focus on the core concepts in anthropology, not careers in anthropology. Career-related topics are not

explicitly taught, but there is some abstract talk about the types of work anthropologists can do and the types of jobs anthropologists can get. When asked to choose a day when discussion of career-oriented topics could be observed in their classes, faculty could not pick a particular day and time they addressed the subject. Non-academic career-oriented values, behaviors, and practices may not be explicit enough to reach the students. Students need to see it and experience it to make sense of it.

Current anthropology students are present-oriented, focused on the tasks at hand associated with college, and concerned with the costs associated with going to school. They are drawn to anthropology because it is interesting, not because it provides any ideas about future careers. In addition, there is no connection to the Co-op, internship, or career services offices. Students either don't know about these resources because they don't hear about them from faculty, or they have a negative perception of them. They report they don't see those departments as having any relevance to anthropology.

Students see a real difference between following a passion, and doing something that will provide enough money to support themselves. But students experience anxiety about money anyway, because they are hoping to find a meaningful and interesting outcome of their anthropology education in the form of a job. They say they think they won't make any money doing anthropology, but they still need to make enough to support themselves. They worry about being able to afford homes of their own, being able support their own families, and whether they will find a job at all. They are not sure how to find out what they

can do with anthropology. Connections aren't made for them. They know anthropology is useful, but they don't know how to articulate its usefulness specifically, and the inability to articulate the skills of anthropology makes it difficult to see the job opportunities that relate to anthropology. They know they have a beneficial perspective, they know how to do research and write and analyze data, but they don't have a way of relating those skills to jobs, and they all experience some anxiety about this uncertainty, perhaps because the cannot envision a consonant identity and status that both incorporates the ideals of anthropology and neoliberalism.

Students do have the hope, realistic or not, that if they do what they love, everything will fall into place. They would tell others to major in something that interests them and follow their passion. They say it is not worth it to make money, a neoliberal value, but be miserable by not following your passion. At the same time, students have to resolve the dissonance produced by the imperatives to find one's passion and make enough money to support themselves. Somehow, students have to reconcile passion with practicality, and this is a process of creating a consonant identity and status.

The next chapter describes and discusses recent graduates' reflections on the relationship their undergraduate anthropology education has to their work and career experiences.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS: GRADUATES

*"People who are really interested in anthropology aren't interested
in money" – Anthropology graduate*

Introduction

The quotation above, taken from an interview with an anthropology graduate of Neoliberal University, is a statement about her beliefs regarding the identity and status of anthropology. This person sees anthropology as a noble pursuit that is not valued or valuable in terms of its monetary reward, and further, that there is a unique type of person that is suited to pursuing a subject and kind of work that does not come with a high salary. For this individual, choosing anthropology meant not choosing better-paid, neoliberally-prioritized options. Choosing to pursue academic anthropology is consonant with her beliefs about the meaning and value of work, and reflects who she would like to be.

This section presents the findings from interviews with six graduates of Neoliberal University between 1998-2008 with a bachelor's degree in anthropology. Of the three men and three women, four are employed full-time, one is completing a master's degree in another field, and three are in the process of applying to graduate school. These six graduates are presented as individual cases, as each is able to reflect on the relationship of their anthropology degree to finding a job. All names have been changed and some personal details altered to protect confidentiality. Each case illustrates aspects of how identity

dissonance are resolved, which may have implications for the discipline of anthropology more broadly.

Graduates

Wes

Wes Wheaton is a white male, 30 years old, with a quick smile and a relaxed demeanor. He graduated from Neoliberal University in 2001 with a double major in psychology and anthropology. In high school, Wes knew he wanted to be a psychologist or psychiatrist, but the mechanics of getting there (taking subjects that didn't appeal to him) diverted him from that career path. He ended up majoring in psychology anyway, because he fulfilled the requirement for a certain number of credits. What really ended up interesting him was anthropology. Wes saw that his Introduction to Anthropology professor had a good time teaching the class, and it was the classroom experience with this professor that kept him hooked. Wes ended up taking seven classes with this particular instructor. Upon graduation, he was able to get a job, he says, because "he wore a suit and the other candidate didn't." Wes recalled that he always had to explain what anthropology was, and that ultimately it didn't matter what his degree was in. Interviewers said it didn't matter; it was more important that he looked the part. Wes said, "I probably would have gotten the job with any degree. Employers look for someone who interviews well, who can put together a resume and cover letter the right way. You have to be polished and put together." Currently, Wes is satisfied with his job in export compliance. He

makes enough money that he feels that he would be "foolish" to pursue something else, even though the work itself is not appealing or what he thought he'd be doing.

Interestingly, Wes found a way to reconcile his interest in the subject of anthropology with his current position. He draws upon his anthropology background as a means to better understand cultural issues within export compliance, and he makes a six-figure salary. Wes made a consonant identity for himself by understanding his anthropology background in a way that makes sense for his job, without having to have an advanced degree in anthropology or a job labeled anthropologist.

Thomas

Thomas Stone graduated in 2008. He a white male in his early 20s but looks much younger, and is shy and serious. As a student, he was a mentor for several semesters, did a field school, and applied to several top tier graduate schools but was not accepted. He ultimately wants to teach or do state archaeology but is not sure where or what to specialize in. He currently is working in retail making eight dollars an hour to support himself and his new family, and is frustrated by the lack of jobs available to him. He describes his struggle to find jobs appropriate for his level of experience, self-described as "none", and level of education self-described as "overqualified." He feels that the level of compensation is not appropriate for someone with his education, but lack of experience may be holding him back from other opportunities. He noted

bitterly that "the [anthropology] major doesn't do much unless you have a master's degree." Any position he would be interested in requires a master's degree or two years' experience, and he currently has neither. Thomas found few job-hunting strategies that were relevant to him as an anthropology graduate. He tried using Neoliberal University's online career portal, but searching for terms such as 'anthropology', 'environmental', or 'forestry' yielded nothing. Neither did searching monster.com nor attending Neoliberal University's career fairs for liberal arts students. In frustration, Thomas called these career resources "useless." Thomas knows that anthropology is a valuable foundation, but struggles to relate his education to the existing job market:

> "Anything can tie into an anthro major, like customer service, what different people want, knowing how people work and what they're interested in. Retail is more cultural anthro than anything else. This is not what I would have wanted to do in between schools. I could be building towards something. There's a lot of different things I could be doing. It's not much use for my degree. I'm half joking. You're not making any money as an anthropologist. Professors don't make any money. The interest is in doing it, and there's not a whole lot of information on how to go about it."

Instruction or direction on "how to go about" finding a job or a track for his anthropological interests would have been useful as a new graduate, according to Thomas.

Thomas is struggling to reconcile his beliefs about what his degree is worth in terms of a job and monetary compensation. Neoliberalism pressures him to have a job related to his education. His interest in anthropology leads him to graduate school to pursue a career in anthropology. Thomas is experiencing identity dissonance while

attempting to make his identity consonant with both his neoliberal and anthropological ideals.

Imani

Imani King, a straightforward African American woman, graduated in 2008 at 33 and wants to get a M.A. and Ph.D. in anthropology so she can do research and teach. Her goal is to travel for research and live outside the United States for about half the year. She came back to school to get her undergraduate degree after taking a buyout from an automotive company, where she worked on an assembly line and made a six-figure salary. Imani says anthropology is "her passion", and giving up a good job with a decent salary was a small sacrifice to be able to have the opportunity to follow her interests. She feels that she is better off with the intrinsic rewards of an academic career path rather than what she sees as the pressure from society to "make sure you have a certain income." However, she doesn't want to waste time taking unnecessary classes or figuring out what she wants to do, since she already knows what she wants. She has a vision for herself as a teacher and researcher. She is currently looking for loans and funding for her graduate education. Imani said, in a matter-of-fact manner, "it's not about making a lot of money," referring to her desire to pursue an academic anthropology career.

Imani finds the value of pursuing an academic anthropology career to be a greater reward than a high salary. Personal satisfaction is more important than money. Though neoliberal values emphasize salaried employment, Imani found

her previous work experience unfulfilling despite the six-figure salary and chose a new path. She sees academics as "open-minded and focused on their lives having meaning and being happy" and wants that for herself, which meant leaving her previous work situation and pursuing a Ph.D. Further, Imani sees rejection of neoliberal values as a significant aspect of her identity, viewing academic anthropologists as those who ostensibly eschew the more pecuniary characteristics of work. Imani has resolved identity dissonance by choosing to pursue a career path where salary is not as important as personal freedom and intellectual satisfaction.

Emilie

Emilie Bowers, a slender white woman in her early 30s, graduated in 1998 and changed majors several times before settling on anthropology because of the "cultural appeal." She participated in the Anthropology Club at Neoliberal University, she was a mentor in the mentoring program, and she published an article with a professor. She found a research job out of state affiliated with a university. She had planned to do a Ph.D. but was intimidated by the application process and what current anthropology graduate students were saying about their experiences with their graduate program, which was mostly negative. She thought "it would take so long to do a Ph.D., I'd be old when I was done." Because she was working and making enough money to support herself on her own, graduate school wasn't a priority. Emilie wishes she had gone directly to graduate school after undergrad, because the momentum would have kept her

going. She had "a great and close relationship with professors. They pushed me to do the Ph.D. They believed in me. I wish they had said, if you don't pursue the Ph.D., these might be your options. I think they'd be disappointed to find out I didn't go to grad school." She moved back to Michigan a few years ago and worked various jobs part time until a research job opened up, where she is currently. She is "grateful" for the anthropology major because it "opened my eyes to the world" but in terms of finding jobs, she says she must "rely on skills I gained in previous jobs" and "as far as my career goes, I depend on my experience." She jokes that anthropology is "completely worthless", but she explains that she thinks "anthropology majors can do anything" and would advise students to "maybe have two majors: something you love and something more practical" because having a passion does not guarantee a job.

Though Emilie was attracted to graduate study in anthropology and an academic anthropology career, ultimately she chose not to pursue an advanced degree because the post-baccalaureate educational path did not seem as rewarding as working. The subtle pressure from her anthropology professors to pursue the Ph.D. conflicted with her fears about graduate school, and produced some identity dissonance. Emilie resolved the identity dissonance because she finds fulfillment in her research job without a Ph.D., and is confident that years of experience speak louder than additional degrees for her career path.

Jane

Jane Byrd, an outgoing and chatty white woman in her mid 30s, graduated with her bachelor's degree in anthropology in 2005. She fell in love with anthropology when she first started her undergraduate education eleven years earlier, in 1994. She never made a plan to use anthropology professionally. The subject matter captured her interest even though "everyone said you won't make any money, but that didn't matter." Anthropology was something she studied part-time while working full time, but Jane sees how anthropology relates to her current job. She says "my anthropology background definitely helped me get the perspective and research methods. It prepared me to think I can do this." However, she had to learn how to talk about the relevance of anthropology without talking too much about anthropology: "I don't say 'anthropology' when I talk about my background, because they think it means digging in the dirt . . . I learned how to describe what makes me a good employee, and how to sell myself." She says that when she interviewed, her employer asked, how does your schooling prepare you for a job like this?, and she talked about "culture and communication and interpersonal skills" which were relevant to the IT field. Jane summarizes her thoughts about the anthropology major: "the major is not responsible for any successes I've had, but it leads to opportunity."

Jane already had a job when she decided to go back to school. She "wasn't going to school to make money" and her decision to major in anthropology was not related to how she saw her employment. Anthropology simply was interesting. Her prior work experience taught her that she needed to relate her subject of study to her place of employment, and she learned to talk

about anthropology in terms meaningful to her employer. She is interested in eventually pursuing a Ph.D., and she sees anthropology as an intellectual interest that she can take the time to satisfy because she has paid employment. Like Wes, Jane has made a consonant identity for herself by interpreting her anthropology background in a way that makes sense for her job and by viewing her paid employment as a necessary means to be able to develop her intellectual interest.

Ed

Ed Moore, a thoughtful white male in his mid-to-late 40s who graduated in 2006, had a full time job and a family while he was in school. He found that to advance in his current full-time job or to find a better job, he would need an advanced degree. He saw the anthropology Ph.D. as an appropriate track if one wanted to be a professor and do research, but he felt he had to choose a career path that would help him support his family: "I didn't envision this current job as where I would end up. I wanted to be the guy in the field digging up bones or finding fossils. . . . Circumstances prevented me from going for an M.A. or Ph.D. in anthropology. It was either/or. I had to support my family. I just bought a house and a car and I have kids in school. I had to take what was available to me." Ed feels that "there should have been more emphasis on what you can do with anthropology. It wasn't touched on. I learned it on my own by interviewing." Ed had to learn to relate anthropology to the policy jobs he was applying for: "I became well-versed in trying to explain it and how it relates to that job. . . .

Interviewers are looking for a specific type of candidate with an experience and background base. When they ask me how I got into public policy, I say anthropology helped me understand numbers, patterns, and trends." Ed credits anthropology with making him a "better employee", but says "anthropology may not be the best ticket to lead to a company." Ed says the "burden" from the anthropology degree is the responsibility to educate potential employers about the value of an anthropology background in addition to having relevant work experience. He worries about advising his college-age son about choosing a major: "What do I tell him? [Anthropology] is a great field to learn in but you'll forever be explaining it to people. Or skip all that and get an accounting degree."

Ed's interest in furthering his career meant choosing an advanced degree in a field that he thought employers would recognize. Though he remains interested in anthropology and sees the importance of his anthropological background to the type of work he wants to do, he feels an advanced degree in anthropology would put him on an academic employment trajectory and limit his options in business and his potential salary. For Ed, choosing a business-oriented degree is a way to reduce his identity dissonance. Further, he predicts similar identity dissonance for his son: if his son wants to go into a business field, a business-oriented university degree will be a more direct path.

These cases show how individuals address identity dissonance and create identity consonance for themselves in terms of their anthropology backgrounds and current employment. The discussion that follows takes the cases together to look at larger patterns.

Discussion

The graduates each had to find ways of resolving conflicting beliefs and ideas about anthropology and work. Graduates felt there was a choice to make between making money and following their interest or their passion. Though some may leave higher-paying unfulfilling jobs to pursue anthropology beyond the bachelor's degree, some leave anthropology behind in order to better support themselves and their families. There seems to be a belief that anthropology means you have to be cash poor to be intellectually fulfilled, and graduates either choose to make money or pursue the intellectual interest. Further, there seems to be a belief that choosing a lower-paying anthropology career is more prestigious for an anthropology identity. Earning more money is contrasted with the internal rewards and prestige that could come from following a desire for a more meaningful but lower paying type of work. Graduates do not seem to see an option to do both. This belief may be a result of the academic model of anthropology that may be unconsciously perpetuated in academic departments. Good students tended to be mentors and were encouraged to present research, publish research papers, and apply to graduate schools. Those who took on more academic characteristics as students felt more torn about whether to pursue advanced anthropology studies as graduates. It seems there is an unconscious expectation for good students to go to graduate school and become academics, not to go outside of academia to find jobs after graduation.

Graduates found it is relevant experience, not the anthropology degree, that gets one a job. For jobs outside of academia, it is not the content of anthropology that is important or relevant, it is the contributions anthropology makes, or the skills one acquires through the study and application of anthropology, that are important. In fact, the very word "anthropology" can deter some employers because they don't know or understand what it is, or they have a misperception of what it is. Talking about anthropology on a job interview can confuse or alienate the interviewer because of the stereotypes associated with it, such as Indiana Jones, Lara Croft, or Bones, to use some modern examples. Taking time to explain what anthropology is can detract from the more important points to cover in a job interview, such as previous experience. In order to relate one's undergraduate degree to the job, one has to talk about the skill set that comes from the study of anthropology that makes one a great employee. As an example of this practice, anthropologist Cris Johnsrud discusses how she has had to "recast" herself with the skills of "a planner, organization analyst, evaluator, or other title" in order for the general public or, in her case, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, to "walk away with an appreciation of the relevance of anthropology to the world in which they live and work" (1999: 244).

Being able to talk about the anthropology skill set is only developed with practice, over time, and in context. Newer graduates both struggle with understanding their skill set and being able to communicate it effectively to potential employers, and being able to see the available entry-level opportunities

as related or appropriate for an anthropology degree holder. This indicates there could be the opportunity to develop these skills while still in school in order to facilitate finding a job upon graduation, if that is the path the graduate wants to take.

The lack of job-hunting skill development points to the misalignment between anthropology and career resources. Graduates did not use the career services on campus while a student or as alumni because they didn't see Career Services as useful or relevant. There is opportunity to change that perception.

Ultimately, graduates say that in their experience, it doesn't matter what the degree is. Getting a job can boil down to previous experience and employer expectations. As Wes said, he got the job because he wore a suit, a symbol of an appropriate identity as serious and worthy job candidate, to the interview, and the other candidate didn't.

Anthropology graduates have to reconcile identity dissonance for themselves in terms of what they think is prestigious, valuable, and rewarding employment. The next chapter concludes the research by answering the aims of the study, discussing the implications and the limitations of the study, and future directions for research.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Undergraduate Anthropology Education in the Neoliberal Era

The purpose of this study was to attempt to understand how undergraduate anthropology education fits in the neoliberal era. In order to develop that understanding, it was necessary to investigate the subject from the perspectives of those involved in the process of undergraduate anthropology education: academic advisers, and career counselors and staff, faculty, current students, and recent graduates.

The neoliberal orientation of the global work environment tasks higher education with training students to be the global work force. Neoliberal values infuse the administrative departments at Neoliberal University, where students and staff focus on getting students in and out of the university and into jobs as efficiently as possible. The faculty of the academic department of anthropology, imbued with academically-oriented values from the discipline of anthropology, embody academic anthropology values and ideals through teaching. Students' beliefs about valuable identities and prestigious statuses are "filtered through" interactions in the learning settings (Nasir and Cooks 2009: 58). Students pick up the multiple and conflicting values of academic anthropology and neoliberal ideals: the conflicts produce some uncertainty and anxiety about choosing a major, a career path, and finding jobs. Current and former students, having internalized neoliberal and anthropological beliefs and values, feel a sense of having to choose between making a living or pursuing anthropology beyond the

bachelor's degree. Tensions and dissonance are resolved through processes of developing an identity and status that is consonant with internal and external beliefs about the value and prestige of work.

Answering the Aims

Five aims were identified in Chapter 1 that provided the foundation for this study. The first aim, to *identify and describe the social, institutional, and personal motivations, perceptions, and expectations of students regarding an undergraduate degree in anthropology and their perceptions of career opportunities*, *and the relationship these have in terms of identity development,* explored the range of influences that affected students' educational choices, directions, and how they resolved any anxieties or tensions between them. Anthropology students are drawn to anthropology because it is interesting, because it satisfies a desire to learn about the world and people in it. In addition, because the structure of the major system counts anthropology classes as general education requirements, it is easy for students to accrue credits in the subject and ultimately major or minor in it, sometimes in addition to other majors. Anthropology students feel the pressures from the outside environment to not waste their time and money in school, to be able to make enough money to support themselves and their families if they have them, and to be able to explain to non-anthropologists what anthropology is and why they are studying it. These pressures cause a certain amount of stress and anxiety regarding decision-making.

Anthropology education socializes and assimilates. The subtle yet pervasive values of academia that infuse anthropology education conflicts with the values of the neoliberal world that permeate administrative departments, and these conflicts produce uncertainty about anthropological career paths.

Further, anthropology students tend not to spend their time thinking ahead to what comes after university until they are right at the point of leaving university or beyond, because they are immersed in the academics. The neoliberal values of the administrative departments of the university, which are more directly engaged with the values of the neoliberal era, conflict with the academic culture of the anthropology department, and students have a difficult time resolving the tensions between the two.

Anthropologists have critiqued neoliberal ideologies because of their capitalist orientation and domination of western values. A key conflict, therefore, faces anthropology educators in the neoliberal era. Neoliberalism says not only that education should prepare students to be workers, but that preparing students to be workers should be a priority. Liberal arts education is not primarily about preparing students to be workers. However, neoliberal values exist in contemporary institutions and in the world. Anthropology education is challenged to negotiate its own identity while keeping the core strengths of what anthropology offers and meeting the needs of students today.

The neoliberal orientation of the administrative departments assumes students easily transition from acquiring skills in school to applying them in the workplace. There is danger in assuming that students are guaranteed jobs upon

graduation. Two stories circulated in early August 2009 about students in the United States who sued their alma maters because they couldn't find a job. In one case, an alumna claims that "any reasonable employer would pounce on an applicant with her academic credentials", a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. Because she doesn't have a job three months after graduation, she feels she is entitled to tuition reimbursement and financial restitution for the stress of searching for a job (Kessler 2009). In the other example, an alumna claims she pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology "under the impression it would lead to a job with a fair salary and benefits" (Stone 2009) She assets that "her undergraduate survey courses have had no real world application" and exhorts fellow jobless degree-holders to sue their alma maters because students "shell out tuition to make money, not work at MacDonald's" (Stone 2009). These examples illustrate the neoliberal belief that the college degree is the ticket you exchange for a job.

The second aim was to *identify and describe full- and part-time faculty perspectives on the value and importance of an anthropology education and the career opportunities available to students, and their perceptions of social, institutional, and personal factors influencing curriculum and career development*. Faculty too are drawn to anthropology because they love the subject and are passionate about teaching the content of anthropology education. However, faculty have been socialized in the academic culture of anthropology, and this culture is embodied and transmitted to the students through the educational process in the learning context. Academic anthropology often does not have a

concrete, specific language about anthropology skills. Anthropology education is associated with certain broad skills, such as developing critical thinking, a holistic approach, and an appreciation for diversity. These are transferable skills and are non-job specific. However, these skills are also vague and may have different meanings in different contexts or neoliberal subcultures:

> Higher education operates in a neoliberal market atmosphere in which higher education is conceptualized as a skill provider, skills being pieces of a job. The nature and importance of a job skill is defined by the specific outcome of that job, and it is against that outcome that a skill can, in theory, be assessed. The product of the educational process should, therefore, be such usable skills . . . So how is writing a "skill" in the abstract? How is critical thinking, which is inextricably connected to specific subject matters, abstractly assessable? (Urciuoli 2005b: 203)

There is a need for anthropology faculty to develop and share an explicit definition of the skills of anthropology and provide concrete, specific examples. One way to do this is by adapting the current model of academic anthropology to reflect practicing anthropology: "Practice, by definition, is something that takes place primarily outside the academy. The future of our discipline, however, will be shaped largely within the academy and within our academically grounded associations" (Baba 1994: 179). Academic faculty can draw from anthropology practitioners outside the university who can share the lived experience of working as an anthropologist in the neoliberal world outside the university: "Practice draws on skills, knowledge, and approaches that range far beyond the traditional boundaries of anthropology, even as the processes and products of practice remain uniquely anthropological" (Nolan 2003: xi). Again, it is necessary for the

academic anthropology to somehow prepare students for the neoliberal orientation of the world.

Students may be receiving conflicting messages about what is a valuable pursuit after graduation. Academic anthropology often models academic career paths; that is, graduate school and a teaching job. If all that is modeled for students is the academic career, they will not see the non-academic opportunities available to them. Comments by practitioners in a recent report entitled "Work Climate, Gender, and the Status of Practicing Anthropologists" indicate they were advised into academic careers, with "non-academic placements treated as second class or not even acknowledged as a possibility" (Brondo et al. 2009). Practitioners "do not feel valued by the anthropology profession or discipline, both of which are perceived as catering primarily to academic anthropologists" (ibid.). Perpetuating the academic model, consciously or unconsciously, does not reflect the realities of anthropological practice.

The third aim was to *identify and describe academic advising and career counselor perspectives on the value and importance of an anthropology education and the career opportunities available to students, and their perceptions of social, institutional, and personal factors influencing career development.* Academic Advising and Career Services departments are greatly influenced by neoliberal values. They use the language of the neoliberal world when they talk about skills and resume development. The meaning of these terms is different in the administrative departments than they are the academic department, and because the meaning of the terms is different, the anthropology

department doesn't relate to the terms in the same way. When Academic Advising, Career Services, and Co-op and Internship staff reach out to the anthropology faculty, the message is not getting across. If the faculty don't hear the messages, the students are not exposed to the services of the administrative departments. This "shared misunderstanding" between the administrative and academic cultures is an area that can be renegotiated in both directions (Batteau 2000: 728): 728). As described in the previous aim, faculty can broaden their conception of anthropological skills to include the more rational descriptions; simultaneously, the administrative departments can broaden their understanding of anthropology and its skills beyond its general education connotations, and a better relationship between the departments can be facilitated.

The fourth aim was to *identify and describe recent graduates' perspectives on the education they received and the relationship it has to their work experiences to date.* The graduates are an important and under-used resource in understanding the relationship of anthropology education to work and careers. The pervasive values of academic anthropology are still present in the graduates' narratives. The belief that the anthropology M.A. or Ph.D. is a luxury degree and the belief that going on to graduate school would be important to the faculty were themes that emerged across the graduates' experiences. The graduates resolved identity dissonance and status inconsistency through their post-undergraduate choices. They perceived they had a choice between fulfilling intellectual pursuits with a lower salary or choosing work outside anthropology with a higher salary but less intellectual fulfillment. For some, the identity

associated with anthropology is more valuable than salary; for others, choosing a career path associated with a higher salary creates an identity consonant with beliefs about the value of work.

The graduates talked about how important actual work experience is in getting jobs, which has implications for anthropology education: this could underscore the importance of Co-ops and internships for anthropology students. The graduates found that through practice they were better able to articulate their relevant skills in ways that were meaningful to employers: "For the practitioner, anthropology is something we were trained in. That training will quite naturally reflect on what we bring to the workplace but it will not generally determine what we do" (Chambers 2009: 376). Understanding how anthropology can be applied in the workplace has implications for anthropology education: if students were able to practice talking about their education in such a way, they might feel like there are more job options available to them.

The fifth aim was to *analyze the data collected to contribute to literature in the discipline of anthropology on undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era*. This research project sits at the intersection of anthropology, education, and work. Anthropologists talk about the relevance of anthropology, which doesn't address education necessarily, but the discussion's impact should trickle down to education. Because "anthropology exists in a market-oriented society" it should go without saying that those seeking anthropology education are also thinking about how to use it to make money to survive (Ahmed and

Shore 1995: 32). It should go without saying that anthropology is relevant to the contemporary world.

The mission statement of the Society for Applied Anthropology calls for the occupation of anthropologist to be

> promoted as a satisfying, rewarding and important professional role whether as an independent consultant, an employee of public agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, or as a university faculty member or administrator. Successful professional roles and identities must be identified, promoted and strengthened, (Society for Applied Anthropology 2010)

The results of this dissertation study suggest that the identity and status of anthropologist as academic is the prevailing image for students, faculty, and administrators, even though they know that the potential for a broader identity and status exists. Bringing more non-academic anthropology occupations into the university environment, through academic exercises and work opportunities, will help change the status and identity of the anthropologist in positive ways. Perhaps as a way to alleviate some dissonance, Marietta Baba (2009a, 2009b) suggests it is time to create a new culture of anthropology that incorporates some non-academic career beliefs, values, and practices:

> The academic disciplinary strategy that was forged under colonialism was only that—a strategy. It was not an end in itself. . . . It could be time to think about a new strategy—one that recognizes the crucial role of the academic discipline while also acknowledging and incorporating the voices of other professionals and the others they work among. (Baba 2009a: 389-390)

The data from this study show how tensions are inherent in the relationship between undergraduate anthropology education and the neoliberal

era, and the following section discusses potential implications for the discipline of anthropology more broadly.

Implications

The findings of this research offer a basis for thinking about how to reduce some anxieties for students in the process of undergraduate anthropology education. It has long been argued that anthropology and anthropologists must believe in and be clear about our potential contribution and be prepared to show it (Crain and Tashima 1999: 213). This is a two way process that involves both understanding the anthropological skill set and being able to illustrate why it is valuable. This, in turn, requires new ways of thinking about anthropology in the university and the global work environment.

One form of this change could take includes adapting the academic curriculum to include "anthropology in practice" offerings (Price 2001: 57). Baba refers to anthropology departments, such as at the University of Maryland, that mimic professional programs as possible pedagogical models to follow (Baba 1994: 180). If internships or Co-ops find a place in the anthropology curriculum, faculty must be prepared to "divide schedules between imparting information in a classroom mode with the time it takes to constructively guide and monitor experiential placements" (Simonelli 2001: 49). Those instructors that are not familiar with the collaborative learning environment and active learning approaches will have to adapt their teaching styles for this purpose. The challenge will be to find the time and resources needed to allow faculty to be able

to train their students to have competency in working in groups, interdisciplinary teams, and in collaborative environments (Schensul, Baba, and Hyland 2003). Students will require more opportunities to work with each other and with others outside the classroom context, which will require time and effort on faculty and administrative departments' parts. Doing so will create a vocabulary and understanding of necessary anthropological skills for faculty and students that can be shared outside the academic department. In addition, creating consistent messages across departments about the status and value of anthropology will encourage identity consonance for individuals.

Viewing anthropology education as part of a process of occupational socialization (for example, Cahill 1999) will tie together the content of anthropology with possible careers in anthropology and professionalization. By showing students what careers are available throughout the curriculum, and by providing work experiences during the university years, students will learn that it is possible to find a career related to anthropology and there does not have to be a division between earning a living and following an intellectual passion: one can do both simultaneously. Providing skill definition and examples of practice will require the academic anthropology to work with the neoliberally-oriented administrative departments at the university. Further, making space in the academic curriculum for discussion and developing career goals will allow students to plan ahead and get relevant work experience while in school. These relevant work experiences will connect students with employers their expectations about work, and having anthropological work opportunities while in

school will allow students to explore various anthropological career options. Relevant work experience while in school will help students build resumes that demonstrate they have the experience that is required for entry into positions once they are out of school. Students, faculty, advisers, and career counselors can work together to better use the university's resources to make network connections specific to anthropology students.

Again reflecting patterns in practitioner responses in "Work Climate, Gender, and the Status of Practicing Anthropologists", practitioners say that networking through faculty and completing internships while in school sowed the seeds for their non-academic careers, and therefore, more professional opportunities for students would prepare them for the actual work of anthropology outside academia (Brondo et al. 2009).

Academic anthropology can turn to the discipline of anthropology for some resources. In 2001, the American Anthropological Association and the Society for Applied Anthropology created a Commission on Applied and Practicing Anthropology to aim for "a discipline-wide emphasis" to put "mechanisms in place to offer guidance to departments that plan to include applied and practicing training" (Society for Applied Anthropology 2004: 6-7).

The model of apprenticeship may be appropriate for bringing the academic and administrative cultures in closer alignment. In 1991, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger collaborated on a book called Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation. The authors discuss "the relationship between learning and the social situations in which it occurs" (Lave and Wenger 1993: 14).

Legitimate peripheral participation means that "a person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a social cultural practice . . . [that] includes . . . the learning of knowledgeable skills" (Lave and Wenger 1993: 29). Legitimate peripheral participation comes from Lave's research on craft apprenticeship among Vai and Gola tailors in Liberia. She found that without being taught explicitly how to be a tailor, the tailor's apprentices became "skilled and respected master tailors" (Lave and Wenger 1993: 30). The metaphor of "apprenticeship" captured how learning occurred in situated ways; that is, legitimate peripheral participation describes the "engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent" and, as shown in Chapter 1, students develop identities through the experience, practice, feedback, participation, and interplay: it is a process of becoming (Lave and Wenger 1991: 35), Wenger 1998).

John Seeley Brown, Allan Collins, and Paul Duguid's theory of cognitive apprenticeship shows why "activity and situations are integral to cognition and learning" (Brown and Duguid 2000: 32). Using the metaphor of apprenticeship established by Lave's work and research on learning, Brown, Collins, and Duguid challenge the standard separation of "what is learned from how it is learned and used" because "the activity in which knowledge is developed and deployed . . . is not separable from or ancillary to learning" (1989: 32). The authors compare knowledge to a set of tools, because tools "can only be fully understood through use" ((Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989: 33). For example, one cannot learn a

language by simply reading a dictionary; one has to use language in context to fully understand what words mean (Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989: 33). Concepts cannot be taught without also teaching how to use the concepts. Using the apprenticeship metaphor to demonstrate how knowledge needs to be put into use, Brown, Collins, and Duguid state that

> unfortunately, students are too often asked to use the tools of a discipline without being able to adopt its culture. To learn to use tools as practitioners use them, a student, like an apprentice, must enter that community and its culture. Thus, in a significant way, learning is, we believe, a process of enculturation. . . . Cognitive apprenticeship methods try to enculturate students into authentic practices through activity and social interaction in a way similar to that evident – and evidently successful – in craft apprenticeship. (1989: 33-37)

The cognitive apprenticeship approach to learning shows students

> the legitimacy of their implicit knowledge and its availability as scaffolding in apparently unfamiliar tasks . . . by allowing students to generate their own solution paths, it helps make them conscious, creative members of the culture of problem-solving. . . . And, in enculturating through this activity, they acquire some of the culture's tools – a shared vocabulary and the means to discuss, reflect upon, evaluate, and validate community procedures in a collaborative process. (Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989: 38)

The apprenticeship model could be used to develop service learning or social justice courses in addition to internships and Co-ops. Service learning is a model of education where "students learn to be good citizens" because education is

> tied to one's relationship to a community and where the education and learning are in reciprocal relationship to giving service to that community . . . the things they learn are tied to real-life needs and situations and not just in abstract textbooks. (Shumar 2008: 80)

Students learn to be "good citizens" and get work experience; service learning could be the "powerful antidote" that resists the neoliberal transformation of education into commodity and incorporates an anthropology ideal (Olssen and Peters 2005, Shumar 2008).

A more popular exercise in one anthropology class at Neoliberal University asks students to make ethnographic observations along a road that goes from downtown Detroit into a wealthy suburb. The practice of doing the exercise teaches students core anthropological concepts. The same could be said for career preparation: with some exposure to real-world problems while in school, students could experience how to apply anthropology and gain a deeper understanding of their skill sets and how they relate to the world outside academia. There is even potential to develop corporate relationships specifically for anthropology students.

In this approach to learning, implicit knowledge becomes explicit through task activity. It makes learning and knowledge relevant. Further, the language regarding relevant skills is developed and deployed in appropriate contexts, which facilitates anthropology students' ability to understand their skill set, find available jobs and create consonant personal and professional identities. A positive outcome of this change in undergraduate anthropology education could be the creation of a market for anthropology students and graduates (Johnsrud 1999: 251).

Limitations

This study focused on one university in one regional context in order to get a deep rather than a broad understanding. Because this study looked at subgroups within only one university, results are not generalizable to all universities. Further, because this study took place at only one university in one country, the results are not applicable cross-culturally. A study at multiple universities in multiple locations around the world would provide cross-cultural and generalizable results. There is "the need for many histories of anthropology" that reflect the many practices of anthropology (Foley 2007: 223).

Another limitation of the study is the lack of specific focus on the role of race in the educational context. As mentioned in chapter 2, the Detroit Metro area is deeply influenced by its historical relationship with foreign immigrants and migrants from the American South who came to this region in search of work opportunities in the automotive plants. Certainly the effects of institutionalized racism and chronic and ongoing segregation as it relates to undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era could be studied in depth.

This study did not examine how other disciplines face neoliberal issues in education. How other disciplines socialize their students and negotiate neoliberal influences would provide comparative data.

Additionally, this study did not address how transfer students or older students returning to school might differ from First Time in Any College (FTIAC) students. Recent research indicates that community college enrollment keeps increasing and students who enter community colleges intend to transfer to baccalaureate-granting institutions (Flagel 2008). The motivations and

expectations of these specific populations (FTIACS, transfers, older students) regarding education in the neoliberal era could be studied separately.

In addition, this study focused on what happened during a limited timeframe. According to lifecourse theory, the choices people make and the priorities they see for themselves may be very different at different moments in time. Perhaps, in the case of this study, students were more concerned with finding jobs and making money in the short term but would have a different perspective on their priorities with some time and distance from graduation. A limitation of this study is not knowing what happened after the data were collected. It would be useful, for example, to follow up with the students interviewed in this study to see what decisions they made about what to do after graduation, where their decisions took them, and how their priorities might have changed over time. As an example of a more longitudinal approach, the American Anthropological Association and the Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology conducted a survey between April and September 2009 of those American Anthropological Association members holding a Master's Degree in Anthropology from a North American institution, awarded anytime before 2008, in order to better understand where M.A.s have gone in their careers, and the ways in which M.A.s have benefited from the knowledge and skills they acquired in their Master's programs (American Anthropological Association 2010). Alignments such as these between governing bodies, academic departments, and practitioners bode well for capturing lifecourse data for further developing the understanding of the

relationship between undergraduate anthropology education and careers in the neoliberal era.

Future Directions

This study focused on the university environment in which anthropology education occurs. One future direction for a study of the relationship of anthropology education to work in the neoliberal era could focus on what employers are looking for in new employees. Of particular interest would be those who hire anthropology graduates and what they understand about anthropology education, the skill set of anthropology graduates, and the value of anthropology in non-academic settings.

I believe that having the opportunity to apply anthropological methods and theories while in school is critical to a student's academic development, especially because work experience is so highly prized by employers. In order to help anthropology students to complement their education with work experience, more scholarship needs to focus on the relationship between anthropology education and the nature of work in the neoliberal era. Potential future research questions also could include:

- Following Miller (2009: 51), what can anthropology learn from the successful diffusion and recontextualization of anthropology's theories and methods across disciplines?
- What might anthropological/ethnographic training in anthropology's relatively non-linear career field look like in the future?
- How do these possibilities compare and contrast with training being provided in other professions in which there has long been a major focus on preparing students to actively engage in practice (e.g., engineering, medicine, law, design)?

- How can anthropology use its own methods and insights to imagine the rewiring of declining industries and focus on the emerging new areas of emphasis from our state and federal leaders?
- What could be "new kinds of anthropological work" (Hahn 2009: 31)?

Concluding Thought

A rejected title for this dissertation was "A map and a territory", which was a play on an argument by anthropologist John Van Maanen (Van Maanen 1983: 520-526)[16]. In positioning qualitative methods as a vital and viable part of an organizational researcher's toolkit, he acknowldges social phenomena are "more particular and ambiguous than replicable and clearly defined." In order to create a useful boundary around the object(s) of study, a qualitative researcher describes the temporal and spatial domains of the particular world under investigation. The researcher's description is "essentially an idiographic map of the territory." However, the map is not exactly the territory, and neither is the territory exactly the map, because "the map is a reflexive product of the map maker's invention," and the boundaries that the researcher defines are themselves somewhat particular and ambiguous. I find Van Maanen's explanation a good metaphor for my dissertation project, because the project in its entirety, from its conception to research design, to frames for analysis and conclusions, developed out of my own preconceptions, experiences, and

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[16] Van Maanen's argument references the topic of a lecture delivered by anthropologist Gregory Bateson (Bateson, G. 1987. "Form, Substance and Difference," in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, Inc.), who references American scientist and philosopher Alfred Korzybski's statement "the map is not the territory," which illustrates how a representation is an abstraction of an object.

expectations. This study certainly could have contained many other various elements, or it could have contained fewer, but it did not, because this is my map and my territory.

Van Maanen's sentiment is also reflected in my data. Many people expressed their frustration with the ambiguous nature of anthropology as it relates to career options, but Amber Blanton, an anxious sophomore student phrased it particularly well: "I've been thinking if anthropology is the place to merge all my interests, but I don't know if it's the place yet. I want freedom, but I want a pathway. What would make me choose a major is knowing what to do with it." What Amber is looking for is some certainty in an uncertain world. Knowing what to do with anthropology is knowing the territory, and choosing to major in it is creating a map. Rephrasing the map and territory metaphor in the terms of the title and analytic framework of this study, why can't anthropology be both something you love and something more practical? A positive, valued, consonant anthropology identity and status developed while in the learning environment would help provide that map and territory of anthropology.

APPENDIX

Introduction

The design of the research project was deeply influenced by my personal journey in anthropology. I am including this piece of my story here because the development of this project was intimately tied to my development as an anthropologist and researcher. Self-reflection is a form of analysis that makes sense of seemingly unrelated paths in one's own life trajectory (Grenfell 2008). Self-reflection is not auto-ethnography, but it stems from the tradition of autobiographical reflexivity that began in the 1980s as an attempt to demonstrate ethnographic objectivity (Meneley and Young 2005). Discussing the process of developing the study reveals some of my deeply held beliefs and biases that informed the development of the study and the process of collecting and analyzing data. This section of self-reflection draws from that critical analysis process to incorporate a postmodern cultural critique of self-as-other (Marcus and Fischer 1999).

Personal Story

I was always interested in why people did the things they did. I remember interviewing a police officer as part of a grade school project to learn about an occupation of our choosing. I also recall voluntarily using crutches for a month to better understand what it was like to have a serious injury, also in grade school. I discovered anthropology was the discipline in which to study this phenomenon at

some point in high school. I remember optimistically declaring to a college admissions counselor that my goals in life were to find the "missing link" and write the "Great American novel." I chose to attend a small liberal arts college in Iowa because of its academic reputation, and chose anthropology as my major because I knew it would help me be able to answer the question "why" in anything I studied.

For a college senior thesis project, I conducted a semester-long mixed-method research project at a small Midwestern liberal arts college (Goldmacher 1996). This project included surveying and interviewing senior and first-year women to determine how, why, and to what extent they achieve their educational and personal goals, based on a study of women at two Southern universities (Holland and Eisenhart 1990). Findings indicated that the women who participated in the study expected what they learned in school to "relate to the world", and though the felt academically prepared, they believed their training lacked real-world preparation. This was the first large-scale independent research project I had undertaken. Reflecting back on this period in my life, I can see a pattern emerging from my interests.

Upon graduation, I responded to an ad for an entry-level advertising job in Chicago with a major advertising firm with a cover letter and resume. Naively, I thought I would get the job because I had an interest in the subject and a degree that meant I had tools to understand human behavior (though I am sure didn't use that language at the time). Perhaps unsurprisingly, I did not get the job.

Instead, I got a job in a bookstore in a mall until I figured out what I wanted to do and how I would get a job doing it.

A college friend who worked at a publishing company in Boston encouraged me to apply. I got a job as an editorial assistant with an academic textbook publisher. Interested in becoming an editor, I followed the appropriate career path by taking steps towards that goal by taking other positions within the company, including working as a sales representative. My job was to talk to college professors about the texts they used for their classes, assess their needs, and provide the best service and solutions for their specific situations. This job reminded me of anthropology, and inspired me to look at graduate programs that would give me the tools to go back into industry and solve business problems.

I decided to attend Wayne State University because it offered the only Ph.D. in anthropology with a specialization in business anthropology in the United States, and I hoped to get a set of specific skills that would allow me to return to industry with the credentials and experience to provide assessments and consultation services in organizational settings. However, initially progressing through the requirements for the Master's Degree, I found I was taking the same types of classes I took as an undergraduate anthropology major: introduction to theory, introduction to methods, introduction to archaeology, introduction to linguistics, introduction to biology and culture. I began to question how I was being trained as an anthropologist without any applied training or practice using field methods in my classes, and how I would be able to get a job

as I did not see how I was developing any job-specific skills through my coursework. I did take an elective class called Applied Anthropology, where the goal of the course was to have the students explore various careers in anthropology by doing self-reflexive exercises and having guest speakers talk about how they turned their degrees in anthropology into careers. This course helped me begin to formulate ideas about how to aim my own career path towards applying anthropology in organizational settings.

The following year, when the Applied Anthropology class was offered again, I decided to research the process of how other students wrestled with the same issues I encountered as a student. With the guidance of the instructor, I developed a research proposal to ethnographically study how students in the Applied Anthropology class, each with a different background and career interests, developed an anthropological identity and then communicated that identity to others. This project allowed me to address my personal concerns with my development as an anthropologist and gave me the opportunity to actually do ethnographic research, from start to finish, and practice anthropology for myself in a real field setting.

After collecting data in the Applied Anthropology class over the course of a semester, I turned back to the theoretical and applied literature in a new way. Importantly, I found that learning and working are not mutually exclusive when examining the social context of knowledge. The students in the Applied Anthropology class became a "community of practice." A "community of practice" is a social theory of learning that says that active participants in a social

community learn by belonging, becoming, doing, and practicing (Wenger 1998: 4-5). Other anthropology courses at Wayne State University focus on specific content areas in anthropology, such as history, theory, and methods, but this knowledge does not become a tool until it is honed through use.

To briefly summarize some of the findings from that project, the Applied Anthropology class became the space where students could reflect on their implicit anthropological knowledge and make it explicit. The process of becoming an anthropologist and being able to apply anthropology is reflected in the example of students' participation in the process of trying out introductions on each other. As a "community of practice," the students co-create knowledge by working with words and phrasing to produce a tool to have in their anthropological toolkit: a clear, concise introduction to who they are, what they do, and why it is relevant. The students' interactions within the context of the Applied Anthropology class produced useful knowledge that helped the students create and refine their introductions, which are a fundamental element of their professional identities. The structure of the Applied Anthropology class included the active learning approach and the facilitation of the instructor, the collaborative environment, and the students' participation in speaking and hearing introductions. All of these allow an academic class to become a "community of practice" where knowledge is transformed into practical tools. The processes of speaking, listening, and getting feedback allows the students to articulate their identities, who they are, what they do, and what they want to do (Goldmacher 2004).

As a result of the research, a faculty member and I developed a full-length book with specific exercises for anthropology students to do in a class or on their own to help them develop and prepare for anthropological careers (Briller and Goldmacher 2009). This book addressed what we saw as an existing gap in anthropology education in terms of career preparation. This work represented another thread in the tapestry of my own career trajectory.

During this time, I was employed as a Graduate Research Assistant in the Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering Department at Wayne State. As a research assistant, I worked on engineering projects in the automotive industry that required a qualitative approach, such as looking at how people communicate across plants in order to find cost-reduction opportunities. These types of projects allowed me to apply anthropological methods and theories in an organizational setting and contribute to business solutions.

After completing my Ph.D. coursework and passing my qualifying exams, I found I did not have a dissertation topic at hand. To get more industry experience while I tried to figure out what I would study for the dissertation, I did an internship with IDEO, a design consultancy that hires people from various disciplines with ethnographic training[17]. While working in a vibrant office on interesting projects, I discovered that anthropologists were not the only people using ethnographic methods in industry, which made me wonder why anyone would choose to spend 5 to 8 years specializing in anthropology when other

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[17] See Goldmacher, A. 2008. Located Mobility: Living and Working in Multiple Places. *National Association for the Practice of Anthropology Bulletin* 30:118-127. for a discussion of the internship and its relationship to traditional and mobile work experiences.

disciplines offered a faster and more direct path to doing the same work in industry. That question inspired me to examine anthropology education and work more closely. After my internship ended in October 2007, I spent the next nine months investigating the literature at the intersection of anthropology and education and work to develop the prospectus.

A common theme that emerges from various points in my story is the concern with the relationship of undergraduate training to perceptions of the current job market. The theme helped me develop the research question and the semi-structured interview questions within the study. Relevant domains of knowledge built from my previous experience include an understanding of historical and current debates in anthropology education, program assessment, and knowledge of the field of education studies. These domains of knowledge became the foundation for the dissertation research.

Based on my assumptions on what was an appropriate amount of time to spend in the field for an anthropological dissertation, I knew that I needed to spend at least nine months in the field collecting data, but I also knew I would need to be employed or have some sort of financial support during the data collection period. Those factors impacted the timeline and location of the project. Because of my interest in the relationship of anthropology education to work, I thought conducting my fieldwork in a university setting would be appropriate for a study of anthropology education and would fit my personal timeline and schedule because it fit within an academic year.

Another reason for locating this study in the Detroit Metro area was because of my need for employment to support myself through the data collection phase of the dissertation. A part-time job as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Anthropology Department at Wayne State provided me with the flexibility to be at a site when I needed to be there for research. Because I would need to be on Wayne State's campus for my teaching duties, the study design would need to allow me to travel between campuses.

I started collecting data at the same time that I was a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Introduction to Business Anthropology course at Wayne State in September 2008. Being an instructor gave me a new perspective on the educational process. Whereas before teaching, I only had a student's perspective, but once I was put in an instructor's position, I felt new issues and concerns, different from student issues and concerns regarding education. Having both the student and instructor perspectives simultaneously gave me better insight and appreciation for the participants at my research site, and also gave me the opportunity to build rapport with student and faculty participants.

In addition to the Detroit Metro area's dire unemployment and foreclosure rates, research job prospects did not look good; I had several friends who were laid off around this time, including researchers with more than 20 years' experience. Seeing industries disbanding their research divisions, I began to doubt I would be able to find a job once I finished my dissertation. My fear of not finding a job in my own field impacted my approach to the study and gave a

negative cast to how I viewed the relationship of anthropology education to work in the current economy.

Throughout the development of the prospectus and during the research process, I found myself holding up my own experience to what I was reading and observing. I frequently reflected back on my experiences as an undergraduate studying anthropology, my expectations regarding employment out of college, and my expectations regarding employment after graduate school. Reading about self-reflection, I discovered that ethnography is an interpretation through the researcher's own subjective personal experience. Ethnography is "the enriched understanding that comes from the dual lens of an anthropologist and the reflections of the lens back to the researcher who has had the lived experience" (Mitsch 2009: 9). Researching this dissertation topic was as much an attempt to understand my own anthropological career trajectory and identity dissonance as it was to try to understand undergraduate anthropology education in the neoliberal era.

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ABSTRACT

"SOMETHING YOU LOVE AND SOMETHING MORE PRACTICAL":
UNDERGRADUATE ANTHROPOLOGY EDUCATION IN THE NEOLIBERAL ERA

by

AMY GOLDMACHER

December 2010

Advisor: Dr. Allen Batteau

Major: Anthropology

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

This ethnographic case study attempts to understand how neoliberalism, which emphasizes education for employment, contradicts, complements, or coexists with the values of the liberal arts discipline of anthropology. Liberal arts education, the broader type of education that anthropology fits into, is called into question in this neoliberal era because its goal is not to train workers but to educate liberally. Historical data show a trend away from liberal arts degrees towards technical and professional degrees over the last thirty years (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). Though the most important reason for earning a bachelor's degree cited among college freshman is improved career opportunities, only 20 percent of those who graduate with a bachelor's degree in anthropology report their jobs are closely related to their major (Fogg, Harrington, and Harrington 2004). Bachelor's degree holders in anthropology either go to graduate school to receive additional education and training to increase the

likelihood of finding jobs in their major field of study, or they find employment in fields other than anthropology (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008).

This study used ethnographic methods at one university in Southeastern Michigan during the 2008-2009 academic year to explore the social, institutional, and personal factors that shape student motivations for choosing a major in anthropology, the delivery of anthropology education from faculty perspectives, and advising regarding academic course work, career preparation, and career options. Further, this study examined what happens after graduation, when anthropology majors found themselves facing the work environment.

Findings suggest academic advising and career services departments, infused with neoliberal values, focus on getting students in and out of the university and into jobs as efficiently as possible. Findings also suggest the academic faculty of the department of anthropology embody academic anthropology disciplinary values and ideals through teaching. Students pick up the multiple and conflicting values of neoliberalism and anthropology through interactions in the learning settings; the conflicts produce uncertainty and anxiety about choosing a major, a career path, and finding jobs, resulting in identity dissonance that must be resolved. Patterns of resolving identity dissonance based on internal and external beliefs about the value and prestige of education and work may have implications for the discipline of anthropology more broadly.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Amy Goldmacher is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. She received her M.A. in Anthropology from Wayne State and her B.A. in Anthropology with Honors from Grinnell College in Iowa. Prior to graduate school, she spent six years in the publishing industry working in the editorial, marketing, and sales divisions of a college textbook publisher. She is the co-author of *Designing An Anthropology Career: Professional Development Exercises* with Sherylyn Briller (AltaMira Press 2009), and is highly interested in the career development of anthropologists and the role of anthropological education in the formation of professional identities.