



PROJECT MUSE®

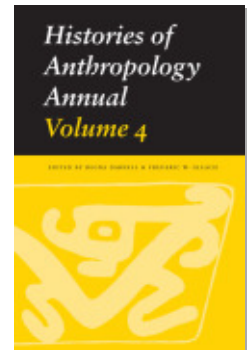
Exploring the Decline and Revival of Anti-Racism

Leonard Lieberman, Rodney Kirk

Histories of Anthropology Annual, Volume 4, 2008, pp. 58-76 (Article)

Published by University of Nebraska Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/haa.0.0041>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/252381>

Exploring the Decline and Revival of Anti-Racism

Leonard Lieberman and Rodney Kirk

With the decline and apparent death of the race concept in anthropology it seems to be assumed that attention to racism is not necessary, a situation referred to as being “color blind” (Harrison 1995; Shanklin 1999; Mukhopadhyay and Moses 1997). Mistakenly, we and others thought that by rejecting biological race, racialization and racism in American science and society would be diminished. In this paper we will explore the context for the apparent decline and the revival of anti-racism, involving political, organizational, linguistic and other cultural influences.

Political Influences on the Decline of Racism

During the later decades of the twentieth century, the race concept declined (Lieberman et al., 2003a, 2003b), and efforts by anthropologists to study “race” also were said to decline, replaced by color blindness towards Americans of African, Indigenous (Amerindian), and Asian origins. For example, to be color blind means recognizing that black African-American culture is to be valued as an amalgam of African heritage, local innovations, acculturation processes, and adaptations to and diffusion from the dominant Anglo-American culture of the United States. Not to be color blind means that so-called social problems of poverty, crime, and low IQ scores, are best understood as consequences of the structure of a racialized social order.

The political context of the decline of anti-racism involves the political atmosphere during and since World War II in which rejection of racism required criticism of American racialization and racial (read: “racist”¹) stratification. During World War II, “the just war,” many anthropologists were employed in support of that effort, including Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. Benedict and Gene Weltfish’s well-known pamphlet, *The Races of Mankind*, was published in 1943.

During World War II the internment of Japanese Americans into iso-

lated camps was an example of racism by exclusion, and was not unique in American history or in many other nations before or since. In that context of the history of the United States there has been a sequence of events and people seen as threats to security from an enemy within, including the long conflict with Native Americans, the Alien and Sedition Act under President John Adams—partly in response to conflicts with France, the era of the Cold War with the Soviet Union and Senator McCarthy's purge of alleged communists in government and fellow travelers in popular culture, and after the September 11, 2001, destruction of the World Trade Center, Osama bin Ladin's threat to the United States and the U.S. government pursuit of possible terrorists, especially those with Muslim names. The above pattern of events with an enemy within may have led some anthropologists, unwittingly, to neglect criticisms of the racist nature of American culture and government. Hard facts gathered by David Price (2004) provide great insight into the political pressures involved.

The Cold War and McCarthyism

In his book *Threatening Anthropology*, David Price (2004) uses FBI files and the Freedom of Information Act to document the effect of McCarthyism (ca. 1950s) and of FBI investigations on anti-racism efforts in anthropology. The title of his book was perceived by some to imply a threat to the racist status quo, or to a revelation that anthropologists could be threatened into silence about racialized social inequality. According to Price,

What came to be known as McCarthyism was part of a long, ignoble American tradition of repressing the rights of free association, inquiry, and advocacy of those who would threaten the status quo of America's stratified political economic system. Despite a general lack of proof of consistent ties to Communist organizations, the anthropologists who were paraded before various public, private, local, state, and national loyalty hearings shared the fundamental trait of progressive social activism.

The most common activities drawing the attention of anti-Communist crusaders included participation in public education programs, political advocacy, social activism, and protests, but the basic concerns of these actions were issues of racial inequality. . . .

McCarthyism's public spectacles transformed the development of anthropological theory, limiting both the questions asked and the answers they found. (Price 2004:2)

Price illustrates his analysis with FBI documents reporting on a number of anthropologists, and John Gledhill (2002) adds to that list. Among those directly or indirectly affected were Ruth Benedict, Gene Weltfish, Bernard Stern, Jack Harris, Mary Shepardson, John Embree, Marshall Newman, Charles Hockett, Demitri Shimkin, Marvin Opler, Paul Radin, Murray Wax, Bernard Mishkin, Elman Service, Ruth Landes, Harold Hickerson, Oscar Lewis, Philleo Nash, Ashley Montagu, Kathleen Gough, Eleanor Leacock, Stanley Diamond, and Peter Worsley. Leslie White might have been among those so honored, but despite his membership in socialist organizations and his outspoken informal criticism, he rejected direct advocacy by individuals of action as agents of change because of his emphasis on cultural determinism. For the FBI it was advocacy of activism rather than politics that caused the red flag to be waved. “White’s lack of progressive activism helped him avoid a prolonged FBI investigation . . . the FBI was less worried about theory than they were about practice,” and White came to the attention of the investigating committee after it had begun its decline in public acceptance (Price 2004:217).

Prominent anthropologists aided the McCarthy investigations by implying other anthropologists had communist allegiances. Carleton Coon spoke against the Boasians, including Ashley Montagu (Marks in press). Ralph Linton told the FBI that Boas and Lesser and Weltfish were probably communists at some time (Price 2004:111).

Ashley Montagu is one of the most widely known figures in anthropology and to the informed public. According to Price,

A common thread linking much of Montagu’s life work was his patient commitment to rationally examining how cultural differences were often misinterpreted as “natural” differences—whether these were differences in gender, race, or ethnicity. Perhaps more than any other twentieth-century anthropologist, Montagu threatened American notions of the biological realities of race . . . one of the [FBI’s] files of clippings relates to the public impact of Montagu’s 1942 *Man’s Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*. . . . In this work—a magnum opus still in print over six decades later—Montagu critically examines the cultural construction of race, effectively arguing against racist typologies then prevalent in America, or even Nazi society. *Most Dangerous Myth* had a dramatic effect on American anthropology, as well as on both intellectual and general audiences. The FBI’s interest in reactions to this work reflects their bias that

racial activism was part of a vast Communist conspiracy rather than a natural outgrowth of America's self-evident principles that all people are created equal. (Price 2004:278–279)

Montagu was fired from Rutgers University in 1954. He had previously resigned from the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in 1953, and, subsequently, from the American Anthropological Association in 1955, “because of their inactivity in rising up against the House Un-American Activities and similar organizations” (Price 2004:281). According to Price,

That liberal/moderates like Montagu and Nash could be even thought of as Communists highlights the threat that the issue of racial inequality brought to mid-century America, and it illustrates how the pervasive climate of fear silenced those who might otherwise have questioned these drastic condemnations. (2004:282–283)

The retreat of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) from social issues is described by Gledhill (2002):

In November 1966, the annual business meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) passed a resolution condemning “the use of napalm, chemical defoliants, harmful gases, bombing, the torture and killing of political prisoners of war, and the intentional or deliberate policies of genocide or forced transportation of populations”. It asked “all governments” to put an immediate end to their use and to “proceed as rapidly as possible to a peaceful settlement of the war in Vietnam” (Gough 1968:136). As Kathleen Gough reveals in her account of the background of the resolution, what was finally passed was a watered down version of what was originally tabled. The idea that any resolution be put forward at all had been opposed by the president-elect and a majority of the AAA executive board. (Gledhill 2002:439)

Gledhill (2002:436–437) explains that many anthropologists did not want to be seen as having a political role and wanted to suppress personal sympathies, which might interfere with “scientific” work.

Liberals as the Enemy

During the 1960s and early 1970s the war in Vietnam, a continuation of the Cold War, divided the country, especially among college students. For

a time enrollments in cultural anthropology courses soared and many learned about the racism of fighting Southeast Asians in the name of anti-communism. However, domestic opposition to the war led to the listing of protestors against the war in the supercomputers of the National Security Agency and included such personages as Joan Baez, Benjamin Spock, Jane Fonda, and Martin Luther King Jr. (Bamford 2006). The careers of some anthropologists who opposed the war survived, e.g., Wolf and Sahllins, while others found their careers suffering, such as Earle Reynolds and Kathleen Gough (Price 2004:339).

As of the 1980s the Reagan victory brought a smiling face to the status quo, and repressed the “optimism of the left for fundamental social reform” (Silverman 2005:322). The cultural milieu of the Cold War continued in the 1980s by use of “the L word” as a code portraying liberal Americans as weak on national defense and excessively supportive of “racial” equality and of society’s “undeserving” poor. Ultra-neoconservative think tanks, news media, and talk radio were loud and persuasive, and the central and left views that might be concerned with racism were seldom heard. This hostile atmosphere may have reinforced the avoidance of politics and issues of racism for some established anthropologists as well as for some of the new recruits into anthropology.

The result of the foregoing social patterns was to influence the decline of criticism of America’s racist social order and the increased color blindness among anthropologists. Shanklin views color blindness as a part of an extreme right-wing reaction denying the existence of race in order to justify cutting benefits to those most in need (Shanklin 1999:670). Color blindness consists of lack of consciousness regarding, or failure to acknowledge, the many forms of racism together with a corresponding absence of analytical interest in human biological variations and their interaction with socioeconomic factors. Both these biological factors and their cultural correlates and influences are related to the disparities in racialized stratification in American society.

A related view of these issues, as associated with affirmative action measures, is described by Jorge Chapa (2002) who identifies “race blind” policies as potentially permitting racialization and racism to re-emerge, perhaps *sub rosa*, while a “race neutral measure would leave the same proportion of minorities in the pool after it was applied as existed in the pool before” (Chapa 2002:380). Chapa’s discussion focused on issues related to voter propositions ending affirmative action programs, and the consequences of the “race-blind” approach in California—tied principally to test score performance—versus the more “race neutral” implementation in Texas. In the latter instance the top 10 percent of

each school district were to be granted admission to state institutions of higher education regardless of state standardized test standing, thus “the potential to democratize” access despite residential or geographic segregation (Chapa 2002:381). We have yet to realize the consequences for the proposition so recently passed in Michigan.

With our understanding of the chimerical nature of “race,” affirmative action programs cannot be about “race quotas” or “race preference” but about promoting access for classes of people who had been (and may still be) racialized and systematically excluded from equal access, opportunity, and participation.

The War on Terror

The War on Terror constitutes the present phase of the political context. In the twenty-first century the old threat of expanding communism and the enemy of fellow travelers internal to the United States were replaced by construction of a new threat referred to as terrorism. Following the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the threat was increasingly perceived as internal. Be this external or internal it was nevertheless viewed as coming from the Muslim world. A Homeland Security bureaucracy was established and the apparatus of the intelligence agencies focused on the internal threat to security.

In the fall of 2001 it is alleged that George W. Bush decided that the National Security Agency would no longer seek approval of the legally required special court for monitoring the various forms of communication (telephone, e-mail messages, etc.). Use of key words or phrases is said to lead to placement of a user’s name on a list by the FBI, CIA, and Department of Homeland Security, as well as foreign intelligence services. There is no way to confirm that a name is on the list, nor is there any way to remove it (Bamford 2006). As of this writing in 2006–07 it is too soon to see how much the civil liberties of individuals will be curtailed. We can expect some anthropologists who are experts on Muslim cultures to be accused or at least inhibited, while some may engage in secret research for government agencies. In a column that appeared in *Anthropology News*, Alan Goodman, the President of the AAA, posed several questions:

How does secrecy, nondisclosure and clandestine research related to perceived links between anthropology and national security entities impact anthropologists in the field? And to what extent does or doesn’t the discipline’s engagement with intelligence and national security—via the PRISP [Pat Roberts Intelligence

Scholars Program] and other mechanisms . . . constitute a threat to academic openness and independence? (Goodman 2006:63)

These questions were discussed by the AAA board and it “resolved to identify key issues and provide some initial architecture for a more systematic inquiry” (Goodman 2006:63).

The anti-communist cold war has been replaced by anti-terrorist intelligence alerts. Criticizing the war in Iraq and describing errors in America’s role in the world are labeled as being “soft on security” and “not supporting the troops.” All this is in the context of a widespread color-blind preference among Americans to ignore race and racist discrimination and by the proclamation by some that there is an “end of racism.”

An example of the political climate that exploits the inhibiting atmosphere of fear is provided in the book *Campus Support for Terrorism*, written and published by former liberal converted to extreme right-wing ideology, David Horowitz, and Ben Johnson (2004). Not available through established publishers, it was reviewed in the San Jose *Mercury News* (Krieger 2006:B 1–2). The book’s cover features a picture of Stanford University Mideast scholar Joel Beinin. In the *Mercury News* article Horowitz is quoted as saying “I didn’t say he was a terrorist, I said he supported terrorism.” Beinin is described by Horowitz’s review as “a 58-year-old Jewish professor who supports Palestinian rights” and “routinely criticizes U.S. leaders for failing to understand why Americans are hated in the Arab world . . . also Beinin is said to favor peaceful co-existence of Palestinians and Israelis” (p. B-2).

Horowitz has also authored a book titled *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America* (2006). On MSNBC’s *Scarborough Country*, on March 3, 2006, Horowitz claimed “there are 50,000 professors” who are “Anti-American” and “identify with the terrorists” (<http://mediamatters.org/items/200603030013>). In *The Professors* three anthropologists are included: Gayle Rubin; Nicholas de Genova; and Elizabeth M. Brumfiel, past president of the American Anthropological Association (2003–05). In the four pages about Brumfiel there are no direct quotations from her that demonstrate her position, but there are lengthy quotations from the theme of a “Radical Archaeology Theory Seminar” which declare that “we should be committed to political action against class and gender oppression, racism, and discriminations” (Horowitz 2006:78 n.174). Horowitz also refers to the American Anthropological Association’s official statement that research supports a vast array of family types, including same-sex partnerships, that can contribute to stable and humane societies (American

Anthropological Association n.d.). The specter of fear created by Senator McCarthy lives on, still using the methods of smear by implication in the era of terrorism.

Linguistic Dimensions of the Reification of Race

An example of cultural/linguistic context is revealed through application of the classic Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Chandler 1994), in this instance, as it concerns the influence of language on perpetuation of a racist worldview. Interestingly, a process of change in the language of race and racism was experimented with in the United States census, the term “race” being dropped altogether from the 1980 census form.

With the arrival of the Reagan/Bush administrations, reification of the concept returned officially and with a vengeance regarding the 1990 U.S. Census Form. Item 4 of the census survey, previously titled “Color or Race” in 1970 and subsequently labeled as just “Race” in 1990, for the 1980 census survey was simply phrased as asking “Is this Person . . . ?” It was left up to the respondent to conceptualize the socio-political descriptors listed. While the term “race” did not appear once on the 1980 census survey form, it occurred a total of 6 times on item 4 alone in the 1990 U.S. census survey (U.S. Census Bureau 1990). Even if the respondent selected “Other,” on the 1980 form, one was asked to simply “Specify” by writing the desired self-designation in a box. By 1990 the option was labeled prominently as “Other Race” and, if selected, the respondent was further instructed quite explicitly to “Print Race.”

The U.S. Bureau of the Census initially defines race in a popular sense, noting that “race . . . reflects self-identification by people according to the race or races with which they most closely identify.” The Bureau does note that “These categories are sociopolitical constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature,” but the unscientific, inconsistent application of unrelated criteria is reflected in the acknowledgment that “Furthermore, the race categories include both racial and national-origin groups” (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

In fact, in its attack on the anti-racism trend, the U.S. Census Bureau violated its own proclamation of this item of “self-identification.” In a 2002 report titled “Modified Race Data Summary File” (U.S. Census Bureau 2002) the Bureau described racialized re-assignment of the 42 percent of the Hispanic population that checked “Other” on the “Race” survey item. The Bureau reassigned the 42.2 percent of Hispanics who selected “Non-Specified One Race Only: Other”—some 14.9 million respondents—to a redesignation as “White.” Given that approximately

two-thirds of the Hispanic population is identified as of “Mexican Heritage” and recognizing that much of that population is considered as “mestizo” or of mixed European and New World indigenous, as well as African and Asian heritages, it is extremely misleading to force a racialized label of simply “White” on that population. It represents a rather blatant example of the workings of linguistic racism and constitutes a *de facto* attack against anti-racism. That 42 percent of the “Hispanic” or Latino population rejects the racialized categories is in itself a significant support for anti-racism albeit apparently not acceptable to the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

A telling example of a valuable alternate perspective was provided to (and later reported by) Lieberman and Kirk (2001) at the March 2001 Luis Montané Physical Anthropology Symposium Roundtable on Race held at the University of Havana, Cuba. During the discussion following a critique of the misleading nature of “Racial” survey results, Cuban anthropologists in that country’s Public Health Service protested and asked what categories were to be substituted for “race.” In response, we posed two questions to them:

(1) What race categories did they currently use? Answer: “Blanco, Negro, y Mulato (White, Black, and Mulatto).” We commented that they were ahead of us in that our census constituted an “either-or” process, related to the racist “one drop rule” which did not recognize the diversity and reality of admixture represented by “Mulato”; (2) If a survey revealed any differences between these “race” groups, did they conclude they represented inherent or innate, “racial,” differences between Whites, Blacks, and Mulattos? Answer: “No, we conclude that we are observing the effects of the last vestiges of racism in our society.” We commented that their use of racialized categories was sound by comparison to ours and their interpretation was intelligible and based in the social and historical context of racialization.

Clearly, the approach described by the Cuban public health workers did not attribute differences to the chimera of “race” but, rather, identified differences as a correlate—and perhaps a consequence of racialization and racism. The biologist Alain Corcos (1997) warns also against mistaking correlation for causation in the notation of “racial” differences. He cautions biomedical researchers in particular to not presume “race” differences are due to inherent distinctions but are attributable as socio-cultural consequences of racialization and racism. This recommendation was underscored by Cooper, Rotimi, and Ward in their 1999 article, “The Puzzle of Hypertension in African-Americans.”

Anti-Racism and the Organization and Traditions of the AAA

A different type of context inhibiting anti-racism is provided by the organization and traditions of the AAA. Beginning in the years following World War II the members of the American Anthropological Association formed a number of special units (Silverman 2005:320). As of 2006 there were over 29 units, plus committees with members having multiple memberships. The special interests of each unit ranged from being focused on a topic and its ramifications (e.g., museums, Asia, feminists) to broad interests (e.g., education, cultural anthropology). This fissioning of research interests discouraged the analysis of racism, which by default were left to other units.

The fissioning of anthropology was painfully seen as some physical/biological and cultural anthropologists moved away from each other. Some anthropology departments at major universities split into scientific versus more humanistic/narrative orientations (Duke, Stanford, UC–Berkeley), generally with physical anthropologists in one and cultural in the other, and with, at best, little interaction between the two. Some groups stayed outside of the AAA umbrella (Society of American Archaeologists, Society for Applied Anthropology) (Hakken 2003:189). The four-field orientation of anthropology received less uniform support: “Boasian ‘holists’ disappeared, bureaucratically transformed into ‘particularists’ like everyone else” (Hakken 2003:189).

Thus a number of divisions of the AAA were organized each with their own area of study. Anti-racism could then be taken up by any of them or allowed to fall between the cracks. Similarly, the Code of Ethics of the AAA leaves anti-racism up to individual researchers.

That there has been an increase in emphasis on ethics in professional organizations is seen in the expansion of the number of such codes from 241 in 1981 to currently over 850 (Turner 2005:1). Over the years the AAA has formulated several codes (see American Anthropological Association 1947, 1998, and 1999). The American Association of Physical Anthropology (AAPA 2003) modeled its code of 2003 on the code of the AAA (see Fluehr-Lobban 2003:247–254, 255–260). In both instances notation is made regarding the avoidance of discrimination based on “race” (placed in quotes in each), but no reference is made to “racism.”

The anthropological criticism of racism in science should be very much a part of the ethics of the profession, however it appears that

as anthropologists increasingly earn their living outside academia, they are simultaneously distancing themselves from the

previously held principle that their primary ethical responsibility is to protect those they study—and substituting a concurrent new emphasis on the ethical fulfillment of contractual duties and responsibilities. (Price 2003:29)

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, active in writing about and exerting leadership on ethics consideration in the AAA, observes that “there is a crisis in ethics in basic U.S. institutions . . . confusion over ethical principles and practices is pervasive in U.S. society today, with few clear standards of right and wrong for which there is general consensus” (2003:xi). Fluehr-Lobban provides a useful and thorough review of the history of ethics and anthropology, 1890–2000, including Boas, World War II, Project Camelot, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act), Kennewick Man, Darkness in El Dorado, and more. She reports on the most recent AAA code of ethics of 1998: “Advocacy for the rights of the people studied, indigenous peoples or others, is a choice and an individual decision, but not an ethical responsibility” (2003:23).

Fluehr-Lobban further states that “the profession is no closer to having a common culture today—where philosophy, ideology, and practice are widely shared. . .” (2003:225). In the “absence of a common culture” and with “advocacy for the rights of people . . . (being) an individual decision,” then it is no wonder that there is not more criticism of the racism directed at indigenous peoples or at minority groups in the wealthy nations.

The tradition of cultural relativism in anthropology and the AAA made judgments of other societies (even our own) problematic. Mark Goodale (2006) adds that the lacunae over ethics and the rights of people is significantly influenced by the strong tradition of cultural relativism which may be understood to decree avoidance of judgmental interference in other cultures.

This tradition is attributed to Boas and the Boasian school that developed in the first half of the twentieth century. It was a view explicitly represented by Melville Herskovits when the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) turned to him for endorsement of its proposed Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Herskovits refused to do so and his statement of refusal was adopted by the Executive Board of the AAA and published in the *American Anthropologist* in 1947. “Herskovits rejected the possibility of a declaration of human rights on three grounds, which can be categorized as the empirical, the epistemological, and the ethical” (Goodale 2006:1). The “science of mankind” has shown that moral systems varied so that assertion of uni-

versality imposed an external judgment, made problematic explanations of social and biological processes, and imposed a “moral imperialism” that denied freedom to persons and groups whose values concerning human life, private property, and individual freedom differed from those in the Declaration (Goodale 2006:1–2).

Despite the low level of general interest in human rights, there were a number of exceptions. Goodale cites the works of forensic anthropologists in human rights investigations, biological anthropologists and archaeologists attempting to reconcile scientific study and human rights claims of Native Americans, and the earlier argument by Ruth Benedict against McCarthyite persecutions of some progressive anthropologists, the maltreatment and internment of U.S. Japanese, federal action on civil rights for “Negroes,” and the work of anthropologists on the four UNESCO statements on race (see di Leonardo 1998:201, cited by Goodale 2006:2).

Despite these worthwhile efforts “the conversation between academic anthropologists and human rights practitioners is basically barely more than a decade old; it will continue to mature over time and it is unlikely to be reducible to any single formula” (Wilson 2006:82). As the conversation matures there may be a reduction in inhibitions, in light of the diluted status of ethics and gap between relativism and unusual human rights. If so, there may be more attention to countering the many manifestations of racism.

Revival of Anti-Racism

We have sketched exploratory and explanatory contexts relating to the decline of anti-racism. This procedure does not yield a statement of which influences are the most potent, nor of the frequency and rate of the decline in anti-racism, nor whether the decline was in the number of anti-racist articles and projects or their emphases. And yet there has been a revival of anti-racism.

Paradoxically, the assessment of anti-racism must include the journals in anthropology such as the *American Anthropologist* that published the influential articles on colorblindness, and *Transforming Anthropology* published out of Duke University by the Association of Black Anthropologists, a section of the American Anthropological Association. Also, as mentioned above there are a number of departments and programs in universities specializing in African-American, Latino and other Ethnic Studies concentrations. Google names over sixty such departments in the first one hundred of its listing of such units.

Notably there are a large number of books and collections of articles dealing with racism from members of departments of anthropology, sociology, political science, English, philosophy and others. Appearing in 2006, for example, and written by cultural anthropologists, are *Race and Racism* (Fluehr-Lobban 2006), and *Race, Culture and Biology: An Educator's Sourcebook* (Mukhopadhyay, Henze, and Moses 2006). Taken together these and corresponding works in other disciplines represent the diffusion of anthropology, the culture concept, and anti-racism into academia. Can anthropology, historically the pioneer in anti-racism, exert continuing leadership?

Outstanding as part of the call to overcome color blind inattention to racism is the development of a traveling exhibition, the *Understanding Race and Variation Project: A Public Education Program*, which debuted in 2007. It was developed by a committee of the American Anthropological Association, with multi-million-dollar support from the National Science Foundation, and leadership from Yolanda Moses as chair, and Mary Overbey as project director (Moses 2004, 2007).

Looking through two lenses, the sciences and the humanities, the RACE Project will help individuals understand the origins and manifestations of race and racism in everyday life, and come to their own conclusion that *human variation* is a part of nature and that *race* is *not inevitable nor part of nature* but a dynamic and sometimes harmful cultural construct. (emphasis added, p.1 of <http://Raceproject.aaanet.org/about.html>)

Race: the Power of Illusion (Adelman 2003), a three-part video documentary, was developed about the same time as the *Race Initiative*. Although not produced by the AAA, many of the advisors and participants are anthropologists. Each part is about fifty-six minutes long. Part one, "The Difference Between Us" presents a diverse group of twelve high-school students and compares their views on how closely they are related to each other. Their DNA sequences reveal that genetic matches are likely to be identified with people from other superficially distant "races." Myths and misunderstandings about the biology of "race," and the sources of differences in group performance in sports and SAT scores are accompanied by narratives from prominent specialists in anthropology and biology. Part 2, "The Story We Tell," presents the historical forces that created the idea of inferior races in the Americas and was used to justify inequalities as the products of supposed biblical stories, or of nature and evolution. Part 3, "The House We Live In" explains how the existing inequalities in the wealth and the status of European-derived

ethnics versus African Americans was reinforced by federal housing policies and mortgage guarantees after World War II. The three episodes use the explanatory power of science, history, and social and economic institutions to unravel the puzzle of persistent inequality. *Race, the Power of an Illusion* provides a fascinating and informative portrayal that vividly complements the AAA program on *Understanding Race and Human Variation*. The role of anthropologists and anthropological information is evident in the above projects which are appropriately and importantly directed towards a broad segment of those Americans learning about race and racism.

Given its commitment to studying humankind in all its aspects, anthropology is rightfully concerned with racism throughout the world. Dedicated to this purpose is the organization *Cultural Survival* founded in 1972 by David Mayberry Lewis, and publisher of *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, advocating the rights of indigenous peoples. Various issues on indigenous peoples have featured water rights, fair trade, conflict, women, mining, property rights, eco-tourism, hydroelectric dams, deforestation, medicinal drugs, and more. Cultural Survival “supports projects that promote local self determination of any ethnic group residing within multi-ethnic society” (Flores 1999:1).

Complementing the worldwide scope of anthropology is the forensic work of Clyde Snow and other physical anthropologists in identifying skeletal remains in several nations including Argentina, Guatemala, and Bosnia. Not only do they identify the remains of missing family members, but also provide evidence of the cause of death, in many cases implicating the involvement of the state sponsored military and police. The forensic specialists also trained local residents in the science of forensic skeletal identification. Was biological racism involved in these murders? Often yes, since the governing elites tended to be European derived while the peasants were more often of Mayan ancestry in Guatemala, or of a different ethnic and religious identity in Bosnia.

Why the Increase in Anti-Racism?

We propose that the leadership against racism that grew out of Columbia University in the early decades of the twentieth century was led to a significant degree by immigrants from Southeastern Europe, Jews, Catholics, and a few Blacks and Native Americans.

The revival of anti-racism is related to changes and conflicts in the social structure of American culture (conflicts over immigration; conflicts over stigmatization of Muslim/Arab Americans; conflicts over rights of prisoners, as well as issues related to secrecy and anthropological ethics).

Preceding these was the Civil Rights Movement of 1955 to 1964, and related changes in federal law (Cashmore 1988). This movement stimulated universities across the United States to recognize the need for diversity in their programs, and increased admissions of African American and other minority students, and establishment of African American and other ethnic studies programs, centers, and departments.

Also relevant to the new anti-racism is the continuity of the Boasian tradition at several universities, among them Oregon, Michigan, Pennsylvania, University of California at Los Angeles, Indiana, SUNY at Buffalo, and the University of Washington (Lieberman and Reynolds 1996:155). Salient among these universities were anthropologists at the University of Colorado and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. These included Jack Kelso, George Armelagos, Michael Blakey, Allen Goodman, and others who called for a new synthesis of biology and culture; according to Kelso: "Taking the narrow natural science approach seems to have inhibited [biological anthropologists] from considering . . . the simultaneous biological and cultural problems of racism" (Kelso 1995:243).

According to Armelagos and Goodman,

Anthropologists can and should contribute their knowledge, experience, and skills concerning such topics as adaptation and its impact on health and disease, as well as the biological and social costs of racism, sexism, ageism, and classism. All of these should be essential parts of a new biocultural agenda for anthropology. Anthropology—as . . . a humanistic perspective and as a biocultural science—should . . . refocus and be poised to meet the issues of the 1990's and the next century. One old challenge—racism—remains. . . . Will anthropology, will we as anthropologists, finally respond?" (Armelagos and Goodman 1998:372)

Given the extent and complexity of racism in American culture, anti-racism has still received far too little attention. The revival of anti-racism is called for by many within the discipline: Alland 2002, Armelagos and Goodman 1998, Baker 1998, Blakey 2001, Brace 2005, Cohen 1998, Fluehr-Lobban 2006, Goodman et al. 2003, Harrison 1999, Jackson 1998, Kelso 1995, Kittles and Royal 2004, Leatherman and Goodman 1997, Marks 1995, Mukhopadhyay and Moses 1997, Price 2003, Shanklin 1999, Smedley 1993, Thomas 2000, and others. These are among the vanguard contributing to a revitalized anthropological approach to human variation and anti-racism, which looks squarely at the inequalities of America as a nation, and its role in the world.

Notes

A longtime friend and colleague, Leonard Lieberman, passed away on February 6, 2007, of complications associated with heart surgery and a lengthy battle with cancer. Notices of his passing and tributes to him as an anthropologist, scholar, mentor, and role model may be found in *Anthropology News* issues of March 2007:37 and May 2007:56. This article was in progress at the time of Professor Lieberman's passing and originated as a contribution at the AAA 2006 Annual Meeting in San Jose for the Presidential Session Biocultural Anthropology: The Half-Century Legacy of Jack Kelso, organized by George J. Armelagos and Wenda Trevathan. One of his longtime collaborators, Rodney C. Kirk, was provided Lieberman's notes and revisions by his daughter, Ms. Dana Lieberman, and offers this draft revision as a final tribute to the long and illustrious career and contributions of Leonard Lieberman, Professor Emeritus of Central Michigan University, to our discipline and its public. The notation of co-authorship was included by Dr. Lieberman in the drafts and presentation but this represents most clearly Lieberman's contribution with assistance provided by Rodney C. Kirk, Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

1. Lieberman and Kirk had many conversations concerning the significance of the language and linguistics of racism and prefer the consistency of avoiding the terms *race* and *racial* as reifying the concept of *race* with all of its presumed and/or perpetuated stereotypes and inherent prejudices. In this vein, then, "racial profiling" becomes translated into the more accurately descriptive "racist profiling" and, similarly, "racial social inequality" may be more clearly labeled as the imposed "racialized social inequality" or even more clearly identified as "racist social inequality." Thus this use of language does not mistakenly perpetuate the notion that there are "races" or "racial" divisions in society except as these social constructs are themselves imposed upon an arbitrarily or insidiously defined population. Finally, in this context for example, it is clear that there can be no description of affirmative action as being about "racial preference" or about "racial quotas." This policy and program was designed to provide access to a class of people who had been racialized and systematically excluded from having equal opportunity or representative access.

References

- Adelman, Larry. 2003. Race, the Power of an Illusion. California newsreel, order Dept. PO Box 2284. South Burlington, VT 05407-2284. (Telephone orders: 877-811-7495).
- Alland, Alexander. 2002. Race in Mind: Race, IQ and Other Racisms. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- American Anthropological Association. 1947. Statement on Human Rights. *American Anthropologist* 49(4):539-543.
- . 1998. Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association. <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethicscode.pdf>, accessed April 2, 2008.
- . 1999. Declaration on Anthropology and Human Rights. <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/humanrts.htm>, accessed April 2, 2008.
- . N.d. Statement on Marriage and the Family from the American Anthropological Association. <http://aaanet.org/stmts/marriage.htm>, accessed April 5, 2008.
- American Association of Physical Anthropologists. 2003. Code of Ethics of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists. <http://www.physanth.org/positions/ethics.pdf>, accessed April 2, 2008.

- Armelagos, George J., and Alan Goodman. 1998. Race and Racism, and Anthropology. *In* Building a New Biocultural Synthesis. A. H. Goodman and T.L. Leatherman, eds. Pp. 359–377. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Baker, Lee D. 1998. Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896–1954. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bamford, James. 2006. Big Brother is Listening. *Atlantic Monthly* 297(3):65–70.
- Benedict, Ruth, and Gene Weltfish. 1943. *The Races of Mankind*. New York: Viking Press.
- Blakey, Michael. 2001. Bioarchaeology of the African Diaspora in the Americas: Its Origin and Scope. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30:387–422.
- Brace, C. Loring. 2005. “Race” Is a Four-Letter Word: The Genesis of the Concept. New York: Oxford University Press
- Cashmore, E. Ellis. 1988. *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.
- Chandler, Daniel. 1994. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/whorf.html>, accessed April 2, 2008.
- Chapa, Jorge. 2002. Affirmative Action, X Percent Plans, and Latino Access to Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century. *In* *Latinos: Remaking America*. Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco and Mariela M. Pérez, eds. Pp. 375–388. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cohen, Mark Nathan. 1998. *Culture of Intolerance, Chauvinism, Class, and Racism in the United States*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Cooper, Richard S., Charles N. Rotimi, and Ryk Ward. 1999. The Puzzle of Hypertension in African-Americans. *Scientific American* 280(2):56–62.
- Corcos, Alain. 1997. *The Myth of Human Races*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- di Leonardo, Micaela. 1998. *Exotics at Home: Anthropologies, Others, American Modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Flores, Alejandro. 1999. Cultural Survival. www.indiana.edu/~wanthro/ali1.htm, accessed April 5, 2008.
- Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn, ed. 2003. *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology: A Dialogue for Ethically Conscious Practice*. 2nd edition. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn. 2006. *Race and Racism*. Lanham, MD: Altamira/Rowman and Littlefield.
- Gledhill, John. 2002. Anthropology and Politics: Commitment, Responsibility and the Academy. *In* *The Anthropology of Politics*. Joan Vincent, ed. Pp. 438–451. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Goodale, Mark. 2006. Introduction to Anthropology and Human Rights in a New Key. *American Anthropologist* 108(1):1–8.
- Goodman, Alan. 2006. Engaging with National Security. *Anthropology News* 47(2):63.
- Goodman, Alan, Deborah Heath, and M. Susan Lindlee, eds. 2003. *Genetic Nature/Culture: Anthropology and Science Beyond the Two-Culture Divide*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gough, Kathleen. 1968. World Revolution and the Science of Man. *In* *The Dissenting Academy*. T. Roszak, ed. Pp. 139–158. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hakken, David. 2003. An Ethics for an Anthropology in and of Cyberspace. *In* *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology: A Dialogue for Ethically Conscious Practice* (2nd

- ed.). Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, ed. Pp. 179–195. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Harrison, Faye V. 1995. Persistent Power of Race. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:47–74.
- . 1999. Introductions: Expanding the Discourse on “Race.” *American Anthropologist* 100(3):609–631.
- Horowitz, David. 2006. *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing.
- Horowitz, David, and Ben Johnson. 2004. *Campus Support for Terrorism*. Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Popular Culture.
- Jackson, Fatima L. 1998. Scientific Limitations and Ethical Ramifications of non-representation in the Human Genome Project: African American Responses. *Science and Engineering Ethics* 4:155–170.
- Kelso, Alec John (Jack). 1995. A Place for the Culture Concept in Biological Anthropology. In *Biological Anthropology: The State of the Science*. N. T. Boaz and L. D. Wolfe, eds. Pp. 241–250. Bend, OR: International Institute for Human Evolutionary Research.
- Kittles, Rick, and Charmain Royal. 2004. Genetic Variation and Affinities of African Americans: Implications for Disease Gene Mapping. In *Genetic Nature/Culture*. A. Goodman, D. Heath and M. S. Lindee, eds. Pp. 219–233. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Krieger, Lisa M. 2006. Professor Fights Portrayal as Supporter of Terrorism. *San Jose Mercury News*, May 10.
- Leatherman, T. R., and A. H. Goodman. 1997. Expanding the Biocultural Synthesis toward a Biology of Poverty. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 102:1–3.
- Lieberman, Leonard. 1997. Gender and the Deconstruction of Race Concept. *American Anthropologist* 99(3):545–558.
- Lieberman, Leonard, and Larry T. Reynolds. 1996. Race: The Deconstruction of a Scientific Concept. In *Race and Other Miscalculations, Misconcepts, and Mismeasures: Papers in Honor of Ashley Montagu*. L. Reynolds and L. Lieberman, eds. Pp. 142–173. Dix Hills, NJ: General Hall.
- Lieberman, Leonard, and Rodney Kirk. 2001. Now That You Have Taken Race Away From Us What Will Fill the Void? Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, DC.
- Lieberman, Leonard, Rodney C. Kirk, and Alice Littlefield. 2003a. Perishing Paradigm: Race 1931–1999. *American Anthropologist* 105(1):110–113.
- Lieberman, Leonard, Rodney C. Kirk, and Michael Corcoran. 2003b. The Decline of Race in American Physical Anthropology. *Prezeglod Anthropologiczny—Anthropological Review* 66:3–21.
- Marks, Jonathan. 1995. *Human Biodiversity: Genes, Race, and History*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- . In press. Race Across the Physical-Cultural Divide in American Anthropology. In *A New History of Anthropology*. H. Kuklick, ed. New York: Blackwell.
- Montagu, Ashley. 1942. *Man’s Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Moses, Yolanda. 2004. The Continuing Power of the Concept of “Race.” *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 35(1):146–148.
- . 2007. The Public Education Project of the AAA: “Race: Are We So Different?” *General Anthropology* 14(1):1–3.

- Mukhopadhyay, Carol C., and Yolanda T. Moses. 1997. Reestablishing "Race" in Anthropological Discourse. *American Anthropologist* 99(3):517–533.
- Mukhopadhyay, Carol C., Rosemary Henze, and Yolanda T. Moses. 2006. *Race, Culture and Biology: An Educator's Sourcebook*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Price, David H. 2003. Anthropology Sub Rosa: the CIA, AAA, and the Ethical Problems Inherent in Secret Research. *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology: A Dialogue for Ethically Conscious Practice*. (2nd edition. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, ed. Pp. 20–49. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2004. *Threatening Anthropology. McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Shanklin, Eugenia. 1999. The Profession of the Colorblind: Sociocultural Anthropology and Racism in the 21st Century. *American Anthropologist* 100:669–679.
- Silverman, Sydel. 2005. The United States. *In One Discipline Four Ways: British, German, French and American Anthropology*. Fredrik Barth, Andre Gingrich, Robert Parkin, Sydel Silverman, eds. Pp. 337–347. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smedley, Audrey. 1993. *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a World View*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Thomas, David Hurst. 2000. *Skull Wars*. New York: Basic/Perseus.
- Turner, Trudy R. 2005. Introduction: Ethical Concerns in Biological Anthropology and Ethics. *In Biological Anthropology and Ethics*. T. Turner, ed. Pp. 1–13. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Understanding Race and Variation Project: A Public Education Program. 2007. <http://www.understandingrace.org>, accessed April 5, 2008.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 1990. Your Guide for the 1990 U.S. Census Form: Respondent Instructions and Questionnaire Pages. <http://www.census.gov/prod/1990dec/cph4/appdx.pdf>, accessed April 2, 2008.
- . 2000. Race. http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long_68184.htm, accessed April 2, 2008.
- . 2002. Modified Race Data Summary File. <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/files/MRSF-01-US1.html>, accessed April 2, 2008.
- Wilson, Richard Ashby. 2006. Afterword to Anthropology and Human Rights in a New Key: The Social Life of Human Rights. *American Anthropologist* 108(1):77–83.