

# Culture, Ethnicity, and Justice in the South

The Southern Anthropological Society,  
1968–1971

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA PRESS  
Tuscaloosa

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# Culture, Ethnicity, and Justice in the South

# Introduction

Miles Richardson

AS A SENIOR member of the Southern Anthropological Society, I'm sure the younger scholars would forgive me if I began with something like, "It seems only yesterday that anthropologists from the far corners of the region came together in Atlanta in 1968 to usher in a new era for the South." As a matter of fact it was a long time ago, back to the Archaic at least, maybe even the Paleoindian era, getting close to a half century in any case. At that time, the South had a coterie of nationally prominent scholars, such as John Honigmann, John Gulick, Solon Kimball, and Arden King. Archaeologists, feasting on the WPA's bounty of shovel hands, had pioneered the penetration of the Old South: Charles Fairbanks of Florida, Hale Smith of Florida State, David DeJarnette of Alabama, Robert Wauchope of Tulane, William Haag of Louisiana State, and Art Kelly of the University of Georgia, to name a few. But in the 1960s—the golden age of grants and expansion—an influx of recent Ph.D. recipients, several from the region's fledgling doctoral programs, joined their betters: Charles Hudson from North Carolina, Miles Richardson from Tulane, and soon the first graduates from the new program at Georgia, Carole Hill and John Peterson. Also new were people such as Malcolm Webb and Michael Olien, who ventured into the region from programs at Michigan and Oregon. Counting both the established and the freshly scrubbed but excluding the sociologists with whom we met, we numbered eighty-seven, not a lot from the perspective of today's abundance, but enough to produce the first Proceedings.

A major figure in the production of the first Proceedings—as well as the next ten or so—was Charles Hudson. He negotiated a most favorable publication agreement with the University of Georgia Press, became the series editor, and played a prominent role in bringing people together at the key symposium.

The first Proceedings devotes itself to a field just crystallizing as a separate subject of specialization, medical anthropology. Among the papers are surveys of the newly emerging field, analyses of contemporary mental health conditions, and several examinations of folk practices. One of the latter—

close to my heart, if not my mouth—is “pica,” or more generally, *geophagy*. A fieldworker hasn’t really arrived until the moment when he or she can ask, “Do people around here eat dirt?”

On the agenda of this first Proceeding, and in the very formation of SAS, is the theme of justice, implicit for some, more vocal for others, but constant and strong in all. Anthropology’s concern for the human species emerged early as a commitment to set the record straight. Setting straight a record that ideologues (if not demagogues) had twisted almost at will to suit the powers that be, required the application of anthropological research to the region’s languages, cultures, archaeologies, and human compositions, which SAS did from its very beginning.

For the organizational meeting, we met jointly with the Southern sociologists. Then for the next meeting, we abandoned the sociologists and met on our own. Some had vaguely mentioned pooling efforts with the well-established Southeastern Archaeological Conference, which met in the fall. But no one, especially the archaeologists, appeared particularly anxious for such a union. In addition, by staying with a spring meeting, we were hopeful that the southern sunshine would tempt our northern colleagues to leave the ice and snow and contribute their voices to ours in articulating critical themes of the day. Sure enough, Elizabeth Eddy, chair of the key symposium, persuaded Conrad Arensberg from New York City and Han Buechler from Syracuse to join the southern contingent in pursuit of another emergent specialty, urban anthropology. Arensberg rose to the occasion, as he always did, with a panoramic, cross-cultural view of the urban, and John Gulick closed the volume with a succinct discussion of research strategies for a discipline committed to the small and the intimate.

For the third meeting, Arden King asked Stephen Tyler and me to organize a program to be held in New Orleans. I had the responsibility of putting the program together, while Steve, who was at Tulane at the time and was still this side of postmodernism, understandably, became chair of the key symposium and editor of the resulting Proceedings. In the freshness of our Ph.D.’s, Steve and I wanted to expose the foundations of the field, so we settled on the theme of concepts and assumptions in contemporary anthropology. The Tulane environment encouraged us to bring together members of all four major fields, so Francis Johnston from UT at Austin sought commonality in human behavior, culture, and biology, while William Haag of LSU exposed the presuppositions of archaeologists. In the absence of a linguist, Jan Brukman of the University of Illinois acknowledged the role of the linguist paradigm in the development of the then “new ethnography,” one of several “news” that “flowered” in the 1960s. Our greatest success, however, came through implementing the “southern strategy” of warm weather garnished by the delights of New Orleans to persuade Eric Wolf, then at Michigan, to kick off the key symposium with a wonderful lacing together of American anthropologists and American society.

The 1970 meeting in Athens was a banner year, producing not just one

Proceeding but two. Proceeding Four, organized and edited by J. Kenneth Morland from Randolph-Macon Women's College at Lynchburg, demonstrates that the South, a regional subculture to be sure, was not all that "Solid"—that is, White, Evangelical, and Democrat—as so many stereotypically assumed. A series of compact papers range over the landscape from Tennessee to Louisiana and bring forth black divines, gypsies, mountain kin, plain folk, Native Americans, and of course, the 1960s epithet, "hippies." Subjects likewise addressed include drinking, hunting, shouting, and dying. To Morland's credit, not one mint julep, not one verandah, and not one Southern "gentleman" grace the work. "Being relevant," Morland explains in his introduction, "characterized the period's most ardent desire," and this volume spoke directly to that desire. As did the next one.

*Red, White, and Black* contains the papers of the key symposium organized by the ever-dedicated Charles Hudson. The subtitle declares the volume to be about Indians in the Old South, and in order to address these people, the authors divide themselves into two parts, each with a commentator. Part I concerns itself with the time of European contact. Led off by a geographer, who promotes the use of early maps as a means of recovering southeastern Native American landscapes, a physical anthropologist, a linguist (from that great "Southern" metropolis, Berkeley, California), and a historical archaeologist follow with comprehensive assessments of each subject during the critical period that saw the birth of the "Old" South. In his overview of the chapters, Charles Fairbanks of Florida applauds the chapters as the "first general synthesis in many years" and then marvels at the spate of recent publication of documents and new editions of classic studies generated by the expansionist 1960s.

Part II began with a historical review of the antebellum elite's mixed attitude toward the native inhabitants and the slaves who replaced them. Even as they pushed Native Americans westward, the elite talked, albeit sporadically, of the nobility of the vanishing Indian, while the best they could say about African Americans was, "We treat our Negras well." Another historian ponders the case of the non-plantation whites in the early Old South. Two factors, he concludes, kept them tied to the mythology of Southern egalitarianism: the availability of land once the Native Americans were "removed," which allowed at least a few onto the road to elite status, and the presence of a stigmatized underclass, which "glorified" their whiteness. In the following chapter, an anthropologist pursues the similar theme of divide and rule, but between the Indians and African Americans. Considering the presence of the French and Spanish, along with the two minorities, there were many antagonisms for the English to stir up and promote to their benefit, which they did quite successfully. In the next chapter, an anthropologist argues that the very label, "Old South," reduces the region to the planter-slave stereotype and blinds us to the position of Native Americans in the composition of Southern society. Historian, Charles Crowe of Georgia, concludes Part II with a well-fashioned comment that underscores the different positions of Native Ameri-

cans and African Americans in Southern mythology. It is as if the Europeans stripped African American slaves of any admirable trait and applied those to Native Americans, *after* the Indians were “removed.”

And so ended the fifth Proceeding of the Southern Anthropological Society. Like its predecessors, it brought attention to the emergence of anthropologists in a region long shunned by the established doctoral programs in the Northeast, Midwest, and on the West Coast. Southern anthropologists, either *in* or *of* the South, in Carole Hill’s terms, showed to a critical, revolutionary, flower-loving, civil-rights promoting generation just how relevant anthropology was to the goals of that generation. Today, the younger set and us crotchety Archaics must continue to proclaim that anthropologists, here in a region of such tragic dimensions and in a country so skewed off course from the 1960s, work for justice through a four-field documentation of the human endeavor.

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# Proceedings No. 1. Essays on Medical Anthropology

Edited by Thomas Weaver

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# ESSAYS ON MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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## PREFACE

This publication is the first of a projected series to be issued annually by the Southern Anthropological Society. The Society, hereafter cited as SAS, is the youngest of the regional anthropology societies, yet its publication program is the most ambitious. An explanation of how this came about follows.

SAS was born in New Orleans on April 8, 1966. Meeting jointly with the Southern Sociological Society, 42 of the anthropologists present came together for an organizational meeting. The officers elected were charged with arranging for a 1967 spring meeting and with drawing up a constitution. In the months that followed, SAS officers fulfilled their stated duties and went one step beyond in drawing preliminary plans for publication of certain papers to be presented at the 1967 meeting.

The second annual meeting of SAS, again in conjunction with the Southern Sociological Society, was held in Atlanta, Georgia on March 30-April 1, 1967. Some 87 anthropologists registered, and a diversified program of papers was well attended. Thomas Weaver and Ralph Patrick organized two sessions on medical anthropology since this was the area that the officers had selected for publication provided that SAS members approved.

The 1967 business meeting was scheduled so that the adoption of a constitution came up first. Next, officers were elected according to provisions in the constitution. Thirdly, a plan for the annual publication of Proceedings was approved as a means of implementing the primary purpose of SAS. This is stated in the SAS constitution as "the promotion of anthropology in the southern United States."

The system envisaged for future SAS Proceedings is essentially the same as that which gave rise to this volume. Each year SAS officers will pick a theme or subject to stress at the next annual meeting. Normally, two or more programs will be built around this theme from invited papers. An editor, chosen by SAS officers, will select the articles to be published from the invited papers. The chosen editor will normally be the program chairman or chairman of the "theme" sessions.

SAS will include volunteered papers on a variety of subjects at its annual meetings. Their very variety, however, prevents them from becoming a unified volume. Unity is essential if for no other reason than increasing the saleability of Proceedings. SAS membership is too small to warrant printing for its members alone.

The goals of Proceedings are admittedly pragmatic. It is designed to promote anthropology in the South. It is intended to increase attendance at SAS meetings and thus get Southern anthropologists to work together for their common good. It has an implicit message to anthropologists in other areas that anthropology in the South is now moving into the

discipline's mainstream. It is even hoped that budding anthropologists will no longer exclude our area from job consideration. It may surprise some people that there are enough anthropologists in the South to organize a society, let alone sponsor a publication program.

Behind the goals must lie a consistent philosophy for our editors. Already stated is the necessity of a unified publication. In addition, a high standard of quality must be maintained. This starts with the invited papers and continues through necessary revisions and time-consuming editorial work. Both Charles Hudson, proceedings editor, and Thomas Weaver, editor of this volume, have had the difficult task of setting up the initial model. It seems obvious to me that they have already established a high level for future editors to maintain.

SAS is indebted to the University of Georgia Press and its director, Ralph Stephens, for bringing out this volume. The University of Georgia Press will also print subsequent numbers of the series.

The University of Georgia Department of Sociology and Anthropology has in effect been a joint sponsor of these Proceedings. The Department has furnished typing services, materials, and, most importantly, has provided us with our proceedings editor, Charles Hudson.

Frank J. Essene  
President, SAS

MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY:  
TRENDS IN RESEARCH AND MEDICAL EDUCATION

Thomas Weaver  
University of Pittsburgh

Introduction

A complete delineation of the field of medical anthropology, even considering its relative youthfulness, would require more time and space than is presently available. Earlier summaries have been written by Caudill (1953) and Polgar (1962). The purpose of this paper, less comprehensive by comparison, is to provide a brief contextual framework for understanding contributions in this field.

Medical anthropology is that branch of applied anthropology which deals with various aspects of health and disease and hence, strictly speaking, although primarily the contribution of anthropologists, it must also include those contributions from non-anthropologists which relate cultural, cross-cultural, comparative, or ethnic material to medicine.

It may be useful to distinguish, as Straus (1957) has done for sociology, between the anthropology of medicine and anthropology in medicine. In this sense anthropology in medicine includes the applied or more directly related contributions made by anthropologists involved in research, teaching, administration, and consulting in medical and public health settings. Anthropology of medicine would then encompass basic or background anthropological contributions to the understanding of sociocultural factors in health and disease which result from research by anthropologists who are usually outside of a formal medical setting.

There are many factors which have led behavioral scientists to do research on medically related problems and to become associated with medical and public health schools in teaching, research, and other activities. Some of these factors derive from broad scale social changes and from changes in the medical profession itself. These include the enormous growth of voluntary health insurance programs (Health Insurance Council 1965); governmental activity in social legislation (Coggeshall 1965); and the increased investment of private philanthropic foundations (Rusk 1967). These trends have resulted in an explosion in medical knowledge and technology, in greater construction of health facilities than before, and in experimentation in new health and medical programs. A greatly expanded and improved communications media together with a continued high level of public education has resulted in greater public knowledge and sophistication in medical matters.

Changes and trends in medicine include increasing specialization,

the continued low production of physicians by medical schools, the movement of medical care away from the home to the office and then to the hospital, an interest in international medicine and in the medical economics of developing countries, and a concern for multiple disease causation, epidemiology, and psychosomatic medicine.

The total effect of these changes has been a depersonalization of medicine, a greatly increased demand for services and for application of the latest medical knowledge, an increased criticism of the physician, a greater number of successful malpractice suits, increased costs of medical care and medical education, fragmentation of communication between the doctor and his patient, and the segmented treatment of the patient by many different specialists.

As the physician and medical educator has become more concerned with the increasing complexity of these problems and the growing health needs of the nation, he has gradually turned to the behavioral sciences for help in obtaining that useful information about social and cultural factors of human life which lies beyond the scope of the biological sciences.

### Anthropological Research

Long before their research was offered to or requested by the field of medicine, representatives of all subdisciplines of anthropology were concerned with the collection of data pertaining to health and disease. Physical anthropologists have long been associated with teaching anatomy in medical schools. Anthropological linguists are involved in kinesic studies and research in communication and illness behavior. Archaeologists and physical anthropologists have long been interested in the diseases of palaeoanthropic man. The subdiscipline most concerned with medical subjects, however, has been social and cultural anthropology.

Perhaps a special mention of physical anthropology is necessary because of its neglect in other discussions of medical anthropology. Washburn (1951) has described the new directions away from a science of measurement to one concerned with heredity and process which physical anthropology has taken as a result of the influence of genetics and a greater concern with functional anatomy. Along with this has gone a willingness to accept techniques which have been developed in connection with medical technology (Cobb 1956). This shift has provided many new and interesting contributions to genetics, anatomy, and medicine (Pollitzer 1963).

Examples of the use of physical anthropological data in medicine are too numerous to attempt a detailed listing. Some of these include the work of physical anthropologists working with archaeologists in the field of paleopathology (Kerley and Bass 1967) and the correlation of sickle cell anemia with malaria and the development of agriculture (Wisensfeld 1967; Livingstone 1958). Other examples of the uses of physical and cultural