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**MAD OR MEDITATIVE IN MARICOPA**

On the cover of this issue is a haunting image of a girl near Chandler, Arizona. It is simply titled "Daughter of Mexican field laborer" and dated 1937 (Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSAA-OWI Collection [LC USF34-016792-C]). It is one of nearly four thousand pictures Dorothea Lange (1895–1965) shot as a photographer, first for the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the California State Emergency Relief Administration and then for the Farm Security Administration. Lange is known for her moving images of poor Whites as they made their way from Oklahoma's dust bowl west to join other migrant laborers in California, and she is, perhaps, best known for her iconic image of the Great Depression—"Migrant Mother."

Lange never focused exclusively on Whites or Whiteness per se. On the contrary, her images in this collection show migrant camps that were a vibrant yet poverty-stricken mix of American Indians, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Filipino Americans as well as Whites from various ethnic backgrounds. What becomes obvious is that the line between migrant and immigrant, documented and undocumented, was thin and blurred, but the color line appears to be drawn in unflinching and stark terms. They were all poor, and Lange's unique documentary style captured the emotions—often a mix of joy and sorrow—of people who were living in a strained and strange congregated segregation bound by circumstance, poverty, and the hope to scratch out an existence picking onions, peas, dates, and tomatoes in the Imperial and San Joaquin valleys or in Maricopa County, Arizona, where this image was shot.

After Pearl Harbor was attacked, Lange was asked to document the efforts of the War Relocation Authority, a federal program that used the U.S. Army to intern people of Japanese ancestry in the so-called Pacific Coast military zone. In this issue, John Howard explores this incarceration. Although there was little evidence and no provocation, President Franklin D. Roosevelt succumbed to fear and issued Executive Order 9066, which forced U.S. citizens, against their will and with no formal charges, into fortified but makeshift assembly centers before they were loaded by train and convoy to remote internment camps. Approximately 120,000 men, women, and children were incarcerated with no due processes and Dorothea Lange used her camera to give witness to this forced removal as they left their friends, businesses, and homes to be "processed"—tagged, labeled, and contained—before they were trucked to the various camps.

Interestingly, her photos of migrant laborers during the Depression are all available online through the American Memory project of the Library of Congress. Although the photos she took for the War Relocation Authority are cataloged on the web, each image is not available online. Thank goodness, they are available through the Online Archive of California at <http://oac.cdlib.org/>.

What is clear from the image on the cover of this issue of *TA*, as well as the gripping images throughout Lange's online collection, is that the plight of poor workers from Mexico, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe is not a new "issue" in the United States, and for many people who hail from Mexico and Central America, conditions have not changed much since the Depression. Although it is hard to discern if this young girl is thinking, "Is chick crazy, trying to take a picture of me?" or if she is really just uncertain what the immediate future holds for her and her family. I used it to help frame Alisse Waterson's controversial look at some of the dynamics in the processes of racial construction in the wake of rapidly changing demographics in the United States. Her paper was vigorously and spiritedly peer-reviewed, and Professor Waterston knows that she is traversing some tricky terrain, but she bravely tackles a complicated subject with hopes that it will spur new research in this area. We also have a great article by L. Kaifa Roland, who uses theory and ethnography to unpack the way her sexuality was initially read through a lens of race and class as a result of her color in Cuba. In our "Call and Response" section, we chose to publish an edited transcript of a unique workshop organized by Deborah Thomas and Tina Camp. Bayo Holsey and Jacqueline Nassy Brown respond to a series of questions by Professors Thomas and Camp. We also have the final installment of the debate regarding the Salt-Hypertension Hypothesis by Fatimah L.C. Jackson, and we also have the last installment of the series edited by Robert Adams Jr. Finally, we present a selection of great book reviews.

In the last few months, we have received several letters to the editor. We do not have a policy regarding letters, and we are the only AAA peer-reviewed journal that has even considered publishing them. The tentative policy as of now is that it is the editor's sole prerogative to publish a letter, and the author of the letter must sign the same author agreement as other authors. The editor, at his or her discretion, can send the letter to anyone to

offer a response or rebuttal, which may appear in the same issue. In the spirit of generating collaboration, spurring dialogue, and creating greater access to scholarly debates, I believe publishing letters articulates well with our mission to develop dialogue and increase access to the production of knowledge.

On behalf of all the members and friends of the Association of Black Anthropologists, I would like to congratulate Dana-Ain Davis for winning the election to the office of president. I have had the pleasure of working closely with Dana-Ain when I was president of the Society for the Anthropology of North America, and I can assure each and every one of you that we selected the very best candidate for this important job. In addition, Kimberly Simmons has been chosen as the new president-elect. A longtime active member, Kimberly has served our organization with both commitment and alacrity, and she will be an outstanding president-elect and will serve as our institution's chief executive officer well when she moves into that position. Also, on behalf of the entire organization, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Kevin Michael Foster, who has distinguished himself as the president of our association. Stepping onto uncertain terrain, KMF has provided important leadership and fiscal responsibility as the organization has retooled its leadership structure. Finally, hats off to Sheila Jeffers, who has served as both our rudder and the keel over the last few years. As secretary-treasurer, she has kept us balanced financially and on course organizationally. When we convene in San Jose, California, for our annual meeting, make sure you thank these individuals for their willingness to provide important leadership for this important organization.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

After reading the correspondence surrounding the Slavery Salt Hypothesis between George Armelagos and Fatimah L.C. Jackson in *Transforming Anthropology* I have come to the conclusion that it is premature to simply discard this hypothesis without proper testing. As a biocultural anthropologist, I believe that discarding this hypothesis will not work to discredit racial models but only assist in denying how hostile environments experienced by African Americans have and continue to impact their biology. While Wislon and Grim's hypothesis is highly controversial, it does in fact highlight a potentially significant historical event that the majority of African Americans share—the Transatlantic Middle Passage. The Middle Passage was the leg of the Atlantic slave trade that transported people from Africa to North, South and Central America, and the Caribbean. It was called the Middle Passage because the slave trade was a triangular trade. Ships left

Europe, went to Africa, then to America, and then returned to Europe. In my opinion, the suggestion of discarding the Slavery Salt Hypothesis inadvertently serves to deny the significance of this Transatlantic Middle Passage Journey.

The Middle Passage is a highly significant bio historical experience shared by the majority of African Americans. The scientific reconstruction of the experiential story of enslaved Africans during this forced migration may be central to any discussions attempting to reduce health disparities. It was the experience of the Transatlantic Middle Passage journey that began the process of distinguishing African Americans from continental African peoples. It is a strong possibility that if the Transatlantic Middle Passage did not occur, the ethnic group "African American" would cease to exist. The Middle Passage acted as a vehicle for the vast dispersion of African Americans and other African Diasporic populations. According to Fatimah Jackson (1991) the phenotypic and genotypic diversity that characterizes African Americans suggests that the Middle Passage was more likely a prelude to an expansion in subsequent variation. It must be highlighted that this expansion in diversity occurred among descendants of African populations, the most diverse populations in the world (Jackson, 1991).

Thus, while the Slavery Salt hypothesis is controversial, its rejection without proper testing may serve to disclaim the bio-cultural consequences of the Middle Passage and undermine serious discussions of its historical significance not only on contemporary African Americans, but all Americans. Once arriving in the United States enslaved Africans not only interacted with each other, but with other populations. From this perspective, it is possible that salt sensitive hypertension (which is really only one form of hypertension) while prominent among African Americans may also be present in other non African populations (Jackson, 1991). Could the presence of salt sensitive hypertension among non African populations result from intermixture among those Africans who were selected for during the Middle Passage? An analysis of this population sub structuring is critical when attempting to reduce health disparities. Experiential and scientific explorations of the Middle Passage may also provide a framework to investigate other health disparities. For example, did the Transatlantic Middle Passage have any epigenetic consequences? If so, do these epigenetic consequences manifest themselves in contemporary populations? Wilson and Grim's acknowledgement of the relationship between the Transatlantic Middle Passage and hypertension disparities should result in future scientific research exploring the bio cultural influences of other events such as slavery, Jim Crow,

miscegenation, urbanization etc. Viewed in this way the Slavery Salt Hypothesis does not perpetuate racial genetic models, but begins to acknowledge the potentially detrimental, and as evidenced by the Middle Passage, often horrific influence of a hostile environment on human biology.

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To the Editorial Board of *Transforming Anthropology*,

As a dedicated reader of *Transforming Anthropology*, I have come to appreciate your consistent engagement with critical theoretical and social problems. While *Transforming Anthropology* does not have the same size readership as the discipline's leading journals (*Current Anthropology*, *American Ethnologist*, *Public Culture*) it maintains a level of rigor on par with the rest. It is for this reason that I was troubled by the April 2006 issue. While I was impressed with the critical discussion about Hurricane Katrina in the "Call and Response" section edited by Tami Navarro, I was displeased by two articles from this issue. Concerning Elizabeth Chin's "Confessions of a Negrophile," her statement, "I like black people. Hey, I married *one*, and even though our marriage didn't work out, I'd do it again!" is second only to her comment that she "finally had an ass" after hours of Haitian dance in terms of inadequately theorized and potentially offensive race-based statements that her proximity to blackness hardly excuses.

I was most disturbed by Robin D.G. Kelley's piece, "Freedom Is Living": LisaGay Hamilton's Radical Imagination." The essay, which positions LisaGay Hamilton as an example of an artist whose "radical" interventions have gone underappreciated is long on hyperbole and short on substance. To be sure, Hamilton's career has challenged her audience and the entertainment industry toward a greater commitment to freedom. Despite this, Kelley credits her with a political influence he fails to demonstrate. She has battled racism in the fine arts and played inspirational roles, but given that she shares company with a number of equally conscientious artists, I remain unconvinced she has, as yet, earned the distinction of being the "Paul Robeson and Lorraine Hansberry" of Robin Kelley's—indeed, any—generation.

What's more, Kelley hangs Hamilton's performative intervention on a critique of anthropology for which the facts are specious. According to Kelley, "Anthropology seems more obsessed with the ongoing problem of authenticity and representations vis-à-vis popular culture: 'truth-telling' no longer seems relevant." I am at pains to understand the object of this critique. Which anthropologists are so "obsessed" with "authenticity"? Might Kelley be referring to John Jackson's (2005) work? If anything Jackson—who, curiously enough, is a member of the *TA* board—provides an exquisite account of the complex negotiations people undergo to reconcile their ambivalence concerning standards of authenticity. In doing so, Jackson provides a nuanced ethnographic account whose theoretical and methodological implications are not simply clear but much appreciated. Elsewhere, when Kelley suggests theatrical work might enrich anthropological insights, I am not so much in disagreement with him as curious about why he neglects to acknowledge the rich corpus of ethnographic work that attends to ritual performance (Turner 1974), stressing its social significance for transmitting (Hanks 1996) and reproducing cherished social values (Parmentier 1994) even as it becomes the site for historical transformation (Comaroff 1985), providing the means by which new forms of historical consciousness emerge and are renegotiated (Holmberg 1989). That such a meticulous historian would turn away from the nuanced and theoretically sophisticated accounts of the black radical tradition he offers in *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* and *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* to an intervention that leans more towards vacuous hagiography than thorough historiography is altogether puzzling and leads me to question his motivation(s). It's true, as Kelley reminds us, "artists may have a lot to teach anthropologists about the complex character of human experience." But anthropologists, it seems, still have a great deal to teach Kelley.

In struggle,  
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