

2nd ANNUAL PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY PUBLISHING COMPETITIONS (2009)

The deadline for submissions is October 1, 2009.

Individuals submit book proposals – involving planned, developing or work in progress – instead of full-length manuscripts. In each of the two competitions described below, the individual with the best proposal receives a book contract from the University of California Press and the book, when completed, is published in the California Series in Public Anthropology.

One competition focuses on individuals who have already earned a PhD. The winner receives, in addition to a formal book contract, a ten thousand dollar advance.

The second competition focuses on graduate students who have not, as yet, received a PhD. In order to compete in the graduate student category, students should include, as part of their submission, a signed statement from their dissertation committee supporting the writing up of the dissertation in a form readable by a broad, public audience – see <http://www.publicanthropology.org/Bookseries/-gradstudent-form.htm>.)

Submission Process

1. Interested individuals should submit a 3-4,000 word overview of their proposed manuscript – detailing (a) the problem to be addressed, (b) the manner in which the problem will be approached, and (c) the style of writing to be used in writing the manuscript. A chapter by chapter outline would be helpful. (d) Instead of a supporting CV, the judges would prefer a short summary of the submitter's basis for writing the book along with any relevant personal background.

2. In addition to # 1, individuals interested in the post-PhD award should also submit one or more publications which demonstrate the ability to write for a public audience.

3. In addition to #1, individuals interested in the graduate student award should also submit (a) the statement at <http://www.publicanthropology.org/Bookseries/-gradstudent-form.htm> signed by members of the individual's doctoral committee confirming their support for the applicant writing his or her doctoral dissertation in a form readable by a broad, public audience as well as (b) a paper, published or unpublished, that demonstrates the applicant's ability to write for a broad, public audience.

Criteria Used for Evaluating Submissions

First, does the submission address a problem that goes beyond anthropology to broader public concerns? Phrased another way, does the submission address a problem that will immediately draw broad public interest? Succinctly phrased, this criterion involves defining public problems in publicly relevant ways.

Second, is there a natural fit between the ethnographic data presented and the problem being discussed? Or do readers have to puzzle over how the material the author presents relates to their own concerns and interests? Environmental concerns, for example, attract a broader readership today. But most North American readers are not interested in reading about how an environmental problem is dealt with in some distant locale unless they see a direct connection to the environmental problems they are confronting.

The third criterion involves writing style. Some submissions attract immediate attention by the way they are written while others plod along in heavy, disciplinary prose. Writing for the broader public means writing in ways that keep a reader's interest. The general public is not a captive audience (as students frequently are). They are not required to read a book for a test. Individuals should write their proposals (and supporting materials) in ways that attract and keep a general reader's attention.

The easiest way to test whether your submission succeeds on these three criteria is to discuss your proposal with a non-academic family member, relative or friend. Are they puzzled when you explain your proposal to them? Do they try to change the topic? Or do they find it intriguing and keep asking questions? A critical test is listening to how the person with whom you discussed your research then describes the research to someone else. What gets emphasized? What drops out of the discussion? The distilled statement that your non-academic friend passes on to another non-academic person is a good test of whether your proposal effectively addresses a public concern in a readily understood public way.

The *California Series in Public Anthropology* leans toward investigative ethnography – paralleling investigative journalism in describing important social concerns in readable ways through the lens of specific people, contexts, and stories. But it also strives to do more. It seeks to place such specifics within broader comparative frameworks that allow a wide range of readers to appreciate the larger dynamics at work that extend beyond the contexts and people described to other places, times, and lives.

All entries will be judged by the Co-Editors of the California Series in Public Anthropology: Rob Borofsky (Center for a Public Anthropology & Hawaii Pacific University) and Naomi Schneider (University of California Press)

We should note the California Series in Public Anthropology is now working with the University of Pennsylvania Press and Rutgers University Press to develop a "one stop" publishing process for Public Anthropology. All entries NOT accepted by the University of California Press's series in Public Anthropology but of possible interest to Cynthia Mahmood, editor of U Penn's series on *The Ethnography of Political Violence*, and to Alex Hinton, editor of Rutgers' series on *Genocide, Political Violence, Human Rights*, will be forwarded on to them for consideration in their series.

For Additional Information and Copies of This Flier, Please Refer to:
<http://www.publicanthropology.org/Bookseries/2009-Competition-1.htm>