



Anthropology & Aging

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From the Editors: An Introduction

Tannistha Samanta

FLAME University, India
tannistha.samanta@flame.edu.in

Amy Clotworthy

University of Copenhagen, Denmark
amy@sund.ku.dk

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Tannistha Samanta

FLAME University, India
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Amy Clotworthy

University of Copenhagen, Denmark
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Since 1979, *Anthropology & Aging* (A&A) has demonstrated a strong commitment to publishing research that examines the plural ways of aging across cultural contexts. According to the journal's [Focus and Scope](#):

Anthropology & Aging considers articles that expand and enrich our understanding of aging and the life course by utilizing the ideas and techniques of anthropological inquiry. We welcome submissions from scholars and professionals at all levels that showcase the diversity of research and writing within this field. We particularly welcome articles based on empirical research with a strong theoretical foundation that speaks to current topics and conversations going on within the broader fields of anthropology, sociology, social work, medicine, geriatrics, public policy, population studies, human development, and aging studies.

This scope is not small. As such, we were honored and humbled when the leadership of the Association for Anthropology, Gerontology and the Life Course (AAGE) asked us to take over as co-Editors in February 2021. Not only are we able to work with a fantastic team—including our Book Reviews Editor, Christine Verbruggen, and Editorial Assistants, Janis Woodward and Brandan Culbert—we are also incredibly privileged to collaborate with a range of esteemed Editorial Board members, authors, students, and peer reviewers who are engaged in the exploration and understanding of aging within and across the diversity of human cultures.

As new Editors, we intend to take this opportunity to build on AAGE and A&A's combined commitment to the multidisciplinary study of sociocultural gerontology while weaving anthropological imagination as the world rapidly ages. It has been heartening for us to receive submissions from a range of countries where authors interrogate, challenge traditional hierarchies of gender and generation, and go beyond the pathological bias of disease and debility. To this effect, we are committed to supporting the research conducted by early-career scholars whose work expands the intellectual ambitions of the anthropological "enterprise" of aging in a variety of ways: e.g., by combating age-related cultural stereotypes in countries where any discussion around "age" is relatively new, and by encouraging our colleagues who specialize in engineering, planning, and the biomedical fields to complement thick description and subsequently reinvent the "applied" dimension of anthropology.

We are also acutely aware of the global inequalities of academic knowledge production with regard to the uneven gap in citations between scholars from the global South and North as well as the idiosyncratic and stylistic demands of scientific writing, which remains a challenge for non-English speakers. To address these inequalities and the academic underrepresentation of certain regions, we plan to exercise the utmost care and caution when delivering peer-review decisions on ethnographic work that comes from these regions. Additionally, by being fully aware of the geopolitics of knowledge, we intend to reach out to reviewers who have demonstrated intellectual engagement with such "local" particularities. Overall, our goal is to ultimately create transregional and transnational circuits of knowledge that highlight multiple perspectives, histories, and regions.

To propel this goal forward, we are in the process of creating two new features on our website that will reflect our personal values: an ethics statement, which outlines our pledge to build a supportive and transparent scholarly community; and a diversity and inclusivity statement, which describes our aim to expand the breadth of A&A's representation. Our editorial worldview is that we are responsible for the journal's integrity and reputation, and that diversity strengthens knowledge creation. Thus, we are committed to fostering diversity, inclusivity, transparency, and equity within our internal practices as well as in our scientific publishing efforts. For our upcoming issues, we welcome contributions that offer practice-oriented, theory-driven, and ethnographically rich perspectives on people's experiences of aging and the life course. Our sustained commitment to support this goal is evident from the diversity of authors, peer reviewers, Editorial Board members, and leadership currently associated with A&A.

Going forward, we will be inviting scholars who reflect our core values and commitment to diversity to join the journal's Editorial Board. Furthermore, we are introducing fundamental changes to the journal's structure. For instance, among other things, we are increasingly interested in encouraging student engagement with the journal. Our new section, "Aging Talks," launched as part of this issue, is illustrative of such an effort. In fact, we also envision the journal becoming an important resource for the teaching community. This is particularly pertinent as we continue to navigate the collective trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has challenged our ways of knowing, learning, and meaning-making. We are firm believers in the power of anthropological story-telling, and we look forward to publishing work from scholars across the globe that allows for a creative resignification of theory, method, and analysis. We hope that articles published in A&A will begin to serve as a socially-meaningful, people-centered teaching resource that can contribute to opening up pedagogical dialogues between the global South and North.

For future initiatives, we have a long list of ideas that we believe will enable us to harness the critical questioning that anthropology so generously affords. To provide a teaser: there is a plan (at a very nascent stage) to introduce a new section curating certain themes from prior issues of A&A—themes that are conceptually innovative and theoretically challenging—while facilitating a dialogic discourse among emerging scholars. Furthermore, we will be expanding from two issues to three beginning in 2022; this decision was made in the hope that the content of each issue would be more concise and coherent. But more significantly, this also allows us to move away from the dichotomy of Fall/Spring issues, which reflect a normative Western worldview. We are also exploring ways to make the journal more accessible to readers with disabilities.

In our respective research specializations, we focus on the interdisciplinary crossroads of family sociology and gerontology, and how health and social policies targeting older people influence the sociocultural dynamics of later life. With this broad perspective, we intend to use our time as Editors to foster productive change and to develop *Anthropology & Aging* into a journal that is as rich, vibrant, and diverse as the topics—and people—on which it focuses. We would be remiss if we did not take this moment to also thank our reviewers whose commitment, dedication, and generosity allows A&A to maintain its quality and diversity. To all of our readers and authors: we appreciate your continued support of the journal, and we are especially grateful for your patience and understanding as we experience some inevitable "growing pains."

We are both open and available to any questions, comments, and suggestions regarding the current and future direction of the journal. We look forward to hearing from you, and to working together with you to strengthen A&A and our shared scholarly community.