

## ASAO Special Publications and Distinguished Lectures

Lamont Lindstrom

ASAO's Special Publication Series and its Distinguished Lectures have been connected, more or less firmly, since the Association established the series in 1980. ASAO's Board, earlier in 1977, had hoped that the University of California Santa Cruz' Center for South Pacific Studies might support publication of ASAO Occasional Papers. The Center had sponsored a number of other occasional publications but budgetary concerns in the late 1970s reduced its ability to do so. Instead, the 1979 Board asked Ivan Brady to seek out possible contributions to launch an "Occasional Papers Series" that ASAO itself would publish and, the following year, the 1980 Board officially established the Special Publication Series.

Brady recalls that he and Mac (Keith) Marshall for several years had pushed for a second publication series to publish short, single-authored monographs (Brady Interview 2015). Brady chaired ASAO's Board from 1975-1978 and Marshall then edited the earlier established ASAO Monograph Series which published successful ASAO symposia, the first of these monographs appearing in 1970 (see Margaret Critchlow's monograph series remarks, this collection). Board minutes from 1976 record that Brady "announced that plans are under discussion to use ASAO monies to establish an ASAO proceedings and occasional papers and that Wenner-Gren Foundation support is now being solicited for a distinguished lecture series at ASAO meetings" (ASAO 1976). Wenner-Gren had twice earlier subvented the monograph series. The 1979 Board was still exploring a Wenner-Gren application for funds to support a lecture series, deciding instead to ask for support for a single lecture to be given at the 1981 meetings, and also contemplated applying to the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies as well (ASAO 1979).

Wenner-Gren, by the 1980 Board meeting, declined to offer up any money but the Board still hoped to feature “a Distinguished Lecture at next year’s meetings” (ASAO 1980b). In addition, Brady and Marshall, in late 1980, signed a “Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Establishment of the ASAO Special Publication Series” (ASAO 1980a). This agreement laid the groundwork for what ultimately would be a three item series, beginning with ASAO Special Publication #1, Marshall Sahlins’ *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (1981).

The founding memorandum suggested that as many as two special publications (“of at least 50 pages in published length”) could appear in one year although, “Because quality is imperative . . . it is equally likely that a year may go by in which no new number appears” (ASAO 1980). The MOA placed the Special Publications (or “Associate”) Editor under the authority of the Monograph Series Editor but assigned that Associate Editor “all actual editorial responsibilities and arrangements” including “the right to enter into publishing contracts with composers, printers, and authors” subject to the Series Editor’s oversight and final approval. The MOA, furthermore, noted that the Special Publication series would receive a one-time allocation of \$800 from the Publications account and, in future, one dollar from ASAO members’ annual dues (with another \$4.00 going to the Monograph Series). Royalties accrued also would support future Special Publications as the Board and the MOA hoped that the publications, and membership subventions, would pay for future numbers.

Before the Board officially established the SPS and an on-going Distinguished Lecture series, Brady (with a publication in mind) had invited Marshall Sahlins to present what would be ASAO’s first “Distinguished Lecture” at the Clearwater, FL meetings in 1979. Although the

establishment of the Series encouraged ASAO Boards and Program Coordinators to make space for plenary lectures that could harden into publications, earlier meetings had featured occasional plenary lectures not yet labeled “distinguished.” Gregory Bateson delivered ASAO’s “First Plenary Address” at the 1974 Asilomar meetings; and Ben Finney the “First ASAO Special Lecture” in Monterey, 1977. After the series was created, Leopold Pospisil addressed a plenary session in 1980 and Kenelm Burridge lectured in 1981 but neither of these lectures transformed into print.

Brady instead concentrated his initial editorial efforts on Sahlins’ 1979 lecture “Structures in the Course of History: The Hawaiian Kingdom,” which entertained those members attending an 8:00 pm Friday, March 2 plenary session. Sahlins whose adamantine words flow easily into print submitted a hand-written draft on yellow pads that Brady edited into camera-ready copy for the University of Michigan Press, the Series’ first publisher. Vern Carroll, then a University of Michigan professor and an ASAO co-founder supported by his old Michigan colleague Sahlins himself, helped arranged a publication agreement between the Press and the Association. Sahlins’ Special Publication #1 quickly became the most successful of the three numbers, selling 5092 copies by 1987. Sahlins assigned royalties to ASAO—these helped to fund publications two and three—until these reached \$3738.00 (the cost of publication plus 200%) which occurred by 1992 (SPS 1990:1).

Brady had plans for subsequent Special Publications that also would feature first as Distinguished Lectures, recalling that from the start that “the Series dictated the Lectures” (Brady 2015). He envisioned a line-up of scholars whose lectures he could transform into Special Publications. His second-in-line was historian Greg Denning and he also hoped to invite Annette Weiner and Marilyn Strathern to address the Association. Despite Brady’s expectation

that publications began as lectures, Weiner (who would die in 1997) never delivered a Distinguished Lecture. Still, Brady worked with her to shape a possible Special Publication, tentatively entitled “The Soft Side of Power: Cloth, Gender, and Hierarchy in the Pacific” which also never materialized. Weiner, by 1989, had reconsidered publishing in the series, writing that she had been “so deeply engrossed in getting a draft done on the “big” book, that [she] really could not come up with any ideas” (SPS 1989:1).

Dening suffered a heart attack after his 1983 lecture which delayed preparation of Special Publication #2. Bob Tonkinson, the 1979 ASAO Chair, suggested that the Series might instead publish Kenelm Burridge’s 1981 lecture. (Burridge was one of Tonkinson’s mentors.) Brady, though, held out for Dening’s recovery (Brady 2015). When Dening was well enough to complete his ms., Brady again prepared camera-ready copy of this but this time for the University Press of America in that the University of Michigan Press had abandoned the series. Brady worked with Margaret Rodman (who followed Mac Marshall as Monograph Series Editor) to transfer Special Publications to the University Press of America along with the Monograph Series. Brady by 1985/1986 had become increasingly unhappy with UMP editor Wally Sears who he found unresponsive and uncooperative. Dening’s lecture belatedly appeared with UPA, in 1988, as *History’s Anthropology: The Death of William Gooch*.

Brady in 1986 informed the Board that he was resigning his editorship, partly because he was otherwise busy during his second term as *American Anthropologist* book review editor. He wrote Margaret Rodman that his replacement should be:

- (a) young enough to be energetic and committed to his or her own professional growth;
- (b) old enough to know a good theory from a bad one; (c) mature enough to deal intelligently with publishers, the Editorial Board, the Executive Board, authors, and other

interested parties; and, above all else, (d) experienced enough to bring to the series some excellence as a writer/editor” (Brady 1986b:2)

The Board asked Brady for a statement of Special Publication Editor duties and canvassed for his successor, appointing Deborah Gewertz to the job the following year.

The Distinguished Lecture emerged as a regular annual event only in 1993 with Epeli Hau’ofa’s address in Kailua Kona, HI. In between Sahlins’ originating lecture and Hau’ofa’s, the Association continued to schedule an assortment of diverse plenary addresses. These included Deborah Gewertz on waterlily infestation of the Sepik River (1980), a lecture (on ASAO roots and custom) by 1982 Chair Mike Lieber, Koho’olawe activist Emmet Aluli (1984), Papua New Guinea politicians Renagi Lohia (1985) and Meg Taylor (1991), Fred and Barbara Roll (1987) who remembered Margaret Mead, and Ben Finney on Hawaiian voyaging (1990), in addition to Greg Dening (1983) and Marilyn Strathern (1988) whose lectures would appear as Special Publications #2 and #3. The 1975, 1976, and 1978 meetings, however, had featured no special or otherwise distinguished lectures, and meetings as recent as 1992 also scheduled no plenary lecturer (as did 1986 and 1989).

The 1988 Board (chaired by Dan Jorgensen) pushed the gradual institutionalization of Distinguished Lectures by amending the Association’s by-laws (adding a new Section 5a to Article IV) to make the Special Publications Editor an ASAO officer. (Previously, the position was governed only by the Memorandum of Agreement signed by original Monograph editor Mac Marshall and Ivan Brady.) The new by-law assigned the SPE all editorial responsibilities and arrangements for the series, including the right to enter into publishing contracts with composers, printers, and authors, and to control the Series’ monies. Leslie Marshall, the 1992 Chair, convinced the Board to create a Distinguished Lecture committee (chaired by the Special

Publications Editor) to identify likely luminaries and suggest speakers for the Board's consideration. This committee, as first envisioned, would

include the ASAO Chair, Special Publications Editor, an affiliate with an institution at the local meeting site, and one member at large. Nominations for the standing member will come from the board and from the floor at a plenary session (ASAO 1992).

The 1992 Board also proposed that selection committees would identify lecturers two years in advance but since boards decide upon meeting sites only one year in advance, this made impossible the charge to include on the committee a member from a local institution. The resolution's directive that the Board or ASAO members attending a plenary session would nominate a committee member-at-large to collaborate with Board Chair, SP Editor, and the local site member was also never followed.

The 1992 Board agreed to pay a Distinguished Lecturer's transportation and accommodation costs along with a \$100 honorarium, although it did not specify if these funds would come from the general or the Special Publications accounts. It did hope that selection committees might squeeze some money from friendly local institutions. The 1992 Board itself invited Hau'ofa to lecture in 1993 (paying him a \$200 honorarium and lifetime membership in ASAO). The Board figured that a "Distinguished Lecture should be an occasional event" and that search committees "should not feel compelled to find some[one] to speak every year" (ASAO 1992). Nonetheless, selection committees since have been so compelled.

As Distinguished Lectures solidified into annual events, Special Publications evaporated. Brady, although no longer Special Publications Editor, helped moved Dening's ms. into print, himself preparing camera-ready copy at the American Anthropology Association's Washington,

DC offices. Gewertz (succeeding Brady in 1987) handled production of Strathern's 1988 lecture encountering various nuisances along the way. Strathern submitted her ms on 10 inch disks that UPA could not read. Gewertz contracted with a Massachusetts firm to reformat this but the Press complained that Strathern's styling was unusual, making the book expensive to print. Gewertz reported "its form (yes, I mean actual form) recapitulates its argument, and its argument is complex. The printer had hard work—somewhat expensive hard work" (SPS 1991:1). Gewertz herself repaginated the ms twice and corrected its running headers. UPA nonetheless charged ASAO an extra \$495 for "corrections" alongside the original production charge of \$2197.80 (SPS 1991:1).

UPA was then in financial difficulty and not much willing to deal with ASAO's small beans. Gewertz badgered the press to pay royalties on Dening's book and reported that dealing with the press' revolving and uncommunicative personnel was "not easy" (SPS 1991:2). The situation looked better when UPA's sister press Rowman and Littlefield (persuaded by Jonathan Sisk, its editor-in-chief who had interests in anthropology) transferred the book onto its own lists. Neither UPA nor Rowman and Littlefield, however, did much to advertise Dening and Strathern. Book sales continued slack and the two associated presses stopped paying royalties until 1992 when Gewertz threatened to shame them:

During a phone conversation, I threatened the editor-in-charge, Jon Sisk, telling him that if I had not received the royalties due us within a week of the call, I would place a news item in the *Newsletter* of the American Anthropological Association describing the situation . . . The threat worked and he paid up! (SPS 1993:2).

Gewertz recommended that the Board seek out a new press and she began initial conversation with University of Massachusetts Press and later explored a possibility that the

University of California Press' Pacific Series might be interested. ASAO's Monograph Series would move to University of Pittsburgh Press to publish its 13<sup>th</sup> number in 1992. Special Publications, however, did not follow in that Strathern's book concluded the series. Gewertz, though, continued to seek out possibilities for Special Publication #4. She invited Fredrik Barth (who might, Gewertz proposed, respond to Strathern's approach to Melanesian personhood in Special Publication #3) and Mervyn Meggitt to consider publishing in the series. They dithered. She asked Hau'ofa to send her a ms. of his 1993 lecture. He didn't. Overworked elsewhere, she resigned the Editorship in 1994.

The 1995 Board appointed Lamont Lindstrom as the third Special Publications Editor. The Special Publications account, at the beginning of that year, totaled \$5096.45, enough to subvent a fourth number. Given Gewertz's exhaustive labors to pin down likely suspects who might both lecture and then offer that lecture as a publication, Lindstrom proposed to delink the series from the annual lectures and created a draft call for mss. (Ivan Brady had made such a call in 1986 (Brady 1986a).) The Board, however, declined to follow this suggestion reiterating instead that "the series should be linked to distinguished lectures" that would "related Pacific ethnography to general social/cultural theory" (ASAO 1995). Nonetheless, that Board invited Guam politician Robert Underwood to present the 1996 Distinguished Lecture even though this would present unlikely fodder for some theoretical publication. That Board also resolved that Distinguished Lecture selection committees should locate lecturers three years in advance despite the ongoing miscarriage of the previous resolution that committees could find lecturers two years out.

Subsequent Boards and/or Distinguished Lecture search committees, chaired by Lindstrom, between 1996 and 2008 annually invited a series of illustrious scholars to address the



Association in hopes that their talks might transform into theoretically-informed publications. Despite concrete promises made by many lecturers during these years to follow up a talk with a ms. to shine as Special Publication #4, however, none eventuated. Some lectures drew on material already or soon to be published elsewhere; some talks looked to make boring publications; most lecturers evoked cares of over-commitment.

The 2008 Board at last put the Special Publication Series out of its misery, accepting a suggestion made by Dan Jorgensen that the Association publish its Distinguished Lectures instead in the journal *Oceania*. The Special Publications Editorship likewise disappeared, replaced by the Distinguished Lecture Coordinator who now chairs lecturer search committees. *Oceania* and ASAO signed an initial five-year publication agreement (which rolled over in 2014). Annual Distinguished Lectures, beginning with James Clifford's 2009 address, have since appeared in the November issue of the journal. The Lecture Coordinator organizes an in-house reading or review of the lecture ms., negotiates with authors about suggested improvements, and then sends the ms. to Sydney for publication.

The Board, earlier, partly because the Series with no upcoming numbers had little immediate need of funds, ceased its annual subvention of Special Publications in 1999. It shifted membership dues instead to the newly established Pacific Islands Scholars Fund. In 2001, the Board also transferred \$1000 from the Special Publications account to fund the new GRIKPIC publication project. Remnant dollars in the gradually declining Special Publications account have since been used to pay Lecturer transportation costs. The Association's general accounts pay for Lecturer accommodation (when hotels have not offered complementary rooms), for meeting registration, and a \$400 honorarium. (Lindstrom in 1997 had suggested doubling the previous \$200 offering.)

Lindstrom also dealt with the afterlife of the three existing volumes. Strathern in 2003 proposed that Rowman and Littlefield reprint *Partial Connections*. After a fruitless search for the initial contract that might clarify copyright, Rowman and Littlefield passed along the reprint to AltaMira, an associated press. Lindstrom provided his copy of the first edition that AltaMira merely reproduced much to Strathern's distress as she had prepared a number of revisions and corrections that the Press ignored. She also disliked the new cover. Strathern agreed to donate royalties the second edition might earn to the Pacific Islands Scholars Fund but, in the end, AltaMira never paid any.

The Series after its long publication hiatus, and maybe special publications in general, had lost cachet. No one kept running royalty totals but only Sahlins' initial number paid for itself. Although Gewertz reported that Sahlins reclaimed copyright when royalty payments hit \$3738, figures captured on available annual reports only add up to \$3180.24 (and Gewertz in 1990 forwarded a check for \$315.63 to Sahlins assuming that the copyright had reverted.) Although no record exists, given Brady's agreement with Sahlins to return copyright after costs plus 200% were captured, production costs for #1 were something like \$1246. The Association spent \$2044.84 to produce Denning's volume, recouping royalties of \$734.58 (although it made a little additional money by selling copies at annual meetings the agreement with UPA committed it to buy). The 1994 Board voted to return copyright to Denning as he planned to reuse the material elsewhere. Strathern's volume did better earning royalties of \$1250.93 although its production costs (\$2796.80) were higher. The Association's original goal that the Series would pay for itself was not met. Members might take solace, however, in their subvention of three theoretically informed publications in Pacific studies.

The run of invited lecturers and their lecture topics since Gregory Bateson's "first plenary address" in 1975 reflect fluctuating interests in Pacific studies and changes in who undertakes these (see Appendix). Lindstrom observed in annual reports that "Speaker selection, so it seems to me, has been guided by several factors including kindness and willingness, logistics (who lives close to a meeting site), and a person's status as "stranger chief"—a certain distance from the Association adds value" (SPS 2015:2). Selection committees have also been mindful of our diverse scholarly interests and the Association itself as these have developed over the years. Of 35 invitees (who offered Distinguished Lectures or otherwise notable plenary talks) up through 2017, 11 were women. Most were anthropologists, or anthropologically inclined, leavened with an occasional historian, archaeologist, writer, ethnic studies scholar, or Pacific politician. Twenty-one were Americans (two of these Hawaiian Americans and one from Guam); three Australian; two from the UK (although Bateson was based in the US); two from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa; and one each from France, Canada, and Tonga. Selection Committees also have always sought out Lecturers of Pacific Islands heritage. (Teresia Teaiwa of Victoria University, Wellington, had agreed to deliver the 2017 Distinguished Lecture but withdrew because of worsening health; Malama Meleisea and Penelope Schoeffel graciously agreed to step in at short notice.) In addition to Meleisea (with Schoeffel) and Albert Wendt (Samoa), Pacific Island lecturers have included Ty Tengan, Jon Osorio, and Emmett Aluli (Hawai'i); Hugh Kawharu (Aotearoa); Epeli Hau'ofa (Tonga); Renagi Lohia and Meg Taylor (Papua New Guinea); and Robert Underwood (Guam).

Some lectures were autobiographical or biographical, reflecting back on lives spent doing anthropology in the Pacific. Some were programmatic, fingering problems to be tackled. Some criticized established structures (beyond or within ASAO itself). And some revisited classic

issues in Pacific ethnography including exchange, religion, cannibalism, gender, and sex.

Although the Special Publication Series capped out at three, the annual Distinguished Lectures, published now annually in *Oceania*, mostly sustain the Association's hope to "relate Pacific ethnography to general social/cultural theory" (ASAO 1995). Paige West assumed Distinguished Lecture Coordinator duties in 2017, as the mission continues.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Ivan Brady and Deborah Gewertz for sharing recollections of their editorships; and Jan Rensel for facilitating access to ASAO's archives.

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*Appendix*

**ASAO ANNUAL LECTURE HISTORY**

**(Distinguished and Otherwise)**

- 2017 – Malama Meleisea and Penelope Schoeffel (Lihue, HI). “*50 years in Pacific studies: A duet*”
- 2016 – Jonathan Friedman (San Diego, CA), “*Weekend update: Identity, culture, politics and anthropology since the 1980s*”
- 2015 – Holly Baker (Santa Fe, NM) “*Confronting a Trinity of Institutional Barriers: Denial, Cover-up and Secrecy*”
- 2014 – Ty Tengan (Kona, HI) “*I Search for the Channel Made Fragrant by the Maile’: Genealogies of Discontent and Hope*”
- 2013 – Marshall Sahlins (San Antonio, TX) “*Difference*”
- 2012 – Polly Wiessner (Portland, OR) “*Carrying Culture beyond Bilas: The Enga Tradition and Transition Center*”
- 2011 – Jon Osorio (Honolulu, HI), “*All Things Depending: Renewing Interdependence in Oceania*”
- 2010 – Adrienne Kaeppler (Alexandria, VA) “*Interpreting Ritual as Performance and Theory*”
- 2009 – James Clifford (Santa Cruz, CA) “*Hau’ofa’s Hope*”
- 2008 – Margaret Jolly (Canberra) “*Of the Same Cloth? Oceanic Anthropologies of Gender, Christianities and Textiles*”
- 2007 – Bradd Shore (Charlottesville, VA) “*Samoan Shorelines: What Thirty-eight Years Visiting Samoa Taught Me about Doing Anthropology*”
- 2006 – Gil Herdt (San Diego, CA) “*Talking about Sex: On the relationship between discourse and sexual pleasure, power, secrecy, and subjectivity in Melanesia*”
- 2005 – Albert Wendt (Kauai, HI) “*Pacific Fiction as Anthropology and Anthropology as Fiction*”
- 2004 – Shirley Lindenbaum (Salem, MA) “*Thinking about Cannibalism*”
- 2003 - Ward Goodenough (Vancouver, BC) “*Reflections on Religion in Western Oceania*”
- 2002 - Robert Tonkinson (Auckland) “*Cleaving to Culture: Continuities and Challenges in the Interpretive Quest*”
- 2001 - Mary C. Bateson (Miccosukee, FL) “*Messages from the Past, Messages for the Future: Using and Abusing the Works of the Ancestors*”
- 2000 - Pat Kirch (Vancouver, BC) [missing title]
- 1999 - Anne Salmond (Hilo, HI) “*Matakite: Post-Colonial Visions*”
- 1998 - Maurice Godelier (Pensacola, FL) “*Some Things You Give, Some Things You Sell, But Some Things You Must Keep for Yourself: What Mauss Did Not Say about Sacred Objects*”
- 1997 - Don Tuzin (San Diego, CA) “*Swan Song*”
- 1996 - Hugh Kawharu (Kailua Kona, HI) [missing title]

- 1995 - Robert Underwood (Clearwater, FL) [missing title]
- 1994 - Jane Goodale (San Diego, CA) "*Ethnography: Is it Real*"
- 1993 - Epeli Hau'ofa (Kailua Kona, HI) [missing title: but lecture moved into print as "Our Sea of Islands"]
- 1992 – none (New Orleans, LA)
- 1991 - Meg Taylor (Victoria, BC) [missing title]
- 1990 - Ben Finney (slide talk, rather than dist. lecture) (Kauai, HI) [missing title, but again on the Hokule'a]
- 1989 - none (San Antonio, TX)
- 1988 - Marilyn Strathern (Savannah, GA) [missing title, but published as SP#3 *Partial Connections*]
- 1987 - Fred and Barbara Roll (a reflective talk about Margaret Mead, rather than dist. lect) (Monterey, CA) [missing title]
- 1986 - none (New Harmony, IN)
- 1985 - Renagi Lohia (Salem, MA) "*Intellectual Colonization of Pacific Peoples and the Need for its Eradication*"
- 1984 - Emmet Aluli, Kaho'olawe activist (Moloka'i, HI)
- 1983 - Greg Dening (New Harmony, IN) [missing title, but this published as SP#2]
- 1982 - Mike Lieber (a talk by the ASAO chair rather than Dist Lect) (Hilton Head, SC) "*Address from the Chair*"
- 1981 - Kenelm Burrige (San Diego, CA) "*Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in Oceania*"
- 1980 - Leopold Pospisil (Galveston, TX) "*Legal and Social Change among the Kapauku*"  
Deborah Gewertz "*Pernicious Ferns in the West Sepik*"
- 1979 - Marshall Sahlins (Clearwater, FL) "*Structures in the Course of History: The Hawaiian Kingdom*"
- 1978 -- none (Asilomar, CA)
- 1977 - Ben Finney ("First ASAO Special Lecture") (Monterey, CA) [missing title but about the Hokule'a voyage]  
Mac Marshall (report on Typhoon Pamela on Chuuk)  
Raymond Firth and Len Mason made honorary fellows; Firth speaks briefly
- 1976 – none (Charleston, SC)
- 1975 – none (Stuart, FL)
- 1974 – Gregory Bateson (Asilomar, CA) "*The Epistemology of Anthropological Research, or, How Not to be Co-opted into Your Natives' Mythology*" (ASAO's "First Plenary Address")