PROFILES OF PRACTICE: Anthropological Careers in Business, Government, and Private Sector Associations[1]

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Introduction

While many anthropologists have actively pursued careers outside academics since the late nineteenth century (van Willigen 1979, 1980; Partridge and Eddy 1978; Wallace 1976; Spice and Downing 1974), the trend for recent graduates has been accelerating. Van Willigen (1980:7) has suggested that the limited growth in academic positions has pushed anthropologists into nonacademic or applied career fields. The following account focuses on the career paths of eight anthropologists currently employed in business, government, or private sector associations. Their training and work histories are analyzed for the ways in which they obtained employment, the skills required for the positions they accepted, their job responsibilities, and the reasons for any job changes. The analysis focuses in large part on the points of continuity in their career paths and the ways they were able to build on past skills and interests and develop new ones. In addition, their views concerning their own involvement with the academic world are presented along with some recommendations for preparing future graduate students for nonacademic careers.

Historical Overview of the Job Market for Anthropologists

Spicer and Downing (1974:2) argued that since World War II, the "almost exclusive focus on training teachers and researchers has been a direct response to an affluent society in the process of expanding its universities." Existing departments of anthropology, for example, were expanded and new ones created. The rising number of advanced degree recipients in anthropology were employed primarily to staff these departments. Twenty-four Ph.D. degrees in anthropology were conferred in the 1947–48 academic year; by the 1971–72 academic year, 250 Ph.D. degrees were awarded (D'Andrade et al. 1975:757). For the 1985–86 academic year, 420 individuals completed a Ph.D. in anthropology (Givens 1987:2)—an increase of 1,650 percent since the late 1940s.

More recently, however, a number of studies have reported decreasing job opportunities in academic positions generally (Cartter 1974; Finsterbusch 1973; Balderston and Radner 1971). D'Andrade et al. argued that the downward shift in birth rates beginning around 1960 and the accelerated growth of advanced degree programs increased competition for academic positions (1975:753–754). Data from the 1984–85 American Anthropological Association Survey of Anthropology Departments in the United States suggest a bleak outlook for new graduates on the academic job market (Whitney 1985:1,16). Although B.A. and M.A. departments of anthropology have experienced declining enrollment over the seven-year study period (1977–78 to 1984–85), enrollment in Ph.D. departments has increased approximately 13 percent. The average of six Ph.D. degrees awarded per department each year has remained constant. And, despite the fact that the number of anthropology faculty has increased 12 percent over the study period, the number of anthropologists exceeds the number of available academic positions. Sixty-five Ph.D. departments responding to the survey reported awarding 391 degrees; only 55 net open positions were available.

Where are the recent Ph.D. anthropologists employed? Among those surveyed by the American Anthropological Association, 56 percent in the 1971–72 cohort (N = 102) were employed in anthropology departments[2] in comparison with only 23 percent in the 1985–86 cohort (N = 189) (Givens 1987:12–13). In the 1985–86 cohort, an additional 20 percent were employed in joint or other academic departments, 13 percent in government work, 9 percent in consulting, business, or industry, 6 percent in museums, 5 percent in research centers and institutes, and the remainder in various other types of employment. The 1985–86 cohort was the first cohort since the study began in which the proportion of anthropologists employed in nonacademic jobs exceeded those employed in academic jobs. Baba (1986) describes the growth of business and industrial anthropology and provides a series of mini-cases on anthropological practitioners in business. This paper provides detailed job related information on eight individuals currently employed in a variety of nonacademic careers.

Data and Methods

Telephone interviews lasting between one to two hours were conducted with eight anthropologists engaged in nonacademic employment in May and June, 1986. Each individual agreed to participate in the study and then received a copy of the interview questions prior to the phone interview.[3] The sample was composed of four women and four men ranging in age from their early 30s to their late 40s. The author obtained the names of these individuals from anthropologists who knew them either socially or professionally; the sample was not random. However, the purpose of the study was to acquire and analyze in-depth data on the training and skills, work histories, and academic involvement of a select group of anthropologists from three different segments of the job market—business, government, and private sector organizations. It was anticipated that the analysis might reveal patterned information useful to individuals seeking nonacademic positions. These case histories represented only the anthropologists who were successful in finding nonacademic careers.

Educational Characteristics of the Sample

The respondents' Ph.D. degrees were conferred as early as 1972 and as recently as 1985. These individuals have varied educational backgrounds and training. Only two of the eight took undergraduate degrees in anthropology; the remainder were in disciplines such as history, sociology, psychology, and philosophy. Of

the six who received M.A. degrees, five were in anthropology and one was in sociology. At the doctoral level, seven of the Ph.D. degrees were in anthropology and one was in business administration.[4] Two of the eight engaged in postdoctoral work—one received an M.A. degree in health science and a second concentrated his studies among adolescents and the educational system in Romania.

The areas of specialization at the doctoral level were also quite broad. They ranged from the more theoretically oriented topics such as middle-class kinship networks in Brazil, and Navajo cognition in an urban setting, to those more applied in focus such as educational and occupational selection in a socialist state and ethnic differences in business practices among elites in the Far East. Field work locales included sites in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Indonesia. Apart from research-oriented experiences, six of the eight respondents lived abroad in various parts of the world for periods of a year or more. All eight respondents reported the ability to speak, read, and write at least one other language fluently, while four of the eight stated that they knew two or more other languages fluently. Only two of the eight took computer related courses in graduate school and only three of the eight took one or more applied anthropology courses.

The respondents commented explicitly on their college and graduate school coursework and research experience. In general they agreed that a liberal arts background or a broad exposure to a number of different disciplines had been valuable. One individual remarked, ''Courses in analytical philosophy taught me to think logically and clearly.'' A second respondent indicated that, ''Rather than specific skills, the general knowledge I acquired in school was more helpful.'' She singled out some field research she had done in Mexico and coursework she had completed in the natural sciences. Such learning proved to be useful in seeking nonacademic employment. Another respondent stated that, ''Due to my training in field techniques, I can talk to most everyone.''

There were also elements in their training that were lacking. One individual suggested that she gained experience from working as part of a team on one of her first applied jobs. ''In grad school you do nothing with teamwork. Yet in the business sector or in government most of the work is based on teams.'' A similar view from another respondent was that he was ''learning the business of nonacademic research. There is a lot that is not taught or is not considered relevant in graduate school—how to do a budget, gain the ability to work with other people, plan for overhead, etc.'' A third respondent mentioned that in her postdoctoral program she was discouraged from taking computer and statistics courses in favor of some that were historically oriented. She felt that, ''This was a mistake [since] I didn't get as familiar with quantitative research.''

Early Career Development

Several of the jobs held by the respondents while in graduate school were closely tied to academics and were frequently renewable on an annual basis. Six of the eight served as teaching assistants, instructors, or both. Such employment typically provided the opportunity to interact with students on a regular basis, gain greater familiarity with the course material, prepare lesson plans, and improve oral communication skills. Three respondents worked in research-oriented positions either on grants awarded at their institutions or, in one instance, as a social

science analyst at the National Institute of Mental Health. In these jobs the individuals often utilized and/or bettered their quantitative and analytical skills. In one case, a respondent was hired for a college administrative position.

All but one of the anthropologists were recipients of one or more fellowships or grants (research, language, or travel) while in graduate school. The respondents tended to be successful in receiving highly competitive grants. Examples included monies from the Ford Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, the International Research and Exchanges Board (Social Science Research Council), the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Wenner-Gren Anthropological Foundation.

Other forms of training included the presentation of papers at professional meetings and the publication of research findings. On average, the eight members of the sample presented about three papers at professional meetings and published one academically oriented article during their graduate school years.

The predoctoral training and work experience of the sample was also quite broad. Four of the eight respondents held jobs in nonacademic areas prior to receiving their Ph.D. degrees. One individual worked first as a free-lance writer and later as a staff writer for a company. He ultimately decided to enter the field of anthropology since he found journalism and fieldwork to be somewhat similar. A second individual worked in marketing and other business-related activities for four different pharmaceutical firms following the receipt of his M.A. degree. In these positions he had the opportunity to improve his oral communication skills as well as apply some of his anthropological training to conducting business in a foreign culture. A third respondent was hired as a social worker to aid in the resettlement process of households affected by urban renewal in the Washington, D.C. area. Finally, two members of the sample enlisted in the armed forces for a few years, and one of them was later employed briefly as an analyst at the Department of Defense.

Many respondents remarked on the importance of emphasizing the value of anthropology to potential employers. One respondent stressed the four-field approach of anthropology (cultural, linguistic, physical, and archaeology) because, ''You need to know anthropology well. . . . [Employers] want to know what problems you can solve.'' Another commented that, ''You need to believe in things like a discipline'' and that, ''There is a lot more to anthropology than what you learn in school.'' A third remarked that employers, ''want to know how you would make this job work.'' As an example he stated that, ''Pharmaceutical companies are intrigued by an anthropologist coming in to interview with them. You have to say to them, 'Let me tell you why you want an anthropologist.' You either end up having a good discussion or they cut you off.''

Employment History

The differences in the career paths of the respondents are best analyzed in reference to two principal types. Five respondents had careers which have undergone a series of changes in job type—all of which began in academic-related employment. The three other respondents had careers that have always focused exclusively on business.

Entering Academia and Changing to Nonacademic Careers

Just as the majority of the respondents worked in academic jobs as graduate students, five of the eight were employed first in academic/research jobs as new Ph.D.s. Two of the five taught in departments of anthropology, one taught in an urban studies department (which was later subsumed by a school of public administration), and two held research positions on grants.[5] For these individuals, academic employment seemed to serve as a transitional type of work between graduate school and their future nonacademic occupations. Indeed, the faculty appointment for one respondent was in the medical area where the focus of his work and research was strongly applied. In only one of the five cases did a respondent leave an academic appointment, engage in some other form of work, and then return to a second academic appointment; even in this instance, however, the academic appointments occurred at the outset of her career.

Following the academic jobs held by these five respondents, the career paths have been quite varied and suggest no particular pattern as a group. In the simplest case the respondent left academics after six years for a policy and planning job in the federal government. There was no vacancy in the government agency to which she was applying so she arranged to "come on loan" for a period of six months through the Intergovernmental Personnel Act. She interviewed with this agency,[6] emphasizing the public management and program evaluation skills she had developed while teaching public administration courses. Indeed, she felt that if she had stressed her more anthropological skills, they "might have been perceived as irrelevant." After four years with the policy and planning office she transferred to a second assignment as a program director—a position created around her skills. As she pointed out, she already had her "foot in the door" and was able to show the relevance of social science and anthropological perspectives. She has remained in this position since 1985.

Two of the five respondents have had slightly more complex career paths with approximately two major job changes. After they left their formal employment in academics, both moved to Washington, D.C. from out of state and became freelance consultants. One respondent was encouraged to move to Washington, D.C. by several of the federal grant reviewers and administrators with whom he had contact in the past. In his previous university-based appointments, he had spent quite a bit of time writing grant proposals in the area of community health. These federal employees indicated to him that they "needed people like him in Washington, D.C. because he came with real experience." Indeed, these government employees "were already too far from real life." By using existing networks and developing new ones, he was able to obtain contacts with a number of management consulting firms as well as with the Agency for International Development (AID).

The second respondent believed it would be more likely for him to find a job in Washington, D.C. than elsewhere in the United States. While exploring job opportunities there, particularly those recommended by WAPA (the Washington Association of Professional Anthropologists) members,[7] he continued to work on his book, based on his postdoctoral studies. He learned that a consulting firm wanted to hire a coder. Although the position was filled when he called, they agreed to talk to him informally. This strategy paid off because approximately two and one-half months later, they contacted him to see if he was still interested

in that type of position. He accepted the job which involved coding interview responses according to preestablished categories. He soon realized that the coding system was not capturing the variability in the data. He rewrote that coding schema and others, and in so doing quickly advanced within the ranks of the outside consultants that the firm hired.

For both these respondents, their contracts or jobs as consultants led to full-time employment. In the first example the respondent had been a consultant with a national health-related association for so long that they asked him to come and work for them permanently. He has been working there since 1983. In the second example a similar situation occurred. The respondent was hired as a regular employee with that consulting firm in 1985. He spends the majority of his time engaged in data collection and analysis. Because he works only four days each week, he continues to take short-term consulting jobs one day each week.

The last two respondents with a career path begun in academics have changed job types three or more times. After receiving her Ph.D., one respondent continued to teach part-time but began her own consulting business. The national news media had publicized her dissertation topic, placing her in a situation of high visibility. This publicity provided her with many potential contacts for her business. In the late 1970s, for example, she received a major contract, and then a grant to examine some civil rights issues related to nursing homes. More recently she has been contacted by a publisher to write a book on selected aspects of the health care industry. Apart from running her own business she also was employed as an evaluation researcher with a consulting firm, an evaluation director of a large government agency, and since 1983 she has worked as a research director at a private sector professional association.

In a final example the respondent's career has been quite varied. She completed the last semester of a two-year academic appointment following the receipt of her Ph.D. She then moved to Latin America where she had the opportunity to take a number of consulting jobs, primarily with AID in the area of social impact assessment. Although she had never done research of this type before, she had been trained to do research, spoke Spanish, was located on site, and made the acquaintance of an influential employee at AID. Three years later she returned to the United States and took a one-year academic appointment. After that academic year ended, she moved to Washington, D.C. and secured some consulting jobs by networking and intensive job hunting, beginning with her Latin American contacts. Little of the consulting she did was directly for AID although it was primarily in the area of international development. Beginning in the early 1980s she found employment with a government agency. This position led to a permanent appointment after she temporarily left that agency for a brief period to do some outside consulting work. She later moved from the more narrow social science analyst to a broader program analyst position in the policy and planning area. Since 1985 she has held a managerial/administrative job in a domestic agency focused on the development, examination, and evaluation of short- and long-term government policies and regulations.

Entering Business Careers

Three of the eight respondents in the sample received their training in anthropology and sought careers in the business world. In two of the three cases the

individuals had just received their Ph.D. degrees and had applied for academic employment with little or no success. One of them heard through word-of-mouth that a major manufacturing corporation was interested in hiring an anthropologist to complement an expanding department of social scientists and engineers engaged in both basic and applied research. She sent out an academic vita and cover letter; over the next several months her contact person in the research department responded with requests for writing samples, an application form, and letters of recommendation. She was invited to interview and was asked to prepare a formal seminar.[8] She was hired not just because she was an anthropologist, but because of her background and training. She had been involved in a number of ethnographic projects, had some quantitative/statistical skills in analyzing large data sets, had been affiliated with an interdisciplinary group of scholars at a population center, and had good writing and oral communication skills.

A second respondent chose to write an historical dissertation—a political/demographic ethnography of an eastern coastal town in the 17th and 18th centuries. Just as he had experienced trouble obtaining funding for this research, he had difficulties securing an academic job. He remarked, "The historians thought I was an anthropologist and the anthropologists thought I was an historian." After approximately six months he made the decision to seek nonacademic employment, despite the fact that he was not sure how to go about finding such a job. His professors were not helpful since they had no experience in a nonacademic job search. He decided to seek advice from his university's placement office. Based on his resume, cover letter, and follow-up phone calls, he was invited to interview at two different firms and eventually accepted an offer from one of them. The qualifications for the job included an advanced degree in the social sciences and quantitative skills. Just as in some of the cases mentioned earlier, his background in mathematics and demography was originally perceived as more useful than his anthropological training.

In a third case the respondent's business career began shortly before he completed an M.A. degree in anthropology. Thinking he might enjoy living abroad, he decided to apply to the personnel departments of various international firms. He had no luck following this strategy so he composed a letter to the heads of the overseas' divisions of five pharmaceutical companies. In these letters he indicated some of his ideas about his potential contributions to their firms and why it might be of interest to them to hire an anthropologist. He got five interviews and three offers. In each of these three cases he had previously contacted their personnel offices with no luck. Over the course of his business career he has worked for four pharmaceutical firms. Typically, he would leave one job for greater responsibility and opportunity elsewhere. In each position he built on the marketing and management skills he had developed early in his career. He was awarded his Ph.D. in 1978, ten years after completing his M.A. degree. To date he continues to work in the pharmaceutical industry.

Current Job Responsibilities

Although the current positions held by the eight respondents cover a wide range of responsibilities, their jobs may be characterized primarily as oriented either toward research or toward program/administrative tasks. Three of the eight are engaged primarily in social science or market research. One respondent spends

the majority of her work week conducting ethnographic research among employees of a major manufacturing corporation. She collects data through participant observation and interviews at different field sites including an assembly plant, and the offices and homes of employees. She came to this job having already undertaken a number of diverse ethnographic studies. A second respondent is employed at a consulting firm where he spends most of his time engaged in data collection using survey methods and the analysis of these large data sets. He feels that he has had adequate training for this type of work due to his background in sociology and statistics at both the B.A. and M.A. levels. He also does free-lance consulting one day each week. The third respondent is a market researcher with another consulting firm. This firm specializes in symbolic analyses of ideas for new products and socio-cultural analyses of the customers who purchase these products. He consults with clients and then interviews consumers, conducts focus group interviews, designs questionnaires, and analyzes the data obtained from these methods. He came to this job with some background as an undergraduate in math and demography.

The remaining five respondents are primarily employed in jobs oriented toward program/administrative tasks. Two work for private sector associations—both in the health care field. One of these individuals is a research director whose job represents a key position in providing socio-demographic and economic data to the federal government on the membership of that association. She performs various administrative tasks related to the functioning of the association. She mentioned that a "crucial" factor in getting hired was that she had an M.A. in health science. Although much of her job consists of analyzing demographic data, she states that she continues her interest in anthropology by "looking at organizational culture." In addition, she maintains her own consulting business on a part-time basis. The other respondent serves as an advocate between select community health programs in the United States in need of funding, and the federal government, which funds these programs. He also spends much of his time writing proposals or position papers to federal agencies or private foundations on behalf of the association's members, and forming and maintaining relationships with medical societies and medical schools to meet the current and future staffing needs for the health programs.

Two respondents are employees in agencies of the federal government. In one case the individual is a program director within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. She sets up national guidelines for proposal funding, develops project types, and reviews projects to see if they are theoretically and methodologically sound. Other aspects of her job include making site visits to universities that are submitting their proposals to her program, and presenting program information at the national level. In the second case the respondent is a staff director of a government program within the Department of Agriculture. She describes her job as a managerial/administrative job rather than one directed toward research. The staff of eight that she supervises is involved in program analyses, regulatory development, responding to high-level information requests made by congressmen, and data management/coding, among others.

The final respondent is a business executive in charge of all his firm's operations in select geographical regions. He spends most of his time reviewing proposals for business development and meeting with executives of other international companies for the purpose of fostering joint interests. He has always carried

out basic research as an integral part of his job. This research has served to identify cultural differences in attitudes and practices, allowing his firm to make more informed decisions and solve various types of problems—particularly those related to business negotiations abroad. In his current position he is involved in a cross-cultural value study of physicians, one goal of which is to help them manage their businesses better.

Linkages with Academia

In addition to their principal forms of employment in business, government, or private sector associations, four of the eight currently hold adjunct appointments at universities. Three are affiliated with departments of anthropology and one with a medical school; one also holds an adjunct appointment with a school of public administration. Typically these appointments vary in terms of the duties and responsibilities that the adjunct performs. Three of the four both guest lecture and serve as advisors to students, either graduate or undergraduate. In the past, two of the four have taught university courses. A fifth respondent, while not currently holding an adjunct appointment, guest lectures when asked. Six of the eight continue to publish in scholarly journals. All of the respondents are members of the American Anthropological Association and many hold membership in other professional associations including the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology, the Society for Applied Anthropology, the Population Association of America, and WAPA.

When asked if they would like to return to academics on a full-time basis at some point in the future, the respondents were divided. Five of the eight stated that they did not want to return. One individual reported that she has ''burned her bridges'' and has ''made a complete transition'' to nonacademic employment. A second individual pointed out that there is no real job security in academia, while a third mentioned that one has ''no control over his own time (in academia)'' and that the pay is far less. Three of the eight suggested that they might possibly want to return to academia at a later date. One respondent stated that she missed ''not writing or thinking as much.'' Another reported that she might like to return to academics for a period of time but that she does not feel she has ''the credentials'' since she has been away from that type of environment for so long.

A few of the respondents commented on the relationship between academic departments and the working world. Although no one in the sample held an internship that linked coursework to a nonacademic setting, it is clear that the respondents valued experience gained with issues and problems in the ''real world.'' Indeed, one respondent pointed out that she ''would have benefitted from [coursework] relating theory to real life—its utility—rather than just [courses] on social change.'' Internships would have been helpful because ''they would have forced me to identify what I could use from anthropological theory to bear on certain organizational problems.'' A second individual emphasized that, ''There should be more relationships between business organizations and the graduate schools'' and that, ''The academic departments should be doing more lobbying in the business area.'' Another individual stated that her graduate school department was geared toward ''getting the students to complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree'' and not toward ''helping them identify potential nonacademic employers—with the possible exception of contract archaeological work.'' It may

be that as more and more anthropologists are hired outside traditional university positions, the possibilities for linkages between the academic and nonacademic sectors will increase, taking the form of research appointments, internships, and ''co-op'' employment for students.

The Importance of Skills and Interest Areas to Career Development

There are a number of key elements that appear to be important in the development of a career path. These skills or interest areas are not necessarily prerequisites for a successful nonacademic career as an anthropologist, but rather represent selected components of some nonacademic work histories. As such these elements may not be continuously present in all the jobs held by members of the sample, but they tend to appear as points of continuity throughout the work histories. They include quantitative/computer, language, oral and written communication, and networking skills, as well as specialized interests in issues related to health, evaluation and work.

Three of the respondents found that having some quantitative/computer skills—some of which were acquired in graduate school or early in their professional lives—were important factors as they advanced in their careers. A background in demography and statistics/math played a large part in the decision to hire two of the respondents for research positions. In a third case the respondent was hired for a temporary, lower level job and soon progressed to positions of higher responsibility because of (1) his statistical and computer skills and (2) his ability to blend qualitative and quantitative analyses with appropriate conceptual categories. This individual later became involved in short-term consulting work in the computer area.

The ability to speak a second language was important in the early career development of three other respondents. The individual who worked in various pharmaceutical firms in the Far East was able to develop a better understanding of Indonesian culture because of his language fluency. In so doing he was able to conduct informal studies of differences in business practices and their impact on the companies where he was employed. Early in the careers of two other respondents, knowledge of a second language was necessary for the types of jobs they performed. Both dealt with native Spanish-speaking populations directly through specific research projects.

Oral and written communication skills were cited as important in the career development of the sample. All respondents had teaching and/or experience at presenting papers at professional meetings, and all had published and/or received funding for their own research projects before completing their Ph.D.s. Presenting one's ideas clearly and succinctly was particularly important during job interviews. One respondent stated that, ''You have to rely on interpersonal skills, size up the situation [and] transmit your ideas to those interviewing you.'' A second individual remarked that in applying for his first job, ''It was a case of doing a sell job on my anthropological skills.'' He also stated however, that he picked up most of his oral skills in the business world. Another respondent pointed out that she felt that she did not have to ''sell her skills'' when applying for an academic job. In contrast, when applying for her first nonacademic job, she did have to ''repackage'' herself as a public administrator and discuss her various skills. A fourth respondent stressed that both her oral and written skills had been very im-

portant considerations in the decision to hire her for the research position she currently holds.

Networking skills also played a large part in the acquisition of many of the jobs held by the eight respondents. While the academic, government, business, and private association jobs were advertised publicly, the respondents seemed to rely primarily on their informal networks for finding out about all but the academic positions. In one case an individual was hired for her first nonacademic position because of a recommendation by someone who had earlier been affiliated with her agency. In other cases, the respondents living in the Washington, D.C. area emphasized the role of WAPA's job clinic and networks in aiding in the job search. Informal networks were also useful in acquiring short- and long-term consulting contracts. One respondent pointed out that consulting firms generally "need someone right away to do the work. If you do a good job for them, they'll remember you for the future." In some cases the respondents heard about the openings through word-of-mouth—some through friends or colleagues. Informal networking did not seem to play such an important role in the recruitment process for academic job openings. The latter may be due to the fact that these positions are generally advertised nationally, reaching a wider pool of applicants.

There were also a number of instances in the recruitment process whereby the potential employer actively sought out specific applicants. In most of these cases the respondents were not previously aware that a job opening existed. One individual was offered a position as head of an international division of a pharmaceutical firm because of his well-known reputation. "The head hunters know who you are and come looking for you if you have a good reputation in the industry," stated this respondent. In several other cases, openings occurred in specific organizations. Those in charge of hiring personally contacted the individuals that they felt would be best suited for the job. This same type of networking was particularly prominent in the consulting area also.

In contrast, there was one case in the sample of an individual hired for a government research position formerly held by an anthropologist. The respondent stated that, "I was very well thought of and left a good impression." In a similar case another respondent pointed out that she is currently the only anthropologist in her organization. She has heard that if she "works out," other anthropologists may be hired. It may be that when individuals responsible for interviewing candidates and/or making hiring decisions have some knowledge of what anthropologists do, they may be more open to the idea of hiring other anthropologists to fill nonacademic positions.

There are some areas of specialization within the respondents' work histories that serve to link their various jobs together into some cohesive career path. Three of the eight respondents have focused their careers in the field of health. One individual, for example, has maintained a strong interest in the U.S. health care delivery system. He has been actively involved in applied work as part of his research, academic, consulting, and private association positions. He has organized self-help networks, coordinated an interdisciplinary program on community and mental health, advised consumer councils, consulted on the provision of services to health organizations, and advocated for health organization members, among others. The work histories of two other respondents seem to have concentrated somewhat in the area of program evaluation. In one case the respondent taught courses in program evaluation, and with that knowledge was hired to conduct program evaluations in a government agency. A final respondent, now in a research position at a large manufacturing corporation, focused most of her study on issues related to work. Indeed, even during her seminar as a job candidate, she emphasized the centrality of her prior research projects in the area of the anthropology of work, suggesting the potential continuity of this line of research in a business/industrial setting. She continues to conduct research on company employees and work-related issues.

Recommendations for Applied Career Training

It is interesting to note that with the exception of one individual in the sample, the respondents had essentially no formal coursework in applied anthropology. The experience that they acquired in applied areas stemmed from their own employment. It may have been that graduate anthropology programs in the respondents' universities offered few, if any, courses in applied studies. However, the question arises, why didn't these respondents enter into an academic career path? Actually, five of the eight began their careers in academics and later made the transition to nonacademic employment. One individual remarked, "I wanted to get outside the university and get closer to policy. The federal government was a good option. I wanted to get out into the real world. When I got out there, I found I liked it." A second respondent pointed out that she "never saw being in academics as advantageous." It never occurred to her that she would not work in an applied setting. It may be that in general the respondents in this sample were more oriented toward the applied area. However, of the three who entered nonacademic careers directly from graduate school, only one stressed that he wanted to be able to apply what he knew in a business setting; the two others were unable to find academic appointments.

The eight respondents made some specific recommendations related to the acquisition of skills and the development of interest areas. They argue that it is important to be an anthropologist first, before becoming an applied anthropologist. It is important to read broadly, take courses outside one's major field of study, and interact with individuals outside anthropology. Formal training or work experience in management, urban planning, health care, education, computers, or other fields might well become of primary importance for anthropologists seeking employment outside academics. Employers are interested in knowing how anthropologists might be useful to them and the kinds of problems they might be able to shed light on or solve. In this regard, skills acquired during fieldwork experiences, internships, and past jobs play an important role—observation, oral and written communication, and data gathering and analysis, among others. One respondent mentioned that it is "good to have fieldwork behind you before you go into applied work, particularly in a culture other than your own. This way you have to adapt to rules other than your own. Solving problems is important in applied work." The interpersonal skills in particular are useful both during job interviews and in future interactions with coworkers when ideas must be transmitted concisely and effectively. Many of the recommendations identified here have been documented by Baba (1986:45–51).

Summary and Conclusions

The eight individuals in this study are part of a growing trend within the discipline of anthropology to leave the university environment for nonacademic ca-

reers. Although the majority had little or no coursework in applied anthropology, nor the opportunity to benefit from internships, they were able to compete successfully in the applied job market. Much of their success may be attributed to the various skills they acquired as graduate students and as newly employed professionals—some knowledge of quantitative methods and computers, language fluency, oral and written communications skills, the ability to network efficiently, and competency in various specialized areas such as health care or program evaluation. Certain aspects of their background and training appealed to the particular needs of their employers. However, it is probably fair to state that these anthropologists would not have been as successful if they lacked the ability to convince their potential employers to hire them, or the creativity to apply anthropological knowledge to real-world situations and problems.

Although these professional anthropologists are not currently working in academics, their linkages with academics have not necessarily been severed. Many maintain their contacts with academia through membership in professional associations, attendance at national meetings, submission of manuscripts to journals, and participation in university life (informally through guest lectures or formally through part-time teaching, advising, and the like). In addition to the teaching and research skills that are typically learned in an academic setting, these anthropologists seem to bring to their employers a broad and diverse base of experience related particularly to problem solving. And, because their focus is primarily applied, they serve in some sense as linkages between the theoretical community of anthropologists engaged in pure research, and the nonacademic community. Employers outside academics seek bright individuals with a certain combination of skills to become an integral part of their existing work force. What is ''essential'' according to one respondent, is that ''anthropologists . . . train themselves to get beyond the academic area.''

Notes

[1]I appreciate the willingness of my informants to interview with me for this project: Shirley Fiske, Gretchen Schafft, Walt Dickie, Mitchell Ratner, Charlotte Miller, Charles Cheney, and Richard Reeves-Ellington. Many thanks also to these individuals and to Bob Trotter, Meta Baba, Jeff Hartley and Carol Gilbert for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

[2]Data from the 1971–72 cohort refer to individuals employed in 1982, not in 1971 or 1972. Employment data from the early 1970s on these individuals are not available.

[3]A copy of the interview questions is available from the author upon request.

[4]In this latter case the individual considers himself an anthropologist and conducted anthropological fieldwork for his dissertation.

[5]One of these individuals was engaged in postdoctoral studies. The other completed his research job and then took two other successive appointments in medicine-related departments at a university.

[6]This was just one of the several government agencies with which she scheduled interviews while searching for an Intergovernmental Personnel Act appointment with the federal government.

[7]WAPA was founded in 1976 and currently has about 250 members. Occasionally it sponsors job clinics in the Washington, D.C. area for new and old members seeking employment. Perhaps their most important service or function is their job referral network, much of which occurs on an informal basis. As one member states, ''If WAPA members working in different organizations have job openings, they may remember you. They become a clearinghouse.''

[8]While giving a formal interview seminar is quite common in academics, it is less common in the business world. She was told to structure the seminar along four topic areas—her background and training, her general research interests, her dissertation findings, and the way in which an anthropologist could be useful to a major corporation. She prepared the seminar in advance and asked a few friends from other disciplines (demography and business) for their comments; they helped to make the seminar less academic and more applied.

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