Have We Ever Taught Anthropology?

A Hidden History of Disciplinary Pedagogy

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Abstract
This paper seeks to puncture three powerful myths about the teaching and learning of anthropology that have circulated within and beyond the discipline. Questioning this mythology, I offer some alternative histories of the discipline, uncovering forgotten debates about training for fieldwork, textbooks, and teaching anthropology in schools.

Introduction

There are many stories that anthropologists in the 'British' tradition tell themselves about their discipline. Of those related to teaching anthropology, three have had a lasting appeal. Over time they have acquired semi-mythological status – recited, invoked, half-believed. The first story is that one can never really teach students 'how' to do anthropological research. Instead, goes the argument, one's ethnographic talent is an embodied skill, best absorbed through the practice of fieldwork. The second is that introductory 'textbooks' risk a sterile codification of disciplinary wisdom, and that anthropology has no need of such simplifying pedagogic devices. The third is that anthropology's methodological relativism is a dangerous thing, potentially risky for those in schools, and even for undergraduates.

These disciplinary wisdoms have been handed-down with the assumption that knowledge is best conveyed through passion rather than formal teaching. They have proved particularly strong in British universities, where there has long been a reluctance to see teaching as a professional practice worth discussing. Instead, we have invoked a vision of social anthropological fieldwork as a form of experiential and sensory knowing, a tradition that values the unintended, incidental and tangential. This can be contrasted with an fifty-year American tradition of textbooks and undergraduate field projects (Mandelbaum et al. 1963, Kottak 2007).

One explanation is that anthropologists choose to keep their secrets to themselves, cultivating academic exclusivism. During the early days of 1950s and 1960s, social anthropologists), kept a tight control over who was able to join their professional association, focused primarily on graduate teaching, and were largely excluded from the new Robbins universities (with the exception of new departments in Kent and Sussex). Increasingly they defined themselves against the populist appeal of Sociology, cultivating a rather iconoclastic mystique.

In this paper, I offer an alternative history of anthropological pedagogies that attends to teaching. I unpack each myth in turn. Challenging the view that little formal training in research methods had been given to students, I show how Bronislaw Malinowski and Max Gluckman each advocated a very explicit approach to training. Puncturing the myth about disseminating anthropological knowledge, I detail an intense set of debates around crafting a textbook for the discipline in the 1950s. And questioning the assumption that anthropologists are reluctant to proselytise, I describe the RAI's attempts to introduce anthropology into schools in the 1960s. Whilst a comforting mix of iconoclasm and intimacy has characterised the British discipline, I want to suggest

that debates about pedagogy are also central to its institutional history.

'Making Anthropologists'

I start with the first myth that has perpetuated around social anthropology: that its research students receive very little training, and that this in part contributes to their success. Michael Polanyi, with no apparent knowledge of Heidegger's own work on habituation, famously discussed the unconscious and tacit ways in which craft skills are passed from master to pupil through informal socialisation and imitation (1958). Polanyi's own background as a research chemist turned philosopher ensured that this model became a highly influential way of understanding disciplinary cultures of learning and knowledge. It is one that resonates for many in anthropology. But not all historians of science agree, and some argue that intellectual and methodological precepts need first to be articulated before they can be mobilised in debate or embodied in practice. Such explicitness, they suggest, is an important way of promoting disciplinary reproduction (Olesko 1993, Kaiser 2005).

Two examples of the ways in which prominent anthropologists trained their students reveal this commitment to an explicit articulation of their approach. Malinowski's students have written about 'his real love of teaching' (Firth 1942) and his captivating 'Socratic' teaching style. Yet there was more to his teaching than charisma alone, and it is not true that he offered no training to his research students. Malinowski laid great store by the importance of formal scientific training and socialization, to the extent of even preparing a short written programme of research training. As well as seminars on field methods and carefully structured (and transcribed) graduate seminars, he insisted that all students submit written plans for their field-research, and these were carefully vetted and discussed (Mills 2008).

Max Gluckman's work offers another example of this (Mills 2005). Despite having studied with Radcliffe-Brown, first in South Africa and then in Oxford, Gluckman's advocacy of empirically grounded social science strongly echoed that of his former LSE teacher Malinowski. He too was explicit about the importance of training, along with the vital importance of remaining aware of the power dynamics within the fieldwork situation (Schumaker 2001). When he was appointed to the directorship of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in 1941, he built its reputation, and subsequently that of the Manchester department, around a strategic approach to hands-on and team-based training. He also advocated of research and writing practices that his force of character gave a unique imprimatur. These included a team-based approach to field research and the importance of re-analysing earlier anthropological work. Letters to his students often discussed the relative merits of his colleagues as teachers and lecturers, as well as asserting the importance of a careful and thorough research training.

Gluckman's approach is worth detailing, especially given his seemingly 'non-anthropological' attention to quantitative data. In his 1945 report as RLI director, Gluckman describes how 'I was planning to take our new officers into some field for a short time, to introduce them to African life, and to show them certain field-research techniques', including the collection of 'demographic data, budgets, and of labour migration figures' (Gluckman 1945: 70). The field-site chosen was the Lamba reserve on Ndola, and whilst Gluckman was quickly called away to meetings in Lusaka, his report notes that 'it has proved a most useful exercise in training us to collect quantitative data in a single scheme, and in developing a method of analysing such facts as matrilocality, divorce rates, type of kinship organisation within a village, on a quantitative basis' (1945: 70). His student Clyde Mitchell later acknowledged the importance of that field-trip, and the training/data analysis that followed at Cape Town under Isaac Schapera, writing that 'not only did the Institute provide the finances for academic and disinterested research, but it also created the framework in which a group of sociologists, of divergent interests and backgrounds, could work on common problems' (Mitchell 1956: ix). Schumaker (2001: 109) describes how during this field-school, Gluckman impressed upon the group the 'necessity of collecting sufficiently detailed data that would enable one to analyse it later from angles not anticipated while in the field'. For Gluckman, the exercise posed 'problems of what data we can measure and how to measure them, and above all, of whether we are measuring the correct things' (Gluckman 1945: 78). He also felt it helped set lines along which 'the institute officers, as a team, can collect comparable data in their different areas' (1945: 78). This focus on team-work, collaboration, and the resulting comparable and controlled empirical data collection is equally characteristic of the work of Clyde Mitchell, John Barnes, Elizabeth Colson and even Victor Turner's *Schism and Continuity* (1957). As an approach to training and pedagogy it served its purpose well, even if it is a less well-remembered methodological contribution of the Manchester school.

'The Most Useful Kind of Textbook'

The second myth is that one couldn't and shouldn't teach anthropology through a formal textbook. Unlike in the US, where there has long been a tradition of undergraduate cultural anthropology textbooks (Keesing 1981, Kottak 1997), social anthropologists have tended to produce more personal and reflective introductions to the field (e.g. Pocock 1961).

Yet when the ASA (Association of Social Anthropologists of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth) was founded in July 1946, the first objective of its draft constitution was 'to promote the study *and teaching* of social anthropology'. One of E.E. Evans-Pritchard's initial aims for the ASA had been 'a journal devoted solely to social anthropology'. 'Such a journal', he went on, 'would publish only contributions to theory and methodology, and not ethnographic fieldwork reports'. Its members recognised that the legitimacy of this new discipline depended on the quality of teaching and the students it produced. Early meetings dwelt repeatedly on the idea of producing either a journal or text-book for scholars and students that would capture the concerns of this new discipline.

Popular and accessible introductions to anthropology were already in existence, though E.B. Tylor's 1881 *Anthropology: An Introduction* was described by one contemporary critic as 'vulgarising' anthropology (Lang quoted in McClancy 1996). Adept at self-publicity, Malinowski gave his books titillatory titles, famously leading one of his books to be shelved under 'pornography' in one Bloomsbury book-shop.

Evans-Pritchard envisaged an altogether more rigorous and scholarly affair. In his initial plans, he proposed a journal modelled on *L'Annee Sociologique*, with a number of extended review articles, such as Firth writing an introduction to anthropological economics, and himself a review of the literature on ritual. Such a journal would legitimise this new intellectual school. It would also be a way of inspiring and informing potential students, for the discipline's future depended on having teaching materials and resources available. Evans-Pritchard was quoted a cost of £500 for the publication of a 500-page journal, a huge sum of money for an association with only £6 in hand. But neither funders nor publishers were forthcoming, and by the following summer the committee agreed to focus solely on a textbook with the provisional title 'Advances in Social Anthropology'.

The plan immediately ran into problems. One of the editors, Seigfried Nadel, became increasingly distracted by complex negotiations over a competitor anthropological 'Year book' to be funded by the Wenner Gren foundation. Eventually Gluckman re-launched the initiative in the summer of 1951, calling for 'a book, or series of books, which would evaluate the development of British social anthropology into a specific distinctive discipline'. Focusing on the developments in the 'technique of intensive field research by Radcliffe Brown and Malinowski' he added, 'I consider that it is possible to isolate the new technique as producing a new discipline'. But again, contributors would not commit to producing chapters.

In 1953 a new idea of the ASA sponsoring monographs was broached, with Fortes reporting that Edward Arnold and Co. were keen to start publishing anthropological works. When Evans-Pritchard noted that the Clarendon Press were equally enthusiastic, the committee began to debate whether the problem was 'good books or willing publishers'. In 1956 Jack Goody returned to the idea of 'a collection of articles representing the more theoretical achievements in Social Anthropology'. The twist was that the articles were to be selected by younger members of the association, 'on the grounds that they are in a better position to assess the achievements of the senior generation'. It too became mired in the controversy over who would select such articles. According to one critic 'it divided the ASA into seniors and juniors when at meetings all were equal'. The idea did however inform the structure of the 1963 'Anglo-American' conference, which highlighted the work of younger scholars. Despite almost two decades of effort, the first official ASA publications were the monographs from this 1963 ASA conference.

What of sole-authored introductions to the discipline? By the 1950s the discipline of social anthropology as imagined by protagonists like Malinowski finally had a secure foothold within British universities. In the introductions written by that generation of academics one learns more about their ambitions for the discipline than about their likely readers. The authors assumed a convergence of interest, and that their readers would be committed to the project of academic professionalisation. Many of the introductions written at this point largely resemble monographs in their structural form – with each chapter devoted to one aspect of the social whole. Yet their views on how the discipline should develop diverged widely, and were partly dependent on their institutional location.

The introductions written by the London School of Economics contingent – Raymond Firth (1957) and Lucy Mair (1965) – are pragmatic and factual, seeking to delimit the discipline through examples of empirical research and application. On the other hand, the influential introduction written by David Pocock (1961), associated with the Institute of Social Anthropology in Oxford, tends towards the philosophical, situating anthropology on a broader historical canvas of intellectual endeavours within social theory. An inspiring teacher, Pocock insisted that all students brought to the discipline their own 'personal anthropology' (1961: ix) that could interact with the formal anthropologies of the discipline. For this reason he felt that anthropology had to be 'lived at the same time as it was learned', and that its greatest value was in helping students develop a 'sociological sensibility, an anthropological consciousness'. He was disparaging about the risks of 'petrification which can occur when an enquiry originally undertaken by adult individuals becomes a 'subject' to be taught to the young and is reduced to 'textbooks', set courses and select bibliographies.' (*ibid*.: ix) Yet this was inevitably what was beginning to happen. In the widely-read introductions by Lienhardt (1964), Beattie (1964) and Mair (1965) a convention begins to appear. Each has a chapter (or more) on kinship, marriage, political organisation, economic relations and religious belief. But each too dwells on the socialising role of the discipline, defining their personal vision with chapter titles such as '*How Anthropologists think*' (Lienhardt 1964), *What Social Anthropologists study* (Beattie 1964) or '*What Social Anthropology is*' (Mair 1965).

Talking Teaching?

The final myth, that in some way anthropology was risky for those with 'unformed minds', has manifested itself in a number of different ways over time. After the second world-war, it was initially reinforced by the influx of mature students turning to anthropology. It slowly began to change as the discipline was increasingly taught to undergraduate students.

It is not wholly fair to say that these issues were hidden away from public scrutiny. Quite the opposite, if one looks at the events leading up to the first (and last) ASA conference devoted solely to the teaching of university anthropology. In the late 1950s, the demise of the Colonial Social Science Research Council, given its generous funding of doctoral research, troubled the ASA committee. When no alternative source of funding could be found, Meyer Fortes proposed an ASA meeting to consider 'undergraduate teaching and patterns of training and research'. Backed by Audrey Richards and Barbara Ward, plans were made for a major ASA conference on the topic.

The meeting, entitled 'The teaching of Social Anthropology' was held in September 1958 at Kings College, Cambridge. It was the first annual ASA 'conference', replacing the twice-yearly meetings that had been held since 1946 and were now suffering from declining attendance. Instead of having one or two speakers, seven papers were presented in four separate sessions – 'Social Anthropology for the non-professionals', 'The teaching of Undergraduates', 'The teaching of Graduates and Training for Field-work', and 'Training for fieldwork in retrospect'. Twenty-nine senior ASA members attended, though after earlier unhappiness about the presence of members' graduate students, who had not been officially invited, no students were present.

Barbara Ward opened the conference with a panel entitled 'Social Anthropology for the Non-Professionals'. She argued that a 'comparative and structural approach to the study of human relationships could add to the moral equipment of educated people' and advocated the wider dissemination of the discipline's insights. She used the precedent of history, which at the turn of the century had equally been faced with 'a dilemma similar to our own', 'whether to give research priority over all other considerations or to broaden their approach'. She described research that revealed a widespread ignorance amongst beginners about the discipline, and argued for a 'professional' committee to focus on the problems of 'teaching anthropology to non-professionals'. More controversially, she noted that teaching was often 'neglected or even despised' in the research universities. Kenneth Little suggested that there was value in school teachers having knowledge of social anthropology for handling children, and that it would be a good thing if they understood the anthropological approach to race relations. But these positions caused a good deal of unhappiness and controversy. Leach, in particular, thought the proposal of 'selling' social anthropology to be 'preposterous', and that 'if the subject was any good it would sell itself'.

This tension between seeing teaching as a form of informal professional socialisation and a desire to promote anthropology's contribution to 'general education' continued throughout the conference. Some felt teaching to be an individual matter, whilst others called for a more systematic approach. Amongst the latter, the vexed

question of the textbook was again raised, with Maurice Freedman pointing out 'that if we had accepted this view earlier we would have produced the basic textbooks which were so woefully lacking'.

During the conference, undergraduate teaching provision at Cambridge, Manchester and LSE were compared in some depth, to the extent of comparing set readings and course options. The conference proceedings provide an excellent record of the different departmental approaches to teaching. Fortes, for example, advocated that 'current controversies should be excluded' in the teaching of undergraduates, and that 'no thorough treatment of the subject's history was needed at this stage'. The place of history and sociology in the teaching of anthropology was constantly returned to, with Fortes suggesting that 'were one to stick to social anthropology as an educational subject without bearing in mind these links it could have a narrowing influence'. On the other hand, the Manchester honours course involved 'one sociological problem examined in detail'. A good deal of anxiety was expressed about the 'mediocre' quality of students, for which Evans-Pritchard blamed 'the lowly place accorded to social studies in the this country', though he also acknowledged that 'we have not yet attained the high standards of rigorous scholarship an exacting student might require', and also 'to some extent lost touch with other fields of learning'. Gluckman, on the other hand, took the position that the 'lower seconds' were 'good, able and valuable'.

There was a good deal of debate about research training, particularly in the two sessions devoted to fieldwork preparation. Debate hinged around the appropriate length of graduate training, the necessary pre-requisites for PhD registration, the contents of pre-fieldwork seminars, and appropriate forms of supervision. Firth asked whether 'supervision should be as loose and informal as appeared to be the case in Oxford', whilst others suggested that the fieldwork should be learnt through the 'do-it-yourself' style of apprenticeship, or placed emphasis on the value of informal peer-tutoring from those engaged in 'writing-up'.

Summing up the conference, Forde concluded that 'the association should put expansion into the field of general education as one of its objectives', and the meeting agreed to set up a sub-committee 'for the study of the presentation of social anthropology to non-specialised audiences'. Barbara Ward, having argued that 'if we did not believe that we had anything to contribute we could not be surprised at our failure to attract first class students', insisted on the importance of keeping 'non-professional teaching under general review'. She thus offered to compile information on the 'extent and character of non-professional teaching'.

As the proceedings drew to a close, Barbara Ward suggested a regular yearly meeting to keep addressing such matters. Maurice Freedman also called for an annual discussion of teaching, including 'common problems with teachers in allied fields' and announced that he would propose a motion to this end at the next meeting. This was duly noted, though there is no record that he ever did so. In April 1959 Ward presented a further paper to the committee, carefully and comprehensively listing all the 'professional' (that is, masters and doctoral) and 'non-professional' (first degree, further education and adult education) anthropology courses available in the UK. The 1958 conference undoubtedly set an important precedent for a disciplinary concern with teaching and learning, though the focus from then on begins to be on 'educating' others about anthropology, rather than publicly reflecting on teaching within universities.

Plans for a regular meeting went into abeyance, only to be resurrected by Paul Stirling in 1964. That December in LSE, six years after the first, another conference on 'The Place of Anthropology in General Education' was held, this time funded by a grant from the American foundation Wenner-Gren, fresh from its support of an extensive international set of workshops on teaching (Mandelbaum et al. 1963). This time it focused primarily on the teaching of anthropology in schools, further education and teacher training colleges. In his provocative call for papers, Stirling acknowledges the tensions within the association about its pedagogic role:

> This topic has so far divided us into the Mandarins (social anthropology for professionals and mature minds only) and the Missionaries (social anthropology has a message for everyone). We are meeting to discuss how to help, not whether to help, and cannot afford publicly to divide amongst ourselves. There are plenty of problems, - what is to be taught, how, to whom, by whom, and from what books. But we need the whole profession well represented, and we need to keep the discussion sane, and standards as high as possible.

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This second conference again attracted many senior figures. It began with a 'closed' session, where Stirling announced that teachers and pupils were 'pathetically not to say dangerously ignorant about society and societies'. He asked 'Have we not a clear moral duty to propagate the truth as we see it?' whilst announcing his reluctance to 'sit by and see schools teach a sociology in which social anthropology is scarcely represented'. In the same session, Gluckman focused more pragmatically on the actual services the association could offer to

schools and education authorities, and raised the question of how far it would be possible to use 'professionally trained' staff. This was followed by a discussion on how best to present the discipline to the guests, and what people considered the 'five main strengths' of the subject when taught as a school subject. These, it was finally agreed, included 'eroding ethnocentricity', 'a solid respect for facts', 'the limitations of all languages and cultures' and the 'general principles underlying the uniqueness of all societies'. There was very much less consensus on 'the very great practical difficulties' of what to teach. One of the key sub-texts to the gathering was whether sociology and social anthropology should be taught as A-level subjects. Some welcomed the proposal, whilst others were 'strongly opposed'. The proceedings note that 'some of the opposition agreed that it was better to bow to the inevitable and co-operate. All agreed that anthropology should only be taught by 'qualified people', and must not become 'woolly or doctrinaire'!

The open session on the following day, with around 25 invited guests – primarily teachers and policy-makers – began with presentations by Mary Douglas and Ronnie Frankenberg on 'What anthropology has to offer'. Mary Douglas, supporting Stirling's position, argued that 'neither knowledge nor even admiration of other cultures is harmful to faith or morals, unless illuminated by a falsely romantic halo'. Frankenberg discussed sociology's relation to anthropology, noting that 'some people find sociology vague, general and abstract' whilst 'social anthropology is specific and detailed', and also has the 'advantage' of the 'shock and interest of the unfamiliar'. The day also included papers by practising teachers, for the Manchester department had developed a close linkage with a Teacher Training College, giving advice on teaching the subject in schools.

The theory-practice dichotomy was cause for dispute. Some of the teachers reacted to the aura of abstraction by challenging anthropologists to 'provide solutions to specific practical problems'. On the other hand, several anthropologists 'expressed serious misgivings about a general policy of encouraging anthropology students to do practical local research as part of an initial training', noting that 'not even universities attempt this'. Others voiced strong objections to the students carrying out practical research as part of their initial training. The complex relationship between sociology and social anthropology also confused many outside the discipline. This was hardly surprising given the messages they were receiving from academics. Fortes argued that anthropology had to keep itself distinct ('the awareness of differences between societies was the crucial point'), whilst Tyler, for tactical reasons, taught anthropology but called it sociology. This was not only a problem for the 'guests', but also a key dilemma for the final closed ASA session, and indeed for policy developments in subsequent years, during which the teaching of sociology at university and school expanded rapidly. As the 'overlap between sociology and social anthropology is so great and our interests so close, it would be absurd to appear publicly as rivals' went the argument recorded in the proceedings, whilst also recognising that 'complete identification with sociology is unacceptable both to them and us'. It was agreed to act independently, but in the 'fullest possible co-operation' with sociologists.

With no publications or public record, the 1964 conference is little remembered in contrast to the first ASA decennial – the 'Anglo-American' conference – the previous year. It deserves better. The dialogue was a diverse but productive one, and in a final 'closed' ASA session it was agreed that there was a strong case for anthropologists to 'take more interest' in non-university education. The general enthusiasm for action led – perhaps inevitably – to the creation of another high-powered committee. Convened and chaired by Stirling, this was grandly entitled the 'Committee on Anthropology in General Education', consisting of the national ASA office-holders and representatives from all the main university departments. Each regional representative was also envisaged as setting up their own committee, as 'we seem unanimous that more about anthropology should be made known to colleges of education and school teachers'. 'Furthering the cause' involved responding to requests for help with syllabi, and offering sixth form talks and doing visits. As the request to the departments ends, 'we all stand to gain from a wider dissemination by people who know what they are talking about, and the more interest we take ourselves, the less will it be left to non-anthropological amateurs to lead each other into the ditch'. For all the focus on education, the 1964 conference made no mention of university-based pedagogy. Indeed, apart from the occasional survey of departments and student numbers, the public discussions of 1958 regarding undergraduate and postgraduate training were rarely repeated. The reluctance of many anthropologists to consider the possibility of teaching anthropology as an 'A' level was also not shared by sociologists, and the fast growth of sociology in schools buttressed its expansion in the new universities, often at anthropology's expense.

After this point, the focus of attention shifts to the RAI, which reached out to many school teachers in the 1960s and 1970s. Under the directorship of Jonathan Benthall, and partly inspired by a visit from Prince Charles to the RAI, the RAI obtained funds from the Leverhulme trust to appoint an Education Officer – the anthropologist

Michael Sallnow. Working with Blackwells publishing house, a group of interested teachers and academics, and the ILEA (Inner London Education Authority), Sallnow developed resources and materials for the teaching of anthropology in schools. The 'Teaching Resources Project' produced several editions of a 'Teacher's Resource Guide', and some comparative ethnographic resource packs, including 'Peru, the Quechua' and others on the !Kung and the Trobriand islanders. However, the initiative fell victim to a major shift in public policy initiated by Prime Minister Callaghan's famous speech at Ruskin College Oxford in October 1976, in which he called for a 'great debate' about public education and school improvement. It led to a backlash against more experimental and iconoclastic pedagogies, of which the RAI initiative was but one. At the same time, the new politics of anti-racism, at a time of rising immigration and social unrest, led the ILEA to be wary of the exoticising difference that anthropology could potentially be accused of. Within the RAI, there were heated debates about whether anthropology could and should be part of anti-racist education. This time, the mandarins won out, amidst fears that the RAI might become as politically fractured as the American Anthropological Association. It retreated to a more scholarly role, and many of the more radical and activist teachers involved in the initiative drifted away. More recently, the debate has come full circle. The RAI's revitalised Education Committee has successfully steered through proposals for a new Anthropology 'A' level: a growing number of schools are now teaching the course.

There was little further public debate about the teaching of anthropology within universities until the 1990s, and the publication of what became called the 'Gold' report (Mascarenhas-Keyes and Wright, 1995). This was partly an autochthonous resurgence of interest in pedagogy and also the fruit of a policy initiative to fund discipline-based learning and teaching initiatives. Since then, anthropology has continued to contribute to these debates through HEFCE funding that led to the establishment of the Centre for learning and teaching Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP) in 2000, part of the Higher Education Academy. This centre funded a number of teaching projects during its 11 years of existence, and its work continues within the Higher Education Academy. Within Europe, a parallel set of initiatives has led to a series of publications on teaching anthropology (Drackle and Edgar 2003, Drackle et al. 2003).

Conclusion

Debates around teaching undergraduates, and preparing textbooks and introductions together raise a key question – how should the discipline be made 'accessible' and relevant to a wider public? Whether it was Evans-Pritchard in the 1950s rejecting undergraduate anthropology (after his attempt to create an undergraduate honours school had been rejected), Leach in the 1970s challenging anthropology's inclusion in the school curriculum, or Ingold in the 1990s questioning the value of undergraduate fieldwork, one can trace a repeated ambivalence about the risks of proselytising anthropological approaches. This tension between a narrow scholarly commitment to the profession and its broader popularisation and promotion was once described by Paul Stirling as the 'Mandarin/Missionary divide'. It is an anxiety that remains to this day, evinced in concerns over the 'poaching' by other disciplines of the 'anthropological' method. The teaching and practice of ethnographic methods are a deeply felt part of the discipline's self-identity.

These different case studies highlight the commitment of senior figures to teaching. Yet pedagogic reforms get written out of disciplinary histories that foreground theoretical developments and schools of thought. The disciplinary self-image that largely takes graduate training and undergraduate teaching for granted is belied by the range of initiatives and projects that have quietly sought to make changes and improvements.

Things are changing. There are a growing number of biographical collections recounting first experiences of fieldwork (e.g. Gardner 2006, De Neve and Unnithan-Kumar 2006, Spencer and Davies 2010), and reflecting on the personal and emotional aspects of ethnographic research. The teaching of ethnographic methods, graduate training and disciplinary reproduction are increasingly being discussed in relation to the reconceptualisation of the field (see Faubion and Marcus 2009, Rabinow et al 2008). The talk is now of collaboratories, of paraethnography, and of design experiments. Myths may not last forever.

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