

1. *Barcelona: Ciutadans en temps de guerra*. A Barcelona TV series supported by several foundations and the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Catalan autonomous government.

2. In his insightful overview of Barcelona's Forum 2004, the anthropologist Gerard Horta (2004) draws attention to the nearly 2000 anti-fascist victims who lie under the Forum's main plaza.

3. The most detailed study of the seizure of these documents, and the uses to which they were put, is Cruanyes 2003. See also Comissió de la Dignitat (2004).

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## THE COST OF COAST

*A response to Felicia Hughes-Freeland (AT 22[2])*

The hand-wringing regarding the lack of a public face for anthropology in the UK which has recently become a regular feature in *AT* reminds me of the late 1980s. This was a time when the media face of archaeology was the historian Michael Wood or, on occasion, the natural historian David Bellamy who appeared to have *carte blanche* to talk on all subjects of an outdoors nature (and made a fine subject for a Lenny Henry caricature on *TISWAS!*). However, these days archaeology is difficult to miss on UK TV following the success of Channel 4's breakthrough series *Time Team*, now preparing to air its 14th series in 2007, and itself a caricature of the archaeological process (meriting references such as comedian Eddie Izzard's 'speed archaeology' and the establishment blessing of a sketch on the BBC *Dead Ringers* comedy series). Academic archaeological colleagues turn up regularly on a wide variety of programmes, including Channel 5's live excavations and reconstruction of Stonehenge (dubbed 'foamhenge') for last year's summer solstice, where a panel of four expert archaeologists commented live

over two nights of primetime TV.

In contrast to archaeology's apparent success in the last 15 years or so, anthropology on TV has declined significantly in the same period, and this is not only a concern in terms of representing the excitement and relevance of the discipline to the public generally, but is likely to influence the choices prospective students make in deciding what they wish to study at university. Felicia Hughes-Freeland points out that, unlike *Tribe* which appears to avoid the association studiously, the BBC series *Coast* consciously has an 'anthropologist' as one of its four 'expert' presenters. This is indeed an improvement in anthropology's standing in relation to 'edutainment', but what anthropology is being presented for public consumption in this series? It is interesting to note that all of the expert presenters have a TV pedigree in archaeology programming. The archaeologist, Mark Horton of the Archaeology and Anthropology department at Bristol University, comes from the BBC aerial archaeology series *Time Flyers*; the 'historian', Neil Oliver, is an archaeologist who co-presented two series of the BBC's battlefield archaeology programme *Two Men in a Trench*; Miranda Krestovnikoff, the marine biologist, is a trained zoologist but previously presented Channel 4's nautical archaeology series *Wreck Detectives* and the BBC series *Hidden Treasure*, which provided a platform for the presentation of finds and their contexts reported through the portable antiquities scheme. So what of the 'anthropologist'?

Alice Roberts, the 'anthropologist', is a medical doctor and human osteologist who cut her TV teeth on *Time Team*, followed by a stint as a regular team member on the short-lived spin-off *Extreme Archaeology* (also Channel 4). Although having a non-anthropologist presenting anthropology for public consumption might be argued to be another case of the Kate Fox 'trust me, I'm an anthropologist' syndrome (Mills 2006), what are people to think of anthropology, given that the pieces on *Coast* presented by this 'expert anthropologist' were almost exclusively related to archaeology (Northumberland's oldest prehistoric house, Formby's Mesolithic footprints, the Palaeolithic remains dredged from the North Sea) or geology and conservation (Giant's Causeway)? One of the few anthropology-

friendly features was the one about beach huts at Lowestoft, which included interviews with the inhabitants of these peculiar structures. Who was chosen to present this feature? Well, the archaeologist of course!

While Roberts may legitimately lay claim to the title of 'physical anthropologist' this may derive from, and reinforce, the public confusion as to what an anthropologist is or does, and says much about the struggles for ownership of the term – a struggle that was very obvious when I attended anthropology meetings from a cultural studies department! Jonathan Benthall (2006) bemoans the loss of Margaret Mead-style evangelism in anthropology, contrasting this situation to the success of archaeology in asserting 'its relevance for the future of the globe' (although using the example of Easter Island is rather unfortunate in this author's opinion, see Rainbird 2002 and Peiser 2005) and the apparent need for the individual to 'find oneself'.

Surely *Coast*, like *Tribe*, is not the answer to the problem of gaining more public airtime for anthropology, but in the late 1980s, when archaeologists were worried about their lack of a public face they were looking jealously at Granada's (ITV) anthropology flagship programme *Disappearing World*. In 1992, David Turton asked what anthropology on television would look like following the axing of *Disappearing World* (which ended in 1993). The answer, 14 years on, is still very much awaited, but it would seem that asserting distinct disciplinary relevance is a pre-requisite for the reintroduction of serious anthropology programmes on TV. ●

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# conferences

## SOUND AND ANTHROPOLOGY

*Body, environment and human sound making, University of St Andrews, 19-21 June 2006*

This conference was the culmination of a series of events organized by the Department of Anthropology at St Andrews and the London College of Communication, and funded by the AHRC and the British Academy. It brought together practitioners from many disciplines, including musicians, sound artists,

architects and psychologists as well as anthropologists. Diversity was reflected in the presentations, with some presenters singing and others presenting sound art recordings. The conference was wonderfully complemented by an evening of sound art and music performances and a rousing ceilidh dance.

So the conference was a sonic feast throughout and, as one's ears attuned to sounds both familiar and new, one was struck by noises all around the lecture hall encroaching on performances: the bells of St Salvator's, a passing bird calling, a military jet from RAF

Leuchars or 'voices from elsewhere' filtering in from the surrounding corridors. These encroaching sounds surfaced as recurrent themes through many of the conference presentations, as speakers explored the revelatory potential of sound in human social life.

Penny Howard and Tom Rice highlighted how attention to sound could reveal otherwise imperceptible phenomena. Howard is conducting fieldwork into seascapes in western Scotland and has used underwater recordings to explore the subsurface traces of human life that remain hidden to the eye, such as mili-