ASAO Special Publications and Distinguished Lectures*

Lamont Lindstrom

ASAO Board 1986–1988;

Special Publications Editor / Distinguished Lecture Coordinator 1995–2017

ASAO's Special Publication Series and its Distinguished Lectures have been connected, more or less firmly, since the association established the series in 1980. In 1977, the ASAO Board of Directors had hoped that the University of California–Santa Cruz's 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. So in 1979 the 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 chaired ASAO's Board from 1975 to 1978 and Mac (Keith) Marshall had edited the ASAO Monograph Series, established earlier to publish sets of papers from successful ASAO symposia; the first of these monographs had appeared in 1970 (see the paper by Margaret Critchlow and others on the monograph and book series). When I interviewed Brady in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in February 2015, he recalled that for several years he and Marshall had pushed for a second publication series to publish short, single-authored monographs. The minutes of the 1976 ASAO "Plenary session" (the meeting of the wider membership, not just the Board and officers) 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" (see also the

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summary report in *ASAO Newsletter* #20 [April 1976]: 11). Wenner-Gren had twice earlier provided subventions for the ASAO Monograph Series. In 1979, the 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 meeting, and also contemplating applying to both the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies (*ASAO Newsletter* #30 [Spring 1979]: 2).

By the time of the 1980 Board meeting, Wenner-Gren had declined to offer any more money, but the Board still hoped to feature "a formal Distinguished Lecture at next year's meeting" (*ASAO Newsletter* #34 [Spring 1980]: 10). In addition, Brady and Marshall, in late 1980, signed a "Memorandum of Agreement [MOA] Regarding Establishment of the ASAO Special Publication Series." This agreement laid the groundwork for what ultimately would become a three-item series.

The series' 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." The MOA placed the Special Publications (or "Associate") Editor under the authority of the Monograph Series Editor but assigned to the Associate Editor "all actual editorial responsibilities and arrangements," including "the right to enter into publishing contracts with compositors, printers, and authors," subject to the Monograph Series Editor's oversight and final approval.

The MOA, furthermore, noted that the Special Publication Series (SPS) would receive a onetime allocation of \$800 from the association's publications account and, in future, one dollar from each ASAO member's 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. (See summary report in *ASAO Newsletter* #37 [Winter 1981]: 10.)

Before the Board officially established the SPS and an ongoing 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 1979 meeting in Clearwater, Florida. 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 meeting and Ben Finney the "First ASAO Special Lecture" in Monterey in 1977. After the series was formally created, Leopold Pospisil addressed a plenary session in 1980 and Kenelm Burridge lectured in 1981, but neither of these lectures was transformed into print.

Brady instead concentrated his initial editorial efforts on Sahlins's 1979 lecture "Structures in the Course of History: The Hawaiian Kingdom," which entertained ASAO members attending the evening plenary session on Friday, March 2. Sahlins, whose adamantine words flow easily into print, submitted yellow lined pads with a handwritten draft that Brady edited into camera-ready copy for the University of Michigan Press (UMP), the series' first publisher. Vern Carroll (then a UMP 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's ASAO Special Publication 1, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (1981), quickly became the most successful of the three numbers, selling 5,092 copies through September 1986, according to Ivan Brady's February 1987 final report as Special Publications Editor. Sahlins assigned royalties to ASAO—these helped to

fund Special Publications 2 and 3—until these reached \$3,738.00 (the cost of publication plus 200%), as noted in Deborah Gewertz's March 1990 report as Editor, and this transition point was reached by 1991 per Gewertz's report of that year.

Brady had plans for subsequent Special Publications that would also be featured first as Distinguished Lectures, recalling that, from the start, "the Series dictated the Lectures" (Brady interview, 2015). He envisioned a lineup of scholars whose lectures he could transform into Special Publications. His second-in-line was historian Greg Dening, 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. By 1989, Weiner 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" (Weiner letter quoted in Gewertz's February 1989 Special Publications report to the ASAO Board).

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 interview, 2015). When Dening was well enough to complete his manuscript, Brady again prepared camera-ready copy, but this time for the University Press of America (UPA), in that the University of Michigan Press had abandoned the series. Brady worked with Margaret Rodman (now Critchlow), who followed Mac Marshall as Monograph Series Editor, to transfer Special Publications to the University Press of America

along with the Monograph Series. By 1985–1986, Brady had become increasingly unhappy with the UMP editor, whom he found unresponsive and uncooperative. Dening's lecture belatedly appeared with UPA, in 1988, as ASAO Special Publication 2, *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 to Margaret Rodman in October 1986 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." 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, on Hawai'i Island. In between Sahlins's originating lecture and Hau'ofa's, the association continued to schedule an assortment of diverse plenary addresses. These included Deborah Gewertz on water-lily infestation of the Sepik River (1980); a lecture (on ASAO roots and custom) by 1982 Chair Mike Lieber; Kaho'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 appeared as Special Publications 2 and 3, respectively. 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 bylaws (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 Ivan Brady and original Monograph Series Editor Mac Marshall.) The new bylaw assigned the Special Publications Editor all editorial responsibilities and arrangements for the series, including the right to enter into publishing contracts with compositors, 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" (Minutes of the 1992 ASAO Board meeting: 6).

The 1992 Board also proposed that selection committees would identify lecturers two years in advance, but since boards usually decide on 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, Special Publications 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 whether 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 (giving 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" (Minutes of the 1992 ASAO Board meeting: 6). Nonetheless, selection committees since have felt so compelled.

As Distinguished Lectures solidified into annual events, Special Publications evaporated. Brady, although no longer Special Publications Editor, helped move Dening's manuscript into print, himself preparing camera-ready copy at the American Anthropology Association's offices in Washington, DC. Gewertz (succeeding Brady in 1987) handled production of Strathern's 1988 lecture, encountering various nuisances along the way. Strathern submitted her manuscript on ten-inch floppy 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. In her March 1991 Special Publications report, Gewertz wrote that "its form (yes, I mean actual form) recapitulates its argument, and its argument is complex. The printer had hard work—somewhat expensive hard work." Gewertz herself repaginated the manuscript twice and corrected its running heads. She noted that UPA nonetheless charged ASAO an extra \$495 for "corrections" alongside the original production charge of \$2,197.80.

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's revolving and uncommunicative personnel was not easy. The situation looked better when UPA's sister press Rowman & Littlefield (persuaded by the latter's editor-in-chief,

who had interests in anthropology) transferred the book onto its own lists. Neither UPA nor Rowman & Littlefield, however, did much to advertise Dening's and Strathern's volumes. Book sales continued slack, and the two associated presses stopped paying royalties until 1992, when Gewertz threatened to shame them, as she noted in her February 1993 series report: "During a phone conversation, I threatened the editor-in-charge, 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!"

Gewertz recommended that the ASAO Board seek out a new press. As she explained to me in a 2015 interview, she initiated a conversation with University of Massachusetts Press and later explored a possibility that the University of California Press's Pacific Series might be interested. The ASAO Monograph Series moved to University of Pittsburgh Press to publish its thirteenth title in 1992 (see the history of the monograph and book series by Critchlow and others). Special Publications, however, did not follow. 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 manuscript of his 1993 lecture; he did not, opting to publish it elsewhere (Hau'ofa 1993). 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 \$5,096.45, enough to provide a subvention for a fourth book in the series. Given Gewertz's exhaustive but ultimately unproductive 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 manuscripts (in 1986, Ivan Brady had made such a call, in a document titled "ASAO Special Publications Series Open to New Manuscripts"). The Board, however, declined to follow this suggestion, reiterating instead that "the series should be linked to distinguished lectures" that would "relate Pacific ethnography to general social/cultural theory" (Minutes of the 1995 ASAO Board Meeting: 3, 4). 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 difficulties in implementing the previous resolution that committees find lecturers two years out.

Between 1996 and 2008, subsequent ASAO Boards and Distinguished Lecture search committees (chaired by Lindstrom) annually invited a series of illustrious scholars to address the association in hopes that their talks might transform into theoretically informed publications. But although many lecturers made concrete promises during these years to follow up a talk with a manuscript to appear as Special Publication 4, 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 overcommitment.

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 Editor role likewise disappeared, replaced by that of 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 manuscript, negotiates with the author about suggested improvements, and then sends the manuscript to Sydney for publication.

In part because the series, with no upcoming numbers, had little immediate need of funds, the ASAO Board had ceased its annual subvention of Special Publications in 1999. It shifted a portion of membership dues instead to the newly established Pacific Islands Scholars Fund. In 2001, the Board also transferred \$1,000 from the Special Publications account to fund the new Grant to Return Indigenous Knowledge to Pacific Island Communities (GRIKPIC) publication project. Remnant dollars in the gradually declining Special Publications account have since been used to pay Distinguished Lecturer transportation costs. The association's general accounts pay for lecturer accommodation (when hotels have not offered complementary rooms), for meeting registration, and what has become 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 & Littlefield reprint *Partial Connections*. After a fruitless search for the initial contract that might clarify copyright, Rowman & Littlefield passed along the reprint to AltaMira, an associated press. Lindstrom provided his copy of the first edition, which 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 any royalties the second edition might earn to the Pacific Islands Scholars Fund but, in the end, AltaMira never paid any.

After its long publication hiatus, the Special Publication Series—and perhaps special publications in general—had lost cachet. No one kept running royalty totals, but only Sahlins's initial number paid for itself as production costs for the other two books exceeded their royalties. 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 1974 reflect fluctuating interests in Pacific studies and changes in who undertakes these (see appendix). Lindstrom observed in several 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" (see, for instance, the January 2015 series report). Selection committees have also been mindful of our diverse scholarly interests and the association's multidisciplinary membership 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 United Kingdom (although Bateson was based in the United States); two each from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Sāmoa; 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; Mālama Meleiseā and Penelope Schoeffel graciously agreed to step in at short notice.) In addition to Meleiseā (with Penelope Schoeffel) and Albert

Wendt (Sāmoa), Pacific Island lecturers have included Ty Kāwika Tengan, Jon Kamaka-wiwo'ole Osorio, and Emmett Aluli (Hawai'i); Hugh Kāwharu (Aotearoa); Epeli Hau'ofa (Tonga); Renagi Lohia and Meg Taylor (Papua New Guinea); and Robert Underwood (Guam).

Some lectures were autobiographical or biographical, reflecting 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." Paige West assumed Distinguished Lecture Coordinator duties in 2017, as the mission continues.

Acknowledgments

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Note

1. ASAO Newsletters are available via the ASAO website: https://www.asao.org/asao-newsletters.html. All ASAO minutes, reports, memoranda, and correspondence cited in this paper are available in the ASAO Archives. For more information or to request access, contact the ASAO Archivist at asaoarchivist@gmail.com.

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Appendix

ASAO ANNUAL LECTURE HISTORY (Distinguished and Otherwise)

- 2019 Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand), "Kia hiwa ra: Social Anthropology in Oceania: One Maori View"
- 2018 Lynnell L. Thomas (New Orleans, LA), "Tourism, Race, and Historical Memory in New Orleans"
- 2017 Mālama Meleiseā 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 Kāwika 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 Jonathan Kamakawiwo'ole 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 Yourselves: What Mauss Did Not Say about Sacred Objects"

- 1997 Don Tuzin (San Diego, CA) "Swan Song"
- 1996 Hugh Kāwharu (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 an article: "Our Sea of Islands"]
- 1992 none (New Orleans, LA)
- 1991 Meg Taylor (Victoria, BC) [missing title]
- 1990 Ben Finney (Kauai, HI) [missing title, but a slide talk rather than distinguished lecture, again on the *Hōkūle'a*]
- 1989 none (San Antonio, TX)
- 1988 Marilyn Strathern (Savannah, GA) [missing title, but published as ASAO Special Publication 3, *Partial Connections*]
- 1987 Fred and Barbara Roll (Monterey, CA) [missing title; a reflective talk about Margaret Mead, rather than distinguished lecture]
- 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 published as ASAO Special Publication 2, *History's Anthropology: The Death of William Gooch*]
- 1982 Mike Lieber (Hilton Head, SC) "Address from the Chair" [a talk by the ASAO chair rather than a distinguished lecture]
- 1981 Kenelm Burridge (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" [published as ASAO Special Publication 1, Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom]
- 1978 none (Asilomar, CA)
- 1977 Ben Finney (Monterey, CA) ["First ASAO Special Lecture"; missing title; a talk about the *Hōkūle* 'a voyage]
 - Mac Marshall [report on Typhoon Pamela on Chuuk]
 - Raymond Firth and Len Mason made honorary fellows; Firth spoke 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"]