The Anthropology Review Database

Jack David Eller

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The mission of the Anthropology Review Database (ARD) is to maintain a high-quality, user-friendly resource that will help scholars keep abreast of and evaluate the quality of the rapidly expanding written and film literature in anthropology and its sister fields. ARD is an all-online resource offering three services to anthropologists: first, it provides a site where they can read reviews on the latest books and films in the field without subscription or membership; secondly, it gives them an opportunity to write reviews and have those reviews published online rapidly; and thirdly, it holds reviewable copies of books and films, generously contributed by publishers and distributors, which reviewers may request.

ARD is not a new project: its first items for review were sent out in June 1997, and its online search engine debuted a few months later. At the time ARD was a radical new experiment for anthropology and scholarship in general: an entirely online venture, with no volumes, issues, or page numbers but simply the name and affiliation of the reviewer and date of the review. Because there is no print version, ARD is not constrained by production deadlines or printing or mailing costs; reviews are published individually and immediately, as soon as they clear the editorial process, which can occur the same day and ordinarily takes no more than a few days. The full text of reviews is available at any time free to all teachers, researchers, students, library personnel and the general public.

While the online model is no longer totally unique, as many journals and other resources follow ARD into the web-enhanced or web-only format, the Anthropology Review Database continues to be distinguished by the amount of content it houses and by its ability to put print and film items into the hands of anthropologists. Since its inception it has forged important partnerships with book publishers and film distributors, as well as with print journals. For instance, it has absorbed the review arms of two journals, *Journal of World Anthropology* and the graduate student publication *Discourse*. Beginning in September 1999, citations for reviews published in *American Antiquity* from 1990 to 1999 were added to the database, increasing its inventory four-fold. In February 2001 ARD entered into an arrangement with the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* to include its review citations, and in March 2004 ARD signed on to the Washington DC Principles for Free Access to Science, an initiative with a commitment to providing free access and wide dissemination of published research findings. By now ARD will also include several recent years of film and book reviews from *Visual Anthropology*, with the goal of eventually listing all of its reviews.

ARD's holdings are by no means limited to visual anthropology, but span the full range of anthropological topics; yet its visual anthropology holdings

comprise a significant proportion. In mid-2010 ARD housed over three thousand reviews and review listings and held over three hundred reviewable items, among them over two hundred films. After several years as a reviewer of both books and films, I became the editor for visual anthropology and ethnographic film in November 2009 and have cultivated or initiated partnerships with major and smaller film distributors, such as Bullfrog Films, California Newsreel, Cinema Guild, Documentary Educational Resources, Ethnoscope, Filmakers Library, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Frameline, Icarus, Outcast Films, PBS, Media Education Foundation, and Women Make Movies, as well as with a number of independent filmmakers. Anthropologists will appreciate how expensive and difficult films are to come by for most potential users, and the capacity of ARD to act as an intermediary between filmmakers/distributors and users/reviewers is quite special.

Films currently available for review cover virtually all areas of anthropology, although ARD is developing a major presence in gender and globalization issues. Films recently added to the list of available items include *Agustin's Newspaper* (about journalism in 1970s Chile) from Icarus, *Shop 'Till You Drop: The Crisis of Consumerism* and *Dreamworlds 3* (about female images in music videos) from MEF, *Art & Copy* from PBS Video, *Demolition* (about urban space in China) from DER, *The Good Mother* (about a ''mother of the year'' competition) from Cinema Guild, *She's a Boy I Knew* (about gender identity) from Outcast Films, and *Finding Dawn* (about violence against women on the U.S.–Mexico border) from Women Make Movies, to mention just a few. Recently reviewed films include *For the Love of Movies*, *The Professional Foreigner: Asen Balikci and Visual Anthropology*, *The Hillside Crowd* (on mining in Africa), *Asmara* (on the city of Asmara, Eritrea), *Secret Museums* (on hidden collections of erotic art), *Umiaq Skin Boat* (on the revival of an Inuit boat-building tradition), and *Plastic Flowers Never Die* (on visual commemoration of the Iran/Iraq war in Iraq), among many more.

The Anthropology Review Database is currently supported solely by the volunteer efforts of its editorial board and staff, including myself as film review editor and Hugh Jarvis as editor-in-chief and book review editor, and by the largess of the University of Buffalo Dept. of Anthropology and University of Buffalo's Web-server staff. Anthropologists may peruse the posted reviews of ARD at any time by visiting http://wings.buffalo.edu/ARD/ and searching by title, author, subject, year, medium and reviewer. ARD also always welcomes qualified reviewers, who may examine its items available for review at the same site; at the particular item, potential reviewers may submit a request for review, which will be evaluated by the appropriate review editor, and if approved the item is usually shipped within a few days. For more information, anthropologists may contact me at david.eller@ccd.edu or Hugh Jarvis at hjarvis@buffalo.edu.

Jack David Eller
Department of Anthropology
Community College of Denver
Denver, CO
USA
David.Eller@ccd.edu