



University of Colorado at Boulder

Department of Anthropology

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Ms. Beverly Hackenberg
1380 Columbine Avenue
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Topic: Remembering Robert Allan Hackenberg (1928-2007)

Dear Bev and Family,

You have been kind enough to invite me to share a few of my memories of Bob to be entered into the record of his funeral. I realize that a really representative picture of Bob would occupy a book-length manuscript, so I won't try to do that. Instead, I shall offer a few memories that capture the high points of Bob as I knew him.

For me, Bob was always like an elder brother. He was the elder brother who forged ahead and led us in the many projects he initiated. It was always challenging to work with Bob, whose energy was phenomenal. His high energy was matched by his dedication to purpose. He was always understanding of the human abilities and limitations of his associates and was able to make us all feel worthwhile. His sardonic humor and keen insights into human nature made it possible for him to act as an advisor, friend, and taskmaster whenever necessary. Nevertheless, his colleagues and students all bonded deeply with him, forming lifelong ties that are evident in the more than forty-five Ph.D. candidates he supported and guided through graduate school. Although Omer [Omer Stewart], Friedl [Friedl Lang], Bob, and I could differ on theoretical and methodological issues as colleagues in the department, our support for our graduate students never failed, and they have all done well in their careers.

After being hired at Boulder in 1969 by Bob, Omer, and Friedl, I became part of an applied team, a hard-drinking, hard-fighting band of applied practitioners. From the beginning, I was impressed by Bob's "all-nighters," in which the really important work didn't begin much before midnight and would last 'til dawn. Being a morning person, it was not always possible for me to last out the night, and Beverly would usually tell me to go home when an all-nighter was in the making. It was clear from the outset that Bob had a master plan, of which I was a part, and it was to make Boulder into an applied powerhouse, building on the example of Omer, both of whom received the SfAA [Society for Applied Anthropology] Malinowski Award. The NIMH [National Institutes of Mental Health] training problem and my editorship of *Human Organization* for six years and service as SfAA Treasurer for three years were parts of Bob's plan. Development of the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology was yet another part of our plan to create a regional applied organization. The HPSfAA is indebted to Bob for his contributions to our journal and for his students, who have been founding members, officers, and long-term supporters of this outstanding local practitioner organization. Applied and public anthropology continue to be evident at the University of Colorado in my work and that of Terry McCabe, Russ McGoodwin, and Donna Goldstein, reflecting the growing number of graduate students who are opting for applied careers.



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Bob's many overseas projects are well known in many national and international settings, where he made many lasting theoretical contributions to development, health, urbanization, and other emerging problems of globalization. Likewise, his contributions to medical anthropology and to betterment of the health of the Tohono O'odham in Arizona should be noted as well as his recent work on the problems of the United States/Mexico borderlands in association with the University of Arizona.

In closing, let me mention two more important factors in Bob's personal and professional life. First is you, Beverly. I regard you as Bob's secret weapon. It is difficult to imagine that Bob could have accomplished alone all he did. From your earlier days at Arizona, you have always provided essential personal and professional support for Bob while acting not only as a mother to your children but also to many of Bob's students and their families. The co-award of the SfAA Malinowski Award to both Bob and you was proof that many others have also recognized your key role in the Hackenberg saga.

Finally, I always like to recall what Bob said to me when I asked him what had guided his incredible career. He thought for only a minute and then said, "If it doesn't make a difference, don't do it." Bob always made a difference.

Respectfully,

SIGNED

Deward E. Walker, Jr.
Professor