

# The End of Chastity and Modesty: Ruth Landes Writing Race and Gender in 1930s Anthropology

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## Introduction

Brazilian historians of anthropology in the 21st century continue to examine the work of American anthropologist, Ruth Landes (1908-1991), whose slim oeuvre on Brazil is based on ten months of fieldwork in 1938-39 and comprises one book, *City of Women*, published in 1947 and a handful of articles (1940a, 1940b, 1953, 1967). Mariza Corrêa (1945-2016) concludes *Antropólogas e antropologia*, her 2003 history of women in anthropology in Brazil, with a chapter on writing race and gender in the work of Ruth Landes. Gustavo Rossi in *O intelectual feiticeiro*, his 2015 biography of Edison Carneiro (1912-1972), concludes with a reflection on Carneiro's collaboration with Ruth Landes that, he says, "sews together" (:232) his examination of Carneiro's ambiguous race identity and place in Brazilian anthropology. Corrêa and Rossi both describe Landes as *um espelho*, a mirror, whose reflections on race and gender shine a light on cracks in Brazil's nation-making narratives in the 1930s.

Landes returned to the U.S from Brazil on the eve of the Second World War. To support herself during the war she worked on short-term research contracts. When she sought to publish *City of Women* after the war, she found a changed intellectual landscape. Post-war American anthropology was starting to turn away from the cultural particularism and

culture-and-personality approaches Landes had learned under Franz Boas (1858-1942) and Ruth Benedict (1887-1948) as a doctoral student at Columbia University in the early 1930s. Boas had retired in 1936 and died in 1942. Benedict's influence had waned when Ralph Linton (1893-1953) had succeeded Boas as chair of the Department of Anthropology and Julian Steward (1902-1972) had arrived at Columbia. Steward was training the postwar student cadre of male war veterans in his nomothetic theory of cultural ecology. [1] Furthermore, American anthropology foregrounded research on indigenous societies; Landes's urban Afro-Brazilian research was considered to be more the domain of sociology. [2]

Landes found she was no longer part of a professional anthropological network. She took work teaching anthropology in social work training programs and began to experiment writing for a wider public as a possible source of income. [3] As part of this experiment, Landes published *City of Women* with the trade press, Macmillan, intentionally without footnotes or bibliography. The book is a combination of field notes written as personal memoir and ethnographic description of the Afro-Brazilian world of Bahia as she had experienced it. *City of Women* was widely reviewed in the popular press but was critiqued in the discipline's flagship journal, *American Anthropologist*, by Melville Herskovits (1895-1963) for what he called "the false perspective on the role of men and women" (1948), and ignored in the American academy until the University of New Mexico Press published a second edition in 1994. [4]

In Brazil, however, *City of Women* was translated as *A cidade das mulheres* and published in 1967 by the respected Editora Civilização Brasileira. The Brazilian edition added an appendix with Portuguese translations of Landes's academic journal articles "A Cult Matriarchate and Male Homosexuality" (1940a), "Fetish Worship in Brazil" (1940b) and "Negro Slavery and Female Status" (1953). In 2002 Editora UFRJ, the academic press of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, published a second edition with a preface by Mariza Corrêa and introduction by British-Brazilian anthropologist, Peter Fry. [5] In his introduction, Fry underscores how Landes's writing exposed three *feridas* – raw nerves – in 1930s Brazil: the status of women; homosexuality; and, the place of Afro-Brazilians and Afro-Brazilian culture.

In his review in *American Anthropologist*, Herskovits charged that "Miss Landes does not realize that the men have places that are quite as important as those of women" in the Afro-Brazilian religion candomblé and, further, that she did not examine the African roots of Afro-Brazilian culture (1948:124). Landes's purpose, however, was different from Herskovits's. Landes was interested in women's lives. Her interest in candomblé was to understand what role it played in women's lives. She interpreted women's leadership of the *terreiros*, the candomblé centres, as a women's strategy to secure economic autonomy for themselves and for their children. And she understood the *terreiros* to be more than ritual centres, as also mutual support associations for women: women's shelters. In her portraits of the women candomblé leaders – the *mães de santo* whom she introduces us to in *City of Women* – she always describes them as workers and elaborates the conditions of urban poverty they lived in. The women were street food vendors, washerwomen, domestics and seamstresses.

The men were stevedores who worked at the international port of Salvador or bricklayers or other skilled trades workers. According to Landes, the *candomblé* world offered women beauty, meaning, belonging, refuge from conjugal violence, loans of money in times of destitution, advice in times of difficulty, cures in times of illness, solace in times of death. The *terreiros* offered social services in the travails of life that typically fell to women.

In his introduction to the second edition, Fry notes that, although Landes's observations on the centrality of women in the daily lives of the working poor in Bahia were dismissed by Melville Herskovits and his colleague Brazilian anthropologist Arthur Ramos (1903-1949) who saw themselves as the leading scholars in the field, her work aligned with the work of Black American sociologist Franklin Frazier (1894-1962). Landes also, Fry notes, foreshadows studies of matrifocality in Afro-Caribbean households and white working-class families that began to be published in the 1950s. Landes's testament to the economic strategies and improvised household structures of the *mães de santo* of Salvador clearly also foreshadows the now-vast feminist anthropological literature on women-centred households and impoverishment globally (see for example, Cole 1991, Hoodfar 1997, Mathieu 2007, Scheper-Hughes 1992). Fry continues on to discuss Ramos's (1942) and Herskovits's (1948) censure of Landes's descriptions of homosexual *pais de santo* in *candomblé* in Bahia and the prescience of Landes's work for the research and debate on gender and sexuality in Afro-Brazilian studies that continues to this day. In 2016 Caribbean scholar Keith McNeal affirmed Landes's status as an elder, naming her an "aunt" to queer Black Atlantic studies in "Dear Dr. Ruth (a love letter)" in which he thanks Landes for her portrait of *candomblé* as "a subaltern space for female solidarity and alternative sexual and gendered expression."

Landes arrived in Brazil at a time when anthropology was moving away from the purview of museum-sponsored expeditions and into academic programs at the national universities. Arthur Ramos, chair of social psychology at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro, was leading this trend and, in 1939, would become the country's first professor of anthropology and ethnography. Ramos identified himself as a disciple of the Nina Rodrigues School, the 19th-century Brazilian school of thought founded by Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906) based on clinical medical studies of Bahia's Afro-Brazilian population (Corrêa 2001). Landes met with Ramos several times in Rio de Janeiro in the spring of 1938 before going to the northeast to begin fieldwork in Bahia. Ramos guided her to key Brazilian texts on Bahia including his 1934 book, *O negro brasileiro*, a psychoanalytic study of Afro-Brazilian religion. In turn, Landes recommended Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) and Karen Horney's *The Neurotic Personality of our Time* (1937). [6] Like Herskovits, Ramos traced Afro-Brazilian religious practices to African roots. Once in Bahia Landes would not, however, concern herself with tracking African survivals and this was the third grievance Ramos and Herskovits would hold against her. Landes instead was interested in cultural innovation in contemporary conditions of social and economic inequality.

In her writing on Bahia, Landes was the only anthropologist at the time to give ethnographic visibility to the practicality of matrifocality in poor urban households and to gender

dynamics in Afro-Brazilian religions. And contradicting Ramos and Herskovits, she treated candomblé as a particularly Brazilian cultural creation in the context of the lived material conditions of post-slavery Bahia. Landes's spotlight on intersections of race, class and gender, Corrêa says, made her a "polluting" presence, *um monstro* – a freak – in 1930s Brazilian anthropology: "Without knowing it, Ruth Landes had crossed the threshold into a minefield of theoretical, methodological and political dissensions" (2000:241). Landes herself summed it up more bluntly, "[I was] a woman stumbling into men's affairs...I was the American she-bull in Brazil's china closet" (1970b: 137, 124).

## *The City of Women*

I wondered if any outsiders could have suspected her position. She sat in the shaded entrance to her house...a tray of sweets on a little stand beside her...she was about five feet tall...a large tooth missing in the front of her mouth... I felt dignity in her, diffident at the moment yet pervasive, accustomed to authority. I noticed her full, heart-shaped face, her small full nose and lips, her cool bronze skin...placing her palms on her thighs...suddenly she was remote...sitting in a loose cotton dress, her great breasts flowed over a great stomach which bulged over tremendous thighs supported by powerful legs tapering to small ankles and feet... "*Minha senhora*" she said quietly... "you wanted to see me?"

Landes 1994[1947]:79-80

Ruth Landes describes here meeting Mãe Menininha (Maria Escolástica de Nazaré 1894-1986), respected *mãe de santo* of the Gantois *terreiro*, for the first time. Mãe Menininha presents the appearance of a Bahian street food vendor, a *baiana*. Landes's attention rests on the woman's body and comportment. In doing so, her portrait captures both the spiritual leader's authority and her material poverty.

*The City of Women* is an ode to the *baianas* and a personal memoir of the months Landes spent in Bahia attending candomblé rituals, life cycle rites and popular festivals. The *baianas* are the daughters and granddaughters of freed slave women who, following abolition in 1888, had moved away from rural plantations into coastal cities where they innovated new household forms in burgeoning shantytowns and presided over daily life. They brought with them, closely meshed with the Catholic calendar of saints' days and religious festivals, the life cycle rituals and beloved seasonal calendar of Afro-Brazilian practices and beliefs. Landes admired their beauty and individuality, their strong bodies and ease of movement, their discipline and hard work, their love of ritual, dance and song. And she respected the dedication of the *mães de santo* who accepted the responsibility for the management of a candomblé centre, the *terreiro*, where they lived with their children and the younger women initiates. Landes also admired the freedom and security the women found in common-law marriages often with white, well-educated men.

It was Edison Carneiro who orchestrated the translation and publication of the first Brazilian edition of *City of Women* by Editora Civilização Brasileira twenty years after it had

appeared in the United States. In a letter to Landes in July 1947, Carneiro recorded his response to first reading *City of Women*:

I read your book and was amazed to see how “undying” are indeed the memories of that time – those beautiful and glorious days of Bahia. Even the simplest things – like the song of Master Domingos and the name Aydano and others called me, Mestre Antigo – were not forgotten by you. It’s wonderful...I think you said very little about your own studies and put to my credit many of your own findings. That is not loyal to you. In my opinion you made an honest, real, good, intelligent book and, although I’m not always satisfied with my portrait, as in the case of my aristocracy, it amuses me (or, in Portuguese, *eu acho graça*) to read the things you recall. I cannot accustom myself with the idea that you could not make the book you would have written – a scientific one. But I am grateful to you for not letting that year die, for reviving those incidents of our daily life among the blacks of Bahia, for upholding the dreamy, one-thousand-nightly tale of our friendly partnership. [7]

*City of Women* was one of the first projects Carneiro undertook when he was appointed in 1961 as director of the Campanha de Defesa do Folclore Brasileiro, a new national agency for the protection of the country’s folklore traditions and popular culture. Editora Civilização Brasileira had published Carneiro’s first books *Religiões negras* (1936) and *Negros Bantos* (1937) as well as *O negro no Brasil* (1940), the proceedings of the 2nd Afro-Brazilian Congress organized by Carneiro. Carneiro was at the time contracting with the press to publish *Ladinos e crioulos* (1964). On February 5, 1962, Carneiro wrote to Landes to tell her about his plan to publish *City of Women* and that he also wanted to translate her academic articles (1940a, 1940b, 1953) to add as an appendix, saying that these were important contributions to Afro-Brazilian studies and would “enrich” the book. The project was interrupted when Carneiro was removed from the agency after the military coup in 1964. But he remained committed to the book and revised and completed the translation himself – “a labour of Hercules” he said in a letter to Landes on December 22, 1966. [8] Carneiro also added footnotes and corrected names of individuals. In 1967 the first Brazilian edition finally appeared: “The great *Cidade das Mulheres* came out – *veio à luz* – exactly on the 24 of August, Saint Bartholomew’s Day,” Carneiro wrote to Landes on October 6. [9]

In her preface to the 2002 Brazilian edition, Mariza Corrêa writes: “A *cidade das mulheres* is a record that preserves in vivid form the memory of so many important figures in the construction of an anthropological field of studies on race relations in Brazil” (:13). Landes’s account, Corrêa writes, follows closely the daily meanderings of Carneiro and his compatriots, members of the Academia dos Rebeldes, including novelist Jorge Amado, journalist Osvaldo Dias da Costa and poet Aydano de Couto Ferraz – all communists or sympathizers. [10] Corrêa emphasizes the key role Carneiro played in determining what Landes saw in Bahia, which neighbourhoods and homes she visited, whom she interviewed, and what events and rituals she participated in.

It must be said that Landes was herself primed to work in this way. Trained at Columbia

University under Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, her method of fieldwork during five prior field seasons in different North American indigenous communities from 1932-1936 was to work closely with a well-situated local person who would direct her to the cultural arenas of importance to members. Indigenous collaborators would explain native points of view, the goal of Boasian anthropology. This had been Boas's method since his "emergence" (Zumwalt 2020) as an anthropologist during his first field experience with Inuit on Baffin Island in 1883. And it was the method Boas taught his students at Columbia. Edison Carneiro was Landes's indigenous collaborator in Brazil.

## Writing Race and Class in 1930s Anthropology: Ruth Landes and Edison Carneiro

In our country [the U.S.], we expect all persons of color to feel a mutual bond. We ignore the fact that this does not happen to be the case ... In Brazil no such assumption is even dreamed of. Everyone knows that the differences of education, occupation and family distinction create a gap as yawning as the American one, which is based solely on color. Consequently Edison viewed the *candomblé* people as from across a gap. To him they were specimens, although of course with an inalienable right to live as they chose ... However, the people understood Edison's attitude, which was their own, and not mine, which came out of *another scheme of living*. And they respected Edison, knowing the risks he ran at the hands of the police, while they merely tolerated the good intentions Edison told them I had. When it came to trust and reliance, *he was their man*.

Landes 1994[1947]: 60-61 [emphases mine]

Landes arrived in Brazil predisposed to find race relations to be different – “another scheme of living” – from those in the United States. Like other American intellectuals in the 1930s, she was familiar with the work of Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987), who had studied at Columbia with Boas and whose writing presented a harmonious portrait of race relations in Brazil, supporting internationally held views of Brazil as a “racial democracy” in contrast to legislated race segregation in the U.S.

Landes spent almost every day with Carneiro during the months she was in Salvador and Landes and Carneiro are major characters in *City of Women*. Written more in the style of a travel memoir than a scientific monograph, *City of Women* follows Landes and Carneiro through the seasonal calendar of *candomblé* rites and Catholic festivals in Salvador. Between August 1938 and February 1939, Carneiro introduced Landes to the key figures of the *candomblé* world including the aged *babalaô*, Eliseo Martiniano do Bonfim (1859-1943) who had been Nina Rodrigues's key informant. [11] In Carneiro's company Landes was able to walk in the streets, take the tram to poor, black neighbourhoods to meet the *candomblé* leaders in their *terreiros*, to attend market days and festivals and to observe *candomblé* rituals that took place at night. Landes and Carneiro spent every day together and became lovers.

Carneiro had made his first foray into the academic world of Brazil's “Africanologists” in 1934 at the 1st Afro-Brazilian Congress in Recife organized by Freyre. The congress brought



together psychologists, including Arthur Ramos, and medical and public health specialists who treated trance and spirit possession as race-determined psychological characteristics. Considered experts on Afro-Brazilian populations, their “mental hygiene” approach (Corrêa 2001) to problems of poverty and marginalization proposed models of acculturation and increased police surveillance of Afro-Brazilian neighbourhoods. The candomblé centres were particular targets of police. In this field of medical professionals, Carneiro’s paper titled “A situação do negro no Brasil” (1988[1935]) was the outlier. Carneiro proposed that Afro-Brazilian cultural formations be studied, not as racially determined, but in the lived context of proletarianization and poverty.

Carneiro argued that Afro-Brazilian proletarianization was another form of slavery under capitalism and that Afro-Brazilian culture is a product of specifically Brazilian historical, political and economic conditions. Cultural symbols are forms of meaning-making, Carneiro said, that can be traced to material conditions and not to biological or psychological characteristics. Carneiro outlined Brazil’s post-slavery failure to incorporate Afro-Brazilians into national society pointing to the unsanitary conditions, high rates of infant and maternal mortality and extreme poverty in the outlying *bairros* where black workers lived. Medical research that circulated colonial myths of racial inferiority criminalized poor Brazilian citizens, he said, and manufactured the double oppression of Afro-Brazilians as proletarian and black. Carneiro shut down any discussion of moral or psychological inferiority and directed analysis instead to processes of social and economic disenfranchisement.

In contrast to medical models for mental health and acculturation programs, Carneiro advocated for the formation of an association – along the lines of a working class union – organized precisely to value and preserve Afro-Brazilian culture, especially candomblé knowledge, ritual and practice. When Carneiro organized the 2nd Afro-Brazilian Congress in Salvador in 1937, he collaborated with candomblé leaders and featured Afro-Brazilian culture in dance and music performances. [12]

Carneiro introduced a new voice to Afro-Brazilian studies: the native point of view. Carneiro’s indigenous anthropology refused the paternalism of the late 19th-century Nina Rodrigues school, the nostalgia of Freyre and the Afro-Brazilian-as-object-of-study approach of Arthur Ramos. He argued that Afro-Brazilian religions are cultural practices, not mental health issues. And he argued that cultures are not biologically or racially determined but are systems of meaning-making that participants create under social and historical conditions. To understand Afro-Brazilian religion as culture, then, required examining those social and historical conditions from the perspective of cultural members. To take the native point of view meant, for Carneiro, to look at history from the point of view of the oppressed not that of white medical experts. Carneiro was a 22-year-old law student and entirely self-taught as an ethnologist. Although an outlier at the 1934 Afro-Brazilian Congress, Carneiro’s approach to studying Afro-Brazilian culture as a dynamic product of particular historical conditions was close to Ruth Landes’s Boasian approach. How did Carneiro develop his anthropological lens?

In *O intelectual feiticeiro: Edison Carneiro e o campo de estudos das relações raciais no Brasil* (2015) Gustavo Rossi traces Carneiro's ethnographic sensibility to his personal experiences of displacement and disenfranchisement. Carneiro had been in his first year as a student at the law faculty in Salvador in 1930, the year the military coup led by Getúlio Vargas (1882-1954) had brought an end to the liberal republic and to generations-old patterns of education and career for mixed race families like the Carneiros that had long been an integrated part of Bahia's political elites. Edison Carneiro's father lost his position as a professor in the engineering faculty. As the Vargas regime dislodged the system of social markers of distinction (education, occupation, taste) that had worked to "keep race in suspension" (Rossi 2015: 93), increasing race consciousness energized a rising national moral discourse around race.

With old forms of social capital now obsolete, Carneiro and his friends moved into new socially ambiguous public spaces. They explored emergent forms of cinema, jazz, dance and gender and formed the literary society, the Academia dos Rebeldes. And they joined the communist party. Being a communist and being an intellectual of Afro-Brazilian culture were intimately intertwined for Carneiro and, from the beginning, he linked race and class oppression. He became a militant student leader, organizing meetings and events. He published essays in the local newspaper advocating for Afro-Brazilian religious freedom and for the right to practice and preserve candomblé. He had his own table at a café where he mentored younger students who nicknamed him Mestre Antigo [Old Master] and it was Carneiro who introduced the other students to the lives of the working poor and to the world of candomblé in the Afro-Brazilian *bairros*.

Carneiro, according to Rossi, became a kind of hybrid figure in Afro-Brazilian studies in the 1930s: in his movement between advocate and scholar, Carneiro also oscillated on a continuum of whiteness and blackness. In the field of Afro-Brazilian studies dominated by white experts like Ramos, Carneiro was distinguished by the possibility to claim to be "one of them" – "to mark his self as black" (Rossi 2015:216). Rossi argues that this ambiguity affected how other scholars viewed Carneiro and his work and how Carneiro himself made decisions about his career. Carneiro's materialist theoretical framework combined with the racialization that accompanied his downward social mobility left him effectively on his own. The opportunity to collaborate with Ruth Landes presented Carneiro with a new social and intellectual context within which to conduct research and explore his ideas.

In letters to Ruth Benedict and in descriptions in *City of Women*, Landes captured the race-class twinning in Carneiro's positionality. "[Carneiro] is the best Brazilian ethnologist ... He has published three books and numerous articles ... and organized a "Union" of the cults to fight police persecution and preserve their traditions ... [he] is exceedingly intelligent, and *coming of a known family* is not thought of as being the mulatto that he is ... without him I could have gotten nowhere," she wrote to Benedict in April 1939. [13] Landes pays attention to microscopic signifiers of how gender, race and class circulated in Bahia. Trained by Boas, Landes's objective was textured description, not abstract generalization. In *City of Women*,



everything is fodder for Landes's eyes and ears. She describes her dinners with American expatriates and records the prejudice they freely expressed, distinguishing their views on race from hers. She describes her excursions guided by white elite Bahian men who admonish her that as a white woman she cannot go out in the city alone. As they drive her around Salvador, she notes and later records micro details of their comportment and conversations with Afro-Brazilians they meet. The hours and intimacy of the time she spent with Edison Carneiro mean that the complexities of his position come often under her microscope to illustrate gender, race and class relations in Bahia. Landes explains how "coming of a known family" meant that, for *o povo* (the people), Carneiro was Senhor Doutor, an "aristocrat" who circulated amiably among them always immaculately dressed in a suit and tie and who respected, even loved, their traditions. He was "their man." Coming of a known family also incorporated Carneiro in national and international networks of white scholars – for whom he was a local expert and a kind of key informant – but ultimately excluded him from being a serious contender for a professorship in Brazil or a scholarship to go to the U.S. [14]

Landes, the daughter of working class Russian Jewish immigrants, could not ignore signs of class privilege or superiority: "The class sentiment of Brazilian society is something to which I never grew accustomed," she writes in *City of Women* (1994[1947]: 58). Her descriptions of Carneiro are fine-tuned by this sensibility:

He was a liberal, and was even considered as a radical in some quarters; but he was distinctly not a man of the people. His class nature belonged to a system of thought that was different from his social and political ideologies. It showed in his dress and in his speech ... He was totally unconscious of it, and he might be amused at my opinion ... The quality came out in his relations with the blacks. He was their patron, and they wanted him to be their patron. By their mode of address and flattering ways, they set him above themselves. They were courteous to everyone, but they were more robust and humorous with their own than with him ... They liked him because he was an aristocrat (Landes 1994[1947]:59).

For his part, Carneiro found in Ruth Landes an international scholar whose sympathies for the material conditions of Afro-Brazilian lives and appreciation for the cultural creativity of the candomblé world mirrored his own. Rossi suggests that it was during his collaboration with Landes that Carneiro began to see his travels across the terrains of race and class in his hometown as fieldwork and to see his writing as ethnography (2015:147-50). Landes herself had, through similar travels across race and class in her hometown New York, met the "black Jews" of Harlem that became the subject of her master's thesis in social work (1967) and led her to Franz Boas and anthropology. Working with Landes "loosened the brakes" (Rossi 2015:166) and set Carneiro on the course he would pursue for the rest of his life. He began to present himself as a kind of organic intellectual of Salvador's *povo de santo* and to pursue the possibility of making an academic career in Afro-Brazilian studies.

## Matriarchs and Masculinities

...the precise data on priestly transvestites I got from Edison Carneiro.  
Ruth Landes to Melville Herskovits, October 26, 1939 [15]

Landes's first publications on her Bahian research were two articles (1940a; 1940b) written for an American academic audience and, more specifically, for Ruth Benedict. In the spring of 1939 Landes sent Benedict the draft of an article then titled "Creole Matriarchs." She wrote again from Rio on April 28, 1939 to say that she was at work on a second article on male homosexual leaders in the emergent *caboclo terreiros*: "You will understand this situation after reading 'Creole Matriarchs'...naturally my data – personal histories, developmental material – are terribly few, but there is enough to present a picture and raise questions." [16] On May 13, 1939 Benedict replied to Landes: "you could organize [an article] more strictly around the control of women and leave out confusing details and the description of the gods". [17] Landes followed Benedict's advice. She re-organized her discussion of African *orixás* in an article titled "Fetish Worship in Brazil" which Benedict would publish in 1940 in *The Journal of American Folklore* along with an article by Carneiro, "The Structure of African Cults in Bahia," that Landes had encouraged him to write and helped to translate.

In the second article, "A Cult Matriarchate and Male Homosexuality," Landes brought together her discussions of male and female leadership in the *terreiros*. Benedict wrote on September 24, 1939 to say that the article still needed revision to clarify the argument that Benedict thought the data supported: that the *caboclo terreiros* were public spaces that "culturally provided for" male homosexuals who would otherwise be stigmatized for taking social and sexual roles coded as female in Bahia. [18] Following Benedict's guidance, Landes revised the article and sent it to the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* that had previously published her article "The Abnormal among the Ojibwa" (1938).

In the fall of 1939, during the time she was revising these articles in New York, Landes was also working on a research contract for the "Negro in America" project funded by the Carnegie Corporation and directed by the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987). On September 30 she had written to Melville Herskovits, who was also working on contract with the Carnegie project, to consult with him on the report she was writing for Myrdal and to tell him of her research in Bahia. In a brief reply on October 17, Herskovits asked if she had "checked [her] findings concerning the male priestly transvestites with Dr. Ramos." [19] Landes's reply to Herskovits on October 26 suggests she was unaware that Ramos and Herskovits were developing a critique of her research:

the precise data on priestly transvestites I got from Edison Carneiro. I put it in this way because of the fact that I got the hunch, and then went after the data hammer and tongs. I could not have got the case material otherwise, for a number of special reasons that you can imagine. And no one else had got the hunch, not even Dr. Ramos, so no one else had relevant data ... In long talks with Dr. Ramos at the beginning of my stay...he never touched on kindred matters, though I put questions to him about what looked like the androgynous character of some of the

conceptions he reported in [his book] *O Negro brasileiro*, etc. I should remark that he knew only one cult group well... [20]

In his October 17 letter, Herskovits reminded Landes that he regarded identifying African survival traits as “the single most difficult problem in New World Negro studies.” Landes concluded her October 26 reply stating her contrasting theoretical position, allied with Carneiro’s, that Afro-Brazilian culture is a dynamic process and product of local history and material conditions: “This is all a virile situation – no mere survival or crumbling character. The blacks are citizens of the country, in the main stream of local civilization, and all they do is taken very seriously.” [21]

Landes’s two articles on the Bahian research follow closely on her 1938 book *The Ojibwa Woman*, one of the first critical anthropological studies of gender and important to read as a precursor to *City of Women*. The ethnographic attention Landes gives to gender fluidity and women’s agency in *City of Women* can be traced to: her graduate training with Ruth Benedict at Columbia University; her 1932 PhD fieldwork in Canada at Manitou Rapids with indigenous spiritual leader and storyteller, Maggie Wilson (1879-1940); and her disappointment in the gendered expectations of her own early marriage.

## Birthing the Anthropology of Gender: Ruth Landes and Maggie Wilson

She came down with her load of birchbarks, and saw their gun there, so she took it along and went back for another load. When she returned, their canoe was gone, also her husband. So she was left there alone with no canoe... The next day she waited and still he didn’t come. Then she knew that her husband had left her there for good. She made up her mind to stay until death came to her. She made birchbarks, tanned moose hides, and pounded meat, and then she got some cedar and made the frame of a canoe. She stayed there and did all her work, made mats, and all kinds of things. She had her sewing with her. One evening she went around the point of the bay and sat there. She saw a moose in the water. She waited until it came closer, and then she shot and killed it.

Maggie Wilson in Landes 1997 [1938]: 87-88

*The Ojibwa Woman* is the collaborative product of perhaps the first research team of a woman anthropologist and an indigenous woman consultant in the history of anthropology. According to Irving Hallowell (1892-1974), Landes was the first anthropologist to document Ojibwa women’s lives. [22] This surprised her: “Why does one never hear about Indian matriarchs who certainly acted among these hunting, trapping, rice- and berry-gathering people?” she asked. [23] At Manitou Rapids Landes worked with Ojibwa elder Maggie Wilson. “I consider her a gem ... she is as good an ethnologist as any of us,” Landes wrote to Benedict on October 12, 1933. [24] Maggie Wilson was one of “my three great teachers of anthropology [alongside Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict]... The ethnography was a product of her genius and my conscientiousness,” Landes said. [25] Boas taught Landes the importance of intensive fieldwork with a “key informant” to understand a culture’s particularities. Benedict taught

her to examine tensions and contradictions in individual lives against the backdrop of a culture's "pattern." And Maggie Wilson taught, through storytelling, that individual life trajectories are negotiations, not embodiments, of cultural rules and norms.

Three original and central components in Landes's analytical approach in *Ojibwa Woman* presage the attention Landes gives to gender in *City of Women* and also preview the work of second-wave feminist scholars in the discipline. First, Landes's method of data collection relies on recording words and life stories of individuals. Second, Landes gives priority to work and marriage as the key theoretical domains to understanding women's lives. Third, Landes recognized that gender (which she, like other scholars in the 1930s, called "sex") comprises both sociological practices and ideological or meaning-making processes and that these are dynamic domains and contested under changing material conditions.

Ruth Landes used the life history method to illustrate contradictions and tensions between stated cultural norms and practice. Her portraits of marriage and kinship in *The Ojibwa Woman* contrast with the formalist kinship charts and marriage prescriptions that other anthropologists of Native American societies were producing at the time. Landes recorded life stories to show how individuals construct lives in spite of cultural rules, not how they live within parameters set by those rules. The stories she relates illustrate not how individuals reproduce cultural norms but how they negotiate and contest cultural rules to address their particular circumstances. Landes understood culture as dynamic, located in the interstices between formalist rules and individual actions. In the foreword to *Ojibwa Woman* Landes writes: "the Ojibwa material shows that the social norms institutionalized in even a simple nomadic culture do not provide for all the population, nor for the entire range of tribal activities" (1938:xix). Cultural analysis for Landes is the elaboration of individual engagements with the constraints of society, environment and history. And in *Ojibwa Woman*, following Maggie Wilson's stories, Landes highlights individual agency and inscribes indigenous women's resourcefulness and survival under conditions of colonialism, forced relocation and poverty.

The remarkable achievement of the research collaboration is that the two women spoke across the cultural and generational differences between them. Landes was 22 years old and recently separated from her young husband, Victor Landes, who was the son of family friends. The two had been raised together in the labour socialist Russian Jewish immigrant milieu in New York. Landes had expected theirs to be a modern companionate marriage and was disillusioned when her husband had expected her to leave university to devote herself to "wifedom and domesticity" after marriage. [26] Her personal experience of constraint in marriage, and the revelation that socialist visions could retain conservative views on women's roles, would guide her ethnographic observations – her radar for "women's situation" (Beauvoir 1949) – for the rest of her life.

Maggie Wilson was a 53-year-old grandmother who had been widowed twice and was living with her third husband. Raised on the Rainy River on the border between Canada and the US, she was of mixed Cree-Scots descent and the granddaughter of a Cree missionary who had

settled among the Ojibwa. She had married Ojibwa men and raised her children as Ojibwa. A decade before meeting Landes, Maggie Wilson and her family had been relocated by the Canadian government and confined to the reserve at Manitou Rapids where they were struggling to make a livelihood hunting, fishing, gardening, maple sugar-making, berry-picking and in seasonal work for logging companies and selling crafts and working as guides to American tourists. Maggie Wilson was multilingual and worked as an interpreter and was well known in the region as a midwife, name-giver, healer and spiritual visionary. During World War I, she had had recurring vision-dreams in which thunderbird spirit-beings taught her a set of songs and drum patterns and guided her to organize the community to perform a dance for her son-in-law and the other Ojibwa men who were fighting with the Canadian armed forces overseas and to bring them safely home. She led the dance for many years.

The stories Maggie Wilson told Landes tend to share a plot: they tell of women who overcome hardship through resourcefulness and knowledge learned from other women. They describe women who, because they refuse to accept prescribed roles, are able to endure and overcome starvation, abuse, abandonment and loss. The stories highlight women's responses to predicaments such as a husband's laziness, adultery, or desertion. Stories tell of women paddling long distances, hunting and butchering moose, and surviving alone in the wilderness. They show women making choices in their lives. The stories report that when widowed, some women choose to remarry and to preserve the conventional gendered division of labour in a hunting society, whereas others choose not to remarry and instead take on "masculine" skills in order to maintain their independence. The stories tell how some women leave polygamous marriages and others value the companionship of a co-wife and choose to stay. The stories are cautionary tales told by older women to enjoin younger women to develop practical skills and personal autonomy to survive challenges that may arise in their marriages and in the wider circumstances of their lives. There is a paradox in the storytelling. Although the stories urge that autonomy is the key to women's survival, their very telling creates a sense of community, of solidarity, among women. Women elders like Maggie Wilson told stories of their own and other women's lives in order to create a cultural space for women's experience. As so many feminist scholars since Landes have shown, women's oral teachings of women's knowledge are transcultural and intergenerational. More than historical or biographical accounts, the stories may be understood as "narrative resources" deployed by women (Passerini 1989: 191; see also Cruikshank 1990).

## Life Writing in Anthropology: Ruth Landes and Ruth Benedict

For more than a decade anthropologists have agreed upon the value of the life history. Some have said that it was the essential tool in the study of a culture ... The unique value of life histories lies in that fraction of the material which shows what repercussions the experiences of a man's life – either shared or idiosyncratic – have upon him as a human being molded in that environment. Such information, as it were, tests out a culture by

showing its workings in the life of a carrier of that culture  
 Ruth Benedict, 1947 Presidential Address to the American Anthropological  
 Association. [27]

The life history was the key method in Boasian-Benedictine anthropology. Male anthropologists typically worked with a male elder in the group: in Kwakiutl field research on Vancouver Island, Franz Boas had worked primarily with George Hunt (Cannizzo 1983) and in fieldwork among the Berens River Ojibwa in Manitoba, Irving Hallowell had relied on William Berens (Brown 1989). Several women anthropologists had published life histories of indigenous women elders including Ruth Bunzel's (1898-1990) *The Pueblo Potter* (1929), Ruth Underhill's (1883-1984) *Autobiography of a Papago Woman* (1936) and Gladys Reichard's (1893-1955) *Dezba, Woman of the Desert* (1939). These life histories highlighted women's maternal roles and their skills as craftswomen, an approach Deborah Gordon (1993) has called "matronization." They did not, as Landes did in *The Ojibwa Woman*, record gender conflict or role flexibility or the stresses on gender relations of missionization and assimilationist policies. The Ruth Landes-Maggie Wilson collaboration, in using the life history method to inscribe Maggie Wilson's testimony of indigenous women's lived experiences of colonization, introduced a new discordant voice.

Ruth Benedict advocated use of the life history method in accompaniment to her theory of the "abnormal" – "the culturally unprovided for." Benedict never wrote about her own experiences of difference – of living with a hearing impairment, or of being a childless married middle-class woman in suburbia, or about her homosexuality. However, her idea of the "abnormal" can be understood as her offering of a theory of difference. She trained her students to recognize that ideas of the "abnormal" are merely local, culturally-specific notions about behaviours that in different contexts and under other conditions might be "culturally provided for" and not "abnormal." She published her article "Anthropology and the abnormal" in 1934, the same year as her book *Patterns of Culture*. If *Patterns of Culture* sought to offer grand theory for global comparison and generalization, then Benedict's theory of the abnormal encouraged the fieldworker also to pay attention to individual experience of cultural norms and to life trajectories that reveal the negotiations, choices and agency of individuals. The life history was key to Benedict's vision for anthropology.

Benedict was Landes's thesis supervisor and mentor and she profoundly influenced the course Landes would pursue in anthropology. Boas had introduced the two women the day Landes started the PhD program in September 1931. Both had recently separated from their husbands and they quickly bonded. [28] Then at the peak of her influence, Benedict attracted and supported a medley of graduate students – immigrant, Jewish, mature single women, bisexual, gender non-conforming – and she appreciated her students' differences and individuality. She encouraged them to observe, and to record in their field notes, ethnographic descriptions of cross-cultural differences and variations in gender codes and conventions.

Following Benedict's training, Landes recorded not only rules and prescriptions of kinship



and residence but also the ways that individuals navigated and experienced these. Having rejected a destiny of wifehood, motherhood and domestic labour, she was on the lookout as an anthropologist for ways that women elsewhere – in other times and places – sought and achieved personal autonomy. Her field notes record her observations on marital conflict, divorce, conjugal violence, birth control, abortion, infanticide, illegitimacy, adoption, household structures, gendered divisions of labour, and gender fluidity and sexual diversity. Landes was relentlessly faithful in recording microscopically detailed descriptions of her personal encounters in the field and in reproducing dialogues she had overheard or participated in. And she was a master observer of micro-behaviours, of bodies, demeanours and gestures that she took as clues to the character and quality of race, class and gender relations.

## Autobiographical Memory: Writing the Self in Anthropology

I was thinking the other night that there's never been a woman's autobiography. Nothing to compare with Rousseau. Chastity and modesty I suppose have been the reason.  
Virginia Woolf 1940, in Wade 2020: 265

Neither chaste nor modest, Landes was, as she says, a “she-bull.” She placed under her anthropological microscope the legacies of colonialism in the intimate lives of indigenous North Americans and the gender, sexual and cultural creativity of impoverished Afro-Brazilians in post-slavery Bahia. She did not refine or sterilize her descriptions to conform to the prudery and the gender, class and race expectations of scholars like Ramos and Herskovits. Instead she sought and found indigenous collaborators – Maggie Wilson at Manitou Rapids and Edison Carneiro in Bahia. In *The Ojibwa Woman* and *City of Women* Landes brings forward the words, agency and vitality of Ojibwa and Afro-Brazilian women living under the duress of routinized oppressions. For Landes, anthropology was work of decolonization. As she saw and practiced it, her task as an anthropologist was to listen to, observe, record and circulate the cultural knowledge and quotidian experience of subaltern worlds. Landes saw herself as part of the worlds she described, not as an outside observer. She, too, wanted to know and needed to learn how to live in an unequal world. She wanted to hear how others in other places and times faced the challenges she, too, found in life to overcome hurdles, to not feel alone, and to find meaning.

For Landes fieldwork was “the lifeway of the anthropologist.” “It means” she said, “attempting to enter the lives of those being observed, in order to sense how things look to *them*, as well as to me. The ‘field’ teaches the researcher” (1973:44). Landes was always the learner, always the student of life and of the self. “The lure of another culture can never be discounted, for it is the lure of self, dressed otherwise. Moving among the world’s peoples, one sees that personalities here may resemble personalities there, underneath and despite the culture differences. So one comes home, again and again, to friends and kinsmen. Underneath culture’s differences, we are not all the same, but we are recognizable. What counts in the field and after is that one glimpses, over and over, humanity creating”

(1970:138). Landes remained hopefully humanist throughout her life in her belief that individual experiences and life predicaments can be translated, understood, shared and learned across cultures.

At the memorial service for Ruth Landes held at McMaster University after her death in 1991, Richard Slobodin (1915-2005), who had been her colleague for more than two decades, recounted how the women Landes introduces us to in her ethnographies are “women who strangely resembled herself: individualistic, energetic, strong-minded, stubborn.” [29] If it may be said that Ruth Landes’s ethnographic determination to record gender fluidity and women’s search for autonomy can be traced to scars – *feridas* – of pain and disillusionment in her own early marriage, she is not the only anthropologist whose autobiography finds its way into their anthropology. In *Scenes from the High Desert: Julian Steward’s Life and Theory*, (2003) Virginia Kerns argues that Steward’s theory of cultural ecology and his concept of the patrilineal band (that became a key concept in mid-20th-century American anthropology) originated in his “autobiographical memory” of his adolescent years after his parents’ divorce when he lived as a member of a band of boys at Deep Springs residential school and ranch in California. Barbara Laslett (1991), in her biography of Chicago sociologist William F. Ogburn (1886-1959), argues that Ogburn elaborated the field of statistics as a means to retreat from his emotions and to escape the autobiographical. [30]

Landes is to be counted among those women who in the interwar years were, as Virginia Woolf put it, “beginning to write of women as women have never been written of before” (in Wade 2020: 265). For Landes, as for Woolf, life writing was a means to counter the cultural codes of “chastity and modesty” that censored women and to rewrite narratives imposed on women. Far from retreating, Landes embraced as her ethnographic responsibility to examine the meanings of conflict and contradiction, ambiguity and androgyny. Exploring individual lives, including her own, she opened up and exposed the *feridas* of power and of inequalities of gender, race and class in the hope that recognition was also movement toward reconciliation. Anthropology offered her a path.

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[1] Before the war, Ruth Benedict had been able to help Landes to find publishers for her Native American research but Benedict was not so positioned after the war. Boas's successor at Columbia, Ralph Linton, was notoriously antagonistic to Benedict (Banner 2003: 379; Mintz 1981:161). Julian Steward's postwar students at Columbia included Stanley Diamond (1922-1991), Eric Wolf (1923-1999), Sidney Mintz (1922-2015) and Robert Murphy (1924-1990), who would be influential in leading the discipline to historical materialist approaches to culture. Mintz, one of the few who has written about Benedict's influence on his work, recalls how his postwar cohort viewed Benedict's work as “psychological determinism” and “as retrograde, unscientific, even irrelevant” (1981:151). However, Mintz writes that he was “forever marked” by Benedict's “complete evenhandedness with her male and female students, even though we returning male veterans were quite thoughtlessly shouldering out of the way our female contemporaries. While there was – as I remember it – an anti-female bias among many of my male classmates that extended itself to Benedict, it was not reciprocated (:156-7).” Although Mintz wrote his PhD dissertation under Julian Steward's supervision on the economic history of the plantation system in Puerto Rico, he traces his dedication to anthropology to Benedict: “I became an anthropologist because I heard Ruth Benedict give a lecture ... I was astonished by her and by her lecture. It simply had never occurred to me before that a total culture might be looked upon as if it were a work of art, something to be coolly contemplated, something utterly unique and distinctive, yet available to be studied, analyzed, understood (:156).” As soon as he finished his



PhD, Mintz began a life history project that became *Worker in the Cane: A Puerto Rican Life History* (1960) that he traces to Benedict's influence: "Benedict's work makes clear that while individuals are certainly "products" of their cultures, they cannot take on their characteristically distinctive identity, while growing up, without strain and suffering. The relationship between culture and individual, then, is neither straightforward nor simple, and Benedict's nuanced view of how cultures work, in and through persons, had surely affected me profoundly" (:157-58). Mintz's recollections of Benedict's teaching echoes Landes's memories recorded in an unpublished essay: "When Ruth lectured to us, standing unconcerned with her chalk-smeared black dress, her voice small, soft, hesitant, she sounded as if she was thinking, in sound ... I felt I was about entering that head where the furnace of concepts blazed" (see Landes n.d. "Ruth Benedict, Teacher." Unpublished paper, RLP Box 29).

[2] African-American research was considered the domain of sociology. As Lee Baker (2010:4) puts it: "Anthropology resisted studying Negroes and desired studying Indians." Ruth Landes herself had discovered this when she started the doctoral program in anthropology at Columbia University in 1931. She had hoped to continue the research she had begun on Caribbean storefront churches in Harlem for her master's thesis in social work but Ruth Benedict had told her that, in order to become an anthropologist, she needed to study Native American societies (Cole 2003:61). Landes conducted her PhD research with Ojibwa in Canada in 1932 and then undertook four subsequent field research trips in Native American communities before going to Bahia in 1938 (see Landes 1937, 1997[1938], 1968a, 1968b, 1970a). In the 1930s Columbia University sponsored the research of a number of students and scholars in Brazil. Landes was alone in choosing to work in an urban setting and on Afro-Brazilian culture. The others, including Jules Henry (1904-1969), Charles Wagley (1913-1991), William Lipkind (1905-1974) and Buell Quain (1912-1939), all conducted research on Amazonian indigenous societies.

[3] Throughout her career Landes valued applied anthropology and enjoyed teaching social workers and teachers anthropological knowledge and perspectives on contemporary urban social problems. The post-war academy, however, viewed applied anthropology as secondary to the work of theory-building. In 1965, after several decades of itinerant teaching, Landes received her first permanent academic appointment at McMaster University in Canada when she was 57 years old. See Cole 2003 on Landes's career.

[4] A student of Franz Boas, Melville Herskovits had received his PhD at Columbia University in 1923. His thesis, based on library research, was an original effort to apply Boas's culture area concept to the continent of Africa. Herskovits spent his career at Northwestern University in Chicago where he sought to establish the field of African-American studies in anthropology.

[5] Born in England, Peter Fry received a PhD in social anthropology from the University of London in 1969 and moved permanently to Brazil in 1970 to teach at UNICAMP where he became head of the Department of Anthropology. In 1993 he moved to UFRJ where he still teaches.

[6] Karen Horney (1885-1952) was a German neo-Freudian psychoanalyst who moved to the U.S. in 1932. She studied female psychosexual development and introduced the concept of "womb envy."

[7] Edison Carneiro to Ruth Landes, July 28, 1947, RLP, Box 4.

[8] Edison Carneiro to Ruth Landes, December 22, 1966, RLP, Box 4.

[9] Edison Carneiro to Ruth Landes, October 6, 1967, RLP, Box 4.

[10] See Rossi 2015 on the founding of the literary society, the Academia dos Rebeldes, in Salvador at the end of the 1920s by a group of young students, poets, and journalists including Edison Carneiro and Jorge Amado.

[11] In his youth Martiniano do Bonfim had trained in Africa as a *babalaô*, a divination specialist initiated into the Ifá cult, and was consulted by all researchers including Arthur Ramos. He collaborated with Carneiro in organizing the 2nd Afro-Brazilian Congress and in founding the Union of Afro-Brazilian Sects of which he was president. In *City of Women* Landes vividly describes her meetings with the almost 80-year-old Bonfim in his sparse apartment in a decrepit house in the oldest part of Salvador. Her descriptions capture the old man's sadness at his own ageing, the responsibility he feels to pass on his spiritual knowledge and his lament about the changing world of candomblé in which the leaders, in his view, no longer had adequate knowledge or appreciation of African traditions: "None of them do things correctly," he told Landes (1994 [1947]: 28). As is typical of Landes's descriptions of individuals in her ethnographic writing, she does not shy away from candidly also recording her observations of Bonfim's interactions with his timid new wife who was less than half his age and his flirtatiousness with a young woman who came to him for a divination (1994 [1947]: 22-34; 208-216).

[12] See Morais (2020) for discussion of the conference programs, the roles of Gilberto Freyre and Edison Carneiro and the significance of the Afro-Brazilian Congresses in wider debates on race relations in Brazil in the 1930s and for the protection of Afro-Brazilian religious practices.

[13] RL to RB, April 28, 1939, RFBP, File 319. Emphasis mine.

[14] Carneiro left Salvador and moved permanently to Rio de Janeiro in 1939. He applied for but not did receive the professorship in anthropology vacated when Ramos died in 1949 and turned instead to work to establish folklore as an academic discipline in Brazil. See Rossi 2020 for discussion of Carneiro's later career.

[15] Ruth Landes to Melville Herskovits, October 26, 1939, MJHP Box 12, Folder 13.

[16] Ruth Landes to Ruth Benedict, April 28, 1939, RFBP File 319.

[17] Ruth Landes to Ruth Benedict, April 28, 1939, RFBP File 319.

[18] Ruth Benedict to Ruth Landes, September 24, 1939, RFBP File 319.

[19] Melville Herskovits to Ruth Landes, October 17, 1939, MJHP Box 12, Folder 13.

[20] Ruth Landes to Melville Herskovits, October 26, 1939, MJHP Box 12, Folder 13.

[21] Ruth Landes to Melville Herskovits, October 26, 1939, MJHP Box 12, Folder 13.

[22] In his review of *The Ojibwa Woman* in the *American Sociological Review*, Hallowell wrote: "Since male

ethnographers have given us most of our accounts of the life of native peoples, it is well to have a culture systematically studied and presented from a feminine point of view. Landes has been successful in carrying this out, as I can testify from my own investigation of a western branch of the Ojibwa ... Since, in Ojibwa society the role of women, as culturally phrased, is very much more circumscribed than that of men, one might gain a totally false impression of the actual life of women without such data as Landes gives. She is able to show, and rightly I believe, that women not only have an immense amount of freedom in this very individualistic society, but that they are often successful in flaunting customs and vetoing traditional standards (1938: 892-893).

[23] Ruth Landes, n.d. "Remembering the Ojibwa after 50 years," unpublished paper, RLP Box 15.

[24] Ruth Landes to Ruth Benedict, October 12, 1933, RFBP File 317. In 1914, the Canadian government had consolidated seven small migratory Ojibwa family hunting groups and relocated them to a reserve at Manitou Rapids on the Rainy River in northwestern Ontario. This community is now known as the Rainy River First Nation. Ojibwa today refer to themselves as Anishnaabe.

[25] Ruth Landes, n.d. "Maggie Spence Wilson," unpublished notes, RLP Box 36.

[26] Ruth Landes, n.d. "Now at Athens," unpublished book ms., RLP Box 15. Landes was born Ruth Schlossberg, the daughter of Joseph Schlossberg (1875-1971) who was a leading force in the American labour movement for 50 years. Born in Belorussia, Joseph Schlossberg had emigrated to New York in 1886 and at the age of 13 began work in a garment sweatshop. He was co-founder of the Amalgamated Garment Workers of America and served as its secretary-treasurer for more than a quarter of a century. He was editor of the Yiddish labour newspaper, *Abendblatt*, and of *Der Arbeyter*, the socialist labour party's weekly newspaper. See Cole 2003 for a portrait of Ruth Schlossberg Landes's childhood and upbringing in the Russian Jewish immigrant and labour Zionist world of early 20th-century New York. Landes retained her married name after divorcing her first husband, Victor Landes.

[27] Published the following year in *American Anthropologist* as "Anthropology and the Humanities" (1948).

[28] See Cole 2002 for further discussion of the relationship between Landes and Benedict.

[29] Personal communication, April 25, 1991.

[30] Questions of autobiography and the role of personal narrative in ethnography were much examined during anthropology's "literary turn" in the 1990s (see Okely and Callaway 1992; Behar and Gordon 1995). Re-editions of *The Ojibwa Woman* (1997) and *The City of Women* (1994) were published during this reflexive moment in the discipline.