

Biography

Jane Cowan received a BA summa cum laude in Anthropology at Macalester College in Minnesota (1977), and an MA (1982) and PhD (1988) in Sociocultural Anthropology and Ethnomusicology from Indiana University, Bloomington. She came to Sussex as a Lecturer in 1991, became Senior Lecturer in 2000, Reader in 2003 and was promoted to Professor in 2004. Jane was Head of the Anthropology Department from 2002-2005. Among her Sussex current commitments, she co-convenes (with Imogen Taylor) the Sussex Women Professors Network, which they co-founded in 2008.

Beyond Sussex, Jane is Associate Editor of the journal, *Anthropological Theory*, and serves as External Examiner for the University of Essex MA in Human Rights Theory and Practice. From 2005-2008 she served on the ESRC Virtual College; as of March 2010, she is a Member of the ESRC Peer Review College. Jane was funded in academic year 2010-2011 by a British Academy Research Development Award (BARDA) to undertake an anthropological and historical study of the Universal Periodic Review, a new human rights monitoring mechanism of the reformed Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In April 2011, in view of her international profile in anthropology and her expertise on Greece, Jane was invited to join the Sectoral Committee on the Social Sciences for the Greek National Council on Research and Technology, the main advisory body to the Greek Ministry of Education, as an academic expert on social anthropology. She is the only non-Greek serving on this committee, and one of two non-Greek academics serving on the Council as a whole.

Jane Cowan's early work concentrated on issues of gender, power, identity and the body. *Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece* (Princeton, 1990) focused on social dancing as a site for the construction and negotiation of social identities and relations, especially gender. She has also analysed the cultural politics of popular music, ritual production (pre-Lenten Carnival) and everyday socialising in contemporary Greece. Her fieldwork in the ethnically mixed, multilingual Macedonian region alerted her to its population's multiple and complex responses to nation-building practices. *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* (Pluto, 2000) addressed the unresolved Macedonian controversy that re-emerged with the break-up of Yugoslavia, and the debates it triggered - political and theoretical - about nationalism, ethnicity, minority status, cultural rights and citizenship. Many of these themes were explored further in her co-edited volume (with M. Dembour and R. Wilson), *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2001).

Jane continues to be preoccupied with the ambiguities, contingencies and contested character of rights processes. She is currently working on two major, interrelated projects regarding rights. First, in a project that has received funding from the Macarthur Foundation and the British Academy-Leverhulme, she is tracing a longer-term history of intersections between claims for rights to difference and international mechanisms. This project focuses on the interwar League of Nations' 'supervision' of minority treaties when, with the demise of

empires and emerging hegemony of the nation-state form, 'minority' is consolidated as a legal-political category. In a series of articles, she has been investigating claims for rights and for Macedonian nationhood made on behalf of the so-called 'Bulgarian minorities' in Yugoslavia and Greece. She is exploring the interactions these petitions generated between civic organisations, revolutionaries, minority claimants, international bureaucrats, diplomats, internationalists, proto-NGOs and the press.

In October 2010, Jane initiated a second major project, funded by the British Academy, examining the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a new mechanism of human rights monitoring within the reformed Human Rights Council in Geneva. The aim is to explore the social processes and contested meanings of this new mechanism among the actors engaged in it: state delegations, UNHCHR staff, NGOs, experts and members of civil society. UPR is approached as a public audit ritual grounded in a wider social, political and legal field and constituted through specific encounters, institutional codes, norms and knowledge practices, and documentary processes. Building on her work on minorities treaties supervision in the League of Nations, Jane will situate this emergent form of international rights monitoring in a wider historical frame, as well as in relation to debates on governance and audit.

Jane's work has been translated into French, Greek, Turkish, Italian and Spanish.

Her article, "Culture and Rights after Culture and Rights" was one of the Top 25 Anthrosource Articles in 2009 (i.e. the most-downloaded, ranked 21). You can find it and download a free copy here: <http://www.aaanet.org/publications/Top-Anthrosource-Articles.cfm>

Current Doctoral Students:

James Barnes - Individuals "in transition" in the Balkan Borderlands of Europe (ESRC funded)

Aleksandar Dimitrovski - Changing Labour Relations and Subjectivities in Post-Soviet Republic of Macedonia (Soros Foundation)

Deniz Duru - Inter-household exchanges, sociability and coexistence on a multi-faith, multi-ethnic island network in Istanbul, Turkey

Lauren Greenwood - Changing conceptions of identity in military stabilisation support operations (ESRC funded)

Vesselina Ratcheva - Nationalist organisations in contemporary Bulgaria (ESRC funded)

Dimitra Varvarezou - Healing practices and disability perceptions among the Navajo (Greek Government Scholarship)

Recent Doctoral Students:

Ali Chouseinoglou - The Western Thrace Minority of Greece in the post-Cold War Era (DPhil completed spring 2012)

Simone Hary - Gender, citizenship and identity among young Korean-German women in Frankfurt (DPhil completed spring 2012)

Sam Hardy - Interrogating archaeological ethics: reconciling professional responsibilities with humanitarian duties (ESRC funded, DPhil awarded 2011)

Julie Billaud - Malalay's sisters: women's political participation in post-war Afghanistan (ESRC funded, DPhil awarded 2010)

Marica Rombou-Levidi - Cultural practices and identification processes in Eastern Macedonia, Greece (DPhil awarded 2009)

Natalie Djohari - Post-conflict youth in Guatemala (DPhil awarded 2008)

Antigoni Papanikolaou - 'Halk verilmez, alinir' (Rights are not granted, they are taken): The 'politicization' of rights in the case of the Turkish-Muslim minority of Western Thrace, Greece (Greek State Scholarship: DPhil awarded 2008)

Kathryn Tomlinson - Indigenous rights, land and the power line conflict in Venezuela (ESRC funded: DPhil awarded 2005)

Niamh Moore - The ecofeminist politics of Clayoquot Sound, Canada: theorising activist narratives (DPhil awarded 2003)

Fani Keramida - Relocating: bureaucratic and migrant practices concerning the resettlement of Pontian Greeks from the former Soviet Union in Northern Greece (DPhil awarded 2001)

Maxine Lattimer - Abortion discourses: an explanation of the social, cultural and organisational context of abortion decision-making in contemporary Britain (DPhil awarded 2001)

Emmanouil Spyridakis - On the Perama waterfront: the social, economic and cultural aspects of employment structure in a suburb of Piraeus (DPhil awarded 2001)

Postdoctoral Fellows mentored by Jane:

Lyndsay McLean Hilker, "Rwanda's Youth: Routes into and out of Violence" (ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship, August 2009 - March 2012, part-time)

Heath Cabot, "The Lacunic City: Athens, Migration and the New Nation" (January-June 2010)

Cowan, Jane (2013) *Before Audit Culture: Towards a Genealogy of International Oversight of Rights*. In: *The Gloss of Harmony: The Politics of Policy Making in Multilateral Organisations*. Pluto Press. ISBN 9780745333748

Cowan, Jane K (2006) *Culture and Rights after Culture and Rights*. *American Anthropologist*, 108 (1). pp. 9-24. ISSN 0002-7294

Cowan, Jane, Dembour, Marie-Benedicte and Wilson, Richard, eds. (2001) *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 9780521793391