Anthropology in Praxis

Applying Anthropology in an AI World

November 19th, 2025, 4:00-5:30pm MT

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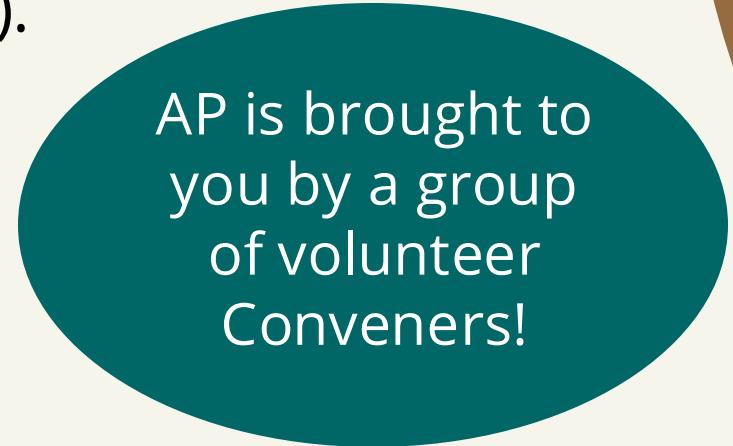
Welcome & Introductions

Anthropology in Praxis (AP) is dedicated to providing a forum to practicing, professional, and applied anthropologists for the exchange of ideas, information, and experiences related to the practical application of anthropology and ethnography.

AP is an official network of CASCA but there is no requirement to be a member of CASCA to join (although there are great benefits to joining CASCA!).

✓ Membership is free

✓ Google Group

✓ Regular virtual meetups

✓ Community driven engagement

AP is brought to you by a group of volunteer Conveners!

Welcome & Introductions

Our inspiration for this session:

At the 2025 CASCA Annual General Meeting in Montreal, incoming CASCA President Liesl Gambold stated, "*Our [anthropology] experiential and sensory data cannot be created by AI.*" And asked, "*How does AI change the value of anthropology going forward?*"

Welcome & Introductions

Matt Artz
Anthropologist, designer, and technologist specializing in AI product development.

Brian Thom
Professor and Chair of the Anthropology Department at the University of Victoria.

Guiding Questions

1. What role does AI play in your work as an anthropologist?

2. How does AI change the value of anthropology going forward?

3. What contributions can anthropology and anthropologists make in an AI world? What opportunities or threats should anthropology pay most attention to?

4. What advice do you have for students and early career anthropologists for working in non-academic settings? Do you have extra training you'd recommend and why?

Thank you for attending!

Virtual sessions will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, every second month, 4:00-5:30 MT.

- January 21, 2026: UserX & Design

- March 18, 2026: Publishing Outside Academia

- May 20, 2026 (CASCA Annual Meeting May 20-23, Halifax)

Dates may change based on availability of Conveners and invited speakers.

Save the dates!

Link to AP website:
https://anthropologyinpraxis.ca/

ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRAXIS | ANTHROPOLOGIE PRATIQUE

November 19th, 2025

See you next time!

UserX and Design Anthropology
Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 4:00-5:30pm MT

Emma Jo Aiken-Klar

Emma is an anthropologist, educator, consultant and coach with nearly 20 years of industry experience applying human-centered methodologies to complex innovation and organizational challenges. In addition to her work for clients, Emma is an Assistant Professor at the Rotman School of Management where she also leads the Business Design Initiative.

Kat Hutton

Kat is an applied anthropologist and UX researcher skilled at designing grounded, person-centered studies that blend qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as developing research processes in both private and public sectors. She is passionate about culture-led explorations, visual anthropology, and sharing through public speaking, volunteering, and writing.

Is there someone in your network that you think would benefit from AP? Invite them!

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ap
ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRAXIS | ANTHROPOLOGIE PRATIQUE
November 19th, 2025

Links to Resources

From Matt:

- [Anthropology and AI](#) (Book)
- [EmTech Anthropology](#) (Book)
- [Ten Predictions for AI and the Future of Anthropology](#) (Article)
- [The Digital Turn in Business Anthropology](#) (Article)
- [Beyond the GenAI gold rush: Mapping entrepreneurial tensions in the age of generative artificial intelligence](#) (Article that shows one approach to how to integrate conventional qual + data science)
- [An Anthropology Winter or Strategic Renewal?](#) (Article)
- Matt Artz's Github: https://github.com/MattArtzAnthro
- [The TANTLab at Aalborg University in Denmark](#)
- [Friction by Machine: How to Slow Down Reasoning with Computational Methods](#)
- [The Slalom Method: How to zig-zag between digital methods and traditional methods in ethnography](#)
- [The Thick Machine: Anthropological AI between explanation and explication](#)

Links to Resources

From Brian and others:

- Brian Thom's Google [Earth Outreach Impact Award](#)
- Craig shared: BC Law Society's [Guidance on Professional Responsibility and Generative AI](#)
- Natalie shared AP members work and extending the AP network: [Social Studies Lab](#)
- Natalie and Matt shared: [Anthropology Careers Readiness Network](#)
- Kat shared Sam Ladner's series on AI in methodologies (cost) and other work: [https://www.samladner.com/free-videos/v/preview-how-ux-research-and-strategy-relate](#)

What we Heard: Session Summary

- "I would like to encourage everybody to do is to get involved. Roll up the sleeves and get involved, you know, contributing to the development of products at the earliest stage possible."

- "We need to figure out, potentially, how can we [...] take control and shape these tools so that maybe they are more anthropological, maybe that we have more control over them. [...] by thinking about human centered AI and kind of human in the loop [...] design paradigms we can actually build this tech to support us and to support multiple viewpoints and [...] epistemic pluralism, and to create friction that challenges us to think harder, and not so that it's full automation, but it's augmentation that actually gets the best of both worlds. And I'm hopeful that if we do that well, we have the ability to sort of sell that to our peers, so that they see that a hybrid approach can have value. Because again, in a lot of cases, the machine is going to do pretty well."

- "I'm of the opinion that if we are not there, we are going to have another social media moment, and it's likely going to be even more dire."

Matt Artz

What we Heard: Session Summary

- "Anthropologists are in a beautiful position to be asking the right questions, right? It's the old Margaret Mead quote about, you know, 'the answers are easy, it's asking the right questions that's the hard thing.' So, I think that […] there's much to offer there in terms of our value as ethical practitioners."

- "These systems are about logic and reasoning, rather than retrieval. So much and so, you know, getting it to be in that kind of reasoning space with you as something to have these conversations about. I found it quite useful."

- "We shouldn't be shy to tinker ourselves or partner with people who can do that tinkering that can be, you know, guided by the kinds of approaches and anthropological questions and sensibilities and responsibilities and relationships."

- "Don't get left behind. Experiment, get informed. Use different tools."

Brian Thom