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Report From the Frontlines

Campaign to Stop Killer Coke

THE ARTICLE *BUSINESS TODAY* REFUSED TO PUBLISH

By Ray Rogers

Abstract: The "Campaign to Stop Killer Coke" seeks to stop the gruesome cycle of murders, kidnapping and torture of union leaders and organizers involved in daily life-and-death struggles at Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia, South America. At the request of Business Today, the author wrote an article (later rejected by that publication) providing a brief description of human rights abuses at Coca-Cola Co. bottling plants in Colombia and the efforts by "Stop Killer Coke" and other groups to hold the Company accountable. The article outlines a disturbing pattern of abuses, documented by scholars and other observers, including the New York City Fact-Finding Delegation on Coca-Cola in Colombia. The article also provides links to informational resources on the issue, including documentation of the Company's human rights abuses and exploitative practices.

Key words: Stop Killer Coke, Coca Cola Co., human rights, union organizing

The Campaign to Stop Killer Coke (<http://www.killercoke.org/>) seeks to hold The Coca-Cola Co. accountable for human rights abuses at its bottling plants in Colombia. At the same time, we are educating the public about Coke's widespread crimes and unethical behavior worldwide.

The International Labor Rights Fund (<http://www.laborrights.org/>) and the United Steelworkers filed a lawsuit against Coca-Cola on behalf of SINALTRAINAL (National Union of Food Industry Workers <http://www.sinaltrainal.org/>), a Colombian union representing Coca-Cola bottling plant workers, several of its members, and survivors of Isidro Gil, one of its murdered officers. The lawsuit charges that Coca-Cola bottlers "contracted with or otherwise directed paramilitary security forces that utilized extreme violence, and murdered, tortured, unlawfully detained or otherwise silenced trade union leaders."

American University Professor Lesley Gill stated in a November 2004 report: "Murdered unionists are not the product of indiscriminate, chaotic violence, nor are they the 'collateral damage' of civilians caught between warring groups. They are the victims of a calculated and selective strategy carried out by sectors of the state, allied paramilitaries, and some employers to weaken and eliminate trade unions. It is a strategy that emerges from, and is facilitated by pervasive impunity."

In January 2004, New York City Council Member Hiram Monserrate led a delegation on a 10-day, fact-finding tour to Colombia to investigate the allegations of human rights violations by Coca-Cola. As one member said upon returning, "We heard one story after another of torture and injustice. The sheer number of these testimonials was overwhelming."

In This Issue

- 1 **Report From the Frontlines:**
Campaign to Stop Killer Coke
(Rogers)
- 4 **The Story Behind the Story:**
Business Today Rejects Rogers's Article
(compiled by Rogers and Waterston)
- 5 **Report From the Frontlines:**
Co-Defenders: How Human Rights Activists and
Anthropologists Can Work Together (Ortega)
- 9 **Report From the Field:**
Fighting For Justice, Dying For Hope
On the Protest Line in Colombia (Gill)
- 14 **SANA Resolution: Boycott of Coca-Cola Products**
- 15 **Meeting Notes: Anthropology in an Uncertain**
Age 2006 Spring SANA Meeting (Brash)
- 16 **AAA 2006: Critical Intersections/**
Dangerous Issues: Announcements of Interest
- 18 **Anthropology Off the Shelf: SANA prizewinner**
Gina Pérez's The Near Northwest Side Story
- 19 **Addendum: Coca Cola Co writes to SANA**

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The delegation issued a scathing report in April concluding that "Coca-Cola is complicit in human rights abuses of its workers in Colombia" – and its "complicity is deepened by its repeated pattern of bringing criminal charges against union activists who have spoken out about the company's collusion with paramilitaries" (<http://www.killercoke.org/report.htm>).

Coca-Cola claims that it has extensive relations with twelve separate unions in Colombia and that more than thirty percent of the 8,000 workers in the Coca-Cola system are unionized. This simply is not true. More than ninety percent of Colombian Coke workers are considered "flexible" workers with no union representation. They are employed through various subcontracting schemes. These workers receive low pay, meager benefits, if any, have no job security or future with the Company and many are mired in poverty.

Coke's claim that the Company was exonerated of human rights abuse allegations by two judicial inquiries in Colombia and two "independent" investigations in the U.S. by *their* law firm, White & Case, and by the discredited Cal-Safety Compliance Corporation which Coke hired, has no credibility whatsoever.

Coke's assertion that it has extensive relations with a dozen other unions is a far stretch of the imagination. Many of those unions really exist only on paper and all the unions combined represent a tiny number of Coke workers, far less than SINALTRAINAL.

Coke's other crimes and abuses against the global public interest include:

- Overexploitation and pollution of water sources in India (<http://www.indiaresource.org/>), Mexico (<http://www.ciepac.org/>), Ghana and elsewhere (<http://www.polarisinstitute.org/>)
- Benefiting from hazardous child labor in sugar cane fields in El Salvador; documented by Human Rights Watch (<http://www.hrw.org/>)

- Aggressive marketing to children of nutritionally worthless and damaging products (<http://www.commercialexploitation.org/>; <http://www.schoolpouringrights.com/>)
- Anti-worker policies in Turkey and Indonesia (<http://www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org/>)
- Labor abuses in the U.S., including harassment, intimidation, discrimination and retaliation
- Giving executives hundreds of millions of dollars in stock options and bonuses while laying off thousands of employees
- History of racial discrimination
- Fraudulent business practices

The Coca-Cola Co. spends \$2.6 billion a year to create a false image that has nothing to do with the ugly reality that is the Company. The reality is that the World of Coca-Cola is a world full of lies, deception, immorality, corruption and widespread labor, human rights and environmental abuses. When consumers think of The Coca-Cola Co., one should think of a company that has brought great hardship and despair to many people and communities throughout the world.

This is why twenty-four campuses* have removed and banned the sale of Coca-Cola products, including small colleges such as Union Theological Seminary and Carleton College, and large universities such as Rutgers University, New York University and the University of Michigan. When students think of Coca-Cola beverages, they should think of them as “Unthinkable” and “Undrinkable” until the company cleans up its act.

Additional links to reports:

Gill, Lesley: “Labor and Human Rights: The Real Thing’ in Colombia”

(<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/cfhr/gill.pdf>)

Monserrate, Hiram: “NYC fact-finding delegation's report on human rights violations by Coke”

(<http://www.killercoke.org/report.htm>)

* as of 2005; since that time, thirty-one campuses have joined the effort to ban the sale of Coca-Cola products.

Want to start a campaign on your campus?

For Campus Activism Packet, go to

<http://www.corporatecampaign.org/killer-coke/student.htm>

Do you know what you’re buying?

Coca-Cola Products

“The Coca-Cola Company offers nearly 400 products in over 200 countries (including 80 brands in the U.S. alone)”

http://www2.coca-cola.com/makeeverydropcount/get_refreshed.html

The following is a list of some of Coca-Cola’s many brands, trademarks either owned or used under license in select locations

Bacardi Mixers

Barq’s

Canada Dry

Citra

Crush

DASANI

Delaware Punch

Disney Hundred Acre Wood

Dr. Pepper

Fanta

Fresca

Fruitopia Tea

Hi-C

Minute Maid

Nescafe

Nestea

Odwalla

POWERade

Schweppes

Simply Orange

Spring by Dannon Fluoride to go

Sprite

TaB

Source: Coca-Cola Company

<http://www2.coca-cola.com/brands/brandlist.html>

The Story Behind the Story: Business Today Rejects Ray Rogers's article

Ray Rogers, Director of the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, was invited by editor-in-chief Michael Kratsios of Business Today to write an op-ed article that would run opposite an article by Coke's Director of Global Labor Relations Ed Potter for an issue highlighting "Coke's College Crisis." Business Today is a student publication affiliated with Princeton University.

According to Rogers, "We were somewhat suspicious since we knew that Coke is the largest sponsor of the magazine." Rogers asked Kratsios if Coke's sponsorship could or would prevent the article from appearing. Kratsios responded that the issue was too important for that to happen.

Rogers prepared the piece which was accepted for publication by Kratsios. The Editor told Rogers it was just what he needed – well-documented with good sources, though he asked that the last two bullet points in the list of Coke's abuses be eliminated ("History of racial discrimination" and "Fraudulent business practices"). Rogers agreed to do so, even though he knew Coke's history of racial discrimination and fraudulent business practices have been extensively reported on in the mass media, including The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

The Spring 2006 issue in which Rogers's article was to appear was published. But Rogers's article was *not* included, though the piece by Coke's Ed Potter did appear (<http://www.businesstoday.org/BIM.php>).

The rejection prompted "Stop Killer Coke" to do some background research on Princeton University's Board of Trustees. According to Rogers, there is a strong connection between Coke and Princeton University. On Princeton's board is Nancy B. Peretsman, Executive VP and Managing Director of Allen & Company, a company with many strong connections to Coke. Just this past May (2006), a Wall Street Journal article announced that Herbert A. Allen, president and chief executive of Allen & Co. and a Coca-Cola Co. director "spent about \$18.7 million this week to acquire 443,898 shares of the beverage giant's stock, the largest purchase by a board member since 1994..." Allen was already the beneficial owner of 8,652,151 shares of Coca-Cola

stock, as described in Coca-Cola's March 10 proxy statement. In addition, Coca-Cola Co. director Donald R. Keough, Chairman of the Board of Allen & Co., is the beneficial owner of 5,140,521 shares of Coca-Cola stock, according to Coca-Cola's March 10 proxy statement. Herbert Allen III, son of Herbert A. Allen, is on the board of Coca-Cola Femsa, the Coke bottler in Colombia that is the target of the Alien Tort Claims lawsuit, charging human rights abuses by Coke bottlers in Colombia! Finally, it is interesting to note that Allen & Co. is headquartered in Coca-Cola's building in New York City.

Subsequently, The Harvard Crimson picked up on the story about the story. In "Cola Controversy Riles Up Princeton," reporter Benjamin Weintraub notes that Business Today received \$25,000 from the Coca Cola Company in the past year and that "while Coke gets a full page in the magazine to rebut allegations, the company's opponents don't get a similar space to make their case" (April 10, 2006 <http://www.thecrimson.com/printerfriendly.aspx?ref=512588>). In The DailyPrincetonian, editor Kratsios of Business Today explains his decision to omit Rogers's article, "We believe the mission of the magazine is to foster dialogue between students and executives, and not between activists and executives" (<http://www.dailyprincetonian.com/archives/2006/04/12/news/15191.shtml>). If this is so, it begs many questions, including: Why did Kratsios invite Rogers, a known activist, to write a piece in the first place?

North American Dialogue accepted Rogers's call welcoming "anyone to print our piece."

On April 21st, Rogers spoke at the SANA conference in New York on a panel titled "The World of Coca-Cola: Human Rights Abuses and Anti-Unionism," organized by Lesley Gill (2006). At the Spring 2006 SANA meeting, the membership voted to boycott Coca-Cola products (see page 14 for the resolution). SANA imposed a ban on Coca-Cola products for the April meeting.

Information for The Story Behind the Story was compiled by Ray Rogers and Alisse Waterston. Ray Rogers is the Director of the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke/Corporate Campaign. He may be reached at stopkillercoke@aol.com

Report From the Frontlines

Co-Defenders: How Human Rights Activists and Anthropologists Can Work Together

By Ramona Ortega

Abstract: The Human Rights Project (HRP) of the Urban Justice Center employs a human rights framework as a tool for social justice and government accountability. HRP has documented the ways in which welfare reform legislation violates international human rights standards and law, and it has joined forces with ninety organizations to introduce human rights legislation in New York City. In this article, HRP's Director Ramona Ortega invites anthropologists to join forces with human rights advocacy groups such as HRP. The author notes a commonality of interests shared by human rights advocates and anthropologists, and points out the specific ways in which ethnographers can provide valuable information and anthropologists can provide authoritative insight in the struggle for social justice in the U.S. and internationally. The case of Coca Cola Co. offers a model of such collaboration and points to the possibilities that can come of collective efforts. The author also offers a specific suggestion to anthropologists that they translate dense scholarly material into readable formats that can then be put to use by human rights advocates.

Key words: human rights, Urban Justice Center, Coca Cola Co., advocacy, collaboration

About the Human Rights Project of the Urban Justice Center

The Human Rights Project (HRP) of the Urban Justice Center (UJC; www.urbanjustice.org) is one of many emerging sites of advocacy on human rights and its application in the U.S. HRP was born out of frustration felt by human rights activists and practitioners in organizing for the rights of welfare recipients at the height of welfare reform in 1996. The widespread sentiment that welfare recipients did not have rights either as workers at mandatory job sites or a right to a standard of living that raised them out of poverty, was the challenge for what was then the Organizing Project of UJC. Civil rights law was not enough to challenge the punitive welfare policies or hold government officials and agency workers accountable to what amounted to human rights violations under the International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICCPR) and International Convention for Racial Discrimination (ICERD). Under ICERD, these policies violated the disparate impact clause, having an unequal impact

on low-income women of color with children. Under domestic civil rights law, the policy was perfectly legal and continues to be. This scenario spawned a critical look at the internal framework we were using and its limitations. Thanks to a circle of human rights activists and practitioners in our inner circle, the decision was made to take up the challenge of using a human rights framework as a tool to achieve a broad social justice agenda in the U.S. (see "Human Rights Violations in Welfare Legislation: Pushing Recipients Deeper into Poverty", April, 2002 (<http://www.urbanjustice.org/pdf/publications/humanrights/WelfareLegislation.pdf>)).

To date, HRP's agenda to implement human rights standards locally include novel human rights legislation in New York City that mandates a proactive approach to remedy widespread discrimination and disparate impact in city policies and programs, and grassroots human rights documentation projects on education and domestic violence. When necessary, we use U.N. mechanisms to shame our government and call for global solidarity. HRP works with the praxis of human rights, translating international human rights law and theory into the pragmatic methods and policies that can be implemented on the ground to achieve real outcomes for those most vulnerable in our society (see for example, HRP's report, "Hunger is No Accident: New York and Federal Welfare Policies Violate the Human Right to Food," 2000 (http://www.urbanjustice.org/pdf/publications/humanrights/full_rpt.pdf)). Most recently, the HRP coordinated a coalition of over ninety organizations to craft a piece of legislation that attempts to reconstruct avenues of participation within New York City administrative law that governs city agencies. While the law, Human Rights GOAL (officially named Intro 512 Human Rights Governmental Audit Law, New York City Council, 2004; <http://www.nychri.org/>), solves a real practical discrimination problem, it also lays the groundwork for a broader idea of democracy that makes authentic participation the norm. While many believe that our democracy is based on participation, it is disingenuous to think, in this day and age of money over power, that people have a genuine voice in the policies that impact their lives. Throughout our legislative campaign, we were met with challenges both legal and political. The city claimed we were curtailing the mayor's power and the naysayer's attested to the inefficiency of



A mother and daughter speak out

Photograph courtesy of Urban Justice Center

institutionalized structures that include public participation.

The legal fight continues. But because “human rights” are not just about legal structures, our work in organizing and documenting continues. The human rights framework is powerful in that it works both within and outside of government structures such that when government or politics fail, there is always the power of the people to call upon global actors to respond.

HRP is part of a growing national movement to use human rights as a tool for social justice and government accountability. The HRP project has found allies and partners in many fields and institutions, including good governance

organizations, science institutions, U.N. development bodies and legal practitioners. The possibilities for collaboration between human rights organizations and anthropologists are significant. There is juxtaposition between the fields of anthropology and human rights. Both are grounded in the idea that social worlds must be understood holistically, and that people, institutions, and societies are interdependent. Both fields make use of documentation and the collection of data at the individual level to advance or reveal a problem, pattern, or story. While anthropologists may use knowledge acquired through such documentation for cultural critiques or to back a hypothesis set forth, human rights research is most often used to document human rights violations and demand remedies and

retribution. Cultural anthropology is perhaps most closely aligned with the field of human rights in that both seem to have an appreciation for humanity and consciousness about social injustice.

A Case of Coke

The case of Coca Cola both in India and South America could not have been brought to global consciousness without exercising a human rights framework. Coca Cola Inc., like many multinational companies, puts us in the quandary of how to hold non-state actors responsible for a whole host of human rights violations. The Coke scenario underscores the growing problem that governments are powerless to hold multi-national companies accountable. Under international human rights law as it pertains to states, governments have two sets of rights to uphold: 1) positive rights which create obligations on the state and others *to do* certain things; and 2) negative rights which oblige the state and others *to refrain* from certain activities. In addition to these broad obligations, states have the obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights. The case of Coca Cola is not just about the company's role and responsibility, but also about the failure of the governments of India and Colombia to protect against the harm caused by non-state actors. As human rights advocates, we want to know why governments do not step in, from where and how heavy is the political pressure to remain silent, and whose rights are considered when enforcing labor laws or creating new policies as they relate to work and the environment? We want to know: Will global impunity continue to rule for multi-national corporations?

The case of Coke also provides a model for collaborative efforts by activists, politicians and anthropologists. From all three of these fronts, there is ongoing effort to document human rights violations (see Rogers, and Gill, this issue), and a prototype for bringing together activists and anthropologists as co-defenders in the struggle for human rights.

Human Rights Activists and Anthropologists: Co-Defenders and Collaborators

At HRP, we spearhead efforts to document, monitor and report on economic human rights violations in the United States, and then publicize our findings through publications, community

education and direct action. As a defender of human rights, I seek to bring forward individual stories of people who have suffered human rights violations. We look to tell the story of "who did what to whom, and how," to use Patrick Ball's words (1996). Our role is defined by the parameters of the human rights framework. We are defenders, we are advocates, and we are activists. To achieve our goals, we also need the research skills of ethnographers, those with expertise in comparative research and analysis, and in tracking local phenomena.

The time has come for human rights activists and anthropologists to be more closely aligned and to become co-defenders. In this global world where activists are often overworked and underfunded and who struggle for legitimacy, ethnographers could provide invaluable data and anthropologists provide a much-needed authoritative voice. Development and sustainability issues as they relate to indigenous and developing countries would greatly benefit from collaboration between human rights activists and ethnographers. Public policies that use data gathered by cultural anthropologists could become the norm. Alliances formed between human rights defenders and anthropologists have the potential to create new methodologies and hybrid projects, all of which are exciting possibilities. With the support of ethnographers, human rights activists could better formulate policies, campaigns, and direct actions. Information on vulnerable populations and communities as they pertain to poverty and political processes could give rise to a more coherent understanding of the human rights issues involved, and provide evidence where none exists.

Moreover, as we evaluate our own efforts at the Human Rights Project, we will look to ethnographic methods to better understand the extent to which the framework of human rights has been effective in bringing together a coalition of groups towards a common goal. We need to better understand if the human rights framework makes a difference for people and for policy, and if so, what the nature of that difference is. More broadly, we call on more anthropologists to work with funding agencies and evaluators to study non-traditional organizing campaigns and movement-building around human rights.

A wealth of documentation produced by ethnographers on human rights issues is readily available, but for the most part there is a disconnect between the traditional fields of social science and human rights. Human rights is a relatively new field of study that has many components, many of which involve non-traditional areas of study. While the study of international law is commonly accepted and mainstream, human rights advocacy is not. The field of human rights is a work in progress, its elements still being comprised. Therefore, collaborations with traditional fields of scholarship are still considered unconventional. Over time, I hope we can forge new relationships and cross-fertilize both fields in the quest to advance social justice.

While I have the opportunity, I would offer up a humble yet practical recommendation for scholars and academic activists who want to apply their skills and knowledge to a social justice agenda. In what ways can you make your work more useful? For those of us working as activists and organizers, we are enormously constrained. We do not have the luxury of time to digest pages upon pages of poetic scholarship before getting to a study's main point or finding. I urge you to translate your academic tomes into fact sheets, thorough executive summaries, manuals, handbooks, briefings, and report-backs, all of which would be extremely helpful and would make our collaborative efforts fruitful.

References cited

Ball, Patrick. 1996. Who Did What to Whom? Planning and Implementing a Large Scale Human Rights Project. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science.

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publications

[Human Rights Violations in Welfare Legislation: Pushing Recipients Deeper into Poverty](#), April 2002

[Financing For Development \(FFD\)](#), April 2002

[The Race, Poverty and Globalization Caucus Statement at the Financing for Development Conference](#), March 2002

[Compliance with Article 5: Economic Social and Cultural Rights Under the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: A Report on US Government Compliance with ICERD](#), August 2001

[Human Rights Dialogue: An International Forum for Debating Human Rights](#), Spring/Summer 2001

[Key Survey Findings: Assessing the Intersection of Race and Welfare Reform for New York City Households](#), April 2001

[Hunger Is No Accident: New York and Federal Welfare Policies Violate the Human Right to Food](#), July 2000

NEWS RELEASE from Stop Killer Coke:

Coca-Cola Suffers Big Blow in Investment Community

July 18, 2006. KLD Research & Analytics, Inc. of Boston, Mass., a world leader in defining corporate responsibility standards, has removed The Coca-Cola Company from its Broad Market Social Index (BMSI). The BMSI consists of all companies within the Russell 3000 that pass KLD's screening criteria. This means that large institutional investors like Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association - College Retirement Equity Fund (TIAA-CREF), the nation's largest pension fund, will ban Coca-Cola from its CREF Choice Account, the world's largest socially screened fund for individual investors with \$7.9 billion in assets and more than 200,000 investors. At the end of December, the CREF Social Choice Account held 1,250,500 shares of Coca-Cola common stock valued at more than \$50 million.

Photograph and press release courtesy of Stop Killer Coke



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Go to: <http://maketiaa-crefethical.org/>

Report From the Field

Fighting for Justice, Dying for Hope

On the Protest Line in Colombia

By Lesley Gill

Abstract: The author provides a vivid account of her most recent trip to Colombia where she has been conducting research on the impact of political and economic violence on efforts by Coca-Cola workers to organize with SINALTRAINAL, a Colombian labor union. On July 22, 2006, SINALTRAINAL (the National Food and Beverage Workers Union) organized demonstrations in several Colombian cities for the third annual "International Day of Protest Against Coca-Cola." Gill describes events of the day in Barrancabermeja, an oil town in the country's conflicted Magdalena Medio region. In 1998, the city fell under paramilitary domination by means of murder and massacre. Eight years later, the paramilitary vise is clamped tight by selective assassination of unionists, social movement leaders and other "disposable people." Despite death threats against them, workers from the local Coca-Cola plant organized a peaceful demonstration against "the crimes of Coca-Cola" -- crimes that include human rights violations and collusion with paramilitary groups. After the successful protest in Barrancabermeja, exhilaration was replaced by despair as word of another assassination spread.

Keywords: Colombia, Coca-Cola, union, SINALTRAINAL, political violence

In the middle of the night on August 3rd, Colombian policemen raided the Bogotá headquarters of the National Food and Beverage Workers Union (SINALTRAINAL), which organizes Coca-Cola workers. It was four days before the inauguration of right-wing president Álvaro Uribe Vélez for an unprecedented second, four-year term in office, and the policemen claimed to be taking precautions. They searched SINALTRAINAL's offices, videotaped the premises, and questioned a housekeeper about the presence in the kitchen of three gas cylinders used for cooking. Colombia's oldest and most powerful guerrilla organization -- the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) -- which uses gas cylinders to construct homemade bombs, had stepped up operations in Bogotá to prove its

determination to overthrow the government, and the policemen clearly suspected a link between the unionists and the guerrillas.

The raid was not SINALTRAINAL's first experience with police harassment, and it was not a particularly shocking event, given Colombia's bloody labor history. The policemen did not hurt, arrest, or disappear anyone nor did they destroy or remove anything. But the raid highlighted a pervasive climate of anti-unionism that associates workers with guerrillas and prevents them from exercising their right to free association. It also underscored the ongoing threats and harassment that workers live with on a daily basis in a country that is the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist, and that has witnessed the murders of over four thousand Colombian unionists in the last twenty years. The workers died because they opposed neoliberal labor laws that allow corporate managers to hire temporary workers outside of collective bargaining agreements, and because they resisted abusive corporate practices and the privatization of state-owned companies. Their opposition placed them in the crosshairs of the state security forces and illegal paramilitaries allied with them.

Despite the loss of nearly half its membership to violence, fear, and corporate restructuring over the last ten years, SINALTRAINAL continues to challenge multinational corporations, especially the Coca-Cola Company. On July 22 -- "The International Day of Protest Against Coca-Cola" -- it staged demonstrations in several Colombian cities to condemn the degradation of work that has accompanied the global shift to neoliberal capitalism, and to denounce corporate complicity in the paramilitary murders of eight Coca-Cola workers since 1990. The demonstrations marked the third anniversary of the union's international campaign to hold the Coca-Cola Company accountable for human rights violations, a campaign that has gained support among trade unionists and university students in Europe and the United States.

One of the anti-Coke protests took place in Barrancabermeja, an oil town in Colombia's conflicted Magdalena Medio region, and a long-time center of working class militancy. During the 1980s and 1990s, many of Barrancabermeja's Coca-Cola workers participated in social networks that

enmeshed unions, human rights groups, and popular organizations in dense webs of solidarity, but these networks fractured when much of the city fell under paramilitary domination. On May 16, 1998, the paramilitaries announced their intentions of wresting control of Barrancabermeja's poor neighborhoods from guerrilla militias with the massacre of seven people in the city's northeast sector and the disappearance of twenty-five others. Despite the heavy police and military presence in the city, it was then only a matter of time before the paramilitaries moved in and established a stranglehold on local power by killing, displacing, and terrorizing residents.

Nowadays, uniformed paramilitaries no longer patrol the streets, but young men dressed in civilian clothing move anonymously about the city, conducting the quotidian chores of occupation and business. They lounge on street corners, where they observe the conduct of residents and are quick to pull out cell phones to report on "suspicious" activities. They also pressure local traders and contractors to hire their supporters, control the theft of gasoline from the state oil company, guard public and private buildings, and drive taxicabs. The paramilitary vise clamped around the city is so tight that these so-called "self defense forces" no longer need to stage massacres to intimidate and displace residents. Yet the selective assassination of unionists, social movement leaders and other "disposable people" (*desechables*), such as prostitutes, petty thieves, and homosexuals, remains a chilling aspect of daily life. They serve as a harsh reminder that even though the paramilitaries began a demobilization process in 2003, their commanders have ceded no ground in Barrancabermeja.

The facade of paramilitary demobilization did not lift the Coca-Cola workers' fears of violence as they prepared for the protest against the company. Men who had lived with death threats for years said little about the possibility of trouble, but they understood the risks. One worker had already survived an attempted assassination; two others received constant death threats that had extinguished any possibility of a normal life. These men left home accompanied by bodyguards everyday, and they traveled to work in armored cars with darkened windows. Ordinary social activities like walking down the street had become

inconceivable without the presence of an armed guard, and friends avoided them because, as one said, they "smell of formaldehyde." Yet even though the men were fenced in by threats and bodyguards, they never considered abandoning the July 22nd protest. Fighting Coca-Cola was their struggle, even if it defied the advice and common sense of others.

The Barrancabermeja local of SINALTRAINAL planned a different kind of anti-Coke protest than in previous years. Workers had decided to replace tedious political speeches with street theater, inspired by the vigil against the U.S. Army's School of the Americas in Ft. Benning, Georgia. Local SINALTRAINAL president William Mendoza attended that vigil in 2005. An actor friend had agreed to help the unionists develop a skit and to teach them the fundamentals of acting, and I found him instructing a small group of potbellied men on the basics of "total body movement" when I walked into the first rehearsal. The would-be thespians were dropping "dead," one-by-one, at the beat of a drum and then remaining corpse-like on the ground while a woman covered them with white sheets bearing the names of deceased SINALTRAINAL members. Their awkward motions and sheepish expressions signaled a high level of discomfort. "We're workers, not actors," a discouraged laborer explained as he picked himself off the floor and brushed off his pants.

More practice sessions followed. The self-consciousness diminished, and the acting improved. The music changed, and the skit itself underwent numerous revisions. At one point, workers decided to include their children in the final scene, but this decision provoked a fight between one worker and his ex-wife, who accused her former spouse of being irresponsible. How could he expose his children to danger, she asked and reminded him that he at least had a bodyguard, but his children had no protection. He countered that their kids would not be the only youngsters at the demonstration, that he would take good care of them, and that he wanted the children to understand the reality of Coca-Cola and to experience a protest. It was never clear if or how the couple resolved their differences, but when the day of the protest arrived, the kids showed up, ready and eager to perform.



Photograph by Lesley Gill

Political street theater on tap during the July 2006 International Day of Protest Against Coca-Cola in Barrancabermeja, Colombia.

The protest took place in a small plaza, located in the center of town on a busy commercial street, rather than at the more remote Coca-Cola plant. As I drove to the site with one of the union leaders, I asked if SINALTRAINAL needed a police permit. "Yes," he explained, "but the last time we asked for one, they didn't give it to us. So this time, we thought that it was better not to ask. The entire event will only last about forty minutes. If anybody calls the police, we will be done by the time that they arrive." The union had also invited a number of "internationalists," including myself, in the belief that our presence would deter any problems with the police or the paramilitaries. The internationalists in Barrancabermeja connected labor and social movement leaders to broader transnational human rights networks that could sound an alarm if there was trouble. Moreover, the murder of a U.S. citizen by the Colombian security

forces or their paramilitary allies would cause much more controversy than the death of a Colombian unionist. At least momentarily, it would spark debate in Washington about U.S. military aid and the extradition of paramilitary commanders wanted on drug trafficking charges. None of this, of course, offered any guarantee of safety, but it did provide a certain peace of mind -- to the unionists and to us, the internationalists -- that otherwise would have been harder to find.

As demonstrators began to arrive in the plaza, a thick layer of clouds obscured the sun, moderating the torrid tropical heat that could soar above 100 degrees in mid-afternoon. A few street vendors hawked their wares on tarps laid out on the sidewalk, and a telecommunications company displayed its products in a flashy booth. Pedestrians filled the sidewalk. At the back of the plaza, a man in a loud orange jumpsuit guarded

the entrance to a multi-story office building and kept an eye on the unionists as they set up a sound system. "See that guy," one of the workers said, "He's a paramilitary." How was he so sure, I wanted to know. "They all are," he replied, referring to the men who guard office buildings in Barrancabermeja nowadays. As unionists unfurled anti-Coke banners, the "security guard" figured out that something was about to happen and started mingling with the gathering crowd under the watchful gaze of the unionists. It was no surprise that a policeman had also learned of the demonstration and watched from a discrete distance in his squad car.

Meanwhile, SINALTRAINAL members, their relatives, and a few representatives from other unions, social movements, and the Catholic

Church, who had come to demonstrate their solidarity, talked under the trees. A group of nine or ten internationalists from the Christian Peacemaker Teams, recently arrived from the United States, sat together along a low stone hedge. Dressed in identical, powder blue T-shirts that proclaimed their identity, they held cameras ready to record the action. Rafael, the 4-year old son of a worker, scurried about the plaza, powered, it seemed, by an invisible energy source. The plastic soldiers and tanks peddled by a street vendor soon caught his eye and became the sole focus of his attention and desire. The vendor urged me to buy the toys for the little boy and cut the price to increase the pressure. Exasperated, I finally agreed to purchase a miniature soccer player, equipped with a mechanical leg that was capable of kicking a



Photograph by Lesley Gill

Children joined adults for The International Day of Protest Against Coca-Cola in Barrancabermeja, Colombia on July 22, 2006. For these workers, "Unemployment, Hunger, Misery, Displacement, Widows, Orphans "mark "The Real Thing" about Coke.

tiny ball five or ten feet. Rafael was not disappointed and scampered off with his brother to play.

The protest finally began, when SINALTRAINAL President William Mendoza, dressed in blue jeans and a long vest that covered the pistol stuffed under his belt, picked up a microphone and addressed the crowd of about 300 people, half of them Coca-Cola workers. His powerful voice resonated across the plaza and drew in more people, as he thanked everyone for their solidarity with the union and spoke about the crimes of Coca-Cola -- the corporate complicity with paramilitaries, the deteriorating working conditions in Coca-Cola bottling plants, and the impunity that protects company officials and allows crimes against workers to continue. As the music was ramped up, several individuals with video cameras jockeyed for position among the onlookers. The actors dressed in their Coca-Cola uniforms readied themselves -- some taking a deep breath to overcome stage fright -- and launched into their "die-in." At the end, a group of children, each with a cup of Coca-Cola, lined up next to a large cardboard Coca-Cola bottle painted with slogans, and, on cue, they emptied their cups into a bucket marked "trash" and received refills of lemonade. The crowd smiled and clapped, while the delighted children giggled with satisfaction.

Afterward, some Coca-Cola workers, accompanied by a small group of friends, relatives, and four bodyguards, headed to a local watering hole for a beer. On the way, William mentioned to me that he did not recognize everyone who was videotaping the event. The videotapes, he said, "would give the paramilitaries an excuse to fuck with us." He voiced his concerns again, after the group had settled around a long table and ordered drinks. Others shared his worries, but nobody dwelled on the topic for long. The mood was upbeat. The protest had been a success. "Someone should nominate us for an Oscar," commented one person. "Perhaps we should contact Steven Spielberg," said another. The workers believed that today at least SINALTRAINAL had scored a goal.

Several hours and many beers later the group finally called it a night and went home. A couple of weeks later, I, too, returned home to the United States but soon learned that another murder had punctured the optimism that buoyed the unionists that evening. In an email, William wrote, "Lesley, I am sorry to have to tell you that last night at about 10:30... one of the compañeros who was drinking beer with us was murdered on his way home... you never get used to seeing this happen... I couldn't sleep last night, and I can't concentrate on anything."

The dead man was Carlos Montes, a SINALTRAINAL board member who worked in a club for the employees of the state oil company. The police chief immediately suggested that the murder arose from a domestic dispute, because the assailant was related to Montes' spouse, and he did not hesitate to share his speculations with the local paper, which placed the police theory prominently on the front page, implying that Montes had been abusing his wife. What the police and the paper failed to mention, however, was that the victim had received numerous death threats because of his union activities, and that the assassin was a soldier attached to an army base in the neighboring town of Yondó. A judge had even allowed the soldier to remain free after hearing his confession in open court.

This most recent tragedy—and the impunity that allows perpetrators to go unpunished — underscores how SINALTRAINAL and other Colombian unionists must fight not just for better working conditions but for life and everything that they consider decent and human. Workers live in a social order that has come unhinged. They understand that much more than a job is at stake, and they know that without a vigorous union and a sense of alternatives, there can be no hope. Yet keeping hope alive remains their *biggest* challenge.

Lesley Gill is professor of anthropology at American University. Her most recent book is titled The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence (Duke University Press, 2004). She may be reached at lgill@american.edu.

SANA RESOLUTION REGARDING A BOYCOTT OF COCA-COLA PRODUCTS

This resolution was passed by the SANA membership at the
Annual Meeting of the Society for the Anthropology held in April 2006

WHEREAS, trade unionists at Coca-Cola plants in Colombia have been assassinated, harassed, and intimidated by right-wing paramilitaries, and

WHEREAS, the wives, children, and relatives of SINALTRAINAL leaders have been targeted by these paramilitaries, and

WHEREAS, eyewitness accounts and other evidence support the conclusion that company personnel have organized the murder and intimidation of Coca-Cola workers, and

WHEREAS, paramilitary groups operate unhindered, and often in collusion, with the government and foreign corporations as an anti-union force, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government provides billions of dollars to the Colombian government in mostly military aid, and

WHEREAS, these actions deprive Colombian workers of their internationally recognized rights to organize into unions and bargain collectively, and

WHEREAS, no professional organization of social scientists concerned with labor and human rights should offer its credibility to the Coca-Cola Company by distributing its products,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Society for the Anthropology of North America (SANA)

- 1) will ban all Coca-Cola products from its functions and annual meetings,
- 2) calls upon the American Anthropological Association to do the same, and further calls upon the AAA to provide quarterly updates directly to its membership describing the efforts the Association has taken to enforce this ban at all of its functions and at its annual meetings,
- 3) communicate to the Coca-Cola Company that until the situation involving SINALTRAINAL is resolved and the safety and rights of workers in its bottling plants in Colombia and worldwide are protected, SANA will support SINALTRAINAL's boycott of the Coca-Cola Company and do all it can to publicize the boycott, and
- 4) demand that the Coca-Cola Company a) make a public declaration in Colombia that paramilitary violence against unionists must stop, b) create a company policy against collaboration with paramilitaries, c) establish a human rights ombudsman in every plant, and d) provide compensation to the victims, and
- 5) call upon the United States government to stop military aid to the Colombian government until the perpetrators of human rights crimes are held accountable.

MEETING NOTES

Anthropology in an Uncertain Age

2006 Spring SANA Meeting

By Julian Brash, SANA Program Chair

In April, the Society for the Anthropology of North America held its 2006 meetings in New York City. With global projects like the war on terror and neoliberalization at home and abroad stumbling after a period of ascendancy, SANA called for papers addressing the theme of "Anthropology in an Uncertain Age."

The response was overwhelming, both in terms of quantity and quality. Over 180 papers were presented to over 200 attendees – both new highs for SANA. The quality and diversity of papers presented – many by students and young scholars – demonstrated the increasing strength of both the anthropology of North America and, despite its relative youth, SANA itself. Sessions and papers addressed a broad array of issues, from urbanization to the war on terror to the politics of health to youth activism. However, if one idea emerged from this diversity of topics, it was the notion that neoliberalism, imperialism, and globalization are generating novel responses on the part of those impacted by these processes, including new forms of identification, new political projects, and new practices aimed at producing a sense of "security," whatever that term may mean. For example, papers addressed how the privatization of public space has produced new opportunities for political resistance and how SUVs have come to symbolize "security" for the precariously positioned middle class, even as they make its members more vulnerable to traffic accidents.

Highlights of the meetings included Catherine Lutz's keynote address on "Ethnographies of Empire" and a plenary session on the final afternoon during which Aihwa Ong, Faye Ginsberg, Donald Robotham, and Nicholas De Genova discussed how anthropologists might move forward in the current context – politically, intellectually, and pedagogically. Gina Pérez was awarded the Delmos Jones and Jagna Sharff Memorial Prize for the Critical Study of North America for her book The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement and Puerto Rican Families.



photograph by Amy Jones

Gina Pérez, author of The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement and Puerto Rican Families, accepts the Delmos Jones and Jagna Sharff Memorial Prize for the Critical Study of North America.

SANA members debated the merits of boycotting Coca-Cola after a panel of labor activists described their struggle to have the company improve its labor practices (see SANA Resolution, p.14). They also celebrated the release of the books Rethinking Urban Parks, edited by Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanne Scheld, and Taxes Are a Woman's Issue by Mimi Abramovitz and SANA President-Elect Sandra Morgen, and presented papers which will be included in future publications, including a volume edited by Ida Susser and Stephane Tonnelat entitled Transformative Cities and a special issue of Urban Anthropology which will be guest edited by Julian Brash.

Students were especially involved in the meetings. There were a number of student-organized panels, including sessions addressing post-Katrina New Orleans (the likely location of next year's SANA meetings) and the viability of American Anthropology's Four-Field approach.

SANA would like to thank all those who made these meetings possible and who contributed to their success, and would especially like to thank Kenneth Guest of the Baruch College Anthropology Department and Dean Myrna Chase of Baruch College's Weissman School of Arts and Sciences, for allowing SANA to hold its meetings at Baruch College's Newman Conference Center.

Julian Brash is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Toledo. He may be reached at julian.brash@utoledo.edu.

**105th Annual Meeting
American Anthropological Association
Critical Intersections/Dangerous Issues**

*San José McEnery Convention Center
San José, California*

November 15-19, 2006

SANA-SPONSORED OR CO-SPONSORED PANELS & EVENTS:

REDEFINING IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL RELATIONS THROUGH SPORT IN AMERICA

Organizers & Chairs: Frank Salamone & John Napora. Speakers: John Napora| Stanton Green| Frank Salamone| John Napora| Anne Bolin| Lawrence McBride. Discussant: Frederick Damon.

LAKOTA LEGACIES CONTINUED: INFLUENCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NORTH AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Organizer: Tressa Berman; Co-Organizer & Chair: JoAllyn Archambault. Speakers: Patricia Albers| Max Carocci| William Willard| David Wilkins| Tressa Berman. Discussant: Thomas Biolsi.

LIFE CAN BE FRAGILE: DISPLACED PEOPLE, DISPLACED PATHS

Organizer: Adam Frank; Co-Organizer and Chair: David Sandell. Speakers: R Neill Hadder| Anthony Webster| Michael Trujillo| Adam Frank| David Sandell. Discussant: Douglas Foley.

UNSETTLING AND UNSETTLED: NORTH AMERICA IN DANGEROUS TIMES

Organizer: Organizer & Chair: Jane Helleiner. Speakers: Barbara Gurr| Kristy Feldhousen| Jane Helleiner| Wayne Fife| Antoinette Jackson| Patrick Linder| R Sophie Statzel.

TROUBLING THE SOUTH

Organizer & Chair: Wende Marshall. Speakers: Wende Marshall| Yadra Perez| Claire Snell-Rood| Lisa Stewart| Todne Thomas| Bridget McDonnell.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF WELFARE BUREAUCRACY

Organizer: Cindy Isenhour. Chair: Beth Goldstein. Speakers: Joan Acker| Alyson Anthony| Halvard Vike| Miria Kano| Cindy Isenhour| Discussants: Catherine Kingfisher| Sandra Morgen.

POWER, PLACE AND PRACTICE IN NORTH AMERICA

Organizer & Chair: Kerry Fosher. Speakers: Cora Bender| Kathryn Fulton| Joel Savishinsky| Josh Klein| Desiree Tabor| Bill McKinney| Kerry Fosher.

RACE, GENDER, AND NATION IN THE IMPERIAL US: RECONFIGURATIONS OF POWER IN THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL

Co-Organizer: Ashley Spalding & Robert O'Brien. Co-Chairs: Angela Jancius & Greg Tanaka. Speakers: Robert O'Brien| Susanna Rosenbaum| Jennifer Alvey| Melanie Beaudette| Angela Jancius| Jeffry Maskovsky| Ashley Spalding| Pauline Lipman| Elsa Davidson| Krista Boerman| Greg Tanaka. Discussant: Sabiyha Prince.

SO, YOU WANT TO BE AN ANTHROPOLOGIST?: THE POLITICS, PRESSURES, AND PLEASURES OF FIELDWORK IN THE U.S.

Co-Organizer: Kate Masley & Elizabeth Carpenter-Song. Chair: Elizabeth Carpenter-Song. Speakers: Rachel Chapman| Kate Masley| Sarah Rubin| Julie Brugger| Per Smith| Mary Gray| Megan Nordquest| Mark Macaуда| Chaya Spears| Tanya Ceja-Zamarripa| Elizabeth Carpenter-Song| Petra Kalshoven. Discussant: Alisse Waterston.

**SPECIAL EVENT: Update on the Coca-Cola Boycott: Anthropologists and Activists Fighting Human Rights Abuses and Anti-Unionism in Colombia and Around the World
Thursday November 16 12:15-1:30 PM Ballroom 7**

Critical Intersections/Dangerous Issues

***San José McEnergy Convention Center
San José, California***

November 15-19, 2006

AAA PRESIDENTIAL PANELS OF INTEREST TO SANA MEMBERS:

- **Through A Glass Darkly: The United States in Global Perspective** (Maria D. Vesperi and Ida Susser)
- **Debating Anthropological Practice & National Security: Past, Present and Across Borders, Part I** (Laura Graham and Kathryn Libal)
- **Dangerous Intersections: Rights and Security** (Sally E. Merry)
- **War** (Alisse Waterston)
- **Embodied Danger: The Health Costs of War and Political Violence** (Marcia Inhorn)
- **Fabricating the Authentic: Anthropology and the Danger of the Real** (Lee Baker)
- **The 1906 Antiquities Act: A Century of Critical Intersections and Dangerous Issues** (Teresita Majewski)
- **Biocultural Anthropology: The Half-century Legacy of Jack Kelso** (George Armelagos and Wenda Trevathan)
- **Critical and Dangerous Issues in Ethnographic Research in Native North America** (Pauline T. Strong)
- **Critical Intersections Engendering Indigenous Knowledge: The Contributions and Enduring Significance of Beatrice Medicine** (Faye V. Harrison)
- **Critical Intersections, Ethnographic Analyses and Theoretical Influence in Honor of Nancy Munn** (Francoise Dussart)
- **Dangerous Intersections and New Cultural Spaces of Age, Mind and Body** (Jay Sokolovsky)
- **Economics and Morality** (B. Lynne Milgram)
- **The Evolution of Inequality** (Eric Smith and James Boone)
- **Human Sociality and the Four Fields: a Wenner-Gren Panel** (Nick Enfeld and Stephen Levinson)
- **New Approaches for Combating HIV/AIDS and Food and Nutrition Insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa: Part I: What Social Scientists Can Contribute; Part II: Taking Gender Into Account** (David Himmelgreen)
- **The New York African Burial Ground "Final" Analysis: Intersections of Time, Space, and Perspective** (Michael Blakey, Autumn Barrett and Shannon Mahoney).
- **The Orgasm** (Don Kulick and Emily Martin)
- **Speaking With/For Nature: Conversations with Biologists and Their Non-Human Others** (Eben S. Kirksey)
- **Those People! The Shared Foundations of Contemporary Racist and Anti-Immigrant Sentiments** (Thomas Paterson, Yolanda Moses and Carlos Velez Ibanez)

DON'T MISS THE SATURDAY NIGHT PARTY WITH

SambaDa

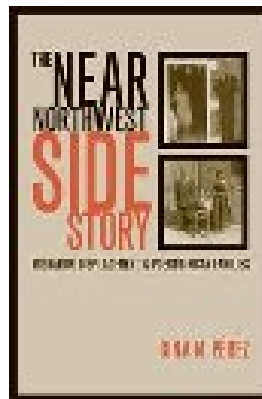
the Brazilian-influenced band based in Santa Cruz!!

ANTHROPOLOGY OFF THE SHELF

The Near Northwest Side Story Migration, Displacement and Puerto Rican Families

Gina M. Pérez

Assistant Professor, Comparative American Studies Program, Oberlin College



In The Near Northwest Side Story, Gina M. Pérez offers an intimate and unvarnished portrait of Puerto Rican life in Chicago and San Sebastian, Puerto Rico -- two places connected by a long history of circulating people, ideas, goods, and information. Pérez's masterful blend of history and ethnography explores the multiple and gendered reasons for migration, why people maintain transnational connections with distant communities, and how poor and working-class Puerto Ricans work to build meaningful communities.

Pérez traces the changing ways that Puerto Ricans have experienced poverty, displacement, and discrimination and illustrates how they imagine and build extended families and dense social networks that link San Sebastian to barrios in Chicago. She includes an incisive analysis of the role of the state in shaping migration through such projects as the Chardon Plan, Operation Bootstrap, and the Chicago Experiment. The Near Northwest Side Story provides a unique window on the many strategies people use to resist the negative consequences of globalization, economic development, and gentrification.

Description from University of California Press 2004

Praise for The Near Northwest Side Story:

"An original and significant contribution to Puerto Rican, Latino, and Latin American studies, drawing on the perspective of ordinary men and women. Gina Pérez's fine work is based on intensive research in two distant but interconnected places, conducted by a perceptive and sensitive observer-participant, herself immersed in two languages, cultures, and nations. Clearly written and cogently argued, her book will be of great interest to students of migration, ethnicity, and gender." -- Jorge Duany, author of *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United States*

"In this fresh, textured, original, multi-sited ethnography, Pérez traces the changing ways that Puerto Ricans have experienced poverty, displacement, and discrimination, and how they imagine and build deeply rooted but transnational lives through the extended families, dense social networks, and meaningful communities. Pérez exposes the limits of citizenship for racialized minorities; the contradictory, constrained agency in community mobilizations and urban uprisings; and the often-failed promise of transnational migration as a place to build a counter-hegemonic political space." -- Brett Williams, Professor of Anthropology, American University

Addendum

The following is a letter to SANA President Jeff Maskovsky from Coca Cola Co. For more on the ongoing email correspondence, please visit <http://sananet.org/cocacolaboycott/boycott.html>

June 26, 2006

Dear Mr. Maskovsky:

We received your email and were sorry to hear that the Society of the Anthropology for North America has decided to boycott The Coca-Cola Company's products. We are disappointed that your organization did not contact us prior to passing this resolution.

We want you to know that we share your concerns regarding the violence against trade unionists in Colombia, but I can assure you that the allegations claiming that our bottlers have engaged in anti-union violence are absolutely false.

Our Company and the Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia have frequently and publicly condemned all acts of violence against workers in Colombia in various ways, including in local advertisements and press statements. We deplore and condemn all acts of violence committed by any paramilitary group in Colombia that targets trade union leaders or any other group. Further, SINALTRAINAL has refused a request from our company to join us in issuing a joint anti-violence statement.

§ Two different judicial inquiries in Colombia – one in a Colombian Court and one by the Colombian Attorney General – found no evidence to support the allegations that bottler management conspired to intimidate or threaten trade unionists.

§ In Colombia, a country where fewer than four percent of workers are union members, about 31 percent of workers in independent Coca-Cola bottling plants are represented by one of the 12 Colombian unions with which the Colombian Coca-Cola bottlers have ongoing, normal relations.

§ Through collective bargaining agreements and their own initiative, Coca-Cola bottlers work with unions and the government to provide emergency cell phones, transportation to and from work, secure housing and a host of other measures to protect employees. Additional security measures are routinely provided to union leaders.

§ A hot line for employees was established in 2003 for bottling plant workers to confidentially call a third party to report any concerns or complaints 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Dilo Complaint System was introduced to facilitate the detection of improper practices and/or conducts inconsistent with the Code of Business Ethics. Operated by a specialized external company, calls are received by trained personnel and make it possible to have secure communication with the informant, to keep him/her informed about the action taken.

§ The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), the global federation of unions that represents the majority of union workers in the Coca-Cola system, unanimously rejected calls for a Coca-Cola boycott. In its rejection, the IUF said: "Sweeping, unsubstantiated allegations and assertions of the type found in the boycott appeal do nothing to help the cause of the unions that organize and represent Coca-Cola workers around the world, the majority of which are members of the IUF."

§ Among other unions not supporting the boycott are SICO, Sinaltrainbec, Asotragaseosas and CUT (the National Federation of Trade Unions), all in Colombia.

§ In the UK, a motion to boycott Coca-Cola on college campuses was overwhelmingly defeated in a vote at the National Union of Students (NUS) Annual Conference in March of this year.

§ Individual trade unions, Amicus, TGWU and GMB, as well as the umbrella organization for trade unions in the UK, the TUC, do not support the call for a boycott. In an open joint-letter to NUS delegates the general secretaries of the trade unions wrote: "Since the first call to boycott Coca-Cola over Colombia was issued in 2003, the UK trade union movement has investigated and monitored the situation closely... Since 2003, no evidence has been provided to link Coca-Cola to the assassination of its workers in Colombia. We do not believe that a boycott of Coca-Cola would contribute in any way to saving lives or achieving a just and lasting peace in Colombia."

In Colombia and around the world, our Company and our bottling partners have global standards for a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all employees. We comply with all applicable labor and employment laws where we do business. We also have a commitment to equal opportunity, fair and inclusive management practices and to creating a work environment free of discrimination. Additionally, we fully respect our employees' rights to join or not join labor unions, and we work to ensure that those rights are exercised freely and without fear of retaliation or intimidation.

We recognize that some people still have concerns about the labor practices of the Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia, and for that reason, we have agreed to a fair and impartial assessment of the bottling operations in Colombia.

This March the International Labor Organization of the United Nations agreed to conduct an independent and impartial investigation and evaluation of the labor relations and workers' rights practices of Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia. The ILO is the ideal organization to complete this investigation and evaluation based on its unimpeachable record as an advocate for workers' rights, its authority with respect to international labor standards and its tripartite structure which balances representation from government, workers and employers. The Coca-Cola Company and the Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia will cooperate fully with the ILO assessment team.

I hope that you will reconsider your resolution regarding our products. If you would provide your phone number, I would very much like to call you and discuss this in more depth. I also would appreciate the opportunity to meet with your board of directors to discuss this topic.

Kind regards,

Kari Bjorhus, Director, Public Affairs, Coca Cola Co.



**TO JOIN SANA, CLIP THE FORM BELOW,
ENCLOSE A \$25. (\$10. Students) CHECK MADE OUT TO:
AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION,
AND MAIL TO:
Membership Services
American Anthropological Association
4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 640
Arlington, VA 22203-1620**

Dear AAA,

I am a member of the AAA. Please enroll me as a member of the Society for the Anthropology of North America. Enclosed please find my \$25. (\$10. students) annual membership fee.

NAME: _____

AFFILIATION _____

ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____



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A N T H R O P O L O G I C A L
A S S O C I A T I O N