

# Princeton University

HONORS FACULTY MEMBERS  
RECEIVING EMERITUS STATUS



*May 2019*

The biographical sketches were written by staff and colleagues in the departments of those honored.

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# CAROL GREENHOUSE



Carol Greenhouse, the Arthur W. Marks '19 Professor of Anthropology, joined Princeton's faculty in 2001. Carol recognized anthropology as her calling well before her college years. Intrigued by the discipline as a way of understanding peace, war, and the rights-based social movements that were changing the world in the U.S. and abroad, she enrolled in an anthropology of law seminar in 1967, her first year at Radcliffe College (Harvard University). The seminar was taught by legal anthropologist Klaus-Friedrich Koch, who with Evon Z. Vogt, served as her undergraduate and graduate adviser at Harvard. The anthropology of law is based on the premise that law has sources, methods, stakes, and effects beyond the law itself. This means that by studying legal processes ethnographically one can learn about the ways law's "social force" recombines tradition, innovation, choice, constraint, habit, and improvisation (among other things).

Carol's first fieldwork was in an Indigenous Maya community in Mexico, as an undergraduate member of the Harvard Chiapas Project. That early project on sacred and secular dispute resolution processes in Zinacantan led her to undertake dissertation research on related issues in a small community in the southern U.S. Carol earned her A.B. in anthropology, graduating magna cum laude in 1971, and her Ph.D. in social anthropology from Harvard, with a minor in law, in 1976.

Carol's entrée into the discipline of anthropology, through fieldwork in Mexico and the U.S., informed the arc of her celebrated career. Carol's first book, *Praying for Justice: Faith, Order, and Community in an American Town* (1986), is about ideas of harmony and conflict in a community in Georgia— revealing both traces of antebellum divisions and very contemporary concerns with social transformation related to suburbanization. Now a classic in legal anthropology, *Praying for Justice* details how cultural frameworks fuse law's significance to questions of social interests and identities. In addition to being a rigorous interpretive analysis, it was one of the inaugural texts in contemporary American legal studies within the discipline of anthropology. Up until then, legal anthropology focused primarily on cultures outside the United States.

What distinguishes Carol's work is her sustained focus on how cultural norms, formal and informal law, and legal authority at all scales

(from personal to transnational and back again) shape and are shaped by social experience. Carol continues to be intrigued by the recursivity of law in contributing to — and constraining— social solidarity, with an eye to understanding how and why democracies are so vulnerable to authoritarianism. She also continues to write on the importance of ethnography as a way to make sense of what law is by considering its relationship to other cultural institutions and its impact on individuals.

Carol's theoretical work on time and law, best represented in *A Moment's Notice: Time Politics Across Cultures* (1996), demonstrates how competing conceptualizations of time often express state legitimacy crises. This breathtaking theoretical work details how legal formalism articulates specific notions of time. Notably legal determinations about the facts of history, and interpretations of legal precedent, are built on cultural beliefs about the agency, or responsibility, of people, institutions, and forces (e.g., cultural, spiritual, economic). This theoretical work is the product of Carol's analysis of events as diverse as the establishment of a new legal order during the Ch'in dynasty and contemporary United States Supreme Court hearings.

Carol's other books include *The Paradox of Relevance: Ethnography and Citizenship in the United States* (2011) and *Transnational Law: Cases and Problems in an Interconnected World* (with her husband Alfred C. Aman, Jr., 2017). Her book *Law and Community in Three American Towns* (with Barbara Yngvesson and David Engel, 1994) was a winner of the Law & Society Association Book Prize (1996). In addition, she is the editor of three volumes on law, politics, and neoliberalism and has published over 70 chapters and peer-reviewed articles.

As a faculty member, Carol was a beloved undergraduate professor and graduate student adviser. In order to encourage non-anthropology majors to study our discipline, Carol led the development of the Program in Ethnographic Studies at Princeton, which began in 2015, enabling undergraduates to earn a certificate in ethnographic studies in addition to their major. For those who knew her passion for teaching, it was no surprise that she was honored with the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching in 2012. Carol's collegiality and leadership also led to her being appointed chair of the Department of Anthropology from 2007–16. In 2012, Carol was named the Arthur W. Marks '19 Professor of Anthropology.

During her time at Princeton, Carol served on numerous committees, most notably the executive committee of the Program in Law and Public Affairs, the Faculty Advisory Committee on Appointments and Promotions, and the University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Her legal anthropology scholarship

has been recognized by the Law & Society Association, which honored her with the Harry Kalven Prize (2011) and by the Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and Humanities, which honored her with a James Boyd White Award (2015). She was also the editor of *American Ethnologist* (1998–2002), our discipline’s flagship journal, and the president of the American Ethnological Society (2013–15). She also served as president of the Law & Society Association (1996–97) and the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology (1999–2001). She is a member of the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Before being recruited to Princeton, Carol was a professor in the (former) Department of Communication & Culture, and the Department of Anthropology at Indiana University-Bloomington (1991–2001). Her first tenure-track teaching job was at Cornell University (1977–91), where she was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1983.

Before that she was a research analyst at the Bureau of Social Science Research in Washington, D.C. (1976–77) and taught part-time at George Mason University (1977) and Georgia State University (1975). She was awarded a visiting Chair of American Civilization at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (1998–99), where she taught a seminar on U.S. ethnography at the intersection of law and literature.

Carol is not retiring; rather she has chosen to devote more time to research and writing. The rise of authoritarianism around the world compelled this transition. She hopes her continuing scholarship might contribute to more critical theorizing about democracy, sovereignty, and global capitalism. Her forthcoming book, *Landscapes of Law: Practicing Sovereignty in Transnational Terrain* (co-edited with Christina L. Davis), continues her theorizations on how different states manage tensions between sovereignty and aspirations for global connection through their diverse officializations of the idea of culture.

In our department, Carol— a close reader of Emile Durkheim (a founder of modern social science)— fostered the types of organic solidarity that Durkheim theorized. Her commitment to democracy as a necessary component of group solidarity, a commitment that requires the ability to listen and respect the points of view of others, made her a phenomenal leader and friend. We will miss her daily insights, wisdom, and guidance, but we are grateful that Carol will now be able to share more of her razor-sharp critical analyses on law and culture with the rest of the world.