

The proposed dissertation research on Nanti karintaa performances emerges from the applicant's ongoing linguistic anthropological research in the Nanti communities of Montetoni and Marankehari in southeastern Peruvian Amazonia. Karintaa is extemporaneous poetry performed by Nantis exclusively within the context of group chanting during community feasting. This project will describe the defining characteristics of karintaa as a form of verbal art and examine specific karintaa performances situated in their sociocultural and spatio-temporal contexts. This research will examine the role these performances play in shaping relationships among individuals and in shaping Nanti society as an enduring network of relationships.

Informed by the discourse-centered approach to culture, Beier will describe and analyze the linguistic, sociocultural, and spatio-temporal features that distinguish karintaa from other forms of Nanti communicative behavior; and will offer a preliminary theory of the relationships between karintaa and other Nanti speaking practices that together constitute a dynamic communicative system, or *discursive ecology*. The project's intellectual merit includes documenting and analyzing previously undescribed Nanti communicative practices, including formal linguistic description of their minimally-documented language. Its broader impacts include producing data and resources that directly support the Nanti communities' self-determined political interests, including land and language rights, and promote their long-term social well-being.