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Department of Philosophy/Anthropology

It's Our Twelfth Year! It seems hard to believe that it was twelve years ago that Bob Reeder put out that first mimeographed newsletter for circulation in anthropology classes. We now distribute 250 copies of each issue to interested students, faculty, administrators and alumni. If you would be interested in being added to our mailing list, please contact either Dave Minderhout (219 BCH, 4334) or Art Sweeney.

Four Anthropologists! For the first time in its history, BU has four anthropologists on its staff. The first anthropologist was hired at BU in 1961. The program was expanded to a second person in 1968 and to a third person in 1971. Since then we've been in a holding pattern. In addition to Elise Brenner, Dave Minderhout, and Bob Reeder, the anthropology program was able to hire Tom Aleto for a one-year temporary position. The anthropologists are very much hoping that we can keep a four person department, bringing us in line with such SSHE institutions as West Chester and Kutztown.

Spring Semester 1988 The anthropologists will be offering the following courses for the spring semester:

46.101 Introduction to Anthropology
46.102 Anthropology & the Modern World
46.200 Principles of Cultural Anthropology
46.220 Principles of Physical Anthropology
46.300 Archaeological Method & Theory
46.350 Medical Anthropology
46.440 Language & Culture
46.450 South American Indians

46.101, 46.200, and 46.220 all qualify for the general education distribution requirements under Group B, the social sciences

46.102 qualifies as a Values, Ethics & Responsible Decision-making Course.

South American Indians:A New Course From the vast tropical forests of the Amazon Basin to the world's driest desert on the coast of Chile, South America is one of the most ecologically diverse continents. The many diverse environments of South America have given rise to some of the most exotic cultures that have ever existed. The most famous of these is the Inca culture that dominated the Central Andes for nearly 200 years. The Spanish defeated the Inca but did not put an end to all of the indigenous cultures. Rather, their conquest of South America introduced an era during which the indigenous cultures absorbed elements of the European way of life and the Europeans were greatly influenced by

the people they came to conquer. The evolution of cultures that began over 400 years ago continues to this day.

"Peoples & Cultures of South America," a course to be offered by Professor Tom Aleto in the spring semester, offers a look at the fascinating indigenous and traditional cultures of South America. The course is open to all students with at least one semester of anthropology. It provides an introduction to the geography of the continent and to the archaeology of the people who inhabited South America before the arrival of the Europeans. These topics create the background for the study of the Inca empire and its destruction at the hands of several hundred Spanish conquistadors. This is followed by a discussion of the changes brought about by colonialism that are responsible for the development of culture over the past 400 years.

Three cultures will be investigated in detail. The first is a group of Quechua speaking peasants of the high Andes. They grow potatoes and graze animals at oxygen deficient altitudes between 10,000 and 18,000 feet above sea level. The methods of farming, language, religion, medicine and social organizatio[illegible]at survive today reflect the long contact between the Incaic and European traditions. Another group to receive close scrutiny are the descendants of African slaves who live in the tropical Pacific lowlands of southern Columbia. Their way of life is a rich synthesis that reflects their West African, South American and European traditions, but is, at the same time, quite distinct. The third group to be studied are the Jivaro of the Amazon rain forest. They are known the world over for their custom of shrinking the heads of their enemies. Until the middle 20th century, they had been little affected by outsiders. As a result, they provide a glimpse of a way of life that once spread throughout the Amazon Basin, but which is now almost extinct.

The final section of the course addresses the problems faced by these groups in dealing with pressure from national governments to reject their traditional way of life and to modernize. This is an issue of immense importance as exploration for minerals and petroleum and destruction of the rain forestss result in a clash of cultures and great personal tragedy. These issues are a concern for all of us since the United States and the World Bank fund these projects. As the welfare of the people living on distant continents is thrust into our hands, it is imperative that we familiarize ourselves with their history, traditions and values and that we recognize their dignity. This course offers an opportunity to learn about unique cultures and people and to understand their concerns and problems.

Ecuadorian Indians Fight Back The Huaorani/Auca Indians of the Ecuadorian Amazon are defending themselves and their land against US and European oil companies and the Ecuadorian government. "We are defending our home, the land on which we live," said Alberto Tangulia, an Indian leader in Coca, Ecuador. "We will defend it with whatever it takes ... be it with our bare hands, sticks, stones, or other weapons."

The resistance of the Auca began in 1956 when they killed five US evangelists who ventured into their territory. In the last decade there

have been at least a dozen fatal attacks on oil, lumber and palm company employees, as these companies' activities advanced farther into the jungle.

The latest act of resistance occurred this past July when a Roman Catholic Bishop, Alejandro Lavaca, 67, and a nun, Sister Ines Arango, 50, were speared to death. Bishop Lavaca was employed by Ecuador's State Petroleum Corp. to contact the Auca. Social scientists living in the jungle say that Bishop Lavaca made several serious mistakes when he descended from a helicopter via a rope ladder into an Auca village. First, his approach by helicopter certainly intimidated the Auca. Second, he did not notice a red stripe on the roof of an Auca dwelling - a declaration of war against intruders. Third, Bishop Lavaca misinterpreted the Aucas' smiles and hand signals as signs of friendship.

A social scientist hired by an oil company to try to "pacify" the Indians said, with sadness, that he felt like a doctor in charge of terminal cancer patients. "I know I can't do anything for my patients, because the march of progress is unstoppable. The only thing I can do is try to delay their death and to make it less painful."

Bob Reeder on Sabbatical Leave This coming spring Bob Reeder will be on sabbatical leave to research physical anthropology facilities at other universities and to observe research at the Yerkes Primate Center in Atlanta, Georgia. As a result, the anthropology program is currently searching for a sabbatical replacement for Professor Reeder for the spring. The advertisement for the position reads as follows:

The Anthropology Program at Bloomsburg University seeks a one semester only sabbatical replacement to teach introductory courses in physical and cultural anthropology for the spring semester 1988. Candidates must present evidence of skill in teaching introductory courses. Ph.D. or ABD preferred. Appointment will be at the assistant professor or instructor level, depending on degree and experience. Women, minorities, and other protected class members are urged to apply. Send vita and three letters of recommendation to Dr. David Minderhout, Department of Philosophy/Anthropology, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. Applications must be received by November 1, 1987. AAE/EOE.

New Find Casts Light on Human Evolution: It was announced this summer by Donald Johanson and Tim White of UCB that they had discovered the skull and limb bones of an early human ancestor at least 1.8 million years old. The significance of the find focuses on the limb bones. The fossil human, known as Homo habilis, first began appearing in the archaeological record in the early 1960's, but until this discovery,no one had been able to conclusively link limb bones to the skulls previously unearthed. When the current find was reconstructed, researchers were able to identify the remains as those of an elderly female, the age being determined by the fact that the teeth were badly worn: in one case the tooth was worn down into the jawbone. Besides being the oldest representative in the fossil record for Homo habilis, this specimen was also remarkably short - she stood only about 3 feet, 4

inches tall. Johanson & White interpret this as evidence of extreme sexual dimorphism in Homo habilis, with males being perhaps twice as tall as females. What was also surprising was the length of the fossil's arms: they would have hung to her knees. This is surprising since Homo habilis is known to be fully bipedal, that is, with upright posture just like a modern human. Homo habilis' brain also is significantly larger than apes or than other contemporary hominids, the australopithecines; work on fossil skull casts suggests that H. habilis' brain was structured more like the modern human brain than apes or australopithecines. Thus, this otherwise fairly modern early human ancestor appears to have retained the relatively long arms of an ape.

Anthropology Major Makes Good!: The following is reprinted from the March 1987 Alumni Quarterly:

When John Sabol ('72) was a student at Mahanoy Area High School, one of his teachers told him he wouldn't amount to much.

Boy, did he fool her!

In the 20 years since he left school, Sabol has been an archaeologist-anthropologist, a guard at the Russian Embassy, an army sergeant, military technician, border guard, policeman, reporter, fighter, and Viking.

Actually, Sabol is a professional archaeologist-anthropologist. His other jobs were on a Paramount movie set in Mexico, where he worked as an extra and has had small speaking roles.

While employed as a professor in the Mexican national education system in 1983, Sabol heard auditions were being held for extras for the film "Dune" at Churubusco, Azteca, one of the world's largest movie studios.

On a lark, he wenbt to the set, auditioned, and was told he would hear from the movie company if they were interested in his services.

Sabol said he thought that was the beginning and end of his movie career, but about three weeks later he was called and offered the role.

In "Dune" which starred Jose Ferrar, Max Von Sydow, and the rock singer, Sting, Sabol had five different roles.

"My face was only seen in one. In the other four roles I wore masks," Sabol said. He also worked on special effects where he was one of 10 people pulling different parts of a monster.

Because there was plenty of action on the film, some of the voices were not as clear as they should have been, and Sabol's voice was also used for the Mexican actors who had small speaking parts.

Since then, he has had speaking roles in many American and Mexican films and has been featured on television commercials.

Although Sabol said he enjoyed working on all films, he especially liked working with Sylvester Stallone on "Rambo II."

"A lot of people are confused about Stallone and perceive him to be different from what he actually is," Sabol said. "He has a lot of savvy about the job he wants done."

Other movies Sabol has worked on are "The Falcon and the Snowman," "Conan the Barbarian II", and "On the Wings of Eagles."

Sabol said he could do a lot more acting if he was willing to give up his duties as a professor of archaeology/anthropology at a Mexican university.

After earning a degree at Bloomsburg and a master's degree at the University of Tennessee, he studied at the University of the Americas in Cholula, Mexico and at Penn State. He was a student and assistant at the University of Exeter in Devon, England, during the excavation of the 12th century Wolvesey Palace in Winchester.

Sabol also spent a summer as supervisor of a team of field surveyors in South Dakota that was involved in recording historic and prehistoric sites.

He believes that one of life's ironies is that he is a teacher. "I hated school, and now here I am, a teacher."

Sabol said his interest in archaeology and anthropology developed during his youth when he and his friends walked the mountainside near his home.

"I had a great imagination, and I used to try to visualize what it was like for the Indians that roamed the woods," Sabol said. When he returned home he often transferred his thoughts to paper in the form of poetry.

Someday in the future Sabol would like to see a movie done on the early days of Schuylkill County and help in the creation of the characters.

Life on a Great Lakes Tanker: In the September 1987 issue of Smithsonian there is an article on anthropologist Michael Agar's research on ore boats sailing the Great Lakes. This is an interesting example of participatory observation, of an anthropologist having direct involvement in a way of life not well understood or documented. Agar sailed on the Columbia Star, a huge (1000 ft. long by 105 ft. wide) boat that carries iron ore pellets from ports in Minnesota to ports in Ohio where processing plants are located. The emphasis in Agar's research is on the decline of the trade; the traffic through the Sault St. Marie Locks between Lake Superior and Lake Huron has declined from 7000 freighters in 1981 to 4200 in 1986. However, he also describes the nature of the trade at its peak.

Iron ore was discovered in the Upper Pennisula of Michigan in 1844. At first, the mines were too remote to be profitable, but the opening of the Soo Locks in 1855 made tanker-borne shipments to Ohio reasonable. Processing plants were not located near the mines because they were too far from both populations of workers and for markets for the raw iron and steel. The tankers quickly took on a typical appearance - a wheelhouse at the bow, an engine room aft, a long stretch of deck for ease of loading and unloading, and flat, boxy sides to fit more cargo into snug rivers and locks. The division of the crew into deck crew and enmgine crew became a social as well as a spatial division. Crews lived, ate, and worked in separate environments. The captain ruled the deck crew, but the engine crew answered to the chief engineer. Some boats actually had lines drawn across them to mark the social boundaries.

Life on a tanker was - and is - hard. Today, work shifts stretch for 60 continuous days, then 30 days off. The shipping season now is nearly year-round, but in the past, before modern ice-breaking equipment, the season was boundaried by the ice in Lake Superior. Even

so, the tankers sailed deep into the winter. To quote the article: "Everything freezes; nothing works. The crew coats themselves in layers but shiver all the same. The buoys are gone. Snow and ice pile up on deck and freeze the hatches, and floes clog the raw water ports. Slabs of frozen river threaten steel hulls." (p. 122). During the entire year the trip is menaced by narrow channels, heavy traffic from recreational craft, and heavy fogs. Navigation is always tricky. Agar tells the story of one pilot who steered by "barking dog navigation." At a treacherous bend in a channel, a toot on the ship's whistle would set the dogs barking at a nearby farm, and the sound would tell the pilot how close he was to the shore.

Today, competition from foreign steel and the high cost of shipping (The Columbia Star costs $13,500 a day to run.) have seriously undermined the Great Lakes tanker trade. Automation on the new boats have reduced the need for crews. Twenty-five years ago there were 12,000 Great Lakes sailors; last year there were 1900. To quote Agar, "Veterans and newcomers alike hope that, somehow, a twitch in the world economy will turn things around. Their hopes are probably unrealistic. The lakers grew with steel, developed like inbred animals for a special economic niche. The Star hauls high-density freight on Great Lakes waters. She can do little else. She is like a dinosaur, upset at the unfamiliar chill from approaching glaciers. Unlike the dinosaur, the Star and a few others like her will survive." (p. 126).

Minor in Anthropology: The minor in anthropology is composed of 18 credits. There are three required courses: 46.200, Principles of Cultural Anthropology; 46.210, Prehistoric Archaeology; and 46.220, Principles of Physical Anthropology. The remaining three courses should be chosen in consultation with one of the anthropology staff. A minor in anthropology is a fine complement to any major.