

# ANTHROPOS

The Department of Anthropology  
 Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

The State System of Higher Education

Volume 25, Issue 5

## Careers in Anthropology

In a recent issue of the Northeast Anthropological Association's newsletter, Dr. John Omohundro offered some optimistic information about careers in anthropology. Omohundro is author of Careers in Anthropology (Mayfield, 2000); an article by him on this subject also appears in the Spradley & McCurdy introductory reader in cultural anthropology.

Omohundro noted that there has been a 300% increase in B.A.'s in anthropology in this country since 1980. However, the increase in Master's degrees has been 50%, and there has been no increase in Ph.D.'s. He be-

lieves this means that students are finding anthropology to be a satisfactory career choice even if they are not becoming professional anthropologists.

There are 1000 archaeologists employed by the U.S. government alone. However, there are only 15 full-time positions for forensic anthropologists nation-wide.

71% of Ph.D.'s in anthropology are entering academic employment, but only half are joining anthropology programs. The others are in interdisciplinary programs, medical schools, administration, and other units of the university.

By 2010 about a third of the current professors in anthropology will retire. While not all these positions will be filled, he estimates a need for 2000 new anthropology professors.

Key managers in two of the largest mutual funds, Dreyfuss and Hanseatic, have M.A.'s in anthropology.

In a survey conducted in 1998, business and organiza-



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## Career Planning Tips

tional executives reported more positive attitudes about a liberal education than students, parents, or even liberal arts professors. The executives hired and promoted the liberally educated employees.

Omohundro ends the article by saying, "Therefore, I

stress this advice to undergraduate ... students: if you want to do good work in the world, develop a plan. Here are the items I recommend be included in your plan:

- Be interdisciplinary
- Seek internships
- Practice teamwork

- Develop communication skills
- Get some management/administrative experience
- Learn to apply for grants
- Expand your methods toolkit.

You can also get similar advice from the dept brochure.

## A Remote Tribe Links to the Web

In February 2001, several news stories circulated about an effort in Borneo to link a remote tribal culture, the Kenabit, to the Internet. There are around 2000 Kenabit living in a rural area without telephones, reliable electricity or paved roads. However, with the aid of researchers at the Malaysian University of Sarawak, they now have e-mail.

Armed with grants from the Malaysian government and the International Development Research Council of Canada, the Kenabit now have computers powered either by solar energy or diesel fueled generators. Satellite links pro-

vide the Internet connections. Researchers originally thought the computers could be a tool to help the Kenabit manage their economy. Village leaders were shown how they could plot crop production by computer and how rice sales could be boosted through the Internet. It was also thought that the Kenabit could promote their area for tourism.

These development ideas were met with limited enthusiasm on the part of the Kenabit, but when they found that they could e-mail relatives who had left the community for opportunities else-

where, then everyone wanted to have a try at the new machines. Now even 80 year old grandmothers want to have access to a keyboard.

The grant to support the system is only for a year, but the Kenabit hope they will earn enough from increased sales to maintain the system. Two other problems now confront them. Diesel fuel is expensive and must be shipped in from towns many miles away. And most Kenabit don't speak English, which limits their ability to surf the Net. However, schoolteachers are now teaching language skills.

## Ground Patterns in the Amazon May be Prehistoric Fish Traps

University of Pennsylvania archaeologist, Dr. Clark Erickson, has recently proposed that odd crisscrossing patterns he had seen from the air while flying over the rain forests of northeastern Bolivia may well be an intricate prehistoric system of fish traps. Some BU students may be familiar with Dr. Erickson's work with raised bed agriculture (or sukakollus) in Andean Peru and Bolivian. In that case, Erickson used aerial photography to identify prehistoric patterns of fields. The techniques involved in those raised fields turned out to produce more

crops than the techniques that were in current use.

In the new research, Erickson proposes that the patterns he could see from the air were fish weirs used for trapping fish during the annual flooding of rain forest waterways. Each year, northeastern Bolivia is covered by an inch or more of water for months. Erickson believes the native people dug channels that directed fish into V-shaped intersections in which basket-like traps could be placed. Though dating these channels is problematic, he believes they were in use un-

*"Mysterious lines zigzag across miles of otherwise bare grassland."*

til around 1700, when Europeans first came into the area. Aerial photography is becoming an important tool.

## Archaeology Museum at Penn Receives \$16 Million Donation

The University of Pennsylvania recently announced the receipt of a \$16 million donation from Dr. Charles Williams 2nd, an archaeologist who graduated from Penn in the 1960's. The donation will be used to refurbish the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology,

the historic, but antiquated facility that many BU students have visited. The Museum houses over a million artifacts. Williams himself specialized in the ancient cultures of Greece, especially in the area of Corinth. The Museum has exhibits on both historic and prehistoric

cultures, and it funds research in 18 different countries. The museum was founded in 1887 by a group of wealthy Philadelphians.

Of course, this raises the question, "How does an archaeologist get \$16 million?"

## Traditional Birth Attendants

In most of the world's cultures, women giving birth are attended by women. This is true not only in traditional cultures, but in most other industrialized cultures as well, where women in labor are taken to birthing clinics, rather than hospitals, to be attended by female doctors and other health care providers.

In traditional cultures, where medical doctors and biomedicine were not found, the women who delivered babies were midwives, usually older women with a great deal of experience in attending and helping with births. Most modern literature prefers to refer to these women as traditional birth attendants or TBA's.

Men ordinarily avoided childbirth in traditional cultures for a variety of cultural reasons.

Medical anthropologists working in the Third World often find that TBA's offer women in labor pretty good care. Even in modern situations, where a Third World nation may provide limited biomedical opportunities to poor women, the TBA's often compare very well to those opportunities.

The advantages a TBA can provide are many. TBA's usually deliver babies in the mother's home, where she may be more relaxed than in a government clinic. Because the TBA is a woman—and usu-

ally of the same social class as the mother—there are fewer social barriers between them than there would be with a male doctor belonging to a higher social class. TBA's provide continuity of service, offering advice and comfort to pro-



## TBA's Offer Advantages in Labor

spective mothers from the second month of pregnancy through the actual delivery to the post-partum period. In the absence of other social support, a TBA may move in with a new mother, cooking and cleaning for her in order to give her some rest and recovery time. Finally, TBA's are usually cheaper than medical doctors, and their fees are negotiable. A TBA may accept a chicken or work help for example, in place of a monetary payment.

Now a new body of research by a medical anthropologist at the Case West-

ern Reserve Medical School adds to this body of research. Dr. John Kennell studied TBA's in six different countries, including Greece, South Africa, and Guatemala. He found that mothers who had TBA's were 50% less likely to need a Caesarean section, 40% less likely to have a forceps delivery, and 30% less likely to need pain relief. The length of labor was also, on average, 25% shorter. He believes that women attended by TBA's are more relaxed than when attended by medical doctors.

He also found that mothers with

*"Mothers who are comforted by a trained female helper when they give birth are likely to find labor easier and to develop closer bonds with their babies."*

TBA's found it easier to breastfeed and were less likely to suffer from post-partum depression.

## Anthropology Web Sites (Continued)

Last month, ANTHROPOS initiated a new feature, a review of information sources about anthropology on the World Wide Web. This month, we wish to call anthropology students' attention to a great source for bibliographic information on the Web. This is a service provided by The Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing at the University of Kent in Great Britain. The site ad-

dress is [http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/search\\_bib2/Makhzan](http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/search_bib2/Makhzan). Calling up this site allows anyone to search for bibliographic references in the CSAC Anthropology Bibliography.

Students may search this site by topic, author or editor, title, book, journal or date. One or more headings can be used; the service automatically combines the headings into an integrated search.

A query on "diet + health" pulled up a variety of sources, for example, including an article in *Current Anthropology* on acculturation, diet and health in Papua New Guinea, an article on food ideology and eating behavior in Malaysia, and a 1994 book on the health of Native Americans. These are bibliographic listings only, though abstracts of the references may be included.

## Moche Tombs Revealed

In the March issue of the National Geographic, archaeologist Christopher Donnan of UCLA describes his discoveries of three tombs in coastal Peru from the Moche culture. The site is called Dos Cabezas (or Two Heads). It is a 105-foot-high pyramid that had been previously excavated by the colonial-era Spanish and subsequently by tomb-robbers hoping to find gold and silver objects buried with dead Moche dignitaries. In this case, however, the tomb-robbers missed the three sites excavated by Donnan and his team over the last three years. The tombs date from 450 to 550 A.D.

The three tombs are rich in precious objects of gold, silver, and copper, including finely worked headdresses, death masks, and bodily adornments. Each of the tombs was accompanied by a miniature tomb in which a copper figure was placed. Also found were the bodies of female attendants and in one case, the body of a llama.

Obviously the three main occupants of the richly adorned tombs were people of high status in their lifetimes, though their exact status is unknown. What is remarkable is their height: each was 6 ft. tall in a culture where the average

male was between 4 ft. 9 in. and 5 ft. 6 in. These were not tall robust figures, however; their bones were long and thin, suggesting that they may have suffered from a disease similar to Marfan syndrome. Though they were dressed in articles of war, Donnan thinks it is unlikely that they ever actually engaged in battle; their bones would not have survived the wear and tear.

The Moche were a farming culture that dates between 100 and 800 AD. Not much is known about them; these tombs may help considerably.

## BU Anthropology News

The Department of Anthropology is currently conducting its Five Year Review. A self-study of the department and its programs was completed in December 2000, and currently, the department is hosting two outside reviewers. The first reviewer is Dr. Esther Skirboll from the Dept of Sociology/Anthropology/Social Work at Slippery Rock University. Dr. Skirboll visited the campus on March 2. Dr. Skirboll obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, and she has conducted

both archaeological and applied anthropological research. The second reviewer is Dr. Paul Pacheco from the Dept of Anthropology at SUNY-Geneseo. Dr. Pacheco is an archaeologist with a degree from Ohio State University. Dr. Pacheco will visit BU on March 23.

Both reviewers meet with the Dean of Arts & Sciences, the Provost, and the Dean of the Library, as well as the anthropology students and faculty. Using the self-study, the interviews on

campus, and their own observations, the reviewers then provide the department and the administration with an evaluation of the department, which will then be submitted to the Chancellor's Office in Harrisburg.

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Please check the Fall 2001 class schedule on page 6. Some last minute changes have occurred that may not be in the Master Class Schedule. Scheduling for Fall 2001 begins on March 26. Scheduling for Summer 2001 begins on March 19.

## Clovis Site Reevaluated

Texas A & M anthropologists Harry Shafer and Michael Waters have announced the uncovering of "the most intensively occupied Clovis site currently known in North America." Called the Gault site, the site is located in the Texas Hill Country.

The Clovis culture has historically been seen as the oldest archaeological culture in the Americas, dating from

11,000 to 11,500 years ago. It is characterized by the Clovis point, a fluted, leaf-shaped spear point. Previously Clovis points had been associated with kill sites of mammoths and bison. The Gault site is the first recorded stratified site to show campsites over a 500 to

700 year period. The Gault site was originally excavated in 1929 for artifacts from later cultures. It wasn't until 1991 that excavations revealed Clovis artifacts. This site will probably reveal a great deal about this culture.



## Russian Health Declines

In the last ten years, Russia has seen a dramatic decline in most of its national health statistics. This decline is most marked among Russian males, whose average life expectancy has dropped to 59, a number equivalent to Pakistan's. (In the U.S., the average life expectancy for males is 73). The average life span for Russian women is 72 (compared to 80 in the U.S.), but they, too, have their health problems. The World Health Organization reports that Russians between the ages of 15 and 29 are twice as likely to die prematurely than their counterparts in Europe.

There are many factors involved in this decline. Sixty-seven percent of Russians smoke, one of the highest rates in the world. Heavy drinking, a long time Russian tradition, is spreading, as the Russian economy declines and people's life chances diminish. Outside observers also say that Russia is experiencing an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV and syphilis; the Russian government is reluctant to agree. Communicable diseases—and especially tuberculosis—are on the rise. There are also increases in homicides, suicides, and drug use.

As a result, Russia's population is dropping. Since the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Russia's population has fallen from 148.7 million to 145 million in 2000. Demographers project a population of 135 million by 2015 and 109 million by 2045, if current trends continue. With the economy in disarray, many families cannot afford to have children, and since 1997, the Russian government says abortions have outnumbered births by 2 to 1. Also, because of the economic decline, the Russian government does not have the resources to mount a major health campaign.

## Nanjing Man Gets Older

Australian and Chinese scientists recently announced that the human remains known as Nanjing Man are older than was previously thought. Discovered in 1993 in a cave near Shanghai, Nanjing Man (and Woman) is represented by two skulls, believed to be a male and a female. Technically, these skulls are examples of *Homo erectus*, a predecessor to modern humans. The Nanjing skulls were originally thought to be 400,000 years old, which would have placed them in line with other *H. erectus* discoveries in China. But using a relatively new ra-

diocarbon dating technique that employs a thermal ionization mass spectrometer, which measures the decay in radioactive uranium, the fossils have been redated to 580,000-620,000 years old. This makes them among the oldest human remains known from China.

This announcement also gives ammunition to the foes of the Out-of-Africa hypothesis, which says that modern humans evolved in Africa and then spread out over the rest of the world around 200,000 years ago, replacing the earlier *H. erectus*. Previously discovered *H.*

*erectus* fossils from China, such as Peking/Beijing Man, were thought to be only 230,000 years old. That made them "too young" to have fully evolved into modern *H. sapiens*. But if *H. erectus* populations in China are much older, then the theory goes that there was plenty of time for *H. erectus* to have evolved into *H. sapiens* without migration from Africa.

Researchers Ken Collerson and Zhao Jian-Xin say they intend to check the dates on other Chinese fossils with the new technology.

## Notes and Queries

From *Cultural Anthropology* by Barbara Miller (Allyn & Bacon 1999):

"An ethnography begins with an ethnographic experience: with your eyes open you have to go somewhere ... The first thing that strikes an anthropologist in the field are details that seem alien. It is April 5, 6 AM, 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and I'm in a remote region of India on a tennis court fashioned out of the earth of

termite mounds. Music, cacophonous to a foreign ear, is blaring over a loud-speaker. In India, the gods and ancestral spirits, who are not hard of hearing, but are sometimes a long way off, not only like to eat food offerings, they also like to be entertained. To a foreigner for whom the gods don't exist, in the midst of a tennis match at six in the morning on a very hot day, the magnified blare is a

nuisance. After two sets my Indian doubles partner finally takes off his heavy wool sweater." (Richard Shweder in a *New York Times Book Review*, Sept. 1986)



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Mankind is one; civilizations are many.—Franz Boas c. 1930

ANTHROPOS, the Anthropology Newsletter, is published six times during the academic year and is mailed to interested students, faculty, administrators, and alumni. It is also distributed in anthropology classes and made available on the department's home page. If you would like to be on the newsletter mailing list, please contact Dr. Dave Minderhout at the address and numbers on the left.

The Department of Anthropology offers a 36 credit B.A. degree and a 18 credit minor in anthropology. If you would like details, please see any of the anthropology faculty.

## Anthropology Courses for Fall 2001

This is the revised schedule for the Department of Anthropology for Fall 2001:

### MWF:

- 9—46.210.01 (Prehistoric Archaeology)  
Dr. Aleto
- 10—46.200.06 (Prin. of Cultural Anthropology) - Dr. Aleto
- 11—46.385.01 (Anthro Research & Writing) - Dr. Dauria
- 12—46.101.01 (Intro. to Anthropology)  
-Dr. Dauria  
- 46.200.01 - Dr. Minderhout
- 1—46.200.02—Dr. Warner
- 2- 46.200.03—Dr. Warner

### 3—46.220.01 (Human Origins) -

Dr. Wymer

### MW 4-5:15—46.405.01 (Primates)

Dr. Wymer

### TUTH:

### 8—46.200.05—Dr. Dauria

### 9:30—46.220.02—Dr. Wymer

### 11—46.200.04—Dr. Dauria

### 12:30—46.102.01 -(Anthropology & World Problems) - Dr. Wymer

### 2—46.310.01 (Aztecs & Mayas) -

Dr. Aleto

### 3:30—46.102.02—Dr. Minderhout

### EVENINGS:

### M- 46.102.03—Dr. Warner

### Tu-46.480.01 (Religion & Magic) - Dr. Minderhout

### W-46.260.01 (Men & Women) Dr. Warner

### Th-46.210.02—Dr. Aleto

