

# Teaching Anthropology: SACC Notes



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Lloyd Miller, Editor; Ann Kaupp, Assistant Editor

SACC's mission is to encourage dialogue and collaboration among teachers of anthropology across sub-disciplines and institutional settings, and to promote excellence in the teaching of anthropology. *Teaching Anthropology: SACC Notes* advances this mission by providing members with news of SACC activities, including annual meetings, and publishing articles and commentaries on teaching, research, and of general anthropological interest.

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## Introduction

In his recurring column, “Archaeology Matters,” our archaeological guru, **Bob Muckle**, takes up the topic of mummies, whose perennial popularity was recently reinforced by the world traveling exhibit of the Egyptian King Tut. After briefly surveying mummies from various places in the world, Muckle focuses on Otzi, known by many as the “Iceman” who died in the European Alps 5,300 years ago, and unlike the royal Tut, was “just a regular guy who got caught up in an unfortunate circumstance.”

In the previous issue of TASN (Vol. 16, No. 2, fall 2010), **Jack Kelso** wrote the first installment of an essay titled “Teaching Anthropology: Some Strong Opinions” in which he stated that much of teaching anthropology is storytelling, and that he would like to go back and tell stories that would “bring anthropology closer to the lives of students.” In this, the second part of that essay, he highlights some of the changes that our discipline—especially cultural anthropology—has undergone (not all of them favorable). After demonstrating how much, over the past 50 years, anthropology has broken apart into pieces (some of them hardly recognizable), he suggests some paths toward making it whole again.

**Laura Tubelle de González** takes us on a taste-tempting tour of the kinds of foods we choose to enhance our moods when we feel good and make us feel better when we don’t. Examining both the physiological and cultural factors of gustatory delights in different societies, and assigning her students to do ethnographic research on their own eating practices, she provides insights into both what and why people around the world eat to please themselves.

We reprint **Bill Fairbanks’s** review of Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, Volume 1 because, as the reviewer implies, de Tocqueville’s work resembles anthropology more than it does the other social sciences. Fairbanks asserts that the French observer of American democracy shares much with Ruth Benedict and other students of national character as well as with the 19<sup>th</sup> century cultural evolutionists. Fairbanks also analyzes in detail both the similarities and differences of de Tocqueville’s 19<sup>th</sup> century views with American democracy as it is today, and argues for the work’s continuing relevance to students of American culture.

**Alison Diefenderfer** applies her previous experience as an academic skills tutor to an analysis and discussion of the kinds of students that inhabit community colleges today, and how we might improve the ways we can help them learn. She asserts that learning styles and the academic skill levels students bring with them must figure in the traditional mix of “cultural diversity.” Also, in economic hard times, more traditional college students—including the gifted—are attending community colleges. She presents some alternative ways an anthropology class can serve our increasingly diverse student population.

Finally, TASN’s Assistant Editor, **Ann Kaupp**, musters the facilities of her Smithsonian Institution Anthropology Outreach Office to provide us with a comprehensive list of resources on seeking careers in and related to anthropology. The list also presents some leading professional organizations (including SACC), and features one of the late Robert Humphreys’ memorable anthropology cartoons.

*Lloyd Miller*

### **SACC sponsored sessions at the AAA Conference in Montreal**

#### ***The Legacies of teaching evolutionary ideas: not buckling in the “Bible Belt”***

**#2-0470 Wednesday, November 16, 2011: 4:00-5:30 pm**

**Organizers: Dianne Chidester and Jo Rainie Rodgers**

#### ***Current Issues in Anthropology: Five-Fields Symposium***

**#5-0375 Saturday, November 19, 2011: 10:15 am-12:00 pm**

**Organizer: George Rodgers**



# Archaeology Matters

a recurring column

*Bob Muckle*



## Otzi and other dead people

People seem to have a fascination with dead things. I'm not sure why.

When I am doing fieldwork one of the most common questions from on-lookers or visitors is, "Are you finding any bodies?" In the classroom, I can always sense increased interest by students when human remains are mentioned. When I offer to let students touch real human bones, some of them almost pee with excitement. When I ask them why they want to touch the skull, the most common answer is something like, "I don't know. I just do."

When teaching, I invariably try to fight the bias in the popular media towards archaeology stories that feature human remains, especially if there are photos. Apparently, editors think photos of human remains are interesting to the public. They are probably right.

Although I try to fight the bias, I am prone to it as well. As much as I would like to teach or otherwise discuss archaeology without reference to skeletons and bodies, I often do. Way more than is usually necessary. Part of this is because I use skeletons and mummies like a loss leader, insofar as I know that once I get students' attention by bringing up human remains, I can use that attention to lead to other things. But part of me also likes the images of skeletons and bodies. In archaeological context, of course.

Of all the different kinds of human remains archaeologists come across, it is those with flesh and other soft tissue attached that appear to garner the most interest. Human skeletal remains may get people's attention, but ancient remains with flesh attached take it to another level.

Archaeologists are apt to use "mummy" when discussing any human remains with soft tissue attached. It makes no difference whether preservation was intentional or not. Nor does it make a difference whether preservation occurred by chemical treatment, drying, freezing or being submerged in a bog. Only

rarely do archaeologists use "mummy" to refer to remains less than 500 years old.

The Egyptian mummies are likely the most well-known, with King Tut probably being the most famous of all. In addition to all the rulers and others of high status, there seems to be an intense interest in the mummified animals found in Egypt as well. One report indicates that there are over one million mummified animals, mostly cats, from ancient Egypt. One amusing piece of prose on Egyptian animal mummies was

published by *The Paris Review* earlier this year, with the title, "The Animal Mummies Wish to Thank the Following." My favourite line is, "The cat mummies allow themselves one fantasy: if only there had been no such thing as archaeologists." (for the full piece, see <http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2011/03/24/the-animal-mummies-wish-to-thank-the-following/>).

Outside of Egypt, some of the best known mummies come from South America. The oldest known mummies are the Chinchorro mummies that reportedly date between 8,000 and 5,000 years ago. Mummification here was likely due to a combination of deliberate preparation and the dryness of the high altitude of the Andes where they have been found. Similarly, deliberate preparation and the dryness of the high altitudes of the Andes has led to the preservation of multiple mummies of Inca children who were laid to rest on mountaintops as part of the child sacrifice ritual known as *capa cocha*. The best known of these is likely Juanita, who is to archaeologist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Johan Reinhard what Lucy is to palaeoanthropologist Don Johanson.

The Guanajuato mummies from Mexico are quite well-known. The story here is that descendants of the deceased who failed to pay a tax had their relatives removed from the cemetery. The deceased were originally interred in the early 1800s and disinterment took place between 1865 and 1958. About two percent of those disinterred were naturally mummified, which

***Like Tut, Otzi has an aura of celebrity.  
He is my personal favorite dead guy.***

accounts for more than 100 mummies. Considering their recent age, archaeological interest is minimal. They have, however, become a major tourist attraction in Guanajuato.

Multiple mummies from China are of interest to many since some researchers suggest they indicate European origins. The Greenland mummies also are quite well-known, being a collection of eight individuals, including an infant, a toddler, and six women.

Many are familiar with the bog people of Europe. Preservation of these individuals comes from the excellent preservation qualities of bogs. Common interpretations of the people preserved in bogs are that the bogs were essentially a dumping grounds for executed criminals or ritual sacrifice. One of the most well-known, *Tollund Man*, still had the rope used to strangle him around his neck.

Some may also be familiar with the excellent preservation of human remains being excavated in Siberian tombs. As elsewhere, preservation appears to have resulted from a combination of deliberate preparation and an appropriate environment, in this case freezing. Of all the mummies found in the region, the most well-known is the body of a woman of high status commonly labelled the Siberian Ice Maiden, or simply the Ice Princess. She was laid to rest about 2,400 years ago. Preservation here is truly phenomenal, with elaborate and artistic tattoos adorning her body, and she was dressed in fine clothing of silk and other materials that has been remarkably preserved.

Other than King Tut, I suspect that the most well-known mummy among both the public and scholars is Otzi, the Iceman. Like Tut, Otzi has an aura of celebrity. He is my personal favorite dead guy.

Otzi goes by many names. While I prefer the entire moniker of Otzi, the Ice Man, it isn't uncommon to see the alternate spelling of Oetzi. Some simply recognize him as "The Iceman", which I suppose is okay given the recent trend of celebrities to be known by a single, often not their real, name (not that we know Otzi's real name. The moniker "Otzi" is based on his discovery in the Otzal region of the Alps). He is also known in some circles as Simulian Man; and by others as Frozen Fritz.

For those who have no recollection about Otzi, this is the guy that died in the European Alps about 5300 years ago, was subsequently frozen, and ultimately discovered in melting ice by some hikers back in 1991. Initially it was thought that he was a wayward shepherd who died peacefully during an unexpected blizzard. Now, research suggests he was heavily involved in copper smelting and died as a result of either murder, ritual sacrifice or traumatic accident.

The initial discovery was all over the news. It wasn't quite one of those events where people remember where they were when it happened, but it was big. Of all the discoveries in archaeology that have made the popular and international press, I am pretty sure I have been asked about this one the most; by students, members of the public,



mummy, Guanajuato, Mexico

and non-

archaeologist colleagues. After 20 years, it still garners immense interest. When I bring the discovery up in class, I find that many do know something about "The Iceman" even though his discovery predates most of the students' own birth.

Part of this continuing interest is likely because research on the mummy and the associated objects has been relatively continuous since his death, and the results often get reported in the popular media. In fact, media has even driven (ie. funded) some of the research.

Perhaps he has remained somewhat of a celebrity because research on him cuts across so many areas of interest to the public as well as the scholarly community. There seems to be an ongoing stream of studies on various aspects of both his human remains and the associated cultural remains, as well as more transcendent questions of where did he come from, what was he doing there, his occupation, his sexuality and the circumstances of his death. He has been tied to modern celebrities such as Brad Pitt (with some suggesting a tattoo on Pitt's forearm is the image of Otzi). As with studies of King Tut, popular media and media pundits also seem pre-occupied with Otzi's penis. Original reports had indicated it was missing, invoking hypotheses of castration while alive, or souvenir-collecting during the initial recovery and analysis. It turns out it was intact, just small. And just like King Tut as well, there is a reported curse, leading to the eventual death of those who study Otzi.

The discovery and subsequent analysis of Otzi has led to significant information that provides a refinement of understanding prehistory in Europe between about 5,500 and 5,000 years ago. For archaeologists

whose primary interests lie elsewhere, his discovery also remains important. Part of this is due to the truly multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of the research on Otzi and his remains. Those interested in almost any aspect of the methodology of reconstructing past lives and lifeways can find some area of intrigue in Otzi research.

I like to use Otzi in my classes for multiple reasons. One is as a case study in archaeology, which I use to review such topics as reconstructing antiquity, age at death, diet, status, technology, disease and palaeoenvironments.

More important, however, I like to use Otzi to illustrate the nature of science in general and archaeology in particular. Studies on Otzi are useful to demonstrate how the most favored hypotheses at any one time are usually those that best explain the data at that particular time. And as more studies are undertaken and new data emerges, hypotheses must continually be re-evaluated and often rejected. Thus the original hypothesis that Otzi was likely a shepherd that got caught in an early autumn snowstorm was rejected when additional studies on plant remains in his body suggested a death during the Spring. And the initial hypothesis that he died a peaceful death was rejected when an arrowhead was found in his body, cut marks on his hands and at least three different kinds of human blood on his clothes. More recently, indications of head trauma are suggesting that perhaps he died from a blow to the head, perhaps deliberate, but maybe accidental, following a fight.

I also like to use Otzi in my classes to fight the bias towards reconstructing the lifestyles of those of

high status. To me, Otzi was likely pretty much a regular guy. Nobody was there to prepare his body in death; nobody built him a pyramid. Nobody, apparently, even went looking for him when he didn't come home for dinner. Otzi, I think, was like a character played by James Stewart in a Frank Capra or Alfred Hitchcock movie; an ordinary guy in unusual circumstances. If a movie is going to be made about the final days of Otzi, I suggest Tom Hanks, who seems to have picked up on the everyman role.

A trend in archaeology over the past few decades has been to focus on the commoner. It is easy to do that with Otzi. From my perspective, he was just a regular guy who got caught up in an unfortunate circumstance. He might have died in a fight to the death, or was ritually sacrificed. There is no doubt he had some troubles, as an arrowhead in his shoulder attests. It didn't necessarily kill him though. He might have just fallen down and hit his head. Maybe he was clumsy.

Like many famous artists, and more than a few scientists, Otzi was apparently pretty much a nobody until his death. I wonder what he would have thought if someone had told him in his final days that 5300 years after his death, he would be one of the most studied humans who had ever lived, that research on his body and associated artifacts made significant contributions to archaeology and related fields, that people would travel from around the world to retrace his last days, and his new name and image were to be associated with musical theater, toys, cartoons, ice cream, pizza and wine. If there is a heaven for mummies, I suspect Tut and the others are jealous. *74*



**Remember the "fro" hair-styles of the 1960s and 1970s?**

**This man is a SACC member whom you've seen and met at annual meetings.**

**Can you name him?**  
(Answer on page 29)

## Strong Opinions from Anthropology, Part Two\*

Jack Kelso

[**Editor's note:** Part One of this essay ("Teaching Anthropology: Some Strong Opinions") is in the preceding issue of this publication, Vol. 16, No. 2, also accessible on [saccweb.net](http://saccweb.net).]

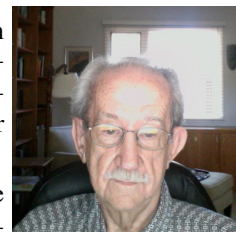
What am I doing here yet again in the land of community college instructors? Paying my respects in the only way I know how and, not incidentally, taking advantage of your editor's generosity to let me spill the beans. I also believe that as a member of this group, you are far less likely to be as rigid in your outlook on the current situation in anthropology as are anthropologists in other four-and-more year colleges and universities across the land, and are thus more willing to entertain some of my opinions on where the field has come to today and what its future looks like. Indeed I hope you might even enjoy thinking about what I have to say. My daughter tells me that I am writing about my life in the twilight of my life and urges me not to be too concerned about "getting it right." She tells me not to write for all those dead anthropologists looking over my shoulder eager to swoop down ready with their forefingers pointing to every flaw, fault and inconsistency. "Write," she says, "what you believe, and write for the curious among us."

So within the confines of roughly 4000 words and in no particular order, I will here tell a story that includes the following opinions: First, the rumor that anthropology is dead is an exaggeration, but only a slight one. Viewed from my perspective, cultural anthropology is on life support and the only options appear to be pulling the plug or starting over. You would never know this if you were on a tour of a university campus where anthropology continues to flourish. On the contrary, you would think the field was at or approaching its peak, though I notice that two departments of anthropology (Florida State University and

Howard University) have been among the early programs recently discontinued as administrators deal with year-after-year budget cutbacks.

Second, the biggest mistake ever made in the history of anthropology was naming it a science; the next biggest was naming it one of the humanities. We have been traveling along one or the other of these roads for well over a century and the journey has taken us nowhere. We are no better prepared to serve the adaptive needs of humankind, the public of which we are a part, or the planet on which we dwell than we were 100 years ago. We know damn well that culture plays an enormous role in our lives, and yet the very people we might expect to help us understand our place in relation to culture—cultural anthropologists—seem to be interested in other matters. If ever there were a more important case of not recognizing the presence of this huge elephant in the living room, I do not know what it could be.

Third, cultural anthropology today is decidedly different from what it was 45 or 50 years ago, different but not much improved. I was there at the beginning and here I am still waiting for an absolutely urgent aspect of the subject matter of anthropology to be made evident to the public. It is this: culture, once the factor that vastly extended the capacity of our ancestors to adapt to a wide variety of local differences in nature has become the source of the most formidable challenge to our future as a species. For over 99% of our species' evolutionary history, culture facilitated the expansion of our ancestors across the globe in what amounts to a blink in the eye of geological time. During the remaining less than 1% of our lineage's history, the stuff of culture itself has proliferated at an ever-accelerating rate and become an increasingly formidable environment challenging our species' capacity to adapt to its own cultural forces! Advances in our understanding of the relationship between the human animal and the forces its culture exercises can be expected to come from cultural anthropologists well grounded in human biology or physical anthropologists with an appreciation for the selective role of cultural factors in shaping human evolution. Not only do we



**The biggest mistake ever made in the history of anthropology was naming it a science; the next biggest was naming it one of the humanities.**

\*The idea for essays on "Strong Opinions From Anthropology" comes from a story by J.M. Coetzee (two Booker prizes and the 2003 Nobel Prize in Literature Awardee) titled *Diary of A Bad Year*. It too is a work of fiction.

fail to understand our relationship to culture; we seemingly appear to place no emphasis on the importance of understanding that relationship. Worst of all, we assume that we control culture, which may be one of those things I like to call precisely wrong.

Which brings me to the fourth and final strong opinion: as cultural anthropology has changed, it has increasingly distanced itself from anthropology's other subfields: physical anthropology, linguistic anthropology and prehistoric archaeology. In other words, within the field as a whole, the present pattern shows the subfields dispersing away from one another or moving in precisely the wrong direction, which makes no sense at all for a coherent study of anthropology. Without a usefully integrated concept of culture, each subfield descends to its closest academic neighbor: human biology, linguistics and history, or perhaps disappears altogether. Cultural anthropology has become a subfield without a mission, without a central core, without much concern for the public of which it is a part (a feeling that may be mutual), and pursued in the end by individuals intent on their own interests. Indeed the word and concept of culture appear to be less important than it ever was among (if you can believe it) cultural anthropologists!

These are opinions, and saying them doesn't make them so. They just seem plausible to me, and plausible is a word that will come up again later on when I raise the prospects of a future for anthropology. For me the opinions are, as the late Marvin Harris used to say, good to think.

Part One of strong opinions implied that it is all too easy for teachers of anthropology to overlook the students in the room as persons included in the purview of anthropology. Two teaching scenarios—one from cultural and the other from physical—illustrated how the content of anthropology can be brought closer to the every day lives of students. I imagined a Pueblo anthropologist doing her fieldwork among American college students as a way of making the students aware of aspects of their own culture that are puzzling to outsiders, and thereby drawing attention to the role culture plays in their lives. Used to being subjects, the students found themselves in the unfamiliar role of objects. The second story described a way to offer the students a view of how the composite of so-called distinctive human characteristics have evolutionary histories that

reach much further back in time than their appearance in our lineage and us.

When viewed from the perspective of contemporary cultural anthropology, these scenarios would likely sound quaint, like relics from a distant past. Indeed they do emerge from an era when anthropology was widely respected for the breadth of its content—all humankind past and present—and as the source of a robust and useful concept of culture. Anthropologists, most of them at the time, considered themselves scientists, recorders of the ways of life of vanishing cultures, languages and biological varieties, while at the same time some among them proposed theories to account for differences they found between today's forms and those in the past.

In that era, a large segment of the educated public showed great interest in what anthropologists had to tell them, and there were some great communicators who were pleased to tell them, including Margaret Mead, Ashley Montagu, Louis S. B. Leakey and Jane Goodall. They attracted huge crowds and were appreciated for their knowledge, experience, wit and insights. We have effective speakers now, (Helen Fisher perhaps is the most prominent among them), but times have changed, and with them, interest in the field among the public seems to have waned, except perhaps for interest in any news concerning the "latest fossil discovery that may bring about significant changes to what we thought was true for human evolution."

Of course the scenarios would sound quaint today; they are extracted from a way of doing and thinking about anthropology that prevailed 50 years ago. Forces emanating from a different cultural context altogether have shaped today's anthropologists. Shifting from one paradigm to another describes pretty well the way anthropology's history has unfolded, perhaps just another instance of what Max Planck once said of the history of science: "Science progresses one funeral at a time."<sup>1</sup>

But physics and anthropology stand apart at near planetary distances when it comes to progress. Progress comes to physics not merely in the form of more and better. It comes from building on the work of antecedent labor and discovery, and in the process, it identifies new questions and opens up new horizons to explore. Such shifts in anthropology (in all the social and behavioral sciences, actually) usually come as reactions against the work of antecedents. So, instead of progress, the history of anthropology is more like what

***Something happened beginning in the late 1970s when cultural anthropology began to shudder under the weight of withering criticism.***

<sup>1</sup> Cited in "The World in 2011," an annual publication of *The Economist*. p 154

one of the characters in *The History Boys*<sup>2</sup> says of history: “it’s just one foocking thing after another.” Anthropologists, when moving from one paradigm to another, do not build upon the work of their antecedents; they characteristically reject and repudiate the work of earlier anthropologists.

Something happened beginning in the late 1970s when cultural anthropology began to shudder under the weight of withering criticism. The first broadside came in 1978 with the publication of *Orientalism*<sup>3</sup> by Edward Said, a literary critic. Said assailed previous Western scholarship on the Orient, and especially works dealing with Islam. According to Said, such studies were not merely bad; they were very, very bad. The descriptions of other peoples by Western scholars of various topics and peoples of the Orient were all inextricably intertwined with Western values and thus hopelessly biased, inherently fragmentary, and dominated by the scholars’ own political and economic interests. The implication, of course, was that what is the case for the Orient must also be the case for everywhere else. Ethnography took a blow from which it has

yet to recover fully. During the 1980s, some anthropologists, intending to respond to Said’s criticism, offered alternative ways of doing ethnographic work. But literary critics and theorists remain implacable that cultural anthropology by its nature conflicts with deconstruction and therefore must go, having “outlived its usefulness.”<sup>4</sup>

How has this criticism affected contemporary anthropology? I’m not knowledgeable of the impact it had, if any, outside academe. Within academic settings, as I mentioned earlier, things on the surface seem little changed. There are plenty of courses offered and plenty of students to sign up for them. However, the criticism has provided contemporary anthropologists with yet another reason to reject the work of antecedents and move on to things new and different.

If we compare today’s anthropology with 1965-’66, before the criticism emerged and before the campus turbulence of the late 1960s, some differences are striking and some are puzzling. I turn to the University of Michigan as an illustration. The anthropology department in Ann Arbor always ranks at the top or within a few places from the top in all rankings of anthropology departments in the country. (Also Michigan is the place where I learned my anthropology in the 1950s.) First, the numbers of faculty and the number of courses have more than doubled in the 46 years between then and now. In 1965-66, the Michigan department of anthropology contained 23 faculty members. This year they have 50. The number of courses they offered undergraduates in AY 1965-66 totaled 51, whereas now they offer their undergraduates 186 courses from which to choose. No question about it, today there is way more anthropology and many more anthropologists than there were 46 years ago. The University of Michigan may have more faculty and offer more courses than most other departments, but virtually all universities in the country have grown in comparable ways over the same period.

So, there’s lots more anthropology and many more anthropologists, but the substance of what is offered differs substantially considerably from a generation or two ago. Thankfully, the word ‘primitive’ has disappeared from course titles; there are now courses in medical anthropology, courses on gender and feminism, ethnicity, and demography. You can find the current list of courses for the University of Michigan online at:

Table 1 University of Michigan Cultural Anthropology Faculty Interests Academic Year 2010-2011		
PhDs Awarded since 2000 N=9 Group A Interests		Group A Interests, continued
Anthropology of the state	Rumor	
Body	Secularism	
Built environment	Semiotics	
Bureaucracy and government	Science and technology	
Citizenship and non-citizens	Social inequalities	
Consumer and material culture	Sovereignty	
Corporations	Technologies of exclusion	
Critical visual anthropology	Theories of representation	
Diaspora and transnationalism	Transformations	
Domestic space	Transnational feminism	
Economic Anthropology	Transnationalism	
Ethnicity	Urban ethnography	
Ethnoarchaeology	Undocumented Migration	
Ethnographic film	Urban planning	
Feminist Ethnography	Vigilantism	
Film	Visual Anthropology	
Gender and Sexuality	Visual ethnography	
German studies		
Histories of Anthropology		
Identity		PhDs Awarded 1960-1979 N=4 Group B Interests
Imagination		
Knowledge production		
Material Culture		
Media		
Medical Anthropology	Consumer & material culture	
Middle Class	Culture Change	
Moving Image studies	Ecology	
Narrative forms	Economic development	
News and journalism	Historical Anthropology	
Pastoralism	History of Anthropology	
Photography	History of Life Sciences	
Political Economy	Kinship	
Political Economy of human smuggling	Legal Systems	
Political Violence	Mass culture	
Popular Culture	Media	
Population and Development	Political Economy	
Post socialism	Political Systems	
Poverty		
Public Culture		
Religion		

<sup>2</sup> *The History Boys*, a play by Alan Bennett, First performed in England in 2004. Also a motion picture by the same name and written by the same author, released in 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Said, Edward 1978 *Orientalism* New York. (Vintage, 1979)

<sup>4</sup> Michaelson, Scott and David E. Johnson 2008 *Anthropology's Wake: Attending the End Of Culture*. New York. Fordham. p 27

[http://www.lsa.umich.edu/anthro/undergrad\\_students/courseinfo.htm](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/anthro/undergrad_students/courseinfo.htm)

For me, the more interesting yet more perplexing information may be found in the lists of faculty interests in Table 1. As you can see, I divided the current cultural anthropology faculty at Michigan into two groups, Group A consisting of nine faculty awarded their doctoral degrees since 2000, and Group B, four faculty who earned their degrees between 1960 and 1979. These would capture the generational extremes among the cultural anthropologists on the Michigan faculty now and provide a comparison of how interests have changed over the decades.

The Table shows 56 interests among the nine current faculty in cultural anthropology who received their doctorates within the last ten years for an average of 6.2 interests per faculty member, whereas Group B lists 13 (average 3.25). I recognize a few titles in Group A's list that would fit easily into an older traditional program in cultural anthropology, but otherwise, the interests of recent faculty wander all over the place. Though the study of culture once stood as the central spine of an anthropology program, it is difficult for me to see where it would fit now, nor can I find any evidence for a core educational mission of the cultural program. Looking at the array for Group A reminds me of a comment by Leonard Pitts, a columnist for the *McClatchy Newspapers*, writing with regard to our nation as a whole: "We are infected by a view that we are not a nation with a nation's sense of mission but a loosely affiliated collection of interests willing to do anything to advance themselves. It says we are afflicted by an acute tendency to regard difference of opinion as a defect of humanity. It says we are suffering a false belief that argument is its own reward."<sup>5</sup>

I fear this segmentation, a widespread process within our culture, may be a greater threat to cultural anthropology than the criticisms literary critics raise. Many of the new courses could easily fit into the curricula of other departments and especially in sociology or political science. Anthropologists may well have a distinctive approach to bring to these issues, but can different approaches be sustained in an environment of diminishing resources?

Or perhaps one should ask the more fundamental question: should these different approaches be sustained regardless of the resource situation? My answer is no, an unfocussed program in cultural anthropology creates a weakness endemic to an entire department of

anthropology. I'm not talking about Michigan here. I am talking about anthropology departments across the country and perhaps beyond the country's boundaries.

Earlier I said it is all too easy for teachers of anthropology to overlook the students in the room as persons included in the purview of anthropology. In a similar way it has long been too easy for anthropologists to overlook the fact that they are included in the purview of anthropology as fully as all those so-called others they have studied. In this regard anthropologists might consider that whomever it is that they might

look in on is nothing more than a version of him or herself. I also said that cultural anthropology is on life support and the only option is to pull the plug or start over.

Forces outside anthropology may pull the plug, but I am for starting over. Though I appreciate that it won't likely happen, I would like to describe what I think a new start might look like by building on some of what has gone before.

I offer the following three suggestions for restoring life to the field as a whole but especially for integrating cultural anthropology with the rest of the field:

1. Reviving the general introductory course to anthropology would be a good place to begin. The course was open to all comers and generally required of majors. At the University of Colorado where I spent my professional life, it was a two-semester sequence that consisted of a survey of all four of the major subfields: cultural and physical anthropology, prehistoric archaeology and anthropological linguistics. Every faculty member was able to teach the course, though the major weight of doing so seemed to fall more heavily upon the latest person hired. This was the one and only exposure to anthropology for the vast majority of students, and it became a springboard for the relatively few anthropology majors. The general introductory course is going the way of the dodo bird. Either it is no longer on the course list or, as is the case at Michigan, anthropology is offered but does not count toward concentration requirements.

The first course for students in anthropology today is usually an introduction to one or the other of the subfields: physical or cultural anthropology, prehistoric archaeology or, less frequently, an introductory course in anthropological linguistics. Thus, few students today experience "anthropology"; they are instead initiated into one of the field's specialties. Fragmentation and specialization, indeed the first step toward a career in one of the subfields, has become the role of introduc-

<sup>5</sup> *Boulder Daily Camera* for December 13, 2010

tory courses or, at any rate, for courses that “count.” What once was anthropology have become its component parts. A major step toward restoring the field of anthropology to a coherent whole would be a renewal of the general introductory course, open to all and required of majors. And every faculty member should possess the requisite background to teach the course.

2. Both the concept and the word *culture* need to be resuscitated and brought back to life. Whoever led the charge to move culture aside because it is a Western concept used by colonialist anthropologists and imposed upon others did the cause of anthropology a serious if not fatal disservice. This was thoughtless name-calling by the sanctimonious PC mafia. The study of culture is at the very core of anthropology. Though many definitions of the word have been offered, I favor one that has been around for over 60 years and that Leslie White authored. I choose it because it is laced with possibilities for helping us make sense of the world within which we live. Paraphrasing White a bit, *culture consists of a class of things and events that are the products of the human capacity to create meaning.*

The capacity to create meaning produces a unique world of our own making though not ours to control. The words you register here with your eyes—your brain really—mean nothing at all to someone who reads only Arabic. To such a person they are merely marks on a monitor or a page, in other words just inert symbols. To you and me, however, they are words, because you and I have learned what they mean. Each one has a history, each one has an origin and they all were made to mean something by someone in the distant past. Indeed many if not most of these words began not as marks on a page but as sounds from our voice.

But new words appear all the time when formerly meaningless symbols are transformed into new spoken and written words, some created by someone we may know. The meaning of iPad, for example, came upon us only a few months ago and may have been created, i.e. given meaning, by Steve Jobs or, if not by him, then by someone he could possibly name. New words may not come our way every day but they come about more often than we may realize. Think Twitter.

The proper study of cultural anthropology is the study of culture, the stuff that comes into being by our capacity to create meaning, i.e. the materials, the institutions and the ideologies, and their interactions with one another and their relationships to local ecologies, and to the human animal. It is not the study of psy-

chology nor is it the study of sociology. If we were fish, it would be analogous to the study of water, for we spend our entire lives “underculture.” Unlike fish, we are the source of culture, yet we do not, as individuals, control it any more than fish control the seas. Every choice we make, every movement we take, oc-

cur within a surrounding context of natural and cultural conditions that will determine their effects. Everything we do can have an effect, but the effect it has is not ours to control.

When I say that White’s definition of culture sparkles with promise, I mean that with it we can begin to explore new and interesting issues such as these:

a. Throughout almost all of human evolutionary history, culture served well the survival necessities of the human animal by vastly extending our ancestors’ adaptability to overcome the challenges served up by nature.

b. The stuff of culture has accumulated at an accelerating rate.

c. Recently—roughly since the dawn of agriculture—culture itself has become an increasingly formidable challenge to the capacity of the human animal to adapt to challenges emanating from culture itself.

d. Culture offers us no means of extending our adaptability to respond to challenges created by culture itself, no means at any rate that do not create even more formidable challenges in their wake.

e. Our future, it would appear, rests largely upon our ability to adapt to culture. Yet we place no emphasis on understanding culture and its relationship to the human animal. We still believe we are in control, and thus keep blaming persons for bad happenings. We remain awash in blame, which makes rather than solves problems.

Dealing with these pressing issues has the potential to bring the parts of anthropology back together into a coherent whole. The biggest obstacle may come from persons who call themselves physical anthropologists but who have no interest in becoming well-schooled in the nature of culture. Their reluctance simply means they remain human biologists and not physical anthropologists. Physical anthropology differs from human biology in that its primary focus falls on the relationship between the human animal and culture.

We cannot experiment, we cannot falsify, but we can explore the material world as delineated in our definition of culture, and as we explore, we may discover what seem to us plausible relationships. Mate-

***If we were fish, [the proper study of culture] would be analogous to the study of water, for we spend our entire lives “underculture.” Unlike fish, we are the source of culture, yet we do not, as individuals, control it any more than fish control the seas.***

rial plausibility may be as close as anthropology may ever come to finding the truth about anything. We did just that in Part One of Strong Opinions when we proposed a plausible explanation for the potlatch as a cultural institution which extends the adaptive capacity of a largely sedentary hunter-gatherers who dwell within fluctuating natural conditions of occasional abundance, local scarcity and, occasional widespread scarcity from one season to the next.

3. Finally, I would suggest that every anthropology department empanel an advisory group consisting of a mix of present and former students and members of the community. The purpose of such a group is to listen to the accomplishments and shortcomings, and to ask questions, offer suggestions and review plans of the department. The advisory group should meet on campus at least once a year for a formal presentation by the department and some time set aside for visiting faculty and students. The advisers might also raise funds for

special projects and provide guidance to the faculty on the perception of their work from the outside.

Academic departments have become closed work places reporting, only to others in their institutions and all participating in what they presume is a zero-sum game. An additional perception from outsiders can provide insight and support that is otherwise unobtainable. It would be like fresh air flowing into a tightly closed room.

I began the first essay with an observation a former student made about my course in physical anthropology having a spiritual component, which was a surprise to me. I raise it here at the close of Part Two merely as a reminder that professors tell stories and students make what they will of them. Students' epiphanies of this sort may come with nothing more than an experience of seeing themselves as they are used to seeing others, or more profound than becoming aware that they are included in the study of humankind. 74



**Here's another SACC member with a "fro" in an earlier chapter of his life whom you've seen and met at annual meetings.**

**Can you name him?**

**(Answer on page 29)**

## **Comfort Foods: An Anthropological Look At Emotional Eating**

**Laura Tubelle de González**



**W**alking along Fisherman's Wharf in 2010, some fellow anthropology teachers and I noticed a restaurant sign advertising "comfort foods." We were intrigued and discovered that the restaurant served classic American fare, mostly fried or grilled meats, with cheesy pasta, warm rolls and pies for dessert. Just the sound of these foods made

us hungry and ready to snuggle into a booth for dinner.

The idea of comfort food became more interesting as I considered why it developed in the first place. I imagined that all people, no matter what ethnicity, have an emotional response to certain foods. But the idea that all San Franciscans would share a craving for American comfort food is clearly incorrect. I wondered if people of diverse ethnic backgrounds would be drawn to different foods with similar qualities. We are all humans, after all, with the same ancient ancestry and basic physiology. Might Ethiopians in San Francisco be attracted to the same types of starchy, salty and sweet dishes as we are, based on desires deeply encoded in our past?

Over the next few months, I set out to understand more about comfort food from an anthropological perspective. I reviewed the published literature on the development of comfort foods and created an assignment for my own ethnically-diverse students in order to learn more about personal reasons for favoring certain foods. Through that study, I also discovered a preference for warm and hot foods, something only alluded to in the current literature. This paper attempts to understand desires for food that comforts emotionally by looking at both cultural and physiological reasons.

### **What are comfort foods?**

Comfort foods are those foods we eat for emotional reasons. Most often they are thought of as foods we turn to when we are feeling sad. Items in this category

might include a favorite flavor of ice cream, a cherished staple food, or chicken soup. We also seek out comfort foods to sustain a good mood, such as pizza at a party (Wansink and Sangerman 2000). Comfort foods help us do this because they are palatable and provide or support a sense of well-being, if temporary, for the eater.

Brian Wansink, director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab, publishes prolifically on eating and consumer behavior. In an article co-written with Cynthia Sangerman (2000), the authors present two reasons that foods become comforting. The first is due to the specific positive memories connected with them.



In particular, foods that fall into this category elicit feelings of "safety, love, homecoming, appreciation, control, victory or empowerment" (2000:66). Examples of these types of foods might be a soup routinely served with love and compassion during bouts of childhood illness; a type of birthday cake served every year; a holiday meal such as Thanksgiving turkey; or potato chips, served

ubiquitously at childhood parties.

The second reason these authors believe foods become comforting is that they express an aspect of our identity. For instance, the authors give the example of men being more likely to derive comfort from eating steak than tofu. In the culture of the U.S., steak is associated with images of masculinity and strength. Tofu is perceived by mainstream eaters as a meat substitute or health-conscious item, neither of which is associated with a particularly masculine image.

Another way comfort food supports the expression of identity would be if a particular food makes a person feel unique. One whose list includes an "Abba Zaba" candy bar, popular in the seventies and eighties, may feel this helps define them as hip or "retro." A person who seeks out food products that are outside the mainstream may find comfort in the uniqueness that these foods express.

### The Evolutionary Link

Research on food and early humans demonstrates a link between the kinds of foods that were essential to survival and modern humans' food cravings. A hunter-gatherer lifestyle relies heavily on plant materials with infrequent but important intake of animal meat. As non-human primates do today, early humans would have sought sources of high-calorie and nutritious foods that were easily digestible as a quick energy source. (Snodgrass et al. 2009). They also would have sought foods that provided aspects of the human diet that we cannot produce in our bodies and must be ingested. Cravings for these types of foods are generally put into three categories: sweets, fats, and salt.

For our ancestors, fruit that has turned sweet signals that it is ripe and ready to eat. Ripe fruit would have provided important vitamins and minerals, including A and C. Sweet-sour foods, such as ripe berries, seem to especially appeal to our tastes (Anderson 33) and are full of nutrition. Our innate "sweet tooth" therefore, is a craving developed to find important sources of nutrients and calories, from breast milk at infancy throughout the human lifespan. Starchy foods, such as tubers, are made up of carbohydrates which also break down into sugars providing energy. Sugars and starches are essential to brain functioning, as the brain is the only organ entirely dependent on carbohydrate energy.

Fat from vegetable sources (in the form of oily fruits, nuts and seeds) and animals hunted for meat would have provided the fat human bodies need for healthy functioning, including absorption of nutrients, organ protection, and hormone production. Playing on the idea of the sweet tooth, epidemiologist Adam Drewnowski calls this important craving for fat our "fat tooth" (Belasco 2008). The fat tooth would have drawn humans to eat sources of high caloric foods that could be stored in the body. Fat intake would have been hard to come by when scavenging and/or hunting was difficult.

Sodium from salt provides another essential mineral that the body cannot produce. A healthy adult requires several pounds of salt a year from food sources, more in hot climates where more salt is lost through sweating (Kurlansky 2002). Sodium helps maintain the fluid in our blood cells and transmits information in nerves and muscles. In fact, the quest for salt may have helped shape the paths of early migratory humans, who followed their prey animals to water and salt sources (ibid). Since sodium cannot be synthesized in the body, developing a taste for salt was crucial to our survival.

Our species has foraged for the majority of its existence. It is only in the last 12,000 years or so that



we began farming on a large scale. Therefore, these cravings, essential for a foraging lifestyle, were engraved into the brain's reward system. These foods tasted good because they were providing important sources of nutrition and energy. The desires never faded. Cravings for fatty and sweet energy-rich foods, as well as for salty foods, are well documented among eaters today (Wansink and Sangerman 2000). Although comfort food items are purely individual choices, the most popular comfort foods sought out tend to fall into one or more of the cravings categories above. In a 2003 survey of over 1000 people, Wansink and colleagues found a strong preference for meal-oriented comfort foods (such as steak, casseroles, soup, pizza or pasta), and dessert-oriented ones (such as ice cream, chocolate, and cookies). Fats, sweets and salt are all well -represented among these favorites.

### Stress and Eating

Perhaps not surprising to those of us who head for ice cream after a hard day, there is a strong link between stress and emotional eating. Ancient peoples, when not able to get the nutrients their bodies needed, would have experienced both psychological and physiological stress. Finding available sources of nutrients would have helped alleviate the physical stress, and no doubt the mental anxiety that would accompany a starving body.

Today, comfort foods are often sought when feeling the effects of stress or negative affect, when one feels anxious, sad, depressed or bored. The connection between stress-induced, high-calorie eating and reward responses in the brain is documented by recent research. Wardle and Gibson point to

a consistent pattern of evidence suggesting that many people, for diverse reasons, will be likely to eat more sweet fatty, energy-dense foods when stressed...provid[ing] some stress alleviation through both psychological and physiological pathways, including changes in activity of neuro-

transmitters such as opioids, serotonin and dopamine. (2007:797)

The three neurotransmitters mentioned are well-established as those which elevate mood. This new research finds that pleasurable eating can act in the same way as an anti-depressant drug, releasing the so-called “feel-good” brain chemicals.

Adam and Apel (2007) found that opioid release in the brain (endorphins, for example) is linked both to stress as well as pleasurable food intake. With opioid release, people feel rewarded for consuming palatable food. Conclusions inevitably lead to a connection between the high incidence of stress reported by people today and the modern obesity epidemic. The pleasure-reward pathways of high caloric food were laid down in our development as humans, even though sweet, fatty food is now easily accessible for most and we are no longer eating to survive.

In a single-sex survey, Kandiah et al. (2006) studied the effects of stress on appetite in a female college population using an online survey tool. Over the course of a month, 72 subjects recorded changes in their experience of stress and the corresponding changes in eating behavior. Stress appears to have magnified their craving for sweets, fats and salt:

when stressed, subjects with an increased appetite chose significantly more types of sweet foods and mixed dishes. Sweet foods commonly eaten were desserts, chocolate/candy bars, candy, ice cream, muffins/sweet breads, and fresh or canned fruit, whereas mixed dishes commonly eaten were burgers or sandwich meat items, pizza, casseroles, tacos, ethnic foods, and fast food. (2006:118)

While 80 percent of subjects reported making healthy choices under normal, non-stressful conditions, only 33 percent of them did so when feeling the effects of stress. The foods sought out by these students demonstrate a clear choice for sweets, desserts, fatty meats and cheeses, and high sodium foods, such as fast food and processed meats. In contrast, missing from this list

are raw vegetables, salads and other typical “diet” foods. Interesting to note, the authors report that the variety of foods selected decreased when subjects were feeling the pressures of stress. That is, when stressed, subjects turned to the same foods most often for comfort, likely due to personal reasons linked to pleasurable past experiences with a narrow range of foods.

Our personal histories help narrow down the list of foods we most desire. Not all of our favorites are simply sweet and fatty. In Wansink and Sangerman’s 2000 study, they discovered the somewhat surprising result that 40 percent of the foods reported by survey participants might actually be considered healthy, such as meats, main dishes, casseroles, soups, etc. (Of course, the actual level of healthfulness would depend upon preparation; nonetheless, these items are not snacks or desserts.) One study participant listed “green bean casserole” as a favorite, underscoring the individual nature of comfort food choices. The authors argue that in fact “the popularity of these less glamorous and less indulgent foods lends credibility to the notion that comfort foods are distinct from ‘taste good’ foods” (2000:66). Past experience plays a significant role in which foods we return to for comfort.

### Ethnographic Research

For a deeper and more personal understanding, I added an optional assignment called “Comfort Food” to my Cultural Anthropology Online course in the Fall semester of 2010 at San Diego Miramar College. I wanted to find out more qualitative data, such as the reasons for choosing particular comfort foods. I allowed students to define the term “comfort food” according to their own understanding. Thirty-seven students of six different ethnicities chose to complete the assignment, with a gender breakdown of 26 females and 11 males.

I recorded their responses in five categories: family (e.g. “my grandmother used to make this stew”), sickness (“my mom would give me this soup when I was sick”), childhood rewards (“my dad would serve us warm chocolate chip cookies when we were good”), carefree times (“at picnics we used to eat these popsi-cles”) and a simple treat (“I simply love the taste of this”). Of the five categories, four are connected to positive memories of home, family and childhood. The last is more hedonistic, that is, linked to the taste experience itself. I would argue that this last category may not contain the kind of comfort foods that have a strong link to memory; however, they may fit into Wansink and Sangerman’s second definition that links comfort foods to identity. Alternatively, this last cate-



gory may contain respondents' favorite foods, but not necessarily comfort foods as defined.

As represented visually in the accompanying charts, the majority of respondents, both male and female, reported that their favorite comfort foods were linked to pleasurable childhood experiences. Of the twenty-six female respondents, twenty-one (or 80 percent) connected their favorite comfort foods to past experiences (the first four categories); of the eleven male respondents, eight (or 72 percent) connected theirs. (All reasons were noted; some respondents gave several reasons.)

Chart 1.  
Female: Reasons for Choosing their Comfort Food (%)  
n=26

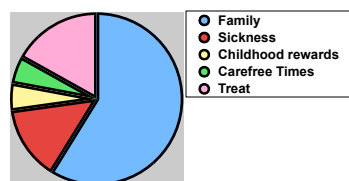
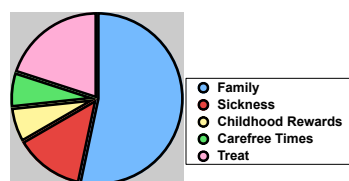


Chart 2.  
Male: Reasons for Choosing their Comfort Food (%)  
n=11



The responses of both males and females demonstrate an understanding of the link between comfort food and memory, and a preference for those foods tied to childhood experiences. Importantly, the largest category for both sexes tie their favorite comfort foods to family, showing an intimate connection to the food fed to them by loved ones in the past.

### Comfort Food and Ethnicity

Memories of food from our childhood situate us within our families, communities, and importantly, our ethnic-

ities. Ethnic heritage often dictates the kinds of foods that are served in the home, and therefore foods that are linked to childhood and family. While many of the foods listed by my students in the assignment fall into one or more of the food craving categories, personal experience plays a crucial role. While North Americans may agree that a warm chocolate chip cookie is nearly universally loved, a person of Greek ethnicity may argue that a sweet honeyed baklava is much more comforting.

Many respondents write about certain foods prepared by family members, especially mothers and grandmothers. Love for people translates into love for certain foods made and offered by those people. Since my students come from ethnically diverse backgrounds, their comfort foods are also ethnically specific. For instance, this student's emotional connection to pasta or Chinese noodles helps comfort her when she is feeling down: (*Emphasis added in each quote*)

My mom...used to make the best pasta and Chinese noodles in the world. So now *whenever I am feeling sad*, I make pasta or noodles because they are my favorite foods.

Another student's quote captures the experience of personalized comfort food beautifully in her description of *Sinigang*, a Filipino meat stew:

The one food that I can always count on for a comforting meal is called Sinigang. It is a Filipino dish that consists of meat of your choice, but I like it with beef short ribs, eggplant, labanos (white radish), tomato, baby bok choy, okra, and special tamarind seasoning. I love it because it is cooked in a broth and gives me that *warm feeling inside like a hug after every bite*. When I am sick, after giving birth to my three children, when I miss my parents, if it is raining outside; those are all examples of when I want my comfort food. This is my idea of chicken noodle soup, but more satisfying.

The description of the stew giving her a "warm feeling inside like a hug after every bite" focuses on the emotional power of this meal, linked to her childhood as a young Filipino girl. She adds below that her non-Filipino husband had his own ideas about food that was comforting and tried to share them in a kind but misguided gesture.

When my husband and I were first dating and I got sick for the first time, he asked me if I wanted some chicken noodle soup to make me feel better. I had always heard that from others who were sick and thought why not, but I never associated chicken noodle soup and comfort; Sinigang is my version of chicken noodle soup. Needless to say, *that it did not make me feel better*.

Her story articulately expresses the strong connection between comfort food and memory, in both the description of why she loves the stew and why she cannot substitute plain chicken soup. Although both

dishes contain meat in a savory broth, they are worlds apart in terms of their emotional resonance.

### Comfort Food and Temperature

While compiling the comfort food preferences of my respondents, I noticed that many of the foods mentioned had a qualifier in terms of temperature, notably for warm or hot items. For instance, one student said “a warm slice of pie” rather than simply a slice of pie. In fact, compiling all the data by temperature, I found a strong preference for foods served warm or hot.

Interesting support for this idea came with the proliferation of grocery store magazine covers advertising recipes for “Comfort Food” throughout the winter. Clearly, cooking and women’s magazines use the colder temperatures of winter months to draw readers with thoughts of warm and comforting dishes. As I write this, it is summer, and cover stories on comfort foods are conspicuously absent. The summer time calls for “light and healthy” foods, when sunshine does more to comfort us than food needs to, and what we really crave is being able to fit into a bathing suit. Magazines use the seasonal change in cravings to draw readers.

Although temperature is not the main focus of his research, Wansink alludes to the connection between warm foods and comfort in several of his articles. For instance, in the 2003 study referenced above, the authors conclude that “Soup is powerful comfort food, as one that highest percentage of people said made them feel good about themselves” (2003:739). In short online piece for MSNBC, Wansink suggests foregoing the junk food cravings for something “hot.” He says “Hot foods are generally more healthy (except maybe french fries) and they can be satisfying enough to short-circuit the craving” (2007). As an anthropologist, I find that this statement begs the question: Why would hot foods be so satisfying?

If we take the same line of reasoning that other food scholars do—that humans crave sweets, fats, and salt due to our evolutionary heritage—shouldn’t we examine temperature as linked to human evolution as well? Cooking food was undoubtedly one of the greatest milestones leading to *Homo sapiens*’ development. Cooked food becomes more easily digestible and frees up calories for other body functions. Raw foods may be healthy, but are very costly in terms of the energy needed to process them (Wrangham 2009). Cooking also kills pathogens in food, making it less likely to make one ill.

The cooking ability of our ancestors has recently become a hot topic, with a book published by Harvard professor of evolutionary biology, Richard Wrangham,



called *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human* (2009). In it, he argues that the brain expansion of hominins hinged on the moment in history 1.8 million years ago, when our ancestors first made fire and were able to cook their food. Calories freed from the onerous process of digestion were better put to use growing larger and smarter hominin brains. The brain is a very needy organ in terms of energy: it takes up two percent of human body mass but consumes approximately twenty percent of its calories. (FDIC 2011) In effect, Wrangham argues that it was controlling fire for heating to heat food that led directly to the kind of growth necessary to support a big brain, and the eventual domination of *Homo sapiens*.

Wrangham’s time frame does not correspond with the mainstream view of most anthropologists. Most argue that solid evidence for cooking comes much later, around 400,000 years BP, before the first *Homo sapiens* appear in East Africa around 200,000 years BP. However, for the purposes of this inquiry, the date of the first cooking fire is not important. The fact remains that controlled use of fire for cooking was a crucial milestone for the development of *Homo sapiens*, leading to a greater absorption of calories to grow and/or maintain our energy-expensive brain. It may have happened earlier or later; nevertheless, it freed up calories that would have otherwise been spent chewing and digesting. Like the foods that led to cravings for sweets, fats and salt laid down embedded in brain pathways, hot food from the cooking fire may have also been carved into our ancestral heritage as fulfilling a need for something good for us.

To see if my sample correlated with this line of inquiry, I categorized the foods that would typically be served hot, warm, at room temperature, or cold. As shown in the charts below, the majority of respondents, both male and female, chose dishes that are typically served warm or hot, or specified it. Of the 26 female respondents, eighteen (or 69 percent) chose foods that

would be served warm or hot, with “warm” as the largest category. Of the 11 male respondents, eight (or 72 percent) chose foods that would be served warm or hot, also with “warm” as the largest category. (All comfort foods were noted; some respondents chose several foods.)

Chart 3.  
Female: Comfort Food Temperatures  
n=26

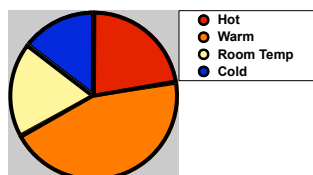
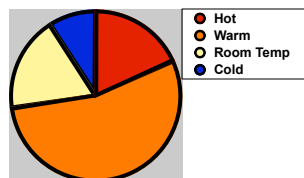


Chart 4.  
Male: Comfort Food Temperatures  
n=11



The preference from respondents for warm/hot foods leads to the conclusion that temperature appears to be important on a physiological level. Smell may play a part in this comfort, as pleasurable aromas are more easily detected in warm or hot foods. In fact, just the smell of a food we enjoy can stimulate the pleasure-reward centers of the brain. (Brookhaven National Laboratory 2002) Smell is crucial to taste perception and contributes much of our sensory experience while eating. Room temperature and cold foods are more difficult to smell and thus contribute less to the overall experience of taste.

Of course, there will always be comfort foods that are served at room temperature or cold. A baloney sandwich can be powerful comfort food if it is linked to a particular person or set of memories. However, the warmth generated by temperature seems to be connected to a symbolic warmth as well, as a vehicle of comfort, perhaps aided by smell. Comfort foods are served hot and cold in our childhoods; we do not know which foods will stay with us as markers of those good feelings. I believe that it is not coincidence that leads us to choose warm foods, just as it is not coincidence that we crave sweets, fats and salt.

## Conclusions

I imagine readers of this paper thinking about their own comfort foods. Do they have characteristics of the high-calorie foods we ate as hunter-gatherers? Are they salty or sweet? Are they warm or cold? What memories do they call up? One of my favorite comfort foods—white rice and garbanzos in tomato sauce—is starchy, salty and warm, and directly linked to memories of love, caring and family. While no one likely shares my particular set of comfort foods, the published literature and ethnographic data support the idea that all of us, as biological and cultural beings, look to some foods for comfort. This is especially true when we are feeling sad or anxious, but may also be true when we want to boost a good mood. As shown, temperature may play an important role, due to the heat itself as well as the role of aroma in enhancing taste.

An evolutionary perspective confirms that many of these foods share qualities that would have made them attractive to our ancestors, providing essential sources of nutrition in a challenging food environment. Of course, early humans wouldn't recognize those foods today in their processed or packaged forms. Yet producers of industrial food cater to the tastes that we respond to. Sweet, fatty and salty foods activate the pleasure-reward system in the brain, now as they did then, providing some relief from stress. Unfortunately, what once helped us survive can now become a health liability. Excessively satiating those desires can lead to major health problems such as obesity and diabetes.

Nonetheless, out of these categories, a select few become favored comfort foods that we turn to again and again. Personal experience, especially ethnic and cultural background, narrows the list of cherished food items. Like so much in human experience, common evolution creates a foundation in our physiology. Like a multi-tiered cake, desires get refined through layers of culture, ethnicity, and personal history. 74

I would like to thank Mark Manasse and Luis A. Gonzalez who read earlier drafts of this paper.

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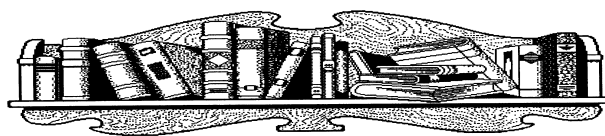
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## BOOK REVIEW

### *Democracy in America, Volume 1*

Alexis de Tocqueville. New York: Vintage Books, 1945. 452 pp.

Reviewed by William L. Fairbanks II, Cuesta College, Anthropology Faculty Emeritus

*[Editor's note: This review is reprinted from the Southwestern Archaeological Association Newsletter, June 2009 issue with the publisher's and author's permission.]*

Why review a book written in 1835? Several reasons come to mind. First, it is a major work that defined, and continues to define, America's identity. If so, what might a current look at this seminal work reveal about the evolution of this identity? Second, the situation the U.S. finds itself in today is radically different than that de Tocqueville described. Thirdly, over time many messages conveyed in classics such as this become distorted—the book becomes stereotyped and used for forensic purposes, to support a priori positions. A fresh look allows us to re-examine and apply those messages to the different situation America now finds itself in, avoiding stale applications and interpretations of de Tocqueville's insights as well as producing fresh insights. Fourth, de Tocqueville takes a holistic approach, an approach more typical of anthropology than political science (although the work is generally considered to fall within that discipline). Theoretically, his work would seem to share much in common with Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. At their best, anthropological studies are analytical rather than merely judgmental, and de Tocqueville succeeded in this approach 175 years ago. A bias against the South is easily detectable in Vol. I, yet judgmentalism was not the lynchpin of the work. During a session on his work at the 2005 annual conference of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), his work was referred to as “the Bible” (Spiegel 2005), a thought to be returned to at the end of this review.

De Tocqueville's work is impressionistic and offers the reader numerous insights into American society as it functioned in the early 1830s. Due to the nature of the study there is not a great deal of material illustrating the insights; it is the insights themselves that make this valuable work a classic. Since the research was conducted approximately 175 years ago,

not all the insights are equally relevant today. De Tocqueville did not present his readers a plan of action for correcting the many weaknesses of American democracy on which he had commented. He seems to have trusted Americans of the future, using the potential inherent in democracy to address these issues.

Popularly, de Tocqueville is seen as unconditionally endorsing American democracy as it existed circa 1831; however, even a casual reading offers little support for that conclusion. De Tocqueville saw many weaknesses in our democracy as it existed in the early 1830s. He observed the poor quality of our leaders and our House of Representatives. According to de Tocqueville, Americans create laws based on legal fiction, excessive laws, weak laws, ineffective laws, as well as some that are dangerous. There are dangers in the Constitution. Our system creates inequalities, leads to envy and acts as an obstacle to justice. Since democracy rests on passion, decisions are not necessarily based on reason. Newspapers are trivial, the press appeals to passions, and journalists distort facts. Our democracy is not oriented to the future; it leads to instability and increased public expenditures. Public business is conducted badly. Majority interests will be overlooked when a nation has several irreconcilable interests. Democracy won't tackle hard problems. Misuse of power by the majority can wrong adversaries, which leads to a debasement of character. Democracies can become despotic, and he could see the U.S. becoming despotic. Indian removal, he said, caused “frightful suffering” (p. 352). Although our jury system is democratic, it is only appropriate when the facts are simple, not when they are complex and intellectual. Cities act in their own best interests, which can be dangerous. America, he said, may be good theoretically, but bad practically.

Of course, de Tocqueville did see positive aspects to American democracy. He saw it as self correcting, leading to wealth and prosperity for all. Judicial powers, he believed, were important to check the excesses of democracy and only democracy could preserve freedom. He also commented on the criteria necessary for an effective democracy, namely sophisticated citizens who are willing to participate in government. Americans seemed to take an active part in local, county and state government. Order and prosperity are intimately connected and lead to stable government.

Americans today might not want to hear that their nation's greatness was not the result of democracy, rather the accidental situation in which providence placed us. De Tocqueville pointed out we had no neighbors and an empty country, no great cities, which,

as well as our customs and laws, worked to make the U.S. great. "A thousand circumstances independent of the will of man facilitate the maintenance of a democratic republic in the United States" (p. 299). God placed the United States on a "boundless continent" which allows us to maintain our freedom and equality (p. 301). America's soil is "extraordinary" and our fields limitless (pp. 301-302). Despite this, not all states could grow and prosper at the same rate and inequality between the prosperity of states threatened the United States.

He saw much that is certainly no longer relevant. America was homogenous and had no poverty, he said. We had no classes, and since we had no great wealth, wealth did not confer power. We had no enemies; hence no need to fear great wars. Collusion between Congress and the President was impossible. The President was weak, as was the federal government. We did not have a capital city whose influence was felt throughout the nation. We had no great parties. States were stronger than the federal government, and state patriotism was stronger than U.S. patriotism. We were a small nation, with no great cities. It was easy to set up a newspaper. Democracy prevented the abuse of power. Americans obeyed the law because it was the will of the majority and if they didn't like the law, they expected to change it with the expectation everyone would obey the new law. We had no financial crises, so we had no great taxes. Americans were practical and had good sense. We had bountiful resources; half the U.S. was wilderness.

De Tocqueville commented on America's national character and how it shaped our institutions. Ignorance, and mediocrity characterized America; few understood. Americans found facts difficult to appreciate, general ideas alarmed us and in America emotion overrode reason. Consequently opinions were hastily formed and superficial. We linked virtue and right. Customs<sup>1</sup> were important and more powerful than law. Slavery, he believed, rested on custom rather than law. Americans viewed practice as more important than theory. Morality was important and its breakdown led to license, what Durkheim later defined as anomy. He would also have agreed with Durkheim that law rests on the collective conscience. Although Blacks were said to be equals in the northern states, they weren't. Contentment was the reward for labor. Americans accepted opportunities. We were a proud race, thinking ourselves above other humans. Americans believed in the perfectibility of humans through education. Ignorance was bad, but society was improving. Americans had faith in democracy. They were individualistic; individual interests overrode patriotism. We changed professions frequently, and equated change with im-

provement. Northerners were patient, precise, clear, reflecting, tolerant, slow to act, preserving, practical, individualistic, selfish, wealth-oriented, religious and moral. These characteristics, de Tocqueville believed, would become characteristic of most Americans.

De Tocqueville may have disagreed with the extreme position some Americans today take concerning the separation of church and state. His analysis of the relationship of institutions is much more nuanced. He saw religion as maintaining democracy. American religion is democratic and no American religion opposes democracy. All religions' morality is the same. He saw religion having little influence on law, but saw it directing customs. He did not see American religion as able to exert its authority over all, and in consequence it has strengthened its authority over a few. An alliance of religion and politics he regarded as undesirable.

Some people today use de Tocqueville in support of local government vis-à-vis the federal government. De Tocqueville does not provide a great deal of support for this position. He did believe that rights need not be uniform nationally and state interests influence people more immediately than national interests, which have a questionable influence on individuals. He said, though, local governments have an instinct for independence. Leaders of state government were said to be second rate and people have more to fear from state than the federal government. He provided, as an example, the tyranny being practiced on Indians and Blacks by southern governors and courts. State governments, he asserted, treated Indians worse than the federal government. State governments, as the federal government, lack good faith.

He pointed out concepts that America might find profitable, even if America chose to ignore them. For example, minor punishments work better than major punishments. Although a host of bad laws can be survived, laws that encourage a cancer cannot. De Tocqueville, like President Washington, advised us not to intervene in foreign politics and to steer clear of permanent alliances. He did not see American democracy as exportable. He recognized that although all American nations have democratic states, only the Anglo-American nations have democratic institutions. He saw the family as important and anonymity as undesirable. He also saw rapid population growth as potentially dangerous.

De Tocqueville saw America's future rather well. When he visited the U.S., he felt we were already a great nation. He foresaw the problem of freed slaves for the South. He also saw freedom for slaves leading to increased prejudice. Consequently, it would be easier to abolish slavery than eliminate prejudice. Amal-

<sup>1</sup> De Tocqueville uses *customs* as we understand *mores*, rather than as we understand customs or folkways. If a person violates folkways, he or she is considered strange, unusual or eccentric, as would be a person who refuses to shake hands when one is extended in greeting. *Mores* are, for a society or social system, more serious informal norms, what are popularly called morals. A breach of mores leads to a negative judgment concerning the person's morality. Often morality is also written into the law. For example, it is both immoral and illegal to murder a human being.

gamation of the races would be resisted by Southerners. America's future involved manifest destiny, and he did not believe the U.S. had reached its natural limit. We would infringe on Mexico, and we would be feared. Rapid prosperity could be a problem. Immigrants would be assimilated. Democracy would increase. The U.S. would become self-sufficient in manufactured goods. We would become a maritime power and our products fill South American markets. De Tocqueville saw democracy leading to capitalism, and in some cases he seems to confuse capitalism, an economic system, with democracy, a political system. He saw democracy leading to increased centralization and the feedback effect centralization would have on limiting local action. Crises lead to tax increases. He believed American taxes could reach European levels, and foresaw taxes of 50 percent.

Additionally, he made generalizations about sovereign states, which seem supported by American history. For example, small states have political liberties that large states lose. Large states have grand ideas. War is not in a nation's best interest; it leads both to increased governmental power and ruin. Men, he said, cannot remain strangers to one another or ignorant of what is taking place "in any corner of the globe" (p. 451). Also government, democratic or otherwise, does not benefit all classes equally. He made some observations about Europe, which now might seem to apply to the U.S., such as Europe's desire for riches and excessive love of independence.

Democracy in America was a great work, a quantum leap in social science. De Tocqueville might be considered a 19th century cultural evolutionist, believing in the progress of reason and hence in American's ability to perfect democracy. He kept this orientation subtle, yet consistent, with scattered references which identify him with this theoretical position. Theoretical commitment did not prevent him from analyzing his topic from as many different perspectives as possible. These approaches seem to anticipate the number of approaches developed by anthropologists such as Emile Durkheim, Ruth Benedict, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, as well as scholars in other disciplines, such as the economist Thorstein Veblen, and historians Fredrick Jackson Turner and Walter Prescott Webb.

Democracy in America provides a unique opportunity to test the relevance of anthropological theory using the United States. Some theories that come to mind include Ruth Benedict's contention that "cultures may be built solidly and harmoniously upon fan-

tasy, fear constructs...and indulge to the limit in hypocrisy and pretensions'" (Kardiner and Preble 1963:182), and Sahlins and Service's law of evolutionary potential: "The more specialized and adapted a form in a given evolutionary stage, the smaller is its potential for passing to the next stage" (Sahlins and Service 1973:97). Or Immanuel Wallerstein, who quotes Marc Bloch: "'through the play of custom, an abuse might always by mutation become a precedent a right'" (Wallerstein 1974:28).

Perhaps de Tocqueville was a better 19th century cultural evolutionist than many that have followed. From a careful reading of this book it is obvious he did not see the United States in the early 1830s as having perfected democracy but practicing an early, very imperfect form; a form in need of much improvement. He did feel confident it could be perfected. Interestingly many Americans today take what de Tocqueville felt was an early imperfect form and consider it the ideal, an ideal we should somehow recapture. Those assumptions move Democracy in America from social science to Biblical status.

Is *Democracy in America* the Bible? Like the Bible, it is dated, packed with insights, some relevant, some no longer relevant and selectively used in support of a priori commitments. Spiegel is right. Democracy in America has become the Bible, but it is still worth reading for its insights! 74

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## ***The Benefits of Cultural Diversity in a Community College Anthropology Class***

***A.B. Diefenderfer***

In order for community college educators and their students to be successful within the classroom setting, it is imperative for all to consider the realms and benefits to the diversity contained uniquely within our particular environments. To improve understanding and encourage dialogue and thought on this topic, we must take a look at four items: community college population demography, the roles of student learning styles and needs, the issue of socialization to college expectations, and, ultimately, various teaching approaches and techniques. We owe it to our students to create inclusive, supportive, respectful and higher-order learning environments and give them the tools they need in order to work toward academic success.

As many of us are aware, the average age of community college student populations is neither the 18-22-year old crowd seen at private colleges and universities nor the slightly older students sometimes seen at public universities. While some community college students are as young as junior high or high school due to homeschooling and dual enrollment, it is not unheard of to also have grandparents and retirees in our classes.

Many students come from households where they are the first to enter higher education or from high schools that may have deficits in one form or another. However, honor students and accelerated learners are also part of the student population, and they are increasing due to rising college expenses and the general economic situation. Likewise, many community colleges have open enrollment, which contributes to an increase in the level of diversity in gender, race and ethnicity.

One of the central tenets of my discussion of this issue, however, is that cultural diversity encompasses more than race, ethnicity, gender, class and age differences. Rather, when we reflect upon cultural diversity within a community college environment, we must also consider the roles of learning levels, styles and various student needs in turn.

Not all of these students are at same stage in the independent and self-directed learning process considered a key feature to academic success at the collegiate level. Community college students especially cannot be presumed to know the nature of library research or plagiarism avoidance. They might

not have any notion of sitting in a classroom for one to three hours or how to juggle multiple assignments. They need to learn that culture from us.

Since many of us teaching at community colleges have smaller sized introductory-level classes than those at four-year institutions, we can play a central role in educating these students on what the realms of cultural diversity are when it comes to learning levels, styles and various needs. Students may need tips and suggestions on where to start or how to balance their educational obligations. Some community college students are quick to seek tutoring or meet with professors when they have specific learning needs, but more often than not, they need the encouragement to do so.

Many students may have to overcome some stereotypes that tutored students are somehow inadequate or less capable than others are. The cultural diversity training we have as anthropologists makes us especially sensitive to gently encouraging and supporting students in need of assistance. In my experience, many students follow through.

Perhaps my personal experiences are biased and overly sensitive to community college student needs. I started working with student populations at my institution. In time I also tutored students in math and study skills as well as in class, in groups and online. My experiences included working with international students, students with learning, physical and emotional disabilities and needs, as well as the honors and athlete populations.

From my tutoring experiences, I was able to determine ways to make my later anthropology assignments highly inclusive and self-reflective for students. I wanted them to start fully appreciating not only their own cultural diversity but also the diversity of their classmates and to see that they each had their own paths to success. I also wanted them to learn patience, compassion and understanding of the others who surround them on campus, in the classroom and within the workplace.

Students can learn to work independently while classmates who are struggling get the assistance needed. They can offer to teach classmates who missed class or who are confused in group settings. Students can be encouraged to seek out more information online or in books. Moreover, they can learn to show respect toward fellow students and come to realize that the classroom is a respectful, tolerant and cooperative

***When we reflect upon cultural diversity within a community college environment, we must also consider the roles of learning levels, styles and various student needs...***

place to be. It is particularly important to teach community college students these skills because a significant number of them—perhaps a greater percentage than students in four-year universities and colleges—have not been socialized into college student culture.

This issue of socialization to college culture comes back to the difference in the culture and mission of community colleges in contrast with four-year institutions. Although we may have pre-testing diagnostics to place students in a certain math or English course and some honors courses, most courses are introductory level. Therefore, students completing a two-year community college degree do not have a lot of credit hours to both foster critical thinking and higher-ordered learning skills, and prepare themselves for the next stages in their educational and work pursuits. Students are changing majors, reassessing career goals and very often ending up far from their original aims. At the same time, we want to provide them with the lessons that they need not only to be culturally aware and sensitive to the world's diverse populations, but also to convey those lessons at the time of immersion into the college culture.

One avenue worth exploring within anthropology classes that could help with the immersion process is service learning. It is one way to teach hands-on, real-life skills that our students can both enjoy and learn from outside the textbooks and lectures. In fact, one advantage diverse community college student populations have over those of traditional university and four-year colleges is that they are more similar to the populations of the college communities. This is partly because the majority of students are already community members. Estrangement in “town-gown relations” is especially noticeable in the smaller towns that house elite four-year colleges, where many students are noticeably wealthier than the locals. In contrast, community colleges are more likely to have strong ties conducive to service learning and community volunteerism, items easily brought into anthropology class settings and reflective of the larger purpose of anthropological inquiry. One excellent book on this topic is *Archaeology and Community Service Learning* (Nassaney and Levine eds. 2009). As I continue to grow as an educator, this is one area that I hope to build upon to support both the local community and the personal growth of my students.

Community ties are just one item that community college diverse populations offer us. We can also customize assignments so students can explore their own subcultures. Students can choose to explore something they have first-hand experience with (whether it is a disability or an experience living in another country in the cases of international students) rather than be assigned a pre-determined list of topics. This is one way students can teach us all.

Likewise, reflective journal entries expose us to a student's learning style and find the best way to flex our lesson plans. The process of establishing a dialogue between students and the instructor promotes students' confidence to ask questions, think critically and pursue their thoughts beyond the classroom. It even provides students with something tangible to review outside of lecture notes, since some of their note-taking skills are still developing. Journal entries also offer us time to get to know each student well, even if he or she is hesitant to participate in the lecture. These journal responses provide us the opportunity to develop individual learning strategies and encourage students to write more critically, analytically and thoroughly about topics discussed in class.

All of this (the use of service learning, reflective journals and attention to student learning styles) contrasts with the teaching approach some call “sage on a stage,” where the method of course content delivery is highly reliant on lecture with minimal creation of dialogue between students and instructor. This latter approach is not used often with community colleges, but might be what some of our students encounter as they pursue four-year degrees someday. Therefore, it makes a great deal of sense for us to foster the individual, self-directed learning now so that they continue to develop as college students. Our role should extend past the content matter of introductory anthropology into the realm of exposing college students to the college culture.

Teaching anthropology to community college populations is actually quite enjoyable. We are able to spend the time customizing activities and lesson plans to promote higher-ordered learning by using scaffolding. Scaffolding includes the combination of lower-order learning (memorization and general application of course concepts) and higher-order learning (synthesis, creation, evaluation work), as described by Bloom (1956). As the students develop their knowledge base of what anthropology is, educators can move toward more evaluation and synthesis-based work. This higher-order learning comes not only from the textbook readings and class discussions but also from journal reflections and service learning endeavors.

The idea of scaffolding within anthropology classes is to appreciate the cultural diversity (including various student needs and learning styles), so that by the end of the semester, the students have not only seen how anthropology is done, but have advanced from the baseline rote memorization of a textbook or regurgitation of bullet points from a PowerPoint slide and actually *done* anthropology. If the scaffolding is done well and the students rise to the challenge, the community college anthropology class has the potential to transcend more to the level of an upperclassmen seminar typical of four-year colleges. This degree of potential achievement should encourage

***Culturally diverse learning styles, levels and needs in our classes provide more to our students than does a "sage on a stage" scenario alone.***

us to strive for this type of classroom. In the end, culturally diverse learning styles, levels and needs in our classes provide more to our students than does a "sage on a stage" scenario alone.

There are two likely paths we as community college educators can take from here. First, of course, is to continue fine-tuning our course design and delivery with these additional components of diversity in mind. The second, however, is pivotal. In the days of seeing anthropology departments being reduced in size or altogether merged or eliminated at many of the nation's four-year institutions (Howard University is but one example), we could promote the addition of anthropology as a required course and revise some of our course offerings.

I suggest that we recognize that, like other social sciences, anthropology is a discipline fundamental to

the community college mission of not just meeting students where they are academically, but also molding them into successful citizens. Our courses can reinforce developmental learning while also teaching higher order skills. The future successes of our students as well as the status of our discipline within the community college setting require nothing less. *7A*

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**Now if you've guessed other two, the identity of this proud "fro" bearer from an earlier epoch of her life might present yet a greater challenge.**

**You have also seen and perhaps met her at SACC meetings.**

**Who is she?**

**(Answer on page 29)**

# Anthropology and Careers

Prepared by Ann Kaupp



## What is Anthropology?

Anthropologists study past and present cultures, language, human evolution, and biological variation. They are engaged in issues relating to contemporary society, such as health care, human rights, law, industry, language revitalization, urban development, environmental management, and global population. Of all the sciences — such as biology, psychology, and sociology — only anthropology attempts to



study the entire human condition over time and space.

## Where can I study Anthropology?

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) publishes *The Guide* that describes faculty and their specialties and research programs in college and university anthropology departments in the U.S. and Canada. This guide may be available at a local university or college or for purchase from the AAA.

<http://www.aaanet.org/publications/guide.cfm>

## How can I learn about careers in Anthropology?

### Videos

“Anthropology: Real People, Real Careers,” by Francis E. Smiley (Northern Arizona University) is a video that addresses the question of “What exactly does an applied anthropologist do?”  
<http://www.aaanet.org/resources/students/CareersDVD.cfm>

The DVD “*Beyond Ethnography: Corporate and Design Anthropology*” by Emily L. Altimare offers information on the use of anthropology in corporate settings.

<http://www.aaanet.org/resources/students/CareersDVD.cfm>

The video “*Doing Anthropology*,” by MIT Video Productions, strives to promote a greater public understanding about cultural anthropology and the process of fieldwork. The video is housed on MIT TechTV

(<http://techtv.mit.edu/videos/315-doing-anthropology>).

Staff Video Interviews, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution

[http://anthropology.si.edu/video\\_interviews.html](http://anthropology.si.edu/video_interviews.html)

### Career Publications

*Careers in Anthropology* (2nd ed.), by John T. Omohundro (Mayfield Publishing Company, 2002), is a practical and informative workbook that explains what anthropology is, what anthropologists do, the available career opportunities (beginning at the B.A. level), how to begin job hunting, and how to get hired. The book contains exercises to help you determine if a career in anthropology is for you.

*The Anthropology Graduate's Guide From Student to a Career* by Carol J. Ellick and Joe E. Watkins (Left Coast Press, 2011) describes a wide range of professions in which an anthropology degree can be used and offers a step-by-step approach to reaching your career goal. (This guide is reviewed in the next *TASN* issue, Vol. 17, No. 2.)

### Museum Careers

The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies <http://museumstudies.si.edu/>

The Smithsonian Institution

<http://www.sih.si.edu/tour.html>

Smithsonian Internships and Volunteer Opportunities [http://www.si.edu/Encyclopedia\\_SI/volunteer/](http://www.si.edu/Encyclopedia_SI/volunteer/)

The American Association of Museums at <http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/abc.cfm#careers>

Publication: *Museum Careers: A Practical Guide for Students and Novices* by N. Elizabeth Schlatter. 2008. Left Coast Press.

### Selected Professional Anthropology Organizations

#### *American Anthropological Association*

<http://www.aaanet.org>

The AAA is the central professional organization and is organized into small sections of topical interest, such as SACC. The AAA holds annual meetings, produces the quarterly *American Anthropologist*, the monthly *Anthropology News*, career publications and The AAA Guide. The website contains a new interactive website on race and human variation (<http://www.understandingRACE.org>).

#### *Archaeological Institute of America*

<http://www.archaeological.org>

The AIA publishes the bimonthly *Archeology* magazine and the *American Journal of Archeology*. There are over 104 local societies across the U.S. and Canada that sponsor lectures, symposia, field trips to local sites and museums, and foreign study tours. The AFOB (*Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin*) <http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/afob> lists U.S. and foreign excavations seeking volunteer workers, paid staff members, and students for formal training programs.

#### *Society for American Archaeology*

<http://www.saa.org>

SAA is an international organization dedicated to the research, interpretation, and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. It produces several publications, and its website offers a wealth of educational resources, including an Archaeology Teacher's Guide.

#### *Society for Anthropology in Community Colleges*

<http://saccweb.net/>

SACC, a section of the American Anthropological Association, sponsors its own annual conference and a symposium at the AAA annual meetings. SACC produces the biannual publication *Teaching*

*Anthropology: SACC Notes* and maintains a listserve and blog. Teaching activities and resources can be found on the SACC website as well as member profiles.

#### *Society for Historical Archaeology*

<http://www.sha.org/>

SHA is concerned with the archaeology of the modern world (A.D. 1400 - present), with an emphasis on the New World. The Society is specifically concerned with the identification, excavation, interpretation, and conservation of sites and materials on land and underwater. The website contains career information and listings of field schools. Members receive the quarterly journal *Historical Archaeology* and the *SHA Newsletter*.

#### *The Society for Applied Anthropology*

<http://www.sfaa.net/>

The SFAA is a professional association that promotes "the integration of the anthropological perspectives and methods in solving human problems throughout the world." The Society publishes two journals – *Practicing Anthropology*, a career-oriented publication, and *Human Organization* – and a quarterly newsletter.

### Summer Fieldwork Opportunities

Teachers, students, and the general public can become personally involved in the field of anthropology through field schools and research organizations. Anthropology departments at local universities and colleges, state historic preservation offices, and state archaeological societies often organize local archaeological excavations and frequently accept volunteers with no previous fieldwork experience.

*The Archaeological Institute of America* offers a listing of its state societies at

<http://www.archaeological.org/webinfo.php?page=10016> and fieldwork opportunities around the world in its online AFOB (*Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin*) <http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/afob>.

#### *Earthwatch Institute*

<http://www.earthwatch.org>

Earthwatch offers international opportunities to assist scientists in the field. Grants and special volunteer service are available.

**Passport in Time (PIT)**

<http://www.passportintime.com/>

PIT is a volunteer program of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. Volunteers work with professional archaeologists and historians on national forests throughout the country.

**Old Pueblo Archaeology Center**

<http://www.oldpueblo.org>

Old Pueblo offers workshops, lectures, and archaeological opportunities to promote appreciation and preservation of Southwest cultures. The web-site soon will offer a virtual dig of a Hohokam site (A.D. 750-1450) that the Center has been excavating for several years.

**Crow Canyon Archaeological Center**

<http://www.crowcanyon.org>

The Center offers programs for all ages to learn about archaeological field methods, laboratory techniques, and excavation. It also offers domestic and international travel opportunities.

**Center for American Archeology, Kampsville Archeological Center**

<http://www.caa-archeology.org>

The Center provides programs in archeological investigation, educational outreach and cultural stewardship, and summer field schools, as well as hands-on activities in basketry and flintknapping.

**The U.S. Experiment in International Living - Summer Abroad**

<http://www.worldlearning.org>

This organization offers high school, undergraduate, and graduate students three to five weeks of immersion in a another culture in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas, Oceania, or Asia, through homestay, language-study, and ecologically-focused programs.

**Free Publication****AnthroNotes**

<http://anthropology.si.edu/outreach/anthnote/anthronotes.html>

This 20-page publication, written for a general audience, provides lead articles on current anthropological research, teaching activities and strategies, and reviews of teaching resources. Several back issues are available online. Sign up to receive AnthroNotes at

<http://anthropology.si.edu/outreach/anthronotes/Form/anSignupForm.cfm>

**Notes on Contributors**

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