



Culture Incribed

The Newsletter of the Department of Anthropology

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Anthropologist of the Fortnight

Mary Nichol Leakey (1913-1996)

Mary Leakey, one of the best known archaeologists of the 20th century, discovered finds that include the first Proconsul Africanus skull in 1948, Zinj (*Paranthropus boisei*) in 1959, and the Laetoli footprints in 1978.

Mary spent much of her time searching for hominid remains and pondering clues that have held to unravel the story of human evolution.

Unlike her husband (British anthropologist Louis S. B. Leakey, 1903-1972) and their son Richard (b. 1944), Mary never received a higher degree in anthropology but her contribution to the study of human evolution is undeniable.

Anthropological Terms of Interest

Oldupai Gorge (in Tanzania, Africa) is considered by most, the birthplace of our ancient ancestors. Although most encyclopedias, spell the name of this region as “Olduvai” the actual name is Oldupai. Since the Leakeys started conducting archeological research in this area seventy years ago, remains of more than sixty hominids have been recovered.

Culture Quip

By Mike Mullooly

Student: Are these pearls cultured?

AnthroGeek: In 1871, Tylor defined culture as, “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”

Student: Does that mean no?

Images on paper version only

“Anthros” Closer to Home

Notes from the Field

By Mara Freitas

(Spring 2004 Archaeology Graduate)

This was a summer to remember. In June, I was with the Fresno State anthropology team digging at the Grandad site near Mariposa, California. On July 3rd through 23rd, I was with another group of volunteers, who came from different parts of the world, to dig in Africa. We first met in Arusha, Northern Tanzania, and then we went to Oldupai Gorge—a site known for its two million year old *Hominid* fossils. In Oldupai, our group learned that more than hunting for fossils, we should be focusing on questions pertinent to the history of the *Hominid's* paleoenvironment. The gorge in the Serengeti Plains is a natural laboratory that holds the key to understanding the *Hominid's* land use and environment and the first steps in becoming human. We also learned that Oldupai was not exhausted by the Leakeys for there are many localities yet to be studied. The gorge, a small canyon, was not a gorge millions of years ago, but an ancient lake bed inhabited by early *Hominids*. We found lithics, animal bone, teeth fragments, and lots of crocodile teeth at the site.

One day to remember was July 17th when I followed a troop of olive savannah baboons for two and a half hours by the fifth fault. Later that day, I attended the anniversary of the discovery of Zinj (*Paranthropus boisei*) where Tanzanian officials, the Maasai, and the Olduvai Landscape Paleoanthropology Project team from Rutgers University were present.

We also spent time visiting Maasai who live in the area, and going on safaris to the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Conservation areas. All and all, this was a very enjoyable trip and I would recommend a visit to the gorge to all those who want to know more about the origins of humankind.

Visit the following for images of Mara's work:
<http://www.csufresno.edu/Anthropology/fieldwork/>

Up Coming Archeology Course

Hands on the Past Short Course Series: Archeology for the Classroom (K-12) (Anth 159T)

This workshop is designed for teachers who would like a basic understanding of the "nuts and bolts" of archeology, as well as an overview of the prehistory of California. The emphasis is on practical knowledge that can be applied to the classroom in a Kindergarten through 12th grade setting. A resource book will be provided (\$25.00 materials fee) which contains a "user friendly" archeological overview of California Prehistory, lesson plans that incorporate archeological concepts, lists of archeological resources that can be used in the class room, and stories of the day-in-the-life of children from the prehistoric past. In the workshop each major concept covered will combine lectures with exercises that allow teachers to see how the lessons in the resource book can be used in the classroom. The last day of the workshop will be a guided tour of a local archeological site that is available for school field trips.

Dates: Friday, Oct. 8, 6-9 PM

Saturday, Oct. 9, 9 AM to 5 PM, and

Sunday, Oct. 10, 9 AM to 2 PM.

Place: Education Bldg., Room 178

Course: Anth 159T, \$110 1 unit credit

\$25 material fee for the resource book payable at first class meeting.

Instructor: John H. Pryor, Ph.D., Professor of Anthropology at California State University, Fresno. If you would like further information about the workshop please call (559) 278-0333 or (559) 278-3002.

Department Reception

The department of anthropology held a student reception on Thursday, September 23rd. Elizabeth Campos and other students discussed their experiences at the Summer Archeology Field School with the aid of Dr. John Pryor's many digital photographs. If you missed the reception, plan to attend the next one and get in on the ground level of the department's future and present!

AnthroNews: Human Relations Area Files at the Fresno State Library

Whether you are interested in learning about the North American Hmong's beliefs in the causes and cures of diseases or the Pashtun's religious views, this multi-cultural database provides you with in-depth information on all aspects of cultural and social life.

The Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) is an internationally recognized organization in the field of cultural anthropology. The mission of HRAF is to encourage and facilitate worldwide comparative studies of human behavior, society, and culture.

Access to this invaluable resource can be gained FOR FREE at the periodicals resources section of the Fresno State library web site:

www.lib.csufresno.edu/resources/periodicals

Such primary resources (e.g., field notes, dissertations, etc.) provide opportunities for undergraduates to analyze "real data".

Up Coming Cultural Events

Bob Dylan

October 16 - Bob Dylan and his band will play at the Save Mart Center at 08:00 PM.

Autumn Harvest Folk Dance Festival

October 18 - 19 - Watch Italian tarantella or Argentine tango at this series of workshops and performances featuring dances from 35 countries. Learn Estonian dances or vintage ballroom moves like the Lindy Hop.

Oktoberfest

October 25 - This German dinner-dance event is sponsored by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia and features kids activities like bannock, a game involving the throwing of horse bones; a dinner that includes berock, a meat pie made of seasoned beef, cabbage, and onions; and dancing to live polka music from Gary Seibert.

Contributing Editorial Board

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