



Culture Inscribed

The Newsletter of the Department of Anthropology
California State University - Fresno

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Anthropologist of the Fortnight **Sir E.E. Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973)**

Evans-Pritchard was one of Great Britain's most significant figures in the development of social anthropology. He is best known for his work amongst the Azande and Nuer tribes of southern Sudan and his theoretical work in the area of religion is still influential. Evans-Pritchard argued against the notion of anthropology as a natural science (argued by Radcliffe-Brown and others) and believed that the field is best understood as one of the humanities. In terms of the study of religion, he claimed that the researcher's personal perspective on religion heavily influenced that person's research of religion. Evans-Pritchard argued that non-believers are more likely to explain religious experience in terms of biological or psychological theories that accommodate illusion, whereas believers are more likely to explain religion in terms of humans' conceptualization of reality.

-- Anthropology Lecture --

Anthropologist **Sander van der Leeuw** will give a lecture entitled: "**Society, Environment, and the Crisis of the Roman Empire**".

LOCATION: Smittcamp facility, CSUF

DATE: Monday, February 28

TIME: 7:30pm free of charge, open to all

This world renown scholar, demonstrates how modern archaeology can contribute to our understanding of present-day environmental problems. His research draws parallels between the first anthropogenic climatic degradation in southern France (during the Roman Empire) and environmental management in the 21st century.

Culture Quip By Mary Anderson

Anthros Closer to Home **Interview with Hank Delcore**

How did you get into anthropology?

I studied Asian Studies as an undergrad and it was common for people at my college (Georgetown University) to go abroad. I was influenced by a professor who studied Southeast Asia to go abroad to Thailand for my junior year. My program required its students to do a substantial research project in Thailand. I was assigned to work with a Thai professor who was an anthropologist with a degree from Stanford. He helped me put together a research project with the Karen upland group in Thailand, and every weekend after classes I would ride my motorbike up to this one Karen village to do research on their religion and reasons why some people were converting to Buddhism. It was exciting and interesting and fun, and I decided that if this is what anthropologists do, I wanted to be an anthropologist.

What is your area of expertise?

My specialty is environmental anthropology. I am most interested in the way people relate to the environment, and all the political and cultural factors that affect that relationship. Aside from this, I like to study development and environmental issues in general.

What courses do you teach?

I teach Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Concepts and Applications, History of Anthropological Theory, Anthropology of Religion, Ethnographic Fieldwork, Peoples and Cultures of Southeast Asia, and a few others.

Describe your current research?

My current research project is about the people who live in and around Doi Phukha National

Please see DELCORE, back page

Hank Delcore Delivers

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park in Thailand. There are several ethnic groups there, and they all have had to change their practices as a result of the park's presence. For example, villagers can no longer fell trees and clear fields to plant upland rice. I am researching the roots and possible solutions to the conflicts going on between locals and park officials.

What is most memorable about this project?

In summer, 2003, I was lucky enough to visit an ethnic Lua village in the park right in time for their annual festival for the rice spirits. They make and play special bamboo percussion instruments for one week, to entertain the rice spirits and ensure a good growing season. After that one week, they destroy all the instruments until the next year. As soon as I got there, people were asking me if I wanted to play the instruments, and they showed me how, and taught me a few simple tunes. It was the kind of unforgettable experience that makes being an anthropologist worthwhile.

Who is your favorite anthropologist?

My favorite theorist is E.E. Evans-Pritchard (see this issue's **Anthropologist of the Fortnight**). Though maligned by some as a colonialist slob, he was actually very sympathetic to the people he studied and laid some of the groundwork for efforts to understand other peoples' worldviews from their own point of view.

What is your favorite novel?

This is tough, but right now I'd have to go with "Cannery Row" by John Steinbeck. Ask me next week and I'll give you a different answer.

Any advice for students?

If you need help with anything, say so. Don't suffer in silence.

AnthroAnnouncements

Lunch with Ellen Gruenbaum

Ellen Gruenbaum will be the next featured guest in the Henry Madden Library's brown bag book discussion series, reading from her book, **The Female Circumcision Controversy: An Anthropological Perspective**. The event will be held on Tuesday, March 8, in the Madden Library, room 1209, from 1-1:50.

International Coffee Hour

This Tuesday (2/22) Ali Moussa will describe **Niger** from 2-3pm in the USU, rooms 312-314.

Anthropology Club Minutes

By Crystal Alvarez

We met with students from the **International Coffee Hour**, which aims to approach the whole community to spread the awareness of diversity. Individuals present their homes and history every Tuesday from 2-3pm in the USU, rooms 312-314. For more information call 278-2782.

The **Vagina Monologues** will be held on February 25-26. The **Anthropology Club** will be in charge of an exhibit on female attire during the performances. Come to the next meeting we will have before the show if you are interested in participating.

The **AnthroClub's next meeting** will be held on Thursday, February 24th at 2:00pm in the Hall of Skulls (BP 389) and our first movie night of the semester will be on March 3rd. Stay tuned for more details.

The Anthropology Department's **Open House** on February 10th was a great success. We saw a lot of new faces and enjoyed some great food. A special thanks goes to all those who took time off from their daily schedules to learn about some interesting things on campus and to meet some new people! Rumor has it that some received extra credit from Jim Mullooly as well!

Anthropology Club Elections

By Tara Ders

The Anthropology Club will be holding elections for new officers at the end of this semester. This is a great opportunity to get involved and it looks great on your resume. Anyone who wishes to run for office must first join the AnthroClub (dues are \$5 per semester). We meet twice a month on Thursdays from 2-3pm. Our next meeting will be held this Thursday Feb. 24th at 2:00pm in Peters 389 (aka the Hall of Skulls). We will be electing a new President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you are interested or would like to nominate yourself, contact Tara Ders at taraders@sbcglobal.net. I am the current Treasurer and plan on running for President!

Contributing Editorial Board

Crystal Alvarez Elizabeth Campos Tara Ders Gilberto Lopez Juanita Rivas Morghan Young
Faculty Advisor: James Mullooly, PhD Website: www.csufresno.edu/Anthropology/newsletter