



Culture Incribed

The Newsletter of the Department of Anthropology
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Anthropologist of the Fortnight

Ernst Mayr (1904-2005)

One of the greatest evolutionary thinkers of the 20th century, Ernst Mayr was born on July 5, 1904 and died on January 3, 2005, aged 100. Below is a portion of his obituary in the Times Online (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk>).

Mayr devoted eight decades to the systematic study of the natural world that he learnt to love as a boy growing up in Bavaria before the First World War. He began as an ornithologist, became an evolutionist, and in later life developed his interests in the philosophy of biology. His longevity and his appetite for work enabled him both to establish a prominent place in the history of 20th-century evolutionary biology, and to write that history himself.

In an essay marking his 100th birthday, which fell last July, Mayr described himself as "the last survivor of the golden age of the evolutionary synthesis". That process, which occupied the middle decades of the past century, integrated two theories which had originated in the middle of the century before: Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, and Mendel's theory of heredity.

AnthroGeek

Student: Isn't it interesting that **Ernst Mayr** and **Sewall Wright**, two of the greatest Darwinians of our times, both published significant work into their late 90s, long after most members of our species are dead? Can evolutionary theory account for this? Is this proof of the Gaia hypothesis? Is Darwin's spirit somehow involved?

AnthroGeek: Let me remind you of two important statements made by Ernst Mayr:

"Life is simply the reification of the process of living" and, "Our understanding of the world is achieved more effectively by conceptual improvements than by discovery of new facts." If these don't help, take Anthropology 161 ASAP!

AnthroNews

Our **Annual Graduate School Forum**, held on 11/1/05 was a smashing success.

Many thanks go out to the following faculty who attended this event that included about 20 people: Henry Delcore, Walter Dodd, Charles Ettner, Ellen Gruenbaum, James Mullooly, John Pryor, Penny Verin-Shapiro.

Some of the more salient bits of advice that came out are as follows.

- Note the social side of graduate school
- Work for/aid faculty when possible
- Know what you want (consider approaching this piecemeal (e.g., and MA now and PhD later).
- Pick people not schools, and conversely,
- Pick only the best schools
- Funding is essential
- College loans need to be well understood
- Presentations/publications/work of grants help (NB: the AAA will be in San Francisco in 2006)
- Apply to multiple institutions and don't assume you will get into all of them
- Apply for Ph.D, not just the MA (regardless of actual goal)
- YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT IS VERY IMPORTANT: 1) Make it well targeted to each institution you apply to and 2) Make it an honest (genuine) appraisal of yourself.
- Don't "blow off" the GRE's, "It's the game you must play"

With regard to the final point, I have attached the following opportunity below.

The Golden Key International Honor Society in conjunction with the Princeton Review has scheduled some practice tests on campus for the **GRE** test. The **GRE practice test** will be on **Wednesday, November 9th at 7-9 pm in McLane 162.**

The cost for the practice test is \$10 for non-Golden Key members. Please RSVP by emailing Jennifer Weston, by November 9 before 5 p.m. dancingprincess@csufresno.edu

Contributing Editorial Board

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Faculty Advisor: James Mullooly, PhD **Website:** www.csufresno.edu/Anthropology/newsletter

Spring 2005 Special Course Offerings in Anthropology

Lithic Analysis

Anth 159T Lithic Analysis W 6-8:50 (Binning). This class will cover the manufacture, use, and discard of flaked-stone and, to a lesser extent, groundstone artifacts. The focus will be on different approaches to the study of lithic assemblages. The role of replicative experiments will be emphasized. Reduction analysis and the organization of technology to better understand the archaeological record of hunting and gathering societies will also be a focal point. A small portion of the class will be spent actually making stone tools. Students in the class will be taught the fundamentals of determining prehistoric reduction technology from archaeological debitage.

About the Instructor:

Dr. Jeanne Binning received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of California, Riverside in 1991. Dr. Binning is currently a Senior Environmental Planner with the California Department of Transportation in Fresno. She has been working for Caltrans in Fresno for 8 years. For most of her professional career (35 years), she has worked as a prehistoric archaeologist doing cultural resource management in California. She has also done fieldwork in Hawaii, Texas, West Virginia, and Baja California.

Origins in Agriculture

Anth 159T Origins in Agriculture. TTh 2-3:15 (Dodd). This class will examine the origin and spread of agriculture across the globe. It will employ an evolutionary perspective to trace how and why humans underwent a gradual transition from a foraging existence to one based on farming. Initial discussion will focus on the process of creating new species through natural and artificial selection. A worldwide survey will next trace the development of early farming societies, and the novel foods and lifeways they pioneered in diverse environments. Finally, these pan-global patterns will be explained in light of several modern theories that employ concepts derived from evolution, ecology, and gene-and-language transmission.

About the Instructor:

Dr. Walter Dodd is an Assistant Professor of Archaeology/Sociocultural Anthropology in the department of Anthropology. Dr. Dodd's interests include Archaeology, ethnoarchaeology, agrarian ecology and site structure and lithic analysis. Dr. Dodd has conducted extensive research in Northern Mexico and southwestern North America.

--Other Rarely-Offered Course Offerings Coming this Spring --

Anth 118—Women: Culture and Biology. TTh 2-3:15 (Gruenbaum). Cross-cultural, interdisciplinary analysis of the determinants of female statuses and circumstances. Examines theories that explain variations in sexuality, maturation, reproduction, and the life cycle.

Anth 120 – Ethnic Relations and Cultures

MWF 12-12:50 (Ettner). The cultural and social origins of ethnicity. Ethnic politics, economics and ideology in cross-cultural perspective. GE: MI.

Anth 123 – Peoples and Cultures of Southeast Asia. TTh 3:30-4:45 (Delcore). Survey of the cultural and historical adaptations of societies in Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and others. Major effects of East/West culture contact. GE: MI.

Anth 125 – Tradition and Change in China and Japan. TTh 9:30-10:45 (Ng) (Same as Hum 140). Examines current aspirations and problems of the Chinese and Japanese in terms of their traditional cultures, and explains how their histories, values, world views, and intellectual traditions affect their lifestyles and international relations today. GE: MI.

Anth 164 – Human Osteology. M 6-8:50 (LaJeunesse). Analytic techniques for extracting information from human skeletal remains: sexing and aging, osteometry, odontometry, examination and diagnosis of epigenetic traits and pathological lesion, statistical interpretation of skeletal data.

**A full listing of Spring 2005 Anthropology offerings can be found at:
www.csufresno.edu/Anthropology**