



Moundville Archaeological Site

Web Newsletter



Department of Anthropology The University of Alabama

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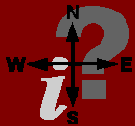
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Department Location



Newsletter Archive

They're Back!



Dr. Lisa LeCount



Dr. John Blitz

The department is pleased to announce that Drs. [Lisa LeCount](#) and [John Blitz](#) have been enticed to return to Tuscaloosa beginning this semester (Fall, 2003). Both archaeologists have left the University of Oklahoma to rejoin our faculty. Dr. LeCount taught at UA for a number of years before leaving to join her husband, John, at Oklahoma. Dr. Blitz, a native of Tuscaloosa, served for a year as an adjunct professor in the department, and he has also taught at Bowdoin College, Queens College, USM, and Columbia University.

Their addition to our ranks greatly strengthens our archaeological program in the complex societies of the Americas. Dr. Blitz is currently writing a book with Karl Lorenz on Mississippian mound centers in the lower Chattahoochee River valley of Alabama and Georgia. His work focuses on the origins and development of complex societies. Dr. LeCount's current interests center on how the analysis of pottery informs our understanding of the complex relationships between wealth, social status, and political power in ancient states. She is principal investigator of the "Actuncan Early Classic Project" in Belize, Central America.

Thomas Wolfe notwithstanding, you can go home again.



Gordon R. Willey

Prof. LeCount Wins the Willey Award

[Dr. Lisa LeCount](#) does not return to us empty-handed; she is the 2003 winner of the coveted [Gordon R. Willey Award](#) for achievement in archaeology. The prize is awarded by the American Anthropological Association and is bestowed upon the best archaeology paper published in *American Anthropologist* over the preceding three years.



Dr. LeCount's award winning essay is "Like Water for Chocolate: Feasting and Political Ritual among the Late Classic Maya at Xunantunich, Belize" *American Anthropologist* 103 (4): 935-953. December, 2001. Originally published only 18 months ago, this article has already been reprinted in Michael Angrosino's *The Culture of the Sacred: Exploring the Anthropology of Religion*. Prospect Heights, IL.: Waveland Press (2003).

Passing the Hat

An old broad-brimmed field hat that the late Prof. C. Earle Smith wore on some of his expeditions to Central and South America has emerged as the badge of the chairmanship in our department. The temporary custodian of Smitty's hat is charged with keeping the department cool and dry, not always an easy task. After five years of dedicated service, this summer [Dr. Jim Knight](#) passed the hat to [Dr. Michael Murphy](#). During the Knight era the size of the faculty increased substantially, financial support for graduate students increased nearly seven-fold, and we acquired the first new Ph.D. program at UA in over a decade (see our [description of the doctoral program](#) in the previous newsletter).



When next you see Jim Knight congratulate him on a job well-done. You may offer Michael Murphy your sympathy --- he'll need it ---for having such a tough act to follow.

Undergraduate Research in Peru

Anthropology major, [Elizabeth Hanke](#), had what she described as "a wonderful experience" for three weeks this summer in the Peruvian Andes. She participated in a field school sponsored by *The Center for the Promotion of Social Well Being*, directed by anthropologist Patricia Hammer. "Each morning there were Spanish and Quechua classes, and in the afternoon field research in which students went to market or to other nearby small towns to

learn about herb use, fiesta rituals, or

explains. being (PAR), an human

Elizabeth participated in a women's group in Catay, a small village in the mountains around Carhuaz. The activity allowed her to understand herb use there, and the women in the group were able to benefit each other by exchanging their knowledge and mapping out where the herbs could be found. She interviewed a *curandero* about herbs in the area and what illnesses they are used for. He related his experiences with curing *susto* (fright illness), *mal aire* (evil wind), and other illnesses. She also attended a traditional fiesta and took part in the carefree dancing! She stayed at a house where the food was organic and home grown, the power was generated by wind and solar energy and the scenery was dominated in every direction by spectacular views of snow capped mountains.



community organization," she explains. The program promotes social well through *Participatory Action Research* empowering method of researching culture through group interactions.



Research in Ribeirao Preto

Prof. [Bill Dressler](#) and [Christine Newkirk](#) (a second-year graduate student in the medical anthropology program) spent the summer doing research in Ribeirao Preto, Brazil. This research focuses on the sociocultural and dietary factors associated with high blood pressure and serum cholesterol in this Brazilian city. The main hypothesis guiding the research is that low cultural consonance (or the inability for individuals to actually behave in ways encoded in widely shared cultural models) is a chronically stressful situation that can lead to poor health, as measured by cardiovascular disease risk factors. Dressler spent the summer working with his Brazilian research staff in the final stages of data collection, coding and entry.

Ms. Newkirk collected data for her master's thesis. She developed a distinct, but closely related project, based in part on research carried out ten years ago in Brazil by another UA medical anthropologist, [Dr. Kathryn Oths](#). In most health research on diet, complete emphasis is placed on the nutrient intake associated with a particular pattern of eating. But food



Dr. Bill Dressler & Christine Newkirk

is not culturally neutral. Part of the effect of different patterns of food use may be that people are variably able to eat in ways that are culturally valued. In her research, Ms. Newkirk examined cultural models of food in a diverse sample, to see if there is a significant degree of intracultural diversity in these models. Additionally, she is examining factors that help to shape cultural models of food. Ultimately, her study will contribute to the development of measures of cultural consonance in food and food use.

This research is funded the National Science Foundation, and Ms. Newkirk is funded by NSF and a Graduate Council Research Fellowship from The University of Alabama.

The Entering Graduate Class of 2003

Once again we have managed to attract some very promising scholars into our graduate programs. Please welcome our newest batch of students.

Our second cohort of Ph.D. students include:

- Tom Lewis (UA) Archaeology/Ethnohistory
- Erica Gibson (LSU) Biocultural Medical

Our new M.A. students are:

- Patty Alleman (UAB) Medical/Cultural
- Kathleen Babcock (Nebraska) Cultural
- Toni Copeland (UA) Biocultural
- Melissa Chronister (East Carolina) Forensics/Osteology
- Sara Glassman (Mount Holyoke) Physical
- Matthew Grunewald (Clemson) Archaeology/Hunter/Gatherers
- Pamela Johnson (Georgia) Archaeology
- Steven Meredith (Auburn) Archaeology
- Laura Minnich (Virginia Commonwealth) Medical
- Rebecca Scopa (Arkansas) Physical/Archaeology



The Dr. Edwin Aubrey Cook Collection

[Dr. Ed Cook](#) (1932-1984) was a prominent figure in Melanesian anthropology and a good friend and frequent visitor to UA's anthropology department. From 1978 until his untimely death in 1984, Dr. Cook was Professor of Anthropology at nearby Florida State University, but his connection with our department really began in the 1960s at Yale University where he studied with his fellow grad students, our Profs. [Dick Krause](#) and [Allen Maxwell](#).

Ed's widow, anthropologist Dr. Susan Pflanz-Cook, has very generously donated more than 1,500 of his books to our department. The Dr. Edwin Aubrey Cook Collection is housed in the Anthropology Lounge, room 10 ten Hour. Ed's personal library will be available for the edification of our students for generations to come, a fitting use for the carefully assembled tool kit of an accomplished and dedicated anthropologist.



The Cook Collection



Dr. Maxwell chatting with the Minister of Education of Brunei, The Honorable Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Wijaya Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin Begawan Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Umar

Faculty Spotlight

Congratulations are due to [Dr. Allen Maxwell](#) who has recently been promoted to full Professor. Professor Maxwell came to UA from Barnard College in 1974 and ever since he has been a prominent fixture in the department's programs in sociocultural and linguistic anthropology. Widely regarded as one of the world's leading authorities on the ethnography of Borneo, Allen Maxwell has conducted extensive fieldwork in Brunei and Sarawak. His current work emphasizes the preservation and analysis of oral traditions and epic texts. Among his recent publications are (2001) *Malay Polysemy and Political Power: Census Categories, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in Brunei Darussalam*. *South East Asia Research* 9(2):173-212 and (1999) *Does pupu Mean 'cousin'? Hyponymy and Collaterality in Brunei Malay Kinship Terminology*. *Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 1(1-2): 137-157.

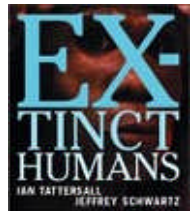
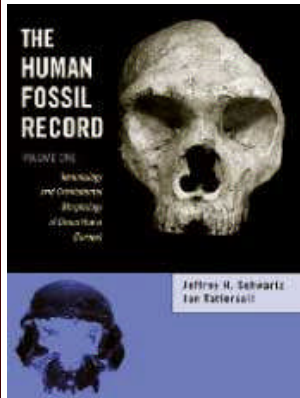


Welcome, Professor Schwartz

We are very pleased that [Dr. Jeffrey H. Schwartz](#), Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh will be visiting us this fall semester. Prof. Schwartz is a distinguished physical anthropologist who is widely recognized as one of anthropology's foremost experts on human fossil remains. Prof. Schwartz will be offering ANT 471/571 (Fossil Man and Human Evolution) as well as several public lectures. Among his many important publications are [Sudden Origins: Fossils, Genes and the Emergence of Species](#) and the award winning multivolume, *Human Fossil Record*, and *Extinct Humans*, both co-authored with Dr. Ian Tattersall.



Dr. Jeffrey H. Schwartz



Don't miss this excellent opportunity to learn about the fossil record from one of the leading figures in the field! For a recent article by Prof. Schwartz, click [here](#).

AnthroTruck Has Arrived

In one of his last official acts as chairman, Jim Knight has established the departmental transportation pool. So far the fleet consists of only one vehicle, AnthroTruck. Long may she roll.



Planning for Spring 2004

It is not too early to begin planning for Spring 2004. Undergraduate majors and minors might wish to review [degree requirements](#) prior to consulting with faculty advisors. Download a [major/minor checklist](#) to keep track of your progress. To peruse course offerings available to both undergraduates and graduate students, please consult our [schedule for Spring 2004](#). As soon as the schedule for spring is finalized in late August, we will place a hyperlink to it here.





Keep in Touch

Don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, queries and suggestions. [Michael Murphy](#) is Chairman. [Janis Nuckolls](#) is Acting Director of Graduate Studies and [Kathy Oths](#) is Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Our [web site](#) contains many resources for students, alumni, and folks who are just interested in anthropology. The site is undergoing some design changes, so don't be surprised by the new look.

Questions, suggestions, and submissions for future issues of this [web newsletter](#) will be gratefully received

Check out previous newsletters at the [archive page](#).

This newsletter is edited by [Michael Murphy](#)