

# berkeley anthropology matters – *BAM!*

anthropology department † kroeber hall † university of california † berkeley  
http://anthropology.berkeley.edu/

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## In Memoriam: Sherwood Washburn

Sherwood Larned Washburn, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, died April 16. He was 88.

Professor Washburn was a professor of anthropology at Berkeley, from 1958 to his retirement in 1978, and one of a tiny number of faculty members appointed as “University Professor” for the nine-campus system. Washburn virtually established the field of primatology in the 1950s following his studies on baboon colonies in Kenya. For the next two decades, his theories dominated interpretations of human social evolution and his teachings inspired several generations of students.

Washburn was the first to propose that tool use, hunting and a gender division in labor had been critical in human evolution. He also saw 40 years ago that humans had evolved from an ancestor that walked on its knuckles, like contemporary great apes—an idea that only this year has gripped the anthropological world anew.

It was Washburn’s holistic approach, working from anatomy to function and behavior, that so inspired his students and colleagues. His lectures showing how bones, joints and muscles related to movement and social behavior in humans and other primates often won standing ovations from students.

Born on November 26, 1911, Washburn was the younger son of the dean of Cambridge’s Episcopal Theological School. He received a bachelor’s degree from Harvard College in 1935 and a doctorate in 1940, also from Harvard.

From a position at Columbia University as assistant professor of anatomy, Washburn moved to the University of Chicago where he was professor of anthropology for 11 years and chair of the department.

During his career, Washburn won virtually every medal and prize given in his field, including the Wenner-Gren Foundation’s Viking Fund Medal in 1960, the Huxley Medal in 1967 and the American Anthropological Association’s Distinguished Service Award in 1983. The Fourth International Congress of Primatology was dedicated to his honor in 1972.

Washburn’s wife, Henrietta, died in 1985. He is survived by two sons, Sherwood of Brooklyn, and Stan of Berkeley, five grandchildren, and his brother, Bradford.

A memorial service will be held on campus at 11 am Sunday, May 21, in the Great Hall of the Faculty Club. In lieu of flowers contributions may be sent to the S.L. Washburn Graduate Student Fellowship Fund. Checks should be marked for the fund, but made out to the UC Regents and sent to the UC Berkeley Foundation at 2440 Bancroft Ave., Berkeley, CA 94720.

## Nancy Scheper-Hughes at UC Irvine

Nancy Scheper-Hughes is currently at the Humanities Research Institute at UC Irvine where she is a member of the “Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison-Industrial Complex” work group spearheaded by Angela Davis. The group is collaborating in writing a “handbook” in critical prison studies that is both reader friendly and an alternative to the “normalized” way that prisons and prisoners are discussed in the media, the popular culture, by political leaders, and in conventional criminology classes. They are visiting various prison facilities in southern California and they hope to put together a curriculum that could be used by high school teachers in California. The group is abolitionist toward the death penalty and toward the growth of a penal society, “one in which prisons begin to look like concentration camps for the poor and for ‘oppositional’ minorities.”

## The Anthropology of Zoos

*BAM!* heard that Professor Emeritus Burton Benedict was teaching a freshman seminar on the Anthropology of Zoos. This subject seemed so unusual that we asked Professor Benedict to describe what this course was about.

In the United States more people go to zoos every year than go to all paid sporting events. Zoos have been around a long time—in ancient Egypt, in China and among the Aztecs. Yet they have had very little attention from social scientists and, to Professor Benedict’s knowledge, only a team of one sociologist and one social anthropologist have written about them. (Bob Mullen and Garrey Marvin, 1987, *Zoo Culture*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson.)



Prof. Benedict’s class watched Smokey get a manicure.

The idea in this freshman seminar is to look at the assumptions underlying the institution of zoos, both of those who run them and of those who visit them. Professor Benedict’s class visited both the Oakland and the San Francisco zoos. His students are to do fieldwork in one or both zoos. One student is studying zoo architecture; another is looking at zoos in terms of power and control, with reference to Machiavelli. Others are researching anthropomorphism, zoos and children’s literature and zoos as theatre. One student is researching the gift shop. In class they have discussed zoos as urban institutions, zoos and conservation, the history of zoos, the ways animals have been presented in different countries and whether there should be zoos at all.

May 1, 2000

## Caitlin Zaloom in *The New York Times*

Caitlin Zaloom, Anthropology graduate student, was recently featured in a *New York Times* article on what today's thinkers are thinking about.

Caitlin is asking the question of why do bond and securities traders trade the way they do? She is comparing the intensely personal interaction between traders at the Chicago Board of Trade, to the thoroughly computerized tools used at a private investment bank in London.

The former relies almost entirely on face-to-face relationships. At any given moment, personalities and the emotionality of decision-making in times of great activity is evident.

Deliberation, however, is at the core of decision-making for the fund managers in London. This group keeps their decision process to themselves because it's how they make money. Embedded in the computerized, predictive tools used "is a model of human behavior that assumes the market will act in a certain way; it will produce an outcome that will happen again and again."

One group relies on reading the other players and the feel of the market. The other relies on computers to get rid of the personalized relationships and thereby the market will become a more rational, efficient institution.

The contrast is fascinating.

## John Ogbu on the Lecture Circuit

John Ogbu hosted eight Japanese educators and civil-rights leaders and a number of people interested in Japan on April 23. The Japanese guests included civil rights leaders, researchers and teachers concerned with minority problems (mainly Buraku and Koreans) in Japan. Prof. Ogbu discussed his work on minority education. Earlier in April Prof. Ogbu delivered a keynote address to the Southeast Conference on Human Development at the University of Tennessee in Memphis and he has been invited to give The Acer Endowed Lecture at State University of New York at Buffalo in October and The 2000 Annual Distinguished Lecture of the Association for Africanist Anthropologists in November.

## Ned's Trivia Challenge

OKAY, no one got last month's trivia challenge either. We suspect you aren't as absorbed in this little activity as you should be.

**Alfred Kroeber founded a learned society. What is the society and what year did he found it? Answer:** American Anthropological Society, 1917.

*Try this:* What year was Margaret Mead's book *Coming of Age in Samoa* published?

The prize for the first correct answer sent to Ned at [flashman@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:flashman@uclink.berkeley.edu) is a Jamba Juice gift certificate. This is a good prize you know.

## The Ear

**Jonathan Marks** was one of four Bay Area faculty members to receive the Northern California Association Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Excellence Award for 1999-2000. . . . **Gerald Berreman** reported that someone (probably a faculty member he said) tried to put the staples that are this size:

into a stapler that is this size.

Next time this happens let's put the stapler on display. We can have a contest for the most appropriate caption. "Hope?" "Sunday Afternoon: The Deadline," "I: Can Make Anything Work," or "Weeny Piece of Crap Office Equipment: You Will Not Defeat Me." See the colons? The Ear: learned: the importance of: colons from: the 290 lecture titles::: . . . Speaking of contests, are you reading this when you should be attending to **Ned's Trivia Challenge?** . . . **Pam Stern's** twelve year-old daughter Morgan and her friend Dana were conducting very scientific interviews with different people in Kroeber in order to decide, definitively, this *was* science, if the Zodiac is true. Early results seemed to point to the positive with Morgan saying, "The Zodiac *is* true even though my *mom* doesn't believe in it." . . . Hosted by Berkeley Folklore students, the annual California Folklore Society Conference was a huge success, attracting papers by both international and emerging folklorists. Several of our own students presented papers including: **Maria Agozzino, JoAnn Conrad, Valdimar Tr. Hafstein, Donna Lanclos, Cherry Levin, Karen Miller, Janferie Stone, Michelle Sullivan, Tok Thompson, and Sue Wilson.** . . . And congratulations to graduating folklorist **Janferie Stone** on her research assistantship in the Humanities Institute at UC Davis starting Fall 2000. She will be missed. . . . And in this small space left the Ear would like to say thank you to **Paul Rabinow**. Paul instituted a lot of changes in the department this year. When you look back on all of the changes it is sort of amazing. *And* Paul has had to hear it from all sides all year long—as soon as one crabby faction would die down another would start up. (And then there is the faction that doesn't believe in cycling, it is just always crabby all the time.) And despite the impressive amount of crabbiness witnessed, we suspect there was a whole lot we never even knew about. The interesting thing is that Paul didn't have to take on this job. Yet he did. And he's going to do it some more. And whatever it is that gets him to do this and then keep on doing it and then come back and do it some more, is a cool thing for everyone it touches.

A huge thank you to Paul.

### Commencement 2000

May 19, 2000, 2 pm

Zellerbach Auditorium  
*reception following*