

berreman anthropology matters — *BAM!*

a special edition of BAM! to honor the retirement of Professor Gerald Berreman

anthropology department † kroeber hall † university of california † berkeley

april 2001

Behind Many Masks: Gerald Berreman and Berkeley Anthropology, 1959-2001

All day conference, Friday, April 6, 2001, 8:30 am to 5:15 pm
Sibley Auditorium, Bechtel Hall 1F

In June of 2001, Professor Gerald Berreman will retire from the Berkeley Department of Anthropology after 41 years (or, as he puts it, 82 semesters) of service. His career embraces an era that has shaped the foundations for contemporary anthropology over the course of which he has contributed substantially to major changes within the discipline, to passing its heritage along, and to enhancing its commitment to critically grounded advocacy in society at large.

To celebrate these contributions, Berkeley's Kroeber Anthropological Society (KAS), and the Anthropology Graduate Organization for Research and Action (AGORA), are organizing a conference in Professor Berreman's honor with support from the Department of Anthropology, the Hearst Museum of Anthropology, the Center for South Asia Studies, and the Institute for the Study of Social Change. Borrowing from the title of one of his best-known papers, the event is titled, *Behind Many Masks: Gerald Berreman and Berkeley Anthropology, 1959-2001*. The conference is open to the public.

The conference will feature approximately 23 paper presentations, most of them by Professor Berreman's former students. Presentations will be grouped in four sessions (see below). KAS plans to publish a Special Edition of The KAS Papers comprising those delivered at the conference and others submitted for the volume.

Preliminary Schedule:

- 8:30-9:00 Continental breakfast social
- 9:00-10:30 First session: SOUTH ASIAN ANTHROPOLOGY
- 10:30-10:45 Break
- 10:45-12:00 Second session: SOCIAL INEQUALITY
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-2:15 Third session: THE POLITICS OF TRUTH: ETHICS, RESPONSIBILITY AND ACTIVISM
- 2:30-2:45 Break
- 2:45-4:00 Fourth session: OTHER REFLECTIONS
- 4:00-4:15 Break
- 4:15-5:15 Concluding session: A PARTICIPATORY CONVERSATION WITH GERALD BERREMAN
- 5:15-8:15 Reception at the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology

Eleventh Emeritus Lecture

in honor of Emeritus Professor
GEORGE DEVOS

Speaker: Robert A. LeVine, Harvard University

"Culture and Personality: What Happened?"

April 24, 4 pm, Alumni House. *Reception following.*

Good-bye Gerald Berreman!

— Kent Lightfoot

Another day has begun at Kroeber Hall. Professor Gerald Berreman, a distinguished member of the Anthropology Department since 1959, is making his usual morning rounds. Strolling down the second floor hall, dressed in his latest cargo pants, colorful Indian shirt and matching vest, and sporting an impressive black leather jacket, he cuts a very dapper figure as he brings a little sunshine to the Kroeber denizens. After peeking into his mail box outside the main office for the latest news from Nepal and India, he initiates his morning ritual of greeting students, staff, and faculty as he winds his way down the hallway. He may spend a few minutes assuring an undergraduate student about an upcoming exam, chat amiably with a graduate student about his pending PhD exam, or talk briefly with a fellow faculty person who has just picked up her mail. He may then make a deftly executed move into the Anthropology Library to check on the status of a book for his class. Inevitably, he will meander down the corridor to say hello to many of the hard-working staff members of the Department, regaling people with witty stories, corny jokes, and wry observations about life in Berkeley.



photo by Jelani Mahiri

Gerald Berreman

Yes, after more than four decades of this morning round, our beloved strolling raconteur is retiring. There are many things, of course, that Gerry brings to the Department. He is an internationally renowned scholar in the anthropology of South Asia, and has made many important contributions to the study of social inequality, small-scale societies, and urban social environments. He is also well known for his lectures and publications on the ethics and social responsibility of anthropologists. A very popular lecturer in undergraduate courses, he is a proven mentor for a long line of graduate students at Cal. In addition, he is a walking, talking archive on the history of anthropology at Berkeley, and for the price of a drink, he will tell wonderful stories about many of the legendary figures and activities of the Department. But what I think he brings most to the Department is his genteel demeanor, kindly nature, razor wit, and his genuine interest in people.

The Gerry Berreman we know and love today is very much a product of growing up on the Pacific Coast in the late 1930's and 1940's. Raised in the shadows of Leland Stanford's junior university, it is rumored he wore a white sweater with a Big Red S on his chest while an earnest lad. Luckily, before inoperative complications set in, young Berreman moved with his family to Oregon in the back of a Conestoga wagon. It was here that his love for the great outdoors, his lifelong affection for green and gold ducks, and his appreciation for foraging and small-scale societies really developed. He began his anthropology training as a student at the University of Oregon, participating in a major archaeological field project on prehistoric foraging peoples in the Columbian River Basin. He then spent considerable time undertaking both archaeological and ethnographic field research

—Berreman continued on back

on the Aleutian Islands. This early field work on hunter-fisher-gatherer peoples made a lasting impression on him, and certainly influenced his later field work in South India as a graduate student at Cornell University.

At his very core, I believe that Gerry is really a kind-hearted forager. One can see this in his morning walkabouts in Kroeber Hall, where he will suddenly stop in a crouched position, his keen eyes sweeping across the corridor, as our fearless hunter detects another weird poster on the wall or loose change on the floor. He is also an accomplished gatherer for food and drink, developing special expertise as an optimal forager in a university environment. Before he met his talented and lovely wife, Keiko Yamanaka, he was a regular on the Berkeley reception circuit. I used to follow the master forager to various functions, where I was continually impressed with his innate skill at being able to carry on conversations with multiple people, balance a glass (or two) of fine wine, gesture wildly with arms in telling a story, while seamlessly sampling at a brisk pace a full plate of tender hor d'oeuvres. It is true poetry in motion. I also believe that his deep reverence for material objects, especially any kind of paper product, is an outcome of his forager outlook. When you visit his office on the third floor of Kroeber Hall, it becomes clear that no piece of paper was ever wasted in his 42 years at Berkeley. While some of us who maintain sparkling clean offices may wonder about the many piles of books and paper in his office, it makes perfect sense to the Oregonian foraging spirit of Gerry Berreman. There is no doubt that our kindly, foraging raconteur is a one of a kind treasure, and we wish him all the very best on his future seasonal rounds.

Special **BAM!** Questionnaire

"What will you remember most about Gerald Berreman?"

Professor Berreman is a genuine scholar with a passion for the people who struggle for equality. I will miss his fine sense of humor in telling stories of various kinds. — *Liu Xin*

Dr. Berreman is the voice of humanity in a world where the people sometimes appear to go missing. — *Jordyn Steig*

Sometimes you forget what your teachers taught you, but you remember well the jokes they made in class. Here is one of Gerry's jokes. In the spring when the Clinton and Lewinsky's story was just revealed, Gerry was making his introduction to Anthro. 3 (I was a GSI): "This morning, while I was thinking about today's class, I had a fantasy—the President has his, I have mine. . . ." The students laughed. — *Everett Zhang*

I will remember that once you start talking to Professor Berreman he always has a story to tell which makes the conversation very pleasant to hear. — *Juliet Vogt*

Every year since I arrived at Berkeley, during the Cal football season, when Cal plays the Oregon Ducks (who hold a warm place in his heart) Gerry has been SURE to tell me how at Oregon, people yell, "EVERYONE DUCK." This usually takes place at the mailboxes and features Gerry's imitation of someone ducking out of the way of a projectile. This past fall when he was away on sabbatical, I found I truly missed his Duck stories. When he retires, a predictable and comforting "rite of fall" will be gone. — *Laurie Wilkie*

*This newsletter is produced by the Department of Anthropology, UC Berkeley. The next issue of **BAM!** will be published May 1, 2001. Please submit all story suggestions and announcements to Holly Halligan at 643.4445 or hollyh@uclink.berkeley.edu*

A Toast To Gerry

Let us drink and be merry,
In honor of Gerry.
An anthropology professor
A neighbor and a mentor.
In fieldwork and publishing,
His career was long and flourishing. — *John Ogbu*

Gerry's office door always posted the best reading material and cartoons in Kroeber Hall. They provided delightful relief from the aesthetic tedium of the third floor corridor. We'll miss your dedication. — *Herbert P. Phillips*

I have three things. 1) Gerald Berreman found something to delight in wherever he was. 2) He had a secret stash of paper clips in the copy room—for emergencies. 3) He was always kind. Always. — *Holly Halligan*

Gerry wrote two generative chapters for our volume, *Japan's Invisible Race*, that summerized well how caste had to be understood in cross-cultural perspectives. It much helped make our case about how caste operated in Japan. Gerry has been a true social scientist bringing together the insights of various disciplines. — *George DeVos*

I will remember two things about Gerry: 1) all the fascinating department history that he has retained and is willing to share (some of his colleagues should worry that he will write a book one day); 2) his favorite activity as back up to the Chair was to let all the staff leave early EVERY Friday. — *Sharon Lilly*

I feel sad about Gerry Berreman's retirement, because even though he'll remain in Berkeley, we won't benefit from his daily presence. I will miss his articulate advocacy for social justice, not only in society at large but more particularly within the academy. I will miss his presence at the office late into the night when, unbeknownst to most of us, he spent tireless hours writing endless letters and reports on behalf of students and colleagues. I will miss his lively storytelling (he's an extraordinary raconteur) and his even-tempered, good-natured disposition, even when confronted within the Department by adversity. I will miss the ongoing model that Gerry has provided of lucid, concise anthropological prose, always tempered with humor. I will miss Gerry's public advancement of truth in science and ethical responsibility within the profession, which translated into consistently engaging research and writing projects. And I will miss the occasional beers that we'd take together at the Faculty Club on Wednesday afternoons. But perhaps we can continue that tradition, off campus or on. I sure hope so. — *Stanley Brandes*

THE STORIES!!!! — *Sandy Jones*

Anthropology Centennial Trivia Contest

Congratulations to Juliet Vogt, Anthropology's textbook coordinator, for providing the correct answer in the fourth round of the Anthropology Centennial Trivia Contest. The question was: *Who was the first woman hired as a full-time faculty member in the Anthropology Department?*
The answer: Laura Nader.

Juliet has already collected her fabulous merchandise from **BAM!** Thank you for playing, Juliet.

April's trivia question is: *"From where did Gerald Berreman receive his honorary doctorates? (2)"*

Email your answer to: hollyh@uclink.berkeley.edu