

# the jawbone

anthropology department † university of california † berkeley



## INTERVIEW WITH JOHN H. ROWE, HONOREE OF ANTHROPOLOGY'S EIGHTH EMERITI LECTURE

### *What were some of the high points of your career?*

My work on the library. My first teaching job was in Cuzco, Peru, starting a new anthropology department with very few anthropology books. The rector (president) of the university was a problem. Once when I was in his office on department business, I was sitting next to his wastebasket. In it was a letter, written in English, lying face up. I pulled it out and said, "What's this?" He said it was nothing. He said this because he didn't speak English and could not read it. I looked at it and saw that it was an offer from the American Library Association to give the university some American books, part of a government good neighbor policy. I said, "I can take care of this for you," and I did. I started ordering anthropology books with the money, and it made a lot of difference. After WWII, I helped start another anthropology department in Popayán, Colombia, and I started another anthropology library there. The one here is my third.



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I was chair of the department here for some years in the sixties (1963-67). I was lucky enough to have a very able administrative assistant, Barbara Lulich—she and I realized that the administration was making life difficult for the departments, because it dealt with each department individually, and the departments never combined. I started having lunch with some other department chairs, and Barbara made friends with some other administrative assistants, and we made alliances to deal jointly with the administration on matters of common concern. I can't remember any specific battles we won. We didn't keep notes. We thought it better not to.

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I was very active in starting the Kroeber Anthropological Society. For years it met in people's houses, to listen to lectures in the evening and end the evening drinking beer. In addition to the good fellowship, the society provided ways for students to get experience editing a journal and giving papers—things they would be expected to do as professional anthropologists. We had a lot of fun with it. However, with the increased number of graduate students, we could no longer meet in people's homes. Plus the university went to the quarter system which was a disaster. It did away with the extra time, everything was too packed. By the time the university went back to semesters it was too late, the damage was done.

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I've done a great variety of research from time to time and I think I've gotten particular satisfaction from putting together combinations of things that people haven't thought of before and getting valuable results. I've always been

particularly interested in the Incas. Most people were saying that the Incas disappeared when the Spanish arrived. That's ridiculous. Of course they didn't disappear. I turned to Inca art to prove this. It was something concrete. The problem was how to prove the art was colonial. Most researchers would just say that it was art done before the conquest. One thing I did was find portraits of Inca nobles in the museum of Cuzco. There were inscriptions done on the paintings. I had a friend who was a physical anthropologist and also a doctor. I got him to take the pictures to the hospital and put them under an x-ray. The x-ray showed a lot more of the inscription than you could see previously. Like dates. I think it was the first time in South America that a painting had been x-rayed. In time I was able to convince a certain number of people that the Incas were around and organizing a certain amount of resistance. Anyway, finding new ways to solve problems was very satisfying to me—much more satisfying than simply applying what everyone else already does and knows about.

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The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers volume 40 is dedicated to me. Eugene Hammel referred to me in his paper entitled "Peck's Archaeologist." This is a play on words—a reference to a novel that used to be popular, *Peck's Bad Boy*. Hammel was implying that I was a bad boy. And this is true. I've always considered myself kind of a bad boy.

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I wanted to be an archaeologist since I was three. My father was Director of the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art in Providence, but he had one season's experience doing archaeology in Egypt and loved it. He always wished he had been able to be an archaeologist. As often happens, the child ends up doing what a parent wanted to do. I went to Brown University, also in Providence, and majored in classical archaeology, learning to study texts as well as objects and to look at objects as an art historian does, emphasizing the style. New World archaeology was dominated by classification and statistics, and I thought the classical approach was better. I also learned to take an interest in linguistics, and when I got my first teaching job in Cuzco, I taught a course in linguistics because I thought it was important. When there was a job opening at Berkeley, they wanted someone who could teach archaeology and linguistics. They asked me if I could teach both. I said, "Sure!" I was the only one who could. I got the job.

### *What went through your mind while you were being honored at the Emeriti lecture?*

A great deal of satisfaction. A great deal. I was very pleased with the way the lecture turned out. The degree to which all sorts of people found it interesting. I had picked DeBoer because when he speaks at meetings I learn something every time. I could not have predicted ahead of time that anyone could make stone axes interesting, and he did. I thought he was a particularly fine example of what my students could do.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 1-30, 1998

**Monday  
November 2** 290 Seminar, Dr. Joy McCorrison  
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.  
*Using Broad Landscapes Narrowly:  
the Appearance of Specialized Pastoralism  
in Northern Mesopotamia, 3000 BC*  
4:00-5:30 p.m., Rm. 160, Kroeber



**Wednesday  
November 4** Archaeology Brown Bag series  
Junko Habu and Team  
*The Archaeology of  
Sannai Maruyama, Japan*  
Noon, Rm. 101, 2251 College

**Monday  
November 9** Faculty Meeting  
3:00 p.m. Gifford Room

**Tuesday  
November 10** 290 Seminar, Dr. Melissa Leach  
University of Sussex, United Kingdom  
*Forest Problems or Problematic Foresters?  
Ethnographic Approaches to Science—  
Policy Processes and their Effects  
in Guinean Locales*  
4:00-5:30 p.m., Gifford Room



**Tuesday  
November 10** Alan Dundes speaking on his book  
*The Vampire, A Casebook*  
7:30 p.m., Cody's Books, 2454 Telegraph

**Wednesday  
November 11** Archaeology Brown Bag series  
Clare Fawcett  
St. Francis Xavier University  
*Subject TBA*  
Noon, Rm. 101, 2251 College

**Nov. 13-25** Margaret Mead Film Festival  
Pacific Film Archive  
For information call: 642.1412

**Monday  
November 16** 290 Seminar, Dr. Michael Silverstein  
*Turning Culture of Language into  
Language of Culture*  
4:00-5:30 p.m., Rm. 160, Kroeber

**Wednesday  
November 18** Archaeology Brown Bag series  
James Coil  
*Subject TBA*  
Noon, Rm. 101, 2251 College



**Wednesday  
November 25** Archaeology Brown Bag series  
David Palmer  
*Subject TBA*  
Noon, Rm. 101, 2251 College

**Monday  
November 30** Faculty Meeting  
3:00 p.m. Gifford Room

## GOOD-BYE TO IDA FOWLER

On October 23rd, the Anthropology Department said good-bye to Ida Fowler, purchasing assistant in the Anthropology front office. Ida accepted a position as an Administrative Assistant III with the Graduate School of Journalism. For the two years she worked at Anthropology, Ida provided a ready source of information, and probably even more important, a source of friendship for faculty and students who needed a connecting point in a big department. Her warmth and helpfulness will be greatly missed. We wish her well in her new position in Journalism.

*This newsletter is produced by the Department of Anthropology, UC Berkeley. Please submit all story suggestions, announcements, and calendar items for the next issue to Holly Halligan at 642.3391 or hollyh@uclink4.berkeley.edu by Monday, November 16.*

November 1, 1998

## THE EAR . . .

The **Anthropology graduate student volleyball team** represented the department with enthusiasm and vigour in the Cal intramural competition. Overcoming enormous structural obstacles and battling divergent ideologies they managed to finally bring 3 fields together in a team that cruised to victory . . . in one game. They are looking for cheerleaders for the next round. **Lawrence Cohen** is the recipient of the 1998 Victor Turner Prize honoring ethnographic writing for his recent book, *No Aging in India: Alzheimer's, the Bad Family, and Other Modern Things*. **Aihwa Ong** will be delivering a lecture on "Corporate Practices in an Age of Hypermobility," at the Ninth Pacific Science Inter-Congress, Academic Sinica, Taipei on November 19.

## CHRISTINE HASTORF'S UPDATE ON HER WORK IN BOLIVIA AND TURKEY

Professor Hastorf was awarded a National Geographic Research Grant for the summer of 1998 and went to Bolivia after exams in May. There, she directed an excavation at the site of Chiripa, an early settlement that spans early civic life. On the project was UC Berkeley graduate student Matt Bandy, who has remained to complete his dissertation field work surveying the area surrounding the site, with grants from the National Science Foundation, Wenner-Gren, and Fulbright. Bill Whitehead is completing his dissertation on the material from Chiripa in conjunction with local ethnoarchaeological studies. Other UC Berkeley graduate students Rachel Goddard, Miriam Doutriaux, David Kojan, and Emily Dean, as well as two undergraduates, Rene Ayon and Daniel Puertas also joined this year's team.

After the excavation season was over in July, Professor Hastorf went to join the Catalhoyuk Archaeological Research Project in Turkey, directed by Ian Hodder and Ruth Tringham. At this large, international, long-term project, she is in charge of overseeing the archaeobotanical research on the site. Two UC Berkeley graduate students, Julie Near and Steve Archer, worked on the plant remains at the site this summer. Julie Near is completing her dissertation on plant material from selected house contexts at the site.

## NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES AND LAWRENCE COHEN TO BE PANELISTS ON ORGAN HARVESTING SYMPOSIUM IN TOKYO

Professors Schepher-Hughes and Cohen are panelists at an invited symposium on the global business in organ harvesting and sales for transplant surgery at the World Bio-Ethics Meetings in Japan this November 4-7 at Nihon University in Tokyo. Following this, Professor Schepher-Hughes is an invited speaker at the American Public Health Association Meetings in Washington, D.C. (November 17-20), once again addressing "The End of the Body: the Global Trade in Organs." At the AAA Meetings in December, she will take part in yet another "Rob Borofsky Production"—a symposium on "Public Anthropology" which will feature an open discussion between anthropologists and public figures.