On Menorca, Spain, the town of Es Mercadal prepares for its annual Fiesta de Sant Marti.  
(Photograph by Jacob Orcutt).

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Editor’s Note

Since arriving at SUNY Potsdam in the fall of 2008 and first becoming aware of the Collegiate Anthropologist, I have always been impressed with what the journal has to offer my fellow students. It is not often that undergraduate students can say they have published works in an academic journal. Nor can many students boast to prospective graduate programs and employers that they attended an anthropology program robust enough to publish a journal every semester. But it was not until I joined the editorial staff last year that I truly understood how much the students have to offer to the Collegiate as well.

This issue of the Collegiate Anthropologist continues the great tradition of collaboration between faculty and students that began in 1980. This issue not only showcases the talent of the contributing students and the strength of the department as a whole, but also gives the reader a taste of the wide-ranging interests of our students. The Fall 2011 Collegiate will take you from Ecuador to Spain, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and even to the Adirondacks in our own backyard.

I am very grateful to serve the Collegiate Anthropologist as Editor-in-Chief, and I would like to sincerely thank all of those who made this issue possible. From the wonderful submissions by our contributing writers, the tireless efforts made by our dedicated editorial staff, and the persistent and devoted effort of Dr. Kruczek-Aaron as our advisor and publisher, this issue is truly a culmination of the hard work and ability of the many people of this department. I hope this issue will be half the pleasure to read that it was to produce.

Many thanks,
Jacob Orcutt
Editor-in-Chief
When most people hear the word “archaeology,” they immediately assume that you carry a whip and burst into tombs to find treasure just like Indiana Jones. However, archaeology is a much more scientific process that involves research, planning, and careful excavation. While many of these things can be taught in a classroom, the process of excavation is very hands on and requires experience to fully understand it. Thirteen SUNY Potsdam students (see Figure 1) eagerly awaited the 2011 summer field school in order to obtain the training and experience necessary to the study of archaeology.

The Area

Our field school was located near Lake Placid, New York, in the town of North Elba. While most of the journey to the site was on town roads that featured views of the High Peaks, the last road was more of a trail, which had washed out a few weeks prior to our field school. Although we could drive in quite a way, we had to stop once we reached a steep hill that some of us referred to as ‘The Hill of Doom.’ Once reached, it was a half-mile hike uphill to the site, which comprised a clearing in the woods. On one map, this area is located just north of the Epps lot, a 40-acre parcel named for the family who

Figure 1. In the woods with the field schoolers. Back row (from left): Matthew Phillips, Rob Velte, Jared Muehlbauer. Middle row: Dr. Kruczek-Aaron, Chris Morine, Tim Craig, Megan Comins, Joann Deleel, Elissa Donahue, Andrea Hill. Front row: Kristara Bly, Jessica Mehm, Shelby Tomko, Colleen Knapp, and Kara Chapin (Photograph courtesy of Dr. Kruczek-Aaron).
originally inhabited it. This is important to our field school, because the Eppses are the family whose cultural material we were searching for.

The History

A few years prior to the Civil War, the Epps family moved to the Adirondacks because of a land grant given to them by abolitionist Gerrit Smith (Stauffer 2001). Smith hoped to bypass racist laws, which limited African Americans’ political freedom, by giving African Americans the right to vote through land ownership. To do this, Smith set up a grant to give 3,000 African Americans 40 acres of land each if they demonstrated high morals and a good character through sobriety and hard work (Stauffer 2001). Most of the African Americans who received land from Smith were everyday workers, like cooks, barbers, and musicians. Even though Smith was trying to help, his project was largely viewed as a failure because many of the people who were given land could not afford the move or the start-up fees to begin working and living on a farm (MacKenzie 2007). In addition to all of these difficulties, some people also tried to trick incoming grantees out of their land by showing them land of lesser quality. The Eppses, however, did find some success as part of this experiment.

Originally from Troy, New York, Lyman and Anna Epps came to North Elba with two children; they would go on to have six more children there. Written sources show that the Eppses were very involved in their community, and Lyman is known for helping form the first Sabbath school for children, becoming one of the first charter members in the Union church, and being a founder of the Lake Placid Public Library (Mackenzie 2007). Their farm, though it was rather successful, was never valued for more than $100, which still did not reach the $250 threshold for voting.

The Field School Experience

On Monday, June 20th, thirteen SUNY Potsdam students, led by Dr. Kruczek-Aaron and teaching assistant Chris Morine, started to become associated with the rich history of Timbucto (the nickname for the settlement). We began our first day by visiting the John Brown Farm. John Brown is a notable figure in history due to his involvement with the raid on Harper’s Ferry, but he should also be remembered as a man who moved his family to the Adirondacks to help the African American settlers. After discussing some relevant readings at the farm we headed to our site, where we would be spending the next few weeks. Following the bumpy ride in, we packed up all our gear and carried it to our site. After two trips we seemed to have all of our equipment at our site and some really exhausted students. We then set

“While most of the journey to the site was on town roads that featured views of the High Peaks, the last road was more of a trail, which had washed out a few weeks prior to our field school.”

up a tent to protect our equipment in case of any rain, which was plentiful in our first week. To finish off the day, we talked about our site and how we were going to proceed with our excavation of the site. We talked about our main goal: to locate any cultural material, specifically structures, yard spaces, and middens, that could help us determine how the landscape was. Ultimately we were looking for cultural material associated with the Epps family from the mid-19th century.

In the first week, we began to map out our site (see Figure 2). While some students (myself included) worked at the total station, other students metal detected the clearing and surrounding area. The metal detectors were extremely useful because they revealed where large quantities of metal were located, which we then flagged and counted. The rest of the students did STPs (shovel test pits) on the outskirts of the clearing; the goal of this was to determine how the Epps used the whole landscape. For instance, did the Epps stick to the clearing or did they also use the area surrounding the clearing?

After a long first week, our first weekend was a welcome break to all. With the weekend came one of the first weekend trips to the Adirondack Museum where students got to walk through the unique museum, getting more acquainted with the area’s history. One notable thing we saw was an example of a log house that would have been similar to what the Epps would have lived in. We also got to see an outhouse from the 1900’s that would have been similar to the one the Epps would have used. The Adirondack Museum gave us a chance to step back and look at all the history of the area, not just the history we were looking for.

Our second week started with some more metal detecting, STPs, and total station work. However, after our grid was set up, we were able to determine where exactly we were going to excavate. The decision of where to excavate is an important one because it will give you a window into the history of that place but it will not tell you the whole story, and while excavating the entire area might be what we wanted to do, it was not a possibility. Dr. Kruczek-Aaron made the final decision on placing the excavation units where they ended up due to the results of the metal detector survey. In one of the quadrants that was metal detected there was a total of 140 hits, some of which were
overloads; overloads are a metal detector’s reaction to a large amount of metal. A large number of overloads were on the very edge of the clearing, where we placed our first two excavation units. With these units, we were hoping to accomplish some of our goals, such as to find structures, yard spaces, middens, and to see how the landscape was used overall. I had the pleasure of working in one of these first units (see Figure 3). As my partners Tim Craig, Joann Deleel, and myself began removing the sod cap, the excitement was paramount. As we were almost finished removing the sod cap, we saw a large piece of metal. We quickly called Dr. Kruczek-Aaron over, and we concluded that it could have been part of a stove. Also, atop our first layer were some cut nails that could have been reused from earlier housing material. Cut nails are important because they go largely out of use in the 1890s, which is prior to when the Lawrence family (who purchased the lot from the Epps) moved to this plot of land in 1900. Therefore, it is possible that the Lawrences re-used buildings or materials associated with the Epps occupation. In addition to cut nails and flat glass (likely window glass), we also found leather shoe parts, possible lighting glass, and a buckle clasp. Later in the week we placed more units throughout the clearing, in what we were hypothesizing was the yard area. One unit was placed near the middle of the clearing with another unit located a few meters to the south of it. In our second week, we opened four units that were all important and challenging in their own respects. The other units brought up interesting finds as well, such as a metal rod, buttons, pieces of ceramics, and other stove parts. 

![Figure 3. The author (in orange) catches up with paperwork while her unit partners Joann Deleel and Tim Craig finish mapping the base of their level (Photograph courtesy of Dr. Kruczek-Aaron).](image-url)
pieces.

After this week everyone was really excited with all of the artifacts we had uncovered, and we could not wait to get back to digging. However, the weekend would be a long one since it featured the 4th of July holiday. During this break, we kept busy with many lovely field trips, including a visit to an exhibit showing at the Whallonsburg Grange that documented the history of Timbucto. After exploring the Adirondacks, we went to Dr. Kruczek-Aaron’s house for a BBQ, which allowed us to spend time with our professor and her family in a more relaxed setting.

During the third week, all thirteen students worked hard at excavating various units, closing up two of the four units, and opening another four throughout the clearing. Towards the end of the third week things got really interesting with the discovery of a plethora of artifacts such as bottles, animal bones, a spoon, a file, some broken dishes, and some shoe parts in a smaller clearing across the road from where we were working. While on the surface you can tell that the smaller clearing is a midden for modern material, it also appears to be a midden for material from the early 20th century as well. While each unit had its own challenges, the unit at the north end of the clearing was by far one of the most difficult to complete. This is due to the appearance of a wooden log with spikes throughout it that extended from the original unit with a total length of roughly 13ft. The original unit was extended when the wooden log appeared, in the hopes that we would be able to uncover the rest of the log. Unfortunately, that was not the case; the wooden log could not be removed from the unit since it went through its side wall.

In the third week we also had our first lab day, during which we cleaned what we had excavated. We dry brushed artifacts that could not get wet, including corroded metal and wood, and wet brushed artifacts such as glass and ceramics. After the artifacts were cleaned and dried, we put them into clean bags with the proper tags. It was really rewarding to see all of the artifacts we had collected. To see them all together brought back the clarity of what we were really doing; we were not just excavating a small hole in the ground – we were excavating someone’s history. It was often difficult to think of the site as a whole, but doing the lab work allowed us to focus on more than just our unit.

The beginning of our last week started earlier but seemed to go by quickly. We started on Sunday with our public day, where many students’ families and friends came out to visit. Despite some general worry in the morning by protective unit excavators, the day went very well. The guests were given tours with at least one student talking about the excavation of their unit and the artifacts uncovered from it. After all of our visitors left and we got to end one of the most tiring and enjoyable days, we packed up and went back to the hostel to prepare for our last week of field school. By far the best part of the day was seeing how many people were interested in the work that we were helping to accomplish. The rest of the week seemed to just fly by, as we tried to complete the work in our units,
had another lab day, and as we entertained more site visitors. The last day of field school we had to backfill our excavation units, pick up all our metal detector markers, and take all of our equipment back to the vans. For me, there was nothing more final about field school than backfilling the unit I worked in for a solid two weeks.

Field school meant many different things to the thirteen students who participated in it. It meant the completion of a required course, some experience in fieldwork, and most of all a view into what it really means to be an archaeologist. For me, it brought to life the idea of archaeology; it created a reality for something I only knew in theory. Field school taught me the necessities of archaeology: I learned how to use a metal detector, how to do a pedestrian survey, use a total station, do an STP, and excavate a unit. I learned how to fill out paperwork for units and STPs to preserve context, and I learned how to look at a site as a whole. Even though we got tired, got rained on, and bit up by black flies, each student was still sad to leave our field school behind us when the time came for its end. After learning everything about archaeology I could inside a classroom, I really appreciated the opportunity to go out and put my knowledge to the test and learn more about the methods of archaeology.

This opportunity would not have been possible without Dr. Kruczek-Aaron and Chris Morine, and I cannot express my gratitude enough at their dedication to helping all of us become archaeologists. I would also like to thank the Powell family and other supporters of the Scott Powell Memorial Scholarship fund, who helped make my field school experience possible.

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About the Author
Kristara Bly is a junior with a double major in anthropology and archaeological studies and a biological anthropology minor. Originally from Herkimer, New York, Kristara has varied interests in historical archaeology, bioarchaeology, cultural anthropology, and forensic anthropology.
Excavating at an 18th Century House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

RACHEL PASSANNANTE

During the summer of 2011, I participated in a museum internship along with six other undergraduate and recent graduate students from all over the country. Some came from as far away as Portland, Oregon, while others lived only a few minutes away. We all came to Strawbery Banke museum in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to gain experience in education, horticulture, carpentry, collections, and in my case, archaeology. I assisted the archaeologist on staff, Sheila Charles, with a variety of projects: artifact processing, cleaning and organizing, as well as deaccessioning the artifacts in archaeology storage. However, the most exciting aspect of the internship was the two week excavation I helped to supervise.

Strawbery Banke Museum, named after the original settlement in Portsmouth, is a 10-acre outdoor historic museum with 42 buildings. All but ten of the buildings are still resting on their original foundations. The buildings have been restored to different eras of American history ranging from the early 1640s (the start of the Strawbery Banke settlement) up to World War II. Preservation of these historically rich houses started in the 1960s by a group of women who wanted to turn their deteriorating city back into a vibrant, bustling seaport (Robinson 2007). Strawbery Banke has since been able to share some of the earliest history of English settlement in America. The 42 houses and several historically based gardens showcase the site’s heritage with the help of the museum’s extensive collection and the archaeological work that has uncovered the history of the town.

This summer was the fourth and final year the field school would excavate at the Chase House. The Chase House was built in the mid 1700s by a mariner from Kittery, and later bought by a wealthy merchant named Stephen Chase in 1799. In 1882, the house became one of several orphanages in Portsmouth and served this purpose until the start of World War II. After the house was abandoned as an orphanage, it became a private residence until the early 1960s when it became the first house purchased and renovated by a young Strawbery Banke Incorporated (Robinson 2007).

The goal of the excavation at the Chase House was to locate the remnants of a barn thought to be on its property based on existing written records. The museum expressed an interest in saving a soon-to-be demolished barn in the Portsmouth area and placing it on the Chase House property where the old barn once existed. This news prompted archaeologists to explore the site to see exactly where the old barn stood and to save any cultural material that would be forever lost underneath the new barn.

While doing preliminary research, my supervisor found two maps. One map documented the location of the barn.
The other map, however, contained an unexpected find. The 1813 map showed the outline of the old barn (measuring 20 by 60 feet) on the Chases’ property. On the later 1887 map, the barn was no longer shown, but another building, labeled W.C., was located where the barn once was. My supervisor realized that within the old barn foundation a water cabinet, what we today would call a privy, had been built. Excavating privies is an excellent way to determine what people in the past used and ate in their homes, for once a privy was no longer in use, it became a place to discard food waste and broken or unwanted household objects. The goal of the excavation expanded to include locating the privy that should sit within the barn’s foundation as well as locating the old barn itself.

My responsibility as the archaeology intern included acting as a field supervisor for this excavation, which involved a two week field school in June and July. The week before the field school I organized and cleaned the field equipment, copied and organized paperwork for the field, and scrounged around to find items to create field kits for the students. The field kits contained a dirt bucket, trowels, brushes, line levels, measuring tapes, root clippers, a clip board, and two pencils.

Strawberry Banke’s field schools are typically open to students aged 16 and up, as well as to any adults who wished to participate. This year we had a total of ten students ranging from 15 years old to recent college graduates, three adults, and three of Sheila’s archaeology volunteers. Another supervisor and I were to watch and help the students and adults who had no previous archaeology experience. This included basic digging, pedestaling artifacts, filling out paperwork, photographing units, and sifting dirt.

The southern wall of the barn was discovered in a previous year of the excavation. As this was the last year of the excavation, our goals were to find the bottom of the privy and locate the east and west walls of the barn. Unfortunately there were problems early on hindering our goals. The units had been covered with ply wood sheets and tarps for all of the previous fall, winter, and spring. Many of the grid lines were loose, torn, or stuck under the hay bales which were haphazardly thrown into some units to try and keep the side walls from totally collapsing. Still, some side walls did collapse, leaving piles of dirt in once neat units. The combination of loose strings and fallen side walls caused us to lose uniformity from last year in the placement of the grids and the depth in which last year’s teams
below ground level, arbitrary levels of 10 centimeters were used over natural soil changes. The soil for the most part remained a roughly uniform brown, fine-grained silt. However, in the privy units where we dug the deepest, around 140 cm below ground level, we encountered a packed grey clay layer starting just above the water table and continuing down. We set up a water screen at the site which helped tremendously in screening through the clay to find artifacts.

Digging in the privy was a challenge (see Figure 2). We had to maneuver ourselves around the unit lines, ducking under and around them to get to the bottom of the unit next to the privy which measured 115 centimeters below ground level. Then we had to balance on a foot-wide patch of dirt to avoid falling into the grey tinted, slightly foul ground water. Often in the attempt to remove clay, we would get a shovel full of water instead. It all turned out to be worthwhile, though, as the privy unit had some of the most interesting artifacts. We uncovered a head of a spoon, part of a porcelain doll, a large broken glass marble, several buttons, and lots of wood. From a side wall, three-fourths of a small cast iron wagon wheel was pulled out. On the last day of the dig, we found half of a black broom handle and a whole blue tinted medicine bottle.

Throughout the two weeks, we found a variety of artifacts. In the 50 centimeter by 1 meter unit, two tea cups were found in situ, decorated in a blue transfer print of stags being chased by hunting dogs. Another unit revealed layers of animal bone and fragments of plates and glass bottles. This unit alone almost filled 20 large artifact bags with artifacts by the end of the excavation.
One of the most unexpected discoveries that occurred in another unit was a pile of window glass fragments that measured 20 centimeters wide by 40 centimeters deep. Usually this much glass is not found in a single spot like this. We did not keep all of the glass, but we did count how many fragments we had. With a rough estimate from only three of the five bags, there was close to two thousand pieces of various size and color. We can only guess why such a deep pile of glass was discarded in one pile.

The best find from the privy was a large amount of fabric and leather that was slowly uncovered over several days of digging. After all of the pieces were carefully washed and dried they were determined to be the soles of children’s shoes, part of a rubber ball, and parts of a child’s vest and shirt. Even more interesting was the embroidered pattern that could still be seen on one panel of the vest. Although the string used had eroded away, the holes that the pattern made through the fabric were still there. As the fabric dried, the pattern of flowers and vines started to emerge when some sort of light colored residue formed around the holes.

Unfortunately the bottom of the privy could not be determined due to the water table obstructing our view. Our deepest point was 140 centimeters, which our supervisor determined would be shallow for a privy. The large amount of wood we pulled up was not likely the floor of the privy. The floor would most likely have been rock or brick. It makes more sense that the wood could be from a fallen wall or beam. Also, we continued to find artifacts beneath the wood, like the bottle and broom handle, for example. I do not know how close we got to finding the bottom, but we definitely needed more time than the two weeks we had to find it. If we could have waited a couple more weeks, maybe the water table would have gone down and we could have dug deeper.

The Chase House excavations proved to be very successful. Through excavations we were able to find the south and west rock walls of the barn and estimated that the east wall extended into the yard of the house next door. The privy was easily located because it was built in brick. It measured 2 ½ feet wide by 10 feet long in the southwest corner of the barn. Artifact analysis still has to be done to fully understand the types of items we uncovered as well as the spatial distribution of the artifacts. The evidence, though, seems to suggest that wealthy people, like the Chases, did live in the house at some point.

On the last day of the excavation, we filled in the units with fill delivered by dump truck. We had a system of some people shoveling, some going back and forth with wheelbarrows, and some at the units leveling and compacting the dirt. This was the most physically exhausting day for everyone. Even our supervisor helped shovel and
wheelbarrow dirt around. This was my first time as a field supervisor, and I could not have asked for a better group of students. They were eager to dig, worked extremely hard, and were easy to teach and direct. They quickly picked up the necessary skills, asked questions, and helped each other. I learned how to be an effective field technician and how to lead and direct people. I got a better sense of lab processes and how complicated cataloging artifacts can be. I also saw how museums and archaeology can work together finding and preserving artifacts. I learned so much from this internship, but most importantly I thoroughly enjoyed my time as a member of the field school team.

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About the Author

Rachel Passannante is a senior graduating this December. She is an archaeological studies major with a minor in geology and museum studies. She has been on two field schools both pertaining to the 1700s and 1800s occupation periods. She is interested in material culture from Europe and Asia, and she hopes to go to graduate school for either material culture studies or geoarchaeology.
University Life in Rural Northern New York and in a Wealthy Quito, Ecuador suburb: A Comparative Study

ANDREW BENTLEY

Background

Ecuador is an anthropologist’s dream. Even though it is the second-smallest South American country, it more than makes up for that with its diverse climates, cultures and geography. If you want to take surfing lessons in the morning, zip-line in the afternoon and have sushi in a high-class restaurant at night, you can do that. Want to take Spanish classes, engage in service learning projects and go nightclubbing in the same day? No problem. Want to spy on tropical birds from your steamy binoculars, photograph snowcapped mountains in a sweater and go on a sea tour beside a mother and baby humpback whale in your swimsuit all in less than twenty-four hours? ¡No te preocupes! (Don’t worry about it!) Ecuador can make all of this and so much more possible, because in an area the size of Nevada it packs a punch. There are four distinct regions, which each feel like separate countries because they shape the country’s multiple identities, offering an array of different cultures just waiting to be explored by those who are curious enough to learn about them.

Perhaps the most well known part of the country is strangely enough the region with the least amount of people. The Galápagos Islands are celebrated as being the birthplace of Darwin’s Theory of Evolution. Although they are six hundred miles from the mainland, they are essential to the Ecuadorian economy due to the ecotourism boom that is sweeping all of Latin America. Although there are not many people on the islands, there is a plethora of species that breed nowhere else on Earth, such as the iconic Blue-footed Booby, marine iguanas and sea lions. Moving east, the lowlands along the Pacific Coast are home to Afro-Ecuadorians who speak Spanish with a distinct, rapid flavor and are well known for their carefree lifestyles. The Andes (known as the Sierra) form the mountainous backbone of the country; incidentally, this is where the capital city of Quito is located. Like other major cities in the region, the modern and the traditional rub shoulders in Quito as demonstrated by shopping malls, palm-lined boulevards that look like they could be in Los Angeles, llamas being shepherded by men in woven outfits, and active volcanoes framing the skylines. A third of Ecuador is the mega-diverse Amazon Rainforest. There are tribes such as the Secoya that have limited contact with the outside
world and more species of birds than in the United States. And yes, you can indeed straddle the equator in several places, for which Ecuador takes its name.

I was fortunate enough to experience this special place firsthand when I spent the Fall 2010 semester in Ecuador studying abroad at la Universidad San Francisco de Quito (henceforth USFQ). It is a private university with approximately 5,500 students, so it has a larger student body than SUNY Potsdam. It is located in the Tumbaco Valley in the suburb of Cumbayá, a short bus ride from downtown Quito. Anywhere near the capital is a good base from which to explore other parts of the country, so I picked USFQ as opposed to other choices in Ecuador to study Spanish. It may be difficult for people who are not familiar with Latin America to imagine what a university there is like. For many, USFQ is a pleasant surprise. Coming in from Quito on a crowded, bright green bus along twisted, forested mountain roads, a beautiful valley opens up to reveal something special. Cumbayá is adjacent to Quito but has a completely different atmosphere, a common theme in a country of contrasts. The main boulevard leading into town is flanked with familiar shops and restaurants, tangible evidence of globalization: Apple Stores, KFC, McDonald’s, Papa John’s and, of course, their very own version of Wal Mart. (in case you were wondering, there is a legit Wal Mart in Ecuador—inside the US Embassy in Quito). Getting off the bus where the bus assistant is already yelling the name of the next destination, and braving the chaotic crosswalks, the commuter student finds what is sometimes called “the most beautiful campus in Latin America,” according to student reviews on the website of Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY, with which USFQ has a bilateral exchange. Before attending USFQ, I thought that St. Lawrence University had the loveliest grounds I had ever seen. However, upon walking around USFQ for the first time, it is easy to see how it has captivated Ecuadorians and international students alike since its foundation in 1988 (see Figure 1). A pond surrounded by palm trees, a pagoda, two obelisks, Middle Eastern-inspired arches, fountains, ceilings with chandeliers, stained glass representations of major constellations, and buildings painted in every color in the rainbow; I was hooked instantly, and ready to find my niche in this exciting environment. I was able to put my anthropological mind to work to understand my new surroundings.

Using Anthropology as a tool for discovery

I had two courses with only gringos (the colloquial term for people from the United States with no negative connotation in Ecuador) and two mixed courses that had both gringos and Ecuadorians. It was evident to me that the gringos were somewhat of a novelty to the Ecuadorian students; they were inquisitive and asked frequent questions about life in the United States. Are name-brand clothes really that cheap there? Isn’t it weird living right on campus? Indeed, American name-brand clothes were two or three times as expensive in Ecuador as they would be in the United States, and there were no dorms on USFQ’s campus that we are accustomed to. The gringos travelled around campus together, just as some international students can be observed doing on Potsdam’s campus. There were conversation sessions where a gringo could have an Ecuadorian partner
to practice Spanish, and the Ecuadorian student could in turn practice their English skills. We have similar opportunities on our campus where both parties can practice their second language. Dr. Lunt of our Modern Language department establishes ties with conversation partners, as does our campus’s Spanish club in collaboration with our exchange students from Mexico. Instead of Bear Pride Night, to celebrate school spirit on Potsdam’s campus, USFQ had its own version of an event that brings the campus community together. In the middle of September on the anniversary of the university’s founding, classes are suspended for a day and professors and students gather around the central fountains for some free cake and beer. The chancellor talks about the accomplishments of the university and how it is a seed of hope for Ecuador, which is still severely lacking quality institutions of higher education.

In making these comparisons and observations, I found myself asking key anthropological questions without knowing it, such as some posed by Potsdam’s own Dr. Omohundro (2008) in his introductory text, Thinking Like an Anthropologist. For example, “do other societies also do something like this?” (Omohundro 2008:126) USFQ surely does not have Bear Pride, but it does have another gathering that the whole campus knows about to celebrate the spirit of the university. I also discovered that USFQ students spend their leisure time similarly to the way we do at Potsdam. They go bowling with friends, spend time at McDonald’s for smoothies, and go to the movies at midnight for Harry Potter premieres.

In regards to the Ecuadorian collective way of being, it was inevitable to think, “well at Potsdam, it’s like this...” on several occasions. At times I was making anthropological observations without even realizing it! A wise translations professor I had at USFQ said, “nada en Ecuador es fácil/ nothing in Ecuador is easy.” I quickly learned what he meant: even printing homework can become a chore, since there is only one small photocopying room on campus and no public printers even in the library, such as the ones I take advantage of at Crumb Memorial Library. Another aspect of USFQ life that is strikingly different from life at Potsdam was the relationship that professors have with their students. It was not uncommon to bump into a professor at a nightclub or to have them ask you to join them at the mall, for example. That is not to say that Potsdam students do not have relationships with their professors. My own experience and our school website’s testimonials about superiority in that category attest to that. However, for us there is a finer line of what is socially acceptable and what is not. USFQ professors were also much more lax about deadlines and arriving to class on time, especially with the gringos.

Despite these differences, it is surprising that there really are more similarities between a North Country university and a South American one than meets the eye at first glance, such as what the students do for fun and how we all form our friendships. The way that friendships can be fostered at both Potsdam and at USFQ is the way in which people engage with and manipulate their surroundings. At the Union, one can always see people meeting friends in front of the stairs, by the mailroom, and in the dining areas. In nice weather, people will often sit out in front of the union and chat with friends as they watch cars go by. USFQ has no union, but there is a main entrance hall,
which houses the library and frames the rest of the campus. USFQ students either meet and chat on the steps in front of this area or in the beautiful gardens, where people can be seen sunbathing as they do in our Academic Quad. One campus is shadowed by the Andes and the other has the Adirondacks in its backyard. Potsdam has its buildings spread out and there is a lot of green space but USFQ’s buildings are close together. However, the students at each university come together in much the same ways.

Conclusions

Ecuador is one surprise after another. Yes, there are some local indigenous peoples who wear ponchos and play pan flutes, similar to the ones you can also see in the New York City subway stations. Yes, there are llamas, wall hangings and a relaxed concept of time that is palpable. But beyond that, there are ways of life similar to luxurious lifestyles in the United States. It is true a good portion (39%, according to one recent study; see World Bank 2011) of the Ecuadorian population lives below the national poverty line; however, the small fraction that does enjoy more privileges in a college setting has some of the same goals and the same ways of merrymaking as we do. Student life at Potsdam and USFQ is at times vastly different, but is more often striking in the similarity of the goals and mindsets of the student populations at both institutions. Ecuador is a place where the ancient and the modern coexist. A constant rhythm of music and color pulls the traveller into a surreal state of mind — a state of mind that is sure to captivate any international student and, above all, any anthropologist.

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World Bank

About the Author

Andrew Bentley is a Spanish language and literature major with a minor in anthropology. He is a senior here at SUNY Potsdam and hopes to do interdisciplinary work with both of his fields in graduate school, and of course, to travel back to South America!
Photo essay: A Summer Field Experience in Menorca

JACOB ORCUTT

During the summer of 2011, I spent three weeks at an archaeological field school on the Mediterranean island of Menorca, Spain. The field school was operated by the Ecomuseo de Cavalleria in Santa Teresa, and I helped excavate a prehistoric funerary cave associated with the Talayotic people, who were in the region when the Romans conquered the island in 123 BCE. The primary purpose of my trip was to gain experience in the practice of archaeology, but the cultural experience of visiting a place so different from home was nearly as valuable as the archaeological aspect of it.

ABOVE: This is the Cala Morell necropolis. This cavern system was carved entirely by hand by the Talayotic people. The columns carved on either side of the opening are later Roman additions.

RIGHT: A natural cave that has been expanded by human activity, in Binimel-la.

TOP: Tramontana Park Hotel in Playas de Fornells, where I stayed my first night in Menorca.

LEFT: The town hall of Ciutadella, sitting atop a rampart guarding the Port of Ciutadella.

BOTTOM: 18th century British watchtower in Es Grau.
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: An articulated skeleton from a tomb in the necropolis at Santitja.

Naveta des Tudons. These naveta (Spanish for boat) are common throughout Menorca. They were used as burial chambers by the Talayotic people.

A taula from Torre d’en Galmés. Taulas are “T”-shaped megalithic structures that are believed to have had religious significance to the Talayotic people.

View from the cave excavation site at Binimel-la.

Signs and menus in Menorca often contain three or more languages. This sign features the three most prominent languages on the island, Catalan ("obert"), Spanish ("abierto"), and English ("open").
Links in the Bio- and Cultural Diversity of Ecuador

Lauren Dodaro

The environment continually helps to shape our world’s cultures. Perhaps no country displays the influence of nature as excellently as the South American nation of the Republic of Ecuador. For thousands of years, cultures in mainland Ecuador—with an area of approximately two hundred and eighty thousand square kilometers—have been changing in rather close quarters and yet in drastically different environments. This paper discusses how the high concentration of varying ecosystems has played a major role in creating the diversity of the cultures within the country.

The Republic of Ecuador

Located in the northwest corner of South America (see Figure 1), Ecuador is by nature a diverse country, made up of three primary continental regions: the costa, the sierra, and the oriente. The costa is situated between the Pacific Ocean and Andes Mountains that slice through the country, containing mainly coastal lowlands with some mountains. Due to the warm and cool ocean currents, the costa’s tropical climate varies in both temperature and rainfall throughout the year. Moving further eastward, the next region is the mountainous sierra. There are two main chains of the Andes, the Cordillera Occidental or “Western Chain” and the Cordillera Oriental or “Eastern Chain” that make up the majority of the sierra, though it also includes a sizable portion of plateau or “intermontane basin,” which rests between the two chains. The extreme variations in latitude cause the sierra’s climate to range from tropical to frozen, and like the costa, it experiences much fluctuation in rainfall. To the east of the sierra is the frontier of continental Ecuador, the oriente, consisting of the piedmont of the Andes and the eastern lowlands. This section of the Amazon jungle experiences plentiful rainfall and a tropical climate (Hanratty 1989).

Ecuador is as rich in people and culture as it is in biodiversity. With a population density of 47.7 people per square kilometer, Ecuador has one of the highest population densities in all of current-day South America. Overall, Ecuador has a population of about fourteen million people. Forty percent of the population is ethnically divided as Indians and self-defined mestizos, descendents of the Spanish settlers and Indians. The densely populated country is rich and diverse in religious practices. Ninety-four percent of the population practices Catholicism, although a notable rise in Protestant evangelical and Pentecostal churches occurred in the latter-half of the 1960s throughout the entire country. The official language spoken by Ecuadorians is Spanish, but a large portion of the population also speaks Quichua, an Incan dialect of Quechua. Today, there are over forty indigenous cultures in Ecuador. Many more once existed; lost in time over the past few hundred years with the weakening of Ecuador’s structural roots catalyzed mainly by the arrival and invasion of the Spanish (Hanratty 1989).
The Costa

The people of the costa live in an almost island-like situation; for, although only lined by the ocean to the west, all other sides are isolated from the rest of the continent by the Andes. In addition, the costa is very ecologically diverse in and of itself, including sea-side, rainforest, and montane environments. Archaeologists have found evidence to suggest a human presence in the costa from as early as 3,500 BCE (Hanratty 1989). The costa is made up of five provinces: Esmeraldas, Manabí, Guayas, Los Ríos, and El Oro, with a total of over six million inhabitants. The indigenous cultures of the costa include the Chachi (Cayapas) of the northwestern province of Esmeraldas, as well as the Coaquiers, Colorado Amerindians, and Salangons. The societies of the costa find themselves especially dependent on the plants present in the mainly tropical ecosystems. The costa people organized 930 plant species into 7 primary categories. The species are further divided into 74 subcategories based on 1,510 uses, “definite evidence of the richness of the traditional ethnobotanical knowledge that these tribes try to keep, even though the acculturation process already presents a gradient from a higher degree in the Colorados, followed by the Cayapas, to a lower degree in the Coaquiers” (Quijano 1998:306). Today, the people of the costa rely greatly on polyculture as the environment requires many crops to be grown in one place to ensure their survival in the mediocre leached and kaolinitic soil. Land is stripped clear for plantains, yucca or manioc, rascadera, pineapple, sugarcane, fruit trees and palms such as chontaduro, as well as their cash crops, coffee, cacao, banana, rubber, and ivory nut. In addition, some areas are cleared for pasture (Tolstoy and DeBoer 1989), with environmental repercussions that will be discussed later in this paper.

The Costa: Salangons and the use of Spondylus

The environment affects the costa people in ways that transcend the boundary of necessities. *Spondylus princeps*, a warm-water mollusk found in ecosystems on the coast of Ecuador, has played an important role in the lives of the costa’s people, as has been studied thoroughly by anthropologist Daniel Eric Bauer. *Spondylus* remains are found extensively in the archaeological record of Ecuador, having both “ceremonial and ritual purposes in pre-Columbian contexts” (Bauer 2007:33). The people of Ecuador’s costa are the only ones in the country with immediate access to *Spondylus*, setting them...
apart from the people of the Sierra region just next to them. Spondylus crafts appear to play a major role in the “formation of a localized identity” that exists today in the costa village of Salango in the south-central province of Manabí (Bauer 2007:33)—an important aspect in the maintaining of any culture. The use of Spondylus in artistic production has been able to anchor “contemporary identities to the pre-Columbian past despite significant changes in modes of production” (Bauer 2007:33), strongly linking the residents of the village of Salango to their un-westernized past which is often nearly lost in many cultures throughout South America. “The fundamental characteristics of collective identity”, writes Bauer, are defined by “common history and common culture” (2007:37), both of which are provided for the Salangons by Spondylus, despite the fact that most Salangons are mestizo rather than indigenous, having a much more mixed history extending beyond the borders of Ecuador. In the costa’s history, Spondylus was more than an adornment, but a major part of the area’s trade which extended to the sierra and even Peru (Bauer 2007), thereby acting as a major support for the area’s economic well-being. Twenty-five-year-old Spondylus diver, Roberto Ascencio, noted that “Spondylus is a symbol of this place. It represents something that is more than important for the people who live here in Salango, it represents our ancestors, our past, the history of this community” (Bauer 2007:47).

Today, around 40 members of the Salango community are employed as Spondylus divers (Bauer 2007). To have such a relatively large number of people in a village working as divers attributes to the importance of the mollusks. However, this job is very taxing and often dangerous, since the divers must hold their breath for as long as two and a half minutes in depths up to twenty meters (Bauer 2007:42) Spondylus diving as an occupation has ancient roots, further strengthening the Salangon cultural unity with their attachment to their past. Bauer notes that both the divers as well as the Spondylus artisans are symbolic as much as they are economic, representing one of the few tangible connections to the past. Although Spondylus products are primarily geared towards tourists rather than local Salangons, this has benefited them as Salango has actually become very popular for its tourism. In fact, one of the main reasons for the recent rise in Salango’s tourism is due to ecotourism—travelers visiting a place to experience and enjoy what its environment has to offer—especially for humpback whale-watching. Spondylus artisans take advantage of this by adapting their pendants and other crafts to fit the
market; rather than trying to re-create pre- 
Columbian crafts, much of their carvings 
are of whales and whale tails, which can be 
produced by a skilled artisan in less than 
a half hour (Bauer 2007). Coincidentally, 
the *Spondylus* that was once essential 
to historical Salango’s booming trade 
economy is now essential for today’s 
booming tourism economy. Additionally, 
*Spondylus* is an aforementioned symbol, 
standing proudly for both “Salango’s 
pre-Columbian past and ethnographic 
present” (Bauer 2007:47). It also represents 
the strong dependence the costa people of 
Salango’s culture and economy have on 
the provisions of the environment and 
how malleable their culture and economy 
are in relation to the environment.

The Sierra

The cultures of the sierra have strong links to those located in the rest of 
the Andes as a result of the Incan conquest in the mid-fifteenth century. Today, 
over five million people inhabit the ten 
provinces of the sierra: Charchi, Imbabura, 
Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Bolivar, 
Chimborazo, Cañar, Azuay, and Loja. 
Due to the Incan conquest, the indigenous 
cultures of the sierra are strongly connected 
to those of the Peruvian Andes. Some of the 
sierra cultures include Canaris, Otavaleño, 
Quichua, Saraguro, and Salasaca. Linda A. 
Newson (1993) describes the history of the 
people of Ecuador in terms of examining 
demographic patterns and changes. Many of these changes are related to the 
environment, for example: “in terms of 
the distribution of population, the 
northern sierra was more densely settled. 
This probably reflected the more favorable 
environmental conditions of the region, 
especially its more fertile soils” (Newson 
1993:59). Also, agriculture in the sierra 
has been concentrated in the *tierra fría*, the 
height between 3,200 and 2,000 meters, so 
most settlements must be located in the 
same areas near the agricultural centers. 
The higher the elevation, the colder the weather; therefore, some crops can only 
be cultivated at certain locations. For 
example, “tuber” crops like potatoes 
grow in the cooler temperatures at 
locations above 2,800 meters, while maize 
is grown at lower elevations. Granted, a 
large number of crops are able to be grown 
in both zones of the sierra. This divide 
affect what groups of people relied on 
what type of subsistence, thereby molding 
their culture to be dependent on what 
their environment was able to support. 
“Andean peoples,” Newson writes, “have 
developed a number of strategies to take 
advantage of the natural diversity of the 
mountain environment” (1993:27). It must 
be remembered that today there are two 
tree lines acknowledged in the sierra, 
“an upper one that correlates with the 
extension of grazing into the colder, higher 
reaches, which reduces the area of TMCFs 
tropical montane cloud forests) from 
above; and a lower one that correlates with 
the ascending intensification of cropland 
agriculture and fuelwood consumption 
in the piedmont, foothills, and interior 
highland plateaus” (Sarmiento 2002:1). 
These treelines prove that the untamed 
nature of ecosystems leads to a blurring
of categorizations that permeate the human life.

The Sierra: Salasacans and Sacred Places

The residents of the sierra town of Salasaca, Ecuador in the Tungurahua province have a culture shaped not only by what is provided by the environment, but by the land itself. Their relationship with the environment goes beyond what the environment provides for their culture, interpreting and interweaving their imaginations with the environment. To the Salasacans, a person’s knowledge of the surrounding land and its traditional connotations denotes great prestige, essential when choosing an alcalde, Salasaca’s mayor-like leader (Corr 2003). The knowledge of their environment is shared, passed down by elders who “live the traditions” (Corr 2003:41). In Salasaca, sacred places are not only important as a “symbol of cultural heritage,” but also as a “part of their lived experience” (Corr 2003:39).

Salasacans remember the sacred landscapes using muy, a “form of bodily memory” (Corr 2003:43). The muy memory is engrained in a person by physically moving along certain sacred routes in the environment; forming muy memory is referred to as “the performance of the muy” (Corr 2003:44). Strengthening their bond with nature, the Salasacans believe in the importance of “physically tracing the boundaries of their territory in bare feet,” thereby creating “an imaginary boundary around the community” (Corr 2003:44). It is both important and necessary to know the pathways and walk them barefoot.

The feet of the person walking “must have contact with the earth so that he can demonstrate his knowledge of how to run over the network of foot trails without injuring his feet on thorns.” This defines and strengthens the relationship between the walker and the Salasacan environment, while also forming imaginary boundaries around the community (Bauer 2007). The alcalde does this four times each year: after receiving staff of office on January first, after the celebration of Carnaval, after the celebration of Quasimodo (or “Cazimozo”) in April, and after the final celebration of the year, Chisi Octava (Corr 2003). The Salascans work with the ecosystem around them and in performing the muy, build off of it, creating “existential space.” Existential space is formed by “life-activity” and is wrapped in “social meanings,” “providing reference points and planes of emotional orientation for human attachment and involvement” (Corr 2003:44). An area of existential space provides a people with “meaning, intention, and purpose of societal significance” (2003:44-45). In the Salasacan culture, existential space is vital for marking social distinctions in the context of nature and the environment. Without the context of the environment, their cultural distinctions and definitions virtually have no meaning.

The Oriente

Of all the cultural anthropological studies conducted in Ecuador, the majority appear to be centered in the dense jungle of the oriente. Due to the humidity of its climate and high rate of deterioration of its ecosystems, little is known about the long-
ago past of Ecuador’s oriente. In fact, “the oldest ceramic complex…dates only to 50 BC +/- 90. The pottery is in abominable condition and has lost most of its surface” (Whitten 1965). Additionally, “the construction of a railroad line […] linking the Ecuadorian highlands with the tropical rainforest coast” (Whitten 1965) was a development that greatly affected cultures of both the sierra and costa. It increased their rate of change significantly, as they became linked, transcending geographic boundaries that had been present for thousands of years. This allowed for a transportation flow of people and resources over the past half century that is not found in the oriente; therefore, the rate of change has been sizably less than the other two areas of continental Ecuador.

The oriente only contains six provinces: Sucumbíos, Orellana, Napo, Pastaza, Morona Santiago, and Zamora Chinchipe. The oriente is dense, in part populated by people who do not wish to have contact with others outside their community. As a result, a close approximation of its population is not easily made, though there are somewhere around 300,000 inhabitants. The region is rich in indigenous cultures, including the Quichua, Siona- Secoya, Achuar, Tchatchilas (Colorados), Huaorani, Cofán, Zápara, and Shuar (Jívaro).

The Oriente: Shuar and Land Ties

The Shuar, sometimes known as the Jívaro, are the oriente’s “largest and perhaps most famous” indigenous culture, due in part to “their custom of shrinking the heads of their enemies” (Hendricks 1993:1). More importantly, the Shuar people are distinguished by their display of “fierce independence and courageous resistance” in the face of conquest—a reputation that still holds strong, engrained in their cultural heritage, despite the end of conflict that is only remembered by the elders from the days of their childhoods; in fact, much of the pride present in the Shuar culture today is founded on “the fact that they have never been conquered militarily” (Hendricks 1993:1).

It can be surmised that their location in the rainforest allows them militaristic advantages, lending itself to their ethnic pride in their cultural heritage. Hendricks has written that “in recent years the Shuar have become equally famous for founding one of the oldest and most successful resistance organizations in South America, the Federación de Centros Shuar” (1993:1). Claiming it as their own land and not the land of the government, this federation is based largely on protecting the land that so shaped the Shuar culture.
that is rightfully theirs. Their federation was created as “a response to the Ecuadorian government’s interest in the Oriente as a political solution to land shortage in the highlands and the subsequent migration of colonists from the highlands to the area” (Hendricks 1993:7). The Instituto Ecuatoriano de la Reforma Agraria y la Colonización (IERAC) “deemed all undeveloped land to be state property”, which forced “indigenous groups such as the Shuar to imitate the colonists’ modes of production or risk losing the land to them” (Hendricks 1993:7-8). The Federation was formed in order to “stop the onslaught of colonization and obtain a legal title to the Shuar land” (Hendricks 1993:8). Its formation illustrates the fierce pride the Shuar have in their land, the same pride that once led them to be victorious in the face of constant warfare.

Located in the “southern lowlands and montaña of eastern Ecuador,” the most numerous of the four Shuar populations are the Untsuri at 30,000; they occupy “the Zamora and Upano river valleys, the Cordillera de Kutukú and area between the Kutukú and the Macuma River” (Hendricks 1993:2). Their traditional enemies, the Achuar, live beyond the Macuma River. The Achuar have a much smaller population of 5,000 and live on either side of the Pastaza River. It may be that Achuar’s isolation by the Pastaza is related to their lack of military victories over the Shuar. It is noteworthy to mention that “Jívaro,” the other name commonly used to refer to the Shuar, has a negative connotation, often interchangeable with “savage” in Ecuador. Oftentimes, indigenous groups in the Amazon define themselves by the area they live in; for example, “Achuar refer to Untsuri Shuar as the muráya shuar (hill people). This term is occasionally used by the interior Shuar to refer to the Shuar west of the Cordillera de Kutukú” (Hendricks 1993:6). It displays how blatantly the people of the Amazon acknowledge how attached and reliant their lives are on the environment. Economically, the Shuar traditionally rely on horticulture and hunting; partly true today, as their isolation from larger towns and cities causes them to be relatively self-sufficient. Within the last century, with the gradual increase of such towns and cities in the oriente, the Shuar are finding themselves continually less and less isolated (Hendricks 1993); prior to this, the dense rainforest had obstructed its development.

Within the community of the Shuar culture, there are many natural boundaries between neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has an amik, or trader, who holds the prestigious position as one of the traditional leaders. An amik is needed to serve as a link transcending these boundaries. The trader maintains the distribution of goods and information (1993:7). That a position of such leadership arose from the need to overcome the boundaries of nature is strong evidence of the influence the environment has on the Shuar culture.

The Oriente: Canelos Quichua and Ecological Imagery

The oriente’s Canelos Quichua rely on ecological imagery to provide a “paradigmatic, symbolic template organized by sets of cosmological premises” (Whitten
1978:836). This “template is invoked in emotionally charged ceremonial and juropolitical contexts to express resistance to nonnative culture bearers who have a potential or real impact on the ecosystem and indigenous political economy” (1978:836), displaying how a culture can use the environment not only to establish their identity, but to protect it. For the Canelos Quichua, both knowledge of the ecosystem—not unlike the Salasaca’s knowledge of sacred land—as well as social structure, are “systematically linked to cosmological premises within a dynamic system of indigenous cultural adaptability” (Whitten 1978:863). Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff’s idea of “true ecological perspective” is evident in much Amazonian culture, which he describes as:

Cosmologies and myth structures, together with the ritual behavior derived from them, represent in all respects a set of ecological principles...[which] formulate a system of social and economic rules that have a highly adaptive value in the continuous endeavor to maintain a viable equilibrium between the resources of the environment and the demands of the society [Reichel-Dolmatoff 1976:308].

Ecology is permeated in nearly every aspect of Amazonian cultures in general, not just by chance, but because of set “ecological principles” with a basis in adapting to the environment present in their society. Amazonian cultures, argues Reichel-Dolmatoff, display a combination of “abstract philosophies” and “ecological theory” (Whitten 1978:863-864).

The oriente’s Canelos Quichua live in a hilly rain-forest between 3,000 and 900 feet above sea level. The “nucleated settlements” are centered around the Bobonaza River (Whitten 1978:864-865), giving them a steady source of water and transportation amongst their society. Their population at the time of Whitten’s studies was “somewhere between 9,000 and 12,000” people (Whitten 1978:865). Not only the indigenous rain-forest people of Ecuador, but all people of South America’s moist tropics are dealing with “radical shifts in ecology brought about by national and international efforts at resource extraction, cash cropping, tourism, evangelism, and colonization” (Whitten 1978:864). In his paper “Ecological Imagery and Cultural Adaptability: The Canelos Quichua of Eastern Ecuador,” Whitten insightfully notes that these ecological transformations such as deforestation and separation of ecosystems make it “uncomfortably easy to draw the conclusion that fragmentation of ideological systems is inevitable” (Whitten 1978:864). In a strange twist of fate, it appears that the environment that so shapes the human cultures of the oriente is in turn being shaped by humans; and it can then be assumed that the newly transformed environment will reshape the cultures in new ways. Whitten wrote about the inevitable reshaping that would be brought on by environmental change over three decades ago, which was still extremely evident at the time. He based his paper, “Ecological Imagery and Cultural
Adaptability: The Canelos Quichua of Eastern Ecuador,” on discussing how the Canelos Quichua’s “structural coherence and adaptability” will allow them to deal well with “undergoing rapid, perhaps cataclysmic, change” (1978:864). Already, he saw a correlation between ecosystem change and ecological imagery in the Canelos Quichua culture, presuming the change affects the culture’s imagery; that correlation “promotes effective communication about ecosystem dynamics and generates a myriad of metaphoric predications allowing for both cultural continuity and change within an environment of ecosystem transformation” (Whitten 1978:864).

How the cultures of Ecuador affect the environment

While the main focus in this paper is on the effects on human life from the environment, this cannot be fully understood without at least a brief acknowledgement of the effects that human life has on the environment in Ecuador. For example, mangrove swamps are essential to the protection of Ecuador’s coast. Unfortunately, excessive mismanagement of the shrimp industry has lead to the destruction of mangrove swamps. With the loss of more and more mangrove swamps, the degradation of the coast creates a chain reaction of ecosystem destruction: the soil of the coastal ecosystems which degrades without the protection of the mangrove swamps is then dragged into the ocean, clouding the sun from coral reefs which in turn become bleached, thereby destroying the coast’s other protection against degradation and furthering the devastation of the coast. The clearing of natural vegetation for grazing lands and agriculture also takes away from the anchorage holding the land together on the coast, thereby making it more susceptible to degradation (Miller & Spoolman 2009:171, 180).

The tropical tree line along the Andes displays substantial evidence of human influence. Fausto O. Sarmiento stresses that it is incorrect for people to assume that the Transandean montane forests are “unspoiled” or that they retain a “prevalent ‘naturalness’” despite our constant presence and activity (Sarmiento 2002:217). In fact, human presence is so strong that “the vegetation of highland Ecuador, known as the Interandean domain of the Tropandean ecoregion” has been highly modified, causing “major geobotanical classification called ‘anthropic’ vegetation (Acosta-Solis 1984)” (Sarmiento 2002:217). Causes of this include “human-set fire,
agricultural clearing, high-pasture grazing, and trade routes through the mountains” (Sarmiento 2002:18). This altering of the environment affects the settlements there that are dependent on the constant environment retaining its elements for their cash crops to grow. Without their agricultural self-sufficiency, the people of the sierra are in danger of being forced from their home. As mentioned earlier, many already are, and the government is trying to send some of these environmental refugees to live in what the government is deeming undeveloped land. However, this land is actually the land of indigenous rain-forest communities.

The oriente also experiences its own terminally serious environmental issues: the human-induced deforestation in the Amazon for industries such as lumber and beef has led to irreparable degradation of land (Johnson & Lewis 2007:116). Without vegetation, the land loses its sustainability and becomes unable to support an ecosystem. The biodiversity that is so prevalent in the Amazon is being stripped away, its resources being used beyond the point of sustainability. The sustainability has already been lowered due to the aforementioned deforestation as well as pollution, giving the biodiversity no chance to regenerate and recover.

Conclusion

The people of Ecuador experience a relatively concentrated and rich biodiversity in one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. Influences range from within the country to international forces beyond its borders, which continue to re-shape the culture permeating their lives. The most immediate and ever-changing of these forces is the environment in which Ecuadorians live. The environment played a role in how the cultures would form in the beginning — where they would form, what would sustain them, etc. — and the environment influences most cultural choices as the cultures change. Unfortunately, awareness of what is most near is often limited, as many Ecuadorians — like all people — take their environment and all it provides, both culturally and vitally, for granted. Perhaps a greater awareness of how each aspect of the Ecuadorian cultures are influenced by the environment and how one’s own actions influence the environment, both locally and globally, would inspire all who affect Ecuador’s precious ecosystems, to protect that environment with greater consciousness.

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About the Author

Lauren Dodaro is an anthropology and studio art major interested in environmental anthropology of rainforest cultures, folklore and storytelling around the world, historical archaeology of the Civil War, and tree-hugging.
The Anthropology Club: A Primer

Megan Comins

What is the Anthropology Club?

- A group of students who are dedicated to learning more about anthropology. The Anthro Club at SUNY Potsdam encourages students to take part in extracurricular anthropological activities (e.g. trips to museums and conferences), make lasting connections with peers, network with regional professionals, meet and work with the faculty, take part in anthropological discussions, attend panels, and listen to guest lecturers.

What is our mission/goal?

- To promote the learning process of students interested in anthropology and its related disciplines.
- To enhance knowledge about anthropology and its subdisciplines and to encourage students to apply this knowledge outside of college.

What did we do in Fall 2011?

- Pumpkin carving, faculty mixer, barbeque with faculty, field trip to an Iroquoian archaeological site in Quebec, field trip to the American Anthropological Association Conference in Montreal, archaeology field school social

What are our plans for Spring 2012?

- Valentine’s Day card sale in February, Northeastern Anthropological Association Conference in March, career/graduate Panel, guest speakers

How can you learn more about us?

- Check out our Facebook page to look for updates and announcements or to contact one of our executive board members:
  
  President: Andrea Wendel
  Vice President: Megan Comins
  Treasurer: Samuel Bourcy
  Secretary: Alexandra Morris
  Public Relations Officer: Kara Chapin

Anthropology Club members at the Droulers-Tsionhiakwatha archeological centre and site in Saint-Anicet, Quebec (Photograph courtesy of the author).
The Collegiate Anthropologist Quiz

Which of the five sub-fields of anthropology should you go into?

Jillian Cullen

1. Which movie do you enjoy most?
   a. Indiana Jones
   b. King Kong
   c. Ace Ventura 2
   d. The Invention of Lying
   e. Food Matters

2. What are you most likely to have in your backpack?
   a. Neon string
   b. Calipers
   c. AAA ethics guidelines
   d. The newest edition of the dictionary
   e. A newspaper

3. Which of these sentences best represents you?
   a. I am patient and love to be outside.
   b. I am smart and love being in the lab.
   c. I am extroverted and love traveling.
   d. I am creative and love learning new languages.
   e. I am analytical and love to solve problems.

4. Which part of your life do you pay the closest attention to?
   a. Education
   b. Health
   c. Family/relationships
   d. Communication
   e. World issues

5. When you hear about Machu Picchu, you think about:
   a. The structures
   b. The burials
   c. Its use by indigenous people today
   d. Spanish and Quechua
   e. Heritage tourism

6. Which of these T.V. shows would you most likely tune into?
   a. Digging for the Truth
   b. Bones
   c. Taboo
   d. Criminal Minds
   e. 60 minutes
The CA Quiz

7. Which was your favorite subject in high school?

8. The professor with whom you would like to take more classes is:
   a. Dr. Kruczek-Aaron  b. Dr. Malit  c. Dr. Schwarz  d. Dr. Johnson-Weiner  e. Dr. Hersker

Results

Mostly:

A. Archaeology: The study of human society, primarily through the recovery and analysis of the artifacts, features and ecofacts left behind in the archaeological record (Bringing a hat and whip to digs –like Indiana Jones- is generally frowned upon).

B. Biological Anthropology: Focuses on the physical development of humans and plays a vital role in the study of human origins and forensic anthropology.

C. Cultural Anthropology: Explores and celebrates the differences and similarities between current cultures. To collect their data, cultural anthropologists use participant observation, interviews, and surveys.

D. Linguistic Anthropology: Does language shape culture or does culture shape language? In this branch of anthropology, you can explore how language helps form group identity and organizes beliefs and ideals.

E. Applied Anthropology: Concerns itself with solving modern problems using anthropological methods from the other four sub-fields. Applied anthropologists often find employment working for development groups, nongovernmental organizations, advocacy groups, and businesses.

DISCLAIMER: This is meant for amusement purposes only; it is not to be taken literally. The answers can overlap for each question. And, of course, it would be unwise to use this quiz to make any career-altering decisions. For more information about careers in anthropology, talk to your professors and/or see John Omohundro’s Careers in Anthropology (McGraw-Hill, 2000).
Collegiate Anthropologist
Editing Team and Submission Instructions

Editor-in-chief

Jacob Orcutt is a senior history, anthropology, and archaeological studies major. His primary interests are the history and archaeology of Native American cultures of New England, as well as the cultural interactions of the colonial contact period. This is Jacob’s second semester on the Collegiate staff, and his first as editor-in-chief.

Assistant editors

Samuel Bourcy is a junior archaeological studies/anthropology major with a minor in Classical studies. His interests lie in the area of Ancient Rome and Greece. This is his second term as an editor.

Jillian Cullen is a first time editor from Roselle Park, New Jersey. She is a sophomore majoring in both history and archaeological studies and minoring in museum studies, Africana studies, and anthropology. Jillian is interested in ancient northern African history.

Kara Chapin is a junior at SUNY Potsdam. This is her second year editing for the Collegiate Anthropologist. She is majoring in history and archaeological studies and has a minor in biological anthropology.

Andrea Wendel is a second year editor from Sanborn, New York. She is a senior with a double major in anthropology and chemistry. Andrea is particularly interested in physical and forensic anthropology. She is planning on going to graduate school for physical anthropology after she graduates.

Andrea Hill is a junior at SUNY Potsdam, majoring in archaeological studies and art history. In the years to come she hopes to narrow her focus to historical archaeology and art restoration.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Anthropological or archaeological research papers, personal reflections or journals on internships and study abroad programs, photo essays, and generally anything pertinent to the study and experience of anthropology is welcomed for submission.

Papers should be submitted in electronic form (.doc or .docx please) to collegiateanthropologist@yahoo.com. Electronic submissions on cd-rom are also welcomed via mail to the following address: Collegiate Anthropologist
Anthropology Department, SUNY Potsdam
Potsdam, NY 13676
A pharmaceutical bottle and cast iron stove doors found during the 2011 SUNY Potsdam archaeology field school (Photograph courtesy of Dr. Kruczek-Aaron).