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**Editor’s note**

As another Spring semester comes to a close, graduation looms over the heads of senior students across the country. Looms – not quite the most positive word, is it? We all know what the job market looks like, and it’s not looking quite as good as it used to. But don’t despair! This isn’t a gloom and doom issue of the Collegiate – quite the contrary, in fact. One of our editors, Esther, wrote a great piece about using anthropology to pursue careers that most people would never associate with this discipline. Most people who have studied anthropology or have told people that they plan to major in anthropology have been asked, “What can you do with a degree in that?” This issue will help you answer this question.

For one, anthropology can help you find sunken treasure! (Well, something like that. Read Amanda’s article for more details). Alyssa and Grace wrote articles that provide insight on the ways anthropology can be used in medical fields, while Paul’s article shows us the benefits of the anthropological perspective when analyzing the present and the past. So if you’re considering a major in anthropology, keep reading to find more reasons to do so. If you’re already an anthropology major, keep reading to remind yourself of why choosing this path was such a good idea. And if you don’t fit into either of these categories, keep reading to enjoy some great articles written by talented students.

This issue would not have been possible without the hard work of our contributors, editors, and wonderful anthropology faculty. Also, I would like to offer a special thank you from all of the editors to our amazing advisor, Dr. Kruczek-Aaron, whose dedication and determination has made each issue of the Collegiate Anthropologist better than the last.

And as always, thank you all for reading.

Sincerely,

Jacob Orcutt
I sat in the hard plastic chair and nervously awaited my flight. I had never flown by myself before. This month was about to hold a lot of firsts for me. I had been accepted into the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program field school in St. Augustine, Florida. I had already checked two enormous bags filled with all of the things I thought I would need for a month away from my home. I double checked to make sure I still had my boarding passes and folded my hands on my lap praying I hadn’t forgotten anything. Finally they announced they were boarding, so I gathered my things and headed to the plane excited for what was to come.

Months before, I had stumbled across the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program, otherwise known as LAMP, and made up my mind. This was the field school I wanted to attend. The requirements seemed daunting; three separate medical certifications, my dive license and various other requirements were necessary before even being considered for the field school. I eventually got them all. However, even after all of these, would I look qualified enough to be picked? Did I have enough experience? These are all fears that many students share. All we can do is apply, cross our fingers, and wait for an acceptance letter, or worse, the dreaded rejection. Finally, after about 300 emails to the various powers that be and a few sleepless nights, I got the field school approved and received my acceptance letter. I began to plan my travel arrangements and soldiered through until my departure date.

I arrived at the airport in Jacksonville, grabbed my extra large suitcases and awkwardly toddled forward, attempting to keep my gear upright. Two of the girls who were already there came to pick me up and bring me to the field house. The field house is a three bedroom ranch house fifteen minutes away from the Saint Augustine Lighthouse (see figure 1). I unpacked my things and waited for the others to arrive. There ended up being ten of us: five girls and five guys in two tiny rooms. Did I mention the A/C had broken a week ago? We all attempted to remain cool those first few days but had no idea what was in store for us.

The first week of field school was filled with paperwork and “hurry up and wait.” In the mornings, we would have lectures from the directors. Chuck Miede,
Treasures

Star Cox, and Sam Turner all shared stories of their excavations and the work they had completed. The work they had done amazed us all, and we were more than ready to get into the field. Unfortunately, one thing stood in our way, and that was DAN training. DAN, or Divers Alert Network, offers medical training for divers. On top of the certifications we needed to be here, we learned we needed three extra certifications. We studied and tested all day. We would get back to the field house as late as 11:30 p.m. some nights and all of us would collapse into bed, ready to do it all again the next day.

After three exhausting days of training, we finally got in the water. We all loaded our gear and shipped out to a local dive shop to use their pool. We took a mandatory swim test and all passed with flying colors. We were ready, or so we thought. Our supervisors, however, had a surprise in store for us: the obstacle course.

The obstacle course was a winding labyrinth of turned over chairs, giant tubing, strange objects, and, of course, feet and feet of line strategically placed at the bottom of the pool to trip us up. None of us were allowed to look at the course so we suited up outside and one by one, our masks were taped and we were led to the edge of the pool. We then leapt in blind and had to complete various tasks in complete darkness. The only sense you could use is touch as you feel your way along the cave reel, or thin line, that they had set up for us to follow. As we went, they would attach bungee cords to various parts of our gear, snagging us. We would have to free ourselves and continue. This was to ready us for the zero visibility conditions of the site.

With all of our training out of the way a mere one week after having arrived, we were finally ready to set out on the ocean and begin our excavation. Drearily, we pulled ourselves out of bed at 5 a.m. in order to get to the lighthouse by 6. We would all load the gear into the truck, drive to the dock, unload the gear from the truck, load the gear on to the boat, and get underway. Our first day out was one of the worst with the seas dishing out swells of four feet. The boat heaved to and fro, shaking us up. None of us were really prepared.

One-by-one we all joined the “leeward rail society” as we heaved over the side of the boat. I managed to hold my stomach in until right before I came up on the dive rotation. Putting on a wetsuit is hard enough on land, let alone when you’re sick and rocking back and forth. I gathered my senses and put on all my gear and took one giant stride into the sea. I followed one of the supervisors along the down line and descended into the murky water. The first dive was designed to show us all around the site and get our bearings. I felt completely lost. It was all I could do to
keep up with my supervisor and not get lost. I had no idea what was going on. I felt my way around the nearly invisible site until, eventually, we made our way back to the down line and slowly began to surface. My entire dive had lasted only fifteen minutes but that was enough for me. The sea was still rocking back and forth as I attempted to peel all my gear off and settle my stomach. Unfortunately the boat had other plans and I was in the running for “the golden chum bucket” award. For the rest of the week, and the rest of field school, I took two seasickness pills each morning regardless of how calm the sea looked.

We finished our dive rotation around 2 o’clock and began to get the ship in order for the ride back to shore. Once we unloaded all the gear, we drove it back to the lighthouse where we began the process of cleanup. We had to thoroughly clean all of our gear in order to keep it in working order. By the time this was done, it was five o’clock, and we all headed wearily back to the field house, ate dinner and got a good night’s sleep.

At the end of the work week, in order to save our site from treasure hunters and salvagers, we had to hide our site buoys and record the location to find them again come Monday. Florida is unique in the fact that treasure hunting is still legal and quite prevalent. It may seem harmless enough to take artifacts from a shipwreck, but unfortunately all the information it may have yielded is lost forever. Some wrecks are so stripped that all that is left behind is an empty shell of leftover wood. We were taught to try our hardest to preserve the history of the wrecks we find so that we can gain as much information about the past as possible.

The site that we were working on was simply called “The Storm wreck”. The name has yet to be discovered, and, unfortunately, it is likely we will never learn the vessel’s name. The goal for the site was to map all of the artifacts as thoroughly as possible and excavate as much as we could. The main artifacts to be raised were two partially buried guns. Chuck and Sam decided on the day and time the cannons would need to be raised. They planned on holding a “cannon raising event,” where we would invite the public and hopefully pique the interest of some wealthy investors so their research could continue. With the date set, we were on a deadline. We had to make sure to record as much data as we could before the cannon rising date.

On the seventh day, I went down with a partner in order to take magnetometer readings of the site. The magnetometer is a device that records readings based off of the presence of metals under the sea floor. This is always done in teams of two. One person positions the base on the sea floor and the other holds the device in place while their partner records the reading. The swell on the bottom would often make this process tricky. Luckily, we didn’t encounter many problems, and we managed to locate what we think may be another cannon or cauldron. However, we won’t be able to confirm this until next year’s field season. While we were doing that, another team began work on digging up a dredge hose they had submerged last summer.

The dredge is a machine with a hose
that acts like an undersea vacuum, sucking up sand and sometimes small artifacts if the operators are not careful. A mesh bag is attached at the other end of the hose that catches the material, which is often full of shell fragments. However, sometimes you’ll find pieces of concretions or small fragments of wood that need to be sifted out and recorded. It is a tedious task, but it can often yield important information about the wreck. As often as we could, we had teams using the dredge. This was our sole means of excavation besides hand fanning. Hand fanning is a process in which you wave your hand over an area, and it moves the sand. More often than not, we used hand fanning along with the dredge in order to make sure that we were not sucking large cultural materials up and possibly breaking them along the way.

At this point, we were excavating in full force. The days went by, and we began to uncover the cannons more completely. All was going well until day nine when we experienced a substantial rainstorm. Normally, rain would not bother us, but you can’t very well dive in lightning when you’re strapped to metal tanks on a large metal boat. We had to wait until the rain passed. In the mean time, we got to learn about underwater conservation. I fell in love with the process. Conservators take mounds of “stone” called concretions and work at them until they’ve revealed the materials inside. A concretion forms when metal is broken down underwater. It begins to secrete chemicals that cause the objects around to stick to it. They then form a large mound known as a concretion. It’s the job of the conservator to reveal what’s inside.

The rain eventually passed so we decided to try and go out. However, when we got into open ocean, the sea began to rock, giving us eight to ten foot swells. We rode out to the site and located the buoys, but there was just too much movement. We would never be able to moor the boat with that much stress on the lines. We had to head back in and sort dredge spoil instead. However, this didn’t dampen our spirits. The waves crashed around our boat and all of us, even our fearless leaders took up in singing some sea chanties as well as a stirring rendition of “Bohemian Rhapsody” all the way back to dock.

The next day, the seas were incredibly calm, and it was finally my day to dredge. I got to go down with Dr. Sam Turner, LAMP’s director of archaeology, and excavate one of

Figure 2. A concretion of a barrel raised during the 2011 field season (Photograph courtesy of Amanda DeBruin).
the gun units. Visibility was fair, which for our site was about two feet. I learned how to hand fan and feel for artifacts. I also learned how to take levels. Unlike in terrestrial archaeology, it is a lot harder to record levels in an underwater environment. This is due to the fact that when you strip away sand, more sand pours in. Therefore, we take opening and closing levels and count it all as one arbitrary level. Any artifacts sucked up in the dredge during that session are said to have come from the unit on that day. We didn’t find anything exciting, but the field school was still young and we had plenty of time to uncover some artifacts.

During the following day, we raised a barrel and the feeling was amazing. We didn’t actually raise a “barrel” as most people would imagine one, but what we did raise was far more interesting. This was a concretion of a barrel (see figure 2). The iron sides of the barrel had concreted all of the barrel’s contents together and the wooden staves had rotted away. What was left was almost like a fossil. Not only was raising the barrel cool but it allowed us to test some weight on the winch in preparation of the cannon raising. The winch reacted well to the weight but the cannons would weigh a lot more than the barrel. We could already tell it was going to be a tricky endeavor.

The rest of that week we raised concretion after concretion. Each one held new secrets that we were dying to uncover. Could this one be a gun? Perhaps that one a knife? We did raise some perfectly preserved artifacts on top of the concretions. We brought up a belt buckle as well as some dinnerware, which was all very exciting. All this time, other jobs were being performed as well. We placed four more units around our existing units and began taking mag readings. The results were strange, as each reading was higher than it should have been. At first, we joked about finding a Confederate steel hull ship underneath the storm wreck. And then we realized that one of the students down there was wearing a steel tank instead of an aluminum tank, which would cause the device to pick up on his tank. Another student and I were sent down to retake the readings, and, oddly enough, ours were high as well. Then, Chuck realized where the boat was positioned in relation to the site. We were sitting right on top of it, and the magnetometer was picking up the boat, which was made entirely of steel. Smacking our foreheads, we redid the readings the next day, and they were back to normal. These are things you generally wouldn’t think of as a problem, but they still need to be taken into consideration. We lost a lot of time taking and retaking data that could have been avoided with a bit more foresight.

The day of the cannon raising was fast approaching. All the divers were working like mad to dredge and recover as many artifacts as possible around the cannons we were planning to raise. Another student and I went to dredge and measure one of the cannons. While we were down there, we made two discoveries. The first we thought was a pissdale, which is a type of urinal used on ships. They moved the pissdale to a location near the units so they could bring it up later in the summer. We also located a sixth gun, which was a particularly exciting find. Because it was a different style from the cannon we had originally planned to raise, we changed our plans and set our sights on this gun. Hopefully, it would yield information as to where the guns came from, which could possibly tell us which ship they set out on.
With new-found hope at discovering a name to the ship, we continued our work.

We kept finding artifact after artifact. Cauldrons, spoons, odd-shaped concretions, and even a few bricks were brought up to the surface. These artifacts hadn’t seen daylight in nearly 300 years. However, we did have a slight issue. As we excavated a unit, another student and I began finding more modern artifacts underneath concretions and cannons. We found glass as well as a tin can that had been washed underneath large artifacts by the ocean swells. It’s disappointing to find a piece of a glass bottle only to discover it’s not associated with the wreck at all. However, the artifacts we did find were excitement enough.

Although we were working quickly, safety remained a top priority. We had been trained in marine medicine so we all felt prepared for anything that came our way. However, accidents happen. Unfortunately, one of our students was attempting to turn off the dredge just as the boat rocked. He slipped and his chest hit the engine of the machine, giving him second degree burns. He went to the doctor and was okay, but he wasn’t allowed to dive for the remainder of the field school. It was an accident that could have been prevented if he had not leaned over the dredge. We were all very careful after that day, and luckily there were no more injuries.

Finally, the day of cannon raising was upon us (see figure 3). In preparation of the cannon raising, we had to attach straps to the cannons we were going to raise. This meant we had to bring up whatever we didn’t want to get accidentally crushed as well as taking last minute measurements and collecting crucial data. It was hectic, but we got it all finished. At the debriefing for the week, we were given a lesson in public relations.

The cannon raising was a big PR event for the lighthouse, and we were all going to be a part of it. Not everyone could be on our research vessel, The Roper, for the cannon raising. There just was not enough room for ten students and two large cannons. Therefore, we were split amongst the boats of wealthy members of the First Light Maritime Society. The maritime society is associated with the lighthouse and often provides donations or funding to the lighthouse for archaeological research. It was our job to explain what was going on as they raised the cannons and answer any questions to the best of our ability. Two other students and I were put on a sailboat and the rest of the students were split between two yachts and The Roper. It was a little disappointing not to be there when they raised the cannons, but getting to see them raised was reward enough.

In order to raise the cannons, we had to use devices called lift bags. Lift bags are large bags that are turned upside down and filled with air that will help to lift heavy objects, like a hot air balloon. These would help the cannons move to a position underneath the winch. We then attached the winch and slowly and carefully raised the cannons and swung them on deck. An important part of the archaeological process is storage, and this site is no exception. Artifacts taken from the ocean must be kept in saltwater to avoid drying out. If an artifact dries out, it will begin to fall apart and become destroyed forever. We had to figure out a way to keep the cannons wet as we transported them. From this point, we used a bulldozer to pick up the cannons and transport them to the lighthouse, where we had two large vats ready...
to go. We had a hard time finding a vat that would be right for the cannons.

In order to conserve the cannons, they will have to undergo a process called electrolytic reduction, which involves using electricity to clean metal objects. You can’t use a metal vat for the process, so we had to find a non-metal vat that was large enough to meet our needs. In the mean time, the cannons are being displayed in metal vats lined in rubber pool lining which seems to be working alright. It is not meant to be a permanent solution but will suit short term needs.

On the day of the cannon raising, my partners and I boarded our sailboat and set out. We told them everything we could about the site, what our jobs were, what the process was like—everything except the coordinates of the site. The boats were teeming with press as we all went out to the site. The students who were on The Roper had already been there, hard at work removing units in order to make the move of the cannons easier. We all waited anxiously, unable to know what was going on at the bottom. However, after a long wait they announced that the first gun was about to break the water. It was truly a beautiful and inspiring sight. The gun was roughly six feet long and weighed a ton. As it swung down on deck, the students draped wet towels over it and constantly poured water on it to keep it damp. We all breathed a sigh of relief that all had gone well. The other gun was brought up within the hour. It was a strange short gun with an interesting cascabell. Hopefully, it will hold the key to the ship’s identity. We all cheered as both the guns were on board, and we headed back to the dock.

To celebrate, we met at a local bar, where we were given a lunch buffet. We displayed our smaller artifacts and left The Roper open so visitors could see the cannons up close and even get a photo. It had been an incredibly successful day. However, for the students, our day was far from over. After lunch we rode back to the dock where we had to transport the cannons. The cannons had to be swung off the boat on to a boat trailer, which had been rigged to hold the cannons. The cannons were then picked up by the bulldozer and carefully taken back to the lighthouse, where they were set in their vats. Every tourist at the lighthouse gathered around as we put the cannons in their new homes. The kids’ faces all shone with delight and curiosity. There was much
talk about pirates, even though we knew the ship was more than likely a shipping vessel, we let them have their fun. After all, that’s how most of us got interested in the field of maritime archaeology.

The last two days of the field school consisted of closing the site and taking closing levels of all the units. The site wouldn’t be opened again until the next field season. We were all sad to see our work come to a close. We had learned so much over the past four weeks. We had become certified scientific divers, and, as far as we were concerned, we were archaeologists who had earned our salt. We worked hard to tie down the units that could stay and bring up what couldn’t. We found missing equipment and lost some more. We knew it would be found again someday. The wind began to pick up and the skies turned dark as the sea began to whip itself into a frenzy. We still had to sink the buoys so our site wouldn’t be found. With all of our publicity, this was more important than ever. However, we ran into a problem—the buoys wouldn’t sink. Our boat became unmoored so we were free floating. We had to send in Chuck with a pony bottle, or small air tank, to fix the problem. We were all worried he would go under so we all kept our eyes on him, and our hands fixed on his position. He eventually sunk all the buoys and we pulled around to pick him up. With a sigh, we came into shore for the last time on The Roper.

All that was left was to clean the house and the gear. We had to thoroughly clean all the gear and check it all back in. It was tough work, but we knew it had to be done. We also had to soap down the field house, which was a task unto itself. We had one last hoorah as the directors threw us an “old fashioned country boil” filled with clams, shrimp, potatoes and sausage all thrown down on a table. We devoured it all. There was even an award ceremony in which many of us got certificates for joining the “leeward rail society,” as well as a certificate for braving the conditions to complete the field school.

Over the next few days, we began to leave one by one. We all said our goodbyes and promised to keep in touch with each other. We had come in not knowing one another but had come together over the mysteries held beneath the waves. Through hard work and good times, we became archaeologists together. We all learned new things whether we were completely green or had more field experience than we could count. It wasn’t going to be an experience we were likely to forget. I know that I won’t forget the work I did at LAMP and hopefully I’ll return in order to become a supervisor myself.

About the Author

Amanda DeBruin is a recent graduate of SUNY Potsdam. She is currently on hiatus, but has been accepted to the University of Southampton for the masters program in Maritime Archaeology. She has completed research with the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program studying the contents of a 17th century shipwreck off the coast of St. Augustine, FL. She is particularly interested in studying classical underwater sites in the Mediterranean.
Concerns Regarding Elective Labor Induction

GRACE BOYD-POLLACK

Introduction

It is generally accepted that the number of labor inductions performed in modern medical settings is on the rise. While some statistics show that the number has risen from 9.5% in 1990 to 22.5% in 2006 (Simpson 2010:188), Caughey et al. (2009) argue that the percentage of those inductions that were performed electively has risen even more. Wilson suggests that elective inductions in fact “account for over two thirds of all inductions in the United States” (2009:131). While many labor inductions are necessary for the health of the mother or child, elective labor inductions are performed with no medical indication of need. Many scholars and medical professionals are concerned that the risks and costs of this unnecessary procedure greatly outweigh the benefits.

Labor can be induced through a number of methods, both mechanical and pharmacological. Mechanical methods, those using some form of equipment, include the use of hygrosopic and osmotic dilators, Foley catheters, or an extra-amniotic saline infusion. Most of these methods function by introducing a physical object into the vagina, which is used to manually dilate the cervix. Pharmacological methods for labor induction include injection of prostaglandins, oxytocin or pitocin, stripping the amniotic membrane from the cervix (membrane stripping), manually breaking the amniotic sack (amniotomy), the ingestion of castor oil, or stimulation of the breasts. While each of these methods can be successful in inducing labor, some methods are used more often than others in clinical settings dependent on the number of side effects, success rate, and physician’s preference (Ramirez 2011).

Each of these methods for labor induction also has individual risks, thus compounding the variety of other risks a birthing woman faces. The possible maternal outcomes of labor induction include increased chance of needing a cesarean section, an increased rate of operative vaginal delivery, intra-amniotic infection (primarily a risk for medically indicated inductions), severe blood loss due to postpartum hemorrhaging, and the need for a hysterectomy. Possible neonatal outcomes include the need for resuscitation, transient tachypnea, sepsis, jaundice, and hypoglycemia (Ramirez 2011). Labor induction also creates financial risk, as it is much more expensive than spontaneous labor. These risks are extended to the physician, who is responsible if the procedure has a negative outcome and cannot be defended as medically necessary (Santana et. al 2006).

Yet, if there are so many risks, why do women and their physicians agree to labor induction? In situations where the life of the mother or fetus is in danger if the baby remains undelivered, labor induction can be a life-saving procedure and the benefits obviously outweigh the risks. However, many women choose this procedure electively, with no medical indication of need. Thus, most reasons for elective induction are culturally constructed. For example, Santana...
et al. (2006) explains that women who do not live near a medical facility may wish to induce their labor so as to avoid the need for long distance travel once spontaneous labor begins. Ramirez (2011) also remarks that a scheduled timing of the labor can be convenient for both doctor and patient in any situation. Thus, rather than weighing the medical benefits (of which elective induction has none) against the medical risks, women are weighing the cultural benefits, often without being completely informed about the medical risks.

Controversies

Controversies regarding labor induction fall into two main categories: medical controversies and cultural controversies. The connection of induced labor to a higher likelihood of receiving a cesarean section is one major medical controversy in the practice of elective induction. There is a significant amount of research connecting the use of induced labor to a higher incidence of cesarean section, which comes with a variety of high risks and costs. However, some more recent research suggests that this connection may not be valid. Caughey et al. (2009) assert that many older studies comparing induced labor to spontaneous labor were looking in the wrong place. Rather, they argue that the decision a clinician and his/her patient makes is between labor induction and expectant management, in which the pregnancy is allowed to continue, hopefully ending in spontaneous labor. Caughey et al. (2009) argue that while expectant management may end in successful, spontaneous labor, there are many maternal or fetal complications that could occur beforehand. Thus, their research shows the likelihood of cesarean section is equivalent or lower in women who are induced. While reviewing this research, Macones (2009) agrees that more research is necessary to determine the full risks and benefits of labor induction. He also makes the argument that clinicians do not choose spontaneous labor, rather they decide between expectant management and induction. It is well supported that induced labor does have a higher incidence of cesarean section than spontaneous labor, but Macones (2009) proposes that while elective inductions cost more time and resources than spontaneous births, they may spare resources now used for cesarean sections in women who elect expectant management.

Wilson et al. (2009) reexamined this issue with concern for the sociodemographic characteristics of the mothers and of their hospital and care provider. They also found that elective induction did not increase the likelihood of needing a cesarean section yet found a number of other factors which did. The likelihood of receiving a cesarean section increased with the level of maternal education, the number of prenatal visits, and the woman’s racial classification as a non-Hispanic white female. The sociodemographic characteristics of race and education level corresponded directly to income level and possession of insurance with which they could pay for the procedure. The correlation to the number of prenatal visits could be explained in two ways: 1) women who went to more prenatal visits may have been higher-risk or 2) these women were more receptive to intervention due to the reemergence of desire for a higher-tech, more intensive delivery experience. Wilson et al. (2009) also consider the fact that the average age of birthing women has risen by four years since the 1970’s and
there is a continual decrease in the newborn gestational age at time of delivery; only 22.7% of newborns had reached 40 weeks in 2002. These factors indicate that there is more to the correlation between induced labor and cesarean section than has previously been revealed.

Another major medical controversy in the practice of labor induction is the rising number of pre-term inductions. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologist distributed a practice bulletin in 1999 recommending that labor may be induced electively as long as the pregnancy met one of the four following criteria:

1. Fetal heart tones have been documented for 20 weeks by nonelectric fetoscope or for 30 weeks by Doppler;
2. It has been 36 weeks since a positive serum or urine human chorionic gonadotropin pregnancy test was performed;
3. Ultrasound measurement of crown-rump length, obtained at 6 to 12 weeks, supports a gestational age of at least 39 weeks;
4. Ultrasound obtained at 13 to 20 weeks confirms the gestational age of at least 39 weeks determined by clinical history and physical exam (Santana et al. 2006:984-985).

The intention of these guidelines was to prevent labor induction prior to 39 weeks of gestational age, a recommendation with which the American Academy of Pediatrics agrees (Simpson 2010). Yet, Simpson (2010) notes that approximately 10% of the total number of elective inductions are performed before 39 weeks leading to a higher likelihood of showing symptoms of iatrogenic prematurity (189). Causes for this practice include inaccurate measurement of gestational age and a misunderstanding on the part of pregnant women and physicians about the meaning of “term” pregnancy and what is a safe gestational age to deliver (Ashton 2010).

The primary cultural controversy surrounding electively-induced labor is the question of autonomy. Our culture defends the practice of elective labor induction by claiming it is the mother’s right to choose to have the procedure. However, Simpson et al. (2005) note the complex relationship between the mother, her partner, her primary care physician, her staff nurses, her family, and any others involved in making decisions during the birth process. She also points out that the mother is not always well informed of the risks of the procedure she is electing. In one study, Ramirez (2011) observed that 35% of women surveyed were not satisfied with the information they received before induction (218). These factors of outside influence and lack of information do not allow for women to give informed, voluntary consent to the procedure of elective labor induction. In this case, the defense of elective induction based on women’s rights and choices falls apart.

In addition to the lack of true autonomy in women’s choices, women who experience labor induction are less satisfied with the process as compared to women who experience spontaneous delivery (Ramirez 2011). This may be due to “the perception that women cannot or should not do what their bodies were made to do naturally (Simpson et. al 2005:141).” This view has been made possible by the Western medical paradigm’s mechanization of the body and its treatment of the female body as a disaster waiting to happen. This perspective allows for no emotional content to be attached to the
birth process, thus disregarding women’s feelings about their birth and treating it as a mechanical process to be helped along before something goes wrong. Thus, Simpson et al. (2005) express concern that the convenience of the medical establishment is held in higher regard than the best interests of the mother, her child, and her family.

Potential Resolutions

Resolutions to these problems found in the literature are couched in two ways. Some authors are interested only in preventing certain aspects of elective induction, such as its occurrence before 39 weeks of gestational age. Others are interested in decreasing or ending its practice altogether. Ashton (2010) and Ohnsorg and Schiff (2010) offer suggestions for preventing elective labor induction before 39 weeks. Both authors suggest that hospital policy changes and stricter enforcement are necessary to improve adherence to national guidelines such as those provided by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Ashton (2010) includes ensuring more accurate gestational dating and improved monitoring of patient quality of care as well as physician education regarding this issue. Ohnsorg and Schiff (2010) also recommend the inclusion of patient education in the effort to reduce elective inductions.

In the arena of patient education, Simpson (2010) describes a study completed to determine the efficacy of educational intervention in reducing elective labor inductions. The study compared women who participated in prepared childbirth classes with those who did not before and after the introduction of a standardized educational session about the risk and benefits of elective induction. Before the introduction of the new class material, there was no statistical difference in the rate of elective inductions between class attendees and non-attendees. After the new material was introduced, the rates of elective induction were lower for class attendees than non-attendees. This demonstrated that educational interventions, which help women become informed about the risks and benefits of elective labor induction, are successful in reducing the rate of this procedure.

Conclusions

The rising rates of elective labor induction are concerning due to the associated serious medical risks, which greatly outweigh the medical benefits. However, it can be seen that women are not weighing the medical benefits; rather, they are concerned with the cultural benefits. We must also be concerned
because in their consideration they are also heavily influenced by their doctors and family, disrupting their ability to make a well-informed autonomous decision. However, evidence shows that the rising rate of elective induction can be successfully combated through patient education. But we must also recognize that the medical establishment needs to take responsibility for this problem as well and institute policies to prevent elective induction when it might be unsafe for both mother and child.

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About the Author

Grace Boyd-Pollack is a double major in Anthropology and Women’s and Gender Studies with a minor in Medical Anthropology. She earned a Certificate in Applied Anthropology after the completion of an internship with Student Health Services. Her academic interests in gendered health and sexual health contributed to the topic of this essay, originally written for Cross-Cultural Aspects of Women’s Health.
Photo Essay: A Study Abroad Experience in Israel  
ANDREA LEVINE

During Spring 2011, I spent six months studying in Be’er Sheva, Israel. Israel is an extremely unique and diverse country, rich in history, tradition, and culture. While there, I took Anthropology/Archaeology classes, learned about the country’s many different cultures, and visited several archaeological sites. I was able to fully grasp the concept of culture shock, as I was exposed to a way of life that was drastically different from mine at home. I was thrust into a new culture with different types of people, values, beliefs, and customs. My time in Be’er Sheva was a learning experience that helped shape my view of the world around me. What I experienced brought to life what I learned through SUNY Potsdam’s Anthropology Department, and I can now apply it to my personal life.

TOP AND RIGHT: An ancient synagogue in the process of excavation in northern Israel.

FAR RIGHT: Large open market in the Old City of Jerusalem where many goods, foods, and souvenirs are sold.

RIGHT: Walls of Masada, a famous archaeological site which is an ancient desert fortress overlooking the Dead Sea.

FAR RIGHT: The Judean Hills, a beautiful mountain range that runs through Israel and the West Bank, where several biblical cities are located.
LEFT: David Falls, located in Ein Gedi.

RIGHT: Ruins of Aqabat, a Nebatean city in the Negev desert. This is now a tourist destination due to its Byzantine period churches, intricate architecture, ancient wine presses, and bath houses.

UPPER LEFT: Israeli soldiers at attention in Mount Herzl, a military cemetery dedicated to Israeli leaders, war heroes, and fallen soldiers in 1951.

UPPER RIGHT: Archaeological remains of a Chalcolithic temple located in Ein Gedi on the shores of the Dead Sea.

LEFT: Old City of Jerusalem, which is Israel’s capital city. As one of the oldest cities in the world, Jerusalem is rich in history, culture, and religion. Its status remains the main controversy within the Israeli - Palestinian conflict. Sea.
The Various Identities of Zainichi Koreans

PAUL CAPOBIANCO

Introduction
Since the Japanese colonization of the Korean peninsula in the early 20th century, there has always been a strong Korean presence in Japan. At its peak in the early 1940s, the Korean population in Japan reached approximately two million. However, after WWII, many ethnic Koreans returned to Korea because they had lost the privileges they once benefited from as Japanese imperial subjects, and only around 600,000 continued to live in Japan. These 600,000 have come to be known as “Zainichi Koreans” (Lie 2008). The term zainichi, which in Japanese means “resident” or “person living in Japan”, is distinct from the term for foreigner, which is gaijin, in that zainichi carries an implication that the individual is not a foreigner, but one who is culturally and linguistically accustomed to Japan, and is used to construct a different identity from that of a gaijin.

Though Koreans have been in Japan for centuries, it was not until the last fifty or so years that a concept of a Zainichi Korean identity had emerged. Prior to Japan’s defeat in WWII, Koreans in Japan viewed their situation as only temporary and assumed they would one day return to Korea. According to Anthropologist John Lie, 1945 was “year zero for the Zainichi Korean population” (2008:35-40). This leads to the complex question of how Zainichi Koreans identify themselves. Using “Zainichi Korean” as an umbrella term, comprised of multiple distinct identities based on various factors, I will look at the various identities and self-images that have divided the Zainichi Korean community and explore the role of language in the formation of these identities.

Brief History
To truly understand the Zainichi Korean identity, one must understand the complex history of Japan-Korea relations over the last century, at least on a basic level, as historical events such as the Japanese colonization of Korea and the division of the Korean peninsula into two disparate nations, played a role in the evolution of the Zainichi Korean identity. Japan declared Korea a “protectorate” of Japan in 1905 and officially annexed the peninsula. Due to a lack of interest from outside parties, Japan’s actions on the Korean peninsula went largely uncontested (Brudnoy 1970:158). Korea remained a Japanese colony until the end of WWII. During this time, Koreans suffered constant persecution, racism, and abuse at the hands of the Japanese, resulting in the deaths of thousands of ethnic Koreans. After their defeat in WWII, Japan “liberated” Korea and the peninsula was no longer considered part of the Japanese empire. At this time, Japan wanted to promote a stronger sense of Japanese self and identity. Japan did everything possible to return Koreans to the Korea. One such example is that in this era of limited transportation, Japan gave priority to Koreans wishing to return to their homeland. By 1946, only 600,000 Koreans remained in Japan (Lie 2008).

Even after the war, the Japanese
continued to suppress the use of the Korean language and expression of Korean culture in Japan. Such discrimination and lack of sufficient representation in Japan led to the emergence of an organization known in Korean as Chae Ilbon Chosônin Ch’ongryŏnhaphoe (also known as Zai-Nihon Chôsenjin Sôrengôkai, in Japanese), or simply Chongryon. Chongryon, an affiliate organization of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) formed as a formal representation for North Korea in Japan in 1955. Chongryon, an affiliate organization of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) formed as a formal representation for North Korea in Japan in 1955. Chongryon claimed Koreans in Japan to be “overseas nationals of North Korea”, which was able to give Koreans in Japan something which they could identify with. Since the Japanese viewed Koreans in Japan as nationals of the unrecognized nation of Chosen (the Japanese term for the Korean peninsula which neglected to recognize the division of the peninsula), this declaration by Chongryon gave Koreans in Japan a sense of identity and a connection back to the Korean peninsula which they had been long seeking.

Moreover, Chongryon was able to operate without abiding by restrictions from the Japanese Ministry of Education, which prohibited teaching in the Korean language in Japan. Thus, Chongryon became the best vector for Koreans in Japan to preserve their culture and language (Ryang 2005). Chongryon was permitted to instruct an entire curriculum in the Korean language, which allowed for the best Korean language education in Japan at the time. Chongryon education continues to be a prominent source of Korean language education in Japan today. During the earliest stages of Chongryon’s existence, the organization maintained close ties with North Korea and very much promoted North Korean ideology in Japan. The Chongryon organization lost much of its support in the early to mid-1960s when around 80,000 ethnic Koreans and Japanese attempted repatriation to North Korea. They were promised a thriving fatherland with economic prosperity bounded by Korean brotherhood but were instead greeted with famine, a strict communist government, and persecution. Many were even imprisoned and executed on charges of espionage (Ryang 1997).

In the 1950s and 1960s, some Koreans also attempted to repatriate back to South Korea, where they, too, found little success. They were culturally and linguistically Japanese and could not find a social niche to call their own in South Korea. They were essentially outsiders in their motherland. It was at this point that Koreans in Japan realized they were no longer culturally connected to the peninsula as their ancestors once were. This failure to connect to their homeland led to the inception of a Zainichi Korean identity (Ryang 1997).

**Zainichi Korean Identity**

In the early 1970s, Koreans in Japan began realizing they were neither Japanese nor Korean. They did not share the same connection to Korea that their ancestors did and the only way for them to be truly “Japanese” was to lose what little connection
they did have to Korea and completely assimilate to the Japanese way of life. The second and third generations of Zainichi Koreans began searching for an identity they could call their own.

This was the first instance of the conception of a Zainichi Korean identity; one that represents Zainichi Koreans as a Korean diaspora population accepting Japan as their home. This ideology was commonly referred to as the “third way.” The “third way” system is still relatively ambiguous, as there were varying degrees of Japanese assimilation amongst the Zainichi Korean population. Wender identifies three possible categories for the Zainichi Korean identity, based on the degrees of assimilation to Japanese society. These come from dialogues which took place between Zainichi Korean men in Ikaino, Osaka, an area with a strong Zainichi Korean population. The first are those with an “inclination towards assimilation” (dōkashikō). The second are those with “an inclination towards the homeland, even if they did not plan to return there” (sokokushikō). The third are those individuals which fall somewhere in between these two, and exemplify the concept of the “third way” (zainichishikō). Their categories highlight the conflict of how one could categorize the Zainichi Korean identity based on their degree of assimilation (in Ryang 2005:77-80).

Korean-Japanese

Koreans in Japan argued about the parameters of this identity for nearly twenty years, until a new notion of identity began to emerge. In the 1980s, Japan moved away from the homogenous mindset of their country and began to cater to the vast number of immigrants from South America, Southeast Asia, and the West. Japan began to take a more “multicultural” approach to their society, and it was at this time that a new, more Japanese-friendly identity began to form, which became known as the Korean-Japanese identity or the “fourth choice” (Tai 2004).

In 1992, Japan allowed for long-term Korean residents in Japan to obtain the status of tokubestu eijusha, or “special permanent resident,” which allowed for any long-term Korean to be granted permanent resident status in Japan. This meant that, unlike other foreigners, these individuals would now be granted more rights and freedoms in terms of travel in and out of Japan (Tai 2004:367-68). Koreans were also granted more freedoms in terms of employment and voting. These laws veered away from the concept of a homogenous Japan and paved the way for the possible embrace of a “more Japanese” identity. Zainichi Koreans were no longer the social outcasts they were in the 1950s.
Tai states that this new Korean-Japanese identity “allows resident Koreans to become Japanese nationals while retaining their ethnic identity as Koreans” (2004:362). This shift towards a more “Japanese friendly” identity would take Zainichi Koreans further from Korea as their homeland and closer to accepting the Japanese assimilation process. They would hold a Japanese nationality while acknowledging their ethnic Korean heritage.

The expression nihonseki chōsenjin became the accepted term for this identity, which literally means “Koreans who hold Japanese nationality.” Tai notes, “They coined the term nihonseki chōsenjin, avoiding the use of chōsenkei nihonjin (Korean Japanese), which they considered problematic because of the ethnic and cultural connotation of the world nihonjin” (Tai 2004:362). This suggests that the new generation, though they wanted to be nationally Japanese, still wanted to separate themselves from the ethnic Japanese population by not using the term “Japanese” in their nomenclature. This identity created a separation between nationality and ethnicity, a distinction that until now remained foreign to Japanese society. Korean-Japanese allowed for Zainichi Koreans to be Japanese nationals but assert a Korean background to their nationality.

Tai takes note of the various complexities in this new identity by writing, “Others claim ‘double’ or ‘descriptive’ identification. Still others express their native competence in the Japanese language and culture along with their foreign resident status, often using Korean last names and Japanese first names” (2004:372). Just as the Zainichi Korean identity was and still is ambiguous, the parameters of this new Korean-Japanese identity were also open for interpretation. The varying degrees of Korean expression among the resident Korean population in Japan highlight the complexity and ambiguity amongst the Zainichi Korean identities. The concept of a Korean-Japanese identity was also very complex and contributed to the diversification of the Zainichi Korean identity even further.

Chongryon-Korean

Since my initial research, I have come to the conclusion that a “Chongryon-Korean” identity also exists in Zainichi Korean discourse. Earlier I mentioned the important role the Chongryon organization played in shaping the Zainichi Korean identity by offering a place in Japan where Koreans could take pride in their ethnic heritage. Even though the repatriations had failed, it did not deter some ethnic Koreans from supporting the organization and North Korea. Today, there are over 150 operating Chongroun schools, from elementary to graduate level, and it remains one of the most thorough sources for learning the Korean language in Japan (Lie 2008).

Even the Chongryon-Korean identity is not without controversy and debate, as generational changes have led to ideological shifts and movements away from traditional social norms. Many of the earliest Chongryon supporters maintained a strict loyalty to Kim Il-Sung and North Korea, despite the dissolution of their hopes of repatriation. Ryang explains how thousands
of Chongryon-Koreans wept in the streets of Japan after Kim Il-Sung died in 1993. They were sad that their “Father Marshall would never see the reunification of the fatherland” (Ryang 1997).

For Chongryon-Koreans, their identity is expressed through lifelong dedication to the Chongryon organization. From an early age Chongryon Koreans begin learning Korean and the history of North Korea in school. They continue to represent themselves as overseas nationals of North Korea and are supposed to pledge lifelong dedication to the organization. For example, after graduating from Korea University (the Chongryon university in Tokyo), Chongryon-Koreans are placed into a job position based on their specialization, to which they are not supposed to object. Due to the structure of the organization, individuals are expected to fulfill their duty to the organization by engaging in work within the organization in a field of expertise. When women become married and have children, they are expected to leave their jobs and cater to their families. This has been somewhat typical of Chongryon-Korean families (Lie 2008).

Chongryon-Koreans have a stronger connection to their Korean roots as they are raised as overseas nationals of North Korea. Some Chongryon-Korean families continue to send money to North Korea to support their government and as a token of gratitude for what they have done for them in Japan. However, as time passes it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep the younger generations dedicated to this Chongryun way of life while living in Japan. Ryang (2005) notes the difficult decision that she had to make as to whether to leave the organization and attend graduate school in England or continue working for Chongryon. The second generation of Chongryon-Koreans is largely torn between the old and the new.

Role of Socio-Economic Class

One factor that plays a role in shaping all of these identities is socio-economic class. Upper-class Zainichi Koreans are not placed in the same social niche as lower-class Zainichi Koreans and are not looked at as pariahs within their society. The reason for this is that the upper-class Zainichi Koreans have usually assimilated a bit more to Japanese society in order to succeed and having done so, have severed close ties with their Korean heritage.

Ryang (2005) highlights the socio-economic class differences which shape the way Zainichi Koreans view themselves by using a case study of how an upper-class Zainichi Korean woman was much less connected to her Korean identity than her lower-class counterparts. This woman was half-Korean and half-Japanese and was raised as an upper-class member of society. She went to Japanese schools her whole life and rarely revealed her Korean heritage to others. This was not done out of shame or fear that she would be viewed as a pariah; this woman simply was not connected to her identity enough to show it. She viewed Korean culture as foreign and in some sense lower than her own. She managed to live a Japanese life as a half-Korean without her Korean heritage ever being a factor in her life. Her ethnicity never limited her or excluded her from mainstream Japanese
society. On the other hand, lower class Zainichi Koreans who are viewed as pariahs of society are constantly reminded of their Korean heritage whether or not they wish to be. The fact that these individuals are distinguished as minorities who are not viewed as equals, they are much more aware of their Korean heritage because they experience the limitations of their ethnicity daily. These individuals have a much stronger connection with their Korean heritage and identity, even though it carries with it a negative image within mainstream society (Ryang 2005).

Conclusion

In this short essay, I hope that I have clarified some specific categories under which Zainichi Korean identity can fall, as well as some factors which explain why variations have occurred under this larger umbrella term of “Zainichi Korean.” Though these classifications are still somewhat vague and in terms of how their supporters go about expressing their identity, there are distinct markers that establish the confines of such identities. By researching this topic and writing this paper, it becomes clear that Zainichi Koreans are not one unified minority group. Though they share a common history, the degree to which Zainichi Koreans understand and express their Korean heritage depends largely on their personal background and their presence and awareness of Korean heritage in their daily lives.

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About the Author

Paul Capobianco is currently completing his M.A. in Asian Studies at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. His current research deals with human trafficking and migration issues in Japan and he has presented research on human trafficking statistics, legislative action by Japan, and human trafficking theory. He hopes to continue his research on the PhD level and he will be applying to programs this coming Fall.
A New Group: Karen Refugees and their Place in the Western Healthcare System

Alyssa Petroski

Introduction

The needs of the patient should always be the first concern of practicing physicians and medical personnel. Sometimes these needs are more complicated than simply administering vaccines and antibiotics, especially when the patients are refugees of various cultures and backgrounds fleeing from harrowing situations to the United States. Each of these refugee groups must be examined within the context of their own history and unique needs in regards to healthcare. The Karen, a newly arrived group from Burma (also known as Myanmar), is a group that requires this type of individual examination. Among Southeast Asian populations that have immigrated to the United States, there is a comparative lack of research on the way in which this population accesses western medical systems. The conspicuous lack of information is likely due to the recent arrival of the Karen, but there may be other contributing factors. This paper will examine the gaps in the available information on this group and provide a preliminary investigation of how the Karen compare to other Southeast Asian refugee populations.

Background

Burma, a Southeast Asian country bordering China, Laos, Bangladesh, India, and Thailand, was formerly a British colony that gained independence in the 1940s (see figure 1). Since then there have been numerous changes in government, primarily under the direction of the military. The Karen is one of at least fifteen ethnic groups living in Burma. They comprise a large portion of the population, second in size only to the Burman, and number around six million people (UNHCR 2007). Historically they lived in the more mountainous jungle regions of their home country, residing mostly in horticultural, rice-cultivating tribes (Marshall 1922). Even within this group, there are wide variations in religious practice, language, and customs. A majority of Karen speak a dialect known as S’gaw Karen, but many also speak Burmese out of necessity.

Similarly to other refugee groups, the Karen has been subjected to terrible human rights violations prior to entering this country. Due to civil and ethnic conflicts within their country of origin, large numbers of Karen have been forced to flee to Thailand and live in refugee camps, some for a majority of their lives (UNHCR 2007). Unlike most Southeast Asian refugees, a large proportion of Karen entering the United States are Christian and have been raised as such. In the 1800’s, missionaries began traveling through the area and found the Karen to be receptive to their message, more so than other groups they had tried to convert (McGill 2007).

Methods

The research for this paper is a mixture
of preliminary literature review and exploratory fieldwork. Previous research on the topic of refugee healthcare was examined for themes and commonly seen issues. Southeast Asian groups were the focus as one of the goals was to look at similarities and differences between these populations and the Karen. Important themes emphasized in the literature will be discussed in terms of the information collected through participant observation and semi-structured interviews with those working closely with Karen refugees through the healthcare system.

I conducted fieldwork from late May through August 2009 in the city of Utica, New York. This fieldwork had prior approval from the State University of New York at Potsdam’s Institutional Review Board. Participant observation took place at the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRCR), primarily in the ESL classes. Four semi-structured interviews were conducted: one with a caseworker at MVRCR, two with nurses working at the Oneida County Health Department (OCHD), and one with administrative personnel at OCHD. All interview participants were female, and subjects were chosen based on availability as opposed to random sampling. These interviews ranged from six to twenty minutes in length and ran according to a list of open-ended questions. A digital recorder was used in each case and all four interviews were transcribed by the author.

**Results**

Many factors in the frequency of western medicine use among refugees lie in the logistical barriers faced by these people. For a newly immigrated individual, owning a car is out of the question. Depending on the type of area they have moved to, patients may be unable to make it to their appointments relying on public transportation alone. Finding childcare may also be an issue, especially for women needing to get to appointments (Jackson, 2000). An interesting subject that arose with the Karen that was not mentioned in the literature was the problem with missing appointments. One interviewee working at OCHD, coded for confidentiality purposes as SA, stated that she initially had problems with the refugees not returning for follow-up treatment. Initially she assumed that they were avoiding the treatment, “we thought that they really didn’t want to come, you know, it’s the same just like any other group, but it was really just misunderstanding on their part”, so she decided to try sending reminder cards through the mail. After implementing this strategy she indicated there was a vast improvement in the refugees making it to their scheduled appointment times. Although the language barrier was indicated to be a problem by some of the interviewees, all pointed out that their access to interpretation services was generally reliable. One of the nurses, code named DG, stated that:

>Sometimes it does become a language barrier, especially if we don’t have a interpreter right on site, it is a little hard to get our point across. We do have avenues to – to call, and sometimes those avenues aren’t available... [so] we call the Refugee
Karen Refugees

Center sometimes looking to see if someone’s available just running around the building... that can help us... it’s very few and far between that we turn people away because there is no interpretation... but sometimes it just happens because we don’t want to do something unsafe for them.

Although it may be an issue at times, the healthcare professionals have available resources in the case of lacking interpreters on-site. They seem comfortable in the way that interpretation should work, and acknowledge the important role it serves to avoid confusion and possibly serious complications.

There is a phenomenon that occurs with some refugee patients that can lead to misunderstandings by medical professionals. It is known as the “passive obedient patient” and stems from differences in communication styles as well as the patient’s reaction to power relations. The first culprit in these types of incidents is usually very simply a language barrier coupled with cultural differences in body language. In some cases, Southeast Asian patients will nod in response to what a doctor or nurse tells them in order to indicate that they are listening, although this does not necessarily mean that they agree with what is said, or even fully understand it (Muecke, 1983b). This can be combatted through the use of interpreters and asking the patient to repeat the instructions or information back to the doctor to ensure they know what is expected of them or what they are agreeing to. A more complex cause for this has to do with power relations. In many Southeast Asian cultures, there is a strict social hierarchy and rules in place regarding whom one can question and who must be obeyed. A consequence of this with regard to the doctor-patient relationship is that refugee patients may feel either that they should not question the doctor out of respect, or that they do not want to ask any questions that may make it seem that they are questioning the doctor’s knowledge and therefore embarrass him or her (Muecke 1983a). Although this was not specifically noted in the fieldwork conducted for this study, there were indications of possible cultural differences.

A major difference noted between the Karen refugees and other groups that had come through MVRCR was that they were much more “compliant.” This term, which was used in an unsolicited way by many of the medical personnel interviewed, was never quantified. As an example, one interviewee in a more administrative position, code named BO, described the Karen as:

...very compliant...um, again that’s a generality...but, um, they tend to be, you know, sort of, peaceful and respectful and cooperative. So I really – from what I see, I think if they understand what it is they’re expected to do and what the purpose of getting into the healthcare system for whatever reason, I think they are very compliant with that, so may – maybe less challenging than other groups once the communication barrier is – is overcome.
The way in which compliance is measured by the healthcare providers can be problematic, as a patient agreeing to follow through with an at-home treatment is not equivalent to their actions in reality. With the concerns about the “passive obedient patient,” it is difficult to say for sure how faithfully the refugee patients were following the recommendations of their doctors. Aside from the lack of quantification for the term, the word “compliance” itself is loaded with paternalistic tones, an overarching theme that can be seen not only in regard to refugee health but with the western healthcare system in general.

One of the most problematic issues with providing refugees with medical care comes from the dual healthcare system employed by many refugees. Chung (1994) found that many Southeast Asian refugees had been utilizing traditional healing practices (in regards to mental health) supplemented by some western practices when in their native country, and continued this combination after entering the United States. However, after entering the U.S., there was a heavier reliance on western practices, as would be expected with the increased availability of these methods. It should be noted, however, that there was significant variation both within populations and between them.

Even so, most refugees continued to utilize traditional healthcare in conjunction with western medicine, which can become an issue for a few reasons. Common healing practices seen in many Southeast Asian groups involve methods that cause minor physical injury to the body. These include scratching the skin with coins; burning the skin; or placing heated cups over affected areas, and, as the cups cool, the skin is suctioned leaving a circular bruise in the process (Buchwald et. al. 1992). Although these practices usually do more good than harm by allowing the patient to have an impact on the course of their illness, there is a constant danger of these marks being misinterpreted by medical professionals who are required to report signs of physical abuse (Uba 1992), especially in children (Muecke 1983b). More serious still is the possibility that certain herbal medicines used by refugees may have undesirable interactions with prescribed medication, and unless the doctor specifically asks what other treatments they are using, these crucial interactions may be missed (Gilman et. al. 1992). Related to drug interactions is the tendency of the “passive obedient patient” to agree to a regimen and then not follow it as prescribed (as discussed above).

One of the reasons for refugees to not follow the recommendations of their doctors comes from the belief of some
groups that people of European descent have a physiology that is distinct from that of Asian peoples (Muecke 1983a). This may result in the patient failing to take medication even if they have filled the prescription, or discretely changing the dosage to suit what they believe their body or illness requires (Uba 1992). These adjustments are also made due to traditional world-view, which will be discussed in more depth later on.

In regards to the Karen in Utica, there were no indications of traditional methods that involved damaging the skin; in fact, most interviewees seemed to not be aware of any traditional treatments that the refugees were using. An issue that arose with the Karen that was not observed in the literature was the idea of the treatments on their own possibly being harmful. It was found that some Karen were using an herbal treatment (specifically aimed towards the digestive health of children) which contained high levels of lead and arsenic. Interviewee SA described how the situation was handled:

We received notification from New York State about it, so I talked to our interpreter here... I printed it out and I asked, “Do you know if they use this?”, and she said “no, not really”, but then when she called people around she said “Yeah, people are using it”. So... we sent that information to our lead program here, through the county, and then they talked to Refugee Center and I’m sure that they did some... teaching about it.

The lack of this topic in the literature should not be interpreted as evidence of absence in actual practice; it seems unlikely that the Karen would be the only group to have potentially harmful materials in their herbal treatments.

This dual healthcare system may also have an impact when it comes to the refugee’s familiarity with western medical traditions. Chung (1994) postulates that out of the five ethnic groups she studied, the Vietnamese refugees were more likely to seek westernized medicine in their home country than other groups due to the spread of modern western medicine through the region by French colonists. This translated to a higher utilization rate once they immigrated to the U.S. as well. The Karen may be very different from the Vietnamese in this way. As most of them had been living for many years in refugee camps in Thailand, their exposure to western medicine was likely fairly low. According to SA:

[T]hey were not exposed to... health care as much as they are exposed here... we would see refugees that have been in camps for a long time, and then they come here and I don’t know if they’ve seen a doctor – ever seen a doctor or – or the first time they saw the doctor was before they came to America...because they had to have [a] physical done.

This could conceivably be a barrier to their understanding and level of comfort with accessing healthcare in the western world.

A sensitive topic that becomes
important when considering cross-cultural healthcare is religion (or more broadly, cultural beliefs). Healing can be as much about mindset as medicine, and like with the traditional healing methods, religion can often give individuals a sense of direction or control when they are experiencing an illness. Muecke (1983b) indicates that in many Southeast Asian cultures, healing cannot be seen but through the lens of religion; in some cases, the gods or ancestral spirits are directly responsible for a person’s ailment, and they may need to be appeased by a spiritual leader or shaman in order to alleviate the victim’s suffering. The belief in external causes for disease may also impact a refugee’s willingness to accept surgery as treatment. According to Muecke, in the eyes of many of these patients “…the best physician is defined as the one who intrudes on the body the least.” (1993b: 837). Refugees may also be reluctant to accept surgery due to tenets of certain religions that state the soul is connected to various parts of the body, and that disturbing those body parts (even after death) can permanently cause damage to an individual’s soul (Muecke 1983a).

Another explanation of disease for many Southeast Asian groups is known as the “hot and cold” theory, wherein the imbalance of hot and cold energy is seen to cause physical ailments. In general, herbal remedies are understood to have cooling properties and most western medicines as being warming agents. In general, herbal remedies are understood to have cooling properties and most western medicines as being warming agents. As mentioned earlier, this may result in patients adjusting dosages or neglecting to use certain treatments based on their understanding of the cause of their illness (Buchwald et. al. 1992). In examining the Karen population in Utica, it is important to note that a majority of those immigrating are Christian. A telling sign of this came from SA who commented that “[The] Karen are mostly Christian and then Burmese are…mostly… Muslim in religion, I think that’s how they really differentiate.” Although this is a generalization, it is useful in seeing how healthcare providers are able to characterize groups in this way. Most of the existing literature on Southeast Asian refugee healthcare deals with the indigenous beliefs of these groups as well as Buddhist and Hindu beliefs about the body. Although it is likely that the Karen retain many aspects of traditional cultural beliefs, the predominant religion (Christianity) must be taken into account when discussing how worldview impacts their view of western medicine.

The lack of traditional healing practices as discussed earlier (i.e. cupping) seen in the Karen population may be an indication of a retreat from traditional treatments. It may also be due to a need to hide these practices from doctors to avoid abuse allegations. Although, with a lack of pre-immigration data on the use of these methods, it is difficult to say if their absence is indicative of a decrease or simply shows the practice was never a part of their culture to begin with.

Discussion

Though these topics tie together and work in unison to give a clearer picture of the barriers facing both healthcare providers and refugees in their pursuit of treating illness, they also raise many questions about
where the Karen fit into the already existing body of literature on the topic. First of all, although interviewees did not specifically indicate any logistical barriers such as transportation or childcare, it would be important to examine these areas more fully and ensure that there is not simply a lack of communication between the refugees, MVRCR, and healthcare workers on this topic. Another concern deserving further investigation is the “passive obedient patient” concept, and the possibility of this being the reason for the Karen as a general group appearing to be more “compliant” than most. If possible, this should be examined outside of a paternalistic model, utilizing a more patient-centered and individualized approach. It may be found that the Karen are actually modifying their treatments or supplementing them with herbal treatments without the knowledge of the physician with whom they had been working. Finally, the impact of Christianity on the population’s perceptions of western healthcare may be examined to gain a greater understanding not only of this group specifically, but the importance of religion in general on access to and acceptability of medical care.

Conclusion
The information presented in this paper is preliminary and by no means exhaustive. By highlighting themes in the relevant literature, comparisons are drawn between the newly arrived Karen and other Southeast Asian groups. In and of themselves, these comparisons may be problematic in their assumptions of commonalities between these populations. As a first look into the way the Karen access healthcare in the United States, the issues brought up will undoubtedly be expanded upon and added to in the near future as more research is conducted. In the interest of the subject population, it is imperative for further, more focused investigation to occur in order to specifically suit the needs of this unique Southeast Asian refugee group.

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About the Author

Alyssa Petroski is a recent Potsdam graduate who majored in Anthropology and minored in Biological Anthropology. Her interests lie within medical, evolutionary and forensic anthropology, and in the future she hopes to attend graduate school for forensic anthropology or medical school for forensic pathology.
A Letter to a Prospective Anthropology Major

ESTHER KIM

Dear Prospective Anthropology Major or Undeclared Undergraduate,

If you’re like me, you’re pondering whether to declare a major in anthropology. Don’t worry, I was in your position my first year of college. I had taken an anthropology class and had fallen in love with it. My next thought was “I do like anthropology, but what can I do with it?” Or the more popular and important question, “how do I convince my parents that I’m actually studying something substantial that will give me a job once I graduate?” Well, I’m here to tell you to take the step of faith and declare a major in anthropology. Become an anthropologist. Anthropology isn’t only about digging up artifacts or writing ethnographies on the forgotten people of our world.

What most people don’t realize is that anthropology is not purely an academic field. The knowledge and skills gained through the study of anthropology can prepare you to be successful in many other careers. For me, the field happens to be broadcast journalism. Anthropology and broadcast journalism essentially have the same goal. Professionals from both fields strive to tell the stories, specifically the stories of people.

Curtiss defines broadcast journalism as a way “to string words together in such a way that they listened well” (in Kalbfeld 2001:13-14). This form of journalism combines writing with pictures and sounds. Stories are transferred through electrical methods like radio (air, cable, internet), television (air, cable internet), and the Internet. It is the form of journalism where visual text and sounds are combined with traditional news writing (Kalbfeld 2001). Anthropology is found in all aspects of broadcast journalism because anthropology is the study of people at all places and at all times. Similarly, broadcast journalism deals with the same subject matter, people.

Anthropology is the holistic study of human beings as it examines the biological, cultural, linguistic, archaeological, and social factors of the human race; humans are affected by the language they use, their learned set of behaviors and ideologies, their biological make-up, how they utilize materials, and how these characteristics influence them socioculturally.

There are certain research methods that are needed to gain a better understanding of each of these factors. The most valuable skills that are required to conduct cultural anthropological research are building rapport, interviewing, and recording the etic (outside) and emic (inside) perspectives.

Cultural anthropology, a subfield of anthropology, emphasizes participant observation where an anthropologist will live within a culture over an extended period of time. During this time, anthropologists build rapport or establish relationships with people. Rapport is crucial in both anthropology and journalism because without relationships with people, there are no stories to
be told. People tell stories. Relationships connect people.

Interviewing is pertinent to cultural anthropology and journalism because people disclose information through interviews. When journalists report on a story, they have to conduct interviews to gain a better understanding of the event. Cultural anthropologists do the same. Interviewing is one way of gathering data or evidence.

Interviews also give anthropologists the etic and emic perspectives of the culture. Journalists try to present multiple angles of a story. Journalists report on what they observe, which is the etic perspective in anthropology. Journalists also strive to understand how the people being affected by an event feel, internally, which is the emic perspective. The etic and emic perspectives of a highlighted group of people produce a holistic understanding of the current event that is being covered.

Have I convinced you yet? If not, read on further. In the Spring 2012, I was given the opportunity to intern at North Country Public Radio located in Canton, New York. Dr. Johnson-Weiner, a Potsdam anthropology professor, played a huge role in connecting me with the journalists at the station. As I was given assignments to gather content from the surrounding communities, I employed the research strategies that I had learned from my anthropology classes. I learned to build rapport with the people I interviewed. Building rapport was crucial in convincing members of the communities to provide personal answers to my questions. In addition, when editing my answers into 60 to 90 second sound files, I was conscious of presenting a holistic overall response to the questions. I was careful to present all opinions that were voiced to the questions I had asked the community members. If it wasn’t for the valuable principles, methods, and ethics lessons that I had learned from my anthropology classes, I believe I wouldn’t have made the same wise ethical editing decisions.

As I near my graduation, I’ve begun to reminisce on the education that I have received as an undergraduate. Out of the many decisions that I have made to shape my education, I’m so thankful that I chose to be an anthropology major. Yes, there were many sleepless nights trying to finish and comprehend brutal readings for class discussions and papers that were physically draining to write. But, they were all worth it. I’ll never be able to elegantly express the knowledge I have received as an anthropology major, but I confidently know that without anthropology, I wouldn’t be the person I am today. Anthropology has taught me how to understand the many cultures of this world. Most importantly, anthropology has taught me the value of humanity.

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Sincerely,

Esther
Anthropology Club Happenings: Spring 2012

ANDREA WENDEL

What is the Anthropology Club?

The Anthropology Club focuses on anthropology both in an academic sense and through extracurricular activities. These include museum trips, conferences, and other events with on campus clubs. Our focus is on making connections both with students within the group, with students from other campuses, and with professionals both at Potsdam and elsewhere. The Spring 2012 semester was one of our busiest ones yet. Our activities included our annual conference trip, museum trip, hike, barbeque, as well as visits from numerous speakers.

Spring 2012 Events

NEAA Conference: Traveling to Bridgewater, Massachusetts, was an exciting experience for 19 club members who attended the Northeastern Anthropological Association (NEAA) annual conference. There were six undergraduate presenters in all. Five presented original research in the form of a paper, and another displayed a poster. The topics ranged from STD testing on campus, views on aging and the elderly, and measuring teeth (specifically the maxillary molars). Potsdam’s turnout is always impressive, since the conference typically boasts about 100 individuals from colleges all over the northeast. In addition, one of our members, Matthew Phillips, got elected as the NEAA undergraduate representative. He will work to connect and collaborate with students in anthropology programs on campuses across the northeast and help plan for the next regional conference in Maryland.

Montreal Museums: This semester’s trip took us to Montreal, where we visited the Pointe-à-Callière Archaeology Museum and the Montreal Science Center. At the Archaeology Museum, we explored underground foundation structures of Old Montreal and saw a film about Montreal’s history. The next exciting part was the Montreal Science Center’s Star Wars exhibit, which turned out to be very anthropological. It compared two main characters (Luke Skywalker and Anakin Skywalker), and how the environment and their decisions affected their lives. We could select a Star Wars creature/species and progress through the exhibit making choices that would shape who we would eventually become. This included our culture, friends, genetics (and the abilities they coded for). Finally, we were given the choice between the dark side and the light side of the force.

Future Events

The club has a lot of things planned for next year. As a welcome activity, there will be a game of “Capture the Idol,” where teams will hunt for the golden idol using a map. There will also be guest speakers, a graduate/career panel, pumpkin carving, and a barbeque with faculty members.

Find Out More

We would like to say thank you to the hard work done by the executive board and all the members of the club for the 2011-2012 year. We want to welcome our new E-board members who will continue to make the anthropology club such a success. Find us on Facebook to stay updated on our events and activities or contact: Matthew Phillips (president); Sarah Skinner (vp); Samuel Bourcy (treasurer); Rebecca Belton (secretary); Kara Chapin (p-r officer).
Collegiate Anthropologist Editing Team

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jacob Orcutt is a senior History, Anthropology, and Archaeology 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 third semester on the Collegiate staff, and his second as Editor-in-Chief.

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Samuel Bourcy is a Junior Archaeology/Anthropology major with a minor in Classical Studies. His interests lie in the area of Ancient Rome and Greece. This is his third term as an editor.

Jillian Cullen is a second semester 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 History/Archaeology major with minors in both Anthropology and Biological Anthropology. Her main interests include historical archaeology of the United States.

Lauren Dodaro is a junior majoring in anthropology and studio art with a concentration in photography. This is her first semester as an editor. She hopes to work in rain forests as an environmental anthropologist.

Ashley Edmond is an archaeology major with a minor in museum studies. This is her first year on the Collegiate editorial staff. Her career goals consist of working for the Smithsonian.

Andrea Hill is a junior at SUNY Potsdam, majoring in Archaeology and Art History. In the years to come she hopes to narrow her focus to Historical Archaeology and art restoration.

Esther Kim is a Senior Speech Communication & Anthropology major. She wishes to pursue a career in broadcast journalism, and this is her first semester as an editor.

Alyssa Lemmermann is a senior Anthropology major and Environmental Studies minor. This is her first semester as an assistant editor. She is particularly interested in human-environment interactions, specifically community development of local (and sustainable) resources. After graduation in May, she will begin a museum internship.

Andrea Wendel is a graduating senior and second year editor from Sanborn, New York. She will be graduating with a double major in anthropology and chemistry with a minor in biological anthropology. She intends to go to graduate school and hopes to combine her interest in both anthropology and chemistry.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Anthropological 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
Nineteen Potsdam students attended this spring’s NEAA conference held in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Six of them presented the results of their research through papers or posters (Photograph courtesy of Andrea Wendel).