



# GLYPHS

The Monthly Newsletter of the  
Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society  
An Affiliate of the Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona  
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*Cannibalism in Brazil in 1557, as alleged by Hans Staden.*

Next General Meeting: January 18, 2010

<<http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/aahs/aahs.shtml>>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

 First of all, there is no diplomatic way to say, "I blew it," but that is what I did in the December President's Message. I said the Snaketown Commemoration was December 5 and 6. Of course, it is March 5 and 6, 2010. My apologies!

I want to thank all of our members who responded to our year-end appeal for support of our fund that awards grants to graduate students in anthropology and archaeology. It is not too late to make your gift and show your appreciation for these students. Our grants help support their graduate research.

I have formed a committee to determine how we can improve our fi-

nanacial stability and better serve our members using current technology. At present, a significant portion of our budget goes to the printing, publishing, and mailing of *Glyphs*. As a cost-saving measure, we are exploring the possibility of sending *Glyphs* in an online version. During the transition, we would continue to offer the option of receiving *Glyphs* via the mail.

In my following letters, I will continue to keep you posted on the committee's discussions. We would welcome your ideas and suggestions as we move forward. Please send them to my attention at <dbkuat@aol.com>.

—Don Burgess, President

## AAHS LECTURE SERIES

All meetings are held at the University Medical Center, Duval Auditorium  
Third Monday of the month, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

- Jan. 18, 2010: John Kantner, *Facts and Fictions of Ancient Puebloan Cannibalism*
- Feb. 15, 2010: Henry Wallace, *New Clues, New Research, and New Photos of the Oldest Art in Western North America: Current Thoughts on the Western Archaic Tradition*
- Mar. 15, 2010: Steve Lekson, *Chimney Rock and Chaco Canyon, Pinnacle and Mesa Verde: Ancestral Pueblo Regional Dynamics*
- Apr. 19, 2010: Will Tsosi, Yádilla, Hádiilǫ, *Perspectives from a Practicing Native American Archaeologist*
- May 17, 2010: Todd Pitezal, *I Rented a Mule and Found Religion*
- June 21, 2010: Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, *Massacre at Camp Grant: Forgetting and Remembering Apache History*

## UPCOMING AAHS FIELD TRIPS

*AAHS membership is required to participate in field trips. Prospective members may attend one AAHS field trip prior to joining.*

**January 23, 2010**

### **Ft. Bowie National Monument: The Apache Wars and Butterfield Trail**

Ranger-led tour of historic Fort Bowie and an introduction to the Butterfield Stage route. Three-mile round trip, moderate hike, with interpretive stops along the way. Wear good hiking shoes, bring lunch and water. Carpool from the northwest corner of Houghton Road at Interstate 10, at 8:00 a.m. Limit 20. To reserve a space, contact Ken Fleshman at <kfleshman@juno.com> or 520.648.5473.

**February 13, 2010**

### **South Mountain Petroglyphs**

The February field trip will continue our exploration of the petroglyphs of South Mountain in Phoenix. This time, we will explore the 16th Street Canyon area on a trip led by Dr. Todd Bostwick. Bostwick, Phoenix City Archaeologist, is the author of *Landscape of the Spirits: Hohokam Rock Art at South Mountain Park* and the leading expert on South Mountain. The hike will be along a fairly well-marked trail, but requires some boulder hopping, as well as elevation gain, but it ends with a great view of the city among a cluster of rock art. We will be on the trail for about three hours. We will carpool from Marana, leaving around 8:00 a.m. Please bring water and lunch. To register for the trip, contact Connie Bacon at 398.3911 or <cbcanao@dakotacom.net>.



## AAHS SCHOLARSHIP FUND DONATIONS

By now, you have received a letter asking for donations towards the AAHS Scholarship Fund. We are gratified by the initial response from members to this appeal. **Donations to the Scholarship Fund are tax-deductible** (unlike your membership fees). If you have not yet sent in your donation, there is still time! If, for some reason, you did not receive a letter of have misplaced it, donations can be sent to the AAHS Scholarship Fund, Arizona State Museum, P.O. Box 210026, Tucson, AZ 85721-0026. Please make your check out to *AAHS Scholarship Fund*.

## AAHS HAPPENINGS

## TOPIC OF THE JANUARY 18 GENERAL MEETING

## Fact and Fiction of Ancient Puebloan Cannibalism

by John Kantner

The 1990s was the decade of cannibalism in American archaeology. Six books on cannibalism were published, most notably *Man Corn: Cannibalism and Violence in the Prehistoric American Southwest*, by Christy and Jacqueline Turner. At the same time, widely reported finds at the Cowboy Wash site in Colorado – including biochemical evidence – further inspired a media circus that quickly polarized discussions of prehistoric violence and offended many descendent groups.

I stumbled into the fray with the coincidental publication of two articles in Ancient Puebloan cannibalism that emerged out of graduate work I had conducted under the guidance of the late Phil Walker. My analyses at the time suggested that different behaviors were being conflated as evidence of cannibalism, and I joined other scholars in arguing that the likely reality was much more complicated and interesting than simply starvation anthropophagy.

Now, almost 10 years later, and with several studies published in the past few years, I'll revisit my original study and consider new evidence about Ancient Puebloan violence that has been identified by a number of

scholars. Perhaps more importantly, I will discuss what archaeologists have hopefully learned from this experience, both about the record of violence in the past, as well as our responsibilities in reporting this unfortunate aspect of human behavior that has so often been invoked to achieve racist and ethnocentric agendas.

Situated at the intersection of "hard" science and humanistic inquiry, archaeologists often occupy a complex ethical position in which we must balance our obligations to both descendent groups and notions of historical accuracy – a position laid bare in how we handle evidence for, and claims of, cannibalism.

## Suggested Reading:

- Dongoske, K. E., D. L. Martin, and T. J. Ferguson  
2000 Critique and Claim of Cannibalism at Cowboy Wash. *American Antiquity* 65:179-190.
- Kantner, J.  
1999 Survival Cannibalism or Sociopolitical Intimidation? Explaining Perimortem Mutilation in the American Southwest. *Human Nature* 10:1-50.

- Kuckelman, K. A., R. R. Lightfoot, and D. L. Martin  
2002 The Bioarchaeology and Taphonomy of Violence at Castle Rock and Sand Canyon Pueblos, Southwestern Colorado. *American Antiquity* 67:486-513.
- Nicholas, D. L., and P. L. Crown (editors)  
2008 *Social Violence in the Prehispanic American Southwest*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Rautman, A. E., and T. W. Fenton  
2005 A Case of Historic Cannibalism in

the American West: Implications for Southwestern Archaeology. *American Antiquity* 70:321-341.

- Reinhard, K. J.  
2006 A Coprological View of Ancestral Pueblo Cannibalism. *American Scientist* 94:2-9.
- Turner, C. G. I., and J. A. Turner  
1999 *Man Corn: Cannibalism and Violence in the Prehistoric American Southwest*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

*Speaker John Kantner is vice president of the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has conducted field research throughout Central America and the United States, and he currently directs the Lobo Mesa Archaeological Project that is reconstructing the Chaco World of the American Southwest during the tenth and eleventh centuries. His most recent book, Ancient Puebloan Southwest (Cambridge University Press, 2004), explores the development of the Chaco Canyon pilgrimage center as an outgrowth of competitive behavior in the face of changing climatic conditions. A central theme of this work is the impact of Chacoan religion and ideology on the ensuing millennium of Puebloan history. Dr. Kantner's publications appear in Human Nature, Journal of Anthropological Archaeology, Journal of Anthropological Research, Journal of Archaeological Research, and Historical Archaeology. He is currently editing a book on the evolution of institutionalized leadership.*

## THE CORNERSTONE

## Life as Expressed in Death

by Dr. James Watson, Assistant Curator of Bioarchaeology at the Arizona State Museum (from ASM's blog)

I was recently asked by archaeologists at the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia Sonora (INAH: National Institute of Anthropology and History) to come to Hermosillo to analyze several prehistoric human skeletons that had been recently recovered from several archaeological investigations throughout the state. Skeletal analysis is an

important part of my job as a bioarchaeologist because it can tell us a great deal about the lives of past people.

We effectively 'read' the variation present in the human skeleton to estimate things like the age, sex, and height of the individual. It can also inform us about patterns in death, disease, diet, behaviors, and popu-

lation relationships, as well as provide crucial information that complements the artifactual evidence archaeologists traditionally use to understand past human behaviors. Another set of behaviors that we can reconstruct from human skeletal remains is the actions of the relatives of the deceased during the burial process. In this case, the analysis is less about understanding bone tissues and more about the circumstances, or context, in which the skeleton is recovered.

Context is THE most important element for archaeologists to reconstruct the past. In the case of human burials, context preserves the last rights enacted to send an individual on to the afterlife. These often reflect important values in the lives of the family, community, or society as a whole, and can be seen as physical evidence in the archaeological record in body treatment, position, orientation, and grave accompaniments, as a few examples. But this process is constructed by the living, for the dead, and can often reflect an idealized social persona. These concepts can be observed today in our own decisions about treatment of the deceased during the wake and funeral, and in grave monuments.

On my way back from Hermosillo, I was struck by the numerous and highly variable *descansos* that I observed along the side of the highway, in both Sonora and Arizona. *Descansos* are memorials placed by families

near the location of a relative's death, most often in traffic accidents. It struck me that these also represent the same behaviors that bioarchaeologists try and reconstruct from burials and can be an important part of the grieving process at a location away from the grave. The commonality of these along the highways of Mexico and much of the southwestern United States identify their importance at a societal level, but the variability observed in their constructions and the objects accompanying them reflect the ideals, values, sentiments, and circumstances of the relatives and can form part of the reconstruction of the social persona of the deceased at the location of death.

Human behavior is infinitely complex, and archaeologists do their best to reconstruct the behavior and lives of past peoples using the material objects they leave behind. Mortuary behavior is one example of this complexity that is comprised of the ideology of a group exacted on the remains of an individual.

Enjoy other, similar stories on ASM's blog at: <<http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/blog/>>.

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## AAHS MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION APPLICATION

(A membership subscription makes a great gift for your loved ones!)

All members receive discounts on Society workshops and classes. Monthly meetings are held the third Monday of each month except August, and are free and open to the public. Participation in field trips requires membership.

### Categories of Membership

- \$50 **Kiva** members receive 4 issues of *Kiva*, 12 issues of *Glyphs*, and all current benefits
- \$40 **Glyphs** members receive *Glyphs*
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- \$75 **Contributors** receive *Glyphs*, *Kiva*, and all current benefits
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### MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Memberships and subscriptions run for one year beginning on July 1 and ending June 30. Membership provides one volume (four issues) of *Kiva*, the Journal of Southwestern Anthropology and History, and 12 issues of the monthly newsletter *Glyphs*.

Membership applications should be sent to:

Donna Yoder, VP Membership  
Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society  
Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona  
Tucson, AZ 85721-0026 USA  
<[donnayoder@cox.net](mailto:donnayoder@cox.net)>

Libraries and other institutions interested in institutional subscriptions to *Kiva* should contact the publisher, AltaMira Press, at 800.273.2233 or <[www.altamirapress.com](http://www.altamirapress.com)>.

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The objectives of the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society are to encourage scholarly pursuits in areas of history and anthropology of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico; to encourage the preservation of archaeological and historical sites; to encourage the scientific and legal gathering of cultural information and materials; to publish the results of archaeological, historical, and ethnographic investigations; to aid in the functions and programs of the Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona; and to provide educational opportunities through lectures, field trips, and other activities. See inside back cover for information about the Society's programs and membership and subscription requirements.