Research in the Central African Republic

Cross-Cultural Child Development
Courtney Meehan

Our understanding of the cultural and universal components of child development is limited by an emphasis on Western studies. While childhood studies in anthropology have a long history, cross-cultural research has often proved difficult to integrate into the broader knowledge of child development.

I am a biocultural anthropologist undertaking a longitudinal five-year cross-cultural study, aimed at bridging these boundaries through an investigation of child development, child rearing, cooperation, and health among the Aka tropical forest foragers and the Ngandu farmers in the Central African Republic. Funded by a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, my research will explore the complex and interrelated components of environment, biology, and culture in child development. In the years to come, research will tease apart the complexity of cultural diversity in childhoods and child rearing systems. This has implications for understanding human development, the evolution of extended human childhood, cooperation, and post-menopausal life spans. In combination with previous research in 2009, funded by the Leakey Foundation, WSU Foundation, and WSU Office of Research, the current research will also explore the impact of human childhood on female time allocation, reproduction, and life history.

Funds from the NSF CAREER Award will allow me to integrate multiple graduate and undergraduate students into my research. Over the next five years, the project will fund several research assistantships and approximately 25 student research trips to the Central African Republic. Student engagement in the project will serve as a platform for students to develop independent research projects while engaging in collaborative projects.

Late Holocene Paleoecology and Archeology of the Northern Central African Rain Forest
Karen Lupo

In 2009, I received funding for a two year paleoecology project centered in Ngotto Forest in southwestern Central African Republic. Between January and March 2010, a field crew consisting of Chris Kiahtipes, Mark Caudell, Kristin Safi, Dave Schmitt, and me conducted survey and limited test excavations along the northern border of the Ngotto Forest. A second round of field work focusing on the eastern border of the forest is planned for February-March 2011. The project is multi-institutional and involves collaboration with Central African scholars J-P Ndanga and Dr. Bernard Simiti, affiliated with the Université De Bangui (UB). The research project is interdisciplinary and combines paired archaeological and proxy paleoenvironmental data with the goal of building a longitudinal paleoecological record for the northern Central African rain forest.
From the Chair’s Desk

Anthropology at WSU continues to be a strong department at the forefront of scholarship and teaching, with faculty receiving substantial grant support and publishing their work in prominent venues. Bonnie Hewlett and Barry Hewlett each received Fulbright Scholar Awards for 2010-11, and will both spend the year in Ethiopia. Bill Lipe was awarded the 2010 Alfred Kidder Award for Eminence in the field of American archaeology by the AAA. As also noted in this issue, several of our graduate students have received similarly prestigious competitive funding awards. Recent graduates have been hired by academic departments and several other public and private entities.

As we all also know, the one constant in life is change; this is certainly the case for anthropology at WSU, with nine new faculty members joining the department in the last decade. We welcome another new faculty member this January, Dr. Luke Premo, moving to Pullman from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Germany. These successes have come in a decade that has seen tough times for academic budgets in most years. This continued growth and productivity is a testament to our faculty, current and past students, alumni, and skillful leadership. For the first time in a decade, we have also had a change in chair, as Bill Andreffsky Jr. stepped down in August. Having provided strong leadership through a period of growth in challenging times, Bill is enjoying a well-deserved sabbatical.

Despite change, anthropology at WSU remains committed to expanding funding opportunities for our students. Donating to the various anthropology scholarships, fellowships, memorial funds, and programs has become easier with access via the web. We greatly appreciate your generosity and I am happy to answer any questions about donations you might have. If you have questions, comments, news, or updates, please feel free to contact me at chair@wsu.edu.

Andrew Duff
Chair, Department of Anthropology

The Department Welcomes New Faculty

Luke Premo

I am an evolutionary anthropologist currently studying Pliocene and Pleistocene hominin behavior and paleodemography. I received my doctorate in 2006 from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. My dissertation research focused on how the fragmentation of woodland habitat during the Late Pliocene in East Africa may have affected the evolution of altruistic food sharing among Plio-Pleistocene hominins and the formation of Lower Paleolithic archaeological landscapes. Upon graduation, I accepted a postdoctoral position at the Department of Human Evolution at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, where I have been working for the last four years.

Although I am still very much interested in the evolution of altruism, I have also been addressing other questions, including why the genetic diversity of modern humans and Neandertals is so much lower than that of living hominoids, why human life history differs so markedly from other large-bodied primates, and how Pleistocene paleodemography helps us better understand why the archaeological record of the Lower and Middle Paleolithic appears temporally staid and spatially homogeneous. I am also interested in cultural transmission theory and, more specifically, in how various mechanisms of social learning affect levels of diversity and rates of change in attributes of material culture.

Luke Premo

In addition to teaching biological anthropology and human evolution at the undergraduate level, I will be teaching a range of graduate courses in the evolutionary stream. I hope that my experience in agent-based modeling will be of special use to students involved in IPEM. I am excited to join the Department of Anthropology in the spring of 2011, and I look forward to working closely with graduate students and faculty members on research topics of shared interest.

Recent publications

Premo, L.S., and J.B. Scholnick

In press. The spatial scale of social learning affects cultural diversity. American Antiquity.

Premo, L.S., and J-J Hublin


Your donations work in many ways toward scholarship, research, travel, and development in the Department of Anthropology

- Lipe Visiting Scholar Program
- Departmental Development Fund
  - Undergraduate Scholarships
  - Graduate Student Scholarships
- Graduate Student Travel and Research
- Museum Development Fund
- Janet Friedman Memorial Fund
- Harvey Rice Memorial Fund

For more information, visit our website at libarts.wsu.edu/anthro
Recent Faculty Publications

Andrew Duff
Duff, Andrew I., Karen R. Adams, and Susan C. Ryan

Duff, Andrew I., and Alissa L. Nauman

Colin Grier
Grier, Colin

Barry Hewlett
Leach, M., and B.S. Hewlett

Hewlett, B.S., and S.J. Macfarlan

Brian Kemp
Kemp, B.M., and D.G. Smith

Lawrence, D.M., B.M. Kemp, J. Eshleman, R.L. Jantz, M. Snow, D. George, and D.G. Smith

Jeanette Mageo
Mageo, J.

Rob Quinlan
Quinlan, R.

Darren Van, M., M. Borgerhoff Mulder, S. Bowles, P. Hooper, H. Kaplan, R. Quinlan, S. Sear, E. Schniter, C. von Rueden, A. Bell, and T. Hertz

Clare Wilkinson-Weber
Wilkinson-Weber, C.

In August 2010, the University of Arizona Press published Leaving Mesa Verde: Peril and Change in the Thirteenth-century Southwest edited by Tim Kohler, Mark Varien, and Aaron Wright. Andrew Duff and Bill Lipe, anthropology faculty, also contribute chapters, along with Eric Blinman, Wright, and Kohler. The volume emerges from a 2008 symposium at the Amerind Foundation in Dragoon, Arizona. It is the most comprehensive examination currently available of the factors involved in the famous depopulation of the northern Southwest by farmers in the A.D. 1200s. Chapters consider the climatic, demographic, and social contexts of the depopulation, the probable destination areas, the probable ethnic identities of the populations leaving the northern Southwest, and the reasons for the dramatic culture change seen in the eastern Pueblo Southwest in the late 1200s and early 1300s. Several of the chapters report data from the Village Eco-dynamics Project, a long-running research project now funded by NSF’s Dynamics of Coupled Natural and Human Systems Program, directed by Kohler, Varien, Craig Allen (USGS), and Ziad Kobti of the University of Windsor (see village.anth.wsu.edu).
AG0 Notes
The new school year presents a few changes and exciting activities within the Anthropology Graduate Organization.

2010-2011 AG0 officers
President: Caity Placek
Vice President: Doug Drake
Secretary: Jenna Battillo
Treasurer: Katie Harris
GPSA Representative: Jesse Clark, Amber Heckelman, and Erin McLraith
Stream Representative: Stefani Crabtree (archaeology), Amber Mear (cultural), and Casey Roulette and Courtney Helfrecht (evolutionary)

Representatives to the Anthropology Club: Katie Harris and Angela Sulfaro

Fundraising, community outreach, and academic scholarship are of central importance to the AG0 this year. We are making efforts to raise money from the yearly auction, departmental BBQs, and other fun events on campus. In addition to these traditional fundraising events, we are organizing pub quizzes, selling t-shirts, and hosting an on-campus Halloween party.

Community service and outreach will remain a strong focus this year. We are continuing to participate in the local Adopt-a-Highway program and are gearing up for Aka fundraising events. Money raised in the past has been used to fund the Aka School. In addition, a Scrabble tournament will be held to raise money for individuals living in Bwa Mawego, Dominica. All funds raised will be used to purchase school and medical supplies, which will be distributed to residents in the rural village.

Academic scholarship will be centered on the Lipe Visiting Scholar, the AG0 scholar, and the Annual Banquet. This year, we are honored to have Brian Hayden as our Lipe Visiting Scholar. The cultural stream will be choosing the AG0 scholar who is visiting in the spring and more information on this event and the Annual Banquet will be available in late fall.

Finally, the Brown Bag Series is back! These meetings are designed to prepare students for conferences while addressing important topics within anthropology and archaeology.

Graduate Student News
Stefani Crabtree and Kyle Bocinsky Awarded NSF Grants

In April the National Science Foundation announced the recipients of the 2010 graduate research fellowship program. Kyle Bocinsky and Stefani Crabtree, both students of Dr. Timothy Kohler, are honored to be the first two NSF GRFP (Graduate Research Fellowship Program) fellows in the WSU Department of Anthropology.

“When I saw the list of NSF GRFP recipients, seeing Kyle's name made it one hundred times better,” says Crabtree.

While Bocinsky and Crabtree work on two separate projects within the NSF-funded Village Ecodynamics Project, they offered each other collaboration during the application process, bouncing ideas off one another and helping edit.

Bocinsky's research focuses on bringing turkey domestication to the agent-based simulation of the VEP, looking at how people utilized alternative protein sources in the Southwest after deer became scarce. Crabtree will analyze how alliance formation among the ancestral Puebloans of the Southwest helped them survive during times of resource depression, and how alliances broke down and resulted in warfare. They both anticipate their research informing each other as they continue at WSU and as their careers progress.

Your Donations at Work
Jen Ferris
I was awarded the Janet L. Friedman Memorial Scholarship in Archaeology in 2010 for my achievements both as a doctoral graduate student and as an archaeologist working in cultural resource management. I have been working in CRM for the last nine years and have held a staff position in Seattle since finishing my master's degree at WSU in 2008.

While I find my work extremely satisfying, I realized that there was more research I wanted to pursue in conjunction with the Birch Creek Archaeological Project. This realization brought me back to WSU in 2009 to earn my doctorate. My research draws from multiple theoretical paradigms to explore how people operate within and navigate through convergent ethnic zones. Such zones profoundly affect the everyday lives of people in many social and technological arenas. The Birch Creek site (3SM1.81) is situated on the dynamic boundary between the Great Basin and Plateau culture areas, providing a platform from which to assess boundary construction and dissolution, the transmission of ideas, the manufacture of lithic projectile technology, and landscape use through the procurement of chert and obsidian toolstone during the Middle Archaic.

I am very appreciative of the Friedman Memorial Scholarship, which helped with continued site excavations during the summer of 2010.

Kelly Derr
I am a doctoral candidate in archaeology. My dissertation research focuses on the intensification of plants in pre-contact Coast Salish economies in the Gulf Islands of southwestern British Columbia. I am using fossil pollen, charcoal, and macrobotanicals collected from archaeological sites and associated bogs in the Gulf Islands to explore changes in plant use and landscape intensification through the use of anthropogenic fire. As a 2010 Scailes Scholarship recipient, I have used the funds to pay for pollen and charcoal processing and radiocarbon dating of key samples. The scholarship has helped immensely in helping me forward my research and data collection. I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Scoales for their generosity and support of WSU anthropology graduate students.

Kelly Derr
Jen Ferris
in the field, summer 2010.
Janet Friedman Memorial Scholarship
Roger Friedman

Four decades ago, the face of archaeology had a beard.

And while the field still leans male (and bearded), the pioneering work of a handful of intelligent, ambitious, and creative women opened the door for thousands of female archaeologists to make their mark. From her early explorations under Richard Daugherty at the seminal Ozette site near Neah Bay to her mentorship of dozens of women near the end of her life, Janet Friedman played a key role in bringing greater gender equality to archaeology.

Friedman led by word and deed. She received her doctorate in anthropology from WSU in 1975 and her vitae list management and active participation in 46 separate scientific studies, from Ozette to her later inspired work in cultural resource management. She was a recognized expert in environmental resource management, in the public’s involvement with archaeology and historic preservation, and in the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act. Perhaps most important to her in her later years as she battled leukemia, she was a mentor, a guide, a sounding board, and a friend for dozens of women who followed her into the field of archaeology and anthropology.

Today, the Janet Friedman Memorial Fellowship in Archaeology keeps alive her memory as it identifies and supports WSU students most likely to emulate this remarkable woman. Donations can be made at secure.wsu.edu/foundation/giving/enteramount.asp?Fund=Friedman%20Memorial%20Fellowship.

Quaternary Studies, Pine Manor, and the Janet Friedman Memorial Fellowship

WSU anthropology graduate activity began in the 1960s, getting a major impetus from a National Science Foundation grant to Richard Daugherty and Allan Smith to establish an interdisciplinary Quaternary studies program within the Department of Anthropology. The building chosen to house the new department was Pine Manor, which had been a men’s dormitory from 1938 to 1963. A doctoral program was initiated at the same time, and the first members of the Pine Manor Cohort descended into the new/old building in 1965. Most of the faculty and students housed there were archaeologists or Quaternary scientists, but a physical anthropologist (Grover Krantz), cultural anthropologist (Deward Walker), and linguist (Jim Goss) added to the mix.

Of the two dozen students in the first class of Quaternary scholars in the department, there was an eclectic mix of experienced state archaeologists, new bachelor degree holders, women, and people drawn to the Marmes and Ozette projects. While the past half-century has taken its toll on the former faculty and students, most of us still remain and continue to be involved with and support departmental programs.

To document, commemorate, and enjoy the memories from Pine Manor and the Quaternary studies program, Ruthann Knudson is compiling a history of the place and early program—and needs your help. We will begin this commemoration at the Palouse Posse Party at the 76th annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Sacramento on Friday, April 1, 2011. We would like to put up a display of pictures of Pine Manor and its inhabitants, emphasizing the first decade of the program (1965-1975), but all memories are welcomed. Stories about the facilities, projects, programs, and events will also be included (e.g., midnight patrols when the campus was under a burn threat)—but we hope most are about the people! We’d enjoy your company at the event, but whether or not you can get there, please help Ruthann put together this review.

Within that first corps of Quaternary scholars there were six women doctoral students, who Frank Leonhardt labeled Daugherty’s Daughters—Judy Bense, Janet Friedman, Lorraine Heartfield, Ruthann Knudson, Tef Rodeffer, and Leslie Wildesen. We’ve all gone on to interesting and rewarding careers, but sadly Janet died in 2002. In memory of her, her son Roger Friedman and his wife Jessica established the Janet Friedman Memorial Fellowship in the WSU Department of Anthropology. The endowment needs significant contributions to offset the losses of the past few years, and to strengthen its eligibility for state matching funds. Janet was part of the Ozette project and, like all her “sisters,” instrumental in establishing today’s field of cultural resource management before she succumbed to leukemia. Two fellowships have been awarded to date. Award criteria include students with interests in North American archaeology and/or cultural resource management, with preference going to female students. The Daughters, and hopefully the broader Pine Manor Cohort and all anthropology graduates, support this fellowship and ask that you contribute to it. To do so, please go to secure.wsu.edu/foundation/giving/enteramount.asp?Fund=Friedman%20Memorial%20Fellowship.

Please help us record the history of the Quaternary Studies Program and its life in Pine Manor, beginning with contributions to our April 1, 2011, gathering in Sacramento! Ruthann Knudson 3021 4th Ave. S. Great Falls, MT 59405-3329 406-216-2676, paleoknute@3rivers.net

Pine Manor in the early 1940s.
Faculty News

International Conference on Congo Basin Hunter-Gatherers

Barry Hewlett was one of the lead organizers of the International Conference on Congo Basin Hunter-Gatherers. This was the first international interdisciplinary conference to be held about the Congo Basin hunter-gatherers, more commonly known as “pygmies.” The conference focused on local and worldwide changes (such as deforestation, climate change, wars, and demographic change) and how they affect the hunter-gatherers. A wide variety of disciplines were represented, including archaeology, history, social anthropology, biomedicine, linguistics, physical anthropology, ethnomusicology, ecology, and geography. Karen Lupo sat on the scientific committee, and the conference featured presentations by WSU faculty members Ed Hagen, Barry Hewlett, Bonnie Hewlett, Karen Lupo, and Courtney Mechan as well as graduate students Adam Boyette, Mark Caudell, Courtney Helfrecht, Chris Kiahtipes, and Casey Roulette.

To learn more about the conference, visit www.cefe.cnrs.fr/ibc/conference/ICCBHG.htm.

Jeannette Mageo

Last summer I visited nine German ethnographic museums to begin work on a new project titled “Envisioning History: Samoan Colonial Art and Photographs.” This project builds on my work as a historical ethnographer writing about Samoa. Central to my most recent work are methodological questions as to whether images in dreams and performances reveal political, social, and personal experiences that people are unwilling or unable to put into words and, as such, can allow us to access cultural memories in ways other sources cannot.

I am also organizing a conference titled “Rethinking Attachment and Separation in Cross-Cultural Perspective” with Professor Naomi Quinn (Duke University Department of Anthropology). The conference will take place at WSU Spokane in May 2011 and aims to forward scientific thinking on this topic and raise the national profile of the WSU Department of Anthropology’s new research and training group in psychological and medical anthropology. All members of this group on the Pullman campus (Jeannette Mageo, Rob Quinlan, Marsha Quinlan, and Courtney Mechan) will be attending and presenting papers. The conference will also provide funding for four anthropology graduate students in the area of psychological anthropology to attend.

Marsha Quinlan

I am continuing my long-term work on health and ethnobotany in Dominica, West Indies. I also began medical anthropology research with two Washington communities. On the west side, I am collaborating with Northwest Indian College on a feasibility study among the Lummi Nation dealing with diabetes prevention through traditional plant use. I also began pilot research on health problems among Washington Hispanics working in the Columbia basin’s agricultural industry.

William D. Lipe receives the 2010 Alfred Vincent Kidder Award

William D. Lipe received the American Anthropology Association’s 2010 Alfred Vincent Kidder Award for eminence in the field of American archaeology. The Kidder award is given every two years to an outstanding archaeologist specializing in the archaeology of the Americas. The announcement noted: “Bill Lipe is known for his extensive contributions to research in Southwestern archaeology, his transformative role in the development of public archaeology, his devotion to teaching and mentoring students of archaeology, and his commitment to service in the field of archaeology.”
Alumni Profile

Judson Finley

Judson Finley completed his doctorate in anthropology from Washington State University in 2008. He is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Memphis, Tennessee, where he continues WSU’s tradition of interdisciplinary environmental archaeology.

Finley conducts postdoctoral research in two primary areas. First, he is expanding his dissertation research by examining late Pleistocene and Holocene environmental change across Wyoming’s Bighorn Basin. In collaboration with Marcel Kornfeld and Robert Kelly (University of Wyoming), this research documents a well-preserved late Pleistocene (40,000-10,000 BP) paleoecological record in the Pryor Mountains, and revisits its Mummy Cave, a rockshelter equivalent to the Marmes Site in its importance to North American prehistory. Work at Mummy Cave also involves WSU professor emeritus Nick Foit (School of Earth and Environmental Sciences) and WSU anthropology alumna Cynthia Fadem (Earlham College).

Finley’s second research area concerns the recent past of Crow and Shoshone people in northwest Wyoming. In collaboration with Laura Scheiber (Indiana University), Finley has developed an archaeological protocol for examining the remains of tipi camps in Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area using survey-grade GPS and shallow geophysics. The results of this work are featured in the trade journals American Surveyor and PositionIT, as well as the international research journal Antiquity. With support from the National Park Foundation as part of Ken Burns’ PBS documentary America’s Best Idea, Finley and Scheiber began a community archaeology program with members of the Crow tribe, bringing tribal youth and elders together with archaeologists at Bighorn Canyon in a week-long field project.

Finley and Scheiber have also taken their research to the backcountry wilderness east of Yellowstone National Park where in recent years wildfires have exposed numerous archaeological sites dating to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Associated with a distinct group of Shoshone known as the Sheepeaters, this archaeological record contributes to understandings of culture contact, ethnogenesis, and resilience in the decades leading up to and following forced settlement on reservations in the 1860s. Since 2006, Finley and Scheiber’s work has been included in two award-winning Amerind Foundation-sponsored sessions at the Society for American Archaeology annual meetings. In addition to an appreciation for the time-honored skills of backcountry outfitting, Finley’s mountain work has led him to diversify his research skills and interests in ceramic and obsidian archaeometry. The results of Finley’s synthetic obsidian source analysis study of the Central Rocky Mountains will be published in an upcoming issue of American Antiquity.

Representative Publications
Finley, Judson Byrd

Finley, Judson Byrd

Finley, Judson Byrd, Marcel Kornfeld, Chris C. Finley, Brian Andrews, George C. Frison, and Michael T. Bies

Scheiber, Laura L., and Judson Byrd Finley

Scheiber, Laura L., and Judson Byrd Finley

Scheiber, Laura L., Judson Byrd Finley, and Maureen P. Boyle

Surovell, Todd A, Judson Byrd Finley, Geoff Smith, Robert Kelly, and P. Jeffrey Brantingham

Cleaning house?
Retiring and moving out of your office?
Outgrown your project T-shirt collection?

The Museum of Anthropology is looking for objects and records associated with the archaeological collections we curate. We are interested in any objects, samples, field or research notes, and personal memorabilia related to these collections. In part we are hoping that we will recover items we’ve lost track of or replace incomplete records with copies researchers made for their own work. We are also interested in adding to our collections photographs, scrapbooks, correspondence, and other materials related to individuals’ experiences as students and others working in the field and on lab projects. The archaeological and cultural significance of the collections we manage is pretty clear to everyone, but there is also historical significance to these projects that is often overlooked. The early era of cultural resource management is something many of us remember and take for granted. However, as the field changes there is growing interest among scholars in exploring the social and cultural aspects of these unique times. If you have materials you are willing to contribute, please contact Mary Collins at collinsm@wsu.edu or 509-335-4314.

Mixed Sources
FSC
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Recent Graduates

2010 Master of Arts Degree

Emily Benz: Paleoenvironmental Reconstructions from the Island of Grenada, Caribbean Environments during the Time of Human Occupation.

Lindsey Clark: Inferring the Interaction of Two Chaco-Era Communities through Painted Ceramic Design Analyses.

Phillip Fisher: Points in Time: Stone Tool Analysis as an Indication of Group Movements at the Birch Creek Site (35ML181), Southeastern Oregon.

Whittaker Harpel: Conceptions of Masculinity among Arab Americans.

Alexandra Hayes: Breastfeeding among Rural Panamanian Women: Initiation and Duration Factors.

Kim Kwarsick: Lithic Raw Material Procurement and Technological Organization of Olympic Peninsula Peoples.

Khamille Neuman: Medical Pluralism in Guatemala.

Charles Reed: The Implications of Coalitional Enforcement and the Adoption of the Bow and Arrow in the Prehistoric Southwest.

Mark Remiker: Psychological Dimensions of Cooperative Labor Exchange in a Rural Caribbean Community.

Casey Roulette: Cultural Models and Gender Differences in Tobacco Use among Congo Basin Hunter-Gatherers.

Fernando Villanea: Evolution of the ABO Blood Group Locus in Pre-Columbian Native Americans.

2010 Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Kerensa Allison: Manioc Mothers: Subsistence Stability and the Influence of Tourism among the Napo Kichwas in the Ecuadorian Amazon.


Rain Forest...Continued from page 1

spanning the Holocene. Understanding the paleoecology of this region is particularly important because the Ngotto Forest is viewed as a sensitive research area associated with a number of endemic species and represents one of the last semi-pristine forested regions left in the northern Congo Basin.

Over the last few decades, questions about the timing, nature, and impacts of the transition to food production and the prehistoric extent and composition of rain forest habitats has generated controversy and catalyzed research in tropical forest zones. Rain forests are traditionally viewed as challenging environments that lack sufficient starches to support fulltime foragers. Permanent and intense human occupation of the Central African rain forest is linked to the advent of agriculture and the migration of Bantu farmers during the late Holocene (4500-2000 years BP) in response to the onset of arid conditions. The unintended consequence of this conventional view led researchers to conclude that rain forest habitats were only recently impacted by anthropogenic processes. But recent archaeological research shows the existence of full-time foragers in forested areas well before the advent of food production, perhaps spanning tens of thousands of years. The goal of this project is to lay the foundation for future research by gathering archeological and paleoenvironmental data to create a cultural and environmental chronological framework. Data collected by this project will have special implications for other research domains, such as forest ecology, and may help explain the low botanical diversity and unique plant ecologies that currently characterize the Central African rain forest. Documenting the longitudinal historical ecology of this area will also have practical applications to rain forest management projects in central Africa. The results of this research will be shared and integrated at the local level by a series of talks at host villages located within the forest. By disseminating the results of this research at the local level, I hope to encourage increased stewardship over local heritage and natural resources.