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In This Issue:

SocioCultural Anthropology

From Coca to Cocaine: The Development of Traditional Drug Use to Modern Drug Abuse

Tourism and the Sex Trade Industry in Southeast Asia

Is Seeing Really Believing? Interpreting the Experience of the Film Audience

Culture in Social Theory

Archaeology

Upper Paleolithic Portable Female Imagery

The Development of Early Aboriginal Watercraft in the Great Lakes Region

Biological Anthropology

The Human Genome Project and the Question of Ethicality

Nonmetric Skeletal Trait Analysis and the Inferences of Biological Distance Studies

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"With this step, may the tradition continue."
# Table of Contents

*Editor*:
Andrea L. Waters

**From The Editor** ................................................................................................................. i

**Introduction** ......................................................................................................................... ii

The Human Genome Project and the Question of Ethicality
  *Gyula Kovacs* .......................................................................................................................... 1

Upper Paleolithic Female Imagery: The Masculine Gaze, The Archaeological Gaze and the Tenets of the Archaeological Discipline
  *Jennifer Kirkness* ...................................................................................................................... 7

The Transformation of Coca to Cocaine: An Overview of Traditional Drug Use and Modern Drug Use
  *J. Marla Toyne* .......................................................................................................................... 19

Nonmetric Skeletal Trait Analysis and the Inferences of Biological Distance Studies
  *Jodi Lynn Barta* .......................................................................................................................... 33

Is Seeing Really Believing? Interpreting the Experience of the Film Audience
  *Alexis E. Dolphin* ...................................................................................................................... 41

Tourism and the Sex Trade Industry in Southeast Asia
  *Ashley Mason* ............................................................................................................................ 51

Culture in Social Theory
  *Greg Beckett* ........................................................................................................................... 63

The Development of Aboriginal Watercraft in the Great Lakes Region
  *Kimberly E. Monk* ..................................................................................................................... 71
Totem is an academic journal that not only publishes distinction in terms of research, argument, and originality, it is also a journal that extends the opportunity of publishing to all – undergraduate students, graduate students and professors alike. Perhaps that is why I have found the experience of editing to be many things – challenging, frustrating, but most importantly rewarding. It is through venues such as Totem that students enter into the research community, exposing their talents and shortcomings, and often realizing a potential that will spur on their academic journey. Thus, ultimately to have published one volume of such an extraordinary journal is very satisfying and I thank those who entrusted me with the responsibility. Furthermore, Totem pays homage to the fine academic standards and renowned faculty of the Anthropology department at the University of Western Ontario. The diversity in paper topics, style and argument is truly amazing, and gives the reader a sense of the range of Anthropological thought and research being conducted at the University of Western Ontario. I congratulate all the contributors to this year’s Totem, as I have witnessed, and often demanded from them a great deal of refinement and hard work. I hope that you find the papers presented herein interesting and enjoyable.

Andrea L. Waters
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
August 22, 1999
INTRODUCTION

Gyula Kovacs, a first-year honours undergraduate Anthropology student who hails from Hungary, submitted a paper on the ethical debates surrounding the human genome project for an introductory biological anthropology and archaeology class. He has been living in Canada for nine years and graduated from UWO with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology in 1998. His other interests include chess and hypnosis. Gyula puts forth a synopsis of the current literature, followed by a discussion of his views on the ethical considerations of mapping the human genome.

Jennifer Kirkness presents a feminist critique of the past interpretations of the Paleolithic ‘Venus’ figurines. Jennifer has completed her third year of a four-year honours degree in Anthropology, and in the future plans to attend graduate school. This essay was completed for the Human Evolution course. Jennifer questions not only traditional masculine interpretations of the ‘Venus’ figurines, but also the ‘archaeological gaze’ and the tenets of archaeology as a discipline.

J. Marla Toyne discusses the transformation of indigenous coca drug use in the Andean highlands, into the international use of cocaine. Marla examines the differences between the two substances, with attention towards the negative transference of stereotypes. Marla uses a number of perspectives to conduct this inquiry, examining archaeology literature, economic reports, as well as, ethnographic reports and experiences. Marla has completed her four-year honours undergraduate Anthropology degree, and in the future plans to attend graduate school focussing on archaeology in South America.

Jodi Lynn Barta discusses nonmetric skeletal trait analysis and the inferences of biological distance studies. She is entering into the fourth year of a Scholar’s Electives combined Honours BSc. in Anthropology and Genetics. In addition to being chief cheerleader for all the endeavors of her two children, her interests include the extraction, amplification and analysis of ancient DNA sequences from fossil remains and its application in studies of modern human origins. In the future, Jodi plans to pursue a PhD. in Anthropological Genetics and looks forward to the joys of independent research.

Alexis E. Dolphin, a graduate student entering into her second year in biological archaeology, discusses the experiences of the film audience. Complete with examples from popular culture, Alexis combines the theoretical perspectives of Foucault with other theorists to examine the agency given to the audience versus the filmmaker.

In broaching the topic of film theory, Alexis’ submission illustrates the multidisciplinary nature of Anthropology.

Ashley Mason considers the reality of tourism and the sex trade industry in Southeast Asian countries. Ashley frames her analysis within the context of globalization and development as she examines the causes that created and now drive this prominent underground industry. Ashley’s focus on the global tourist industry highlights the complexity of the situation, pointing out the overwhelming need for further anthropological and cross-disciplinary research in many areas. Ashley is entering into the second year of a Master’s program in Socio-cultural Anthropology.

Greg Beckett discusses the concept of ‘culture’, and the various interpretations of it, in past and current social theory. In deconstructing the term ‘culture’, Greg offers suggestions as to how the term can be better defined and applied. Greg Beckett is a second year Masters student in Cultural Anthropology. His research interests include both the symbolic and the political-economic aspects of the social production of knowledge, especially knowledge about the body, the self, and health in the Caribbean.

Kimberly E. Monk, currently entering her fourth year in anthropology, discusses the archaeological examples of indigenous watercraft in Ontario. Kimberly highlights the different construction and decorative styles used over spatially and temporally varied periods. She plans to pursue a career in marine archaeology focusing primarily on ship construction and material culture remains. These interests have led her to underwater archaeological fieldwork opportunities.