



Article

*Why Are There So Few Christian Anthropologists?
Reflections on the Tensions between Christianity and Anthropology*

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Dean E. Arnold



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In his provocative book, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, evangelical historian Mark Noll decries the lack of an evangelical mind in the academy, and challenges evangelical Christians to consider the importance of the cultivation of the mind as a divine calling. Unfortunately, the Christian mind in anthropology lags behind many disciplines because, among other reasons, there are so few Christian anthropologists. Why is this? According to a Carnegie Foundation survey, anthropology is the most secular of the disciplines. It has a record of hostility to Christianity that is borne out by the experiences by many evangelical Christians. This essay elaborates some of the tensions between anthropology and Christianity and provides a response to some of these tensions. It suggests that evangelical Christians can influence the academy by immersing themselves in it and by pursuing pure research rather than just focusing on more applied concerns such as missions, development and the church.

In 1994, historian Mark Noll published a provocative book called the *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*¹ lamenting the lack of intellectual impact of evangelical scholars upon the academy. Some of these themes were revisited and enlarged by Michael Hamilton in "The Elusive Idea of Christian Scholarship"² and by the responses of Joel Carpenter,³ Dorothy Chappell,⁴ and Don King.⁵ These scholars argue that evangelical history, combined with American pragmatism and utility, have degraded the value of exercising the mind for its own sake. Fur-

ther, the American values of achievement, individualism, and humanitarianism have focused attention on evangelism and helping others. While these tasks are important, evangelicals have often failed to love God with their minds. They have failed to grasp the importance of contributing to the secular academy, to recognize the latent significance of that contribution to the future of the church, and to cultivate the mind for its own sake as good stewardship of God's image. Evangelicals have failed to "tend the garden" of the knowledge of God's creation and to work toward redeeming it through that cultivation. Further, evangelicals have failed to recognize the importance of bringing glory to God by learning about him through the study of his created world.⁶

While all of these reasons are compelling, challenging, and relate to all disciplines, the problems between the Christian mind and anthropology go much deeper. In this paper, I want to explore some reasons why there are so few Christian anthropologists and why those that do exist have had little impact on the academy.⁷

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The Problem

In anthropology, the "Scandal of the Evangelical Mind" exists because there has been relatively little scholarship by Christian anthropologists directed to the academy. We have not "paid our dues" enough to establish credibility. Related to this problem is the hostility between anthropologists and missionaries, in particular, and between anthropologists and Christians in general. This hostility is not only borne out by my own personal experience and that of other Christian anthropologists and Christian students of anthropology, but is also reflected in a Carnegie survey of the religious and political views of departments in American colleges and universities.⁸ In that survey, 65% of respondents in anthropology departments answered "none" to the question: "What is your religion?" This percentage was the highest among all the disciplines, and was ten percent higher than the next highest department (philosophy). It was more than twice the average frequency (30%) of the "none" response among faculty in all disciplines.

The strong a-religious tendency of anthropologists is illustrated in a recent article by Christian anthropologist Robert J. Priest.⁹ Writing in the leading journal in the field, Priest documented how the phrase, "The Missionary Position"¹⁰ has become a powerful metaphor: (1) to disparage traditional Christianity and morality, and (2) to characterize asymmetric power and allegedly hegemonic relationships such as Christian missionary activity. The "missionary position" as a symbol:

... summarizes modernist objections to Christian morality as a morality of negation, as ethnocentric and as lacking adequate foundations. By post-modernists this symbol is employed to argue that modernism itself is a morality of negation, that it is ethnocentric and that it lacks adequate foundations. As a foundation for morality, rationality is as inadequate as God and special revelation.¹¹

Further, it:

... essentializes (and scorns) Christian morality as taboo morality and used this very scorn ... as a justification for imposing a taboo on speech form and explicitly religious subject position in academic discursive spaces.¹²

The hostility between anthropologists and Christians is also illustrated by a response from a Christian graduate student in anthropology: "I feel like I have been really inundated lately with the 'Christians are idiots'/'anthropologists can't be believers' sort of ideology ..." Another told me that her advisor had told her: "A Christian cannot be an anthropologist." Each year I learn of similar experiences of other Christian students of anthropology.

To some anthropologists, the term "Christian anthropologist" is an oxymoron. This perception betrays an important structurally-embedded assumption concerning

the relationship between anthropology and Christianity; they are simply incompatible. As a result, few Christians survive the attacks or the subtle (and often not-so-subtle) prejudice against them in the discipline.¹³ Those few who do exist are mainly missionaries or former missionaries and/or are heavily engaged in teaching and write primarily for Christians. They simply do not have the time or the resources to devote their lives to scholarship and speak to a sometimes hostile academy.¹⁴ The result is a largely invisible presence in the discipline and this invisibility reinforces the oxymoronic perception that Christians cannot be anthropologists.

A Brief History of Christians in Anthropology

The recent history of Christian anthropologists attending the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) affirms their meager numbers. Since 1964, I have attended roughly half of these meetings. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a handful of Christians got together at the AAA over a meal or a cup of coffee. Over the years, different Christian anthropologists came to our gatherings, but there was never more than a few, and the total aggregate number over this period was approximately six to ten.

In 1976, following the meeting of the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA) in Wheaton, Illinois, Christian anthropologists stayed behind to have their own session and to discuss their position in the discipline. When the decision to organize was raised, considerable discussion ensued, and the group was split on the outcome. One group wanted to organize and another group believed that an organization of Christian anthropologists would only subject us to more harassment and anti-Christian prejudice. The argument was that we had already suffered from anti-Christian bias among secular anthropologists. So, why make ourselves a larger, more obvious target? As a result, the "nays" carried the day, and no organization of Christian anthropologists emerged.

By 1987, more Christian anthropologists were attending the annual meetings of AAA and the numbers had grown from the 1976 ASA meeting in Wheaton. At the 1987 AAA meeting, we decided to organize informally as a "network of Christian Anthropologists" since many of the anthropologists were missionaries and seminary professors and had already gotten together at the national missiology conferences. A decision was made to apply for a slot on the program at the 1988 AAA annual meeting and to request a room for our gathering. Since then, attendees have ranged between thirty and fifty annually. Each year usually brings two or three new Christian anthropologists (unknown to us) or a grateful student "out of the closet" who thought that no other Christian anthropologists existed.



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The “Network of Christian Anthropologists” is an informal group of colleagues. It is “informal” in that one does not “join” it. There is no formal organization, and it has no creed or membership. But in the sometimes hostile, anti-Christian environment of anthropology, anyone who has the courage to call oneself a “Christian” and affiliate with us is welcomed and recognized as a brother or sister in Christ. As a result, our meetings have included Roman Catholics and Orthodox believers as well as Protestants from a range of creeds and denominations, including evangelicals and non-evangelicals alike.

In some respects, the Network of Christian Anthropologists is still a persecuted minority within the discipline. At the AAA meetings in 1993, in Washington, DC, we incurred the hostility from some of our professional colleagues when they would not vacate a room at the time that had been assigned to us. They had locked the two doors and would not let us into the room. When they finally allowed us to enter, some began chanting in derision, “Here come the Christians.” In other years, we have been assigned a “postage stamp”-sized meeting room when the coordinator had asked for a larger room. There were other occasions, my colleagues tell me, when we were omitted from the program index, or scheduled at the most inconvenient time.¹⁵ Sometimes, our Network meetings bring curious colleagues who want to see who these “Christian anthropologists” are and what they are doing. Such visitors are always welcomed, and are always invited to go to dinner with the Network group afterwards.

Even with the growth of the “Network,” the number of Christian anthropologists is still meager. With 30 to 50 people at the network meetings, the number of Christian anthropologists is minuscule compared to a usual meeting attendance of 4,000–5,000. Even at one percent of the total attendees at the larger AAA meeting, however, the number of individuals at the network meetings is deceptively inflated and does not represent the true number of professional Christian anthropologists in the discipline. Many Network attendees, for example, are students. Once one gets beyond the former missionaries and linguistic anthropologists attached to missionary organizations¹⁶ and seminaries, there are only a handful with Ph.D.s in

anthropology and very few that teach in colleges and universities. If one eliminates Christian colleges, there are precious few indeed! Based upon those whom I know from these meetings, I can only come up with four Christian anthropologists teaching at secular colleges and universities.¹⁷ Even at ten times my biased sample, the numbers of Christian anthropologists in the secular academy are minuscule.¹⁸

These meager numbers of Christian anthropologists are disproportionately distributed across the sub-disciplines of anthropology. Most are linguistic anthropologists with strong training in linguistics. The next largest group is the cultural anthropologists. In the subfield of archaeology, those Christians who also belong to the 6,800 member Society for American Archaeology are far less frequent; I know of only six Christian professionals in that sub-discipline.¹⁹ I have heard of one or two others, but I do not know them personally. At the Society for American Archaeology meeting in New Orleans, in the spring of 2001, three of us met but wrung our hands that, to our knowledge, we (and one other who could not meet with us) were the only Christians at a meeting of 4,000 attendees. As for the subfield of physical (or biological) anthropology, I know of no Christian who is a professional in the field and is active in the discipline.

If I am wrong and there are more Christian anthropologists than I have listed here, there is more of a “Scandal of the Evangelical Mind” than one might think. Those anthropologists who attend the national meeting and attend the network are only those who are active in the discipline. There may be others who choose isolation, professional inactivity, or remain “underground.” Why? I suggest that both the dearth of Christian anthropologists and their lack of visibility in the academy are related to the tensions between Christianity and the discipline of anthropology.

Sources of Tensions

For secular anthropologists, a “Christian” anthropologist is an oxymoron because two of the fundamental ideological assumptions of anthropology, the “antiquity and evolution of humanity” and “cultural relativism,” appear to contradict the teachings of the Bible. In reality, these contradictions are more

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illusory than real, but these perceptions are still a powerful ideology among anthropologists and part of their counter-cultural mystique.²⁰

Issues of Origins

The first significant tension between anthropologists and Christians consists of their different views of human origins. Anthropologists are committed to the evolutionary origins of humankind. One reason for this commitment is that the study of human origins is fundamental to anthropology because (as any introductory textbook to the discipline will testify) it is the discipline most involved in research on human origins. By way of contrast, the evangelical sub-culture has many Christians believing that so-called "creationism" is synonymous with "Christian" and a high view of the authority and inspiration of the Bible, while "evolution" is synonymous with "non-Christian" (or "liberal Christian") and a low view of biblical authority. I am always amused by this false distinction, but my mirth is always tempered with the reality that many Christians *really do* believe that the universe was created instantaneously less than 20,000 years ago and any evidence to the contrary not only goes against what the Bible says, but is a misreading (and some believe, a falsification, or deliberate fabrication) of the fossil evidence. To many anthropologists, this position is "Christian" and is fostered by a massive "creationist" literature that metaphorically reflects the creationist book title, *The Fossils Say No!*²¹ In reality, however, the fossils do not say anything at all without the presuppositions of the scientist—whether Christian or not. On the contrary, the Bible and science share common presuppositions about nature: it exists, it is inherently orderly, and it is knowable.

If Christianity and science share these presuppositions about nature, how does one integrate an anthropological perspective with a biblical perspective? Is there still a conflict when one gets beyond the level of these basic presuppositions? It would be erroneous to claim that there is no conflict between an anthropological perspective and the Bible. Nevertheless, the conflicts are not of the magnitude that many imagine.

One alleged conflict perpetrated by both Christians and anthropologists concerns a dichotomistic distinction between different agencies in the origin issue. Was "evolution" or "creation" responsible for the beginning of humans? Is the agency "divine" or "naturalistic"? Emphasizing such extremes obfuscates the underlying issues for the Christian.²² Divine agency ("creation") is not necessarily mutually exclusive from naturalistic agency ("evolution"). But, unfortunately, those who reject evolution and believe in a "young earth" model of origins have co-opted the term "creation." On the contrary, all Christians believe in the doctrine of creation.²³ That is, all that we know to be in the natural world has come into being through the willful act of an eternal and all-powerful divine personality whom we call "God." We could go further and say that the

"matter" or "stuff" of the natural world (such as chemical elements and energy) is not made out of the same substance of that triune personality, nor was it produced out of previously existing matter. Rather, the tangible substance that we call "matter" did not previously exist before creation. This means that the divine personality is totally "other" from what we know to be the tangible, natural world. Another way of talking about the "other-ness" of this personality is to use the term "spirit."

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The Bible affirms that this spirit is responsible for the beginning of matter as we see it and the origin of the universe as we know it. Elsewhere in Scripture, the text asserts that God is not just Creator, but also Sustainer of the universe and is involved in creation to accomplish divine purposes. Further, the "goodness" that Genesis attributes to creation suggests that nature reflects certain aspects of the character of God. The integrity of that reflection is so important that later in the Bible, it is averred that humans are responsible for knowledge about God from that created world alone.²⁴ Human sinfulness is insufficient to keep humans from knowing about God from creation.

Both science and the Bible thus assert an objective reality (called "nature") that is made of tangible "things" that have inherent patterns and structures and are knowable. To the Christian, these patterns and structures are consequences of the divine stamp on God's created world. Nature is God's revelation and humans come to know God by means of that revelation. One of the most important aspects of this "general" revelation is the human mind and its unique behavioral manifestation: language. Language permits us to understand God's special revelation, the written record of God's dealings with humans. Without a mind, human language, a tangible world that we can "see," and the integrity of nature that can be known, humans could never come to know God. Natural revelation is thus indispensable for understanding special revelation (the Bible).

Another, more traditional way of saying this is that God has revealed himself in two great books, nature and the Bible, and there should be no conflict between them because they have the same author. Both reflect God's



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character and both are necessary to know God and do his divine will. A mind, language, and an understanding of nature are all parts of general revelation that are needed to understand the Bible. Conversely, the meaning and purpose of nature cannot come from nature itself, but from our understanding of the Bible. One kind of revelation is necessary to more fully understand and give meaning to the other. Meaning does not come from “data” or cultural, biological, or physical facts but from beliefs, ideology, and worldview. Said differently, the great questions of life, “Who am I?” “Where did I come from?” “Where am I going?” (Or “What is the purpose of my existence in the universe?”), are not questions answerable by nature itself, but rather by the meaning given to it by God and by those who bear God’s image.

This approach to the relationship of nature and the Bible suggests that the conflicts between anthropology and Christianity do not come from the level of nature and the Bible, but from the level of our interpretations of the Bible and from our understanding of science based upon our hermeneutics of nature. These are genuine conflicts, but not the kind that many Christians may immediately recognize. First, there is the conflict between natural and supernatural explanations. Natural explanations are based upon materialistic presuppositions that provide scientific causes, while Christians believe that God is the cause. These two apparently opposing explanations, however, are not necessarily contradictory.

Naturalistic explanations are instrumental causes that are one kind of divinely created process by which divine power sustains the universe. But, God is also a “first cause,” or “ultimate cause,” who brought the naturalistic forces into being and who continually sustains them through divine power, fulfilling God’s purposes throughout the history of the natural world. Biological characteristics are favored (or not favored) through natural selection (among other mechanisms of evolution), but God is sovereign over the forces of natural selection. Scientific explanations that rely on naturalistic and material explanations thus are not necessarily contradictory to first causes or ultimate causes because such explanations are only immediate and proximate to the phenomena studied

and may be instrumental for a sovereign God. No necessary conflict thus occurs between instrumental causes and ultimate causes because the methodology of science can only reveal immediate and proximate causes that are physically and tangibly expressed in knowable phenomena.

While the apparent conflict of supernatural versus natural causes for the origin and perpetuation of the universe can be handled as a matter of perspective, the conflict between anthropology and popular readings of the Bible is most apparent with regard to the beginning of the first humans.²⁵ At the end of the first chapter of Genesis, the writer says that humans are made with a divine imprint, or “image.” Then, the text suggests that the first humans had a unique origin in the creative process such that God was more directly involved in fashioning a creature that exclusively and uniquely reflected God’s divine character. This unique creation had the capability for language, but with personal responsibility. This responsibility involved the ability to make choices, but because this creature was a part of the rest of creation and interconnected with it, those choices had physical and nonphysical consequences.²⁶

From one popular reading of the Bible, Adam and Eve were the first humans, uniquely created by God, and all of humanity is their descendants. Theologically, the link between Adam and modern humans is essential for the responsibility of Adam’s act of disobedience to fall on all humanity. This act had unintended consequences for Adam and reveals a link between the material and spiritual worlds and between what some might think is an amoral universe (nature) and the moral basis for that universe (God). From the beginning, however, humans had a moral responsibility to take care of their environment. When they failed to follow instructions, they were banished from the garden, and their failed responsibility had physical and spiritual consequences.

The Adam-modern human link is also important to account for God’s image being transmitted to all humans, in some accounts, through sexual reproduction. To believe otherwise, leads us down the road of Manichaeism and a separation of the “spiritual” from the “physical.” From an anthropological perspective, however, humans began

through a long series of changes in hominid populations (human-like creatures) that evolved from a common primate ancestor with chimpanzees²⁷ less than about seven million years ago.

Those Christians who want to bridge this chasm between the biblical and anthropological views may do so, for example, by writing off the first few chapters of Genesis as nonhistorical, or by appealing to God-guided evolution as an explanation. While both of these positions solve many difficulties, and are held by many scientists who are Christians, they leave some knotty problems. From an orthodox Christian perspective, these problems include the development of language, symbolic behavior, and human interconnectedness with the natural world, not just because humans are unique and part of that world, but because they bear responsibility for what they do—whether the consequences of their actions are intended or unintended. Their choices can have far-reaching and cosmic consequences. Can these characteristics be derived from biological evolution? In spite of speculation to the contrary, even some Paleolithic archaeologists recognize significant revolutionary cognitive differences at the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic that are associated with modern humans in Western Europe. Some have argued that this difference may have been caused by a genetic mutation. But, does this explain the human “mind”? Scientific explanations for human origins, however, speculative or not, will always be naturalistic and materialistic because of the nature of the presuppositions of science.

Another of the knotty problems of God-guided evolution consists of a uniquely modern version of the Gnostic problem: the biological aspect of humanity is totally different and separate from its “spiritual” side. Such notions tend to deny the biblical view of the unity of the human person by arguing that the human body and brain evolved first and the “spiritual” creation of humans in “the image of God” came later by a unique divine act.²⁸ The divine image was thus separate from the biological evolution of the human body and brain. The divine image, however, is not just some mystical quality infused into an animal at some remote point in the past, but rather has real biological and cognitive foundations that give it a physical basis. As near as we can tell, modern human cognitive and cultural capacities developed very late in the hominid sequence. They were in place by the Upper Paleolithic Period in Europe (about 35,000 BC at the latest), and seem to have a solid biological basis in the human brain. The Upper Paleolithic thus seems to be a likely beginning for the “embodied image of God.”²⁹

The price of this position of God-guided evolution³⁰ (as attractive as it might seem) is that it tends (but not always) to deny the historic character of the early chapters of Genesis.³¹ In evolution, populations evolve. With the biblical text saying that the first humans were a single cou-

ple, one is left struggling with the theological implication of how this couple can be reconciled with a “population” for the evolutionary origin of humans. More important, if one takes the Genesis account as, at least, theological history, it is difficult to understand how a population collectively bore the responsibility for disobedience against the divine will, and how it could have emerged in any way other than through a single couple. This problem, of course, can be eliminated by arguing that humans began with a divinely-selected “first couple” from a larger group of pre-existing hominids. But, this position still leaves questions about the Gnostic separation of the biological beginnings of humans and the subsequent divine imprint and questions about the social, and potentially sexual, interaction of this couple with other members of non-Adamic hominid populations at the time. Are the “image of God” and “original sin” passed on by means of a physical lineage through normal sexual reproduction? Or, is there some other means of transmission?

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Among other reasons, a historical basis of an initial human pair has validity for Christians because it accounts for the unusual and unique place of humans in the natural world, why evil is so pervasive in humanity, and why humans have responsibility for it. Needless to say, these fundamental issues set the stage for understanding the need for redemption and Christ’s atoning death. It is this latter point and the analogy between Adam and Christ made twice in the New Testament that are the strongest biblical evidence for a historical Adam. Both strengthen the position for a historical Adam that was uniquely created, whatever that unique creation or “divine image” in humans might mean materialistically.

Sadly, much of what is available to lay people about these issues is sloppy or questionable scholarship at best and outright deception at worst. While purporting to provide Christian answers to origin issues, some publications may, in fact, erode the very message that they are trying to proclaim: The God of the Bible is a God of truth and integrity, and the world that God has created is real, bears the stamp of the Creator’s character (despite nature’s



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fallen state), and it can be known (despite human's fallen state). Further, nature itself and the Bible's use of the metaphors of nature help humans understand who God is and how to know him. A doctrine of creation that affirms the integrity of natural revelation as a reflection of the character of God is thus absolutely essential to be able to know about, and proclaim a God of Truth who can be known from the Bible. The God of the Bible is not an aloof deity of disembodied and immaterial spirit that bears little or no relationship to the integrity of the world (and its past) that is a product of divine creation. Authors that undermine a scientific approach to the past are thus the poster villains of Noll's book. For those of us who are Christian anthropologists, they are "Exhibit A" of the "Scandal of the Evangelical Mind." Their message of the Gospel is undermined by their implicit denial of a God who proclaims the divine character in nature and can be known from it. As Christians, we need to be committed to the pursuit of truth, wherever it may be found, and no matter how inconvenient or threatening it may seem—anything less challenges the truth of the God we worship. Truly, as Noll has written, there is a scandal of the evangelical mind and it appears to be greater in anthropology than in any other discipline.

Cultural Relativism

Besides the issues of human origins, the second ideological conflict between Christianity and anthropology concerns cultural relativism. Notions of relativism in the history of American anthropology have their roots in works such as Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*³² and those by Melville Herskovits.³³ Historically, however, cultural relativism was a methodological reaction to the ethnocentrism of nineteenth century anthropology that used western European culture as a standard of comparison for cross-cultural description and theory construction. To counter this tendency, the first American anthropologists formulated the notion of cultural relativity: in order to study a society and understand its cultural practices, one must see those practices from the perspective of the members of that society. For some, especially ethicists, philosophers, scholars in multicultural studies, and some anthropologists, this methodological relativism was extended to moral and ethical

relativism. To them, cultural relativism was a belief that all cultural diversity, including morality, is relative to the culture in which it occurs and that no ethical or moral pattern ought to be universally applied to all cultures.

Although this fusion of "cultural" and "ethical" relativism was also propagated by some anthropologists in the first half of the twentieth century, it has been abandoned by anthropology since 1971, when the American Anthropological Association developed a code of ethics.³⁴ Such a document is hardly one that would be expected in a discipline that is reputedly ethically and morally relative. Some contemporary anthropologists, however, still believe in a kind of ethical relativity, but officially, anthropology has moved beyond this, and cultural relativism (as moral and ethical relativism) has not been an issue since the Vietnam War stimulated reflection about the responsible uses of anthropological research. Rather, cultural relativism simply has come to mean the suspension of judgment and of one's own cultural biases until one better understands the culture under study. Then, moral judgments and moral action are possible and anthropologists *do* make moral decisions about issues such as refugees, immigrants, indigenous rights, war, the loss of land of indigenous peoples, and female genital mutilation. Throughout the last thirty years, anthropologists increasingly have committed themselves to causes that protect the people that they study, and champion causes of the poor and exploited people of the world.

Relativistic morality dies hard in a post-modern world and ethical and moral variations of cultural relativism still persist in disciplines outside of anthropology such as those concerned with pluralism and multiculturalism. More important for anthropology, however, is the underlying methodology that led to the development of relativism and still profoundly influences the discipline: immersing oneself in a foreign culture in the "field" as a participant-observer. The importance of this approach was eloquently described by the late Joseph B. Casagrande.

[Field research is a challenging scientific undertaking, an adventure of both the mind and the spirit.] Immersed in the life around him, the anthropologist may experience an exhilarating sense of coming to understand another peo-

ple and of being accepted by them. He may also at times undergo a shattering feeling of isolation, of strangeness and disorientation, and yearn for the comfort of accustomed things. Herein lays the dilemma, for he is neither full participant in the life he studies, nor simply a passive background observer of it. He is something of both, a role nicely summarized in the double term, "participant-observer." Not born to the alien culture or committed to it, the anthropologist must stand at a certain psychological and emotional distance from it. If he is an objective scientist, he cannot "go native." Neither can he hold himself aloof and observe human behavior as a naturalist might watch a colony of ants; with fellow humans there is both the possibility and necessity of communication. One's capacity for imaginatively entering into the life of another people becomes a primary qualification for the anthropologist. For him, the "field" is the fountainhead of knowledge, serving him as both laboratory and library.³⁵

The "field" is holy ground to the anthropologist and going there is almost a sacred rite of passage. Casagrande called it both "laboratory" and "library." This "rite of passage" gives anthropologists a different, more objective view of another culture, less tainted by one's own cultural biases. A similar perspective is reflected by Georges Condominas in his Distinguished Lecture to the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in 1972.

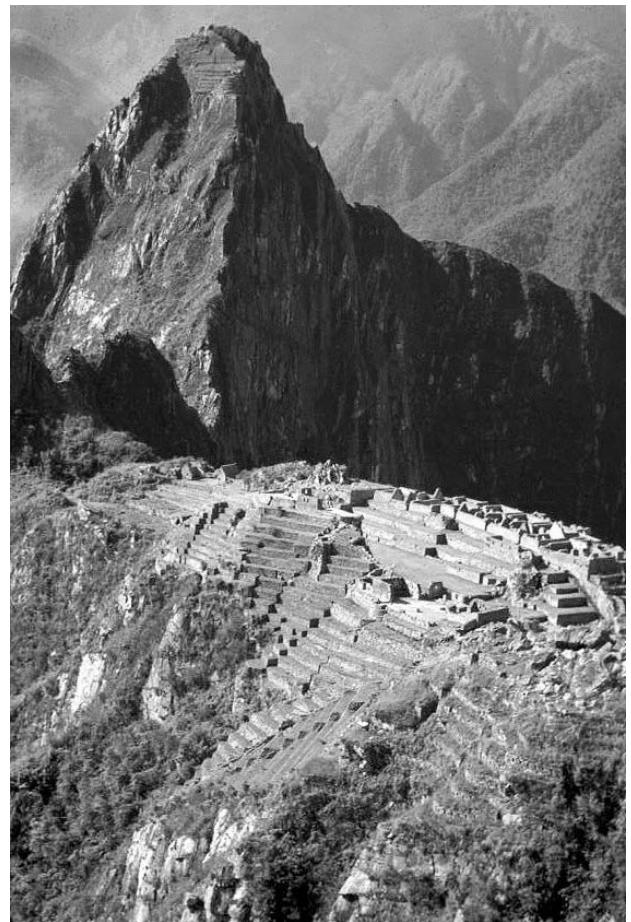
... the most important moment of our professional life remains field work; at the same time our laboratory and our *rite de passage*, the field transforms each of us into a true anthropologist.³⁶

These quotes powerfully reflect the anthropological mystique: fieldwork using participant-observation is historically the "heart" of anthropology. It is an essential prerequisite for the collection of data and it is an indispensable component in the training of every anthropologist. For many of us, fieldwork is the reason that we found anthropology attractive in the first place. All of the talk about holism, generalization, theory, and the "science of humanity" is trumped by one very important personal bias: we love fieldwork and look forward to the time when we can return again "to the field."

Anthropological fieldwork is different than that of the missionary, tourist, development worker or diplomat. It is different than any other science or social science that does work in the "field." Immersion in the life of the people is not living on expatriate compounds, obtaining one's food from the embassy commissary, going to cocktail parties with local movers and shakers, or having the comforts of home in a foreign setting. In order to truly understand another culture, one must live with the members of that

culture, eat their food, and try to see the world as they see it. This takes deep commitment to the people one studies, and the experience can be difficult, uncomfortable, and disagreeable. The results can be greatly rewarding, however, and an anthropologist can come to understand a group of people relatively quickly. Indeed, during a visit to Bolivia some years ago, one missionary admitted to me that an Argentine anthropologist had learned more about her community in six months than she had learned in seven years.

Fieldwork using participant-observation thus makes a significant contribution to the ideology of cultural relativism. Once one is immersed in another culture, and understands it from within, the anthropologist sees just how "relative" cultural practices can be. Becoming a participant-observer thus reinforces anthropological beliefs about cultural relativism and gives the belief personal power and meaning.



Anthropologists often go to remote locations to do their field work. Although well-known and highly popular, the Inca site of Machu Picchu is located in the jungles of southeastern Peru, and except for a tourist hotel, living and working there means living without the comforts of home. Research can also be challenging physically such as investigating the site of Huayna Picchu, the peak in the center of the photo (with terraces on the top of it). Ascending the stairway to the top can be challenging as well as dangerous.



Cross-cultural immersion provides the basis of a critique of Christianity that challenges one's faith and its social and cultural dimensions. ...

Some Christians emerge from their field experience and graduate training having left their faith behind.

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On the other hand, anthropologists believe that Christians are ethnocentric, arrogant, and “pre-judge” cultural practices before they understand them. For the Christian anthropologist, however, it is the empathy and understanding of the people that one studies that makes the experience of cultural immersion similar to the Incarnation. No secular anthropologist would admit it, but ideally, the anthropologist tries to have an experience that metaphorically mirrors much of the Incarnation. If one compares the Incarnation with fieldwork as a “participant-observer” described above by Casagrande, then one can see the similarities. Jesus subjected himself to the institutions of human culture without losing his divinity; he was a “participant-observer” without losing objectivity of who he was, or why he came. Further, Christ also withheld judgment, reserving it only for the self-righteous, and set it aside in order to accomplish another task, the reconciliation of humanity with God.³⁷ The anthropological experience of participant-observation, however, differs from the Incarnation in the purpose of the immersion experience and few anthropologists would admit a desire to transform or redeem the culture that they study, at least initially.

For the Christian anthropologist, field research and one's own experience as a participant-observer take on a new meaning. His or her non-Christian professors and student colleagues inevitably ask the hard questions: Why not just leave these foreign cultures alone? Do they really need a western religion? Do they really need a western God? Are they really as bad off as missionaries would lead one to believe? These issues also go deeper for Christians because questions about the cultural embeddedness of Christianity force them into deep reflection about the relationship of their faith to the anthropological perspective. It causes them to reflect on the cultural and social dimensions of Christianity.

Anthropology as Cultural Critique

Cross-cultural immersion provides the basis of a critique of Christianity that challenges one's faith and its social and cultural dimensions. It provides another explanation for the antagonism between anthropology and Christianity and contributes to the paucity of Christian anthropologists. While being a participant-observer gives anthropologists a different, more objective view of another



A wife and children of a potter in Ticul, Yucatan. Participant-observation provides great empathy and understanding of a different way of life. Most potters live on the edges of poverty, often suffer great tragedies (hurricanes, sickness, and lack of sales), and have few material resources on which to draw in these times of crisis.

culture and is less tainted by one's own cultural biases, it also provides them with a more objective and critical view of themselves and their own culture. For Christian anthropologists, the experience also provides a different view of their faith, missionary activity, and its social and cultural dimensions.

Some Christians emerge from their field experience and graduate training having left their faith behind. Indeed, some secular anthropologists came out of evangelical and fundamentalist backgrounds and became disillusioned with Christianity during their doctoral program, and/or had a "social science" conversion experience. In this experience, they recognize the western cultural assumptions in the praxis of Christianity and see it myopically as a product of western civilization and American values such as those elucidated by Arensbeg and Niehoff.³⁸ I personally know of seven professional anthropologists who are former missionaries, or who came from evangelical backgrounds, for which their "Christian experience" is no longer real or relevant. I suspect there are many more. One, Elmer J. Miller, went public with this crisis of faith by saying that he could no longer affirm the uniqueness of the Christian claim to truth.³⁹

Such a crisis of faith is not limited to Protestants. Joanne Mulcahy recounts her own struggles with the faith of

her childhood during her field experience in Alaska. She recounted how the sensory richness of an experience in a Russian Orthodox Church overrode her intellect and carried her back to the Roman Catholic ritual of her youth, but she refused to submit to that memory.⁴⁰ Later, she longed for the faith that an informant described and imagined it similar to her own childhood belief:

But almost as quickly as the longing surfaced, I wriggled from its grip. I had replaced religion with the structural elegance of linguistics, folklore, and cultural anthropology. The patterns of social science, I concluded, would tame the power of the incomprehensible.⁴¹

While fieldwork and anthropological training can challenge one's faith, field experience also creates a different perspective of the anthropologists' own culture even without a crisis of faith. This experience makes them a rather "different" group of people. In many respects, they become mavericks—counter-cultural gadflies who see the world differently and challenge traditional worldviews and social institutions.

The training of anthropologists provides them with insight that may be threatening to social structures of Christian organizations. This insight leads to critiques that challenge the cultural assumptions of the American evan-



A Quiche woman shaman offering incense to the mountain god on an altar near the town of Chichicastenango in highland Guatemala. Christian anthropologists often find themselves observing rituals and ceremonies not in harmony with their Christian faith and must learn to understand.



*There is
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geical subculture and those of Christian institutions such as the church, para-church organizations, missions, and confessional colleges. Such critiques are important for the church because the Christian community needs to be more accountable and responsible in understanding how its culture affects its ministry, evangelism and biblical interpretation. It should recognize that the cultural expressions of Christianity are different than the transcendent reality that Christians engage through their "faith." This reality is an intangible, totally separate, all-powerful personality who came to earth in human form to establish a relationship with humans. It is very different from the organizations of Christians in America, or in any other society. Such critiques, however, exist more between anthropological explanation and Christianity as a social and cultural institution, and between anthropology and the Bible as a cultural document, than it does between anthropology and what the Bible actually teaches. There is a conflict between Christians and anthropologists, and between Christianity and anthropology, but not necessarily between anthropology and the historic Christian faith. Indeed, little of what most of us know tangibly as "Christianity" transcends cultural barriers, and it desperately needs to be critiqued anthropologically to fulfill the mission of the church more effectively.

These problems become evident when Christian leaders pontificate on everything from issues of origins to politics, and are more than happy to assert their power on issues that are rather distant from biblical values and from their own academic and professional field of study. The flap over the "gender inclusive" translation is a marvelous example of the use of ideology and beliefs to legitimize a position of power as an inheritor of the "truth" as rightful privilege. This conflict is so foreign to biblical values of humility and the dangers of power that the Christian anthropologist is virtually forced to use a structural interpretation: power elites manipulate ideology to reinforce and legitimize their position of power. To anthropologists, whether an ideology is true or not is not the point. Rather, they recognize the importance of elites acquiring and maintaining power through the use of ideology. This is true of churches, denominations,

para-church organizations, political parties as well as nation-states such as our own.

Such a cultural critique can be disturbing to Christians because when it is applied to Christianity, it demystifies their religion, challenges the sacred, upsets popular views, and challenges charismatic leaders. While the presence of God in our world and his sovereignty is primary and sufficient as an explanation, we are also humans who are bound by sin and selfishness, our culture and our social structures. Such structures and the values that they embody may be evil, unchristian, and unbiblical. Explaining them with pious religious language elevates them to a level of being the only explanation, and ignores the role of structure and the social and cultural values that drive that structure. Further, such verbal explanations may be manipulative, hypocritical, and arrogant, and may be used to preclude challenge by dissenters that would ensure accountability.

Religious language, however, consists of symbols that bind people together, convinces them that they should keep the rules, and thus reinforces the power and structure of the leader of the organization. This union of structure and ideology and its latent functions with other conscious explanations was recognized by Karl Marx in the nineteenth century when he called religion the "opiate of the people." In this quote, he was expressing a very simple explanation that anthropologists (whether Christian or not) know too well: that the religious explanations and religious symbols, regardless of their truth value or metaphysical basis, can be used to reinforce existing social and political structures. If such structures are organized hierarchically and lack accountability, then they can be used to perpetuate evil by convincing others that they are doing good.

Such critiques of Christianity can prove fatal to Christian fellowship and can discourage a career in anthropology, or they can force Christian anthropologists underground and render them "invisible." But, such critiques can, on the other hand, also strengthen one's faith and give Christian anthropologists biblical basis for social justice. They can also refine and focus the mission of the church and make it more effective, if it has the will to change.

The Role of Family

A fourth reason for the tension between Christianity and anthropology concerns the effect of fieldwork on family life. In anthropology, field work is essential to be credible in the secular academy. Such research, however, takes anthropologists to locations to which travel is often expensive for a family. The financial and time demands for this research and the emotional stress required by immersion of a spouse and children can be difficult. Separation from one's family in order to undertake field research can also be difficult. Isolation without immersion can be alienating, but immersion, in spite of its similarity to the Incarnation, creates suffering and trauma—as was the case for Christ. Life on the field can be incredibly lonely without the support of friends, family, and the symbols of home.

The challenge of immersion and living as close as one can to the people whom one studies creates great hardship such that even basic necessities such as obtaining food, staying healthy, and answering the call of nature can produce challenges undreamed of in America. There are also physical challenges such as a different climate, a different

altitude, and intellectual challenges such as learning the local language. And, there are the emotional challenges to survive the inevitable conflict of one's own values with those of the new culture.

If Christians work in the field with secular colleagues, they may experience a "double whammy" because they must deal with the conflict of the values of their non-Christian colleagues as well as those of the culture being studied. On top of all this, they must do their work, develop relationships with their informants, and collect data. Often, the strain is too great for a spouse. Subsequently, the anthropologist may not go to the field.

Sometimes the loneliness and isolation of the field create dependency on the use of drugs and alcohol. At other times, this loneliness creates a deep desire for intimacy and makes one vulnerable to the temptation of a sexual tryst with a colleague or a native.

As I write this, example after example of these kinds of problems flood into my memory from people I know, from my experiences in the field (both alone and with



Quechua-speaking Andean peasants taking a break from threshing barley to drink cane alcohol and maize beer near the town of Sangarara in a very remote section of southern Peru. The people in the Andes have a tradition of ritual drinking, and Christian anthropologists must make lifestyle choices that relate to their Christian faith in these situations. Life in the Andes is also physically challenging. With no place to sleep and nowhere to eat in Sangarara, I asked the police to sleep in the jail, but they offered me a bed in their dormitory instead. When I went to shave the next morning, I discovered that the shaving water had frozen because the village is located about 13,000 feet above sea level. Although I arrived on the back of a truck, in order to leave the village, I had to walk some 15–20 miles to find a truck to take me to Cuzco.



Christian anthropologists ... tend to see their scholarship through American cultural glasses. This perspective emphasizes pragmatism and utility ... and focuses on the traditional mission of the church ... [It] fails to see scholarship as a stewardship of one's mind, and as an activity that simply brings glory to God regardless of its utility.

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colleagues), and from the informal “culture” of the discipline. Needless to say, these problems are hard on marriages, and in the last forty years, I have seen many marriages of my anthropological colleagues break up. Hardly a year passes that I do not learn of a break up of a marriage of at least one colleague whom I know, or learn of a problem of another with drugs and alcohol. In sum, the “culture” of the discipline can be hard on Christians, especially because of lifestyle issues, and can deeply affect the quality of marriage and family life.

Problems Stemming from the Church's Values

Besides the tensions between anthropology and Christianity, another contribution to the limited impact that Christian anthropologists have made on the secular academy concerns the fact that they tend to see their scholarship through American cultural glasses. This perspective emphasizes pragmatism and utility (“What can I do with it?”) and focuses on the traditional mission of the church (“How will it make a difference in missions or implementing the ‘great commission’?”). This singularly American pragmatism and concern with American values fails to see scholarship as a stewardship of one’s mind, and as an activity that simply brings glory to God regardless of its utility. In other words, professional scholarship is an activity that must be practical in some way as a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

The application of anthropology to missions has a long and distinguished history of more than fifty years. While such scholarship is essential for Christians and for missions and it is scholarly, it is not a kind of anthropology that has influenced the secular academy in the discipline. Similarly, writing for Christians, about Christian themes or from a Christian perspective—as important as it is—is not sufficient to influence the academy. Non-Christian anthropologists probably will never read nor engage this literature, and it probably will never be influential in the anthropological world. In anthropology, anti-Christian prejudice is one bias which is, and has been, politically correct. This point is masterfully documented in the article by Robert Priest cited earlier in this paper.

Anthropology and Education

Besides the tensions between anthropology and Christianity and a preoccupation with the church’s cultural values, another reason for so few Christian anthropologists concerns education. The model of Christian scholarship is largely a “humanities” model and is geared almost exclusively to reading, the hearing of written language, and writing. We favor the student who reads well, learns what he or she has been told to learn, can write about it well, and can do so efficiently. The learning is cognitive and favors a learning style that is based upon written language. Linear, rather than visual and contextual thinking is selected for and synthesis and distillation are emphasized more than intellectual creativity. Encouraging students with this style of learning to consider a life of scholarship has great value. But, if we persist in training these kinds of students exclusively, then we will never have many Christian anthropologists who need to be creative, nor visual and experiential learners who can analyze, describe experience, and synthesize their observations.

My best experiential learners, with the most sensitivity, insight, and creativity in analyzing themselves and other social settings are not the academic “stars.” My worst experiential learners are those who cannot handle the ambiguity of nonlinear contextual learning, and they are often “good” students in other disciplines. It does not matter that life experience is visual, contextual, and ambiguous. Rather, the most successful experiential learners are not necessarily the most academically successful, but are often sociology/anthropology majors and some literature and science majors who are used to translating experiences into words and who are good writers. Christian higher education is such that it will continue to produce history, philosophy, literature, political science, and theology scholars, but few scholars in fields where the frontiers with Christianity are the greatest such as anthropology.

Traditional scholarship in anthropology has emphasized a “scientific model” of scholarship which has focused on the discovery and description of new information based largely upon sense experience, not written documents. For the biologist, the sense expe-

rience comes from observation in the field or the laboratory. For the anthropologist, that sense experience comes from “the field,” in the immersion in the life of another culture in its natural setting. This is one of the lessons that one learns in the “professional culture” of anthropology: the field, as Casagrande put it, is the “fountainhead of knowledge.”

This problem is also illustrated in the funding of Christian scholarship. The model chosen for Christian scholarship is the “humanities” model. The problem is not that the model is bad, but that it is exclusive, Gnostic, and firmly embedded within the values of American culture: “Christian scholarship” must be on religious topics, for Christian ends, with explicit Christian presuppositions. Scholarship, however, is socially and somatically embedded and Christian influence on the secular academy comes from this embeddedness rather than from disembodied ideas on a printed page. Just like the Incarnation, Truth is embodied in a person—not in good ideas. “Christian” scholarship and its influence on the academy thus ultimately depends just as much on how we live our lives as scholars and what we do, than just upon the disembodied ideas we have—as important as they are.

Conclusion

Given all of the reasons for the tensions between anthropology and Christianity, and the dearth of Christian anthropologists, can Christians in anthropology survive under the pressures described here? Can they make a contribution to the secular academy? The problem of the dearth of Christians in anthropology is not because there is no evangelical mind. Rather, in anthropology, the “scandal of the evangelical mind” exists because of a complex set of reasons that involve tensions between Christianity and some of the most basic ideologies of anthropology, the cultural critique of Christian institutions that anthropology provides, the problem of family, the problems stemming from the church’s values, and the orientation of Christian higher education.

Given these problems, how can the Christian anthropologist influence the academy? Pure research in a climate of professional competency is a crucial first step in influencing anthropology positively with a Christian viewpoint. Influence requires learning about the professional subculture in graduate school. It requires consistent attendance, interaction, and presentation of papers at professional meetings over years, not just an occasional participation when these meetings occur within a few hours drive of one’s home. Influencing the discipline requires fieldwork at the proper time during those graduate years. It requires publication in professional journals and the willingness to turn one’s back on the value of pragmatism and utility and see scholarship as glorifying God with one’s mind, and loving and influencing other

scholars positively, as a Christian, for Jesus’ sake. It also requires grace, prayer, and discipline.

Scholarship, like evangelism, is not the propagation of “good ideas” for their own sake, but rather scholarship, like the gospel, must be socially and somatically embedded, just like the Incarnation. We influence people first with the “fruit” of our character, not just with our words. Just like the Epistle of James, our lives must demonstrate that the words of Truth are not just words, but emulate the reality of transcendent Truth that we call “God” who came to earth in human form to reestablish contact with us. As Christian anthropologists, we need to begin with our scholarship, our life, and our interpersonal interactions. Influence in the academy does not occur with just words or disembodied ideas. Christians are not selling a religion, another good idea, or another brand of toothpaste that is



Developing relationships with people is one of the great rewards of being an anthropologist, and a desire to learn and understand another culture provides a great basis for rapport and mutual respect. In 1984, the members of the potters’ religious brotherhood asked me to place the crown on the head of one of their daughters whom they had chosen to be their ambassador to the community. In this photograph, women are waiting to begin the procession for similar brotherhood. These processions and ceremonies express the ethnic identity of the participants, social memory, and allow women to dress up in their finest in the hope of attracting potential suitors.



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only based on words. Just as missions needs more of an incarnational orientation, so Christian scholars should be reflecting the living Christ in a personally-embedded way, in scholarship and in our lives, that *shows* that our words, and the words of the One we worship are *true*, not just because we say so, or because the Bible says so. The future of Christian scholarship for anthropology and its influence on the academy and intellectual life thus rests on pure research by scholars who are recognizably Christian, not just by their explicit engagement of a Christian perspective.

Christian anthropologists have traditionally been powerless in the profession. And, as I have come to experience it, we suffer from discrimination in the field. The only way to change this position is prayerfully and thoughtfully to allow oneself to participate in the networks of power by presenting professional papers and writing for the profession—not just for Christians. In anthropology, having a Christian voice can only occur through careful cultivation of the vineyard of scholarship that is recognized by the academy. We cannot set our own rules, or our own agenda, but we have to abide by the unwritten norms and social structure already in place. The Christian mind should not be disembodied on the printed page, but should be physically embodied and socially embedded, as much as it can be, in the life of the secular academy. When it is, and meets the standards of the scholarship and interaction in the academy, *perhaps* we can begin to have a Christian voice that may be influential in our profession. But, our main task should be to bring glory to God with our mind by what we do—whatever kind of research it involves.

At the same time, Christian anthropologists have a responsibility to the church, to educate Christians about the importance of anthropology for its mission, and to teach with integrity about the conflicts between anthropology and their faith. Exposing error and challenging traditional syntheses and answers are parts of this process. Further, all Christian scholars have a responsibility to encourage students and others struggling with the issues elaborated here. A conversation, or some words of encouragement, may be critical in the life of a struggling student. Sometimes, simple openness and honesty

that there are no ultimate answers communicates love and acceptance by God, and that there is nothing wrong with a faith that exists in the midst of uncertainty and tension. **

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Notes

- ¹Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994).
- ²Michael S. Hamilton, "Reflection and Response: The Elusive Idea of Christian Scholarship," *Christian Scholar's Review* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 13–31.
- ³Joel A. Carpenter, "Response to Hamilton," *Christian Scholar's Review* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 21–4.
- ⁴Dorothy F. Chappell, "Response to Hamilton," *Christian Scholar's Review* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 24–7.
- ⁵Don King, "Response to Hamilton," *Christian Scholar's Review* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 28–30.
- ⁶Besides the reasons enumerated here, there are also practical and infrastructural reasons. These reasons include, but are not limited to, the availability of funds for research and writing, and time off from teaching in institutions that typically have heavy teaching loads, substantial committee work, and a commitment to student care and counseling.

⁷The measures of the impact of Christian anthropologists on the academy should be empirical rather than based upon anecdotal information. One way to assess this impact empirically is to compile the number of citations of Christian anthropologists in one or more of ISI's citation indices (the Social Science Citation Index, Arts and Humanities Citation Index, or the Science Citation Index) and compare them with randomly chosen individuals from comparable secular colleges or universities. Anthropology journals are indexed in both indices. Google Scholar is an easier way, but it is crude, and the basis for inclusion in the database does not appear to be explicit.

⁸"Politics of the Professorate," *The American Enterprise* (July/August 1991): 86-7.

⁹Robert J. Priest, "Missionary Positions: Christian, Modernist, Postmodernist," *Current Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (2001): 29-68.

¹⁰The term was first used in the Kinsey Report to refer to a position of sexual intercourse, but Priest showed that the term (as well as the position) was absent both in the Christian and missionary literature and in the anthropological literature prior to the publication of the Kinsey Report in 1948. Consequently, its use in that report was the result of shoddy scholarship at best, and/or outright anti-Christian bias at worst.

¹¹Priest, "Missionary Positions: Christian, Modernist, Postmodernist," 40.

¹²*Ibid.*, 45.

¹³As recently as 1980, Christian anthropologist Claude Stipe was hard pressed to find explicit condemnations of Christian missionaries in the anthropological literature in spite of the rather open condemnation of it informally and pedagogically in the classrooms of the discipline (Claude Stipe, "Anthropologists Versus Missionaries," *Current Anthropology* 21 (1980): 165-8). This has now changed and Robert J. Priest has written a thorough article (see note 9) detailing the attitudes of anthropologists to missionaries. In the responses to that essay, it is clear that there is antagonism toward Christians.

¹⁴Talking about the need for scholarship by Christians is one thing, but in reality, scholarly research (whether by Christians or not) takes funding, and outside of Christian colleges and universities, there appears to be little vision for support of Christian scholars, particularly those doing the "pure research" of which Hamilton speaks.

¹⁵Thomas Headland, personal communication, April 29, 2002.

¹⁶With twenty-one current members with Ph.D.'s in anthropology, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the academic arm of Wycliffe Bible Translators, probably has more Christian anthropologists than any other single organization. In 1997, there were 260 Ph.D.s in this organization, but most of them were in linguistics (Thomas Headland and Kenneth L. Pike, "SIL and Genocide: Well-Oiled Connections," *Anthropology Newsletter* 38, no. 2 (1997): 4-7). By April 2002, 307 SIL members had earned doctorates and 257 of them were Ph.D.'s (Thomas Headland, personal correspondence, April 19, 2002).

¹⁷There may be other Christian anthropologists who teach at secular universities and will not associate with us. The existence of such individuals is obviously difficult to verify, but I know of at least two such anthropologists who were supported by a foundation that supports Christian scholarship. To my knowledge, they have never associated themselves with the "Network." On the other hand, I know others who come to the national meetings, but attend symposia that conflict with the scheduled time of the Network gathering.

¹⁸Both from my own experiences and from those of other Christian colleagues, one of the reasons for the small number of Christian anthropologists is the prejudice against Christians in the discipline. Christians without the symbols of Christian involvement on their vita have fared the best. Those with missionary credentials and those with degrees from Christian colleges and seminaries have fared the worst and have suffered the most prejudice.

¹⁹Christians in archaeology usually specialize in Biblical, Near Eastern, or Classical archaeology and appear to be more interested in

issues of biblical apologetics and interpretation than the broader theoretical issues that appeal to anthropological archaeologists. Although the latter are usually archaeologists of the New World, the area of research interest no longer separates the two kinds of archaeologists, and anthropological archaeologists now work in virtually any area of the world. Anthropologically-trained anthropologists tend to belong to the Society for American Archaeology while others belong to the older Archaeological Institute of America, but there is some overlap.

²⁰These perceptions have been used to deny an informed and anthropologically competent Christian voice from being heard in the discipline. There are many examples of this type of prejudice from fellow Christian anthropologists, but an elaboration here is outside the scope of this article.

²¹Duane Gish, *Evolution: The Fossils Say No!* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1979, revised 1985).

²²These oppositions force thinking students into one of two extremes: an intellectual rejection of Christianity for the sake of participation in the scientific community, or an anti-intellectual rejection of science for the sake of participation in the Christian community. These oppositions, however, are as counterfeit as they are unfortunate and are latter-day manifestations of the early Christian heresies of mind (spirit)/matter dualism such as Manichaeism, Gnosticism, and Docetism. See Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 49-56.

²³This discussion of origins is the result of forty years of reflection and study. I am not going to attempt to document each assertion, but rather present my own distillation integrating anthropology with Christian concerns. A slightly more expanded version of these ideas with some more documentation occurs in Dean E. Arnold, "How do Scientific Views on Human Origins Relate to the Bible?" in *Not Just Science: Questions where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect*, ed. Dorothy F. Chappell and E. David Cook (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 129-40. See also note 29 below.

²⁴Romans 1:19-20.

²⁵The dating of the first human and its relation to the Bible is a very complex issue that is of lesser importance than those issues discussed here. To summarize these problems adequately, however, goes beyond the scope of this article.

²⁶This is, I believe, one of the strongest messages of Genesis: Humans live in a vastly interconnected seen (material) and unseen (spiritual) world and the choices that humans make have tangible and intangible consequences. What is fascinating about the Genesis account is that humans are deemed responsible for the consequences (whether intended or unintended) of those choices because they were uniquely in charge of their environment. But, they were only the caretakers, not the owners, of creation.

²⁷In fact, some members of one of the reputed human ancestors, the Australopithecines, looks very similar to the Bonobo chimp (*Pan paniscus*), and the earliest tools (Oldowan chopper tools) attributed to hominids are similar to a tool made by a Bonobo to solve a food acquisition problem in a lab experiment.

²⁸The irony of this issue is that the scientific evidence tends to support it. Bipedalism, brain size, and skull morphology appear to have become modern well before one sees the development of cognitive and symbolic capacities of humans in the Upper Paleolithic.

²⁹The relatively sudden appearance of a new and unique kind of culture in the Upper Paleolithic (without clear antecedents in many cases) supports a Christian view of the uniqueness of modern humans and their relatively "sudden" appearance. The evidence to support such points, however, is very controversial among paleoanthropologists and Upper Paleolithic archaeologists. It is true, however, that the cognitive and mental capabilities of modern *Homo sapiens* of the Upper Paleolithic is different than their predecessors, the *Neanderthals* (See Frederick L. Coolidge and Thomas Wynn, "Executive Functions of the Frontal Lobes in the Evolutionary Ascendancy of *Homo sapiens*," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 11, no. 2 [2001]: 255-60; Michael S. Bisson, "Interview with a Neanderthal: An Experimental Approach for Reconstruct-

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ing Scraper Production Rules, and their Implications for Imposed Form in Middle Paleolithic Tools," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 11, no. 2 [2001]: 147-63; and S. Mithen, *The Prehistory of Mind* [London: Thames and Hudson, 1994].) Assuming that the modern human mind began in the Upper Paleolithic, proponents of a more recent date (say at 10,000 BC) for Adam must accept the origin of humans as God-guided evolution that is essentially Gnostic, separating a "spiritual" Adam from all of the human intellectual, cognitive, symboling, and cultural capabilities that developed tens of thousands of years earlier.

³⁰This may be called "theistic evolution," but in reality, God-guided evolution includes a number of positions of which only one has been traditionally labeled "theistic evolution."

³¹For simplicity, I simply mean that Adam and Eve were real individuals who really did make bad choices in a spatially and temporally situated "Garden of Eden."

³²Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

³³Melville J. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism: Perspectives in Cultural Pluralism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973). This book is a compilation of previously published articles on the subject.

³⁴This code of ethics can be read at the Association's web site: <www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>.

³⁵Joseph B. Casagrande, *In the Company of Man* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), xii. The value of the participant-observation approach in anthropology is illustrated by the prominent place-

ment of this quote as the equivalent of "scripture" (such as the Twenty-third Psalm) on the program for the memorial service for Casagrande after his death. This quote provided here is exactly that provided for the program from his memorial service. In the Casagrande book, however, the sentence in brackets was placed at the beginning of the paragraph following the remainder of the quote.

³⁶"Ethics and Comfort: An Ethnographer's View of his Profession," by George Condominas, Distinguished Lecture, 1972, *Bulletin of the American Anthropological Association*, 1973.

³⁷I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers of this paper for this elaboration of this idea.

³⁸These American values include two-fold judgments, moralizing, effort and optimism, egalitarianism, separation of work and play, material well-being, nature is something to be conquered, and humanitarianism (Conrad M. Arensburg and Arthur H. Neihoff, "American Cultural Values" in *Introducing Social Change: A Manual for Americans Overseas* [Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1964], 153-83).

³⁹Elmer S. Miller, *Nurturing Doubt: From Mennonite Missionary to Anthropologist in the Argentine Chaco* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 98.

⁴⁰Joanne Mulcahy "Belief, Resurrected: Through an Alutiiq Midwife's Struggle to Bridge Old and New Cultures, Lost Faith Is Rediscovered," *Science & Spirit* (May-June 2001): 38.

⁴¹Ibid.

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