Hunting / Gathering / Foraging

This week we go a-hunting—hunting for the “truth” about how Prehistoric Peoples lived off of the land. And in doing so we’ll have another look at !Kung San ethnographic analogy.

Hunting was a part of prehistoric peoples’ living off of the land, but not quite as big a part as is usually thought. Except with cold-climate cultures—like the Inuit, the “Eskimo”—women provided 60-80% of the food for the group, as they do today with “Hunting-Gathering” groups, even in groups that consider themselves primarily “hunters.”

But hunting was a crucial activity, a vital activity for some cold-climate folks like the Neandertal.

We’ll continue our close look at lithics, stone tools and stone tool making, so vital to the hunt itself. . . .

And we’ll have a look at the main features of “band” societies. We’ll see The Hunters—often said to be one of the top three anthropological films ever made—it is certainly one of the top three films viewed and used in other films. It most often takes a long time to hunt . . . it took The Hunters thirteen days basically to get one animal in the end. So it will take us two days, or most of two days, to watch The Hunters hunting action.

film HomePage course viewing guide

photo: !Kung San Hunters

The Hunters
(72 min., 1955, UMD LIBRARY Multimedia OT655 K86 2664 (DVD)
"In this classic documentary *The Hunters*, the Kalahari Bushmen [aka Khoisan, !Kung, San] of Africa wage a constant war for survival against the hot arid climate and unyielding soil. *The Hunters* focuses on four men who undertake a hunt to obtain meat for their village. The chronicle of their 13-day trek becomes part of the village's folklore, illustrating the ancient roots and continual renewal of African tribal [sic.] cultures."

After the hunt on Tuesday we’ll have a short look at another fundamental concept in anthropology and prehistoric cultures—adaptation. (We had a look at the sister concept Week 3, *Patterns of Variation*.)

“How do humans adapt to environmental challenges? In this [video], experts explore this question from many angles. The difference between acclimatization and adaptation is explained. Nina Jablonski explains skin-color function and adaptations related to UV radiation levels, the vitamin D hypothesis, and preventing the loss of folate in the body. High-altitude adaptations are also discussed, along with responses to heat and cold stressors. In the last segment, the evolutionary dance between humans and their pathogens is brought to light. The interwoven interactions between human cultural activities, and the evolution of new pathogens, are discussed, as well as the evolution of drug resistance in existing pathogens.” – Coast Learning Systems

In the *moodle Forum* this week we hunt for the First Americans, the oldest American “artifact,” and weigh in on atlatl hunting in the City of Duluth . . .

- Forum: Who Were the First Americans? (Due by Friday, 9 December 2011)
- Forum: Oldest American Artefact (Due by Friday, 9 December 2011)
- Forum: Atlatl Hunting in Duluth? (Due by Friday, 9 December 2011)

As usual, if you have any questions, please let me know: mailto:troufs@d.umn.edu. Or, better yet, post them on you *moodle* Discussion and Project forum boards.

Share your ideas. Discuss them on-line with the others in class . . .
Your Moodle Topics and Reading Assignments Listings for Week 13 will look something like the information below.

Best Regards,

Tim Roufs
DAY 25 Thursday, 1 December 2011 nlt 12:23
CE Week 13 Monday, 5 December 2011 nlt 6:40

video:
The Hunters
(72 min., 1958, UM DULUTH Library Multimedia DT1058.K86 H86 2004 DVD)

film HomePage
course viewing guide

DAY 26 Tuesday, 6 December 2011 nlt 1:07
CE Week 13 Monday, 5 December 2011 nlt 7:57

video:
Patterns of Adaptation

film HomePage
transcript
REM we had a look at the sister concept Week 3 video:

**Patterns of Variation**

film HomePage

transcript

!Kung San Hunters

YANOMAMO INTERACTIVE CD/ROM
(Peter Biella, Napoleon A. Chagnon and Gary Seaman)
readings from *Understanding Humans, 10th Edition*

**Ch. 14, "Food Production," pp. 345-386**

The materials from Ch. 14 will be reviewed in the Week 14 presentations.