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MU's anthropology department adds two big names to its faculty roster

By Whitney Hayward
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COLUMBIA — With two new research professor hires in the past three months, MU’s Department of Anthropology has raised its national profile. The first hire in November, Martin Daly, is known for his work in evolutionary psychology. Napoleon Chagnon, hired Jan. 1, is one of the most prominent American anthropologists.

"Chagnon’s work with the Yanomamo is of the utmost importance not just to anthropology, but on a global scale — for us to be able to understand the major problems that face humanity," MU anthropology professor Mark Flinn said.

His work helps answer universal questions like, "Why do we end up in these astonishing arms races? Why do we kill each other by the millions?" Flinn said.

The anthropology department has made recent efforts, most headed by Flinn, to draw faculty members that focus on evolution.

"Missouri will now probably be the strongest department in evolutionary anthropology," Northwestern University Professor Emeritus William Irons said. Only a handful of universities in America have anthropology departments with evolutionary programs, Irons said, though much of the controversy surrounding the study of evolution has decreased within the last ten years.

Anthropology, or the study of humans and their ancestors, is interested aspects of human relationships, appearance, behavior, language and culture. Evolutionary anthropology seeks to answer the same research questions, but through the framework of human development and history.

Daly, who was unavailable for an interview, researches the way behavior and psychology are influenced by evolution. Some of his best-known work is on the "Cinderella Effect," which involves propensity for stepchild abuse.
Chagnon is known within the anthropological community for his work in South America, researching the Yanomamo people.

"It's unbelievable to get even one of these folks," Flinn said."But to get both of them, in one year, is unheard of. This is a coup that has sent shock waves through this discipline."

Chagnon has been tangled in his share of controversy, but in an interview last week he said he felt energized by his move to MU.

"It feels like I could have my career all over again," he said.

**The Fierce People**

The Yanomamo reside in the middle of the Amazon rainforest, scattered along the border between Venezuela and Brazil in 200-250 small villages. Before the 1960s, they had almost no contact with the outside world. Chagnon studied the Yanomamo when the government maps were inaccurate, the language was unknown and the culture was unfamiliar.

"I thought, these noble savages that flittered around in the jungle with scented bodies would try to help me, anxious to have me wear them out by reciting their genealogies from five generations back," Chagnon said recently in an interview in his new home in southeast Columbia. "I would write it all down, go back to the United States and write a book. But it just wasn't that way."

Chagnon's home is filled with artifacts from distant lands. Ye'kuana Indian canoe paddles hang in the living room, dark wooden African tribal masks adorn the walls, and baskets, one from the Yanomamo tribe, sit on a ledge lining the foyer. Every piece seems to hint that the house's inhabitants have seen things most never have the opportunity to.

It took Chagnon more than a year to learn enough Yanomamo language to start work on their genealogy. Saying the name of another member Yanomamo was taboo, which made tracking kinship difficult. Chagnon said he eventually convinced members of the Yanomamo Bisaasi-teri tribe to tell the truth. When Chagnon visited another Yanomamo tribe, members asked about the names he'd learned. Chagnon said he quickly realized something was wrong.

"So they asked, 'Oh, what was so-and-so's name?' and I said, 'Oh, 'asshole' was his name,'" Chagnon said. "And then they'd ask, 'Oh what was his wife's name?' And I said (a vulgar term for female genitalia). It quickly dawned on me that they had duped me."
Five months worth of genealogy and data collection was worthless. Chagnon had to start from scratch.

"It was funny as hell, had I been able to stand back," Chagnon said. "But at the time I was really annoyed that they had hoodwinked me. It totally changed my approach to how I interacted with them."

Outmaneuvering practical jokes wasn’t the greatest challenge, as it turned out. The Yanomamo frequently engaged in warfare, and at least one fourth of males died violently in the area where Chagnon lived, he said.

Returning to America and readjusting to the culture proved just as difficult as getting used to the Yanomamo way of life, Chagnon said. The commonplace became annoying, and Chagnon realized he was experiencing culture shock.

"I resented standing in line to do anything," Chagnon said. "In the jungle you just did it! And I always, still today, feel uncomfortable going into a public place and having people stand behind me, because in the jungle that’s a good way to get shot with an arrow."

Chagnon wrote a book about his experience in 1968 called, "Yanomamo: The Fierce People," which quickly became an important textbook for introductory anthropology courses.

"When that book came out, it was almost an instant best seller," Flinn said. "Part of that was the intense interest in America with war. People wanted to know how the heck this stuff happened anyway, and whether we can see where the roots of conflict might lie."

The ethnography brought Chagnon notoriety. Before he retired at the University of California-Santa Barbara, he had lecture classes filled with more than 900 students.

"It’s like, whoever has popcorn and throws it into the pond at one end, all of the ducks will go to that end," Chagnon said, "Well, I had lots of popcorn."

Not everyone within the anthropological community was as enthused with Chagnon’s description and study of the Yanomamo. Some felt uncomfortable, even angry, that Chagnon described the society as fierce and, at times, vicious.

"Some saw the way Chagnon portrayed the Yanomamo culture as not right because they kill each other. They even kill their babies," Flinn said. "And we know that humans must have been nice, and kind, before the intervention of the capitalist global market."
Darkness and Controversy

Chagnon’s ability to continue research was eventually affected by growing hostilities. When he was teaching at the University of California-Santa Barbara, Chagnon made three attempts to return to the Yanomamo. Chagnon said pressures from various anthropologists created a hostile political environment, which stopped his trip short in Venezuela and prevented entry into Yanomami land.

"Here's someone who's devoted his life to understanding the Yanomamo, and his whole world was turned upside down," Flinn said. "You've sacrificed your own self, been away from your own kids, had diseases, maybe shortened your life. And now you can’t get back."

When Chagnon was unable to return to the Yanomamo, he left California and moved to rural Michigan with his wife, Charlene, and his dog, Darwin.

"If I couldn’t do field research, I didn’t want to be an anthropologist," Chagnon said.

Things got worse when the book Darkness in El Dorado came out in 2000. The author, Patrick Tierney, alleged Chagnon and geneticist James Neel had committed atrocities, as far as knowingly introducing measles to the Yanomamo. Chagnon said the American Anthropological Association did not give him the opportunity directly refute the claims.

"I spent the next 15 years fighting the demons that were after me," Chagnon said. "I was sort of depressed back then because I couldn’t figure out what was happening to my career."

Flinn knew that Chagnon needed time away but continued a good working relationship with the anthropologist. He visited Chagnon in Michigan over the next few summers, and eventually decided it would be best for Chagnon to come out of hiding.

"I’m sorry, but it was like Frodo," Flinn said, a reference to the unlikely hero of the Tolkien Lord of the Rings Trilogy. "He had something that was too important for humanity to just let him slide peacefully beneath the waves. We weren’t going to let him go gently."

Flinn said it was during this time that he allowed himself to consider the possibility of Chagnon coming to MU.

Rehabilitation
Seven years ago, Chagnon came to MU to give a talk on his research. Flinn said he had plans to convince the administration to hire the anthropologist as an "unusual senior hire." The enthusiasm to hire someone like Chagnon, though, wasn't there then.

"So what happened then, the provost and administration, were recognizing that people who were prestigious, like those in the National Academy of Sciences, or Nobel Prize winners," Flinn said. "And we don't have very many of those folks here in Missouri."

Last year, Chagnon was admitted into the National Academy of Sciences, which was created to give "advice on the scientific and technological issues that frequently affect policy decisions," according to the society's website.

Chagnon said that's when the light at the end of the tunnel began appearing. To be inducted into the National Academy of Sciences meant recognition from his scientific peers that his research had academic credibility.

Flinn said the second he caught wind of Chagnon's appointment, he started contacting professors within the university who could be influential in getting the anthropologist to Columbia.

Late last year, Chagnon again visited Columbia, to discuss possible employment.

"Things just began coming together," MU Provost Brian Foster said.

Foster said Chagnon's connection with Daly, who had then recently taken a job at MU, was helpful in getting the anthropologist on board. For more than 25 years, Daly and Chagnon were members of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society.

"He was happy to come here to talk to everyone and entertain my idea that he should consider a move," Flinn said.

Chagnon said he agreed to come as a courtesy to Flinn. "We had no intention of moving here," he said.

When he realized MU had faculty with similar research interests, and he could have a post-doctoral student to help with his research, Chagnon said he changed his tune.

"I was flabbergasted," Chagnon said. "So, I accepted. I said yes, where can I sign on the dotted line."
A mass of data

Within two hours of seeing the listing for a post-doc to work under Chagnon, Shane Macfarlan sent his application to MU.

Macfarlan quit his job at Oregon State and moved his family to Columbia.

"There's a bit of flexibility in our lives right now so we can do this," Macfarlan said. "Plus it's a new adventure."

Macfarlan will oversee a team charged with digitizing and analyzing Chagnon's unarchived data on the Yanomamo.

"I met Shane for the first time two nights ago, and he is just bubbling with energy," Chagnon said. "These young guys are going to run me into the ground."

Chagnon spent most of his time collecting data, and little time processing it. Flinn said Chagnon knew his time with the Yanomamo was limited, and wanted to get as much information as he could.

"It was a time window, Flinn said. "If he didn't, the opportunity would have been gone. This data, it's now irreplaceable."

Flinn said the main goal is to make Chagnon's unpublished findings public for the anthropological community and the rest of the world.

"It's not just, gosh, these savages in the Amazonian rainforest, why do I give a damn?" Flinn said. "We're going to learn stuff about how the world works, how family and kinship is important, and how the modern world has created some circumstances that aren't particularly ideal. It might help us understand more, to come to a more peaceful world."
Haith happy Miami investigation drawing to close

By Steve Walentik


A more than two-year NCAA investigation into allegations to rampant rules violations at the University of Miami appears to be drawing to an end, which Missouri basketball Coach Frank Haith said is welcome news.

Haith, who spent seven seasons at Miami before taking over the Missouri program in April 2011, has had a cloud from the scandal hanging over him since he was named in a Yahoo! Sports’ August 2011 report detailing allegations made by disgraced Hurricanes booster Nevin Shapiro, who was convicted and is serving a 20-year sentence for his role in a $930 million scheme.

The Associated Press, citing two people with knowledge of the situation, was the first to report on Saturday that the “NCAA is scheduling meetings to discuss specific allegations with individuals who are believed to have committed violations found during the inquiry.” The AP also said that these reviews are a signal that the NCAA is concluding the investigation phase and that the school could receive its notice of allegations letter in the coming days, though the NCAA does not publicly announce the issuance of that letter.

“It’s kind of relief to know that this is coming to an end — their part of it, in terms of their allegations,” Haith said before Missouri’s practice on Monday.

Haith said he had not gotten any clarity on his status in the investigation or whether the NCAA would charge with him with rules violations.

“If there are any toward Frank Haith … then we’ll have a chance to defend ourselves,” Haith said.

Yahoo! Sports reported that Haith was complicit in a $10,000 payment Shapiro said he made in the summer of 2008 to help secure the commitment of recruit DeQuan Jones, who signed a letter of intent with the school the previous fall. Shapiro told Yahoo! the transaction was set up by assistant coach Jake Morton and that Morton acted as the conduit for the funds but that Haith expressed gratitude to Shapiro for his role in Jones’ recruitment during a meal later that summer.
Haith, Jones and Jones’ mother, Irene Bell, both issued public denials of being involved in the payment, which Yahoo!’s report said was to be paid to a person close to Jones, who had influence with him. Shapiro told Yahoo! he did not believe Jones knew about the payment.

Shapiro also told Yahoo! the payment was later returned.

Jones, a senior last season, sat out the first 10 games last season while the NCAA was investigating Shapiro’s allegations, but he was reinstated after an attorney for Jones requested an appellate hearing last December.

Miami standouts Reggie Johnson and Durand Scott were also suspended last season as the joint NCAA-Miami investigation uncovered evidence that they received impermissible benefits from members of Haith’s staff. Haith has not been publicly linked to those allegations.

Should Haith be named in the NCAA’s notice of allegations, he would have 90 days to challenge the allegations or request an extension. His response would be reviewed by the NCAA Committee on Infractions, which doles out punishment in infractions cases. The committee operates independently from the investigative unit.

“Something like this has been taxing on me and our family and our program,” Haith said. “So that is good to know that it is coming closer to the end.”
COLUMBIA, Mo. - Mizzou coach Frank Haith on Monday said he welcomes the apparent conclusion of the first phase of the nearly 2-year NCAA investigation of Miami, where Haith coached before coming to Mizzou in 2011.

"You know, it's kind of a relief to know that this is coming to an end, their part of it, in terms of their allegations, if there are any, towards Frank Haith," he said. "Then if there (any allegations), we have a chance to defend ourselves."

Citing two sources with knowledge of the situation, The Associated Press on Saturday reported that the NCAA is scheduling meetings with individuals it believes committed violations as found during the inquiry.

The AP report said some meetings would take place as soon as Monday, procedurally suggesting, anyway, that the NCAA's notice of allegations against Miami is imminent.

It's not known whether Haith will face any allegations.

Asked Monday if he'd gotten any clarity from the NCAA, Haith said he had not.

Last summer in an exhaustive report by Yahoo Sports alleging rampant and salacious NCAA rules violations largely in the football program at Miami, Haith was accused by rogue former Miami booster Nevin Shapiro of being complicit in an illegal $10,000 payoff as part of Miami's recruitment of DeQuan Jones.

The allegation was laden with puzzlements, including the facts that Shapiro did not identify to whom the alleged payment in pursuit of Jones was made and that Shapiro said it was later given back.

His specific accusation of Haith was that he thanked him for making the cash payment, which Shapiro said was carried out to the unknown party by then-Haith assistant Jake Morton.

Shapiro, who is serving a 20-year prison term for his part in a $930-million Ponzi Scheme, also told Yahoo he didn't believe Jones knew about the payment.

In separate interviews with the Post-Dispatch last year, Haith and Jones' mother denied Jones' allegation to the Post-Dispatch.
Jones, who was suspended for 10 games last season before being reinstated, also has publicly denied the charge.

As the joint NCAA-Miami investigation continued into the spring of 2012, two other players were suspended for accepting impermissible benefits from members of Haith’s staff during his seven-year stint at Miami.

Haith has not been publicly linked to those allegations.

If, in fact, the investigative aspect of the case is concluding, the process moves thusly from here, per NCAA procedures posted on the Miami web site:

“At the conclusion of the investigative process for any NCAA case, the enforcement staff makes a determination of what, if any, NCAA bylaws and rules it believes have been broken by the institution, its staff or student-athletes or associated parties.

“If, in their determination, violations did occur, the NCAA staff issues a Notice of Allegations to the institution, detailing the bylaws alleged to have been violated and providing supporting evidence.

“The issuance of the Notice of Allegations is not announced publicly by the NCAA nor is it released by the NCAA. Member institutions may, at their own choosing, release parts of or all of the Notice of Allegations to the public.

“Any individual alleged to have committed an NCAA violation in the Notice of Allegations will also receive a copy of the allegation(s), whether still employed by the institution or not.”

From there, any institution or individual has 90 days to challenge the allegation or request an extension.
Haith says he’s relieved as Miami investigation comes to a close

Missouri coach Frank Haith on Monday addressed recent reports that the NCAA is expected to soon hand the University of Miami a notice of allegations following a nearly two-year investigation.

Six months after Haith was hired at Missouri, Yahoo! Sports reported that a member of Haith’s staff at Miami — with the cooperation of jailed booster Nevin Shapiro — paid guard DeQuan Jones $10,000 to attend the school. Haith denied the allegation, and Jones was reinstated by the school after a brief suspension. The allegation was one of several accusations of impermissible benefits that were given to Miami athletes.

The Miami Herald reported Saturday that individuals alleged with committing NCAA violations will soon receive notices and that two sources close to the investigation said they were told by the NCAA “to be available near their phones” on Monday to discuss allegations made against them.

When asked Monday if he has received any notice from the NCAA regarding his status in the case, Haith said he has not.

“I haven’t, but obviously … it’s kind of a relief to know this is coming to an end, that part of it, in terms of their allegations — if there are any — against Frank Haith,” Haith said. “And if there are, then we have a chance to defend ourselves.”

The Herald reported that once the University of Miami receives the allegations, it will have up to 90 days to respond in writing before a hearing is set with the NCAA Committee on Infractions.

Three Miami players, including Jones, were suspended for at least one game last season for receiving impermissible benefits related to the investigation.

Haith has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing and said he is cooperating with the NCAA in the case. He indicated Monday that he is happy the investigation is finally drawing to a close.

“I am glad (because) something like this has been taxing on me and our family and our program,” Haith said, “so it’s good to know it’s coming closer to the end.”
Leaders of the University of Missouri system want researchers on the system's four campuses to collaborate.

The system has set up a $1 million Interdisciplinary Intercampus Research Program. It will provide funds for research if it involves faculty from at least two different campuses and two different academic disciplines. The research must be considered likely to attract outside funding.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports (http://bit.ly/10iT6Gl) the four campuses must each contribute $125,000, and the UM system will add $500,000.

The fund is temporary until system officials see if it is successful.

University system official Mike Nichols says more federal agencies are considering intercampus and interdisciplinary research when they award grants.

Proposals for the first round of funding are due by March 1. Awards will be announced May 1.
University of Missouri Extension Offers Farm Classes For Women

BOLIVAR, Mo. (AP) - The University of Missouri Extension is offering a series of courses aimed at helping women in agriculture.

The series of seven classes begins Feb. 12 at Citizens Memorial Hospital in the southwestern Missouri town of Bolivar.

The courses are part of Annie’s Project, a program that started in Illinois in 2003 and has since spread to other states. The program is named for an Illinois woman who ran a farm and raised six children in the 1950s.

Topics include farm record-keeping and taxes, business plans, how property is titled, pasture rental contracts and estate planning.

A grant through the North Central Risk Management Center helps fund the program. The class will be limited to the first 20 women who register.