



anthropogeny tracks

a CARTA newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1 - February 2013

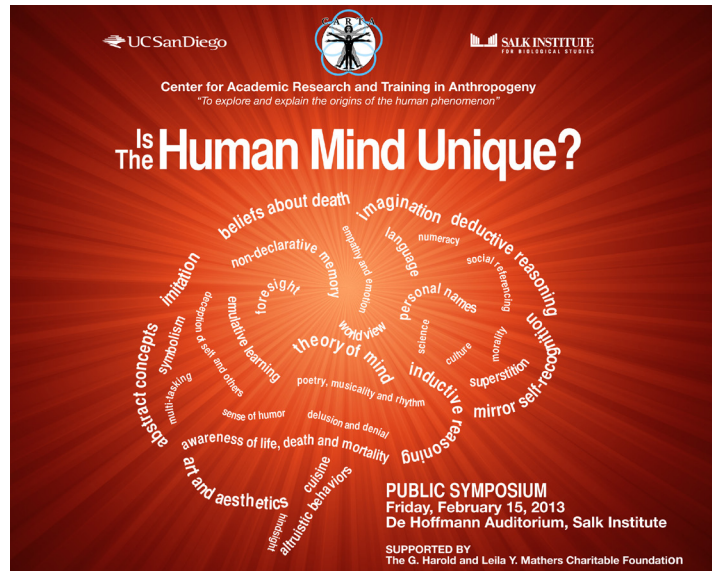
Join Us at the Next CARTA Symposium

CARTA's symposia series continues on February 15 with *Is the Human Mind Unique?* Scientists from many different fields will discuss cognitive abilities often regarded as unique to humans including humor, morality, symbolism, creativity, and preoccupation with the minds of others. Emphasis will be placed on the functional uniqueness of these attributes, as opposed to anatomical uniqueness, and whether these attributes are indeed quantitatively or qualitatively unique to humans.

WHEN Friday, February 15, 1:00-5:30 pm Pacific Time
WHERE De Hoffmann Auditorium, Salk Institute
ADMISSION Free, however, registration is required.
REGISTRATION <http://carta.anthropogeny.org>
INFORMATION carta-info@anthropogeny.org
WEBCAST See live webcast details on the [event page](#).

LIST OF SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Terry Deacon (UC Berkeley)
Daniel Povinelli (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)
Steven Mithen (University of Reading)
Daniel Dennett (Tufts University)
Colin Renfrew (McDonald Inst. for Archaeological Research)
Nicholas Humphrey (Darwin College, Cambridge)
Merlin Donald (Queen's University)
Patricia Churchland (UC San Diego)
V.S. Ramachandran (UC San Diego)



UC San Diego

SALK INSTITUTE
FOR BIOLOGICAL STUDIES

Center for Academic Research and Training in Anthropogeny
"To explore and explain the origins of the human phenomenon"

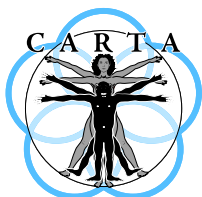
Is The Human Mind Unique?

beliefs about death imagination deductive reasoning
 non-declarative memory language numeracy social interaction
 love, sighs empathy and compassion personal names
 theory of mind word view science morality
 inductive reasoning poetry, musicality and rhythm superstition
 mirror self-representation
 delusion and denial
 art and aesthetics cultivate altruistic behaviors
 independent awareness of life, death and mortality
 sense of humor of self and others
 imitation non-declarative memory love, sighs
 emulative learning symbolism multitasking abstract concepts
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PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM
 Friday, February 15, 2013
 De Hoffmann Auditorium, Salk Institute

SUPPORTED BY
 The G. Harold and Leila Y. Mathers Charitable Foundation

Symbolic Communication: Why is Human Thought so Flexible?
Desperately Seeking Explanation
An Evolved and Creative Mind
Humor
Archaeological Evidence for Mind
Entering the "Soul Niche"
Skilled Performance and Artistry
Moral Sense
Inter-Modular Interactions, Metaphor, and the "Great Leap"



Center for Academic Research and Training in Anthropogeny
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 CARTA • University of California, San Diego • 9500 Gilman Drive, MC# 0060 • La Jolla, CA 92093

CARTA's Autism Symposium Now Online

If you missed the October 2012 CARTA symposium, *Human Origins: Lessons from Autism Spectrum Disorders*, or saw it live and would like to see it again, you can now view all the talks online at these websites:



We cannot thank UCSD-TV enough for their continuing support of CARTA's symposium program. All CARTA symposia are video recorded by UCSD-TV, then later broadcast on the UCSD-TV channel, before being archived at the websites listed above.

Along with our mission to explore and explain the origins of the human phenomenon, we strive to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and recent discoveries in human origins together with the implications of this knowledge for many practical issues affecting us all.



Dr. Simon Baron-Cohen presents at the October 2012 CARTA symposium, *Human Origins: Lessons from Autism Spectrum Disorders*.

CARTA's Nutrition Symposium to Air in February

Premiering on **February 6, 13, 20, and 27 at 9 pm Pacific Time**, UCSD-TV will broadcast the series of talks delivered at the CARTA symposium *The Evolution of Human Nutrition* (December 2012). UCSD-TV airs on the following San Diego channels:

Cox (Digital) Channel 135

Time Warner (Digital) Channel 135

Time Warner Del Mar (Analog) Channel 19

AT&T U-verse Channel 99

UHF (no cable) Channel 35

Not in the local San Diego broadcast market? The same talks will also become available online at the **UCSD-TV** site.

Follow CARTA on Facebook!

We invite you to visit our Facebook page, featuring news about future CARTA symposia, updates on CARTA's activities, and links to interesting articles and talks featuring speakers of upcoming CARTA symposia. Join us in our quest to explore and explain the origins of the human phenomenon and become a friend of CARTA.



www.facebook.com/ucsdcarta

Future CARTA Symposia

Behaviorally Modern Humans: The Origin of Us

Current evidence indicates that multiple upright-walking, tool-dependent species in the genus *Homo* co-existed in the Old World (Africa, Asia and Europe) for most of the last 2 million years. Yet only one surviving species of *Homo* exists today. When, where, and how did we "Behaviorally Modern Humans" emerge and why and how did we eventually replace all other human-like species? This symposium will take a fresh look at those questions and examine the available evidence from multiple sources, including climate proxies, geology, fossils, archaeology, linguistics, immunology, genetics and genomics, as well as evolutionary neuroscience/cognitive archaeology.

WHEN May 10, 2013

WHERE UC San Diego, TBD

REGISTRATION <http://carta.anthropogeny.org>

Mind Reading: Human Origins and Theory of Mind

The phrase "Theory of Mind" (ToM) has historically referred to the ability to impute mental states to oneself and others, but has been used in a variety of ways during the 35 years since the original 1978 Premack and Woodruff paper. The analysis of ToM has been the subject of many papers in developmental psychology and in anthropology, the latter focusing on differences in mental performance between humans versus other mammals and birds. This symposium will discuss what ToM is, the ontogeny of human ToM, relevant information on other mammals and birds, and the neuronal correlates and mechanisms of human ToM performance.

WHEN October 18, 2013

WHERE Salk Institute, De Hoffmann Auditorium

REGISTRATION <http://carta.anthropogeny.org>

Out of Africa: Reflections on the 2012 Anthropogeny Field Course in Tanzania

For the past two summers, graduate student recipients of the CARTA fellowship participated in an anthropogeny field course in Africa. The primary goal of this program is to introduce three major approaches to studying the origin and adaptations of our species:

1) fossil evidence, 2) behavioral ecology of non-human primates, and 3) ethnography and behavioral ecology of human foragers living in environments similar to those in which we evolved. Underlying all three approaches is an appreciation for the importance of the ecological and cultural context of human adaptation.

Melanie Beasley Anthropology

I was amazed how each part of the trip contributed to ideas and hypotheses on how the environment influenced the trajectory of human evolution. Observing the flexibility of primates, especially hominids, to exploit different ecological niches highlighted the behavioral flexibility of our hominin ancestors, as exhibited by the coexistence of *Paranthropus* and *Homo* and the coping mechanisms they used to extract resources from a single, shared habitat. Witnessing negotiations between the Hadza (foragers) and their nearest neighbors (pastoralists) demonstrated how, even today, members of the same species can have different survival strategies aided by cultural adaptations. Culture was our ancestors' answer to coping with a variety of environments and facilitated movement out of Africa. The knowledge I gained about habitat variability, hunting and gathering practices, and behavioral flexibility of anthropoids will certainly aid me in my future research.



Melanie poses with a skull she found.

Visits to key sites in Tanzania and Ethiopia are combined with lectures and impromptu “teachable moments” over a 3-week period in August.



The three 2012 CARTA fellows.

Kari Hanson Anthropology

Our journey through Ethiopia and Tanzania allowed us to contextualize our own research with respect to a few broad themes. We were encouraged to consider the environment as a prime mover in the evolution of complex social systems, through exposure to diverse landscapes somewhat similar to those that shaped the physiological and cognitive adaptations of our ancestors. I was most influenced by the observation that primates are the quintessential generalists, and the trend for flexibility in habitat, diet, and behavior is particularly salient in humans. Finally, understanding that cooperation, the division of labor, and interdependence are defining human characteristics from the perspective of a foraging economy helped to illustrate the overwhelmingly social nature of human societies, reinforcing the concept that sociality has been a driving force in the evolution of the primate brain, particularly in humans.



Kari shows off an arrow she fletched.

Not only is it a huge learning experience from an anthropogenic perspective, but it is also a life-changing experience for the students from a cultural and humanistic perspective. CARTA is currently able to fund a few students on this unique field course. We are eager to find a sponsor to help us increase the student participation.

The comments from students who have participated in this field course say it all. The following are just a few reminiscences from those who have taken part.

Rachel Zarndt Biomedical Sciences

Before leaving, I was thoroughly prepared: well-packed, vaccinated, well-studied, and ridiculously eager to see Africa. Throughout the entire safari, I kept an optimistic adventurer-mindset and leapt at every opportunity. The knowledge imparted by accompanying professors and African hosts were life-changing. However, at the baggage claim back in San Diego, I realized I'd brought something even more intangible, but fantastically profound, back from Africa. It's taken months to figure out what it is, and I still can't completely place the feeling...a more universal human empathy, deeper compassion, vehement disgust at the injustices and needless poverty in the world. I feel passionate about letting people know our world is both larger and smaller than we realize. Despite the enormous variability between people on this planet, we are more similar than we are different. We are all human.



Rachel with Mbugoshi (a Hadza man).

Images from the 2012 Anthropogeny Field Course



Kari digs for tubers with the Hadza.



The anthropogeny fellows pose with a herd of wildebeests.



Melanie seizes an opportunity to teach osteology.



Rachel observes a chimpanzee drinking from a stream.

Support CARTA

Where did we come from and how did we get here? As CARTA explores the origins of humanity, we are not only answering philosophical and existential questions, but also addressing very practical issues such as human nutrition, medicine, mental disease, the organization of society, the upbringing of our young, and the interactions of humans with one another and with our environment.

Your donation to CARTA has the power to impact and transform the study of anthropogeny and the understanding of human origins.

If you would like to make a donation to CARTA, there are three ways to give.

ONLINE

Visit <http://carta.anthropogeny.org/donate> and click on "Donate"

BY MAIL

Make your check payable to **UC San Diego Foundation** and include a brief note specifying that you would like your donation to go to CARTA. Mail your check to the following address:

CARTA
UC San Diego Office of Annual Giving
9500 Gilman Drive #0140
La Jolla, CA 92093-0140

BY PHONE

Call Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins, CARTA Community Relations Director, at (858) 246-0846