

WHY DO WE MIGRATE?

Migration is a ubiquitous feature of our modern human lives. Ease of transportation has decreased barriers to movement while economic, social and cultural factors remain important push-pull factors in decisions to migrate. As a consequence, long standing patterns of internal migration and established streams of international migration have been joined by the emergence of transnational migration in which individuals and families move from country to country.

At the same time, an evolutionary perspective suggests that an activity as widespread as migration is likely to be imbedded in our human nature. In fact, the very origin of modern humans is associated with migration out of Africa. Thus the biology of humans may be expected to reflect our history as a colonizing species. Yet, it is unclear exactly when humans and/or human ancestors first began to migrate, what factors influenced their decisions to migrate and whether such migratory capacity left a sufficiently deep signature that it plays a role in modern migration patterns.

This international conference seeks to address the question of Why Humans Migrate--from multilevel and interdisciplinary perspectives that link social and biological factors. What are the social, economic, and cultural factors involved in current migration patterns? Do they reveal a pattern typical of a species or are there notable differences in the patterns and determinants of migration across human populations? What are the demographic and evolutionary sequelae of migration? Furthermore, can we identify variation in our genome, in our bodies, and/or our brains that make us want to migrate in the first place? If so, are any of these biological factors directly connected to the social, economic and cultural processes underlying modern day migration?

You are cordially invited to attend this conference on Why Humans Migrate on March 1st and 2nd, 2010, at the Interdisciplinary Commons of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Ks. Posters and oral presentations on why humans migrate and the consequences of these migrations are being solicited worldwide from faculty and graduate students. Inquiries concerning the conference, volunteered presentations, possible titles and abstracts should be addressed to the organizers: Professor Michael H. Crawford (crawford@ku.edu) or to Dr. Benjamin Campbell (campbelb@uwm.edu).

List of Participants

Mark Stoneking (Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany)
“Genetic Evidence Concerning the Origins and Dispersals of Modern Humans”

Jonathan C.K. Wells (Institute of Child Health, London) and Jay T. Stock (Biological Anthropology, Cambridge University) “The Biology of the Colonizing Ape”

Eske Willerslev (Centre of Excellence in GeoGenetics, University of Copenhagen)
“Ancient DNA and Early Peopling of the New World Arctic.”

Ebenezer Obadare (Sociology, University of Kansas) “Forging Alternatives: Theory and Practice in Nigerian Transnational Visa Economy.”

Lorena Madrigal (Anthropology, South Florida University) “Slavery, Indentured Migration, and Formation of the Caribbean Gene Pool.”

Michael H. Crawford (Laboratory of Biological Anthropology, University of Kansas) “Genetic and Demographic Consequences of Settlement and European Contact in the Aleutian Islands.”

Alan G. Fix* (Anthropology, University of California-Riverside) “Kin Migration.”

Maria de Lourdes Munoz, Gerardo Perez, Alvaro Diaz et al. (Department of Genetics and Molecular Biology, Center for Research and Advanced Studies of the National Polytechnical Institute (CINVESTAV-IPN) “Migration of Pre-Hispanic and Contemporary Human Mexican Populations.”

Benjamin Campbell (Anthropology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) “Migration: Risk-taking or Decision-making—What the Evolutionary Approach Can Tell Us.”

Alvaro Diaz, America Alejandra Padilla, Adrian Martinez-Meza, Miguel Moreno-Galeana and Maria de Lourdes Monoz (Department of Genetics and Molecular Biology, Center for Research and Advanced Studies of the National Polytechnic Institute (CINVESTAV-IPN), Mexico DF “Contemporary Migration in Mexico, the Paradox of a Great Nation.”

Dixie West (Anthropology, Kansas State University) “The Peopling of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska: Archaeological Perspective.”

R Gomez, JJ Magana, F Castaneda, et al. (Department of Genetics, National Institute of Rehabilitation, Mexico City) “Genetic Structure, Migratory Influences and the Genome-wide Association Studies in the Mexican Mestizo Population.”

Bartholomew Dean (Anthropology, University of Kansas) “The Social Anthropology of Contemporary Migration in the Peruvian Amazon.”

Majid Hannoum (Anthropology, University of Kansas) “Tangier, A City Transit in the Age of Globalization: African ‘Illegal’ Migration to Europe.”

Phillip Melton (Genetics, Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research, San Antonio) “Mennonite Migrations: Demographic and Genetic Consequences.”

Bruce Rothschild (Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine) “Disease Consequences of Migration from Siberia: Osteological Evidence.”

Gerardo Perez-Ramirez, Alvaro Diaz, Maria Concepcion Morales-Gomez, et al (Department of Genetics and Molecular Biology, Center for Research and Advanced Studies of the National Polytechnic Institute, Mexico DF) “Migration of the Prehispanic population from Monte Alban to Teotihuacan.”

Felix Moos (Anthropology, University of Kansas) “I Am Leaving: Globalization, Conflict and Asian Migration.”

M.J. Mosher (Anthropology, Western Washington University) “The Role of Diet and Epigenetics in Migration”

William Woods and Lilian Rebellato (Geography, University of Kansas) “Eating their Way Across Amazonia: The Tupi Expansion.”

Ivana Radovanovic (Anthropology, University of Kansas) “Population movement dynamics during the transition to food-producing in SE Europe.”

Alvaro Diaz, Feliciano Sanchez, Eduardo Ramos, et al (LBA, University of Kansas and National Polytechnical Institute, Mexico DF) “The Role of Domestication and Cultivation of Corn (*Zea mays*) in the migration processes.”

Solomon Katz (Chair of AAA Task force on World Food Problems, University of Pennsylvania) “Worsening World Hunger and the Migratory Counter Trend from Urban to Rural: Implications for Human Biology and Evolution.”

Discussant: Dennis O’Rourke (University of Utah)

* Not confirmed