



Michael H. Lockman

BA in Honors Anthropology and BS in Psychological Sciences from Purdue University (2015) and MA in Applied Anthropology from University of South Florida (pending)

What have you been doing since the publication of your article in JPUR, volume 5?

After graduating, I spent two years working in the private sector of cultural resource management as a field technician, traveling around the mid-south working on archaeological surveys and excavations contracted by federal and state government agencies pursuant to legal compliance. In 2017 I enrolled at the University of South Florida in Tampa to pursue a master's degree in applied anthropology and am currently writing my thesis. As of early 2019, I have also been working for the National Park Service as an archeological technician at the Southeast Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida.

What are your career goals?

I hope to remain in the federal service in some cultural resource management capacity. Working for the National Park Service at the Southeast Archeological Center genuinely has been the highlight of my career thus far; it is an incredible honor to be able to work with some of the greatest professional archaeologists in the world toward unimpaired preservation of our nation's cultural resources.

How did the research you did as an undergraduate at Purdue impact your current endeavors? What is the value of undergraduate research?

It taught me the many basic principles of research and that has served me well for the entirety of my graduate school career, and I believe it will continue to serve me well thereafter. Research is an art form. It is never too early or too late to begin, but during an undergraduate education is an excellent time to engage in this process that will continue to develop over a lifetime.

ANCIENT MAYAN "DEFORMITY"

Student Author

Michael H. Lockman is a 2015 dual-degree graduate from the College of Liberal Arts, where he earned a bachelor of arts in anthropology, and the College of Health and Human Sciences, earning a bachelor of science in psychological sciences. The genesis of the research herein was borne from personal experience with deformity and intolerance in adolescence, an experience from which this research served as great catharsis in collegiate study. More broadly, his research interests focus on using archaeology as a means to explore solutions to contemporary social issues of marginalization through investigation of power, agency, and inequality in antiquity.



Mentors

Michele R. Buzon has degrees in anthropology from Loyola University Chicago (BS) and University of California, Santa Barbara (MA and PhD). She currently is an associate professor of anthropology at Purdue University. With support from the National Geographic Society and the National Science Foundation, she has been investigating ancient identity and health in people buried at archaeological sites in the Nile Valley of Africa. Specifically, her work has researched the consequences of Egyptian-Nubian interaction on the lives of individuals who lived during the New Kingdom and Nubian periods at the site of Tombos in northern Sudan.



Abstract

Research investigates ancient Mayan sociopolitical practices regarding individuals with congenital physical anomalies, including dwarfism, acromegaly, clubfoot, and polydactyly. Research endeavors to determine if social marginalization of individuals with such traits is a human universal and to explore the potential existence of more amicable alternative paradigms. Analysis of pathology, as identified via clinical diagnostic criteria from modern medical literature, determined that the pre-Columbian Maya represent a model by which social mobility was facilitated, or at the very least not hindered, by physical variation: elites appear to have acquired and maintained status by means of their atypical physical traits. Subsequent cross-cultural ethnohistoric comparison of this paradigm with modern cultures may yield interesting anecdotal implications for contemporary social issues regarding the perceived marginalization of individuals with similar afflictions. As evidenced by the Maya, an effective method of normalizing human variation may be through incorporation of the aforementioned traits into the existing cognitive framework of society's collective conscience.

Keywords

bioarchaeology, deformity, Maya, dwarfism, achondroplasia, acromegaly, gigantism, clubfoot, polydactyly, Palenque

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How did the faculty mentor relationship impact you during your time at Purdue?

Dr. Michele Buzon was incredibly influential in inspiring me to think critically and creatively about the kinds of questions that can be answered through the archaeological record. She emphasized that the focus of anthropological archaeology always comes back to the *people* we are studying. This is something I still think about every day!

How did the experience of publishing an article in JPUR benefit you? What advice would you give to other undergraduates at Purdue who are interested in contributing to the journal?

It was hugely beneficial in helping me to organize and articulate my thoughts on the subject matter. The feedback I've received has really helped in continuing to develop those ideas as well. I recommend that anyone and everyone who wants to contribute reads and thinks widely across disciplines. I feel that a multiplicity of perspectives is often key to generating creative questions and formulating thoughtful conclusions.

What advice would you give to other undergraduates at Purdue who are interested in doing research?

The hardest part about undergraduate research is getting started. First and foremost, take every

opportunity to turn any paper or assignment into the component of a broader research objective or a self-encapsulated research project. Outside of your coursework, there is such an incredible concentration of prolific minds at Purdue engaged in interesting research. The first step to getting involved is to ask how you can help with faculty members' ongoing projects. Express your interest, take an interest in the work, and be vocal about your own interesting ideas.

Lockman, M. H. (2015). Ancient Mayan “deformity”: Cultural accommodation of congenital physical anomaly in Mesoamerican prehistory. *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research*, 5, 56–63.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5703/jpur.05.1.07>