

To: Jacky Houdret <JackyHoudret@tigressproductions.co.uk>
From: "Jack D. Forbes" <jdforbes@ucdavis.edu>
Subject: Re: national Geographic Series
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Dear Jacky Houdret: Let me reply to your query first by letting you know that there are Native American scholars who have been quite interested in questions of human migrations for a long time. Vine Deloria Jr. is one. I am another. I wrote my first article on this subject back in the 1950s in a journal called THE MASTERKEY from the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. At that time I proposed a date of about 40,000 bp at least for the appearance of people in America. I have also said quite a lot about these matters in my books NATIVE AMERICANS OF CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA and AFRO-AMERICANS IN THE FAR WEST.

More recently, I have published a book entitled AFRICANS AND NATIVE AMERICANS in which I discuss some of the evidence for Americans reaching Africa, Europe, and western Asia in great numbers after 1492 due to the slave trade, which saw many Americans enslaved and shipped to Spain and Portugal, Canary islands, etc.

I also have data on the Dutch use of Brazilians in the conquest of Ghana, coastal Nigeria etc. in the seventeenth-century. The reason that this is important is that American genes would be spread far and wide and might be misinterpreted.

It would appear that Americans also went out into the Pacific before 1492 and also afterwards as whalers, sailors etc. For example, the Spaniards took mexicans to Manila each year as sailors on board the Manila Galleon. Nootka people were also commonly used on whaling vessels and so on.

The spread of the Diego gene (antigen) illustrates some of the travels of Americans, since it has shown up in Poland, Ireland apparently, and along the rim of Asia. This is a cirum-caribbean genetic characteristic, with its foci in Venezuela-Colombia apparently.

I should also make sure that you know about the work of the linguist Joanna Nichol, Slavic Languages Dept, UC Berkeley. Her research is vital on the evolution of the languages of America. Basically, most of them evolved south of the ice during the Pleistocene, perhaps mainly in South America, and then spread north after 11,000-14,000bp.

Finally, I hope that you will deal with the apparent fact that in recorded history times the migration patterns of humans in the northern hemisphere have almost always been from north to south and not the reverse (except where similar climate exists as along seashores). Thus we find frequent migrations of Celts, Slavs, Teutonics and other "Balts" from the Baltic Sea area southward towards the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, but we do not see many, if any migrations toward the Baltic. Of course, the post-industrial age changes all of that.

In Nebraska, for example, we find virtually no settlers from Missouri or south in 1860.

Almost all seem to come from Canada, the Great Lakes and northerly points.

American tribal groups also seem to move in a southerly direction in recorded times. For example, numerous tribes are forced westward by European intrusion after 1500, but if we look at a pattern of their movements, they almost all move westerly or southwesterly until reaching the area of the Rockies, at which point they all swing southerly (this from the Great Lakes area). From more southern beginnings, they also move westerly or southwesterly,

never northerly.

All of this makes it very difficult to explain how early humans, with limited tool kits, and no adaptation to colder climates, could migrate to colder, frigid, and very difficult climes demanding very specialized skills and tool kits. A much better explanation might be that Homo Europenses (so-called Neandertal) was already adapted to frigid climates and provided the cultural tools through intermarriage or cultural influence.

In any case, I personally believe that a very, very long period of time would be required to master cold climates, especially that of plains or steppes.

Now, you ask about an American group which might be willing to be filmed. You will have to go to some area other than California. Almost all American nations are today being pressed by the forces of oil exploitation, the destruction of the selva, missionaries, urbanization etc. In a way it is misleading and stereotypical to try to portray First Americans as a kind of pristine people. Even those who are still "uncontacted" in southeastern Peru and elsewhere have been forced to migrate under the pressure of colonialism and often after losses from diseases and warfare. In the USA the Crow Tribe of Montana might be a good one to look at, because they combine a real sense of nationality with many aspects of modern economic society.

See my web page for other information. Also you may go to Melvyl, the guide to the UCLibrary, for holdings in the various UC collections. Yours, Jack Forbes

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Subject: national Geographic Series
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Dear Prof. Forbes,

Apologies for approaching you out of the blue like this. Victor Montejo kindly suggested I get in touch with you with regards to throwing some light on the following.

We are working here in London on a new 2-part documentary series for National Geographic and the US Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). The subject of our series is how our ancestors peopled the world 50,000 years ago and what journeys/adventures they took along the way. The series is a synthesis of the different disciplines that converge on this subject from archaeology to genetics, anthropology, linguistics and the changing climate.

The films are to be told through the eyes of geneticist Spencer Wells who has been studying population genetics for the past 10 years. During his research he has collected blood samples from a variety of people worldwide. His results are very exciting and provide compelling evidence to the entire world's recent common ancestry and inter-relatedness.


Much of the emphasis of the films will be on 'first people' populations around the world. We will be focusing on Aborigines in Australia, San in Namibia, Chukchis in Russian Far East, Native Americans and so on.

The reason I am writing to you is that we are looking for a population of Native Americans who continue to live traditional lives and would be happy for us to film them over 2 days in Dec / Jan? Ideally they need to be located somewhere that is not covered in snow at this time, is lush and green, and where mountains border more open country. I am imagining somewhere in California? Apologies - my knowledge of this area is not vast - I realise I might be asking the impossible.

I sincerely, however, look forward to hearing from you,
Very best wishes,

Jacky

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