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May 2011

Brent Weisman at May 18 SWFAS on Southwest Florida After the Calusa: Spanish Indians and Seafaring Seminoles

Brent Weisman from the University of South Florida will speak at the May 18, 2011 SWFAS meeting on “Spanish Indians and Seafaring Seminoles: Southwest Florida After the Calusa,” in Bonita Springs. Come at 7 for socializing; the program starts at 7:30 p.m.

Upon the decline and demise of the Calusa chiefdom in the early 1700s, southwest Florida became a cultural frontier for new groups of native people seeking to adapt to a rapidly changing world. As a land of opportunity, a refuge, or simply as a place to get by, southwest Florida became a haven for a culturally diverse mix of people who remain poorly known to historians and anthropologists. This talk will focus on the historical and archaeological evidence for two of these groups, the so-called Spanish Indians and the Seminoles of Pine Island and will examine their links to remnant Calusa and to events contributing to the Second Seminole War.

Brent R. Weisman is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of South Florida, Tampa, and is the Chair of the Anthropology Department. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 1987 and has been active in Florida archaeology for more than 25 years. Brent has authored a number of



Weisman at Weedon Island

books on Florida topics, including two on Seminole Indian history, culture, and archaeology, and co-edited (with Phyllis Kolianos) a two-volume presentation of Frank Hamilton Cushing’s “lost” Florida manuscripts, which received the 2006 Rembert Patrick Award from the Florida Historical Society for best academic publication in Florida history.

Brent has served the Florida Anthropological Society as editor of *The Florida Anthropologist* from 1992-1995, served a term as the president of the Florida Archaeological Council, has

lead or participated in many workshops and programs sponsored by the Florida Humanities Council, and is the principal investigator for the two FPAN centers housed at USF (the Central and West Central regions). Brent has conducted many grant-funded projects, including one in urban Tampa, and is now the co-PI (with Tom Pluckhahn) for an NSF-funded excavation at the Crystal River site in Citrus County.

Previously, Brent was Archaeological Director, Conservation & and Recreation Lands (C.A.R.L.)

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Discovering the Fort in Fort Myers: April SWFAS Field Trip

By Annette Snapp

We had about 30 people there for Lee Hutchinson's talk on Fort Myers and also about 30 on the walking tour. We filled the room at the Southwest Florida Museum of History, had lunch at the Oasis and then walked around downtown with maps provided by Lee that show where fort buildings were located in relationship to the current downtown.

Participants asked many questions and were very engaged with Lee's presentations. The day was warm, but not too hot as we moved from one shady location to the next.

Lee Hutchinson (left, with megaphone) describing the layout and buildings of the long-gone historic Fort Myers.



Artist Le Moyne Subject of March 16 SWFAS Meeting at FGCU

By Alison Elgart

Jacques Le Moyne was the top of the March 16 SWFAS meeting, hosted at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) by the Anthropology Club. David Southall, the Collier County Museum Curator of Education presented a talk entitled, "Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues, Huguenot artist". He gave us a detailed account of the French Huguenots, and Jacques Le Moyne in particular, who were essentially deported to the New World from France. The Huguenots worked their way as far north as the Hilton Head area, but after they ran short of food, they traveled back to the St. Johns area where the Timucua Indians were friendly to them. Le Moyne, an illustrator and cartographer, traveled to the St. Johns area in 1562.

Mr. Southall impressed upon us that, as an illustrator, Le Moyne was not interested in drawing the scenes of Native Americans exactly as they were, but instead drew them in such a way that Europeans would understand them. For example, he drew deer to look like red stags of Europe and he illustrated that the forests around Indian villages were

managed. That is not to say that Le Moyne was inaccurate; to the contrary, we can still identify the native Florida plants that he drew. His illustrations have provided us with much information about Timucuan dress, rituals, warfare, and day to day life. For instance, we know that Timucua royalty were tattooed while others were not, and that in warfare, the victors took war trophies and dismembered and scalped the losers. He depicted berdaches, men who lived as women in many Native American tribes, carrying the dead from the battlefield and redistributing food. In one picture he drew a sorcerer with symbols of the Southeastern Ceremonial Cult scratched into the ground, and in another, he depicted a black drink ceremony.

Mr. Southall explained many of Le Moyne's drawings, but also clarified that only one original has survived. Le Moyne lost all but one illustration and had to recreate them from memory 20 years after returning home. They were engraved and published in a popular book by de Bry in Europe. This talk was very informative of all aspects of this time period in the St. Johns area.

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Archaeological Survey, Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Archaeological Research. His Ph.D. dissertation was "Like Beads On A String: A Culture History of the Seminole Indians In North Peninsular Florida." His undergraduate honors thesis was "Warfare: Its Adaptiveness for Intensive Maize Horticulturalists," under the direction of Dr. Charles Wagley).

In 1998, he received the USF Teaching Incentive Program (TIP) Award for excellence in teaching; in 1986, he was a recipient of the John M. Goggin Memorial Fellowship, Department of Anthropology, University of Florida.

Weisman's primary areas of interest include integrating anthropology, history, and archaeology; historical archaeology, especially ethnohistoric and early 19th century Florida archaeology, and Seminole Indian studies.

Digital Archaeology: Robot Scientist

By Jack Harvey

Robots are science fiction, right? The name was apparently derived from a Hungarian word for labor and famously used by Karel Capek in his 1920 play “R.U.R.”. Variations are automaton, bot, android, droid. They were proposed long ago for performing repetitive “mechanical” tasks such as drawing well water but slave labor was much cheaper. Now, as labor costs rise, there is increasing interest in machines that carry out complex multi-step jobs without close human control.

But surely a machine can't be a scientist, proposing hypotheses, testing them, and working toward a deeper understanding of some aspect of nature? There is a team at the University of Wales that has created a robot called Adam that they argue does exactly that. They say, “Adam has autonomously generated functional genomics hypotheses... and experimentally confirmed these...using laboratory automation.” Their paper describing this work is “The Automation of Science”, Ross D. King, et al. For much more about this, Google:

aberystwyth university adam robot

We usually think of a robot as being humanoid with two arms, two legs, a body and head. But that's just because we're human. An octopus or insect might have a different model. Adam has none of the usual animal appendages and consists of a large framework filled with various interconnected laboratory devices useful for the scientific area (yeast biology) he studies. The computer controlling all these devices is programmed to select the tests and measurements to perform based on previous results. If test results are “promising”, it adjusts the work plan to explore the findings in more detail.

Perhaps Adam is no more than an undergraduate student that doesn't go on Spring Break. However, he is autonomous in that he can select from an array of choices which action to perform next. Of course Adam's criteria for selecting an action are in his controlling artificial intelligence computer program. How is that different from a student?

One of the difficulties we humans have with science is precise communication using our wildly imprecise adjective-ridden natural languages. While the undergraduate might report the results of an experiment as, “Hey, that last test worked great!”, Adam specifies the test and results in a formal logical language with empirical data. This is one of the advantages that Ross King, et al, argues.

Many readers of King's paper will feel that it's really a stretch to claim that their machine is a “Robot Scientist”. Adam's work might appear to be largely trial and error, like the proverbial monkey at a keyboard writing Hamlet. But Adam's trials are determined by the results of his previous trials and this does mimic science laboratory work fairly well. The controlling computer program (Adam's ‘brain’)

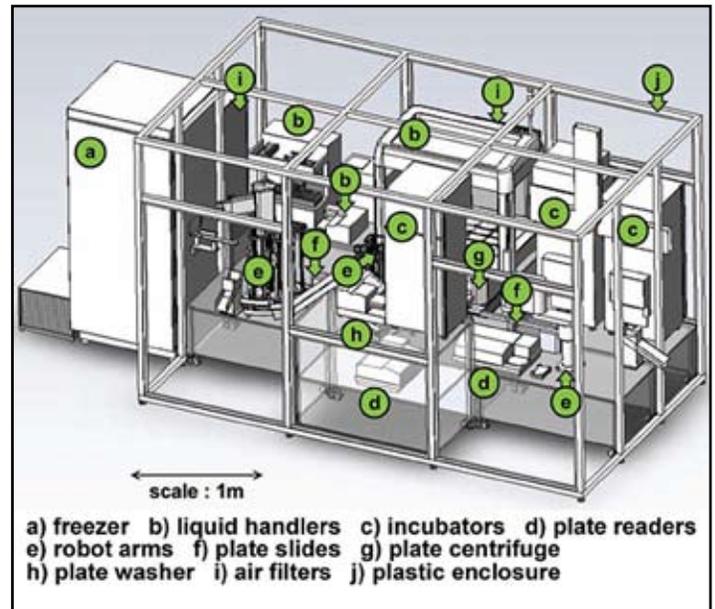


Diagram of Adam

does not simply run a long list of specified tests. Quoting the paper, “A Robot Scientist automatically originates hypotheses to explain observations, devises experiments to test these hypotheses, physically runs the experiments using laboratory robotics, interprets the results, and then repeats the cycle.”

Adam's laboratory work was in a tiny specialization of genetics involving a single species of yeast. How can this be relevant to anthropology or archaeology? Certainly the lab tools that Adam used (freezer, liquid handlers, incubators, centrifuge, etc.) have no use in evaluating artifacts.

But imagine we have a Robot Scientist (Eve?) that can identify ceramics. I suggested such a machine earlier in “Artificial Intelligence” that could identify a decorated sherd from any locale on the planet. Eve does this by comparing the decorations and other characteristics with a vast database previously merged from all known pottery types. Now let's imagine that Eve (using another vast database) can also identify the spicule species in the paste used to make each sherd, and can physically separate sherds from soil, stone, shell, flora and fauna fragments. She will weigh and image each sherd in broad and microscopic detail. Eve is a world-class specialist in pottery artifacts that we can load up with a couple of thousand bags of stuff from a dig. She will work 24/7 through these bags with blazing speed, producing an organized database for the dig showing each sherd, its provenience, type, weight, size and probable clay sources. After recording these data for a sherd, she will assign it a unique identifying number and place it in a container marked with that number.

When done with sherd identification, Eve produces a series of tables and charts that summarize results. Alas,

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however, Eve is logical and can't write the sesquipedal adjective-infested verbiage needed for the typical scientific paper. (Yet.) So a human scientist will need to integrate Eve's results into something that can be published.

When will Eve appear? I don't think she is even on the horizon because human labor is currently cheaper. Still, Adam was built. That robot is not science fiction.

SWFAS Newsletter by E-Mail

If you're online, you can get the SWFAS newsletter sent to you as a PDF via e-mail. Many SWFAS members have already made the switch - it saves quite a bit on printing and postage costs. If you would like to get the newsletter by e-mail, please note it on the sign-in sheet, e-mail Charlie Strader (cesplor@aol.com) or let Charlie, Annette Snapp or Karen Nelson know at the next meeting.

Don't forget - SWFAS memberships expired in January!

Dues are:
 Individual - \$20;
 Sustaining - \$50;
 Family - \$35;
 Student \$15

About SWFAS

The Directorate:

President - Annette Snapp
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SWFAS Committees:

Field - John Beriault
 Lab - Jack Thompson
 Hospitality - volunteer welcome!
 Newsletter - Karen Nelson

If you would like to join SWFAS, please address your check to: The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society; P.O. Box 9965; Naples, FL 34101

Dues are: Individual - \$20; Sustaining - \$50; Family - \$35; Student \$15

Learn more about SWFAS at:

<http://www.explorationsinc.com/swfl-archaeology/index.html>

Board meetings are usually held prior to the regular meeting on the third Wednesday of the month at the Bonita Springs Community Hall at 27381 Old U.S. 41 (by the banyan tree). All are welcome. Board meetings begin at 6 p.m. Regular meetings begin at 7:30 (with coffee served at 7).

May 2011 Newsletter

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