

Sarah R. Taylor

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Profile

I am a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology at Northwestern University. My concentration is in biological anthropology. More specifically, I am interested in the ways in which biology and culture intersect and can be studied in tandem to better understand the health of various human groups and their lifeways, past and present.

My previous major research, under the tutelage of Dr. Peter S. Ungar of the University of Arkansas, focused on orangutan dental morphology and the use of dental topographic analysis to infer hominid diet. For my MA graduate work, under the guidance of Drs. Matt Sponheimer and Arthur Joyce of the University of Colorado at Boulder, I conducted an interdisciplinary bioarchaeological study that utilized both stable isotope and dental microwear analyses to reconstruct pre-Conquest Mesoamerican diet from a museum collection housed in the Centro Bodega of Cuilapan in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Other academic and research interests include: biocultural studies of diet and nutrition; human biology, physiology, and ecology; medical anthropology; public health and obesity; human rights and inequality; issues of "race" and class; eugenics and bioethics; human variation and adaptation; foods, food processing, and food systems; and the social and biological aspects of aging.

Education

2012 - Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

College of Arts and Sciences

- Status: Currently Enrolled
- Degree Sought: PhD
- Field of Study: Anthropology
- Specialization: Biological Anthropology

2008 - MA Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder

College of Arts and Sciences, Distinguished Graduate

2005 - BA Anthropology, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, Departmental Scholar, Magna cum Laude Scholar

Grants and Awards

2007- **Fellowships**

- 2006 *National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.*
- Awarded in November 2006, tenure begun in August of 2007.

2007- **Grants and Awards, Graduate**

- 2006 *Beverly Sears Small Grant for Graduate Student Research (\$1000).*
University of Colorado Dept. of Anthropology Pre-dissertation Research Award (\$1160)
- Covered travel expenses incurred while attending a workshop on the principles and practices of stable light isotopes in Bradford, England, Summer 2006.
- Colorado Archaeology Society Alice Hamilton Scholarship (\$250).*
University of Colorado Museum William H. Burt Award (\$3000).
- Funded Master's Thesis research conducted in Oaxaca, Mexico, Summer 2006.
- AAUW Brown/Ricketts/Udick Grant for Women in Graduate Studies (\$1000).*

2005- **Grants and Awards, Undergraduate**

- 2004 *Distinction: Magna cum Laude Scholar, University of Arkansas, conferred in August.*
Honors College Conference Grant, University of Arkansas (\$750).
- Covered travel expenses incurred while attending the 2005 AAPA meetings where honors thesis results were presented.
- Honors College Research Grant, University of Arkansas (\$2350).*
- Funded honors thesis research, especially the use of laboratory equipment.

Research Experience

2006- **MA Thesis Research, University of Colorado at Boulder**

- 2008 *Diet and Agriculture in the Lower Río Verde Valley of Pre-Conquest Oaxaca, Mexico.*
- Objective: to test the hypothesis that maize consumption increased over time in the Lower Río Verde Valley prior to the Conquest.
 - Five weeks spent in Oaxaca, Mexico, during the Summer 2006 for the purposes of collecting research samples and becoming familiar with the region, its history, and its culture.
 - Collected dental enamel powder samples for stable carbon isotope analysis and whole molar teeth for dental microwear analysis.
 - All samples were taken from a museum collection of burials stored at the Centro Bodega of Cuilapan, located 20 minutes outside of Oaxaca City.
 - Volunteered at the excavation site of Pueblo Viejo in Teposcolula, Oaxaca, Mexico for one week in order to gain first-hand archaeological experience.

- 2005 **Undergraduate Honors Thesis Research, University of Arkansas**
The Effects of Tooth Wear on Function in Orangutans
- Produced 50 high-resolution casts of orangutan lower second molars for this research using molds obtained from specimens at the American Museum of Natural History.
 - Collected morphological data using a modified Surveyor 500 laser scanner and Geographic Info Systems software, ArcView GIS 3.2.
 - Findings presented at an invited symposium held during the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists (Ungar and Taylor, 2005).
 - Earned the distinction of *Magna cum Laude* scholar for exceptional thesis and thesis defense, August of 2005.

Relevant Employment History

- 2005-2008 **Teaching Assistant, University of Colorado, Boulder**
Introductory Labs in Biological Anthropology, I (ANTH 2030) and II (ANTH 2040)
- Labs consisted of two-hour sessions that included lectures, guided group activities, and interactive experiments based in biological anthropology.
- 2006 **Research Assistant, University of Colorado, Boulder**
Book editing and review
- Assisted Dr. Matt Sponheimer with his edited volume (in prep) on hominid paleoecology.
- 2005 - 2002 **Workstudy, Neogene Paleoecology Lab, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville**
Laboratory Coordinator and Technician
- Produced high-resolution casts of hundreds of human, non-human primate and fossil hominoid teeth for use in microwear research.
 - Trained workstudy students and visiting researchers in the methods of handling, storing, and producing dental casts.
 - Directed the storage and organization of all laboratory specimens.
- 2003 **Workshop on the Evolution of the Human Diet, Fayetteville AR, August**
Assistant Coordinator and Webmaster
- Arranged travel, accommodations and meeting venues for twelve presenters.
 - Assisted in workshop planning, including the design and production of informational posters and programs.
 - Designed, created, and maintained the event's website at sloandietworkshop.org.

Presentations and Publications

- 2008 **Taylor, SR.** The potential health benefits and risks associated with coffee consumption: a review of the literature. Poster presentation for the Annual Meeting of the Human Biology Association, Columbus, OH. Wednesday, April 9.
- 2007 **Taylor, SR.** Let Me See Your Grill. NASA column, *Anthropology News* 49(4): 54-55.
- 2007 **Taylor, SR** and Demmig-Adams, B. To sip or not to sip: the potential health risks and benefits of coffee drinking. *Nutrition and Food Science*, 37(6):406-418.
- 2007 Covert, HH, B Wright, DM Mulhern, K Nichols, J Galligan, **SR Taylor**, and J O'Brien. Lab manual for Anthropology 2030: Introduction to Biological Anthropology I. Fall 2007 Edition. University of Colorado.
- 2007 **Taylor, SR** and H Williams. "Finding Your Tastebuds." Workshop presented at the 2007 *Expanding Your Horizons* science learning event for young girls, Boulder, CO, February 24.
- 2006 **Taylor, SR.** "Diet and Agriculture in the Lower Rio Verde Valley of Pre-Colombian Oaxaca, Mexico." Presented at the October 14th meeting of the *American Association of University Women*, Boulder, Colorado.
- 2006 Covert, HH, B Wright, DM Mulhern, K Nichols, J Galligan, and **SR Taylor**. Lab manual for Anthropology 2030: Introduction to Biological Anthropology I. Fall 2006 Edition. University of Colorado.
- 2006 Merceron, G, **S Taylor**, R Scott, Y Chaimanee, and J Jaeger. Dietary characterization of the hominoid *Khoratpithecus* (Miocene of Thailand): evidence from dental topographic and microwear texture analyses. *Naturewissenschaften*, 93(7):329-333.
- 2005 **Taylor, SR.** The Effects of Tooth Wear on Function in Orangutans. Undergraduate honors thesis, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
- 2005 Ungar, PS and **S Taylor**. Dental topographic analysis: Tooth wear and function. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, Supplement #40.

Conferences and Workshops

2007 **Events Organized**

Graduate Student Distinguished Lecture Series, Biological Subdiscipline.

- Invited guest speaker and presentation: "Dental Microwear Texture Analysis and the Diets of Plio-Pleistocene Hominins from Africa," by Professor Peter S. Ungar of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, September 16-20, 2007.

2007- **Events Attended**

2005 *Graduate Teacher Certification Program.*

- Fall and Spring Intensives, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2005-2008.

Workshop on the Principles and Practice of Stable Light Isotopes.

- Dept. of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, England, July 3-7, 2006.

13th Annual Mixtec Gateway.

- Conference specifically for researchers whose focus is the archaeology of Oaxaca, Mexico, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, March 18-22, 2006.

American Association of Physical Anthropologists.

- 75th, 76th, and 77th Annual Meetings, held in March 2005, 2006, and 2007 respectively.

Interests and Organizations

2007 *Graduate Student Distinguished Lecture Series, Biological Subdiscipline Officer, Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado at Boulder.*

2007 *Human Biology Association, student member.*

2006 *Engaged Anthropologists, an Independent Student Organization, University of Colorado at Boulder.*

2006 *Graduate Teacher Certification Program, University of Colorado at Boulder, program participant.*

2006 *Graduate Student Colloquium Committee, Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado at Boulder.*

2006 *Sigma Xi: Society for Scientific Research, associate member.*

2006 *American Association of Physical Anthropologists, student member.*

2006 *American Anthropological Association, student member.*

2005 *Computer Committee, Coordinator Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado at Boulder.*

2005 *Arkansas Alumni Association.*

References

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Dr. Arthur Joyce, Associate Professor
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