



In Memoriam

Frank W. Marlowe (April 17, 1954–September 25, 2019)

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Here we offer a brief chronological timeline of Frank’s academic career and highlight some of his most noteworthy scientific contributions after completing his doctoral degree at UCLA. For a more comprehensive look at his life and work, please see the Frank Marlowe Archive (<http://frankmarlowearchive.com/>). The following musings are written by a collection of Frank’s graduate students from his various academic positions.

Harvard University, 1998–2003, + Summer 1998 in Tanzania Contributed by Peter B. Gray

Frank was a conversationalist. From his rural Texas roots to academic hallways to Tanzanian field settings, Frank welcomed and cherished talking. He was relaxed, laidback, open-minded and, put simply, easy to talk with. If you thought you were in store for high-minded, status-sensitive discussions that might make you feel inferior or a poor reflection to the Hadza and hunter-gatherer scientist he became, you were in for a surprise. Like a good forager, he could level any social difference with an egalitarian ethos. He made you feel heard and respected.

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I was drawn many times into what could be called the Frank Zone. One example was when you were supposed to meet someone (such as your future wife) but were late because you stopped at his open-door office in the Peabody Museum to say hi or briefly talk about something. You then disappeared into a long conversation about so many curious things that you lost track of time. The Frank Zone was born from curiosity and genuine interest in anthropology, Hadza, hunter-gatherers, you name it. It was a friendly and memorable place because so many things you had thought of or were concerned with were discussed without judgment, and you emerged a bit more insightful.

Frank brought Hadza research to Harvard (1998–2006), but he seemed more at ease in Hadzaland. His relaxed pace and demeanor and ease in talking with his Hadza friends contrasted with the academy's tenure clocks and higher-education demands. When Frank was first hired, I joined him in Tanzania for exploratory research that July and August. As others would come to find as well, Frank was great fun talking over a Safari lager, and he was happy talking with the various folks in and out of the Tanzanian research bureaucracy, or with any and many Hadza. While in Arusha for some paper-pushing, I vaguely recall James Woodburn, the early Hadza-focused anthropologist, having long talks with Frank in our hotel room as I drowsily sought to nod off. I think James Woodburn experienced the Frank Zone too.

Frank was resilient. Tanzania imposed a several-year moratorium on research with the Hadza in the late 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium. Frank took a few exploratory trips to the Andaman Islands to see if that could be an alternate hunter-



Fig. 1 Frank Marlowe in the field in Tanzania, 1998 (photo by Peter Gray)

gatherer research path. Hadza avenues reopened, but Frank landed on late night talk show host Craig Ferguson's couch discussing the Andamanese in the interim. Frank's path was not direct. From a note in my summer 1998 journal, "After dinner tonight, we all stumbled in the dark along Mbulu's rough, rocky dirt roads. Starlight provided enough illumination to avoid falling off the edge of a bridge 6 feet into water, or a few feet into a hole on the main street. Low on the horizon, we saw what we think is Mars." Frank was in his forties when he was hired at Harvard, having undertaken sundry other projects such as documentary film-making (e.g., "Manatic"), and continuing a nonlinear life course.

Frank made major contributions to Hadza and hunter-gatherer research. Some of us saw the processes by which this happened. In arguably his most formative and productive phase, he undertook theory-driven research on Hadza paternal care, foraging activities, experimental economics, attractiveness evaluations, and more. He spent much time in the field and secured internal and major external funding. His initial write-ups of some of this research were of variable quality. In an early draft of what became his *Human Nature* paper on the patriarch hypothesis (Marlowe 2000a), the idea was not expressed well and the writing needed much work. Yet it was a revelation to witness the process of honing a research idea, to see how discussion, feedback, and persistence could transform something into a legitimate contribution. Frank also ensured that readers of the hunter-gatherer literature did not think the Hadza could represent all foragers or small-scale societies generally. He complemented a longstanding, deep engagement with the Hadza, culminating in his classic book on the Hadza (Marlowe 2010), with systematic cross-cultural analyses drawing on the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) sample and its relatives. He provided quantitative summary of tropical, nonequestrian hunter-gatherers that revealed patterned variation in foraging economics, social dynamics, and also ethnographic outliers, such as a higher prevalence of polygyny among some Australian Aboriginal foragers. Reading, discussing, and providing critical feedback on some of these manuscripts, such as his 2000 "Behavioural Processes" paper (Marlowe 2000b), made me a better scholar and fundamentally shaped an outlook on the evolution of and variation in male social behavior.

Tanzania, 2004–2012

Contributed by Alyssa N. Crittenden

I first met Frank at a sushi restaurant in Pasadena, California, in the spring of 2004. A doctoral student at the University of California, San Diego, I was interested in studying foraging behavior and diet composition among women and children in a contemporary foraging population—the only problem being that I didn't have a fieldsite. Frank was an assistant professor at Harvard who had recently received a large National Science Foundation grant to study "Hadza Foraging, Food Sharing, and Family Formation," and he was looking for a student who wanted to ask just the types of questions that I was interested in asking. After being introduced by colleagues via email, he invited me to meet him in Pasadena, where he was giving an invited lecture (which he did quite often, all over the world). This first discussion, as all of our subsequent discussions over the years would turn out to be, was meandering. But just like all of the others, we eventually found our way to the topic at hand. It was decided. I would join Frank for the summer field season of 2004—the first field season in which he took multiple students/mentees from the US into the field. Five of us, to be exact.

That summer deserves its own remembrance; suffice it to say, Frank dubbed it the “summer of chaos.” Many things went right. .. and many, many things went wrong. We all learned quite a lot that summer, and Frank, ever cool under the pressures of the field, encouraged us all to return to Tanzania. And almost all of us have—many times over. Frank was a dedicated, patient, and flexible fieldworker. Although “directing” work at a fieldsite did not come easy to him (so he resisted the term), being in the field most certainly did. I always considered the Lake Eyasi basin to be Frank’s happy place—and he was the most content in a Hadza camp collecting data, stories, and memories. Frank loved data, and he loved writing up his findings. I have memories of him mulling over his computer screen, trying to find an answer to something that was puzzling him.

His corpus of work is wide-ranging, spanning the fields of anthropology, psychology, human biology, and behavioral economics. Although perhaps most well-known for his ethnography, *The Hadza Hunter-Gatherers of Tanzania* (Marlowe 2010), he contributed a bevy of work in the form of peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. Each of his students likely has their own favorite Frank paper. His 2005 “Hunter-Gatherers in Human Evolution” (Marlowe 2005a) is iconic, well-cited, and nears the top of my list. My favorite, however, is his less-well-known 2003 paper, “A Critical Period for Provisioning by Hadza Men: Implications for Pair Bonding” (Marlowe 2003a). He argues that although women contribute staples to the diet and have the most reliable caloric returns, men ratchet up their provisioning when their partners have just given birth and are breastfeeding a young infant. He concludes that provisioning by husbands during this “critical period” may have been enough to favor pair bonding during human evolution. Given my interest in allomaternal investment, this paper was key in how I began contextualizing pair bonding in a cooperative breeding matrix, and incidentally, my first peer-reviewed publication on the topic (co-authored with Frank) appeared in *Human Nature* (Crittenden and Marlowe 2008).

Frank certainly left an impact on the field of anthropology. He advised several PhD students, myself included, who went on to secure university positions and publish in their own domains. Although the quality and intimacy of his relationships with his students varied, we were all heavily impacted by his early onset Alzheimer’s and his recent passing. As we remember Frank and his contributions, I keep circling back to one memory in particular—focusing on the best parts of Frank. He once told me that he looked forward to the day when a Hadza friend could come and stay with him in the US and sleep in his guest room. That never came to be. This month, however, a few short weeks after his death, a Hadza friend of mine (who is the son of one of Frank’s longtime friends and informants) came and stayed with me and slept in my guest room. He is currently a graduate student in Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy at the University of Arizona. Frank would have been happy to know that the next generation, both of Hadza children and his academic offspring, are finding their way.

Harvard University, 2002–2010, + Summer 2004, 2010 in Tanzania Contributed by Coren Apicella¹

I first met Frank in 2002 when he was an assistant professor at Harvard. He asked me to come by for an interview after I volunteered to work as his research assistant. I remember standing outside his office, taking in a deep breath before knocking. I was

¹ From a longer obituary (in press) to be published in *Evolution and Human Behavior*.

nervous to meet the Harvard professor behind the big wooden door. I smile now at how wrong I was to be intimidated. The man who greeted me had a quiet reflection, an endearing Southern drawl, and a quirky, if not mischievous, grin. Despite his quietness, he was open and full of life. He had a humble radiance about him that made him easy to like and easy to learn from.

Frank took a chance on me and brought me in as his graduate student. He introduced me to anthropology, evolutionary psychology, fieldwork, and the Hadza. He taught me how to be interdisciplinary. How to take good field notes. And he taught me how to roll with the punches in both work and life.

Frank's advice to his students was always simple but practical. I once asked if he had any tips for succeeding in graduate school. "Well, Coren," he replied, in his slow, drawn-out way, "you should always have a pen handy to take notes." Before my first trip to the field, I eagerly asked what one should do if they are bitten by a snake. Again, slowly and casually he said, "Well Coren, you should probably pray."

I like to imagine Frank back in his old office in the Peabody Museum at Harvard, flanked on one side by floor-to-ceiling wooden bookshelves overflowing with his life's collection of books, notes, films, art, and other memorabilia, and on the other side, large windows overlooking the museum's library and wintry courtyard.

But Frank was happiest in the field. He had a natural bent for adventure and exploration. He enjoyed being active in body and mind—doing, discovering, and documenting. So, in all my best memories of him, there is wind in his hair and sun on his face. And of course, there is always a pen in his shirt pocket.

Florida State University, Durham University & Cambridge University, 2006–2019, + Field Seasons 2007–2009, 2011–2014

Contributed by Colette Berbesque

Frank loved the easy-going calm of the South. At Florida State University, he loved the weather, the friendliness, and the openness of Tallahassee. His time was productive. He finished his book (Marlowe 2010). He bought his first home, and he liked to say that he was "house proud." He adopted two older dogs—sisters—which he loved dearly. He once said that although he loved his fieldwork in Tanzania and his job in the US, he felt as though he had lived two separate lives, having two or more of everything: keys to two cars, two apartments, two sets of friends. He said that sometimes he was amazed because he had had so many wonderful experiences, but also he wondered if he were ever fully living either of his lives.

At Florida State, he was made a full professor and began to feel as though he had finally settled into a successful academic career. He could've lived his life happily in Tallahassee. But the anthropology department was being cut, so he continued his, as he called it, "peripatetic life" and moved into a new opportunity in England, at Durham University. This was also where his illness first manifested. After he moved to Cambridge, although we weren't in the same city, we spoke often of our experiences as immigrants. The culture shock of life in the United Kingdom was a bit embarrassing for two trained anthropologists, but Frank made a sort of friendly competition out of which of us could identify the most absurdities.

Frank's best and most unusual quality was that he had a way of making people feel heard. He would listen to and seriously consider the experiences and thoughts of others. Even when he disagreed with someone's perspective, he still took that person seriously.

It was what made him a great scientist, and also what made him a truly gifted anthropologist.

Cambridge University, 2012–2014, + Summer 2013, Winter 2014 in Tanzania Contributed by Duncan Stibbard-Hawkes

I spent the summer before starting my PhD systematically working my way through Frank's publication record. As I quickly found out, Frank was a productive scholar and his academic interests were intimidatingly broad. His work ran the gamut from carefully observed quantitative ethnography (Marlowe 2010) to detailed work on diet and provisioning (Marlowe 2003a; Marlowe et al. 2014), economic games (Marlowe 2005a), mate choice (Marlowe 2004; Sear and Marlowe 2009), cross-cultural hypothesis testing (Marlowe 2003b), and wide-ranging review articles (Marlowe 2005b) to imaginative if occasionally divisive evolutionary hypothesizing (Marlowe 1998, 2000a). However, beyond this and a few email exchanges, I had very little idea what kind of person to expect when, with some trepidation, I climbed the stairs to meet Frank for the first time in his Cambridge University offices. Whatever I had expected, it was not the laid-back, easy-going Texan I found reclining on his seat, smile on his face and characteristic twinkle in his eyes. I cannot remember whether Frank actually had his feet on the desk, but for the sake of these reminiscences, he may as well have.

Frank's approach to scholarship, as to life, was unpretentious, open-minded, and characterized by boundless intellectual curiosity and energy. He was a natural conversationalist, anecdotalist, and storyteller. As others have noted, a short meeting at noon would often continue until 8 PM or later. By the time we went our separate ways, we would have discussed forager food-sharing patterns, the finer points of human/honeyguide mutualism, Cambridge's [somewhat inadequate] culinary landscape, basal hominin locality patterns, Frank's favorite *Twilight Zone* episodes, and whether or not elephants could reasonably be described as "critters." Among other things. The sun set and the hours melted away unnoticed.

Frank was never afraid to play with ideas. Although certainly opinionated, he was never dogmatic and was willing to give any topic or theory a fair shake. In terms of my own project on costly signaling theory, although Frank was no committed proponent of the idea, he bent over backwards to ensure that I had the intellectual freedom to develop my ideas without undue influence, often deliberately hiding his opinions until we had talked things through. His students were always encouraged to speak their minds and were free to do so without judgment or censure. If Frank disagreed with something, he would give students a gentle nudge in the right direction and let them do the rest. Similarly, he supervised by suggestion and, in the spirit of egalitarianism, set no deadlines. This inspired his students to work all the harder so as not to let him down. On one occasion, after Frank casually dropped a book recommendation into an email, I remember trying to read the entirety of Chapais's *Primeval Kinship* (Harvard University Press, 2008) in a single evening. When I appeared for our meeting the next day, red-eyed, over-caffeinated, and only somewhat triumphant, he was deeply amused that I had made good on his suggestion. He shared his incisive criticisms of ancestral patrilocality, plied me with coffee, and gave me an affectionate if sustained ribbing for following his word to the letter.

The relaxed humility and occasional fondness for blue jokes made it easy to forget that Frank was a first-rate scholar. Frank was not your common, all-garden, cobwebby

don, and to borrow Peter Gray's very apt phrasing, his career path from filmmaker to anthropologist was not direct. In spite of, or maybe because of, this, anthropology was, to Frank, a vocation and not a day job. He lived and breathed it. He did not constrain his work to office hours, and seemingly during all waking hours and across all settings, he was always puzzling over a question or three.

Although I believe he contributed much to Cambridge's academic milieu, Frank had only limited patience for Cambridge University's anachronisms. Perhaps not unreasonably, he perceived gowns, formal meals, and senior common rooms to be a bit stuffy. His real home was, instead, the Eyasi region and surrounds in Tanzania, where he was well known and well liked. In certain places it seemed impossible to walk 10 m without someone appearing from nowhere, embracing Frank and sharing reminiscences. He was never happier than when he was in the field, covered head to toe in bright orange dust, ears pink from the sun, sharing a joke or story by the roaring fire as the moon rose over the thorn bushes.

He was also a principled fieldworker. He insisted that researchers do no harm, add no extra burden, and not conduct any research that participants might find boring, tiresome, or confusing. He loved doing people a good turn, occasionally to his own detriment—in one camp I remember we had to head back to town and resupply because Frank had given away double the allotted number of gifts. His fondness was reciprocated in spades, and our arrivals in many camps felt like family reunions. His 2010 book was dedicated, in part, “to the Hadza, the fantastic, wonderful Hadza.” Although superlative, this was perhaps an understatement coming from Frank.

I knew Frank during a difficult time of his life. Alzheimer's is a cruel disease which renders many previously straightforward tasks frustratingly tricky and burdensome. For a long time, Frank did not have a formal diagnosis, which made his time at Cambridge all the more difficult. Characteristically, Frank took these challenges on the chin, with grace and optimism and not a word of complaint. Frank, perhaps more than many of us, was a complex and multifaceted person. However, over the three continents on which he worked, I know he will be fondly remembered by those who knew him best. His charm, humor, and intellect will be keenly missed, and his academic legacy will be richly appreciated by generations of anthropologists to come.

2000–2019

Contributed by Brian Wood

I first met Frank in 2000, at the AAA conference in San Francisco, where he had presented his early research on Hadza hunting. In 2003, he asked me to be his graduate student at Harvard, an offer that fundamentally changed the course of my life. At Harvard, Frank was often the first person in the department to arrive, and the last to leave, spending countless hours honing manuscripts, analyzing data, prepping lectures. Frank was a deep thinking, hard-working, inspiring, and humble person. He was also a bit mischievous and mysterious, a Cheshire cat with a Southern drawl. He held many different versions of the present and past in his mind, using them to run mental simulations of complex evolutionary, historical, and social situations, searching for scientific opportunities to learn what was actually going on. His depth of knowledge, creativity, and hard work led to new hypotheses and novel tests of hypotheses that will have lasting impacts on anthropology, biology, and psychology (I've written about this at frankmarlowearchive.com).

In the field, Frank collected data for myriad research projects, and he became rejuvenated and re-inspired, devised new projects, and immersed himself in the daily life of his Hadza friends. On focal follows, Frank would walk in the footprints of Hadza hunters, as quiet as a cat. Frank also embodied many of the traits that have been called the “hunter-gatherer ethos.” He was generous and forgiving. He was always happy to share his new ideas, share his time. I will never forget the first time that Frank drove me to a Hadza camp, deep in the hills, in a beautiful place overlooking Lake Eyasi. Along with the rest of his students, I was extremely lucky to have been along for the ride.

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