

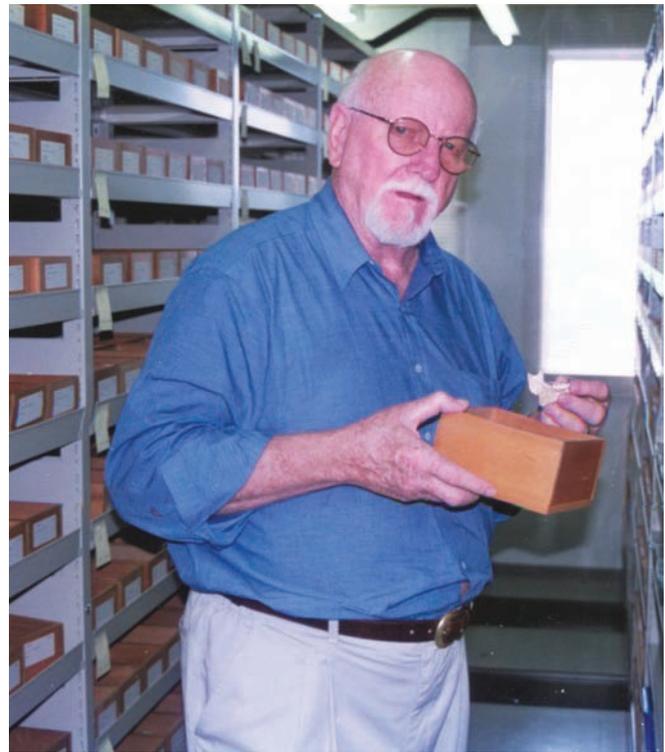
## Obituary: Daris R. Swindler (1925-2007)

Daris R. Swindler, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Washington, Seattle, passed away on December 6, 2007, after a brief acute illness in Spokane. He was 82 years old. Much of his scientific work was related to dental anthropology and craniofacial growth and development. A long-time member of the Dental Anthropology Association, Swindler served as its president from 1990 to 1992. From 1996 to 2001 he belonged to the Editorial Board of *Dental Anthropology*. With his death dental anthropology has lost one of its finest scholars and supporters. The 14th International Symposium on Dental Morphology in Greifswald, Germany in August 2008 will commemorate his life and will honor his most valuable contribution to Dental Anthropology.

Daris R. Swindler was born in Morgantown, West Virginia in 1925. Since his junior years in highschool, Swindler had been interested in the evolution and the diversity of recent humankind. This interest was greatly fostered by the reading of "On the Trail of Ancient Man" by Roy Chapman Andrews. Interrupted by his volunteer service for the US Navy during the Second World War, Swindler began his higher education at the University of West Virginia. As a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania he studied with Drs. Wilton H. Krogman, Loren Eiseley and Carleton Coon. Especially influential was his acquaintance with Krogman that inspired his continuing interest in craniofacial growth and development, and especially of teeth.

In 1954 he participated in an expedition to New Britain with Ward Goodenough, Ann Chowning and Charles A. Valentine. This had a great impact on Daris Swindler's future work. Not only was his doctoral dissertation in Anthropology, which he completed in 1959, largely based on the material that he collected during these five months, but the time he spent with the Lakalai people assured him of his career choice as a physical anthropologist. In his most recent book "New Britain Diary, 1954: An Anthropologist's Journal", Daris R. Swindler reflects his encounter with the Lakalai [p. 34] "As I walked back along the beach that evening, all that had happened today was swimming about in my head: thoughts about our earth and its many people, its many religions and cultures, and then I realized: this is why I became an anthropologist."

Though he was never able to return to New Britain, his interest in the various cultural regions of the Pacific continued. In 1996 he joined an Italian Expedition to Easter Island as a Field Consultant in Dental



**Fig. 1.** Daris R. Swindler studying primate dentitions in Inuyama, Japan, in 1998.

Anthropology and one year later accepted an invitation to lecture on Micronesian Anthropology on the Oceanic Grace Cruise Line through Micronesia.

From 1954 to 1968 Swindler taught human anatomy at several academic institutions including the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Medicine, Cornell University Medical School, West Virginia University Medical School, the Medical College of South Carolina, and Michigan State University. In 1968 Swindler was appointed full professor at the Department of Anthropology, University of Washington. Over this same time period he was also an Adjunct Curator of Primate Anatomy, Burke Memorial Washington State Museum. After his retirement in 1991 he was invited to be Visiting Professor by the University of Zurich, Switzerland (1992), the University of Padua, Italy (1994), and by the Okayama University School of Dentistry, Japan (1998).

Swindler's research interests included primate anatomy, early primate dental development, comparative dental morphology and odontometrics of living and fossil primates, as well as Pacific dental anthropology. Several field expeditions took him to important sites such as the Big Horn Basin, Wyoming



**Fig. 2.** Daris R. Swindler researching in Inuyama, Japan, 1998.

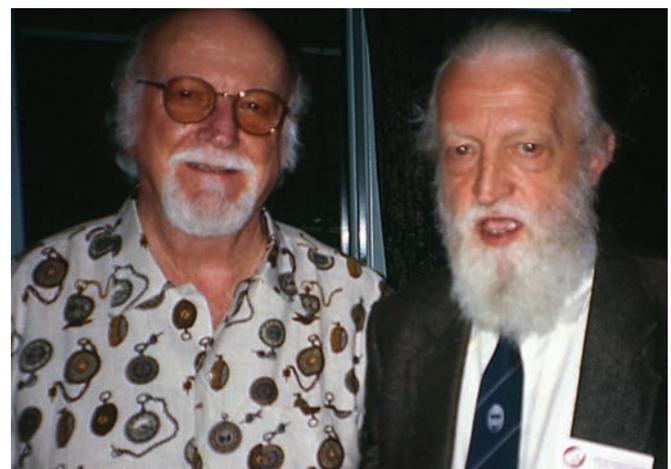
(1984-1990), Pakistan (1989), as well as to the Valley of the Kings, Egypt (1991). In recent years he carried out forensic work in Cyprus for Physicians for Human Rights.

His time in Seattle was very productive. Several research grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) allowed Swindler to conduct unique longitudinal studies on craniofacial growth and development of two primate species, the pigtailed macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*) and the yellow baboon (*Papio cynocephalus*). Huge datasets accrued from X-ray-films, dental casts, body and head measurements, which were studied extensively by Swindler and his graduate students, most notably Dr. Joyce Sirianni. In addition to Swindler's classic work in 1973, "An Atlas of Comparative Primate Gross Anatomy, Baboon, Chimpanzee, and Man" (reprinted by Robert E. Krieger in 1982), with medical illustrator Charles D. Wood, Swindler and Sirianni published a substantial body of data in 1985 as an impressive book, "Longitudinal Growth and Development of the Pigtailed Macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*)" CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida. Daris Swindler never refused scholars access to his original data. On the contrary, he often went out of his way to promote new research that made continuing use of his own data base. In 2007, shortly before his death, Daris decided to donate his enormous collection of dental casts, X-ray films, skeletons, etc. to the New York University. At the same time New York University formally established the "Daris R. Swindler Collection" of dental primate material available for study at their Center for the Study of Human Origins (<http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/anthro/programs/csho/center.html>). This gave Daris a great sense of pride and the assurity of a productive future for his collections.

Swindler received many honors in his life, notably the Alexander Von Humboldt Senior Scientist Award from Germany; the Washington Governor's Writer's Day Award for his "An Atlas of Primate Gross Anatomy: Baboon, Chimpanzee and Man"; the Senior Award for the Visiting Scholar Exchange from the Peoples Republic of China; Vice President of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists; President of the Dental Anthropology Association. He was a member of the editorial boards of several journals including *Journal of Dental Research* and the *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*. He was elected a Fellow of The American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1961 and in 1992 became a Fellow of The Explorer's Club.

Swindler was a gifted writer, who published constantly over more than 50 years. His first publication was in 1955 on the absence of sickle cell anemia in Melanesia. "A review of dental morphological traits in Oceania" was a chapter in a Festschrift (2005) for Ann Chowning. Apart from those already mentioned, other outstanding publications include his widely acclaimed books, "The Dentition of Living Primates" Academic Press, London, 1976; "Introduction to Primates" The University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 1998; "Primate Dentition: An Introduction to the Teeth of Nonhuman Primates" Cambridge University Press London, 2002. Daris himself said he especially enjoyed his work as the major editor of "Systematics, Evolution and Anatomy", Vol. 1 of Comparative Primate Biology, Alan R. Liss Publishing Company, 1986 (with J. Erwin as Series Editor).

Apart from his outstanding contribution to dental



**Fig. 3.** Daris R. Swindler (left) and C. Loring Brace, both past-presidents of the Dental Anthropology Association. Picture taken at the AAPA meeting, 1996 (courtesy of E. F. Harris).

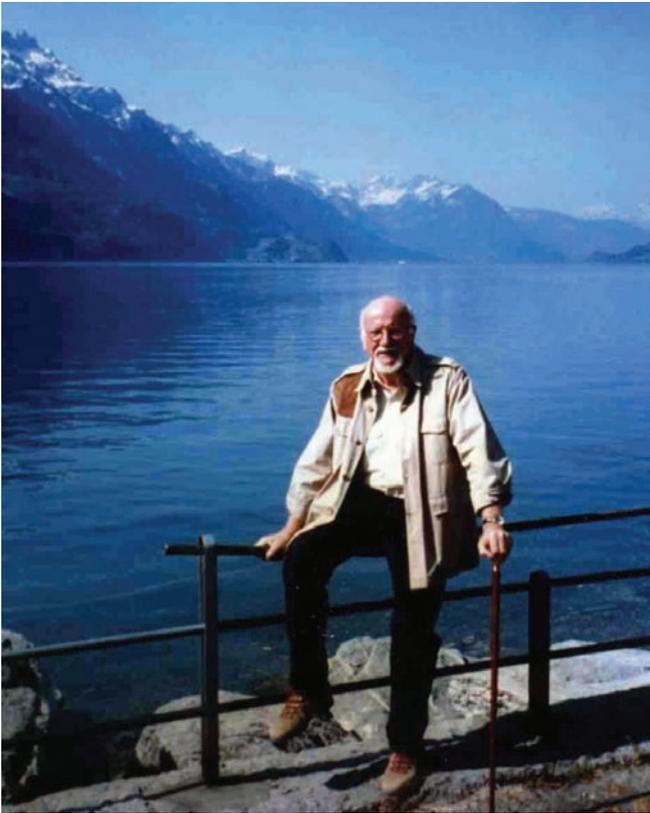


Fig. 4. Daris R. Swindler in Switzerland.

morphology and primate anatomy, Swindler was known for his passion for teaching. His courses on Comparative Primate Anatomy were particularly popular with his students. Shortly before his death, Daris was honored by the establishment of the Daris R. Swindler Fellowship in Biocultural Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology of the University of Washington. This fellowship marks a lasting contribution to Anthropology in his name and will provide a great opportunity for many future students at the University of Washington.

As a truly biological anthropologist, Daris R. Swindler enjoyed life and its many facets to the fullest. He was always fascinated about all aspects of evolutionary biology, and loved to chat about his many interests, most notably about primate teeth. From all of the many meetings he attended, he especially favored the International Symposia on Dental Morphology because of their special flavor and small size which encourages scientific discussions about so many aspects of dental morphology both in primates and other vertebrates. He was especially passionate about key historical figures, none more so than Charles Darwin and was never prouder than when he could extend his private library with another book on the subject. He and his wife Kathy Swindler were great hosts not just for well-known

and established academics, but also for many young researchers who were still at the start of their careers. Many felt, and still feel, part of Daris and Kathy's extended scientific family and many, through their friendship and support, were inspired to keep going. Daris had an overwhelming trust in the future and his friends felt his love for his academic family. Apart from science he loved fishing in the Puget Sound and was almost fanatical about American Football.

Daris R. Swindler is survived by his wife Kathryn Rantala Swindler of Spokane, seven children and seven grandchildren. Everyone who knew him will agree that Daris was a wonderful person. He will deeply be missed by all those to have shared so much with him and have learned so much from him though he will remain a part of dental anthropology for a very long time to come.

Christopher Dean  
University College London  
United Kingdom  
and  
Thomas Koppe  
Ernst Moritz Arndt University  
Greifswald  
Germany

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[An electronic version of this bibliography is available on request. *Editor*]

## The Daris Swindler Primate Dental Cast Collection

In August 2006 Daris agreed to donate his collection of primate dental casts to the Center for Human Origins, New York University. The collection consists of more than 2,000 casts representing every primate species known (and some non-primate relatives), as well as several human populations. The Daris Swindler Primate Dental Cast Collection is now housed in the Anthropology Department of NYU. Undergraduate volunteers are in the process of inventorying the collection and comparing it against Daris' catalog. Inventory is expected to be complete by December of 2008. The collection has already been used for a number of undergraduate and graduate student projects. In addition, researchers who are members of the New York Consortium for Evolutionary Primatology have begun scanning some of the ape casts for comparative study. Ultimately, NYU plans to scan the entire collection in three-dimensions and make it virtually available for remote researchers via an internet database. The collections will provide the foundation for developing standards for scoring non-human primate dental morphological variation. Many important studies of human and non-human primate variation as well as growth and development are in the works. NYU now anticipates working with Kathy Swindler to arrange the transfer of the remaining collection, which includes measurements and radiographs from an 8-year growth study of *Macaca nemestrina*, several hundred tooth buds from several species of non-human primates, and additional human collections from New Guinea Highlands and New Britain. NYU and Dr. Bailey, in particular, are greatly indebted to Daris for this generous donation.

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