Henry Farmer Dobyns Ph.D. 1925 -2009

Henry Farmer Dobyns died quietly at the age of 84 on June 21, 2009 at his second home in Edmond, Oklahoma. He also seasonally resided in Tucson, Arizona. Dobyns was born July 3, 1925 in Tucson, Arizona to Susie Kell (Comstock) and Henry F. Dobyns. His father, born in 1891, was a distinguished Captain in U.S. Army Company D. Hank lived in Tucson until at about the age of three when his father took a position with a newspaper in Casa Grande, Arizona. His mother became a widow at a young age, so growing up in the Depression Era was financially tough. Susie was an excellent cook and would cater and make Sunday dinners that people would pay to come and eat. She also grew lovely flowers that she would sell for wedding and funerals. As a young boy Henry would hunt when possible - he said they ate a lot of Arizona rabbit. He attended Casa Grande Union High School where he graduated in 1942.

After High School Hank served in the Army during World War II and suffered from rheumatic fever that damaged his heart. When he returned from the war he entered the University of Arizona where he majored in Anthropology. He was elected to Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Beta Kappa and graduated with a B.A. degree with High Distinction in 1949.

After returning from the war, he was admitted as a graduate student at the University of Arizona. There he continued to conduct research on American Indian issues. He was selected to be an instructor with the Cornell University's Arizona-based Field Laboratory in Applied Anthropology from 1949 to 1952 (see First Look at Strangers 1959). His M.A. thesis was a massive 702 page long analysis of Pai ceramics entitled Prehistoric Indian occupation within the eastern area of the Yuman complex: a study in applied archaeology.

Like his earlier works (by now he had academic publications) the thesis was focused on American Indian issues especially those of special interest to the tribe itself – in this case it was used in the Hualapai Indian Claims Commission hearings to argue for their land aboriginal claims.

He entered Cornell University in 1953 as a graduate student supported by the Olmstead Fellowship. Dobyns received in 1957 a National Science Foundation dissertation research grant which enabled him to return to the regional festival of St. Francis Xavier at Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico, which he had first observed in early October of 1949. That grant also enabled Dobyns to study the festival committee system at Wa:kvillage on the San Xavier Indian Reservation a dozen miles south of Tucson. Dobyns utilized data about these religious festivals in his Cornell University doctoral dissertation entitled A Religious Festival, a portion of which was later discussed in a chapter entitled "Do It Yourself Religion" in the book Pilgrimage in Latin America (1991). The PhD degree was completed in 1960 at Cornell University in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Professor Dobyns joined the Cornell Peru Project as its Research Coordinator in 1960, after receiving his Ph.D. from Cornell. In 1962, he returned to campus to participate in training Peace Corps volunteers to work in Peru. The Peace Corps also contracted with Cornell to have the CPP advise Peace Corps officials in Lima and to evaluate their impact on the communities. He was the Coordinator of the Comparative Studies of Cultural Change program and the Associate Director of the Cornell Peru Project from 1963-1966. In 1966 he became the Director of the project following the death of Allan R. Holmberg, the previous director. Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections holds his papers from the 1960s.

Professor Dobyns taught and conducted research at various academic institutions in his career including Arizona State Museum, Cornell University, the University of Florida at Gainesville, the University of Kentucky, Prescott College, the University of Wisconsin Parkside, the University of Oklahoma, and the University of Arizona. He was a NEH research fellow at the Newberry Library in Chicago and a lifetime member of the Arizona Historical Society. His many students attest to the quality of his teaching and his willingness to share ideas and time. His devotion to his student's development was only exceeded by his commitment to research accuracy and quality.

Professor Dobyns was an anthropologist who maintained active research interests in cultural anthropology, ethnohistory, and archaeology and published extensively on American Indians and Hispanic Peoples in Latin and North America. He is most famous for groundbreaking historical demographic research, importantly published as a seminal article "Estimating Aboriginal American Population: An Appraisal of Techniques with a New Hemispheric Estimates" in 1966 in Current Anthropology and as a series of books including Their Number Become Thinned in 1983, which greatly increased the estimates of the number of American Indian people living in the New World before 1492. Populations estimates are debated because they are closely related to social complexity and the legal rights of Native Americans to hold national territories as established under European conquest law in the 15th Century, thus his findings called into question the legality of the taking of the New World by Europeans.

In recent years, Professor Dobyns worked as a senior researcher at the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, at the University of Arizona. His work on the Old Spanish Trail study, funded by the Trails Division of the National Park Service, yielded a totally original assessment of the location of the 1829 Armijo Expedition Route – which was the first Spanish trip between Santa Fe, New Mexico and Los Angeles, California. Dobyns subsequently contributed to another NPS-funded study of the culture and values of the people from northern Mexico who settled San Francisco Bay in 1776 under the direction of Juan Batista de Anza. These most recent studies built on a lifelong interest in Southwestern

studies highlighted by his many books on the region: Papagos in the Cotton Fields in 1950, The Ghost Dance of 1889 Among the Pai Indians of Northwestern Arizona in 1967, Wauba Yuma's people: the comparative socio-political structure of the Pai Indians of Arizona in 1970, The Papago People in 1972, Spanish Colonial Tucson in 1976, Indians of the Southwest: a critical bibliography in 1980, and From Fire to Flood: Historic Human Destruction of Sonoran Desert Riverine Oases in 1981, and The Pima-Maricopa in 1989. .

Some of his professional recognitions are the first Malinowski Award from Society for Applied Anthropology, 1951, for the article "Blunders with Bolsas"; National Science Foundation fellow, 1956-57; Social Science Research Council fellow, 1959; co-winner of Anisfield-Wolf award of Saturday Review, 1968, for "The American Indian Today"; and the Stoner Award, Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society, 1990.

Henry Dobyns was married three times: Zippora Pottenger (1948), Cara Richards (1958), and Mary Faith Patterson (1968). Four children were born in the first marriage and one in the second. He is survived by Cara, Mary Faith, and all five of his children: Rique Pottenger, Bill Pottenger, Maritha Pottenger, Mark Pottenger, and York Dobyns. He is missed by many others.