

# RECLAIMING YANOMAMI BLOOD

By Virginia Prescott on Wednesday, June 2, 2010.

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In 1967, University of Michigan anthropologist **Napoleon Chagnon** led a team of researchers to study the isolated **Yanomami** tribe, living in rainforests between Brazil and Venezuela. He spent eight years with them on and off, and wrote the groundbreaking ethnography *Yanomamö: The Fierce People*. Chagnon also made several documentaries, including "A Man Called Bee".



**Chagnon** also collected blood samples from the **Yanomamo** in exchange for offers of steel tools, pots and pans, and vaccines.

In 2000, investigative journalist **Patrick Tierney** published the book *Darkness In El Dorado*. The book accuses **Chagnon's** team of unethical and possible harmful conduct, and of taking the blood under false pretenses. **Yanomamo** representatives have been lobbying to have it returned since. Final legal negotiations are now underway, meaning that the blood could be returned by the end of the month, ending one of the ugliest academic controversies of modern times.

**Robert Borofsky**, professor of anthropology at **Hawaii Pacific University**, has been a leading voice in the campaign to return the Yanomami's blood, he joined us today to discuss the controversy.

For more information about the **Yanomami**  
A **Yanomami musical** premiered in Germany earlier this month.  
An article from **The Independent** about the Yanomami

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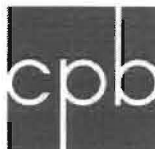
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