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 _Yanomamo: 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 academe 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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