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Patterns of paleomobility in the ancient Antilles: an isotopic approach

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Propositions

“Patterns of paleomobility in the ancient Antilles: An isotopic approach.”
Jason E. Laffoon

1. Given that many regions within the Caribbean share similar strontium isotope ranges, the results of this study almost certainly underestimate the degree and frequency of human mobility in the prehistoric Caribbean.
2. In some contexts, marital or marriage-associated movements may blur the line between mobility and exchange.
3. The complexities associated with the influences of marine strontium in maritime settings are not so severe that they preclude the application of strontium isotope methods to provenience studies in Antillean settings.
4. Isotope analyses of specific Archaic skeletal assemblages may shed light on debates concerning the origins of the first colonists of the Caribbean.
5. The associations between foreign origins and nonlocal grave goods is unlikely to be coincidental but the possible mechanisms accounting for such variations are many and varied.
6. The development of methods for retrieving reliable (biogenic) strontium isotope data from archaeological bone material would contribute significantly to investigations of paleomobility.
7. Certain elements of the story of Guayahona (the mythic culture-hero of the Greater Antilles) such as voyaging with groups of women to distant lands in search of *guanin*, and the permanent relocation of the women to the place where the *guanin* was located, indicate a cultural logic pertaining to voyaging for the purposes of exchange and resulting in migration.
8. If there are individuals of mainland origin buried in the Antilles, then it is highly probable that there are individuals of Antillean origin buried on the mainland(s).
9. It is very difficult to identify forced migration based on archaeological evidence alone.
10. My family (and I) moved when I was 11 years old and it certainly seemed like a forced migration to me.
11. Despite enormous technological strides over the last several centuries, inter-island transportation in the Caribbean may not be significantly faster than it was a millennium ago.