

## **UC Merced**

### **Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology**

#### **Title**

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#### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5m69p08r>

#### **Journal**

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 35(1)

#### **ISSN**

0191-3557

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#### **Publication Date**

2015

Peer reviewed

young, he was willing to invest in individuals like that. ... He was just a delightful person.”

Then, realizing Dr. Jennings would prefer anecdotes that showed his tough, demanding side, he added, “He’s going to turn over in his grave when he hears these stories I’m telling about him.”

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### **A COMPLICATED AND CONTRADICTIONARY ARRAY OF TRAITS**

Carol Condie  
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Steve Simms asked me to write up a few memories of Jess Jennings because, he said, “You are the only one on my slate of contributors who goes back to the Danger Cave days.” Unfortunately, although I visited a couple of times, I was not part of the Danger Cave crew because by that time Jess had commandeered me to become the departmental secretary. (I was later impressed, though not quite so abruptly, into multi-year service as assistant editor of the *University of Utah Anthropological Papers*, which meant that a faculty member’s name ranked first on the cover but I did the work.)

Thus, I can’t talk about Danger Cave, but I can talk about Jess. He was a complicated and often contradictory array of traits. He was brilliant, enthusiastic, intense, and magnetic, but he was also impatient, demanding, macho, sexist (as were most men of his generation), and often tactless. Had he become the Baptist minister his mother had intended him to be, he would have been a hell-fire and brimstone preacher. Instead, he became a hell-fire and brimstone archaeologist. I had worked for the meanest man on Salt Lake’s Film Row, so Jess didn’t scare me much, but for the entire length of time I knew him, I alternated, as I suspect many others did, between adoring him and wanting to strangle him.

He saw his responsibility to his students’ education as perpetual, both on the campus and in the field. I remember Sunday field trips to antelope traps north of Garrison, Utah and to the evaporating and harvesting ponds at the Great Salt Lake salt works near Wendover, Utah. When he learned, many years after I was his student, that we (my contract firm, Quivira Research Center/Associates)

were conducting survey and excavation projects on the Pecos River road, he took time at an SAA meeting to recount details of mining life during his time working at the Pecos Mine in the summer of 1926. He was 17 and his family had moved to Montezuma, a few miles northwest of Las Vegas, New Mexico, so he could attend Montezuma Baptist College. His mother had planned that a degree from Montezuma would prepare him for life in the church.

Nor did he restrict his educational responsibilities to students. He took a group of University of Utah administrators on a junket to see archaeology first-hand during the Glen Canyon Project (although I’m certain the purpose was not solely for education). As the party made its way through the southeastern Utah desert, they were stranded between two floods, and it was apparent they wouldn’t be able to move for hours. As it happened, Jess had thoughtfully stocked the grub boxes with a good supply of liquor and, even though several of the administrators were practicing Mormons, there were no complaints about the enforced layover.

His view of the educational parameters for which he was responsible extended far beyond textbooks and classrooms. Much of his approach to education was of the “Seize the moment!” variety. Certainly he never sat us down and said, “Now, dear children...” Instead, his educational philosophy was exemplified by a response he made to another guest at a faculty dinner party when she leaned across the table and said, “Oh, Dr. Jennings, do tell us some of your adventures,” to which he snorted “We don’t have adventures! Only fools have adventures!” In response to this approach, as students we learned to get our ducks in a row before we spoke to him about anything beyond trivia, lest we be blown away by a rapid-fire string of questions that we should have been—but were not—prepared for. We also learned to try to anticipate all foreseeable contingencies. I was present one day as he sneaked out onto the loading dock during a lull in a Glen Canyon crew’s loading of supplies and equipment into one of their trucks. He grabbed a bunch of shovels and hid them in a nearby shed. When the crew chief announced a half hour later that they were ready to go, Jess strolled over to the shed, pulled the shovels out and said “What about these?” If looks could have killed, the exhausted and exasperated crew chief would have spent the rest of his life in prison, but that taught them (and me) to make a final complete check on the totality

of their field supplies a few minutes before departure. I thought of this incident, ruefully, when I, too, once failed to run a final check of field gear (the only time in my 30-year contract career, I might add).

Closely related to his standard of one’s obligations to education was his insistence that no excavated site go unreported. His over-arching byword was that a site that goes unreported is a looted site—and in his view there could be few worse sins. For any non-archaeologist who might read this, excavating an archaeological site destroys it. Theoretically, it should be possible to reconstruct a site from the field documents—the maps, drawings, photographs, and the exhaustive notes made ad infinitum during excavation. I would be surprised if any student of his had ever, short of death’s intervening, failed to report a site he or she had excavated. I even remember his mentioning offhand to a faculty member whose site report had never materialized that he had just learned from the university attorney that it was possible to bring a lawsuit against someone who had accepted university money for a project that was never reported. This person must have been a short-term appointment because I can’t remember who it was, but the site report appeared soon after this conversation.

Finally, I have heard him referred to as “The Dark Lord.” Not so. He was sometimes rude and sarcastic and sometimes chose the wrong time to give someone hell—but he was not malevolent or vindictive or mean. He was generally willing to be pleased and for the entire time I knew him he was enthusiastic about life and scholarship and human beings. Would that we could all leave such a legacy!

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### CLOACA OUCHII AND OTHER TALES

Kevin T. Jones  
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Jesse D. Jennings had a powerful presence. He seemed to enjoy dominating a conversation, taking control of a classroom, and asserting his dominance over students, faculty, and passers-by. He wrote proudly of his many accomplishments, and posed as a triumphant warrior for a heroic portrait. His humanity, however suppressed, did fleetingly peer through his chain mail of bravado on rare

occasions, revealing a tiny bit of self-deprecating humor and even grace. Two instances are illustrative. First, the story of how his most visual legacy was created came to me through our mutual friend, Eldon Dorman.

The frontispiece of his book *Accidental Archaeologist* is a photo of the near life-sized portrait of a stern-faced Jesse D. Jennings that dominates the fourth-floor landing of the Natural History Museum of Utah. The painting, by renowned Utah portraitist Alvin Gittins, can be unnerving to former students as they emerge from the elevators, as it captures Jennings’ intensity with remarkable clarity, and his ferocious gaze seems to peer directly into the viewer’s soul, a capability the Professor seemed at times to possess.

The portrait is indeed an incredible likeness, a testament to the artistry of Mr. Gittins, but there is a lighter side to that frightening countenance, a side that harkens back to a lasting relationship Jennings cultivated and maintained for over thirty years with a man of similar background and motivation, Dr. J. Eldon Dorman.

Dorman and Jennings were born in the same year, and both were possessed from an early age with incredible drive and curiosity. Dorman earned a medical degree and found himself at a young age in the eastern Utah town of Price working as a coal-camp doctor to repay his student loans. He took a great interest in the abundant archaeology and paleontology of the area, and became a knowledgeable devotee, writing several guides to the resources of the region, and leading legendary “Jeep Safaris” to visit the incredible sites of the area. Jennings and Dorman became friends in the early 1960s when Dorman sought Jennings’ help in starting a museum in Carbon County. The two quickly found common ground, and proclaimed themselves the official “Curmudgeous of Carbon County,” cementing their relationship by sharing their love for lively conversation, tobacco in its many forms, and Jack Daniels whiskey. Jennings served as Dorman’s archaeological mentor, and they shared many professional and personal moments, including the marriage ceremonies of their eldest sons.

When Jennings was slated to pose for the portrait, a prestigious event as Gittins was the official portraitist of the University of Utah, he sought the advice of his friend. He would have to sit for the artist several times, and mentioned to Dorman that he often had trouble getting the exact expression the artist wanted. He wanted to be