How to Mentor Like You Mean It, William Longacre's Key to Student Success

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I had been summoned to the Department of Anthropology main office on the 3rd floor of Savery Hall at the University of Washington (UW) to take a long distance phone call. This was in March or April and on the other end of the line, William Longacre introduced himself to me, and told me, "I'm calling to let you know you've been accepted to the University of Arizona (UA) Archaeological Field School at Grasshopper this summer. We hope you can join us." I was in my senior year, about to graduate, and hopefully on to graduate school in archaeology.

I knew who Longacre was; we read much of his work in our theory seminars at UW. As one of the leaders of the new, processual approach in American archaeology his work at the Carter Ranch site was renowned for the reconstruction of ancestral Puebloan social organization. By this time he had published two major articles (Longacre 1964; 1966) and his dissertation was now a monograph (Longacre 1970a) and he had edited a volume on Reconstructing Pueblo Societies (Longacre 1970b). I was amazed that he called personally to invite me to the field school.

The field school at Grasshopper was a dream for me. I had friends from UW who had been there the previous year and who encouraged me to apply. I had never been in the field before even though I had been a major in anthropology since my sophomore year. My summers were spent in eastern Washington earning money to pay for college. The UA field school was funded by a multi-year NSF grant and it paid for all one's expenses, tuition, room and board, and the cost of travel to reach eastern Arizona. I would never have been able to attend if it were not for this. I happily accepted Longacre's offer.

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I recall that summer, in 1974, as if it were yesterday. Meeting Bill Longacre and attending the Grasshopper field school changed my life. There were lighting flashes all summer long and a chance to eat well cooked food to your heart's content. Not only was it an incredible experience to be doing archaeology in the southwest, something else happened about midway through the summer. One day passing by, Bill asked me and Julie Stein—my drinking buddy—if we wanted some ice for the warm vodka tonics we were drinking on the steps of a student dorm. He invited us to join him at the Director's Cabin. Now everyone knew about Bill's cabin; it had a gas refrigerator that made ice. As students we could often hear him and the staff on his porch, laughing and talking in the late afternoon. So, Julie and I took him up on the invitation. We knew this was a great and unusual honor for students in the field school, and we were even more amazed that we became "regulars" on his porch. At some point during one of the conversations at those afternoon cocktail hours, Longacre asked me "Why would you attend graduate school at the same university where you are an undergraduate." I said quite bluntly, "UW accepted me." He then inquired, "Are you interested in attending UA." I said, "Sure, but I wasn't admitted when I applied to your department the first time around. What's going to change now?" He said, "I can take care of that." Julie looked at me, and said something to the effect, "Holy shit!" And Bill did to his ever loving credit did what he said he would; before I left the field school to return to Seattle, I had been admitted to the Anthropology doctoral program at UA for the fall semester 1974. Oh, and Longacre had "found" funding for me as well to support my graduate education.

Such was the influence of Bill on my life. Through his efforts my emergent professional trajectory had just changed forever. Of course I did not realize that; UA enrolled as many as 30 students each year, and then let them sort themselves out through performance in graduate seminars and on the comprehensive exams. The latter were where most students were winnowed out, either choosing not to take them or failing them. And yes, like Mike Schiffer (2015: 84), I failed one of the

subfield exams, physical anthropology, on the first go round. I retook them all again the next year, and I am sure I have Bill to thank for my passing through that gauntlet.

As with most students my age, I did not much reflect on the opportunities I was provided. Everything seemed possible, and naturally within my grasp. I imagined that my success was all my own, which of course is never the case. I spent the next seven years at UA, with Longacre as mentor and dissertation advisor. Initially, I thought the program was "soft." After all, I had done my undergraduate work at UW where there was a cult of personality around the archaeologist, Robert Dunnell. All of the graduate students lived in some fear and awe of him, especially in graduate seminars. I had taken his theory courses in my senior year and learned that if you hoped not be devastated by Dunnell, it was infinitely better to offer up as a sacrifice one of the other students. It was by turns demanding, frightening, and exhilarating.

What I came to understand is that at UA, particularly with Longacre, one got to chart his or her own course, figuring out what "kind" of archaeologist you wanted to be. He only asked us to be the best we could, and encouraged us to grow. I was surprised; I thought I would have to be a copy of him. He could not have been clearer, I was not there to duplicate him in some fashion. I was there to learn, challenge myself intellectually, and take on the research problem(s) that most interested me. At UA, I had the freedom to explore a number of topics, perhaps some of them unproductive, but still others that broadened and enriched my archaeological perspective.

All of this did not necessarily come with emotional maturity. For I now possessed a sense of invincibility and entitlement. I was pretty skeptical of everything that Bill was doing or had done as an archaeologist. I often thought, "Here is what I would be doing differently if I were in his place." If he knew what I was thinking (and he must have known how uncharitable graduate students can be), he never let on, never held back his encouragement and support for me.

My professional trajectory changed once more after Bill returned from his year-long 1975-76 ethnoarchaeological fieldwork among the Kalinga of northern Luzon, the Philippines.

I was still looking for a dissertation topic and I wanted to do something different from but related to the southwest. The Kalinga Ethnoarchaeology Project had been borne of the same sensibility—a plan to collect data on a contemporary but still analogically relevant society where pottery was made by women for their households, with perhaps for some local barter. Earthen wares were still in use for both cooking and storage, and many girls learned to make pottery from their mothers. I remember thinking: "This is a project I could—no, I would do" not once considering how Bill might respond to this idea or whether he even wanted my participation.

Bill did not blink twice when I voiced my intention to work with the Kalinga data. He allowed me to insinuate myself into his research project. Like others before (Reid 1975) and after me, I quickly colonized a portion of his faculty office. From there I was able to commandeer the analyses of the Kalinga system of ceramic decoration, the designs of which involved a series of impressed elements located around the circumference of the upper shoulders of the vessels. Identifying and explaining the sources of ceramic design variability had been the primary reason for conducting this research (Longacre 1974). This was a project designed to answer Bill's critics of his earlier work at the Carter Ranch site.

Not only was I given access to the primary collection of pottery, but I soon realized there was design information on another 800 vessels that had been inventoried by Bill and his field assistants in four different Kalinga settlements. What Bill had done was to effectively create two censuses, with the accompanying documentation, not only of the Kalinga residents but also of their pottery. It was a gold mine, and at that time mostly mine to work on.

Because of the dangers working in the Kalinga region, the result of a proposed development project that would have uprooted many local residents, I could not go to the Philippines to conduct my own fieldwork. Instead, I interviewed Longacre incessantly about the Kalinga, what he seen or heard about the women who made the pottery, what they knew about each other's work, social relationships, inter-community differenc-

es, and any other information that might be useful for my research. He was patient, even when I would tell him that he couldn't possibly be correct about some aspect of Kalinga life that I had never witnessed myself but about which I had become expert.

As I was nearing the completion of my dissertation analyses I realized that I would soon be applying for academic positions, but other than one earlier article co-authored with Bill (Longacre and Graves 1976), I had nothing yet prepared for publication. Then, Sally Holbrook, an ecologist at UC Santa Barbara, and I were afforded the opportunity to complete the editing of the long-awaited monograph on Grasshopper. We both had begun working at Grasshopper in 1975 and with Bill's guidance the volume was soon published with us as co-editors and co-authors (Longacre, Holbrook, and Graves 1982).

I completed my dissertation, *The Ethnoarchaeology of Kalinga Ceramic Design (*1981), and was afforded a reality check that I had avoided throughout graduate school. There were no jobs to be had for me. Eventually, a position was offered to me as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Guam (UOG), in the far western Pacific. I had never even traveled outside of the continent. This was one time Bill was very firm with me. He said: "You need to take this position and turn it into an opportunity." And so I took the position. From my perspective today, it was absolutely the best professional decision I ever made (albeit with Bill's push). It was there I began to make peace not only with myself but also with Longacre since I thought he personally had "sent me there" into exile. Over the next few years I re-engineered myself as a Pacific Islands archaeologist and learned what it meant to be a professional colleague and faculty mentor. I have Longacre to thank for this experience, without which I would never have succeeded in archaeology or found my way to the other academic positions I have held.

Figure 1. William Longacre and Michael Graves at the School for Advanced Research Seminar on Ceramic Ethnoarchaeology, Santa Fe, NM, March 1985. Photo from author.

In 1986, after several years of unsuccessful applications for positions elsewhere, I was hired at the University of Hawai'i (UH). I had been applying for any number of faculty positions in the US mainland after I arrived in Guam. By 1985 when this picture was taken, I had been appointed as director of the Micronesian Area Research Center and had come to terms with the prospect of spending the rest of my career at UOG. However, in the academic year 1984-85 Bill spent the academic year of his sabbatical leave from UA at UH. The following fall a new position was advertised at UH for a Pacific archaeologist, which I had by then become. I applied and went through the process of an on-campus interview and job talk, and was offered the position in April 1986. I arrived in early August to take up my new position in Honolulu, a little more than a year after Bill was there. I don't think these events were coincidental. Longacre was always coy about what he had done in that year except to say he told everyone who would listen that the Department needed a new archaeologist. Bill was held in such high regard by the UH Anthropology faculty and other administrators that his views mattered; a new faculty line was secured. The job was by no means handed to me but Bill knew I would likely be a strong contender for the position.

At both UOG and UH, I learned what it was like to

teach and mentor students, that challenging them to learn and to succeed required both rigor and empathy. Like Longacre, I worked in the field with students. Because of my experience at Grasshopper with Bill and Jeff Reid, I knew how to develop and implement field training programs. In recruiting students, and based on my own experience at Grasshopper, I looked at their potential in addition to academic records. And I tried always to provide honest assessments of my students' progress. Longacre's role in my professional development and what I learned from him, even when I wished my own academic life might have gone a bit differently (i.e., stayed closer to home), was my touchstone for mentoring a new generation of "Longacre" students.

I spent 20 years teaching at UH, before I applied for the position of Chair of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. (UNM). The position was offered to me and I arrived in January 2007. I don't think Bill could have been happier for me or more proud. This was partly due to the old rivalry between the Anthropology programs in Arizona and New Mexico. To place a UA alumni at UNM was viewed as a coup. In my eight years as Chair at UNM, I modeled my behavior on that of Bill when he was Anthropology Head at UA. We had talked about the travails he had experienced as well as his successes. We each promoted our programs and the quality of the faculty who formed the core of Anthropology, emphasized collegiality among our faculty and students, talked up the historical importance of Anthropology to our respective states and universities, and attempted to build stronger programs with new hires. Bill was incredibly proud of me, told me so regularly, and enjoyed hearing how it was going for me—the Anthropology faculty at UNM after all were known to be challenging and the program was going through a rough patch. There is no doubt in my mind that Bill—his professional character and leadership abilities—have been essential to whatever success I enjoyed as Chair at UNM.

I ultimately learned most of my professional manners from Bill: don't take things personally (and don't blame others), laugh at your own plight (so you don't despair), work for the collective good with common goals (and not only for yourself), learn

to take criticism (because it comes with the territory), be patient with students (for they usually don't know any better), and be generous with your ideas and research (just as Longacre had been with me).

I have learned, and I think Bill knew this well in advance of me, that the most direct or visible trajectory for one's profession (and life) is not necessarily the only or best one for each of us. We need only to be open to new experiences. Based on his own background, he knew that good things can happen unexpectedly (or arise out of disappointment), particularly if you look ahead rather than behind or in the past. I learned from Bill to be optimistic about life, to pursue my dreams, and to help others realize theirs.

With Longacre'smentoring and assistance throughout my adult life, my career has been successful. I was able to grow and build a good life for myself. For more than 40 years Bill remained one of my closest friends. I will forever be grateful to Bill for that phone call in the spring of 1974, at a moment that I could not then appreciate but was the start of a new path for me. Bill was a great mentor in every sense of that word, not telling but showing how it worked and not only to me but to a raft of other students at UA and elsewhere. It is a great honor to be included among his former students and current friends and to share this story of how he launched my professional trajectory not knowing how our lives would become entwined over the next four decades.

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Beeson, W.	1966	Archaeological Survey Near St. Johns, Arizona: A Methodological Study
Leone, M.	1968	Economic Autonomy and Social Distance: Archaeological Evidence
Griffin, P.	1969	Late Mogollon Readaptation in East-Central Arizona
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Tani, M.	1991	Extending the methodological potential for archaeological interpretations: A small site analysis
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