

SPECIAL REPORT: MEDIA

April 21, 2009

## JARED DIAMOND'S FACTUAL COLLAPSE:

### New Yorker Mag's Papua New Guinea Revenge Tale Untrue...Tribal Members Angry, Want Justice

by Rhonda Roland Shearer with Michael Kigl, Kritoe Keleba, Jeffrey Elapa



See Henep Isum Mandingo, last on right. He is angry that Jared Diamond, renowned UCLA scientist, Pulitzer Prize winner and best-selling author, published "lies" about him in *The New Yorker*. StinkyJournalism sent three researchers into the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea (PNG) starting in July 2008 to fact-check Diamond's article, which ran a year ago today, in the April 21, 2008 issue of *The New Yorker*. We soon discovered that Henep Isum, an indigenous tribesman who was his main character, was NOT in a wheelchair with spinal paralysis as Diamond dramatically claimed. Yet Diamond wrongly published this error, as well as many others, including charging Daniel Wemp, the indigenous driver he used from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) for his 2001-2002 bird research, with multiple crimes, including his assertion Wemp was a bloody warrior "thirsting" for revenge who personally paid for killers to do the "maiming of Isum." (credit: Michael Kigl, StinkyJournalism.org)

#### BREAKING NEWS:

- Daniel Wemp and Henep Isum [file a summons](#) and sue for 10 million dollars in the Supreme Court of the State of New York--charge famed UCLA scientist and best-selling author Jared Diamond and Advance Publications (aka *The New Yorker* magazine and *Times-Picayune* newspaper) with defamation, April 20, 2009.
- REVEALED: *The New Yorker* removed Diamond's article from the open Internet last year after demand by Daniel Wemp's lawyers (Lexis Nexis, EBSCO, Gale Group databases also complied with the take-down. Only abstracts remain).
- *The New Yorker* fact checkers never contacted any of the indigenous Papua New Guinea people named in Jared Diamond's article as unrepentant killers, rapists and thieves, before publication.
- Henep Isum is not paralyzed in a wheelchair with a spinal injury, as Diamond claimed. He and Daniel Wemp, Diamond's World Wildlife Fund driver in 2001-2002, and the only source for *The New Yorker's* revenge story in Papua New Guinea, as well as dozens of tribal members and police officials, deny Diamond's entire tale about the bloody Ombal and Handa war, calling it "untrue."
- Expert linguistic analysis and *The New Yorker's* own admissions indicate the quotations attributed to Daniel Wemp, as spoken in 2001-2002, are fabrications.

*UPDATE: 4/22/09, 7:16 a.m.: This article includes excerpts from a forthcoming 40,000-word report (Real Tribes / Fake History: Errors, Failures of Method and the Consequences for Indigenous People in Papua New Guinea) that will be released in the coming weeks. All interviews were recorded and were in English, the national language of Papua New Guinea, unless noted. Research methods are detailed at the bottom of this article. \**

**EXCLUSIVE :** If Jared Diamond had changed the names of people and tribes and simply said that he was unsure if the stories he heard were true, Daniel Wemp, his single source for his tale of [Papua New Guinea](#) (PNG) tribal revenge, would not be in the danger that Diamond and his publisher, *The New Yorker* magazine, placed him in. This crisis was set in motion a year ago today, on April 21, 2008, with the publication in *The New Yorker* of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author and

renowned UCLA scientist's [article](#), "Annals of Anthropology: Vengeance Is Ours: What can tribal societies tell us about our need to get even?"

When Papua New Guinea researcher [Michael Kigl](#), working with StinkyJournalism, went to Daniel Wemp's Nipa home in the Southern Highlands, in July 2008 to ask him about *The New Yorker* article, he was shocked. Wemp had no idea that he or people he mentioned to Diamond in random stories about tribal warfare back in 2001-2002, would be publicly named, and worse, erroneously linked to heinous crimes.

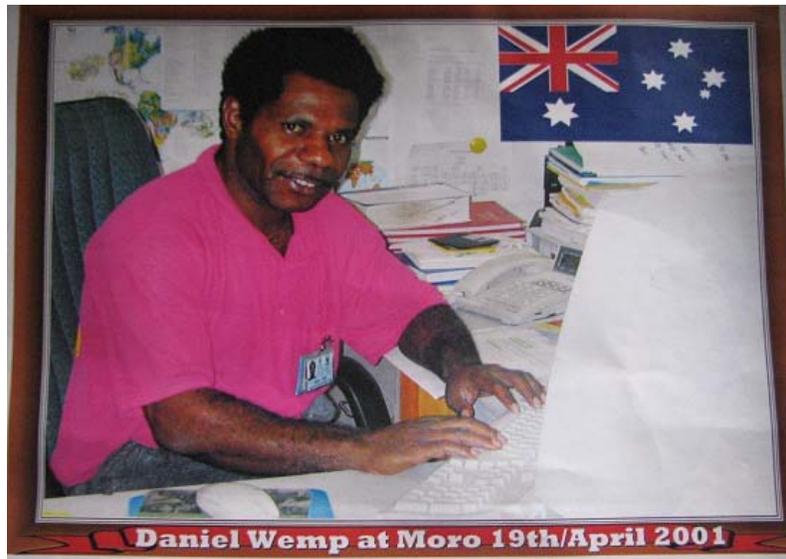
Despite Diamond's claims, Wemp was no Handa tribal leader, nor was Henep Isum a violent leader of the Ombals. Isum isn't even an Ombal tribesman; he is a Henep, hence, his full name: Henep Isum Mandingo (tribal name, first name, last name).

In addition to tracking down Daniel Wemp, we also found Henep Isum. When Kigl first saw him, Isum was carrying a large bag of dirt over his shoulder. It turned out that Mandingo never had a spinal cord injury resulting in his being a wheelchair-bound paralytic, the result—or so Diamond claimed—of an arrow attack by Wemp's hired assassins.

### What did Jared Diamond's fictional tale claim?

Diamond said that Daniel Wemp was a Chevron driver (untrue, he was a [World Wildlife Fund](#) [WWF] worker) who swapped stories with him during drives for his bird research. It was from the stories that Daniel told him on these trips that Diamond weaved his tale of two tribes, the Handa and Ombals, and their endless and futile violence based on a relentless "thirst" for revenge.

Diamond claims Wemp was the leader of a three-year effort to gain personal vengeance for the death of his beloved uncle Soll—who was only killed after an Ombal was angered when a Handa man's pig wrecked his garden. In the six battles that he instigated, Diamond claims, Wemp tirelessly mustered and financially supported hundreds of warriors from 1992-1995, including providing comfort women for their sexual needs and stealing 300 pigs from enemies. All of this carnage and thievery, Diamond alleges, was brought about by Daniel Wemp's obsessive "need to get even" for the death of his uncle Soll, who was destined to be a leader. Wemp selected Henep Isum, Diamond tells us, because he was the Ombal leader and counterpart. If Daniel Wemp's assassins could kill Isum then his vindication and lust for revenge would be satisfied.



Here is photo of Daniel Wemp in his World Wildlife Fund office in 2001, the very year he was driving Dr. Diamond for his bird research and discussing PNG warfare.

In the end, after many failures and 30 people killed (a total of 47 killed, including 17 during the four years of fighting leading up to Soll's death), Wemp finally triumphs and his killers manage to stick an arrow in Isum's spine and paralyze him. Diamond claims Isum's very public suffering as a wheelchair-bound paralytic for the past 11 years has made Wemp happy. He reports that Wemp even told Isum he was sorry. From the *New Yorker* article: "Occasionally, I go over to Isum, shake his hand, and tell him, 'I feel sorry for you.' But people see Isum. They know that he will be suffering all the rest of his life for having killed Soll. People remember that Isum used to be a tall and handsome man, destined to be a future leader. But so was my uncle Soll. By getting Isum paralyzed, I gained appropriate revenge for the killing of my tall and handsome uncle, who had been very good to me, and who would have become a leader."

**Daniel** and **Isum** both have confirmed that they never met each other before Diamond's article was published. Thus, there were no dramatic apologies by Daniel shaking Isum's hand at Handa /Ombal basketball games, as portrayed in Diamond's article. Isum also said that he never spoke to anybody [meaning Diamond or *The New Yorker*]. He never gave consent to anyone to use his name or his story of how he was wounded or paralyzed in the tribal fight. He said that he had never spoken to Daniel Wemp on any occasion during or after the fights.



Henep Isum Mandingo, shown here on the right, and in the distance, in the photo on the left, is obviously not confined to a wheelchair. He is a dignified man and former village peace officer. He stopped his hard physical labors of clearing land and carrying heavy sacks of dirt to pose for this image taken by StinkyJournalism team member, and local researcher, Michael Kigl. Image taken, August 2008, at Isum's home in Southern Highlands, PNG.

**Joseph Kuwimb Hal**, former primary school teacher and currently business development officer (Isum is Hal's uncle from his mother's clan) said, "The whole story and the story of how he (Isum) got injured is an opposing view and not correct. The society, we are not happy, we totally condemn that report on the article." (Translated)

**Jared Diamond's "pig in a garden" war is a fictional composite constructed from random stories Wemp said he had heard.**

The only correct facts in the entire story are the names of Wemp and Isum (although incomplete—their full names are: Henep Isum Mandingo and Hup Daniel Wemp) and the names of the tribes, Handa and Ombal. Isum is not a warrior but a former village court peace officer, still serving his community by building a ceremonial area for feasts and celebrations. (See images above.)

In his article, Diamond attributes getting the names of Isum Henep, the brothers of Fukal Limbizu and Wiyo, Soll—all the information about these years—from Daniel Wemp during their long car drives together in 2001-2002. StinkyJournalism found out—and this was confirmed by *The New Yorker*—that the only notes Diamond actually took of their conversations were back dated. That is, four years after the drives in the car with Daniel Wemp, Diamond re-contacted his "source." By that time (May 2006), Daniel Wemp had a new job as an oil field technician at the [Oil Search Ltd.](#) They met at the company's compound dormitories (again, Wemp was not a Chevron employee, as Diamond reported; Chevron sold their stake to Oil Search in 2003).

Even though Diamond's article says the quotations by Wemp were made in 2001-2002, this was untrue. The several long and complex (and erudite) quotations attributed to Wemp—that Wemp vehemently denies saying—were apparently composited together by Diamond into a single narrative, along with bits and pieces of Wemp's stories Diamond remembered from years before. Diamond could have easily checked facts with the Ombal driver who still works for WWF, and presumably, also still picks him up at the Moro airport at WWF behest as a perk for Diamond serving as a WWF board member in the U.S. for many years.



Diamond is on the Board of Trustees for World Wildlife Fund, USA. and operates out of their Papua New Guinea office to obtain services, such as drivers, like Wemp. Why didn't he ask the local WWF, to whom he uses to arrange transport to and from the Moro airport, to provide contact information for Wemp, who used to work there and everyone knows?

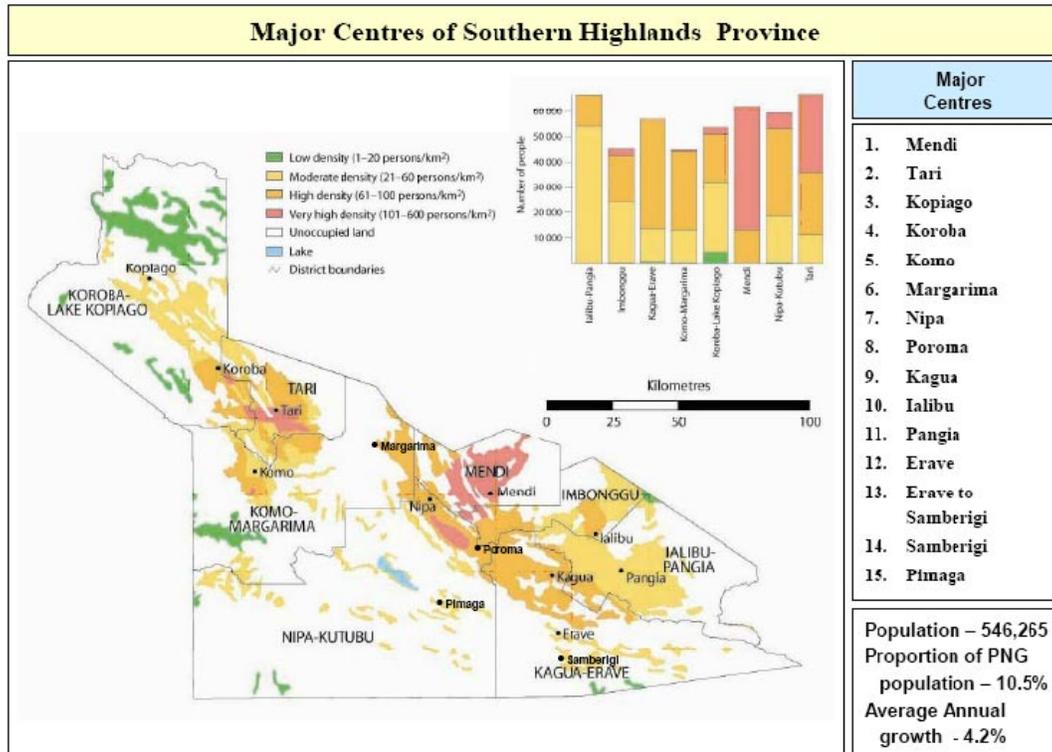
Wemp says, in one of dozens of phone interviews with StinkyJournalism since July 2008, "The facts are totally wrong in *The New Yorker* story. I have given all those stories to Diamond and those stories are very true and those names are not fake." In other words, Wemp says he told the true stories to Diamond with real names but Diamond retold them wrongly by jumbling up information. By Diamond connecting false assertions of crimes to real people—all sourced to Wemp—he has put Daniel in danger among tribes, according to experts such as **Dr. Nicole Clair Haley, Research Fellow, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, who has worked in the Southern Highlands for 16 years.**

Let's examine just one example of the seriousness of Diamond's errors and how he jumbled facts: Wemp told Diamond he lives in Nipa/Kutubu district (his mother was Nipa, his father a sub-clan of Handa). Diamond's untested assumption was that Ombals and the Handa tribes live in Nipa, since Wemp does. In fact, they live in a completely different district, Komo-Margarima. The more serious error occurs when Diamond extrapolates his false premise that "Ombals and Handas are Nipa and live in Nipa" to devastating effect when also assuming that the Ombals and Handa tribes also raped and killed Huli along with their fellow Nipa [sic]

tribesmen on a highway in 1997.

**Nicole Clair Haley explained by email and phone, after reviewing Diamond's article and StinkyJournalism interviews with informants:** "Part of the confusion seems to have stemmed from the fact that Daniel – a member of Handa-Hup sub-clan--grew up and had been living at Nipa, and not at Margarima where the groups involved in the fight are from. That Diamond describes the combatant groups as being from Nipa seems to demonstrate his confusion regarding the facts of this case."

Haley continued, "The roadblocks and ambushes, to which he (Diamond) refers, took place on the Highland's Highway following the 1997 General Elections and the Court of Disputed Returns proceedings. They concerned the provincial as opposed to the open seat. Perhaps even more importantly, though, the events described took place in and around Nipa and not in Magarima, where ...the Ombal and Handa live...This is common knowledge in the Southern Highlands Province (SHP)."



The above political map shows that Nipa is far away from Margarima --the location where Ombals and Handa live and the place where the "2 Kina" fight actually took place in 1993. Credit: Allen, B. 2007. "The setting: land, economics and development in the Southern Highlands," in *Conflict and Resource Development in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Studies in State and Society in the Pacific*. Edited by N. Haley and R. J. May, pp. 35-46. Canberra: Australian National University E-Press.

One can easily understand that members of the Handa and Ombal are angry they have been labeled killers and rapists of Huli women by Diamond and *The New Yorker*—accusations that spread widely when the article was posted on the Internet—when they were actually victims of the conflict cited!

**George Lek Kuwimb , a Handa, who is now a motor mechanic instructor at Nipa Technical College and is also related to the Ombals,** told StinkyJournalism PNG researcher [Kritoe Keleba](#), during an interview: "The Handa and Ombal clans are located some 6-10 kilometres away from the road the Nipas blocked. This is to say that the Highlands Highway that connects and services the Nipa-Huli area is quite far from the Handa-Ombal territory for members of these clans to travel through other clans' territory in order to block the roads."

Kuwimb continued, "In fact, the blockade conducted by the Nipas against the Hulis resulted in looting and burning down of houses of people along the Highway on the Margarima side bordering Nipa. The raids were made by Nipas in their hot pursuit of the Hulis. Margarimas were innocent victims in this conflict."

"It is an outrageous insult to say they were involved in raping women and violence on the highway. The Ombals and Handa are outraged by this false claim," Kuwimb said.

**Chock-A-Block errors**

Diamond's many other errors range from mistakenly saying that two villages are tribes (Aralinja and Ungupi are villages) to creating an entire history of conflict between two tribes where only the smallest fragments of truth can be found and then traced back to the seeds of real events that actually took place.

When Diamond writes of the "pig in a garden" fight that took place in Nipa for three years, 1992-1995, between the Ombal and Handa tribes—part of what he

claimed was a history of never-ending fights between them—this can be related to the single and relatively small conflict between the Ombals and Handa for approximately 3 months of fighting in 1993, called the “2 Kina fight.” (Kina is the PNG national currency valued then at about \$1 dollar)

Of the dozens of people our research team spoke with, everyone agrees uniformly on basic facts: 2 Kina went missing while five youths gambled in Mt. Hagen in 1993. The Handa youth punched a Solpaem youth. So the fight started between the Handa and the Solpaem. The Ombals were not in charge of the war that later broke out but served only as allies.

All Ombals and Handas—and independent parties, such as the police—whom we spoke with agreed. There was no “pig in a garden” fight between the Ombal and Handa tribes, nor were there six battles during the years 1992-1995. There were no 300 pigs “sacrificed” or stolen, and there were no 30 war dead, or 17 dead in the years before.

**Phillip Pungiam, senior constable at the Nipa Police Station**, described the outbreak of violence in 1993: “The Ombal reported that a ‘Two Kina’ (2 K) incident occurred in Hagen (Provincial Headquarters of Western Highlands Province, a neighbor of Southern Highlands Province), where they (youths) were involved in gambling (card game)....A problem arose involving youths of Ombal and Handa. And they didn’t completely solve the problem in Hagen instead brought it back to the village.”

Constable Pungiam again confirmed, “They fought until ... two men from Ombal side died and two from Handa died. They confirmed this and reported it at the police station. The Ombal reported the case to the police and at around the same time too, the Handa reported. Their stories were same.”

**Isum** told Kelaba that the ‘Two Kina Fight’ started in Hagen...played cards for one “Two Kina” [a monetary unit equivalent to \$1US]. They fought over this [card game, Queen] and brought the problem here and fight began over this two kina. The Handa and Ombal fought [each other].”

**A Ombal group of 23 men** told Kelaba the history of the fight as beginning with a Handa boy breaking the jaw of one of their own members. They said: “He (Song Sowal, the boy injured) is the son of Soal. And down there [Handa area] ... Kor Ungurip [is] brother of Paul La’a, the boy who broke his jaw). They broke this (touching their jaws). We told them to pay compensation and said [the] boy (victim) was alive so why should they pay compensation. We asked them at least you [Handa] give us one pig ...for the blood [loss of blood from the injury]. When they refused to pay (compensation); that is how the fight started. The reason of the fight is this [the refusal to pay compensation]. We do not get into trouble for other things. When they didn’t pay, we waited until our patience was exhausted and we [started the] fight.”

It is not surprising that all parties agree to the basic facts of the initial conflict, as it is fundamental to maintaining the settlement that was reached among the multiple tribes (led by the two sides of Handa and Solpaem). According to tribal law, everyone has to agree on the basic facts of what happened to whom and how much—and stick to that agreement—or a new fight could break out. Anyone who changes the narrative would be violating the tribes’ agreement and corresponding money paid based upon complex negotiations of who was injured or killed and how badly and—not unlike an insurance company’s evaluation—how much money needs to be paid to victims and victims families after the fight.

#### **Diamond’s uses names uncle Soll, Limbuzu and Wiyo—well known victims of 2K fight**

The names Diamond’s uses of the dead and injured, although incomplete, lead us back in time to the single conflict that involved fighting between the Handas and Ombals. These two tribes had previously—absent the three to six month fight in 1993—had a peaceful relationship.

We know that Diamond refers to facts taken from the real war, as his *New Yorker* article mentions Uncle Soll, Limbuzu and Wiyo, real people who were killed or injured in the 2 Kina fight. Other than these three names, the remainder of the facts that Diamond presents are untrue. Only Sande (Mogan Sande Hameno), an Ombal ally that Diamond does not mention, was killed hours after battle. The three others –Handa’s Ken Soll and Fukul Limbuzu, and Ombal ally, Kekel Ambiak—were not killed in battle but wounded and died months later. No Ombals died in the 2K fight.

Soll was not a close relative of Handa sub-clan Hup Daniel Wemp (Soll was a Ken Handa sub-clansman), nor was Wemp involved in any part of the 3-month conflict; he was out of the village the entire time. It is worth noting that Wemp, who was depicted by Diamond as a seasoned and bloodthirsty warrior, had only picked up a bow and arrow once in his life, when he was a teenager. He is now in his late 30’s but would have been too young to have been “owner of the fight” in 1993 (as Diamond asserts), in his early 20’s. Sponsoring a fight is expensive and this literal accountability helps keep everyone in check. (If American generals had to personally pay for fights out of their own pockets, do you think there would be so much warfare? Upon reflection, this is a wise PNG strategy that helps retard violence).

#### **Summary of Diamond’s fictional history about the Ombal / Handa conflicts**

Diamond stated in his *New Yorker* article that the two Southern Highlands “Nipa” clans, the Handas and the Ombals, were in an endless cycle of violence that had raged for decades. As they were from Nipa, when a Nipa political election did not go their way, they started “blocking highways” and “killing Huli men they found in the vehicles and raping Huli women.” Another time, when a Handa-owned pig plundered an Ombal garden, the resulting six battles, which took place from 1992 to 1995, left 300 pigs “sacrificed” and 30 warriors dead, including Daniel Wemp’s Uncle Soll, who was killed in one of the battles. Diamond wrote “in the four years of fighting leading up to Soll’s death, seventeen other men had been killed.”

An amazing coincidence, indeed, that then 32-year-old Daniel Wemp, Diamond’s driver in 2001-2002, turned out to be a seasoned warrior whose expertise was fighting. Daniel, according to Diamond, served “with the brothers of Fukal Limbuzu and of Wiyo” as the Handa leader who was official “owner of the fight” of the 1992-1995 Handa/Ombal war. When Daniel was 22, reported Diamond, he was a master of logistics who, over a three-year period, hired and then cared for

hundreds of mercenaries from 14 tribes in his relentless "thirst" for revenge. Diamond wrote, "Hiring, supporting, and rewarding all those allies was a complex logistical operation. Daniel had to feed them during the actual days of combat, to arrange for houses in which they could sleep, and even, as he delicately phrased it, 'to provide ladies for the warriors when they were homesick.'" As he sought and failed to gain revenge for his Uncle Soll's death, over three years, he personally arranged to steal 300 pigs from his Ombal enemies, and did "incessant plotting" of murder of Henep Isum, the owner of the fight for the Ombals. Diamond wrote, "By accepting the official role known as 'owner of the fight,' Isum took responsibility for the killing."

Diamond told his readers that if Daniel murdered Isum, he would "exact appropriate" revenge for his beloved Uncle Soll's death. After many failures of "personally orchestrating the shooting of Isum," Daniel's hired assassins finally shot an arrow into Isum's spine that caused him to be paralyzed. With revenge achieved, Daniel was, at last, satisfied. Time passed and Isum suffered publicly, for 11 years. As Isum sat in a wheelchair, Daniel would approach Isum during Handa/Ombal basketball games and tell him how sorry he felt. But inside he was "unapologetic" and filled with "exhilaration and pleasure in expressing aggression," having committed revenge with his own efforts instead of leaving it to the government. In the end, Diamond reported, the personal cost was only a matter of money. Daniel had to pay, by age 25, "the man who shot the arrow that paralyzed Isum" a total of "eighty pigs plus fifteen thousand kina," a value of approximately, \$40,000 to \$60,000.

Diamond used this story about Daniel's satisfaction with his revenge as part of his statement of a general theory about revenge in cultures. He contrasted Daniel's happiness resulting from "New Guineans traditionally practiced unchecked violence against each other" with his own father-in-law's unhappiness, when in post-Nazi Europe, he chose not to take personal revenge against his family's killers and lived to regret it.

**If *The New Yorker* and Jared Diamond are seeking truth, why do they refuse to call Daniel Wemp or the others?**

The only time that *The New Yorker* spoke to Daniel Wemp was on August 21, 2008, when an interview took place between **Daniel Wemp** and **Chris Jennings, *New Yorker's* fact checker**. At the start of the interview, Jennings asked, "Are the stories in the article accurate? Is it true?" Daniel answered, "Not accurate, not accurate." Later in the same interview, Daniel reasserts his stories are real but Diamond's are not. Daniel said, "Those stories that I gave him, it is all those stories that I gave him are those true stories, what had happened, the real names of the people."

Emails from *The New Yorker* and a transcript of the phone conversation on August 21, 2008 between **Daniel** and ***The New Yorker* fact checker, Chris Jennings**, confirm that Diamond conducted only a single interview with Daniel Wemp for which notes existed, on May 29, 2006, and that Daniel was the single source for the narrative and specific facts in the article.

**Jennings** admitted the whole article is built only on the notes from May 29, 2006. Speaking to Daniel on August 21, 2008, Jennings said, "He [Diamond] met you previously in 2001 and made your acquaintance. And the notes, which he uses for this story, tell the specific details and the quotations of you, were when he spoke to you on May 29, 2006. And then on [inaudible] May 29th of 2006. And he took very long notes. He, didn't you know -- he wrote them while talking to you. And when [inaudible] the story, it's everything from what's put in the article, it's everything from what he wrote on that day with you."

Jennings was, in all likelihood, not even working from Diamond's original shorthand notes. He was reading Diamond's translations from shorthand of the single interview from two years before (May 29, 2006), whose purpose was to simulate quotations and re-construct information supposedly supplied by Daniel Wemp in 2001-2002 while he worked as Diamond's driver.

**Daniel** said that he and Diamond only discussed the Handa/Ombal conflict of 1993 a total of three times. The fact that Diamond took notes during only one interview with only one person, four years after their initial conversations in 2001-2002, is confirmed by Daniel. During two of the three or four times he was driving Professor Diamond for bird research forays during 2001-2002, no notes (or audio recordings) were taken. The third meeting, and the only time notes (no audio) were taken, on May 29, 2006, was also the final time Daniel heard from Diamond.

On May 28, 2006, the night before that final note-taking meeting, Daniel had received a note from an office receptionist that Dr. Diamond had called requesting to speak to him the following day (in the Oil Search camp, Wemp's then job site) about the stories he'd told him four years before.



Here is Oil Search Ltd, the location in PNG where Wemp worked 2003-2007. Diamond easily found Wemp there in 2006. Why did he tell New Yorkers fact checkers in 2008 that Wemp worked for Chevron ---when he knew full well that he worked for Oil Search and that Chevron left in 2003? Did Diamond suddenly forget where he sought out Wemp when he wanted to speak with him in 2006?

Here is the timeline for Daniel Wemp:

- **1999-2002--Worked at [World Wildlife Fund \(WWF\)](#) as driver and administrative worker** (This is confirmed with WWF). He was assigned to

drive Jared Diamond to and from the Moro airport. He drove Diamond and K. David Bishop, Diamond's companion, on 3 or 4 bird research trips during the time he worked for WWF. He also said he spoke to Diamond about warfare on only two occasions while driving him for bird research.

- **July 14, 2002 --Daniel Wemp resigned from WWF and was hired by Chevron as an oil field worker, process technician.** (Confirmed with [Oil Search](#)). He never drove Diamond again.
- **Summer 2003--Chevron was sold to Oil Search Ltd.** Wemp became oil field worker for Oil Search Ltd.
- **May 28, 2006 -- Daniel Wemp received a note on his desk from Diamond by his computer in the Oil Search Ltd office.** The receptionist placed it there after getting a phone call from Diamond. The note said that Diamond wanted to come by the next morning to talk to him.
- **May 29, 2006 -- Diamond knocked on Daniel Wemp's door (25A) at approximately 7:30 a.m. with K. David Bishop.** They sat down in the area adjacent to Daniel's room. Diamond had a red notebook and black pen and wrote in a "foreign" language Daniel could not read. (*New Yorker* lawyers later reveal it is "shorthand"). Diamond asked about the stories Daniel Wemp had told him more than four years earlier, in 2001-2002. Daniel was tired, having worked all night, and at 7:30 am he still had not slept. He was, therefore, impatient with the questions and flip with some of the answers. He assumed Diamond knew their talks were private and that the information he gave him was confidential due to its "sensitive" nature. During the two hours he spoke with Diamond that morning, Daniel can't remember his interlocutor once telling him anything about a book. Daniel also stated he was never told about a journalism article in *The New Yorker* that would feature him and the other people he named. In fact, despite Diamond's claim that Wemp clearly knew that the information he was providing would be published, **two WWF drivers, Philip Kayape and Aloysius Pokaraija**, who were present, confirm Wemp's claim that he asked them to leave and go to their rooms as the discussion he was having with Diamond and Bishop was private. Indeed, Nancy Sullivan, an anthropologist who lives in PNG and speaks Tok Pisin, asked Phillip Kayape about the May 29, 2006 meeting among **Diamond, Bishop and Wemp**. She asked what happened, and Kayape responded in Tok Pisin, "Secret tok tok, yeah."
- **July 7, 2007 --Wemp Left Oil Search job**
- **April 21, 2008--Jared Diamond's article appears in The New Yorker, both in print and on the Internet**
- **December 9, 2008- "[Justice Deferred](#)" by Jarvis DeBerry, The Times-Picayune, republished the defamatory claims cited in The New Yorker article--** even after the owner was notified and complied with taking down the New Yorker article from its web site. . Both Times-Picayune and New Yorker are owned and published by Advance Publications.

**Bill Kovach**, founder of **Committee for Concerned Journalists** and co-author of seminal book *The Elements Of Journalism*, is considered one of the deans of journalism ethics. He made the following statement about *The New Yorker* in light of the Daniel Wemp case:

"I've read the material in the file you sent of your research on the article Vengeance Is Ours by Jared Diamond. It is an impressive file raising important questions both about the science and the journalism involved. Although you have made it possible for me to verify your work by careful attribution to sources, I have neither the ability nor the time to do that so I will limit my comments to what I know from reading the article as it appeared in *The New Yorker* and what I believe is the critical question a journalist reading the article for consideration to be published should have addressed.

"My comments are based on 50 years experience in newspaper journalism and on the journalistic values laid on in *The Elements of Journalism*, a book Tom Rosenstiel and I wrote in 2001, that is based in part on information accumulated over two years in open forums with more than 3,000 people including 300 journalists in which we asked them how journalism differs from other forms of communication and why the public should care whether journalism survives in the new world of unlimited instant communication.

"The first responsibility of the editor is to assure what the reader will see in the article is the truth. Therefore, the first reading would be to assure that the author's assertions and conclusions have been authoritatively and clearly verified. In a case like this where the article was written by an award-winning scientist and presented under a subject head: "Annals of Anthropology," the responsibility would be heightened since the reader should expect a careful, if not rigorously documented piece.

"Instead what was published is a complicated and in many ways confusing narrative based on what appear to be casual fragments of conversations in 2001 with a single source who claims to be an eyewitness. Around this single source narrative are woven assertions about what the social sciences tell us about such narratives. These fragments were knit together into notes taken later to produce the article that appeared in 2008.

"The narrator named a number of other participants in the event described that the author and the editor could have checked to verify the core narrative upon which the article was built. If such fact checking was done it is not made clear to the reader. A critical aspect of journalistic verification is transparency---what is made clear to the reader. Few people today are willing to, nor should they be asked to, accept undocumented assertions from journalists. If there are others involved in the story, their agreement or disagreement should be noted and dealt with.

"Thucydides warned all of us of the need for verification when he wrote of his own efforts to verify the history he wrote in the 5th century B.C.: "With regard to my factual reporting of events...I have made it a principle not to write down the first story that came my way...different eyewitnesses gave different accounts of the same events, speaking out of partiality for one side or the other, or else from imperfect memories."

#### **Were fake quotations attributed to Daniel?**

Daniel informed *The New Yorker* that he was misquoted. In his interview with Jennings on August 21, 2008, Daniel said, "The words that I have spoken during that time I can't actually remember what words I have spoken, all these notes that he has taken [inaudible] ...but I see that the English [inaudible]...on the article is not good enough for such person like me [inaudible]. It is a perfect English which is written on the article."

Jennings' answered, "Okay. So, you think that the words may not sound like your own words." Though Jennings heard Daniel, *The New Yorker* had no interest in

this serious charge.

One of the four reasons I cited for initially doubting the veracity of Diamond's article was that the quotations seemed fake.

The [official national languages](#) of Papua New Guinea are English and two pidgin languages (Tok Pisin, and Motu). Daniel Wemp's first languages are Angal Heneng and Tok Pisin; but his English is fairly good. There were no tape recordings, as previously mentioned, and Daniel and Diamond both spoke in English. So any claims that Daniel has made that he has been misquoted cannot be brushed off as due to bad translations. Daniel had a 10th grade education at the time he first spoke with Diamond. Could Daniel, whose second language is English, really have spoken in the manner that Diamond has indicated in the following paragraphs? Diamond attributed to Daniel the following statements:

*"That requires nerve, judgment, and presence of mind, to select the right target, and not to panic and shoot the first man who moves into a shootable position, he said. Boys and young men are prone to make such mistakes and hence are excluded from the stealth parties."*

Or this:

*"Isum was in the public fight, with his bow and arrow ready for a long-range battle, and he was shooting and dodging arrows in the open. He was concentrating on that public fight, looking at our men far away in the open, and he wasn't prepared for our attack from behind and nearby by one of our hidden parties. It was our group that had gone down along the side of the river that got him. Only one arrow hit Isum, but it was a bamboo arrow, flat and sharp as a knife, and it cut his spinal cord. That's even better than killing him, because he's now still alive today, 11 years later, paralyzed in a wheelchair, and maybe he'll live for another ten years. People will see his constant suffering. Isum may be around for a long time, for people to see his suffering, and to be reminded that this happened to him as proper vengeance for his having killed my uncle Soll."*

Or this:

*"I felt that it was a matter of 'kill or else die by suicide.' I was prepared to die myself in that fight. I knew that, if I did die then, I would be considered a hero and would be remembered. If I had personally seen the arrow go into Isum, I would have felt emotional relief then. Unfortunately, I wasn't actually there to see it, but, when I heard that Isum had been paralyzed, I thought, I have everything, I feel as if I am developing wings, I feel as if I am about to fly off, and I am very happy. After that battle, just as after each battle in which we succeeded in killing an Ombal, we danced and celebrated and slaughtered pigs. When you fight with thinking and finally succeed, you feel good and relieved. The revenge relieves you; now it can be your turn to help someone else get his own revenge."*

The *New Yorker* and Jared Diamond deceived the public by falsely presenting statements supposedly said by Daniel on May 29, 2006 (which Daniel denies) as quotations of what Daniel supposedly said in 2001-2002, during three car rides. All the quotations in the *New Yorker* article are attributed to Daniel during car rides—none are attributed to his speaking at his workplace dormitory in 2006, at Oil Search Ltd. Oil Search is not mentioned.

Journalist, professor and media ethicist, [Edward Wasserman](#), **Knight Professor in journalism, Department of Journalism and Mass Communications, Washington and Lee University**, stated, "I mean, if he [Diamond] has reconstitute[d] these conversations years later, then in *The New Yorker*, he had an obligation to indicate that much to the reader."

#### **Linguist Douglas Biber studied Daniel's quotes and actual speech**

I wrote to linguist [Professor Douglas Biber](#), **Northern Arizona University, Applied Linguistics Program**, an expert on measuring the differences between written and spoken language. I asked, "With verbiage, such as 'and hence...' imbedded within long, numerous and supposedly spoken quotations, my common sense perspective was cued to doubt. My impression was that I am reading written English and not spoken English. The wordings seem too perfect and seemed to me what I recognize as written English word choices and sentence structures...Therefore, I seek more objective, forensic methods in order to determine by linguistic analysis whether or not the quotations as presented indicate written or spoken roots."

Dr. Biber's initial impression was that the quotations were academic writing, but he needed to do a final analysis to quantify it. On the phone, he said, "I don't know any university professor that would talk like those quotations."

He also wrote, "You're certainly right that those quotes contain many grammatical characteristics that are typical of writing but rare in conversation."

DESCRIPTION OF 'CORPUS LINGUISTICS' FIELD AND METHODS : Excerpted from Dr. Biber's report:

"Over the last 25 years, a research approach has been developed for the empirical analysis of such grammatical characteristics. Referred to as 'corpus linguistics', the approach is based on the analysis of very large collections of natural texts from thousands of individual speakers and writers. Computer programs aid the analyses, which result in descriptions of the grammatical features that are especially frequent, features that are typical, and features that rarely occur. In addition, by comparing corpora with different kinds of texts, it is possible to contrast the grammatical characteristics that are usually found in conversation to those usually found in academic writing (or any other spoken or written varieties).

"The most comprehensive grammatical description of English undertaken from this perspective is the 1,200-page *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (LGSWE; Biber et al. 1999).

"...The research for that project is based on analysis of a very large corpus that represents four major varieties: conversation, fiction writing, newspaper writing,

and academic writing. For example, the sub-corpus for conversation includes c. 6.4 million words, produced by thousands of speakers. The sub-corpus for academic writing includes 5.3 million words from 408 different texts. Computational / quantitative analyses of these corpora allow us to make strong generalizations about the grammatical characteristics that are frequent or rare in conversation, contrasted with the features that are frequent/rare in academic writing."

**Dr. Biber** explained that for his analysis he did a "3-way comparison":

- 1.) "a quantitative analysis of the grammatical characteristics of Diamond's quotes [i.e., the quotations attributed to Daniel Wemp as his spoken words in the 4/21/08 *New Yorker* article]"
- 2.) "a quantitative grammatical analysis of Daniel Wemp's actual speech [verbatim transcripts of speech produced by Daniel Wemp collected by Rhonda Roland Shearer]"
- 3.) "the research findings from the LGSWE [large-scale corpus analysis of conversation and academic writing]."

**Dr. Biber** concluded, "Taken together, the linguistic analyses indicate that it is extremely unlikely that *The New Yorker* quotations are accurate verbatim representations of language that originated in speech. To put it simply, normal people do not talk using the grammatical structures represented in these quotations. However, these quotations do include several grammatical structures found commonly in academic writing, suggesting that the quotations were produced in writing rather than being transcribed from speech."

Dr. Biber's analysis revealed that the occurrence of "Adjective *and/but* adjective (e.g., *tall and handsome*)" was (emphasis original): "**100 times more frequent in Diamond quotes than in speech.**"

He also stated that the "Preposition + Relative pronoun (e.g., *each battle in which we succeeded in killing an Ombal*)" was "**100 times more frequent in Diamond quotes**" (emphasis original).

He further concluded, "These comparisons show the magnitude of the discrepancies between the grammatical style of normal conversation contrasted with the grammatical style of the Diamond quotes. To find one of these grammatical features in a normal conversation is noteworthy. To find repeated use of this large constellation of features in actual spoken discourse, some of them occurring c. 100 times more often than in normal conversation, is extremely unlikely. In contrast, these are all features that are typical of academic writing, suggesting that they have their origin in writing rather than actual speech."

In summary, Dr. Biber wrote, "Other corpus studies (e.g., the book *University Language*; Biber 2006) have shown that these same features are rare and exceptional in even academic speech, including university lectures. In contrast, what we find in the Diamond quotes is the pervasive use of a suite of grammatical constructions, which are all rare in conversation but common in formal writing. This constellation of grammatical characteristics is also strikingly different from the grammatical style of the verbatim transcripts of speech produced by DW [Daniel Wemp]. In sum, the analysis strongly indicates that the Diamond quotes are much more like discourse that was produced in writing, reflecting the typical grammatical features of formal academic prose, rather than verbatim representations of language that was produced in speech."

#### **What has New Yorker or Diamond done in response to StinkyJournalism's revelations?**

After my initial inquires, and forcing the issue that they had a duty to at least speak to Daniel, (facts which are detailed in my forthcoming 40,000 word report), suddenly, and without advance notice, The New Yorker escalated their stonewalling, and dispatched their in-house attorney, Lynn Oberlander, to write me, instead of their public relations department or editor to address Daniel's complaint.

When they finally spoke to Wemp, they had the fact checker who failed to do the fact checking in the first place, as the person assigned to call Wemp—one time. The August call did not go well as would be expected.

**Oberlander** wrote: "I understand that you left a message for one of our fact-checkers, indicating that we missed some potential errors during our discussion with Mr. Wemp. We gave Mr. Wemp several opportunities [in the one phone call, clarification mine] to describe any issues he had with the article, and he seemed quite certain that he had covered everything that was of concern to him; nevertheless, we understand that you believe there are other errors that were not raised."

The transcript of the actual interview with Jennings contradicts Oberlander's representation of Daniel's satisfaction. It provides evidence of Daniel's claim that he was very upset during the phone call and this clouded his judgment. (Provoked by Daniel's displeasure, Jennings apologized to Daniel at least three times. Acknowledging there was a problem, he told Daniel, "I'm very sorry that you are in an uncomfortable situation.")

When Oberlander continued to refuse to fact check me by phone and insisted that my final written report be prepared by September 5, 2008, to meet their deadline for doing corrections that they intended to quickly publish, I temporarily, as an emergency measure, obtained UK lawyers for Daniel Wemp, who soon obtained relief for Wemp who was frantic and wanted the articles down from the Internet as he felt his life was in danger. (A notion that I have since confirmed with multiple experts). Thankfully the article was removed by New Yorker from the Internet, at least for non-subscribers. The lawyers for Wemp also asked the three data bases The New Yorker content is distributed in--Lexis Nexis, EBSCO, Gale Group--to also comply. They did. Only abstracts remain .

Since *The New Yorker* failed before publication to call these named individuals—a basic fact-checking step—one would think that given their fact-checking procedures, and the seriousness of the alleged errors, that they would be interested in obtaining leads and other information from me so that they could call these

people immediately. But no fact checker ever called me or Daniel again, and the editors refused to meet with me, stating, "We're very busy working on future issues."

*The New Yorker* has continued to assert that they have "acted in good faith." Their attorney wrote, "We have responded with honesty and an openness to collaboration on determining whether there are errors in the article." However, the historical record—the complete set of email exchanges—proves their behavior is in sharp contrast to their words. Their sacred duty is to "seek the truth and report it" but they fail to do so today, as they did before when publishing overwhelming and harmful errors of fact.

I started off wanting only to verify the facts in *The New Yorker* article, but the magazine's and Diamond's unwillingness to take over the situation when the problems in the reportage emerged and to deal with Daniel Wemp directly, led to my refusal to abandon him in his time of great need. Daniel Wemp would not be in any position to fight for his rights alone. I felt compelled to try to help him. I saw how they previously and conveniently distorted and took out of context part of his statement that his "story is very true," even after hearing him on tape tell Jennings that Diamond's version of his story was "inaccurate, inaccurate."

From their inaction, I could see they did not want to hear the truth, let alone do a serious and independent investigation. If my written report would be the sole source for *The New Yorker's* corrections -- given their disinterest in pursuing the truth, and their ill-treatment of their main informant by not giving him the respect and proper hearing he deserved -- that raised the bar and burden unfairly onto me to do an authoritative report myself, when it was their mess, and their responsibility to investigate and correct their errors.

**The Society of Professional Journalists' SPJ [Code of Ethics](#) cites under a major heading that journalists need to: "Seek Truth and Report It" and "Be Accountable."**

**Journalists should:**

- Test the accuracy of information from all sources and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error. Deliberate distortion is never permissible.
- Diligently seek out subjects of news stories to give them the opportunity to respond to allegations of wrongdoing.

If *The New Yorker* did not give named tribes and individuals an opportunity to respond before publication, they surely had an even higher obligation to do so after being informed by me that their report had numerous errors. Their journalistic duty is to *seek* truth. They were told in a September 2, 2008 email from me, "Daniel was not 'owner of the fight' for Handas nor was Isum 'owner of the fight' for Ombals." I provided photographs of Isum, showing he stood upright and walked unassisted. I quoted my researcher as stating "only the names and locations are true."

I also wrote (emphasis original), "I am willing, as I mentioned, to speak to someone there to provide [preliminary research results](#). If recorded and transcribed you are able to circulate it among your stakeholders... To correct the record, I have never refused to detail or respond regarding my assertions of errors." I further explained, "I am not finished with my investigation but can provide information--have a fact checker--or someone call me (record, transcribe and circulate among you--that's what I do). I am not a supplicant required to meet your deadlines. I do not have time, desire or ethical obligation to write a footnoted report for you. Dr. Diamond and you need to do your own research."

So why didn't *The New Yorker* or Diamond collect information that I offered in order to contact Isum and the real owners of the fight for their own investigation if they were, in fact, "seeking truth"? *The New Yorker* has refused to call Wemp again, despite all the verbal and written requests made in his behalf. In his July 17 statement to *The New Yorker*, Daniel said: "I would at least want Jared on the phone. I would like to talk to him personally so that we could all talk together and sort out this problem so that the article would be removed from *The New Yorker* because it is very sensitive in my area."

Despite all academic norms for transparency, scientific requirements for "full disclosure," and journalistic and academic responsibilities to one's sources, Diamond has refused to speak to Daniel Wemp. He has not answered any questions about his methods and data since my first email to him on April 30, 2008.

[Edward Wasserman](#), the Knight Professor in Journalism in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications at Washington and Lee University and well-known media ethicist, said, "In the circumstances you're describing, he [Diamond] has a real obligation to make it plain to the person he's talking to, particularly an unsophisticated source, what it is that he's talking to them for, and what use he proposes to make of the man's comments ... there's nothing very -- you know, subtle about that. That's a bright line obligation that he has."

**Wasserman** added, "Now, all I can say is that if Diamond conducted the interview with this guy without telling what the interview was for, without even telling him it was an interview, then he did something wrong, that the guy has a right to know that he's talking to somebody for publication, and it really doesn't matter anymore whether it's scientific publication or periodical publication, because you have this seamless information network called the Internet, where stuff can be very easily -- you know, easily accessed through search engines. So, regardless of whether it was *The New Yorker*, or *The New York Daily News*, or some obscure scholarly journal, you still have to tell the guy what this is all about, because everybody has a right to control their words and have some control or some knowledge of what their words or image is going to be used for."

**Consequence for Tribal members of libels**

[Jack Caldwell](#), for example, writes in his blog (emphasis mine): "Tribes fighting tribes for control of resources, for revenge, and **for the sheer thrill of being young and vicious**. Here is a haunting picture from The New Yorker that has just published a [superb piece](#) by [Jared Diamond](#) in which **he traces the deeds of Daniel Wemp** in the New Guinea Highlands **as he goes about organizing his relatives to kill in order to revenge the killing of his 'beloved paternal uncle Soll.'**"

**Jarvis DeBerry**, of the [Times-Picayune, on December 9, 2008](#), wrote a column that cited Diamond's *New Yorker* article and quotes **Daniel Wemp**. DeBerry wrote, "Jared Diamond, best known for his book 'Guns, Germs and Steel' displays more of his trademark curiosity in an April edition of The New Yorker when he talks to Daniel Wemp in the Highlands of New Guinea about avenging his uncle's 1992 killing. It took him three years, but Wemp finally made things right by organizing a battle that left his uncle's killer paralyzed."

He explained that Daniel "lust[s] for payback" and he justifies violence as a way of becoming a hero. DeBerry quoted Diamond's article where Daniel described his lack of remorse about harming Isum that DeBerry characterized as "bloodlust": Daniel said, "I thought, I have everything, I feel as if I am developing wings, I feel as if I am about to fly off, and I am very happy." DeBerry also cites Daniel's admission of a crime: " 'I wanted to obtain vengeance myself, even if it were to cost me my own life,' Wemp said. Even if he had died, 'I would be considered a hero and would be remembered.' "

**DeBerry** concluded, "In New Orleans somebody would have put Wemp's face on a T-shirt and proclaimed how he kept it gangsta to the very end." He cites what Diamond wrote in his article that "Daniel's methods might seem quite familiar to members of urban gangs in America, and. . . peoples of other countries where tribal ties remain strong and state control weak," and concludes, "If, as Diamond says, the lust for payback is never stamped out in an orderly society, imagine how it must rage here where 'state control' is so weak. Imagine what it feels like when people believe that the only justice that exists is the justice they carry out." (It is surprising that Advance Publications owners of both The New Yorker and Times-Picayune would allow this second defamation to take place in December 2008 after The New Yorker article was removed from their web site.)

**Dan Jorgensen, a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Western Ontario**, is an expert on Papua New Guinea. He noted that Diamond's "pig in a garden" debacle has put people at risk. Professor Jorgensen said, "In fact, there are lots of other criticisms one can make and should make about his [Diamond's] work, but one of the things that is clear is that the guy is not a professional anthropologist, and there are all kinds of things he does, and I regard – your concern about using somebody's real name, for example – as a big one. And I just automatically assumed, 'Well, of course it's not the guy's real name,' because nobody would ever do that, right?"

**Jorgensen** continued, "And see, that's the kind of thing no professional anthropologist – I mean, that would be default assumption, okay? If nothing is said you automatically assume it's a pseudonym, and for all kinds of absolutely crucial, ethical reasons, and sometimes people really want you to use their real names." In this circumstance, a mix of "real names and some pseudonyms are used." Jorgensen said, "One of the things that upset me more than anything else was the *Annals of Anthropology* thing there, because that's not *Annals of Anthropology*. That's false advertising."

Nonetheless, internal evidence in Diamond's article indicates that he and his editors knew or should have known the dangers of the article for Daniel and the other identified individuals whom Diamond named as having committed serious crimes. The article depicted a violent culture in PNG of never-ending revenge. Diamond quoted Daniel specifically stating how dangerous it is to identify killers. He wrote, "Even if the side achieving the kill does know, it is always careful to keep the killer's identity secret. For that reason, the target of Daniel's revenge was not Soll's killer but another Ombal man, named Henep Isum, who had organized the fight for the Ombals." Does it, then, make any sense that Daniel would casually identify himself as personally plotting to kill Isum with hired assassins?

Yet Diamond states that this is true, giving the exciting illusion of privileged knowledge; that the man he was talking to—his driver—was a secret killer. However, with publication there is no secret, even in the jungles, due to the Internet. With the information provided in the article, Diamond and *The New Yorker* editors were aware—or should have been aware—of the dangers for Daniel. Diamond even wrote about the specific risks to Daniel, with total disregard that the article would only compound additional risks. Diamond wrote, "But it continued to concern Daniel, who was now, of course, a target for Ombal revenge. He told me that Ombal men tried for several years to kill him and three other Handa clansmen who had been fight-owners, but they never succeeded."

The untruths in *The New Yorker* article by Dr. Jared Diamond are already poisoning the future of indigenous peoples. Mako John Kuwimb, Handa clansman in PNG and a PhD candidate in law living in Queensland, Australia, must publish a peer-reviewed paper before being able to finalize his degree after four years of study. The referee notes for Kuwimb cites Diamond's article as evidence of violence of Handa in SH PNG [Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea]. The anonymous reviewer suggests that Kuwimb is somehow not honest about his area's violence (" the actual circumstances of Papua New Guinea today" pg.3) and uses Diamond's article to support this assertion. He/she writes: "The author comes from Handa village (the subject of an essay by Jared Diamond in the *New Yorker*, 21 April 2008), not far from the production facilities in the oil fields of Southern Highlands Province in Papua New Guinea (not discussed)." (pg.4) The key words are "not discussed."

He/she goes on to further suggest the fact of the violence of the Handa area (that Kuwimb should know about and should have mentioned) in their conclusion: "The paper neither mentions the conflicts of local origin that have resulted in the rise of a gun culture, failed elections, the destruction of most social services, and the imposition of various States of Emergency over the last decade, nor the local political salve that was apparently agreed to in 2008 by the national government and the Southern Highlands oil and gas owners – to form a new Hela Province in 2010. The Southern Highlands has massive social and political problems, and so will Hela Province, but few can be blamed on legislative drafting dating back 120 years."

In other words, the only evidence the reviewer offers for this assertion of violence in the Handa area (that he/she suggests Kuwimb should have mentioned as he is a Handa!) is the Diamond article that, in fact, and unbeknownst to the reviewer, is full of untruths and libels.

Why would Kuwimb discuss an un-peer-reviewed article in *The New Yorker* magazine in the first place? He certainly would not mention it as it is full of objective

factual inaccuracies and libelous assertions. And yet there it is, cited in the peer review simply because Dr. Diamond's and *The New Yorker's* prestige is powerful—and, therefore, extremely dangerous when wrong. They have soiled the reputation of the Handa and Ombals and individual clansmen and they need help to defend themselves. This case could set an example around the world that just because people are indigenous does not mean the powerful can come into their area and export lies about them for profit. (Diamond's agent was trying to sell lecture bookings using Daniel Wemp's and the Handa and Ombal's names and these false stories [of their murderous and raping behaviors along a Hwy as "Nipa tribes people" when they are not Nipas and live 4 or 5 hours away from said Hwy] for \$25,000 each).

Let this case be a cautionary tale warning others around the world that such "academic" exploitation will no longer be tolerated and will be exposed by the international community, who will stand up along with the victims of such painful lies.

UPDATE: 4/22/09: 9:34am: CORRECTION: We corrected the spelling of Mt. Hagen and removed Dr.as title from long time-PNG scholar, Nancy Sullivan's name. We regret the errors.

#### \* **Research Methodology? StinkyJournalism vs. New Yorker & Diamond**

**Pamela Maffei McCarthy**, *The New Yorker* deputy editor, wrote in an August 15, 2008 letter (emphasis mine), "When our first choice of source is not available, we must rely on the next, and in this case we consulted a large number of experts in the various fields the material *touches on*."

One of those experts was [Alex Golub](#), assistant professor at University of Hawaii at Manoa, an anthropologist and expert on PNG who writes for Savageminds.org. Golub said that, indeed, a fact-checker spoke to him for "about 15 minutes" and only asked general questions. He said, "They asked me some general questions about what is PNG like and what is tribal fighting like and this kind of stuff, it didn't have anything to do with the actual case [or] details of the actual case."

**Golub** continued, "No one asked me anything about whether the guy was in a wheelchair or any dates or anything like that. It sounds like from what you're saying that they never really bothered to do that at all at any level."

In contrast to what The New Yorker apparently did, my method for field work focused on the details. "Could it be true?" was not good enough. "Was it true?" was the clarion call. Either Isum was paralyzed with a spinal injury in a wheelchair or he wasn't. The mission was clear.

I began that mission by contacting two local indigenous researchers recommended by two American scientists who have worked in PNG for many years. Through **PhD anthropologist**, [Nancy Sullivan](#), an anthropologist and consultant who has lived and written about PNG for many years, I was introduced to **Divine Word University (DWU) journalism professor Brother Michael McManus**. McManus, in turn, suggested I contact **his student Jeffrey Elepa** whose thesis was on peace and compensation. Elepa was from the Southern Highlands and spoke the dialect. Through **environmental scientist Andrew Mack, PhD**, who lived in PNG for many years (co-author with [Paige West](#), PNG expert, associate professor of Anthropology at **Barnard College and Columbia University**; "Ten Thousand Tonnes of Small Animals: Wildlife Consumption in Papua New Guinea, a Vital Resource in Need of Management [\[pdf\]](#)"), I was introduced to one of his researchers, **Michael Kigl** .

Elepa and Kigl did not know each other, and the data they collected were only compared after they completed their research. This was a key component of my research plan. If Elepa and Kigl came back independently with the same or similar stories from the area, the constancy itself would further indicate overall accuracy. I soon added a third **researcher, Kritoe Keleba**, who worked for Sullivan, just to have a final push for additional informants we were not able to locate previously, and to obtain medical records from Isum and check with the police station about their reports. Keleba did not know my other two researchers.

The goal was to interview multiple informants from all sides (Handa, Ombal, neutral parties). Persons named in Diamond's article were of special interest as well as the fight "owners" or village leaders. All interviews were to be tape-recorded and photographs taken for documentation when possible. Our team of three field researchers ([Michael Kigl](#), [Kritoe Keleba](#), [Jeffrey Elapa](#)), interviewed and verified the article's numerous errors with 20 sources, a number that includes Daniel Wemp, the actual tribal owners and organizers of the fight and police who worked the 1993 case. Field interviews include two groups of men: one, a Henep group with 23 members, and the other, an Ombal group with 17 members, who acted as a Greek chorus adding comments as certain informants spoke. I personally conducted over 300 phone and email interviews with over 80 anthropologists, scientists and journalists with expertise in ethics and/or Papua New Guinea, as well as indigenous informants.