

DNA linking various peoples

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DNA samples being taken from living people and ancient remains are startling U.S. anthropologists by linking people thousands of miles and years apart.

John Johnson, head of anthropology at the Santa Barbara (Calif.) Museum of Natural History has, for 14 years, been collecting DNA from members of the Chumash Indian tribe. Assisted by archeologists and geneticists, the research is linking peoples of coastal regions from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, The Los Angeles Times reported.

The study is adding evidence to a theory that the first inhabitants of the Americas were big-game hunters who crossed a 1,000-mile land bridge from Asia, traveling into the Great Plains through an inland corridor created by receding glaciers, the newspaper said.

Still others believe some may have traveled from Asia and traveled by boats that, over hundreds of generations, took them the length of the Pacific Coast.

Johnson discussed his research during a weekend scientific conference at the University of California-Santa Barbara.

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