



# The AnthObserver

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

2016-2017

## News from the Chair

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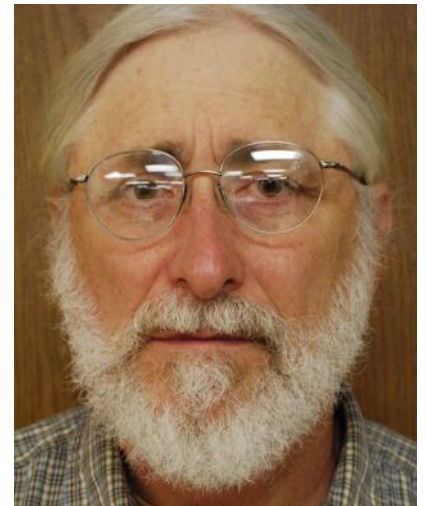
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This year's "news from the chair" has been compiled by Jim Enloe and Bob Franciscus (Interim DEO this past fall semester). This has been a year of many administrative reviews of faculty and of the department.

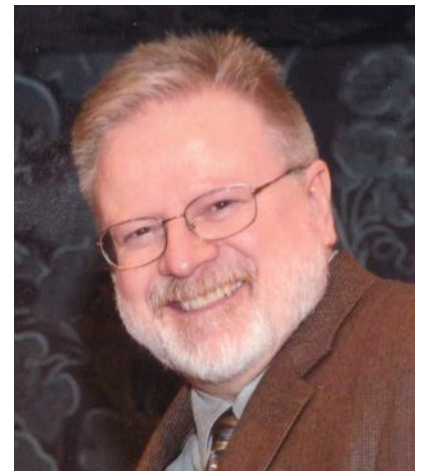
Katina Lillios, with the help of numerous faculty members, has compiled and submitted a self-study of the department—the initial step of a 7-year cycle of internal and external review to be completed next year. Despite such administrative distractions, we were able to accomplish a number of significant things.

Cynthia Chou, Stanley Asian Chair in International Programs, was awarded tenure and promotion to full Professor, and also overcame a serious health issue with bravery, humor, and resolute determination—a true inspiration to all of us. Lecturer Heidi Lung in Museum Studies Program has significantly increased the regularity of course offerings for the Museum Studies Program, establishing a Museum Studies Certificate that can be completed entirely with distance education courses. Heidi was also named official Academic Coordinator of the Museum Studies Program, replacing Russ Ciochon who has been on CDA leave this semester. Anthropology faculty continued participation in the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU) program, providing our students with opportunities to perform research and to present it in public and professional venues.

This academic year we have had 131 majors and 33 minors in Anthropology, producing 37 BA and BS degrees, 4 Anthropology honors graduates, and 4 Phi Beta Kappa invitations.



Dr. James G. Enloe



Dr. Robert Franciscus



# News from the Chair

*Congratulations to  
Meena Khandelwal  
for receiving the  
International  
Engagement in  
Teaching Award  
and to  
Katina Lillios for  
being awarded a  
National  
Endowment for the  
Humanities  
Fellowship*

Having offered additional distance education courses and sections to increase course availability and enrollment, the department was able to obtain significant funding from the Division of Continuing Education for graduate student research support, contributing to continued production in the graduate program, including 4 MAs and 3 PhDs. Additionally, Margaret Beck, Russ Ciochon, Matt Hill, Erica Prussing and Bob Franciscus crafted a successful proposal to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Dean's office to significantly increase selected course sections and other curricular modifications which will increase the number of funded graduate students for next year.

Regarding significant awards, congratulations to Katina Lillios for receiving an NEH Fellowship for her forthcoming new book on the prehistoric heritage of Iberia, and to Beverly Poduska for receiving a Longevity Award for, count 'em, 45 years of service to the University of Iowa. Last, but not least, we note with great pride that the inaugural [International Engagement Teaching Award](#) was given by the CLAS to Meena Khandelwal, a well-deserved recognition of her dedication to teaching undergraduate and graduate students, as well as engaging in truly significant application of anthropological perspectives to serious world problems.

## Congratulations to our Graduates!

### DOCTORATE

SHELBY PUTT—dissertation titled “Human Brain Activity during Stone Tool Production: Tracing the Evolution of Cognition and Language”

CHRISTIAN HAUNTON—dissertation titled “REMAINING FAITHFUL IN THE OUTHOUSE An Introduction to the Utopian Archaeology of the Amana Colonies”

TOBY AVALOS—dissertation titled “Discerning Hominid Taxonomic Variation in the Southern Chinese, Peninsular Southeast Asian, and Sundaic Pleistocene Dental Record”

### MASTERS

LIZZY HANDSCHY—Advised by Dr. Erica Prussing

SCOTT OLSON—Advised by Dr. Emily Wentzell

EMMA WOOD—Advised by Dr. Robert Franciscus

# Focus on Faculty

## Promise and Pitfalls of Development Efforts in Rajasthan, India

Fulbright-Hays Group Project Award Seminar (Dec.2016 – Jan.2017)

Contributed by: Meena Khandelwal

Millions of people worldwide depend on simple biomass stoves to cook their daily meals. Cooking with this kind of stove (called a chulha in India) has benefits, including its construction from locally sourced stone and mud and the delicious wood-fired flavor it infuses into bread. However, these stoves are also linked to a host of health and environmental problems. In India and elsewhere, women and girls collect fuel wood, trekking increasingly long distances in the face of deforestation; mothers and children are disproportionately affected by harmful emissions due to their physical proximity to cooking fires. The problem of cook-stoves is a global story, but it also varies by place depending on differences in cuisine, landscape, history, culture and state policies.

India has been a key site for efforts to replace the hand-crafted chulha with 'efficient' and 'smokeless' manufactured stoves. Indeed, the government, academic researchers and NGOs have tried for more than half a century to diffuse 'improved cook-stoves' (ICs) in rural areas, but without much success. Thanks to a Fulbright-Hays GPA grant, funded by the Department of Education, I was able to take a group of 12 UI faculty and students to spend a month studying efforts to design and diffuse ICs in southern Rajasthan. ICs are a window into the complex and inevitably unfinished project of 'development' in India and elsewhere. We studied the IC issue by seeking out the perspectives of both women users and agents of development, including researchers and practitioners. The goal of our Fulbright-Hays seminar "Promise and Pitfalls of Development Efforts in Rajasthan, India" was to understand people's personal experiences with ICs, including those of researchers who design them, manufacturers who produce them, NGO workers who promote them, and village women who are expected to use them. Another goal was to demonstrate the value of area studies expertise (language,



Woman cooking with a chulha and young woman carrying fuel-wood

history, culture, religion) not only for a broad range of 'science' disciplines, but also for engagement with vexing problems of global concern. A comprehensive account of our four week trip is impossible in this short piece, so this is a sketch of some of the places we saw and people we met.

In addition to the focus on ICs, my goal was to expose participants to different kinds of places and people, because, well, there are many Indias. Site visits included both research institutions that produce knowledge with painstaking care and shopping malls complete with gleaming food courts and escalators that carry customers up and down floors jammed with international and Indian brands but eerily empty of crowds that generally fill Indian markets. We joined Indian and foreign tourists to see wildlife reserves, sprawling 15th century Rajput forts, massive palaces—

open to tourism but still inhabited by present day royals who retain ceremonial importance—and even the Taj Mahal. Forts and palaces are stunning artifacts of India's long and colorful history, but the tour guides for hire—master storytellers—bring these monuments to life.

Most of our time in India was spent off the tourist trail. We visited a local cricket practice session at an open field on the invitation of our young hotel owner and cricketer Sullabh, a tiny roadside temple devoted to the 'smallpox goddess' Sitala where young couples seek her blessing before marriage, and NGO offices where staff work with dogged persistence to change hearts and minds as well as structural inequalities. One NGO, Jatan Sansthan, works to empower rural youth. Under the guidance of Ms. Lakshmi Murthy, Jatan has launched the UGER project ("new beginnings") that focuses on menstrual health and trains girls to produce and use washable menstrual pads to promote livelihood opportunity, help families save money, reduce shame (as pads must be hung in the sun to dry), and address the horrible environmental consequences of disposable pads so actively promoted by Proctor and Gamble with free samples. Ms. Murthy, a designer by training, told us that her work with non-literate villagers has taught her that visual images, even those ubiquitous in health education, are not universal at all.

Getting out of the city in search of rural women's views on chulhas and fuel wood collection, we also visited non-electrified village homes where chulhas are used daily, and wood is stacked nearby. Small solar panels sit atop thatched roofs, charging mobile phones. These village visits gave us the opportunity to try out our Hindi and Mewari which we were learning from our language teacher extraordinaire, Ms. Vanita Ojha. Even though this seminar was relatively short, language instruction was a central part of the program. As India has become a popular site for both business and short-term study abroad, it is often held up as a place where foreigners can get by very well with English. This is true only if one limits one's interaction to educated middle and upper class people. In rural Bhil ("Scheduled Tribe") villages in southern Rajasthan,

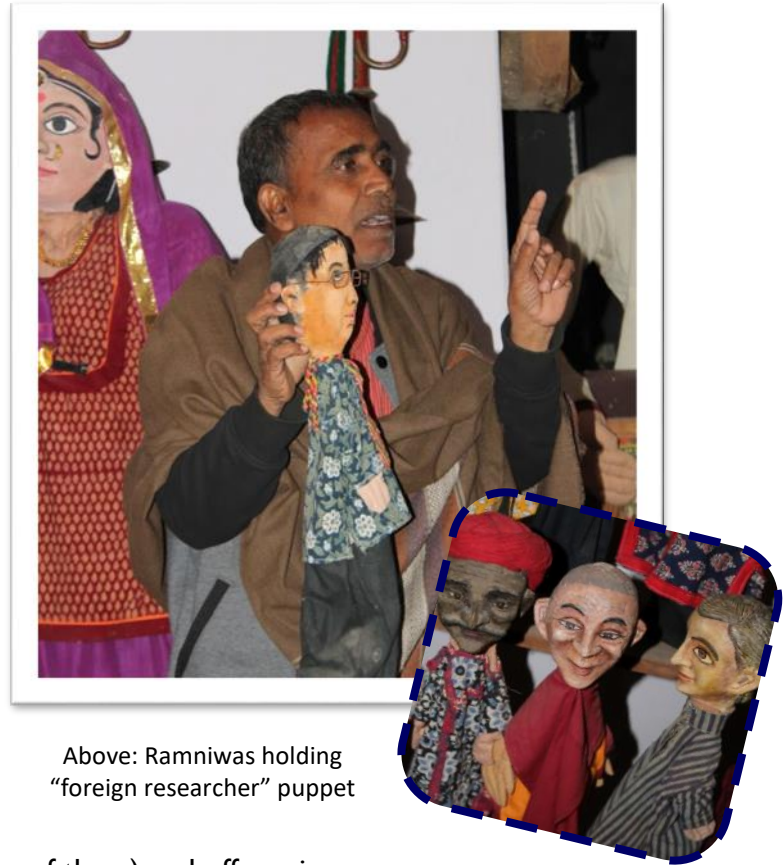


Group in front of Ganesh Pol Gate at Amber Fort in Rajasthan

women generally don't even speak Hindi, much less English. Trying to find out what women think through two layers of male translators makes me feel like a modern-day armchair anthropologist. Because campus internationalization efforts occur within a context where 'time to degree' is a primary metric of success in graduate training and study abroad has become a 2-3 week affair, language study is dismissed as too slow a process. It must remain a key part of campus internationalization efforts.

While the chulha is generally associated with rural cooking, rural and urban livelihoods are deeply intertwined. People flee to cities to escape poverty and agrarian distress. Boys and young men leave villages to perform low-paid and dangerous work in the service and industry sectors (head loading, construction, mining); indeed, this labor mobility is central to India's economic growth. Ms. Parul Kulkarni spoke to us about the work of Udaipur-based Ajeevika Bureau, an NGO that assists migrant workers. Many of these young men live temporarily on the construction sites where they work and either buy (fried) foods or cook with costly firewood that they purchase. To address the cooking needs of migrant workers, Ajeevika Bureau has created mobile community kitchens, enabling the men to save money and eat healthier food. Cooking is typically women's work, but millions of Indian men work away from their homes—in the city, on the move with their herds, in another country—and they cook.

Barefoot College and Swaraj University are two alternative schools in Rajasthan that shun degrees and promote inquiry-based and applied learning. Barefoot College is a striking contrast to US universities and colleges that were envisioned to be, like monasteries, separated from communities. We now try to promote 'public engagement' to overcome this foundational town-gown divide. Barefoot College, as described in Bunker Roy's TED Talk, is embedded in the surrounding rural community and ecosystem and founded on the tenets that everyone possesses valuable knowledge. Thus, the college trains non-literate grandmothers to practice dentistry (we met



Above: Ramniwas holding "foreign researcher" puppet

one of them) and offers six months' training to semi- and non-literate women on how to build and repair solar systems; these 'solar mamas' have taken their achievements as far as Sierra Leone and Zanzibar where they train local women in solar engineering. We were lucky to have Ramniwas-ji as our tour guide; he comes from a Dalit background and has no formal schooling. He was instructed by Bunker Roy to learn accounting to help the college—to his own surprise, he did—and was then encouraged to pursue his true passions of puppetry and theater as a means to spread the Barefoot message of breaking caste, gender and religious barriers—through satire and laughter. His repertoire of puppets include a poor Rajasthani farmer, a Brahmin priest, a grandmother, Barack Obama, and even a foreign researcher sporting a short-sleeved shirt, glasses and a tie!

Swaraj University is part of the movement against 'factory schooling' called Shikshantar Andolan, and one of its projects is Halchal Café established as an experiment in gift economy. We spent a Saturday evening at the café socializing. People volunteer to cook a meal with locally sourced ingredients and serve it to anyone who shows up. This is different from the charitable 'soup kitchen' model in that guests offer whatever they can give in exchange, whether a monetary donation stuffed into a wooden box, time, service or even an artistic performance. Over steel plates of spicy pulao and vegan brownies, we got to chat with one of Shikshantar's founders, Manish Jain, who renounced his career in the US to return to India: He had worked as an educational planning consultant for UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, USAID and an investment banker for Morgan Stanley. As he puts it, he has spent years trying to unlearn his B.A. in Economics and International Relations from Brown University and his M.A. in Education from Harvard.

Whew. We managed to do all this in the middle a demonetization crisis. The same day of Trump's win in the US (Nov. 8) India's government announced that, as an anti-corruption effort and amidst reports of Pakistani counterfeit rupees, all Indian Rupee notes in commonly used denominations of 500 and 1000 would become worthless on Dec. 30; the government was releasing new 2000 rupee notes, but, predictably, there were not enough in circulation. This situation wreaked havoc on India's largely cash economy, as people tried to dispose of their old notes and get new ones. By the time we arrived in mid-December, one could identify the few ATMs that had cash by their long lines. Wealthy Indians scrambled to get cash, while poor people, who subsist almost entirely in the informal economy and hold their savings in cash, were hurt the most, as both employers and customers did not have cash to pay them. For me, the



first omen was when, upon arrival at the Delhi airport with a group of 12, I was allowed to change only US\$ 77 (the weekly allowance foreign currency conversion) Period. With plenty of money in the budget, I spent the next four weeks trying to figure out how to spend it; only larger stores and restaurants take credit cards. While Prime Minister Modi heralded India's new digital economy that would end corruption, India's national monuments like the Taj Mahal were still accepting only cash for entry fees! Miraculously, we got by with the kindness of many and a heavy dose of what Indians call "jugaad" or work-arounds that bend the rules to solve a problem. Insights from economic anthropology were much more helpful than economics proper.

Our first few days in Delhi highlighted Iowa connections. In Gurgaon (bordering Delhi), we were hosted by Sehgal Foundation in their beautiful LEEDs building powered by solar and with zero water waste. Dr. Suri M. Sehgal arrived in India as a child refugee during the 1947 Partition, later came to the US to study plant genetics, and lived much of his life in Des Moines. He is a diaspora philanthropist who has devoted his energies and wealth to promoting rural development in Mewat district of Haryana. Mr. Jay Sehgal is a Trustee of the S.M. Sehgal Foundation (SMSF) and an alum of University of Iowa; SMSF has been a supporter and host of UI's India Winterim Program. Mr. Lalit Mohan Sharma, the SMSF Director of Adaptive Water Technologies, explained how the organization uses check dams and technologies to address problems of dropping groundwater levels and salinization. While in Delhi, we also visited the Gurgaon office of American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), where Dr. Vandana Sinha gave us a wonderful tour of AIIS Art and Archaeology Department that included seeing work in progress, a labor of love, to document and preserve South Asia's rich architectural

and archaeological history. Here was another Iowa connection, as UI faculty member Dr. Philip Lutgendorf, is the current president of AIIS.

In India, NGOs most commonly take an oppositional stance towards 'corporates' who tend to promote neoliberal development and, of course, benefit from it. Two of our guest speakers suggested the need for a different approach. In Delhi, we heard from Dr. Nisha Agrawal, head of Oxfam India. When she left her career as a World Bank economist to lead Oxfam's transition from being a subsidiary of the British non-profit to a national (Indian) organization, she had to win over the trust of her new employees and colleagues in the non-profit sector who were generally suspicious of the World Bank's capitalist development. Dr. Agrawal explained to us that Oxfam adopts a rights-based approach, but is one of the very few NGOs in India that is willing to work directly with corporates; they are doing so, she said, because it is the ONLY way to bring about large scale change on the issue, for example, of violence against women: if corporates are the problem, she said, then they need to be part of the solution as well. A few weeks later, in Udaipur, Mr. George Varughese, president of Delhi-based Development Alternatives (DA), observed that if humans don't learn to work together we will never address the systems challenges we face. DA works on issues of environment and sustainable development by building partnerships with other organizations, with communities and researchers. In order to scale up, he argues, development organizations need to get into company and corporate space. Both Agrawal and Varughese are pragmatists.

In addition to journeys by bus or train, tours and meetings, wild rides stuffed like sardines into auto-rickshaw 'taxis', we also read essays and discussed them in 'seminar' sessions, our disciplinary disagreements kept friendly by steaming cups of chai, fried pakoras and our favorite 'biscuits'. Packets of Bourbon Silk and Parle G (G for glucose) can be found at Coralville's Indian grocery, but they never taste quite the same here. This trip confirmed my

long-standing view that India is a place of incredible vitality and innovation, perhaps because the state is rather weak, the problems daunting, the civilization ancient, and the population enormous and diverse. We learned that, with regard to the IC issue, too much attention has focused on technology itself and not enough on the experiences of users or on the power dynamics between agents of development and those targeted for interventions. These conversations and debates continued during the Provost's Global Forum "Up in Smoke: Women's Health and the Environment" that took place April 12-14, 2017, on the University of Iowa campus. This forum brought together some of the leading experts on ICs from India and the US, and included comparative perspectives from China, Tanzania and Malawi. We brought two ICs from India and demonstrated their use on the Anne Cleary Walkway as part of the forum. In terms of future research directions, every short trip to a village in southern Rajasthan prompts more questions than answers (How is fuelwood shared, exchanged and sold? Would women actually be thrilled to be freed from having to collect wood? These questions about actual behavior and actual attitudes and aspirations can only be answered with substantial ethnographic research.



## Navigating Health and Society in the Post-Apartheid Township

Contributed by: Theodore Powers

Dumisa and I stood smiling as his wife, Phumzile, took our photo. The flash illuminated the interior of the shack as Dumisa's young son Themba grabbed at his legs. He was anxious to play outside now that his interest in the mhlungu (white) visitor had waned. I followed Dumisa out of the door and into the small, enclosed area that encircled his home. Themba, jumped atop a small, plastic motorcycle that served as a toy of choice for South African boys of all backgrounds. As the boy scampered across the paving stones that separated our feet from an underlying layer of sand, I turned toward Dumisa with a wistful smile. As I stood amidst a sea of corrugated iron and

makeshift wooden fences, the news of his move began to sink in. I looked across the area he had called home since we first met in 2007 while the traffic of N2 highway hummed in the distance. During my visit, he had told me that he and his family planned to move to a new area later in the year. The next time I would see Dumisa and his family, it would not be in the township of Khayelitsha.

Last year I carried out six weeks of field research in South Africa during the months of June and July. Supported by the 2016/17 Old Gold Summer Research Fellowship, I carried out site and home visits with research participants based in the township of Khayelitsha, a township located approximately 25 kilometers outside of central Cape Town. The primary goal that I had set prior to my trip was to carry out follow-up fieldwork for a project entitled "Coalition Formation and Public Health Policy in South Africa." Over the course of my trip, I carried out interviews and site visits in order to expand my understanding of the dynamics of public health policy, alliance formation, and community health outcomes in South Africa. The additional field research and interviews addressed gaps in the existing dataset, meeting the primary goal that I set out to accomplish.

During my fieldwork I also developed a new area of research focused on community health initiatives in South Africa. As shown above with Dumisa, I carried out site and home visits with long-term research participants to learn more about the direction their lives had taken since my last visit in 2013. Living in a context of material deprivation produced divergent outcomes for those who I have



Khayelitsha from the shacks



known and learned from for over a decade. A concept that loomed large amidst the difficulties faced by some research participants was James Ferguson's framing of "an ethnography of decline." For some, their lives had grown increasingly difficult since our paths had last crossed. For others such as Dumisa, the future was rife with the possibility of an increasingly middle-class lifestyle. Thus, the preliminary fieldwork that I carried out in June-July 2016 underscored the necessity of thinking through trajectories amidst a context of rising food prices, fuel shortages, trauma, and survival.

As I move forward with my research, I will continue to analyze how community residents are developing local programs for addressing health in their own communities. Critical to understanding these local community health efforts are the complex ways that they articulate with global health programs and public health initiatives in Khayelitsha. How, when, and why these interventions overlap – and where they do not – will serve as a focal point. As always, it will be the life experiences of people that will guide my questions and my research. Many thanks to the Department of Anthropology and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for supporting my fieldwork in South Africa via the 2016/17 Old Gold Summer Research Fellowship.

### UI Anthropology Department 2016-2017 Colloquium Series

THANIK LERTCHARNRIT (Silpakorn University, Thailand) "Iron Age Archaeology in Thailand: Recent Research in Central Thailand"

OCTOBER 14, 2016

MYRA LAIRD (University of Chicago) "Biomechanical and spatial approaches to interpreting diet in fossil hominins"

NOVEMBER 11, 2016

JACK KUGELMASS (University of Florida) "A Traveler at Home: A Talk on Counternarrative and Memory with Inter - and Post-War Poland"

JANUARY 27, 2017

TINA LEE (University of Wisconsin-Stout) "The Reproduction of Inequality in New York City's Child Welfare System"

FEBRUARY 10, 2017

SHANNON LEE DAWDY (University of Chicago) "An Archaeology of the New American Death"

FEBRUARY 24, 2017

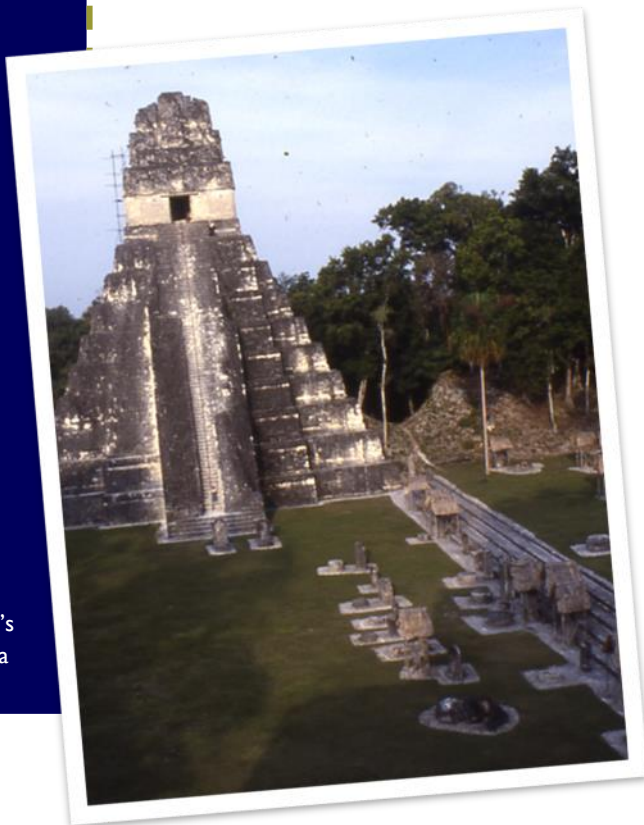
## Two Anthropologists Study the Phenomenon of Societal Collapse

Contributed by: Glenn Storey

I credit my sister, Rebecca Storey of the University of Houston, with making me an anthropologist. At the time she was a senior at Smith College, majoring in anthropology. She came home one vacation break, looked at her annoying little brother, and said “Hello, *Dryopithecus*.” I figured that I should find out what that meant, so I got interested in anthropology. More seriously, when I finished my classics studies at Trinity College, Oxford, and I knew that I wanted to do archaeology, she convinced me to enter graduate school with her at Penn State. We overlapped only one year, but ended up sharing the same thesis adviser, William T. Sanders (Alfred P. Kidder Award, National Academy of Sciences). People noted that a brother and sister

sharing a thesis adviser is kind of unique—at my graduation party, Bill jokingly asked my father: “So, do you have any more children for me?” Rebecca took a position at the University of Houston, where she has been for 34 years; shockingly, I have only been here at the UI for 23. She has studied the Maya for most of her career, and I have concentrated on Rome—although Bill Sanders made me a Mesoamericanist as well. And my co-adviser, Paul B. Harvey, Jr., a Roman social historian who had the smarts, good sense and flexibility to work with anthropologists, further encouraged me to be a solid comparativist (and made me continue with graduate-level Latin and Greek).

Working for the Copán Archaeological Project (CAP) under William Sanders and David Webster made me an unusual Romanist because I always see Rome through the lens of Mesoamerica—fitting because our Mexican mother, Maria del Pilar Tapia y Morales, infected both my sister and I with the archaeology bug when we were children. I worked for CAP right when colleagues, especially Ann Freter of Ohio University, were discovering that the Maya collapse there did not happen quickly after 800 CE, but took a long time not concluding until the 1200’s. That got me to thinking as to why and the answer was that collapses are slow. Gibbon said that the “Decline and fall of the Roman Empire,” took some time—I started to think of combining our two “failing” states, Rebecca doing the Maya, and I doing Rome. Our first proposal stated: “Two anthropologists study the phenomenon of societal collapse.” Many people may not know that the majority of Romanists no



Maya Tikal's  
Great Plaza

longer think the Roman Empire “declined and fell” but rather made a transition to the Medieval world. Similarly, many Mayanists are now denying that the Classic Maya collapsed because the Mayan people survived and are still with us today. In both cases, some feel that saying the Romans or the Maya “collapsed” somehow demeans them. Nothing could be farther from the truth. To deny these two cases of collapse is to deny one indisputable result: in both cases, there was massive loss of population. Many people died. To us, “transition” is too gentle (and heartless) a term to describe what happened.

**Our basic definition of collapse:** *We define collapse as a major disjuncture in the trajectory of a complex culture (those commonly called “civilizations”); the political integration completely fails, and the Great Tradition (the assemblage of material culture and reflected ideologies unique to that culture) similarly comes to an end. That process also entails human suffering on a large scale, largely through diminution of population, which almost never means total disappearance of a population; but there is significant loss of life and a smaller population left behind. The people (in most cases) survive, persist, and regenerate into another complex society; usually there is a gap (large or small) before re-establishment or re-integration of complexity into a new political system with a new Great Tradition, which is partly derivative of the old but also distinct.*

We then analyzed both cases starting with the archaeological evidence, and then considering the economic, political, social, and environmental dimensions of each collapse. Our conclusions can be summarized in a few major points as follows.

**Collapse is slow:**

- ◇ The failure of the Roman State in the West begins at 476 CE, however, the shrinking of the “Eastern Empire” to only regional significance does not occur until the 7th century CE
- ◇ Failure of the Maya “Holy Lords” occurs in the 9th century CE, however, most centers take one to three centuries to finally be abandoned. The Yucatec Maya Post-Classic (Uxmal and Chichen Itza) during the 11th century is now included in the Classic Maya Collapse

It is possibly counterintuitive that a collapse could take so long, but looking back on almost all major civilizational collapses we think that such is the case.

**Economic Failure:**

- ◇ Declining marginal returns of complexity
- ◇ Increasing corruption of Roman administration
- ◇ Increased aggrandizing of Maya elites
- ◇ Privatization Threshold—elites get more wealth from their offices of state than their private landholdings
- ◇ Gap between rich and the rest widens

**Political Failure:**

- ◇ Problem of succession with no stability; civil war
- ◇ Maya elites in constant competition and warfare between polities increases

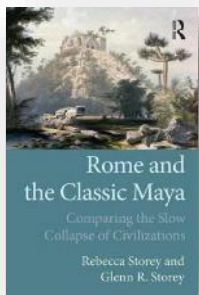
**Societal Failure:**

- ◇ A great mistake for Romans to persecute Christianity, an ally in social control
- ◇ Failure to get past prejudice and treachery against Germanic peoples
- ◇ Failure of Maya kingship and loss of elite prestige leads to common populations abandoning the centers and removing their labor

**Ecological Failure:**

- ◇ Both agrarian polities dependent on climate
- ◇ Roman Warm Period (300 B.C.E. to C.E. 220); Roman Cold Period (C.E. 220 to 800 C.E.)
- ◇ Maya “Mega-drought” of the 9th century CE now accepted as likely
- ◇ Massive anthropogenic environmental degradation of fragile tropical-jungle ecology

So, we conclude that slow collapse is common, and more often than not followed by regeneration—which is almost a rule of societal collapse. And the relevance for today? Well, we can take some comfort that massive cultural systems such as ours take a long time to wind down—unless there is a climatic event, such as a Cold Period or a Mega-drought. Or we can consider the perhaps frightening realization that we are now in the Anthropocene, and changes might come very fast indeed.



\*Glenn and Rebecca’s book *Rome and the Classic Maya: Comparing the Slow Collapse of Civilizations* is now available from Routledge publishing.



Left to Right: The Evolution of a Great Tradition, from the Roman Emperor Nerva, to the Late Roman four Tetrarchs, to Byzantine Basil II

## UI Department Brown Bag Speaker Series

JAMES MCGRATH "Symboling in the Stone Age: A case study of the MSA ochre assemblage from Pinnacle Point 5-6, Western Cape Province, South Africa."

OCTOBER 28, 2016

ANA-MONICA RACILA "Navigating Barriers to Transgender Healthcare in a Midwest Community Health Clinic."

MARCH 10, 2017

SCOTT OLSON "Configuring Brotherhood: Leather, AIDS, and Memories of Kinship."

MARCH 31, 2017

T. MARKS "Variation in Modern Human Turbinate Morphology and Implications for Modern Human Adaptation to Climate."

MAY 5, 2017

LIZZY HANDSCHY "Social Networks, Media, and Body-Image."

MAY 5, 2017



# Faculty Updates



Dr. Elana Buch

## Margaret Beck

My colleagues and I are continuing to work and publish on seventeenth-century red-slipped pottery made in Kansas, as one line of evidence for the arrival of Puebloan refugees in this part of the Great Plains, and on other compositional analyses (including Woodland pottery in Kansas, red-slipped pottery from North Dakota, and Hohokam and Patayan pottery from southwestern Arizona). In 2016, I was lead author on two articles in *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* and co-author on one article in *American Antiquity*; I'm also a co-author on several papers in review (including James McGrath's innovative and very promising work on measuring slip color). The project on eighteenth-century Pawnee ceramics continues as well, with illustration assistance from UI undergraduate Yu Shen Lim. Finally, I was thrilled to participate in Meena Khandelwal's Fulbright-Hays Group Project in Rajasthan, India between the fall and spring semesters; it was wonderful to learn more about India and to think more like an ethnoarchaeologist again.

## Elana Buch

Elana's research examines the new kinds of intimate relationships that adults forge in later life. She is interested both in how people experience these relationships, how the relationships differ amongst people from different social and economic backgrounds and how they are changing broader understandings of family, intimacy, and the life course. Elana's book *Staying Alive In America: Independence and Inequality in Home Care Work* is forthcoming from NYU press. The book focuses on relationships in paid home care, which is the fastest growing occupation in the United States. She is also preparing article manuscripts focused on the ways orientalism shapes discourses of global aging and on the role of kinship refusals in paid care. Elana's new research focuses on the experiences of older adults who enter into new romantic relationships in later life. Her first presentation on this research examined the ways that late life romances involve experiments with gender and power. Elana serves on the advisory board for the Aging Studies program, and teaches courses cross-listed with that program. This year, she also taught the graduate sociocultural theory seminar and ethnographic methods course. Finally, Elana is increasingly involved in consulting with local and national non-profits working to improve elder care. By increasing our understanding of the experiences of older Americans and teaching future professionals in aging, Elana aims to improve the lives of older adults across Iowa and the United States.



Dr. Cynthia Chou

## Cynthia Chou

Cynthia's first year at the Department of Anthropology has been nothing short of the extraordinary. Her research project on perceptions of breast cancer among Asian women deepened in form and meaning in a most unexpected encounter with it. There could not have been a more compelling case of participant observation than her experiences in the last half year to gain insights into the processes that connect body, self and society. The book, *Breast Cancer Meanings: Journeys Across Asia* that she is currently editing and nearing completion is thus but a timely contribution to examine the ways in which breast cancer meanings impact upon women in different Asian settings: how do they manage the disease and steer their life course. Together with an international inter-disciplinary research team in Singapore and Denmark,

# Faculty Updates

Cynthia's research into breast cancer among Asian women will continue with funding from the Asian Breast Cancer Research Fund. During the past year, she has also been actively writing and publishing on the Orang Suku Laut or more popularly known as the sea nomads of the Riau archipelago in Indonesia. Cynthia remains to sit on the International Advisory Board for the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, published by Cambridge University Press.

## Russell L. Ciochon

Russ continues to expand his academic research in Asian fossil primates with an emphasis on *Homo erectus* in Indonesia and *Gigantopithecus* in southern China. Russ is on sabbatical this Spring and has used the time to conduct multiple field projects. He has been working in the Sangiran Dome, Java, Indonesia for over 20 years. Russ returned to this influential site in April to better understand the environment and biogeography of early Asian *Homo erectus*. He will return to Indonesia at the end of the summer for an expedition to Sumatra looking for evidence of early primates with Gregg Gunnell, Duke Lemur Center Division of Fossil Primates. This summer Russ will also be continuing his invited research with the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology & Paleoanthropology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IVPP, CAS) on the scientific issues related to *Gigantopithecus* faunas with Professor Wang Wei, Guangxi Museum of Nationalities, China. Russ along with Kira Westaway, Macquarie University, received a grant from the Australia Research Council to date cave sites in southern China in order to better understand the extinction of this great ape. *Gigantopithecus* continues to generate media interest and a French film team came to campus as part of a documentary on megafauna. The 15th edition of *Introduction to Physical Anthropology*, Russ' coauthored textbook, was published in February. Russ balances his research with teaching and administrative duties. He continues to serve as Director of CLAS' Museum Studies Certificate Program and Coordinator of Distance Education for the department.



Dr. Russell Ciochon

## John F. Doershuk

John Doershuk is the State Archaeologist and adjunct associate professor in the Department of Anthropology. Doershuk organized the 2016 Midwest Archaeological Conference which met in Iowa City October 6–8 at the Sheraton Hotel. A total of 275 archaeologists participated. Doershuk also attended the 2017 Society for American Archaeology annual meeting where he participated in the National Association of State Archaeologists meeting, the Council of Councils meeting of professional archaeological organizations, the Council of Affiliated Societies meeting of state-level avocational archaeology groups, presented a poster on his research with UI colleagues focused on mammoth remains from Lake Red Rock (Marion County, Iowa), and served on a forum that addressed issues involved with digital archaeological data in the 21st century. See page 35.



Dr. John F. Doershuk

## Jim G. Enloe

Jim Enloe has begun a new term as chair of the department of Anthropology with a

# Faculty Updates

**Congratulations to  
Laura Graham  
for her promotion to  
Full Professor  
and to  
Emily Wentzell  
for her promotion to  
Associate Professor**

sabbatical leave, during which Bob Franciscus served as interim DEO in the fall of 2016. Jim was a Scholar in Residence at the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, during which he made substantial progress in data entry and manipulation of the faunal assemblage from the Upper Paleolithic archaeological site of Verberie. A total of 28,752 lines of data, corresponding to artifact locations in six sequential occupation surfaces were manipulated in preparation for individual analysis of each occupation level. These analyses form the basis of a substantial chapter in the final monograph of the excavation of this prehistoric reindeer hunters' campsite on the bank of the Oise River, France, for which he has drafted the French language text of the faunal analysis chapter.

He came back to resume full time administrative duties for the spring 2017 semester. While being chair is a time consuming task, he was able to continue his various research programs. Jim is continuing his Namibian research program in collaboration with Grant McCall of Tulane University, UI graduate students Teddy Marks and James McGrath and Paul Grigg of Albuquerque. Jim, James and Paul had a short, productive field season in Namibia, locating ochre raw material sources and visiting prominent rock art sites. Jim presented "Putting Southern African Rock Paintings in Context: the View from Mirabib Rock Shelter" with McCall, Marks, Schroll and Krummel at the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), in Vancouver. Continuing their research in lithic raw material sourcing, Jim co-authored a paper with Jay Mehta, Grant McCall and Teddy Marks, Source evaluation of archaeological chert from the Carson site in north Mississippi using portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF) in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 11 (2017), 381-389.

Jim continued his work at the field school site of Woodpecker Cave at the Coralville Reservoir for the fifth year, working with ICRU and other undergraduate students on analyses through the winter. They submitted an annual preliminary report, "Excavations at Woodpecker Cave (12JH202): Report No. 5 – University of Iowa Archaeological Field School 2016" to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with contributions by David Caccioli, Melody Hines, Jacob Foubert, Deidre Funk, William Kinkner, Robert Lepcin, Addison Marsengill, James R. McGrath, Amy Meehleder, Julia Rohn, Lindsey Scott, Jeremy Skeens, Adam Skibbe, Luke Stroth, Ryan Theis and Bekah Truhan. He presented "The Hawkeye Horizon: post-Woodland occupations of Woodpecker Cave (13JH202)," by Enloe, McGrath and Meehleder at the 60th annual Midwestern Archaeological Conference. Jim presented a public lecture on "Woodpecker Cave: Past, Present and Future" in March at the Office of the State Archaeologist as part of the OSA Brown Bag colloquium series. At the SAA meetings in Vancouver this April, Jim presented "The tale of a Rock: Backdirt, backfill and intrusive historic occupations of Woodpecker Cave" with McGrath and Meehleder. Other presentations included "Sourcing Lithic Raw Materials in the Namib Desert: Exploring Land Use and Technological Organization" with Marks, McCall, Schroll and McGrath, and a poster entitled "The Sky is Falling!: Site formation processes at Woodpecker Cave, Johnson County, Iowa" with McGrath, Truhan and Skibbe. Jim is preparing for the next field season of excavations at Woodpecker Cave, where he will be assisted by Jeremy Skeens, graduate Teaching Assistant, Bekah Truhan, Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates fellow, and Jacob Foubert, veteran of Woodpecker Cave excavation, analysis and poster presentations. They already have a crew of 20 enthusiastic undergraduate and graduate students, ready to attack continued excavations on several occupation surfaces of the Middle and Late Woodland if the river doesn't rise too soon.



# Faculty Updates

## Robert G. Franciscus

Bob served as interim chair of the department during the fall 2016 semester and enjoyed working closely with Beverly Poduska, Shari Knight, and all of the departmental faculty and adjunct faculty in that role. Although that administrative work kept him quite busy, Bob also managed to continue his work on the morphometric analyses of the first shipment of skeletal remains received from the fox farm at the Institute for Cytology and Genetics (IC&G) at the Siberian Division of the Russian National Academy of Science for a project that is studying the skeletal effects of experimentally produced domestication in the Russian silver foxes. This work, combined with well-documented changes in the domestication of dogs from wolves, is being used as a framework for Bob and his collaborators to model similar skeletal changes observed in the emergence of later modern humans through inferred aggression-dampening and increased social tolerance sometime around 80,000 years ago via a hypothesized process of self-domestication. In addition to his primary collaborator, Dr. Scott Maddux (Anatomical Sciences, University of North Texas), and their Russian colleagues at the IC&G, one of Bob's current graduate students, Emma Wood, has also joined this project and has been working closely on the fox crania and dentitions.

In addition to this work, Bob was also a co-author on four peer-reviewed journal articles published in fall 2016 and spring 2017: three in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, and one in *Nature Human Behaviour*. Bob was also a co-presenter on several posters and/or podium presentations presented in 2016 including two at the American Association of Physical Anthropologists meeting in Atlanta, GA, one at the Texas Association of Biological Anthropologists meeting in Austin, TX, one at the Society for American Archaeology meeting in Orlando, FL, and one at the Society for Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy meeting in Paris, France. This past October, Bob also gave an invited colloquium lecture at the University of Nebraska's Department of Anthropology (Lincoln, NE). Finally, Bob was very proud to hood his seventh and eighth doctoral students at UI commencement ceremonies last year: Randi Karban, who is now Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Illinois College; and Shelby Putt, who is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Stone Age Institute and the Center for Research into the Anthropological Foundations of Technology at Indiana University.

## Laura R. Graham

In April 2016, Laura's article, "[Toward Representational Sovereignty: Rewards and Challenges of Indigenous Media in the A'uwẽ-Xavante Communities of Eténhiritipa-Pimentel Barbosa.](#)" was published in the open access journal *Media and Communication* 4(2): 13-32.

She is currently co-editing, and contributor to, the volume, *Language and Social Justice: Case Studies on Communication and the Creation of Just Societies*, a collection of short essays for use in undergraduate classes forthcoming with Routledge. She is also Associate Editor of the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, and Wiley Blackwell's *International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology*. Laura Graham is chair of the 2017 Margaret Mead Award, jointly awarded by the American Anthropological Association and Society for Applied Anthropology and is serving her final year as a



Dr. Robert G. Franciscus

# Faculty Updates

member of the Executive Board of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America (SALSA).

## Matthew E. Hill

In the last year I continued to focus on my three main research interests: the earliest big game hunters of the Americas, the appearance of Dene populations on the High Plains of North America, and anthropogenic deforestation in Rajasthan, India. I was very fortunate to work closely with a number of Iowa colleagues and graduate students. This collaboration culminated in the publication of seven articles and book chapters, and the submission of four additional manuscripts over the last year. I look forward to taking seven undergraduate and graduate students into the field this summer for excavations and survey at the Humphrey site in the Sandhills of Nebraska.

## Meena Khandelwal

Meena Khandelwal contributed a chapter in *Mapping Feminist Anthropology in the 21st Century*, edited by Ellen Lewin and Leni Silverstein (Rutgers U Press 2016); her piece brings together disciplinary thinking on meat (anthropology, gender studies, South Asian studies) to reveal new insights on debates about veganism, vegetarianism and beef-eating in India.

Her critique of microfinance “Pop Development and the Uses of Feminism”, co-authored with Carla Freeman, appeared in *Seduced and Betrayed: Exposing the Contemporary Microfinance Phenomenon* (SAR Press 2017). She is also lead author on the essay “Why Have Improved Cookstove Initiatives in India Failed?” co-authored with Matt Hill, Misha Quill and several other UI colleagues (*World Development* 2017). The cookstove conundrum is the inspiration for the Big Ideas course “People and the Environment: Technology, Culture and Social Justice” which she and Matt Hill will co-direct for the fourth year in Fall 2017. This course fulfills the General Education requirement for International and Global Issues. It not only implements inquiry-guided and activity-based pedagogies but is organized around a transnational framework that begins the semester with an unlikely comparison between Rajasthan and Iowa; by the end of the semester students discover not only similarities between these two places but also historical connections through colonialism and the Green Revolution. Also related to this project, Khandelwal won a Fulbright-Hays Group Project Award to direct a seminar on the development story of improved cookstoves in India during the winter break. See story on page 3.

## Drew Kitchen

Drew’s current research projects involve: 1) analyzing ancient DNA from Native Americans interred thousands of years ago in the Atlantic Northeast; 2) investigating the effect of agricultural lifestyles on the human microbiome; 3) revealing the dynamics of contemporary pathogen populations using bacterial genomes gathered from remains dating to Byzantine-era Troy; and 4) the construction of language phylogenies, specifically the Afroasiatic languages. Drew is a member of the Genetics Cluster Initiative, the Informatics Program, the Iowa Institute of Human Genetics, and



Dr. Meena Khandelwal



Fulbright-Hays Group Project participants at home of Hindi Teacher Vanita Ojha

# Faculty Updates

an Obermann Center working group investigating the interstices of social and biological understandings of human behavior.

## Ellen Lewin

I finished my book manuscript, *Filled with the Spirit: Sexuality, Gender and Radical Inclusivity in a Black Pentecostal Church Coalition*, and it is now in the production process at University of Chicago Press, with publication anticipated for spring 2018. The book is an ethnographic study of a coalition of predominantly African American LGBT Pentecostal congregations around the country, and is based on fieldwork I have conducted since 2009.

Other than that, I am planning for my phased retirement, which will begin in fall 2017 and end in spring 2019. My principal challenge is to come up with a big writing project that will occupy me after I retire. In the coming two years, I will serve on the Executive Boards of the Section Assembly and the AAA, completing the term of a colleague who felt he had to resign because he is Mexican and no longer feels safe coming to the US. We live in very challenging times, to say the least.

## Katina Lillios

This past year, Katina continued with her research on climate, demography, and culture change during the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC in Iberia as well as worked on her book *Prehistoric Iberia from the Paleolithic through the Bronze Age: The Making of a Cultural Mosaic* (Cambridge). She published articles in *Journal of Archaeological Science: Report*, *Scientific Reports: Nature*, and *Setúbal Arqueológica*, and has another article forthcoming in the *Journal of World Prehistory*. During the summer of 2016, she travelled with Spanish and Portuguese colleagues to some of the famous Mesolithic and Paleolithic sites of Iberia that she plans to write about in her book, including Muge, Lapedo, the Atapuerca sites, Altamira, Covalanas, and El Castillo. She was blown away by the experience of seeing Paleolithic cave art in its original setting as well as by the stunning landscape of northern Spain. She was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship to devote the 2017-2018 academic year to writing and, hopefully, completing the book.

## Heidi Lung

In my second academic year as Lecturer, Museum Studies I worked to widen the accessibility of the Museum Studies Certificate program through the development of online offerings. Since joining the department in the fall 2015, I have developed five online courses including Introduction to Museum Studies, Museums in a Digital World, Historic House Management and Preservation, Engaging Museum Audiences, and Museum Origins. With these new offerings students can obtain the Certificate completely online.

This spring I led Museums and Social Justice, which highlighted museums as places to engage in crucial conversations about our collective past, present, and future. Over the semester I encouraged students to explore individual, cultural, and institutional levels of oppression, challenged them to gain self-awareness, and supported them as they collaboratively designed action plans for addressing social justice issues. The rich conversations and insights produced by students in our collaborative learning



Antonio Blanco-González (Universidad de Salamanca) and Katina Lillios at the Neochalcolithic rock art site of Peña Tú (Asturias, Spain).



Dr. Heidi Lung

# Faculty Updates



Dr. Ted Powers

community were truly inspiring.

I had the opportunity to act as internship advisor for many of our Certificate earners and supervised an ICRU research project focused on the long history of the Museum Studies program at UI (since 1910). My community work with the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (Office of Outreach and Engagement) and service on the Iowa Museum Association board keep me out in the museum field identifying career opportunities for students. Finally, most recently I was granted the role of Program Coordinator for Museum Studies and I am excited to have the opportunity to lead the program as it continues to grow and develop. Museum on!

## Ted Powers

My third year in the Department of Anthropology has been one marked by productive encounters with both faculty and students as I continued to build towards a long-term relationship with the University of Iowa. The critically minded intellectual environment that I noted upon arrival has productively contributed to my research and teaching in ways both large and small. Thanks to all faculty and students that I work with at the University of Iowa. Your passion, enthusiasm, and support is infectious and has contributed greatly to the development of my research and teaching.

With respect to teaching, I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with a wide array of students from anthropology and global health studies over the past year. Working with anthropology PhD students in a graduate section of Urban Anthropology proved to be a productive and enriching. A proposal for a AAA panel has been developed by two of our graduate students based on the work they developed during our time working together. I anticipate that this is but the first of many national sessions that our students will develop in the coming years. I enjoyed my time with undergraduate students as well, teaching the large Contemporary World Problems course and Urban Anthropology. I enjoyed teaching the urban class a great deal. Our undergraduate students engaged with cutting edge debates currently in the sub-discipline of urban anthropology. I have been impressed by the analytical strengths of our students in this course and others.

Over the past year, I have published articles in *Critique of Anthropology and Human Organization* while continuing my research on the political economy of health and access to care in South Africa. Thanks to departmental funding and an Old Gold summer research grant, I returned to South Africa last summer for additional data gathering and started a new research initiative analyzing community health initiative in the township of Khayelitsha. I appreciate the support provided by both the department and the university as I develop my research on health dynamics in post-apartheid South Africa.

## Erica Prussing

Erica's travels ranged from Seattle and Portland to Honolulu and Cherokee, NC in 2016, as she finished out the final, US-based fieldwork for her NSF-funded ethnographic study of the international rise of public health research by and for indigenous peoples. Three new articles from the study for different audiences (public



Dr. Erica Prussing

# Faculty Updates

health, anthropology, and science & technology studies) are nearing completion, after which she will fully draft a book (tentatively entitled *Quantifying Justice: Epidemiological Research and Indigenous Advocacy*). Erica has also continued to collaborate with UI medical anthropology/public health alumnus Dr. Carrie Hough at Augustana College, producing a co-authored chapter for a forthcoming edited collection about biocultural perspectives on breastfeeding (with Routledge as publisher). While beginning a term as Director of Graduate Studies for the department this year, Erica has continued to teach a variety of undergraduate courses in medical anthropology, indigenous studies, public health, and gender studies. She has also continued representing departmental and collegiate interests while beginning a second term on the university-wide Faculty Senate, and was recently elected to serve on the Faculty Council (the executive council of the Faculty Senate).



Dr. Scott Schnell

## Scott Schnell

Scott Schnell continues his research on the matagi—traditional hunters of bear and other animals in the forested mountains of Northeastern Japan. The matagi are similar to Native American and other indigenous hunters in recognizing nature as a conscious presence—one that provides for and protects them but expects responsible conduct in return. They thus subscribe to a more localized set of ethics in addition to that which is contained in “world religions” like Buddhism and Christianity. This provides ideological support for their own activities, which they deem essential to the healthy functioning of the mountain ecosystem. In December, Scott hosted a conference at the University of Iowa entitled “Tradition in Search of a Rationale: The Future of Hunting in Japan and North America.” Simply put, it addressed the question: what is the rationale for killing animals when it is no longer a necessary part of one’s own subsistence. Participants included scholars from both Japan and the United States, as well as two matagi as special guests. The papers will form the basis of a forthcoming edited volume. Following the conference, Scott led the Japanese contingent on a field trip to the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) in northern Wisconsin. The matagi found many commonalities with their Ojibwe hosts in terms of their relationships with wildlife and perceptions of the natural world. On the car ride back they encountered two gray wolves crossing the highway just in front of them, which they took as a good omen.



Dr. Emily Wentzell

## Emily Wentzell

This year, I focused on writing about my research on Mexican couples’ experiences of men’s sexual health. I published articles on this topic in medical anthropology journals and have begun writing a book based on this work. I also continued to write about how the medicalization of sexuality influences masculinities, publishing a review article on the topic in the *Annual Review of Sex Research*. On campus, I became director of the CLAS International Studies Program.

# Focus on Graduate Studies

## A Tale of Two Cities: Conducting Pilot Ethnography in San Luis Obispo, California and Portland, Maine

Contributed by: Lizzy Handschy

**E**thnographic fieldwork is an intimidating endeavor. For many cultural anthropologists, fieldwork involves moving to a totally new location, starting a new life there, meeting folks, and engaging in local activities to answer theoretical or applied questions. For some anthropologists that place can be halfway around the world, and for others, it can be much closer to home. For anthropologists working in urban or industrialized areas, a lot of the anxieties we experience before starting fieldwork might be similar to the anxieties many Americans experience when moving to a new place. Some of these anxieties seem mundane, but are still important to anthropologists (we do have to live and eat while we conduct research): How will I find a good place to live? Where is the nearest grocery store? How will I get around in my new place of residence? Some of these anxieties are more complex: Who will my new friends be? How will I meet them? What kinds of activities will I do in my new home, such as a job and hobbies? Will I miss my old home and will I like my new one? Now imagine on top of all of these stresses, you also have to worry whether this new place you live in will give you the data to answer the theoretical questions you are interested in. As an anthropologist, and in my case, PhD

student, you are not just making new friends, but trying to make new friends who will essentially help you write a good dissertation. Thus, picking your location for research is a tough decision.

Because this is such a tough decision, anthropologists usually do pilot research. In pilot research, you visit a site you think might be good for your research and give it a trial run for a much shorter period of time, before you go back for the bulk of your fieldwork. In the summer of 2016, I visited two sites for two weeks each to see which I thought might be better to answer the questions of my dissertation. For my dissertation research I am interested in body image and body-acceptance in queer women. The two sites I visited were San Luis Obispo, California and Portland, Maine. Both of these smaller cities are known for having larger and visible populations of queer women that have emerged in the last few decades.

To determine which site I thought would be most productive for my dissertation I conducted semi-structured interviews about my topic and participant observation with queer women. However, with only two weeks in each site, I did a lot of preparation for my visit before arriving. I used social media sites to let women in the area know about my visit to

try to schedule as many interviews as possible before I arrived. I also learned about social groups and events that I could attend to meet more folks and conduct participant observation. The process of preparing for fieldwork at each of the two sites was very different. The extreme differences in these processes showed me that even the preparation for fieldwork can be used as data.

For example, folks in San Luis Obispo used social media sites to maintain social relationships differently than folks in Portland did. There were a few, central, large Facebook groups for queer folks in general and specifically queer women in the San Luis Obispo area. These groups had hundreds of members and there are new posts everyday, about politics, history, art, and many other topics, some related to LGBT life, others not. Regular events

were scheduled through these Facebook groups, such as weekly hikes, and monthly movie viewings and book clubs. All of the hundreds of members of these Facebook groups would be invited to every event. Once I was connected to one of these groups, it was easy to find the others and fill my calendar with events for participant observation. However, after my fieldwork started, I noticed that a core group of about twenty women constituted the clear majority of the attendees at these events and posted most items in the Facebook groups.

The use of social media was very different in Portland, ME. People connected by “liking” pages linked to their interests in the local area, such as a body-positive and queer-friendly burlesque troupe and a sex-positive education group. The pages I

*“The process of preparing for fieldwork at each of the two sites was very different... [showing] me that even the preparation for fieldwork can be used as data.”*

ended up finding were not even explicitly about or for LGBT people, but were popular among LGBT people. There were also many more pages I connected with, though few of them had quite the membership of the ones in San Luis Obispo. Though the diffuse nature of these online spaces this made initial contact more difficult, once I found social media pages to recruit with and events to attend, I noticed that the different folks I met at these events were less likely to know each other than in San Luis Obispo. In other words, the social networks in Portland, ME were less centralized around a few organizations, and more diffuse.

After the summer ended, I decided my dissertation field site should be Portland, ME. A lot of folks I talked to in Portland were involved in body-

acceptance activism, in addition to other forms of social justice activism—something I want to write about in my dissertation. While I will not be going back to San Luis Obispo, if I had not visited, I would not have thought about the differences in social network structures. Through my very different experiences of conducting research and making contacts in two cities where the social network structure of LGBT people was so different, this year, I started thinking about how social network factors influence body image and embodied experience. Thus, when I return to Portland, ME this summer, I will be piloting some different methods to assess how social networks, online social networks as well as in-person ones, impact the spread of information and body image.

## From Leominster to Udaipur: Finding Research in the In-Between

Contributed by: Shane Weitzman

Things in-between captured my imagination this semester. I'm attracted to the intimacy of studying things in the process of becoming something else. This semester, as I've begun to dig into the literature on refuse, I was deeply moved by Kath Weston's new book, *Animate Planet*. Weston offers a fruitful characterization of intimacy as a process by which "people try to make creative sense of tensions between all that technology promises and the way they keep looking over their shoulders at an ecological deterioration, if not devastation, that seems to be gaining ground" (2017: 7f). I was describing Weston's chapter on water in India to my mom when she reminded me that the animate and intimate life of objects has a history in my own backyard.

My mom, always eager to support a new hobby or research interest of mine, suggests that we visit the plastics museum in Leominster, my home town in Massachusetts during spring break. My mom has spent the majority of her thirty years as a community organizer transforming abandoned buildings, often in gross disrepair, into affordable housing developments. Perhaps my newfound interest in the in-between space of objects is based on a childhood appreciation of the power of re-signification. I watched as old factories adorned with boarded-up windows, broken glass, and whispers from passersby about pesticides slowly but surely gave way to exposed brick and wooden beams, vaulted bedroom ceilings, the security of first-time home ownership, and the promise to struggle a

little bit less.

My mom pulled her car into a parking spot in an empty lot, save for the car mounted on cement blocks in the corner, in what was supposed to be the museum's property. We climbed out of the car and made our way with unsteady feet over slick pavement to the building's entrance. The faded lines of years passed still stained the dark blue canvas awning mounted above the glass door. "National Plastics Center and Museum" read the faint letters. A piece of construction paper next to the locked front door instructed visitors to buzz the bell for help. The police officer who emerged from behind the locked glass door informs us that the museum had closed in 2008, and the space was now owned and operated by the police department. "You're really dating yourself" the police officer responds, when my mom asks if we could visit the museum.

Our excursion to the non-existent museum was prompted by my recent trip to India, but I did not need to travel to the other side of the world to wonder about refuse. My hometown, the National Plastics Center and Museum may have reminded me, is the plastics capital of North America, and a reminder that the road to progress used to be paved with plastic combs and pink flamingoes. Leominster manufacturing grew famous, and prosperous, in the early twentieth century for producing combs made of celluloid plastic—a second-best alternative to wood and bone that, it turns out, would find a home in medicine chests across the world. The pink flamingo was a more flamboyant iteration of plastic city's



Plastic Pink Flamingo,  
Photo by [annamae22](#)



manufacturing history, but its invention and production in Leominster nevertheless made for a life of wealth for a few, and a middle class American dream for many. Daniel A. Gross, writing a feature for Chemical Heritage Foundation's magazine, *Distillations*, introduces Leominster as the setting in a plastic fairy tale: "Once upon a time a small city in Massachusetts played an outsized role in plastics. From mundane celluloid dice to Disney's all-plastic house, the plastics industry focused on the future. What happened when the future finally arrived?"

If Leominster used to be a fairy tale, globalization is the dragon and outsourcing is the moat. If you search for "National Plastics Center and Museum" on YouTube, you won't find relics of the museum's online presence, but you will discover a series of amateur videos with titles like "Leominster: Abandoned Plastics Museum" where commenters bemoan the decline of a once prosperous city into an eye sore of central Massachusetts. There are dozens of these videos, each inviting yet more commentary about what went so wrong in Leominster. "What happened when the future finally arrived?" asks Daniel Gross, and the commenters answer: The American dream used to live here, but she moved away some years ago. Let us know if you see her.

Change scene from Leominster to Udaipur, a mid-sized tourist town in the eclectic and storied state of Rajasthan. I found myself approaching the city dump from a speeding rickshaw, following closely behind a garbage truck, on its last legs and overflowing with refuse. My right arm is draped around the driver's shoulders out of necessity in a front seat built for

one, and I feel almost intoxicated as the smell of rotting food, combined with partially burnt plastic, enters my nose and mouth with increasing intensity. My visit to the dump that day is short, perhaps only an hour, but long enough for me to know that the YouTube comments section is missing a whole other story about the after-life of objects. Surely decline of one kind makes room for another process of invention.

In India, after a process of economic liberalization of the 1990s, we can say with certainty that the subcontinent became associated with stuff in a new way. The growing middle class was delighted to adorn their homes with cheap goods, the rich could live as ostentatiously as Americans, and the poor took jobs in sweatshops in unprecedented numbers. The "made in India" craze invites criticism from human rights organizations and American right-wing nationalists alike, but that conversation often misses an important question: What happens to all of our stuff after we decide its useless? If it winds up in a garbage can in India, or elsewhere in the world (depending on what it is), it may very well take on a new life amid communities and neighborhoods in dumps and landfills across the subcontinent. My project on garbage in India begins from the assumption that dumps and landfills in India can be reimaged as neighborhoods where families, workers, and passersby engage in novel ways with supposed trash, objects in the in-between space where value is crafted and contested. "What happens to stuff when the future finally arrived in India?" we might ask. More than I thought.



Scenic dumps of Udaipur

## Central States Anthropological Society's 2017 annual conference:

### UI Students, Faculty and Alumni

Contributed by: Erica Prussing

University of Iowa students, faculty and alumni were well-represented at the [Central States Anthropological Society's](#) 96<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska this April.

CSAS was founded in 1921 as the "Central Section" of the American Anthropological Society, to bring greater national recognition to anthropologists located in the greater Midwest region. It has continued to be a small but vibrant section of the AAA, and to serve as "a friendly, four-field professional society that welcomes students and anyone keen on promoting anthropology in the heartland". Its annual conference is held at various Midwestern locations (including Iowa City, back in 2011) to create accessible opportunities for faculty and students throughout the region to present their work and exchange ideas. **Graduate and advanced undergraduate students** are able to network with one another and with faculty from multiple institutions, in a smaller scale setting than most national meetings; to learn about professionalization through experience as well as formal mentoring from faculty; and to learn about graduate programs and potential future employment opportunities at colleges and universities throughout the Midwest. Graduate and undergraduate paper prizes, as well as scholarships for student research, are also offered by the CSAS Executive Board. For **faculty**, involvement with CSAS provides opportunities to network with one another, to meet potential graduate students and new colleagues, and to gain experience with AAA governance through positions on CSAS's Executive Board.

Key speakers at CSAS's 2017 meeting included Richard Lee (University of Toronto), well-known for his work on hunter-gatherer societies and extensive fieldwork in the Kalahari Desert region; and Fred Smith (Illinois State University) who examines Neanderthals and modern human evolution in western Eurasia, and who is a close colleague of UI Anthropology faculty.

UI graduate students **Noah Johnson** and **Scott Olson** both presented papers this year. Noah spoke about findings from his dissertation research about karate in both Okinawa, Japan and multiple sites in the U.S., in which he uses cognitive methodologies to add psychological depth to anthropological theories about localization and globalization in the transnational movement of cultural practices. Scott presented from his ongoing development of work initiated in an undergraduate honors project, about how collective memories of the AIDS epidemic shape HIV prevention strategies and kinship in a gay leather community in the U.S. CSAS section membership is free for most graduate students who are already members of AAA.

Graduate alumni of UI's Department of Anthropology were also a visible presence at the meetings. **Brigitte French** (now professor at Grinnell College) and **Cristina Ortiz** (now assistant professor at the University of Minnesota, Morris) are both Executive Board members, and also served as conference presenters and discussants. **Carrie Hough** (now associate professor, Augustana College) also serves on the Executive Board, and helped to mentor four "Augie" students who attended and presented. **Hannah Marsh** (now assistant professor at University of Central Missouri) also chaired a session plus helped to mentor several students attending.

From current UI faculty, **Erica Prussing** attended as a member of CSAS's Executive Board and Nominations Committee, and served as discussant for panel on religious experience, health/well-being, and cultural change. The 97<sup>th</sup> annual CSAS meeting will be held in April, 2018 at Indiana University in Bloomington, in conjunction with the Midwest Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology. Look [here](#) for more information this summer and the call for papers this fall.

# Graduate Student Updates

## **Meredith Anderson**

Meredith is an archaeology Ph.D. candidate, currently in the process of writing her dissertation. Her doctoral research is focused on trade economy and consumption patterns in rural Classic-period sites at Teotihuacan. This research in part examines the relationship between the phenomenal economic and political success of Teotihuacan during the first few hundreds of years A.D. and the control and maintenance of obsidian exchange and procurement.

## **Toby Avalos**

Toby completed his PhD in Paleoanthropology under the guidance Dr. R.L. Ciochon. Tony earned his B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Nevada, Reno in 2000, and his M.A. in Anthropology from the New Mexico State University in 2011. His M.A. thesis addressed the primitive nature of the lower anterior dentition of the Early Pleistocene hominins from the Dmanisi Site, Georgia Republic, whose fossils represent the earliest evidence for hominins known outside of Africa, dating to 1.85 mya. At present, Toby's PhD research is concerned with the transition from early Homo to the more modern Homo erectus form, primarily through dental analysis, and how this relates to the first hominin expansions eastward of the Levant region during the Latest Pliocene or Earliest Pleistocene. His other ongoing academic pursuits include post- Late Miocene hominoid evolution and systematics throughout Southern China and Peninsular Southeast Asia.

## **Paul Capobianco**

Paul is a Ph.D. candidate in cultural anthropology studying the changing nature of Japanese-foreigner relations in contemporary Japan. His dissertation research examines the ways Japan's ongoing demographic changes are affecting notions of Japanese identity and patterns of interaction between Japanese and foreigners. This past summer, he collected the final bits of formal data for his dissertation and is now in preparing his dissertation for submission. Paul is presently based as a lecturer at Kyushu Sangyo University in Japan. Last year, Paul presented his research at the Society for East Asian Anthropology annual meeting in Hong Kong and at the 3rd Annual Forum of the International Sociological Association in Vienna. This summer, Paul will participate in the International Association of Applied Linguistics Junior Researchers Meeting in Vienna and will present his work at the Japan Second Language Association meeting in Shizuoka, Japan.

## **Lizzy Handschy**

Elizabeth is a cultural anthropology PhD student advised by Dr. Erica Prussing. She graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 2014 with a BA in Anthropology and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies with a minor in Public Health. Elizabeth conducts fieldwork in the Northeastern United States and is interested in sexuality, health, and activism. Her research focuses on knowledge production and circulation and the impacts of activism on embodied experience. See page 22.

## **Anthropology Graduate**

### **Student Association**

### **(AnthGrad) Officers**

**2016-2017**

#### **President:**

**Addison Kimmel**

#### **Vice-President:**

**Emma Wood**

#### **Treasurer:**

**Kerri Lorigan**

#### **COGS representative:**

**Lizzy Handschy**

#### **GSS representative:**

**Ana-Monica Racila**

# Graduate Student Updates

## Christian Haunton

Christian completed his doctoral dissertation in archaeology under the guidance of Dr. Glenn Storey. His doctoral research focuses on the material culture of Utopian communities, specifically the east-central Iowa Amana Colonies.



## Noah Johnson

Noah is now in the process of completing his doctoral dissertation in sociocultural anthropology under the advisement of Dr. Scott Schnell. He also carries out ongoing fieldwork with karate practitioners in the Upper-Midwestern United States. Noah's dissertation extends his earlier work through the use of a multi-sited research approach to karate as a cultural practice and cultural product in the circuits of globalization. This project took him once again to Okinawa, Japan, but also to Australia (briefly) and to several locations in the United States to trace the historic events and interactions that have led karate to become established in the United States. His research indicates that karate has a crucial role to play in the lives of its practitioners and – more than simply a pastime – this practice is instrumental in how these people structure their lives and make their way through the world. As Noah works feverishly to complete his dissertation, he, his wife Jessica, and their two year-old son Liam, also prepare for the arrival of a second child, due in October.



## Addison Kimmel

Addison is a PhD student in archaeology working with Dr. Margaret Beck. He earned his B.A. in History from Miami University in 2010, and his M.A. in Anthropology from Northwestern in 2012. He has excavation experience in The Bahamas and Dominica, and has worked in CRM in Illinois. Broadly, he is interested in historical archaeology, the archaeology of the Midwestern United States, household archaeology, and the archaeology of identity. His current work looks at identity and social and economic networks in “Indian Country” during the first decades of the 19th century.

## Kerri Lorigan

Kerri Lorigan is completing the second year of her PhD program in archaeology, with a focus on Greco-Roman Egypt, under the guidance of Dr. Glenn Storey. She received both her B.A. in history and B.S. in anthropology from Middle Tennessee State University, and her M.A. in history, with a concentration in Ancient Egypt, from the University of Memphis in 2015. She has conducted field work at the Mississippian site of Castalian Springs, and in the ancient cemetery of Abydos in Egypt. Last summer she completed a review of sites and museum collections in Egypt to assess the available information for her research. Her dissertation research is focusing on the urban experience in Greco-Roman Egypt. Her proposal for her dissertation has been accepted, and she is currently in the process of completing her comprehensive exams.

*Congratulations to  
Noah Johnson for  
being selected by his  
peers as the recipient  
of this years  
June Helm Award*

# Graduate Student Updates

## Natalie Luna-Renek

Natalie Luna-Renek is working towards her Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology with an emphasis on the Anthropology of Religion, under the guidance of Dr. Sonia Ryang. Natalie received her B.A. in Anthropology from California State University, Fullerton, in 2010 and her M.A. in Sociocultural Anthropology again from California State University, Fullerton, in 2012. Her thesis research focused on the dream and spirit theories of California-based Hawaiians. Her dissertation research is on the dreams of Latina Catholic immigrants living in West Liberty, Iowa.

## Farai Marazi

Farai Marazi began the dissertation fieldwork component of his studies in early 2014. His current work involves the use of ethnographic methods to investigate diabetes treatment for homeless people in Brooklyn, New York, who use mobile clinics. The aim of the study is to examine the microeconomic demands of treating diabetes that pose problems to homeless populations, and the degree to which their health care providers understand and respond to this social context. Throughout graduate school, Farai's research interests and coursework in medical anthropology have focused on unmasking the sources of social inequality and poor health for the homeless by exploring conditions of inadequate housing and health structures.

## Ted Marks

Ted Marks is a doctoral student in archaeology advised by Dr. James Enloe. Ted's dissertation research is focused on shifts in technological organization and land use strategies across the Middle to Later Stone Age transition in Southern Africa.

## James McGrath

James is a paleoanthropology graduate student advised by Dr. Jim Enloe. He graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from Arizona State University in 2013. James has completed four field seasons at the Middle Stone Age site of Pinnacle Point 5-6 near Mossel Bay, South Africa, multiple field seasons at a variety of locales in the American Southwest, one field season as the TA of the Woodpecker Cave field school, and several ochre surveys in South Africa and Namibia. His research is on the social and environmental context of symbolic technology use during the Middle and Later Stone Age in southern Africa. James recently presented his work at the Paleoanthropology Society and Society for American Archaeology meetings in Vancouver. He is a co-author on an upcoming article in *Advances in Archaeological Practice* titled, "The Potential and Pitfalls of Large Multi-Source Collections: Insights from the Analysis of Mimbres Gender Imagery". This summer James will be conducting fieldwork in South Africa.

## Liz Newbury

Liz is wrapping up her dissertation on biobank donors' and professionals' expectations for community engagement and representation in an Iowa biobank. Liz



Graduate students  
James McGrath and  
Ana-Monica Racila  
represent at the  
March for Science in  
Iowa City this spring

# Graduate Student Updates

has enjoyed working this spring semester as a TA with Dr. Margaret Beck in the Native Peoples of North America course and continues work as a research support staff member with the Center for Comprehensive Access and Delivery Research and Evaluation (CADRE) at the Iowa City VA Health Care System.

## Scott Olson

This year, I presented a paper, “Configuring Brotherhood: Leather, AIDS, and Memories of Kinship” at the Central States Anthropological Society, which focused on kinship among gay leathermen and its connection to bodily substance and collective memories of the AIDS epidemic. Through this and my other coursework, I have refined some of the central questions for my dissertation research, in preparation for collecting further preliminary ethnographic data in Berlin this summer. I will also be receiving my MA degree in two weeks, and will continue on to Ph.D. candidacy in the fall.

## Ana-Monica Racila

Ana-Monica is a PhD student in medical anthropology, working under the guidance of Dr. Emily Wentzell. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Anthropology and a minor in Biology in 2013 at the University of Iowa. As part of her dissertation research, Ana-Monica examines how transgender patients and their healthcare providers rework a medical system designed for cisgender people. To do this, she applies an ethnographic approach paired with document analysis to investigate how providers trained in U.S. trans healthcare and trans patients engage with and navigate bureaucratic health technologies—specifically, bureaucratic labels referencing dominant ideas about gender in widespread technologies such as electronic health records (EHRs). Informed by broader trans activist movements, trans-sensitive healthcare providers and trans patients can interpret these gender-normative labels differently than insurers and healthcare staff with less exposure to the nascent field of trans healthcare. Through her fieldwork, Ana-Monica hopes to understand what such interpretations reflect about the fluidity of these labels’ meanings, as well as the construction of gender and sex in U.S. biomedicine more broadly. The overarching goal of this research is to improve healthcare delivery to this community.

## Jill Scott

Jill is a paleoanthropology Ph.D. candidate whose research focuses on craniomandibular variation in Pleistocene Homo. She is currently working as the Laboratory Coordinator for the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Jill is part of the team that analyzed and named *Homo naledi*, the recently announced hominin species from the Dinaledi chamber of the Rising Star cave system in South Africa, and she has co-authored three new publications on the craniomandibular remains of the species in the *Journal of Human Evolution* over the past year: [1] [The evolutionary relationships and age of \*Homo naledi\*: An assessment using dated Bayesian phylogenetic methods](#); [2] [The skull of \*Homo naledi\*](#); and [3] [Skull diversity in the Homo lineage and the relative position of \*Homo naledi\*](#). Jill is continuing to work on the craniomandibular and first metacarpal

Anthropology graduate students and alumni enjoyed a reunion at the 2017 meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists (AAPA) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

# Graduate Student Updates

morphology of the *Homo naledi* material and co-authored a presentation on the *Homo naledi* first metacarpal at the 2017 American Association of Physical Anthropologists annual meeting in New Orleans. Jill has given a number of invited lectures about *Homo naledi* this year, including public lectures at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and the University of Colorado Denver. She also co-authored a paper with several other UI colleagues that was published in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* in October 2016 titled [Spatial determinants of the mandibular curve of Spee in modern and archaic \*Homo\*](#).

## Shane Weitzman

Shane Weitzman is a first-year graduate student advised by Meena Khandelwal. He earned a BA in Anthropology and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Brandeis University. His research interests took an unexpected turn after he haphazardly found himself at the city dump in Udaipur, Rajasthan, in January. Shane plans to study refuse in India, and spent the spring semester becoming acquainted with the literature on garbage in South Asia. Shane will return to Rajasthan this summer to study Hindi on a Critical Language Scholarship from the US Department of State. See story on page 24.

## Meredith Wismer

Meredith is a doctoral candidate specializing in zooarchaeology. Her dissertation research focuses on understanding the role that wild animal resources played toward the speed and scale of the adoption of agriculture, using the tallgrass prairie region of western Iowa during the Woodland period (~800 BC-AD 1200) as a case study. This spring she presented a portion of this dissertation research at the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) annual meeting in Vancouver in a paper titled "Ungulate Bone Fat Exploitation at the Adoption of Horticulture in Western Iowa." Meredith continues to serve as a member of the Media Relations Committee for the SAA, and as a volunteer documenting artifacts destined for repatriation in the archaeology repository at the Arizona State Museum. She looks forward to defending her dissertation in the fall and moving on to life beyond graduate school.



Anthropology  
graduate students  
and alumni celebrate  
summer graduate  
Shelby Putt's  
successful doctoral  
defense with a night  
of adventures—  
starting with  
matching bracelets  
made at Beadology

# Focus on Undergraduate Studies

## Museum Studies Students Collaborate with Community on Digital Engagement Project

Contributed by: Randi Proescholdt, Katherine Tucker, and Heidi Lung

*Congratulations to the 37 students graduating with a BA or BS degree in Anthropology and the 15 graduating with a Museum Studies Certificate during the 2016-2017 academic year*

During the Fall 2016 semester, as part of the Museums in a Digital World class taught by Professor Heidi Lung, we participated in a community service learning project with The Edgewood Museum and the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC). The Edgewood Museum is an up-and-coming museum with the mission of bringing local history and culture to life for the Edgewood area. The IISC pursues a dual mission of enhancing sustainability in Iowa communities while transforming teaching and learning at the University of Iowa through partnerships and service learning projects. Collaborating with the museum and the IISC provided the class an opportunity to apply museum studies theory and practice to real-world contexts while supporting Iowa communities.

well as ways to use technology in its engagement, marketing, and collections activities. The meeting provided a foundation of understanding that enabled our student teams to research digital initiatives that best align with the needs of the museum. As we learned about technology in museums throughout the semester, we continued to communicate with Art Johnson, Edgewood resident and museum treasurer, and Travis Kraus, the Assistant Director and Program Coordinator of the IISC, to complete our Digital Engagement Project.

The project started with a visit to The Edgewood Museum, which was at an earlier stage of the construction that is now nearly completed. During the visit, we toured the building and met with board members to discuss the museum's mission and vision, as well as ways to use technology in its engagement, marketing, and collections activities. The meeting provided a foundation of understanding that enabled our student teams to research digital initiatives that best align with the needs of the museum. As we learned about technology in museums throughout the semester, we continued to communicate with Art Johnson, Edgewood resident and museum treasurer, and Travis Kraus, the Assistant Director and Program Coordinator of the IISC, to complete our Digital Engagement Project.

The first phase of the project required us to work in teams to research and recommend a digital collections management tool. The majority of the class recommended a software called PastPerfect, and the museum decided to move forward in purchasing the software. In the second phase of the project, we developed a holistic communications plan that included social media. In keeping with the online nature of the course, group presentations of both parts of the project were delivered



via digital media and websites. The Edgewood Museum has since been given a \$2000 grant specifically to be used towards our recommendations, and they will use this money to install internet and create a professionally designed website.

This experience was a unique addition to our education. Over the semester, we developed our ability to communicate professionally both within our groups and with the collaborating partners. Our investigation of available management and communication options enhanced our research skills as well as our knowledge of museum practice. The opportunity to apply our studies to The Edgewood Museum was valuable to our understanding of how museums operate in a real- world context.

We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work with The Edgewood Museum and the IISC. Be sure to visit The Edgewood Museum at their Grand Opening on June 18th, 2017.

Randi Proescholdt is an English Major in the Creative Writing Track with a Museum Studies Certificate and hopes to pursue a career related to one or both of her fields of study.

Katherine Tucker is a History and Anthropology Major with a Museum Studies Certificate. She is planning on earning a Masters in Museum Studies after she graduates in 2018. Katherine hopes to continue her career in the museum industry and to one day become a museum director.

MUSM 3135 Museums in a  
Digital World collaboration  
with the Edgewood Museum,  
Edgewood Iowa



The Edgewood Museum  
Then: 1885 (above)  
Now: 2016 (left)

## Spotlight on the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates

Several anthropology undergraduate students presented their research at this year's ICRU spring festival, including:



Left: Rebekah Truhan, Fire-Cracked Rock: A Technical Approach to FCR, Mentor: James Enloe



Right: Maja Sunleaf, Digitizing a Museum's History, Mentor: Heidi Lung



Left: Mads Hoofnagle, Pits and Pieces: A Case for Holistic Analysis in the Study of Ceramic Technology



**Congratulations to Mads Hoofnagle for receiving the Outstanding Poster Presentation Award!**

# Focus on Community

## Updates from the Office of the State Archaeologist

Contributed by: John Doershuk

**J**ohn Doershuk, State Archaeologist and adjunct associate professor in the Department of Anthropology, organized and served as lead instructor for a summer archaeological field school in 2016. The course was based at Iowa Lakeside Lab, a facility which is part of the Iowa Regent's University system (as is UI). All participants earned four semester hours of credit and paid tuition at the in-state rate. The class returned to site 13DK96 to continue collecting contextual data on the relationship of Fox Lake and Lake Benton ceramic wares. UI anthropology major Madeleine Hoofnagle, through Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates funding, has been investigating the ceramic assemblage from 13DK96 during academic year 2016/17, including through stylistic and thin sectioning analyses (see page 34).

The same Lakeside Lab course will be taught summer 2017 when site 13DK143 at Mini-Wakan State Park will be investigated. This site is believed to be contemporaneous with 13DK96 and will provide important comparative data.

Other happenings at the OSA can be discovered within the [Annual Report](#).

Please remember all students with archaeological interests should visit the UI Office of the State Archaeologist facility (700 Clinton Street Building) and avail themselves of the collections, archives, and personnel to enhance their UI learning experience!



Above: Anthropology major Chris Coudray working on cleaning mammoth bone specimens from Lake Red Rock, Marion County, Iowa, as part of his academic year 2016/17 ICRU-funded project at the University of Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist.



State Archaeologist John Doershuk teaches a four-week (4 s.h.) archaeological field school each summer at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory (West Okoboji Lake, Dickinson County, Iowa). In-State tuition and room & board scholarships available! Click [here](#) for more information.

## Medical Anthropologists @ Work: Colleagues and Alumni at the Veterans Affairs Health Care System in Iowa City

Contributed by: Erica Prussing and Iowa City VAHCS Colleagues

*“Anthropologists at  
CADRE welcome  
opportunities to  
collaborate with UI  
faculty, and to work  
with both graduate  
and advanced  
undergraduate UI  
students ...”*

Click [here](#) for  
link to the Iowa  
City VA  
HealthCare  
System

**H**eather Schacht Reisinger describes what she enjoys most about her job: “I’ve always wanted to do applied anthropology—use anthropological methods and theory to have an impact on the world. Working in veterans affairs (VA), we get to do just that. Ethnography and qualitative methods are valued and are used to improve patient care.” Reisinger arrived at the Iowa City Veterans Affairs HealthCare System (VAHCS) in Iowa City in 2006 after completing her doctorate in applied medical anthropology at American University, followed by a post-doctoral fellowship in drug dependency epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. By helping to demonstrate how qualitative research can improve health services through better understanding the behaviors, interpretations, and communication practices involved in seeking, providing, and experiencing care, Reisinger was soon in high demand at the VAHCS’s Comprehensive Access & Delivery Research & Evaluation (CADRE). She took this opportunity to work with CADRE leadership to help develop a cohort of anthropologists to collaborate with VA investigators on many of the organization’s dozens of projects to promote evidence-based

improvements in the delivery of health services.

Since then, a number of Department of Anthropology doctoral program alumni (specifically Samantha Solimeo ’05, Sarah Ono ’10, Kenda Stewart ’12, and Jonathan Thomas ’14) have worked and/or continue to work at CADRE post-doctorally. In addition, during the past decade, approximately ten UI and advanced undergraduate students and graduate students (including Liz Newbury, Misha Quill, Kenda Stewart, Jonathan Thomas, and Rachel Horner Brackett) have also worked there as paid research assistants (e.g., conducting interviews, coding data, or transcribing) while students. Anthropologists from CADRE have also provided guest lectures in applied medical anthropology, health services research, and qualitative research methods in both graduate and undergraduate Anthropology courses.

UI’s own Samantha Solimeo (MPH, 2003; PhD, 2005) returned to Iowa City for the opportunity to work with CADRE. Her graduate training here emphasized medical and feminist anthropology as well as public health, with a special focus on aging and health services for aging populations. She returned to Iowa City after

postdoctoral work at Duke University. In addition to work on a variety of health services topics, Solimeo has continued to conduct research about gender and aging, with projects concerning how gender shapes health care experiences of men with osteoporosis. She publishes in a variety of medical, health services, and medical anthropology journals, and was recently promoted to Director of the Ethnographic Methods and Implementation Core (EMIC) at CADRE. She characterizes her work as “applied medical anthropology in a health services research environment”, and enjoys the diversity of roles her position affords: teaching medical students; serving on graduate committees; grant writing; administration; professional service; ethnographic and other mixed methods research; and lots of writing.

Kenda Stewart (PhD 2012) first joined CADRE as

a transcriptionist in April 2011 while completing her dissertation and then joined EMIC as a full-time qualitative research analyst in November that year. Her training as a cultural anthropologist has been indispensable to her career at the Iowa City VAHCS, where she contributes methodologic and analytic expertise to a variety of research and quality improvement projects for CADRE, the Veterans Rural Health Resource Center-Iowa City, and the VISN 23 PACT Demonstration Lab. In addition to her research Dr. Stewart initiated and leads CADRE’s Veteran Engagement Panel where Veterans and Investigators meet to collaboratively develop ongoing and future research studies. The Veteran Engagement Panel is part of a broader national movement within VA Health Services Research and Development to engage Veterans in all stages of the research process.

*“...during the past decade, approximately ten UI and advanced undergraduate students and graduate students have also worked [with CADRE] as paid research assistants while students.”*

Reisinger and Solimeo both hold faculty appointments in the General Internal Medicine Division at University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, and alongside their intensive research, administrative and teaching responsibilities, both engage with professional organizations and initiatives in anthropology. For example, Solimeo is past president of the Association for Anthropology & Gerontology, a Fellow of the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA), Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee for SfAA, and a member of the American Anthropological Association’s Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology. In 2014, Reisinger chaired the Society for Medical Anthropology program at the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings (SMA

and SfAA hold their national meetings jointly every two years); she served on the SfAA program committee through 2016 and has since been elected to SfAA’s executive board, plus also serves on the editorial board of the journal *Practicing Anthropology*. She publishes widely in public health, medical, health services, and social scientific journals, and now serves as Associate Director of Research for CADRE.

Anthropologists at CADRE welcome opportunities to collaborate with UI faculty, and to work with both graduate and advanced undergraduate UI students who have broader interests in applied/practicing anthropology and qualitative research methods, and/or more specific interests in medical anthropology and health services research.

# Focus on Alumni



*“Honestly, I don’t believe you could have a better academic background to do the public policy work I do today than anthropology...”*

## Anthropology in the Real World

Contributed by: Nick Gevock

**S**o you’ve earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology.

Now what?

I know, because I’ve been there. And now 20 years later, I have some advice for recent

graduates over how to take a social science degree and apply it in the “real” world—outside of academia.

First, a quick version of my path after I left the University of Iowa. Right after graduating, I worked in cultural resource management throughout the West. I did apply my degree directly to archaeology, and it was a great job for several years, living in a tent and working on some incredible sites in the Southwest, Inland Northwest and Northern Plains.

Eventually I ended up earning a master’s degree in journalism, and worked for 11 years as a newspaper reporter in Montana. Then just over four years ago, I switched to public policy work when I came to work as the conservation director for the Montana Wildlife Federation.

My job entails testifying before and lobbying the state Legislature; lobbying members of Congress; attending state Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings and commenting on key issues; and writing official letters on public land

policies, wildlife issues and public access issues. And I spend time doing background research on key wildlife conservation issues, including for such charismatic megafauna as wolves, grizzly bears and bison.

In short, if there is an issue that affects wildlife, habitat and public access to enjoy these public trust resources, MWF is engaged. We organize our grassroots members to get involved, contact their elected officials and show up at public hearings to make a difference. Honestly, I don’t believe you could have a better academic background to do the public policy work I do today than anthropology coupled with the communication skills of journalism.

That needs some explaining. It’s common for journalists to go into public policy work, because they spend years covering government and get to know how it works. But the anthropology is equally as valuable.

We have a saying in wildlife conservation: managing wildlife is easy—it’s people that are the hard part. The more I work in this field, the more I understand how true it is.

As a nation, we’ve accomplished some truly remarkable things in

wildlife. We nearly denuded this continent of wildlife, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century began the daunting task of putting that pyramid of wildlife species back together. It came further along when President Franklin D. Roosevelt, along with Iowan Jay “Ding” Darling, convened the first North American Wildlife Conference and formed the National Wildlife Federation.

Today we face more challenges, but often they’re focused on what to do with the abundance of wildlife we enjoy. We’ve brought back not only the large game species like deer, elk and moose, but also predator species like grizzly bears, wolves and mountain lions. That took getting a lot of people, many with radically different worldviews, to work together.

Everybody comes at wildlife, and life for that matter, from a different background. Understanding how people who are radically different than you see the world is essential to working with them.

Case in point: today I’m working to restore wild, free ranging bison to part of eastern Montana. A cattle rancher out there can’t understand what the problem is: we have tens of thousands of bison in the United States. But almost all of those are

livestock, owned by a rancher and raised just like cattle for their meat.

Hunters, on the other hand, see a valued native wildlife species, and one that could be restored onto public lands and managed just like other game animals. Many wildlife enthusiasts would love to have the opportunity to see these majestic animals on a prairie landscape. And of course, to Native Americans, bison are incredibly important – nutritionally, spiritually and culturally.

Balancing all of those interests is no easy task. But in order to sit down and work with people, you have to understand how they see the issue, what their interests are and what could be done to help accommodate them.

Anthropology prepares you to do that. And it has real world implications – in business, government, public policy, non-profit advocacy and so much more.

*Nick Gevock is the conservation director for the Montana Wildlife Federation, an 81-year-old conservation organization based in Helena, Montana. He is a 1993 anthropology graduate of the University of Iowa.*



Montana Wildlife Federation public lands rally

## Anthropology Opens Doors

Contributed by: Kayleigh Applegate

*“Anthropology gives you an open door to several different paths.”*

As many anthropology students know, getting a job within the field of anthropology can be difficult. I discovered this when choosing to enter the field during my sophomore year. I fell in love with Anthropology and all the passion each teacher had when teaching a class. What I didn't fully understand back then was the applicability of an Anthropology degree outside the field.

As I was starting my final year I was deciding what steps I wanted to take next in my life. I choose to dive into the realm of healthcare and get my masters in health administration. During the interview and orientation process I was constantly asked how anthropology would help me succeed in a healthcare/business setting. Although I didn't quite know how to answer that question back then, I do know how I would answer it now. Anthropology gives its students a unique set of tools that no other major does. It gives its students the ability to navigate situations and communicate differently, it allows its students to embrace and explore diversity, and it allows its students to view business and healthcare as a culture with its own values and customs. All these tools in combination allow students to succeed in a variety of fields. In my own experience, I have been able to use anthropology to succeed in my health policy, public health essentials, and epidemiology/biostatistics classes. Anthropology can be used in each of these settings to understand the

choices of a population and their values and customs.

My advice to present anthropology students: find your passion. Just because you have a degree in anthropology doesn't limit you from working in an outside field. One of my many passions, that honestly borders on addiction, is my heart for animals. Currently I am volunteering for the Humane Society of Missouri on their rescue ranch. There are several leadership and outreach positions within the organization that utilize the core concepts of anthropology and have helped me succeed in their organization.

Another great example of working outside your field was a guest speaker that I listened to who came to talk to MHA students. He chose to use his MHA degree outside the field, and now works in commercial healthcare real-estate. He talked about the importance of passion and drive in your work. If you can find that in your life and use anthropology as a tool to help you get there, then you will succeed.

Anthropology gives you an open door to several different paths. My final advice, pick the path you have passion for and use your tools wisely.

*Kayleigh Applegate is completing the first year of the Master of Public Health at St. Louis University. She is a 2016 anthropology graduate of the University of Iowa.*



## Special Congratulations!

In January Beverly Poduska welcomed a new granddaughter Kara Marie—she is pictured here with big sister Katelyn Elizabeth!



Emily Wentzell and her family also celebrated the birth of her son Elliott this spring!





Thank You to Our  
Incredible  
Administrative  
Support Staff!

**Beverly Poduska** and **Shari Knight** expertly juggle the multiple demands of a busy department and do so with grace, flexibility, and good humor. Their experience, hard work and dedication is deeply appreciated by the faculty and students alike!

A special congratulations to Beverly for receiving the Longevity Award—we are lucky to have the benefit of her many years of service to the department!

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## Note from the Editor

This editor would like to thank all those who took the time to send materials and craft feature stories: this year's edition truly offers a glimpse into the varied and productive research of UI anthropology faculty and students!

A special thanks to Meena Khandelwal, Ted Powers, Glenn Storey, Heidi Lung, Erica Prussing, Lizzy Handschy, Shane Weitzman, John Doershuk, Nick Gevok, and Kayleigh Applegate for taking the time to write feature stories. Erica Prussing was instrumental in developing sections of this year's newsletter—providing contact information for alumni as well as writing articles. Lizzy Handschy, James McGrath, and Emma Wood provided photos to include.

As always, Beverly Poduska and Shari Knight provided information and guidance.

Many thanks to faculty advisors Elana Buch and Heidi Lung for developing story ideas, contacting contributors, and offering many great suggestions as to the formatting and editing of this year's edition. Their guidance has made this year's newsletter a fantastic representation of our departments continued and active engagement in the field and broader community.

I take credit for any mistakes and omissions in this year's edition.

Cheers!  
-Meredith Wismer  
AnthrObserver Editor  
(2013-2017)

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