

The Anthropologist

The College of Arts & Sciences

Case Western Reserve University

A newsletter for faculty, students, alumni, and friends of the Department of Anthropology

Spring 2003

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Spring Focus: An Interview with Kate Masley

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A native of Pennsylvania, Kate Masley entered the Department of Anthropology's graduate program in the fall of 2000. In 2002 she received a three year NSF Graduate Research Fellowship for advanced study and research. This fellowship gives Kate the opportunity and means to work towards her Ph.D., her focus being pregnancy management and postpartum experiences among native Honduran women and immigrant Honduran women in the U.S.

As an undergraduate, Kate majored in anthropology, with a concentration in Women Studies, at Kenyon College. Through the college's cultural anthropology study abroad program, she spent the fall semester of her third year in Honduras focusing her ethnographic research project on womens' experiences of pregnancy, childbirth and becoming a mother by administering questionnaires to a sample of 102 mothers and interviewing mothers of various ages, health practitioners and midwives. She then returned to Kenyon for her senior year and conducted similar research among a sample of 255 mothers in Knox County. This cross-cultural comparative study became the focus of her senior honors thesis. In the fall of 1998 she returned to Honduras, this time to teach third grade students at Santa Rosa De Copan school.

Kate decided to take her bilingual teaching experiences from Honduras to Morgan Park Academy, southwest of Chicago. For a year she taught Spanish to K-6th grade students and was known as "Senorita Masley." From her time spent in Honduras, Kate felt a connection to the people who she says are "generous, loving, and unforgettable." In the summer of 2002 she returned to Honduras on an Eva L. Pancoast Fellowship from Case Western Reserve University to continue her research of womens' experiences of pregnancy and childbirth, a topic that has never left her.

While conducting participant observation in the regional public hospital, Kate observed prenatal care visits, several childbirths, and doctor-patient relations in the maternity ward. She became extremely intrigued by womens' strategic blending of biomedical and "alternative" methods of pre-and postnatal care. She was curious as to how Honduran immigrant women manage their pregnancies and care for themselves in the U.S. This topic is particularly interesting to her because she hopes it will help provide some answers to an epidemiologic puzzle known as the "Latina Paradox" which refers to scientific research showing that Latina women in the U.S. have lower incidence of low birth weight infants and lower infant mortality rates than expected based on their socio-economic status. It is Kate's hope that by conducting an ethnography of Honduran womens' pregnancy management in their countries of origin and U.S., she will be able to contribute a piece towards better understanding this epidemiologic puzzle.

From the Editor's Desk.....

The past six months have been very busy and exciting. We have had numerous presentations by great speakers, the privilege of hosting the Flora Stone Mather Visiting Professor, and searched for a new Assistant Professor to join our department. I hope you enjoy reading this issue.
Kathleen J. Dowdell

urban health

Dr. Chapman's Huron Hospital research project is nearing the end of data collection and analysis. Findings will be submitted for publication, presented at the 2003 AAA conference, and establish a hospital advocacy program at Huron Hospital, providing 24-hour volunteer advocates to victims of domestic violence. Students at Rozelle Elementary School produced posters, murals, and learned non-violent solutions to conflict. Michelle Nebergall and Maggie Zraly conducted ethnographic baseline research using surveys, interviews, participant observation, student shadowing, and school mapping techniques to document the youths' experiences. Ashley Schneider and Maggie Zraly volunteered their anthropological skills to conduct, transcribe, and analyze data from focus groups examining barriers to parental management of asthma in school-aged children. Five anthropology graduate students, Kate Masley, Marisa Abbe, Elizabeth Carpenter, Michelle Nebergall, and Maggie Zraly have been awarded research grants to conduct urban health research in Cleveland.

Spring Courses

spring courses

Cultures of Contemporary Brazil (341/441)	Katia Almeida
Anthropology of Health and Illness II (481)	Cynthia Beall
Health, Culture, and Disease: An Introduction to Medical Anthropology (215)	Rachel Chapman
Gender, Race, and Class in the Anthropological Study of Health (530)	Rachel Chapman
The Human Body: Discourse and Experience (542)	Thomas Csordas
Childbirth, Obstetrics, and Midwifery (376/476)	Robbie Davis-Floyd
Being Human: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (102)	Melvyn Goldstein
Introduction to Human Evolution (103)	Lawrence Greksa
Human Ecology: Biology of Human Adaptability (393/493)	Lawrence Greksa
Asian Medical Systems (317/417)	Charlotte Ikels
Chinese Culture and Society (353/453)	Charlotte Ikels
Culture, Behavior, and Person: Psychological Anthropology (371/471)	Janis Jenkins
Urban Health (361/461)	Janet McGrath
Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (102)	James Pfeiffer
Globalization, Development, and Underdevelopment: Anthropological Perspectives (388/488)	James Pfeiffer
Seminar in Evolutionary Biology (394/494)	Patricia Princehouse
Great Lakes Archaeology (327)	Brian Redmond
Independent Study in Laboratory Archaeology II	Brian Redmond
Archaeology: An Introduction (107)	James Shaffer
Roots of Ancient India: The Archaeology of South Asia (333)	James Shaffer
Anthropology of Childhood and the Family (306/406)	James Spilsbury

undergraduates

As a culmination of her College Scholars Senior Project, Marcela Smid initiated an exciting opportunity for staff and students to interact and learn a little bit about each other's experiences at CWRU. The Student-Staff Interaction Day was held on April 10, 2003. In conjunction with College Scholars Program, Provost's Office, and Staff Advisory Council, members of the campus community had the opportunity to interact in a social environment that included food, games, and a documentary about five people on campus who have touched her life. During her four years as a student, Marcela noticed little personal interaction between students and staff aside

undergraduates

from students using staff members for their own personal needs. She thought that by bringing students and staff together in a party atmosphere, it would increase their awareness of each other. President Hundert kicked off the celebration with a welcome speech. Students paired up with staff for games and prizes. The event was a huge success with close to 400 participants.

graduates

Heather Lindstrom was recently awarded the inaugural Richard A. Zdanis Endowment Fund Fellowship for Ph.D. candidates in the School of Graduate Studies. The fellowship is the result of a School of Graduate Studies-wide competition that took place in fall 2002. Each academic department in the School of Graduate Studies nominated one Ph.D. candidate for the award and the applications were then reviewed by a faculty committee. The fellowship supports Heather's data analysis and dissertation writing activities which examine the effects of modernization on elders' social status in Samoa. Her interest is in how "modernization" can be measured in Samoa and elsewhere and whether those elders living in areas with higher levels of modernization receive less respect and have less influence over family and cultural resources. In addition, she is very interested in how a particular elder's health, functional and cognitive status modifies this relationship. Her data stems from 280 interviews with Samoan elders, their family members and neighbors. She is also a research assistant with the Integrative Studies Department/University Memory and Aging Center and is involved in a variety of projects related to Alzheimer's Disease and associated disorders.

Kathryn McGowan was awarded a College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Fellowship for the spring 2003 semester. She also received a Phi Beta Kappa Research Grant to support her dissertation research on impairment-related experience through time and in the context of change among persons who had polio.

events

Our department hosted the following events:

**October 3, 2002--The Thick and the Thin: Squeezing Anthropological Complexities into Sound Bites. Jonnie Marks.*

**October 24, 2002--Departmental Roundtable: September 11, 2001. Jill Korbin moderator.*

**November 5, 2002--When the Natives Talk Back: Doing Anthropology in the Public Eye. Robbie Davis-Floyd, Mather Visiting Professor of Anthropology.*

**November 14, 2002--Culture, Dementia, and Ethics: A Conversation on Three Key Questions. Atwood Gaines, Peter Whitehouse, Charlotte Ikels, Margaret Lock, Patricia Marshall.*

**December 5, 2002--Possession and Healing in the Candomble of Bahia. Miriam Rabelo.*

**December 6, 2002--Literature and Health: The Construction of a Brazilian National Identity. Paulo Cesar Alves.*

**February 21, 2003--Mary Catherine Bateson informal breakfast.*

**March 24, 2003--Birth in Brazil. Ricardo Jones.*

**April 3, 2003--Kassen Lecture--Reproduction, Polygamy and the State: Challenges to Malian Migrants in Paris. Carolyn Sargent.*

**April 8, 2003--Donald Johanson informal luncheon.*

news tip

Due to rising health costs, a stalled economy and the war on terrorism, local colleges are reporting an increase in alumni entering the work force. Many are accessing the career centers at their alma mater to find jobs.

alumni

Jacklyn Chisholm (5/02) is the Director of Community Relations at CWRU. Her office establishes productive relationships between the university and the Greater Cleveland community. In addition, Jackie is the president of a consulting business called It's Worth It! Educational Consulting, LLC. She offers workshops and motivational speeches to groups and organizations in support of helping students and parents understand the college admission process in pursuit of a degree.

CWRU College of Arts and Sciences Alumni/Senior Audit Program allows alumni and senior citizens to take classes at the university. Qualified students need only pay ten percent of regular tuition. Although these classes cannot be taken for credit, they offer a perfect means for keeping mentally active and up to date on current issues. More information can be found by calling 216-368-4413.

visiting professor

This year our department had Robbie Davis-Floyd join us as the Flora Stone Mather Visiting Professor. A well-known anthropologist specializing in reproductive and women's health, Professor Davis-Floyd taught "The Anthropology of Reproduction" and "Childbirth, Obstetrics, and Midwifery." In addition, she gave talks at CWRU for the Mather Alumnae Association, the Anthropology Department, the Center for Women, the Nurse-Midwifery Program, and the nursing doctoral students, and in the Cleveland community for the Nurse-Midwives of Ohio, the International Cesarean Awareness Network, and Lakewood Hospital, among others. Professor Davis-Floyd has also used her time at CWRU to finish several articles and to work on the three books she has in progress: Mainstreaming Midwives: The Politics of Change, The Anatomy of Ritual, and Space Stories: Oral Histories from the Pioneers of the American Space Program. She and Dr. Rachel Chapman are planning to collaborate on a grant proposal for a project called "Birth in Other America," which will investigate the birth experiences of subaltern women.

graduate discourse

Some accomplishments this year:

- *published the spring 2003 Graduate Discourse Journal, available on line very soon.
- *hosted professional development seminars with Professor Robbie Davis-Floyd on anthropological research methods as well as publishing strategies.
- *actively advocated for graduate student issues and concerns, for example, taking the MA exam on computer.
- *encouraged student participation in national and local conferences.
- *supported fellow graduate students' social well being and development with programs like the buddy system for the first years.

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