

# THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

Case Western Reserve University College of Arts and Sciences

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

SPRING 2008

## DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Lee D. Hoffer, who earned his Ph.D. in 2002 at the University of Colorado, will be joining the faculty next year. The results of his dissertation research were published in an ethnographic case-study titled, *Junkie Business: The Evolution and Operation of a Heroin Dealing Network* (2006). Upon completing his Ph.D., Dr. Hoffer was awarded a National Institute of Drug Abuse post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry of Washington University School of Medicine, where he is currently a Research Instructor in Medical Anthropology. While at Washington University he earned a Master of Psychiatric Epidemiology degree. His current research combines ethnography and agent-based modeling techniques to study illicit drug markets and organizations, as well as to evaluate policy intended to influence outcomes of these activities.

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We will also be joined next year by Visiting Assistant Professor Vanessa Hildebrand, who will receive her Ph.D. from Washington University. Her thesis, titled *Reconciling the Birth of the Modern Sumbawan: Shifting Social Boundaries, Political Hierarchy, and Authoritative Knowledge in Sumbawa, Indonesia*, examines how rural Indonesian women configure their identity and social status when confronted with the need to care for a pregnancy and childbirth and particularly how they negotiate various local and global influences in their assessment of the obstetric options available to them.

## CHANGE IN CREDIT REQUIREMENT FOR A MAJOR IN ANTHROPOLOGY

At the request of the Anthropology Department, the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences approved reducing the credit requirement for anthropology majors from 36 to 30 credits. This change was requested in order to make the requirements for a major in anthropology similar to those for other social science departments. None of the required courses for any of the concentrations have been changed or eliminated. Instead the general electives for each concentration is reduced by six credits. The requirements for a minor in anthropology were not changed. According to Dean Wolcovicz current majors will have the option of choosing the 36 credit or 30 credit requirement.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FELLOWSHIP IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Jonathan F. Plimpton, a 1970 graduate of the Department of Anthropology of what was then Western Reserve University, has generously created an endowment to support experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate anthropology majors. These funds will be used to provide support for an international experience for students, with preference for students with an interest in business-related activities. Although not required, the fellowship can be used to

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support a Senior Capstone project or can be used to support an experience or project conducted in conjunction with Junior Year Abroad. Mr. Plimpton, who is currently Managing Director of International Business Management, Inc. located in Skillman, New Jersey, believes that his anthropology background played an important role in his success in international business.

The first recipients of the fellowship were announced prior to a lecture on the applications of anthropology which is also supported by Mr. Plimpton. (see below)

Two students were awarded fellowships to help support their research this summer. John Heintz received support for his study, *Treatment Seeking and Structural Factors Affecting Malaria Control in Papua New Guinea*, and Nina Sreshta received support for her project, *Working at Target India*. A summary of the findings of their studies will be included in a future newsletter.

## DEPARTMENT LECTURES

On November 19, the Department of Anthropology and the Schubert Center for Child Studies were honored to receive a visit from Dr. Tom Weisner, Professor of Anthropology in the Departments of Psychiatry and Anthropology at UCLA. Dr. Weisner delivered a public lecture titled *New Hope for Working Poor Families and their Children: Mixed Methods Evidence for a Successful Support Program for Parents and Children*. The program was co-sponsored by the Schubert



Center for Child Studies and the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, MSASS. Later, Dr. Weisner presented a seminar in mixed methods and met with graduate students. This event provided an excellent opportunity for students, researchers, and community members to interact with a distinguished scholar of culture and human development.

## ANTHROPOLOGY SPOTLIGHT LECTURE SERIES

On April 1, the Anthropology Department was pleased to present the first lecture in the Anthropology Spotlight Lecture Series titled “Applying Anthropology to Real World Problems.” This new annual lecture series, which is also supported by Jon Plimpton, highlights the value of anthropological theory and methods in solving real world problems, with a focus on applying these methods to business activities. Guest speaker Dr. Susan Squires, Executive Director of Customer Insight Research, TACTICS, LLC, presented “American Breakfast and the Mother-in-law” which described the ethnographic approaches used to determine what kinds of children’s breakfast foods would be attractive to both children and parents. The end-product of her research was the development of Go-Gurt. Dr. Squires began her career at the University of New Hampshire teaching introductory and advanced courses in social/cultural anthropology. She has worked in corporate settings, health and human service agencies, communities and in schools throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia and has provided organizational insights by designing and conducting ethnographic studies for manufacturers, high tech companies, and telecommunications firms. From 2004-2007, she was a member of a special project studying issues of productivity for the next generation supercomputer at Sun Microsystems, recruited because of her training as a cultural anthropologist. In addition, she has worked with Arthur Anderson and Anderson Consulting and has written a book about Anderson’s culture.

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Anthropology students were given the opportunity to meet with both Dr. Squires and Jon Plimpton for an informal discussion of the relevance of an anthropology background for anyone considering a career with an interna-

tional focus, including international business.

### GRADUATE NEWS

**Liz Olson** had a very exciting and fulfilling year. She spent the fall semester continuing her field research in the Sierra de Manantlán Biosphere Reserve in southwestern Mexico completing structured and semi-structured interviews regarding socioeconomic status and knowledge of medicinal plants. This research will be the basis for her doctoral dissertation in which she hopes to illuminate some of the optimistic areas of sustainable development, and other areas that present the opportunity to improve the conservation of forest resources through valuation of local cultural heritage. She presented her preliminary findings at the American Ethnological Society/Anthropological Society of North America meetings held in early April in a paper titled *Local Politicking and the Others Who They Negotiate With: Making Sustainable Development Decisions in the Sierra de*



*Manantlán Biosphere Reserve.* Liz is also working as a writing liaison for the SAGES program and will be offering her SAGES seminar *USSO 254: Global Health*

*Issues and Culture* this summer.

**Meghan Halley** received the Society for Psychological Anthropology Lemelson Award and the Eva L. Pancoast Fellowship. Both will be used to support her pilot research this summer examining adolescent sexuality in Tanzania.

**Prisca Fall** is beginning a new job with the National Cancer Institute's Division of Epidemiology and Genetics with Dr. Chatterjee doing data analysis.

**Ruth Magtanong** has been accepted into the NSF Summer Field Training in Methods of Data Collection in Cultural Anthropology in Bolivia.

**Darcie Debevec** received an Eva L. Pancoast Fellowship and was accepted to the East Asia Pacific Summer Institute funded by NSF and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. She will be hosted by Waseda University in Tokyo while researching health-care worker migration to Japan.

**Hillary Melchiors** received the Society for Psychological Anthropology Lemelson Award to conduct a pilot study in Berlin investigating the coalesced nature of political, psychological, and cultural definitions of mental illness, race, and identity and how they relate to acculturation and integration in the adolescent immigrant context. She will spend one month working with Turkish-German girls ages 14 to 17.

**Nadia El-Shaarawi** received a Canadian Institutes for Health Research Doctoral Research Award and Case's Ruth Barber Moon Award.

**Aura Newlin** will be traveling to Papua New Guinea this summer as part of the Fogarty Framework in Global Health research team. She will be monitoring and evaluating a bed net distribution program and its



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impact on malaria control in various sites throughout the country. Also, she will be attending the 40th anniversary colloquium of the PNG Institute for Medical Research and an annual national medical conference.

The following graduate students presented papers at the Society for Applied Anthropology/Society for the Medical Anthropology conference in Memphis, March 25-29:

**Brad Casucci:** *Controlling Flies or People?: Trachoma Intervention and the Maasai of Kenya.*

**Jonathan Metcalfe:** *Increasing HIV Testing Uptake among Zimbabwean Health Workers: An Alternative Approach.*

Panel: (Chair: Amy Rezac) *Conceptual Knowledge and Response to Illness: Concentration on Mental Health.*

**Anne-Marie Bertino:** *Perceived Control as an Indicator of Stress among Mikea Women of Madagascar.*

**Nadia El-Shaarawi:** *Risky Lifestyles: Public Health Discourses and the Construction of the Self.*

**Janelle Highland:** *Collaboration and Accommodation: Patient Centered Care, Communication, and Health Promotion.*

**Denise Lin:** *Social Support among Chinese Cancer Patients in Los Angeles County.*

**Ruth Magtanong:** *The Exploitation of the Sick Role as a Cultural Maintenance Tool.*

**Aura Newlin:** *Ethnopsychology, Professional Socialization, and the Normalization of Mental Illness in Old Age.*

**Amy Rezac:** *What Would Tu Pac Do? A Comparative Analysis of the Influence of Hip Hop Culture on Mental Well-Being, Identity, and Social Network Construction Among Refugee Youth in Host Countries.*

## UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

**Amanda Kittoe** will graduate in August with a B.A. in Anthropology. She will apply to programs in Forensic Anthropology next fall and plans to work in relevant research throughout the year. Her senior project is an exploratory study on covariation in limb and trunk proportions between African-American and European-American men and women.

**Erin Benson** and **Robin Schulze** were enrolled in ANTH 370 (Senior Field Seminar in Paleoanthropology) this spring and participated in the 2008 field season at the Woranso-Mille Paleontological site in the central Afar region of Ethiopia. This project, which is directed by Yohannes Haile-Selassie, the Curator of Physical Anthropology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and Bruce Latimer, Museum Director, has the goal of collecting vertebrate fossils from different time horizons in the deep past and locating as many new sites with early human fossil remains as possible.

Erin and Robin collected data which they will be using to write up a report to satisfy the SAGES Capstone requirement. The participation of undergraduates was made possible through the support of Cyrus Taylor, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Students interested in participating in future field seasons should contact Professor Haile-Selassie (yhailese@cmnh.org) in order to learn the requirements for participation.

## GRADUATE DISCOURSE

**Graduate Discourse**, our department graduate student group, has been extraordinarily busy the last two semes-



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ters. They have been meeting to discuss business and upcoming events at the departmental, university, and wider community levels. In addition, they held monthly work-in-progress meetings to give feedback on one or more of graduate students' papers, presentations, and/or funding proposals. This experience has been invaluable for all the students who participated, both on the receiving and giving end of the feedback, as they got not only great ideas for the projects they were working on but unbelievable support and encouragement from peers as well! Several of the Graduate Discourse representatives, organized by Jonathan Metcalfe, participated in the annual university intramural bowling tournament on February 16. The first professional development seminar organized by Amy Rezac was held on February 22 with Dr. Anderson-Fye presenting "How to give a 15 Minute Conference Presentation." Amy also organized a meet and greet luncheon with the undergraduate anthropology majors catered by the Falafel Café on February 29. The luncheon was an excellent opportunity for the undergraduates to ask questions about graduate student life, research interests, anthropology programs in general, and planning for the future. Editor-in-chief, Jonathan Metcalfe, projects that the next issue of the journal, Graduate Discourse, will be ready for publication by late April.

## ALUMNI UPDATES

**Carmit McMullen**, for several years a researcher with Kaiser Permanente in Portland, Oregon, has been awarded funding by the National Cancer Institute for a project on cancer survivors titled: *Intestinal Ostomies and Informal Caregiving for Colorectal Cancer Survivors*.

## NEW STAFF

**Mandy Economos** joined the Anthropology Department as part-time secretary in January. Mandy moved to Cleveland in August, 2007 with her husband and daughter from Alfred, New York. She is originally from Oklahoma and previously lived in New York

City where she worked for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, and Columbia University. Most recently she was employed for eight years as the Visual Resources Curator at Scholes Library, Alfred University. Mandy has an educational background in studio art and art history. She has been a fine and liberal arts student at the University of Oklahoma, Brooklyn College, Columbia University, and Alfred University and hopes to continue her studies at Case. Mandy will assist in grant preparation, web design and maintenance, and general office support.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

**Dr. Eileen Anderson-Fye and Dr. Jill Korbin** of the Department of Anthropology and the Schubert Center for Child Studies have received a 2008 Lemelson/Society for Psychological Anthropology Conference Award. The conference, *New Directions in Policy-Relevant Research on Adolescence: Perspectives from Psychological Anthropology*, will take place on November 6-7, 2008. Speakers will include Dr. Robert LeVine (Harvard), Dr. Thomas Weisner (UCLA), and Dr. Carol Worthman (Emory). Please see the Schubert Center website this summer ([www.case.edu/artsci/schubert](http://www.case.edu/artsci/schubert)) for a complete list of speakers and conference program details.

The April, 2008 issue of *Anthropology News* featured a special section on *Children and Childhood*, and included an article featuring the work of **Dr. Jill Korbin**, **Dr. Claudia Coulton** (MSASS) and **Dr. James Spilsbury** (Ph.D. CWRU Anthropology 2002) on using mixed methods to study neighborhoods in Cleveland. Other articles in the issue included mention of Korbin's anthropology course on children and of the Childhood Studies Minor at CWRU.

### **Dr. Atwood Gaines:**

As Editor-in-Chief of *Culture, Medicine, and Psychia-*

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try, Dr. Gaines has published three issues since September of 2007. The most recent issue 32(1) is the new *CMP* and carries a new cover and a reorganized interior as well as evidencing many new sections containing specific types of papers.

Dr. Gaines was named Deputy Director, Identity Issues Group of The Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications (ELSI) Research Center of Excellence in ELSI Research at CWRU of the National Human Genome Research Institute which is headed by Eric Juengst, Ph.D. of the Department of Bioethics.

Dr. Gaines taught a spring break international course on French Bioethics with French ethicist/physician colleagues March 10-14 at the University of Paris 5-René Descartes Faculty of Medicine, Paris, France.

## EVENTS

The spring picnic for Anthropology Department students, faculty, and staff will be held Saturday, May 10 at noon at the Squire Valleevue Farm.

