

THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

The College of Arts & Sciences

Case Western Reserve University

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

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Spring 2005

Spring Focus: Christian Simon

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Christian Simon is an Assistant Professor of bioethics and oncology based in the Bioethics Department at the Case Medical School. He completed his Ph.D. in medical anthropology at the University of California, San Francisco and Berkeley. He then worked for two years as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Anthropology Department at Case, teaching African Health and Healing, Political Economy and Health, and other topics. Thereafter he took a position as a project director for a multi-site NIH-funded study focused on informed consent among pediatric cancer patients. This triggered an interest in cancer and ethics issues, and led Dr. Simon to a postdoctoral fellowship in behavioral cancer prevention and control in the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Case/UH. During the fellowship, he received a two-year National Cancer Institute grant to study language barriers among Latino parents of children with cancer. Since his appointment to the Bioethics Department in September 2003, Dr. Simon has received a five-year NIH grant to formalize his research interests in informed consent. Specifically, he is interested in the ethical issues surrounding the ongoing shift of clinical trials information and decision making support to the Internet. Dr. Simon also has support from the American Cancer Society and a number of other sources to explore the role of gender, race, and other factors in the informed consent process for clinical research. He is also co-PI of a South African-based study focused on leveraging family ties to mobilize low income women to get screened for cervical cancer. Dr. Simon has published in anthropology, clinical, ethics, and other social science journals.

- ◆ Jennifer Coats and Stephanie Melillo were co-recipients of the Ruth and Newbell Niles Puckett Award which is given to graduating seniors for outstanding achievement in anthropology.
- ◆ Gregory Hoeker and Cortni Moglovkin were co-recipients of the Callender Memorial Award for outstanding achievement in anthropology.

Congratulations to all of them!

From the Editor's Desk.....

The department hired a new part-time staff member in February. You can read more about Charvez Forte' on page four.

Kathleen J. Dowdell

**undergraduate
research,
internships, and
volunteer work**

Seven undergraduate students participated in a wide variety of anthropology-related research, internships, or volunteer work during the year. Research topics included:

- ◆ **Jennifer Coats**-Experiences as part of a medical volunteer program and travel in South Africa.
- ◆ **Katie Gallup**-The order of vertebral apophyseal ring fusion in humans was measured to determine if it was responsible for the pattern of distribution of Schmorl's nodes throughout the vertebral column.
- ◆ **Nikita Joshi**-Community health education on hypertension through CWRU-Corps (Americorps) and NEON health centers around the Cleveland area.
- ◆ **Stephanie Melillo**-The morphological indicators of bipedality on the proximal femur, in reference to the fossil *Orrorin tugenesis*.
- ◆ **Cortni Moglovkin**-The effects of novel object and food based enrichment techniques on the American turkey vulture.
- ◆ **Rachel Pope**-Experiences as a youth NGO intern for health and environment and culture in Ghana, West Africa.
- ◆ **Melanie Prarat**-Molecular markers for failure of pyrimethamine treatment of *Plasmodium falciparum* and *P. vivax* malaria.

Descriptions of these projects are available online at:

<http://www.case.edu/artsci/anth/undergrad/RecentUndergradresearch.html>

**undergraduate
accomplishments
and future plans**

- ◆ **Jennifer Coats**-will enter the M.D. program at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, PA; She plans to earn an M.P.H. through Jefferson's joint program with Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
- ◆ **Shezza Edris**-plans to take an internship at the Cleveland Artist Foundation interviewing local artists to create an oral history of Northeast Ohio's artist community.
- ◆ **Greg Hoeker**-is graduating with a B.A. in anthropology and an B.S. in biomedical engineering. He will be working towards a Ph.D. in cardiac bioelectricity at Case.
- ◆ **Wayne Liang**-will work for a year with Plymouth House of Healing, a Seattle-based social agency which provides temporary housing and transitional support for homeless residents living with mental illness. He plans to attend medical school in the fall of 2006 to pursue a joint M.D./M.P.H. degree.
- ◆ **Stephanie Melillo**-will attend Stanford University in the fall concentrating on Paleocology and comparative morphology.
- ◆ **Rachel Pope**-was awarded an Experiential Learning Scholarship to study children in Brazil. She will begin an Integrated Graduate Study in Public Health with the Case Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.
- ◆ **Melanie Prarat**-has accepted a one-year fellowship with the Plum Island Animal Disease Research Center within the Department of Homeland Security in Long Island, New York. She is the first fellow accepted into the program who did not have a Ph.D.!

**note to graduating
seniors**

We would like to keep in touch with you in the future. Please send your new address and e-mail to Barbara Reebel (bjr12@case.edu) once you settle in at your new school or job. We will keep your fellow students apprised of your progress in the newsletter.

graduate news

Kathryn McGowan successfully defended her dissertation "A Body History of Polio-related Impairments in the United States" last fall. She received her Ph.D. in January.

Mara Buchbinder, Michelle Osborn and Sarah Rubin received M.A. degrees in January.

Mara Buchbinder presented a paper entitled "Seeing to Know: Visual Research of Youth with Diabetes" at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development in Atlanta. She also received a grant from the Endowment Sponsored Mentorship program to present "Anthropological Perspectives on the Therapeutic Perspective of Play" co-authored with Dr. Jeffrey Longhofer, at the Association for the Study of Play Annual Meeting in Santa Fe.

Michelle Eder's chapter "Testing drugs in developing countries: Pediatric research ethics in an international context" was published in *Ethics and Research with Children: A Case-Based Approach*, an Oxford University Press book edited by Eric Kodish.

Charlotte Haney presented a paper entitled "Making Space for the Body to Speak: Women with a history of Childhood Sexual Abuse attempt to birth 'naturally'" at the SFAA. This paper contained in-depth interviews that dealt with the difficulties of childbirth for women with a history of childhood sexual abuse and expands on Sheila Ortner's position that subaltern voices can provide an opportunity for change within schemas of cultural reproduction by suggesting that the body itself may at times provide subaltern voice.

Michelle Nebergall was awarded an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship which will allow her to study Bosnian/Croatian for 6-8 weeks this summer. This training is designed to prepare her for her dissertation research on the development of Croatian and Bosnian adolescents in newly emerging post-war nations. She presented the results of her capstone project in the M.P.H. program "The Relationship of Perceived Stress to Health Risk Behaviors in Adolescents" at the 2005 Research ShowCASE.

Elizabeth Olson presented papers on aspects of her fieldwork in Bolivia on the roles of doctors, midwives, and missionaries in forming child birth models at three professional conferences this spring: 1) Annual Meetings of the Society of Applied Anthropology, 2) Annual Meetings of the Central States Anthropological Society, 3) Fourth Biennial Conference on Intercultural Research. In addition, Liz was elected to serve as President of the Graduate Student Senate.

Michelle Osborn, a third-year dual-degree student in medical anthropology and public health interned this spring semester in the Department of HIV/AIDS at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. While there, she assisted Dr. Carla Obermeyer with operational research efforts connected to WHO's "3 by 5" Initiative and examined HIV testing guidelines and the social implications related to HIV testing scale-up. She has also contributed to the effective distribution of anti-retroviral therapy. Following her internship, Michelle will take a year's leave of absence to pursue an M.Sc. degree in African Studies at Oxford University in England. There she will continue to pursue her research interests related to the impact of urbanization and HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa.

Maggie Zraly has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship. She plans to travel to Rwanda to begin her dissertation research on resilience among Rwandan genocide-rape survivors in September 2005.

faculty achievements

Professor Cynthia Beall - received funding from NSF to study adaptation to high-altitude hypoxia in Ethiopia.

Professor Atwood Gaines - is part of the recently funded Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications (ELSI) Research Program of the National Human Genome Research Institute's Center for Excellence in ELSI Research.

Dr. Janet McGrath - was awarded the John S. Diekoff Award for excellence in graduate education. She also received funding from WHO to investigate the role of social networks and social support in controlling TB in Kampala, Uganda.

new staff

Charvez D. Forte' was hired as a part-time secretary, replacing Meredith Holmes. Since starting in February she has implemented a scholarship database, located in room 238, accessible to all students. In addition, she assists in grant preparation and in the day-to-day functions of the office. She's had experience as a secretary at Cleveland Public Schools and with East Cleveland City Hall. She is a poet, and aspires to write historical novels one day. She is currently a student at Cuyahoga Community College majoring in Human Resource Management.

graduate discourse

This semester Graduate Discourse held its second Brown Bag Colloquium. The first Brown Bag Colloquium took place in November 2004 and included three papers on HIV/AIDS presented by Sarah Rubin, Sarah Rundall, and David Kaawa-Mafigiri, with Dr. Cynthia Beall as the faculty discussant. The colloquium held this March included three papers on the topic of youth. Graduate students participating were Mara Buchbinder, Elizabeth Carpenter-Song, and Peter Lawson, with Dr. Jeffrey Longhofer as the faculty discussant. Both colloquia generated interesting discussions among students and faculty and gave the students an opportunity to present their research to their peers and professors. In April 2005, Graduate Discourse was chosen to receive a small monetary award by the Graduate Student Senate to promote communication and collaboration among graduate students from different disciplines. Members were extremely pleased to have been chosen for this award for the second year in a row.

contact

To submit news or for more information, contact Kathleen J. Dowdell at kathleen.dowdell@case.edu or at 216-368-2264.

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