

Below, center: Lucy Steele at the G200 Youth Summit (page 6)



Grad Students Pursue Joint Degrees (D.O./Ph.D.)

Recent medical anthropology students in the department are opting to pursue both a DO degree and a PhD in Anthropology through the joint degree program offered with the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM). Students who apply to both COM and the department can pursue both degrees over a period of seven or eight years, following their own plan for completing exams, fieldwork, rotations, and dissertations. The DO-PhD program was created in the 1970s, but most students pursued PhDs in lab sciences (for example Genetics and Microbiology) until Anthropology began enrolling students more recently. This was partly due to the encouragement of Dr. Linda Hunt and Dr. Justin McCormick (DO-PhD Program Director), who saw that the joint degree option could attract high-achieving students in Anthropology. There has already been one graduate: Dr. Emilia Boffi, who finished her PhD in 2015 and is now a medical resident at Georgetown.

To complete both degrees, students spend the first

year taking classes in Anthropology, then the next two years in the medical school followed immediately by their medical board exams. During their fourth year they begin rotations, but only part time while preparing for their comprehensive exams in Anthropology. Once they have finished their exams (including the proposal defense), they do dissertation fieldwork and finish their PhD dissertations before going on to do their medical residency. One advantage of the program is that COM funds the students completely, including their fieldwork. This makes the program attractive to students and easy for the department to accommodate, since students can be flexible when scheduling exams and rotations without having to time their studies around external grant deadlines.

First-year student Melissa Chavarria was attracted to the program because of the holistic approach that the DO offered and the flexibility of the combined

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Message from the Chair: Dr. Jodie O’Gorman



Some of our biggest department news this Fall Semester is college news – we have a new Dean of the College of Social Science. Dr. Rachel Croson, formerly Dean of the College of Business at the University of Texas at Arlington, became Dean of our college August 1, 2016. Dr. Croson has served as Director of the Negotiations Center at the University of Texas at Dallas, Associate Professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and was Division Director for Social and Economic Sciences for two years at the National Science Foundation. Along with all the other units in the College of Social Science, Anthropology faculty and staff are engaged in a

dynamic and participatory strategic planning process for the college. It is an exciting time, and we are enjoying getting to know our new Dean and helping her get to know us.

In other exciting news, we plan to hire for two positions this year. The department is in the early stages of a search for a tenure-track position in archaeology linked to our Campus Archaeology Program. We are also working on a new, non-tenure track teaching professor position focused on excellence in the anthropology classroom. Fully integrated into the department, this individual will play a key role in the overall advancement of undergraduate teaching.

In closing, please think of us as you make end of the year donations. Your contributions help support graduate and undergraduate research and other learning opportunities, such as Lucy Steele’s participation in the G200 Youth Summit in Germany (cover, and page 6). Participation in professional meetings, such as Mari Isa’s presentation at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (page 11), as well as undergraduate presentations are also funded in part by your generous contributions.

Editors & Contact



Above: Rachel Croson, Dean of the College of Social Science, welcomes the participants in the Institute of Digital Archaeology Method and Practice during their final meeting this past August. Read more on page 9.

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Editorial support from the College of Social Science

Success stories in anthropology come via many different paths. However anthropology informs your career, whether you are a practicing anthropologist inside or outside the academy, we want to hear from you. Email: anthropology@ssc.msu.edu

Grad Student Jessica Ott Receives Fulbright

Graduate student Jessica Ott received a 2016 Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad fellowship to investigate legal advocacy and women's rights in Tanzania. Starting in early 2017, she will begin dissertation research tracing the work of feminist lawyers in Zanzibar who draw on historical ideas about women's and human rights in order to provide advocacy for women today.

In Zanzibar, when women experience family strife, it often falls under the purview of local Islamic courts. But women are increasingly bypassing this court system and going to women's law offices where feminist lawyers provide mediation and contract negotiation between couples, which represents a major cultural shift for addressing family issues in Zanzibar. For cases that go to courts, these women lawyers can also provide legal representation, which differs from how the Islamic legal system has historically operated, with a judge or kadhi presiding over a given case in the absence of lawyers. Jessica is interested in exploring what these shifts mean for Zanzibaris. Feminist activist lawyers also engage in legislative advocacy, trying to change laws in ways that will make things better for women.

While bypassing Islamic courts is relatively new, Jessica hopes to look at how recent framings of women's rights draw on historical depictions of women as legal subjects. How do female lawyers frame their arguments? Are women depicted as helpless or worthy (as would be consistent with many colonial representations), or do they contest these depictions? Jessica hopes to reveal the ways in which feminist lawyers and other women's rights activists in Zanzibar have strategically drawn on the specific rights history of Zanzibar as well as global ideas about human rights. This contrasts with the work of other anthropologists who have analyzed similar actors as mere 'translators' of global ideas, without adequate attention to local inspirations.

Jessica first became interested in women's advocacy in Tanzania while working for an NGO called EngenderHealth in Dar es Salaam, prior to starting graduate school. There, her work related to HIV infection and ideas about masculinity. In some ways, the NGO was positioned as a 'gender expert' compared to local feminist groups in the context of USAID funding. This was surprising to her, as the



Grad Student Jessica Ott

NGO was staffed mostly by foreigners, while the local organizations were staffed by feminist activists who had been working on gender issues for decades. As a result, Jessica decided to look more closely at what grassroots feminist organizations were doing.

Jessica has conducted pre-dissertation research and was able to live with a prominent women's rights activist in Zanzibar this last summer, getting a head start on exploring how activists were engaging with different notions of rights. She also spent time in the Zanzibar National Archives investigating three local rights organizations. Jessica will be conducting her research in Swahili, thanks to FLAS funding which allowed her to study the language at an advanced level at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA). During that course, she began reading literature in Swahili, which was another fascinating way to look at women's roles throughout history.

Jessica's work has been shaped by her mentors here at MSU, especially Dr. Elizabeth Drexler's

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Joint Degree Program (continued)

program. With a BA in Anthropology and an MS that focused on biomedicine and immunology, she's excited to work with Latino populations to answer questions about the language and discourse of infectious disease. Elisabeth Arndt is a second year student and currently taking medical classes. She is interested in how pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) affects cultural understandings of risk for HIV transmission.

Kelly Colas and Evan Guay are both fourth year students currently working on their Anthropology exams with an eye towards dissertation research. Kelly is researching c-section decision-making in Mexico's public hospitals, where low income women deliver and the c-section rate is high. She's examining the factors that influence the doctors, who must decide after the patient is admitted what kind of birth they will have. While doctors want what is best for their patients, they must navigate constraints around time, money, and space. She's already conducted pre-dissertation research, and has a Gliozzo scholarship (via MSU ISP) to supplement her DO funding. Evan is planning to investigate the development of medicine in Malawi and the role of interpersonal touch in patient-doctor encounters. He hopes to observe unique clinical environments, such as mobile offices, to see how diverse settings may affect the way examinations are conducted. In preparation for this

research, he studied Chichewa supported by a FLAS during his second year of study.

Emilia Boffi's dissertation, titled "How social forces don a white coat: The social context of childbirth management in Metro Detroit," describes the power hierarchies reproduced by institutionalized birthing practices. Dr. Boffi conducted interviews and participant observation at prenatal clinics and delivery units to investigate how social stratification influences medical care and patient autonomy. She found that while the practice of American obstetrics limited the autonomy of expectant mothers, these limitations were particularly pronounced among disenfranchised groups in Detroit. She argues that the perceived objectivity of biomedicine further conceals these processes of disempowerment.

While biomedicine is often critiqued by Anthropology, what these students find interesting is the ways the two intersect. Compelling research questions can be answered at the fertile intersection between Anthropology and clinical experience. As Kelly says, "Recognizing that health is influenced by social variables as much as physiologic factors has helped me to understand medical issues with greater depth." Or as Evan notes, "These fields should be in conversation, especially since Anthropology's turn toward greater activism. Both strive to understand the intricacies of human life and have a positive impact."

Introducing Kathy McGlynn, IT Support

When faculty, staff, and TAs find their computers are crashing or their AV equipment won't link to their laptops, they call Kathy McGlynn, Anthropology's IT expert. Kathy troubleshoots technical problems on all department software and hardware and keeps everyone's systems up-to-date and safe from viruses. As the link between central MSU IT and the department, Kathy helps faculty on everything from small issues ("Is this email safe to open?") and big issues, like what new equipment to invest in for the department's future. She also keeps abreast of new industry developments for both Windows and Mac products, updates, and software. "I always have to keep an eye on what is coming down the pike," she says.

Kathy started working for Anthropology in Fall of 2012 after having worked a few years in ANR. Before that she worked in a corporate environment, where she transitioned to an IT career from one as a graphic designer. As the only one in her company who worked on a Mac, Kathy was self taught and eventually became an informal IT expert. Realizing how much she enjoyed this work, she returned to school and got an IT degree. Kathy has learned to adapt her corporate experience to the unique nature of IT work on an academic campus, where expectations of faculty and students create a different set of pressures. As an MSU alumnae herself, she also enjoys working on campus. When not at work, Kathy can be found working in her garden and spending time with her beloved pets.

Featured Faculty: Dr. Laurie Medina

Since she became director in fall of 2015, Dr. Laurie Medina has been working with staff and affiliated faculty at MSU's Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) to build new research initiatives and to identify new opportunities for collaboration across campus and with partners abroad. During her first year as director, the center added 18 new core faculty, representing seven different colleges; MSU signed an agreement with Mexico's Consejo Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnologia (the equivalent of the NSF in the US) to fund graduate study at MSU by Mexican students and short-term research exchanges; and CLACS engaged US and Colombian government agencies and higher education institutions to develop initiatives for post-conflict development and peace building as Colombia emerges from 50-years of civil conflict.

Dr. Medina is also working on the last chapter of a book manuscript based on research in Belize. Building on her earlier research on agricultural development, the research for this book began with a project focused on the implementation of ecotourism in three Maya communities in southern Belize. This research revealed novel political arrangements through which communities and natural resources were being governed in Belize. Rather than being governed by the Belizean state, both people and protected areas were being managed by a transnational alliance of conservation NGOs and by market mechanisms. A 2010 article in the *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* explores the former, while a 2015 article in the *American Anthropologist* focuses on the latter.

During the time that Dr. Medina was conducting this research on ecotourism, the Maya communities in which she was working were pursuing a land claim based on indigenous rights. She began to follow the progress of this claim through a series of legal cases before the Inter-American Commission on Human



Dr. Laurie Medina

Rights and the Belizean judicial system, spending most of one summer teaching herself the fundamentals of international law. The Belizean Maya case was an early and influential case in the development of an inter-American jurisprudence on indigenous land rights and has played a role in strengthening the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The international legal impacts of this case formed the basis for a 2016 article in the *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* on the production of indigenous land rights. While the first half of her book manuscript focuses on how contemporary processes of "government" operate through markets and non-governmental

organizations, the second half analyzes the practice of contemporary sovereignty and the production of rights, as they intersect in the Maya land claim.

Dr. Medina is currently involved with colleagues from MSU and other institutions in developing a new comparative project that will focus on the implementation of judicial decisions in favor of indigenous land rights. The project will encompass four research sites in Central America where indigenous communities have won land claims in the Inter-American Human Rights System: the Maya case from southern Belize; a Garifuna case from Honduras; and two sites that emerged from the precedent-setting case of Awas Tingni in Nicaragua, the northern and southern autonomous regions of the Caribbean coast. Dr. Medina, Dr. Jennifer Goett from James Madison College, and colleagues from the University of Colorado-Boulder and the University of San Francisco are drafting a proposal for NSF's Law and Social Science Program. Although each of their case studies is extremely complex, they hope that systematic data collection and analysis will enable them to see beyond this complexity to identify similarities in outcomes and the drivers that produce them.

Undergrad Lucy Steele Attends G200 Youth Summit

This past Spring, the department was pleased to sponsor undergraduate Lucy Steele's attendance at the G200 Youth Forum. Lucy shares more about her experience below:

Last April, I proudly represented the Anthropology Department and Michigan State University at the G200 Youth Summit in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. This international conference provides a platform for students, academics, and young leaders to discuss the major issues facing our world today. I was initially drawn to the G200 Youth Summit as an opportunity to present research in a way that facilitates further conversations and to meet and learn from other students with a variety of interests from all across the globe.

I participated in an event called the Youth Conference, where roundtable discussions focused on large global themes are guided by research projects that students present. With the help and mentoring of Dr. Joe Hefner, I presented a research project entitled "Who Are They?: Forensic Anthropology, Context, and Identification Along the U.S.-Mexico Border" at the roundtable focused on law and human rights.

The project investigated the human rights issues surrounding the identification of migrants dying along the United States border with Mexico. For this research, Dr. Hefner taught me how to score crania using both morphoscopic and craniometric measures and use these measurements to assess ancestry. I pulled from sociocultural theory and consulted the institutions working directly with the unidentified border crossers, such as the Colibri Center and the Texas State Forensic Anthropology Center, to understand the crisis of identification and human loss from multiple viewpoints. My presentation's analysis addressed the legal context that has heightened the crisis, the cultural materials associated with unidentified border crossers, and the ways in which the institutions working with this crisis navigate the process of returning lost loved ones to their families. The combination of forensic ancestry assessment methods and sociocultural approaches allowed me to paint a full and clear picture of what is happening along our border to my international audience at the G200 Youth Conference.



Lucy Steele takes measurements in the Forensics Lab

This opportunity enriched my understanding of the vast amount of information we can learn from the human body. As a result I have begun to shift my academic interests towards bioarchaeology from an initial interest in archaeology. Dr. Hefner has immensely influenced this newfound interest. Because before I took his Introduction to Physical Anthropology course and had the opportunity to work with him for this project, I had never considered doing any research or study with human remains. I am beyond grateful to the Anthropology Department for the opportunity to participate in such a rewarding and influential conference and to Dr. Hefner for mentoring me through the process from application to final presentation.



Lucy (far left) with other Spartans attending the G200 Youth Summit

Alumnae Dr. Keri Brondo Releases New Textbook

Dr. Keri Vacanti Brondo (Ph.D. 2006), Associate Professor at University of Memphis, just released a new introductory text, "Cultural Anthropology: Contemporary, Public, and Critical Readings" through Oxford University Press. This reader offers a flexible and applied approach for teaching undergraduates. When Oxford Press approached her, Dr. Brondo realized it was an opportunity to create her ideal reader for an intro class, so she combined classic pieces (such as Bohannon's "Shakespeare in the Bush") with a significant number of contemporary pieces: 39 articles from the last decade and 24 from the last few years. Dr. Brondo wanted students to get exposure to a variety of recent ethnographic texts, regardless of what other texts (ethnographies or traditional textbooks) they were assigned.

The reader includes many examples from the U.S., encouraging students to think anthropologically in their own backyards. The book also boasts some features that are unique among readers, such as the "In the News" pieces which discuss current events from an anthropological perspective, and "Anthropology in Practice" sections which feature examples of anthropologists at work in real life situations. Each section of the reader also starts with an essay that introduces students to the topic. These kinds of features are common in traditional textbooks but are not usually included in readers. The result is a versatile text that could be paired with a traditional textbook, or used as a stand-alone text to be complemented with lecture material.

Dr. Brondo also wanted to feature colleagues whose work she had long admired, some of whom she met during graduate school. Thus, many MSU anthropology alumni are among the contributors: Natalie Bourdon, Andrea Freidus, Tara Hefferan, Michael Perez, and Michael Walker as well as others



Dr. Keri Brondo (right)

Dr. Brondo met at MSU such as Neera Singh (Geography Alumnae) and Barbara Rose Johnston (Adjunct Professor).

The textbook is Dr. Brondo's second book. Her 2012 ethnography, "Land Grab: Green Neoliberalism, Gender, and Garifuna Resistance in Honduras," began as her dissertation at MSU. While finishing her degree, she worked as a social scientist in an applied position for a conservation research organization in Honduras and was able to come at her topic from a different perspective. Another summer of research after joining the faculty at the University of Memphis brought the ethnography

up to date. "Land Grab" applies

feminist political ecology and critical race and ethnic studies to analyze the contradictory development policies that exclude Garifuna from securing land and resource rights while allowing others to benefit.

Dr. Brondo credits MSU Anthropology for her grounding in contemporary theory. With the department's support of policy-relevant research, she graduated prepared for both applied and theoretical work. As a graduate student she worked as GJEC coordinator while the specialization was launched and engaged with feminist methodology. Lately, she finds herself in the same conference circles as her former advisor Laurie Medina because of their similar research interests. Since she mentors graduate students herself, she continues to appreciate the commitment Dr. Medina gave her as a student in the form of time and straightforward feedback.

Dr. Brondo is currently the Director of International Studies at University of Memphis, and was recently awarded a 2016-2019 Dunavant Faculty Professorship, a prestigious award at her institution that recognizes excellence in teaching, research, and

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Adjunct Feature: Dr. Heather Walder

Heather Walder is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology for 2016-2017. She recently completed her Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and her dissertation investigated intercultural interaction and colonial encounters across the Upper Great Lakes region of North America. She has extensive teaching, research, and cultural

resource management experience in the Midwest, and she most recently worked for the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Her interest in archaeology first took root during her undergraduate field school excavating a 9th century AD town site in the Czech Republic, where she learned that she loved the outdoor fieldwork, camping, and camaraderie often involved in archaeology. However, as her mother would attest, Heather was destined to be an archaeologist since childhood, when playing in the dirt and conducting messy “science experiments” in the kitchen were some of her favorite pastimes.

After being accepted to the UW-Madison Ph.D. program, she became interested in investigating stone inscriptions in the Mauryan Empire in India under the reign of Ashoka, in the 3rd century BCE. As part of an experimental archaeology course, Walder carved a rock inscription of her own to better understand inscription carving technologies and how they might have served as part of the empire’s system of expansion and integration of outlying areas. She eventually travelled to India to participate in an intensive Urdu language training program and to explore the possibilities of pursuing dissertation research at inscription sites there. As far as she knows, she is still one of the only Midwest archaeologists also conversant in Urdu!

After these initial fieldwork experiences in India, Walder’s geographic interest shifted to the Upper Great Lakes, when she recognized that large-scale research questions about regional

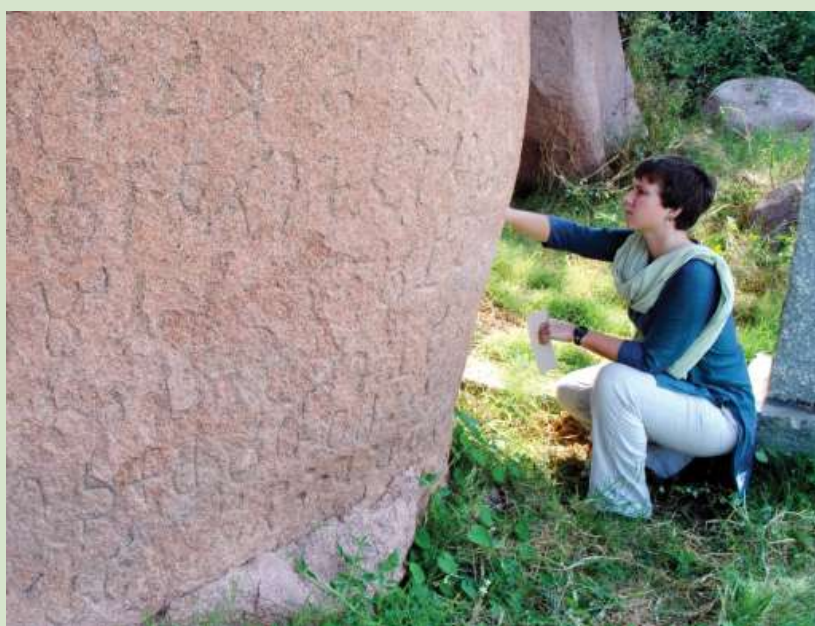


Dr. Heather Walder guest excavating at Fort Michilimackinac, July 2013.

interaction and colonial expansion might be more readily addressed in North America than in South Asia. With funding from the National Science Foundation and many smaller organizations, she undertook a systematic materials science investigation of personal adornment items such as glass beads and ornaments cut from copper trade kettles from 38 archaeological

sites across Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, eastern Minnesota, and northeast Missouri, including several collections of the Michigan State University Museum. This work was particularly enjoyable, as she was able to spend an entire summer circling the Midwest in a state vehicle, analyzing artifacts from numerous curation institutions and conserving grant funds by camping everywhere from National Forests to the backyards of collaborating researchers! The summer culminated in several weeks of archaeological chemistry analyses of

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Dr. Walder in India investigating an Ashokan Rock Edict in India, January 2010

service. She continues to teach one course a year in the Anthropology department and enjoys how close-knit the department is, with synergy across different faculty due to similar interests. Since it is an applied program, the MA is treated as a professional degree and students will go on to practice anthropology in a variety of ways.

Dr. Brondo is now working on a new research project focused on multispecies interaction on the island of Utila and looks forward to developing this research into future publications.

seminar class on Violence and the State and Dr. Mindy Morgan's class on knowledge, memory, and the archives. While in Zanzibar, Jessica plans to conduct a discourse analysis of past legal cases to understand how women were positioned as humanitarian subjects. Dr. Monir Moniruzzaman's class on medical anthropology also helped her think about how women's bodies are used for political causes. After obtaining her PhD, Jessica hopes to teach or become a critical voice within a larger research or policy institution that focuses on women's issues.

Digital Archaeology Grant Wraps Up

The Institute for Digital Archaeology Method and Practice successfully held its second and final meeting at MSU this past August. Directed by Professors Ethan Watrall and Lynne Goldstein and generously supported by a \$250,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the goal of the institute was to bring together scholars, practitioners, and students to learn digital archaeological skills and engage with critical concepts and challenges. The 32 participants were originally chosen from 200 applicants and hailed from a wide range of sectors, including national parks, private cultural resource management firms, academic programs, and museums.

This second meeting followed a year long period during which the institute participants each built the capstone projects they proposed at the end of the institute's first meeting (August 2015). Throughout the year, participants blogged about their process and progress (digitalarchaeology.msu.edu/news). They also engaged one another, the institute faculty, and the broader archaeological community on the Digital Archaeology Commons (commons.digitalarchaeology.msu.edu), a newly launched social platform dedicated to supporting work and community building around digital methods and practice in archaeology and closely related fields.

Aside from the workshops and talks by institute faculty, participants spent the majority of their time working with their mentors—and each other—to complete and publicly launch their capstone projects. Institute participants and faculty also spent time reflecting upon the role that digital methods and

digital projects play in the broader landscape of professional and scholarly practice in archaeology. Capstone projects varied widely, reflecting the diversity of the institute participants themselves:

Ben Carter, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Muhlenberg College, built and launched Digital Data Collection (benjaminpcarter.com/digital-data-collection), a workflow and set of best practices for using a constellation of open source tools and platforms to collect digital data in the field.

Neha Gupta, a Postdoctoral Fellow at Memorial University, built “Map Indian Archaeology” ([dngupta.github.io/mina.github.io](https://github.io/mina.github.io)), a website that maps research and discoveries in Indian archaeology.

Sarah Rowe, an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas Rio Grande, built Virtual Valdivia (sarahmrowe.github.io/Virtual_Valdivia), an online repository of ceramics pertaining to the Valdivia culture (ca. 4400-1450 BC) of coastal Ecuador.

Jolene Smith, Archaeology Inventory Manager for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, built Virginia Archaeology for Everyone (vaarchaeology.matrix.msu.edu), a prototype digital library whose goal is to take often dense, technical archaeological information and present it to the public in an engaging way.

While the grant is complete, the Department will continue to maintain its commitment to research and teaching in the domain of digital archaeology and heritage. You can learn about these projects and more at digitalarchaeology.msu.edu.

Guest Speakers Offer Fresh Perspectives

Two dynamic scholars visited the department this fall. Dr. Donna Yates (University of Glasgow) brought her expertise on antiquities trafficking to campus. She gave a public lecture to an audience of almost 100 with another 41 people watching it stream live. The talk traced factors enabling looting and illicit antiquities sales around the world, raising questions about how policy and scholarship could more effectively prevent the destruction of the past. She also gave a workshop for graduate students in which she analyzed the humanitarian disasters in Syria and Iraq as examples of policy dilemmas. Students were engaged in a discussion of how scholarship and media can work or conflict when it comes to curtailing looting and smuggling.

Dr. Kristina Killgrove (University of West Florida) gave a public lecture on her bioarchaeological research in Rome. Her work uses the archaeological record and biochemical analysis (DNA, stable isotope) to identify immigrants within cemeteries from Imperial Roman society, providing a more complete picture of how slaves, foreigners, and

native-born Romans lived together. She writes a well known blog, “Powered by Osteons,” and is a guest writer for Forbes and Mental Floss. Dr. Killgrove’s workshop on best writing practices for writing for the general public allowed graduate and undergraduate students to consider how blogging and online media could be a fun way to convey anthropological ideas to a broader audience while creating some income and spurring public discussions.

Both scholars visited the same week, so they were able to attend each other’s events and participate in a productive conversation across the department about engaging the public through blogs and other social media. Both of their workshops were at capacity with 35 attendees. Dr. Killgrove’s talk was sponsored by the Archaeological Institute of America while her workshop was sponsored by the Department of Anthropology. Dr. Yates’ visit was made possible by the Alumni and Friends Expendable Fund for Archaeology with co-sponsorship from eight additional units across the university.

Dr. Heather Walder (continued)

glass beads at the Chicago Field Museum, where she employed elemental analysis (LA-ICP-MS) to categorize the chemical compositions of glass trade beads to address her questions about trade, interaction and chronology. She is excited to be building on some of this research here at MSU today.

As a Visiting Assistant Professor, Walder is focusing on developing her long-term research trajectory with a new archaeological survey project, teaching Introduction to Archaeology and other courses in her areas of expertise, and collaborating with the Campus Archaeology Program. Her new survey project, the Chequamegon Bay Archaeological Survey (CBAS), is a community-based participatory research program seeking to locate and investigate historically-documented Wendat (Huron) and Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe) communities along the southern shore of Lake Superior, near Ashland, Wisconsin. She is also continuing her materials

science research on early historic copper-based metal artifacts from the Midwest, utilizing the handheld X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) instrument shared by Anthropology and the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences (in the College of Natural Science). Along with other faculty, she is applying for external funding to curate, digitize, and expand research and public access to the Marquette Mission site (20 MK 82) legacy archaeological collection, which was excavated by Michigan State from the 1980s – early 2000s. Walder is a dedicated teacher-scholar with a passion for undergraduate experiential learning, and an advocate for integrating faculty research into all classroom levels. She brings innovative and collaborative approaches to the investigation of colonial situations in the Midwest with the hope of better understanding the social and economic aspects of human intercultural interaction past and present.

Grad Student Mari Isa Receives NSF Fellowship



Mari Isa is a graduate student analyzing skeletal trauma, and a recent recipient of an NSF fellowship. Below, she shares more about her work:

I started at MSU as an undergraduate. That fall, I took my first anthropology class, Biocultural Evolution, and began working in the Nubian Bioarchaeology Laboratory under the guidance of Dr. Todd Fenton. Needless to say, I was hooked. Six years later, I am serving as the Laboratory Manager in the MSU Forensic Anthropology Laboratory. This job allows me to work with local medical examiners and law enforcement agencies to assist in medico-legal cases. I have worked on cases involving identification of human vs. non-human material, positive radiographic identification, and trauma analysis. As lab manager I continue to learn from directors Dr. Fenton and Dr. Joe Hefner about writing case reports, analysis methods, and activities involved in running a laboratory.

My dissertation research focuses on the intersection between anthropological analysis of skeletal trauma and biomechanical experimentation. Specifically, I am interested in how intrinsic factors related to bone structure and extrinsic mechanical factors interact to produce fracture. To better understand the mechanical concepts involved in this research, I had to dust off my graphing calculator and enroll in engineering courses including Tissue Mechanics and Mechanics of Deformable Solids. I have also started to learn the basics of finite element

modeling. Using a program called Abaqus, I learned to create computational models of simulated impact experiments. These models help predict the location on a skeletal element where the highest stresses—and thus fractures—are likely to occur during impact. In 2014, I was awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to support my dissertation research.

As part of my research, I work on the National Institute of Justice study, “Building a Science of Cranial Fracture” (led by Dr. Fenton with Dr. Roger Haut and Dr. Feng Wei from engineering). At last year’s American Academy of Forensic Sciences meeting I presented on research investigating the role of implement shape in determining cranial fracture patterns. A key result of this research was that individual variation in aspects of bone structure, such as cranial curvature, may contribute to differences in fracture patterns observed between individuals.

Outside of skeletal trauma research, I am also working on a project with recent MSU graduate Dr. Amy Michael aimed at evaluating the applicability of a standard histological method for age estimation using the rib. I have also had the opportunity to venture into bioarchaeological research. For the past two years, I have traveled to Tuscany to assist in osteological investigations of skeletal remains excavated from Late Roman cemeteries under the mentorship of Dr. Fenton, Dr. Elsa Pacciani, and Dr. Alessandro Sebastiani in association with the Alberese Archaeological Project.

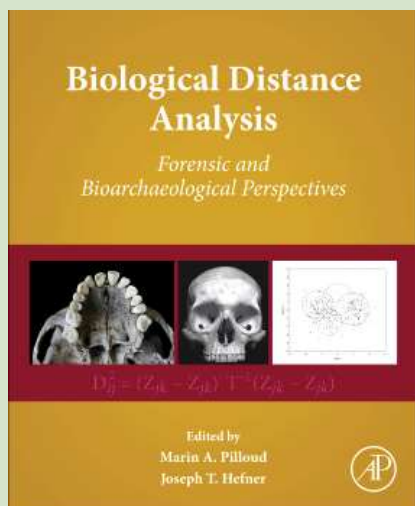
When I graduate, I hope to pursue a career in higher education. I would like to have students of my own because my favorite graduate school experiences have involved teaching. One of my best experiences at MSU was teaching the osteology lab portion of Dr. Fenton and Dr. Norm Sauer’s Human Identification and Forensic Anthropology study abroad course in the United Kingdom. While at MSU, I have also enjoyed being involved in various outreach programs within the Greater Lansing community. I am a senior instructor for the museum’s Human Ancestors Program, and I volunteer with other programs such as Darwin Day at the MSU museum, OsteoCHAMPS with the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Michigan Archaeology Day.

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Book Releases

Biological Distance Analysis, 1st Edition Forensic and Bioarchaeological Perspectives

Edited by: Marin A. Pilloud and Joseph T. Hefner



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