

From the Chair

Greetings from the Department of Anthropology! While a lot has happened since the last newsletter (e.g., we've settled into our new space in the renovated Wooster Building), I wanted to devote this introduction to something else. SUNY New Paltz prides itself on having faculty that are 'teacher-scholars'. That is, even though we are a 4-year undergraduate school, conducting research is a large part of what we do as faculty. We can bring our experiences back into our coursework, but it also means we can get students involved in learning experiences outside of the classroom. It is *these* experiences that stand out on resumes and on job applications as they demonstrate the ability to adapt, to problem solve, and to think and work independently. Therefore, an active faculty translates to active students.

Our department was recently ranked #44 in a nation wide survey of the top 50 Bachelor programs in Anthropology in terms of value. Although it is certainly nice to be recognized in this way, I felt that this really doesn't really capture the true value of our department. So, in order to get a better sense of the "value" of our department, I put together this little snapshot of what our faculty have done "research-wise" over the last 5 years (and keep in mind, we have 6 full time faculty):

- # of presentations at national conferences = 34
- # of presentations at international conferences = 10
- # of external grants = 8
- # of internal grants = 6
- # of published chapters and journal articles = 34

This leads to student/faculty collaboration on articles (Chris Manoharan '13), conference presentations (Kyra Nolte '16), video productions (Dylan Lewis '13), research grants (Sullivan Grunn '17), and internships (Jennifer Diamond '13).

This is the value of our department.

I hope to hear from you all in the near future!



Current Anthropology Students

Field Schools and Study Abroad

Our students continue to take advantage of exciting study abroad and field school opportunities. These are great experiences and offer the chance for students to immerse themselves in a different culture.

Ariana Sofka (Class of 2018)



This summer, Ariana will be attending the Field School in Medieval Archaeology and Bioarchaeology at Badia Pozzeveri (Lucca, Italy) which will focus on the medieval and post-medieval levels of a cemetery associated with the church of San Pietro a Pozzeveri.

Anna Woodworth (Class of 2019)



Anna will be attending Mahidol University in Thailand in the Fall 2017 semester. She will be taking courses for her Anthropology major and Biology minor.

2016-2017 Outstanding Graduates

Our Outstanding Graduates for the academic year are Nathaniel Ogren (left) and Nicholas Hoefer (right). Congratulations!



2016-2017 Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion

For the fifth year in a row, we hosted our Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion. It was a good day filled with interesting presentations, family, and old and new friends.



Richard Pezzella - *Here Come Dat Boi: The internet meme and Western Communication*



DeYan McCarthy - *The Complex Identity of Chinese Adoptees*



Marcin Rozkowski - *Altruism: its irrationality in the context of radical social activism*



A packed house!

2016-2017 Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion



Tamara Samilenko ('94, left) and Carrie Celentano ('94, right)

It was wonderful meeting the alumni that came to the event this year. I know I missed some of you, so please reach out to me to reconnect...and I hope to see you next year!



Tamara and Carrie reconnecting with Dr. Hendel-Sebestyen



Pictured left to right: Jesse Walker ('97), Christine Olsen ('97), and Holly Bruce ('16)



Tisa Leowen ('15) in her Anthropology Honors ceremonial induction mask.

2016-2017 Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion

Every year during the Anthropology Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion, we bestow (complete with an elaborate ritual and secrete incantations) Anthropology Honors to majors that have exceeded a 3.5 GPA in all of their Anthropology course work. This year, the following students are receiving departmental honors:

Ashley Cummins
Sullivan Grunn
Nicholas Hoefler
Adian Morse

Rachel Norkelun
Geneva Turner
Jacob Yoder
Stuart Zanes



Pictured wearing their initiation masks (from left to right): Stuart Zanes, Ashley Cummins, Rachel Norkelun, Nicholas Hoefler, and Adian Morse.

2016-2017 Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion

Behind the scenes of the secret initiation ritual!



2016-2017 Student Research Symposium and Alumni Reunion

The day was capped off by a presentation by Dr. Teferi Abate Adem, Human Relation Area Files, Yale University. His talk was entitled *Humanizing Landscapes as Vernacular Response to Rainfall Variability in Northeastern Ethiopia*.

ABSTRACT: Smallholder farmers in Ethiopia's Amhara region are highly reliant on rainfall, which is their main source of agricultural water. Unfortunately, the onset, duration and intensity of the rain tend to vary from season-to-season and across different communities. In this talk, I argue that despite increasing familiarity with official daily weather predictions radio broadcasted to rural communities, farmers do not think of rainfall variability as fully predictable by supra-local, meteorological processes alone. Instead, they hold a much broader vernacular explanation that also takes into account other, non-meteorological, causes. The most salient of these concerns the ways humans interact with a category of spirits and supernatural powers believed to have animated the bio-physical nature. This understanding supposes that the agricultural landscapes, which farmers divide, use, and refer to by different names, are living and breathing things, imbued with varying qualities such as differential exposure to risks of erratic rains and other climatic stressors.



Graduation 2016 – 2017

And of course, the culminating event of the year - GRADUATION!



One of the benefits of being an Anthropology major: front row seats at graduation.



Sully Grunn



Nichlas Hoefler shaking hands and DeYan McCarthy with her diploma



Ashley Cummings

Graduation 2016 - 2017



Laraib Ali after getting her diploma. You can just spot some of the other majors in the background (e.g., Marisa Bates, Rachael Norkelun) getting ready to receive their diplomas.



Nathanial Ogren receiving his diploma.



At the after-commencement-party with professors DeMunck, Hendel-Sebestyen, and Junge



Congratulations to all of our 2016-2017 graduates!

Anthropology Alumni Update

Tisa Loewen (Class of 2015)

In May 2015, Tisa graduated from SUNY NP with a bachelor's degree in Anthropology. Since then she has been very busy strengthening her skills in the biological and archaeological aspects of anthropology as a Masters student at New York University. Tisa has attended bioarchaeological field school in Spain, interned at the American Museum of Natural History, and was recently accepted as an American Association of Physical Anthropologists Ethics committee fellow for 2017-1018. For her master's thesis, Tisa has been working with archaeologists from the University of Zadar and SUNY New Paltz professor Ken Nystrom on a skeletal collection from the archaeological site in Nadin, Croatia. She is currently applying to PhD programs in biological anthropology where she hopes to continue her research on skeletal biology, considering identity construction, admixture, as well as dialogues on biological affinity in anthropology.



**Please keep in touch and keep an eye on our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/NewPaltzAnthroAlumni/>**

**Please complete the survey at this link so that we can keep
updated about what you are up to:**

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ETHzh4dacyd1ZwbNw%3d%3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RNPDT72?sm=DXBsDETHzh4dacyd1ZwbNw%3d%3d)**