

PARTICIPANT OBSERVER

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Summer 2011

Alumni Updates



The **2011 LEWIS HENRY MORGAN LECTURE** titled “An Archive Beyond History” will be presented by **Marisol de la Cadena**, Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Davis. The Lecture will be held at 7:00 PM on October 19, 2011

Sunny Chung (BA 1997)

Since graduating from law and business school last year I started work at Johnston Barton, a law firm in Birmingham, Alabama (home town). You may have heard about the tornado that whipped through here just a couple weeks ago. It has devastated a huge part of the state, but thankfully it bypassed my (and my parents') neighborhood so we were the fortunate ones.

My work at my firm primarily consists of corporate document drafting and negotiating. I also do a bit of economic development and work with clients in the automotive industry. I know, it's so different from what I did at U of R. Sometimes when I think about it, I've evolved several times since college; it's kind of scary.

Madeleine Cutrona (BA 2008)

I am doing well... currently living in Baltimore, MD where I am a grad student at Maryland Institute College of Art. I am in an interdisciplinary program, but my work focuses on social issues/commentary and frequently work with performance, installation and textiles. **(Cont'd on 2)**

“Farmers and Footballers” by Joe Lanning (BA, 2000)

Sports are often recognized as an outlet, an escape, and a relief from the challenge of everyday life. For the youth of Malawi, football is instead a reflection of life. This athlete attempts a bicycle kick.

Executing this kick is risky, with uncertain outcomes and a chance of injury. Life in this player's community is also precarious.

Uncertainty in the food supply is matched by a chance of chronic hunger. Farmers, like football players, must cultivate their gardens facing great challenges. Regardless of the challenge and vulnerability, the athlete and the farmer, return each day, pushing their bodies to the limits.

“Farmers and Footballers” is the Royal Anthropological Institute's winner of the annual photography competition. This is Joe's *second* year winning the competition. Entries encompassed





Alumni Updates Continued

Devin Opotzner (BA 2009)

I have been following your email updates, and I just checked out the new anthropology department website. It's awesome! I saw the call for alum updates, so I thought I would update you on what I've been doing in the last year. After doing an internship at the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center and teaching with the Institute of Reading Development, I secured a full-time position at the University of Connecticut. I work in the UConn Honors Program developing social, cultural, and academic events for undergraduate Honors students. It's great because I am doing a lot of work similar to what I did with UAC and my other Rochester campus organizations, and I realize now that those experiences are some of the most formative that I had while at Rochester. I just returned from taking two UConn students to an ethics conference at West Point, which was both professionally and culturally enriching. I found myself frequently employing the critical anthropological lens I was trained to have while at Rochester in my discussions of ethics with military personnel and instructors. I still maintain an avid interest in all topics related to anthropology, and looked for employment at an institution of higher education in the hope that I would be able to continue my education in the field or related fields without incurring much more debt (and so far I've received positive feedback on the idea). As time passes since graduation, I am realizing more and more the caliber of instruction and support I received from you and all the professors in Rochester's anthropology department, and I appreciate it so much. It continues to serve me well. Thank you for keeping me on your email list, and I'm looking forward to reading about this year's Morgan lecture in the PO!

Gemma Sole (BA 2009)

My name is Gemma Sole and I am a 2009 Graduate Anthropology Major (2010 KEY scholar). I am now working for Booz Allen Hamilton, a government IT and strategy consulting firm. I have recently gotten involved with the firm's diversity group and I thought bringing a little bit of anthropology to the corporate world would be a great idea. We are looking for diversity events and I immediately thought of the Lewis Henry Morgan lectures. I was hoping to have a local DC Anthro/Sociology professor/grad student come speak about their recent work (which we should be able to link to any number of themed months in the diversity calendar).
Gemma.K.Sole@gmail.com

Graduates: Seniors 2011



Dollie R. Aiken
Margaret G. Ball
Jessalyn Ballerano
Caroline Z. Bernal-Silva
Jessica R. Bohanon
Miles D. Booth
Sarah A. Cummings
Dimitra Georgakopoulos
Eliza Gramarye
Eun Hyei Kim

Adrienne Hloderwski
Jennifer Hoffman
Owen M. Laurion
Elizabeth Marilyn Martin
Victoria M. Massie
Lindsay R. Miller
Christine Marie Rose
Lauren N. Schleider
Ilana O. Shalowitz
Caitlin G. Simpson

Department Awards

*Alumni Award for Promoting
Anthropology & the Public Good*
Adrienne Hloderwski

*Gerald E. Williams Memorial Prize
For Culture & Communication*
Jessalyn Ballerano

Distinguished Service Award
Victoria Massie

Helen S. Jones Award
Margaret G. Ball
Victoria Massie

2011 Undergraduate Research
Margaret G. Ball

Faculty Updates

Professor Eleana Kim received

The 2011 G. Graydon Curtis '58 and Jane W. Curtis

Award for Excellence in Teaching by a Nontenured Member of the Faculty Award at the College of Arts, Science and Engineering Commencement ceremony in May. Professor Kim was awarded an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship for research on a second book about the environmental and political transformation of the Korean demilitarized zone. Beginning this July (2011), Kim will spend a year interviewing environmentalists, politicians, local residents, and others to turn the militarized border between North and South Korea into a greenbelt of peace.



Professor Robert J. Foster received

fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies, supporting academic leave for 2011-12. He will write a cultural biography of the P.G. Black Collection of Pacific Islands objects at the



Buffalo Museum of Science. Opening in September, his co-curated exhibit, *Journeys to Papua*, will consider five collectors' trips to Papua New Guinea between the 1890s and 1990s. During the summer, he will participate in, "Markets, Materiality and Consumer Practices," at the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies, University of Queensland, Brisbane. The workshop will engage issues addressed in his publication, *Coca-Globalization: Following Soft Drinks from New York to New Guinea* (2008). In the fall, he will be a Wyse Visiting Professor in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, England.

Professor John Osburg's

research is broadly concerned with the relationship between market economies and systems of cultural value,

affect, and morality. From 2003 to 2006, he conducted ethnographic fieldwork with a group of wealthy entrepreneurs in southwest China, examining practices of network



building and deal making between businesspeople and government officials. Osburg examined how these networks were forged and maintained through ritualized entertaining and the informal moral codes through which they operated. His current book project, *Anxious Wealth: Money, Morality, and Social Networks among China's New Rich*, examines the rise of elite networks in China and documents the changing values, lifestyles, and consumption habits of China's new rich and new middle classes. Professor Osburg received his MA and PhD from University of Chicago.

Anthropology Undergraduate Research Grant

The **2010 Anthropology Undergraduate Research Grant** made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Louis Samuels, an alumnus of the department, and Dr. Fania Leiderman-Samuels in memory of Simon Leiderman was awarded to **Margaret Grace Ball**. Margaret's research entitled "Eagle and Condor in the Same Skies? A Paradoxical Sustainability Narrative in New York's Hydrofracking Debate". A "sustainability" narrative pervades contemporary environmental activism that weds modern scientific knowledge with premodern spiritual knowledge that "everything is interconnected." Margaret examines the employment of this sustainability narrative in an activist movement against hydrofracking in upstate New York. Activists employ scientific discourse, separating Nature from Culture, in order to create a legitimate voice in the political-cultural context of contemporary America. They pair this with a moral discourse stressing human-environment interconnections which draws legitimacy from a larger narrative of "indigenous morality." Problematically, it often remains unclear whether activists' appeals to "interconnection" indicate a true subversion of Western Nature/Culture categories, or merely an ethnocentric assumption of their overlap. The silence of this uncertainty, Margaret argues, results from activists' strategic desire to articulate with broader narratives in order to maximize their movement's political effect. However, as in many things, silence only serves to perpetuate old dichotomies, avoiding crucial conversations that could help to correct cultural misunderstandings and rectify imbalanced power relations. While hydrofracking is a real and immediate concern, Margaret argues, the danger of ethnocentrism is *equally* real and immediate, and questions about cultural relativism need to be voiced confidently and urgently in this and other environmental debates.

2011 ANTHROPOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT Sorcha Dundas '12

Sorcha has an internship at the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program (VRRP) in Burlington. She proposes to study the socialization of refugees in Vermont through their relationship with the welfare state and the establishment of positive agency through agriculture.

Undergraduate Awards

NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Victoria Massie '11 (B.A., Anthropology; African & African-American Studies)

“(Re)Connection: Networking African American Identity in Genetic Ancestry Testing”

Excerpt from proposal: “As demonstrated by the development of African Ancestry, Inc. in 2003 and Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s PBS documentaries *African American Lives* (2006), many African Americans are utilizing genetic ancestry testing to understand their ancestry... Utilizing information collected during African Ancestry, Inc.’s “We Are Africa” Road Tour in August 2010, I will illuminate how genetic ancestry testing companies—hybrids of commercial and scientific innovation—produce “ancestry” by employing the genome... For this reason, African American consumers serve as a paradigm. Based on the history of the Atlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery in the U.S., the African American racial/ethnic identity presupposes having little (if any) knowledge about an ancestry beyond America’s eastern shoreline. As a consequence, this group is particularly invested in “ancestry,” providing insight into the types of social networks simultaneously engendered, validated, and invalidated by this genetic technology. By examining this phenomenon, I will call attention to the hidden politics of knowledge production in science and the implications this has on identity construction for people locally and globally.”

HUMANITY IN ACTION FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

Mara Chinelli '12/T5 (B.A., Anthropology) of Manhattan, NY has become the fifth Rochester student or alumnus selected as an HIA Fellow since 2006. HIA fellows are selected through a highly competitive application process and spend six weeks of the summer in U.S. or European cities participating in intensive seminars, focus groups, and site visits related to international human rights issues and rights of minority populations within majority societies. Participants have the opportunity to engage with diplomats, journalists, scholars, and leaders of human rights organizations during the program, and complete a written research report on human rights or minority issues in their host country. Chinelli will be the third Rochester student to do the Berlin summer program. She studied abroad in Jordan this past fall and spent summer 2010 in the West Bank volunteering for Cinema Jenin and also working on a sustainable farm in Beit Sahur. She also spent part of last summer studying in an intensive Arabic language course in Amman. Chinelli received an undergraduate research grant from the Dept. of Anthropology last year, which helped support her summer 2010 ethnographic fieldwork on political tourism in Palestine. On campus, she has been active in Students for a Democratic Society, a writer for the Campus Times, and a teaching assistant in anthropology. Her Take Five program is entitled "African-American Narratives: Literary Expressions of Identity."

2011-12 FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

Jenna Miller '11 (B.A., Russian; **minor: Anthropology**; Certificate in Literary Translation Studies) of Richfield Springs, NY, is the first UR Fulbright Scholar to Shymkent, Kazakhstan, where she will serve as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in a secondary school helping students improve their ability to speak English comfortably. Jenna is an experienced intercultural ambassador, having spent a year in Krasnoyarsk, Russia as a Rotary International Youth Exchange Student prior to matriculating at UR. She also spent summer 2009 in Tomsk studying Russian language and culture intensively as a Critical Language Scholar through a competitive program sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of State.

2011-12 FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR FINALIST

Gabriel Perreault '11 (B.S., Molecular Genetics; **minor: Medical Anthropology**), Denmark

HONORS RESEARCH 2011

Jessalyn Ballerano “Contracted Birth: Limited Agency, Authoritative Knowledge, and Modern Meanings of Choice in American Reproduction”

PHI BETA KAPPA 2011

Margaret Ball, Jennifer Hoffman

The Participant Observer

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