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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Anthropology

Vol 3, No. 1 Spring 2010

Participant/Observer

A Newsletter for Friends of the Western Michigan University
Department of Anthropology

WMU Anthropologist and NSF Awardee, Bilinda Straight is Featured Author at Conference on Global Health and Violence

What are the long-term impacts of living in a community experiencing acute or chronic episodes of violent conflict?



WMU anthropologist and NSF awardee Bilinda Straight, featured with Samburu women in the field. Photo by Charles Hilton.

How can experiences of violence be expressed in words and numbers that will be understood and positively acted upon?

Many people assume that the pictures we see in the media—of the aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti, for example—correspond to obvious facts. Count the dead, count the

number of injuries and diseases, and send money accordingly. Unfortunately, the short- and long-term impacts of violence and disaster on people's health and psychological wellbeing are not so easily documented.

Even the most basic data—counting the dead—is so difficult in dangerous and rapidly changing circumstances that authors of a 2010 editorial in *The Lancet* reported on a model developed to make sense of wide variations in no less than 63 mortality surveys gathered for Darfur over a four year period. One of the problems in dealing with catastrophes in poorer countries is determining what health and mortality looked like prior to the violence or natural disaster in circumstances where such seemingly basic information is lacking.

The situation is more complicated as researchers attempt to understand the impacts of catastrophe on the daily life of the whole person. For this reason, improving scientific methods for documenting the broad health impacts of violence, particularly in very different cultural contexts, has emerged as a key concern in the global health arena.

This concern is so great that in January 2010, prominent researchers, doctors, and representatives of humanitarian organizations including World Health Organization (WHO),

continue p. 2

International Rescue Committee (IRC), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and Global Doctors met in Copenhagen to develop an agenda for coordinated efforts and methodologies for documenting, analyzing, and reporting on violent conflict.

Western Michigan University anthropologist Bilinda Straight was a featured author and researcher at the conference. The conference coincided with the publication of linked special issues in the international journals *The Lancet*, *Social Science & Medicine*, and *The Journal of the Danish Medical Association*.

Straight and her colleague, Ivy Pike, University of Arizona, are principal investigators of a National Science Foundation research study developing an innovative methodology to document the lived experiences of violence among the poorest of the poor—in a pastoralist region of northern Kenya where poverty ranges from 84 to 95 percent compared to Kenya’s national average of 53 percent.

Straight and Pike are working with U.S. collaborator Charles Hilton (Grinnell College), and European and Kenyan collaborators at University of Bergen (Norway) and Egerton University (Kenya) to document the short- and long-term impacts of intercommunity violence in northern Kenya—one of

all too many conflict zones typically missed by the international media.

For these researchers, better understanding of the relationship between culture and health is key to improved methodologies. To address this, the team is testing a unique approach to integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies that raises culturally specific questions about even the most basic quantifiable variables such as gender and age. They hope to offer broadly relevant, quantifiable ways to describe typically elusive dimensions of lived experience—not just writing poetry alongside the numbers, but putting poetry into the numbers.

While medical anthropologists have been highlighting the role of cultural context for decades, this is a crucial historical moment because humanitarian organizations and researchers in global health fields are listening. And, with decades of experience working on the ground in the same impoverished region of northern Kenya—Straight, Pike, and their colleagues are in a position to offer an important contribution to a problem of enduring, global significance: Describing and measuring the specific impact of suffering in very different cultural situations so that the most effective routes to alleviating suffering can be explored.



NSF Project Turkana Field Team conducting nutrition measurements with internally displaced Turkana. Photo by Charles Hilton.

Letter from the Chair



"Greetings! As you've probably guessed, I am the new chair of the Department of Anthropology."

- Louann Wurst

I moved to Kalamazoo from Rochester, New York where I served as associate professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology at SUNY Brockport. While I do not know many of you, I am excited to be at Western and look forward to learning about all of our alumni scattered across the country.

Updates

It has been a busy year and I would like to update you on some of our activities. We had two visiting scholars present their research and meet with students:

Dr. Patricia Galloway, associate professor at the University of Texas-Austin, is an ethnohistorian known for her work in the southeastern United States. Students in Dr. Michael Nassaney's ethnohistory course used her textbook "Practicing Ethnohistory" and had the opportunity to discuss it with the author.

Dr. Chris Beard, curator and head of the section of vertebrate paleontology, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, is one of the leading paleoanthropologists in the field. While on campus, Dr. Beard gave a well-attended public lecture, a departmental seminar on his research, and met with students in Dr. Robert Anemone's biological anthropology graduate seminar. His wife, Dr. Sandra Olsen, also gave a fascinating lecture on evidence of horse domestication.

Dr. Brent Metz was selected as our distinguished alumni this year. He graduated with a B.A. from

WMU in 1986 and currently is an assistant professor in anthropology at the University of Kansas. While on campus, he met with a large group of students to talk about his experiences as a student and professional in anthropology.

We have exciting plans for next year as well. In particular, we are expecting to move into our new lab space at the end of the Moore Hall wing. Our plans for this space include a new archaeology lab, a visual/media lab, a teaching lab or resource room, and a dedicated seminar room. Another priority for our space reorganization is to create a student meeting room or lounge.

We are also looking forward to the American Anthropological Association's RACE: Are We so Different? exhibit opening October 2010 at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. We are planning many events in the department and university revolving around this important exhibit.

I hope that alumni and friends of the Department of Anthropology will continue their interest in and support for our programs and will use this newsletter to keep in touch with faculty and fellow alumni. Please update us on your achievements and activities by sending a letter or email to louann.wurst@wmich.edu.

Louann Wurst
Associate Professor and Chair

Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project: 2009 Field Season Summary

Established in 1998, the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project seeks to engage the public in the investigation and interpretation of sites associated with the colonial fur trade in the St. Joseph River valley of southwest Michigan. This past season, a team of more than 20 WMU faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and volunteers continued a program of public outreach and community service learning in conjunction with the 34th annual archaeological field school.

During the past season, the project investigated areas that previously yielded features such as middens, fireplaces and hearths, or particularly high artifact concentrations. Excavations were centered on facilitating an understanding of the size and orientation of buildings at Fort St. Joseph and the construction methods employed by the French and Natives at the site. In addition, increasing the size and variety of the recovered artifact assemblage continued to be a primary goal to enable further understanding of the process of ethnogenesis and how social identities were created, contested, and reproduced on the frontier of the Colonial empire.

Excavations yielded a large assemblage of 18th century artifacts and faunal remains indicative of the diverse, multi-ethnic community who called Fort St. Joseph home. As in past years, archaeologists recovered a number of military, commercial, and domestic-related artifacts from beads, lead-shot, musket balls to nails and assorted ceramic shards



A 2009 field school student carefully works on excavating a white clay pipe stem and bowl, a common artifact at many historical archaeological sites including Fort St. Joseph.

and architectural detritus that continued to inform researchers on site structure and the activities conducted there.

Students found, in several units, a number of unique artifacts relating to personal adornment such as, a heart-shaped finger ring, several ear and nose bobs, a complete silver hoop earring, an embossed buckle, a brooch complete with tongue, tinkling cones, and a complete matching pair of ornate glass-inlaid cufflinks. Such elaborately crafted and gilded items highlight the fact that a number of individuals at Fort St. Joseph were continuing to wear very European-styled ornamentation on a frontier outpost thousands of miles from France.

A copper alloy crucifix, which incorporates the corpus of Christ, was excavated as well. The object testifies to the importance and persistence of religious beliefs at the frontier outpost.

Lastly, the most complete white ball clay smoking pipe recovered to date at the Fort site also was discovered, demonstrating the cultural interplay and interaction of Native and French at



Excavation and note-taking at Fort St. Joseph.

the site. Excavations in the vicinity of a previously identified stone fireplace and hearth provided further information on its size and orientation. Activities relating to sewing, cooking, smoking and relaxation appear in the form of straight pins, tacks, smoking pipe fragments, shards of redware that could be portions of cooking vessels, several mouth harps and two circular bone gaming pieces. Finally, the continued investigation of a large pit feature, first identified in 2002, revealed that the pit is much larger than expected resulting in the question whether or not this feature is actually a well but instead part of a basement or cellar.

The public outreach components of the field school included three week-long summer camps run in association with the Fort St. Joseph Museum. Adults from local communities, students from the sixth to ninth grades, and six continuing-education teachers all learned how to excavate properly, identify artifacts, and gain an appreciation of the importance of archaeological materials. In addition this year's community service learning component

included a four-part weekly lecture series in which visiting scholars discussed various topics relating to the archaeology and history of Fort St. Joseph. The field exercises culminated with the annual two-day open house at which community members had the opportunity to listen to lectures, witness demonstrations by historical re-enactors, peruse an outdoor museum featuring artifact displays highlighting recent finds from the field season, and interact with the field school students. A cornerstone of the field school, the open house remains firmly dedicated to bringing the community closer to the project by sharing the history, culture and actual archaeology of Fort St. Joseph. Since 2006, more than 6,000 visitors have enjoyed this special event.

As the upcoming field season approaches, several informal presentations are scheduled to raise project awareness and draw in prospective students. Plans for the 2010 open house, to be held Aug. 14 and 15, are under way with the tentative theme being "Women of New France."



Kalamazoo Valley Museum hosts RACE exhibit

Oct. 2, 2010 to Jan. 2, 2011

The Department of Anthropology is pleased to announce that Kalamazoo in Fall 2010 will host the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) exhibit RACE: Are We So Different? Through a partnership with WMU, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum will open this phenomenal, anthropological exhibit on Oct. 2. Admission to the museum is free, and the exhibit will stay until Jan. 2, 2011. Many organizations on campus and around the region are planning events and programs to coincide with this exhibit and its theme of stimulating informed dialogue on race and racism as issues of our society.

The exhibit itself, a product of the AAA's Race Project and the Science Museum of Minnesota, with funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and Ford Foundation, addresses race through three themes: current scientific understandings of human biological variation, the history of the race concept in American society, and contemporary lived experiences of race that demonstrate its continuing impact on social inequalities. The Department of Anthropology is working with the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and other departments and institutions to bring speakers, do outreach with secondary public school educators, and involve students in service learning around the exhibit.



A Magic Field Season in the Eocene of Wyoming

“We could not predict how extensive the fossil deposits were at this site.”

-Dr. Anemone

*Dr. Robert L. Anemone
Associate Professor of Anthropology, WMU
Biological Anthropologist
Vertebrate Paleontologist*

A field crew from Western Michigan University’s Department of Anthropology traveled to southwest Wyoming in July 2009. The crew consisted of WMU anthropology graduate students Tim Held, Justin Gish, and Victoria Kersbergen, as well as graduate students from several other universities, including the University of Texas, University of Michigan, and Southern Illinois University.

Our work in Wyoming’s Great Divide Basin began in 1994, and Anemone has led crews back out to the high desert of Wyoming nearly every summer since then. However, none of the earlier field seasons prepared us for the fossil bonanza that we would soon encounter.

On Wednesday, July 8, 2009, our third full day of searching for fossils, we decided to drive to an area known as Salt Sage Draw and search for fossils in some known localities which we had not visited in the past four or five years. Finding our way into Salt Sage Draw has always been a bit of an adventure,

since the roads have changed quite a bit over the years as new drill holes for oil and natural gas have been developed in this very rugged and out-of-the-way place (even by southwestern Wyoming standards). On this particular day, we drove eight miles north of Interstate 80 on a dirt track known as Bar X Road. We then turned west on a very rough 2-track road for the three- or four-mile trip into Salt Sage Draw. We soon realized that this two-track was not the one that we remembered, which brought us into the Salt Sage Draw at a very recognizable place. We did not worry, though, because we knew this road would bring us to the Draw just a bit north of where we normally entered, but once there, we would be able to use the G.P.S. receivers to determine exactly where our fossil localities were.

We did however stop and park our vehicles about 3/4 of the way into the Draw at a high point on the road where we clearly saw the north-south running Salt Sage Draw another mile or so to the west. We confirmed our position on our topographic maps,

but before getting back into our vehicles to follow the by now very faintly marked two-track to the Draw, we decided to take a closer look at the eroded sandstone exposures immediately to the north.

Starting from the northwest side of these exposures, our team fanned out and slowly prospected for fossils towards the south and east. Keeping the late morning sun in front of us keeps our shadows behind us and out of our field of vision as we search for small fossil teeth and bones in the slowly eroding sandstones.



Surface collecting and screening for fossils at Tim’s Confession.



Tim Held collecting fossils at the new locality he found in July 2009.

We quickly found some fossil teeth and bones, and decided to spend the morning there. By lunch time (tuna sandwiches with cheese, apples and pickles), we had filled two small film canisters with fossils, which we considered a good morning, but nothing special. After lunch, however, as we came around the south side of the main exposure, Held and Gish called out that they had found some nice jaws with multiple teeth. I quickly joined them, and within a few more minutes, we had each collected five to 10 lovely mammal jaws. Our normal procedure is to wrap jaws with tissue paper before putting them in the film canisters, in order to protect the fragile bone and teeth. For the first time in nearly 20 years of collecting fossils in Wyoming, Oregon, and Kenya, I was finding so many jaws so quickly that I could not bear to wrap them and pause in my searching. So I carefully piled them up on the ground and kept on searching and finding more jaws...there would be time to wrap them up later, after the excitement of finding so many beautiful specimens wore off a bit.

Before long, the whole crew was crawling around this part of the sandstone, and everyone was having the same kind of success. Gleeful shouts of “Another jaw,” “Found one with five teeth,” “Beautiful rodent jaw,” and the like were echoing through the badlands, as we all enjoyed one of the greatest days of fossil collecting that any of us will likely ever experience. As the sun started to set and the quality of the late afternoon light diminished, we packed up and headed back to camp, secure in the knowledge that we had just found one of the best mammalian fossil localities from the early Eocene of North America.

We eagerly looked forward to returning on the next day to see if we could hope for at least one more day of extraordinary fossil collecting at this new locality that we named Tim’s Confession. We could not predict how extensive the fossil deposits were at this site, perhaps tomorrow we would find that we had picked it clean of its fossil riches in the six or seven hours that we had crawled it on the previous day. Only time would tell.

Tim’s Confession did not disappoint. We returned five more days during that field season, and each succeeding day was at least as productive (and sometimes more productive) than the previous day. After six full days of collecting, much of it spent screening the sediment and then picking fossils off the surface of the screen, we had collected approximately 500 mammalian jaws and 4,000 individual

bones and teeth.

Considering that our combined fossil collections from 12 previous field seasons in the Great Divide Basin numbered about 8,000 bones and

teeth, and only about 150 jaws, we had really found an extraordinarily rich new locality. We currently are identifying, cataloging, photographing and analyzing these fossils, and making plans to return to Tim’s Confession in August 2010.

We will be presenting the preliminary results of this work at the American Association of Physical Anthropologists’ Annual Meetings in Albuquerque, N.M. in April.

**“We all enjoyed one of the greatest days of fossil collecting that any of us will likely ever experience.”
-Dr. Anemone**



A lovely 50 million year old carnivore jaw from Tim’s Confession.

Mastodon Bones Identified in Biological Anthropology Lab

By Dr. Robert L. Anemone

When Mr. Roger Olds of St. Joseph County, Mich. called to ask if someone in the Department of Anthropology might be able to help him identify a large “fossil” bone that he had found on his property, my expectations were not particularly high.

Being a biological anthropologist with an active research program in vertebrate paleontology (the study of the fossil history of animals with backbones), I often receive phone calls like this. And most of the time, the “fossil” turns out to be a rock or mineral with only the vaguest resemblance to a real vertebrate fossil.

But when Mr. Olds brought his discovery to my lab in late January 2010, it did not take long for my students and I to confirm that he had, indeed, found a beautiful fossil bone.

Roger had found a pelvis or hip bone that was nearly complete, from the left side of an adult American mastodon (*Mammuth americanum*). The large circular structure in the middle of the bone is known as the acetabulum, and it forms the hip



Mastodon pelvis with ruler for scale.

socket, articulating with the head of the thigh bone or femur.

Since the American mastodon went extinct at the end of the Ice Age (Pleistocene Epoch), this bone comes from an animal that lived more than 10,000 years ago. Mastodons are reasonably common fossils in Michigan, often coming from bogs or other wetland settings, sometimes as complete skeletons.

Students in anthropology 3500, Primate Evolution, were involved in the examination and identification of this fossil in our department’s paleontology lab in Moore Hall.

In The Spotlight

Brent Metz is the Distinguished Alumni Award winner for the Department of Anthropology. Metz, a native of St Joseph, Mich., received his B.A. majoring in Anthropology and Spanish at Western Michigan University ‘86, and his M.A. in anthropology from University of Michigan ‘89. He finished his Ph.D. at SUNY-Albany ‘95, the dissertation for which regarded the relationship between Ch’orti’ Maya political economy and ethos in Guatemala. He taught in full-time, non-tenure track positions at Western Michigan University, Central Connecticut State, Grinnell, and Temple from 1995-2000,

before taking the position of associate director of Latin American studies at the University of Kansas in 2001. Since 2005, he has been assistant professor of anthropology at Kansas. Among his publications are two books and an edited volume: “Primero Dios: Etnografía y cambio social entre los mayas ch’orti’s del oriente de Guatemala” (‘God Willing’: Ethnography and Social Change among the Ch’orti’ Maya of Eastern Guatemala) (2002), “Ch’orti’-Maya Survival in Eastern Guatemala: Indigeneity in Transition” (2006), “The Ch’orti’ Maya Area, Past and Present” (2009).

Meet LouAnn Wurst

I am an historical archaeologist whose primary research focus is the development of the modern Capitalist world. I am particularly interested in questions about the social relations of class, ideology, and gender in the 19th century. These research questions have always resonated with me, stemming, I think, from the fact I grew up during the 1970s. My father was a construction worker and the building trades represented an economic sector particularly hard-hit by the recession. He was unemployed for much of the decade. I did not plan to focus on historical archaeology, but became increasingly drawn to explore social issues that had relevance to understanding the modern world and to make sense of my own experience.

I got my B.A. at Temple University (Philadelphia, PA) and attended Binghamton University (Binghamton, NY) for graduate work. My dissertation entailed a class analysis of a small rural community located in the Binghamton area. I've always been frustrated by common-sense understandings that treat "rural" as simple agrarian, static, and passive. Any examination of historic maps documents a great deal of industry in rural communities. Rural became predominantly agricultural only after these industries were removed from rural contexts as industry became increasingly concentrated in urban areas.

The goal of my dissertation was to integrate agriculture

and industry into the understanding of a single community. I focused on the tannery operation located in the hamlet of Upper Lisle in upstate New York (where?), and excavated at the house site of the tannery owner and his sons, as well as the boarding house where the mostly Irish tannery workers lived.

My analysis demonstrated the class structure of the agricultural segment was very different than that of organizing the tannery and other rural industries. While each economic segment could be divided into groups of laborers, middling classes, and elites, each was naturalized with very different ideologies that impacted their use of material culture.

Since then, issues of class have been central to all my research. I have examined questions of class and material culture of elite families and domestic servants in urban 19th century Binghamton; used a focus on labor in hotels to understand the transformations in Niagara Falls and the creation of the tourist industry; and applied a class analysis to social reform by focusing on the Gerrit Smith estate in upstate New York.

Since 2000, I have been working on the Finger Lakes National Forest Farmstead Archaeology Project in New York. As part of this project, I have directed excavations at 10 farms in order to study the discrepancies between common agrarian myths and the material realities of 19th

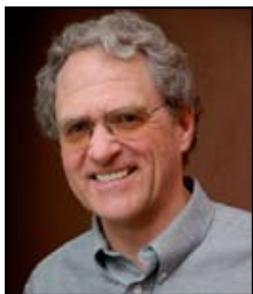


Mark Hoock, WMU Master's Student, drawing unit profile at the Albright II Log Cabin Site

and early 20th century families who lived on these upland farms. These farms were all purchased by the Federal Government as part of the Resettlement Administration's Submarginal Farms Program (this is the name of the program), designed to save farmers stranded on unproductive farmland in the 1930s. We have found little evidence for the supposed decrease in productivity of these farms or reduction of the farm family's standard of living. Instead, we discovered these farmers were building new houses, improving their property, and buying expensive consumer goods throughout the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries.

Given these disparities, this project provides an ideal context to elucidate the Capitalist transformation of American agriculture from the early 19th century until the Depression. I have brought all of the artifacts from the Finger Lakes (over 100,000) to WMU with me. This means that I have a lot of data for student projects. Let me know if you would be interested in helping.

News from the Lewis Walker Institute



Tim Ready

Through the Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations, Western Michigan University students and faculty learn about diversity, while they actively engage in research and service with the goal of making communities more equitable and inclusive.

Applied anthropologist Tim Ready now directs the Walker Institute, located in Welborn Hall.

Before arriving on campus two years ago, Ready taught and conducted ethnographic research in south Texas and in Washington, D.C.; directed the national diversity campaign for the Association of American Medical Colleges throughout the 1990s; was director for three studies addressing the education of minority and economically disadvantaged students at the National Research Council; and served as research director at the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. With the anticipated launch of a new interdisciplinary minor in race and ethnic relations in the fall of 2010 as his top priority, Ready has set an ambitious agenda for the Walker Institute.

The Institute developed the One Community model as the framework for its extensive applied research and service activities. The One Community model has three components: (1) documenting the causes and magnitude of disparities in access to resources and opportunities by race/ethnicity and class; (2) evaluating the effectiveness of the health and human services infrastructure relative to community needs; and (3) engaging in applied research, service and advocacy to build institutions and communities that are more equitable and inclusive.

Following are some of the Institute's current research and service activities based on the One Community model:

- “Are We a Healthy Community? Health Disparities in Kalamazoo, Michigan and Beyond.” April 1, 2010. This presentation and community conversation featured Brian Smedley, Ph.D., director of the Health Policy Institute at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, D.C. The event is co-sponsored by the Center for Social Justice Leadership at Kalamazoo College.
- In collaboration with the Kalamazoo-based Poverty Reduction Initiative, the Walker Institute is playing a leading role in the State of Michigan's Voices for Action anti-poverty campaign.
- The Walker Institute is working with various civic leaders to implement the Kalamazoo Action Covenant whose theme is: To realize our promise, each of us must be a keeper of the promise.
- The Walker Institute is playing a key role in supporting service learning at Western Michigan University. On Feb. 1, 2010, the WMU Center for Service Learning was founded, with Dr. Kathy Purnell as the new university coordinator for service learning.

For more information about the Walker Institute, go to www.wmich.edu/walkerinstitute, visit the Lewis Walker Institute in Welborn Hall, or call 387-2141.



Conference Participation

Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency (KRESA) Workshop

In November 2009, faculty members Kristina Wirtz and Jacqueline Eng worked with the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency to deliver a two-day anthropology workshop for middle school teachers. New Michigan education standards include teaching about the nature of historical evidence and how it is used to understand the past, something many teachers feel unprepared to cover. Wirtz and Eng developed a range of activities and materials to demonstrate how anthropologists—biological and cultural—bring together multiple kinds of data to understand humans as biocultural beings, and to reconstruct the life-worlds of diverse societies of the past and present. Calling the workshop, “Migration and masking,” they tied their activities in to two current Kalamazoo Valley Museum exhibits on the Genome Project and the “Spirit of the Mask.”



Jacqueline Eng conducting an anthropology workshop for teachers.

Bioarchaeology and Forensic Anthropology Association (BARFAA)

In November 2009, several students joined Jacqueline Eng at the 16th annual Midwest Conference of the Bioarchaeology and Forensic Anthropology Association (BARFAA), held at the University of Indianapolis. One student, Katy Grant, had been awarded a WMU Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities award that helped fund the independent research and poster she presented at the conference.

Society for Historical Archaeologists

One of the coldest Januarys in decades did little to sway 19 intrepid WMU students, faculty, and alumni from making the trek to Amelia Island, Florida, the site of the 2010 Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, sponsored by the Society for Historical Archaeologists (SHA), the world’s largest professional organization dedicated to studying material culture of the recent past. Several WMU graduate students presented papers on topics ranging from the economic underpinnings of Jesuits in New France to the archaeology of historic farmsteads in upstate New York. Additionally, the team from WMU garnered several prestigious and competitive awards. Graduate student Andrew Robinson, himself the official photographer of the SHA conference, and recent WMU graduate Tori Hawley took home awards from the archaeology photography competition. Two posters were also shown at the conference, one on the 2009 Fort St. Joseph archaeological field season and the other on public archaeology, the project’s hallmark.



The 16th Annual Midwest conference of the BARFAA. Left to right: Jacqueline Eng, Connor Hagen, Katy Grant, Rachel Carlson, and Adrienne Neubert.

Faculty News



Kristina Wirtz

Kristina Wirtz participated in a Mellon-grant funded institute to annotate 10 hours of her field video recordings for deposition at Indiana University's Ethnographic Video for Instruction and Analysis Digital Archive (EVIADA) Project last summer. EVIADA recordings will be available for research and instruction on the

internet. She also was awarded a WMU Faculty Research and Creative Activities Award (FRACAA) grant to continue research in Cuba for a book on performing blackness in religious ceremonies and folklore shows. Her article on ritual waste in Cuban folk religion appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society* in fall 2009, and she currently is co-guest-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* on racializing discourses as well as working with community partners in planning educational outreach for the American Anthropology Association's RACE Exhibit coming to Kalamazoo in fall 2010.



Laura Spielvogel

Laura Spielvogel presented a paper titled "Marriage of Cultures: An Online, Role-Playing Simulation for Japanese Anthropology" at the Symposium for Gender Studies across Languages and Disciplines at WMU fall 2009. She has published an article in the annual bulletin for the Society for Gender Studies (*Nihongo Gendaa Gakkai*) and has

co-authored two articles in the *International Journal of Learning and Media*, and the *Electronic Journal of Communication*.

Sarah Hill, on sabbatical for 2009-2010, is working on several distinct projects. Throughout it all, she continues to keep her eye on all things waste and recycling—both solid and liquid. She is finishing a book about a garbage dump on the United States-Mexico border and is continuing her biofuels collaboration on campus with chemistry faculty Steven Bertman and John Miller. She hopes to finish her book by the summer of 2010, though the on-going war between rival drug syndicates in Ciudad Juárez has posed some challenges to that. Back home on the much more peaceful turf of Michigan, the biofuels group now has an algae harvesting operation to study the prospects for turning WMU's Goldsworth Pond scum into a gasoline-alternative fuel. She will be returning to Cuba, as well New Orleans, following material recovery practices in both of those settings.

Allen Zagarell continues to cultivate interest in Central Asia in the department and is mentoring a number of students who are working in this area. He is teaching them Tajik and Uzbek and plans on leading a group of undergraduate/graduate students to Kyrgyzstan through the Diether H. Haenicke Institute for Global Studies in the near future.

Bilinda Straight currently is conducting a collaborative medical anthropology project (dual PIs Bilinda Straight, WMU and Ivy Pike, University of Arizona) funded by the National Science Foundation that seeks to determine how intercommunity violence creates a special class of vulnerable and impoverished persons, making violence-created inequality distinct from other forms of poverty and inequality. In this context, they are longitudinally documenting the broad health consequences of violence on men,

Faculty News

women, and children using an innovative, mixed-methods approach that identifies culturally specific markers of vulnerability and resilience.



Tim Ready

Tim Ready planned the “Kalamazoo Matters” community conversation series, in collaboration with the Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership at Kalamazoo College. The first event took place April 1 and featured Brian Smedley, director of the Health Policy Institute of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, located in

Washington, D.C. The topic was: “Is Kalamazoo a Healthy Community?” and focused on causes and solutions to racial and class disparities in health. Later presentations addressed issues related to education and employment.



Michael Nassaney

Michael Nassaney has been busy attending conferences and preparing his research for publication. Earlier this academic year he attended the Center for French Colonial Studies conference (St. Louis) and the Conference on Underwater and Historical Archaeology (Florida). He also presented papers

at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology (St. Louis) and the Theoretical Archaeology Group conference at Brown University. His recently co-edited a book on archaeology and

community service learning was published by the University Press of Florida in 2009.

Robert Anemone’s book “Race and Human Diversity: A Biocultural Approach,” will be published by Prentice-Hall in 2010. His paleontological work in the Great Divide Basin of Wyoming continues, and he is looking forward to completing several papers during a one-semester sabbatical during fall 2010.

Ann Miles continues her research on lupus in Ecuador and this summer she completed the last interviews for this multi-year project. She has been working on a book manuscript that chronicles the lived experiences of living with a chronic illness in Ecuador, which she hopes to complete in the next few months. In the last year she has published an article in *Medical Anthropology* on lupus Web sites in the United States and has an article in an edited volume titled “Chronic Illness, Fluid States” published by Rutgers University Press on global chronic illness.



Jacqueline Eng

Jacqueline Eng recently began research in Mongolia, studying the burials of ancient pastoral nomads. She also continues work on the health and paleopathology of ancient Chinese skeletal collections from the Bronze Age and earlier.

Mammoth in Allegan County

By Tim Held, Graduate Student

When Otsego landowner Steve Mathis was expanding the diameter of his backyard pond in early October 2009 he pulled out more than mud. Out of the swampy marshland that is characteristic of Allegan County Mich., came two limb bones of mammoth proportions. Literally. This is not the first time Mathis has come upon an archaic vestige of the Ice Age (or Pleistocene Epoch). In the late '80s, when the pond was first being excavated, a mammoth tooth was discovered in the back dirt. Not knowing exactly what he had found, Mathis contacted

paleontologists from Michigan State University who confirmed the tooth as mammoth. With a little more insight as to what the bones may have belonged this time, Mathis called Western Michigan University anthropologist Robert Anemone and invited him to view and identify the bones. Expecting to be shown fragmentary unidentifiable pieces of bone, Anemone and his graduate student Tim Held were pleasantly surprised when they were led into Mathis' impressive workshop to find two bones in immaculate condition; a femur (thigh bone) and an ulna (lower



Mammoth bones (hat for scale).

front leg bone). Given that they were excavated from the same area of the pond as the tooth, they have concluded with confidence that the bones are mammoth and not mastodon.

What makes this case particularly interesting is that in this region of Michigan mastodon bones are more commonly discovered than mammoth. The distinction between the two animals is easiest to observe when comparing their teeth. The molars of the mastodon clearly indicate a browser's lifestyle while the mammoth

was equipped with molars modified for grazing (see photos below). In fact, this may be the first mammoth discovery in all of Allegan County, which has typically yielded mastodon specimens.

Undoubtedly there are more bones hiding in the back dirt, which is still sitting on the edge of the pond. However, the soil excavated from the pond is made up of thick clay and is difficult to search through. Fortunately, this type of soil composition is prone to rapid erosion, and as the seasons go by more specimens will likely appear.



Mammoth molar for grazing.



Mastodon molar indicates a browser's lifestyle.

Alumni News

Boone Shear (M.A. '06) presented a paper at the 2009 American Association of Anthropology (AAA) entitled "Neoliberal Education and Public Discourse," and has an article coming out in the next volume of *Rethinking Marxism*. He is co-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences* focused on the corporatization of education; Shear is the incoming chair of the student committee of the Society for Applied Anthropology.

Chris Sweetapple presented a paper at the 2009 American Association of Anthropology (AAA) "Intervening in the Intolerable: Governmentality and the Questions of Muslim Homophobia." He and Boone Shear presented papers with Dr. Vincent Lyon-Callo (Anthropology) in a panel entitled "New Metrics of Inequality: Zizek, Violence, and their Ethnographic Implications" at the 2009 *Rethinking Marxism Conference*.

Adam Bubb (M.A. '05) is featured in an interesting online video about his community service learning teaching in New Mexico (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OVIjCT7aIg>). He is close to completing his dissertation on Native American gaming for the University of New Mexico.

Adam Sharma (B.A. '02) joined Health Outreach Partners in May 2003 and has been the director of marketing and information services since 2006. He leads various projects, including a nationwide needs assessment on farm workers and health outreach programs, best-practice reports, conference presentations, peer-to-peer conference calls, and organizational grant writing.

Marvin Keller (M.A. '76) has been promoted to federal preservation officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C.

Kourtney Collum (B.A. '09), last year's Presidential Scholar, will start the Forest Resources Program at the University of Maine this fall.

Cassie Workman (M.A. '04) is at the University of South Florida where she was recently awarded a National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant for her research titled: "The Politics of Participation: Hydropolicy, HIV/AIDS and Women's Health in Lesotho."

Dylan Clark (B.A. '99) is working in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico where he is completing his dissertation research on Mayan and pre-Mayan archeology. Dylan is a Ph.D. student at Harvard University. Dylan presented a paper on tourism and Mayan sites for the American Anthropological Association meeting in December 2009 in Philadelphia.

David Chaudoir (M.A. '06) is teaching at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi where he also is writing his dissertation for the University of Arkansas.

Shelly Clafin (B.A. '99) is operating a travel consulting service, Conscious Traveler, promoting sustainable and adventure travel to the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America. She also coordinates two cooperative community garden projects in the city of Kalamazoo that introduce residents of the Vine and Oakwood neighborhoods to the experience of growing their own food. In addition, she often can be found on campus at WMU, where she has implemented and advises a registered student organization for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Jonathan Hill (M.A. '09) entered a Ph.D. program in anthropology at University of Massachusetts Amherst in September 2009.

Sonya Datta-Sandhu (B.A. '04) is enrolled in the B.S.N.-M.S.N. Segue program at Emory University. She will receive her B.S.N. in May of 2010, and her M.S.N. in nurse midwifery in December of 2011. She also received the prestigious Fuld Fellowship at Emory.

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