



CHAIR NOTES

*Interim Chairperson,
Dr. Tawnya Adkins Covert*

University life is about constant change: the coming and going of semesters and the movement of students into and out of our classes, on and off our campuses. We meet, teach, and mentor students over several semesters to prepare them to walk across the stage at graduation and for the next stage of their lives. This cycle leaves little time for reflection as we shift from the buttoning up of one semester to preparation for the next. As I begin my second year as Interim Chairperson, allow me to take a moment here to reflect.

In the past year, our department has experienced a number of significant changes. We continue to mourn the unexpected loss of our dear colleague and friend, Dr. Patricia Anderson and we celebrate the arrival of our new colleague and friend, Dr. Ryan Clasby. We also continue to adapt to the changes necessitated by COVID-19. This semester, we are teaching more courses face-to-face, a welcome option for faculty and students alike. We are also delivering courses in split-delivery and livestream formats to reach our students near and far and accommodate social distancing requirements.

Last year, our undergraduate Anthropology program underwent its periodic review, providing the opportunity to reflect on the remarkable growth and resilience of the program and its faculty. The Anthropology major, reestablished in 2008, has steadily grown into a strong and highly regarded program offered in dual modalities, both on the Macomb campus and online (beginning in 2017). Enrollment for Fall 2021 is at 53 undergraduate majors.

This year, our undergraduate and graduate Sociology program reviews are in process. This provides another opportunity to consider the changes both within and without our department over the last seven years. In that time, we have revamped both the BA and MA program, revised curriculums, and rolled out an online BA program. After several years of declining enrollment across the campus, this fall our programs has nearly double the enrollment of fall 2019 with 70 undergraduate majors and 20 students in our graduate program.

As we prepare for final exams and the completion of another semester, I am more confident than ever that our department and our students are ready to face whatever changes we may face in the next year and beyond.

The Department of Sociology & Anthropology welcomes Anthropologist Dr. Ryan Clasby

Dr. Clasby is an anthropological archaeologist specializing in Andean and Amazonian prehistory with research interests in social complexity, interaction and exchange, human adaptations to tropical forests, and ceramic and lithic analysis. His research is primarily based in the northeastern Peruvian Andes and is aimed at examining early interregional exchange networks between the Andes and the Amazon and the impact that these relationships had on long term cultural and sociopolitical developments within western South America.



Dr. Clasby is the lead (co)editor of the volume "The Archaeology of the Upper Amazon: Complexity and Interaction in the Andean Tropical Forest," and recently served as a Fellow in Pre-Columbian Studies at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington DC. He has also conducted archaeological investigations throughout the U.S. (East Coast, Midwest, and California) and worked on museum collections projects in the U.S. and Latin America. These museum projects include an ongoing investigation at the American Museum of Natural History in New York that involves refining the chronology of an Amazonian ceramic sequence first developed in the 1950s. Dr. Clasby also has a forthcoming article, "The Jaén Stone Bowl Tradition and Ceja de Selva Contributions to Early Andean Exchange Networks," that stems from his investigations of an Upper Amazonian polished stone bowl tradition.

He recently gave a talk on his research for the National Museum in Peru in November: El Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú, Lima Peru.

Dr. Clasby received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Yale University (2014) and is teaching courses in Cultural Anthropology, Physical Anthropology, and Archaeology.

Sociology and Anthropology at Western Illinois University

Anthropology Notes



Dr. Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Anthropology Program Coordinator

Albert Einstein wrote, "The measure of intelligence is the ability to change." The Fall 2021 semester has continued to be one full of change for Anthropology students and faculty alike. The pandemic has forced us to adapt our daily rhythms and ways of learning. Despite the constantly shifting landscape, our students and faculty continue to adapt with grace and creativity. We are hopeful that in time, when we can do so safely, we will be able to add more activities that bring our community together for collaborative learning, networking and just plain fun.

Since our last newsletter, we have experienced some bittersweet staffing transitions. First, our

dear colleague **Dr. Patricia Anderson** passed away on July 26, 2021 just weeks after publicly announcing her retirement. The hole she leaves is immense, but her legacy is alive in the lessons she shared with her students and colleagues.

Shortly before the Fall 2021 semester began, we welcomed **Dr. Ryan Clasby** to our faculty for the 2021-2022 academic year. He is an archeologist and has jumped into teaching a wide array of courses. We are happy to welcome him to our small but "scrappy" team!

The **WIU Archaeological Field School** had a very successful season exploring the Orendorf Site with 14 students from all over the United States. **Dr. Andrea Alveshere** led the Field School for six weeks. This season the crew unearthed some exciting discoveries including a possible palisade wall with round bastion, and intriguing combinations of Late Woodland and Mississippian ceramics. Students in the Field School also visited the Illinois State Archaeological Survey's Macomb laboratory, Cahokia Mounds, and had fun and food at the Horn Field Campus along with WASC (Western Anthropology and Sociology Club) members for a cookout and games.



In addition to continuing to create online options for many of our upper division courses, the Anthropology faculty continue their scholarship and research. **Dr. Ryan Clasby**, **Dr. Sarah Haynes**, and **Dr. Heather McIlvaine-Newsad** have all given talks about their respective research to WASC.

Dr. Andrea Alveshere is collaborating with Lynne Kelly on her research about the NF1 gene. Dr. Kelly is an Australian scholar who wrote "Memory Code: The Secrets of Stonehenge, Easter Island and Other Ancient Monuments." This collaboration is exciting and important work, so stay tuned to learn more about the research as it progresses.

In September, **Dr. Christina Davis** gave a lecture on her book, *The Struggle for a Multilingual Future: Youth and Education in Sri Lanka* (OUP, 2020), at the University of Jaffna. She also presented on her book to students in anthropology and education classes at Stanford University, Oberlin College, and Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar. She recently co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, "Essays in Honor of Judith T. Irvine," which will come out on December 1st. In the issue, nine of Irvine's former students contributed articles based on their original research that reflect insights into her important and enduring scholarship in linguistic anthropology. Dr. Davis contributed a co-edited introduction and an article, "Memes, Emojis, and Text: The Semiotics of Differentiation in Sri Lankan Tamil Social Media Groups." Finally, she presented a paper related to this article at the AAAs as part of an invited panel honoring the scholarship of Judith T. Irvine.

Dr. Sarah Haynes, in addition to teaching several Anthropology courses, is the coordinator of the Interdisciplinary minor Cannabis & Culture, which includes several Anthropology courses. This minor is now available in a fully online format. New courses for Spring 2022 include ANTH 333 - Drugs & Cultures: From Magic Mushrooms to Big Pharma. Additionally, Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad and Dr. Haynes will travel with students to Amsterdam for a study abroad trip on global cannabis cultures. Students can register for either or both Anthropology credit and Liberal Arts & Sciences credit.

Dr. Heather McIlvaine-Newsad published a chapter with Dr. Gloria Delany-Barmann in the forthcoming book, *Cultivating Change in the Curriculum through International Faculty Development*, edited by Jennifer Weis and Hillary Haldane, titled "Applying Anthropology to General Education." She continues her applied research on local food systems and community-based responses to the COVID-19 pandemic while collaborating with the Good Food Collaborative in Macomb. This year 30+ students from her FYE (First Year Experience) classes provided 10 hours each of community service to the organization.

Many of our graduates have decided to continue their education at WIU as part of the Master of Liberal Arts & Sciences (MLAS) Program. In the last year three WIU Anthropology graduates have been accepted into the MLAS Program where they are engaging in advanced studies related to anthropology and archaeology. Additionally, the Anthropology Program has an integrated degree with the MLAS Program and Museum Studies that allows students to complete an undergraduate degree in Anthropology and a Masters in Liberal Arts & Sciences or Museum Studies in five years.

We would like to congratulate our Fall 2021 Anthropology graduates
Thalia Ruiz, Lori Reeves, Savannah Duncan, and Anna Lucken
Brava! We know that you will continue to do good things!

Sociology and Anthropology at Western Illinois University

Anthropology Notes

FALL DEPARTMENT SCHOLAR IN ANTHROPOLOGY

ANNA LUCKEN

I am originally from Florida but moved to southern Illinois as a teenager. I am married and have one daughter.

I currently live in Macomb and am the president of the Western Anthropology and Sociology Club and have enjoyed the members and the club events so far this year.

I plan to one day be a professor of religious studies. I have chosen to stay at Western and pursue a master's degree to gain more knowledge and because of my great experiences with the professors. I am excited to take the next move forward in my future and do not doubt that Western is the best place to do that.

I was drawn to WIU after looking for a school that allowed me to study anthropology remotely. I am a mother and was looking for both flexibility and a great program. My experience at Western has been so great that I relocated my family to more than one hundred and fifty miles to further my education. I moved to Macomb in anticipation of starting the MLAS program in January. I have had the opportunity to work and interact with an incredible group of professors and other faculty members. I am not only impressed by the accolades of the professors but also by their approachable and sincere personalities. I will graduate with a BA in Anthropology and a minor in religious studies this December.



Alumna Profile KATHLEEN SULLIVAN



I'm an alumna with a BA in Anthropology. I was able to use the skills I learned at WIU by taking a holistic approach to my work. I am currently a House Supervisor/Qualified Developmental Disability Professional with the Magdala Foundation in St. Louis.

I work at a residential home for adults with intellectual disabilities. I help improve their life by teaching life skills to help them become more independent and grow their confidence.

Carl B. and Alice Larson Scholarship in Illinois Archaeology awarded to

SAVANNAH DUNCAN

Savannah Duncan, a senior Anthropology major who participated in the Field School this year, is the 2021 recipient of the Carl B. and Alice Larson Scholarship in Illinois Archaeology. This award was created by the late Dr. Patricia Anderson, as a way to recognize an outstanding Anthropology student participating in the biannual WIU Archaeological Field School. Dr. Robert Hironimus-Wendt, professor of Sociology, generously funded the \$1000 award this year in Dr. Anderson's honor.



Savannah will graduate from WIU in December 2021 with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology. At WIU, Savannah became a charter member of the WIU Chapter XI of Illinois of the Lambda Alpha National Anthropology Honor Society. She participated in events held by the Western Anthropology and Sociology Club and was on the Dean's List continuously during her undergraduate study. She participated in the Summer 2021 WIU Archaeological Field School and will soon pursue graduate studies with a focus on anthropology and archaeology.

Sociology and Anthropology at Western Illinois University

Sociology Notes

Elizabeth Lutz named WIU's 2021-22 Lincoln Laureate

Elizabeth Lutz, a senior triple major in Sociology, Anthropology, and Communication, has been named as Western Illinois University's recipient of the Lincoln Academy of Illinois' Student Laureate Award.

According to University Relations, "the prestigious award, presented annually to an outstanding senior of each of Illinois' four-year degree-granting institutions, honors a student's overall academic excellence and participation in extracurricular activities."

A member of the Centennial Honors College, Elizabeth's Honors Thesis focuses on college athlete's perceptions of female head coaches. Her research, completed under the supervision of Dr. Lora Ebert Wallace, Professor of Sociology, has been presented at the annual American Sociological Association conference in August and has resulted in a co-authored publication with Dr. Ebert Wallace that is currently under review.



FALL DEPARTMENT SCHOLAR IN SOCIOLOGY

KATHRYN UPTON



My name is Kathryn Upton and I am a senior here at WIU. I will be graduating this December with a major in Sociology and a minor in Psychology. I have been a 'non-traditional' student for the last couple years as I finish up schooling that I started over 20 years ago (which included a change in my major).

I have been married for 22 years, have 3 children, a bonus son-in-law, 2 dogs and 2 cats. I chose Western to finish my degree because of the flexibility of the online classes. I work full time at a licensed childcare home and because the days run long, I needed an educational option that was flexible with my working hours.

Sociology became my major because of the interest I have in the development, structure and functioning of human society. Why people do what they do, why they say certain things, why they are drawn to certain people or areas are all things that I have found myself intrigued with my entire life. How we are raised, how our life's transitions interact with other areas in our life, how one area affects the other, have always been very fascinating to me.

I grew up in a home with a mom who was part of our school administration for over 30 years and a dad who was a local politician for just as many years. Those experiences, combined with my own, have really given me an exposure to society that many don't get to see or be a part of.

I would love to be able to incorporate my major/minor to expand the general knowledge I've already gained and use the additional sociology coursework to continue working with children and families (which I've already been doing for 21 years). I'm excited to see where my next step takes me and to show everyone, including my kids, that no matter what you want to do, what you have your eyes set on, or how old you are, that you can achieve it with a little work, discipline, and determination.

Sociology and Anthropology at Western Illinois University

Sociology Graduate Program

GRADUATE PROGRAM NOTES



**Dr. Gordon Chang,
Graduate Advisor**

Succeeding Dr. Patrick McGinty, I assumed the position of Graduate Director/Advisor in Summer 2021. The main capacity of my involvement with the graduate program in the past eleven years has been to teach students in advanced theory courses as well as sitting on a number of students' exit option committees.

I have long known our graduate students to be a passionate group, and a very intelligent one at that. It is thus an honor and pleasure to be part of this department's organizational effort to help students cultivate their interests and careers professionally.

Our graduate program has experienced significant growth in the last year, both in terms of enrollment and in the number of applicants. This is terrific news for us. Indeed, whenever society undergoes a major transformation, particularly a disruptive one, curiosity about the new cascading phenomena and their deep interrelations tends to grow as well. Students want to comprehend the confusing big picture called society and do something to change it for the better. An example can be seen in a thesis defense I attended this semester. Sparked by recent events, Ms. Christina Cottle successfully completed a heavily theoretical thesis—a painstaking and highly unusual endeavor—entitled *Protesters, Politicians, the Power Elite, and The First Amendment Right to Protest*.

Intellectual endeavors do not have to come into conflict with practical ones. All degree programs in our department train students in both broad-based and specific skills that align with labor market demands. Some of our MA students have even been able to transition to their preferred career path before they graduate. A favored career direction sometimes comes with monetary benefits. A master's degree earner in sociology tends to have higher income than a bachelor's degree earner. There was a difference of around \$10,000 in 2012 (approximately \$12,000 in today's terms) in starting salary. Please consider this difference across a 10-, 20-, or 30-year career. Whether in financial terms or not, real-life difference may be seen in students using an advanced degree as a vehicle toward an internal promotion, a lateral job switch, a second master's degree, or a PhD. Our MA graduates have walked all these paths in the past few years.

In closing, I would like to offer a minor update. Our graduate faculty is making an active attempt to roll out more and more online courses. We hope that by Fall 2023 all required courses for an MA degree in Sociology can be taken online or in person. Staffing challenges may ensue, but if the plan succeeds, then we may open the door to a new influx of students interested in joining our graduate community.

Graduate Student Profile Samantha Rymus

Samantha Rymus, from Chicago, Illinois, is currently in her second year as a Peace Corps/AmeriCorps Fellow graduate student. She is majoring in Sociology and working to obtain a post-baccalaureate certificate in Community and Economic Development.



Last year for her graduate assistantship, Samantha served as a Community Development Assistant for the Housing Authority of McDonough County and is currently serving her graduate internship in the same position and the same location. Her overall purpose of serving at the Housing Authority of McDonough County is to promote community and economic development and sustainability by partnering with existing local agencies, as well as residents, to create a sense of agency, involvement, and belonging at HAMC.

Samantha is passionate about creating sustainable and self-sufficient communities and strongly believes that allowing people to have agency in their own communities allows them to flourish for the greater good. She finds that Sociology has been extremely helpful in her current work setting, as well as those in the past, by looking into systems and what has and has not worked in the past and where there may be room for improvement.

Samantha is looking forward to the rest of her time at Western Illinois University and wants to say thank you to all of those professors and fellow students who have supported her along the way.

Sociology and Anthropology at Western Illinois University

Faculty Notes

Recent Awards and Recognitions

- **Dr. Andrea Alveshere, Dr. Christina Davis, and Dr. Heather McIlvaine-Newsad** have each been awarded Provost's Travel Awards to cover costs related to conducting and presenting their research.
- **Dr. Christina Davis** has been awarded a University Research Council's Summer Stipend for Summer 2022 to support her research project: "New Wellawatte: Sri Lankan Tamil Identity and Place in Online and Offline Interactions."
- **Dr. Ryan Clasby** was selected to receive the Department of Sociology & Anthropology's Faculty Research and Travel Award.

Recent Publications and Presentations

- **Chang, Gordon C.** Forthcoming. "Authentic Identities in Late-Modern Globalized Social Scenes." Book Review of *Studies on the Social Construction of Identity and Authenticity* edited by J. Patrick Williams and Kaylan C. Schwarz (Routledge, 2021). *Symbolic Interaction*.
- **Clasby, Ryan** and Jason Nesbitt, eds. 2021. *Archaeology of the Upper Amazon: Complexity and Interaction in the Andean Tropical Forest*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.
- LaDousa, Chaise and **Christina P. Davis**, eds. 2021. *Language, Education, and Identity: Medium in South Asia*. New York: Routledge.
- **Chang, Gordon C.** "Investigating the Thinking Mechanisms of European Witch-Hunters: Notes from an Impure Ethnomethodological Detective" American Sociological Association 2021 Annual Meeting, August 2021.
- **McGinty, Patrick.** "Interactionism and Social Action" American Sociological Association 2021 Annual Meeting, August 2021.
- **Lora Ebert Wallace** and Elizabeth Lutz, (BA major in Sociology and Anthropology) presented a paper connected to her honors thesis "Coach Like A Girl: Collegiate Athletes' Views of Women as Coaches" at the American Sociological Association 2021 Annual Meetings, August 9, 2021.
- **Lora Ebert Wallace** and Joy Ofuokwu, (MA student in Sociology) presented a paper related to Joy's thesis work, "Use of 'Risk' Language in Breastfeeding Promotional Materials: U.S. State, Territorial, and Local Health Departments" at the American Sociological Association 2021 Annual Meetings, August 8, 2021

Dr. Lora Ebert Wallace selected as recipient of 2021 Provost Award for Excellence in Multicultural Teaching

Dr. Ebert Wallace's was honored in early November with the Provost's Award for Excellence in Multicultural Teaching. Her selection for this prestigious award is in recognition of her longstanding commitment to equity and inclusion in her scholarship, teaching, and mentorship of students at Western Illinois University.



We love to hear from our Alumni!

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