

New Graduate Program Director

The Department of Anthropology is pleased to announce Associate Professor and affiliated faculty member of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies program, Dr. Mindy Morgan is our new Graduate Program Director. Dr. Morgan previously held the position of Associate Chair and enjoyed having input on department policies and practices and when this position arose, it seemed like another opportunity for her to be able to help shape the direction of our program. After having the opportunity to teach the incoming core theory course for many years, Dr. Morgan always enjoyed getting to know the incoming students and to help them create a supportive cohort. She misses this opportunity now that another faculty member teaches the course.

Dr. Morgan sees the Graduate Program Director role as a way of not only continuing that work, but to be involved in students' careers as they move through the program. Having always enjoyed serving on graduate committees and learning about the diverse and exciting work our students are doing, she views this new position as a good way of engaging with an even wider range of students.

Some of the new directions Dr. Morgan wants to steer the graduate program in are to have more engagement with our alumni and to engage in more conversations about career opportunities and trajectories. Our program has had success in placing people in highly rewarding academic positions, but we have also had great success in placing graduates in non-academic settings. Given the difficulties of the current academic job market, she intends to facilitate more conversations about non-academic positions and to hopefully create wider career networks for our graduates. Dr. Morgan also anticipates developing



a more responsive curriculum, allowing students to take the seminars they need to move through the program in a timely way. Part of moving through the program in a timely fashion is to help students connect with other sources of funding and to provide the support they need to successfully secure funding in a changing funding environment. Lastly, she would like to see a more strategic recruiting program put in place where we can encourage a greater number

of students to consider applying to the anthropology department.

Dr. Morgan has always said that anthropology found her as she always loved stories for the wisdom they contain as well as for the community created through their telling. Not knowing how to articulate this fascination, she discovered anthropology late in her undergraduate career as an American Culture major. She then decided some disciplinary rigor would help shape her interests. Anthropology provided that framework. Dr. Morgan went on to complete her PhD in 2001 from Indiana University in Bloomington in anthropology. Outside of academia, Dr. Morgan has few hobbies but she is passionate about her family, supporting the performing arts (especially dance), and traveling (for purposes other than research).

On the horizon, Dr. Morgan is working on a book manuscript regarding the periodical *Indians at Work*, but has also been readily enjoying a small detour into the history of anthropology. She has an article regarding Ruth Underhill coming out in the *Histories of Anthropology Annual* (Vol. 13) next year. Dr. Morgan truly hopes to have a positive impact on our department's future and we look forward to further research and graduates as she continues her career with us.

Message from the Chair: Dr. Jodie O’Gorman



At this time of the semester, when we stop to take stock of what we’ve done over the past year, I’m always inspired and astounded at the breadth and scope of the research done by our graduate students, faculty, and undergraduates in the Department of Anthropology.

We have many examples of faculty

mentors publishing with their students, including Dr. Tetreault and graduate student Sarah Tahir who co-authored with two physicians an article appearing in the *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* based upon research conducted after the 2016 election on American Muslim women’s responses to rising Islamophobia. Dr. Hefner mentored his first year PhD student, Micayla Spiros, through writing her first article that was published in *Forensic Anthropology*. Dr. Fenton and graduate student Mari Isa and associates recently published on their research in the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*. Drs. Howard and Hunt mentored undergraduate student Funmi Odumosu and graduate student Anna Martinez-Hume on an article that appeared in *Medical Anthropology*.

Recently, our two newest archaeology faculty members, Dr. Stacey Camp and Dr. Kurt Rademaker were in China and Peru (respectively) over the

semester break for research. Dr. Gabriel Wrobel is doing research in Australia this semester during his sabbatical.

Graduate student Emily Milton, who came with Dr. Rademaker from Northern Illinois University to finish her master’s degree, was just awarded a Sigma Xi Grant in Aid of Research for her MA thesis project. Emily is one of only six anthropology students nationwide to be awarded a Sigma Xi grant on this cycle.

As I write this, one of our advanced undergraduates is attending and presenting at the Society for Historical Archaeology meeting, his first professional conference. While these are recent examples of our more advanced students and faculty members’ engagement with research and mentorship of research, I also want to note the wonderful mentorship of Dr. Lynnette King and other faculty members who worked with undergraduate students on research projects over the past year. Dr. King organized our second annual Anthropology Undergraduate Research Showcase that took place just before break and it was a huge success – we had 37 posters and 51 presenters on topics in all subfields. Along with many other faculty members and graduate students, I thoroughly enjoyed talking with the undergraduates about their presentations. The excitement that the undergraduates have for anthropology and their enthusiasm for applying an anthropological perspective to the world’s issues is truly inspiring.

Thank you for your interest in the department, and many thanks to those that have reached out to help our students attend conferences and otherwise support their research. Please find our giving link: <https://givingto.msu.edu/gift/index.cfm?sid=701>.

Editors & Contact

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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. Contact us with your stories.

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Editorial support from the College of Social Science

Featured Graduate Student, Autumn Painter

Autumn Painter, a graduate student here in the Department of Anthropology, specializing in archaeology was provided the opportunity to travel with Dr. Marcy O'Neil, an anthropology alumna and grant support staff and former instructor in the department, to Benin, West Africa during the summer of 2018. In collaboration with the Department of Anthropology and the African Studies Center, both here at MSU, Ms. Painter and Dr. O'Neil celebrated the launch of the second volume of a project called Books That Bind at the US Embassy in Cotonou. Autumn became a part of this project during her assistantship in Lab for Education and Advancement in Digital Research (LEADR), and continued to be involved with it following her assistantship.

Books That Bind was created by Three Sisters and the Three Sisters Education Fund (TSEF), who provide tutoring scholarships to under-served students in Benin. This project creates bi-lingual storybooks. The first volume of books was created by MSU undergraduate students in Dr. O'Neil's class in Spring 2017. In addition to the launch at the US Embassy, they also worked on getting the second volume of books printed and signed by the storytellers, and participants in the book making process, and did a launch at one of the communities with which Three Sisters works.

The experience was something that Ms. Painter never thought she would have the opportunity to participate in and is thankful the Department of Anthropology, and her mentors within the department (Dr. O'Gorman, Dr. Goldstein, Dr. Camp, and Dr. Watrall) have always encouraged her and provided her with support, advice, and the opportunities.

Ms. Painter's general research interests lay in foodways and social interactions in prehistory. Her proposed dissertation research will focus on these concepts using faunal analysis at a Mississippian and Oneota village site, the Morton Village, located in west-central Illinois during a known time of violence. Part of a larger research team under the mentorship of Dr. O'Gorman, Autumn will look at the way animals were used at the village and other aspects of their foodways to better understand the relationships and interactions of the two groups of people who occupied the site together.

Autumn first became interested in archaeology and anthropology in elementary school by attending

the Hiawatha National Forest's Youth Archaeology Workshop on Grand Island (run by Jon Franzen, Jim Skibo, and Eric Drake [MSU Anthropology Alumnus]). She attended this 2-day workshop every summer from 5th grade through her senior year of

high school. Pursuing her undergraduate studies here at MSU, she majored in Anthropology before attending Illinois State University for her Masters degree. Her love for her native state led her back to MSU for her graduate studies, where she is currently the Campus Archaeologist.

Autumn feels that MSU has and is preparing her as an anthropologist by giving her many opportunities to interact professionally. These experiences include her assistantships within the department as a teaching assistant, a research assistant in the Lab for Education and Advancement in Digital Research, a research assistant as the Campus Archaeologist, the Cultural Heritage Informatics Fellowship, and the Campus Archaeology Program Fellowship.

Aside from her dissertation research, Autumn has many upcoming projects and articles in the works. She is co-author on an article in review in for the journal *Ethnoarchaeology* entitled "Acorn Processing and Pottery Use in the Upper Great Lakes: An Experimental Comparison of Stone Boiling and Ceramic Technology" with Kelsey E. Hanson, Paula L. Bryant, Autumn M. Painter, and James M. Skibo. She is working on an oral history project with Alice Lynn McMichael (LEADR) on the Campus Archaeology Program to be launched in the spring of 2019. Also be sure the take a look at her latest website about an early food project on MSU's campus: Capturing Campus Cuisine.



Autumn Painter

Featured Faculty, Dr. Lucero Radonic



Dr. Lucero Radonic

Dr. Lucero Radonic, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, joined the department in 2014. Her research centers around the human/environment interaction within urban landscapes. More specifically, the human governance of changing landscapes, the ways nature is transformed for human use and how we make decisions about the distribution of natural resources within dynamic, urban environments.

In Arizona, where she grew up, water has always fascinated her and was ever present in conversations. Her fondness for the desert environment lead her to pursue her BS in environmental sciences in 2005 from the University of Texas El Paso. It was during her early studies that Lucero quickly discovered that while she enjoyed spending time outside in the forest and the mountains, she had other questions about the role of humans in those beautiful (or destroyed) environments. There was little room for the exploration of these issues within the realm of environmental sciences.

Given her interest in the role of humans within the environment during her undergraduate tenure, Dr. Radonic began taking anthropology classes and was fascinated by the ways human topics were fluidly interwoven with environmental and other themes. This helped her decide she wanted to approach human/environmental interactions from the human perspective rather than the environmental one and led her to pursue anthropology for her graduate education. She received her PhD from the University of Arizona in 2014.

She is interested in how people's relationship to nature in cities changes through urbanization. In Arizona, for example, policy makers and residents are reconceptualizing what rainwater is, especially as her home state confronts prolonged drought and all states continue to battle over water rights. Until recently in Arizona, rainwater was a problem to be controlled so it did not cause chaos through flooding; now, it has become a resource. The conceptualization of rainwater has switched from it being a contaminated nuisance that must be removed to it now being considered a renewable resource that should be harnessed and collected.

When not researching, writing or teaching, Lucero enjoys hiking, biking, and anything outdoors. Cross country skiing is a new activity she has been exploring, although coming from a desert environment, the cold is something she struggles to enjoy. She also enjoys Photography and reading fiction and historical nonfiction. Look for her upcoming publications in *Economic Anthropology* and *Water Alternatives*.

New Research on the Peopling of the Americas

An international research crew, including MSU Department of Anthropology Assistant Professor Kurt Rademaker, contributed the first high quality ancient DNA data from Central and South America, illuminating a distinctive DNA type associated with the Clovis culture.

The results of this research were revealed in a recent article, "Reconstructing the Deep Population History of Central and South America," published in the journal *Cell*. In 2015, Dr. Rademaker's team excavated several ancient individuals from Cuncaicha rock shelter, in the high-elevation Peruvian Andes.

He then hand-carried the three ancient individuals, a 9000-year-old female and two males dating from 4200 and 3300 years ago, from Peru to labs in the United States and Germany for radiocarbon dating, CT scanning, stable isotope and paleogenetic analyses and then returned them to Peru.

This work was also featured in the *New York Times*. Dr. Rademaker says, "As an archaeologist, it is incredibly rewarding to collaborate with physical anthropologists and paleogeneticists to unravel the complex story of early Americans. Interdisciplinary efforts like this are the future of our fields."

Alumni & Friends of Archaeology Research Award

The Alumni and Friends of Archaeology Expendable Fund, established to enhance research and learning of undergraduate and graduate students in the archaeology program through the MSU Department of Anthropology, awarded Jeff Painter funds for his dissertation research during the Summer of 2018. This was the second year for the Alumni and Friends of Archaeology Research Enhancement Award and Jeff was able to complete two trips to the Dickson Mounds Museum in west-central Illinois in order to gather data for his dissertation.

Mr. Painter's proposed dissertation seeks to better understand the role of cooking and foodways within social interaction by examining vessel use-wear and the distribution of vessels, cooking techniques, and cooking-related features across the site of Morton Village in central Illinois, a site of known prehistoric interaction between different cultural groups, the Larson site in central Illinois and the Tremaine



Complex in western Wisconsin. By using the comparative sites, he hopes to document the traditions of cooking and foodways a local Mississippian group and an Oneota group outside the area of interaction.

The allocated funds helped Jeff to defray the cost of gas, food, and necessary supplies to travel to The Dickson Mounds Museum (DMM), which houses the Larson site materials. On Mr. Painter's first trip to the museum, he examined ceramics for use-wear and also collected

morphological measurements. On the subsequent trip, he collaborated with Alan Harn, the site director of the 1970 Larson excavations, and obtained digital copies of excavation maps from the 1966 and 1970 excavations.

Jeff is still in the process of data collection and has yet to start analyzing this data. Mr. Painter wanted to stress that the support provided by the Alumni and Friends of Archaeology Research Enhancement Award has been essential in continuing work on his proposed dissertation research.

Dr. Hefner and NIJ Helping to Identify Children



Dr. Joseph T. Hefner, Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University, and Dr. Nicholas Herrmann, Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Texas State University, received

a National Institute of Justice award to improve the accuracy of age estimates for unidentified remains of children and adolescents. The University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio and Triservice Orthodontic Residency Program, 59th Dental Group will also collaborate on this research.

The project entitled, "Investigation of sub-adult dental age-at-death estimation using transitional analysis and machine learning methods," was funded for approximately \$900,000 and focuses on tooth root

and crown development to estimate age in children and adolescents using transition analysis and machine learning methods. Currently, standard methods often underestimate the age of children and adolescents by one to more than two years as age increases.

Their goal is to provide forensic anthropologists and odontologists an accurate and precise age estimation method using a large, demographically diverse, modern sample of children and adolescents by collecting data from radiographs obtained from living children and adolescents from different populations in the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa and other locations around the world.

Dr. Hefner states, "as forensic anthropologists, we are routinely involved in the identification effort when unidentified human remains are discovered. Refined age estimates are a critical component of identification, especially when the skeletal remains under examination belong to a child."

Alumna Dr. Megan McCullen

We are very proud to announce that our alumna, Dr. Megan McCullen, is the new Director of the Gordon L. Grosscup Museum of Anthropology & Planetarium at Wayne State University.

As Director of the Anthropology Museum and Planetarium, Dr. McCullen fills many rolls. Part of her role as Director is to conceptualize how the public community sees and uses college resources – as well as how the university and departmental communities use these same resources. Her day to day job includes grant writing, working with the college's advancement team, marketing, developing exhibitions and programming, creating, and maintaining community partnerships, curating the museum's collection, and supervising student projects in the museum. She also oversees the staff of the museum.

The driving factor of Dr. McCullen's work is her interest in making the resources of the University more accessible to the community surrounding them. One of her goals is to increase the number of community members coming to campus to visit the Museum and Planetarium, and to bring these resources out into the



Dr. Megan McCullen at Chaco Canyon World Heritage Site

community as well. Megan has been working to fund programs to reduce barriers to access of the museum. Her experience curating, cataloging, and researching museum collections in graduate school here at MSU prepared her for her current collections management efforts.

Dr. McCullen's favorite thing about her job is that she enjoys working with the public and developing new ways to engage communities both on and off campus. The Director position also requires her to learn many new things, like astronomy and the history of her new museum. Megan also enjoys being in a position to think holistically

and broadly about future projects. Part of her role is to think about what they want to be doing five or ten years down the road, what they need to do to get there, and how to collaborate with other sectors of the College and the community to do so. This includes everything from exhibitions to curation plans. She has always been one for thinking about connections and relationships, so she truly enjoys being in a position where building and maintaining these kinds of relationships is an important part of her work.

Great Lakes Digital Cultural Heritage

Dr. Heather Howard, Associate Professor of Anthropology was awarded a grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada as co-Principal Investigator (PI) with PI Heidi Bohaker (History, University of Toronto) and co-PI Margaret Bruchac (Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania). Their project, "Widening the Circle: Building a Community Knowledge Sharing Digital Platform with Great Lakes Indigenous Cultural Heritage Research Data," provides over \$40,000.00 to create and test a new public website for the Great Lakes Research Alliance for the Study of Aboriginal Arts and Cultures (GRASAC).

GRASAC is an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural alliance of researchers from Indigenous communities, universities, museums, and archives sharing a common

goal of creating deeper understandings of Great Lakes Indigenous arts, languages, identities, territoriality, and governance.

This project will ensure responsible data sharing grounded in respectful and meaningful Nation-to-Nation conversations helping to develop long-term data governance policies for GRASAC. Using Mukurtu, an open source software developed specifically for Indigenous cultural heritage, the GRASAC team will work with community partners to develop appropriate cultural protocols to protect data and to test the usability of the platform by Indigenous community members. This project builds on work Dr. Howard has been undertaking with Michigan Indigenous makers and the collections of the MSU Museum over the last three years.

Dr. Amanda Tickner, Adjunct Faculty



**Dr. Amanda Tickner
at Keukenhof Gardens,
Netherlands**

Dr. Amanda Tickner is a librarian specializing in GIS in the Maps Library and an Adjunct lecturer in the Department of Anthropology. Amanda helps people find data, use GIS in research, teach GIS to beginners, and troubleshoot GIS problems, she also sits on several PhD committees in Anthropology. The interdisciplinary quality of her GIS work allows her to help people from all disciplines, which dovetails well with her

anthropological background. Dr. Tickner received her PhD in archaeological paleobotany from the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill in 2009 and began at MSU in 2015.

Currently, Dr. Tickner is transitioning from using her anthropology background as a paleobotanist to working with more cultural subjects. She is very interested in using ethnographic methods in usability studies via contextual analysis, which she can do as a part of her job as a GIS librarian. Amanda is also interested in landscapes more generally – especially people’s perceptions of virtual spaces in relation to physical spaces. Regrettably, she has not been able to do much of her own research since switching career paths because her library work takes up most of her time.

Dr. Tickner enjoys her current positions because librarians are helpers and her adjunct position with anthropology allows her the ability to share cultural references with people who speak her own language. It also allows her to help students in a variety of ways. Amanda finds it satisfying to help people succeed in their projects and to gain job skills because she can teach interested people new skills without the pressure of giving grades, something she feels is a wonderful change. Dr. Tickner’s current work builds upon her previous experiences because her background in both ecology and social science allows her to work with a wide variety of disciplinary problems in a coherent and

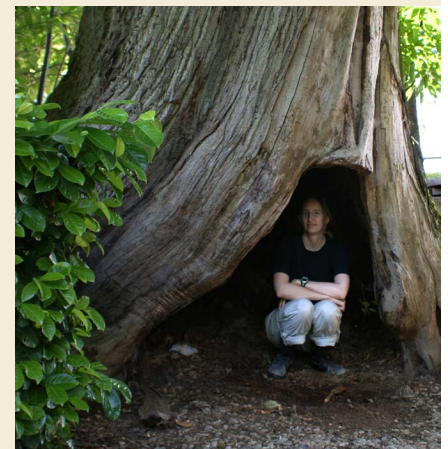
helpful way. This is important because it allows her to help people with GIS research from all departments, from English to Forestry.

Her first interest in anthropology came from a fascinating World Archeology course from Prof. Peter Wells at University of Minnesota, where she studied for her undergraduate. While this course was initially selected to fulfill a requirement, Dr. Tickner soon realized she really enjoyed this subject the most. Grinning while studying for World Archaeology became a norm. This enjoyment led her to value a holistic approach in her thinking and understanding which anthropology also values. Amanda’s interest in both the sciences and the humanities kept her firmly in archeology, since it is a wonderful hybrid of these things.

When Dr. Tickner was starting out, and in her past anthropology teaching (historical ecology, food and culture, and four fields anthropology), she was very interested in getting students to break down their ideas of a nature/culture dichotomy and recognize that humans are as natural as anything else in the world, while at the same time acknowledging our role in shaping our natural world. This is a value she hopes she has imparted in her students. Now, Dr. Tickner enjoys hearing from students that her assistance helped them finish their master’s thesis or that skills she taught them in a workshop helped get them a job. Currently, she is excited about the new digital scholarship lab in the library as she has had a lot of fun working with the 360 immersive display space and looks forward to helping more classes use it.

We are extremely happy to have Dr. Tickner here at MSU and are glad that she decided to move across the country even though Michigan winters are not her favorite thing. Having grown up in Minnesota, Amanda thought maybe she would be able to handle winter better now that she is older, but so far, she reports this is not the case.

**Dr. Amanda Tickner at Uxeau
France**



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Salman Receives Bill Clinton Award

WHO Task Force Member

Dr. Monir Moniruzzaman, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, has been appointed as a member of the inaugural Task Force on Donation and Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues at the World Health Organization (WHO). This Task Force was established to advise and assist the WHO and other Member States, in disseminating and implementing the WHO Guiding Principles that address the ethical aspects of organ transplantation such as the voluntary and unpaid donation of human tissues and organs, issues of universal access to transplant services, and the availability, safety and quality of these procedures worldwide. They also assist Member States in establishing and/or strengthening their systems in organ-tissue donation and transplantation at a national level or through regional cooperation.

This Task Force, the first of its kind, is comprised of 31 selected experts, with extensive knowledge on this issue across various fields such as medicine, surgery, ethics, law, patients' rights, public administration and health systems and who come from regions across the world. We are grateful to Dr. Monir for his dedication and work on such an important topic.

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Are you a faculty, student, staff member or alumnus of the MSU Department of Anthropology? Contact the department with updates and news you want to share!

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