

# ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS

Spring Issue

Volume 20



May 2007

Number 2

*Culture*



*Language*



*Archaeology*



*Biology*



Site of Pukara: Qalasaya, Peru



Candelaria parade, Puno, Peru

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## Letter from the Department Chair

*Robert J. Jeske*

Dear ASU:

Happy end of the school year once more! I have to start out this letter with something very unusual and very impressive: alum Jeff Halper (PhD 1977) was nominated for a Nobel peace prize for human rights work in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. I'm sure we all wish Dr. Halper and his co-nominee, Ghassan Andoni, continued success in their efforts.

We have had another very busy year in the department—this year we produced one Ph.D. (Linda Naunapper), 16 master's students, and 32 bachelor's students. Five undergraduates were invited into Phi Beta Kappa. In addition, eight graduate students completed the Museum Studies certificate. (As always, exact numbers may vary due to submission deadlines). Congratulations to all.

Once again, our recent graduates have done very well this year: Ann Williams (PhD 2006) will take up a position at Ottawa University and Kira Kaufmann (PhD 2005) will be in the anthropology department at Florida Atlantic University. We receive a steady stream of news from our bachelors and masters alums out in the real world getting jobs in museums, CRM (Cultural Resource Management) companies, and private and public sector institutions.

Within the university, we also had success with graduate funding: Ph.D. student Julia Kirchner was awarded a UWM Dissertator Fellowship for next year. Katy Mollerud

was named an alternate for the UWM Graduate School Fellowship.

Our students were again active at professional meetings such as the American Anthropological Association, the Society for American Archaeology, the American Association of Physical Anthropology, the Midwest Archaeological Conference, the Central States Anthropological Society, and Wisconsin Archaeological Survey.

The faculty were very busy this year. Erica Bornstein spent the year as a fellow at the School for American Research in Santa Fe, working on her latest book. Both Trudy Turner and Fred Anapol took one-semester sabbaticals. Cameron Walker, a young scholar with a Ph.D. from the University of Oregon, spent the year here teaching 301 and other classes as their sabbatical replacement. Kal Applbaum also took a one-semester sabbatical. Pat Richards had the year off from teaching classes, after successfully achieving her indefinite status as Academic Staff (similar to tenure for regular faculty). Jason Sherman served to replace her for the year, teaching our 101 courses ably. Cheryl Ajirotutu took on her new administrative role with Cultures and Communities. Celtic Studies, Forensic Sciences, Museum Studies and other research and teaching projects continued their fine contributions to our department. We also had a very active and well attended departmental colloquium this year.

I'd also like to acknowledge that we couldn't have managed to teach our full assortment of classes without the help of faculty such as Ann Stodder, Alan Aycock, Ann Williams and Chris Roth. We rely on their time and energy to give us the flexibility to provide new classes and experiment with our curriculum.

Next year is all about change. Due to a fortuitous set of circumstances, we were able to offer positions to two Mesoamerican archaeologists: Laura Villamil and R. Jason Sherman. Dr. Villamil works with Mayan sites and Dr. Sherman with Zapotec. Both start as Assistant Professors next year, and will add an exciting new component to the department. In addition to 103, Jason will be teaching the Archaeology of Western Mesoamerica in the fall. In the spring, Laura plans on teaching a course on the Maya. (See *Interview Below*)

Lots of other good things are coming up for next year. Paul Brodwin, Thomas Malaby and Jean Hudson will all be on full-year sabbaticals next year pursuing their research, and Thomas also has been awarded a fellowship at UW-Madison's Institute for Research in the Humanities. Bernie Perley has been awarded a fellowship to the Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Studies. Tracey Heatherington will be working this summer in Romania as part of an NSF-funded multi-disciplinary project on sustainable development. John Richards and I have been awarded a UWM RGI grant to refine radiocarbon chronology for late prehistoric sites in Wisconsin and to use x-ray fluorescence to trace clay and lithic raw material sources. Brian Nicholls will be teaching a brand-new GIS for Anthropology course for us.

We also have another change coming up. Michael Muehlenbein is leaving UWM for Indiana University-Bloomington at the end of this year. While we are sad to see him go, I'm sure that we all wish Michael success in his new academic home. We have sought permission to hire another biological anthropologist to maintain the program Michael began here over the last few years.

At this point, I'd like to say thanks to all the ASU officers who served this year and thanks to Faculty Representatives Kevin Cullen and Kerry McAuliffe who suffer through faculty meetings to represent ASU. I look forward to working with all the new officers and grad reps for next year.

Because of the semester schedule for writing, and the inevitable loss of brain matter each year, I am always afraid that I skip or miss important people or events in these letters. If you noticed something that needs reporting, please let me know and I'll include it in next fall's letter.

Finally, see you on September 8, 2007 for the graduate orientation and welcome. Please put the date on your calendar now, since important information such as requirements and financial aid will be covered.

All the best,

Robert J. Jeske



## An Independent Study: Are Graduate Students Stressed?

*By Lis Thimke*

Conducting research on the relationship between graduate school and stress levels seems like a project worthy of a dissertation. However, last August I was asking many

Anthropology graduate students to donate their time and spit for a small independent study on graduate school and stress. The goal was to give myself experience working in a lab, and possible data to publish and present. However, in the end I learned that this was much more than “just” an independent study. I learned a lot about the ways in which cortisol can fluctuate depending on school, work and personal stress.

Why did I decide to study stress in graduate students? When thinking of what topic to explore, I immediately knew that cortisol would be an interesting topic. I had decided to study how graduate school really affects student’s stress levels, as detected by the hormone cortisol. After the IRB approval and the supplies were bought, it was time to find my willing participants. Luckily I found 20 wonderful people who were willing to chew or suck on cotton once a week, first thing in the morning, for an entire semester.

So why study stress? Cortisol is a glucocorticoid hormone secreted from the adrenal cortex in humans and a common measure of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis stress response, and so is generally known as the hormone that correlates with stress levels. This stress response is necessary for survival. When in danger, our bodies activate our sympathetic nervous system, which, through elevated cortisol levels, sends epinephrine throughout the body, activating the “fight or flight” response. This response causes the veins around the heart to expand, so that more blood, oxygen and glucose can be carried to vital organs, but also constricts veins in the extremities. Non-chronic stress creates epinephrine in the body, which leads to glycogen breakdown, which in turn raises blood glucose levels in the body, resulting in

the energy needed to escape. In short bursts, this is a very healthy and necessary function.

However, during periods of long-term stress, this initial benefit quickly becomes very detrimental to the body. Long-term cortisol production can down-regulate the body’s production of disease fighting T-cells as well as the death of these cells, causing sickness in the already stressed out person. Along with sickness, prolonged stress causes cortisol to be constantly produced in the body. This results in a down-regulation of the glucocorticoid receptor in the hippocampus, which can lead to the death of hippocampus neurons. Hippocampus degradation leads to memory loss and the inability to absorb new knowledge. Not only can long term stress have these detrimental effects, chronic stress can also lead to the inability to reproduce. In females, the chronic release of cortisol leads to lower estrogen and progesterone levels, resulting in amenorrhea as well as the cessation of ovulation, causing the female to be unable to reproduce.

It is for these reasons that cortisol is monitored closely in many species, as well as in humans. However, no study has yet been conducted correlating stress resulting from graduate school throughout an entire semester. Once I had my participants, and they were given their instructions, I waited until the end of the semester to collect the weekly surveys and saliva samples they had taken for me on their own. After receiving them all I was able to begin my lab work. Using the cortisol assay provided by the company Salimetrics, I spent many, many hours in the lab. Once I had my data, it was time for statistics! Dr. Muehlenbein conducted Spearman correlation on the data to find out if the cortisol levels found significantly correlated with work, school or personal stress each week. Overall there

was a definite trend towards school being the primary perceived stressor, meaning that almost every week, perceived overall stress correlated with perceived school stress in the participants. However, the actual cortisol levels did not correlate with stress from school. In fact, when cortisol levels were significant, it was in relation to stress caused by work. So even though school stress was perceived to be causing the most stress, it was in fact work pressure that affected the cortisol levels of the participants the most significantly.



## **Student Research Highlight: Medical Tourism in Merida, Mexico**

*By Matt Dalstrom*

Recently, the scope of tourism has expanded to more than just the traditional types, such as eco-tourism and cultural tourism, to include the new practice of medical tourism. The broad category of medical tourism encompasses any person who travels for the purpose of improved health. It includes, but is not limited to, organ transplantation, heart surgery, dental work, and cosmetic surgery. Often, it incorporates a stay at a resort, larger rooms, more attentive staff, and substantially cheaper services. The popularity of medical tourism has grown over the past decade with people traveling all around the globe for treatment.

Medical tourism does not just happen in far away places, it occurs daily between Mexico and the United States. Currently, thousands of Americans cross the border annually to

receive a variety of procedures ranging from dental work to plastic surgery. While some of the visits only consist of a medical treatment, an increasing number of people incorporate a vacation with their treatment. These vacation packages, posted on the Internet, offer patients luxurious hotels, tours, boating, and hang gliding, to name a few activities. They not only promise superb healthcare, but also claim that their prices are up to seventy percent lower than a comparable surgery in the United States.

My field site in Merida, Mexico provides an excellent example of this practice. Merida is located roughly four hours west of Cancun and thirty minutes south of Progreso. It is accessible by bus, car, and airplane. Although it shadows Cancun in global recognition, Merida remains the largest city in the peninsula. Merida's long colonial history and central location made it the ideal location for one of the oldest continually operating medical schools in the region. The school helped to develop a sophisticated medical infra-structure, which in turn brought in indigenous people from all around the peninsula. In more recent times, this medical system has been utilized by the large English speaking community living in the area as well as medical tourists. These patients come to Merida for a wide range of treatments ranging from dental work and plastic surgery to more complicated procedures.

Prior research on the topic is limited and for the most part focuses on the exotic aspects of the practice, such as the organ trade. My research interests, on the other hand, focus upon the factors that influence individuals in wealthy countries to travel abroad for health care and the impact they have on the local community.



**An Interview With Two New  
Department Hires:  
Dr. Jason Sherman and  
Dr. Laura Villamil**

*By Kevin Cullen (Newsletter editor)*



Dr. Villamil discovering a Maya stela at Lagartera in Quintana Roo, Mexico.



Dr. Sherman mapping the site of Yaasuchi in Oaxaca, Mexico

**Question:** Tell us a little about yourselves, where you grew up and received your postsecondary academic education.

**Dr. Villamil:** “I was born and raised in Mexico City until the first year of high school, when we moved to the United States - first Georgia, then Oklahoma, and then California for the last year of high school. I went to UC Berkeley for my undergraduate degree and eventually to the University of Michigan for graduate school.”

**Dr. Sherman:** “I actually grew up in Chicago and then went to Yale for my undergrad and then spent part of the year traveling and doing fieldwork on different projects. Then I ended up working at the American Museum of Natural History in New York for a year and then went to Ann Arbor (U of Michigan) for grad school.”

**Question:** How did you become interested in archaeology and specifically in Meso-American Archaeology?

**Dr. Sherman:** “I got interested in archaeology when I was in high school, because of some connections my family had. I started going to Crow Canyon Archaeological Center in Colorado. I didn’t actually do the formal archaeological field school, but I went a couple of times on my own and just fell in love with it, so it was really southwestern archaeology that I first got into. So, I had a little bit of archaeology in high school and when I went to college I decided to be an Anthropology major and again just really loved it and loved the four field broad Anthropology. When I decided to go to grad school I knew I wanted to do archaeology. At that time I had never been to Mexico, except for across the boarder, but I really liked Native American societies and wanted to study complex societies, so I figured complex Native Americans,

Mesoamerica seemed pretty cool. So I actually committed to studying Mesoamerican archaeology before I had ever even been there. Since then it's been a very good choice."

**Dr. Villamil:** "I kind of came to archaeology very late. When I first went to college my first major was Latin American Studies; literature, languages and history, then my last year I had to take something specialized in another field, so I took two Anthropology classes and got hooked. I managed to add the Anthro major at the last minute, but was undecided whether to study cultural or archaeology. Then I ended up taking a couple of Mesoamerican archaeology classes and fell in love with the Maya, and the rest is history."

**Question: Whom do you consider to be some of your most influential advisers or scholars in the field and why?**

**Dr. Villamil:** "For me that's how I ended up in Michigan. For my thesis, given I was in a very feminist department, I analyzed the depiction of women in Mayan art...and one of my major sources had been Joyce Marcus, which is why I ended up going to the University of Michigan. I was planning to do more art historical, iconography or epigraphy, but that was not the way it turned out, so she was very influential for me."

**Dr. Sherman:** "Joyce Marcus as well, whom I have a lot of respect for and learned much of what I know about Mesoamerica from her. I'd also have to say another important adviser was Kent Flannery, reading a lot of his material has been very meaningful to me. I don't think there are many archaeologists who can construct research designs the way he does...where the research is designed in a very grounded way. He also happens to have worked in Oaxaca, which has helped me out a lot. You have to be rigorous when setting up research

designs, you have to look at broader theories especially when dealing with state level societies...it involves asking many more profound questions."

**Question: How did you come to hear about UWM and this department?**

**Dr. Sherman:** "She (Laura) ended up here because I ended up here, and I ended up here because I was given the one year lecture position this past year. I was actually teaching in Michigan and Laura was teaching at Albion College, which is about an hour from Ann Arbor and we were looking for the next one-year opportunity, which is typically what happens after grad school. Then Bob Jeske posted the job to about six or seven basically Big Ten schools and I got it... I'm happy and we're thrilled to be part of the department".

**Question: How are you enjoying Milwaukee as a city so far?**

**Dr. Villamil:** "We love it, we were very pleasantly surprised. That seems to be a common reaction, you imagine Milwaukee to be this nasty industrial town, but it turns out to be a really nice place and we really love it."

**Dr. Sherman:** Growing up in Chicago, I never visited...or even thought much about Milwaukee. But now that we're here, we love it!

**Question: Based on your experience with the hiring process here, what advice can you give to students thinking about a career in academia?**

**Dr. Sherman:** "Publish!! Publish in grad school, period. One of the best ways to set yourself apart is to get in some good publications."

**Dr. Villamil:** "The market is very bad, and it will probably be bad for whatever sub-

field and specialty you have, there really aren't that many jobs out there right now. So, the way to land a teaching job is to make your name known early on, which means you have to publish, publish, publish, go to conferences and get to know people. You've got to understand that it will be a couple of years before you land that job, so you will be bopping from one-years to one-years, but its eventually going to happen...really it's a matter of stamina."

**Question: What type of teaching curriculum do you foresee bringing to the department over the next several years?**

**Dr. Villamil:** "One of the first things we are going to do is split the course that is already in the books, which is the 300 level Meso class. We both have taught a similar class and realized it is way too much to cover and is actually very frustrating. What we are going to be doing next year is, he (Jason) is going to teach a course on highland or western Mesoamerica, and I'm going to teach just a whole course on the Maya, at different levels not just at the 300 level but also a more rigorous 500 level. Also, more specific topics...I'd like to teach a Maya hieroglyphic writing class...it wouldn't be just how to translate glyphs, but understanding the context and social uses of writing in the Maya region, which I think would be kind of fun. We were also interested in teaching some more theoretical seminars, maybe at the graduate level where we pick topics that are more relevant to people who study complex societies...but it could also be used for non-complex societies. Things like power and ideology, warfare...which is what you (Jason) want to teach."

**Dr. Sherman:** "If it is possible it would be good to be able to pull non-archaeology students in too. The problem is that power and ideology is huge topic, so being able to

make that broad enough to pull in ethnology students would be great. Also, a seminar on warfare would be something any anthropology student could look at. I'm interested in the beginnings of warfare and you could look at it in terms of traditional societies, ethno-historic and ethnographic, or what the biological aspects of that are. So, I'm interested in eventually teaching courses that bridge the disciplines."

**Dr. Villamil:** "Also, landscape archaeology...that's kind of my cup of tea, it would be kind of a neat class to develop. Given that 'space' is something I'm theoretically very interested in...the social uses of space...that could also be something that bridges the sub-fields."

**Dr. Sherman:** "This could be lower level, but courses like ancient civilizations or ancient cities, again it's a matter of looking at what is already offered and complement that with a complex society focus".

**Question: What, if any, publications do you have in the works or on the way that we can look forward to?**

**Dr. Villamil:** "We have a coauthored article on the work we did in Quintana Roo (province in southeastern Mexico) that's out in an edited volume and then I have another one that is coming out in December in an edited volume called 'identity memory and landscape research in archaeology,' or something like that. In that I have a chapter, a thirty page summary of my dissertation. Aside from that, I'm working on articles that are more data oriented, because the one coming out is more theoretical, so articles that have more descriptive data from the sites in Quintana Roo."

**Dr. Sherman:** "I have one that will be coming out in the next six months; both of these are co-authored articles. One is basically looking at how prestige ceramics were used by the Zapotecs in Oaxaca as a

way of cementing relationships among elites. Then I'm working on one now that will be looking at the expansion of the Zapotec state outside the valley of Oaxaca. I'm also working on a manuscript based on my dissertation research at the site of Yaasuchi, where Laura helped me. So that's in the short term."

**Question:** When and where do you intend to continue fieldwork in Meso-America, and will there be opportunities for students to participate in excavations on these projects?

**Dr. Villamil:** "This summer we're not going to the field, for obvious reasons...*laughs*, (Laura and Jason are due to have their first child, a boy, in late May, his name will be Julian Alexander). We are hoping the following summer we will restart work in one of the sites where I did my dissertation (in Quintana Roo, Mexico) and we would love to have students. After so many years of just the two of us, it would be great to have help. Besides, the sites are so big that you can't just do it on your own. So, we do anticipate taking a couple of students depending on the amount of money we have for the fieldwork. But, before we start excavating, I have an amazing collection of ceramics that need to be analyzed. The first layer of analysis has been done for my dissertation, but now there are a lot of other questions that need to be answered, so the ceramics need to be analyzed in a very detailed manner."

**Dr. Sherman:** "So, that first summer will involve the ceramics and then I'm going to start a settlement survey, a rural settlement survey around the big site. Probably the first summer in '08 will involve survey and mapping in house mounds, small sites and doing some test excavations. Then maybe the next summer, in '09 we would do some full-scale excavations of households. This

will be multiple years, but we've just thought about the next two years and it will definitely involve bringing graduate students. One, we want to work with graduate students and it's easy to work with graduate students in terms of getting them permission to work in Mexico...you can't have field schools in Mexico, formally you cannot, so taking undergrads is possible but it is complicated. So, we are really interested in working with graduate students and building up a team, both working collaboratively with other scholars and having students who might decide to do a dissertation project somewhere in the region. This could also be UWM students who just want field experience working somewhere else, you wouldn't have to commit to being a Quintana Roo archaeologist to go with us. But absolutely, we need the help and we would welcome a small group of students to start. If people end up liking it, there are awesome opportunities for dissertation projects throughout the region, its one of the things I'm most excited about, is having students down there."



Dr. Villamil (left), Beth Hart (U. of Michigan student) and Dr. Sherman (right) atop a pyramid in Quintana Roo, Mexico

## Peruvian Photojournal

By: *Matt Warwick*

I have recently returned from conducting doctoral research in highland Southern Peru. From December to mid-March 2007, I lived and worked in Puno, a city situated a stone's throw from beautiful Lake Titicaca. My dissertation research focuses on the role animals, both wild and domesticated, played in the rise of the pre-state Pukara polity (500 BC – AD 400). Camelids are a primary focus of this research, given llama and alpaca herd management was a nexus of domestic, political, and ritual spheres of life.

During the visit, I was fortunate enough to enjoy several secondary ethnographic and archaeological experiences. Around New Years, I participated in a *pago*, a syncretistic Aymara/Catholic ritual, which entreats God and the local deities, *apus*, for good fortune during the coming year. In February, I experienced Candelaria, a half-month celebration of the Virgin of Candelaria driving out devils from the area. Daily celebration involved dancing, singing, music, and camaraderie. Finally, just before I left Peru, I was able to visit a nearby pre-Inkan and Inka site, Sullistani. Sullistani was devoted to the burial of individuals and family units. The site includes an over-time progression from below-ground to above-ground crypts, commonly known as *chullpas*.

Matthew Warwick (Ph.D. ABD)



Overview of Puno and Lake Titicaca



Site of Pukara: *Qalasaya* during the spring



Site of Pukara: *Qalasaya* during the winter



Pukara Catfish Stelae



*Wichuña*  
A camelid metapodial weaving tool



Camelid congregation



Overview of Sullistani



Camelid remains: an analyst's dream



Inkan-style *chullpa*



Candelaria parade competition



Candelaria parade

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The UWM Anthropology Student Union is a student-run, non-profit organization designed to serve the needs and interests of undergraduate and graduate students. Membership is open to all registered UWM students and alumni.

All ASU meetings are open to attendance by anyone. General meetings are held the first Friday of each month in the department conference room.

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**Thanks to all who submitted, and please consider writing for the Fall issue.**  
**ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!!**

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