2019-2020 & 2020-2021
NEWSLETTER VOLUMES 13-14
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
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The past year has been unusually challenging for all of us. The pandemic forced all of us to change our daily rhythms and to live a life online, meeting students, instructors, collaborators, friends and family on our screen. The other major event in 2020 was the protests that followed the murder of George Floyd on a street in Minneapolis. This murder was captured on a cell phone, like many other recent pieces of footage of excessive police violence against Black people in America.

Demonstrations, rallies, and other forms of protest across the country were unprecedented in scope, size, and duration, and they changed the mood and the conversation around race in the US. “It feels different this time,” many said last summer and autumn. Terms like systemic racism, historical injustice, and anti-Blackness were now articulated, if often somewhat awkwardly, by mainstream politicians, corporate leaders, and many others. Many university leaders and officials, also here at Stanford, seized this moment to commit themselves to diversifying faculty and student bodies and to creating a more inclusive environment on campuses across the country. We all hope that this long-overdue effort will bear fruit. One of the first results on this campus was the decision to turn our longstanding program in African and African-American Studies into a fully-fledged department, a decision many of us felt should have been made decades ago. I want to applaud and recognize the important role that many of our students played in that campaign.

Many departments, including our own, launched efforts to foreground histories of racial exclusion, anti-Blackness, and historical inequalities across the globe into our curriculum, seminars, discussions, and scholarship.

This year’s departmental newsletter has “Race and Anthropology” as its primary theme. Some of the articles in this newsletter provide perspectives on how to study and think of race in anthropology. Others describe events and initiatives in the department addressing race and social justice from a variety of angles.
Before introducing the various contributions, let me briefly reflect on the protests of 2020. Two questions immediately come to mind: First, why did it happen at this point—what was different this time? Second, why did it take so long for so many people in this country, especially white people, to realize that systemic racism was a deep reality, carved into most facets of social life?

It is obvious that footage from cell phones and police body cams now provide a new, visceral kind of evidence of the excessive and often deadly force that communities of color—and in particular Black communities—face on a daily basis. However, there were also other forces at play in the past year that contributed to the upwelling of political protest. The deepening polarization of American life in past decades, and especially the newfound confidence and visibility of armed white supremacists during Trump’s presidency, have presented many people an image of the country that they do not like or recognize. Some people say, “No, this is not us. This is not America.” Others say, “Yes, this is also us—and we do not like what we see.” I think that latter sentiment is what compelled so many people to take to the streets last summer to protest, including many of our students and faculty. The target was to stop police killings, but it was also a cry for another kind of future and a more inclusive and less violent society.

The protests made it clear that there are indeed many Americas, many experiences and many histories—not all of them white, not all of them celebratory of American greatness. That fact, increasingly visible in public life, causes anger and frustration in many quarters and further drives the polarization of politics and public life in this country.

The deep divisions of society, the memories and realities of police brutality, and the segregation of life and opportunities have all been self-evident to Black communities and other communities of color for generations. The “racial reckoning” across America this past year is in reality white America waking up to what has existed in plain sight for decades and generations. It had remained unseen by many, partly by the design of cities and institutions and partly by convenience and self-interest among millions who enjoyed the benefits of being white in America. Whiteness is, as the Black legal scholar Cheryl Harris has famously put it, a form of property, in that whiteness allows easier access to resources, opportunities, wealth, and education. It also affords what W.E.B DuBois a century ago called “the psychological wages of whiteness”—the satisfaction that even the poorest white person can take from the fact that there are millions of Black people who are much worse off.

Anthropologists have had much to say over the years about minorities and about acknowledging cultural differences. However, we must have as much, if not more, to say about how racial identities and putative racial majorities came into being, how they became “natural” and taken for granted. That work is not yet done and our newsletter describes some of the ways that faculty and students have approached the study of race.
We begin with Duana Fullwiley’s scintillating account of how the early modern science of mapping colonized territories, and classifying their people as discrete races, reverberates through contemporary ancestry genetics used by commercial genetics testing companies like 23andMe.

We then turn to an interview with Professor Faye V. Harrison, Professor of African American Studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign who completed her Ph.D. at Stanford in the late 1970s. Professor Harrison gives us a vivid glimpse of her own intellectual trajectory and the many and intensive discussions of race at Stanford at the time, led by St. Clair Drake and other colleagues in Anthropology, as well as Sylvia Wynter and economists like Tetteh Kofi and Donald Harris.

We then feature four pieces by graduate students describing a variety of initiatives in the past year. Jameelah Morris gives an account of the department colloquia in the autumn of 2020 and winter of 2021 that were devoted to the many well-attended lectures and panels around the study of race and historical inequalities. Jasmine Reid summarizes highlights from a highly successful interdisciplinary seminar series called Race in Science, Technology and Medicine that was organized by the Science, Technology, and Society program on campus and co-sponsored by our department. Sam Maull writes about the incredible creativity and learning that happened in his class “Beyond Incarceration,” which also included a Brown Bag speaker series featuring local community organizers, activists, and community partners from the Ella Baker Center and the Ahimsa Collective. In “The Struggle for Black Studies,” Kristin McFadden and Jameelah Morris reflect on the importance of Black studies and Black feminism in sustaining a critique of how institutional racism and white supremacy informed the epistemological foundations of anthropology and many other disciplines. They tell the story of the organizing and pressure that led to the creation of the program in African and African American Studies (AAAS) at Stanford 50 years ago. They also survey the long road of tireless activism—involving many students from Anthropology—that finally led to the departmentalization of AAAS this year. In 2019, the department launched the Center for Global Ethnography (CGE) under the auspices of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRISS). David Stentiford describes the activities and profile of the CGE, which managed to host a series of high profile and well-attended events both before and during the pandemic. CGE has emerged as an important home on campus for scholars and students interested in ethnographic methods and materials.

We then turn to four interviews with new anthropology colleagues at Stanford—first, two faculty affiliates: Jonathan Rosa, who joined the School of Education in 2015, and Anna Bigelow, who joined the Department of Religious Studies in 2018; second, two new colleagues: Serkan Yolaçan and Mudit Trivedi, who both joined our faculty ranks in the Department of Anthropology as assistant professors in 2020.
Letter from the Chair

We also carry two letters from the field. Alisha Cherian writes about her ongoing work in Singapore, and Aaron Neiman writes about the fieldwork he conducted in Australia last year.

The final item in the newsletter are six shorter op-ed pieces written by undergraduate students majoring in Anthropology as a part of the capstone class “Contemporary Debates in Anthropology.”

As is evident from the many activities described in this newsletter our students, faculty and staff weathered all the challenges of the past year extremely well. A heartfelt thanks to all the hard work and determination that everyone demonstrated in the past year. I look forward to meeting you all in person in the next academic year.

Thomas Blom Hansen
Reliance-Dhirubhai Ambani Professor in South Asian Studies
Professor and Chair
Department of Anthropology
Of Maps, Ancestors, and Genes
Duana Fullwiley

On a former occasion I wrote to you at some length concerning my return from those new regions which we found and explored with the fleet, at the cost, and by the command of this Most Serene King of Portugal. And these we may rightly call a new world. Because our ancestors had no knowledge of them, and it will be a matter wholly new to all those who hear about them.

—Amerigo Vespucci, Mundus Novus, letter to Lorenzo Pietro Francesco de Medici, 1503

In the “Age of Discovery” many explorers and ship pilots were commissioned by the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns to set sail in search of goods, opportunities for trade, plunder, and expansion of powers. Amerigo Vespucci made his way into the circles of these men and eventually onto their ships. Born in the city state of Florence, he became a mercantilist who worked for the Medici family’s business interests in Spain. There he met prominent explorers, including Christopher Columbus, Alonzo de Hojeda, and Juan de la Cosa.

It was during a voyage in 1501 that Vespucci realized that they had not reached “the Indies,” or Asia, but were in fact limning the shores of what is now Brazil. The diverse people, languages, plants, and animals that Vespucci saw convinced him that they had breached a new continent. Printers in Florence seized on the story and published his 1503 letter to Medici under the title Mundus Novus, which became a best seller. A few years later, a group working in Saint-Dié, France, under the name Gymnasium Vosagense set out to produce a cartography of the world based on the most recent accounts of explorers. This was the first time the “new” continental landmass would be included on a global map. The cartographer Martin Waldseemüller was the primary mapmaker among a small group of printers and humanists, including the Alsatian scholar and poet Matthias Ringmann who produced Cosmographiae Introductio (a book to accompany the map). In The Fourth Part of the World, historian Toby Lester makes a compelling case that it was Ringmann who called the landmass “America” in recognition of Vespucci, coupled with his own poetic fascination with
wordplay in different languages and “investing his writing with hidden meanings.” According to Lester,

The key to the passage, almost always ignored or overlooked, is the curious name Amerigen—a coinage that involves just the kind of multifaceted, multilingual punning that Ringmann frequently indulged in. The word combines Amerigo with gen, a form of the Greek word for “earth,” creating the meaning that the author goes on to propose—“the land of Amerigo.” [...] But the word yields other meanings, too. [It] may also contain a play on meros, a Greek word sometimes translated as “place.” Here Amerigen becomes A-meri-gen, or “No-place-land...” (2009, 357).

This layered credit to Vespucci, designating America as a “no-place” territory, would prove useful for those set on effacing the lives and cultures of people inhabiting the land, and also of those brought from Africa to economically develop the territories for profit. This cultural extermination would leave legacy effects on many people who, 500 years later, would be compelled to submit their DNA for “ancestry” tests in an effort to chart the bodies lost to history that live on in their present-day identities.

Intrigue fueled the escalation of the map’s value when Waldseemüller’s original depiction of the planisphere disappeared for over 300 years. Cartographers and researchers embarked on audacious quests to locate this first printed record of a continent in the western hemisphere. By pure chance, it was recovered by a researcher in 1901, among a sixteenth century portfolio of maps acquired by the family of Prince Waldburg-Wolfegg in Germany.

Once the news reached the United States, the expressed interest in buying it throughout the twentieth century. In 1992, the German prince publicized the possibility of a sale, triggering an 11-year negotiation between Waldburg-Wolfegg and the Library of Congress. The first down payment was made in 2001, while the final purchase, completed in 2003, amounted to $10 million. This was the largest sum the United States has ever publicly paid for a historical document, almost $2 million more than the previous record holder, The Declaration of Independence. Hailed as the crown jewel of the Library of Congress’s collection, Waldseemüller’s 1507 map is now celebrated as “America’s birth certificate.”
In technical terms, however, this birth certificate was for what is now South America. North America remained unknown to these explorers and the cartographers at Saint-Dié. Nonetheless, for Europeans of the time, its emergence on the globe ushered in a conceptual reorientation of the world. It was one that deepened Europe’s aggrandizement, set on wealth accumulation and territorial expansion that would catechize the violent colonization and extermination of incalculable numbers of Indigenous people and the death and enslavement of millions of Africans. The “discoveries” of the era were cast as political exploits, economic entitlement, and divine mission, as well as feats of knowledge production for the sciences. As key sources that expanded the fields of geography, cartography, and natural history, these expeditions were in no way impartial, unbiased, or neutral achievements. They were rapacious, grotesque, and often genocidal.

Divisions and conquest written into ancestry algorithms:

In 2007, 500 years after the printing of the Waldseemüller map, the direct-to-consumer genetic testing company 23andMe launched its Personal Genome Service®.

Businesses like 23andMe have marshalled in a reckonable culture shift. Over 12 million people worldwide have given the company DNA to analyze their ancestry and health. Ancestry.com—the other big player in this market—boasts 16 million testers. Both entities have brought the notion of genetic ancestry into a tight conceptual frame that renders many of the world’s present-day people as older populations who may have contributed to “new world” humans’ genetic makeup. In the broader field, the original “admixture” models were designed using what are called “ancestry informative markers” (AIMs). These are single nucleotide polymorphisms selected for their relative higher or lower frequency in groups that often resemble outmoded racial categories. In these models, Africa, Asia, and Europe are cast as “old world,” while the Americas are “new” in most instances but could also be old for those deemed “pre-Columbian” (meaning present-day Indigenous groups, mostly from South America). For such models to work, a few things have to pertain. Contemporary people in the old world are situated as proxies to stand in for new world humans’ ancestors. For this to be possible, there is a suspension of time at the year 1492 (when Columbus landed in the Bahamas), which becomes a signifier of mobility and mixture for people conceived in the new world. In the same fell swoop, those in the said old world are conceptually rendered less mobile and mixed.

23andMe’s reference populations impressively include more groups than early admixture models. Yet the crucible of the 500-year time frame for mixing as well as the logic of admixture itself—old world stasis versus new world mobility—remains intact. In short, algorithmic ancestors are made possible by splitting the world in much the same way that early explorers did. Furthermore, the violent conquest of
The Ancestry Composition algorithm calculates your ancestry by comparing your genome to the genomes of people whose ancestries we already know. To make this work, we need a lot of reference data! Our reference datasets include genotypes from 14,437 people who were chosen generally to reflect populations that existed before transcontinental travel and migration were common (at least 500 years ago). (23andMe 2021, emphasis added)

The dating is key: the ancestry algorithm holds if people can be slotted into those who came before and those who came after the vaguely named “transcontinental travel” and “migration” that began in the late fifteenth century. To explicitly mark that historical period, while omitting any detail about it, silently tucks away racial colonization and enslavement into the algorithmic shadows.

This sanitized language may be a safer bet to appeal to Europeans and white Americans who remain the largest consumers of these tests. This is amid a simultaneous desire and several initiatives to attract more clients of color, including a giveaway of 10,000 “free” DNA tests for African Americans if they participate in research. In one of the company’s first studies on diverse DNA, a communiqué from one of its scientists reads, “Our results can inform the design of medical genetic studies. For example, the presence of Native American and African ancestry in European Americans may have implications for genetic studies of complex diseases.” The scientific paper explicitly acknowledges both colonization and the slave trade, however, which prefaces the pragmatic question of how the progeny of the actual colonized and enslaved forebears might provide clues to mapping genetic disease risks for all. The convergence of such ancestry models for medical genetics and heritage testing sales has now resulted in drug development plans and diagnostic tools made possible by the vast research platform that clients seeking ancestry helped to build.

The door to this platform is consent. Consumers are on one side, and their ancestry results await them on the other. As online clickwrap contracts are now increasingly familiar, one has to wonder about the degree to which people assess the details of such agreements. In keeping with the general upbeat mood of the company’s website, testers are asked to give consent for studies “to understand the basic causes of disease, develop drugs or other treatments and/or preventive measures, or predict a person’s risk of disease,” which the company frames as “enabling its customers to participate directly in research.” Eighty percent of people in 23andMe’s database have clicked to agreements to reuse their biodata. On average, each individual contributes to 200 different research studies, much of this supported and exclusively used by pharmaceutical giants, such as Pfizer and GSK (formerly GlaxoSmithKline). Earlier this month, on February 4, 2021, 23andMe announced that they were going public. In the press release, the CEO emphasized that the next phase of the business will indeed “create new opportunities to revolutionize personalized healthcare and medicine.” The genomic labor performed by people with “diverse” Latino and African ancestry will be critical to these developments.
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Embodied expressions of the new and old world:

For two decades, I have been concerned with ancestry genetics and its uses in basic science labs for medical research in several university settings in the United States. The use of racializing ancestry informative marker panels has consistently raised flags for scholars in the social, medical, and biological sciences who study race and ethnicity—prompting the question, Is this science or business?

In practice, the admixture idea offers testers possible results of not just mixed genes, but also of mixed emotions. These arise around their heritage being linked to Europeans who brutally seized the Americas while summarily violating Indigenous and African people in the process. When I was conducting fieldwork in US labs, it was scientists who relayed such unsettling feelings to me, sentiments they had when they underwent similar kinds of tests.

In a lab where geneticists used AIMs to detail portions of African and European genetic ancestry in prostate cancer patients, one of the principal researchers from Central America shared her experience of testing herself for the markers.

I was really happy that at least my mitochondrial DNA turned out to be Native American because my AIMs said that I was about 50 percent European, and only some 30 or so percent Native American. The African was around 12 percent, or something like that. I can’t recall the Asian exactly.

Honestly, I thought I would have much more Native American. I was really surprised to have so much European—and this was not a good surprise. The fact that my mtDNA is Native reflects what happened to Native women. It brings all that up, which we know. But I’m glad I at least have some Native, and that my maternal line is Indigenous.

Here the scientist also used a lineage test that analyzes clonally inherited haplogroups to trace mutations in mitochondrial DNA and on Y chromosomes. These give information about less than one percent of a person’s genetic makeup and consist of mutations inherited through a single line of descent (one’s mother, and her mother, etc. for women, and one’s mother and father, and his father, etc. for men). This researcher was troubled by the amount of European ancestry the autosomal genetic markers indicated. She also points out the distress of feeling that a Native American woman in her line could not fend off the Europeans who forcefully took over Native bodies, lands, and now, much of her genome. She allows this recognition to surface, and then quickly safeguards her Indigenous line.

Another scientist in the lab did away with the old versus new world distinctions altogether. She had not submitted her DNA for an AIMs analysis, but always felt a close affinity to Africa and Africans.

I don’t know what it is, I love Africa, I’ve never been there. I don’t know what it is. There is this silent rivalry with Africans. Even [a black collaborator] said, ‘I’m not no African.’ This is brainwashing. This is part of the hate and separation that was brought upon us. I very much feel that I am from
Africa. . . My mom went to Senegal after she was diagnosed with breast cancer. And she brought back these photos. People were running their own business—that kind of stuff you never hear from the media. I would want to know where I come from so maybe I could learn the language. I know I wasn’t speaking English [back] then.

This scientist effortlessly transported us back to West Africa in the immediacy of placing herself in the past while speaking—or rather not speaking—English. She collapses the time frames of pre and post new world in the recognition that enslavers cut Africans off from their mother tongues and cultures. The wish to speak an African language—as she abruptly juts her English anachronistically into the past for a moment—is a temporal reflex, an attempt to reunite with her ancestors in some form.

Family members and friends have also brought their experiences with DNA tests to my attention. One of my Nigerian friends was excited to tell me that his brother, who spends half of his time in Lagos and half in New Jersey, had recently done a 23andMe test. When we spoke, he told me he had been intrigued by the trend for a while, but wasn’t sure he wanted “to blow 200 bucks on a test.” But then, as he recounted, “Around Black Friday it was half price. It was $99 for health and ancestry. . .So, I was like, ‘Eh, I might as well.’” He had expected to match to Black Americans or other Nigerians in the diaspora, but he was surprised by some of the people the algorithm matched him with as relatives, such as an Indigenous Guatemalan woman and others in South and Central America.

My friend’s brother also found some of the test’s health and trait data insightful, such as a propensity to smell unappealing to female mosquitos. 23andMe developed this test in collaboration with Pfizer to understand how genes that express immunological function prevent some people from getting bitten as much as those around them. But the real surprise he had hoped to uncover was whether or not he had any unknown siblings—and also whether or not he had an unknown child. No data came up for either. Culturally, his curiosity about the test is forward-looking rather than back. As a Nigerian with a foot in the United States he is not questing for ancestors. Rather, he was interested in progeny.
What do these stories illustrate and why do they matter? They make clear that, like individuals, economies derive from human relationships—from aggregates of people who make up populations that bear life but can also be used to generate development, new enterprise, and marketable labor. In this way, economies also have ancestors. The propulsion of men onto ships and into the Americas for wealth, commerce, and exploits of raw resources did not, of course, stop at inert matter. Bodies were seen as material and made into tools for gain, or discarded. Today’s global capital was born of sixteenth century expeditions for lands, gold, spices, birds, plants, pearls, and people. Today, genetic technologies are designed to recover some aspect of the heritage many people lost in these pursuits. Clients and scientists alike engage ancestry tests to search the past while looking forward in ways that affirm some aspects of their identities. The appeal resides in the ways technologies that purport to reveal ancestry embed within them promises of recovery. Along the way, they also create new possibilities for profit that embody assurances of newfound wealth and health—alongside a risk of mining bodies for gold—in units of genes.
Faye V. Harrison is a Professor of African American Studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the past president of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. She is a sociocultural anthropologist specializing in the study of social inequalities, human rights, and intersections of race, gender, class, & (trans)national belonging (or not belonging). She has also contributed to the history and politics of anthropology and of African American/African Diaspora studies. She earned her BA at Brown University and her MA and PhD in Anthropology at Stanford University.

**Maybe we could start with you telling us a little bit about your early intellectual trajectory—for example, your arrival at Stanford, who you met and who influenced you, and what kind of place it was for you then and now.**

I arrived in the Bay Area about a month before my graduate studies began. That gave me enough time to acclimate myself to my new environment, find a place to live, and intro-
Before starting Stanford’s graduate program in 1975-76, I spent a year in England doing intensive ethnographic research on Afro-Caribbean (then called “West Indian”) immigrants—and particularly the generation of young adults who were U.K.-raised. Whether born in the Caribbean or Britain, they were often caught betwixt and between Caribbean and English identities and identifications. I was interested in how they negotiated the contradictory conditions for forming cultural and sociopolitical subjectivities as Black Britons in an imperially configured nation-state that excluded them and assaulted them with xenophobic, anti-Black political campaigns and everyday practices, some of which criminalized Black youth.

Someone I’d met in London, a Black American from Oakland, connected me with a woman who lived in Nairobi. She was kind enough to help me get my bearings. It was a small world in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto. My Nairobi acquaintance introduced me to someone who would be one of my classmates in the anthropology graduate program, Glenn Jordan. Glenn had been an undergraduate student at Stanford and was a research assistant and protégé of St. Clair Drake, Professor of Anthropology, Sociology, and African and African American Studies. Glenn helped me find housing and introduced me to Professor Drake, who had been assigned to be my advisor during my first year. Professor Drake had done his University of Chicago PhD dissertation research in the late forties and early fifties in Cardiff, Wales, in the port neighborhood of Butetown, also known as Tiger Bay. The (often bi- and multi-racial) families of African seamen and other African and African diasporic immigrants were integral segments of that community. Professor Drake had moved between Cardiff and London where he befriended leading Pan-Africanist thinkers and politicos such as George Padmore, CLR James, Kwame Nkrumah, and others, who helped to forge the transition from colonialism to independence and postcolonial sovereignty.

I learned a great deal about the intellectual and political history of the debates that are current now from Professor Drake’s ruminations as a Pan-Africanist scholar-activist who belonged to a transnational community of kindred thinking intellectuals, situated both within and beyond academia. My exposure to this intellectual history and its legacies came through conversations we had—and often monologues which I listened intently to—during office hours and while walking our bikes across campus. Opportunities to learn beyond the formal curriculum were an important aspect of my years at Stanford.

Professor Drake was an important influence. A considerable amount of my scholarship has and continues to focus on the history and politics of anthropology, especially with respect to African and African diasporic intellectuals, and on race and related axes of difference. I am indebted to Drake’s many stories—he adhered to a griot pedagogy, and engaged in a practice of storytelling and counter-storytelling—as well as his scholarly writings on race and power, urban life, intellectual history, and

Drake was not the only professor who influenced me. Bernard Siegel chaired my dissertation committee and was always supportive and a keen source of insight and input. We corresponded during his sabbatical year in Israel; his letters provided detailed feedback on my draft chapters. I also learned a great deal from Sylvia Yanagisako, whose tough love critiques of my work taught me how to craft a better balance between theory and evidence in developing a more cogent analysis. From Bridget O’Laughlin I learned about Marxist political economy and other critical social scientific methodologies and theory. She complemented what I learned from Drake about Africa.

There were other faculty who didn’t serve on my committee but whose conversations helped me develop the conceptual and analytical tools I needed to think through issues I examined in my dissertation. Don Donham, a Stanford PhD, was conversant about matters related to economic anthropology. Before her tragic death, Michelle (“Shelly”) Rosaldo was someone I admired, worked with as a teaching assistant, and always learned from. In fact, she was the initial magnet that drew me to Stanford. Even though I ended up working more closely with Drake, Shelly was a major force in the department. Her regular participation in colloquia always prompted her to ask questions related to gender, regardless of what the speakers had presented. She pushed us all to find ways to gender our analyses. I especially appreciated that about her when years later feminist perspectives became more explicit in my work.

Beyond the Department of Anthropology, Sylvia Wynter, who was recruited to Stanford to direct the African and African American Studies Program, was an important catalyst in creating a dynamic interdisciplinary intellectual community. A Jamaican professor of Spanish and Portuguese, she brought a robust command of critical theory, cultural analysis, and philosophical interpretation to her writings, teaching, and everyday conversations with those of us who used to congregate in AAAS to enjoy the vibrant discussions and interdisciplinary company of students from across the college and university. Professor Wynter opened up her home to us for holiday meals and other occasions which brought people together for socializing and intellectualizing. Professor Tetteh Kofi, a Ghanaian development economist, also had regular weekend parties where African and Caribbean food was served and music compelled many of us to get up to dance. When we weren’t dancing, there were stimulating conversations on an array of topics that clarified and expanded my understanding of matters related to my research interests. Those years at Stanford were so generative.. I balanced my academic work with coordinating an interdisciplinary Black graduate student organization and doing Southern African liberation solidarity work that linked Stanford student activists to Bay Area organizations.

In 1978, I went off for fieldwork, and a year
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later returned to complete the dissertation. It took me a couple of years to finish it, because my life was enriched by marriage and the birth of my first son, Giles Harrison-Conwill, also a cultural anthropologist (Duke PhD). I like to play with the idea that his quiet presence at the dissertation seminar that Professor James (“Jim”) Gibbs facilitated in Spring 1981 influenced Giles’ later decision to study anthropology. I am thankful for Jim insisting that I attend the seminar and bring baby Giles along. During a time when I might have lost momentum and weakened my ties to the Department, Jim brought me back into the fold.

As you write in various works, you did your early work in Jamaica at a time of protracted political upheaval and struggle centered around race and historical structures of oppression. How did that shape the work that you did there and also the work that you did on rethinking anthropology? What was it like to be a young anthropologist at that time?

My research in Jamaica, starting in 1978 and continuing on through intermittent fieldwork and archival projects over twenty years, was inspired by my earlier experience in London, where what was happening politically in the Caribbean was always being discussed or debated in the Caribbean diasporic community. Intellectuals and activists visiting from the Caribbean addressed small and large audiences about the struggles at “home” and how the diaspora in the U.K. could offer support. I remember learning about the New Jewell Movement and other similar political formations in the Eastern Caribbean from those events. Jamaica was often a focus of concern in communities like Brixton, where a sizable segment of the community had origins there. The non-aligned foreign policy of Michael Manley’s democratic socialist People’s National Party and its U.S.-affiliated Jamaica Labour Party opposition were heatedly debated. There was also a strong element of cultural politics related to the impact of the Ras Tafari movement and the popular culture it inspired, which was being internationalized all around the world. Reggae music, particularly the “conscious” variety, was having a strong impact on an array of popular musical expressions in the UK and the USA. Political and cultural currents of that time pointed my attention toward Jamaica.

There was one other important factor that convinced me to focus my dissertation project on Jamaica. Economist Donald Harris (Vice President Kamela Harris’ father) led a political economy seminar that was open to faculty and students from other fields of study. I accompanied Bridget O’Laughlin to the seminar and was exposed to transdisciplinary perspectives on development and competing models for resolving the contradictions of uneven development in the global economy. The seminar, which I attended fairly regularly during my first year, was a formative learning experience. It stimulated my thinking about political economy and what anthropological inquiry and analysis could contribute to it.

From those convergent influences, I decided to go to Jamaica to study poverty, the urban informal economy, and political
contestations over the path to development, which by the late 1970s was presented as an antagonism between a non-aligned and electorally-based democratic socialist movement (not equivalent to Cuban communism, though perceived as much the same in Washington, D.C.) and a U.S./IMF/World Bank-driven neoliberal restructuring in the guise of structural adjustment. Matters of race and racial formation were germane to the historical context of Jamaica as a colonial and later a postcolonial society as Jamaican economist Norman Girvan wrote about in his 1975 essay “Aspects of the Political Economy of Race in the Caribbean and Americas.” Culturally-contingent forms of racialization certainly had effects on the color-coded and ethnically intersecting aspects of class stratification. However, my immediate ethnographic focus was on polarizations and antagonisms of class and how they intermeshed with or drew upon the sociocultural salience of color (a metonym for culturally construed phenotype) and colorism as a manifestation and trickle-down effect of the wider historical and global forces of racialization and race making. Nowadays some would say that this approach resonates with the current resurgence of interest in racial capitalism. Others would characterize these concerns in terms of the afterlife of racial slavery and its consequences for all segments of Caribbean societies as well as the societies and economies of the Americas and beyond. As it evolved over time, my research also addressed questions of gender. I suppose it took some time to distill the lessons I learned from Shelly Rosaldo, Jane Collier, Bridget O’Laughlin and Sylvia Yanagisako.

You ask what it was like as a young anthropologist doing fieldwork in Jamaica? It was difficult, a real challenge I had to rise up to in order to complete it. It demanded a great deal of negotiation and navigation across a complex terrain of ethical, political, and epistemic quandaries. It compelled me to rethink the meanings of race, class, gender, nationality, and diaspora for myself and for my diverse, differentially-situated interlocutors—slum residents; petty commodity producers and traders; members of partisan and drug-trafficking gangs; community-based school networks of educators, students, and parents; and also politicians, civil servants, and members of the university community.

If you had to pick one work of yours that you would like students to read, which would it be and why?

I’d recommend Outsider Within: Reworking Anthropology in the Global Age (2008). It weaves together essays organized around several themes integral to my thinking about anthropology as it developed since Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology of Liberation.

Outsider Within is a critical anthropology of anthropology, using my scholarly and professional trajectory as a point of entry. The book offers a vision for a more inclusive, social justice-centered approach to knowledge production, career building, and public engagement from the vantage point of “outsiders within” or “outside within” spaces within the discipline and profession of anthropology. Outsider comes out of my interest in the non-canonical, marginalized,
So much of your work over the decades on decolonizing, activism, political struggle, and rethinking the anthropological canon continues to guide the most pressing and yet still unresolved questions within our discipline.

Looking at this work twenty years on and the political moments sixty years on, how do you see current discussions about decolonizing anthropology and the movements it is now situated in?

To some extent, I addressed this excellent question in a two-part interview that was posted in 2016 on the former Savage Minds blog, which is now anthro{dendum}. The interview with Carole McCranahan, Kaifa Roland, and Bianca C. Williams can be accessed online: part one is linked here, and part two here.

There are some continuities with past moments when calls for knowledge decolonization were made. The fundamental social transformations that were envisioned then have not come to fruition in any sustained sense. David Scott has argued that the current conjuncture is marked by tragedy that is starkly visible in the “precariousness of civilization…the threat of disaster (both natural and human-made), and the inversion and perishability of human achievements” (Conscripts of Modernity, 2004:111). This is a very different “cognitive-political problem space” than what existed during the anticolonial and early decolonization eras, when more utopian, romantic outcomes of vindication, redemption, and salvation were being imagined and hoped for.

Charles Hale, who contributed a comment to Jafari Allen and Ryan Jobson’s “The Decolonizing Generation” article in Current Anthropology, wrote that he saw Decolonizing Anthropology (1991) as “an effort to recapture the (waning?) energy of decolonial and revolutionary movements of the ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s.” He suggested that the “decolonizing generation” was influenced more by Gramsci than by the influences that shaped “latter-day decolonial theorists…” and scholars such as Afro-pessimists and other interlocutors (Alexander Wehiliye, Fred Wilderson, Jared Sexton), who are skeptical of the relevance of Gramsci, Foucault, or Agamben, whose theoretical assumptions have failed to acknowledge colonialism, slavery, and race. Like decolonial theorists (Walter Mignolo, Arthur Escober, Catherine Walsh, and the much less cited Afrofeminista scholar-activist, Ochy Curiel), they argue for an epistemic break from modernist, Eurocentric frameworks and a concerted move toward building knowledges otherwise rather than re-signifying hegemonic categories.

In the perspective I espoused in 1991, I called for the valorization of knowledges from the global and metaphoric souths, but I did not insist on a delinking from non-orthodox neo-Marxist perspectives. My argument included useful insights from Antonio Gramsci, Walter Rodney, Bernard Magubane, and a number of anthropologists who had drawn on, reworked, and integrated aspects of Marxian analysis in their critical analyses.

While, in principle, I concur with the empha-
on knowledge otherwise, I suspect this is an aspiration and goal that is difficult to accomplish. As we move toward longer-term pluriversal goals, we can find ways to decenter Western or Northern epistemologies while working toward the end of dismantling the hegemony exercised within the cognitive empire.

*In a footnote in the introduction to African-American Pioneers in Anthropology, you remark that St. Clair Drake felt that he was seen as an “area man” whereas others were seen as “theory men” whose work is seen as theoretically significant. Do you feel that anthropology continues to maintain these distinctions?*

In some form or fashion, yes, although that particular binary may not be explicitly articulated now. There are evaluative criteria concerning whether scholarship is more descriptive than explicitly theoretically nuanced. I also think there are implicit assumptions about who among us are likely to produce theoretically significant work, and who are expected to offer analysis that is more descriptive. I’m alluding to Catherine Lutz’s argument about the “gender of theory” and my writings concerning the gendered racial economy of knowledge within which theory plays an important part. I addressed this problem in Outsider Within and in more recent essays on engaging theory and theorizing in “ex-centric” contexts. Drawing on Donna Haraway’s perspective on situated knowledge and partial perspectives, I suspect there are still “god tricks” operating to depreciate, circumscribe, and limit the validation and mobility of some anthropologists’ theoretical claims. I have an essay on this coming out in a forthcoming Cultural Anthropology colloquy on citational practices. In my piece I examine some of the GendeRace dynamics that contribute to the under-engagement of Black women’s writings, including our theoretical formulations, in the past and even today.

When I was at Stanford I picked up on the perception that St. Clair Drake was a great storyteller but not someone to be assigned to teach a graduate courses in which theory would be an important component. However, I learned a great deal from the stories and counter-stories he told. His stories were never what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has called “a single story.” They were often layered with lessons about theory, method, and empirical evidence and context. Eventually, I understood that theory can assume a variety of forms and discursive registers, and that the conventional language and style of theory—dense, abstract and often articulated to elite audiences—doesn’t necessarily explain anything in a coherent, intelligible way, especially if it leads readers or listeners through labyrinths of muddled confusion. The Kenyan writer, literary critic, and decolonial theorist (and author of *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature, 1986*), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, has a notion of “poor theory.” It is based on the understanding that density of words is not the same thing as complexity of thought. If what is presented as theory doesn’t present a convincing interpretation or explanation, informed by ample evidence, is it really theory? Does one have to mimic the most seemingly disembodied, universalizing
philosophical treatise, with some of its origins traceable to France or Germany?

Things may be changing because of recent decolonial and antiracist trends. In the United States, anthropologists of color seem to be receiving greater recognition, as evidenced by the books that are being nominated for and are receiving major awards.

The #CiteBlackWomen movement here in the United States (led by Stanford graduate alumna Christen Smith) and Brazilian anthropologists’ call to avoid “cognitive extractivism” and the reproduction of the cognitive empire are perhaps two indications that much more needs to be done.

**Do you see people challenging and re-orientating the discipline?**

For many years I have been involved in the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, serving a five-year term as president in 2013-18. Before that I was active in a commission (equivalent to a AAA section) and served two-consecutive terms on the Executive Committee before being elected president. There was a great deal of concern over the hegemony of U.S. and Anglophone anthropology vis-à-vis other national and regional anthropologies. To foster a more horizontal, democratic community, the World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) and eventually the World Anthropological Union (WAU) were established. WAU is based on the merger of WCAA and IUAES, which are now chambers of a bicameral organization. Around the country and abroad, there are interesting things happening. Graduate students at Oregon State University developed an alternative syllabus for the required course on social theory in anthropology. They “decanonized” the course. In my department at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, we have been having regular discussions among faculty and graduate students on “decolonizing anthropology.” These were prompted by the convergence of last summer’s civil unrest in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd, the COVID-19 pandemic, the consequent economic decline, and the crisis of political legitimacy heightened under the Trump administration. Many departments and other communities of scholars posted statements of solidarity with Black Lives Matter and the Movement for Black Lives. Some were also prompted to do more than talk a good rap after the American Anthropologist published Ryan Jobson’s 2020 essay reviewing recent published work through the lens of “letting anthropology burn.” Many webinars and Zoom meetings followed.

The Department of Anthropology at UIUC decided to explore what we could do toward developing more principled practices of anti-anti-Blackness and other forms of antiracism. We are reframing and reworking our teaching, mentoring, fieldwork, and scholarship along more decolonial terms. The Brazilian Anthropological Association’s November 2020 motion on avoiding cognitive extractivism (i.e. treating anthropologists abroad as informants rather than as colleagues deserving of being read, cited, and respected) and increasing knowledge of anthropology’s diversity around the world has been endorsed by the AAA and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.
My department has drafted a statement on what we will do as a unit to decolonize our approach to and practice of anthropology. There are eight to ten commitments, which, if implemented in a sustained, accountable manner, will bring us in line with the vision that world anthropologies proponents have been encouraging for a long time.

**How do we engage with students in ways that do not reproduce hierarchies of subjugated knowledges?**

We have begun to think about this question more seriously in my department as we envision how to reorganize and rework so much of what we do in a manner consistent with a decolonization or decoloniality of knowledge and power model of principled practice. Our discussions, which have included graduate students’ participation, have emphasized that students are our colleagues and potential collaborators in co-producing knowledge, teaching, and making what we claim to know available to wider audiences. We must find ways to work against the power disparities of traditional professor-student relationships embedded in verticality and hierarchy. We must recognize that although there is so much students need to and will learn when they enter into graduate programs, they do not come to us without funds of knowledge ultimately grounded in communal epistemologies. The treasure trove of knowledge with which our students already have connections can be at least one important source and basis of their intellectual pursuits. We shouldn’t undermine that by devaluing that organic epistemological base. I know of many instances of students of color or ethnoracially, religiously and sexually subordinate students across the country and also in other national contexts (e.g., Brazil, South Africa, and even Roma in Central Europe), whose academic advisors and other professors have discouraged or disapproved of their ideas for thesis and dissertation research—often because the professors lack expertise in those areas and because those areas of study are considered non-canonical and are depreciated as unworthy of serious academic attention. Faculty need to be more self-critical and committed to their own continuing education, their own unlearning and retooling. Without this kind of commitment, the decolonization of anthropology or any course of study will be impeded.

We prepare graduate students to undertake research in a range of cultural and geographic contexts, at home and abroad, in which there are established intellectual traditions. However, these may not include anthropological inquiry, analysis, and theorization. In some parts of the world, anthropology as we define it is not institutionalized; in some cases, it is subsumed within other social sciences or humanities, which may be of higher institutional and programmatic priority. In some contexts, anthropology is perceived to have too much colonial baggage. As a consequence, researchers and scholars trained in anthropology may wear other hats, such as those worn by sociologists or researchers in development or health studies. Cameroonian, South African-based anthropologist and creative writer Frances Nyamnjoh has pointed out that some African social anthropologists have taken their evidence-informed social and cultural interpretations into creative
genres, such as novels, poetry, and theater. If one wishes to seriously engage the anthropological thinking of Sub-Saharan Africans, he claims, one must be flexible and interdisciplinarily conversant. Departments of anthropology and anthropology journals are not necessarily where all of the most cutting-edge work is to be found.

We should help our students establish respectful contact with communities of interdisciplinary scholars who may be receptive to and willing to collaborate with the students’ anthropological thinking and research pursuits. The knowledges of the global South, intellectual communities east of the West and North Atlantic, and those minoritized traditions situated in the global North have been and continue to be relegated to peripheral, non-prestige zones of knowledge production and circulation. These archives and bibliographies are rarely integrated into graduate training as much more than another source of data from a category of informants subjected to “nativization.” Interestingly, a parody of this notion was reflected in the title of the Association of Black Anthropologists’ earliest newsletter, News from the Natives. The native concept and slot (akin to Trouillot’s idea of the “savage slot”) was inverted to invest intellectual agency in “native anthropologists” who were interested in studying communities like the ones from which they or their foreparents originated, or domestic and diasporic communities with which they were committed to building relations of solidarity on the basis of overlapping or similar positionalities and experiences of subjection.

It is imperative for professors to teach, advise, and mentor students in ways that go against the grain of the coloniality of knowledge and its reproduction. Perhaps we can move in this direction by integrating more diverse, intercultural, and pluriversal knowledges into our teaching and scholarship. We can ensure that our students prepare themselves for doctoral candidacy exams by helping them cultivate a command of the literatures produced within the epistemological and sociocultural settings in which they intend to pursue their projects. Their exams should demonstrate their command of the anthropologies germane to their projects so that U.S. and other northern anthropological perspectives are in productive dialogue with the discursive streams of other anthropologies, social sciences, and humanities.

Our students (as well as our faculty) will be encouraged to publish in English and in the language(s) of the host communities where they work, in outlets that include journals and books based in other countries and, in the context of the USA, in adjacent ethnic, gender, and other interdisciplinary outlets that permit them to situate their analyses within wider transdisciplinary discourses. Some of us already do this, but now we want these publications to count as more significant scholarship rather than as minor publications or service rather than scholarship.

As departments and programs consider updating the content of their core courses, it is important to emphasize the advantages of reframing around themes and debates that would be amenable to intercultural dialogues, rather than the replacement or mechanical addition of a quota of token
Interview with Faye V. Harrison

scholars and texts. Decanonization may be another strategy if disciplinary history and theory is taught through more than one or two courses. The graduate students at Oregon State University developed a proposal to decanonize the theory course. There is a lot of good content on the syllabus, but it may also be worthwhile to find innovative ways to facilitate learning about the canon, approaching it as situated knowledges and partial perspectives, demystifying the god tricks that have long valorized some theories over others.

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For all of its resources, Stanford is a decentralized institution, and there aren’t often opportunities to gather people from different career and educational paths to engage in a discussion about anti-racism. In July 2020, Paul Edwards, the director of the Program in Science, Technology & Society, reached out to me to ask if I’d be willing to help change that reality.

I’d spent the summer of 2020 witnessing a pandemic disproportionately kill and maim Black people; spent humid days in Montana watching previously trusted acquaintances debate the worthiness of Black lives; spent warm evenings in California dodging images of a murdered George Floyd – pictures and GIFs and video loops that crept up without content warnings and crippled my already tenuous sense of safety in the U.S. When I got the email from Paul, I was emotionally spent. But I saw a light in his invitation to be the graduate student coordinator for a new course entitled “Race in Science, Technology, and Medicine.” Here was a way to turn all the anger and fear of 2020 into a healing space for students who shared my same intersecting identities, while also providing space for people who had never reckoned with their own privileges to learn how to implement anti-racism in their lives. The foundation of the class would be to address all three valences of racism – the systemic, the interpersonal, and the internalized – but it would also highlight global nature of anti-Blackness. There would be no debate about whether global white supremacy existed, only opportunities to interrogate the fast and slow violences designed to uphold whiteness.

Sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and eighteen other departments, labs, centers, and affinity groups around Stanford, the class came together as a year-long speaker series that students could enroll in for credit. Over the summer, the nineteen sponsors brainstormed a list of thirty-five BIPOC speakers. All the sponsors agreed that for students to get the most out of the course, they would need to see a variety of career trajectories that still advanced justice represented by the speakers, and the final list of invitations reflected that diversity. The scholars came from foundations and from presidential cabinets, from academic sciences and from fledgling tech start-ups, from Stanford and from around the world. We grouped the speakers into three quarters’ worth of programming: “Race in Science” in the fall; “Race in Technology” in the winter;
and “Race in Medicine” in the spring. We committed to keeping the series virtual all year, not only so that we could accommodate different time zones, but also so that we could optimize our funding to provide the speakers with large honoraria. Ever mindful of the time tax and the emotional burden placed on BIPOC – and especially Black – scholars to speak about their experiences, we wanted to compensate each speaker fairly for their labor.

We also committed to keeping our sessions open to any Stanford affiliate who wanted to join. From our first class with University of New Hampshire physicist Chandra Prescod-Weinstein, to our most recent class with Princeton Professor of History Keith Wailoo, we’ve consistently had over forty affiliates join our students each week. Speakers have opted for a wide range of formats to share their stories, including facilitated discussions with colleagues, interactive workshops, formal talks, and fireside chats. We made sure to end each session, regardless of format, with a Q&A led by our students. Through this rich interchange, we’ve had the pleasure of watching new research projects, new connections, and new departmental initiatives take shape at Stanford.

Just as designed, our class became an accessible meeting ground for representatives of Stanford’s many silos to engage in imperative, candid discussions about race. Through weekly graded writing assignments, I watched our students respond to this vulnerable experience by reflecting on their own social and ethical goals. Stanford matriculates so many innovators and entrepreneurs, and early on in the class, I decided that the best metric of the course’s success would be if our students graduated with that entrepreneurial spirit and a renewed commitment to pursuing justice.

As an example, during the fall “Race in Science” sequence, we invited anti-racism facilitator Suzette Shipp to lead a closed workshop with our sixty-five enrolled students. Through pre-circulated videos and small group discussions, Suzette helped students reflect on their own experiences of racialized gate-keeping at Stanford. In their written responses from that week, most students admitted that they’d never been asked to define what an anti-racist orientation would look like for them, but the exercise helped them illuminate the values they wanted to guide the rest of their educational experience. The following quarter, we repeated the exercise – this time with almost eighty enrolled students. At the end of that workshop, one of our graduating master’s students shared that the exercise helped her realize she would restrict her job search to only those positions that advanced the cause of social justice. She hadn’t articulated that commitment before this class, she admitted, and other students immediately agreed with her that they now wanted to dedicate their labor to the task of eradicating inequities in STEM fields. It was a lightbulb moment for Paul and me: our class had given students the chance to see that it was possible to lean into their gifts while also prioritizing justice for the oppressed.

As an anthropologist who looks at how race and racism structure spatial justice and political action in South Africa, I’ve always...
been passionate about helping students understand how insidious racism can be in their own spheres of influence. Becoming the graduate student coordinator for this course fit with that professional development goal of mine, but this class has also become one of the most consistent lights in my life. As I write this, recycled images of George Floyd’s last breath again pepper social media, along with stories about anti-Asian violence and the latest mass shooting, which happens to be in the predominantly Black county where my grandmother lives. It’s exhausting to be in a body whose worth is up for debate, but in spite of the burdens of surviving this year as a person of color, I delight in the privilege of creating a weekly space for students like me to breathe. I sincerely hope that our class inspires the creation and design of other courses and lecture series around campus, where Stanford students, faculty, and staff can develop a shared language for how to be explicitly anti-racist in their work.
Brown Bag and Incarceration Class

SAM MAULL

ANTHRO 141/AFRICAAM 142: Beyond Incarceration started life tentatively titled “Imagining Abolition” nearly a year ago, when I found out that I would teach a class of my own in the department. In the past, I’ve taught comparative religion in prison, social anthropology in jail, the social and cultural anthropology introductory course as a TA, and for CCSRE as an instructor and TA; but I had never had my own class in the department. I had pitched quite a conceptual class on captivity in 2019, thinking that it would be a good way to work out some of the theoretical parts of my dissertation project by teaching the texts I hoped to work with to a class of undergraduates. I knew that there was nothing like teaching to help me really get into those texts. Once I found out that I had actually been given the position, I realized that I wanted to do something more engaged, more political, and more experimental. Hence, the hybrid “Beyond Incarceration” class and Brown Bag series was born.

Both the class and speaker series engage
questions around carcerality, abolition, and the university, and both are based in the same ethic: an encounter between people working in, or against, the criminal legal system, and students focusing on what abolition, as a practice, might look like. In a previous course I had taught, CCSRE22: American Lockdown, students had examined the broad impacts of mass incarceration on American society. We had discussed prison towns, the families of incarcerated people, for-profit prisons and prison industries, probation and parole, and the school-to-prison pipeline all as examples of the broader carcerality which has led many to label the US a carceral society. The last week of the class engaged the question of abolition: if American society is so inextricably bound up with carcerality, how do we break that bond? Though the class was stimulating, even personally moving, I found myself left dissatisfied. Why does abolition have to be the end of the story? So many of the popular and academic books I have read on the subject of mass incarceration dwell on the problem, while cursorily gesturing at abolition in the conclusion. Where would we find ourselves if we were to start with abolition, even to assume abolition?

As Angela Davis argues in *Are Prisons Obsolete*, "The prison is considered so 'natural' that it is extremely hard to imagine life without it." This is what makes the United States a carceral society. Assuming abolition would mean taking on the monumental and timely task of developing that abolitionist imaginary. Drawing from the insight of scholarship on the school-to-prison pipeline, as well as my prior experience teaching how pervasive and deeply-rooted carcerality is in American society, I knew that for a class on abolition I had to address the carceral logics at play in my own classroom. This was a pedagogical journey I wanted to take, just as much as it was one I wanted for the students. I set about designing the course in such a way that the power structure would be as horizontal, and the learning as dispersed (across myself, the students, and a range of invited guests), as possible. I applied for a Cardinal Course Grant with the Haas Center, a Center for Teaching and Learning Course Improvement Grant, a Arts Stanford Arts Catalyst Grant, a Community Engagement Grant from the School of Humanities and Sciences, and supplemental funding from CCSRE. With all of their support, I pulled together a class with two community partners with whom I pursued service learning partnerships, two community engaged learning undergraduate coordinators, arts workshops, and a series of guest facilitators and guest speakers drawn from the network I had built over years of organizing and research into mass incarceration in the Bay Area.
One community partner of the “Beyond Incarceration” class has been the Ella Baker Center. We have participated in their monthly Prison Mail Night, where we have learned about the real situations of currently incarcerated people and contributed to the ‘procedural’ abolitionist task of helping people use the law to decarcerate themselves. With our second community partner, the Ahimsa Collective, we have conducted weekly transformative justice circles in which we have processed the content of the class, built community, and learned about the circle process as a key tool in the abolitionist toolkit. The final major element of the class is arts practice, represented in a series of art projects, designed as a vehicle for developing imaginative capacities. These projects draw from the community guidelines set by the class, the transformative justice circles we have participated in, and the class content as raw materials. Formerly incarcerated people have been central to the direction of the class, taking leadership roles as circle keeper of the transformative justice circle, facilitator of the artist workshops, and guest speakers. Centering system impacted folks isn’t a question of good optics, charity, or hearing their perspective. Recognizing the need for abolition means recognizing the system is not and has never been broken; it works exactly as intended. With this perspective we can begin to see that incarcerated people do not need to be rescued. Far from it, we need their leadership to rescue ourselves.

As I write this, the class approaches its midpoint and—despite the alienation of the virtual classroom, the structural violence that characterizes everyday life in America, and the vertiginous terrorism of spectacular violence meted out to Black, Latinx, Native, and AAPI folk—I have never felt more of a sense of community in a classroom. Reflecting on the work that my students have done over the course to build that community I am reminded of the words of Lilla Watson, the Indigenous Australian visual artist, activist, and academic: “If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”
The call to address Anthropology’s racist and colonial legacies is not new—that is what the constant emergencies of antiblackness and white supremacy should remind us of. Global uprisings protesting the 2020 murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and more by police and white vigilantes called attention to Black communities’ particular and constant vulnerability to premature death and gratuitous violence. These uprisings sparked renewed calls in Anthropology demanding that the discipline seriously confront the ongoing contemporary perpetuation of its racist and colonial legacies. These calls, echoed by multiple generations of Black and Indigenous anthropologists, demands more from departments than just writing strongly-worded statements condemning racial injustice. Precisely because the genocidal assemblages of antiblackness and white supremacy are a longue durée, and not a moment from which reprieve can be expected next year, we must resist the urge to declare this year as an exception. To declare this year as the year Anthropology focuses on race, or the year in which fleeting changes are made under the discourse of “diversity and inclusion,” risks failing not only to recognize the time-space of racialized violence but also the structural embeddedness of antiblackness and white supremacy in Anthropology’s disciplinary formation and contemporary evolution. Indeed, calls to challenge and reimagine the canon and how it is taught—and to interrogate how antiblackness and white supremacy still texture training, citational practices, and hegemonic epistemologies—are not new. One need only recall Faye V. Harrison’s 1997 edited volume Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Toward an Anthropology for Liberation, or even more recently Ryan Jobson’s 2019 article “The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn.” We must return to these critical interventions made by Black anthropologists in order to confront the erasure of anthropologists of color from the field’s canonical figures and citational practices and to generate community-engaged and community-accountable research.

As the only consistent space of discussion and reflection for faculty, students, and the broader community, we wanted to imagine a colloquium series that did not merely pay fleeting attention to race in Anthropology. Rather, through collaboration between Professors Paulla Ebron and Sharika Thiranagama, and Ph.D. candidates Jameelah Morris and Paul Christians, the colloquia became a space to center the research of scholars and practitioners of color, particularly those producing both interdisciplinary scholarship at the intersection between political activism, antiblackness, settler colonialism, and sovereignty, and innovative methodologies to study these processes. Colloquia were transformed not only in thematic focus, but also in format. We sought to foreground the

Reimagining Colloquia and Beyond

-By Jameelah Morris-
interdisciplinary and community-accountable possibilities of anthropological research by hosting conversations between anthropologists, interdisciplinary scholars, and practitioners. Furthermore, we worked to ensure that colloquia could become student-centered spaces where the developing work of the Department’s graduate students could come into conversation with invited guests.

In fall quarter, Dr. Anand Vivek Taneja’s (Vanderbilt University) colloquium talk centered on how political theology articulat-ed through Urdu poetry calls for a radical reimaging of intimate relations as the basis of belonging and the forming of politi-cal community. A panel conversation between Dr. Karla Slocum (UNC Chapel-Hill), Brent Leggs (African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund), and Jasmine Reid (Stanford) on Black Placemaking and the Politics of Public Memory drew on anthropological scholarship and community-engaged cultural preservation practices to examine how the production of particular geographies is entangled with ongoing processes of slavery, colonialism, and modernity in the United States and South Africa. This focus on geography continued in a dialogue between Dr. Meredith Palmer (UCLA) and Dr. Duana Fulwiley (Stanford) based in Dr. Palmer’s research on how metrics and measures of racial disparities in health and social inequality paradoxically retrench and naturalize the historic figure of the damaged or vanished “Indian” in the context of the productions of US colonial-ism. Based in Black political struggles from Brazil, Colombia and the United States, both Dr. Christen Smith (UT Austin) and Dr. Tianna Paschel (UC Berkeley) urged
decentering the geopolitical centrality of the US in analyses of gendered-antiblack violence and Black political struggle, while locating contemporary struggles in a larger time-space continuum stemming from racial slavery and colonialism across the Americas. Attentive to the ways COVID-19 required a reorientation of anthropological methods towards multimodalities, a panel conversation between Dr. Meredith Clark (UVA), Dr. Melissa Brown (Stanford), and Dr. Kareem Said (Stanford) demonstrated how digital and social media can be utilized as sites and tools for studying community formation, narratives and protest as they occur in both virtual and non-virtual spaces.

We extended these conversations and revised colloquia format into winter quarter. Dr. Deborah Thomas (UPenn) opened the quarter with a talk foregrounding our contemporary condition as one of an epochal shift rather than of crisis, marked by the impending death of Western modernity as global articulations of political and econom-ic power enable new forms of struggle, and disable others, in the Caribbean. Dr. Rosa Ficek (UPR-Cayey), Dr. Kiran Asher (UMass-Amherst) and Nestor Silva (Stanford) collectively drew our attention to the intersection between gendered-racialized violence and struggles for environmental justice as they play out in scenes of climate catastrophe across the Americas. A dialogue between Dr. M. Amah Edoh (MIT) and Dr. Vivian Lu (Fordham) focused on how global circuits of material cultures and capitalism produce shifting discourses about Africa’s place in the world. Dr. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (Wesleyan) foregrounded the importance of locating both the occu-pation of Palestine and the U.S. occupation of
Palestine and the U.S. occupation of Hawai‘i within broader histories of settler colonial projects, prompting a set of questions regarding indigeneity and the attendant problematics regarding statist “solutions.”

Spring quarter colloquium events organized by Professors Miyako Inoue and Kabir Tambar brought attention to race and semiotics. A conversation between Dr. Jonathan Rosa (Stanford) and Dr. Krystal Smalls (U. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) focused on how semiotic approaches to the analysis of race, racism, and racialization challenge conventional assumptions about the dynamic relationship between signs and context. Dr. Yazan Doughan (LSE) explored how Jordanian activists strive to formulate new ways of being and acting patriotically when past forms of patriotism have ceased to make practical sense in the present. Dr. Xochitl Marsilli-Vargas (Emory) analyzed the constitution of genres of listening through the ethnographic study of psychoanalytic listening in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Cautiously, this early reimagination of the colloquia is barely a first step in reckoning with Anthropology’s racist and colonial legacies. We hope this early attempt at reconfiguring the Department’s colloquia will extend beyond this year. In this spirit, continued engagement with the scholarship of this year’s speakers is a small next step for continuing the conversations that were started this year. Therefore, we’re including a list of recent works by this year’s speakers for readers to check out in more detail:

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Black Studies is forged out of a set of brutal realities. Black Studies reminds us of the premature death and gratuitous violence Black communities are subjected to, and the ways Black communities have fought back and imagined anti-Black state and 2021, the domestic terrorism of white vigilantes and police officers has only escalated: Ma’Khia Bryant, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Diamond, and so many more. Black lives were prematurely taken, some of whose names we do not. Their murders are only the latest reminders of atrocities of the system and the reverberating effects of anti-Blackness in the United States. Black Studies scholarship has examined how genocidal assemblages of anti-Black-violence extend across time and space, and has studied how Black communities, who have engaged in continuous political struggle, have demanded a reckoning with these assemblages as they take shape in every realm of social life. And yet the call to action that is “Black Lives Matter” demands more from allies and supporters than using a hashtag, writing statements, or expressing guilt. It demands concrete measures for redress and restitution.

Especially crucial for the discipline of anthropology is to acknowledge the ways that the discipline has been and continues to be implicated in the project of anti-Blackness and white supremacy.
and white supremacy. Anthropology’s foundational theories, methods, and practices are grounded in epistemologies which have historically had a central role in the denigration and racialized inequalities of Black communities around the world. Black feminist anthropologists writing at the intersection of anthropology and Black Studies like A. Lynn Bolles, Leith Mullings, and Faye Harrison have especially called attention to this legacy and its contemporary manifestations. They additionally demand the end to the marginalization of Black anthropologists and their scholarship, challenging the discipline to re-evaluate its epistemological commitments. As such, there is a long intellectual history of cross-pollination and critique between Black studies and anthropology resulting in critical interventions that have not only contributed to a reevaluation of epistemological and citational commitments, but to theorizations and interrogations of racism and white supremacy within and beyond it.

Black Studies is an interdisciplinary field attuned to the ongoing histories of racial violence, exclusion, and oppression, and works with an understanding of the past and present that does not render the two as siloed entities. Attending to the interconnectedness of the past with our present experiences, Black Studies creates space for us to attend to silence, not just within our historical narratives but also within our present realities. As such, Black Studies centers the epistemologies of Black communities across the globe, recognizing knowledge production as existing both within and outside of the university. Black Studies problematizes mere inclusion within oppressive structures, pushing us to think beyond institutions as our only sites of knowledge production. Moreover, Black Studies scholarship theorizes the ways modernity has been constituted in and by anti-Blackness and rejects tacit assumptions of modernity that do not account for Black life. With particular attention to the nonlinearity of historical progress, and experiences of oppression, dispossession, and resistance across the African Diaspora, Black Studies invites us to theorize the “otherwise.” The “otherwise,” constituted by the no-spaces, the in-between, and the spaces where past and present collide and usurp one another, are the spaces of possibility in Black Studies. Black Studies is testimony to way-making, to demanding and creating space in the way forward despite the violence that encompasses the global project of anti-Blackness.

The Stanford Program in African and African American Studies was born out of an insistence by Black students, faculty, staff, and alumni on creating a space at Stanford that would theorize what it means to be Black in the world. Black students at Stanford in the 1960’s recognized significant gaps in the University curriculum, and more broadly understood their calls for a liberatory education as related to the ongoing struggles for racial justice across the globe. In April 1968, members of the Stanford Black Student Union “took back the mic” from university officials during a university convocation to address Stanford’s response to white racism. The students called for ten demands to be met by the University administration, one of which was to institutionalize African and American Studies. In the fifty years since its creation, the Program in African and African American Studies has been woefully underfunded and under-resourced, despite its important role in Black intellectual development and student life at Stanford.
As a result of years of serious neglect, the AAAS Program has often lacked the resources to offer vitally necessary training in the theoretical and methodological orientations of Black Studies. In recent years, The Black Studies Collective, a graduate student initiative housed within AAAS, has served as a hub for Black Studies on campus, providing a critically important space for graduate students to engage in Black Studies collectively, attending to historical and contemporary discourses within the discipline. Our insistence on the continued presence of Black Studies at Stanford is both a reflection of the legacy of student activism that we are beneficiaries of and a reflection of the transformative interventions it offers in understanding our world. Black Studies is a necessary discipline both at Stanford and in the world at large.

In Summer 2020, The Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and the Black Student Union (BSU) circulated a petition advocating for the Departmentalization of the African and African American Studies Program at Stanford. The petition garnered over 5,000 signatures and reflected decades of organizing work done by students, staff, alumni, and the AAAS Stanford community. 2020 was a significant moment in the fight for AAAS, as Stanford students advocated for Black Studies at Stanford as protestors across the country called for racial justice after the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and many others both known and unknown.

In Summer 2020, BGSA and BSU released a series of demands in the Stanford Daily that included the University creating a viable path for the departmentalization of the AAAS Program. In response, the University released a plan for a cluster hire of scholars who would focus on “The Impacts of Race in America.” BGSA and BSU rejected this announcement, recognizing its limitations in offering any substantive recognition of Black Studies at Stanford and its inability to honor the long tradition AAAS possesses as a critical scholarly home for students of Black Studies at Stanford. The BGSA Social Action Committee proceeded to launch a series of organizing efforts for the 2020-2021 academic year that aimed to keep AAAS departmentalization at the center of conversations of racial justice and equity at Stanford.

By launching a series of teach-ins, community town halls, and op-eds in the Stanford Daily, we aimed to not only emphasize the long history of AAAS at Stanford but also contextualize the importance of our insistence on a distinctive AAAS department. As members of the Education and Training Sub-Committee of the BGSA Social Action Committee, our efforts focused on emphasizing the intellectual tradition of Black Studies as an interdisciplinary field and the importance of its autonomy from other disciplines. We highlighted both the methodological orientations of Black Studies and its rich theoretical foundation. We aimed to dispel popular notions that Black Studies is “too narrow,” attending to the myriad ways Black Studies intervenes as a discipline to disrupt static conceptions and representations of Black life across the African Diaspora.
Black Studies is necessary to academic life at Stanford, and the University’s recent decision to departmentalize AAAS recognizes that necessity. However, for us, it is important that in that recognition, Stanford provides students who have been organizing for Black Studies clear positions on the committees determining what the AAAS Department will look like. Our work is not done; it is only just beginning. We continue to be engaged in the work of collectively envisioning what a viable Black Studies department might look like at Stanford, and how disciplines like anthropology can support AAAS in substantive ways. It is important that in our conceptions of what an AAAS Department looks like at Stanford, we remain committed to thinking beyond the confines of the University as we continue to fight for liberation in the wake of Black death. Our work will not be complete until the vision of a Department in African and African American Studies is actualized, with the university’s long-term commitment to its success.

With particular attention to anthropology’s historical entanglement with Black Studies, we also recognize that there is significant work to be done within our own department to see Black Studies, and its implementation in anthropological work, as necessary interventions in the discipline. In this moment, we look again to the Black Feminist Anthropological Tradition as a path forward in Anthropology in order to reckon with the experiences of racism and white supremacy Black students frequently face in the discipline and the discipline’s abysmal citation and engagement of the scholarship of Black women. It is our hope that a turn to the urgent and necessary ways Black Studies continues to intervene in anthropological thought and dominant epistemologies will extend beyond this year. The work has barely just begun.
Since its initiation in autumn 2019, the Center for Global Ethnography has brought together faculty and graduate students to foster rigorous, meaningful, and ethical ethnographic fieldwork across the disciplines. The Center was formed as a collaboration between the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) and the Department of Anthropology. The Center’s purpose is to showcase interdisciplinary conversations and collaborations of ethnographic research, and to support the training of graduate students and researchers interested in linking ethnography with other methods.

Support in the form of funds and administrative assistance from IRiSS has been crucial to the Center’s public programing, which has reached a broad range of graduate students and faculty, as well as scholars and publics outside Stanford. To date, the Center’s public programing has drawn more than three hundred attendees to live in-person and virtual events, and its asynchronous programing has reached tens of thousands of viewers online.

At Stanford, ethnographic research is conducted across all seven schools. To help bring these practitioners together, the Center has developed a wide network of affiliated members from a variety of disciplines and interdisciplines.

Below is a brief description of the Center’s events held over the past two academic years since its launch in 2019. After March 2020, it should be noted, all events were held remotely over Zoom. This includes the series, “Doing Ethnography Remotely,” which was developed specifically to help graduate students expand their fieldwork methods and adapt their research projects in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
On January 24th, 2020, the Center kicked off programming with “Urban Life in a Digital Age: A Conversation with Thomas Blom Hansen (Anthropology) and Forrest Stuart (Sociology).” Blom Hansen and Stuart each spoke about conducting ethnography in contemporary urban spaces and the ways in which social media pose new opportunities and challenges to fieldwork. The presentations were followed by a concluding discussion with the audience that emphasized the changing nature of participation observation in the digitally networked spaces of contemporary city life.

Following this inaugural colloquium, in February of 2020, the Center’s co-directors Sharika Thiranagama and Sylvia Yanagisako led a day-long session at IRiSS titled, “Ethnographic Research Methods: A Workshop for Stanford Graduate Students.” This event focused on three areas: 1) Research design, i.e., how to frame ethnographic research questions, select field sites, develop methods, and identify interlocutors; 2) the temporal process of research over the course of fieldwork, i.e., how to plan and adapt practices and methods; and 3) fieldwork ethics, i.e., how to confront issues raised in the field, including relations with interlocutors and among researchers in teams. Eight Stanford graduate students, mostly new to ethnographic research methods, participated, coming from Anthropology, the Graduate School of Education and International Comparative Education, Political Science, Sociology, and Theater and Performance Studies.

In March of 2020, as the world adjusted to new COVID-19 regulations, students began to re-design their research sites and methods. To support this difficult transition, the Center produced a six-video series on methodology titled, “Doing Ethnography Remotely.” These pre-recorded interviews with leading remote ethnographers were followed by a live Q&A panel held on June 5th, 2020. Participants included, Yarimar Bonilla (Hunter College/CUNY Graduate Center); Irus Braverman (SUNY); Christine Hine (University of Surrey); Heather Horst (Western Sydney); John L. Jackson, Jr. (Penn); and Sarah Pink (Monash). In the six pre-recorded interviews, available here for viewing, Thiranagama and Yanagisako spoke with these ethnographers about how they have used digital and analog methods for remote research. All conversations included practical advice for graduate students adapting their projects to the new spatial constraints of the pandemic. As a whole, the series showed how scholars from anthropology, communications, geography, law, sociology, human-centered computing, and design have creatively solved problems specific to remote research.
After the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25th, 2020, the Center began to ask where and how Black Lives Matter might be understood as a global social movement and how it can be engaged with ethnographically. In the autumn, the Center produced a video series titled, “Methods of Protest: Engaging Black Lives Matter Movements.” The videos and live sessions focused on the Black Lives Matter movements in Italy, Australia, and the Bay Area. The goal of this programming was to learn how different collectives around the world employ methods of protest to end anti-Black and Indigenous violence and oppression and to center research and activist engagements with BLM. The series began with a session titled, “Black Lives Matter in Italy: A Conversation with Camilla Hawthorne, Torin Jones, and Angelica Pesarini.” This was a live Zoom webinar held on October 16th, 2020 and the event was co-sponsored by the Europe Center and the Department of Anthropology. This was followed by a pre-recorded event on Black Lives Matter in Australia. In this recorded conversation, Thiranagama spoke with Marcia Langton (University of Melbourne) about police brutality against indigenous communities and the recent protests in Australia, touching on the nation’s settler-colonial history and ongoing forms of racism. Langton concluded by highlighting Indigenous justice initiatives and struggles for sovereignty for Indigenous families and communities. This event was co-sponsored by the Archaeology Center and the Department of Anthropology.

From Australia, the focus returned to the United States and Black Lives Matter in the Bay Area, and included two events. The first was a recorded conversation, available here, titled, “Movements of Change: Dance, Liberation, and the Power of Aesthetics.” In this video, Aliyah Dunn-Salahuddin (Ph.D. student, History) spoke with her mentors, dance luminaries Joanna Haigood (Artistic Director of Zaccho Dance Theater, San Francisco) and Colette Eloi (Ph.D. student, Critical Dance Studies, UC Riverside and Artistic Director of El Wah Movement Dance Company and Research Group, Oakland, California). They each shared insights into their methods as they relate to place, community connections, oral history, and archival research. The second event was a live webinar moderated by Umniya Najaer (Ph.D. student, Modern Thought and Literature) in which Dunn-Salahuddin discussed the intersections of Black history, expression, and freedom with artist and activist Khafre Jay who directs the Bay Area organization Hip Hop For Change. This event was co-sponsored by African and African American Studies and the Department of History.

In February 2021, the Center considered the relationships between ethnographic and archival research in a panel titled, “Ethnography at the Archive.” In the first half of the conversation, Stanford Anthropology alum, Trinidad Rico (Art History, Rutgers) spoke with Gabrielle Hecht (History, Stanford), Lynn Meskell (Anthropology, Penn), and Miyako Inoue (Anthropology, Stanford) about the nuts and bolts of working with documents, archives, and historical collections. The session gave additional attention to the ways in which these modes of research relate to ethnographic practices. The panel also discussed the potentially complementary roles of and disjuncture between these modes of inquiry and the findings they produce.
Most recently, in April, the Center had the privilege, along with the Program on Urban Studies, to co-host a book launch for Greening the Black Urban Regime: The Culture and Commerce of Sustainability in Detroit (2020) by Alesia Montgomery (Stanford Libraries). The event was moderated by Michael Kahan (Co-Director, Program on Urban Studies; Sociology), and Michelle Wilde Anderson (Stanford Law) served as the discussant for Montgomery’s new book. The conversation gave insight into Montgomery’s approach to studying how direct democracy was undercut in the implementation of The Detroit Future City plan.

Beginning next academic year (2020-2021), Thiranagama and Yanagisako will hand-off their co-leadership roles to Miyako Inoue (Anthropology), Kabir Tambar (Anthropology), and Jonathan Rosa (Graduate School of Education).
As a sociocultural and linguistic anthropologist, Jonathan Rosa’s research theorizes the co-naturalization of language and race as a key feature of modern governance. Specifically, he analyzes the interplay between youth socialization, raciolinguistic formations, and structural inequity in urban contexts. Dr. Rosa collaborates with local communities to track these phenomena and develop tools for understanding and eradicating the forms of disparity to which they correspond. This community-based approach to research, teaching, and service reflects a vision of scholarship as a platform for imagining and enacting more just societies. Dr. Rosa’s research has been published in scholarly journals such as Harvard Educational Review, American Ethnologist, American Anthropologist, Language in Society, and the Journal of Linguistic Anthropology. In addition to his formal scholarly research, Dr. Rosa is an ongoing participant in public intellectual projects focused on race, education, language, (im)migration, and U.S. Latinxs, and his work has been featured in media outlets such as MSNBC, NPR, CNN, and Univision.
**JL: Tell me a little about your academic background.**

JR: My goal as an undergraduate was to be a K-12 teacher. I was a first-generation college student, and that was my sense of what you did with a college degree; most of the people I knew who had degrees were my K-12 teachers. I studied education, and I had to combine that track with a “traditional” academic discipline. I ended up studying linguistics and education because of my interest in questions about language, identity, and power.

I grew up in a context where the varieties of English and Spanish my parents used were framed as different in the context of mainstream schools, which presented me with questions about the role of institutions in standardizing language and reproducing particular kinds of language ideology and broader structures of political and economic power. My questions about language and education were really broader questions about how societies are organized and how power is structured. I found that neither education—which led me to focus on specific kinds of institutions—nor linguistics—which led me to focus on specific kinds of structural patterns—were fully satisfying to me. That’s what led me to linguistic anthropology.

I discovered that linguistic anthropology—a field in which language, history, and power were at the center of conversations—presented me with an intellectual and political approach that was the best fit for me. I was able to ask questions informed by how societies are organized historically in relation to ideas about language and race, and how what we understand as a whole range of contemporary social problems is a reflection of longstanding colonial entanglements that demand to be reckoned with. I’m interested in the work involved in recognizing the historical productions of these dilemmas, as well as the ways that people throughout history have lived beyond the borders that separate languages, geopolitical territories, and identities.

**JL: What concepts in linguistic anthropology first interested you as an undergraduate?**

JR: The first thing you often learn in a linguistics course is that there’s no such thing as correctness. Ideas about linguistic correctness are a reflection of prevailing power structures—they’re not fundamental facts about language. Learning that messed me up; it ruined my entire investment in linguistic perfection. I had understood language as a deeply mathematical phenomenon, and I had been trying to refine my writing and spoken language practices the way that I would refine my understanding of mathematical formulae. Once I started to take the notion that linguistic correctness is a situated fact of history, power, and institutionality seriously, it demanded a fundamental reorientation to these issues that were so important to me. I revisited all of these ideas I had internalized about correctness—ideas I brought home with me and used to monitor and surveil my family and their language practices. I thought I was learning these practices in schools to help fix my family, and that the goal of school was to fix deficient people like myself and my family. I thought that if I could fully engage in this kind of project,
then my family would access upward socio-economic mobility, societal inclusion, and escape from various forms of marginalization. Studying these issues forms a different perspective, and I needed to rethink which patterns to pay attention to.

**JL:** How have you continued pursuing those questions you began confronting as an undergraduate in the academic projects you’ve undertaken since?

**JR:** As an undergraduate, I engaged in some ethnographic work with Puerto Rican and Dominican high schools in Philadelphia, looking at the institutionalization of their bilingual education program and their approach to providing support to students designated as English Learners. That initial ethnographic project was an important precursor to my dissertation work, which was a community-based study to understand the coproduction of linguistic and ethnoracial categories in the context of historical dilemmas around colonialism. I wanted to understand how it is that certain modes of migration and institutionalization organize everyday life in ways that provide people with access to very particular kinds of opportunities while cutting them off from others. That ethnographic work led to my book, *Looking Like a Language, Sounding Like a Race*, which was a study of a Chicago high school and its surrounding communities—predominantly Mexican and Puerto Rican. Growing up, my sensibility around Hispanic and Latinx identities was oriented in relation to Puerto Ricanness, Dominicanness, and to some extent, Cubanness. Chicago was a very different Latinx context. Mexican and Puerto Rican interrelations are central to experiences of Latinx identity in Chicago. In that context, I was confronted with a situation that demanded of me a reconsideration of the production of these categories and experiences, and that’s what inspired my book. I wanted to understand how categories of language, race, and ethnicity co-articulate, and how that co-articulation is part of a much broader history of power relations. I wanted to understand how those histories could open up different possibilities for re-narrating how we got to where we are and where we can be.

Looking Like a Language, Sounding Like a Race was published a couple of years ago. My next project builds out from the Chicago high school itself to look at how the boundaries and borders institutionalized within this particular context were also negotiated across distinctive institutional contexts. This links struggles over education to housing, employment, healthcare, criminalization, accessibility, political representation, environmental disparities, and cultural and spiritual expression. I’m going to build out from the school to look at projects that people engage in creatively to reexamine the challenges that they face—not as reflections of their fundamental pathologies or deficiencies but as historical and colonial inheritances. Once you narrate a disparate educational achievement as a problem of individual pathology or ability, you address it by remediating it on an individual level: for instance, a person needs tutoring and assistance to be more successful within the particular institution. However, if your orientation to the alleged problem considers how the city of Chicago, the state of Illinois, and schools throughout the United States are
designed to reproduce a political economy in which only a very small portion of students have access to a so-called knowledge economy, and the vast majority are slated for participation in the service economy, and a smaller percentage of students are excluded from the formal economy altogether, then they’re actually doing that very well. The notion that achievement is a problem accepts that schools are designed to produce achievement.

This mode of thinking raises fundamental questions about what education is and should be, and how schools are organized as institutions. I’m looking at what happens when communities collectively engage in analysis which refuses the notion that they are pathological, instead locating the problem in historical power structures and their contemporary re-articulation. How does re-narrating the problem in that way inspire collective action to create alternative sites of music and cultural expression, housing, kinships, and economies? That’s what I’m tracking now: the creation of alternate systems, the kind of historical analysis which inspires that, and how that analysis hinges on a particular mode of interpretation. That’s where the language and semiotic component comes in. I understand the re-analysis of history as a semiotic process where you’re analyzing what looks like contemporary problems as a sign of history in particular ways, or signs of colonialism. That’s a communicative, interpretive practice that I’m really interested in.

**JL: Have you begun fieldwork for this current project?**

**JR:** I was already conducting some of the fieldwork while I was writing the first book, and I’m back in Chicago relatively regularly. For the past several years prior to the pandemic, I was the faculty sponsor for an alternative spring break trip to Chicago. We’ve had relatively large groups of Latinx students from the Chicago area at Stanford who are interested in exploring issues of education and activism, so I go back to the city with students to introduce them to some of these political projects. There’s still much more that I want to do in terms of fieldwork. I see myself as a relatively slow ethnographer. I’m looking forward to returning to Chicago this summer to continue this work.

**JL: Can you introduce the department to the courses that you teach, the initiatives you’re involved with at Stanford, and anything else that you’re looking forward to doing in the future?**

**JR:** I teach in the Graduate School of Education and the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity. Those are my primary homes. But I have courtesy appointments in Anthropology, Linguistics, and now Comparative Literature, which allows me to teach courses that speak to issues across a range of intellectual fields. That’s part of what I love most about the work I get to do pedagogically at Stanford: There’s a breadth of different student populations who take my courses, which are typically cross-listed across many of these fields.

I teach theory and ethnography courses at the doctoral level. That’s a reflection of the needs of the Graduate School of Education
I like to teach on theories of race, ethnicity, and language. At the graduate level, in ethnographic field methods, I want students to think about strategies for collecting data in ethical ways, in collaboration with particular kinds of communities, and to write about ethnographic data without reproducing the categories that they’re trying to examine.

At the undergraduate level, I’m inviting students to understand themselves as scholars and enter into intergenerational intellectual dialogues. I’m currently the Director of Chicano/Latino studies, so I teach the intro course there, which I’ve taught every year since coming to Stanford. I’ve designed it as a community-based learning project, where we collaborate with Sequoia High School in Redwood City. Just yesterday, we finished our final day of intro, which was with 25 Stanford students, 35 Sequoia High School students, and five Sequoia High School teachers and administrators. The teachers, administrators, and I co-facilitated the course. This is my attempt to enact a vision of ethnic studies that doesn’t just let it live on an elite campus like Stanford, but lives up to the spirit of moving off-campus and politically committing not just to thinking critically about this world, but also to engaging in efforts to change it. The point isn’t that undergrads are teaching high school students, because in many cases, undergrads are critically thinking through these issues for the first time. We’re examining citizenship and migration; race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and labor politics; and sites of political struggle.

Over the last several years, I’ve also collaborated with fellow semiotic anthropologists Miyako Inoue and Kabir Tambar on a range of projects. Semiotics analyzes the significance of signs and symbols in society. When you really start to think with a framework like that, you begin to recognize the role that it plays in organizing so much of our everyday lives. Ideas about language, symbols, and signs are central to organizing power in mainstream institutions. A couple of years ago, we got a grant from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education to create a workshop to teach and train students in semiotic approaches. The three of us are now directing the Center for Global Ethnography. Part of what Miyako, Kabir, and I want to do is to make the argument for the power of linguistic anthropological and semiotic anthropological approaches to students and colleagues.

**JL: One final question. What is a non-academic project you’ve been working on lately or excited about?**

**JR:** I’m actually interested in the distinction between what constitutes academic and non-academic work—that, by itself, is interesting to me!

I’m the president of the Association of Latinx Anthropologists. One of the projects we’ve worked on is creating a mentoring program. We’ve been doing virtual mentoring events monthly, and over 200 people have participated in the first several events. I’m interviewing colleagues about their experiences and sharing them with current students who are seeking insight and encouragement. That project has been really exciting—I have been working on with Cecilia Vasquez, a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. It’s a really cool space, especially in the context
pandemic, to bring some energy and life to our organization, and to build and sustain community in a more ongoing way.

I’m also an obsessive walker here where I live in San Francisco, so that’s part of my daily practice: to engage with urban landscapes, soundscapes, and culturecapes.
Serkan Yolaçan’s research broadly focuses on the interplay of past and present in the lives of individuals, diasporas, and states. His book project, Time Travelers of Baku: Conversion and Revolution in West Asia, weaves the modern experiences of Turkey, Iran, and Russia through the lens of a mobile, diasporic people from the region of Azerbaijan. His second project is a comparative study of cults and messianic movements. It explores how embodied authority, eschatological beliefs, and textual traditions interact to create invisible forms of sovereignty. In both projects, Yolaçan combines broad space and deep history empirically, and history and anthropology methodologically, to generate geo-historical frames that speak to questions of international order and state expansionism, past and present. He has an active media profile in Southeast Asia through regular contributions to Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post and Singapore-based Channel NewsAsia.
JL: Tell me about your academic background and where your research interests originated.

SY: I received my PhD in anthropology from Duke University. In the early years of my graduate studies I became fascinated by the world of empires. Unlike nation-states, empires could expand and shrink. Their borders were porous, and their capacity to rule depended on their partnerships with societies that went in and out of their domains, be they traders, pilgrims, mercenaries, or scholars. I was drawn to this vibrant scene of mobility and interdependence. As I explored further, the rise and fall of empires eventually became a façade; the malleability of empires explained their resilience as a political form for thousands of years of human history. Dabbling in this vast history, I discovered unlikely geographies pulled together not by states but circuits of human mobility, geographies that did not correspond to any spatial divisions we are familiar with today. When I began to suspect the existence of such vibrant geographies hiding behind the seemingly static political maps of our times, my attention was brought back to the contemporary moment. Using history as a vast resource of conceptual models and empirical cases, I began to see clues that eventually led me to my doctoral research on the Caucasus and its erstwhile Azeri diaspora. History and mobility have since been central to my research and teaching.

JL: What are the methods, in terms of doing fieldwork and collecting data, which operate at the crossroads of anthropology and history?

SY: There are two ways in which I foray into history as an anthropologist. One is to search for cultural models, conceptual ideas, and even counter-examples that can illuminate present questions and dilemmas through secondary sources. Most of these readings are focused on histories of human mobility, religious movements, and state formation, especially in Muslim contexts but not necessarily.

My other entryway into history is my informants, mobile Azeris I have been in conversation with over the past decade. During my fieldwork, I joined Azeri study circles in theological seminaries in Qom and Mashhad (Iran), hearing stories of them leaving behind a communist past in former Soviet Azerbaijan and discovering their Shi’a roots in Iran. I then traveled with these young clerics back to Baku (Azerbaijan), where I met their friends and relatives—some of whom, to my surprise, went to Turkish
boarding schools and embraced a Sunni Muslim outlook, looking to make their careers in Istanbul. These mobile Azeris saw their transformations not as conversions to a foreign faith or ideology, but as returns to a forgotten past that they rediscovered. Shrines they visited, rituals they picked up, saintly stories they heard, and family genealogies they traced conjured different temporal orders, in which they could place themselves alongside known Azeris of earlier times. Exploring these histories with my informants broadened the temporal horizons of my research. In other words, the question of what histories I needed to explore was settled ethnographically.

However, the historical landscape I found myself in was temporally uneven. The pasts were not to be found in one place along a linear timeline, but distributed across empires, strung along Azeris’ diasporic routes. Azeris variously appeared as Iranian shahs safeguarding a Shi’a empire, Sufi masters guiding Sunni Turks, liberal patriots leading Iran’s constitutional revolution, and Russia’s Muslims laying the groundwork for Turkish nationalism. Although national and regional historiographies explore these fragments separately, they fall short of capturing the whole thing in its entirety. It is telling that other genres of historical representation have made a comeback in the Caucasus since the 1990s. The biographical dictionary, or tazqirah—as the genre is known in the Islamic tradition—is notable among them. Tazqirahs communicate a historical pattern that speaks to the experiences of mobile Azeris today who foray into the neighboring realms of Iran, Turkey, and Russia. What seems fragmentary and sporadic begins to make sense, first within the narrative arc of a single life story, and second as part of a pattern that emerges when those life stories are placed side by side in a single volume.

I wouldn’t have become aware of tazqirahs had I not done my ethnography, and I wouldn’t have explored specific episodes of Azeri movements in the past had I not appreciated their relevance through these texts. My historical examination generated new questions which I then discussed with my informants—so back to ethnography. What sets off this dialogue between past and present need not be a text; it can be an object, a built landscape, an oral legend, a religious ritual, a venerated image, or anything else that lends itself at once to ethnographic inquiry and historical examination.

**JL:** In studying diasporic communities, how did you think about place?

**SY:** From a diasporic perspective, places appear as nodes where pathways of mobility are interwoven. Each site offers a unique vantage point on a distinct set of paths, and those paths give a place its distinctive qualities. Are the routes far-reaching?
Do they come as a bundle or separately? Where are their origins? Once we explore these questions, we discover vibrant geographies of exchange and interdependence obscured by state-centric perspectives. Within diasporic spaces, places function as anchors or switches that may facilitate or filter movements or bring them to a complete halt. They can also become storage places where people on the move invest their money, prestige, ideas, and hopes for a different future. Over time, these investments accrue as sediments, and in times of crisis, they can be revived. In my extended fieldwork in Baku, I observed how Azeris’ diasporic routes converged and generated an eclectic cultural orientation that allowed Azeris to switch between competing religious and national outlooks with relative ease.

**JL: What are the challenges of learning the different languages of different disciplines, like anthropology, history, and political science?**

**SY:** Learning different languages of disciplines has been an afterthought for me. Anthropology has been my home field. My forays into history have been more hobby-like and passionate rather than methodic. My relationship with history hasn’t changed much: I still get more excited by surprising discoveries, provoking contrasts, and unexpected connections than systematic inquiry and rigorous methodology.

My relationship with the discipline of political science began more recently. After my PhD at Duke and before coming to Stanford, I spent a few years in Singapore as a research fellow at the National University of Singapore’s Middle East Institute. Just as I moved there, puzzling geopolitical developments unfolded in the Middle East. The growing cooperation between Iran, Turkey, and Russia over Syria began to tilt the balance of power in the region. As I ruminated on the Turkey-Iran-Russia dialogue, I went back to earlier episodes in the interconnected histories of these three countries that I was familiar with from my research. Placing the contemporary moment within this longer history emboldened me to bring my insights into empires and diasporas to bear upon the analysis of current geopolitics. It wasn’t easy at first: The reductive canvas of inter-state relations proved hard-edged against the subtle conceptual threads of anthropology and nuanced empirical threads of history. But slowly by trial and error, I developed new geo-historical frames that addressed questions of international order and state expansionism in the 21st century.
JL: You’re a regular contributor to daily news sites. What is the connection between collecting your insights by sitting with fieldwork for years at a time and commenting on news in a more fast-paced setting?

SY: The Middle East Institute worked closely with Singapore’s Foreign Ministry. As Singapore’s only center on the Middle East, its researchers were sought by the media for expert opinions on current affairs. Besides working on my book project, I found myself meeting with ambassadors and diplomats, joining government delegations on foreign visits, and offering comments on live news shows on TV. On all these occasions, I would be given five or ten minutes to comment on complex issues. I learned how to prioritize and use plain language—engaging with different audiences in such diverse settings taught me how to convey in-depth analysis in accessible language.

The process from long-term research to short briefs, sound bites, and op-eds is not always unidirectional; at times, presenting ideas in shorter and easily digestible forms can help clarify the essential and relevant aspects of the long-term research. What starts as a frustrating process may culminate in an “aha” moment.

JL: Shifting gears a bit: being new to Stanford, what are the things you’re excited about doing here?

SY: I am most excited about collaborations I will be a part of in the department and across the university. I have shared interests with several faculty in the department, especially on themes of religion, political anthropology, and time and temporality. What is doubly exciting is that I can learn from my archeologist colleagues on all these topics. Although I’ve been operating from Istanbul, I am already a part of conversations about potential collaborative projects, including plans to co-teach a graduate seminar on religion—which will also involve our students in the exchange.

Beyond the department, I am affiliated with the Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies, where I have colleagues from political science and history. An exciting new initiative there called Ottoman Turkey Encounters (OTES) aims to create an intellectual platform that brings the Turkish/Ottoman world into conversation with scholarship on neighboring areas. This broad framing dovetails nicely with my research on the Caucasus as a place that links the Turkish/Ottoman world to Iran, Russia, and Central Asia. We have also launched a videocast series called “encounters with scholars,” and recorded our first interview in April.

In the long run, I want to extend these collaborations into other departments and centers and bridge ongoing conversations within social sciences, history, and area studies. I also want my students to be a part of these university-wide exchanges so they feel inspired by a broad spectrum of questions, methods, models, and geographies.

JL: What has it been like working through the pandemic year? Two prongs: one, what does fieldwork
look like for you in this year, and more broadly, how it’s changed your patterns of doing academic work?

SY: One advantage of conducting research that straddles anthropology and history is shifting to historical material when ethnography becomes infeasible. This past year, I put my fieldwork plans on hold and worked on the biographical dictionaries I mentioned earlier, which I had collected during earlier field visits. Stuck at home, I returned to them and some other historical material I had been sitting on, such as the digitized archives of a satirical magazine from the early twentieth century. So my research continued—though lopsided on its historical leg. If anything, the pandemic was a lesson in the importance of keeping physical and digitized material to work on in case field sites and archives become inaccessible.

JL: Can you talk a little bit about the different courses you’ve taught as well?

SY: The courses I teach reflect the central themes in my research—namely, history and mobility. Time Travel is a graduate course that explores how people live and think through history. It uses diverse historical practices from around the world to question the basic tenets of Western historicism such as chronology, the taboo of anachronism, and the division between past and present. We discuss various forms pasts can take and the multiple ways people can access them: pasts can be embodied and reincarnated, deposited in certain places and discovered by visitors, inscribed in texts and deciphered by readers, and so forth. Approaching them as different history-making models, we discuss whether scholars can or should emulate these practices and what possibilities follow.

Another course, Transregionalism, shows how anthropologists can employ mobility, both as a conceptual lens and a method, to build expansive geo-historical frames that offer surprising perspectives on contemporary conflicts and developments. A third course called Mystics and Messiahs, which I will teach this summer, relates to my next book project on cults and messianic movements. In this course, we will demystify cultic formations. By unpacking this seemingly marginal phenomenon, we will develop insights into enduring forms of human sociality and thought, such as embodied authority, millennialism, cosmology, eschatology, charisma, solidarity, and protection.

JL: Finally, what are some personal interests or projects you’ve pursued in the past year?

SY: I’ve found a new hobby: rowing! I’ve been doing it in the Marmara Sea off the shores of Istanbul and have been truly enjoying it. I hope to continue it in the Bay Area once I finally move there.
JL: Tell me about your educational background.

MT: I trained for my BA in India as a historian and I subsequently specialized as an ancient historian and archaeologist. I realized there was this thing called American anthropology whose discourse was influencing thought in these fields, something I tracked in footnotes, but which I could not access. So I applied to grad schools, and I went to the University of Chicago for a PhD. I was lucky to end up at a school committed to rethinking the inheritance of anthropology, especially through a much closer integration of anthropology and archaeology. These very different educations have formed me.

JL: What are your current research interests and where did they come from? And what are you thinking about this quarter in particular?
The overarching research question of my project is this: how can we rethink religious conversion as the embrace of a new form of life? Theories of conversion generally seek explanations from motive, or from contextual historical and sociological factors. I’m interested instead in what the embrace of a new form of life entails, how selves learn about themselves anew in the face of a truth they must reckon. Most broadly, I am interested in how someone learns to be good in the space of a new form of life, a tradition, and how these attachments thematize hierarchy, labor and desire. I ask these questions in the context of conversion to Islam in North India, a history whose mechanisms and legacies remain bitterly contested today. Among South Asian Muslims, converts are extremely important, an importance usually gestured at by reference to their demographic preponderance and yet the historical archive is almost entirely silent on what their uptake of Islam looked like.

Archaeological methods can raise new insights into these questions, but on account of both the colonial inheritance of archaeology and the field’s wider secular commitments questions of embrace and uptake of faith have rarely been broached. I join archaeology to the questions and critique raised by the current anthropology of ethics and the anthropology of secularism. In the book I am writing I show that we can use our archaeological epistemologies to think about how south Asians learnt about Islam, and learnt to be good, or virtuous, in distinct ways. We can open up new insights into the material practices that were key to these strivings. Most broadly we can come to understand how traditions rest upon not only discursive formations and embodied practices, but that aspects of materiality and particular assemblages are crucially at stake in these shifts.

JL: Fascinating. When and where did your initial interest in this topic area develop?

MT: The colonial epistemological division between a deep material past and more recent history persists in South Asia with Archaeology seen as appropriate to ancient epochs but not historical time, very much unlike the space Euro-American Historical Archaeology has crafted. There are a growing number of colleagues who have conducted excellent archaeologies of the historical era in South Asia, and they have used the reflexive potential of archaeology to critical effect. This archaeological capacity to circumscribe and dislodge historical assumptions led me to build on and attempt to enlarge the ambitions of this archaeology. This led me to frame a dissertation project in terms of excavating the assumptions of regimes of historicity, questioning categories like the medieval and arguments made under the sign of politics, and instead centre the figure of the convert.

My research interests came out of this shared commitment to try and rethink the more recent past in South Asia through archaeological epistemologies. In a more anthropological vein my interest in conversion arose from dissatisfactions with the way converts are approached, whether through questions of motive or problematics of sincerity. I wanted to explore the acceptance and uptake of a tradition.
**JL:** Can you say more about the methods for your research—specifically this marriage of archaeological and anthropological approaches?

**MT:** I was privileged to work at an incredible, fortified city that is unique in South Asia among all medieval forts—one that escapes the usual historical script and was built not by a Hindu Raja nor Muslim sultan, but by a lineage of converts. I’ve been working at this city, Indor, in the region of Mewat, since 2015, in collaboration with the Rajasthan State Department of Archaeology. We have done an incredible amount of archaeological work at Indor and now possess really rich datasets. They range from the ornaments that people wore and how they changed in accordance with different conceptions of self, to extensive mortuary assemblages that allow us to study how the idea of the good grave debated different notions of personhood and index different arguments about a mortuary ethics of care. Alongside that, I examined archival records across different languages, tracking Rajasthani and Persian registers of these debates. These data span 5 centuries and we have fair temporal control allowing us to resolve shifting material patterns into particular material arguments made across inter-generational time.

I conducted this archaeology project alongside an ethnographic ambition (with due IRB permissions) to reckon with the dissonances of this historical inquiry on the horizon of the present. This dissonance is not only with reference to contemporary politics in India but with the local facts that at Indor since the violent partition of South Asia in 1947, some of the communities whose past I was researching are no longer resident. Those who survived partition live in Pakistan now. So their absent presence, and their echoes into the memory of the current residents, was equally important to grapple with in trying to understand what it is that we were excavating, in all senses of the term.

**JL:** How does that shape the ethnographic component of your research—that absent presence?

**MT:** The ethnographic component of the project had several commitments. At the broadest level, I was interested in learning what the ruins of the city were to those who lived amongst them – what sensibilities guided their attachments and rejections of this material past and how their assessments of this place came to be in tension with what comes to be called history. Equally, I was trying to give an account of how odd an activity archaeology is, especially in the landscape of rural North India. My attempt was to ethnographically locate my own archaeology on the same contested terrain where history as a form of knowledge factors into the impoverishment and inequality that make for the present. In this context, I wanted to be attentive to the specific ways in which historicity and belonging are differentially available across castes to the residents of Indor today. Alongside working to archaeologically know the past at Indor I wanted to listen to the questions others posed of these same ruins, what answers they sought in them and how they navigated the violence of the past and the present on that scene.
The eruption of material signs, from ruins to ceramics, demanding the recognition of those who had to flee at partition, ensured that their erasure was constantly troubled. These presences and my work amongst them continuously intruded upon all conversations. And every conversation would return to the fact that we were all standing in a place that was not the same as it was a hundred years ago, in every sociological and material register. This elicited without my prompting reflections, aspirations and longings about both past and future. Archaeologists have often engaged with other's notions of the past as a problematic site, where they have generally sought to reinscribe their authoritative access to a true / historical past which they can speak for. My efforts have been to include alongside whatever my archaeology can open up about Indor that which I have learnt from the skepticisms and assertions made about past and future by those whom I lived alongside. The incorporation of that frisson and dissonance is to me important; because one of the ways archaeology continues to inhabit a colonial epistemology is that we evacuate these presents out of our accounts. We talk only about the past in the texts we produce. The dissertation that I wrote attempted a few experiments across these divides, and I want to continue to think about these epistemological openings and closures and find appropriate forms for their telling.

In these ways I am attempting to think critically about the closures of differing regimes of historicity, including those which archaeology inaugurates. Others at Indor related to pasts not only in terms of the dis/continuity of social memory, but in ways that made clear that archaeology speaks across a violent past that people are either desperate to forget or that they are actually still triumphal about. I think it is vital that alongside embracing the disciplines critical potential archaeologists learn to listen and reflect much more on the world within which our archaeologies are afoot and the work historical knowledge does.

**JL:** How has fieldwork changed for you in this year, and what has it looked like for you?

**MT:** All plans for fieldwork per se are on hold and will remain so until the pandemic in India and its inequities change. As a result there has been a lot of time to think more about the kinds of interventions I want to make between different anthropological fields —say, like, how this kind of archaeology of religion speaks to the anthropology of religion, how it speaks to the anthropology of ethics, politics and secularism—but also how it speaks to current debates in historical anthropology and history about religious subjects and conversion. Apart from these engagements, I was fortunate to receive permission to conduct a large set of compositional analyses of glasses from Indor which were completed prior to the pandemic. I have been refining and preparing those results for publication in a series of articles.

**JL:** Broadly speaking, what are some projects you’re engaged in at Stanford that you’re excited about?

**MT:** This is my first teaching job and while I was apprehensive starting over Zoom
I was also very excited about the teaching. I have to thank the students I have had the pleasure to be in conversation with, they have made class so rewarding. I am also excited about two proposed course, the first, which Kabir and I hope to co-teach next year, will bring together ethnographic and archaeological debates on tradition. The second is a wider collective endeavor and is framed as a pro-seminar on religion.

In the longer term I’m excited about the lab I will set up at the Archaeology Center. Plans are preliminary at this stage but the lab will be a space for rethinking the intersection of archaeological sciences, especially compositional analysis with theories of materiality. The planned lab will be centred on an instrument enabling non-destructive analysis and I aim to integrate this with a class where undergraduate and graduate students can be trained in its use. Ideally the class would integrate with the Archaeology Center Collections, generating new data for objects already at Stanford in step with questions that matter to students.

**JL: Final question. Is there a less academic project or hobby that has interested you recently?**

MT: The pace of pandemic life has meant that I’ve been able to do gardening seriously and reflect on the growing season and vegetal life. In terms of a hobby, that’s pretty much it: growing things and thinking about how theories of matter and theories of life relate.
Anna Bigelow is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies in the Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University. She received her MA from Columbia University and PhD in Religious Studies from UC Santa Barbara with a focus on South Asian Islam. Bigelow’s current book project is a comparative study of shared sacred sites in India and Turkey, exploring how everyday devotional life in shared spaces illuminates the shifting terrain of these ambivalently secular states. Another project traces the lives of devotional objects circulated by Muslims, Hindus, and others around a Sufi tomb shrine in India. She is editor and contributor to a volume on material objects in Islamic cultures, Islam through Objects (Bloomsbury, 2021). Bigelow’s earlier work Sharing the Sacred: Practicing Pluralism in Muslim North India (Oxford University Press, 2010) is a study of a Muslim majority community in Indian Punjab and the shared sacred and civic spaces in that community.
Tell me about your academic background and where your research interests originated.

AB: I studied religious studies and English in college. I got into religious studies as a first-year student. It was the usual story: I took an amazing class with an amazing professor, and I found it so exciting to be able to try to think through lenses and frames that were totally new to me. That seemed to open up whole new horizons for possible ways of being in the world—all those things that you do in college when you’re grappling with—“Who am I? Why am I here? What’s going on?” Having some new tools for thinking about that came from, in this case, a professor who worked in South Asia. I was just so excited to learn about totally different frames of thought, and that started me down the religious studies path.

After college, I spent some time earning some money, and then I went on a study abroad program. I happened to be in India in 1992. It was the year when a mosque that had been built about 400 years before was torn down by some Hindu activists who believed it was believed on top of a temple. This mosque was in a town called Ayodhya in North India, and there were all these riots around India in the aftermath of that. There were curfews, and there were periods of time when you couldn’t go outside. I was really fascinated by the situation and horrified by the deaths that were occurring. But I also became really interested in: why is it possible sometimes for a multi-religious community to share a holy place without it being seen as a problem, and sometimes it is divisive and contested? Then in the aftermath of the Ayodhya events in 1992, a lot of studies came out analyzing why there were riots and why particular towns had had troubles. So contrarily, I became really interested in those towns where there weren’t troubles, where these kinds of stresses could occur to social and civic life, and people found ways to be resilient. My research then slowly turned in that direction to look at places where people figured out ways to create a positive collective life.

I started pursuing this interest with my graduate work that brought me to Columbia for a masters and then to Santa Barbara for the PhD in religious studies, where I focused on Islam in South Asia and how Muslims figured out ways to coexist with Hindus in post-partition India—in particular, how Muslims and non-Muslims gathered at shared sacred spaces, and how those situations could sometimes become resources that helped provide tools to communities that were invested in a shared civic life. My dissertation, that became my first book, was based on the 500-year
history of a town, Malerkotla, that was founded by a Sufi Muslim saint and was a place where nobody died during Partition in 1947. Most of the Muslim population stayed even though it was in the northern Indian state of Punjab—a region where almost all Muslims left from East Punjab to West Punjab (which became Pakistan). Most of the Muslims residents stayed in this town, and nobody died, and so it became part of the local mythology that this was the place where everybody gets along and everybody’s peaceful, and so forth. The media portrays this as some sort of utopia, with nostalgia for pre-partition India. In the ethnographic component of my work, what I learned was how much work goes into making and maintaining that as part of the relevant, resonating narrative about the town. Many other towns can tell similar stories, but they don’t. Or they don’t have the same collective resonance. So what is it that makes this narrative available and meaningful to a wide enough swath of the population—that, in fact, you do have a fairly well-integrated community that really does try to problem solve when religious tensions arise, and for the most part has been able to be resilient in the face of the constant barrage of stress that comes from a country which, right now, has had a steadily increasing level of religious politics at the top? My interests have extended on from this to looking at how both conflicted and cooperatively shared sacred spaces come to signify for local populations as being emblematic and representative of various forms of collective coexistence—whether that seems positive or negative or ambivalent. The project I’m working on now is comparing conflicted and cooperatively shared spaces in India and Turkey, both of these countries that are constitutionally secular but are grappling with major upticks in religious nationalist politics at the center of their ruling parties and governments.

Meanwhile, I’ve also edited a volume on Islamic objects and how things animate religious life for different Muslim cultures around the world. That was also a lot of fun and speaks to the project I’m moving onto after the project I’m trying to finish up now.

JL: And could you talk about what your upcoming project will be?

AB: Well, it is complicated as it is totally contingent on being able to travel to India, and possibly do research in a country where the main concern at the moment is and should be the pandemic. So there are some asterisks, if you will, around this project at the moment. I hope for improved conditions for everyone in India and across the region. Eventually, when the time is right, what I’m interested in are the objects that circulate around Sufi shrines—the things that people bring in, the things people take away, how that varies.
between religious communities, what kind of attachments are made to the things that move through spaces, and how do they then manifest a pervading sensibility around the kinds of subjectivities that are formed in environments of interreligious interactions that are typical of Sufi shrines in India. How to those sensibilities then filter out not just in terms of the ideas that people profess, but how these objects permeate physically through their worlds? Materially, how is a space present in another space? For instance, how is the space of saint brought into the home, office, car, workplace, or body? I want to track these things with a little ethnographic GPS, if you will.

JL: How do ethnographic methods play into your work?

AB: Religious studies as a field has tended to be a bit textualist in its approaches, and tended to focus on conceptual ideals and structures as expressed through the written word. This is great, and it’s certainly one really rich and fascinating way to approach religious life, but I’ve always been much more interested in what people do in relation to abstract ideals, whether that be the abstract ideal of the so-called sacred text, or the abstract ideal of constitutional secularism. How are these things actually inhabited, imagined, instantiated, deployed, strategically opposed, etcetera? There are a lot of ways in which people in daily life orient themselves around these conceptual frames that require an ethnographic component to observe, flesh out, see how they work through time, through different communities. I think that while the select use of representative texts, media products, archival materials, and the material record are all different ways of getting at that question, for me, the human component, on a certain level, is the critical piece without which we can’t make sense of how any of these other products are relevant. You might have a manuscript from the 8th century that is completely fascinating, but without knowing how it resonated with which populations, it’s very difficult to understand how significant it actually was in shaping the rest of the historical record that we might have. Bringing in ethnographic methods helps us contextualize. Without actually going to places and talking to people, whatever archival materials we might have—whether it’s historical writings, census data, survey data from archaeological surveys, or whatever they might be—remain partial and potentially quite distorting records of times and places. I’ve always appreciated a certain mixed-method approach in general for coming at any question. Anything that’s worth thinking about is worth thinking about from all possible directions. One wants to avoid being a dilettante as well, but I think there’s a lot of room for cross-pollination in a mixed-method approach.

JL: What are some projects that you are excited to take on—perhaps courses you’d like to teach or initiatives you’d like to be a part of?

AB: One of the things that I miss most about pre-pandemic life is museums, art, culture, and music—being able to see and be around things that are beautiful, interesting, or challenging. I’ve been trying to
think of a class that I’d like to conceptualize maybe through the Cantor and Special Collections of Green Library, looking at religious objects that we have in our collection and maybe teaching a class through religious things at Stanford. I’m interested in artifacts, objects, manuscripts, that people can learn different methodological approaches to in thinking about how would we analyze this thing or that thing, whether it’s a manuscript, photograph, video, sculptural installation, or something else. That’s something I’m thinking about doing that would really require in-person involvement; it would be so hard to do that over Zoom. So I definitely fantasize about the things that we can do when we’re actually in person again.

I am doing another digital humanities project, with a colleague at Berkeley and some colleagues in France, who are all interested in shared sacred spaces. We’re trying to create a global digital mapping project and we’re still in the early stages with that. We’re trying to work up interesting, interactive ways of visualizing these spaces and just having a better understanding of how common and prolific such spaces are around the world. We’ll start with the Mediterranean world and India, and a few other places where our core network of scholars are working. Ultimately, it would be great to build out this map to make it as global as possible, and to provide the sort of evidentiary pool that is both common and widespread, and provide materials for people who are interested in doing further, deeper study of these kinds of phenomena.

JL: What kinds of interesting religious objects exist on campus?

AB: Last year, I taught a class on material objects and Islam, and we spent one class going to the Cantor and looking at a bunch of different materials. We have some really interesting objects including a West African Quran that is bound between cloth boards, and we don’t even know if it’s in order, because it’s not bound bound, because it’s just sandwiched between two panels. I’m really intrigued about that; I want to find somebody who wants to go through it with me and put it in order and see if we actually have the complete thing. There’s a photograph from 1963 by this really important African American photographer, Gordon Parks. We have several of his photographs of Nation of
Islam figures from the early 1960s, and one of these is this incredibly powerful image of a woman wearing the uniform that women were encouraged to wear in the Nation of Islam in that period. She just has this incredible, direct, serious gaze into the camera, and it’s just incredibly powerful composition. I could stare at that forever. We have quite a hodgepodge of things, but that also makes it interesting to think about again in terms of, how do we think about both of those things as Islamic objects? What is it, if anything, that holds any of that together, in terms of the ways we can think about them, the questions we ask about them, and the methods that we use to analyze them?

**JL: Final question: what are some non-academic projects you’ve been engaged in lately?**

AB: Well, most of my non-academic projects these days are dog related. I have a little three year old mixed breed, mostly Beagle-ish dog, and so we are always on the lookout for places to go, hike, play, and just generally roll in the grass. Living in this part of the world means that that’s fun most of the year. One bonus about pandemic life is that if you have a pet, you always have to get away from your screen at some point in the day.
It was a sweltering 90 degree afternoon. Aunty Raji, a Tamil-Telugu Singaporean woman and corporate lawyer in her late fifties, insisted that the afternoon was too hot and our route too expansive to commence our journey without a cold drink from the air-conditioned prata shop on Upper Thompson. As we sipped on our iced teh halia, Aunty Raji scrolled through some old childhood photographs she had scanned onto her phone. One of these photos was of her little brother’s kindergarten class. Of a class of over thirty students, only two were not Indian (one was Chinese, one was Eurasian). She explained that it was only later—at the age of 13, when she attended secondary school at the prestigious Raffles Girls School in town—that she realized that Singapore was actually majority Chinese and not Indian.

Afterwards, Aunty Raji would show me the old Canberra Primary School where a tiger had escaped from Mandai Zoo and had prowled the forests right opposite her school gate on her first day. She took me through the old grand prix route, a course with a hairpin bend so tight that it claimed the cars and lives of less experienced local drag racers. We stopped by a small shopping mall where a miniature colosseum of sorts once stood, where the white men from the army and navy bases around Sembawang would drink beer and watch local women mud wrestle for their entertainment. She remembered that one clearly because whenever
pointed out the longkang, or the massive storm drain, that she and her neighbors Shruti, Sonia, and Anjali, turned into their club house on sunny days. And finally, in the house she lived in until she got married, she told me about her next-door neighbor, a Mrs. Singh who still lives in that same house, thirty years later. She and her cousins had spent the night in Mrs. Singh’s guest room before Aunty Raji’s wedding so that there’d be enough space at the bride-to-be’s house for all of her uncles and aunties who’d descended upon them from Malaysia for the wedding festivities. As we passed through these neighborhoods, she pointed to houses previously owned by Chowdris, Ittyerahs, Krishnamurthys, Balakrishnans. While most of these surnames betrayed a certain social standing, they were all undeniably of South Asian origin.

In Singapore, there are four racial categories into which all citizens and permanent residents are categorized: Chinese, Malay, Indian, and ‘Other’. Here, Indian can refer to anyone of South Asian descent and encompasses a wide swath of ethno-regional, linguistic, and religious difference—not to mention an enormous intersectional diversity of class, gender, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability, citizenship status, and histories of migration. I have been spending the last seven months interrogating how race is formed as a coercive organized regime and a socially and politically constructed category that seems to bear much meaning in everyday life.

Race is how people are made legible to the state through a totalizing system of racial bureaucracy. And for most Singaporeans, race affects where you are allowed to live. While Singapore has a colonial history of formalized, segregated ethnic enclaves, the postcolonial state uses both immigration policies and public housing to enforce a system of racial integration that keeps racial minorities in place. The state manufactures and maintains racial minority demographics through an immigration policy that ensures Chinese remain at approximately
74 percent, Malays 14 percent, Indians nine percent, and Others three percent of the overall population. About 85 percent of Singaporeans and permanent residents live in government subsidized public housing. Thus, public housing becomes a major site through which the ideal citizen (heterosexual, family-oriented, nation-focused) can be shaped. Through racial quotas, public housing in Singapore replicates national demographics in racially-mixed neighborhoods. This dilutes the presence of racial minorities across the island; the policy has promoted racial harmony but also sustained Chinese political dominance.

Aunty Raji had been so excited to show me her brother's kindergarten class photograph for the same reason I had found it so fascinating that so many of her neighbors had been South Asian. It was a remnant of a bygone era in contemporary Singapore's urban racial landscape. Nonetheless, even with this spreading out of racial minorities, there are still places and spaces in Singapore that are imagined to be Indian. While walking with an informant in the northern neighborhood of Yishun, she pointed out to me all the public benches and tables she, as a child, had witnessed her older sisters and their group of Singaporean Indian friends spend their free time, drinking, smoking, and cracking jokes. As we meandered through the neighborhood, we ran into her little brother, now the only teenager in the family, doing the same with his group of Indian friends. She and her cousin told me stories about nightclubs and bars, some explicitly Indian themed with Tamil, Hindi, or Punjabi music and names like "Rupee Room" and others with no indication by menu, music, or decor that they, too, were Indian spaces as well. But, turning up there in person would have revealed Singaporean Indian owners, staff, and an overwhelming majority of patrons. During these last couple of months, I received invitations from friends to join socially distanced Singaporean Indian groups of eight at home (according to the government’s Covid-19 phase 3 restrictions); Singaporean Indians gathered in small groups in their homes even before the pandemic in response to alcohol curfews that my informants claimed targeted Indians. Now, as Singapore seems poised to go into a second lockdown, all such gatherings have come to an abrupt halt. With one more year of fieldwork ahead of me, I am unsure of what data collection will look like, but for the time being, I continue to explore these crafted and curated Singaporean Indian spaces of same-race intimacy and sociability as nostalgic memories of a pre-pandemic past and sites of hope and even potential mobilization in a post-pandemic future.
I was moved recently by news footage showing the long-awaited reunions between Australians and their many loved ones just across the sea in New Zealand after more than a year of closed borders between the closely linked nations. The images of tearful, unmasked embraces in airport terminals not only mark the hopeful start of a “Trans-Tasman travel bubble,” but make evident the country’s impressive success at beating back a novel pathogen that has brought much of the world to its knees. As I spent time in the field in Australia from 2019 to late 2020, I saw the country elicit both the pity and the envy of the world in international headlines; I began my stay experiencing one of the most devastating bushfire seasons in Australian history (now known as the Black Summer bushfires), and left as it was heralded for being among the few countries that triumphed over the virus. It’s tremendously gratifying to see such relief and joy after an exceedingly trying year. But there are still many other families whose own tearful reunions are held needlessly and cruelly in abeyance by the Australian Government.

As an anthropologist studying new mental health technologies and popular discourses around mental health, this short period of crisis in Australia was a generative one ethnographically: as the seemingly cascading apocalypses freaked out some and stressed out many others, mental health policy, research, and advocacy organizations rose to meet the challenge. Reminders to ask your loved ones “are you okay?” adorned buses, trains, and bus shelters; Medicare benefits were expanded to cover ten additional therapy sessions; an emergency $76 million AUD fund for counseling services for bushfire first responders and victims was set up by the Department of Health. There was an explosion of discourse about the importance of maintaining one’s own, and checking on others’, mental wellbeing, reflecting changing popular attitudes as well as a bipartisan consensus in Australia: one about the importance of promoting “good mental health” in the nation. While this “mental health turn” is in many ways a genuine one, bad faith actors abound.

Often those supporting this movement for better mental health are political and economic elites who are themselves responsible for grievous psychic harm. Consider, for example, the case of Peter Dutton, the racist, far-right Minister for Home Affairs. Under Dutton’s aegis, Australia’s one-of-a-kind policy of indefinitely detaining refugees in offshore camps continued. Since 2001, innocent people
territorial waters—so-called “boat people”—have been warehoused in detention centers in poor Pacific nations like Nauru and in prisons in Papua New Guinea—a militarized “deterrence” tactic amounting to torture. Dutton is particularly notorious for his opposition to a bill allowing for the medical evacuation to mainland Australia of critically ill detainees. Many suffer from what some psychiatrists and international observers have taken to calling “resignation syndrome”: an epidemic of suicide attempts and catatonic depression at the camps, especially among children. What untold psychic damage has Dutton wrought, not only on these refugees but on the 25 million Australians in whose name this has been carried out? At the beginning of the pandemic, Dutton’s wife was named the newest board member of the Mental Health Foundation of Australia. Declaring one’s support for “mental health” has become a form of social currency, a plaything for the rich and powerful who degrade actual mental life both in and outside the fortress of Australia.

Australia’s enviable success with the virus—a combination of geographic luck and prudent action—has come with a heavy price. 15 months on, with the Kiwi exception, its borders remain shuttered: no citizens may leave, and increasingly fewer may come in. Human rights groups have decried the Government’s decision to severely limit the number of repatriations, requiring hundreds of thousands of Aussies scattered around the globe to jostle for price-gouged flights and to navigate mandatory hotel quarantine at their own expense. Recently, it was announced by Health Minister Greg Hunt that the Commonwealth would take the astonishing and unprecedented step of criminalizing the return of its own citizens from India, effectively stranding them during the country’s devastating second wave of infections. I saw Minister Hunt in person only once, a few months before he wielded such broad emergency powers in the name of “biosecurity.” He had come to visit my field site, the country’s premiere mental health research institute, to cut the ribbon on a new suicide prevention research center.

What’s going on here? Why are the very dealers of death and despair at the borders championing the prevention of mental illness and suicide? Is the pain that might drive a Bangladeshi refugee imprisoned in Papua New Guinea or an Australian national stuck in India to contemplate suicide somehow categorically different and unworthy of addressing?

The pandemic has brought out one of the darkest impulses of Australian society, what more than one of my informants referred to broadly as the country’s lamentable “island mindset”: a hostility to outsiders informed by a jealous guarding of the exceptional natural beauty and general quality of life in “the lucky country.” I saw this obsession with invasion (which is itself rooted in the brutal, actual invasion of the continent, begun in the late 18th century) literally fold inward on itself during this period. In late June 2020, a cluster of cases identified in
Melbourne began spreading out of control in low-income residential towers, plunging the state into one of the world’s strictest and longest lockdowns for the next four months. For the first time in 100 years, the state borders between Victoria and New South Wales were closed. In the weeks that followed, Victorians became national pariahs and the butt of jokes; already referred to as “Mexicans” by the New South Welsh, the term referenced their undesirable, and now contaminated, neighbors to the south.

Perhaps there were signs early on that the pandemic would see the inhumane politics of the border spill out into domestic life; that the chickens would come home to their fortified roost. In February 2020, news media reported on the first Aussie nationals evacuated from Wuhan to the remote Christmas Island detention center for asylum seekers, which would double as a quarantine facility. Images circulated of bewildered travelers wandering the grounds of the detention center, doing their best to stay active; to socialize; to put on makeshift concerts and get schoolwork done. It was an eerie reenactment of the many others who had similarly tried to keep themselves from coming undone on the island, but who did not get to leave after 14 days.

The policing of Australia’s borders, external and internal, both inform and index the psychic wellbeing of the nation. As calls grow to liberate the mind from illness and stigma at the population level, we must ask which other forms of unfreedom are behind them.
## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

### 2019-2020 and 2020-2021

### UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS & GRANTS

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<tr>
<th>Award Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Ogden Ortiz Memorial Prize for Outstanding Performance in ANTHRO 90B. Theory in Cultural and Social Anthropology</td>
<td>2019-2020: Noah George Luis-Ferdinand</td>
<td>2020-2021: Dryden Myers, Matthew Zheng</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Joseph H. Greenberg Prize for Undergraduate Academic Excellence</td>
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<td>James Lowell Gibbs, JR Award for Outstanding Service to the Department in Anthro:</td>
<td>2019-2020: Anthony Hackett, Caroline Aung, Josh Cobler, Eunice Jung</td>
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<td>2020-2021: Sadie Blanca-flor, Victoria Chiek, Lilith Frakes</td>
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<td>The Firestone Golden Medal for Excellence in Research:</td>
<td>2019-2020: Mahima Krishnamoorthi</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Robert Bayard Textor Award for Outstanding Creativity in Anthropology</td>
<td>2020-2021: Ethan Chua</td>
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THE MICHELLE Z. ROSALDO SUMMER FIELD RESEARCH GRANTS

(2019-2020)

Harleen Kaur  “Understanding Legacies of Violence and Their Role in Formations of Identity, Kinship, and Movements in the Sikh Diasporic Youth”

FRANZ BOAS SUMMER SCHOLARS

(2019-2020)

Bena Habtamu ‘Entrepreneurial Utopianism Amidst Africa’s Digital Revolution: Reimagining Youth and National Futures in Urban Ethiopia’

Paloma Moreno Jimenez ‘The Effects of Testimonio on Migrant Mothers: A Closer Look at Desahogamiento’

(2020-2021)

Sadie Blancaflor ‘An Ethnographic Analysis of the Movement Strategies and Tactics of Environmental Activists in Red America’

Dryden Myers ‘He Ānuenue Pi‘o I Luna a Ko‘olaupoko: Ethnography of Kawainui and Hakipu‘u as A Native Hawaiian Cultural Complex of Resilience’

Shayna Naranjo ‘Indigenous Youth and Type 2 Diabetes: Examining Reality and Identity’

Danny Nguyen ‘Constructing Queer Spaces: Exploring Nonconformist Gender/Sex Expression in Vietnam’s Cultural Landscape’

Matthew Zheng ‘Beyond Humanity: Comparative Political Ethnography of Queer Refugees in Northern California’
GRADUATE AWARDS AND PLACEMENTS

The Bernard J. Siegel Award for Outstanding Achievement in Written Expression by a Ph.D. Student in Anthropology

2019-2020 Anthony Medina  
2020-2021 Grace Zhou

The Robert Bayard Textor Award for Outstanding Creativity in Anthropology

2019-2020 Dilshanie Perera  
2020-2021 Torin Jones

The Anthropology Prize for Academic Performance

2019-2020 Nathan Acebo  
2020-2021 Claire Maass

The Anthropology Prize for Outstanding Graduate Research and Publication

2019-2020 Nethra Samarawickrema  
2020-2021 Hannah Moots and Elliott Reichardt

The Anthropology Prize for Service to the Department

2019-2020 Emilia Groupp, Isabel Salovaara, and Grace Zhou  
2020-2021 Shikha Nehra, Kerem Ussakli, and Shandana Waheed

The Anthropology Prize for Academic Performance by a Masters Student

2019-2020 Alexa Romano  
2020-2021 Vibhav Mariwala

The 2021 Centennial Teaching Assistant Award

Elix Colon and Pablo Seward
NEW JOB PLACEMENTS

Gesualdo Busacca
Tutor/teacher with University of Catania, Italy

Editorial freelance and permaculture trainee with urban and rural regeneration in Sicily, Italy.

Claudia Liuzza
20-21 Duke University, Center for International and Global Studies, DUCIGS Rethinking Diplomacy Program Fellow

21-22 Visiting Research Scholar at the American University, Rome, Italy

Cherkea Howery
National Archives. LC Copyright Specialist in the Visual Arts Division, examining registrability of intellectual property by federal government, international law and regulation.

Library of Congress in the U.S. Copyright Office

Dilshanie Perera
Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow in Climate and Inequality, The Climate Museum
New York City, New York

Nethra Samarawickrema
After Graduation, Nethra began a new career as a mediator and co-founded The Lab for Listening, which provides training in conflict resolution and difficult conversations. She is also currently working as Lecturer at the Department of Anthropology at Stanford University.
### NEW JOB PLACEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grace Zhou</strong></td>
<td>21-22/22-23 Postdoc President’s Scholar-Ohio State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claire Maass</strong></td>
<td>1-year PD Forensic Anthropology Researcher, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Honolulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vibhav Mariwala</strong></td>
<td>Kepler Cannon, Global Strategic Advisory firm in NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dean Chahim</strong></td>
<td>21-22 Postdoc, Princeton-Mellon Initiative in Architecture, Urbanism, and Humanities-Princeton University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-23 Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology-University of Texas, El Paso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laura Ng</strong></td>
<td>Grinnell College, Visiting Assistant Professor in Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TianYu Xie</strong></td>
<td>Facebook beginning Summer 2021, User Experience Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hannah Moots</strong></td>
<td>Hannah has started a Neubauer Collegium Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Chicago, Working jointly with archaeologists and geneticists to study changing mobility practices in the Bronze and Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camilla Mazzucato</strong></td>
<td>2021-2022 Academic Officer, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies-University of Copenhagen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alana Springer</strong></td>
<td>Alana will work a seasonal outdoor education position during summer 2021 before taking time off to explore the U.S. by van and sort out her next moves.</td>
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In a speeding white minibus on our way to Piassa in Addis Ababa, my cousins and I heard a radio station discussing an anticipated new movie, The Red Sea Diving Resort. Released in 2019, the film was said to depict a story of Ethiopian-Jewish refugees and their journey to Israel as inspired by their real-life exoduses during the 1980s. Days later, cuddled up on a crowded bed and fighting for a fair view of my cousin’s laptop screen, we were excited to watch a movie about Ethiopia and to potentially hear our languages in a Hollywood production. To our dismay, there was not a single Ethiopian actor or actress cast in the movie. The story was rife with the white-saviorism that plagues Hollywood.

The U.S. film industry is notorious for centering whiteness, as was made clear in 2015 during the #OscarsSoWhite movement that took social media by storm. When “diversity” is addressed in Hollywood it has often been through the coping mechanism of whites who are the agents of change. Movies like The Red Sea Diving Resort, The Blind Side, The Help, and countless others are infamous for depicting black characters’ paths to success and happiness only via the oh-so-generous helping hand of a white protagonist.

It really matters to have more multiplicity in film. It changes the narrative. When those underrepresented in film are enabled to tell our own stories, we do not settle for a diversity that applauds simply seeing a non-white actor or actress on screen. We get the opportunity to experience stories told via what Shalini Shankar refers to as a “multicultural ontology.”¹ A multicultural ontology means that stories do not just applaud deviation from whiteness, but center race, ethnicity, heritage, language, and culture in a more comprehensive rhetoric of storytelling. They demonstrate different ways of being in the world in more depth. Shankar argues that diversity is unspecific and often equated with “inclusion.” A multicultural approach, though, focuses on many different ways of being in the world—not white and non-white, but white, Ethiopian, Iranian, Black-American, etc. In doing so, it does not privilege a white gaze.

One can gain insight into the impact of a multicultural approach to filmmaking by exploring non-American cinema. My sophomore year at Stanford, I took a class that has been a

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transformative part of my undergraduate education—COMPLIT 249C: Contemporary Iranian Theater. In this course, we were introduced to the renowned world of Iranian cinema and taught by a pioneer of the industry. Learning about Iranian experiences through films like Persepolis and The Cow allowed me to expand my perspective on histories from a part of the world I knew so little about and challenged the ways the U.S. education system has taught us to think about the Middle East and the “Orient”.

One reason I was able to maintain some sanity after watching The Red Sea Diving Resort was because I knew of other films that do justice to the stories I was excited to see on screen. Though the Ethiopian film industry is at its early stages and has much growth ahead, films like Sost Mazen so poignantly depict stories of Ethiopian refugees that the American industry simply could not. My point? Don’t wait around for Hollywood to produce the films you want to see. The U.S. film industry is often glorified and placed at the center of filmmaking, but so many global cinema industries are telling their own stories in ways that Hollywood, by nature, cannot (yet, at least).

Bong Joon Ho notably referred to the Oscars (often perceived as a quite global awards ceremony) as a very “local” set of awards, meaning they center American film. And as I’ve said, American film tends to center white narratives. Of course, newer film industries, like the Ethiopian one, often may not have the CGI experience or technical equipment that allows Hollywood to continue pushing the boundaries of filmmaking. Nevertheless, these industries are still provocative, innovative, and important. So, next time my cousins and I want to see our own stories and languages on-screen, we decided we’ll get our fix straight from the source.

2Sost Maezen 2 Triangle 2 (2020)
3Norton, R. (2020, February 17). Parasite Director Bong Joon-Ho Once Described The Oscars As "Very Local" Does He Have A Point?
When Robert Aaron Long killed eight people in Asian American-owned massage parlors in the Atlanta area last March, the nation mourned the deaths of many Asian women at the expense of one man’s “sex addiction.” This shooting has been one of many cases of Anti-Asian hate crimes and racial harassment since former President Trump ramped up rhetoric blaming the spread of the coronavirus pandemic on Asians and Asian Americans over the last year.

The tragedy in Atlanta reveals a troubling contrast to dominant stereotypes against Asian Americans: Asians are largely portrayed as economically successful, educationally ambitious, hardworking, and determined. These stereotypes position Asian Americans as ‘model minority’ figures compared to other ethnic minority groups in the United States. The story has become a kind of myth, a story that Americans use to paint an integrated multicultural picture of the United States. The model minority myth is used to explain the apparent success of Asian Americans across academic, economic, and cultural domains compared to the perceived racial groups in the United to shame these other New York Magazine, the model minority myth to for other minorities position and achieve economic Asian Americans can.

The shooting in Atlanta working class Asian parlors as sources of sex does not fit neatly with minority. Working class women are often invisible Asian American success. What can we learn from this violence in thinking about the model minority story?

We need a better vocabulary to talk about Atlanta. Anti-Asian hate crimes illustrate the dangers of stereotypes that generalize many Asian Americans into a singular experience. The pan-ethnic identity of Asian American conflates many different histories, cultures, and identities into one large racial category. Despite having the largest median income out of any racial group, Asian Americans also have the largest income gap of any other racial group. Disparities in levels of education, English language, personal networks, and employable skills point towards different income levels and socioeconomic mobility for different Asian ethnic groups. There are intricate gendered nuances and differences that the model minority myth, like all stereotypes, erases as well. The fetishization of Asian American
women as sexual objects of desire and addiction, including stereotypes of Asian American women as demure, erotic, or manipulative, bring to light the extra barriers Asian American women face in many aspects of their lives. Asian American women navigate through gendered inequalities and racial disparities that may create pay disparities and other forms of discrimination. There is an incredible diversity within Asian Americans that is collapsed under the singular image of the Asian American as the model minority.

The model minority myth perpetuates an image of potential success that not only undermines the important intersections of culture, political histories, gender, social class, and ethnicity, but also pits racial minority groups against each other. In the media, as we have seen, people compare Asian Americans, and their economic and educational success, to Black Americans. These generalizations that point towards Asian American achievement position Asian Americans as proximate to white Americans and erase anti-Asian racism. Simultaneously, the model minority narrative can be used to argue that non-Asian minorities should learn from and adopt Asian American strategies for economic mobility and overcoming discrimination.

Anthropological methods can equip us to dismantle the model minority myth not just as an unlearning of stereotypes but as a racial project that upholds white supremacy through caricaturing Asian Americans, and thereby positioning non-Asian minorities against them. This results in holding non-Asian minorities responsible for their own oppression, rather than directly addressing systems of power that create disparities among minorities. The story of Asian American success is used to perpetuate stereotypes about other minorities who fail to overcome such disparities.

Instead, the model minority myth should be examined critically to examine how it utilizes culture and identity to mask structures of whiteness and power that uphold and maintain a racial hierarchy. Scholarship on the model minority myth and Asian Americans often fail to incorporate different positionalities and experiences of Asian American women and other marginalized identities. What anthropology does is create spaces to interrogate the structures of power that link culture, identity, and stereotypes together.

In a discipline that continuously pushes the boundaries of culture and socially constructed identities, anthropology is a unique space that can recognize both the power of collectivity in a pan-ethnic Asian identity and the dangers of generalizing many lived experiences of differing intersecting identities. Instead of using the model minority myth as a framework to understand and explain Asian Americans in a larger context of racial relations, an intimate exploration of the multitudinous lives within Asian communities, as products of different histories and expressions of different desires, may be able to directly address the sources of continued violence against Asian American women.
When a myth costs real human lives, it is time to craft different stories.

https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/robert-long-halfway-house.html
Sakamoto 2014 “where does the model minority myth come from?”
Ibid.
I’ve always disliked the English language. Historically, it has been used as a tool of colonial domination. Growing up Latino in the US, I’ve had my share of experiences with people saying phrases like, “In America we speak English.” Yet during my time in undergrad at Stanford, I received an opportunity to travel to Cartagena, Columbia and work with a local organization that helped a local school with teaching assistance. My role was to assist the English language teacher with curriculum design, lesson planning, and just general classroom management.

Despite my unease, I took the job. I worked in a small school on an island serving a predominantly Black and low-income community. I always felt uncomfortable in the role. I found it difficult to try to teach the students English. I wanted to validate their existing language practices and knowledge and let them know they didn’t need to learn English. I wanted to let them know that it was not necessary to speak English to be successful. But that’s not for.

One of my most insightful moments came on a random day in August. That afternoon, I was left in charge of one of the classes, mostly composed of 14 to 16-year-olds, and instructed to come up with a lesson for that day. At this point, it had been roughly a month that I had been working in this school. During recess time, I would play soccer with the children or help referee kickball matches. I would also walk with some of the students to their homes on my way to my own apartment. It was in these interactions that I learned most. Many of the teenaged students were into Champeta, an Afro-Caribbean music genre originating in the Colombian Caribbean coast. One of the students, a kid I felt close to, was also an artist; he liked to sing, rap, and dance. He would always share with me snippets of some verses he was working on.

That afternoon, I decided to integrate his form of knowledge—music—into the classroom. I decided to have him lead the class. I asked him to write the lyrics to one of the more popular champeta songs at the time on the chalkboard. We then walked through each word of the song, and we translated the song together into English from Spanish. It was fun. It also was an opportunity for the classroom to hear what a song they were familiar with might sound like in English.

Oftentimes educators are restricted by state requirements, or any number of factors, that affect how they approach teaching. This is especially true for under-resourced educational
settings. But there are always ways to create more adequate and relevant material. A common remark I heard amongst the students that same summer in Colombia was why they had to learn English if they would never have to use it outside of that classroom. And to an extent, I agreed with their concern. Why should they be forced to learn something that they deem is not relevant in their day-to-day lives? Even though I felt conflicted teaching English, I was reminded that when we use local forms of knowledge in a classroom setting, what we are teaching seems more worthwhile.

The question I pose I believe should be an important one for all educators to consider: how is the material or knowledge you are expected to convey to others relevant to their everyday lives and experiences? There isn’t a straightforward guide to answering this question, but I can offer a few pointers from my own experiences. Anthropology has helped me here. It has been a starting point for me to learn about different theoretical worlds of possibilities.

Here is my challenge: one of the most important steps to take is to recognize and actively work against upholding the norms that may not serve diverse students well. This is especially true for a traditional educator (i.e., public school teacher). More often than not, educational standards are based on whiteness. One need to look no further than the SATs. An article in Inside Higher Education describes the SAT as a racist tool which marginalizes the non-white. Additionally, understanding how histories of colonialism and imperialism inform not only educational standards but also the realities of many students in under-resourced educational settings is crucial. To say that an individual educator could tackle all these long-standing histories would be naïve. But what I hope to illustrate through my personal reflection is how seemingly small shifts in our teaching pedagogy can have important effects. In my case, shifting the perception of the English language as a necessary tool for success towards something that can be made relevant to one’s everyday life, in my opinion, is one of many ways we as educators can begin to transform curricula. Educators are often positioned as the bearers of knowledge while students are expected to absorb as much of their information as possible. But part of transforming pedagogy is being able to recognize and actively reinforce the fact that students step into the classroom with day-to-day experiences to which that knowledge must be made relevant. Another part of the transformation is recognizing how much these students have to share.

In 2016, a little boy slipped through an exhibit fence at the Cincinnati Zoo, falling 15 feet into the gorilla enclosure. The female gorillas retreated to their indoor enclosure, and the 440-pound silverback male approached to assess this intruder. Nothing in the gorilla’s behavior indicated aggression. He poked and prodded at the boy, dragging him a few feet down a stream. As onlookers yelled down from above, he suddenly grabbed the boy and retreated into the gorilla exhibit. Worried for the boy’s safety, 10 minutes after he fell, a zoo employee shot the gorilla in the chest. Harambe, the gorilla, was killed the day after his 17th birthday.

In the world of primate conservation, I’ve come across the rhetoric of allowing apes to live “as wild as possible” as an ethical ideal. This rhetoric has sprung up as an apologia for zoos or other conservation settings keeping animals in captivity. In zoos, our ape relatives can live free of threats that make their natural habitats dangerous: poachers, deforestation, and starvation. But how are these animals, most of whom live their entire lives in captivity, capable of living “as wild as possible”?

The cognitive and cultural differences between great apes have fascinated human beings for hundreds of years. Some intelligence tests for chimpanzees in the 1930s assessed primate cognition in terms of how far they were from human standards of communication and behavior. Chimps were raised as children, taught human tasks, and sectioned off into nuclear families in proper American fashion as a test of intelligence. The biggest breakthrough in conceptualizing primate intelligence came in the 1960s, when Jane Goodall asserted that like us, chimps were tool users and innovators. This made them seem more human.

In the next five decades, this line between human capacities and those of other apes became even more blurry. In the nineties, Koko the Gorilla took the world by storm. The Western Lowland Gorilla was abandoned by her mother at the San Francisco Zoo, and became the ward of Stanford Ph.D. student Penny Patterson. She taught the ape over 1,000 signs in ASL. Koko’s vocabulary allowed her to express her emotions, talk about the environment, and watch movies. Koko also made it clear she wanted a baby gorilla of her own. The research team was excited to help her do so, especially to see if Koko would pass on her ASL vocabulary. Koko indicated that she wanted to be in a traditional gorilla troop. The Gorilla Foundation tried to put her in a troop consisting of one silverback male (with plans to add females), but among them Koko seemed depressed and isolated, and plans...
were never completed. She couldn’t integrate back into gorilla culture, and never conceived.

Though the extent of Koko’s vocabulary has been questioned by linguists, there’s no doubt that gorillas are intelligent and capable of communication. They can speak. But should we teach them? Koko’s knowledge allowed her to converse and express herself to humans, but did she miss out on being a gorilla?

I’d like to return now to Harambe. Born and raised at the Gladys Porter Zoo in Texas, Harambe learned a system of communication from zoo keepers there. While not as formalized as ASL, many zookeepers use their own combinations of phrases and gestures with captive gorillas. When Harambe came to Cincinnati to become the troop’s silverback, this specific communication system he knew since his birth was gone. And when a small child fell into his enclosure, Harambe ran to see the interloper (a “wild” tendency in silverbacks protecting their troop). Visitors and zookeepers screamed at the gorilla, creating a level of stress he had never encountered before. And Harambe, used to being able to understand (to some degree) the intention of his human caregivers, grabbed the little boy and retreated from the screaming crowds. Had he been at Gladys Porter, or been allowed to transition to Cincinnati with the zookeepers he had known his whole life, Gorilla Foundation Director Anthony Rose argues, “Harambe would be alive today.”
What is our goal in keeping gorillas in captivity and learning from them? Scientists and conservationists exploded with conflicting opinions regarding Harambe’s death, and many who criticized the zoo for shooting first and thinking later redacted their statements to not blame zoo employees who reacted to save the child. Western Lowland Gorillas are critically endangered, and after the silverback was shot, his sperm was extracted to be used for artificial insemination. The zoo director declared that despite his death, “There's a future, it's not the end of his gene pool.”

But is that the ultimate goal of ape conservation: to preserve the gene pool? Or to see their “wildness”? Or to know how well other apes learn? To some extent, the answer to all of these questions is yes, even though these goals can be contradictory. Many zoos engage their apes with creative enrichment activities, mental challenges that stimulate and demonstrate their intelligence to visitors. But when apes deviate from behavior their human keepers want to see, the results are dangerous.

The aspiration of allowing animals to live as “wild as possible” becomes a trap when an ape suddenly becomes a little too wild, exposing it as a faulty model that at best inhibits captive primates from much needed stimulation, and at worst gets apes killed. Harambe’s death highlights issues of conservation, communication, and ethics that have yet to be resolved in the livelihood of captive primates. To do so would mean re-evaluating our notions of “wild” or tame, threatening or docile, human or ape. If anthropology is about understanding different people, we have the capability (and need) to turn around and study ourselves as well. Through better understanding human interactions and standards for great apes, we can improve the quality and safety of apes in captivity.
Conducting an interview with my grandmother, Marion Ute, about her nursing education at a school made exclusively for Native American women was an interesting and exciting opportunity for me. I was approaching the end of my education in anthropology at Stanford. The years of synthesizing ideas, reading ethnographies, and gaining a familiarity with decades of anthropological theory had prepared me, I had hoped, to be more than ready to represent her narrative by asking her the right questions and follow-up questions as she spoke into the microphone. I was the authority; she was my subject.

I asked if being an Indigenous woman in a formal educational setting with other Indigenous women made a difference in her experience.

She paused and looked at me with an almost panicked expression on her face before she replied with an abrupt “No.”

My heart sank. I had wanted to tell a story about my grandmother’s experience of being indigenous, and she thought I was being hostile. But this wasn’t the only time that my attempts to apply my training in ascertaining the narratives of underrepresented people had resulted in a situation that felt wildly uncomfortable. I had talked about “culture” and “indigeneity” in tribal law discussions, proudly implementing tools and abstractions I had accumulated during my education, and found that it produced similarly stagnant air and subtle hostility.

Dorothy Smith once remarked that anthropologists tend to “graze in a field of conceptual entities” when they attempt to understand the narratives of people who belong to another culture. The constructs, theories and abstractions they use while endeavoring to craft a document, archive, or ethnography seem to become the objects of their analysis rather than the real people they study.

And while the days of anthropologists exploiting vulnerable people to accumulate data as part of an ongoing colonial project are long gone, I believe that there is still much work to be done before our tools enable us to represent these stories with as much fidelity as possible.

This leads me to wonder how we, as researchers and writers, can help to create story-making projects that increase the visibility of communities in need while also evolving the
discipline of anthropology. How can we go about conducting research in the field so that our methods do not feel so intrusive?

A very different but similarly underrepresented narrative takes shape in a digital space, on the YouTube channel of a man named Daniel Nepveux. Without any questions from someone with training in anthropological methods, he expounds with alarming transparency his experience of living with schizoaffective disorder.

With the use of free editing software, he cuts together short pieces of himself talking into the front-facing camera on his phone during psychosis events with interspersed clips of him playing with his dog and even bits of fan art that some of his 85,000 subscribers made. In my own attempts to create a safe space where vulnerable people in need of visibility can represent their experiences with transparency, witnessing this type of raw, deeply personal storytelling aggravates my feelings of being limited in my capabilities as an academically trained researcher and interviewer.

In the interest of taking the next step in my journey of translating human experiences into forms that will make positive differences in the world, I now wonder: if I were to go to a Daniel Nepveux, not as a collector, but as an interlocutor, would that make a difference? Would a more reciprocal conversation enable us to avoid the hostility my grandmother felt?

This is why I would like to suggest an addition to the interview portion of an anthropologist’s methods: a reverse interview.

Toward the end of their fieldwork, perhaps an anthropologist could give their participants an opportunity to ask questions and receive answers from the researcher that would be included in the record. While researchers are well aware that conventional methods in anthropology still have the capacity to misrepresent or exploit vulnerable people, I believe an addition such as this would make a powerful difference. It would also give burgeoning anthropologists like myself an opportunity to receive feedback that can make the balancing act of being an Indigenous person (who are historically the subjects of this kind of research) and an analyst a little less precarious.

Toward the end of the interview with my grandmother, things got easier. I ended up telling her more about what I was trying to do, and what my anthropology classes were like. Then I asked some more general questions about her experience of becoming a nurse who would eventually specialize in diabetic health issues on our reservation. She then expounded on the ways that she and her classmates would tell stories about their upbringing among their respective tribes, which was something I was attempting to ask about in the beginning of the interview.

We weren’t talking explicitly about her experience as a Native woman when she opened up
about this. We were simply discussing what made her comfortable in school, and how her classmates helped each other feel more connected during that time.

The next time I conduct an interview as part of a research project, if an interlocutor is willing and able of course, I'll turn the tables so they have another opportunity to represent themselves in the record with an exchange that brings the anthropologist and their methods directly into the discussion. Hopefully this will help prevent any preconceived ideas about a person's experiences—like my own assumptions when I interviewed my grandmother—from getting in the way of the type of conversation that would best represent their story.

Then, perhaps, anthropologists wouldn't be lost navigating a landscape of their own “conceptual entities.” If participants of the research were given a chance to question the researcher, that could lead to new perspectives that can further the evolution of the discipline.
Two of the most innovative books in healthcare have been simple reminders. The more recent: The Body Keeps the Score (2015), was from a psychiatrist alerting the public to the depth of its trauma. The second, The Body in Pain (1984) was from a writer alerting us to the depth of pain in our society. Their similarity in name is no coincidence, since both authors wanted to remind us of our physicality. They feared we had forgotten how it shaped our lives.

Theorists of medicine have long shared their fear: that health is something we take for granted. We never know how it’s faring until we have to know. Elaine Scarry, writer of The Body in Pain, uses old age as an example: “As the body breaks down, it becomes increasingly the object of attention.” She argued oneself made someone’s an observer.

Last year, however, the to us all. I saw people in within a month of the United States, I was This made me the only handful of quarantined aware of how much they

One woman I knew cried tears were slow; they dried in a crawl. I came in to see her staring at a blank TV in a dark room. “Hi Grace,” I’d say, and then feigning surprise, “Oh no! What’s wrong?” But she could never remember. And perhaps for that reason, neither she nor I could do anything about it. I talked until she sent me away to replay the scene tomorrow.

Grace fared better than most residents. Still, her plight scared me, and for two reasons. The first was the realization that we are all getting older. The second was that I was now privy to a depth of experience I had not understood. Because mortality and illness are not things we like to speak about—we do not even feel entitled to speak of them—seniors usually face this existential burden alone.

And we should note, so do those battling disease. I happened to be in the hospital during California’s November Covid spike later that year, with nothing to do but absorb the sounds and scenes of a pandemic. The experience reminded me of Virginia Woolf’s essay On Being Ill. Woolf noted how our memory and knowledge of the body are impoverished, because pain is at once subjectively rich and yet indescribable: “Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way. There is a virgin forest, tangled, pathless, in each... Here
we go alone” (36).

This was how Woolf described influenza, with obvious analogy to the present. The awe of observing Covid is a kind of surprise at its depth, but this is still not a true realization. I have no better sense of the gravity of its toll seeing firsthand how terrible it can be.

Elaine Scarry offers another metaphor to capture this sense. Rather than a wild forest, she says that pain is like some distant, violent phenomenon in space that scientists tell us about: a supernova or a black hole, for example. The point is that we can be awed by its magnitude but we could never possibly grasp it.

Frankly, I don’t think we can grasp the magnitude of pain even once we feel it. Woolf wrote that it is as if we keep no record of the body, which is commensurate with my own experience. I am someone who has faced disability well before the pandemic. Most severe was a chronic disorder which persisted from when I was seventeen to only a few months ago. My body had immense trouble with digestion which caused tremendous pain most days of the week. I could tell it was breaking down, so I tried everything to get better. This went on for five desperate years.

I’m fortunate to have recovered. But you know the weirdest thing? Now that I’ve had it under control for some time, I really cannot imagine what it was like. There were hundreds of terrible episodes, but I cannot empathize with the person in them. This was the most meaningful improvement that ever did or perhaps will occur in my life. And yet I cannot call the past to mind.

The only conclusion I can draw from this is that it is unimaginably easy to forget what has happened to you. It’s unimaginable in that we can never grasp just how quickly we can become alienated from our own experience.

The most direct proof for this claim is in what we are forgetting now. Most people I have talked to have struggled with a sense of numbness to the pandemic, which has perhaps alternated with anxiety. But acknowledgement is not appreciation.

As of today, more Americans have died as a result of Covid-19 than did in World War 2. And yet even when the toll numbered in the tens of thousands, writers were asking: Where are the memorials? When will we grieve? Some of the authors noted that there were no memorials, no products of an emotional process. A fellow student in my office put it more personally: Where are the five stages of grief I was promised?

I think the answer is that for most of us, grief has to be a choice. The greatest wisdom I can draw from Scarry is that the history of pain is largely unwritten. Seniors have wasted away in nursing homes for decades before it became politically relevant. Tens of thousands of
Tens of thousands of Americans die from influenza every year in a normal process. Disabled persons suffer and go unaccommodated all around us every day.

The difference a pandemic makes is only to elevate the immensity of suffering and subjective loneliness which quietly define countless lives. Whether we forget it once again will be entirely up to us.
Anthropology Faculty

Andrew Bauer
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. University of Chicago, 2010) Environmental Anthropology, Materiality, Space/Place/Landscape, Archaeological Theory, South Asia

Lisa Curran
(Professor; Ph.D. Princeton, 1994) Sustainable and equitable use of tropical resources, sound land use planning and governance.

Paulla Ebron
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. Massachusetts at Amherst 1993) Comparative cultural studies, nationalism, gender, discourses of identity; Africa, African-America.

James Ferguson
(Professor; Ph.D. Harvard U., 1985) Political Economy, development, migration and culture; Southern Africa.

Duana Fullwiley
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco, 2002) The Anthropology of science; Medical anthropology; Genetics and identity; Economic anthropology; Global health politics; Africanist anthropology; Race; Health disparities; Environmental resource scarcity as a source of ethnic conflict, Senegal, West Africa, France, and the United States.

Angela Garcia
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. Harvard, 2007) Medical and psychological anthropology; violence, suffering and care; addiction, morality and science; subjectivity; ethnographic writing; Unites States, Mexico.

Thomas Hansen
(Professor; Ph.D. Roskilde University, Denmark) Political theory; continental philosophy; psychoanalysis; comparative religion; contemporary urbanism; South Asia and Southern Africa.

Miyako Inoue
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. Washington University, 1996) Sociolinguistics, gender; Japan.

Lochlann Jain
(Professor; Ph.D. U.C. Santa Cruz, 1999) Law and technology, feminist theory, travels in material culture, representation, and visual theory.

Richard Klein
(Professor; Ph.D. Chicago, 1966) Paleoanthropology; Africa, Europe.

Matthew Kohrman
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. Harvard U., 1999) Medical anthropology, disability studies, gender, social suffering, state formation, social experience; China.

Tanya Luhrmann
(Professor; Ph.D. Cambridge U., 1986) Psychiatry anthropology; spirituality; culture and mind; psychosis; voices and visions; South Asia, United States.

Liisa Malkki
(Professor; Ph.D. Harvard U., 1989) Historical anthropology, nationalism and internationalism, colonialism, racism, refugees and the politics of humanitarianism, religion; East and Central Africa.
**Krish Seetah**  
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. University of Cambridge, 2006) traditional and scientific methods in zooarchaeology, colonial activity within European contexts and wider European influences within the 'global landscape'.

**Kabir Tambar**  
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. University of Chicago, 2009) Religion and secularism, pluralism and nationalism, the politics of affect, Islam, Middle East, Turkey.

**Sharika Thiranagama**  
(Associate Professor; Ph.D. University of Edinburgh, 2006) Ethnicity, Enslavement, Labor, Violence, Gender, Kinship, Caste, Displacement, History, Political Anthropology and Political Theory; Sri Lanka, India, South Asia.

**Mudit Trivedi**  
(Assistant Professor; Ph.D. University of Chicago, 2020) Identity, urbanization, paleoenvironmental research, ceramic technology and trade, geoarchaeology, lithics; South Asia, North India.

**Barbara Voss**  
(Professor; Ph.D. U.C. Berkeley, 2002) Archaeology, women, gender, sexuality, archaeology of architecture and structured space, politics of cultural resource management; prehistoric and colonial California.

**Sylvia Yanagisako**  
(Professor; Ph.D. Washington University, 1975) Kinship, gender, feminist theory, capitalism, ethnicity; U.S., Italy.

**Serkan Yolaçan**  
(Assistant Professor; Ph.D. Duke University, 2017) Religion, Nationalism, Immigration, Political Economy; West and Southeast Asia, Indian Ocean.

**EMERITI**  
Harumi Befu, George A. Collier, Jane F. Collier, Carol L. Delaney, William Durham, Charles O. Frake, James L. Gibbs, Jr., Ian Hodder, John Rick, Renato Rosaldo
50’s

Janet Houck Boreta, 1951. Undergrad. we had a wonderful time with Dr. Keating as the head of the department. I think most of us were glad of the smallness and closeness of the Anthropology department. I went with my husband and son to Venezuela after graduation, Dr. Keesing helped me develop a kind of questionnaire I could use to interview the local people in the area in eastern Venezuela’s "Uninhabitable llanos" according to the Encyclopedia Britannica of the time, but women weren’t allowed out of our Ool camp without a male escort, so I established a library there in that camp, which was there a long time, instead. I did read all of Margaret Mead’s books, and met her and introduced her at a Planned Parenthood meeting once, and did talk to her about some of her books. That was interesting! Now there are a lot of Anthropology Majors, and I am glad.

60’s

• 17th Annual DTES Heart of the City Festival;
• 6th Annual Symposium on Reconciliation & Redress in the Arts,
• In the Beginning: A Cultural Sharing-Indigenous history.
Impossible to provide a meaningful summary of recent accomplishments in 200 characters or less; very frustrating, makes you wonder why bother; disappointing

Frances Ann Hitchcock, 1968. BA ANTHRO and Art History. Senior Advisor, National Park Service Oversee NPS servicewide initiatives addressing new issues and requirements for scientific collections and lead the NPS benefits sharing and technology transfer programs (see https://www.nps.gov/nature/benefits-sharing.htm

Anya Peterson Royce, 1968. Undergrad. Chancellor’s Professor of Anthropology and Comparative Literature Tracy M. Sonneborn Award, distinguished research and teaching,

Medal of the Zapotec People, distinguished scholarly contributions to the Isthmus Zapotec.

Becoming an Ancestor, book My first field work in Mexico was when I was a junior and was funded by the Ford Foundation through Stanford. Thank you!


Sara Nerlove, 1969. PhD. Retired after 35+ years at NSF. Last position: Program Director of Partnerships for Innovation Paper published with Lee Munroe--will have to look it up to get the accurate citation I have been involved in a fascinating project will when brought to fruition should provide a novel link --containing a film, original tools for Trephination, and the donation of over 2500 lbs of books, journals and data --between my dissertation field sit


Stephen F. Jones, 1970. Undergrad. Retired from 40 years in microwave radio communications. Recently read Robert Ardrey's "The Territorial Imperative" and was struck by how it helps explain our current social divisions!


Kenneth Tanaka, 1970. PhD. Emeritus Professor, Musashino Univ., Tokyo Publication of Jewels: An Introduction to American Buddhism for Youth, Scouts and the Young at Heart. This can be downloaded free of charge at "BDK America". I am actively involved with the postponed 50th reunion of the class of 1970.


Janice Larkin, 1972. Undergrad. Clinical psychologist An accomplishment: Getting through the past year - thanks as much to luck and circumstance as to any actions of my own! I am fortunate to continue enjoying my life, both as a private citizen and a doc of psychology. I still supervise some training seminars for doctoral psychology students at the University of Denver. Working with these groups of bright young professionals

Roger Woodbury, 1972. Undergrad. My major in Anthropology at Stanford has really affected my world view about different cultures, as I have lived in a few. In the summer of 1965, I joined a crew sponsored by Harvard University for a 3-month dig slowly slowly excavating an early man site with trowels under the supervision of Prof Henry Irwin of the Peabody Museum; we were uncovering nicely worked points and scrapers. This was on the Frederick Ranch, the Hell Gap Site, near Guernsey, Wyoming. I also lived in the culture of an archeology dig; it was sex, pot, and booze at nite. We slept in old Army surplus tents, on surplus cots. This was a real cultural anthropology experience. My next cultural experience was being an Air Force Lieutenant in a Caribou Squadron at Phu Cat, II Corps, South
Vietnam. That was a different cultural experience. Came home in disgust, joined the Anti War Movement, and the Air Force granted me an early out. Married Marsha Cook, Class of '68, whom I had met at Stanford in Italy, another cultural experience. Tired of the USA, Marsha and I emigrated to New Zealand; they speak their version of English, but what a cultural difference that has been. We ranched sheep and cattle for 20 years, have two sons, Luke and Matt, who are dual US/NZ citizens. Matt attended Stanford., as we had returned to live in Illinois. We now still own a 60 acre vineyard in Marlborough, NZ. We grow chardonnay and sauvignon blanc grapes for Oyster Bay Winery. Our family travels back and forth between both countries. Throughout my life, I owe a lot to the Stanford Anthropology Dept for opening up my eyes about trying to understand the many different cultures on this planet.

Stephen Dougherty, 1973. Undergrad. Retired and doing some fiction writing. Published a novel entitled "Taboom." Obviously on Amazon. Editing a 2nd book. Title will be "Scamland." Might be some Anthro hints in these books. How are the Anthro Dept and SU Anthro folks dealing with Wokeness, Antifa, Riots, Climate Issues, pandemic and related things since 50 years have gone by for is old-timers?


I've been experiencing the same centripetal force as everyone during the pandemic and have been trained by local crows and ducks to feed them when called.

Nicol (Nick) Mackenzie, 1973. Undergrad. Self employed Physician, retired from practice of anesthesia and president of a software company I founded, Monterey Medical Solutions. Husband and father of a physicist, nurse and physician. Inspired and mentored by Professor George Collier, I continued my education at Stanford with a Biology MS, MD, Internship and Residency in Anesthesiology. As a Resident, I wrote a program to assist physicians order and compound the complex intravenous so

Stevan Harrell, 1974. PhD. Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Environmental and Forest Sciences, Curator Emeritus of Asian Ethnology at the Burke Museum, University of Washington. I retired from the University of Washington in 2017 after teaching there 43 years. I spent my career as an ethnographer first in Taiwan and then in Sichuan. I also chaired 50 Ph.D. committees at the UW. I'm now finishing a
book manuscript tentatively titled «Development and its Discontents: An Ecological History of Modern China». I hope


In the education development and funding positions I have held, I have tried to promote more qualitative, anthropological approaches to research and evaluation -- starting from my first job, post-PhD, at the International Development Research Centre in Can


Anne R Peterson, 1975. Undergrad. retired

Edie Wade, 1976. Undergrad. Very happily retired Retired in 2018 from a Public Policy Analyst position at the University of California, San Francisco. San Francisco City Chorus President since 2018. Still fondly remember teaching an "Anthropology 101" course at the Edmunds Community College campus in Japan in the '90s and thereby being able to share my love of anthropology with Japanese post-high school students and housewives.


Philip L Ritter, 1978. PhD. Research, Stanford Medical School Published two co-authored papers last year on a caregiver self-efficacy measure and on effects of COVID on caregivers. Officially retired after 37 years at Stanford, the last two decades with the medical school. Continuing as a casual employee doing part-time research on chronic disease and caregiver self-management.


Janice LeCocq, 1980. PhD. Retired
Successful career in life sciences .... and now retired. Learning to use my right brain.

Beth Stern, 1980. Undergrad. Outreach Representative, Senator Bernie Sanders
After 30 years in elder services, started working for Bernie Sanders, covering health care, seniors, disability and economic justice issues.

Stacie Walton MD MPH, 1980. Undergrad. CEO: The Diversity Doctor

Professor, Department of Anthropology Curator, Peabody Museum of Natural History Co-Coordinator, Combined YSE/Anthropology Doctoral Program Yale University Press just published my latest book, "Bitter Shade: The Ecological Challenge of Human Consciousness" (2021); my current work focuses on natural history.

Helen F. Siu, 1981. PhD. Professor of Anthropology, Yale University I am the executive producer of an 83 minute documentary film on Hong Kong (Denise Ho: Becoming the Song), premiered July 1, 2020 by Kino Lorber, North American distributor. A brief bio: Helen F. Siu is a Professor of Anthropology and former chair of the Council on East Asian Studies. She has conducted decades of fieldwork in Southern China, exploring agrarian change and the nature of the socialist state. Lately, she explore


Anthropology has led me into the realm of global trade in education reforms.

Marcus Alexis, 1983. Undergrad. Vice President, State Street Global Advisors
Current fellow at the CEO Action for Racial Equity; Chair - SASB Working Group on Diversity Data Disclosure. I would be very interested in knowing whether there are any professors or graduate students who are doing research in the field of ethnic and racial identity. Specifically, I’m trying to create a taxonomy that defines diversity within the context of regi

80’s
Monica Brickwedel, 1983. Undergrad. Teacher Not yet retired, but celebrating 36 years of teaching at Granada High School in its Social Science department. Favorite subject: Geography


Jim Henly, 1984. Undergrad. Retired I retired 2 years ago from a career in public lawyering for City and State of NY and the MTA. My work included heading the Lit Bureau of State AG, and later serving as GC for MTA and NYCTA.

Tamar Schwartz, 1984. Undergrad. Co Owner, IPBooks IPBooks has published over 190 books including psychoanalytic texts, novels, poetry, literary criticism and memoirs. Last year we also published a series of holocaust memoirs of living survivors.

If you are interested, please check out IPBooks.net


#rhizomes1848 The pandemic demonstrated the value of cultural anthropology who could have guessed that messaging about the virus, strategies of mitigation, and the vaccination require culturally informed responses.

Steven Mandeville-Gamble, 1987. Undergrad. University Librarian, University of California, Riverside Transformed UCR Library into a forward-thinking, proactive partner in the academic success of faculty and students at UCR.

Jason Williams, 1987. Undergrad. Director of Information Security, University of California, Office of the President
Troy Anderson, 1990. Graduate. Chief Product and Information Officer Continue to try to revive the Miluk language, the indigenous language of the Southwestern Oregon coast.

Namino Glantz, 1991. Undergrad. Associate Director, Mil Familias Programs at Sansum Diabetes Research Institute Applying Stanford anthro BA and U AZ medical anthro PhD to health equity. See www.healthandculture.org for publications like, “Diabetes, like COVID-19, is a wicked problem” (Lancet Diabetes Endocrin) Re question above, degree earned at Stanford is Undergrad; highest degree earned is PhD.

Hugh Gusterson, 1991. PhD. Professor, University of British Columbia I published the edited volumes The Militarization Reader (Duke) and Life by Algorithms (Chicago). I moved to the University of British Columbia


Joanna Davidson, 1992. Undergrad. Associate Professor, Anthropology, Boston University; Associate Director, Kilachand Honors College, Boston University

Dee Ann Espinoza, 1993. Undergrad. CEO, Espionza Consulting Services My company, Espinoza Consulting Services (www.espinoza-consulting.com), has entered its 11th year in business. We have 30 employees in 8 states and growing.


Mark E Reed, 1993. Undergrad. Manager Completed the construction of over 800 units of affordable housing in low income communities across New York City.
MunWei Chan, 1994. Undergrad. Founder & Principal Consultant, SustainableSG After working more than 20 years, I set up my own consulting and training business (https://sustainablesg.net/) specializing in sustainability, strategy and risk in September 2018. Am based in Singapore. Contact me if you’d like to find out more about living and working here.

Scott Ortman, 1994. Undergrad. Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Colorado Boulder During AY 2020-21 I was a Resident Scholar at the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, and I was named director of the new Center for Collaborative Synthesis in Archaeology at CU. I’ve enjoyed crossing paths with fellow archaeology alums Sandi Copeland and Dee Espinoza in the past year.

Amy Stevens, 1994. Undergrad. Systems Engineer Helping implement sections of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). My daughter will be graduating from Stanford in 2021 with a BS in Mechanical Engineering

Laura deNey, 1995. Undergrad. Film & TV Producer / Owner, Flicker Filmworks Our film company Flicker Filmworks' creates docs focussed on positive cultural and environmental change. Currently we are producing the TV show Going From Broke, executive produced by Ashton Kutcher. I’d love to connect with any anthropology majors interested in cultural films and nature consciousness. I hope all the anthro alumni out there are doing well!


Genevieve Bell, 1998. PhD. Distinguished Professor, Director School of Cybernetics, Australian National University; Senior Fellow & VP, Intel Corporation Appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 2020 Australia Day Honours for distinguished service to education, particularly to the social sciences and cultural anthropology. As of January, i am also the inaugural director of the School of Cybernetics here at the Australian National University ... https://www.griffithreview.com/articles/touching-the-future/ .... happily reconnecting to the anthropological roots in Cybernetics!

P. Zitlali Morales, 1998. Undergrad. Associate Professor, University of Illinois Chicago I was recently awarded a grant from the Spencer Foundation for a research study: https://today.uic.edu/spencer-grant-award-ed-to-uic-researcher-to-rethink-teacher-preparation-for-ra
One of the other co-investigators is an assistant professor at Stanford, Dr. Ramón Antonio Martínez. Marco De Masi, 1999. PhD. Director Presidente Doing CRM archaeology in Bahia and Santa Catarina states in Brazil.

Anu Menon, 1999. Undergrad. Executive director, Oasis for girls Leading my organization through a pivot from in person to virtual programming and just getting through 2020!


Asha Mehta, 2000. Undergrad. CEO, Global Delta Capital I am launching Global Delta Capital, the first quantitative investment solution to the SDGs. I look forward to (re-)connecting!


Robin Balliger, 2001. PhD. Associate Professor and Chair of Art, Place, and Public Studies, San Francisco Art Institute Current project on urban restructuring in Oakland, invited to Max Planck Institute in Germany, published two articles, one in Art and Gentrification in a Changing Neoliberal Landscape (2021).

Portia Jackson Preston, 2002. Undergrad. Assistant Professor, CSU Fullerton, Dept of Public Health I gave a TEDx talk at UC Irvine on lessons I learned about resilience while gardening! I also developed an intervention on mindfulness and self-care to promote mental health during the pandemic I feel like I continue to use my degree every day! In many ways, I still have the same
passions I did when I was a 19 year old former pre-med thumbing through the catalog for a major that "fit" me, only to stumble across the CASA major and into a medical

Dr. Holly M. Mortensen, 2002. Graduate. Computational Biologist, US Environmental Protection Agency Dr. Mortensen has developed the EPA Adverse Outcome Pathway Database (AOP-DB). This work has been accepted for publication in Nature Scientific Data Go Cardinal!

Jen Roth-Gordon, 2002. PhD. Associate Professor, School of Anthropology, University of Arizona I’m now teaching graduate, undergraduate, and "community" classes (open to the general public, one starting online in September) on "Whiteness and Racial Violence in America."


team of user and market researchers at a leading medical technology firm

Jonathan Snowden, 2005. Undergrad. Associate Professor, OHSU-PSU SPH Leading a collaborative COVID-19 epidemiology grant as PI, between my institution and our state health dept, OR Health Authority. Made associate professor of epidemiology. Still using my anthro skills Just a note to say that i’ve always been grateful for my Stanford anthro training, and this year it has become especially critical. I am an epidemiologist and am active in medicine & public health, where there is both (1) broad recognition of the need to


Laura Bloomfield, 2007. Undergrad. Postdoctoral Scholar, University of Vermont Completed my MD/PhD. My research on emerging infectious diseases was highlighted on BBC World News, NYTimes, and news outlets all over the world.

Jennifer M. Chertow, 2007. PhD. Medical student at the University of Illinois at Chicago M.D. student at U of Illinois, Chicago (present). Urban med intervention with Somali community in Chicago (2011-2012). Patient centered medicine outreach to immigrants and refugees in Chicago (2013). Due to personal experience with an invisible disability of mental health, which I had while at Stanford but which I never disclosed
due to stigma, I have begun to explore ways of researching mental health through the arts, namely painting.

Jerry Zee, 2007. Graduate. Assistant Professor, Princeton University Started (remotely) at Princeton as assistant professor in Anthropology and Environmental Humanities.

Lauren King, 2008. Undergrad. Pediatrician

Carolyn Mansfield duPont, 2008. Undergrad. Head of Growth & Partnerships, Upstream Tech I'm working on a platform that helps conservation organizations easily monitor land and environmental projects using remote sensing data. Beyond work, staying busy with two kids under four!

Bradley Heinz, 2009. Undergrad. Medical Student - UCSF-UCBerkeley Joint Medical Program Recently finished a Master's in the philosophy of Mind at Berkeley, now 3 of 5 years done towards getting my MD in this joint program

Mitali Thakor, 2009. Undergrad. Wesleyan University - Asst. Professor of Science in Society; Anthropology; Feminist, Gender, & Sexuality Studies My book manuscript is under contract with MIT Press and I just completed my 3rd year as faculty at Wesleyan. I am also expecting a baby this summer!

10’s

Tiffany C. Fryer, 2011. Graduate. Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow, Princeton Society of Fellows; Lecturer, Anthropology & the Humanities Council, Princeton University She’s recently published a co-edited collection titled “Engendering Heritage: Contemporary Feminist Approaches to Archaeological Heritage Practice” with AP3A. She continues to co-facilitate a historical archaeology and heritage initiative in southeastern Mexico. And, in Fall 2022, following the completion of her fellowship next year, she will begin a position as Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Assistant

Pedro Gonzalez, 2011. Undergrad. Director of Diverse Communities, Stanford Law School Office of External Relations Pedro, his wife Kalena (USC alum he met at Dr. Rick’s Chavin de Huantar project), and his husky Koda moved from the Bay Area to Fort Collins a little over two years ago and have loved it ever since. Pedro continues to work for Stanford remotely and transitioned in January from working for the Stanford Alumni Association as the Sr. Manager for Diversity & Inclusion to his new role as Director of Diverse Communities, Stanford Law School Office of Extern

Pete Kauhanen, 2011. M.A.. GIS Manager at the San Francisco Estuary Institute
Recently got married to Taryn Taka-hashi, Stanford ’10. I currently lead the GIS focus area at the SFEI, where I use remote sensing, drones, and machine learning to map and protect the environment.

Dr. Rania Sweis, 2011. PhD. Associate Professor of Anthropology My book, Paradoxes of Care: Children and Global Medical Aid, is forthcoming this June 2021 from Stanford University Press. My recent article, "Doctors With Borders: Hierarchies of Humanitarians and the Syrian Civil War," International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 51, No. 4, 2019, was awarded the 2020 SERMEISS Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Middle East Studies.

Andrea Griego, 2012. Graduate. Grants Manager, PUENTE Learning Center

Dolly Kikon, 2013. PhD. Deputy Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne I secured a 3 year grant (2021-2023; amount 600,000 AUD) from the Swedish Social Science Council to study food, climate change, and sustainability in the Himalayas.

Elizabeth Rosen, 2013. Undergrad. Press Secretary & Speechwriter, Freedom House Following two years at NATO, Elizabeth returned to the US to work on the election, after which she moved to DC. She has since adopted two kittens and written a lot of press releases.

Laurel Fish, 2014. Undergrad. Director of Strategic Campaigns, UFCW 1439 I recently supported 300 immigrant food processing workers in Central Washington to form a union and fight for safer working conditions.

Sarah Ives, 2013. PhD. City College of San Francisco I am teaching at City College of San Francisco and continuing my work on gender bias in higher ed and environmental justice, as well as pursuing more public scholarship, including a piece in SAPIENS. I would love to include a link to my SAPIENS piece. Please let me know if that is possible! https://www.sapiens.org/archaeology/pandemic-archaeology/


Amelia Farber, 2015. Undergrad. Director of Partnerships, Conversica In early 2020, my sister and I launched a home bakery to complement our online baking blog, Sisters Sans Gluten. I manage our website, Instagram, and develop recipes and accompanying food photography! Would love to hear news on recent/current research!

Allison Mickel, 2016. PhD. Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Lehigh
University Published a book based on my PhD research, called "Why Those who Shovel are Silent: A History of Archaeological Knowledge and Labor"; earned two fellowships (NEH & ACOR) to continue research in Jordan.


Nicole Fox, 0. Undergrad. Press Attache, US Embassy Bangkok After a year in Thai language training, I moved to Bangkok in 2020 to be the Press Attache/Spokesperson at Mission Thailand, the largest US Embassy in the world.

Bharat Venkat, 0. Undergrad. Assistant Professor, Institute for Society & Genetics and Department of History, UCLA My first book, At the Limits of Cure, is coming out with Duke University Press in September 2021. This work is the winner of the Joseph W. Elder Prize in the Indian Social Sciences.

Peri Unver, 0. Ph.D. Business Development/International Trade Program Coordinator - Global Affairs Canada After graduating with her MA in 2015 Peri worked at nonprofits in Southern California, helping underserved communities, before beginning work in business. Peri’s poetry has also been
Hank Mooney, . .  I am 73 and quite healthy, living in San Francisco with one partner, type: female. Still love music, keep up with linguistics, and still love dogs.

Helen Siu, . .  Siu’s recent film Denise Ho: Becoming the Song

Helen Siu is executive producer of an 83 min documentary film Denise Ho: Becoming the Song, premiered by Kino Lorber on July 1, 2020. Siu raised the funds internationally, researched and worked with NY-based director/produc- er Sue Williams and an award-winning team. It features the artistic career and activism of Cantopop singer Denise Ho to reflect a Hong Kong experience that generations have cherished. This experi- ence has been abruptly changed in the past year by the city’s National Security Law. The film has been shown in interna- tional film festivals in the US, Singapore and Japan, and broadcasted at TV Ontario. It is featured by rogerebert.com and Video Librarian on their list of Best Documentaries of 2020, Beat and chosen as Critics Pick by NYTimes, among mainstream media reviews.

A few videos and articles on the web about the protagonist may be of inter- est:

Performance and talk at Yale MacMillan Center, April 2017

New Yorker article

Performance at Oslo Freedom Forum Concert in NYC October 2019

The film (digital and DVD) is available at Amazon Prime, ITunes, Google Play, Apple TV, and Vudu.
EDITORS
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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND EVENTS, CONTACT US AT:
Tel: 650-723-3421 Fax: 650-725-0605
E-mail: anthropology@stanford.edu
Web: https://anthropology.stanford.edu

Stanford University, Department of Anthropology Main Quad, Building 50
450, Jane Stanford Way, CA 94305
Phone: (650) 723-3421