

S P R I N G 2 0 1 7

The PhD Students of Anthropology Newsletter



College of
Liberal Arts and Sciences



Meet Maya Stovall

While pursuing a PhD in Cultural Anthropology and Performance Studies at WSU, Maya Stovall has come to understand that, “Anthropology is fundamentally a powerful discipline,” she said. Stovall found this in personal experience, both with her work and her history.

Stovall’s history began as a fourth generation Detroiter who grew up in Woodbridge. She graduated from Cass Technical High School and went on to get her bachelors at Howard University. After getting her masters at the University of Chicago, Stovall decided that it would be best if she got her PhD back in her hometown. “I decided that I wanted to focus as an artist ethnographer here in Detroit where I’m from,” she said. “So Wayne State was my first choice.”

Within her first year at WSU, Stovall knew exactly how to combine her passions for ethnography and dancing into her art piece dissertation called *Liquor Store Theatre*.

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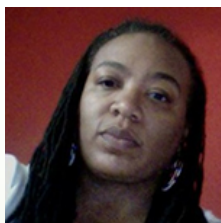
The Annual Society for Applied Anthropology Conference

The Society for Applied Anthropology is a professional association that has been promoting the investigation of the principles of human behavior and the application of these principles to contemporary issues and problems for the past 70 years. Their mission is to showcase anthropologists from the different sub-fields who are making an impact on the quality of life in the world today. Four of our doctoral students were asked to present at the SfAA's annual meeting in Santa Fe this year.



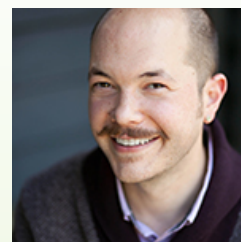
Monica Rodriguez participated on a panel regarding Anthropological Approaches to Disability and her talk was "Performing Language Identity: Deaf Children Negotiating Voice and Sign Language Usage in Guatemala"

Kimberly Shay presented "Meaningful Engagement: Older adults and Volunteering in the Museum Environment" on a panel discussing New Traditions and Practices with Elders.



Angela Guy-Lee participated on a panel regarding Women's Health and her talk was "Making 'Good' Citizens: African American Women's Feminine Hygiene Practices, Moral Personhood, and Foucault."

Michael Thomas presented his paper "Apparitions, Automata, and the Blob: Sketching a Cognitive Bestiary of Engineering" on a panel called Advancing Theory in Culture and Cognition.



Doctoral Students and Their Work

Daniel Harrison

Dan is currently working on his dissertation about the diachronic study of a maritime cultural landscape in the Great Lakes, which transformed from a "wreck trap" to an international seaway and recreational mecca. A highly abbreviated version of dissertation topic won him first place in the "3-Minute Thesis" competition at the Graduate Research Symposium in March. He authored a chapter titled, "Maritime Archaeology as 'Evidence-Based Storytelling'" in the just-released volume *Interpreting Maritime History*, edited by Joel Stone (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017). His article, "Change amid Continuity, Innovation within Tradition: Wampum Diplomacy at the Treaty of Greenville, 1795," appears in the April 2017 issue of the journal *Ethnohistory*.



Kelsey Jorgensen

Kelsey is presenting research based on her master's thesis at the American Association of Physical Anthropologists annual meetings in New Orleans. Her research is testing a method for activity patterns in bioarchaeological populations. Kelsey plans to celebrate completing her first year as a PhD student by traveling to Peru to work on a project that focuses on the agricultural origins of potato domestication in the Andes. She's very excited to collect potato weevil samples from research collaborators at the Centro Internacional de la Papa in Lima for this project and to also hike Machu Picchu for the first time.

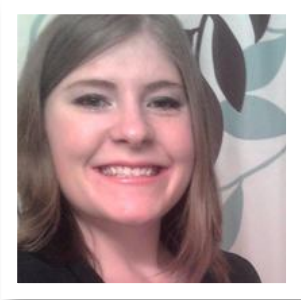
Kathleen M. Hanlon-Lundberg, MD

A short summary of Kathleen's piece, "A Gift Like No Other: Market Aspects of Assisted Reproductive Technologies," states:

"Through assisted reproductive technologies, babies may be assembled from commodity components, produced by workers of differential socioeconomic status, appropriated through the efforts of clinics and health care systems which serve as marketers. The nature of an individual, including its genetic inheritance and the cultural situation in which each human comes to be, renders a person inalienable from the workers and societies of their origin. This study explores the value paradigms used within the biomedical enterprise involved in assisted reproductive technology, which contain various features of gift and commodity exchange through an ethnography of their on-line representation."



Kat Slocum



“Graduate School in Detroit is fascinating. Despite what many people believe, archaeology is prevalent in the city and WSU’s connection to Detroit is compelling,” graduate student Kat Slocum said. Slocum knows this because she is a Detroit archeologist herself. She’s currently working on a research project with the National Parks Service and the Fort Wayne Historical Society to assess the connection between the River Raisin battlefield and Historic Fort Wayne’s role in the war of 1812. Slocum said the aim of the project is, “to increase much needed funding for preservation at Historic Fort Wayne and provide future directions for engagement with the public at the historic site.”

While doing work for her Historic Fort Wayne project, Slocum is also working on her dissertation, which is a comparative analysis of two 19th century Native American mission sites in Northern Michigan. She said, “The purpose of the project is to highlight the often hidden and overlooked narrative of Native Americans during northern expansion following Michigan’s entrance into the Union.” The long term implications of this project will be bringing Native American history to the forefront and providing insight into the active roles Native Americans played in cultural preservation while their culture was simultaneously targeted by the federal government through the practice of forced boarding schools, relocation, and racist policy.

Slocum believes that she could not have done this research anywhere else but at Wayne State. WSU’s location in Detroit’s center and engagement with its rich history facilitated Slocum’s involvement in the Fort Wayne project. Similarly, her dissertation is a direct result of the mentorship and input from mentors and professors here in the department. By focusing and developing new ideas to enhance research of Native Americans in Michigan, Slocum will have no difficulty accomplishing her goals.

Eduardo Piqueiras

“Indiana Jones effect” is what triggers interest in some people to become anthropology students and Eduardo Piqueiras was one of them. Piqueiras found himself going into his first year of undergrad drawn by the allure of foreign locales with a mix of adventure and intellect, and the excitement of exploring the unknown. He soon discovered that anthropology wasn’t finding supernatural artifacts and deathtrap boulders chasing you in the field (at least usually). Piqueiras found himself falling in love with all of anthropology’s subfields and how varied they are. “The benefit of a four field undergraduate program is just that... you get to explore them all. So I really do believe that anthropology has something for everyone,” Piqueiras said.

When Piqueiras was finishing his masters in New Orleans and realized that doctoral training in medical anthropology was his next step, it was the professors and researchers here at Wayne State that really made this one of his top choices. “I was looking for an applied program especially one that had strong urban research ties,” Piqueiras said. “I had read a few things by some of the medical anthropologists here specifically Dr. Andrea Sankar, Dr. Mark Luborsky and Dr. Todd Meyers, so the chance to be able to work with any or all of them was a huge driving force in my wanting to come here.”

The fact that Detroit is undergoing so many changes also added a bit of spice to the mix, and at the time, Piqueiras thought Detroit might present a similar environment as New Orleans does because of how much they have in common.

As a doctorate student, Piqueiras is focusing his studies in Medical Anthropology because it's an interest that has never dulled for him, "What I loved about medical anthropology was that it's so applied and is about making a difference in people's lives, not just about doing research for research's sake." Applying his love for studying diseases and his anthropological skills to the real world, Piqueiras is currently doing his dissertation on examining the social, ethical and political-economic stakes generated by the control and surveillance of frequent recurrent outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease within the autonomous community of Catalonia, Spain- specifically in the area around Barcelona.

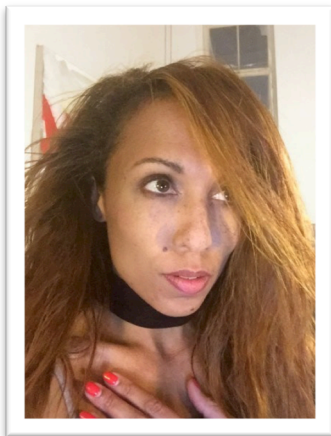
Legionellosis is a respiratory disease caused by *Legionella* bacteria that can cause fatal outcomes for those infected. There has been an upward trend globally of cases and large clusters with little research on its social determinants. Piqueiras is approaching this through the investigation of the deontology of various outbreak sites, realized between the network of health professionals and the afflicted, which are connected through a larger network of various epidemiological investigatory units. "I hope that this work can help to contribute to ongoing discussions about how governmental and state policies impact our health and perhaps call additional attention to Legionnaires' disease," Piqueiras said.



Edward Piqueiras' work will help to define a future for governmental policies on diseases and bring better exposure to Legionnaires' disease and its fatality.

Maya Stovall Continued

Liquor Store Theatre is a series of dance performances and conversations that happens on the eastside of Detroit in the McDougal Hunt area where Stovall lives. "I travel between the eight liquor stores in the neighborhood and stage dance performances," she said. These performances were video recorded and edited with a soundtrack that her husband, Todd Stovall, composed.



Stovall believes that, "Those dance performances formed the impetus for ethnographic encounters with citizens." Her goal with *Liquor Store Theatre* is to get at big questions concerning the status of cities, the status of capital flows, the status of urban process, but through a very up-close and personal project that meditates on affect and desire on sidewalks and streets. "I'm really interested in human experiences and peoples' wholeness as humans that are always there, regardless of these macro forces," Stovall said.

But she wouldn't have gotten here if it weren't for the support of others. Stovall believes that when her adviser, Andy Newman, said yes to her dissertation idea, it typified her experience at WSU. Newman could've easily said no to Stovall. She had only been at WSU for a semester when she came to him with her out of the box idea for a dissertation, but Newman believed in her.

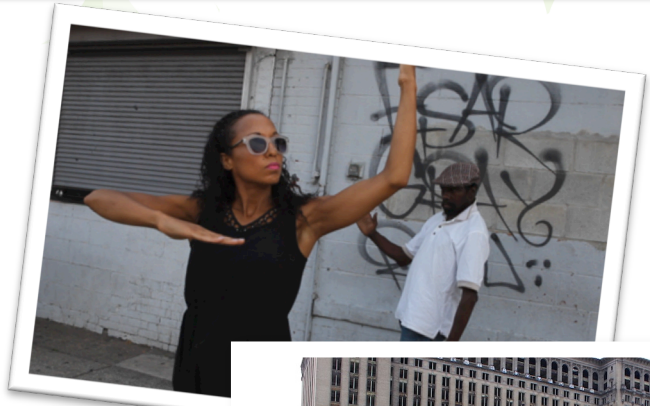
"It was a new idea and he was willing to go with it," Stovall said. "It's someone like Andy being open to an idea that's so weird, so off –the-wall, that you get a wonderful example of how knowledge, scholarship, and powerful research can happen if people are open to it."

Liquor Store Theatre is being featured in the 2017 Whitney Biannual in New York, which is considered the preeminent survey of contemporary art in the United States; all because Newman said yes to her idea.

"[*Liquor Store Theatre*] is a very classical anthropological endeavor of the ethnography of a neighborhood concerning urban ethnography and scholarship of cities," Stovall said. It consolidated her research focuses of performance, dance, cities, blackness, and urban ethnography into an art piece that visually and beautifully expresses Detroit at its core. Maya's work represents what kind of student Wayne State is capable of producing, but also represents more generally the type of people that come out of the Detroit.

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