

Department of Anthropology  
Case Western Reserve University

Departmental Newsletter

Spring 2000

**New Ph.D. Graduates**

Congratulations to:

**Micah Parzen** recently defended his dissertation entitled “Culturally Appropriate’ Mental Health Care: Wilderness Therapy and Navajo Youth.” Documenting wilderness therapy as an emergent mental health care treatment alternative among Navajo and other Native American adolescents, Micah presented his research findings as a case study in the discourse of “culturally appropriate” mental health care. His work encourages scholars to take a more critical approach to this discursive category, both with respect to how we define it and how we go about evaluating it. Micah is currently enrolled as a law student at UC Davis School of Law where he is focusing on mental health law. Over the summer he will be working for the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law—the nation’s leading advocacy organization in the field—in Washington, DC. He plans to continue to weave together his background in psychological and medical anthropology with his training as a legal advocate in new and interesting ways. Stay tuned!

**Sherylyn Briller** completed her dissertation entitled “Whom Can I Count On Today?: Contextualizing the Balance of Family and Government Old Age Support for Rural Pensioners in Mongolia.” She was a Medical Anthropology Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI this past academic year and has now been appointed as an Assistant Professor in this department.

**Nyamdorj Yandag** recently completed his dissertation entitled “Basal Metabolic Rate of Mongolian Pastoral Nomads (BMR)”. He is returning to his home country at the beginning of June 2000 to resume his previous position as a research scientist in the Anthropology Sector, Institute of Biology, Academy of Sciences, Mongolia. Because he will be a first western-trained physical anthropologist in Mongolia, he plans to teach graduate courses to Mongolian students at the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, National University, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and introduce his knowledge and expertise gained here at Case to colleagues and students in Mongolia.

**Writing Dissertations**

After a year away from the department, **Chris Dole** has recently returned from his fieldwork in Turkey. His dissertation research project explored the practice and utilization of religious healing in two religiously distinct migrant, or squatter, communities in Ankara, Turkey. Despite innumerable obstacles, he reports that his research was ultimately successful and that he has a remarkable amount of data that he hopes to share with the department soon. Chris’ research was made possible through a Dissertation Research Grant from the National Institute of Mental Health and two Predoctoral Research Fellowships from the American Research Institute in Turkey. He has also been recently awarded a Mellon Fellowship for dissertation write-up.



**Jessica Price** is just completing a job as Kenya Country Director for the HIV/AIDS Department for Family Health International in Nairobi. She is responsible for three main donor funded (USAID and DFID) programs in Kenya for FHI: (1) a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and care program, (2) a program to improve the national blood transfusion services in Kenya, and (3) a project to strengthen STD case management in primary health clinics. She will be returning to the U.S. in May to write her dissertation.

**Sarah Chard** is currently working as a project director at the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) on a five-year project designed to develop orientation, governance, and public health materials (manuals, videotapes, and CD-ROMs) for use by local boards of health across the country.

Both **Jessica** and **Sarah** expect to complete their dissertations within the next year.

### **Graduate Student Directory**

Please be sure to give the office staff your address and phone number so that we can complete the Graduate Student Directory for 2000-2001.

## **FACULTY NEWS**

Welcome aboard!

**Rachel Chapman, Ph.D.** has been appointed as an Assistant Professor in our department effective August, 2000. She has been teaching as Visiting Assistant Professor during 1999-2000. She received her Ph.D. in June 1998 from University of California for dissertation entitled: "Pregnancy and the Politics of Protection: An Ethnography of Reproductive Health and Medical Pluralism in Central Mozambique." She also received a M.A. in African Studies

from Yale in 1988 and a B.A. in Afro-American Studies from Yale in 1986.

### **Congratulations!**

**Professor Lawrence Greska** for being nominated for the 2000 Carl F. Wittke Award!

**Professor Jill Korbin** presented her research on neighborhoods and child maltreatment to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in London last December. She will also present this research at a conference at the National Institutes of Health this June.

Beginning in July, **Professor Jill Korbin** will be the Co-Director of CWRU's Schubert Center on Child Development. Information about the Schubert Center can be found on the web at: <http://www.cwru.edu/artsci/schubert/>

**Professor Jill Korbin** is heading the new interdisciplinary minor in Childhood Studies. Information on this minor can be found on the web at <http://www.cwru.edu/artsci/childstudies/>.

**Professors Lawrence Greska and Jill Korbin** have been involved in a project through the Ohio Department of Mental Health to improve mental health services to the Amish populations of four counties in Northeast Ohio (Geauga, Trumbull, Portage and Ashtabula). These counties have the fourth largest Amish population in the world. **Professors Greksa and Korbin** have worked closely with a consortium of representatives from mental health agencies and county boards of mental health and with the Amish community in these four counties to enhance the delivery of culturally competent mental health services.



## **New Grant**

**Professor Melvyn Goldstein** has received a three-year grant from NEH for “A Political and Social History of the Cultural Revolution in Tibet”.

### **Urban Health Initiative to focus on racial and ethnic disparities in health:**

In response to the growing realization that a major goal for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the elimination of pervasive racial and ethnic disparities in health and health care worldwide and particularly in the poor sectors of urban America, the department is establishing an innovative research, training and intervention program in Urban Health that will pioneer in identifying and addressing the underlying causes of disparities in health and health care among racial and ethnic minorities in the urban America, and will work with providers in Cleveland to hone and develop new approaches and programs. To achieve this goal, new approaches and initiatives are necessary, and we are convinced that medical anthropologists’ extensive experience in international community-based health research in diverse ethnic and racial settings provides a powerful theoretical and methodological framework to do so. **Professors Chapman and McGrath** are leading the initiative.

**Professor Chapman** plans to undertake pilot research in Cleveland this summer, with the goal of applying her experiences in previous research in Los Angeles and Mozambique to the study of maternal and child mortality in Cleveland.

## **Professor Charlotte Ikels will be back in Fall 2000 from Sabbatical.**

Having spent the second half of 1998 doing fieldwork in China, I have been using my Sabbatical to organize, analyze, and write up my data. I find myself working on four papers simultaneously, three of which have already been presented in draft form at conferences around the country. My first presentation on the impact of housing reform on Chinese urban households was given in October at the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard. The second on “Constructing and Deconstructing the Self: Dementia in China” was delivered at a conference on the social construction of dementia at the Ruby Gerontology Center at the University of California-Fullerton in late February. The third “When Is Enough Enough?” was delivered as part of the panel, “The Practice of Filial Piety in Contemporary China,” which I organized for the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in San Diego in early April. This panel was so well-received (quite to my surprise) that I was inspired to go beyond the panel and edit a broader volume on the “The Practice of Filial Piety in Contemporary East Asia” which will include papers on Japan and Korea in addition to China. Besides these three fieldwork-based papers, I have been collaborating with my colleague, Cynthia Beall, in writing the chapter on “Age, Aging, and Anthropology” for the fifth edition of *The Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*.



## ALUMNI NEWS

**James Ross** has been appointed as Country Director of Family Health International in Nepal.

**Charles B. Rwabukwali** (Ph.D. in 1997) is Associate Professor of Sociology at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda and Associate Dean of Social Sciences.

**Delia Easton** (Ph.D. 1998) is working as a Behavioral Scientist at the CDC in their National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention. In her current position, she is working to identify structural factors at both the macro- and micro-level (e.g., levels of poverty, experiences of racism, discrimination, housing availability, language preferences, employment, access to health care, etc.) that act as facilitators or barriers to the transmission of HIV with the goal of developing interventions to decrease HIV transmission rates.

**Delia** joins **Fred Bloom** (Ph.D. 1995) who works in the syphilis elimination program at the CDC.

**Kinuko Omori**, RN, CNM, MSW, Ph.D., a 1994 graduate of our program in Medical Anthropology is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Health Sciences, School of Medicine, Kanazawa University. Prior to accepting this position she worked for several years on an HIV/AIDS project in Thailand. She has also conducted HIV/AIDS research in Myanmar, where she is currently a consultant to the Institute of Nursing. Since receiving her Ph.D. she has also studied maternal and child health in slum communities in Dhaka, Bangladesh and the community care system for providing support for the elderly in Japan. She can be contacted at: Department of Health Sciences, School of Medicine, Kanazawa University, 5-11-80 Kodatsuno, Kanazawa 920-0942, Japan; e-mail: omori@mhs.mp.kanazawa-u.ac.jp.

## UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

### Upcoming Research

**Sonia Varghese** has been awarded a Pancoast Fellowship to go abroad to India.

Two Undergraduate Mann Fellows in Medical Anthropology **Heidi Bolander** and **Alice Minn** will be going to America Samoa this summer to work with the American Samoa Department of Health on a project concerning children's health.

**Heather Linstrom-Ufuti** (ABD) will be providing assistance to the students during the summer.

### New Executive Board Member

**Valerie Kosheleff** is the new executive board member of the Undergraduate Anthropology Society.

## STAFF NEWS

Our department has two new people working in our administrative office.

**Kathleen J. Dowdell** is our Department Assistant and **Barbara J. Reebel** is our Secretary. If there is anything that you need or if you have any questions, they are here to assist you. Here are their e-mail addresses:

**Kathleen J. Dowdell** – [kjd4@po.cwru.edu](mailto:kjd4@po.cwru.edu)  
**Barbara J. Reebel** – [bjd12@po.cwru.edu](mailto:bjd12@po.cwru.edu)

**We hope that everyone will have a great summer break!**