

ANTHROPOLOGY NEWSLETTER



Faculty and Graduating Class Photo

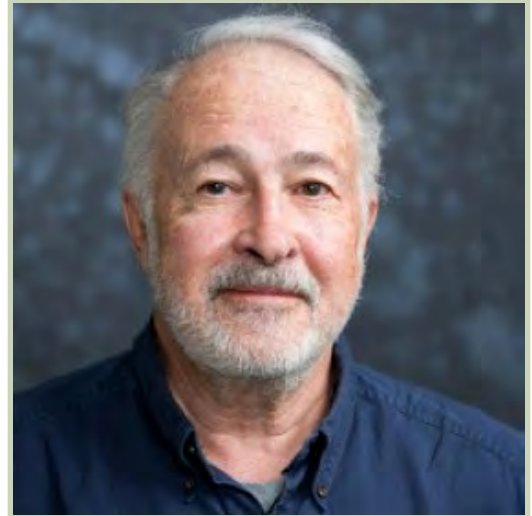
Pictured L-R. Front: Sakura Ishizaki, Prof. Tess Kulstad, Victoria Harrison, Zoe Robinson, Lila Podgainy, Emma Nelson, Emily Anderson, Prof. Jane Holmstrom, Prof. Laura Ng. Second row: Julia Tlapa, Prof. Maria Tapias, Spencer Clark, Alex Sun, Rachel Woock, Lexi Mueldener, Mallory Graham, Maddie Healy, Prof. Josh Marshack. Back row: Prof. Jon Andelson, Prof. Monty Roper, Prof. Owen Kohl.

Not pictured. Faculty: Vicki Bentley-Condit, Brigittine French, Katya Gibel Mevorach, Cynthia Hansen, Kathryn Kamp, John Whittaker. Students: Jay Kratz, Riana Mulligan.

In Memoriam: Professor D. Douglas “Doug” Caulkins, 1940-2023

(Adapted from Professor Jon Andelson’s remarks delivered at the Memorial Gathering in Remembrance of Doug Caulkins, March 12, 2003, Joe Rosenfield Center 101, Grinnell College)

Doug was born in Rapid City, South Dakota, in 1940. After high school he attended Carleton College, from which in 1962 he earned a Bachelor’s degree with honors and distinction in Anthropology and Sociology. The topic of his honors thesis was “Persistence and Change in Chippewa Culture.” Doug then entered the PhD program in anthropology at Cornell University with support from a First Year Fellows grant from the National Science Foundation and later a Pre-doctoral Grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. Doug’s dissertation research was on community and organization networks in Western Norway.



Doug entered the job market before completing his dissertation, a not uncommon decision in those years (I did so myself a few years later), and in the spring of 1970 applied for an open position in Grinnell’s three-year old Department of Anthropology. It was a turbulent time. The United States was being roiled by the war in Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women’s Liberation Movement, the American Indian Movement, the Environmental Movement, and more. It happens that I was a senior anthropology major at Grinnell that year, and in the midst of all the turmoil, and of writing my own senior thesis, and of applying to graduate school, I was asked by the two faculty members in the department (Ralph Luebben and Ron Kurtz) to interview the job applicant.

I wish I could say I had the prescience to know just how outstanding a professor Doug would become, how innovative he would be as a teacher and scholar, how many students’ lives he would touch, and touch deeply, and how much he would contribute to the college and the community in other ways. But I did not know any of that then. I did know that he was engaging and considerate in speaking with students, and I liked his manner. He just seemed to me to be a very cool guy, and that’s what I told the professors. They agreed. For I’m sure additional reasons they recommended Doug, the college made an offer, Doug accepted, and in the fall of that year he began his 40-year career at Grinnell.

Today, I – and so many others – know all these things and more about Doug, and finding words to describe his numerous contributions comes easily for me. One of those words is

“innovative.” Doug’s innovativeness at Grinnell began almost the moment he hit the ground. I mentioned that I was applying to graduate school in the spring of 1970. I ended up going to the University of Michigan. One of my earliest recollections of my first year at Michigan was attending a departmental party at which one of the department’s most eminent scholars quipped, “anthropologists need to know how to do two things – teach and do research – and at Michigan we don’t train our students for either.”

Meanwhile, back at Grinnell, Doug was developing the anthropology department’s first course in “Ethnographic Research Methods” – to teach anthropology students HOW to do research – years before Michigan’s much-vaunted department did anything like it. Doug’s innovativeness on that point was prelude to a long sequence of innovations he brought to the Anthropology Department, including a roster of new courses in everything from hunters-and-gatherers to urban anthropology. He would see a need, or rising student interest in a topic, and move to fill it. (Another word that applies to Doug is “polymath.” His interests were wide-ranging, as those two courses alone would suggest.) I am quite sure that Doug holds a record in the department for the largest number of different courses taught, and equally sure it will never be broken.

Doug’s innovativeness went beyond contributions to the Anthropology Department. He helped to develop the Grinnell-in-London program, on which he taught five times (another record) and which is still going. He helped develop Grinnell-in-Washington (just recently discontinued), and Mentored Advanced Projects for student research (especially during the summer). He was constantly reinventing himself, or at least part of himself, as he served the college as associate dean, as acting director of Off-Campus Study, as co-chair of the Gender and Women’s Studies concentration committee, and most recently as the director of the Wilson Program in Enterprise and Leadership, although never losing the perspective of, and identity as, an anthropologist.

I said that upon arriving at Grinnell Doug hit the ground running. He was running so hard and so well, in fact, that it was a while before he completed his PhD dissertation. The death of his dissertation committee chair delayed things even more. At last, in 1982, Doug completed all the requirements for the degree, on his Norway material, and became Dr. (of Philosophy!) Caulkins. He subsequently did research in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and in the U.S. on organizational culture, entrepreneurship, consensus analysis, ethnic identity, and other topics that really are too numerous to mention. He published scores of articles and gave hundreds of presentations at professional conferences, and in 2013 he co-authored a book, *Companion to Organizational Anthropology*.

Another word that applies to Doug is “generous,” and while others will no doubt speak to this I want to comment generally about his generosity to students and colleagues. His efforts on behalf of students are legendary in the department -- the students he taught in classes and mentored individually, in guided reading projects, independent projects, summer MAPs, and senior theses. Many of these projects resulted in publications that Doug co-authored with his students, helping them build their resumes. The same is true of his colleagues. Many of us became involved with Doug in projects that led to jointly authored papers or published articles. I don't know in how many of these Doug ended up doing the majority of the work, but I recall with embarrassment the article he and I co-authored, which was 80% Doug and 20% me. He was too kind to breathe so much as a word about the disparity in contribution.



Doug also cared deeply about the natural environment. About 25 years ago he and Lorna purchased a 240-acre farm in Mahaska County and worked diligently to restore it to ecological health. They also showed the way to others, spearheading a group of ten Grinnell families to do the same with a much larger farm in Mahaska County, which we've been improving for two decades and have recently deeded to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. Doug and Lorna have been real nurturers of nature, partisans of the prairie, and heroes of the heartland.

Doug and Lorna's long life together was so full of highlights that I wasn't sure which to remark on. So I asked Lorna to share with me a few memorable times. She mentioned a trip they took through Europe while Doug was directing the off-campus study office at the college: France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands all came in for praise.

But it was Great Britain that always called them back and which they loved best . . . the times living in London while Doug was directing the Grinnell-in-London program, the Phase 2 part of the program one year in Wales and the Welsh border, the research on entrepreneurship in Scotland, and the time several summers ago when Doug led a small group of Grinnell students to Derry, Northern Ireland, to study the lingering effects of Northern Ireland's "Troubles" in that city.

Given their love of Britain, I suspected that Doug and Lorna enjoyed some of the legendary BBC television productions, and I was right. Lorna mentioned as favorites “All Creatures Great and Small,” “Upstairs, Downstairs,” and “Downton Abbey.” I asked if she and Doug ever read books together. “Oh, yes,” she said. I imagined she might name Bleak House or Pride and Prejudice, but she caught me off-guard with the first title she named, The Lord of the Rings. “We read it out loud to each other,” Lorna said. In my own paperback edition, which comes to 1,196 pages, not counting the Appendices, which I bet they read, too, or The Hobbit.

Let me invite others to remember Doug. I will just add the obvious: it is terribly, terribly difficult to part from such a friend and colleague of nearly 50 years. I will draw what comfort I can from the thought that Doug is still here, just in a different way now.

2023 Graduates

Lila Podgainy This summer I will be moving home to NYC and continue applying for jobs in museums and archival spaces, particularly focusing on Jewish institutions. One day I will go back to school to get my masters in either Museum Studies or Library Sciences.



Sakura Ishizaki I will be going back to Japan to take medical school exams. I am hoping to work in the future as a physician and medical anthropologist to contribute to improving the hospital resilience to pandemics/medical emergencies. A long way to go but I'm looking forward to my journey!

Emma Nelson I will be starting in June as a Research Associate in the Department of Evolutionary Anthropology at Duke University. Through this position, I will be overseeing/participating in comparative research at the Duke Canine Cognition Center and Lemur Center as well as managing collaboration with other researchers through the PhyloPsy organization. I am excited to continue exploring and developing comparative cognition research!





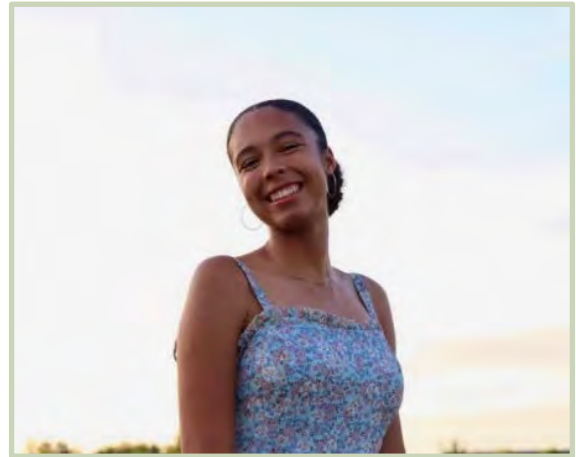
Lexi Mueldener After graduation, I will be moving to Colombia for a Fulbright grant as an English Teaching Assistant. After the Fulbright, I hope to continue my studies in Museum Anthropology and work in museum education and outreach.

Maddie Healy Next semester I will be pursuing an MA in Digital Studies of Language, Culture & History at the University of Chicago. I plan to continue my anthropology studies during this program by examining the intersection of anthropology, technology, and library science. I am excited to learn how to apply programming skills to the humanities while living closer to home!



Mallory Graham I'm excited to spend next year teaching English in Madrid, Spain! I hope to continue to travel and eventually work in environmental and food justice.

Zoe Robinson After graduation I will be attending NYU to receive a master's in public health starting in Fall 2023. I am extremely excited for the new opportunities and experiences to come ahead in New York City!



Alex Sun After graduating, I will be at UCLA studying for a Master of Urban planning. I'm currently in the process of applying for policy and research-focused internships. I also plan to work as an urban planner or sustainability consultant.

Emily Anderson I am an Anthropology major, and I studied abroad in Mexico and Chile during my time at Grinnell. I am going to graduate in December 2023, and I plan on moving back home to Minneapolis while I look for jobs in the spring. I'm really interested in ethnography and cultural anthropology, and I hope to work at a nonprofit with a focus on immigration, food security, or human rights. Thank you so much to the whole anthro department for your help and support during my time at Grinnell, especially SEPC members and my advisor Monty Roper.





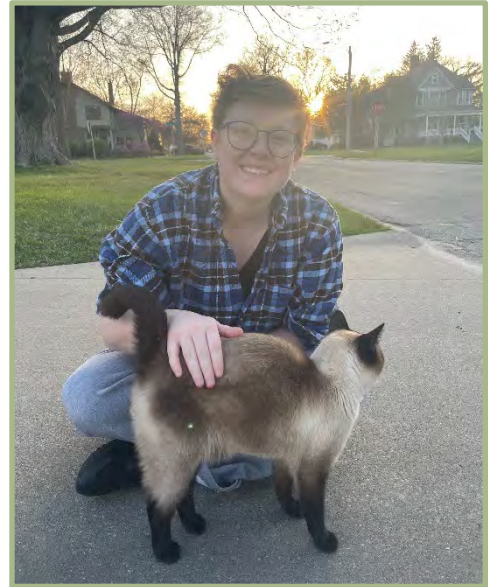
Rachel Woock Upon my graduation in December, I will be taking a year and a half off to study for the MCAT, work as a CNA, and take some time to relax and travel. I hope to attend medical school to pursue a career as a medical examiner.

Spencer Clark After graduation, I will be attending the University of Iowa Law school.



Victoria Harrison I graduated with a major in Anthropology and a concentration in Statistics. This summer, I will be returning home to my family in Ankeny, Iowa and will enjoy a break to pet my dogs and figure out what to do with my life. My current plan is to attend graduate school once I have narrowed down my varied interests enough to choose which program I would like to enroll in.

Jay Kratz I will be graduating with both an Anthropology and Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies degree. After graduation they will be working as a medical assistant/counselor at a summer camp for transgender youth in New Hampshire. They plan to move to Minneapolis afterwards and adopt a cat.



Julia Tlapa I'll be pursuing a PhD in Endocrinology and Reproductive Physiology at UW-Madison.

Graduates not pictured: Riana Mulligan.

Student Research Presentations

Julia Tlapa: IVF Healthcare and Cultural Competency

This past semester, I have been conducting research at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics IVF Laboratory. I have been interviewing providers to learn more about the provider experience in the context of IVF care. The questions I have been asking have been about healthcare providers promote inclusivity in their practice.



Sakura Ishizaki: COVID-19: Triage Decision-Making in an ICU

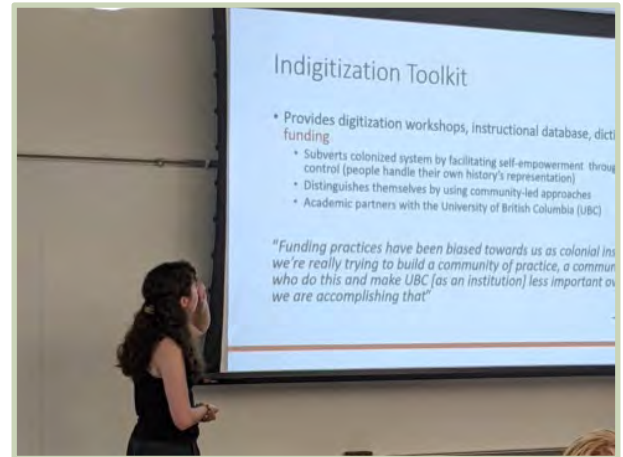
This qualitative study was conducted to identify the decision-making processes regarding COVID-19 patient ICU admissions and mechanical ventilation, and issues associated with those processes in an ICU during the COVID-19 pandemic. Patient characteristics that influenced triage decisions made by physicians, and the interaction between physicians, nurses, and senior management staff upon making such decisions were revealed. Two issues emerged: 1) the lack of legal support for Japanese physicians to practice withdrawal of life-sustaining treatments even during emergencies, 2) the impact of non-clinical forces, likely specific to health emergencies, on physicians' decisions regarding mechanical ventilation, where such forces imposed a significant mental burden on the medical providers.

Sakura won first prize in the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology's online student poster competition.



**Maddie Healy: Digitizing the Undigitizable:
Decolonizing Indigenous Cultural Heritage
Through Digital Archives**

My thesis focuses on how to use digital archives to decolonize the representation, production, and transfer of Indigenous cultural heritage. My data draws on interviews, literature reviews, and comparative analysis of current digital archive models.



**Lexi Mueldener: A Museum in Situ: Examining
Actun Tunichil Muknal**

My research this semester examines a sacred Maya cave site (Actun Tunichil Muknal) that I visited during my time at an Archaeology Field School in Belize. I analyze the ways that tourism at the site may contribute to decolonizing Maya heritage by comparing educational goals of guides and archaeologists and the educational outcomes of tourists. I hope that my findings from this site will have relevance in the broader conversations about the complexities of decolonizing tourism and heritage.



2023 Summer Research Fund Recipients

Lucy Suchomel was awarded anthropology departmental funding from the Paul Simmons '79 and Michele Clark International Research and Learning Fund, as well as the Emeritus Professors' Student Research Fund, to support participation in the Human Impacts on Ecosystems Through Time project as part of George Washington University's Koobi Fora summer Field School in Kenya.

Julianna Vajda was awarded anthropology departmental funding from the Paul Simmons '79 and Michele Clark International Research and Learning Fund to study cultural symbolisms present in food, with relation to tourism, in the Netherlands and Brussels.

Tyler Ching was awarded anthropology departmental funding from the Paul Simmons '79 and Michele Clark International Research and Learning Fund to support an internship with University of Cincinnati Associate Professor of Classics, Dr. Steven Ellis, to digitally model photogrammetry from archaeological excavations at Pompeii and Tharros.

Faculty News

Jane Holmstrom

As Professor Jane Holmstrom finishes up her position as a visiting professor here at Grinnell, she is preparing to transition to Macalester College. There, she will continue to teach biological anthropology in a 2-year visiting position. The Anthropology Department thanks Professor Holmstrom for her time, work, and dedication to the college and her a smooth transition during this exciting time!

Laura Ng

This semester, Professor Laura Ng presented a paper titled "Diaspora and Double Happiness: Tracking Rice Bowls Across the Pacific" at the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. Additionally, she presented a paper titled "Hidden Agricultural Landscapes: Chinese Farms in the San Bernardino Valley" at the Society for California Archaeology Annual Meeting in Oakland, CA. Professor Ng co-organized a forum titled "Building Antiracist Archaeologies" with Jocelyn Lee (Stanford University), and Veronica Peterson (Harvard University) and co-authored a paper with Dr. Jiajing Wang (Dartmouth University) titled "An Intimate Bond: New Evidence for Human-Pig Relationships in Chinese Diaspora Communities" at the Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting in Portland, CA.



Jonathan Andelson

Professor Jonathan Andelson released an article titled: "The Community" and "The World": Place-Making and Re-Making in Amana. *Communal Societies*, Volume 41, Numbers One and Two. Along with a book review: *To Find a Pasqueflower: A Story of the Tallgrass Prairie*, by Greg Hoch. A Bur Oak Book. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2022, in *The Annals of Iowa*, Volume 82, Number 1, Winter 2023. He was also elected to a three-year term on the board of directors of the Communal Studies Association, Fall 2022.

Katya Gibel Mevorach

Professor Katya Gibel Mevorach's [chapter](#), "Racism, Pedagogy and Willful Ignorance," was published in the newly released book, *Bioethics and Racism: Practices, Conflicts, Negotiations and Struggles* edited by Carlo Botrugno, Marcia Mocellin Raymundo and Lucia Re, 107-124. (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2023). In her chapter, she argues for intervening against and discrediting the race concept in science education and research. The histories,

uprooting false ideas which otherwise serve as the premise and departure point for prescriptive questions and interpretation. This means candidly confronting dismantling racism and making visible its trace. Noting that Barbara Fields' concept of *racecraft* explains the process through which racism creates race, the most important interrogation of classifications and racial taxonomy is—always—*what difference does difference make?*

Cynthia Hansen

Professor Cynthia Hansen had a co-authored publication come out this semester. The [chapter](#) is a grammatical description of the Amazonian language Wánsöjöt, an isolate spoken in Colombia and along the Colombia-Venezuela border. Adam Tallman and her worked closely with Jesús Mario Girón to provide a condensed version of the grammar in English (Girón published a grammar of Wánsöjöt in Spanish in 2008 and did the original fieldwork).

Owen Kohl

Professor Kohl's upcoming paper, "Traces of Solidarity and Breakdown: Scales of Domestic Collection in Post-Yugoslav Hip Hop Fanzines and Mixtapes", is anticipated to come out in the fall. Additionally, an interview with Owen Kohl and Falina Enriquez discussing her new book, *The Costs of the Gig Economy* can be accessed [online](#).

Joshua Marshack

One of Professor Marshack's pursuits on sabbatical has been an autoethnographic writing project where he interrogates the paradoxical nature of colleges that ostensibly celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion, while simultaneously doubling down on union-busting, enacting austerity measures, eroding academic freedom and faculty governance, and increasing the cost of tuition. As he puts in his manuscript, "I turn to my own pedagogy in anthropology as a starting point to explore the limitations of trying to elucidate social inequality from within an apparatus that in many ways helps to maintain."

Monty Roper

Professor Monty Roper is continuing work on the USDA-funded Build a Better Grinnell 2030 project. Phase one of the research is complete (a broad identification of community strengths and needs), and the community is now being asked to rank their top needs from those identified broadly by the community. He will be working with several student research assistants over the summer, as well as a large number of community-based research assistants, to further community asset mapping and to explore the top ranked needs in greater depth.

Alumni Updates

Interview with **Rebecca Hughes Marcum '12**, Assistant Director of Corporate, Foundation, & Governmental Relations at Grinnell College

How has your education and experience as an Anthropology major helped you navigate the professional world?

I will say right at the front that listing "B.A. in Anthropology" on my resume and applications was not immediately helpful when applying for jobs, so I had to quickly develop a "sales pitch" to explain to potential employers what this degree actually is and what valuable skills I bring to the table because of it. Here's the gist of it:

Anthropology is the study of people and I chose that major because I was interested in learning more about people, cultures, communities, and so on. Because of this major - and my overall liberal arts education - I've developed really strong skills in cultural competency and intercultural communication, not to mention a great grasp of written and spoken communication. All of this is necessary to work well in our increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

I believe all of this to be true (though think a lot of it also simply comes from having attended Grinnell in general). However, I had to figure out a way to articulate it so I could show my value in applicant pools laden with business, communications, IT, education, and similar fields where people immediately have an idea of what you learned and the skills you bring to the table.

A lot of these "soft skills" that we learned in our anthropology classes are very in-demand – even more so if you can actually do them well! – so let them shine when you're on the market and in the job itself.

What is it like returning to Grinnell and working as the Assistant Director of Corporate, Foundation, & Government Relations?

It's WEIRD. Luckily, I had a bit of an adjustment period since my family moved back to Grinnell about a year I returned to the College in this role. At least that made walking through campus again much less strange than it was the first few times I did it!

One of the interesting things about this job in the College's "Grants Office" (the easier-to-explain title for the actual office title) is that I work very closely with faculty to support their research through grants and through programming. It's been a big adjustment to shift from the student-faculty hierarchical relationship to working together as colleagues. I have often felt myself returning to the mindset of 19-year-old me when starting an interaction with a member of our faculty, but have learned to suppress that former person and embracing my current self – older, more experienced and educated and with more authority.

Besides, I was an 17anthro major, so I have an easier time viewing faculty as simply belonging to another culture! If nothing else, taking an ethnographic approach can be helpful.

Other than wanting to understand people, another big reason I chose to major in anthropology is because I like to help people. I have a hard time committing to a job if I don't feel like I'm making a positive impact (something tells me you may feel the same?), so using the skills I gained as an anthro major here, plus the various higher education skills I've accumulated since graduation, to help our faculty secure grants to pursue their passions in their research pursuits is incredibly fulfilling. It's even more fulfilling that these are MY faculty, who helped me and my classmates navigate this challenging time of our lives - I owe it to them and can finally give something in return!

Interview with **Anna Gjoleka '21**, Academic Institutional Research Analyst at Grinnell College

How has your education and experience as an Anthropology major helped you navigate the professional world?

My education in Anthropology and my experience within the Anthropology department as a student assistant helped me grow both professionally and personally. Through my education in Anthropology, I learned how to communicate with people from different backgrounds and walks of life from my own, and the importance of truly listening to what others have to say. It is not always easy to relate with other people's experiences but, listening to them brings you a step closer to understanding what those experiences mean to the person you are speaking with. This has proven to be very useful in my professional experience where I had the opportunity to communicate with clients with different backgrounds and experiences to assist them with their concerns and in receiving appropriate services for their needs. Even now as the Academic Institutional Research Analyst, I am using these important skills throughout my work to assist academic departments with the data they need and understanding their various concerns and difficulties. My experiences in the Anthropology department also prepared me in approaching colleagues from different sectors of the institution. This is another valuable skill that I have been using throughout my professional endeavors and one that I am sure I will continue to use and expand in the future.

What is it like returning to Grinnell and working as the Academic Institutional Research Analyst?

Coming back to Grinnell after some time has been very exciting. I am happy that campus life has returned to what it used to be before the pandemic. I am also learning that there are so many aspects of college life, particularly the work behind academic planning, that I was not aware of until now. As the Academic Institutional Research Analyst, I am learning a lot about the administrative side of Grinnell College. In the short period that I have been working with Analytics and Institutional Research and the Registrar's Office I have discovered a lot of aspects about class registration, advising, and challenges academic departments face in terms of enrollments and majors which I was not fully aware of as a student. I have also had the chance to meet with numerous faculty members from different

departments whom I was not acquainted with before, which has been a great chance to meet new people with different backgrounds and use the interpersonal skills I advanced through my education in anthropology.

Robert Schwaller, Class of 2003

The January/February 2023 issue of the Smithsonian Magazine features a small article about my research on African maroons in colonial Panama. My book *African Maroons in Sixteenth-Century Panama: A History in Documents* came out in Fall 2021. It details an over half century long struggle by Africans in Panama to reject enslavement and secure freedom. The Africans succeeded in forcing the Spanish to negotiate a peace agreement that provided the maroons freedom and self-government. The former maroons were resettled into the first two free-black towns in the Americas, Santiago del Principe and Santa Cruz la Real. I'm currently working on a study that compares the experience of African maroons in Panama to other maroons in Mexico and Hispaniola. (The story can be viewed online at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/new-discovery-puts-panama-site-first-successful-slave-rebellion-180981312/>.)

Najwa Adra, Class of 1969

After my funded Sr. Researcher position at the Institute for Social Anthropology at the Austrian Academy for Sciences (2018-2019) I was asked to maintain my affiliation after my return to the US. In 2019-2020, I was "Visitor" at the Institute for Advanced Study.

Publications:

Cautionary Note: For those who, like me, cringe at the use and misuse of the term, "tribe" in anthropology, please see my 2015 piece in Anthropology News, attached. Essentially, there is no other English term that works to translate the Arabic term referring to segmentary institutions in the region. 75-80% of Yemenis identify as "tribal." Ignoring them is not an option. My argument is that, far from being "primitive," these are territorial units with highly sophisticated examples of indigenous civil society, while tribal customary law predates the current interest in conflict resolution by centuries if not millennia.

2021. Qabyalah. Or What Does It Mean to be Tribal in Yemen? Book Chapter in *Tribes in Modern Yemen: An Anthology*. Marieke Brandt, ed. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sammlung Eduard Glaser. Open Access: <https://austriaca.at/9783700186199>

2021 Decolonizing Tribal "Genealogies" in the Middle East and North Africa. Roundtable: Tribes and Tribalism in the Modern Middle East. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 53:492-406. doi:10.1017/S0020743821000805.

2022 *Potential Contributions of Yemeni Tribes to the Emerging Yemeni State* (in Arabic). Invited presenter, ***Tribes and the Future of Yemen***. Webinar organized by the Organization of Yemeni Academics and Professionals, August 6. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFSXE_2FCyc (The webinar was in Arabic with Yemeni panelists, organized by Yemenis. A rough translation of my presentation is attached.

2021 *Tribal Women in Yemen: Beyond the Stereotypes*. Invited presenter, ***The Yemen Exchange***. Sanaa Center, April. (In Arabic)

2020 *Countering Gender Stereotypes: A Case Study from Yemen*, panelist and panel organizer: ***Countering Gender Stereotypes in the Middle East***. Middle East Studies Association Meetings, online. October.

2020 ***Why Yemen Matters: The Heritage of a Land in Crisis***. Panelist. School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, February.

2020 ***Tribal Dynamics and Nation Building in Yemen***. Lecture, Near East Seminar, School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, February.

BOOK PROJECT IN PREPARATION: ***Decolonizing Tribes and States in Yemen: Countering Stereotypes***.

Ellery Frahm, Class of 1999

Ellery Frahm is an archaeology research scientist at Yale University. His research using X-ray fluorescence technology on obsidian tools in southwestern Iran was recently highlighted in the New York Times article, "Obsidian Cliff: Humanity's Tool Shed for the Last 11,500 Years" (March 20, 2023).

Bill Green, Class of 1974

My wife, Linda Forman, and I have moved to Santa Fe, NM. After a combined 120+ years in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois, we're enjoying the change in climate, landscape, food, culture, etc. I'm still busy writing and publishing. I have book chapters and articles in press about ancient agriculture in western Iowa, circular villages of the Woodland tradition in the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys, and early Holocene stone tool traditions in North Africa. My current writing project focuses on an 1837 map presented by the Iowa Tribe at a treaty council in Washington, D.C. The map depicts the Tribe's settlement locations and migrations throughout Iowa and adjacent states over a period of about 200 years. Independent historical and archaeological evidence largely confirms the village locations shown on the map. Later this year, I plan to finish a report about a 1926 dig at an eastern Iowa rockshelter. Fun stuff! (Editors note: Bill Green is the Director Emeritus of the Logan Museum of Anthropology at Beloit College.)

Alexander Woods, Class of 2003

Alexander Woods, an archaeologist with Colorado State University's Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, graduated from Grinnell in 2003. An article covering Alex's work at Fort McCoy has been published and can be accessed at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/436839/fort-mccoys-archaeology-aids-understanding-wisconsin-distant-habitants-driftless-area>.

Tom Asher, Class of 1995

Editor's note. Tom was an Anthro major, and he now works in the White House. This is a terrific account of his career trajectory, and it contains a clear central message which is at the opening of his piece.

I write this piece largely in the hope that students and alumni give serious consideration to working in government – whether federal, state, or local – if they want to put into practice the principles that they routinely express at the college.

A course in 1992 with Jon Andelson on the tribal beliefs of anthropologists set me on a wonderful career path. After graduating from Grinnell College ('95) with a bachelor's degree in anthropology, I pursued a PhD at the University of Chicago driven, in part, by a wish to recapture the magic of that earlier course offering. My doctoral studies started with a whirlwind tour of high-minded philosophers and early sociologists taught by Marshall Sahlins; they concluded with a dissertation exploring labor history and promise of politics in Mumbai.

After that period, I have had uncommonly good fortune, shaped in part by willingness to take on new opportunities, many well beyond my initial comfort zone and, most certainly, my initial skill set. My first job after graduate school was at the Social Science Research Council, where I developed and led programs to support research capacity globally. The work offered me access to remarkable depths of joy in supporting the efforts of others through grants and fellowships, nurturing fields of research and activity.

An example or two might be in order. A few years after 9/11, it became apparent that much of public discourse animating journalism and politics on the topic of Islam was informed not by those with deep expertise in the subject, nor by those with lived experience with the vast, sprawling issues that roiled so many of our politics of that moment. Instead, there was a generation of former Soviet experts – Sovietologists, as their tribe was known – retooled as experts on Afghanistan, Iraq, Sunnism and Shi'ism. I had the privilege of creating a grant program that drew knowledgeable, rigorous researchers from fields as diverse as religious studies and comparative politics alongside community organizers into engagement with journalists and policymakers, using tools ranging from fellowships placing journalists in Middle East Studies departments to supporting serialized programs on public radio as well as bringing the voices of scholars into the incipient blogosphere (now an historical curiosity) and into policy circles (still relevant!). Much of that infrastructure persists even now. Later, improbably, though I had never been to sub-Saharan Africa, I was offered the opportunity to develop programming to

strengthen social science research capacity in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. By the time I left the SSRC, I had stood up a program that supported some 300+ African researchers who grapple with how to advance inclusion, representative democracy, and peacebuilding – with near gender parity throughout the program offerings despite university systems in which the vast majority of faculty and students were male.

The perspectives of these research communities – and those of the friendships throughout the globe that I fostered in the course of this work – now informs my own commitments, infusing them with new considerations and a more adaptable dynamism. The work altered my understanding of the world at-large and the change I seek to enact, giving me a more global understanding of the issues that animate us today, whether movements for Black lives or the creep of inequality, anti-democratic efforts that weaken representative institutions, and activism to renew democratic practices.

I next took a role in starting up a new initiative at Columbia University that sought to bring researchers, policymakers, and practitioners into productive conversation with one another. The work I shaped brought secretaries of state and local election officials into dialogue with researchers of election administration as well as activists who seek election systems that are accessible, transparent and secure to order to think through opportunities to improve election administration. The work additionally sustained a community of practice that supported new experiments in deliberative democracy by helping NYC adopt a digital platform for engaging residents, while attending to the concerns of digital disconnection that face so many city residents. There was other work I took on in this role, much of it heady and thrilling, not least how to deploy the assets of a major research institution to address some of the most pressing – and most challenging – problems that beset us, including prospects for bolstering democratic norms, practices, and institutions across much of the globe as well as how societies from Beirut to NYC might recover from disaster more equitably and sustainably.

This year I work in the most exhilarating role of my life. I serve as a senior equity fellow in the Office of Management and Budget, the largest agency that makes up the Executive Office of the President. I have the remarkable privilege of supporting the Biden-Harris administration's priority of advancing equity throughout the whole of government, an ambition first formalized in Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. I lead efforts to strengthen public participation in government and community engagement by federal agencies. The goal is to ensure that community voices – especially those least often engaged by federal agencies -- are heard early enough in the process to help inform policy choices by agencies and again when policies and programs are to be implemented. This administration has put equity at the forefront of its agenda to build and reshape the American economy so that it is fairer and infused with greater opportunity. It is the honor of a lifetime to help support this effort.

My path to the White House involved a good deal of meandering. There is a more direct opportunity to serve in this manner. Federal government, I have discovered, sustains a remarkable environment. Career staff are afforded opportunities to effect positive change at a scale that is without parallel even as its ranks are filled with dazzlingly bright and committed public servants. As best I can tell, my colleagues come to work brimming with enthusiasm for a commitment to shaping good, responsive

government that serves the needs of all people, not least underserved communities. The values that students bring to Grinnell and that Grinnell cultivates in its student body are suffused throughout the federal workforce. I write this piece largely with the hope that students and alumni give serious consideration to working in government – whether federal, state, or local – if they want to put into practice the principles that they routinely express at the college. When I wrote my dissertation I was, to be candid, as cynical about formal politics as I was romantic about the kinds of grassroots activities so often embraced by anthropologists, but I now understand that good government is without real parallel and that we need government to engage grassroots movements and everyday people if the ideas from below are to achieve institutional form at the scale we need. (As something of an aside, we additionally need to help movements build capacity to productively engage government through partnership as well as pressure)

Moreover, government affords a stunning career, imbued with purpose and impact, unlike any other. Our government needs bright, curious, principled career staff who reflect the diversity of this country. As you mull ideas for how you want to have impact in the world, and the career arc you hope to be able to narrate, there might be no more rewarding opportunity than that afforded by public service. If, like me, you are getting older, there are other pathways to this work, including through mechanisms that allow institutions to loan employees to the federal government. These should be better known, not the least the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA). If you still are young, with the promise of a long career ahead of you, you can do even better, and make your way directly into a society that looks arcane from the outside but is suffused with both rationality and communal spirit once you are on the inside. There is an entire book to be written about the rituals of that tribe of bureaucrats and political officials, whose calendars are set by the logic of rulemaking and annual budget appropriations and when to bring the public into the shaping of policy and programs that serve both as the north star of this workforce and as the safety net that nestles beneath us all. One of you might even be the author of that book.

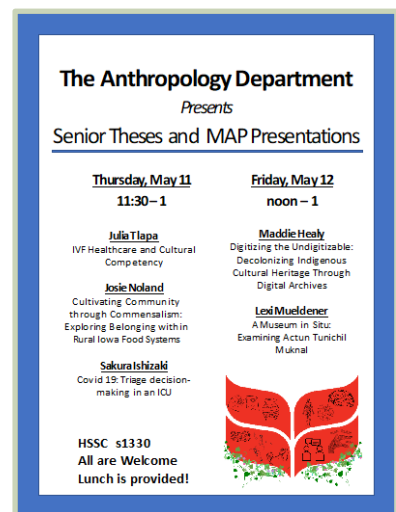
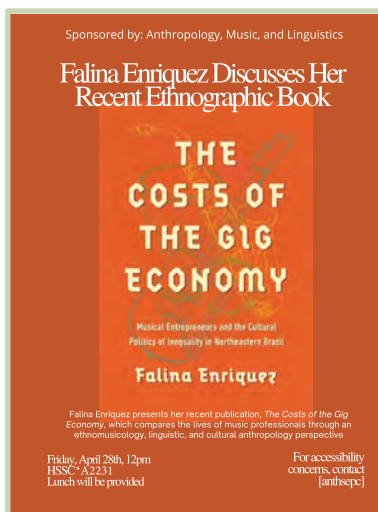
Tom Asher is a graduate of the class of 1995. The views expressed in this article are those of the author himself and do not necessarily represent the views of the United States, the Executive Office of the President, or the Office of Management and Budget

Alumni, please share updates on your lives! We love to hear from you.

Also, **I could use your help** on a project to help promote anthropology on campus. I would like to fill one of our bulletin boards in the relatively new Humanities and Social Science Complex (prominently displayed on the main hallway on the 1st floor) with pictures and brief blurbs along the line of “this is anthropology,” the Prezi created by University of South Florida students in response to Gov. Rick Scott’s public assertion that the state of Florida doesn’t need more anthropologists (<https://prezi.com/vmvomt3sj3fd/this-is-anthropology/>). Please send me a picture of yourself in your office or field site, or just a picture of where you work, noting what you do that benefits from anthropological methods or knowledge. Send to roperjm@grinnell.edu. I’ll also share stories in subsequent newsletters. Thanks in advance! - Monty Roper, Chair, Department of Anthropology.

Events

Pictured below are the posters advertising the multiple events that the Anthropology department hosted this semester.



Course Embedded Travel

Sumak Kawsay and Ikigai: Living Well and Finding Meaning in a Global World

Professor Maria Tapias co-taught a Global Learning Program class with Professor Caroline Lewis this Spring. The class was based on questions of wellness and living and cross-culturally mapped practices through readings and course-embedded travel. The class visited Ecuador during Spring break and engaged in conversations about restorative tourism, ways of being, and community organization and care. Towards the end of the semester, the class is leaving for Japan to study ikigai living and how that impacts/changes life. The course was open to first-year students and is an attempt to offer students early learning and travel opportunities.

Collective Memory from the Anthropological Perspective

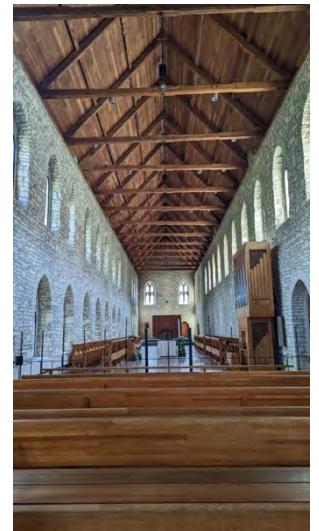
Students in Professor French's seminar on collective memory traveled to Ireland and Northern Ireland for the first week of their spring break. Class content revolved around memory work, studies of conflict, properties of commemoration, and linguistics. Students spent their days exploring areas in Belfast, Dublin, Bangor, and Derry. They got to collaborate and learn from professors abroad, such Professor Evropi Chatzipanagiotidou, Professor Stephen Miller, and Professor Maruška Svašek.



Class Activities

Jane Holmstrom: Body and Religion in the Middle Ages

This semester, Professor Holmstrom's seminar traveled to two Cistercian Abbeys, New Melleray Abbey and Our Lady of the Mississippi. At New Melleray, students met with Brother Joseph who explained the order and origins. The class had the privilege of sitting in on their prayer services and asking questions. At Our Lady of the Mississippi, the seminar met with Sister Grace who gave the students a tour. Here they also got to sit in on a prayer session and explored the candy factory. This trip was made possible by the James M. Garst '79 Memorial Endowed Fund for Anthropology.



The week following their return, students visited Grinnell's Special Collections & Archives where they looked at rare books related to class material.

Maria Tapias: Reading Medical Comics Anthropologically

Professor Tapias taught a graphic medicine class that combined medical anthropology, comic theory, and qualitative interviews. Each student was expected to produce a comic study through their interviews at the end of the semester. Students conducted qualitative interviews with a relative, friend, or peer on a past illness experience or about their work as health care professionals. They developed narratives from these interviews and with support from Tilly Woodward turned them into comics. The class held a reception in the Bucksbaum Rotunda.

Awards

The Rachael M. Asrelsky '89 Anthropology Paper Prize, for the best student paper written in Anthropology.

- ❖ **Hamilton Peacock** for his paper “Je me Souviens: Theories of Culture in Richard Handler’s Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec”
- ❖ **Sakura Ishizaki** for her paper “Triage Decision-Making Processes in a Japanese Intensive Care Unit During the COVID-19 Pandemic”
- ❖ **Alex Sun** for his paper “What Makes it Home: Place-Making Among The Homeless in Skid-Row”

The Ralph Luebben Prize in Anthropology, for the graduating senior who best exemplifies the ideal anthropology student including meritorious scholarly work, breadth in the discipline, field experience, and an anthropological viewpoint on life.

Honorable Mentions

- ❖ Sakura Ishizaki
- ❖ Julia Tlapa

Ralph Luebben Award Winners

- ❖ Maddie Healy
- ❖ Lexi Mueldener



Academic Honors

Spencer Clark
Mallory Graham
Victoria Harrison
Madeline Healy
Sakura Ishizaki
Alexandra Mueldener
Emma Nelson
Lila Podgainy
Julia Tlapa

Donors

- ❖ Ms. Madelyn A. Gardner
- ❖ Mr. Angelo S. Ioffreda
- ❖ Ms. Danielle K. Long
- ❖ Ms. Jennifer Paarlberg Peaco
- ❖ Dr. Stuart C. Gilman M.D.
- ❖ Ms. Kelly A. Eldridge
- ❖ Dr. Elizabeth M. Fathman
- ❖ The Austin Family Fund
- ❖ Ms. Susan Hyatt
- ❖ Ms. Lara E. Szent-Gyorgyi
- ❖ Ms. Cassandra S. Ewert-Lamutt
- ❖ Dr. Harriet M. Phinney Ph.D.
- ❖ The Asrelsky Family (The Asrelsky Prize)
- ❖ Paul Simmons and Michele Clark (Paul Simmons '79 and Michele Clark International Research and Learning Fund)
- ❖ Sallee Garst Haerr (The James M. Garst '79 Memorial Endowed Fund for Anthropology)

Thanks so much to all our donors!
Your support helps to enhance the experience for our students
both in and out of the classroom.

A big thanks to this spring's newsletter student staff!
Ekta Shaikh '24 and Maddie Healy '23