

UCL DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY NEWSLETTER

# ANTHRO NEWS

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UCL



## **A Personal View from Susanne Kuechler, Our New Head of Department**

Dear friend of UCL Anthropology,

In preparation for taking over as HoD on July 1st of this year, I took stock of the Department's affairs over the last decade. Our move to the new location in Taverton Street took place five years ago already. We surely all agree that our new building has been hugely positive for the department. The space we inhabit is the envy of our colleagues in other universities and, although we will need to expand in the future, the layout and configuration of rooms has enhanced the life of staff and students. Collegial relations across the three sections have survived cohabitation, we even have begun to teach across the sections and are now hosting cross section research groups for the first time. This department has always offered a nurturing environment for staff and students, being extraordinarily free of conflict, thanks to the willingness of staff to compromise and act collegially. These qualities of a strong and cohesive collectivity are needed now more than ever to help us face a future of declining resources and growing insecurity.

UCL anthropology stands at the forefront in paving the way for the application of research. We do not apologize for this, but are using it to steer the debate on the direction our discipline should take in the 21st century and the kind of training students will need in a world where anthropology must matter, if it is to survive. In this spirit, we have created two new methods courses at the postgraduate level and have widened a programme of placements offered as part of the applied studies module at both undergraduate and graduate level.

With our three sections creating a true science/humanities interface, UCL anthropology plays a unique role in the

development of UCL as a social science centre with a difference, supporting each of the UCL Grand Challenges in Global Health, Sustainable Cities, Intercultural Interaction and Human Well-Being through teaching and research. UCL's Global Citizenship initiative is supported by a programme of placements and training in applied studies run by our department, giving students the opportunity to connect what they learn here with the world of work and to establish contacts beyond university. Our department has a reputation for doing new things, for launching novel intellectual trends and innovating in teaching delivery (such as programmes in human evolution and health, ecology and development, material culture and most recently, digital anthropology), while sustaining core anthropological teaching and research.



The visibility, appeal and resourcefulness of our department have enabled the department to make two new appointments at the starting lecturer level this year. Dr. Andrea Migliano has come to us from Cambridge University to teach in the field of the evolution of human behaviour. Her research interests lie in observing and explaining adaptive differences in human populations. Currently, she is working on the evolution of body size variation of pygmies and extremely tall populations in Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Kenya. Her aim is to understand

the evolutionary mechanisms involved in the determination of their phenotype, and the genetic basis of their singular life history traits. Dr. Ludovic Coupaye has come to us from France to join the material culture group. He has studied Pacific arts at the Ecole du Louvre, African archaeology at Paris I-panteon Sorbonne, and anthropology at the Sainsbury Research Unit, UEA, Norwich. He has done fieldwork among the Abelam of Papua New Guinea, and his teaching and research focuses on the interaction between technology, arts, rituals and material culture, combining French and British/American approaches.

Our research lies at the heart of all we do here in Anthropology. It is through and because of our research that we all came into anthropology and we are, as a discipline, fortunate, in that much of our core investigative work can be done for the price of an air fare and some subsistence. We have no fear, therefore, that the cuts from public funding will impede our research activity. Research lies at the heart of our teaching, informing what we teach and how we do so. This is true across the board, from undergraduate to postgraduate, since it is in trying to explain our ideas to a far from passive audience, unfamiliar with the particular field we work in, that we refine and give shape to the premonitions of the classroom that become the theories of tomorrow. There is talk around of a division of academic departments into pure researchers and full-time teachers. That is not a route we will be following in this department.

***The Department of  
Anthropology would like  
to  
congratulate Sara Randall  
on her promotion to  
Professor and Ruth Man-  
del on her promotion to  
Reader***

The role of doctoral research is particularly important in a department like ours and we were pleased, though hardly surprised, to discover that the PhD student per staff ratio in Anthropology puts most other departments across the college to shame. This year past, UCL's Provost, Malcolm Grant, set a target of three PhD candidates per member of staff – we are already well beyond that. Our Masters and MPhil/PhD students in the department enjoy a lively and close-knit intellectual atmosphere, supported by daily senior seminars and reading/research groups at the MPhil/PhD level. This year we are creating research clusters, the meetings of which will be advertised on our website, and to one of which we expect most of our doctoral students to belong. This will offer a less intimidating environment than the senior seminars we always run for junior scholars to share ideas in a group and work along a common theme related to their doctoral research.

Beyond the PhD these days lies the post-doc – the standard route now across the board into academia. This term we welcome David Lawson, Tom Currie, Jeroen Smaers and Alex Fanghanel, joining Laurence Douny and Kathleen Richardson. You will be able to read more about their work in this and forthcoming newsletters this year.

Changes are coming across the range of our activities. In the last newsletter we announced a rethink of the structure of our undergraduate programme in response to student demand for greater integration of our three constitutive fields. As a result of a bout of enthusiasm generated at the summer-term open-day, we have now set two committees to work to produce two new, all-field second year courses, one provisionally entitled 'Body, Mind and Spirit' will range from the nature of classification, through medical well-being to understanding the persistent human fascination with the transcendent. We want to get our students to begin to

examine the specificity of the ways the human primate occupies its natural and artefactual environments and some of the consequences of this in the world today. The other 'From Sex to IVF and beyond' will bring the latest anthropological wisdom to some of the disciplines oldest conundrums, attempting to ask our students to stretch their imaginations across the traditional divide between the natural and the cultural, examining the evolutionary and social reasons for continuities and variation in human and primate social arrangements.

Few will be surprised to hear that in these times we are also looking at every possible means of increasing income and, more to the point, finding new income sources. Masters fees increases are probably inevitable from the 2011 session but we are thinking about running short courses for outsiders – 'ethnography' is the research method of the decade and we reckon we have a thing or two to say about that – and maybe even summer schools for promising post-graduate students. Whatever income we raise from these will of course be ploughed straight back into improving the teaching and research environment of the department.

This is the beginning of a year filled with activities. I mention here just the most important highlight of this term. In November Michael Stewart is launching a project inspired by that great anthropological research project initiated in 1936 by an anthropologist, a poet and a filmmaker, Mass Observation. Anyone who has been reading David Kynaston's extraordinary history, *Stories of a New Jerusalem*, largely based on the Mass Observation archives will know what a treasure trove was created by this inspiring project. Our version is humbler but no less exciting – a mass digital tapestry of the nation, through short films made about MyStreet. You can read about this further on our

website and [www.mystreetfilms.com](http://www.mystreetfilms.com). MyStreet is part of our Department's preparations for two film festivals that we are running back to back next June. The Royal Anthropological Institute has kindly agreed to let us host their biannual festival from 24-26 June, 2011 ([www.therai.org.uk](http://www.therai.org.uk)) and just prior to that we are launching a London Open City celebration of the art of documentary film making – hoping to draw in new audience to the university and to this form of communication. If you feel like getting a taste for the kind of winning work being produced in our film courses take a look at the Brick Wall on our website where you can watch films students have produced with Mike Yorke over the past two years (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/film-courses/index.htm>) <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/film-courses/index.htm>).

You have here the second of our termly series of newsletters – updating you of developments of interest to the broader community, letting you know of recent achievements and informing you of upcoming events that may bring you in to visit.

We hope you enjoy it!

*(Professor Susanne Kuechler, Head of Department)*

## Grants

### Morphological Clocks – NERC Standard Research Grant Awarded to Christophe Soligo



Christophe Soligo (Anthropology) and Anjali Goswami (Departments of Genetics, Evolution and Environment and of Earth Sciences) have been awarded a 3-year NERC standard research grant to quantify module- and lineage-specific variation in rates of morphological evolution in the primate skull. The award includes provisions for hiring a post-doctoral collaborator, Dr Jeroen Smaers, for its duration, as well as for a 3-year studentship, which will be taken up by Ms Gemma Price, a recent graduate from our MSc in Human Evolution and Behaviour.

An animal's body (its phenotype) is the vehicle through which its genes interact with the environment in which it lives. The shape of the body is constrained developmentally by the animal's genes (it cannot grow into a shape that is not coded for by its genome) and put to the test by the environment in which it lives (characteristics of the body can make the difference between life and death). Characteristics that can help an individual survive in its environment can become part of the phenotype through the process of Natural Selection, because only phenotypes that survive for long enough in their environment have the potential to reproduce and pass on their genetic blueprint to subsequent generations. We can, conse-

quently, view the shape of a phenotype as the result of complex interactions between the effects of the environment in which a species evolved and the constraints imposed by its evolutionary relationships with other species.

In the first instance, our research aims to quantify the extent to which environmental and evolutionary history are reflected in the shape of the primate skull and of different elements of the primate skull and in the rate at which different species and different parts of the skull have changed over evolutionary time. Ultimately, we aim to develop a new improved framework for inferring evolutionary relationships between extinct species and between extinct and living species based on this information.

In the longer term, this research will contribute to solving some of the most interesting outstanding questions in primate and human evolution. For example, how are adapiforms and omomyiforms, two very diverse northern hemisphere groups of primates that lived between approximately 55 and 34 million years ago, and left no living relatives, related to living primates? Which known fossil species are the earliest members of the evolutionary lineage that led to the 'higher primates' (anthropoids: monkeys, apes and humans)? Which known fossil species is the earliest member of the hominins (the evolutionary lineage, which ultimately led to modern humans, after its divergence from the chimpanzee evolutionary lineage)? Which fossil hominin is the closest relative of our own genus, *Homo*? These questions are not only interesting in their own right, but also necessary to answer in order to correctly interpret the sequence in which important characteristics of a species, or group of species evolved, and, hence, key to defining the fundamental biological identity of those species, including our own.

In addition to the usual scientific research output in the form of conference presentations and peer-reviewed publi-

cations, we plan to distribute newly developed software solutions free of charge through a project-specific website. We also hope to use the project website as a platform to initiate an international depository of 3D-morphometric data by making available the data we will have collected during the course of this award to the wider research community.

Finally, the natural world and evolutionary biology in general, and human and primate evolution in particular are of key interest to a large proportion of the population. This is clearly shown by the popularity of televised natural history programmes and the regularity with which popular information programmes such as the BBC's *Horizon* series engage with subjects related to evolutionary biology and particularly primate and human evolution. At a time when responsible interaction with the world's natural resources may have become key to human survival, this interest represents a unique opportunity for scientists to engage with members of the general public and contribute to improving their understanding of the complexity of biological systems. Our project, consequently and importantly, also includes plans and funds for engagement with a broader audience through public lectures and themed museum-based workshops.  
*(Dr. Christophe Soligo)*

**Brocher Foundation  
Workshop Grant Awarded to  
Sahra Gibbon**



Sahra Gibbon received a Brocher Foundation Workshop grant in June 2010 with two other co-applicants Jessica Mozersky (a former UCL Anthropology Department PhD student) and Sonja Palfner in Germany. This award will cover the costs of hosting the two-day residential workshop at the Brocher Foundation in Geneva in 2011 for twenty international participants for a workshop entitled 'BRCA Gene Research and Medical Practices: A Comparative Transnational Social Science Workshop'. The purpose of the workshop is to bring together those working in the field of BRCA, or breast cancer gene research, in order to develop a comparative transnational perspective on these developments. It builds on two previous workshops held by an international network of BRCA researchers in Berlin and London in 2009 and in February of this year respectively, of which along with Sahra and three other PhD students from the department, Jessica Mozersky, Eirini Kamperiani and Alison McDonald, form a core group. The workshop will focus on the following six key themes: BRCA Health Disparities and Populations; Beyond BRCA: Epigenetics and Personalised Medicine; Political Economy and the Commercialization of BRCA Risk Assessment Technologies; Gender and Genetic Risk of Breast Cancer; Comparative Social Science Methods and Interdisciplinarity in the Context of BRCA; Clinical Practice: BRCA Genetic Technologies and Medical Research. There

will be a special edition of the journal *Biosocieties* coming out at the end of this year also exploring these themes. (Dr. Sahra Gibbon)

**Ecosystems Services for Poverty  
Alleviation (ESPA) Grant  
Awarded to Katherine Homewood**



Katherine Homewood has been awarded a grant from the NERC/ESRC/DfID collaborative ESPA programme (Ecosystems Services for Poverty Alleviation). They have £224,444 for a two-year research project on Biodiversity, Ecosystem services, Social sustainability and Tipping points in East African rangelands (BEST). We will be using extensive datasets from multisite studies of livelihoods of pastoralist households in protected-area adjacent drylands in Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia, along with biodiversity and conservation revenue data, to explore incentives to manage rangelands for sustainable biodiversity and poverty reduction outcomes in a context of increasing privatization, loss of mobility and intensifying climate change. (Prof. Katherine Homewood)

**Supplementary Teaching  
Equipment Grant awarded to  
Lane DeNicola**

In June 2010, Lane DeNicola was awarded a Supplementary Teaching Equipment Grant by TEESC (UCL's Teaching Equipment Execu-

tive Sub-Committee). The award will be used to assemble five portable, low-cost "field kits" for digital video collection. Adding to the assets of the Digital & Visual Culture Laboratory, the kits will support one of the three practical foci of the new MSc in Digital Anthropology: the collection, processing, and analysis of digital video for qualitative research. (Dr. Lane DeNicola)

**British Academy Small Research  
Grant Awarded to Lucy Norris**

Lucy Norris has received a British Academy Small Research Grant of £7,100 for her project entitled Recycling Textile Technologies, to be carried out between June 2010 to the end of 2011. The project complements research currently being undertaken in India and the UK as part of the wider ESRC funded Waste of the World project, and the extra funding will enhance academic network building and collaboration, enhance public dissemination of research findings through website development and assist in the production of a short ethnographic film on the topic of recycling clothing. The funding is broken down into three parts: a) it contributed towards a highly successful international workshop held in the Department of Anthropology, UCL, in June (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/conferences/recycling-textile-technologies.htm>), which is being edited for a special themed journal issue; b) it will enable the initial design of a website to both disseminate research findings and help to create networks of researchers and practitioners working in relevant fields; c) it will facilitate the making of a short ethnographic documentary by Meghna Gupta, an independent film maker who earned an MSc in Anthropology and Development in the department in 2009.

(Dr. Lucy Norris)



## Profile - Ludovic Coupaye

*Tell me about your upcoming book?*

It is a re-writing of my PhD thesis (finished in 2004), which was mostly ethnographic description with little theoretical discussion (apart from trying out the idea of fractals on how technical processes can be considered). The book in itself, I would say, goes more into details into the methodology I used to study the long yams of the Abelam of Papua New Guinea, and I show how it can fit to contemporary theoretical discussions on material culture (consumption, materiality, aesthetics, etc.). I also have to admit that, having been trained as, first an art historian, then an archaeologist and finally an anthropologist, I thought that focusing on a tuber (even if it's a very beautiful one) had a somehow an ironic and humorous dimension.

The book reflects my own trajectory in a sense, as it mixes and discusses French and Anglo-American traditions in their approach of material culture. One of the main points is that I have purposefully decided to start my analysis not by the context, but from the artifact itself (the yam). I then describe the complex agricultural, social, cosmological processes, all merged into what I call the "technical process" by which the yam are made, before they are exchanged, consumed, replanted and used. To do

this, I use the tool of "chaîne opératoire" (a descriptive tool that goes back to Marcel Mauss, and that archaeologists know quite well), and show where one can see aspects that have been discussed by contemporary anthropological theories on material culture but also on Melanesian anthropology appear relevant and how these are integrated into the actual artefacts. In fact, it is as if, starting from yams, I came to address a lot of questions treated separately in anthropology, such as food, environment, gender relationships, modernity and the impact of new religious practices.



In many ways the book is more a methodological standpoint, rather than a theoretical one. But I also tried to address how "technology" and "techniques" have been dealt in the course of the last few decades in francophone and Anglophone anthropological writings, which implies a lot of fascinating and very complex theoretical issues.

*What is your greatest achievement to date?*

I would say, meeting the people of Nyamikum, the Abelam village where I did my fieldwork.

*What would you be if you were not in academia?*

Something related to storytelling, perhaps.

*What are you researching now?*

From a theoretical angle, I'm pursuing my investigation of how anthropological thinking deals with technology and technical systems. It means looking further at the different linguistic traditions (British, French, but also German), but also dialoging with other disciplines such as archaeology, of course, but also sociology, historians, museums and collections, as well as with domains such as engineering, ergonomics, and possibly design. What is happening with new materials also brings new type of relationships between people and things. I should not forget either about the role of aesthetics, so it also implies following my interest in the anthropology of art and museums.

As for fieldwork in Papua New Guinea, there are many opportunities I can build on from what I did before, such as food production, the role of cash crop, but also environmental changes (as we know, every technical system is deeply embedded within both the social and the environmental fabrics).  
*(Interview by Cecilia Eklund)*



## Film Programmes

### UCL Anthropology to Host Two London Open City and Royal Anthropological Institute Film Festivals, June 16-26 2011

#### Open City

*"I thought they were all weirdoes and then I realized that they weren't and I was one of them."* Diary of a Time Square Thief (Klaas Bense 2008)

Open City is a new and public-minded celebration of documentary film making in the heart of London. The central ethos of the festival is inclusivity and diversity. Amateur and professional will rub alongside each other in a truly public festival. Based at UCL and the Renoir Cinema in Bloomsbury, the festival will screen international shorts and features. Rather than chasing premieres, the emphasis will be on presenting the best films of the last 12 months alongside classic archival films that illuminate our present understanding of the world.

The four-day festival will begin on Thursday 16th June with a focus on UK films. Day two will broaden the focus to Europe and day three to World films. Throughout the festival we will screen MyStreet films, made by members of the public as part of the MyStreet competition, before feature and shorts programmes. The final day of the festival will see best of fest features and the closing gala featuring the best MyStreet films.

The full shape of the festival is emerging but we envision strands of the festival being curated by established film making professionals in which central aspects of the form are discussed in the context of archival and contemporary work.

Where possible there will be audience Q&As with the film makers and events

focused at bringing professional and public together.

#### RAI

UCL is honoured to have been awarded the chance to curate the 2011 Ethnographic Film Festival, which will run from 24-26 June and offers significant prizes to makers of films that have a clear anthropological orientation.

Alongside the festival we will also be organising a number of parallel events including a seminar provisionally entitled 'From Reith to internet TV: The impact of the democratisation of digital media to be held immediately after the film festival. Alex Argenti-Pillen has proposed hosting a film VJ event - a collaboration with the vibrant community of "realtime video" or "VJ" performance to interrogate cinematic modalities, visual representation, performativity, and synesthesia. In line with our interests as a department we will also host two retrospectives. One from Eastern Europe, an area which has for fifty years produced some of the best documentary work in the world. And one from the British Anthropologist of the Maasai Mellissa Llewellyn Davies, juxtaposing her extraordinary Maasai Diary films with some of her work in institutions in Britain.

*(Dr. Michael Stewart)*



### Film Training Courses on Offer from InSight Education at UCL Anthropology

Arts / Film Project Management  
Sat, 11 Sep 2010 - Sun, 12 Sep 2010

Arts / Film Project Management  
Sat, 9 Oct 2010 - Sun 10 Oct 2010

Developing and Pitching Documentaries  
Mon 11th Oct 2010 - Mon 1st Nov 2010 (evenings)

Multi-Platform Story telling  
Thurs 21st Oct 2010 - Thurs 11th Nov 2010 (evenings)

Intro to Final Cut Pro  
Sat 23rd Oct 2010 - Sun 24th October 2010

5 Day Documentary Camera Workshop  
Mon, 08 Nov 2010 - Sun, 12 Nov 2010 (reading week)

Final Cut Pro Intermediate  
Sat 20th Nov 2010 - Sun 21st Nov 2010

Producing Documentaries  
Mon 15th Nov 2010 - Mon 6th Dec 2010 (evenings)

Multi Platform Production  
Thurs 18th Nov 2010 - Thurs 9th Dec 2010 (evenings)

Directing Actors  
Sat, 4 Dec 2010 - Sun 5 Dec 2010

Distributing Documentaries  
Sat 11 Dec 2010 - Sun 12 Dec 2010

## MyStreet Competition

The advert opposite, which UCL Anthropology is putting out with this issue of the newsletter marks the launch of a digital, Mass Observation project attempting to recover the inspiring creative spirit of the movement of that name established in 1936.

In that year, during the 'abdication crisis' and as a result of a strange coincidence of letters and poems published in the News Statesman, three Cambridge based social scientists including Tom Harrison, the colourful anthropologist and Humphrey Jennings, the organiser of the great Surrealist Exhibition of 1936 who was to go on to become Britain's greatest documentary film maker, established an extraordinary and enduring project: they wanted to use the distributed resources of mass society to carry out an anthropology of the modern world. So strange had public reactions to the King's unseemly exit been that they called on the population of Britain to observe itself, take notes on itself and send them in to a vast national archive. That idea was so powerful that there is still today a small band of reporters sending in notes on 'the state of the nation' to the Mass Observation archive in Sussex University.

Now UCL Anthropology is setting out to create a modern and digital version of this idea. UCL has long been at the forefront of ethnographic and anthropological innovation and MyStreet is just the latest in a series of innovations.

One of the true novelties here is that MyStreet is an online competition whereby participants can not only upload and view their films on the internet ([www.mystreetfilms.com](http://www.mystreetfilms.com)) but they will be able to edit them as well on our site, should they lack the resources to do so themselves. The website, a new narrowcast outlet for documentary film, will come to present a panoramic tapestry of the nation's stories, searchable through detailed metadata enabling members of the public, schools, universities and filmmaking professionals to view the world they live in.

The best of each year's films will be presented alongside professional feature films at the new, UCL hosted OPEN CITY London Documentary Film Festival and the winning films and filmmakers will be championed at the closing Gala ceremony hosted at the Renoir Cinema.

Alongside the open invitation we will be working with schools to train and inspire young people in the craft of documentary making. We will do this by bringing young professionals, alongside UCL student volunteers into secondary schools to work with children. The day-long workshops will result in groups of five children having worked together to make their own MyStreet films that will be edited and published on the [mystreet-films.com](http://mystreet-films.com).

The project has already won the endorsement of leading film makers. Stephen Daldry, Academy Award nominated director of Billy Elliott, The Hours and The Reader says: "MyStreet is a terrific idea. Every street in the country should have a MyStreet film made about it. Then we'll all know who we are."

Simon Chinn, Academy Award winning producer of Man on Wire says: "Everyone should make a MyStreet film. It's a brilliant and fresh way of looking at our world. I look forward to seeing them."

Over to you now!

Michael Stewart, Director - MyStreet and London Open City

*If you would like further details please write to Andrew Steggall at: [andrew@motiongrouppictures.com](mailto:andrew@motiongrouppictures.com)*



# My Street!

Get to know your hood....

## **INVITATION TO THE PUBLIC:**

My Street is many things.

It's where I live, it's where you live, it's an idea, it's your hood, your locale, your community, your neighbours, it could even be your corridor or your lift عراشل اي دلب, mia strada, az én utcám, Sokaktaki, mera gallee, my street....

Now it is two more things: it's a competition for you to make a short documentary film about your "street" and it is a new, online website and channel where these films can be seen, telling the nation's story, street by street.....by you.

We all come from some place. We all live some place. But how much do we know about that place? So often in the city we have no idea where our neighbours come from, how they live, how they see us. Or, more likely, we have an idea, but it's wrong.

Go out and ask you neighbour who they are; chat to the man at the bus stop, ask the lady in the corner-store what she thinks of the street. You might be surprised what you hear, you might learn something, you might teach the rest of us something, you might make a work of art and you might play your part in tipping the world on its axis.

Anyone can engage. Anyone can contribute. Anyone can participate. Anyone can win the grand prize at the My Street Gala Presentation in June 2011.

The format, content and style of the films you make is entirely open. We simply want you to think about your street and make a film of 2 to 6 minutes about some aspect of it that interests you.

Films should be submitted to [www.MyStreetfilms.com](http://www.MyStreetfilms.com) - going live October 15<sup>th</sup>

## Departmental Reading and Research Groups

### Cosmology, Religion, Ontology and Culture (CROC)

Run by Allen Abramson & Martin Holbraad

Thursdays 1-2pm, Room 132

CROC is a fortnightly gathering of graduate students and staff who share an interest in cosmologically informed approaches to anthropology. Conceived as a space to share ideas, read good books and discuss each other's work, the group has for the past five years brought together people working on such topics as religion and ritual, mythical landscapes, risk and death in the modern world, indigenous mathematics, cosmologies of exchange, ontologies of emotion and seduction, and much more.



The group runs fortnightly in one-hour meetings, in which pre-circulated texts are discussed. During Term 1 the discussion focuses on published readings that are pertinent to the overall themes of the group. Reading lists are posted on the group's Moodle site at the beginning of the year. In Term 2 discussion turns to texts written by the group's members (draft articles, thesis chapters, project proposals, etc.). In some years the group has continued to meet during Term 3 and/or the summer. In addition, every year we welcome external speakers – in the past these have included Bruce Kapferer, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and the late Mary Douglas.

### Primate Sexualities: Beyond the Binary

Run by Prof Volker Sommer & Kathleen Bryson

Thursdays 1-2pm (07 Oct, 21 Oct, 04 Nov, 18 Nov, 02 Dec) Room 224



Black and white, raw and cooked, sick and healthy, we and them, animals and humans, good and bad: we have a strong tendency to pigeonhole our world in dualistic categories. This is particularly true with respect to dimensions related to gender and sexuality. Who doesn't think in "male and female" or "straight and gay"? Such a binary approach to life is certainly practical, allows us to make fast decisions and provides some sense of security. However, dichotomous structures are social constructs and do not correctly reflect physical or biological realities. The "real world" is fuzzy, full of gradualism.

Our reading group aims to explore the roots of our tendency to view the world in opposites. For this, we will engage with historical, philosophical and psychological contexts and concepts. Venturing into the field of evolution of cognition, we will also try to understand if and how other animals "construct" their worlds, in particular our closest living relatives, monkeys and apes. It will probably lead us to question concepts such as "species" and "sex" upon which much of current biological and sociological theorizing is built. With this, we will hopefully arrive at an informed understanding of alternative concepts, currently engendered by the fashionable term "queerness".

### Digital Culture

Run by Lane DeNicola & Jerome Lewis

The Digital Culture Reading and Research Group is a fortnightly gathering of graduate students and staff who share an interest in the cultural and political dimensions of digital media and information technology. Newly formed in Autumn 2010, the group is intended to provide an informal opportunity to engage intellectually with texts, ideas, and phenomena of common interest and to discuss each other's work. Envisioned topics include the digital divide, indigenous media, game cultures, values and aesthetics in simulation, identity and mobile communications, hacking/phreaking communities, personal informatics and digitally mediated surveillance, space and location-aware devices, mobile health, materiality and the Internet of Things, and so on.

The group runs fortnightly in one-hour meetings, in which pre-circulated texts are discussed. During Term 1 the discussion focuses on published readings that are pertinent to the overall themes of the group. Reading lists are posted on the group's wiki at the beginning of the year. In Term 2 discussion turns to texts written by the group's members (draft articles, thesis chapters, project proposals, etc.). Depending upon our individual schedules, the group may meet during Term 3 and/or the summer. In addition, we may occasionally welcome external speakers.



**Issues in Transnationalism and Migration (ITM)**

Run by Ruth Mandel  
 Wednesday 5-6pm, Room tba

ITM is a fortnightly gathering of graduate students and staff who share an interest in a wide range of issues relating to anthropological approaches to transnational movements of people. Migrant minority communities, identity change due to transnational movement, and related topics might be the sorts of things members' research address. The precise topics will depend on the interests and expertise of the group members. Members can present research in progress for group discussion, discuss pre-circulated readings of mutual interest, and so on. Occasionally we will have an outside speaker or a film. The group runs fortnightly in one-hour meetings.

**Social Science Materials Research (SMR)**

The Social Science Materials Research Group is an interdisciplinary research cluster spanning anthropology, archaeology, history of art, museology, geography, political science, STS and Fine art. Within anthropology, ongoing research of staff and students address the perception, selection, transformation and use of materials in design and how materials, in turn, inform social relations between persons and things, and persons and persons via things. These relationships concern not only culture, society and technology, but also landscape and environment, heritage and collections. The research group will be run under the auspices of the UCL Centre for Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies (<http://www.mhm.ucl.ac.uk/>).

**Sustainability, Environment and the Culture of Materials (SEM)**

Run by Victor Buchli, Jerome Lewis and Susanne Kuechler  
 Alternate Thursdays, 1-2pm, Room 132

Are culture and society necessarily opposed to nature? What are the emerging theoretical and practical trends seeking to understand and address the growing problems associated with reconciling the limitations of our environment with our consumption of it? What can studies of alternative conceptions of society and nature, of sustainable design and manufacturing processes or waste recycling contribute to these debates?

This reading and research group will bring together interested staff and graduate students to explore and debate anthropological and other work that discusses the conundrums around concepts and practices of sustainability, of different cultural constructions of the environment, and of new cultures of production and consumption. In addition to critically engaging with the research, concepts and competing theories, we will share each others' work and ideas on what the key issues are, and critically discuss different solutions being proposed to explain them, or being implemented to resolve them.

The group runs fortnightly in one-hour meetings, in which pre-circulated texts are discussed. Discussion focuses on pertinent published readings, texts written by the group's members (draft articles, thesis chapters, project proposals, etc.) and invited external speakers.



## Conferences and Workshops

### Marie Curie SocAnth Closing Event

For the past four years UCL has led and coordinated an extraordinary international doctoral school. Known around our buildings simply as Marie Curie – after the FP6 funding stream which provided the income to run it though SocAnth was its official acronym – this aimed quite simply to provide brilliant eastern European students with the resources to carry out doctoral research on a par with their western European contemporaries.



In most of the communist countries up till 1989 social science in general was frowned upon – the official state credo, Marxism-Leninism, claimed to have found the answers to all important social questions – and modern, comparative Anthropology was not allowed to take root. That began to change after 1989 but, with limited central resources Anthropology, which is always the poorer sibling in the social science family, struggled to get on its feet.

Today, thanks to SocAnth, and the extraordinarily generous funding by the EU which provided in the region of €1.8m for the whole training programme, there are fifteen more doctoral students from the region who are preparing to help construct our discipline in their home countries. And thanks to SocAnth – which also enabled some twenty students, drawn from doctoral programmes all over the world, to spend a total of 100 visitor-months as guests in the participating universities they are

part of a truly international network. At the end of June this year it was time to put the products of all this investment on display. Budapest's Central European University – a private, English language university founded and funded by the billionaire philanthropist of Hungarian origin, George Soros – which has been a loyal partner throughout the programme and whose Masters' training provided many of the SocAnth students was the obvious place to host the event: a three day international conference where the usual hierarchies were inverted. Standard procedure is for junior scholars and doctoral students to make the pilgrimage to one international conference after another where they can listen in awed respect to the wisdom of the elders. Here the elders came to sit at the feet of the students and contemplate what Anthropology in eastern Europe is going to look like in twenty years time when our students are running research and training programmes of their own.



The doyen of Europeanist anthropology, Michael Herzfeld, who is now based at Harvard but had originally been trained under John Campbell in Oxford, led the list of leading, senior colleagues. Douglas R. Holmes, who over the past ten years has been trying to give empirical and practical shape to a research programme that would incorporate the lessons and injunctions of George Marcus' work and in the course of this has written two brilliant books on the rise of integralist-populist politics in the kinds of communities beloved of European anthropologists, also turned up and gave a challenging talk on fieldwork in the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England. Now there's some fieldwork! Janet Carsten, who has been rewrit-

ing kinship theory for the discipline, Jonathan Spencer, who will be known to some readers for his work leading a reinvention of political anthropology, Akis Papataxiarchis, who created and now heads the Department of Anthropology at the University of the Aegean in Lesbos – a UCL Erasmus partner – alongside other leading figures in European anthropology like Susanna Narotzky and Lale Yalcin-Heckmann all provided the commentary on thirty presentations by the SocAnth students.



And there was rich fare on offer. The papers took us on a journey across the northern hemisphere, ranging from the Star-Wars style fantasy city of Asthana in Kazakhstan, through the horror or a Chechen refugee camp in the Polish plains or to Naples Italy where Ukrainian illegal migrants prop up the tottering Italian welfare state and are spat on by the locals for their efforts, to the 'organic' cooperatives of Ghana and onto the tobacco fields of Cuba. In an event like this it is not so much the individual papers that stand out – though there were brilliant examples of the mixing of ethnography and theory – rather the overall impression of a cohort with extraordinary solidarity, a powerful sense of a shared intellectual project and a fascinating route ahead of it.

If you want to know more about this project entirely funded by European taxpayers take a look at the videos now available at [www.ucl.ac.uk/marie-curiesocanth](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/marie-curiesocanth) and follow the links. (Dr. Michael Stewart, Coordinator SocAnth)

### **Anthropological Perspectives on Health, Genomics, Identities in Latin America**

This was the second meeting funded by the British Academy Latin-America Caribbean links scheme and took place in Belem, in north east Brazil. It was a pre-event linked to the National Association of Brazilian Anthropology annual meeting that followed it some days later. There were speakers from Brazil, US and UK. It was an interdisciplinary event with both social scientists and geneticists involved. The key note speech was given by Michael Montoya who gave a talk on genetic admixture, diabetes and Mexican identity. This was followed by a number of round table presentations with different presentations. The topics covered in these presentations included: the 'molecularisation' of prostate cancer in the use of DNA chip technology, ancestry and breast cancer risk in Brazil, Biopolitics, health and longevity, Degeneration and Eugenics in the History of Psychiatry, Racial classification and Semen Donation, Commercial ancestry testing in the US, Europe and Brazil, Medical Technology and popular notions of biology and race in Salvador da Bahia, a reflection on the history of the dialogue between geneticists and social scientists, Genetic Identity and a study of the status of embryos in Brazil, Indigenous Movements and ethnic identity in a Genetics study in the Peruvian Andes and a presentation by a leading member of the Genetics Department in Belem. We are in the process of collating the presentations into a book that should be out sometime next year.



Some of the key participants from the event are there including from left to right Michael Montoya from the University of California Irvine, Ricardo Ventura Santos (co-organisator of the event) from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Peter Fry from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Luiz Fernando Dias Duarte from the National Museum at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and myself). (Dr. *Sabra Gibbon*)

### **Recycling Textiles Technologies**



A workshop on "Recycling Textile Technologies" was held at UCL on the 14th of June 2010. Devised by Lucy Norris and Julie Botticello, researchers on project 6 in the WOTW programme, the workshop aimed to bring together people from different disciplines and sectors who work on textile recycling, with a view to exchange information and ideas about their common interest. The day covered a range of perspectives on textile recycling, including the history of the trade and its currency in Europe, anthropological analyses of the value of recycled textiles, the networks involved and their moral implications embedded in particular recycled goods, consumer research on attitudes to recycling and reuse, and a material science project investigating the reinvention of old recycling technologies to cater for an overabundance of low-grade materials. The day proved successful in its intention of creating a strongly focussed forum for interdisciplinary dialogue, with exchanges taking place both in the

### **Relational Knowledge and Cultural Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Nature, Gender, Family and Nation**

**Event in Honour of Nanneke Redclift**  
UCL, Daryll Forde Seminar Room  
September 30th, 2pm - 6pm

This symposium reflects on the relationship between knowledge and cultural identities related to changing concepts of nature, gender, family and the nation in comparative arenas. The notion of 'relational knowledge' has been central to this task, evoking a long history of feminist theorizing on the body and technology. Contributors include those whose past and current research is informed by these approaches through the teaching and supervision of Nanneke Redclift.

2.00 Introduction

2.10 - 3.00 Food/work: researching family food practices at the public-private interface. Rebecca O'Connell, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London

3.00 - 3.50 Anthropologist Gone Native: Reflections on Government Drugs Research and Policy. Sara Skodbo, Drugs Analysis and Research, Home Office.

3.50 - 4.10 coffee break

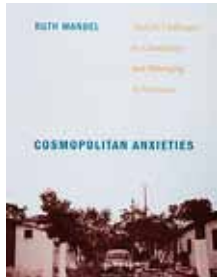
4.10 - 5.00 BRCA identities, Genetic Testing, Race and Ancestry; case studies from the UK and Brazil. Jessica Mozersky, Cancer Programme, Kings College London and Sahra Gibbon, Anthropology, Anthropology Department, UCL

5.00 - 5.50 Conflicts and Intellectual Property Rights in the Peruvian Amazon: the Role of Mediators. Claudia Ituarte, Anthropology Department, UCL

6.00 Drinks in the department

**New Books by Department Staff**

***Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Berlin***  
**Ruth Mandel**



In this book, I address alternative expressions of Islam, shifts in gender and generational relations, negotiating the homeland-diaspora consciousness and transmission, as well as the procrustean constraints lived by the migrant elites. In the course of carrying out my research I found that both historical disruptions and continuities in ways of thinking about salient others were central to understanding the present day. Thus, in one chapter I describe what I call the German-Jewish-Turkish nexus and pose the question: Are Turks really Germany's 'new Jews' as many have claimed?

The book engages other troubling issues as well; for example, why does the stereotypical headscarf worn by some Turkish women become fetishized by Germans in ways that Turks never could have predicted?

I also explore the curious role of language in the many monikers Turks and other foreign workers in Germany have assumed and been assigned over the last half-century of labor migration. The attitudes about Turks have proved extremely uncomfortable for a country that envisions itself as a quintessentially cosmopolitan, liberal, and progressive society and one that has struggled admirably to come to terms with its Nazi past.

Complicating the situation even more has been the historically informed, perennial German conflation of 'ethnicity' and citizenship. For many in Germany, the separation of an ethnic German from a German citizen is little less than cognitive dissonance. The book explores how this understanding precludes the meaningful incorporation and enfranchisement of foreigners, outsiders – Ausländer – from the body politic, undermining conventional notions of ethnicity in the process.

***Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Romany Studies***  
**Michael Stewart**



The scholarly field of Romany Studies has been trapped by the history of the Roma in a unique and perhaps even peculiar position in Europe. The investigation of Roma was in the past marginal to academic concerns because most of its practitioners were amateur folklorists interested in treating Gypsies as paragons of a lost world and not citizens of modern nation states. Today this field is hemmed in by two different and contrasting forces: the emotionally understandable if intellectually debilitating concern to turn the plight of the Roma into a matter of 'human rights' and the difficulty academics have of dealing with a people who are not a people in the sense that nation states constitute and make people.

One aim of this volume is to chart a course away from these constraining and rather ideologised approaches.

Over the past ten years George Soros'

Higher Education Support Program has tried to bring together all those who wish to work for greater understanding of Romany concerns in the academy. This particular volume is the result of a series of summer schools at the Universities of Central Europe in Budapest and Babes Bolyai in Cluj, Romania. It is organised in three sections dealing with the academic use of the notion of ethnicity, its political usage outside the academy in Europe today and with new forms of anti-Romany racism.

***Lines That Connect: Rethinking Pattern and Mind in the Pacific***  
**Graeme Were**



Building on historical and contemporary literature in anthropology and art theory, *Lines That Connect* treats pattern as a material form of thought that provokes connections between disparate things through processes of resemblance, memory, and transformation. Pattern is constantly in a state of motion as it traverses spatial and temporal divides and acts as an endless source for innovation through its inherent transformability. Graeme Were argues that it is the ideas carried by pattern's relational capacity that allows Pacific islanders to express their links to land, genealogy, and resources in the most economic ways. In doing so, his book is a timely and unique contribution to the analysis of pattern and decorative art in the Pacific amid growing debates in anthropology and art history.

## News and Upcoming Events Recent Retirements

### Professor Nanneke Redcliff



This summer, after 25 years as a member of the Department of Anthropology, Professor Nanneke Redcliff is retiring. Nanneke came to UCL in 1985 having begun 'life' in English Literature before switching (like many of us do) to a second life in anthropology. (The life-changing moment occurred, she says, whilst reading E.H. Dodd's book *The Greeks and the Irrational*.) Nanneke subsequently completed her PhD in the Anthropology Department at Sussex under the supervision of Freddie Bailey, conducting her doctoral fieldwork in a village in north west Catalunya. Her anthropological interest in matters Hispanic remained strong – and still remains strong – its focus though on the contemporary politics of knowledge, identity and history shifting to Latin America. A few years ago, Nanneke was instrumental in establishing the Latin America Research Group in the department. Her continuing fieldwork is in the Yucatan peninsula in South-Eastern Mexico.

Whilst lecturing at Sussex, Nanneke edited a successful book on gender and labour power called *Beyond Employment: Household, Gender and Subsistence* and when she finally took up residence in the Social Anthropology section of the department, she took over what was proverbially known then as 'the gender course'. In Nanneke's care, the course morphed as *The Anthropology of Sex-Gender Systems*

and rapidly became one of the 'must-do' courses for all thoughtful students leaning towards social (anthropology) and not just, as was often jokingly pointed out, a course for militant feminists plus the one poor bloke who cringed at the back of the class when the lecturer began "As women, we know, of course, that..." In fact, scores of students who took the course – male as well as female – flocked to Nanneke's office door in search of supervision in sex/gender-related topics. Many of these students went on to write their own doctorates under Nanneke's assiduous supervision (in fact, she supervised over 30 doctoral students!) before invariably moving onto prestigious jobs in and outside of academia.

Throughout her stay in the department, Nanneke has been universally known for the sophistication (and great lucidity) of her contributions to its intellectual life. She was never afraid to engage with contemporary trends in social theory and to find ethnographic outlets for their abstract content. Research-wise, this led her gradually towards a searching interest in the cultural dimensions of biotechnologies and led her (together with Sahra Gibbon) to found The Genetics and New Technology Research Group. Her boundless efforts to bind students and staff together productively in this research area bore fruit recently in two books *Contesting Moralities: Science, Identity, Conflict* (2005) and *Genetics: Critical Concepts in Social and Cultural Theory* (in 2006 with Sahra Gibbon).

Over the last 3 years, Nanneke headed the department resolutely, effectively and firmly and, noticeably, with great regard for her colleagues. Consequently, all of the latter and all of her past students will join us in offering our best wishes to her in her retirement... which in addition to watering the roses, of course, means enjoying the well-deserved freedom to carry on researching and benefitting the Department in emeritus. (*Dr. Allen Abramson*)

### Professor Mike Rowlands



This is a department that has had many luminaries in its time, think for example of Mary Douglas, but what I would say about Mike Rowlands, first, and perhaps foremost, is that he is surely one of the most brilliant academics this department has ever had or is ever likely to have. These days we never seem to have time but there was a period of perhaps twenty years when staff used to regularly meet for lunch and also in the pub after work, and I remember sharing lunch with Mike probably hundreds of times in which he would get into a conversation about anthropological research and intellectual issues. And you never ever knew where this was going to lead, it might start with a news story or discussion of a student's work. And Mike would take a completely unexpected stance, and come up with a research agenda. If only we thought this through we would surely come up with an entirely different understanding of some small matter, like the entirety of political economy, a new future for Structural Marxism, a genuine basis for comparative studies. The word brilliant doesn't just mean shedding some light, it implies a blinding revelation, astonishing new perspective that you never dreamt anyone could come up with. And at the end of lunch I felt like that, thanks to Mike. These were things we absolutely had to study and reveal to the world at large.

There is no doubt that one person above all deserves credit for the establishment of the Material Culture section of this department and that is Mike Rowlands. He was the one individual

who understood its worth, nurturing it when it was fragile (and there were a couple of times early on when it came close to being abolished), and seeing it through to its present state as an integral part of our programme. A telling point in this development was the editing in 1977 of a hugely influential volume called *The Evolution of Social Systems* with Jonathan Friedman which apart from grounding certain Marxist ideas also provided a unique articulation between archaeology, history and anthropology that simply didn't work within conventional disciplines. It needed this more flexible and dynamic, but also less disciplined, branch of anthropology. It demonstrated how material culture could explore the interstices between disciplines in a highly productive fashion. The vision of material culture that Mike represented was not some literal devotion to the study of things, but this far more imaginative weave between established paradigms and perspectives.

Mike's early work was based in archaeology including influential publications such as *The Internal Structure and Regional Context of Early Iron Age Society in South-Western Germany*, with Sure Frankenstein and studies on the interpretation of iron working. He then helped to promote a series of critical perspectives, including the work of Immanuel Wallerstein through his Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World. In addition there were shorter periods of both archaeological fieldwork in sites ranging from Brazil to Denmark. Several of these contributions culminated in a joint collection with K. Kristiansen called *Social Transformations in Archaeology: Global and Local Perspectives*. Gradually the archaeological work was complemented by both historical and ethnographic fieldwork based in Cameroon and often in collaboration with the Paris based Jean-Pierre Warnier. This included a range of topics from sorcery and the state to the material culture of success with

its orientation more to consumption. Other topics varied from trade through to issues of identity. More recently Mike has developed a highly successful programme in collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology around the general areas of cultural heritage, the interpretations of monuments and challenging issues of memory and history. This was the mainstay of his more recent teaching in the department and of several publications in 2007 together with Ferdinand de Jong. In its wake have come several important collaborations ranging from the UCL Centre for the Study Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies together with the British Museum, through to growing links with Chinese anthropology.

Against these developments in the range of his interests has been one constant property which was a commitment to critique. This includes his involvement in the development of the *Journal Critique of Anthropology*. Throughout Mike's contributions to material culture studies there has always been a sense of the Marxist concept of materialism evident in his contribution to the book *Materiality*, but also in many writings about the state, colonialism and the wider political economy. His celebration of critique also included the more academic value in a certain destabilising of established thought, which simply fostered out ability to see things in another way.

Although technically Mike has retired, he clearly intends to further this programme of work in the future and as much as possible in collaboration with our department. This is an aspiration that will be welcomed by all those who have worked with him over the years, were inspired by his ideas and recognise him above all as a towering intellectual figure the like of which we are unlikely to see again for quite some time. (Prof. Daniel Miller)

## New Course Anthropology of Games and Simulation

Anthropologists have studied games since at least the late nineteenth century, and in more recent decades mimicry and play have become phenomena of special interest. While being "just a game" is usually a trivializing qualifier reserved for leisure activities and child's play, games are a form of social interaction that have persisted for millennia and are present in all cultures. As a set of practices, artefacts, and protocols, games are distinct from literature or drama, art or audiovisual media, worship or learning (though they have overlapped with each).



With the proliferation of digital technologies, computer games now challenge the primacy of television and cinema as the dominant entertainment media, and together with professional sports, "games" represent many billions of dollars in revenue. This course begins by considering the diverse forms of simulation and theories about its function for and operations within various societies.

Games and their analysis are then considered in contrast to simulation, with subsequent weeks narrowing in topical specificity to include play and labour, luck and superstition, interface/experience/the body, and the formation of identity and community through game-forms from the Olympics to computer gaming guilds. We close by considering the design and play of games as a possible method for critical social inquiry. (Dr. Lane DeNicola)



## New Appointments / PostDocs / Studentships

### Andrea Migliano Lecturer

My research interests lie in observing and explaining adaptive differences in human populations. My doctoral research focused on Philippine pygmies, when using life history theory I proposed a new adaptive explanation for pygmies' short stature. After the PhD as a Junior Research Fellow at Clare College, University of Cambridge, I kept my interests on the ecological and cultural selective pressures behind the evolution of human phenotypic diversity; and extended the studies on the evolution of pygmy's phenotype to populations in Papua New Guinea. Currently, I am working on the evolution of body size variation of pygmies and extremely tall populations in Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Kenya. My aim is to understand the evolutionary mechanisms involved in the determination of their phenotype, and the genetic basis of their life history singular traits.

### Alex Fanghanel PostDoc

I am just finishing my PhD at the University of Leeds where I have studied the ways in which knowledges about fear and safety, which constitute street-wisdom, are constructed. Using a mix of data obtained from mapping interviews, walking interviews and multimedia diaries I examined the ways in which teenage girls made sense of their home towns as places they liked, where they belonged, or where they felt that they did not belong, and the inclusions and exclusions inherent in such a discussion. Using this range of methods to examine the intersubjective relationship between women's bodies, and the spaces that they occupy,

I was able to analyse how sense is made of space, how knowledges about 'good' and 'bad' space circulate and inform women's understanding of themselves in space. The findings of this study call into question the way in which many existing studies of women's fear of crime has been theorised and suggests that by applying an affective theoretical lens - one which recognises the indeterminacy and fluidity of intersubjective relationships between bodies and space - a more precise and more thorough understanding of the feminine experience of occupying space, can be garnered.

I start work in the UCL Anthropology department on 1st October and I will be working as a post-doc on Sara Randall's ESRC/ANR funded research project on Harmonised Households. This research, along with its sister project headed by Philippe Antoine at CEPED in Paris will examine how the definition of household used in survey data collection influences, biases or distorts perspectives on intergenerational support and relationships. Comparative research will be undertaken in the UK and France, in Senegal and Burkina Faso (Francophone Africa) and in Uganda (Anglophone Africa). Earlier research in Tanzania by Professor Randall and Dr Ernestina Coast (now LSE) will also be included. One aim of the work is to establish in what ways context (North or South) and linguistic and academic tradition (British or French) impact on what definitions are used, how they are understood by data analysts, policy makers and NGOs and the ramifications of this for interventions and policies. I will be involved in both the British and the West African research.

### Sarah Brooke Studentship

Since studying Biological Sciences at Reading University I went on to Manchester Metropolitan University to read Behavioural Ecology where I had my first experiences in East Africa conducting research throughout the Northern

National Parks of Tanzania and then I spent three months in Kenya for my thesis. Having the Africa bug I then went on to assist a PhD student in Namibia for five months living just outside Cape Cross Seal Reserve on the West coast. Here, I collected social behavioural data with particular interest to the helper system during the reproductive season. It was here that I decided that as fascinating as it was to witness animal behaviour this intimately and closely, I was interested more in the relationship between wildlife and people and particularly in relation to conflict between wildlife and humans in human dominated landscapes.

During a trip to Tanzania, visiting a friend I got involved with humanitarian organisations and was teaching orphan and street children English. I had six weeks work experience on the coast of Tanzania in Kilwa working for an NGO involved in community harvesting of Mpingo. I also used this time to scope out some potential research sites to conduct a PhD in elephant conflict with little success. Whilst travelling between Kenya and Tanzania I reconnected with the NGO I was working for during my Masters and was taken on as a Conservation Biologist working on cheetah conflict in south eastern Kenya. Over the year I was responsible for reporting on the extent of the carnivore depredation in the area and radio-tracking the collared individuals. While I was back in the UK I further developing my PhD ideas while working briefly for IUCN assisting them to write portfolios of flagship species threatened by climate change ahead of the December 2009 Copenhagen Convention before winning the Vodafone World of Difference award. This award allowed me to work at my chosen organisation for two months to gain additional skills and knowledge, I chose Fauna and Flora International. Since leaving FFI I have been coordinating research in Southern Madagascar on littoral forest fauna and flora and that brings me close to the 24th October where I will land in the UK and move to London!

**Past Students:  
Where Are They Now?**

**Kate Solomon  
1996-1999 Undergraduate Studies  
in Anthropology**



“It was a really lucky series of events,” Kate Solomon modestly says of the extraordinary opportunities that came her way subsequent to completing undergraduate studies at UCL. Solomon may be best known as a producer on major motion pictures such as *United 93* (2006) and this year’s *The Green Zone*, but it is what she learned as an anthropology student that helped shape her career.

Having developed a keen interest in ethnographic film and material culture, Solomon returned to Nepal, where she taught English during her gap year, to conduct research for her dissertation in 1999. She examined the changes in fashion over the course of three generations of women within the Gurungs, an ethnic community historically recruited for Gurkha military regiments. Solomon explains that elder Gurung women remained in Nepal while their male relatives were in service. They wore “more traditional clothing such as block-printed wrap skirts, velvet crossover tops, beads and gold jewelry.” Women in their forties, whose fashion was influenced by experiences abroad, accompanying their husbands serving mostly in Hong Kong. They typically wore t-shirts and lungis. Their daughters, however, were “riding mopeds, wearing trousers and tight shirts.” She says it was fascinating to see on the street

how “modernization and exposure to the West had changed the Gurungs.”

After viewing the ten-minute documentary she made on Gurung fashion, Professor Christopher Pinney recommended an ethnographic video course in India offered by David and Judith MacDougall, renowned for their work in ethnographic film and theory. Solomon had the great fortune of attending the three-week intensive program and returned to Nepal to shoot, *What Gurkhas Did Next*. Her documentary examined what men did with the pension received after retiring from military service. Dr. Michael Yorke generously edited the film, shown in the RAI Film Festival. From there, she worked on Yorke’s *Kumb Mehla* series, as well as numerous documentaries on topics such as the Ice Age, Roman animal games, and the Black Death. Solomon directed *The Missing Chink* about London’s Chinese community and how they are often left out of local debates on race and identity.

She was introduced to Paul Greengrass, director of *Bloody Sunday*, and two of the *Bourne* films. He hired her as a producer on *United 93*, a film based on the hijacking of a Boeing 757 on 9-11. She believes “it was the perfect step into film in that Paul marries documentary and film together.” She interviewed all of the passenger and crewmember families, air traffic controllers and the 9-11 Commission panel. “We brought all of the facts together and tried to create a truth through it.” Such veracity was also aimed for *The Green Zone*, but “through a fictional story told through a factual landscape.”

Solomon admits that her work is very much informed by the anthropological training received at UCL. “Anthropology gives you a specialism that is transferable to almost everything.” In essence, she developed the capacity “to understand what things mean to people; to look

at the factors that bare down on them and why they do the things they do.”

Several projects are in development with Greengrass and she looks forward to producing smaller budget films. “What makes filmmaking fun,” she adds, “is the ability to immerse yourself in something and then come out of it with a finished project that is then set free into the world. Then you immerse yourself again. There’s something very satisfying in that.”

*(Jill Reese)*

**Rachel Singh  
Intel Digital Health  
Internship 2010**



Rachel Singh, graduate student of digital anthropology (2009-2010), has been selected for the Intel Digital Health Ethnographic Research Internship 2010, for Intel Ireland’s Digital Health Group Europe (DHeG). Rachel joined the group in May and has been conducting research investigating how older adult’s constant contact with new information and communication technologies (ICTs) is impacting their health and well-being. The project, initially conducted in partial fulfilment of her M.Sc. thesis, was picked up by Intel and scoped into a 6-month, four-phase ethnographic research study led by Rachel under the supervision of senior anthropologists and DHeG Principal Investigators, Dr. Simon Roberts and Dr. David Prendergast. Phase I of the project is currently ongoing, and is exploring the reality of 22 older peo-

ple's lives across six counties in Ireland. The internship runs 11-months and is designed to give interns a central position in local and international projects. As a member of the DHeG Rachel will also be contributing to technology solutions which address some of the health and social care challenges the world is facing as a result of phenomena such as rapid population ageing, the rise of chronic diseases, challenges to the status quo of medical and care professions, as well as individuals' own personal management of health and wellness.

She will also be assisting on projects at the Technology Research for Independent Living Centre – a research consortium between University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Intel, General Electric Healthcare and Ireland's Industrial Development Agency. There she will be working with multidisciplinary teams of technologists, social scientists, business and health specialists, clinicians, designers and engineers conducting primary qualitative research to understand "user" and organisational needs for, and responses to, new technologies in the health, social care and independent living arenas.

Initial talks with Intel resulted from her search for a short placement project to fulfil the course requirements for her Applied Anthropology option. She notes, "The Applied Anthropology course allowed me to open up a door that I otherwise may not have opened. I would like to thank the course tutors Rodney Reynolds and Jennifer Randall for supporting me to pursue inquiries with Intel. In addition, I am very grateful to Digital Anthropology course tutors Lane DeNicola and Daniel Miller and UCL Fellow Stefana Broadbent for their ongoing support of my research."

## Recently Completed PhDs

### Julie Boticello

1) *What is the title of your PhD?*

"The Materialization of Wellbeing among Yoruba-Nigerians in London"

2) *What is it about?*

The research considered Yoruba-Nigerians living in London. It focused on the daily life practices and social relations of those connected to a street market and a Pentecostal church, with a view to understanding cultural identity in dis/re-location. The research revealed that wellbeing for Yoruba people in London is acquired through the use of transnational healing materials, an engagement with global religious practices, socially expansive intergenerational relations and through reciprocal relations with new people of different nationalities and ethnicities.

3) *What are you doing now/what are your plans?*

I currently work at UCL on the Economic and Social Research Council funded project, the Waste of the World, which explores waste and its potential use as resource. For this, I focus on the reuses of second-hand clothing in the UK in commercial and personal contexts. I am considering the relationship between sustainable consumption in clothing and food, and I plan to develop a further research project which addresses this nexus.

### Marjorie Murray

1) *What is the title of your PhD?*

"Madrid: The Material Culture of City Life"

2) *What is it about?*

This thesis uses material culture to explore the holistic questions of cosmology, values and practice in Madrid, arguing for the possibility of studying Madrid as cosmology, for which I consider a diachronic perspective. The ethnographic study of informants' concern with clothing indoors and outdoors; the display and practices related to the different home areas, an account of friendship and kinship as observed through the use of mobile phones, and the several steps they follow in the one-month Christmas time celebrations -placed in juxtaposition-, led me to question several sociological assumptions about this city and to theorize about this specific "civilización", which in turn configures specific kinds of individuals. Rather than a family-centered society, family is found to be one specific idiom among others: family has to be considered within larger constructions of private and public and within the frame of the city itself. The individuality that is constructed and most of all the larger entity that constitutes being a proper Madrilenian, imposes constraints and expectations that lead to unexpected forms and degree of homogeneity. Under this frame, Madrilenians appear as porous, heteronymous individuals in the city and of the city. This thesis is a contribution to European and urban anthropology.

3) *What are you doing now/what are your plans?*

I am a lecturer in Social Anthropology at the Sociology Department at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago, Chile. I have recently started a research project on the study of mother-infant dyad configuration in Chile in the context of a recent law that marks strong state presence in child rearing. Currently I teach the following courses: Anthropological Theory, Anthropology of Mass Consumption and Ethnography. (*Interviews by Beverley Langevine*)

*Special thanks to co-editors Cecilia Eklund, MSc International Public Policy ,  
Beverley Langevine, MSc Digital Anthropology and to Jill Reese, MA Material &  
Visual Culture for her contribution.*