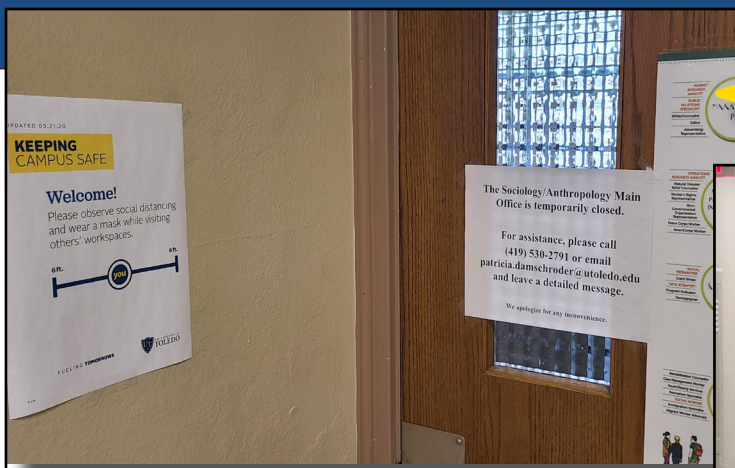




Newsletter

Fall 2020

Volume 4, No.1



It's been a quite time this academic year on campus....



Empty Halls, but classes went on...

This Fall we continued to do what we could to reduce the spread of Covid-19. This included a prolonged shut down of many campus offices. While the halls were empty, our faculty and students continued to meet virtually and push forward in their research.

Below, several faculty have shared a few creative thoughts, in the form of haikus, inspired by the ongoing effort to remain social, but socially distant this semester...

*Click, unmute, share, chat
My daily autumn routine
Hope for a new year*

-Hasse

*Learned halls stand empty
Voiceless hollow and alone
Diligence prevails all*

-Zych

*It's Brady Bunch time
I see myself and I cringe
Look like Jim Varney*

-Hasse

*Asking a question
Dora the Explorer-me
Will someone answer?*

-Mungo

*One by one by one
Once present and in person
Now an empty square*

-Baltus

*Record this lecture
The daily reminders bark
Teaching during 'Rona.*

-Mungo

*Damn you, you're to blame
You put my haikus to shame
Damn you, damn you, damn*

-Hasse

*Talking to blank screens
Is my new superpower
Pandemic teaching*

-Mungo

*Job loss job hunt death
Pokemon Star Wars Star Trek fun
Keeping me alive*

-Rodriguez

In this issue:

Racial Justice Working Group (pg 2)

Alumni and Student accomplishments... (pg 2-3)

Racial Justice Working Group Provide Reflection and Guidance

On Wednesday, June 10, 2020, faculty members from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology did not engage in regular research, meetings, classes, or “business as usual.” Instead, they joined hundreds of academics across the country in the #ShutDownAcademia, #ShutDownSTEM, and #Strike4BlackLives strike. Recognizing that white and non-Black people of color need to do their part in carrying out direct actions to eliminate systemic racism, faculty worked together to create an anti-racism action plan for the department. The plan included a range of action items such as assessing and modifying department elaborations to better take into account contributions made and work often done by Black faculty, identifying and participating in anti-racist training opportunities, and creating spaces that center research on racial justice. Throughout the fall semester, faculty worked to implement their plans and will continue to do so in light of their commitment to ensuring an institution that is free of racism and discrimination.

STAY CONNECTED

Stay up to date with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UT. Like and Follow us on **Facebook** to keep in touch with the latest developments in our Department including recent the accomplishments of our students, updates on the latest research in our fields, and notices for our upcoming events. Alumni be sure to keep in touch and let us know what is important to you, what questions do you have, what is new in your world!

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Education-Website/>

UToledo-Department-of-Sociology-Anthropology-114528263620008/



Checking in on our Alumni...

Emma Janosik completed her Master of Arts degree in Anthropology in August of 2020 at Kent State University. She compiled a thesis entitled – “Does Early Manipulation of Oxytocin Influence Serotonin Innervation Within the Hippocampus?” under the supervision of Dr. Mary Ann Raghanti.

Her research centered on neurochemicals – oxytocin (OT) and serotonin - which affect social recognition & social behavior in primates and rodents. Primates (unlike most other mammals) have a decreased reliance on olfaction and increased visual acuity – both of which are essential for food detection, mate selection and social and sexual communication among human and nonhuman primates. Her study contributes to studies into the long-term repercussion of synthetic oxytocin, commonly used in hospitals to influence the

timing of childbirth. Oxytocin (OT) plays an important role in mother-infant bonding as well as inducing uterine contractions and the regulation of milk ejection in mothers. Disruptions to the OT system during critical stages of postnatal development can result in long-term changes to serotonin (which plays a role in OT levels) expression in some adult brain regions involved in aggression and social behavior.

Richard Hamant continues his graduate work at Johns Hopkins University. His concentration on tuberculosis research has been seriously impacted by COVID-19. The Center for TB Research, on which he was dependent, had to be repurposed to take on the recent coronavirus. His lab work/research now involves the fungus – *Cryptococcus neoformans* – specifically, & the possibility of using such fungal

pathogens to target cell death pathways.

Meg Perry recently co-authored an ebook entitled *Kemēcemenaw: Tribal Extension Partnerships That Support Food Sovereignty on the Menominee Indian Reservation* with two members of the Menominee nation. Simultaneously, she is also working on her masters degree in English at the University of North Dakota. She will be studying early Indigenous literature, focusing on the recovery of marginalized women and Native American writers. In that she found her undergraduate linguistics courses in the English department of at the University of Toledo (Meg double majored in English and Anthropology) so “fascinating,” she may also do some study on Indigenous English and dialects. Meg now works with the White Earth Reservation, which allows her to commute from Minnesota to North Dakota in pursuit of graduate work. Her White Earth project involves interviewing Anishinaabe elders for what will be another publication, *The Thirteen Moons*. She also continues to exercise the expertise gained while at the Menominee reserve in Wisconsin as she works now with immigrants near the White

Earth in establishing community gardens.

Ryan Schmidt continues his research on ancient DNA. He is presently in Portugal at a Biodiversity and Genetics Institute assoc. w/the University of Porto. His team is working on paleogenomics of canid remains from archaeological contexts in Iberia, North Africa and the Middle East. His recent postdoc in Ireland involving dogs has been published in the October 2020 issue of *Science* (See below). As Portugal doesn't have the ancient DNA lab needed for his analysis, it meant spending time in Sweden where he generated the data now being analyzed in Portugal. Ryan said it was strange being in Sweden at this time given that it has had no lockdown policy re: COVID-19. Given the seriousness of a second wave of COVID in the states, Ryan has been contracted to work with the New York City Medical Examiner's Office helping to process decedents from homes possibly affected by the coronavirus. On that note, the work he had been contracted to do regarding battlefield remains of U.S. soldiers is on hold due to COVID.

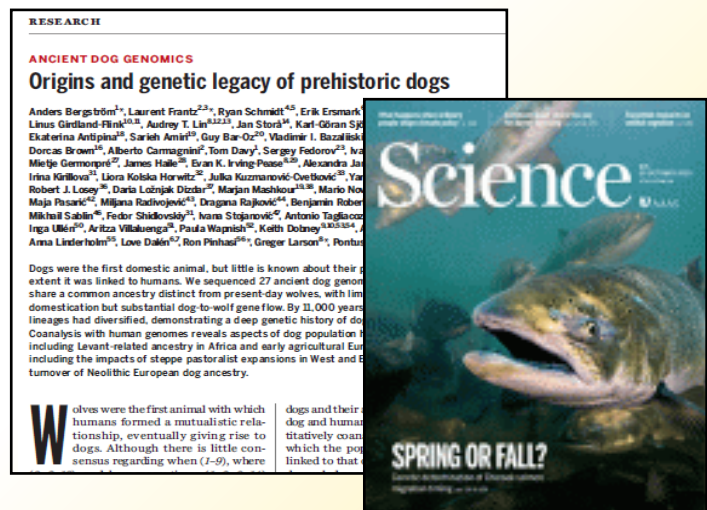
Yeah, we will brag about our students some more...!

Our congratulations go out to Undergraduate Alumnus **Ryan Schmidt** (Anthropology) whose postdoc research involving dogs has been published in the October 2020 issue of *Science* (American Association for the Advancement of Science).

Science 30 Oct 2020:

Vol. 370, Issue 6516, pp. 557-564

DOI: 10.1126/science.aba9572



This past year, Graduate student Simon Mwaura (Sociology) has been in consultations with the US Government Special Advisor on Children in Adversity and the USAIDs Center for Excellence on Children in Adversity about the formation of

an advisory group from developing countries made up of persons who have experience of growing up in orphanages, foster care and adoption. The proposal has formally been accepted by USAID and a call for applications for the ten member council was sent out. Simon notes that these cumulative efforts are “a great step in putting these young persons on the table where policies and programs that affect them are made.”

