

# Anthropology

## Personnel and Administrative Changes

During academic year 2011–2012, Leon and Anne Goldberg professor Susan Silbey continued to serve as head of the [Anthropology Program](#). Professor Stefan Helmreich was promoted to full professor, and associate professor Heather Paxson received tenure, both effective July 1, 2011. After 38 years on the faculty, professor James Howe retired on June 30, 2012. A successful promotion case was conducted for assistant professor Manduhai Buyandelger, who will become associate professor on July 1, 2012. Two faculty members took an Old Dominion leave: associate professor Erica James in the fall semester, and Manduhai Buyandelger in the spring semester.

## Highlights of the Year

Several honors and distinctions were accorded Anthropology faculty. Professor James was awarded the James A. and Ruth Levitan Prize in the Humanities. Assistant professor Graham Jones was the winner of the 2012 Levitan Award for Excellence in Teaching in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS). Professor Helmreich was selected to be the holder of the Elting E. Morison Chair.

This year Anthropology was pleased to host several visiting scholars, including Dr. Yehuda Goodwin from the University of Tel Aviv and Dr. Mihye Cho, who participated in the MIT–Singapore University of Technology and Design Collaboration’s Teach the Teacher program, with associate professor Christine Walley as her mentor. Dr. Samson Lin, from the same program as Dr. Cho, visited in the spring semester, with Professor Silbey as his mentor. Dr. Beth Hennessey, from Wellesley College, had a visiting professorship, and Dr. Michele Friedner began a postdoctoral fellowship sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

## Teaching and Curriculum

The Department continued its review of the Anthropology curriculum. Both undergraduate and graduate subject offerings have been reclassified and renumbered within the following categories: core subjects; culture and identity; religion and belief; global health; environment, development, and conflict; science, technology, and media; and cross-cultural dialog and investigations.

Several new subjects have been developed for implementation during AY2012 and AY2013. Other subjects have been redesigned to be more project oriented, offering students better opportunities for hands-on fieldwork. Two classes that were developed along these lines include 21A.329 Practicum in Global Health and Development, and 21A.801 Cross-cultural Investigations: Technology and Development. Both these subjects are also being offered at the graduate level. Single-session workshops have also been created to provide students with skills to aid them in their research projects and experiences in diverse cultures, both at home and abroad. Plans to develop materials and

skill-building exercises and interactivity of the fieldwork workshop as an online module are under way. It is intended that this work will contribute to MITx. Anthropology expects to launch a new, more modern website in summer 2012.

As has been the case for several years, faculty participation in the Doctoral Program in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology and Society (HASTS), as well as PhD programs in the MIT Sloan School of Management and the Department of Urban Studies and Planning continues to be in evidence, with several faculty members serving as graduate student advisors or on dissertation committees.

## Publications

Professor Helmreich authored the articles “What Was Life? Answers from Three Limit Biologies” in *Critical Inquiry*, and “Nature/Culture/Seawater” in *American Anthropologist*, and wrote the chapter “Underwater Music: Tuning Composition to the Sounds of Science” in *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies* (Oxford University Press).

Professor Jean Jackson published “Pain and Bodies” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, Frances Mascia-Lees, ed. (Wiley-Blackwell); and “The Evolution of Colombian National Press Portrayals of Amazon Indigenous Development and Organizing, 1985–2005” in *Editing Eden: A Reconsideration of Identity, Politics, and Place in Amazonia*, Frank Hutchins and Patrick C. Wilson, eds. (University of Nebraska Press). She also published “Overview of the Colombian Indigenous Movement,” a requested essay for a special edition of *UniverSOS* (Spain).

Professor James’s article “Haiti, Insecurity, and the Politics of Asylum” appeared in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, and her article “Governing Gifts: Law, Risk, and the ‘War on Terror’” in *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law*.

Professor Jones published the book “Trade of the Tricks: Inside the Magician’s Craft” (University of California Press). He also published two articles in *Ateliers d’anthropologie* and contributed to *Digital Discourse: Language in the New Media*, Crispin Thurlow and Kristine Mrozeck, eds. (Oxford University Press), and to *Lexikon der Globalisierung*, Fernand Kreff, Eva-Maria Knoll, and Andre Gingrich, eds. (transcript-Verlag).

Professor Paxson’s article “The ‘Art’ and ‘Science’ of Handcrafting Cheese in the United States” appeared in a special issue of *Endeavor*.

Professor Silbey published six articles and contributed to *Regulation and Governance*, Vol. 5, (for which she was Special Issue Editor) titled *The Sociological Citizen: Pragmatic and Relational Regulation in Law and Organizations*.

## Presentations

Professor Buyandelger spoke at the University of Miami on “Provincializing Neoliberalism through Culture(s),” and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on “The Spiritual Economies during Neoliberal Capitalism.”

Professor Helmreich presented at various locations, including the University of Minnesota; MIT; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of California, Irvine; Rutgers University; Princeton University; the City University of New York (CUNY); Harvard University; the University of Maine; Dartmouth College; Teresopolis University in Brazil; McGill University in Canada; the American Anthropological Association (AAA) annual meetings in Montreal; and at sea, aboard the motor yacht *Dardanella*.

Professor Howe's photography was exhibited at the Museo del Canal Interoceanico de Panama, where he gave a book presentation. He also gave a keynote address at a conference on the ethnography of Panama at Universidad de Panama.

Professor Jackson gave three talks: "Research on the Colombian Indigenous Movement and Reindigenization: One Anthropologist's Experience" in Bogota, Colombia; "Some Inconvenient Truths about Indigenous Rights Mobilizing" at Harvard University; and "Indigenous Culture-linked Enterprise in Colombia" at the AAA annual meetings in Montreal.

Professor James gave presentations on her research on Haiti and other topics at several venues, including Brown University; Duke University; Harvard University; University of California, San Diego; and McGill University.

Professor Jones's talks included "Authentic Impersonation: Reported Speech in Computer-mediated Talk" at Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies in Germany, "Embodying Craftiness in the Trade of the Tricks" at the AAA annual meetings in Montreal, "Working Theories of Mind in Play and Games" at Stanford University, and "Mediating Reflexivity" at Georgetown University. He co-organized an invited session at the AAA annual meetings in Montreal.

Professor Paxson presented on several occasions about the culture surrounding cheese making and cheese makers. Venues included the AAA annual meetings and McGill University in Montreal, the University of Copenhagen, and James Madison University in Harrisburg, VA. She also co-presented with Professor Helmreich on "The Perils and Potentials of Microbial Abundance" at CUNY and the University of Minnesota.

Professor Silbey gave talks on topics related to law and society as well as other subjects at a variety of venues including Stanford University; University of Leiden, Netherlands; the National University of Singapore; Harvard University; MIT; and at meetings in Chicago and San Francisco. She delivered the keynote address at the Melbourne Workshop on Rethinking Regulatory Paradigms, at Monash University Law School, Australia.

Professor Walley lectured at Michigan State University and Harvard University, as well as giving presentations on topics relating to class, environmental issues, and documentary filmmaking at conferences in Chicago and Cleveland, at New York University, and at the AAA annual meetings in Montreal, where she was also organizer and co-chair of the panel Documentary Futures.

## Contributions to MIT and Outside Communities

Anthropology faculty members served on a wide range of committees and boards at MIT. Professor Buyandelger served on the programming and curriculum committees for the Program in Women's and Gender Studies. Professor Helmreich served on the Committee on Curricula, the Kelly-Douglas Prize Committee, and the Levitan Prize Committee. Professor Jones served on the de Florez Fund for Humor Committee. Professor Paxson served on the HASTS Graduate Program Curriculum Committee, the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement, the MIT Food and Agriculture board, as a Burchard Faculty Fellow, and as a graduate student mentor for the Graduate Women at MIT group. Professor Silbey served on the Energy Minor Oversight Committee, the MIT Energy Initiative Education Committee, the Energy and Environment board, the MIT–Singapore University of Technology and Design exchange, the HASTS Steering Committee, and the Killian Prize Committee, as well as on faculty committees for the Institute for Work and Employment Research, Economic Sociology, and the Organization Studies Group at MIT Sloan. Professor Walley served on the McMillan-Stewart Search Committee and on the SHASS Education Advisory Committee.

Outside MIT, Professor Buyandelger is a consultant for the project Oral History of 20th Century Mongolia at Cambridge University, UK. Professor Helmreich served on the editorial boards of *Science as Culture* and *Cultural Anthropology*, on the advisory board for *Science and Culture*, and is on the American Anthropological Association's David M. Schneider Award committee for an original graduate student essay on kinship, cultural theory, and American culture. He is also on the Gregory Bates Book Prize committee for the Society for Cultural Anthropology. Professor Howe has served since 2003 on the board of Cultural Survival. Professor Jackson has also served on the Cultural Survival board since 1997 and on its executive board since 2004. She is on the steering committee of the Network of Concerned Anthropologists. In addition, Professor Jackson is at-large board member of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America and serves on the editorial boards of *Antípoda: Revista de Antropología y Arqueología—Universidad de los Andes*, *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, and *Boletín de Antropología*, and is on the international advisory board of *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*. Professor Jones served on the executive programming committee of AAA's 2012 annual meeting and on the advisory panel for NSF's Doctoral Dissertation Improvements Grants in Cultural Anthropology. Professor Silbey is a mentor for the Sociology of Law Section of the American Sociological Association and the Law and Society Association. She is on the editorial boards of *Annual Review for Law and Social Science*, *American Political Science Review*, and *Regulations and Governance*, and is an editor for Cambridge University Press, *Studies in Law and Society*. Professor Walley was a board member for the Public Laboratory for Open Technology and Science.

**Susan S. Silbey**

**Program Head**

**Professor of Sociology and Anthropology**

**Leon and Anne Goldberg Professor of Humanities**