

undergraduate research newsletter

summer edition (issue 2)
june 7th, 2010

wednesday luncheon
june 9th at noon in samuelson pavilion

dietary restrictions?
email urc@oxy.edu



featured speaker:

Alexandra Puerto, Professor of History

Measuring the Maya: Race, Science, and the "Indian Question" in Inter-War Yucatán

How is academic knowledge about indigenous peoples produced? This talk will focus on how the Carnegie Institution's "Program for Maya Research," launched in 1924, precipitated and piloted North America's rediscovery of the Mexican Maya. The Carnegie Institution sustained an exclusive 24-year scientific occupation of the Yucatán peninsula, which included unprecedented biological and anthropological studies of the contemporary Maya. The research effort unleashed a foundational moment in the western representation of the modern Maya since the era is now remembered as the Golden Age of Maya Studies. The competing interpretations about Maya development that emerged from these studies reflected larger international debates about evolutionary versus cultural paradigms during the inter-war years. Ultimately, the Carnegie's Program for Maya Research contributed to a shift from the earlier emphasis on external characteristics and internal capabilities as fundamental bases for indigenous taxonomies to a focus on culture evaluated upon a western fixed concept of progress. The case also shows how representations of the Maya, and indigenous peoples in the Americas in general, became imbued with the concerns and values of the emergent U.S. scientific elite.

spotlight on research
student projects in progress

want to be
featured?

email larios@oxy.edu



Ellen Robertson, Cognitive Science '12
on cupcakes and cognition

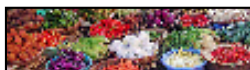
The research Ellen Robertson is conducting this summer allows her to combine two things she really loves: cupcakes and cognitive science. Robertson's faculty advisor, Carmel Levitan, inspired the project through her own studies of the interaction between visual perception and taste perception. One experiment used to test this relationship gauges how flavor perception is affected when participants are provided with sugar water whose colors and flavors are purposefully mismatched. Robertson has decided to focus her research around conditioning, particularly "the different ways that people learn to readjust these color-taste associations." The variable? Cupcakes. Robertson plans to bake her own batches of the tasty treats for her test participants, so she can control their features, the better to get useful data on the participants' perception of their deliciousness. It's likely she won't have trouble finding willing volunteers. Robertson considers the Summer Research Program to be "a fantastic opportunity." Says she, "My field involves a lot of research, and this is an ideal atmosphere for people like me who have never done research before, or who have minimal research experience." As a rising junior, she considers it important that she get an idea of whether or not she wants to go into research after college, and participating in the Undergraduate Research Program is helping her do just that.

reminder

researchers:
paychecks
will be 💰
available for
pickup this
friday, june 11
after 10:30

fun weekend ideas
upcoming events in the LA area

need help getting around?
plan your trip on public transit at [M](http://metro.net)etro.net



**eagle rock
farmer's market**
sundays 9 am - 2 pm
2700 colorado blvd
fridays 5 pm - 9 pm
2100 merton ave

LA pride festival
saturday june 12th, noon - 11 pm
sunday june 13th, 11 am - 10 pm
san vicente blvd
between santa monica blvd and melrose ave
lapride.org



outdoor movie screening of
beetlejuice
saturday, june 12
gates open 7:30, screening 9:00
hollywood forever cemetery
6000 santa monica blvd
www.cinespia.org