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From the Desk of the Editors: Dr. Samantha McCrane and Dr. Sara Withers

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From the Desk of the Editors: Dr. Samantha McCrane and Dr. Sara Withers

The 2023-2024 academic year has been one of scholarly reflection, highlighting UNH Anthropology students' intellect and humanism, as many took a deeper look at how aspects of our culture and recent events have, or are continuing to, influence people's everyday lives. Importantly, many students took an engaged and grounded perspective, and used their writing to explore what we can learn from these analyses to better the future. This issue of *Spectrum* exemplifies this theme, as students reflect on our history as a species, the meaning of our dreams, music, personal labels, immigration laws, political spheres, and identities.

An original artistic recreation of *Australopithecus garhi*, an important member of the hominin family tree that lived approximately 2.5 million years ago, drawn by Isabella Evilsizer, graces the cover. Isabella took Dr. Samantha McCrane's ANTH 415 *Human Evolution, Fossils, and DNA* course this past spring.

Section I features work by three students from Dr. Robin Sheriff's ANTH 785: *Dreams and Dreaming* course, exploring how dreams reflect and shape culture. Brian Downer writes a powerful analysis of three of his own dreams, disassembling seemingly random occurrences in his dreams into common cultural models that ultimately represent a disconnect between the expectations placed on younger generations in America and the reality that many of these expectations are unachievable for most. Kai Parlett delves into the connection between dreams and music composition, reviewing popular American and European artists such as Paul McCartney, Billy Joel, György Ligeti, and Lucy Davis, who utilize dreams as a freeing space to expand their creativity or tackle complex issues in contrast to the typical American-Western perspective that dreams are unimportant. To round out this section, Channon Evans considers the pragmatic and spiritual role of dreams in three diverse Indigenous cultures: the Yolmo people of Nepal, the Chipewyan of Northern Canada, and the Gaujiro of Venezuela and Columbia.

Section II showcases work by three students from Dr. Sara Wither's ANTH 650: *Anthropology of Migration and Movement* course. First, Sadie Kane Marston, as a counter to the primacy of using nationality labels to define immigrants, explores the possibility of utilizing self-defined LGBTQ+ labels instead. She argues that defining identity based on assumed nationality divides people into stereotypical racialized groups they had no autonomy in choosing, while allowing for a self-driven alternative identification might instead empower minority individuals. Elizabeth Hartt writes a very timely essay on Title 42, the Public Health and Welfare Act, discussing the history of U.S. immigration laws and their past uses, before delving into the implementation and harmful aftermath of enacting Title 42 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Lastly, Morgan Eames examines how the martyrdom and permanent disfigurement of Palestinian youth in Gaza has been normalized and wielded by activists and the media, unpacking the most recent violent chapter in the complex historical relationship between Israel and Palestine.

Section III features an essay coauthored by Alex Proulx and Hunter Motta for Dr. Robin Sheriff's ANTH 611: *History of Anthropological Theory* course on Jimi Hendrix's performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Woodstock in 1969. Specifically, they discuss how Hendrix's choice to omit lyrics and distort specific portions of the anthem added new symbolic layers to this already symbolically laden song, expanding the meaning and representation of our anthem to include themes related to the Vietnam War counterculture, Civil Rights Movement, and hope for the future.

Finally, **Section IV** features Sarah Grace Barba's McNair Research project on how first-generation college students experience and mitigate dissonance in their identities, especially as it relates to social class.

Methodologically, Barba employs a mix of participant-driven photography and qualitative interviews with first-generation UNH undergraduate and graduate students, alongside autoethnography, as she explores this topic.

We are incredibly proud of our amazing students in the Anthropology department, as well as the faculty who mentor and support them along their academic journeys. Thank you to everyone who made this issue possible! We hope you thoroughly enjoy this issue of *Spectrum*.