



Graduate Studies in Anthropology @ Penn

Our program, ranked 6th nationally, offers Doctoral and Masters degrees with a four-field approach to anthropological studies. In addition to our world renowned faculty, graduate students also benefit from direct interactions and collaborations with numerous cross-disciplinary schools and programs, including:

The School of Medicine (www.med.upenn.edu)
The School of Nursing (www.nursing.upenn.edu)
The Population Studies Center (www.pop.upenn.edu)
The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (www.museum.upenn.edu)
And many others in the School of Arts and Sciences.

Ph.D students are offered 5 years of full support through the Benjamin Franklin Fellowships.

For questions regarding the Graduate Program contact the Graduate Coordinator Zoe Beckerman at (215) 746-0409.



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Anthropology @ Penn



Studying women's
life transitions from
a biocultural
perspective

Principal Investigator: Dr. Claudia Valeggia

My work is primarily concerned with the interactions between human reproductive biology and the ecological and cultural context in which it develops. I take a biocultural approach to research, where the interplay between biology and culture takes a central role in interpreting reproductive patterns. My research interests include human reproductive ecology, reproductive endocrinology, maternal and child health, and health of indigenous populations in Latin America. Some of the topics I have explored are the determinants of the return to postpartum fecundity, the variation in reproductive hormonal levels within and between women in relation to environmental variables, growth and development patterns in breastfed infants, and variation in male and female life history in populations experiencing drastic lifestyle changes.

For more information about my research, please visit www.upenn.edu/~valeggia



Fieldwork



The CARE Project Chaco Area Reproductive Ecology

Since 1998, we are studying the interaction between reproduction and ecology in populations of the Gran Chaco region of Argentina. We have several long-term objectives:

- To study the impact that drastic lifestyle changes have on the fertility of the indigenous populations.
- To investigate the effect of transculturation on the health status of Chacoan indigenous populations.
- To explore the influence of child rearing practices on infant and children's growth and development



The ecology and culture of motherhood in Santiago Atitlan

As part of the Guatemala Health Initiative, this project investigates the cultural and ecological correlates of maternal and infant health in a Tz'utujil population of the highlands of Guatemala. For more information go to: www.med.upenn.edu/ghi/

Local Projects

Programa Lactar

The objective of Programa LACTAR is to increase the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding in Northeastern Philadelphia.



This applied, mixed-methods project is run in collaboration with Dr. Gail Herrine, ObGyn, (Women's Care @ Northeastern Hospital).

The Reproductive Ecology Lab



At the RELab, we study the physiology of reproductive function using non-invasive techniques for monitoring hormones in the field.

We are interested in the relationships between energy metabolism and reproduction and we are studying the role of energetics (as measured by metabolic biomarkers) in life history transitions such as puberty, the resumption of postpartum menses, and menopause.

We are also currently analyzing fecal samples from titi and owl monkeys to evaluate the hormonal correlates of sexual and paternal behavior in collaboration with Dr. Eduardo Fernandez-Duque (Anthropology, Penn).