

THiNK

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150th Anniversary Professor

Powered by a passion for history

As one might expect from a conversation with one of Purdue's most notable lecturers, a theme quickly develops when Randy Roberts discusses his profession.

Now in his 30th year as a Purdue faculty member, Roberts has a passion for the research that informs his work as a historian. As evidenced by the stack of biographies bearing his name on the spine, Roberts possesses a passion for writing. And as thousands of Boilermakers who have passed through his classrooms can attest, Roberts has a passion for standing at the front of a lecture hall and relaying stories about events that shaped our world. "If you've been at it as long as I have, you've got to be passionate about what you do," Roberts said. "If you're continuing to do your research, if you can't wait to write every day, then you've got to be passionate about it. I always think that passion rubs over into teaching."

Because of his reputation as an educator, Roberts' trophy case is stocked with some of Purdue's most notable teaching

Page 3: Distinguished Professor of History Randy Roberts addresses guests at the 2012 President's Council appreciation banquet at The Ritz-Carlton in Naples, Florida. (Purdue University photo) **Pages 8-9, 11:** Family photos contributed by College of Liberal Arts staff. **Page 12:** Close-up photo of a grasshopper. (Photo by Boris Smokrovic) **Page 18:** 2018 Emerging Voice Award winners. (Photos by Ashley Read)



ON THE COVER. As part of the "Love Liberal Arts" week festivities from Feb. 12-16, students covered the Dean's Office windows in Beering Hall with messages explaining what they love about studying in the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue. (Photo by Lorri Foster)

awards, including the Morrill Award, the Charles B. Murphy Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award, and the College of Liberal Arts' Kenneth Kofmehl Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award. But it's his most recent honor – in January, Roberts was one of 10 faculty members whom the Office of the Provost named as an 150th Anniversary Professor – that Roberts describes as “the big one.”

“I'm proud of two things: number one, I'm proud that I was awarded a distinguished professorship for my research and scholarship. Similarly, I've always taken teaching seriously, and the 150th Anniversary Professor honors that aspect of my career,” Roberts said. “I believe that teaching and research absolutely go hand-in-hand, and I think that's because of some of the teachers I had who were spectacular scholars and researchers.”

That approach has not just influenced the undergraduates who left Purdue with a greater understanding of history thanks to Roberts' teaching, his research and writing also made a direct impact on the study of sports history, helping the field garner respect among serious historians who might once have dismissed its importance.

His reputation in the field and as author of notable biographies like *Papa Jack: Jack Johnson and the Era of White Hopes* and *Jack Dempsey: The Manassa Mauler* attracted numerous Ph.D. candidates to Purdue to study under Roberts before launching their own distinguished careers.

“There's just kind of this family tree of sport historians that Randy has influenced,” said David K. Wiggins, Professor of Sport History at George Mason. “He prepares Ph.D. students very well, and I feel like I can always tell a Randy Roberts student because one of his strengths is telling a good story. He's a terrific writer, Randy is. He's a terrific storyteller. And I think his students kind of fall in that ilk. They all write well, they're all good storytellers. You can see the influence that he's had on their writing life and academic careers.”

Among Roberts' former pupils are history professors David Welky (M.A., 1996, Ph.D., 2001), Eric Hall (M.A., 2006, Ph.D., 2011), Nathan Corzine (Ph.D., 2010), and Andrew McGregor (Ph.D., 2017) at Purdue. In addition, there are Aram Goudsouzian (Ph.D., 2002), history department chair at the University of Memphis, and Chris Elzey (Ph.D. American Studies, 2004), Director of Sport and American Culture at George Mason. And then there is frequent writing partner Johnny Smith (Ph.D., 2011), the Shaw Assistant Professor in Sports, Society, and Technology at Georgia Tech.

Like so many Purdue undergrads who enjoyed Roberts' classes through the years, those historians learned valuable lessons of their own while working as his teaching assistants. Only in the professors' case, it wasn't knowledge alone that they absorbed from Roberts' lectures. They also learned methods of engaging an audience that they incorporated into their own teaching styles.

“I remember the first time I watched him give a full lecture in a U.S. history survey,” recalled Smith, whose second book co-written with Roberts, *A Season in the Sun: The Rise of Mickey Mantle*, hit bookshelves in March. “He had to have at least 300, 400 students, and I was one of three or four TAs. I'm sitting in the front row, and I'm watching this guy command the room, command the attention of all these late-teens and early 20-somethings. And I thought to myself, ‘I want to lecture like him.’”

“Here's what I saw: I saw someone with relentless energy and enthusiasm, who could fill the space of a giant lecture hall not with his voice, but with his energy. I realized in watching him that he could hold the students' attention because he knew how to pull them in. He knew how to take history and create this grand narrative where he would make these steps along the way and teach you something.”

By influencing them in subtle ways and with a personal touch – he even served as a groomsman in Smith's wedding – Roberts' mentorship helped those TAs develop into successful historians.

“It is not that he attracts talented scholars – lots of professors do that. It is that he impresses his students with his approach to writing and teaching history,” Goudsouzian said. “He develops historians, whether he realizes it or not. If there's a common coin among his students who are now successful in our own right, it is

that we all love what we do. We don't get bogged down in the academic slog, and we constantly appreciate what we love about being a historian: telling stories, whether in the classroom or on the page. That is thanks to Randy.”

Some historians are strict academicians, typically authoring dense, thoroughly researched material intended for academic audiences. Others lean heavily on a vibrant writing style that better suits the casual reader. Roberts bridges the gap between the two camps.

His books on war, popular culture, and sports can serve as pleasure reading or as traditional history publications that satisfy scholars on the subjects.

“He recognized there are interesting stories to tell that aren't just stand-alone subjects, but they contribute to understanding the fabric of American history – and sports certainly is very much part of the fabric of our history,” Professor of History and Head R. Douglas Hurt said. “So you can read him if you're just sort of an armchair buff and you're interested in this or that, and maybe you'll never read another book on that again, but if you read one of his, you'll profit and learn from it.”

“But academics also use his work all the time because maybe they're not talking about boxing or basketball or football in their class, but they can use much of his work as examples of social and cultural, political relationships, race, class, how does all of this effect what they really want to do



Randy Roberts served as a groomsman for his co-author and former Purdue teaching assistant Johnny Smith at Smith's wedding on Oct. 24, 2015 in Savannah, Georgia.

Photo by Evie Perez

in their class. So there are a lot of pieces that you can mine, I think, very effectively.”

Despite his influence within the profession and among readers, Roberts is at his essence a classroom teacher. He has entertained and informed generations of Purdue graduates, enlightening them on the graft of the Gilded Age or on the significance of American boxer Joe Louis’ landmark matches against German Max Schmeling in the 1930s.

After three decades, Roberts still has a reputation among undergrads as a must-hear lecturer whose popular courses attract students from a broad range of academic disciplines.

“He really holds my attention throughout class, and I think that is because of those two elements: the enthusiasm and the knowledge. I think truly he is at the top,” said Mary Kate Ramker, a senior visual communications design major and student in Roberts’ “History of Sports in America” course. “Some of the other teachers I’ve had that I’ve enjoyed, it’s the same thing. You can tell that they know what they’re talking about and they’re enthusiastic, but I think

Randy is just on a whole other level.

“It’s almost intense the way he talks about it that he invokes emotions in the audience, which is crazy because our lecture is at least 100 kids, and no one talks. We’re all just dead set when he walks through.”

Again, Roberts emphasizes that his passion for the material is what strikes the correct note with his pupils. It helps to have an encyclopedic knowledge of the subject matter – and students and former TAs alike will confirm that he does – but Roberts also regularly reminds himself to seize the moment as he determines how to deliver the knowledge he hopes to impart.

“I think several things help,” Roberts said. “Number one, I teach great courses. I teach American history, and to me it’s all storytelling – telling the history of the 20th Century of America. It’s great. My most popular course is World War II. I mean, it has every human emotion that you can imagine. It has the best of people, the worst of people. The story is just utterly fascinating.

“I teach the history of sports, which I find really interesting. So that’s part of it.

And the awareness, literally every class period, of saying, ‘OK, I’ve got this class period to teach this subject to these students. I’ll never have another chance to teach this subject, this lecture.’”

The good news for Purdue students is that they will have many more opportunities to hear those lectures.

With his lengthy list of publications and teaching recognitions, Roberts would not have much left to cross off a history professor’s bucket list if he viewed his career in such a fashion

The reason he’s still at it? His work remains his passion.

“I really feel like I’ve lived a privileged life. It’s been a privilege to do what I do, to go in a classroom and try to get students excited about something. I can see it when they’re (busily typing what I say) and I can see it on the other end, when they’re on their iPhones and other gadgets. But I’m not ready to retire yet. I enjoy what I’m doing,” he chuckled. “And now that they gave me this incredible (150th Anniversary Professor) honor, I feel like I’ve got to stay around at least a few more years.”

and they drank hard. It was a tough life, and that’s the world Mickey came from.”

Mantle also embraced that hard-living philosophy, as had many relatives who died before reaching the age of 40. But unlike the many miners in his family, Mickey didn’t wilt away in a mine. Exceptional athletic ability carried him from Oklahoma to the center of the 1950s baseball universe: New York City, where he patrolled the outfield for the Yankees.

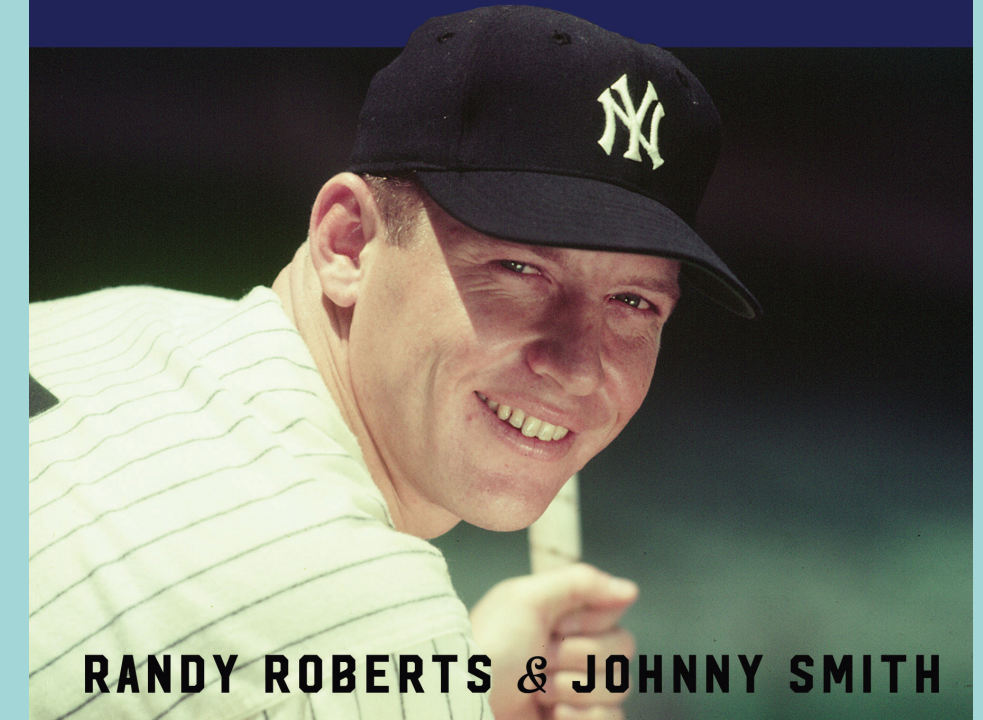
Roberts’ new book co-written with Johnny Smith (Ph.D. history, 2011), *A Season in the Sun: The Rise of Mickey Mantle* (Basic Books), examines the 1956 baseball season in which Mantle asserted himself as the sport’s leading man. In 1956, the future Hall of Famer achieved the coveted Triple Crown – leading the American League in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in – and won the first of three AL Most Valuable Player awards.

“There was great expectation on him to be the next Joe DiMaggio, to be the next Babe Ruth, and it wasn’t until 1956 that he really fulfilled those expectations,” Smith said. “But in the process, 1956 was the season where he became the face of baseball. So we wanted to explore how Mickey Mantle was packaged by the media, by advertisers, television executives, the Yankees’ publicists, so he could be embraced by the American public.”

This is Roberts and Smith’s second book, following their 2016 collaboration, *Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X* (Basic Books). It’s Roberts’ first baseball book, joining a vast collection of writings about sports and pop culture icons like boxers Joe Louis, Jack Dempsey, and Jack Johnson, football coach Bear Bryant, and actor John Wayne.

A Season in the Sun

THE RISE OF MICKEY MANTLE



RANDY ROBERTS & JOHNNY SMITH

By focusing on Mantle’s highly-visible role in 1950s America, Roberts and Smith were able to examine the connections that existed between baseball and the greater society before football surpassed it as the nation’s favorite sport.

“What we wanted to do is return back to Mickey Mantle’s world in the 1950s and try to understand: What did he mean to America?” Smith said. “This is a guy who comes from rural Oklahoma, he’s the son of a miner, and he’s transplanted to New York City. It’s the capital of everything. It’s

the capital of baseball, it’s the capital of television, publishing, the media, and how does he get transformed?”

Prior to publication, *A Season in the Sun* had already garnered positive press from Kirkus Reviews and Publisher’s Weekly and had earned rave reviews from luminaries like Ken Burns, David Maraniss, and official Major League Baseball historian John Thorn, who described it as “a shimmering snow globe of a game and a time gone by.”

‘The Mick’ and America

Roberts, former student collaborate on second sports history book

Randy Roberts never felt like he had a handle on Mickey Mantle until he visited the baseball legend’s hometown, Commerce, Oklahoma. The old zinc and coal-mining center is now a ghost town, run down by years of pollution and depression.

“If you’ve ever shoveled snow, you do it about a half-hour and you’re tired, you’re exhausted. Well, if you’re doing it in the lead mine, those shovels are 75, 80 pounds that you’re lifting and you’re doing it eight hours a day. These guys wore out fast and they died young. They came back

Mom's Favorite

You're probably wrong about your mother's preferences

So you think you know which sibling your mother likes best? Jill Sutor says there is a good chance you have it all wrong.

The sociology professor has spent nearly 20 years conducting the Within-Family Differences Study (WFDS), polling moms about their relationships with their children and then comparing their responses to input gathered from their kids.

Not only was Sutor surprised by how often moms would state familial preferences, she was stunned by how often their actual preferences didn't matter. The adult children's perceptions about favoritism were what often contributed to depression and shaped relationships among siblings – and those perceptions were frequently incorrect.

"The lack of accurate awareness is problematic because of the effect," Sutor said. "And actually moms' own reported preferences have no effect on kids' psychological well-being. But it's what the kids think, and yet they're usually wrong. So it's complicated because it has consequences."

The results are significant for many reasons.

In addition to the data's indications about how children's incorrect assumptions regarding parental favoritism can affect mental health and family relationships, the study is also valuable because of its longitudinal nature.

In phase one, Sutor and research partner Karl Pillemer interviewed 566 mothers – ages 65 to 75 – and

773 of their children about their parent-sibling relationships. Around a decade later, they re-interviewed 420 of the moms and 826 of their kids, uncovering further data about whether moms' preferences changed over time, the effects of their preferences, and the impact caregiving decisions have on the family dynamic. Sutor and her research partners hope to soon embark on a third phase that will examine how these relationship perceptions affect the bereavement process.

The study's findings are revelatory enough on their own, but it is the data's value to practitioners who treat aging families that make the WFD study even more worthwhile.

"You read and the number of physicians that consider family problems to be an obstacle to try and provide care is insane. So I think a lot of physicians and people interacting with older adults could really benefit from some more knowledge on how to negotiate family conflict," said Marissa Rurka, a doctoral student in sociology and gerontology, and a Ross Fellow who has assisted Sutor with her research.

For one thing, it is important that healthcare professionals ascertain which child mom would prefer to serve as her caregiver, and to develop methods to

influence that decision-making process. Sutor's research shows that moms are more prone to depression when the child who serves as her primary caregiver is not the child she prefers for that role.

"Even some of the kids who are caring for mom don't have a clue as to whether mom really preferred them," Sutor said. "Yet that does make a difference, apparently, in the mom's perceptions of the quality of care she receives."

One of the greatest influences on mom's caregiving preference – that she feels the child shares her values – is also one of the most telling factors in her selection of favored offspring.

If the child's views on matters such as religion, politics, and general life outlook jibe with mom's, she is more likely to feel close to and proud of them. If they frequently disagree about these things, mom is more likely to experience conflict with and be disappointed in them.

Among the other influences that affect moms' preferences: gender (they generally like daughters best and confide in them most often), age (youngest siblings are most likely to be the favorite), and educational accomplishments.

While those factors offer general insight





Sociology professor Jill Suito (center) and doctoral students Gulcin Con, Siyun Peng, and Marissa Rurka (left to right) discuss their work on the Within-Family Differences Study. Photo by John Underwood, Purdue Marketing and Media

into the conditions that might influence parental favoritism, first-hand experience is often unreliable. The adult siblings' own assessments of their mothers' preferences consistently missed the mark.

Suito shared her findings at a 2016 TedxPurdue talk titled, "So You Think You're Mom's Favorite," telling the audience that just 47 percent of adult children were correct in claiming they were the sibling who was closest to their mother compared to what the mother reported. Just 39 percent of the respondents were correct in saying mom was proudest of them, and 41 percent were correct in their belief that they were the child who most disappointed their mother.

Conflict was the only category where more than half of the children's self-assessment was correct, with 51 percent correctly identifying themselves as the sibling who had the most disagreements with mom.

That makes the interpersonal damage perceptions can cause seem especially tragic since they are so often incorrect.

"You may say there's a communication problem because you don't really know how your mother thinks," said Siyun Peng another doctoral student who co-authored several articles and chapters in the study. "But on the other hand, it just speaks to how important the family relationship is. Even

your own perceptions can have an effect on your health. When you're talking about interventions, maybe this is something we need to talk about. For the children, if they have perceptions that their mother differentiates, maybe it's good for them to know that they're probably wrong so they don't have to worry about it that much."

Fellow sociology/gerontology doctoral student and Fulbright Scholar Gulcin Con agreed, adding, "If I perceive myself as favored or disfavored, then it's going to affect me more than whether my mom is actually favoring me or not. Therefore, I think it is important for us, as sociologists, to show to the policy makers, to the

"Moms' own reported preferences have no effect on kids' psychological well-being. But it's what the kids think, and yet they're usually wrong. So it's complicated because it has consequences"

practitioners – especially in the context of caregiving – that these perceptions have consequences."

The degree to which moms were willing to state a preference – eventually – surprised the researchers. And yet 70 percent were willing to identify the child they felt closest to, 69 percent acknowledged the child who was the most frequent source of conflict, 55 percent picked the child who engendered the greatest sense of pride, and 54 percent listed the child in whom they were the most disappointed.

"The first thing we had to do was a pilot study to see whether moms would even admit it," Suito said. "And a lot of moms will say something like, 'Oh, I love all my children the same. How could you ask me a question like that? But if you really want to know, though, I just feel differently about David. I don't really want to. It's not that I love him any more than the others, but I just feel closer to him.'"

"So just finding they would talk about it thrilled us. So our first end game was just finding out to what extent there were patterns of differentiation."

In the nearly two decades since then, the study's research focus has branched out far beyond Suito and Pillemer's original intent, with Suito's graduate assistants frequently redirecting it to examine their own research concerns.

That has been one of the most rewarding aspects of the WFD study for Suito, whose mentorship has helped multiple students who share her interest in aging and family to embark upon their own academic careers. Her former graduate assistant and collaborator Megan Gilligan (Ph.D. 2013) is now an assistant professor in human development and family studies at Iowa State.

"Jill's really good about getting you involved from the get-go, and your role changes as you progress and get further along. But everything is a collaboration, so you're on papers, and you're helping her think about how to frame things, and looking at data. So it's been really fun. It's a very hands-on, active, collaborative project."

Suito's encouragement ensures that her original project will further evolve as her students provide their own assessments of inter-family relationships across the life course. That creates a win-win situation for all involved, with their research and writing bringing additional depth to the study while also preparing Suito's graduate students for their own careers.

"I get as much from working with my students as they ever get from working with me," Suito said. "And I also feel as somebody who has been funded by government for 28 years and who works every day in a job funded by the state of Indiana, I really feel it's part of my mission, ethically, to train that next generation of scholars."





What's Bugging you?

Why we're disgusted (or not) by the idea of eating arthropods

Alison Kirkham knows that bugs have a PR problem.

Millions of Americans are at minimum uneasy about coming into contact with insects, if not terrified or disgusted by their presence. And when it comes to actually eating one of these critters? Forget about it.

But why is it that in much of Western culture, crustaceans like crab, shrimp, and lobster are considered delicacies, while the idea of eating their arthropod cousins – insects (beetles, grasshoppers, bees, mealworms, and crickets, among others), arachnids (spiders and scorpions), and myriapods (centipedes and millipedes) – commonly elicits disgust?

That's what Kirkham set out to study, determining that cultural influences play a major role in shaping attitudes toward entomophagy, the eating of bugs.

"As Americans, we're so opposed to insects being food," said Kirkham, a graduate student in anthropology. "I've had people be like, 'You are disgusting for wanting me to eat insects.' People sometimes get angry and they have very visceral reactions like, 'You want me to do what? You want me to eat a bug?' Which I find pretty

interesting."

That's a common response, and arthropod experts know their best efforts to educate the public about these creatures can only do so much to combat that revulsion. Disgust is an impulse that sometimes can be too powerful for even logic and reason to overcome.

It's one thing to learn facts about arthropods – how they are often cleaner than you might expect, or how they can be inexpensive, high-protein sources of nutrition. It's another to cross the mental hurdle of placing a bug in your mouth, biting down, and swallowing, especially if your cultural traditions condition you to find it a disturbing act.

"There's a range of things which are more likely to become disgust elicitors for particular people, and bugs are right in disgust's wheelhouse – they can sting you, they can be poisonous, and they're sort of creepy-crawly, so they can also be indicative of disease transmission," said Daniel Kelly, an associate professor in philosophy whose work focuses on disgust. "So that's all stuff which disgust is going to be really sensitive to, and it's going to be easy to become



disgusted by anything in that range.

“The idea of putting something in your mouth, you can just ramp up the disgust. Stepping in dog (feces) is disgusting, but even the very thought of eating it is worse. So there’s a connection between disgust and the mouth, and there’s a connection between disgust and various forms of uncleanness or potential for infection.”

That puts bug experts in an awkward position – part educator, part psychologist – as they work to both teach us about the millions of arthropod species that surround us and to also set us straight about their value.

“The fact that it is an uphill battle, as are a lot of crusades, has never been much of a deterrent for me because I end up having victories every day,” said Zack Lemann, curator at the Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium in New Orleans. “I always bump into somebody whose attitude I can change for the better a little bit. So on the one hand, one can lament the fact that the vast majority of folks don’t have a great set of thoughts and feelings about arthropods. But we’re plugging away and we’re fighting the good fight, and I have fun with it.”

Kirkham worked under Lemann’s supervision as a summer intern in New Orleans while continuing her research into attitudes toward arthropod consumption. In addition to handling and caring for creatures in the Audubon Insectarium, she also worked in a presentation area called “Bug Appétit,” where visitors can, you guessed it, sample buffet-style cuisine featuring bugs as ingredients.

Dip a chip into the “Six-Legged Salsa,” with crab-boiled mealworms added to a

traditional tomato salsa. Prefer something sweet? Then try the mango chutney, made from mangos, apples, and poached waxworms. It tastes like apple pie. On special occasions like the Fourth of July, there might be holiday-themed cakes and other treats available that contain insect ingredients.

Working in that space allowed Kirkham to make valuable observations concerning visitors’ attitudes toward arthropod consumption. Not surprisingly, children were overwhelmingly more open to it than their older companions.

“There seems to be a divide sometime around puberty,” Kirkham recalled. “The smaller, younger children were typically like, ‘Oh this is cool! This is a neat experience!’ And they would kind of dare each other to eat one. And then we also had a stamp that we would mostly offer to kids, but adults wanted them sometimes, too, that said, ‘I ate a bug at Bug Appétit.’ The stamp was such a big motivator. Sometimes the kids would be like, ‘I don’t know, is it going to taste gross?’ and we’d say, ‘Well try it and we’ll give you a stamp.’ And immediately they’d eat it and be excited about it.”

Teens and adults, though? Not so enthusiastic.

“From my observations,” Kirkham said, “teenagers typically just found it disgusting and weren’t very interested in eating them. We had a lot of camps and school groups, and a lot of times the kids would convince their camp counselors to eat the bugs and the counselors would do it reluctantly.”

In one unique way, New Orleans was a perfect location for Kirkham’s research. The city’s renowned culinary scene revolves around the consumption of crustaceous

arthropods and mollusks.

A springtime social ritual among Louisianans involves gathering around a long table with friends and eating platters loaded down with boiled crawfish, potatoes, corn on the cob, and sausage. Dismembering a “mudbug” with your fingers in order to eat its flesh is not just acceptable, but expected behavior. Hardcore eaters even slurp juices from the creature’s head, insisting that’s where the tastiest spices can be found.

Don’t bother inviting most crawfish dissectors to sample a cricket or grasshopper, however. They might have picked apart crawfish bodies since childhood, but still find the idea of ingesting a bug to be weird.

“Another powerful force that can work in the opposite direction with disgust is foods which kind of signal group or tribal membership,” Kelly said. “So if you’re a real New Orleans person, of course you eat crawdads. That can be one way that you signal that you’re in the group, a true native.”

Those powerful tribal forces are at the center of bug crusaders’ push to make entomophagy a more widely accepted practice in Western culture. Sushi was once generally framed as a niche, foreign dish, but now it’s tremendously popular in the States. Likewise, entomologists believe that increased exposure to modern societies’ attitudes toward arthropod consumption might eventually help it gain acceptance in the U.S.

For instance, Oaxaca, Mexico is well known for its insect cuisine, offering gastronomic delights like chapulines (grasshoppers) toasted

with garlic, lime juice, and salt, or escamoles (ant larvae), nicknamed “Mexican caviar.” In Cambodia, spiders are considered a delicacy. And it would not be at all strange to come across a street cart in Bangkok offering crispy, fried water bugs or worms for sale.

Those regions’ bug consumers have plenty of company across the globe. In 2013, the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that some two billion people eat insects annually, with bugs serving as traditional staples of human diets in parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

“There’s definitely a hipster element to it, and sushi is a great example – something that sort of catches fire and suddenly it’s very popular,” said College of Agriculture entomology outreach coordinator Gwen Pearson, who coordinates the Bug Bowl event at Purdue Spring Fest every April. “A lot of it is just that first hurdle from, ‘This is gross’ to ‘I might eat that.’ That’s the hard part, and once you’ve gotten to, ‘I might eat that,’ then it’s all downhill from there.”



Bug Bowl attendees at Purdue Spring Fest make their first attempts at eating bugs.

Photos by John Obermeyer, Department of Entomology



Anthropology graduate student Alison Kirkham researched attitudes toward eating arthropods last summer while completing an internship at the Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium in New Orleans, Louisiana. Photo courtesy of Alison Kirkham

While Bug Bowl features a variety of activities, from insect crafts to hands-on animal demonstrations to cockroach racing, the most notorious event is the cricket spitting competition, which attracts approximately 6,000 entrants from across the region.

"It's very entertaining to watch," Pearson said. "Especially the little kids because they're just so baffled by the whole thing. They're like, 'You put it in my mouth and now I have to spit it out? What?'"

Of course, there is an edible-insect component to Bug Bowl, as well, and Kirkham is part of a group that will serve visitors the bug-based treats. Pearson said visitors typically consume about 20,000 chocolate-covered crickets at the two-day event, which makes sense given that entomophagy specialists call crickets the "gateway bug" for insect-eating novices.

The Bug Bowl will offer Kirkham yet another opportunity to observe general

attitudes toward arthropods, further preparing her for what she hopes will evolve into a career as an educator at a zoo or insectarium.

Her main objectives are to teach us the facts about bugs and help the general public become less squeamish about them – including the notion that eating an arthropod might not be such a disgusting thing to do, after all.

"It's important that people are aware that insects can be a food and are eaten as a food in other places, and those places are not primitive or bad in some way for eating insects," Kirkham said. "Because there is that connotation that you only eat insects if you're starving or if you're poor or if you absolutely have to or if you're part of some indigenous group and you're not a civilized person. And so I want to get that connotation about edible insects out of people's minds and realize that insects can be a food."



What can Google tell us?



Online searches concerning flu symptoms doubled over the last two days in Houston, potentially signaling an outbreak in America's fourth-largest city.

Real-time satellite data from Global Forest Watch shows that protected forestland in Oregon has been cleared overnight. Could it be the result of illegal logging activity?

The Waze app shows traffic backing up miles away from the highway exit on the edge of town, indicating some sort of automotive mishap has occurred.

All of this data is available to view online. Today's most effective communicators understand how to access that data and utilize it to bring context to their storytelling.

That's why Sorin Adam Matei – a professor in the Brian Lamb School of Communication and Director of the Purdue Data Storytelling Network – is intrigued by the possibilities that exist within the Google News Lab University Network, a collaboration between the technology giant and more than 200 universities across the globe.

"You have all the data, you've found this and that, but now how do people take advantage of this and tell a compelling story to the world about it?" Matei asked. "Now sure, people intuitively know how to do it some, but many of them don't."

"So can we do a little bit more about it and actually move the conversation a little bit from pure engineering and computer science to the domains that are more appropriate for this, which is communication?"

Matei's plans for Purdue's contribution to the network are still in development, but he has two primary goals.

First, he wants to formulate a curriculum teaching

data skills – like how to use cloud-based Google Spreadsheets in storytelling – to journalists and those in corporate communications or marketing. In addition, Matei intends to launch a series of seminars with data storytellers offering lectures and workshops.

"I'm thinking very much about the big social media houses – invite some of their researchers and tell us how they mine data, how they get insights and all that," Matei said. "And not just social media, maybe people who work for the financial sector and engineering."

Purdue Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer Gerry McCartney (Ph.D. 1995, Sociology) believes that everyone should be aware of how data analytics impact so many of their daily interactions. Whether it's a purchase Amazon recommends or a story Facebook funnels into your news feed, none of it appears there at random.

"It's going on in every facet of human endeavor right now, at least in industrialized countries, so it's important that our students are exposed to that," McCartney said.

That is a primary objective of Google's data storytelling partnership with universities, and it is why Purdue jumped aboard as one of the initial collaborators.

"We're a quantitative school, so we believe in the value of numbers," McCartney said. "Anything that we can produce or use to help our students be more successful, to help our faculty be more successful, we're going to be right up at the front of that, trying to develop those products and tools."

"So this Google tools story is just another facet of that – one centered around news. We're just endorsing that is all we're saying. This fits right in with the way we do business."



EMERGING VOICES AND INSPIRED LEADERSHIP

The College of Liberal Arts and the CLA Alumni Board annually recognize young alumni with the Emerging Voice Award. The award celebrates alumni who have excelled in their career field and communities.



KATHERINE M. GLICK

*BA 2008, Political Science
Agribusiness Strategy Manager,
Ice Miller LLP, Indianapolis, IN*

Katie Glick says it was her experiences in Purdue Student Government, the Purdue Foundation, and her sorority that helped shape her into the successful women she has become.

After graduating as a political science major, Katie worked on Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels' re-election campaign in 2008 as a Deputy Finance Director, then as a Project Coordinator in the Mayor's Office at the City of Indianapolis. In 2009, she returned to the Indiana Republican Party as the Finance Director for the Governor's Aiming Higher PAC. In 2011, she continued to work on the PAC in addition to her role as Director of Operations for the Governor's Aiming Higher, Inc. organization. She then joined the Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, and Indiana Corn Growers Association as the Public Affairs and Industry Relations Director.

Katie now works at the law firm Ice Miller LLP as the Agribusiness Strategy Manager in the Food and Agribusiness Group.



MICHAEL H. KENNEDY II

*BA 2010, French
Owner & Founder, Component Wine
Company, San Francisco, CA*

It was an engaging faculty member from the College of Liberal Arts who led Michael Kennedy to his career passion. Kennedy says Professor of Linguistics in the School of Languages and Cultures Becky Brown's influence, as well as her love of food and wine, inspired him to be the professional he is today.

After graduating with a degree in French Language and Literature Michael worked for a small family-owned winery. His role grew over three years until he reached the position of Director of Wine. Along the way, he passed his Sommelier certification with the Court of Master Sommeliers. Michael assumed the Sommelier role with luxury hotel chain, The Ritz-Carlton, where he worked in Washington D.C. and the Cayman Islands. In the Cayman Islands, Michael managed the wine programs for eight restaurants including Blue by Eric Ripert, sister restaurant to three-star Michelin Le Bernardin in New York.

Michael and his wife Rachel founded the Component Wine Company in Napa Valley in 2016. A year later, Michael was named in Forbes Magazine's 30 UNDER 30 list.



STEPHANIE WHITE

*BA 1999, Brian Lamb School of
Communication, Women's Basketball
Head Coach, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN*

Stephanie White looks back at her time as one of Purdue's top all-time basketball players and says that shared experiences with fellow Boilermakers, friends, teammates, and campus staff were what made it memorable.

The former Indiana Miss Basketball led Purdue to the 1999 NCAA championship, winning national Player of the Year honors as a senior, prior to a five-year WNBA career split between the Charlotte Sting and Indiana Fever.

After retiring from her playing career in 2004, White served as an assistant coach with several college and pro teams before joining the Fever staff in 2011. The Fever won the WNBA title in 2012 while she was on the coaching staff, and reached the finals again in 2015, White's debut season as the team's head coach. She also served as a college basketball analyst for ESPN and the Big Ten Network.

White led the Fever to the WNBA playoffs in both seasons that she spent as head coach before accepting a position as head women's basketball coach at Vanderbilt in May 2016. She is just the fifth head coach in the history of the Commodores program.

EMERGING VOICES AND INSPIRED LEADERSHIP

Photos, top to bottom and left to right: Michael Kennedy reviews program with his college mentor, Professor in the School of Languages and Cultures Becky Brown; Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science Rosalee Clawson and Associate Dean Joel Ebarb chat at the awards ceremony; Emerging Voice Award on display; Stephanie White shares her thanks for receiving the honor; Emerging Voice Award program cover; Liberal Arts Student Leadership Council member Lilianna Pond helps emcee the ceremony; Katherine Glick speaks to the audience while receiving her award; Posing for a photo are Bridget Williams Golden, Vice President/Treasurer of the Liberal Arts Alumni Board, Stephanie White, Michael Kennedy, Katherine Glick, and Justin S. Morrill Dean of Liberal Arts David A. Reingold.

Photos by Ashley Read

For a complete list of past recipients, and for information about nominating a Liberal Arts alumnus/alumna for the EVA, please visit www.cla.purdue.edu/alumni/awards



THINK BROADLY. LEAD BOLDLY.®

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue invited Professor Emeritus of Philosophy Donald W. Mitchell to help lead the first All-Asia Buddhist-Christian Dialogue in November. The theme of the event, which was hosted by the Vatican and held in Taiwan, was "Buddhists and Christians Walking Together on the Path of Nonviolence." It covered ways that interreligious cooperation can address issues of religious and secular violence in Asia.

At the end of the event, the Pontifical Council honored Mitchell with its first award for interreligious dialogue, a certificate "to express its sincere appreciation and deep gratitude to Professor Donald W. Mitchell for his outstanding contributions and tireless efforts to foster the Church's Buddhist-Christian dialogue for over 30 years." Pontifical Council president Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran signed the certificate, which was accompanied by a rare medallion from Pope Francis. Photo courtesy of Donald Mitchell

Purdue Day of Giving

"Make Your Mark" and support the College of Liberal Arts on April 25 with a donation on the fifth annual Purdue Day of Giving. Last year, the Purdue community raised \$28.2 million through 15,181 individual gifts in the 24-hour fundraising drive. Donors can direct their gifts by going online to DayofGiving.purdue.edu or by calling toll-free at (800) 319-2199.



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