

## Anthropology Lecture Series:

# CULTURE, COGNITION, AND FORMAL SCHOOLING: THEORETICAL AND APPLIED INSIGHTS FROM LONGITUDINAL AND NATURAL EXPERIMENTS

## Dr. Helen Davis

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What if our most fundamental measures of cognitive performance were influenced by small amounts of schooling or by having parents, siblings or others who attended schools in one's household or community? What does cognition and learning look like in a world without schools or formally educated parents or communities? Because formal schooling consistently covaries with relevant environmental factors associated with cognitive performance, little is known about the extent to which schooling per se is responsible for functional changes in cognition and learning. Yet, we know these abilities are necessary for successful adult life in industrialized populations and that performance gaps are documented time and again. Using data from a natural experiment—along the Namibian-Angolan border and longitudinal evidence from lowland Bolivia—this talk will focus on how relatively small “dosages” of formal schooling may influence fundamental aspects of cognition and learning during childhood, and the implications this may have on evolutionary theory and global policies that are focused on childhood.



**Wednesday,  
October 25th  
3:00pm  
Tate Hall 111**

*For ADA accommodations, please contact [muasanthropology@missouri.edu](mailto:muasanthropology@missouri.edu)*

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