

The Department of Anthropology through the Gavan Lecture Series

Presents:

Virpi Lummaa

Academy Professor; Human

Life History Group

University of Turku, Finland

Will present her talk:

Natural Selection – NOW!

Nutritional, epidemiological and demographic changes that accompanied the Industrial Revolution have profoundly changed human ecology and biology, leading to major shifts in, for example, disease patterns, lifespan, family size, and age at puberty. These social and cultural adaptations have led some to question whether the use of modern medical care and effective contraceptive methods means that evolution by natural selection has stopped. I will discuss how mismatches between past adaptations and the current environment may now predispose us to non-communicable diseases, such as Alzheimer disease, cancer and coronary artery disease. Moreover, in both traditional and industrialized societies, differences among individuals still lead to selection favoring certain heritable traits because of variation in family size, even though most people now survive to old age. In line with this, increasing evidence suggests that the transition to modernity has also altered the direction and intensity of natural selection acting on many traits, with important implications for public and global health.

WHEN: October 15, 2018

WHERE: 101 Swallow Hall

LECTURE TIME: 5:30 PM

RECEPTION: 5:00 PM in 111 Swallow

