Aaron D. Lightner

Postdoctoral Researcher · **Aarhus University**
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Education

Washington State University (Pullman, WA)

Ph.D. in Anthropology   2021
   Committee: Edward Hagen, Anne Pisor, Luke Premo

M.A. in Anthropology   2017
   Committee: Edward Hagen, Pat Barclay, Luke Premo

University of Nebraska − Lincoln (Lincoln, NE)

B.S. in Biology and Psychology, minor in Chemistry   2011

Positions Held

Postdoctoral Researcher   2021-present
   Research supervisor: Benjamin Purzycki
   Religion, Cognition, and Culture research team
   Department of the Study of Religion, Aarhus University

Adjunct Faculty   2021-present
   Department of Anthropology, Washington State University

Graduate Researcher   2020-present
   Project: Evolution of Science and Religion as Meaning-Making Systems
   Issachar Fund and Templeton Religion Trust
   Department of Anthropology, Washington State University

Consulting Data Analyst   2019
   Department of Anthropology, Washington State University Vancouver

Graduate Instructor and Teaching Assistant   2015-2020
   Department of Anthropology, Washington State University

Research Assistant   2011
   Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic, University of Nebraska − Lincoln

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant   2010-2011
   School of Biological Sciences, University of Nebraska − Lincoln

Publications

Lightner, A.D. & Hagen, E.H. (in review). All models are wrong, and some are religious: Supernatural explanations as abstract and useful falsehoods about complex realities. *Human Nature.*

Hagen, E.H., Blackwell, A.D., Lightner, A.D., & Sullivan, R.J. (in review). *Homo medicus*: The transition to meat eating, increased pathogen pressure, and the constitutive and inducible use of pharmacological plants in *Homo. American Journal of Biological Anthropology.* preprint doi: 10.31219/osf.io/76bka

Purzycki, B.G., Bendixen, T., Lightner, A.D., & Sosis, R. (in review). Gods, Games, and the Socioecological Landscape. *Current Research in Ecological and Social Psychology.* preprint doi: psyarxiv.com/r9qtm

Bendixen, T., Lightner, A.D., & Purzycki, B.G. (forthcoming). The Cultural Evolution of Religion and Cooperation. R. Kendal, J. Tehrani & J. Kendal (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Evolution.* Oxford University Press. preprint doi: psyarxiv.com/fhscv

Lightner, A.D. & Purzycki, B.G. (forthcoming). Game Theoretical Aspects of the Minds of Gods. B.G. Purzycki & T. Bendixen (Eds.) *The Minds of Gods: A Cross-Disciplinary Survey.* Bloomsbury Publishing, London, UK. preprint doi: psyarxiv.com/ybwcd/

Purzycki, B.G., Bendixen, T., & Lightner, A.D. (in press). Coding, causality, and statistical craft: The emergence and evolutionary drivers of moralistic supernatural punishment remain unresolved (reply to Turchin et al.). *Religion, Brain, & Behavior.* preprint doi: osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/qvjfp/

Lightner, A.D., Heckelsmiller, C., & Hagen, E.H. (in press). Middle-earth wasn't built in a day: How do we explain the costs of creating a world? (reply to Dubourg and Baumard). *Behavioral and Brain Sciences.*

Lightner, A.D., Garfield, Z.H., & Hagen, E.H. (in press). Religion: The WEIRDest concept in the world? (commentary on Henrich (2020), The WEIRDest People in the World). *Religion, Brain, & Behavior.* preprint doi: psyarxiv.com/58tgd

Placek, C. & Lightner, A.D. (in press). Moralizing gods, local gods, and complexity in Hindu god concepts: Evidence from south India. *Religion, Brain, & Behavior.*

Lightner, A.D., Heckelsmiller, C., & Hagen, E.H. (2021). Ethnomedical specialists and their supernatural theories of disease. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology.* doi: 10.1007/s13164-021-00589-8 preprint doi: psyarxiv.com/gbamc/

Lightner, A.D., Heckelsmiller, C., & Hagen, E.H. (2021). Ethnoscientific expertise and knowledge specialisation in 55 traditional cultures. *Evolutionary Human Sciences*, 1-52. doi: 10.1017/ehs.2021.31

Lightner, A.D. & Hagen, E.H. (2021). Acculturation and market integration are associated with greater trust among Tanzanian Maasai pastoralists. *Evolutionary Human Sciences* 2021:3(1-33). doi: 10.1017/ehs.2021.10. preprint doi: 10.31234/osf.io/aqfyn

Lightner, A.D. & Hagen, E.H. (2018). Mapping the terra incognita of economic cognition will require an experimental paradigm that incorporates context (reply to Boyer and Bang Petersen). *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 41(e178). doi: 10.1017/S0140525X18000444

Lightner, A.D., Barclay, P., & Hagen, E.H. (2017). Registered report: Radical framing effects in the ultimatum game: The impact of explicit culturally transmitted frames on economic decision-making. *Royal Society Open Science* 2017:4(170543). doi: 10.1098/rsos.170543

Grants and Awards

Templeton Religion Trust and Issachar Fund ($50,000)   2020
Investigating Adaptive Knowledge Specialization and the Evolution of Science and Religion

National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant ($25,127)   2019
Testing theories of mutualism in the context of rapid cultural change

Open Science Framework preregistration challenge prize ($1,000)   2018
Radical framing effects in the ultimatum game: the impact of explicit culturally transmitted frames on economic decision-making

Washington State University Vancouver mini-grant ($432)   2017
The impact of explicit culturally transmitted frames on economic decision-making

Conference Presentations

Hagen, E.H., Blackwell, A.D., Lightner, A.D., Sullivan, R.J. (2021). *Homo medicus*: The transition to meat eating, increased pathogen pressure, and the constitutive and inducible use of pharmacological plants in *Homo*.
Presented at Northwest Ecology, Evolution, and Human Behavior, Boise, ID.

Lightner, A.D., Heckelsmiller, C., & Hagen, E.H. (2021). When knowledge is hidden, and when it is shared: Specialization vs. mentorship from cross-cultural and evolutionary perspectives.
Presented at Human Behavior and Evolution Society, virtual.

Heckelsmiller, C. & Lightner, A.D. (2021). Can a bean plant get sick like a cow? Evolution of folk biological knowledge with a shifting subsistence system.
Presented at Human Behavior and Evolution Society, virtual.

Hagen, E.H., Garfield, Z.H., & Lightner, A.D. (2021). Computational services and encephalization in *Homo*.
Presented at Human Behavior and Evolution Society, virtual.

Heckelsmiller, C. & Lightner, A. (2021). Social ecology of Maasai honey wine, *enaisho namuka*.
Presented at Society of Ethnobiology Conference, virtual.

Lightner, A.D., Heckelsmiller, C., Hagen, E.H. (2020). The evolution of science and religion as adaptive knowledge specialization.
Presented at the Templeton Religion Trust and Issachar Fund Speaker Series for the Science and Religion as Systems of Meaning-Making, virtual.

Lightner, A.D., Quinlan, R., & Hagen, E.H. (2019). Cultural change and sacred institutions: An ongoing case study with Maasai pastoralists.
Poster presented at Northwest Ecology, Evolution, and Human Behavior, Boise, ID.

Lightner, A.D., Pisor, A.C., & Hagen, E.H., (2019). Risk pooling in the context of rapid cultural change: Interdependence and need-based transfers among Maasai pastoralists.
Presented at Human Behavior and Evolution Society, Boston, MA.

Lightner, A.D. (2019). Testing theoretical models of cooperation with *osotua* in northern Tanzania.
Presented at the Human Generosity Project annual meeting.

Lightner, A.D., Barclay, P., & Hagen, E.H., (2018). Radical framing effects in the ultimatum game: The impact of explicit culturally transmitted frames on economic decision making.
Presented at Northwest Ecology, Evolution, and Human Behavior, Boise, ID.

Lightner, A.D., Barclay, P., & Hagen, E.H., (2017). The impact of explicit culturally transmitted frames on economic decision making.
Presented at Human Behavior and Evolution Society, Boise, ID.

Lightner, A.D. (2017). Ecological response and innovation in the evolution of social learning strategies.
Poster presented at GPSA Research Expo and Academic Showcase, Pullman, WA.

Teaching

Washington State University

Instructor, Introduction to Anthropology (Anth. 101)	2020
Instructor, History of Anthropological Thought (Anth. 390)	2019
Instructor, Biological Anthropology Laboratory (Anth. 260L)	2019
Teaching Assistant, Biological Anthropology (Anth. 260)	2019
Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Anthropology (Anth. 101)	2018
Instructor, Introduction to Anthropology (Anth. 101)	2018
Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Anthropology (Anth. 101)	2018
Teaching Assistant, Experimental Design and Analysis of Variance (Psych. 511)	2017
Teaching Assistant, Childhood and Culture (Anth. 302)	2016-2017
Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Anthropology (Anth. 101)	2016
Teaching Assistant, Peoples of the World (Anth. 203)	2015

University of Nebraska − Lincoln

Student Support Services Tutor, Course aid in biology, chemistry, and psychology	2011
Teaching Assistant, Human Physiology Laboratory (Biol. 213L)	2010-2011

Professional Service

Graduate Student Representative	2017-2018
Department of Anthropology, Washington State University	
Anthropology Department Representative	2015-2016
Graduate and Professional Student Association, Washington State University	

Fieldwork

Researcher, Monduli Juu, Tanzania   2020

Research Skills

Statistical analysis and experimental design, survey design, data visualization, R, Python, LaTeX, mathematical modeling, agent-based modeling