



Andrew M. Byrd

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OVERVIEW

Associate Professor of Linguistics

Specializes in Historical Phonology, Proto-Indo-European, and Constructed Languages

APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor of Linguistics	2017-
Assistant Professor of Linguistics	2014-2017
Lecturer of Linguistics	2011-2014
<i>University of Kentucky</i>	

- My primary research focus is the application of various methodologies to difficult problems in historical linguistics, including phonetic experimentation, database construction and analysis, and the application of phonological theory, in order to make predictions about unreconstructable data.
- I also work to educate the public about Proto-Indo-European (PIE) and historical linguistics through constructed languages. Recently completed projects include Ubisoft's *Far Cry Primal*, National Geographic's *Origins*, and a [documentary](#) by the NHK on the evolution of man.
- Courses Taught:

The History of English	Proto-Indo-European	Historical Linguistics
Homeric Greek	Ancient Greek Dialects	Sanskrit
Classical Armenian	Oscan & Umbrian	Hittite
Phonological Analysis	Research Methods in Linguistics	Optimality Theory
Writing and Writing Systems	Introduction to the Study of Language	Introduction to Linguistics
Constructed Languages	How to Create Your Own Language	

EDUCATION

PhD Indo-European Studies 2004-2010

University of California, Los Angeles

“Reconstructing Indo-European Syllabification”

Thesis advisor: H. Craig Melchert

2nd place, “Best Dissertation of 2011 in the field of Indo-European”, Indogermanische Gesellschaft

BA Linguistics, minors in Latin, German, and Italian 1997-2002

University of Georgia, Athens

“The Phonology of the Laryngeals”

Thesis advisor: Jared S. Klein

Summa Cum Laude, with Honors

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. *The Anatolian Trail: an Indo-European Adventure*. I am leading a large team of experts to design a video game that will engage a broad audience on the scholarship of Proto-Indo-European and ancient Indo-European (IE) languages and cultures. In the game, players will be able to battle ancient monsters from IE folklore, gain blessings from the gods of the IE pantheon, and even converse with the locals in their native tongue. I am designing the game together with award-winning teacher and language-pedagogy expert [Brenna Reinhart Byrd](#) (UK) and [George Landon](#), head of the [EKU Gaming Institute](#).
2. **Experimental Indo-European Linguistics**. I am keenly interested in designing experiments to test theories on PIE and the prehistory of IE languages. I am currently investigating the rarity of PIE */b/ with Phillip Barnett through a series of perception and production experiments.
3. *The Life Cycle of A Sound Law: Szemerényi's Law as Study in the Diachrony of Phonological and Morphological Acquisition*. I am co-writing a book on the history of Szemerényi's Law with [Ryan Sandell](#) (LMU München) to be published by John Benjamins (likely 2020). In it we argue that a great majority of lengthened grades in PIE are attributable to processes of compensatory lengthening conditioned by the loss of fricatives in post-consonantal coda position. We show the naturalness of the sound laws through phonological analysis, phonetic and morphological experimentation, and computational modelling.
4. **DERBi PIE**: Together with former MA student Phillip Barnett (now at UCLA) and current MA student Ryan McDonald, I am working on the creation of a large-scale database of the PIE language, called DERBi PIE (Database of Etymological Roots Beginning in PIE).

BOOKS

2. A.M. Byrd, J. DeLisi, and M. Wenthe (eds.), "[Tavet Tat Satyam. Studies in Honor of Jared S. Klein on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday](#)", *Ann Arbor & New York: Beech Stave Press*. (2016).
1. A.M. Byrd, "[The Indo-European Syllable](#)", *Leiden: Brill*. (2015).

ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS

11. Brenna Reinhart Byrd and A.M. Byrd, "Teaching Proto-Indo-European as a Constructed Language", *Jeffrey Penske, Amy Fountain, and Nathan Sanders (eds.), Language Invention in Linguistics Pedagogy*, Oxford: OUP (forthcoming).
10. A.M. Byrd, "Motivating Lindeman's Law", *Forthcoming Festschrift*, (forthcoming).
9. Phillip Barnett and A.M. Byrd, "[A Markedly Different Approach: an Experimental Look at the Rarity of PIE */b/](#)", *Proceedings of the 29th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference*, 11-28 (2018).
8. A.M. Byrd, "[121. The Phonology of Proto-Indo-European](#)", *Handbook of Comparative and Historical Indo-European Linguistics* vol. 3, 2056-79 (2018).

7. A.M. Byrd, “[The Rules of Reconstruction: Making our Etymologies More Grounded](#)”, *Etymology and the European Lexicon, Proceedings of the 14th Fachtagung of the Indogermanische Gesellschaft, 17-22 September 2012, Copenhagen, Denmark* , 81-92 (2017).
6. Joseph Rhyne and [A.M. Byrd](#), “[Stressful Conversions: Internal Derivation within the Compositional Approach](#)”, *Tavet Tat Satyam. Studies in Honor of Jared S. Klein on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* , 322-333 (2016).
5. A.M. Byrd, “[Schwa Indogermanicum and Compensatory Lengthening](#)”, *Sahasram Ati Srajas. Indo-Iranian and Indo-European Studies in Honor of Stephanie W. Jamison* , 18-28 (2016).
4. A.M. Byrd, “[Deriving Dreams from the Divine: Hittite tesḫa-/zash\(a\)i-](#)”, *Historische Sprachforschung* **124**, 96-105 (2011 [2012]).
3. A.M. Byrd, “[Predicting Indo-European Syllabification through Phonotactic Analysis](#)”, *The Sound of Indo European - selected papers from the conference, held in Copenhagen 16-19 April 2009* , 9-28 (2011).
2. A.M. Byrd, “[Motivating Sievers’ Law](#)”, *Proceedings of the 21st Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference* , 45-67 (2010).
1. A.M. Byrd, “[Return to Dative anmimm](#)”, *Ériu* **56**, 145-55 (2006).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Project Director, *The Anatolian Trail: An Indo-European Adventure* (2017-). My responsibilities are:
 - To secure funding for the project, which has recently been awarded an NEH “Digital Projects for the Public Discovery” grant;
 - To translate dialogue from English to PIE and train actors to speak the language within in-game dialogue;
 - To coordinate tasks among the nearly thirty individuals enlisted to work on the project, including game designers, artists, musicians, and scholars.
- Pronouncer, [University of Kentucky Spelling Bee](#) (2013-), [Fayette County Spelling Bee](#) (2018-)
- Advisory Board, [Bluegrass Literacy Project](#), a community organization dedicated to improving and advancing English language literacy in the state of Kentucky (2018-)
- Historical Constructed Languages
 8. [Vikings, season 6, episode 13](#): PIE poem reconstructed for Proto-Germanic (forthcoming)
 7. [Draw Curiosity](#): translation featured on “Let’s Talk about PIE (Proto-Indo-European) - Reconstructing Old Languages” (3/19)
 6. [AXE](#): set in 3,600 BCE, John Yates’ play features prayers and story-telling in PIE (3/18)
 5. [人類誕生メイキング](#) (*The Birth of Humanity*): a documentary for NHK on the evolution of humankind. Features languages created for early Homo Sapiens, Neanderthal, and Homo Erectus. (2018)

4. *Origins: The Journey of Humankind*: features eight prehistoric and ancient languages created, translated, and trained, including two varieties of PIE, Proto-Afro-Asiatic, Proto-Nostratic, Proto-Dené-Caucasian, Proto-Pama-Nyungan, Lydian, and Gaulish, shown on National Geographic (2017)
 3. *Far Cry Primal*: lead creator, translator, and dialect coach of the Wenja & Izila languages, both based on PIE, for a AAA Ubisoft videogame set in the late Mesolithic era (2014-16)
 2. *The Drop That Contained the Sea*: PIE translations for “Water Prelude” in the album by Grammy-award winning composer [Christopher Tin](#) (5/14)
 1. “Telling Tales in Proto-Indo-European”: PIE recordings of [Schleicher’s Fable & the King and the God](#), *Archaeology Magazine*, (9/13)
- Interviews
 7. *First Horse Warriors*, NOVA documentary, PBS (5/19)
 6. “UK professor speaks about developing Proto-Indo-European languages for video games”, *The Collegian* (4/19)
 5. “The Long Linguistic Journey to ‘Dagnabbit’”, *Atlas Obscura* (3/18)
 4. National Geographic’s *Origins: UKNow* (4/17)
 3. *Far Cry Primal*: roughly 70 interviews given with mainstream media outlets, including [der Spiegel](#), [le Figaro](#), [el Mundo](#), [News Corp Australia](#), [Vice](#), [Player.One](#) (2016)
 2. Recordings for *Archaeology Magazine*: [BBC Brazil](#), [BBC World Service’s Newsday](#), [Huffington Post](#), [UKNow](#) (2013)
 1. “On Talk Like a Pirate Day, it’s time to go beyond ‘aarr, matey’”, *Lexington Herald Leader*. (9/13)
 - Creator and editor of the [speakingprimal.com](#), an outlet to educate the public about PIE in the context of *Far Cry Primal* and other language creations. Posts include recordings, etymologies, and grammar lessons. (2016-present)
 - Pamela Munro, Virgil Lewis, and Nicole Gfroerer, with Marcus Smith, Andrew Byrd, Kevin Ryan, Kyle Wanberg, Heather Willson, and Jennifer Fischer. *Shaap Kaij?* (An introductory primer to the Akimel O’odham language.) Academic Publishing, UCLA. (2007)

GRANTS & AWARDS

- Research and Creative Activities Support Program award, \$5,000, to create artwork and voice-acted dialogue on *The Anatolian Trail: An Indo-European Adventure*. (2019)
- NEH Digital Projects for the Public Discovery Grant, \$30,000, to work on the development of *The Anatolian Trail: an Indo-European Adventure*. (2018)
- Southeastern Conference Visiting Faculty Travel Grant, \$2500. (2013)
- Academic Planning, Analytics and Technologies Grant, \$1500, to develop an introductory course in Linguistics. (2013)
- UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Award. (2005-2006)

- Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute Fellowship. (2005)
- Fulbright Fellowship for Study in Pavia, Italy, at l'Università degli Studi di Pavia. (2002-2003)

INVITED TALKS

8. Making the Esoteric Exoteric: Introducing the Public to Historical Linguistics through Film, TV, and Video Games, Marshall College of Liberal Arts Research and Creativity Conference, keynote speaker, 4/19
7. Making PIE for the People: *Far Cry Primal*, The History Channel's *Vikings*, and *The Anatolian Trail*, University of Richmond, 4/19
6. Reconstructing the Proto-Indo-European Stop System: An Experimental Approach, Princeton University, 12/17
5. Resurrecting a Dead Language for *Far Cry Primal* (with Brenna Reinhart Byrd), Centre College convocation, 2/17
4. The Wenja Language from *Far Cry Primal* (with Brenna Reinhart Byrd), OMG!con, featured panelist, 6/16
3. Vowels vs. Vader: Exploring the Light and Dark Sides of Indo-European (with Joshua T. Katz), Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, keynote presentation, 4/14
2. Speaking Proto-Indo-European: What Modern-Day Linguistics Can Teach Us About a 7000-year-old Language, Centre College convocation, 11/13
1. The Phonology of Proto-Indo-European. Day 1: Segmental Phonology; Day 2: Suprasegmental Phonology; Day 3: Rules & Constraints; Day 4: Future Directions." (SEC Faculty Exchange Seminar Series), University of Georgia, Athens, 5/13

CONFERENCE AND SYMPOSIUM PRESENTATIONS

23. Conlanging Proto-Indo-European: An Immersive Experience within Prehistory (with Brenna Reinhart Byrd), 2020 MLA Conference, Seattle, WA, 1/20
22. Transparent Learning through Video Game Puzzles: Making Indo-European Studies Accessible (with Brenna Reinhart Byrd and George Landon), 2019 Pedagogicon: Transparency in Teaching and Learning, Richmond, KY, 5/19
21. The Anatolian Trail: An Interactive Introduction to Proto-Indo-European (with Brenna Reinhart Byrd), ACTFL, New Orleans, LA, 11/18
20. The Gilaki Causative Suffix *-be(:)-*: Its Function and Origins (with Zia Khoshsiraf), 30th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 11/18
19. An Empirical Look at the Rarity of PIE */b/ (with Phillip Barnett), 37th East Coast Indo-European Conference, Ann Arbor, MI, 6/18
18. A Markedly Different Solution: Perceptual Confusability Explains the Rarity of PIE */b/ (with Phillip Barnett), 29th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 11/17

17. Motivating Lindeman's Law, 27th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 10/15
16. Extrametricality and Non-Local Compensatory Lengthening: The Case of Szemerényi's Law (with Ryan Sandell), 89th Annual Meeting of the LSA, Portland, OR, 1/15
15. Raising a Language from the Dead: On Teaching Indo-European Linguistics in the Age of the Internet, 29th Annual Interdisciplinary Conference in the Humanities, Carrollton, GA, 11/14
14. Stressful Conversions: an Analysis of Internal Derivation within the Compositional Approach (with Joseph Rhyne), 26th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 10/14
13. In Defense of Szemerényi's Law (with Ryan Sandell), 33rd East Coast Indo-European Conference, Blacksburg, VA, 6/14
12. Accounting for the Absence of Expected Lengthened Grade: Szemerényi's Law in Word-Medial Position, 2013 Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft, Leiden, the Netherlands, 7/13
11. The Indo-European Homeland Hypothesis : an Examination of Bouckaert, et al. (with Darin Arrick and Victoria Milam), SECOL LXXX, Spartanburg, SC, 4/13
10. A Crazy Rule in PIE? A Closer Look at the Saussure Effect, 10th Annual Ohio State Linguistics Symposium, Columbus, OH, 1/13
9. 'It's Complicated': the Relationship between Syllabification & Morphology in PIE, 24th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 10/12
8. The Use of Linguistic Typology and Universals in Indo-European Linguistics, with a Brief Note on the Hittite *s* ~ Luvian *t* Correspondence, SECOL LXXIX, Lexington, KY, 4/12
7. A Fresh Look at Pinault's Law, 23rd UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 10/11
6. 'Laryngeal Vocalization' as Schwa Epenthesis: Why does Compensatory Lengthening not Occur?, ECIEC 30, Cambridge, MA, 6/11
5. Motivating Sievers' Law in a Stratal OT Framework, 21st UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA., 10/09
4. Predicting PIE Syllabification through Phonotactic Analysis, The Sound of Indo-European Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark, 4/09
3. Deriving Dreams from the Divine: Hittite *tesha-/zash(a)i-*, The 219th Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Albuquerque, NM, 3/09
2. Towards a Predictive and Explanatory Theory of Laryngeal Deletion in Proto-Indo-European, 27th East Coast Indo-European Conference, Athens, GA, 7/08
1. The Long Dative Singular of Neuter n-Stems in Old Irish, 16th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 11/04

THESES SUPERVISED

3. [Ryan McDonald](#), MA in Linguistic Theory and Typology, University of Kentucky. “PMKN PIE: A Parsed Morphological KATR Network for Proto-Indo-European.” (5/19)
2. [Zia Khoshsirat](#), MA in Linguistic Theory and Typology, University of Kentucky. “The Origins of the Gilaki Causative Suffix *-bē-*.” (7/18)
1. [Phillip Barnett](#), MA in Linguistic Theory and Typology, University of Kentucky. “Investigating PIE stops using modern empirical methods.” (5/18)

OTHER ADVISING

5. Tara Singh. “An analysis of the distribution of root aorists within DERBi PIE.” (5/19)
4. Noor Mohammed Bueasa. “The Adaptation of Loanwords in Classical Arabic: the Governing Factors.” (5/15)
3. Joseph Rhyne. “Indo-European Nominal Morphology: a Phonotactic Approach.” (5/14)
2. Lindley Winchester. “Egyptian Arabic Plurals in Theory and Computation.” (5/14)
1. Erica Mattingly. “Tongues from Across the Mediterranean: The Influence of Classical Arabic on Spanish Phonology.” Chellgren Fellows Program. (5/13)

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE WORK, CURRENT

- Director of Undergraduate Studies
- UK Linguistics Club, Faculty Advisor
- Admissions & Awards Committee, chair
- Curriculum Committee
- Linguistics/MCLLC PhD Creation Committee
- North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO), Organizer

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Affiliations
 - Linguistic Society of America
 - Indogermanische Gesellschaft
 - American Oriental Society
 - Southeastern Conference on Linguistics
 - American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
 - Modern Language Association (MLA)

- Reviews

- *ǵékuos
- Brill's Studies in Indo-European Languages & Linguistics
- Indogermanische Forschungen
- Kratylos
- Indo-European Linguistics
- Journal of Germanic Linguistics