

# SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS

FALL 2021



**DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF ARTS AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES

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## STAY CONNECTED

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## CHAIR'S MESSAGE



### *Chairing amidst a pandemic.*

**IT IS A PLEASURE TO CHAIR A DEPARTMENT LIKE SOSA AT DAL.** As we inch our way towards the new normal, staff, faculty and students have demonstrated a remarkable generosity of spirit as they adapt and learn from this new experience. There is ample evidence of both adaptation and learning in the pages that follow – including an article about how our honours students studied and came to understand COVID-19's varied social impacts (see page 14).

The world does indeed keep turning. SOSA is pleased to welcome Jonathan Amoyaw as our newest tenure track appointment. Dr. Amoyaw is particularly interested in the dynamics of social inequality and social vulnerability. He brings with him considerable expertise in quantitative research, migration and the life course. The department is also extremely fortunate to benefit from the expertise of two limited term faculty members. Tsafir Gazit is an environmental sociologist and long-time collaborator of SOSA. Emily Lockhart is completing her PhD in Socio-legal Studies at York

University. Her doctoral research focuses on youth and the regulation on intimate image sharing in Nova Scotia. She has worked with young people and organizations who serve youth across the province. Unfortunately, we also bid farewell to Tim Bryan. After two tumultuous years in which his Dal colleagues kept saying "this isn't normal, we promise!" — freak storms, power outages, a water alert that saw us locked out of our building, COVID! — Dr. Bryan finally returned to his beloved hometown (University of Toronto). Although we will miss him, we wish him

*Continued on page 2*

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE *cont'd*

very well and look forward to following his compelling work on policing and hate crimes in the years to come.

SOSA has the pleasure of hosting Soni Grant, for their two-year Killam postdoctoral fellowship. Soni began their education here at Dalhousie in International Development Studies but they admit to having taken SOSA courses back in the day. Having completed a doctorate in Anthropology at University of Chicago, here at Dalhousie Soni will continue research focused on the politics of land, energy and extraction, and environmental justice.

The pages that follow are full of SOSA news from many quarters, but I want here to note a few special recognitions for research excellence. Afua Cooper was awarded the Killam Research Chair for 2021. She has also just received funding for the fabulous project: *A Black People's History of Canada* (see inside page 6). Karen Foster's Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Rural Futures was renewed. Dr. Foster continues to build a vibrant research group looking at some of our

region's most pressing issues. Also inside, in addition to updates from faculty, students and alumni, we caught up with someone many readers will vividly recall, Professor Emeritus Donald Clairmont. Read on to see how Don is still doing his sociological thing at age 83 (see page 7).

Before signing off, I want to remind alumni about two projects for which we would very much appreciate their support. We continue to grow our fund for bursaries for African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq SOSA undergraduates. You can donate directly by following this link: [giving.dal.ca/ssabursary](https://giving.dal.ca/ssabursary). In the name of a different kind of equity, we are also trying to build up a Social Anthropology Prize to match the longstanding Prince prize designated for sociology students; you can donate here: [giving.dal.ca/sap](https://giving.dal.ca/sap).

And, as always, we eagerly await word of what you are up to. Drop us a line!

Warmly,

**Lindsay DuBois, Chair**

## FACULTY UPDATES

### JONATHAN AMOYAW

Over the last year (2020–2021), Dr. Amoyaw has been engaged in several activities. He taught six courses and submitted 2 grant applications (SSHRC Insight Development Grant and CIHR Project Grant) with colleagues in Saskatoon and Regina. He participated in a webinar organized by the BC Refugee Hub to co-present (with Dr. Yoko Yoshida and Rachel McLay) research findings on the retention rates of refugees in Canada. In June 2021, he also co-facilitated 2 interactive workshops (with Dr. Yoko Yoshida) organized by the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) for Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) in Western Canada. These workshops offered an opportunity for SPOs to learn how to access and use data from the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) to meet their specific needs. Dr. Amoyaw co-authored 3 peer-reviewed journal articles. He is currently a co-investigator on a project exploring family-focused immigrant youth substance use prevention programs funded by the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (Prairie Node).



**SOSA faculty online meeting in "together mode"**

### LINDSAY DUBOIS

A highlight of this last, strange year was the publication, with doctoral student Daniel Salas, of a special issue *Value and Politics in Dialectical Anthropology*. In addition to a brief introduction, the issue includes an article: "The Trouble with Money: Argentina's Conditional Cash Transfers." DuBois was also pleased to participate, albeit remotely, at the 2021 CASCA meetings with her paper "Engagement and entanglements with the progressive populist state: Ideological struggles over Argentina's conditional cash transfer program". She was happy to see a number of Masters

students she was supervising persevere through COVID and complete their intelligent and insightful theses. Kate Crane completed "Inside or outside the struggle?: Investigating political possibilities of freelance digital labour." Caitlin Stonham completed her study of house and home in, "From Real Estate to Dream Houses: Aspirations and Experiences of Homeownership in Two Maritime Provinces." Margaux Wolse, of International Development Studies completed "'We are Warriors': The Micropolitics of Play in Natal, Brazil" based on fieldwork supported by Brazilian colleague Marlos Alves Bezerra.

## FACULTY UPDATES *cont'd*

### ELIZABETH (LIZ) FITTING

Like everyone else, Liz spent the last year adapting her teaching and research to the pandemic conditions and restrictions; interviews she had planned in person, with farmers and farm workers, switched to the telephone. In addition to conducting research and homeschooling while on sabbatical for six months, Liz organized panels and co-wrote papers for two online conferences: the Canadian Anthropology Association (CASCA) in May and for the joint meetings of the Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS); Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society (AFHVS); Canadian Association for Food Studies (CAFS) and the Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition (SAFN) in June. A chapter she co-wrote with Laura Gutiérrez Escobar and Tamara Wattnem was published in *The Social Life of Standards*, and her chapter for the *Oxford Handbook of Agricultural History* "From versatile staple to 'flex' crop: Corn as an exemplary commodity" was accepted, and forthcoming in 2022. Alongside Dr. Catherine Bryan, Liz also helped set up the website for a Nova Scotia Migration Research Forum, which is an interdisciplinary network focused on historic and contemporary migrations and mobilities in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Region which can be found at: [www.migrationandmobility.ca](http://www.migrationandmobility.ca). A blog she wrote for the website about the frustrations of booking COVID vaccines for temporary foreign workers caught the attention of the CBC's Information Morning, and Liz was interviewed about the experience in July: [www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-27-information-morning-ns/clip/15855257-hear-struggle-temporary-foreign-worker-face-booking-COVID-19](http://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-27-information-morning-ns/clip/15855257-hear-struggle-temporary-foreign-worker-face-booking-COVID-19)

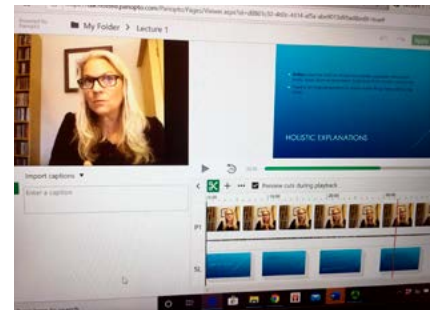
### LAURA ERAMIAN

Dr. Eramian spent the 2020–21 academic year on maternity leave. Though the COVID-19 pandemic made it a tough year during which to care for a newborn, visits from SOSA colleagues when public health restrictions allowed were always bright spots in her days. In July 2020, Dr. Eramian was awarded a SSHRC Insight Development Grant for her new project with Dr. Peter Mallory of St. Francis Xavier University, "Friendship across public and private life: changing personal communities in the modern world." She and Dr. Mallory also published an article in *Families, Relationships, and Societies* in 2020 entitled, "Unclear endings: Difficult friendships and the limits of the therapeutic ethic."

### KAREN FOSTER

The 2020–21 academic year was my first sabbatical. I spent it, like many others, just barely surviving with children at home a lot more than usual, so there's a gap between what I hoped to get done on sabbatical and what I actually did. My kids emerged happy, healthy and literate and my marriage intact. Less importantly, I conducted four different online surveys, set my survey lab up to work virtually (via VPN), and helped launch one telephone survey. I welcomed a post-doctoral fellow, Gillian Kerr, to work with me on an OFI-funded research project, conducted a half dozen in-depth interviews for my Insight Grant project on rural occupational succession, and finished editing *The Right to Be Rural* (forthcoming with University of Alberta Press). Some other highlights included: taking on a government contract with ESDC to produce an 'Intersectional GBA+ Qualitative Evaluation Framework'; giving a lecture on 2016's *Productivity and Prosperity* to the LEREPS institute in Toulouse, France; and working with my graduate students on several publications, presentations and reports.

### LIESL GAMBOLD



**Dr. Gambold edits a lecture.**

Dr. Gambold spent the 2020–2021 academic year much like everyone else; looking at herself and others in small boxes on a computer screen at her dining room table. But knowing that we were all in this together, and with the help of incredibly supportive colleagues, patient students, and as many hikes and walks as were possible, the year wasn't all bad. Liesl taught two large first-year classes this year, Introduction to Gender & Women's Studies and Introduction to Social Anthropology as well as a graduate seminar on Ethnography, a one-credit class for Law students on Qualitative Research and Interviewing, and a summer class on Sport. Liesl was a co-author on two articles that were published this year, one titled "Housing as a determinant of health for older LGBT Canadians" (2021) and the other "Uncertainty tolerance among experts involved in drug reimbursement recommendations" (2020). Liesl also presented papers at three conferences (a silver lining of the shift to online): the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH); the International European Sociological Association's Research Network on Ageing in Europe, which took place in Finland so meant logging on from Halifax at 4am (!), and; together with former SOSA MA student Stephanie Peel, at the Canadian Anthropology Society (CASCA) meeting. Two of Liesl's MA students managed to complete their theses during the pandemic and it was very disappointing that we could not celebrate together in person.

*Continued on page 4*



## FACULTY UPDATES *cont'd*

While recognizing the benefits of being able to adapt to online teaching and learning, Liesl was ready to close her computer for a while at the end of the academic year and recently enjoyed a 6-week road trip of over 8,000 kms from Halifax to Memphis, Phoenix, Chicago and Ottawa to reconnect with family and friends.

### JEAN-SEBASTIEN GUY

Since summer last year, Jean-Sébastien has published two articles: a first article entitled “Durkheim meets Cthulhu: the impure sacred in H. P. Lovecraft” in the *Journal for Cultural Research*, and a second article entitled “Are relational processes teleological or self-referential? What relational sociology can learn from systems theory” in *Digithum* for the special issue on the work of the late Canadian sociologist François Dépelteau. He has also submitted an introduction chapter on Emile Durkheim for the volume *Reading Sociology, 4th edition* edited by Johanne Jean-Pierre & al. In addition, he has submitted an abstract for the call for papers “Working the Form” organized by Dirk Baecker and Florian Grote for the German journal *Soziale Systeme*. The abstract has been accepted and authors are asked to forward their full articles by October 31. For the Canadian Sociological Association (CSA)’s annual meeting (May 31-June 4), Jean-Sébastien organized three sessions on relational sociology and presented two papers himself entitled respectively “Theory of history beyond structure and agency” and “Decentering the subject (yet again): a processual-relational approach to actor-centric models.” Just recently, on June 16, he presented another paper for the European Academy of Management Conference entitled “Social structures, social change and the metric/nonmetric distinction.” Lastly, as chair of the CSA research cluster on relational sociology, Jean-Sébastien organised a series of online workshops on Zoom. These workshops have been recorded and uploaded on the CSA’s website in the section for the research cluster on relational sociology.

### MICHAEL HALPIN

This year I published two pieces from my social isolation/incel research project. One paper, with Kayla Preston and Finlay Maguire, was published in *Men & Masculinities*. The other paper, with Norann Richard, was published in *Methods in Psychology* as part of a special issue on qual methods. I published a piece in The Conversation based on these papers that was “reprinted” the National Post (online), which was pretty neat. I also spoke to CTV News, The Halifax Examiner, Dal News, and Saltwire’s Sarah Poko about my research. With Elena Neiterman (Waterloo), I organized 4 sessions on medical sociology for CSA. For the next year, we’ll be co-chairing the CSA’s sociology of health research cluster.

### CHRISTOPHER HELLAND

Over the last two years during the COVID crisis, Dr. Helland has been watching the incredible rise in online religious activity due to quarantine and isolation protocols. Dr. Helland wrote one of the first dissertations in the world studying online religious activity and developed a theoretical framework of analysis that became the common tool used for studying online religion. (Here is a video of Dr. Helland presenting his early work at Google [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr4XyY-DJgQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr4XyY-DJgQ)). With the new surge of people going online to participate in religious rituals and stay connected with their religious communities, his work has become frequently referenced and plays an important role in understanding the range and impact of this activity. As part of a research team funded by the Luce Foundation at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Dr. Helland has been updating his theoretical framework of analysis to keep pace with new technology and the “hypermediation” that is occurring within our society. He will be presenting his research in Boulder in November and is publishing this work in the new year.



**Dr. Helland conducting digital ethnography in the game *Valheim*, where he is exploring digital manifestations of religious activities.**

Dr. Helland has just finished two articles with Dr. David H. Michaels studying religion in the news media that are in a forth coming issue of the *Journal of Religion, Media, and Digital Culture*. He has also completed an updating of earlier work he had done examining online ritual with Dr. Lisa Kienzel. This is being published in an edited volume by Dr. Heidi Campbell that is exploring new aspects of digital religious activity. For fun, and research, he is part of an international group of scholars studying religion, values, and spirituality in video games. Currently they are exploring the game *Valheim*, where Dr. Helland is examining aspects of the sacred.

### ROBIN OAKLEY

Dr. Oakley published a book chapter in an edited volume published by *Carolina Academic Press*, co-authored a journal article in *Special Edition of Aesthetics of Healing in Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ethnologie und Medizin* and a book review in *American Ethnologist*. She taught Health and Culture, Health, Illness and the World System, Food and Culture, Qualitative and Field Methods, Myth Meaning and Ritual and Aging Cross Culturally.

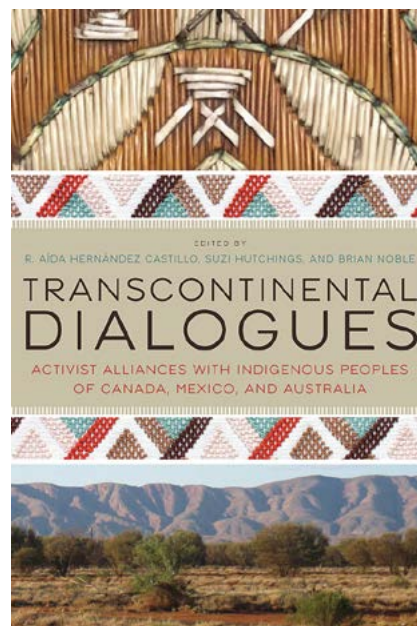
## FACULTY UPDATES *cont'd*

### MARTHA RADICE

Like so many professors around the world, Dr Radice learned a lot about online teaching and research this year! She adapted her SSHRC-funded research on carnival in New Orleans to conduct remote ethnographic fieldwork via social media, regular media, Zoom hangouts, and good old phone calls. This resulted in an article, [‘Creativity, Sociability, Solidarity: New-Wave Carnival Krewes’ Responses to COVID-19 in New Orleans’](#), published in the first open access issue (vol. 63, no. 1) of *Anthropologica* in spring 2021. Martha’s MA student Briana Kelly likewise completed remote interviews and digital ethnography for her MA thesis on the material culture of carnival as part of this project. As this year’s Honours supervisor, Martha helped eight Social Anthropology and six Sociology students figure out how to design their research projects with COVID-19 restrictions in mind – and was truly impressed by how they rose to the challenge. The online Honours symposium meant students’ far-flung friends and family could attend, and [Dal News](#) featured several COVID-19-related Honours research studies. Martha presented her own research online at the AAA’s virtual Raising Our Voices conference (November 2020), in a roundtable comparing the impacts of Hurricane Katrina and the COVID-19 pandemic on New Orleans. She also organized a panel and presented research on the reconfiguration of carnival 2021 at the Canadian Anthropology Society’s virtual conference in May 2021. As its Editor-in-Chief, Martha has shepherded three issues of the international, open access, peer-reviewed [Journal for Undergraduate Ethnography](#) into publication since July 2020.

### BRIAN NOBLE

This past year Dr. Noble has been moving more intensively in his research and writing across disciplinary and knowledge practices, focussing on what we may learn from human-animal (or human / non-human) relationships *as political relations* – jumping in particular from both deeply informed scientific and Indigenous ecosocial practices of relations, most notably among Crows, Coyotes, and Humans. The aim is to glean alternative, decolonizing modes of social, economic, and collective knowing and action that can aid in addressing the ecosocial crises looming worldwide, a matter Dr. Noble is also bringing to the fore in a new course he has been teaching, *Alternative Economies, Livable Eco-Social Futures*. He is now working on a web portal / blog space *Articulate Beings*, for emergent thinking and new dialogues of Indigenous people, researchers and others active in this area. Meanwhile, the volume that Brian co-edited *Transcontinental Dialogues: Activist Alliances with Indigenous Peoples of Canada, Mexico and Australia* has been in publication for a year now with University of Arizona Press, seeing wide circulation and receiving very positive reviews. A Spanish-Language Edition *Diálogos transcontinentales: Investigación activista con los pueblos Indígenas de Canadá, México y Australia* has also just been published by Pochote Press / IWGIA, which includes a prologue in *Chatino*, an endangered Zapotecan language of southwest Oaxaca, Mexico – proceeds of that publication are being used to support Chatino language restoration initiatives. This year, Brian was also honoured to welcome two Killam recipients to join in interchange / studies with him – Dr. Soni Grant, Killam Post Doctoral fellow, and Tiffany Campbell, Killam Doctoral Scholarship recipient. Both work in related areas of decolonial knowledge, politics and ecosocial resurgence practices.



**Dr. Noble’s co-edited *Transcontinental Dialogues: Activist Alliances with Indigenous Peoples of Canada, Mexico and Australia* is available from University of Arizona Press.**

### MARGARET ROBINSON

During the past year, Dr Robinson partnered with Dr. Maryam Dilmaghani at Saint Mary’s University on the first study to examine sexual orientation hiring discrimination in blue-collar occupations in Canada. Using fictitious applicants, they applied to blue-collar positions across the country, varying resumes by volunteer activities (with LGBTQ+ organizations or non-LGBTQ+ organizations). They found a significant hiring preference for those whose resumes present them as straight/cis male, but no differences between callback rates for fictitious female applicants. This study was funded by a SSHRC Partnership Engage grant, has been written about on Saltwire and an academic paper about the study is now under review.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. COOPER



**Dr. Courtney Ligoure, a Black Halifax doctor, and hero of the Halifax Explosion.**

Under Dr. Cooper's leadership, the project *A Black People's History of Canada* secured over C\$1 million in government funding to create classroom-ready materials and digital media about the history of Black Canadians. The project will create and publish new content in English and French, and intends to reach teachers and students in elementary and secondary schools across the country. The learning materials will be developed and evaluated in consultation with leading educators, community organizations, and government agencies.

"Black people's history in Canada has languished in the doldrums in spite of the 400-year presence of Blacks in this country," said Dr. Cooper. "And that is why I am truly excited to receive

this wonderful support from Canadian Heritage for *A Black People's History of Canada*. Our project will fill the lamentable gap in African Canadian history education. Researching, writing, conceptualizing and teaching Black history in a comprehensive manner will produce a seismic shift in African Canadian knowledge mobilization."

Additionally, Dr. Cooper was named one of Dal's 2021 Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Chairs. The Killam Chairs recognize highly distinguished academics at Dalhousie with appointments of up to five years. Finally, Dr. Cooper's book "Black Matters," a poetry volume with photography by Wilfried Raussert, won the 2021 J.M. Abraham Poetry Award for the best poetry book by an Atlantic Canadian.

# DISPATCHES FROM ACTIVE RETIREMENT

## *Professor Emeritus Don Clairmont*

### AFTER A LONG AND IMPACTFUL

academic career, SOSA's Don Clairmont retired in 2003. Many in his position choose to focus on long-postponed hobbies, but as it turns out, Don's main hobby was his scholarly work. As Director of the Atlantic Institute of Criminology, Don has kept delivering publications and project results that build on earlier research and policy evaluation thrusts.

One of Don's main areas of attention has been the Health-Justice nexus, particularly around the Healing to Wellness courts in Aboriginal societies in Canada and the United States. A recent publication dealt with the emergence of one such court in the Mi'kmaq community of Elsipogtog (2013). Don has also paid attention to the impact of how institutions assess fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in Aboriginal societies, for instance, in the co-authored article "Knowledge and Attitudes of Justice Professionals as to Fetal Alcohol Disorder" (2008). In 2013-2014 Don directed a second Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety in HRM, which yielded a major report and an edited volume.

Another of Don's continuing focuses has been restorative justice (RJ). In collaboration with Nova Scotia Public Safety, he has worked on various issues dealing with RJ's expansion and future directions throughout the province and beyond. A significant paper on RJ in Nova Scotia, "Beyond the Gatekeepers: The Reception of Restorative Justice in Nova Scotian Criminal Justice System," appeared in the *Dalhousie Law Journal* in 2013. Don has also done extensive research on RJ and Aboriginal and community-based policing.

Throughout the 2010s, Don carried out research and evaluation in partnership with NS Corrections at NS Youth Centre. The primary focus of his research was the assessment of



a new programming strategy utilizing restorative practices. He published a report on this topic, and more analysis is ongoing. Don has also recently completed work on Indigenous issues in PEI ("Indigenous Justice in the Reconciliation and Implementation Era," 2021) and is continuing a 4-year project on a program dealing with troubled Indigenous youth in New Brunswick.

Don had little hearing capacity for most of his life, but a recent surgery has restored a good part of his hearing. Colleagues that haven't seen him in a while may find it surprising that he hears now better than ever!

Not everything has been rosy, though. Don has had to cope with the unfortunate loss of his wife some three years ago. Despite this blow, Don remains committed to lifting spirits

and staying fit by doing several weekly workout sessions at Dalplex.

Don is also particularly fond of supporting those most in need in our community through volunteering work with the Brunswick Street Mission food bank and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

As a kid, growing up in the London-Hamilton area, to a caring, hard-working mother but an abusive father, Don found heaven in school and, eventually, social science. At 83, his passion for exploring the human condition remains intact. "Doing fieldwork sometimes was not pleasant," he agrees. "But on the whole, I've enjoyed my life so much. Working with people, great colleagues, big projects... I'm very grateful, sometimes overwhelmed, when I think of what a good life I've had."

# GRADUATE STUDENT UPDATES

## **BRYCE ANDERSON (PhD Social Anthropology)**

Over the past year Bryce has written and published three book reviews in journals *Ethos*, *Asian Anthropology*, and *Anthropology Book Forum*. Bryce has presented papers at two conferences, including: "Democracy in Crisis... Democracy in Peril?" the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the International Social Theory Consortium, hosted by the University of South Florida, and "On the Brink of Something, Anything, Everything?", Acadia University's Biennial Social & Political Thought Conference. Bryce attended and participated in the Medical Anthropology Young Scholars (MAYS) Affective Teaching Workshop, titled "COVID-19 and Me" in July, hosted virtually by Durham University. Bryce is now finishing his comp work and preparing his PhD proposal to ultimately begin PhD fieldwork in South Korea in December. In his PhD project, Bryce will be revisiting Durkheimian concepts to study suicide in South Korea. Bryce has also been awarded a MITACS Globalink Research Award to collaborate with Dr. John P. DiMoia at Seoul National University for part of his PhD work. Bryce's PhD committee includes Drs. Robin Oakley (supervisor), Mike Halpin, and John P. DiMoia.

## **ROBERT CHATTERTON (MA Sociology)**

Robert grew up in a very conservative religious household in a rural community. They reflects: "I began to draw conclusions between rurality and my parents' anti-queer beliefs. I moved to Antigonish for my undergrad (because I am a small-town boy) and experienced a new and different side of a rural community. My trips to the city (Halifax) helped me understand that queerness and queer people were slightly different than what I was used to in Antigonish. Was Antigonish an anomaly? Or was there something special about small town queerness that I loved and appreciated? My experiences lead me to investigate rural queerness in Nova Scotia." During the pandemic, Robert travelled around Nova Scotia and stopped by queer owned businesses. They has built a rapport with several people in several communities and hopes to have these businesses as a starting place for study recruitment.

## **JASON ELLSWORTH (PhD Social Anthropology)**

Jason continues as a Research Fellow exploring the global political economy of Nova Scotia's local food movement. The project funded by the Mobile Lives Forum is organized by Co-Investigators Dr. Fitting, Dr. Foster and Dr. Bryan. Jason also became a research member of the newly formed Nova Scotia Migration Research Forum, an interdisciplinary network focused on migrations and mobilities in the Atlantic Region. As part of his doctoral work, he presented a paper titled "Buddhist Social Enterprise or 'Corporate Buddhism' The Commodification and Consumption of Discourses of Social Change" on the panel "Transnationalism, Secularization, and Hybridity: Adapting Buddhisms in the West" at the virtual American Academy of Religion annual meeting. The pandemic slowed the completion of "Fabricating

Authenticity" (Equinox Publishing), a co-edited volume with Andie Alexander, Emory University. Organizing pieces from 28 scholars during a global pandemic added several challenges to the project but is now close to completion.

## **MORGAN HERBERT (MA Social Anthropology)**

Beginning her MA in Social Anthropology this past fall, Morgan completed her coursework, wrote three area essay examinations, presented her research proposal to the SOSA department, and submitted her written proposal. She has received ethics approval for her thesis research, which considers how the perspectives of individuals with matrilineal surnames challenge or support established theories about the patrilineal surnaming norm. She is carrying out this research under the supervision of Liesl Gambold, and she will begin her recruitment campaign in September. Over the past year, Morgan delighted in her role as TA to Martha Radice in two introductory ethnography courses, and she received the humbling news that the second year of her MA will be funded by SSHRC. In addition to her own research, she is currently engaged in research assistant work for Laura Eramian on friendship in modern personal life.

## **KATIE MACLEOD (PhD Social Anthropology)**

Katie is finishing up revisions to her dissertation exploring the social and cultural reproduction of Acadian ethnicity in Nova Scotia. She was awarded the Dr. P. Anthony Johnston Memorial Bursary in 2021, which is awarded to a graduate student focusing on social justice and human rights by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Katie presented a joint paper titled, "Food Justice in Cape Breton: Emergency food response, emergent food understandings" with Dr. Leigh Potvin at the Just Food Conference. She has recently started a Research Associate position on a SSHRC-funded project with Dr. Potvin called "Storying Food Landscapes in Cape Breton" based at Lakehead University where she will be responsible for qualitative data analysis. Over the last year Katie has been lecturing in SOSA at Dalhousie University and L'nu, Political, and Social Studies at Cape Breton University.

## **HANNAH MAIN (PhD Sociology)**

In 2020-2021, Hannah continued the data collection and analysis phase of her dissertation research on rural school closures in Nova Scotia. She presented at the CSA and as part of a Twitter conference, and was co-author of a paper in the International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies. In May, Hannah started a new job at St. Stephen's University as the Director of Community Engagement, a position that includes teaching courses on community engagement and development, and facilitating university connections with community organizations. Working at the intersection of academia and rural community development is a dream job for Hannah, and she's so excited to do it!



### EMILY MICHAUD (MA Sociology)

This past year, Emily both began and completed her MA, exploring online representations of social egg freezing and of the meanings of oocytes in the assisted reproduction industry. She also had wonderful and meaningful experiences both working as a teaching assistant in the department, helping Gender & Health and Health & Society courses be delivered in a virtual format for the first time, and assisting with Dr. Mike Halpin's research on masculinity and social isolation. She is beyond excited to have accepted a spot in Dalhousie Medicine's class of 2025, and hopes to bring everything she has learned in critical health studies to her training.

### ALASTAIR PARSONS (MA Social Anthropology)

Alastair's master's thesis, *Spiritual Maladies: AA Members as Interpreters of a Symbolic Culture*, was accepted this past September. He presented research drawn from that thesis at the 2021 Qualitative Analysis conference. This September, Alastair moved to the UK to begin a SSHRC-funded PhD in medical anthropology at University College

London. With some luck, it will take him to Thailand to study Buddhist addiction therapies. Alastair is grateful to the SOSA department as a whole, to Dr. Liesl Gambold for her guidance since the earliest days of his BA through to her supervision of his master's research, and to Dr. Fiona Martin for her invaluable support as a committee member.

### DANI SALAS (PhD Social Anthropology)

During the past year, Dani Salas advanced the draft of his dissertation focused on the politics of value in rural Cuba. Along with Dr. Lindsay DuBois, Dani co-wrote the introduction to a Dialectical Anthropology special issue that brings together ethnographic studies of the power-value relationship. He also published a shorter piece analyzing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cuba in the same journal. In addition, Dani presented a paper at the online colloquium of the Society for Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology. More recently, he taught a summer course on the politics of socialist transition and development in Cuba.

### EXTERNAL GRADUATE STUDENT FUNDING AWARDS (2020/21)

**Alyssa Gerhardt** (PhD SOCI) - CGS-D (SSHRC)

**Brooke El Skaf** (MA SOCI) - Scotia Scholar Award (NSDHW)

**Caroline Milner** (MA SOCI) - CGS-M (SSHRC)

**Danielle Frinton** (MA SOAN) - CGS-M (SSHRC)

**Etni Zoe Castell Roldán** - Wenner Gren (renewed)

**Lisa Redgrift** (PhD SOCI) - Karen & Tom Traves Achievement FASS Graduate Bursary

**Morgan Herbert** (MA SOAN) - CGS-M (SSHRC)

NOTES: CGS stands for Canada Graduate Scholarships. SSHRC stands for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Wenner Gren is the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. NSDHW is the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness.

## KUDOS TO OUR STUDENTS!

Recent MA graduates **Brenna Sobanski** and **Alastair Parsons** were awarded SSHRC doctoral fellowships to continue PhD studies in McMaster University and University College London, respectively. Along with **Lizzie James** (BA), Alastair also won the Canadian Anthropology Society (CASA) Outstanding Graduating Anthropology Student Awards 2021, Dalhousie University. **Rachel McLay** is one of 13 doctoral students selected annually from across Dal for the Open Think program, which "gives future thought leaders the training and platform they need to influence public discourse and policy." Rachel McLay studies polarization in politics, with a focus on the state of politics and the public sphere in Atlantic Canada.

## SOSA SPEAKERS' SERIES 2020–2021

**NOVEMBER 6: Dr. Anthony Hatch**, *Silent Cells: The Secret Drugging of Captive America*

**JANUARY 22: Dr. Alexa Dodge**, *Delete, Listen, Educate: Alternative Responses to Digital Harassment & Nonconsensual Pornography*

**FEBRUARY 26: Lana Maclean, MSW, RSW, #the3P's**: *African NS Three Pillars for Social Justice (Church, Community and Champions)*

**MARCH 19: Dr. Daanika Gordon**, *From State Racial Projects to Colorblind Ideologies: The Bureaucratic Dissociation of Race in Policing*



**Maurice (cat)** attempted to crash Dr. Gordon's Speaker Series session. Chaos was averted thanks to Hanna Main's timely snack-offering intervention.



SOSA students and professors during the online symposium.

## SOSA HONOURS SYMPOSIUM

April 9, 2021. Introduction by Dr. Martha Radice

### PANEL 1: INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH THE LIFE CYCLE

**Mackenzie Frolic-Smart:** *Love at Six Paces: Intimacy in Distance Relationships during the COVID 19 Pandemic*

**Chuhan Zhang:** *"One or Two?": Fertility Decisions After the End of the One Child Policy in China*

**Sydney Patterson:** *Young Adults and their Parents: The (Mis) understandings that Define Mental Illness*

**Yanze Dong:** *The Social Lives of Chinese Seniors: Family, Reciprocity, and Social Networks*

### PANEL 2: EVERYDAY PRACTICES IN PUBLIC

**Aspen Doig:** *Green Time Machine: Urban Public Parks and Community during the COVID-19 Pandemic*

**Lydia Hanson:** *At the Tipping Point: Intersections of Wage, Gift, and Solidarity in Halifax Restaurant Work*

**Sarah Mingo:** *Behind the Mask: Nova Scotians' Social Constructions of Mask-Wearing During COVID-19*

### PANEL 3: ADAPTATIONS: ADJUSTING TO NEW SITUATIONS AND REALIZATIONS

**Dana Kelly:** *Staying Connected: Life Online During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

**Nolan Roy:** *Growing Up and Learning Masculinities in the Age of #MeToo*

**Hannah Shaw:** *"I Don't Suffer from ADHD, I Suffer from Other People": ADHD, Stigma, and Academic Life*

**Mary Berger:** *"I Don't Know How to Just Chat": Online University, First-Year Students, and the Trouble of Digital Community*

### PANEL 4: INTERPRETATIONS: PRACTICES OF CULTURAL INTERMEDIARIES

**Alex Reucassel:** *Bridges and Barriers: The Canadian Refugee Resettlement Process*

**Caroline DeFrias:** *The Task of the Curator in the Era of Reconciliation*

**Lizzie James:** *How and Why Heritage Performers Represent the Past in the Present*

# A CHANGE OF PLAN SPURS NEWFOUND PASSION

*Genevieve MacIntyre*

*August 4, 2021*



*Hannah Shaw's move to Dalhousie helped her discover a passion for sociology and social anthropology. (Provided photo)*

**HANNAH SHAW KNEW SOMETHING WASN'T RIGHT** when she first began her postsecondary education at a university in her home province of Ontario. Following the plan she had created for herself for after high school — to become a psychologist and get her PhD — she quickly learned that she was not passionate about psychology.

"I thought, because I wasn't enjoying my classes and was consumed with stress, that I wasn't meant for university," she says.

The courses she was taking and the co-op she was placed with had her feeling miserable. Even during orientation week, a week that's typically full of fun and excitement, she knew she had made the wrong choice.

"I feel like we often 'click' with our chosen universities. I never had that experience [there]."

Hannah's first experience at university led her to believe she must just dislike university. As she had always identified as someone who loved school and learning, the stress, tension headaches, heart palpitations, panic attacks and other symptoms she suffered had her feeling heartbroken and lost. She knew she needed to change things.

Hearing about her stepsister's positive experience at Dalhousie, along with Hannah's interest in Halifax and the east coast, she decided to take a leap of faith and leave Ontario for Nova Scotia.

"I didn't think too much about it, I just did it because it felt right. It was easily the best decision of my life!"

## **ETHNOGRAPHY, THE GATEWAY SUBJECT**

Having switched her plans to be a psychologist to instead pursue a career in social work, Hannah decided to begin that path by getting an undergraduate degree in sociology at Dalhousie before moving on to pursue a master's degree in social work.

Hannah says that she didn't expect to enjoy sociology and social anthropology (SOSA) but when she took Martha Radice's ethnography class in her second year, she discovered she absolutely loved the subjects.

"My passion for sociology grew when I took the required theory course. As my degree progressed, I found myself getting more and more proud of and interested in my major. I went into honours because I thought it would better my chances of getting into grad school but expected it to be really difficult and stressful. I couldn't have been more wrong; it was easily the highlight of my degree. It made my time at Dal really special and gave me a close relationship to the faculty."

She took her growing interest in sociology and applied it to her own life and surroundings when choosing her honours thesis topic. Hannah, who has ADHD, noticed a lot of stigma around her on campus and a lot of intolerance from her peers towards neurodivergence – for example, getting easily annoyed by people who talked too much, overshared, or had difficulty "reading the room". She decided to focus her honours thesis research on ADHD, stigma, and academic life.

"As I worked on my research design, I realized my experiences of stigma were significant factors in how I shaped my honours project."

Hannah looked into the idea of 'masking' — how someone may hide or conceal ADHD symptoms/behaviours. She found that fidgeting, talking too much, and "passive listening" were the most common ways people masked their behaviours. She describes "passive listening" as listening but not appearing like you are (looking away, playing with hands, etc.) as opposed to "active listening", which was described as looking at the speaker and "aggressively" nodding the head.

"Active listening was associated with demonstrating respect, so participants tried to do it all the time, but it took so much energy and focus that participants often had a harder time paying attention because they spent so much time trying to look like they were paying attention," explains Hannah. "While stigma was prevalent, most participants had strong ideas about self acceptance and didn't see ADHD as a negative trait. Rather, they often found it was something to celebrate as it made them unique. Sometimes it even felt like a superpower!"

Hannah, who graduated from Dal in spring 2021 and is now working as a mental health support worker, still has her sights set on a master's in social work degree and plans to begin her graduate studies after a year or two of working. She adds that she would like to work with people with disabilities who have higher support needs, or in geriatric social work.

(This story originally appeared in Dal News. [www.dal.ca/news/2021/08/04/when-a-change-of-plan-is-the-right-choice.html](http://www.dal.ca/news/2021/08/04/when-a-change-of-plan-is-the-right-choice.html))



## ALUMNI UPDATES

**SHANNON AUSTER-WEISS** (BA Hons SOAN 2016) has dedicated most of the last few years to building Nanny Lane, a startup company that seeks to make child care accessible for families while alleviating the perils of precarious work for nannies. During this time, she led a team that took the business from pre-revenue stages to generating \$500,000 of revenue a year. Shannon has accepted an offer to go to the University of Oxford for an MSc in Medical Anthropology starting in October 2022. She spent most of the past year between the West Coast and her home in Ontario.

**JENNY BENSON** (MA SOAN 2009, BA Hons SOAN 2007) received a Rotary Club's Paul Harris Fellowship Award for her work with The Aninga Project, a Halifax-based grassroots charity organization that funds and supports the education and empowerment of young women in East Africa.

**MACKENZIE FROLIC-SMART** (BA Hons SOCI and STAT 2021) recently started a job that will put both disciplines to excellent use as a Planning & Performance Analyst Intern with Halifax Regional Municipality.

**CINTHYA GUZMAN** (BA SOCI Hons 2014) is working on her PhD in Sociology at the University of Toronto, studying the daily routines and habits of everyday Canadians in relation to emotional experiences like boredom. Her own daily routine has been very busy recently--not only because she followed up with many of her research participants to find out how the COVID-19 lockdowns changed their routines and affected their emotions, but also because she and her partner welcomed baby Émile into the world in late 2019. Congratulations to Cinthya!

**BRENDEN HARVEY** (MA SOAN 2014, BA Hons SOAN 2012) has been working for five years with The City of Calgary as a Social Research Policy Analyst. Lately, he has been involved in developing a COVID response project, helping to design an intake tool for offers and requests for service during the pandemic, and reporting to Calgary's Emergency Operations Centre on things like offers of PPE and requests for food from local elders and indigenous groups. Brenden has also been maintaining a portfolio working with Federal Census data for a couple of years, and occasionally evaluates research projects for community associations in Calgary.

**ANDREA RANKIN** (BA SOAN 2019) After two years working in the Halifax startup ecosystem, Andrea will be returning to Dalhousie University to complete the Master of Public Administration program in September 2021.

**BRENNA SOBANSKI** (MA SOAN 2021) was awarded (and later declined) the C. David Naylor Fellowship at University of Toronto. She has since accepted McMaster University's offer to continue academic studies under the supervision of Dr. Petra Rethmann.

**ADRIANNA VANOS** (BA Hon SOSA-CTMP 2021) worked as a research fellow with the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness and Special Olympics International. She is looking forward to continuing her MA studies in the area of social anthropology.



### OBITUARY

#### Dr. Margaret Kathleen Dechman (1957–2020)

It is with great sadness that we noted the passing of Dr. Margaret K. Dechman, on November 16, 2020 at her home in Howie Centre, Cape Breton. Margie was an Associate Professor of Sociology in the Department of L'nu, Political and Social Studies at Cape Breton University in Sydney, Nova Scotia. After 25 years in the academic and public sector, Margie returned to Dalhousie to complete a doctorate in our then new PhD program. In 2008, she was the second recipient of a PhD in the history of the Department. Margie was a warm, thoughtful person, who combined her deep concern for the victims of social inequality with a positive outlook. Her preoccupations were clear in her doctoral dissertation, "The Narrowing Path: A Multidimensional Life Course Analysis of Processes of Exclusion."



*SOSA BBQ social at Dr. Noble's backyard, strictly following provincial health guidelines.*

## PHD PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS 2020–2021

**OCTOBER 16:** **Emma Kay**, PhD proposal presentation, *Funding for Women's Charitable Organizations in Canada*

**MARCH 5:** **Elias Galindo Paredes**, PhD proposal presentation, *From stakeholders to rightsholders of a Conservation Area: Co-governance and sovereignty in the Colombian Amazonia, Lagos de Tarapoto, 2006-2020*

**MARCH 30:** **Meghan Gosse**, PhD proposal presentation, *Living with vaginismus: Relationships, identities, and intimacies*



*Inge Van Buren having just received her MA at the October 2021 convocation celebrates with SOSA's Emeritus Pauline Gardiner Barber.*

# MORE THAN A HEALTH CRISIS: STUDENT RESEARCHERS EXPLORE COVID-19'S IMPACTS ON THE SOCIAL WORLD

*Genevieve MacIntyre – June 25, 2021*

## **SOCIOLOGISTS AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGISTS,**

including Dal honours students, have explored how people have reacted and adapted to the pandemic in their everyday lives.

Researchers have amassed an incredible amount of knowledge about COVID-19 in a relatively short period of time, providing evidence used in everything from the creation of vaccines to the writing and re-writing of public health guidelines as fresh outbreaks and variants have emerged.

But the COVID-19 global pandemic is more than just a health crisis, something the many researchers closely

examining the virus and its relationship to social patterns and trends are helping to illuminate in their work.

Dr Martha Radice taught this year's SOSA undergraduate Honours Research seminar, coordinated the Honours Research Symposium and supervised all 14 SOSA Honours students' projects. She says that several of the students from this year's cohort have conducted some really valuable research on the impacts of the pandemic, taking the tools of their disciplines and applying them to what they saw happening in their own social circles, families and communities.

Learn more about some of their projects below.

## **A DIFFERENT KIND OF FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE**

Sociology student Mary Berger's thesis research investigated how first-year students experienced the transition from high school to the exclusively online university experience. Her research topic was inspired by her brother, who had just started his first year of university in British Columbia and was having to participate in orientation and social events virtually.

"It was very jarring to see how different his experience was compared to mine when I started university," says Mary, pictured right. "I thought since there was a lot of research which had looked at the importance university friendships played in the adjustment of first-year students at university, I was curious about how that was going online."

Her research found that the students suffered from both a lack of sociability – as they couldn't have the kind of spontaneous encounters or organic conversations with peers that they would have in-person sitting next to each other in class – and a lack of socialization into their new roles of university students – due to many of them studying in isolation, they had a difficult time applying the label of "university student" to themselves.

Dr. Radice adds, "Mary's research can help university services and faculty take stock of what this online year meant for new students, which is important if we are considering expanding online offerings."



## **MASKS AS SYMBOLS**

Social Anthropology student Sarah Mingo's research looked at Nova Scotians' constructions of mask-wearing during the pandemic.

"What interested me in face masks was how quickly they became a part of our daily lives," says Sarah. "In the span of a few months, they went from rare sightings to a universal feature of our public life. I wanted to examine what Nova Scotians make of face masks, and what masks have made of us in return."

Although masks hamper some kinds of social interactions, making it hard to read each other's facial expressions, they communicate other messages very well. Sarah's findings showed that for many, masks symbolize how interconnected we are, and that mask-wearing also demonstrates care and consideration towards other people.

She also found that face masks are a way people have connected with each other at a time when we've been encouraged to socially distance.

"Everyone I spoke to had either made or bought masks for their friends, family, coworkers, or even strangers. They've been used not only to stop the spread of the virus, but to overcome some of the social barriers it's created."



## GREEN SPACE AND PRIVILEGE

Social Anthropology student Aspen Doig (right) was fascinated by the public blowback to the closures of the Nova Scotia parks during the beginning of the first lockdown last year. On the day the parks reopened, Aspen accompanied their parents on a walk to the park and noticed how quickly the tape and barricades had already been moved aside by a steady stream of people eager to return.



"This enthusiasm was what inspired me to take my research in this direction," says Aspen, pictured right.

Aspen's project, which included in-depth interviews with several Haligonians, examined the role of parks in maintaining a sense of community in the COVID-19 pandemic. It also interrogated the privilege of access to green space during the pandemic, a point of frustration raised by all interviewed, especially in relation to those who lived in apartment buildings without access to any private green space.

Aspen's research found that after the parks reopened, people used them as a place to go to escape the present barriers and feelings of isolation brought on by the pandemic. They saw parks as a kind of "green time machine" or window to the pre-COVID times. They also found that parks were seen as the last public space that was comfortable for people to relax in, where spontaneous social interactions became important aspects, as a venue where events could be organized, and as one of the last places people could go and safely socialize.

"As a result, those I interviewed had an increased appreciation for public green space and expressed a stronger drive to protect their ability to freely access those spaces," says Aspen.

## THE BLURRING OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIVES

Inspired by conversations she had with her friends, family and co-workers throughout the pandemic, Sociology student Dana Kelly focused her research project on how people are coping with the massive shift to online work, study, communication, and leisure.

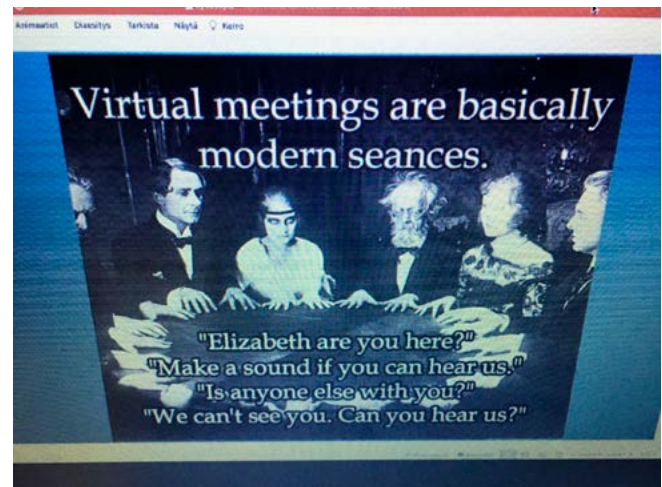
"The increasing reliance on social media and other online communication platforms and the impact that that has on people's daily lives was something that I was already interested in," explains Dana. "Using the COVID-19 pandemic as a sort of frame to explore this topic was really intriguing and I hoped relatable to people."

Dana's research depicts the tension that Canadians have been feeling in the wake of their switch to online life during the pandemic, as they've been forced to use online platforms in new and targeted ways to find a sense of connections with colleagues, friends and family in a time of imposed self-isolation.

Her research found this shift to online life has left participants feeling that their private lives have been breached, blurring what constitutes public and private, and that some participants felt like they were the victims of surveillance and monitoring on these platforms, particularly about how they were responding to the pandemic and public health guidelines, and how they are presenting themselves online.

Dana adds that even though the online shift has impacted the way people cautiously approach their online engagement, she notes that even before the pandemic, the option was always there for people to connect online, but now, it has taken on a greater importance as a source of connection.

"In a lot of ways, I think the pandemic has forced people to go out of their way to remain connected to others."



*New technologies recast timeless rituals.*

(This story originally appeared in Dal News. [www.dal.ca/news/2021/06/25/more-than-a-health-crisis--student-researchers-explore-COVID-19-.html](http://www.dal.ca/news/2021/06/25/more-than-a-health-crisis--student-researchers-explore-COVID-19-.html))

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES

### MA SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Alastair Parsons  
Brenna Sobanski  
Brooke Edwards  
Bryce Anderson  
Caitlin Stonham  
Inge Van Buren  
Jenny Davidson

Katy Crane  
Patrick Bondy  
Rowen Shier  
Stephanie Peel  
Wade Pfaff  
Xiao He

### MA SOCIOLOGY

Alexandra Milmine  
Betty Chukwu  
Brooke El Skaf  
Emily Michaud  
Emily Taweel  
Hailie Tattrie  
Jordan Minx  
Kayla Preston

### DOCTORAL DEFENSE

**April 16, 2021:** **SERPERI SEVGUR** successfully defended her PhD in Sociology. Her dissertation was entitled *Transnational Dimensions of Social Reproduction: Georgian Migrant Women in Turkey*.



*Serperi Sevgur (center) celebrates with (L-R) Liz Fitting, Pauline Gardiner Barber, Evangelia Tastsoglou and Shiva Nourpanah.*

## SOSA BABIES!



*Winifred Anna Crane, born on March 29. Healthy and happy!*



*Drew Laurie Lockhart-Connell, born March 1, ready for Halifax's fall weather! She has a big sister named Mae.*



*Ernesto Salas-Linares, born on December 26. He loves playing on the jumper.*

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have an interesting story to share?

Know of a former classmate who is doing something exciting and newsworthy?

Email us at:

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