Social Sciences at Victoria

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Kia ora,

There are so many significant projects going on in the school, and so many reasons to celebrate. Two of these strike me as very special for this current newsletter. Two weeks ago four of our SACS members were honoured with a Victoria University excellence award: Lynzi Armstrong with an early career research award and three of our best tutors with a tutor excellence award (Jordan Armstrong, Sally Day and Sophie Beaumont). Seeing them on stage made me feel so immensely proud. Apart from the fact that they all are truly awesome, we also need to keep up the effort to nominate colleagues and tutors to give them a chance to win. Thank you Trevor for having made this happen this time round.

The second special occasion was the School starting, as a team, the Te Hapai Programme last week. Being together for a whole morning learning about Te Reo, laughing, practicing and egging each other on to walk with the same pace into this new space for also a truly great experience. Thank you all, my wonderful SACS colleagues for joining into this project. It will make a difference, it will change us, but I am sure also make us stronger as a team.

Kia kaha
Brigitte

THE MOMO CHALLENGE

An online game said to encourage children to self-harm is likely a hoax, but that hasn’t stopped agencies in New Zealand and overseas sounding the alarm.

Dr Sarah Monod de Froideville was interviewed for Morning Report on Radio NZ on 1 March about the Momo Challenge:

Listen to the full interview here
“In March, ten years ago, I took up a diplomatic posting to Damascus, Syria. At the time, Syria was the perfect family posting. It was safe, the people were friendly, and being home to historical and archaeological remains from the Bronze Age, Byzantine times, and the Ottoman period, Syria offered a rich experience.

“As a South African diplomat to Palestine (2000-2004), I was often asked to compare the Israeli occupation with Apartheid. In my opinion, a discriminatory regime exists in Israeli proper, while the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip facilitates the dispossession of Palestinians. My posting to Ramallah started with the second Palestinian Intifada or uprising. On my daily commute from East Jerusalem, at the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) checkpoint into Ramallah, I witnessed standoffs between Palestinian youth and the IDF. An armoured vehicle and diplomatic passport allowed me access into the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, a curtesy not afforded most Palestinians.

“Jordan (1993-1997), my first posting, was an easy introduction to the Middle East. Foreign aid and a prevailing secret service or mukhabarat keep Amman afloat, and able to accommodate refugees from neighbouring Palestine, Iraq, and in recent years, Syria.

“My family and I left Syria in August 2012, a year and 5 months after the start of the Syrian uprising. By this time, a military conflict fuelled by the Syrian government’s spectacularly violent response to the uprising, foreign interests, and an Al-Qaeda foothold had surpassed the March 2011 protest movement, which was initially mostly peaceful. In the enabling environment that the Religious Studies Programme at Victoria offers, I spent the next five years doing a PhD on the moderate platform of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood (SMB). Then came the opportunity to lecture in the Religious Studies programme, in SACS. A much desired destination!”

- Dr Hanlie Booysen
Dr Mike Lloyd is a Senior Lecturer in the Sociology programme

THE NON-LOOKS OF THE MOBILE WORLD:
A VIDEO-BASED STUDY OF INTERACTIONAL
ADAPTATION IN CYCLE-LANES (forthcoming in Mobilities)

This empirical study uses video data to examine interactional adaptation between cyclists and pedestrians in a relatively new cycle-lane. Existing research on intersections shows order is achieved through the frequent use of a look-recognition-acknowledgement sequence, and whereas this is used in the cycle-lane interactions there is also an important divergent technique which on the surface seems less cooperative. Others are made to concede space based on ‘doing and being oblivious’ (Liberman, 2013), in short, forms of non-looking force others to take evasive action and subtly alter their line of travel. Here the dynamic nature of this obliviousness is shown through empirical examples. Even though it is not always easy to distinguish between the two forms of non-looking, it is concluded that ‘doing oblivious’, whilst possibly annoying for others, is most probably harmless, but there are good reasons to be more concerned about ‘being oblivious’, for it may lead to collisions between pedestrians and cyclists. Aspects of non-looking provide an important addition to knowledge of the mobile world, suggesting we renew attention to specific sites where people concert their movements in minutely detailed ways.

- Dr Mike Lloyd

YOU JUST TOOK THE JUMP TOO SLOWLY: A SINGLE CASE ANALYSIS OF A MOUNTAIN BIKING CRASH

Dr Mike Lloyd has an article to be published in the online journal Social Interaction

Two online videos are used to analyse social interaction in a mountain biking crash. The first provides context and a contrast case: we view five mountain bikers crossing a large jump in close succession, where it is their chained riding that helps establish the minimum speed required to cross the jump.

Then there is a detailed analysis of a frequently viewed Youtube video showing another group of five riders with a very different experience of a much smaller gap jump. In this case, only two riders are closely linked and we see a different kind of social effect: a watching group educes one of the riders to take on the gap jump riding solo, when he does not seem to have the requisite skill, the result being he is knocked unconscious attempting the jump. The analysis shows how coordinated activity does not always benefit participants, emphasising the need to carefully investigate the subtleties of co-operative action.

- Dr Mike Lloyd

“The non-looks of the mobile world: A video-based study of interactional adaptation in cycle-lanes” (forthcoming in Mobilities)

Apart from an overseas conference in Macau (see photo), I stayed in Wellington for my Research and Study Leave in the second half of 2018.

Along with two international conference papers, the main work during this time was the production of two original research papers, now forthcoming in two international journals, including the premier journal Mobilities and the new journal Social Interaction.

The abstracts that are reproduced here both show my ongoing commitment to working with video data that captures the fine detail of social interaction”.

- Dr Mike Lloyd

“You just took the jump too slowly”: A single case analysis of a mountain biking crash

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- Dr Mike Lloyd

“The non-looks of the mobile world: A video-based study of interactional adaptation in cycle-lanes” (forthcoming in Mobilities)
"Fast forward 16 years from when I was a student at Victoria completing a BA in Criminology - I now work out of Stratford Police Station in Taranaki.

The role that I am in sees me assigned to the Public Safety Team which is a frontline role so I get dispatched to all of the priority one type jobs - family harm episodes, burglaries, car crashes etc.

Another one of my roles is being on the search and rescue squad. The majority of our call outs involve helping lost or injured trampers off Mt Taranaki. We might also be called to carry out DVI (Disaster Victim Identification) work which involves extracting victims from car crashes.

I applied for a job in the New Zealand Police as I wanted a job that involved helping people but that was also different from day to day. After 5 years I still find the job both challenging and interesting.

I decided to study Criminology as I was interested in finding out what makes people decide to commit crimes. I chose the School of Social and Cultural Studies at Victoria because at that time Victoria was the only university with a dedicated Criminology department. And I felt this would give me the most comprehensive education.

I was asked what has been the most positive impact in my police career and I’d have to say though, apart from the work, it was meeting my wife Sunghee whilst I was living in Korea.

A degree in Criminology has definitely helped me to understand why people do what they do. This helps me in trying to create solutions to the problems I’m faced with. A degree does give you a competitive advantage when you’re going through the recruitment process. However once you’re in the job itself the old saying, ‘You get out what you put in’ definitely applies."

- Nathan Hessell

The Sociology and Social Policy programme at Victoria hosted the national sociology conference, Sociological Association of Australia and New Zealand (SAANZ) 2018, from 4 - 7 December last year. There were approximately one hundred and fifty people who registered, with over one hundred and ten papers delivered.

The papers delivered covered an enormous range of issues in the disciplines, but there were particularly strong streams in the following: social movements and resistance, complicating academia, and disrupting the social work narrative.

A large contingent of postgraduate students participated in the conference. The first day of the conference included a postgraduate workshop, with a masterclass by Professor Gregor McLennan on “Postsecular Puzzles: Religion, Marx, Sociology, Secularism”, and a writing session led by Dr Jennifer de Saxe.

The three plenary sessions were exceptional and their sessions were well attended. There was an opening plenary by Professor Tracey MacIntosh, ‘A Mua: The Art of Decarceration’; two plenaries delivered by Professor Gregor McLennan – ‘Dilemmas of the Discipline: The Ever-Present Coming Crisis of Sociology’, and ‘Stuart Hall: Critical Intellectual’; and a joint plenary with the Society of Medical Anthropology, Dr Sonja Van Wichelen, ‘How Science and Law Co- Produce Shit as Medicine: On Postcolonial Technosciences in the Postgenomic Age’.

- Dr Chamsy el-Ojeili
"I had a very busy and productive Research and Study Leave (RSL) in 2018/2019, although at times it felt interrupted by travel and a diverse range of speaking engagements. At the start of my RSL I went to a conference in Adelaide called ‘Pleasure and Health’ where I presented a paper about harm reduction, intoxication and pleasure. I then took up two visiting scholarships, one in the UK at Manchester Metropolitan University (where I did my PhD), and one at the Australian National University in Canberra. They both kept me busy with teaching and seminar presentations, and I was made to feel very warmly welcomed, especially in Canberra, where I even discovered a street called ‘Hutton Street’ near the campus!

“I finalised the contract for an edited collection about ‘intoxication’ at the start of my research leave so I’ve been working on editing chapters from contributing authors and thinking about my own contributions for this project. I also received an invitation to submit a proposal for a Routledge series about health which was accepted, so now I have two book contracts on the go which I am not sure is a good thing or not! My area of research is ‘hotting up’ with drug law reform debates a key topic over the last few months, so I have also been busy writing opinion pieces and doing presentations about drug law reform and harm reduction. Last, but not least, I developed a new project looking at the effects drug convictions have on people, but I haven’t had time to start it yet, although it is all ethically approved and ready to go – hopefully I can kick start it in the next few months. And really finally I am also now on Twitter which is my first foray into the scary world of social media - this would not have been possible without Lynzi Armstrong’s help - thanks Lynzi!”

- Dr Fiona Hutton

POPULAR FEMINIST WEBSITES, INTIMATE PUBLICS, AND FEMINIST KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Dr Carol Harrington has recently had a new journal article come out called ‘Popular feminist websites, intimate publics, and feminist knowledge about sexual violence’

This article presents a qualitative analysis of conversations about rape in the comments sections of two popular feminist websites: Jezebel and xoJane. Focussing on comment threads about first-hand experiences of sexual violence and problematic heterosex, she shows that commenters produced an analysis of rape as a continuum with less extreme forms of sexual coercion, as heterogeneous and as a predictable product of heterosexual norms.
PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR

The School is very pleased to announce that at the end of last year two of our academics were promoted to Professors. A big congratulations to Professor Jan Jordan and Professor Elizabeth Stanley. This is a huge achievement and in both cases very well deserved. Both Jan and Elizabeth are in the Institute of Criminology.

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER AWARDS

Dr Lynzi Armstrong was awarded one of only five Early Career Researcher Awards given out by the University last year. This is a marvellous achievement and real credit to Lynzi. Lynzi teaches in the Institute of Criminology.

PROMOTION TO SENIOR LECTURER

Congratulations to Dr Eli Elinoff on his promotion to Senior Lecturer. Eli is part of the Cultural Anthropology Programme in our School.

NEW BOOK FOR DR GRANT JUN OTSUKI

Abstract

‘The World Multiple’, as a collection, is an ambitious ethnographic experiment in understanding how the world is experienced and generated in multiple ways through people’s everyday practices. Against the dominant assumption that the world is a single universal reality that can only be known by modern expert science, this book argues that worlds are worlded—they are socially and materially crafted in multiple forms in everyday practices involving humans, landscapes, animals, plants, fungi, rocks, and other beings. These practices do not converge to a singular knowledge of the world, but generate a world multiple—a world that is more than one integrated whole, yet less than many fragmented parts.

The book brings together authors from Europe, Japan, and North America, in conversation with ethnographic material from Africa, the Americas, and Asia, in order to explore the possibilities of the world multiple to reveal new ways to intervene in the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism that inflict damage on humans and nonhumans. The contributors show how the world is formed through interactions among techno-scientific, vernacular, local, and indigenous practices, and examine the new forms of politics that emerge out of them.

Engaged with recent anthropological discussions of ontologies, the Anthropocene, and multi-species ethnography, the book addresses the multidimensional realities of people’s lives and the quotidian politics they entail.”

REVEaling THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON SOCIAL POLICY

"My summer scholar project, ‘Revealing the Royal Commission on Social Policy’, supervised by Carol Harrington, aimed to create resources for students, academics, and the wider public to better access the content, ideas, and context of the Royal Commission on Social Policy 1988. This project has been co-sponsored by Jan Rivers of Public Good (http://publicgood.org.nz/), who in learning about the Royal Commission became fascinated by it and saw value in its content and context which should be brought to public discussion.

For this project I produced an annotated bibliography of writings about the Royal Commission on Social Policy, a bibliography of related materials such as the submissions, an annotated listing of the recommendations in the Royal Commission on Social Policy’s report, a table of contents and chapter description for each chapter in the first four (of five) volumes of the report, and have done interviews with some of those who were involved with the Royal Commission on Social Policy. These resources are to be published online at Jan’s Public Good website for people to access and use in their own studies and research.”

- Tegan van der Peet

ARTICLE PUBLISHED FOR JOHN PRATT

John Pratt has had an article published in Volume 28, Issue 116, March 2019 issue of the Journal of Contemporary China

Are Street-Level Bureaucrats in China Hardnosed Cops or Consultants? An Institutional Account of Policing Behavior in Autocracy.

Abstract

Chengguan (城管) is part of the stability maintenance regime specializing in civil law enforcement in China. Many protests today have occurred in reaction to Chengguan harsh enforcement rather than police action. Using survey data (n = 1,721) from China, the authors found both severity and leniency in Chengguan law enforcement.

The author also found that Chengguan enforcement styles are largely conciliatory rather than legalistic, and that Chengguan officers are more likely to be harsh during politically important periods than during politically unimportant periods. The authors explain the temporal variation in Chengguan severity and leniency with three institutional factors of autocracy: resource constraints, upward accountability, and the politics of ritual events. This study offers a new account of law enforcement in China.

VISITOR TO SACs ESTELLE CARDE

Associate Professor Estelle Carde is a visiting scholar in the School of Social and Cultural Studies.

Estelle Carde studied in France, where she completed two doctorates, in medicine (public health) and sociology. She is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the Université de Montréal, Canada, for the last 7 years and is presently a Visiting Scholar in the School of Social and Cultural Studies at Victoria University of Wellington.

Her main research interest is in the social inequalities in health. Her early research focused on the health of foreigners and racial minorities, with particular focus on discrimination encountered in their access to care. Some of these studies were conducted in French Guiana, an overseas French territory, whose legacy of slavery and ethnic diversity (and neighbouring poor countries) give it a unique context, within the French health care system, for such discriminations. She has subsequently broadened her approach to social inequalities in health by considering other social factors, such as socio-economic status and gender, in an intersectional perspective. Her present research focuses on the social inequalities in the perceived credibility of people who report suffering from chronic pain to their doctors.

Estelle is located in MY1013 so please feel free to pop in and say Hello.
VISITING SCHOLAR FROM DENMARK

"Hi, my name is Mads and I’m a visiting PhD student from Denmark.

While I’m here, I will be working on the part of my PhD that is concerned with the development of penal politics in Denmark in the last two decades – a development I try to describe under the headline ‘Exceptionalism for most, Excess for Others’. I guess that gives an idea of where the politics are going... The other part of my project is about how these politics affect police legitimacy amongst ethnic minority citizens in Denmark.

Criminology is ‘young’ in Denmark, and so is punitive politics. So I’m excited to have the opportunity to visit a more experienced country in both regards. I hope to hear about all your interesting work here at Criminology at Victoria - I’ll be here till the end of May, so hopefully there is time to have a chat!"

- Mads Madsen

I KA PIKO, TO THE SUMMIT: RESISTANCE FROM THE MOUNTAIN TO THE SEA

Dr Emalani Case, Lecturer in Pacific Studies at Victoria University of Wellington

“13th March 2019 was Mauna Kea Awareness Day, a day for celebrating, educating, protecting, and lending a voice, a hand, or a heart for our mountain, Mauna Kea. As a resident of Hawaii Island, where Mauna Kea is located, and as a kia mauna, or a protector of the mountain, I was honoured to give a seminar on Mauna Kea as part of Anthropology’s seminar series. The seminar, serendipitously aligned with Mauna Kea Awareness Day, presented different (and often conflicting) readings of the mountain and how particular framings have been used strategically to dismiss Kanaka Maoli (Hawaiian) beliefs and ancestral connections to place. It explored current issues surrounding Mauna Kea, focusing on the proposed construction of a thirty-metre telescope at its summit, and explored what motivation, momentum, and inspiration kiai mauna can gain when they look to the summit for guidance and wisdom. Further, it offered hope in its critical examination of place and space, and perhaps more importantly, in its recognition of a long history of resistance that will continue far into the future. Finally, I discussed the often-conflicting expressions of belonging and possession, how they are enacted and embodied both on and off the mountain, and how they have been used in contemporary discourse regarding the sacred”.

- Dr Emalani Case
Under The Radar: experiences of disabled Māori in academia

This project sought to share the stories of disabled Māori who have studied or worked in academia. It was created by and with disabled Māori and their whānau. It used research methods that encouraged safety as well as openness, serious conversation shot with laughter. It looked to create a Māori space.

Four overarching statements emerged from this research:

1. We need to take an intersectional approach to disability, not an individualised one

For many Māori, one of the most disabling things that they experience is intergenerational trauma. When pain is passed down through generations, so is mental illness, physical disability, chronic conditions. When these disabilities are treated as a problem of individuals, it fails to recognise that healing is so much more difficult to do when the rest of your whānau is suffering as well. It fails to recognise that sometimes putting yourself first is just not an option when there are people who are just as unwell relying on you.

Additionally, when we separate disability into its own category away from being Māori, we ignore the way that the day to day stressors of simply being Māori worsens disability. These are not taken into account in scenarios where students may require a doctor's notes for an extension, or lecturer expectations of breaks being a time to refresh themselves rather than the stressful realities many Māori face at home.

The barriers that Māori experience within academia aren't just dictated by the old white man on the board. They’re created by the well-meaning and otherwise liberal staff members on the ground who refuse to make exceptions, to acknowledge the history of the land and Aotearoa’s status as a colonial settlement, who do not engage because they do not originate here. It is not simply enough to not be racist. You must be actively anti-racist.

This is something that should not be so hard to grapple with for academics who have a whole vocabulary on oppression on hand. But if (rather than uplifting Māori, intentionally making Māori voices heard, and celebrating Māoritanga in more ways than a basic kauri at the start of one class, things are simply left to pass, Māori students feel alienated and uncertain. Māori lecturers make all the difference. Lecturers who aren’t afraid of breaking the status quo of what a class is supposed to look like (students silently writing, lectures, teaching unquestioned) by bringing their kids, showing their fears, bleeding parts of a Māori space into their academic one, make a difference.

Lecturers who assume that any of their topics will be in the hypothetical for all of their students are ignorant of the hardships that Māori students face. They make a difference as well, but not a good one.

The time to let it pass is done. There will be no partial credit.

2. Approaches to health and the healthcare system itself are racist and delegitimizing for Māori

Many people have the expectation that the health system, and the people who operate inside of it, are objective and factual. However, for Māori (and plenty of other people of colour,) the health system is a place that can be unreliable at best. The fact that this clashes with the common perception means that Māori are fighting an uphill battle at every turn to have their needs heard. Often the lived experiences of Māori are passed over, or requested are made for a more “legitmate” point of view than their own; in essence, we are asked to “prove” our pain at every turn. We are not trusted to tell our own stories. And we are not believed when we point out the discrimination we have suffered at the hands of healthcare professionals.

For disabled Māori this makes simply being diagnosed more difficult, and lack of diagnosis often means lack of treatment, lack of accommodations made. Lack of access to the aids put in place to help disabled people function in the world, and especially, in the university.

The current expectations in place on what knowledge is and how it can be expressed within academia are elitist relics of the age of enlightenment.

Such practices are not only unwelcoming for anybody with a disability but for disabled Māori they also completely remove any knowledge of tikanga or to a Māori from the sphere of “legitimate knowledge.” Academics also participate in this when they expect any Māori person to be able to perform tikanga such as waiata or haka on short notice, implying that it is something they think is simple and easily executed rather than in depth processes of selection or crafting. This erases the knowledge of exports, and forces Māori who do not know to have to relive the trauma of being cut off from their own culture. The spaces that research and knowledge sharing are expected to be placed in also reflect this restrictive definition of valuable knowledge. The idea that knowledge has to stay within, closed, double spaced, does not reflect a Māori knowledge expansion space; family friendly, with babies and music and kiai and kiai. Decolonisation cannot be expected to thrive in your book margins.

3. Well-meaning Pākehā and tauiw and ignorance is no longer acceptable

4. The status quo of what is and isn’t counted as knowledge needs to be radically expanded for us to thrive