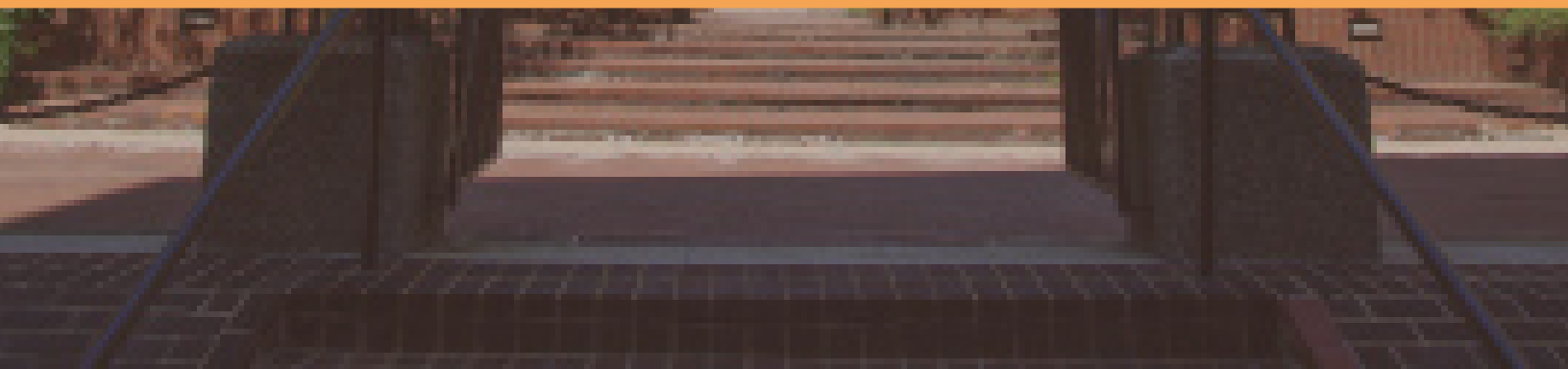


INSTITUTE FOR
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
RESEARCH AND POLICY



ANNUAL REPORT

| **2020 - 2021**





INSTITUTE FOR
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
RESEARCH AND POLICY

The Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy (ISERP) is Columbia University's research institute dedicated to the social sciences. ISERP pioneers research and integrates knowledge and methods across the social sciences.

Our Mission: To bring ideas into the world, ISERP supports researchers, faculty, students, and social science research through research development, education and training programs, centers, workshops and administrative support.

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COLUMBIA

MESSAGE FROM THE

1 | DIRECTORS

The Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy (ISERP) is the research center for the social science departments in Arts and Sciences and for the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). In 2020-2021 ISERP, with the rest of Columbia, navigated the evolving pandemic landscape with flexibility, maintaining our goals of facilitating social science research, interdisciplinary engagement, and education through the QMSS program. ISERP staff worked to provide all of our services virtually and gradually opened our space and in-person activities in line with university guidelines during this uncertain time.

ISERP awarded two programmatic seed grants to junior social science faculty: Maria Jose De Abreu in Anthropology, and Hassan Afrouze in Economics. We sponsored three new thematic workshops led by Naoki Egami, Gil Eyal, and Nikhar Gaiwad and continued to support workshops postponed by the pandemic and departmental seminars through ISERP's Block Grants. All of our workshops have navigated the shifting landscape of gatherings and have adapted quickly to keep robust discussion flowing in the social sciences at Columbia. In FY21, ISERP sponsored the celebration of four new books published by social science faculty at Columbia: Casey Blake, Mahmood Mamdani, Timothy Frye, and Frank A. Gurdy. The virtual format of the series afforded speakers to join from across the country and audience members from across the world.



CO-DIRECTOR

MATTHEW J. CONNELLY

PROFESSOR OF HISTORY



CO-DIRECTOR

THOMAS A. DIPRETE

GIDDINGS PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY

The QMSS program continues to thrive under the leadership of Greg Eirich. Despite pandemic uncertainty and a new hybrid learning style, QMSS started fall 2020 with 95 brave new students and the largest number of applicants to date (over 800). This was a year of instructional innovation, in both QMSS core classes and electives. Faculty went above and beyond to adapt their curriculum to the needs of a hybrid audience. Students were encouraged by QMSS faculty to bring their concerns about the world and their experiences during the pandemic into the classroom, and excelled across Columbia. Two QMSS student teams were selected as winners of the inaugural Columbia Data Science Student Course Project Competition and student teams won first place in the Columbia-Wide Data Science Society Hackathon. QMSS graduates continued to find themselves in high demand, taking on roles at many of the world's premier institutions.

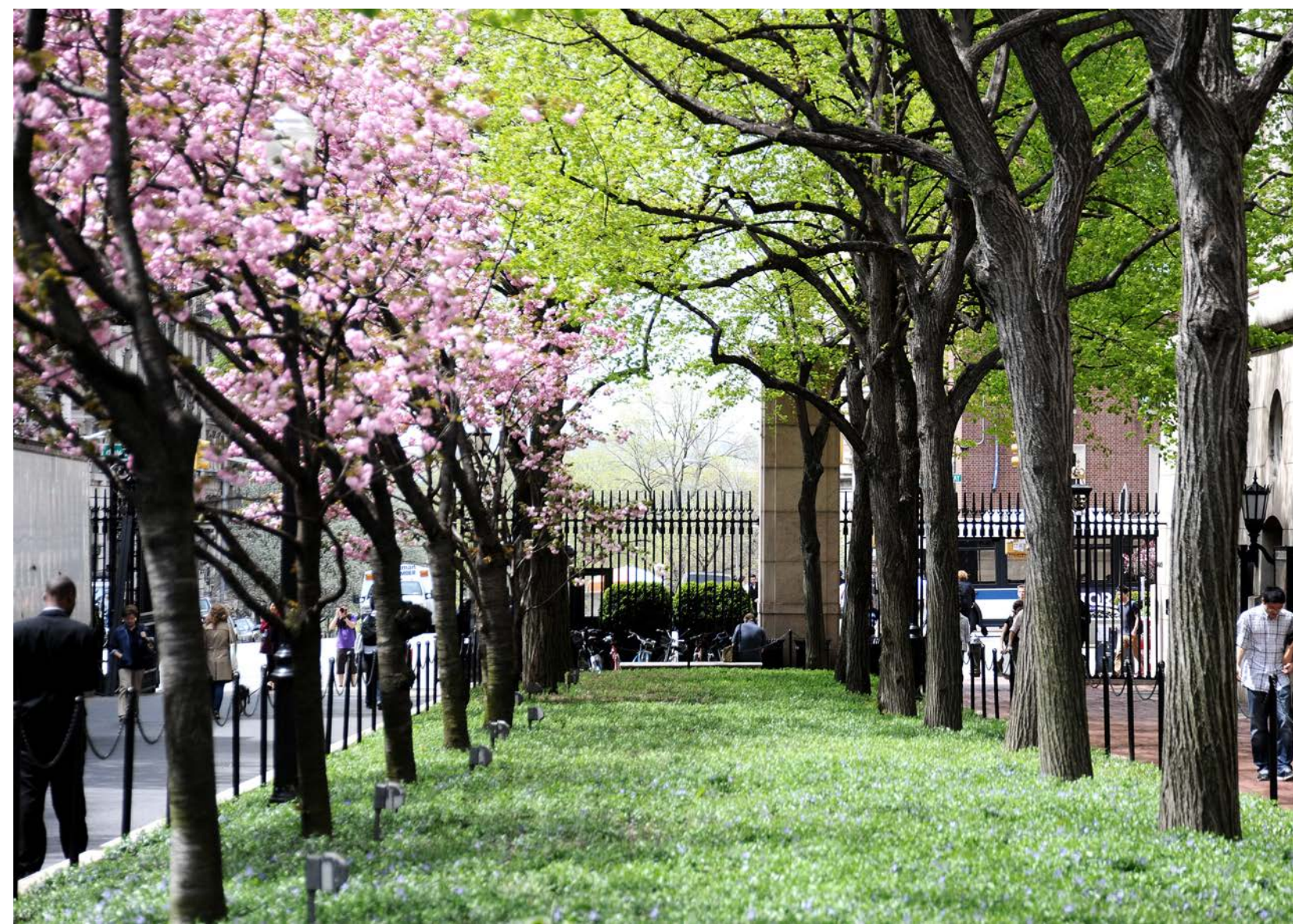
Wilmot James joined ISERP as Senior Research Scholar to lead the Center for Pandemic Research, started in spring 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Center ran an executive education symposium, "Meeting the Challenge of COVID-19 in Africa," featuring high profile speakers including Dr. John Nkengasong, then Director of the Africa CDC, and led a series on "The History and Future of Planetary Threats." The series included former U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest J. Moniz, respected CNN contributor Fareed Zakaria, and others. In spring 2021 the Vaccine Safety and Confidence Building Working Group was launched with support from Schmidt Futures. Made of physicians, public health officials, industry leaders, the group publishes a monthly overview of COVID-19 vaccines in Africa used by the US Congressional Research Service. The Center for Pandemic Research continues to be a hub for social science research and policy discussions surrounding the evolving pandemic and looking into the future at preparations for the next epidemic events. It awarded five seed grants in rolling competitions, with study topics ranging from anti-Asian sentiment, vaccine hesitancy, and incentivising social distancing.

The number and size of grants that ISERP administers continues to climb. In FY21, ISERP helped faculty obtain 34 new grants. In FY21 we managed 102 active grants, a 50% increase since FY14. Altogether, ISERP is now managing grants that total \$30,934,721, funded by a mix of government, private, and non-federal grants. Awarded projects include faculty research, grants supporting doctoral student dissertations, and funding for convening scholars, and practitioners.

ISERP continues to be a repository for helpful information about major activities and opportunities in the social sciences. We embraced the continued move to online activity as the COVID-19 pandemic prohibited in-person work and interaction. We created a Youtube channel to share recordings from virtual events and help reach a wider audience. We supported social science faculty and students with their use of Zoom technology for classes, seminars, and events, sharing what we learn about virtual work to enhance experience across the university.

We are proud of how ISERP weathered the worst year of the pandemic and made important contributions to ensuring the resilience of Columbia's social science community.

Matt Connelly and Tom DiPrete



RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

The Research Development Office (RDO) supports investigators in Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Sociology, African American and African Diaspora Studies, and the School of International and Public Affairs. For details on our services, see ISERP's website, iserp.columbia.edu.

In the last fiscal year, the RDO assisted with the submission of 83 grant proposals to 35 government agencies, foreign institutions, and private foundations.

ISERP's work resulted in 28 grants awarded by 15 sponsors in FY21. Awarded projects include faculty research, grants supporting doctoral student dissertations, training for early-career researchers, and funding for convening scholars and practitioners.

RDO OUTREACH

In addition to one-on-one meetings with faculty and students, ISERP participated in activities for larger groups. We hosted an Institutional Review Board (IRB) information session with an official from the Human Research Protection Office and researchers in ISERP's departments. We also hosted graduate student information sessions.

SEED GRANTS

Full time faculty in the social sciences and the School of International and Public Affairs are eligible to apply for up to \$30,000 in seed funding to develop a proposal for an external sponsor. ISERP issued a call for proposals in FY21 and awarded 2 seed grants.



LABORING IN ABSTRACTION: OIL AND RETURN AMONG PORTUGUESE LABOR MIGRANTS TO ANGOLA

PI: Maria Jose De Abreu
Assistant Professor of Anthropology

IS IT THE MESSAGE OR THE MESSENGER? EXAMINING BIAS IN IMMIGRATION BELIEFS

PI: Hassan Afrouzi
Assistant Professor of Economics

In addition to these programmatic seed grants, ISERP funded another 2 seed grants through our new Center for Pandemic Research. Read more about the center on page #.

UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING VACCINE HESITANCY IN LATIN AMERICA

PI: Sarah Daly
Assistant Professor of Political Science
PI: John Marshall
Assistant Professor of Political Science

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INCARCERATION AND COVID-19

PI: Gerard Torrats-Espinosa
Assistant Professor of Sociology
PI: Bruce Western
Professor of Sociology

EXTERNAL GRANTS

Partial Listing of awards ISERP received in FY21

Title: *Tax Evasions in Customs: Firm Level Evidence from Uganda*

Sponsor: International Growth Centre

Researcher: Michael Best

Title: *Doctoral Dissertation Research in Economics: The Consequences of Welfare Reform: A Case Study in Michigan*

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Researchers: Michael Best & Motaz Al-Chanati

Title: *Attacking Tax Evasion in Production Networks: Theory and Evidence from Paraguay*

Sponsor: Institute for Fiscal Studies

Researchers: Michael Best and Evan Sadler

Title: *Combining Administrative Databases to Improve Public Procurement Performance: Evidence from Brazil*

Sponsor: Institute for Fiscal Studies

Researcher: Michael Best

Title: *The Effect of Graduate PLUS Student Loan Increases on Access, Program Prices, Student Debt, and Labor Market Outcomes*

Sponsor: Arnold Ventures

Researcher: Sandra Black

Title: *Building an International Digital Archival Platform for Declassified Government Documents*

Sponsor: National Endowment for the Humanities

Researcher: Matthew Connelly

Title: *Machine Learning Solutions for an Email Archive of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Sponsor: Andrew Mellon Foundation

Researcher: Matthew Connelly

Title: *Excavating the Roots of Bartram's Botanical Gardens: Science and Commerce in 19th Century America*

Sponsor: Rust Family Foundation

Researchers: Zoe Crossland & Alexandria Mitchem

Title: *Consortium on Analytics for Data-Driven Decision-Making (CANd3): Developing Talent for Population Analytics in Aging Societies*

Sponsor: Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (Canada)

Researcher: Thomas DiPrete

Title: *Improving representativeness in non-probability surveys and causal inference with regularized regression and post-stratification*

Sponsor: National Institutes of Health

Researchers: Andrew Gelman and Qixuan Chen

Title: *Collaborative Research: PPOSS: Planning: Scalable Systems for Probabilistic Programming*

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Researcher: Andrew Gelman

Title: *RAPID: Flexible, Efficient, and Available Bayesian Computation for Epidemic Models*

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Researcher: Andrew Gelman

Title: *Collaborative Research: Veto Bargaining: Delegation and Non-Coasian Dynamics*

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Researcher: Navin Kartik

Title: *The Effect of Audits on Physicians and Patients: Evidence from Medicare*

Sponsor: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Researchers: Wojciech Kopczuk & Maggie Shi

Title: *Employment, investment, and inequality in the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis*

Sponsor: Research Council of Norway

Researcher: Wojciech Kopczuk

Title: *Factor Based Imputation of Missing Data*

Sponsor: National Science Foundation

Researcher: Serena Ng

Title: *Mapping Historical New York – Phase II*

Sponsor: Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation

Researchers: Mae Ngai, Laura Kurgan, and Rebecca Kobrin

Title: *The Disparate Impact of Police Homicide*
Sponsor: Russell Sage Foundation
Researchers: Brendan O'Flaherty and José Luis Montiel Olea

Title: *Interventions on Diffusion Processes*
Sponsor: National Science Foundation
Researcher: Evan Sadler

Title: *Doctoral Dissertation Research: Governing the Uncommons: How Does Technological Change Affect International Law?*
Sponsor: National Science Foundation
Researchers: Jack Snyder & Justin Canfil

Title: *CAREER: Accountable Democracy: Mathematical Reasoning and Representative Politics in America, 1920-Now*
Sponsor: National Science Foundation
Researcher: Alma Steingart

Title: *Doctoral Dissertation Research in Economics: The social dimension of quality*
Sponsor: National Science Foundation
Researchers: Eric Verhoogen & Louise Guillouet

Title: *How Do Managers' Beliefs about New Technologies Evolve? Informational Interventions and the Adoption of Energy-Efficient Stitching Motors in Bangladesh*
Sponsors: International Growth Centre and Private Enterprise Development in Low Income Countries
Researcher: Eric Verhoogen

Title: *Square One Project Phase Two*
Sponsor: MacArthur Foundation
Researcher: Bruce Western

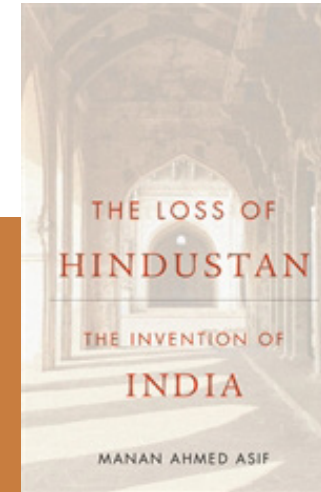
Title: *Data-Driven Reform in Pennsylvania: Solitary Confinement and Reentry*
Sponsor: Arnold Ventures
Researcher: Bruce Western



3 | FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

FACULTY BOOKS

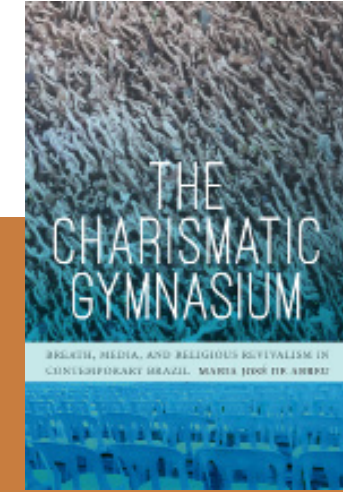
Published by ISERP Affiliates during FY21



*THE LOSS OF HINDUSTAN:
THE INVENTION OF INDIA*

Manan Ahmed

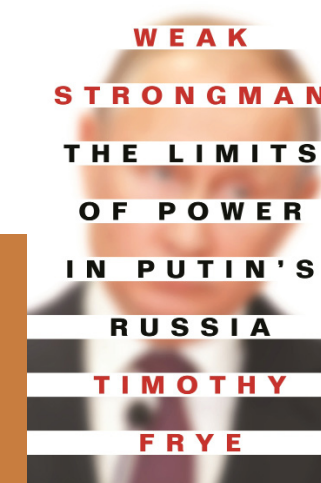
Assistant Professor of History
Published by **Harvard University Press**



*THE CHARISMATIC GYMNASIUM:
BREATH, MEDIA, AND RELIGIOUS
REVIVALISM IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL*

Maria Jose de Abreu

Assistant Professor of Anthropology
Published by **Duke University Press**



*WEAK STRONGMAN: THE
LIMITS OF POWER IN PUTIN'S
RUSSIA*

Timothy Frye

Professor of Post-Soviet Foreign Policy
Published by: **Princeton University Press**



*THE SPORTS REVOLUTION: HOW
TEXAS CHANGED THE CULTURE OF
AMERICAN ATHLETICS*

Frank A. Guridy

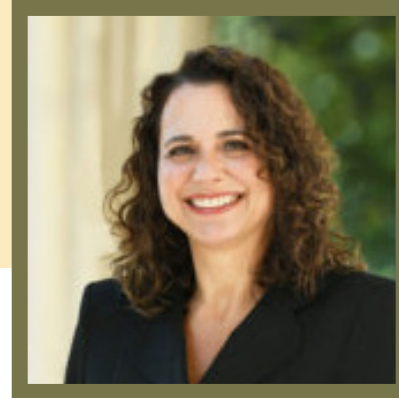
Associate Professor of History and of African
American and African Diaspora Studies
Published by: **University of Texas Press**

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Columbia social science research in FY21

SANDRA BLACK

Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs



Professor Black, in collaboration with Jeffrey Denning (BYU) and Lesley Turner (Vanderbilt), began examining the effect of expanded access to government loans to graduate students on both student outcomes as well as changes in school prices.

In 2006, the federal Graduate PLUS Student Loan program was created, effectively eliminating federal loan limits. Graduate student debt makes up an increasing share of outstanding student loans, and the majority of large-balance borrowers accrued most of their loan debt in graduate school. In recent years, loan repayment has fallen among high balance borrowers, suggesting these debts may be burdensome (Looney and Yannelis 2019). The Grad PLUS program may facilitate access to high return but expensive programs for students who would have otherwise struggled to finance such degrees. This may be especially relevant for Black students who – due to historic discrimination in housing and other markets – have access to much lower family wealth, on average, than white students. The expansion may also have had unintended consequences if institutions alter their prices to “capture” some of the additional funds. For many programs, the effective increase in federal loan limits due to the Grad PLUS program was an order of magnitude larger than the increases in grant aid and undergraduate loan limits previously studied, and we are working to test this theory. Findings from this research can provide valuable evidence for policy decisions on the potential costs and benefits of such changes.

Dr. Black, with Dr. Elizabeth Ananat, Dr. Belinda Archibong, and Dr. Anja Tolonen, has also begun a seminar series highlighting the work of women in Economics in the Columbia community. Economics has a well-known gender problem: fewer than 30% of economics majors in the USA and the UK are women (Zarghamee, 2017; Mumford, 2014), and only 22% of tenured and tenure track faculty are women (AEA 2013). To address these issues and facilitate the success of women in Economics, we began a working group that allows women from across the NYC/ Northeast area to meet, discuss research, present work in progress, and receive constructive feedback in an environment that allows junior and senior scholars to interact. The group welcomes all women faculty doing research in applied microeconomics topics. Because it is a coordinated effort between junior and senior faculty, the seminar provides crucial mentoring to help with the longer-run success of women economists at Columbia and helps recruit women to our campus.



ZOE CROSSLAND

*Professor of Anthropology
Director of the Columbia Center for Archaeology*

The Sacred Rice Project aims to understand the history and legacies of irrigated rice agriculture in the Central Highlands of Madagascar, with a particular focus on rice’s role in the politics of the highlands. Co-directed by Zoë Crossland and Chantal

Radimilahy (University of Antananarivo), the project was developed collaboratively with faculty and students from the Museum of Art and Archaeology, Antananarivo, and is also committed to training students in Madagascar and at Columbia in techniques of archaeological analysis and mapping. Funding by ISERP allowed an international team to excavate at the 15th century site of Ambohidahy – a significant settlement for the highlands that was peripherally connected to the wider Indian Ocean trade and is central for understanding the transition to rice agriculture in the highlands. We’ve also undertaken off-site soils sampling to better reconstruct the local environment in the area around Madagascar’s historic capital city of Antananarivo. Presentations on our ongoing research were given in August at the 2021 Society of Africanist Archaeologists meeting.

Our research was substantially disrupted by the pandemic, but since the start of this semester lab work has started up again with undergraduate volunteers from Columbia and Barnard helping in the Center for Archaeology’s open lab to sort through ancient macrobotanical remains collected in 2018. This semester Zoë Crossland is also co-teaching a class with Eric Glass (GIS/Metadata Librarian) on Hydropolitics in Madagascar. An interdisciplinary seminar on urbanism and the politics of water, the course received funding from Columbia’s Center for Spatial Research to teach GIS through mapping the hydrological history of rice agriculture around Madagascar’s capital city.

The production of irrigated rice continues to be vitally important for the region around Antananarivo – whether as an index of the region’s wealth and of historical claims to place, or as an economic resource in a time of increasing food insecurity. However, the city’s rich irrigated rice landscapes and its archaeological heritage are increasingly coming under threat from a combination of urban growth and climate change. In tandem with tracking the deep history of rice agriculture the project is documenting these threats, and working to better understand the continuing significance of rice and its histories for communities in the highlands today.

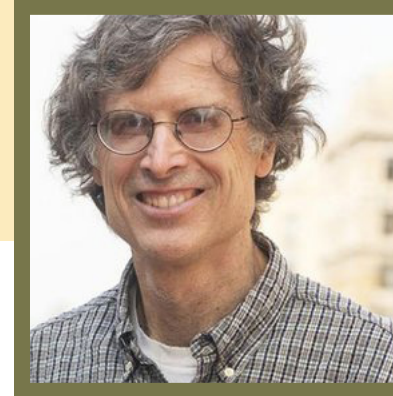
FRANK A. GURIDY

Associate Professor of History and African American and African Diaspora Studies



During the past year, Professor Guridy has been continuing to explore the relationship between sport and American social movements. His recently published book, *The Sports Revolution: How Texas Changed the Culture of American Athletics* (University of Texas Press, 2021) explored how Texas-based sports entrepreneurs and athletes from marginalized backgrounds transformed American sporting culture during the 1960s and 1970s, the highpoint of the Black Freedom and Second-Wave feminist movements. He is currently at work on a new book project entitled, “Between Conflict and Community: The Stadium and the American City” (under contract with Basic Books), which is a history of the American sports stadium as a community institution during the past century. The book aims to tell the story of American social movements through the lens of the stadium, a ubiquitous urban institution that has been a battleground for social justice since its earliest incarnations.

Guridy also joined a group of political scientists and voting rights advocates on a project that examines the repurposing of stadiums and arenas into voting centers during the 2020 election. Spurred by the extraordinary protest movement that exploded across the country in the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and the need for social distancing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, sports franchises partnered with elections officials & voting rights activists to successfully convert hundreds of sports facilities into voting sites across the country. The project examines whether the record voter turnout during the election was tied to the usage of these facilities and whether they can be employed to increase voter turnout and effectively administer elections in the future.



BRENDAN O'FLAHERTY

Professor of Economics

Dan O'Flaherty, Jose Montiel Olea, and Rajiv Sethi have been studying police homicides in the US. The first step in their analysis has been constructing a linked data set of police homicides from 2013 through 2020. Their major innovation is to link police homicides from Mapping Police Violence, a crowd-sourced website to law enforcement agencies, and where possible to link law enforcement agencies to demographic and other information about the jurisdictions they serve.

Law enforcement agencies (or closely related entities) are the unit of analysis, rather than individual officers or potential victims. Their working hypothesis has been that agency-level policies and practices—selection, training, discipline, culture, back-up availability, etc—matter crucially in determining the frequency of police homicides, and that any reform has to occur at the agency level. Individual officers are not free agents.

Their first analysis with this data set was broadly supportive of this hypothesis. In a paper entitled Empirical Bayes Counterfactuals in Poisson Regressions with an Application to Police Use of Deadly Force they looked at local police departments (because these agencies usually have jurisdictions with well-defined populations and do not differ greatly in their responsibilities). They showed that the ten largest police departments differed greatly in how many civilians they killed, even with a rich array of environmental variables held constant. For instance, the ten departments together killed 548 civilians between 2013 and 2019, but if they all had the unobserved characteristics of the Phoenix Police Department, the death toll would have risen to between 850 and 1445. If all the departments had the New York Police Department's unobserved characteristics, the toll would have fallen to between 161 and 298. Agencies matter. Thinking about a single abstraction called “the police” is not going to be helpful.

O'Flaherty, Montiel Olea, and Sethi are also using the data set for two other projects that have not come to fruition yet. One project tries to understand racial disparities in police homicide victimization rates. That is, can differences in non-racial characteristics like region of residence, education, income, and gun death rate explain why Blacks and Latinos are more likely to die of police use of deadly force than whites? Or whether discrimination is playing a role? The other project is historical and seeks to understand why police homicide rates declined significantly in most big cities over the past half century—a decline centered on African American victims.

ALMA STEINGART

Assistant Professor of History

The overwhelming infusion of computational techniques into American electoral politics has, in recent years, received increased scrutiny by political and legal scholars, as well as the broader public. However, contemporary accounts tend to forget that mathematics has always played a role in American representative democracy, even prior to digital computing.

With a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation, Steingart investigates how changing computational practices, from statistical modeling to computational geometry, insinuated themselves into the most basic definitions of “fairness” in the American electorate in the twentieth century.

Focusing on apportionment, census, voting, congressional redistricting, and election forecasts, the project follows a series of twentieth century legal controversies to ask what happens when technical considerations offer competing claims about fair representation and public policy. Steingart shows how ideas about what constitutes “bias,” “fairness,” and “discrimination” are determined as much by mathematical and computational metrics as by legal, political, and social ones. She demonstrates that arguments about how to count – opinions, people, votes, and representatives – are always fundamentally about who counts.

More broadly, the electoral process is the perfect place from which to investigate the incursion of mathematical and computational ways of knowing into the everyday fabric of American life. Throughout the twentieth century electoral politics played a foundational role in the development of computational and statistical methodologies in the United States. The Census Bureau and early polling and forecasting were crucial research sites for sampling methods, data gathering, and data analytics on a large scale. Voters have vested interests in how their votes get counted, making this history especially salient for studying the public understanding of science – and, in particular, of mathematics – in the twentieth century.



YAMIL VELEZ

Assistant Professor of Political Science

This past year, Yamil Velez has been working on two major projects that focus on significant issues facing society. The first project is a collaboration with Thomas Wood (OSU) and



Ethan Porter (GWU), funded by the Google News Initiative, that aims to address Covid-19 vaccine misinformation. Across several studies, we have found evidence that factual corrections undo the effects of misinformation on factual beliefs. Correcting misconceptions via fact-checks rarely contributes to hardened beliefs in the misinformation, and has positive effects across a variety of political and demographic groups. We have accumulated evidence on the effectiveness of fact-checks across a variety of populations, and just replicated these findings in a ten-country study covering Africa, Latin America, Europe, and North America. The second project involves an in-depth study of how gentrification is affecting political representation in the United States. This project is funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. In a collaboration with Chris Warshaw (GWU), Justin de Benedictis-Kessner (Harvard), and Daniel Thompson (UCLA), we are in the process of building the largest local elections database in the United States. I will use this data set to evaluate how changes in urban demographics are altering the racial and ethnic composition of city councils, and the distribution of public goods.



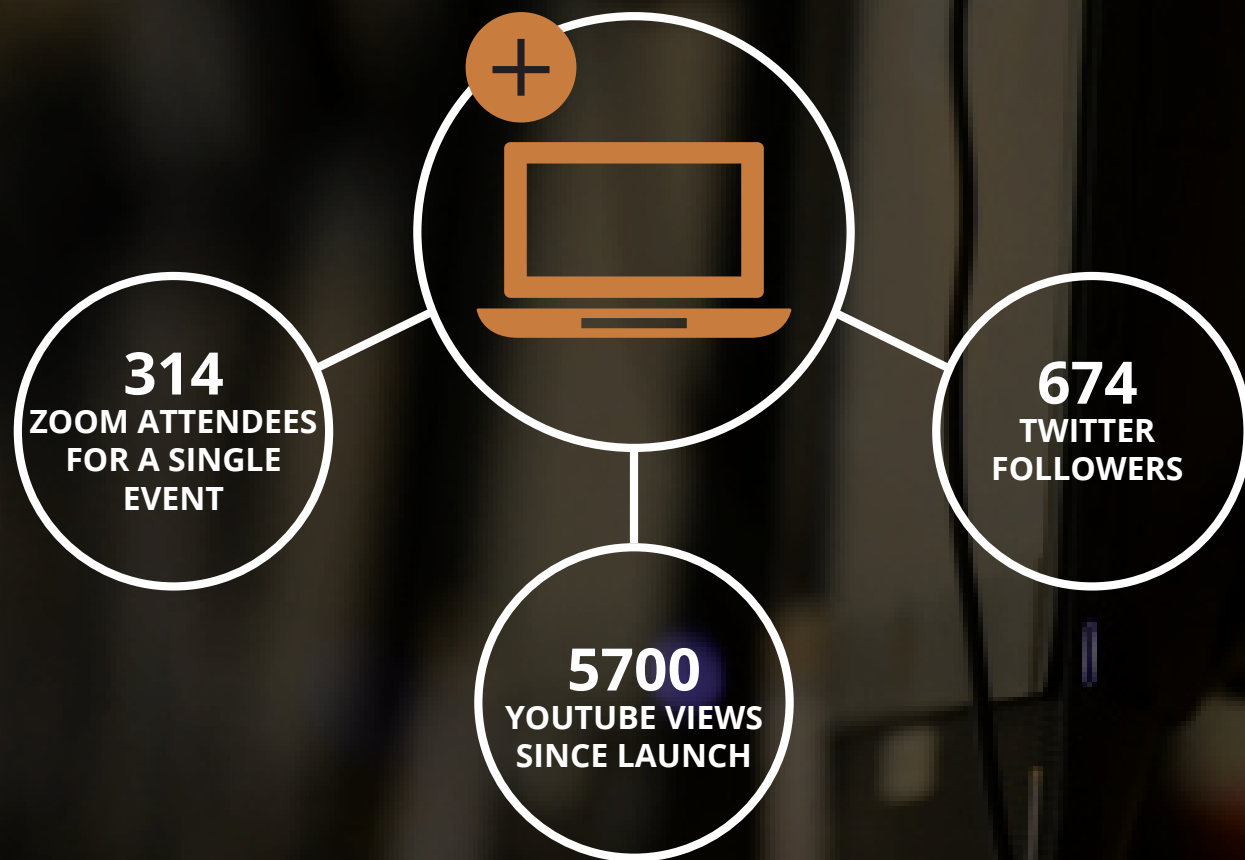
JOSH WHITFORD

Associate Professor of Sociology

Josh Whitford focuses his research on regulation at the intersection of the public and private. In the 2020-21 academic year, with the support of an ISERP seed grant, he launched a new project exploiting research access to NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) data and personnel. In the project, he is asking

about the transformation of “The City” as an administrative body and—by investigating the activities of that body—also about the transformation of “The City” as a built social environment. New York is—via NYC OpenData—releasing enormous and growing amounts of digitized administrative data. However, to paraphrase Harold Garfinkel, there are often “good” administrative reasons for “bad” social science data; that is, we ignore at our peril the organizational logics of the disparate actors who, in the conduct of their work, generate and assemble the underlying information. The project therefore integrates an accounting of those logics into its development of analytic tools to, for instance, identify buildings where rent-stabilized tenants are at particular risk of harassment by developers; buildings at particular risk of dangerous illegal conversions; and so on. It will in its next steps include collaboration with Gianpaolo Baiocchi, the director of the Urban Democracy Lab at NYU, in an examination of interactions at the “street-level” between neighborhood actors, developers and landlords, and a host of city and state agencies including but not limited to the DOB (Housing Preservation and Development, in the city; and Department of Housing and Community Renewal at the state; and likely others).

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT



ISERP WEBSITE

During the 2020-2021 year, we made changes to the ISERP website to increase usability and streamline access to ISERP activities and resources. During the pandemic which mandated remote working and increased online activity, having a robust website was an ISERP priority.

Find out more about ISERP's space, history, people, QMSS, and the social science departments we work with under the "[About](#)" tab. Learn what events are happening, view recordings, and see what our centers, workshops, and working groups are doing in "[Programs](#)." Faculty and others looking for new funding opportunities of all kinds and a variety of resources to support and enrich their research can explore the "[Resources and Funding](#)" tab. Important policy information, forms, and process guides for expenses and HR are found in the "[Business Office](#)" and "[Hiring & Payroll](#)" website sections respectively. Finally, recent ISERP researcher news, highlighted social scientists, and other updates can be found right on our [homepage](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

As COVID-19 limited our in-person interaction, we relied more heavily on social media and online communication. In addition to our website, ISERP can be found on the following social media platforms:



Youtube: Find live-streamed and recorded ISERP events including seminars, book panels, executive education courses, and more. Event series are conveniently collected into playlists.



Twitter: Stay up-to-date about upcoming events, recent faculty research and media highlights, and activity from our partners across Columbia and beyond.



Facebook: See a calendar of upcoming events and highlights from each monthly newsletter.



5 | ISERP RESOURCES

ISERP houses a number of resources to support Columbia social scientists with research projects. In addition to the Research Development Office which aids in seeking and securing grant funding and with the IRB process, investigators can make use of the following resources at any stage of their work.

- The [Columbia Experimental Laboratory for Social Sciences](#) (C.E.L.S.S.): an interdisciplinary venue for researchers to conduct computer- and web-based experiments.
- [Statistical Consulting](#): for advice and help with statistical analysis (including biases in analysis), survey design, and regression models.
- Data Use Agreements: for research requiring DUA signatures processed by Research Administration
- Computing Resources: Columbia University has a large selection of computing resources available to researchers, including secure data services. For help deciding which option is best suited for you, or for general computing consulting please email iserpsa@columbia.edu to schedule an appointment.

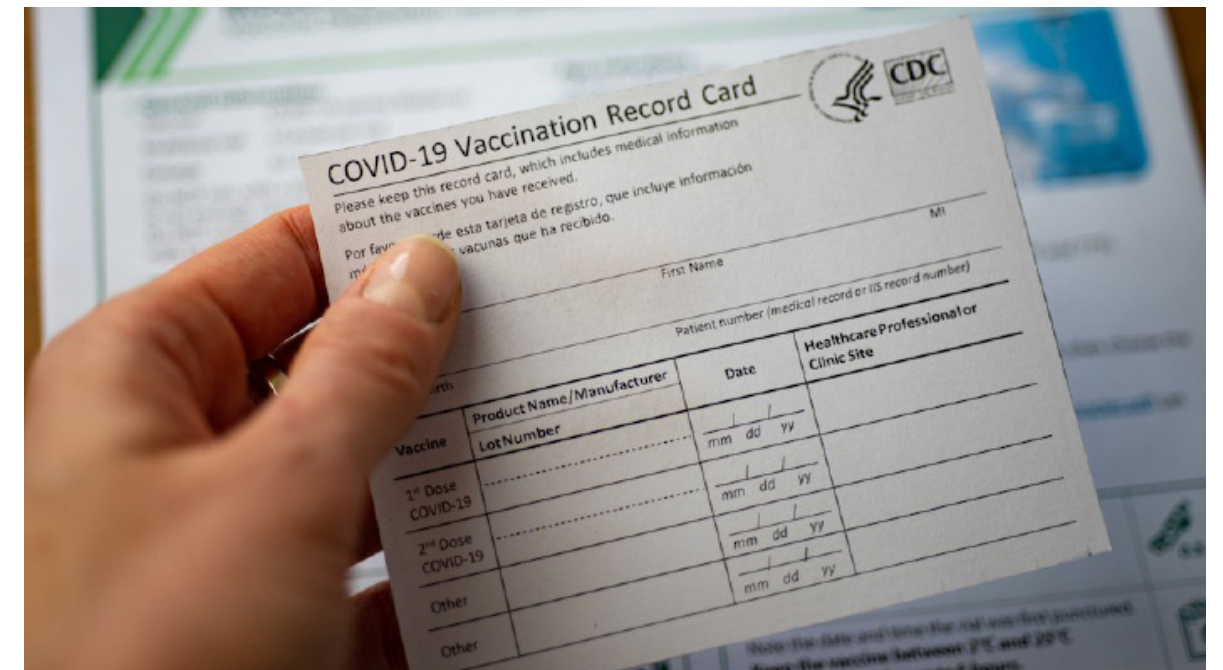
CENTER FOR PANDEMIC RESEARCH

The Center for Pandemic Research coordinates new work by Columbia social scientists on COVID-19 and other disease outbreak topics by convening studies and discussions about the social science aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. It funds faculty research through seed grants in a separate process from ISERP's standard calls for funding proposals, enabling quick support of pandemic-related research while preserving funds for non-Covid-19 projects. Other Center activity includes hosting events and seminars, and supporting undergraduate and graduate student research assistantships. The Center for Pandemic Research houses the Vaccine Safety and Confidence-Building Working Group, which builds on the Epidemic/Pandemic Response in Africa study.

In FY21, ISERP awarded 2 seed grants. One to John Marshall, Sarah Daly, and a group of Political Science PhD students who studied vaccine hesitancy in Latin America. Their findings are discussed in Columbia News here. The second was awarded to Gerard Torrats-Espinosa and Bruce Western to examine the relationship between incarceration and the coronavirus pandemic using a unique combination of qualitative and administrative data.

The Center is led by interim Chair **Wilmot James** (Senior Research Scholar at ISERP). The executive committee also includes:

- **Matthew Connelly**, Professor of History
- **Douglas Almond**, Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs
- **Jennifer Hirsch**, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and Director, Doctoral Program, Department of Sociomedical Sciences
- **Yao Lu**, Associate Professor of Sociology
- **Suresh Naidu**, Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs
- **Elizabeth Povinelli**, Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology & Gender Studies
- **Robert Shapiro**, Wallace S. Sayre Professor of Government and Professor of International and Public Affairs
- **Thomas DiPrete**, Giddings Professor of Sociology, Ex-Officio



EVENTS

Hosted by the Center for Pandemic Research

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM: MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF COVID-19 IN AFRICA

September 1-4, 2020

From COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND & AFRICA CDC:

MEETING the CHALLENGE of COVID-19 in AFRICA

VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM SEPTEMBER 1-4 REGISTER NOW

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY | ISERP
INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND POLICY
IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG

AFRICA CDC
Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

COLUMBIA
COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

Bergman Family Charitable Fund

Sanlam

The purpose of the symposium was to focus on the key challenges of dealing with a delayed but explosive unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic in parts of Africa and to identify best practice solutions in respect of (1) gaining of public trust in adhering to the health imperatives of social distancing and the use of approved therapies and vaccines to manage and contain outbreaks; (2) the dynamic and most-effective use of testing, tracing and isolation as public health tools during a pandemic; and (3) the scaling up of SARS_COV2 vaccine acquisition and distribution platforms that will serve all African countries for mass immunization. A pre-meeting on the biosafety and biosecurity aspects of the SARS_COV2 pathogen was held on 1 September. Symposium co-hosts included the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; Programs in Global Health, Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; The Stanley and Marion Bergman Family Charitable Fund; and the Sanlam Foundation.

September 1: Pre-meeting on the Biosafety and Biosecurity Aspects of SARS-COV2

Special Message: Dr. Tedros Adhanom Gebreyesus, Director General, World Health Organization

Moderator: Wilmot James, Columbia University

Keynote: Talkmore Maruta, (Africa CDC)

Panelists: Iqbal Parker (University of Cape Town); Isabella Ayagah (Ministry of Health, Kenya); Andrew Hebbeler (Nuclear Threat Initiative); and Natasha Griffith (Georgia State University)

The recording of this session is available on our Youtube page, [here](#).

September 2: The Challenge of Social Distancing in Africa and the Developing World

Special Message: Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi

Moderator: Ames Dhai (WITS University)

Keynote: John Nkengasong (Africa CDC)

Panelists: Amanda McClelland (Resolve to Save Lives); Chikwe Ihekweazu (Nigeria CDC); Greg Mills (Brenthurst Foundation); and Yanis Ben Amor (Columbia University)

September 3: The Limits of Testing, Tracing and Treatment

Moderator: Martin Veller (WITS University)

Keynote: Wafaa El-Sadr (Columbia University)

Panelists: Victor Mukonka (Zambian Public Health Institute & Africa CDC), Glenda Gray (SA Medical Research Council); Meredith McMorrow (US CDC); and Jennifer Dohrn (Columbia University)

September 4: Public Trust and the Delivery of COVID19 Vaccines

Special Welcome: Murugi Ndirangu (Columbia Global Centers | Nairobi)

Moderator: Lawrence R. Stanberry (Columbia University)

Keynote: Shabir Madhi (WITS)

Panelists: Helen Rees (WITS); Stavros Nicolaou (Aspen Pharmacare); Scott Dowell (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), Arnaud Bernaert (World Economic Forum)

The recording of this session is available on our Youtube page, [here](#).

PLANETARY THREATS SERIES

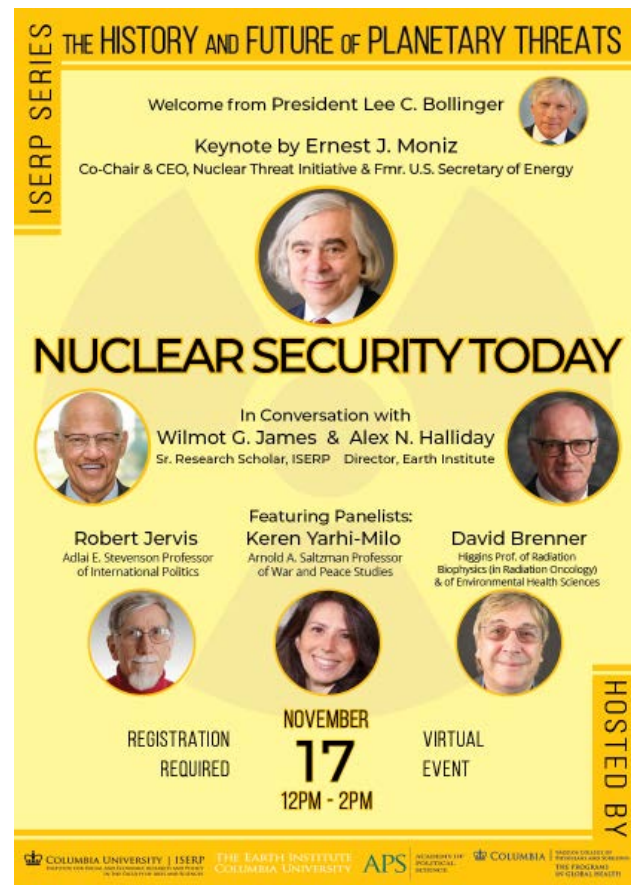
In this series, ISERP convenes meetings to examine historic and contemporary catastrophic risks and hazards, whether natural, accident or deliberate, in the following domains: geological, biological, epidemic infectious disease, environmental, chemical, extreme weather, radiological and nuclear, or combinations of these. By catastrophic we understand to mean classes of events that could lead to sudden, extraordinary, widespread disaster beyond the collective capacity of national and international organizations and the private sector to control, causing severe disruptions in normal social functioning, heavy tolls in terms of morbidity and mortality, and major economic losses; in sum, events that may well cause a change in the direction of history. Nuclear falls into a class of its own, because it can result in the annihilation of life on planet earth and the end of history as we know it.

This series has been offered as Zoom webinars and draws an audience from around the world. Attendees range from public health officials to private sector leaders and scholars from across a broad range of academic fields. Events in this series have attracted up to 314 people, who logged in to view CNN's Fared Zakaria discuss his new book with Columbia experts. If you missed any of these events, find them in the Planetary Threats Series playlist on our Youtube page.

NUCLEAR SECURITY TODAY

November 17, 2020

Featured Speaker: **Ernest J. Moniz**, Fmr. U.S. Secretary of Energy, & CEO and co-chair, Nuclear Threat Initiative
 Panelists: **Robert Jervis**, Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Affairs; **Keren Yarhi-Milo**, Arnold A. Saltzman Professor of War and Peace Studies (Political Science & SIPA), & Director, Arnold A. Saltzman Institute



of War and Peace Studies; **David Brenner**, Director, Center for Radiological Research (CRR) at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, Higgins Professor of Radiation Biophysics (in Radiation Oncology) and of Environmental Health Sciences, & Director of the Radiological Research Accelerator Facility (RARAF)

Moderators: **Wilmot James**, Senior Research Scholar, ISERP; **Alex N. Halliday**, Director Earth Institute

Co-hosts: The Earth Institute; Programs in Global Health at the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; Academy of Political Science.

FAREED ZAKARIA'S TEN LESSONS FOR A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

December 8, 2020

Featured Speaker: **Fareed Zakaria**, CNN
 Panelists: **Lawrence R. Stanberry**, Associate Dean for International Programs & Director, Programs in Global Health, Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; **Anya Schiffrin**, Director, Technology, Media, and Communications, School of International and Public Affairs
 Welcome: **Safwan M. Masri**, Executive Vice President for Global Centers and Global Development & Senior Research Scholar, School of International and Public Affairs
 Moderator: **Wilmot James**, Senior Research Scholar, ISERP



CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS AND VACCINE UPTAKE IN FRAGILE AFRICAN SETTINGS: WHAT WORKS?

March 31, 2021

Featured Keynote Speakers: **Natalia Kanem**, United Nations Population Fund; **Simone Carter**, UNICEF; **Melinda Frost**, World Health Organisation

Panel 1: **Agency and the Health Citizen**, moderated by **Wilmot James**, Senior Research Scholar, ISERP

Panelists: **Donda Hansen**, US CDC; **Michael T Ghebrab**, Independent Consultant, frm. Catholic Relief Services

Panel 2: **Community Partnerships**, moderated by **Jennifer Dohrn**, School of Nursing

Panelists: **Chinwe Lucia Ochu**, Nigerian CDC; **Stefano Cordella**, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent; **Sheila Davis**, Partners in Health; **Richard Garfield**, US CDC

Panel 3: **Journalists Reflect**, moderated by **Victoria Rosner**, Professor of English and Comparative Literature

Panelists: **Madeline Drexler**, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; **Mark Heywood**, Daily Maverick

Co-hosts: Frontline Nurses: Center for the Study of Social Difference; School of Nursing; Program in Vaccine Education, Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; Columbia Global Centers-Nairobi and Tunis; Earth Institute; Academy of Political Science Sciences, & Director of the Radiological Research Accelerator Facility (RARAF)

ISERP SERIES | THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF PLANETARY THREATS

Welcome: **Murugi Ndirangu**, Columbia Global Centers | Nairobi; **Youssef Cherif**, Columbia Global Centers | Tunis

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS & VACCINE UPTAKE IN FRAGILE AFRICAN SETTINGS: WHAT WORKS?

Agency and the Health Citizen
James Oladipo Ayodele, Africa CDC
Donda Hansen, US CDC
Michael Ghebrab, (frm) Catholic Relief Services
Moderated by Wilmot James, Columbia University

Community Partnerships
Chinwe Lucia Ochu, Nigeria CDC
Stefano Cordella, IRC-Libya
Sheila Davis, Partners in Health
Richard Garfield, US CDC
Moderated by Jennifer Dohrn, Columbia Nursing

Journalists Reflect
Madeline Drexler, Harvard Public Health
Mark Heywood, Daily Maverick
Moderated by Victoria Rosner, Columbia University

Keynote Speakers:
Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UN Population Fund
The role of the UNFPA in risk communication and community engagement.
Melinda Frost, World Health Organization
Risk communication and COVID-19 vaccine take-up: A WHO perspective
Simone Carter, UNICEF
Integrated analytics to inform vaccine-related comm. & engagement strategies: case study from the DRC.

VIRTUAL EVENT | MARCH 31 | 8:30AM - 12PM | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEMS AND FORECASTING OUTBREAKS

April 14, 2021

Featured Speakers: **Caitlin Rivers**, Senior Scholar, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security & Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; **Dylan George**, Vice President at In-Q-Tel (IQT)

Panelists: **Jeffrey Shaman**, Professor of Environmental Health Sciences & Director, Climate and Health Program; **James Flemming**, Charles A. Dana Professor of Science, Technology, and Society, Colby College

Moderator: **Wilmot James**, Senior Research Scholar, ISERP

Co-hosts: Program in Vaccine Education, Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, Earth Institute, Academy of Political Science, Data Science Institute

ISERP SERIES | THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF PLANETARY THREATS

ADVANCE WARNING SYSTEMS & FORECASTING OUTBREAKS

Overview of the National Center for Epidemic Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics
Presentation from
Caitlin Rivers & Dylan George
Johns Hopkins Univ. | In-Q-Tel

Featuring Responses from:
Jeffrey Shaman, Columbia Mailman Sch. of Public Health
Improving Infectious Disease Forecast
James Fleming, Colby College
Weather Forecasting in Historical Perspective

Moderated by:
Wilmot G. James, Sr. Research Scholar, ISERP
Alex N. Halliday, Director, Earth Institute

VIRTUAL EVENT | APRIL 14 | 12 - 1:30PM | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

ISERP SERIES | THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF PLANETARY THREATS

Columbia ISERP Center for Pandemic Research in partnership with The Academy of Political Science present:

LAUNCH OF THE REPORT CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS AND VACCINE UPTAKE IN FRAGILE AFRICAN SETTINGS

Panel discussion co-moderated by:
WILMOT JAMES, Senior Research Scholar, Columbia ISERP
ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO, Columbia University and Academy of Political Science

Other Panelists:
TOM FRIEDEN, President & CEO, Resolve to Save Lives
CHINWE LUCIA OCHU, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control
TIJJI SALAAM-BLYTHER, Congressional Research Service

VIRTUAL EVENT | JUNE 22 | 12:30 - 2:00 P.M. EST | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

LAUNCH OF THE REPORT: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS AND VACCINE UPDATE IN FRAGILE AFRICAN SETTINGS

June 22, 2021

Panelists: **Tom Frieden**, President & CEO, Resolve to Save Lives; **Chinwe Lucia Ochu**, Acting Director, Prevention, Programmes & Knowledge Management & Head of Research, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control; **Youssef Cherif**, Director, Columbia Global Centers Tunis

Moderators: **Wilmot James**, Senior Research Scholar, ISERP; **Robert Y. Shapiro**, Wallace S. Syre Professor of Government & Professor of International and Public Affairs.

Co-hosts: Frontline Nurses: Columbia Center for the Study of Social Difference; Columbia School of Nursing; Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons Programs in Vaccine Education; Columbia Global Centers Nairobi and Tunis; the Earth Institute; and The Academy of Political Science

VACSAFE WG

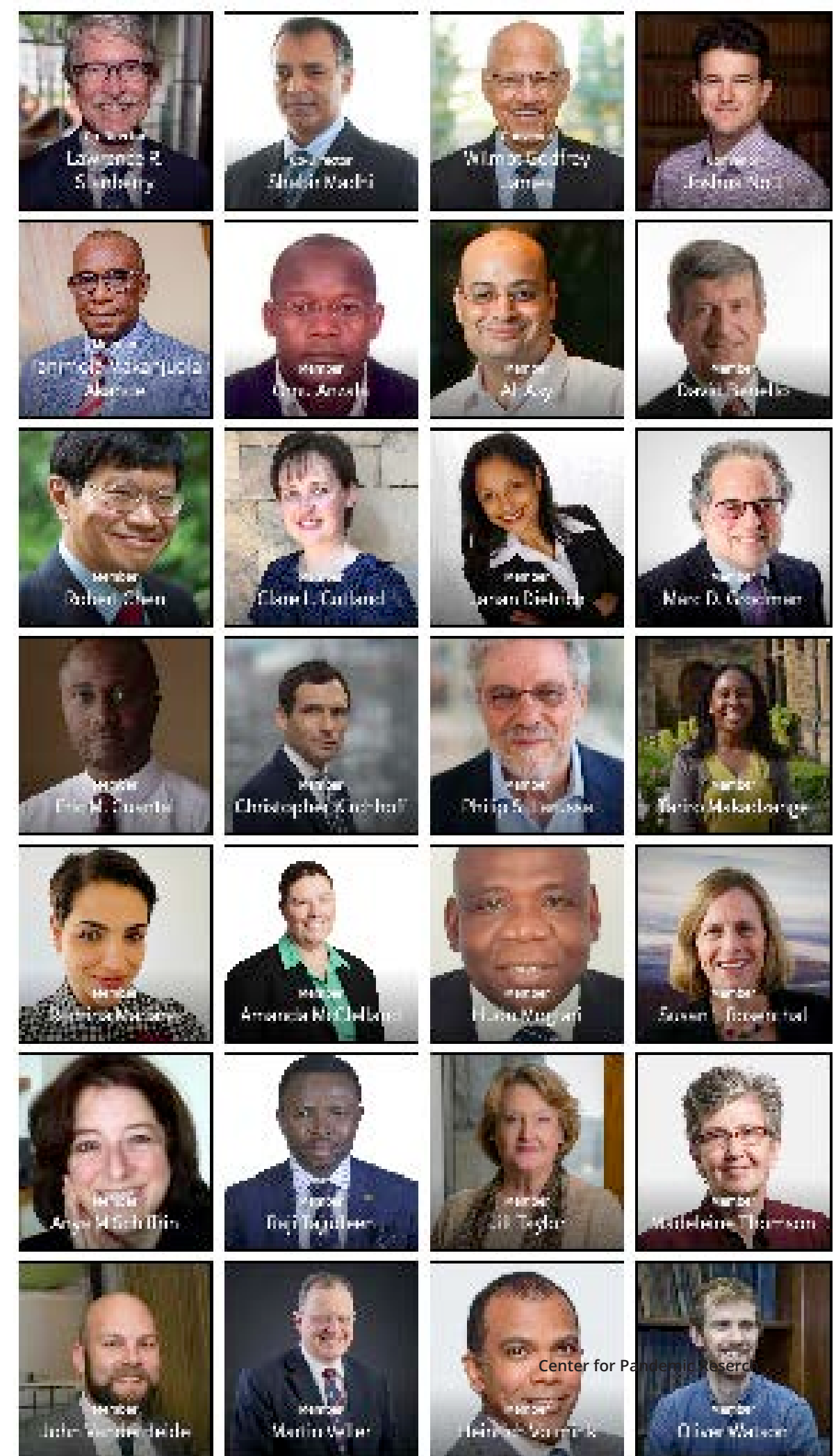
Vaccine Safety and Confidence-Building Working Group

Led by Co-Directors Dr. Lawrence R. Stanberry (Columbia University) and Dr. Shabir Madhi (University of the Witwatersrand) and Co-Convenors Dr. Wilmot James (Columbia University) & Joshua Nott (Schmidt Futures), ISERP launched the Vaccine Safety and Confidence-Building Working Group (VacSafe WG) in the spring of 2021. The VacSafe WG will catalyze and support projects that generate, scale and analyze actively-collected vaccine safety surveillance and pharmaco-vigilance data in Africa. The group began meeting and working in spring 2021.

The aim is to monitor adverse events to help clinicians intervene if necessary to save lives and increase public trust and confidence in vaccines through the rigorous collection and dissemination of this data. Not only are these capabilities a crucial priority if COVID-19 is to be vanquished on the continent, they will also be essential infrastructure for future pandemics and rapid vaccination campaigns. To be successful, such projects will require considerable amounts of public, institutional, and corporate funding. VacSafe WG will help surface and support projects with the potential to scale through seed funding that can be leveraged for additional support.

This working group is based at Columbia University's Center for Pandemic Research at the Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy, working in collaboration with the Program in Vaccine Education at the Columbia Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons; and the Medical Research Council Vaccines and Infectious Diseases Analytics Research Unit (VIDA) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. The working group receives additional funding and support from Schmidt Futures and the Gates Foundation.

Learn more about the VacSafe WG, use it's interactive map of vaccine coverage in Africa, and read it's monthly reports on the status vaccination efforts in Africa on the [VacSafe WG Website](#).



ISERP

7 | WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

ISERP WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

CRITICAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL STUDIES

Organized by Shamus Khan and Desmond Patton

CMDS brings together scholars interested in interrogating the sociocultural and political implications of digital technologies' growing scope and indelibility upon the public sphere, in particular, its impact upon marginalized communities. Currently, digital technologies are advancing in their capabilities and reach at a far faster rate than conversations and policies that challenge its implementation and effects, both short and long-term.

DIGITAL MAPPING AND DISCOURSES OF SPACE AND PLACE

Organized by Mae Ngai, Gergely Baics, Rebecca Kobrin, Laura Kurgan, and Leah Meisterlin

The Digital Mapping and Discourses of Space and Place: A Seminar Series on Teaching with Emerging Methods Across Disciplines brings Columbia faculty together with scholars engaged in work using digital mapping and spatial research for a series of conversations on pedagogy. In particular, it stages a conversation between discourses of place and space and the use of digital mapping and Geographic Information Systems in the classroom.

DIVERSIFYING THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: THE WOMEN IN ECONOMICS WORKING GROUP

Organized by Sandra Black, Elizabeth Ananat, Belinda Archibong, and Anja Benschaul-Tolonen

This group allows women from across the NYC/Northeast area to have a space to meet, discuss research, present work in progress, and receive constructive feedback in an environment that allows junior and senior scholars to interact. Given the low numbers of women economists in the profession, the seminar group is an important avenue to address pipeline issues by supporting and creating a safe space for female scholars throughout their research careers.

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Organized by Tey Meadow and Shamus Khan

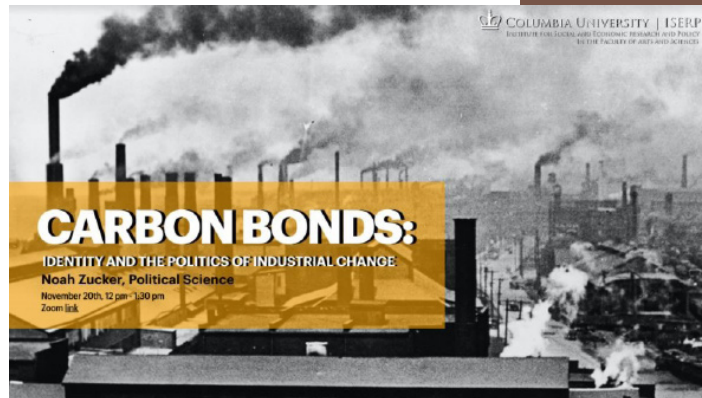
This workshop brings together students and faculty from across the disciplines whose work engages the heterogeneity of issues related to gender and sexuality in the social world. It helps train interested graduate students from across the arts and sciences in the foundational methods of data collection and analysis specific to empirical and theoretical approaches to gender and sexuality.

ON THE POSSIBILITY AND IMPOSSIBILITY OF REPARATIONS FOR SLAVERY AND COLONIALISM

Organized by David Scott, Anna Kirstine Schirrer, and Howard Rechavia Taylor

On June 7th 2020, a group of Black demonstrators scaled a statue of King Leopold II in Brussels, Belgium and brandished the flag of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; chanting one word repeatedly: "Reparations". Such demands for reparations for slavery and colonialism are occurring across multiple scales and locales, in various forms, and have intensified in the context of the global movement for Black Lives. An increasing number of institutions, NGO's and even states are responding to reparations demands: sometimes by acknowledging their moral legitimacy, rarely by addressing their material merits.

This webinar series investigates the significance of a global turn towards demands for reparatory justice for slavery and colonialism, and probes the terms upon which reparations would be capable of both enacting repair and accounting for social inequality in capitalist, white supremacist, and settler colonial contexts. Acknowledging the global implications of racialized forms of oppression, the series prioritizes an international framing of the question of reparatory justice and asks us to ponder the possibilities and the impossibilities of reparations for slavery and colonialism: What is the relationship between reparatory justice and the possibility of the abolition of the carceral state? What could material reparations for histories of colonialism and enslavement look like, how might they be adjudicated and administered? What is the relationship between claims for reparation, studies of repair, and liberal progressive state logics? This webinar series can be viewed on [Youtube](#).



IIGSS

ISERP Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Seminar

The ISERP Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Seminar (IIGSS) is a yearlong ISERP-sponsored seminar that seeks to foster a conversation across the social science communities at Columbia to discuss the diverse ways in which interdisciplinarity can be mobilized. The ultimate goal of the seminar series is to explore how interdisciplinary approaches can contribute to and enrich traditional disciplines and what such interdisciplinarity demands from them.

Following the precedent from last year, the IIGSS committee decided to choose a different theme for each semester. The themes were selected for their relevance to current affairs and their potential to involve research across disciplines. The theme for Fall 2020 was “Globalization: Causes and Consequences” and the theme for Spring 2021 was “Political Disorder”.

The ISERP Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar Series held the following seminars this year:

- “Governing the (Un)commons” by **Justin Canfil** from the Political Science Department which explored the microfoundations of international weapons bans. This seminar was held on October 23rd, 2020.
- “Social Transformation of the Indigenous Mining Society in Southern China.” by **Dongming Wu** from the East Asian Languages and Cultures department on November 6th, 2020.
- “Carbon Bonds: Identity and the Politics of Industrial Change.” by **Noah Zucker** (Political Science) on November 20th, 2020.
- “Educating Citizens: ESEA and the Role of Culture in Public Schools.” by **Mary Catherine Stoumbos** from the Music Department on December 11th, 2020.
- “Moore of the Same: the Institutionalization of Moore’s Law.” by **Susannah Glickman** from the History Department on February 19th, 2021.
- “Examining the Dilemmas of Indigenous Property Georeferentiation in Peruvian Amazonia.” by **Eduardo Romero Dianderas** from the Anthropology Department on March 12th, 2021.
- “Ethnic Composition, Legibility and The Conditional Effect of War on Fiscal Policy.” by **Yusuf Magiya** from the Political Science Department on April 2nd, 2021.
- “Dual Moral Obligations and International Cooperation.” by **Jenny Xiao** from the Political Science Department on April 23rd, 2021.

NEW BOOKS

In Arts and Sciences Series

The New Books in Arts and Sciences series, hosted by ISERP, the Divisional Deans of Arts and Sciences, and the Society of Fellows/Heyman Center for the Humanities, moved online in 2020-2021 like all of the university's events. Despite the restrictions on in-person interaction, we celebrated four new books by social science faculty with joyous zoom gatherings and vigorous virtual discussions. As faculty members joined to support their colleagues' publications, this series continues to be a wonderful way to highlight the important research going on in the social sciences at Columbia. While we were not able to sell or autograph books in-person, ISERP organizes promotional codes with each publisher to get audience members discounted book purchases.

Like with ISERP's other events this year, a silver lining of the virtual setting was the ability for speakers and audience members to join from across the country and world. This year saw audiences as large as 162 people for Mahmood Mamdani's *Neither Settler Nor Native*. If you missed any of these events, find them in the [New Books Series playlist](#) on our Youtube page, here.

CELEBRATING RECENT WORK BY CASEY BLAKE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, DANIEL H. BORUS, AND HOWARD BRICK

At the Center: American Thought and Culture in the Mid-Twentieth Century

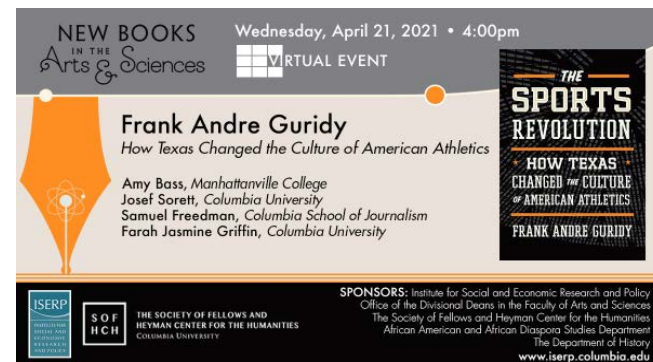
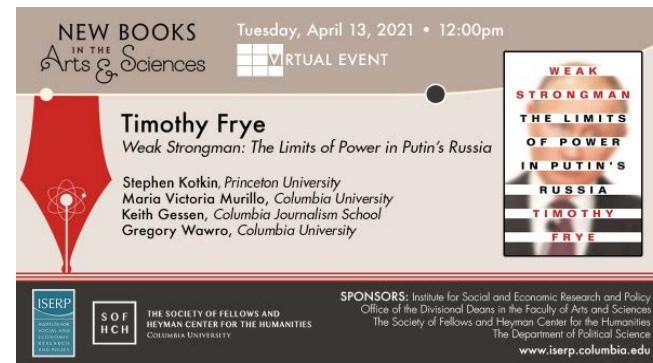
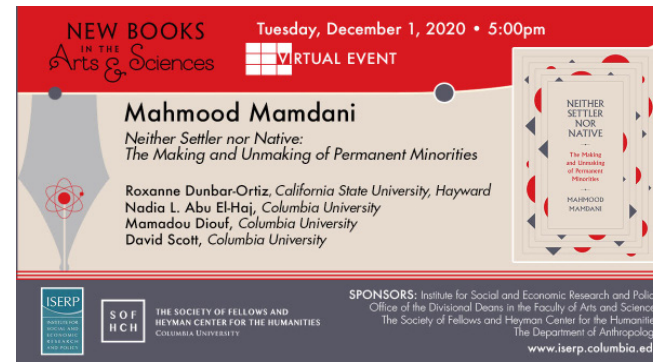
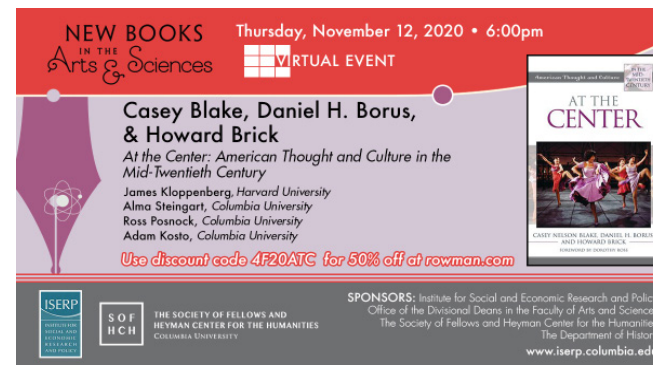
November 12, 2020

Co-Authors: **Daniel H. Borus**, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Rochester; **Howard Brick**, Louis Evans Chair in U.S. History, University of Michigan

Panelists: **James T. Kloppenberg**, Charles Warren Professor of American History, Harvard University; **Alma Steingart**, Assistant Professor of History; **Ross Posnock**, Anna S. Garbedian Professor of the Humanities

Moderator: **Adam Kosto**, Professor of History, Chair, Department of History

Co-hosts: The Office of the Divisional Deans in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities, and The Department of History



CELEBRATING RECENT WORK BY MAHMOOD MAMDANI HERBERT LEHMAN PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT

Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities

December 1, 2020

Panelists: **Nadia Abu El-Haj**, Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College and Columbia, & Codirector, Center for Palestine Studies; **Mamadou Diouf**, Leitner Family Professor of African Studies, & Director Institute for African Studies; **Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz**, historian, author, memoirist, California State University, Hayward
Moderator: **David Scott**, Ruth and William Lubic Professor of Anthropology, Chair, Department of Anthropology

Co-hosts: Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities, the Dean of the Division of Social Science, and the Anthropology Department

CELEBRATING RECENT WORK BY TIMOTHY FRYE, MARSHALL D. SHULMAN PROFESSOR OF POST-SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Weak Strongman: The Limits of Power in Putin's Russia

April 1, 2021

Panelists: **Stephen Kotkin**, John P. Birkelund '52 Professor in History and International Affairs, Co-Director, Program in History and the Practice of Diplomacy, Director, Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, & Director, Fung Global Fellows Program; **M. Victoria Murillo**, Professor of Political Science and International and Public Affairs & Director, Institute of Latin American Studies; **Keith Gessen**; George T. Delacorte Assistant Professor of Magazine Journalism

Moderator: **Gregory J. Wawro**, Professor of Political Science; Chair, Department of Political Science

Co-hosts: Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities, the Dean of the Division of Social Science, and the Political Science Department

CELEBRATING RECENT WORK BY FRANK A. GURIDY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

The Sports Revolution: How Texas Changed the Culture of American Athletics

April 21, 2021

Panelists: **Amy Bass**, Professor of Sport Studies, Manhattanville College; **Josef Sorett**, Professor of Religion and African American and African Diaspora Studies, Chair, Department of Religion, & Director, Center on African-American Religion, Sexual Politics and Social Justice; **Samuel Freedman**, Professor of Journalism

Moderator: **Farah Jasmine Griffin**, William B. Ransford Professor of English and Comparative Literature and African-American Studies & Chair, African American and African Diaspora Studies Department

Co-hosts: Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities, the Dean of the Division of Social Science, the African American and African Diaspora Studies Department, and the History Department

CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

ISERP CENTERS

APPLIED STATISTICS CENTER

Director: Andrew Gelman

The Applied Statistics Center is a community of scholars at Columbia organized around research projects in the human, social, and engineering sciences, as well as basic statistical research. In addition to coordinating existing projects and seminars, the Center supports visitors and research fellows, facilitates the development of new projects, and connects Columbia students in statistics and quantitative social science as part of research teams in datarich projects, providing topics for M.A. and Ph.D. theses.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WEALTH AND INEQUALITY

Directors: Seymour Spilerman, Thomas A. DiPrete, Yao Lu

The Center for the Study of Wealth and Inequality (CWI) takes as its mission the investigation of income and wealth, along with exploring the dimensions of societal inequality in these household resources. The Center's interests encompass issues of poverty, labor market behavior, public transfer programs and tax policy, in that each has a clear relevance to economic inequality, family resources, and to living standards.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Director: Macartan Humphreys

The Center for the Study of Development Strategies (CSDS) provides a forum at Columbia to support rigorous field based research on major questions in the political economy of development. Research at the center focuses on democracy and governance, peacebuilding, and aid effectiveness.

CENTER ON AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

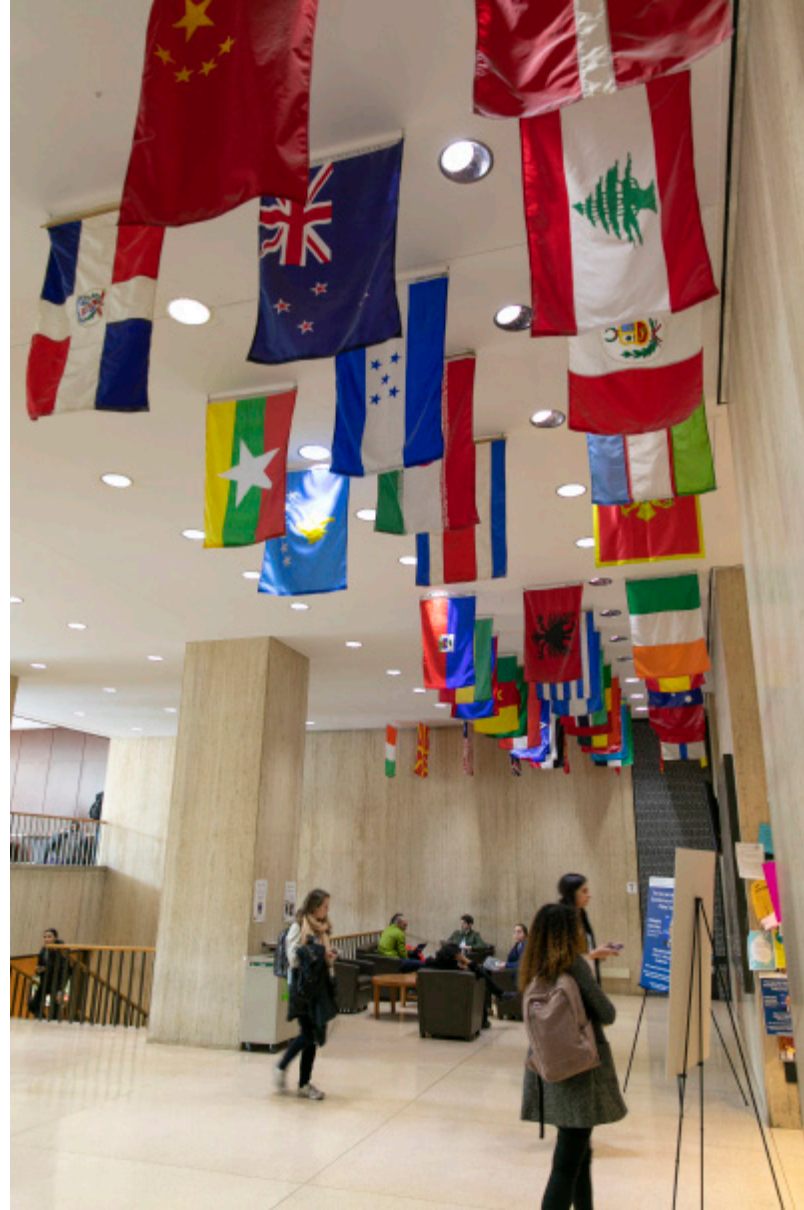
Director: Frederick C. Harris

CAAPS provides an intellectual infrastructure for social science research on the political, social, and economic conditions affecting black communities. It aims to support theoretically sophisticated and policy-informed research among Columbia faculty, using a variety of methods and approaches that intersect various disciplines, including political science, psychology, sociology, law, economics and urban studies. With its emphasis on policy relevant research, CAAPS aims to bridge the center's research with the needs and concerns of policy and community-based actors who work within and on behalf of black communities.

CENTER ON ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

Director: David Stark

The Center on Organizational Innovation (COI) promotes research on organizational innovation as well as new forms of collaboration, communication, and coordination made possible with the advent of interactive technologies. COI supports a number of PhD research projects, including: “Racialized Expertise and the Enabling and Constraining Character of Organizations: The Case of University Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workers,” Sandra Portocarrero and “Trials of Legitimacy -- Stress Testing and the Governance of Global Finance,” Julian Jurgenmeyer.



COLUMBIA JUSTICE LAB

Drector: Bruce Western

The Justice Lab seeks to foundationally reconceive justice policy through actionable research, community-centered policy development, and the sustained engagement of diverse constituencies. We envision a community-centered future for justice in which healing and resiliency, rather than punishment and surveillance, are used to solve social problems often rooted in racial and economic inequity.

The Justice Lab uses four key strategies: designing and conducting research to inform justice policy development and advocacy, serving as a convener to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and bridge-building among diverse and interdisciplinary perspectives, disseminating new ideas for justice policy and practice, and working with young people, especially those with direct experience of justice involvement, to build the next generation of researchers, advocates, practitioners, and policymakers.

THE AI MODEL SHARE PLATFORM

Director: Michael Parrot

The AI Model Share Project acts as a lab for machine learning innovation at Columbia University. The project is currently piloting the AI Model Share Platform (see modelshare.org or find us on [github](https://github.com)) throughout 2021-2022 at Columbia. Its mission is to generate the tools needed to assist students, faculty, and the wider data science community to bring machine learning innovations to all manner of end-users. The initiative received Start Up Center grant funding from ISERP to build a platform (Python library + integrated website) that will act as the world’s trusted academic repository for machine learning model prediction APIs. To date we have used these resources to rapidly generate the core functionality of this platform.

The platform now enables faculty, students, and the wider data science community to launch machine learning models into scalable production ready prediction REST APIs and live web-dashboards using a single Python function. Details about each model, how to use the model’s API, and the model’s author(s) are deployed simultaneously into a searchable website at Columbia. Data scientists (faculty, students and otherwise) have individual model detail pages listing information about all deployed models. Each of these pages includes a fully functional prediction dashboard that allows end-users to input text, tabular, or image data and receive live predictions. Moreover, documentation for prediction API usage via Curl, Python, and R code are also available.

In a matter of seconds, data scientists can launch a model into this infrastructure and end-users the world over will be able to engage their machine learning models. A developer version of the platform is currently being used by Columbia students, faculty, and staff to test and improve platform functionality through the spring semester of 2022. The site will be publicly launched outside of Columbia in summer 2022.

QMSS MA PROGRAM

Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences



Last year was another unprecedented year for the world, including the Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences (QMSS) MA program here at Columbia. For the first time in its 21-year history, QMSS welcomed a class of students who would learn in a hybridized style, with approximately a quarter of the cohort on campus, attending classes in person in masks and socially distanced, and the remaining 75% of students joining classes remotely from all around the US and the world. Despite continued uncertainty and a very long list of potential complications, a total of 95 new students bravely started their QMSS training in social research, advanced statistical methodologies and data science last year (out of the over 800 applicants who had applied last year).

This last year has seen no shortage of research topics crying out for the type of quantitative analysis students being trained in an interdisciplinary social science MA degree program at Columbia could offer: the continued spread of Covid; the rise of political polarization and authoritarianism; mass protest and mobilization over rights; the spread of misinformation and disinformation via social

media; critical interventions into the economy to respond to a worldwide crisis; the challenge of vaccine hesitancy. These — and many other weighty topics — are ones QMSS students are well equipped to answer and indeed, they began to answer them in a variety of ways over the past year.

The students were encouraged by QMSS faculty to bring their concerns about the world and their experiences during the pandemic into the classroom, where they could be tackled quantitatively and with scholarly rigor. Moreover, faculty — who are dedicated lecturers for QMSS or adjunct faculty with strong connections to the New York tech and corporate communities — went above and beyond to further adapt their curriculum to the needs of a hybrid audience, adding more occasions for group projects, asynchronous participation and access to recorded lectures.

This sort of instructional innovation happened over and over again, whether in QMSS core classes or in QMSS electives, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Time Series and Forecasting, Bayesian Statistics, Data Visualization, Applied Data Science, Modern Data Structures, Data Mining, Social Networks, Machine Learning and a Practicum on Large-Scale Data Analysis. Despite the additional logistical complexity of offering courses in hybrid format, QMSS was still able to accommodate a great number of additional graduate students drawn from across Columbia in our electives, since students continued to find QMSS classes critical to their research plans.

Perhaps there is no better illustration of QMSS students directly confronting critical questions of the day than the Practicum class. This course produced multiple teams of students who created valuable projects, in collaboration with external research partners, on critical problems. In fact, two separate teams composed of QMSS students were selected as winners of the inaugural Columbia Data Science Student Course Project Competition, judged by the Data Science Institute's Education Working Group Committee.



The QMSS teams were praised for their creative use of data science; their potential societal impact; and their “Data for Good” mission. One team, working with the Opportunity Project (a Census Bureau initiative), developed an easy-to-use dashboard for rural leaders to access and deploy critical data about their communities to encourage investment and entrepreneurship. These students were also selected as finalists in the Opportunity Project’s own nationwide challenge. The other team, working with KPMG Consulting, developed a cutting-edge intelligent forecasting model for COVID cases, which can be accessed via an interactive website and which had the potential to provide valuable early warnings to many large organizations during a very uncertain year.

QMSS students continued to excel out of the classroom as well. For instance, a team made up exclusively of QMSS students won first place in the 2020 Columbia-Wide Data Science Society Hackathon. The team asked the question “Can COVID-19 related factors, like changes in mobility and government action, predict when schools will reopen for a country?”– and they delivered the most compelling answer. Another team, made up primarily of QMSS students, won the 2020 Kellogg-Morgan Stanley Sustainable Investing Challenge Inaugural Plastic Waste Reduction Prize. The QMSS team brought forward innovative financial solutions to address some of our most difficult and pressing global challenges.

Throughout last year, QMSS students worked right alongside faculty studying important topics and issues as well. Despite all of the challenges of the pandemic, the QMSS Research Assistant program still managed to appoint 42 RAs for faculty research projects last year. Additionally, a number of QMSS students were selected as Data For Good Scholars to work with Columbia faculty via research internships run through the Data Science Institute.

In their theses, the QMSS students sought to continue to follow the spirit of the QMSS program, of integrating the perspectives and research strategies of our six founding disciplines– economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology and statistics. Students managed to connect with

thesis advisors in person and over Zoom, and they managed to design their research projects, collect big data and analyze it using the most up-to-date methods. One QMSS student was selected to present her thesis at the GSAS Synthesis MA Thesis Showcase, which involved mapping the demographic and geographic correlates to Uber, Lyft and Via rides in Chicago.

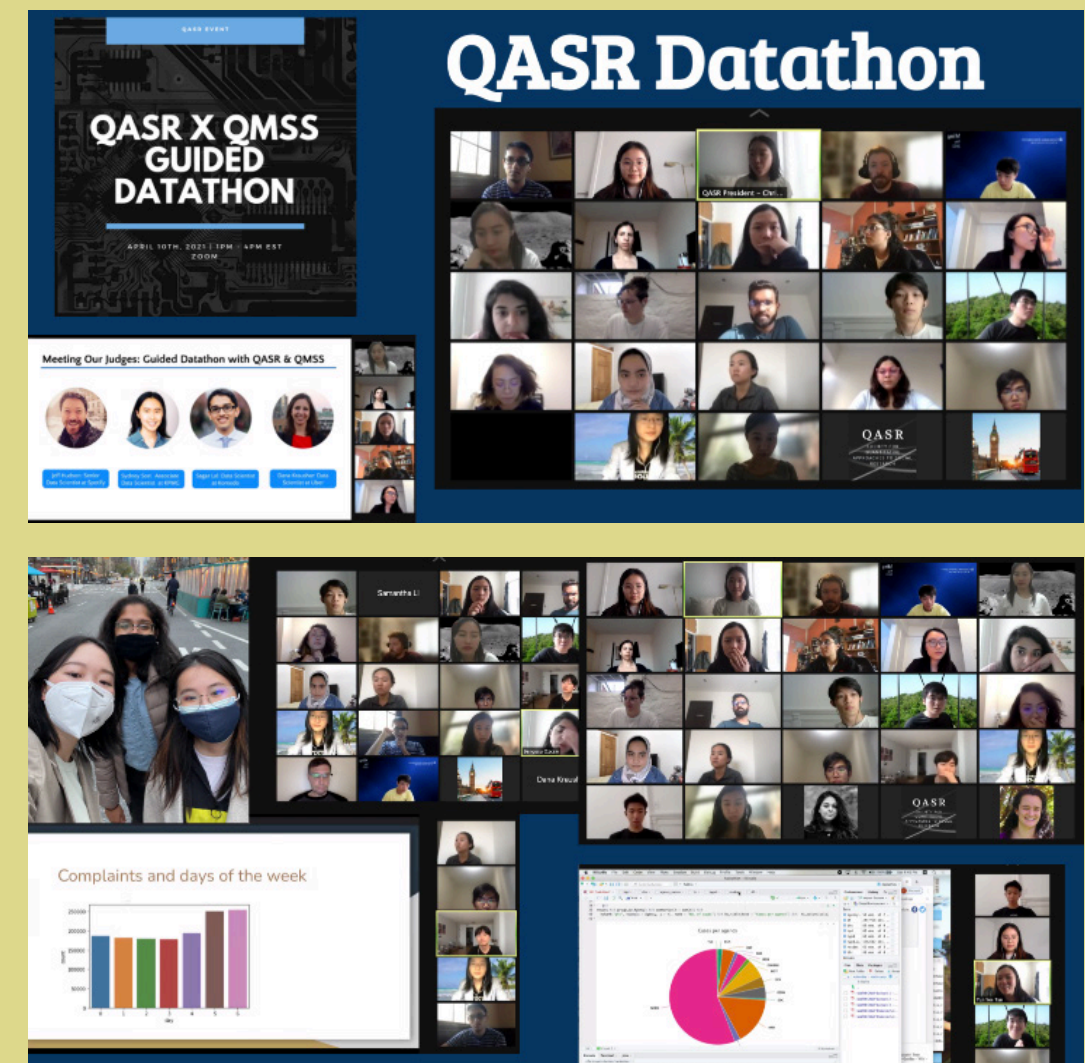
Likewise, the QMSS student group, QASR - the Society for Quantitative Approaches to Social Research, offered a rich variety of advanced programming for the MA students, most especially an incredibly successful Spring virtual mini hack-a-thon examining changes in NYC’s 311 complaints during the pandemic. A number of QMSS alumni served as judges of the teams’ efforts.



Not only was QASR active last year, but the newly-formed QMSS Alumni Council partnered with them to host alumni panels on data ethics and on careers.

Despite having to primarily navigate the job search process remotely, QMSS graduates continued to find themselves in high demand, taking on roles at many of the world’s premier institutions, such as GM, Mastercard, Facebook, BlackRock, Palantir, the Census Bureau, the New York Mets, KPMG, Goldman Sachs, Progressive Insurance, ByteDance, Schmidt Futures, NORC at the University of Chicago, and Columbia itself. They join the hundreds of QMSS alumni who continue to distinguish themselves as data scientists, research directors, senior analysts and academic researchers in many fields, whether in New York City or around the world.

As it has done for the last 21 years, and during this pandemic, QMSS will continue to look for ways to add value to the experiences of the MA students in the program, and also for ways to support advanced quantitative research among the larger Columbia community as well.



PER

Program for Economic Research

Harrison Hong
Executive Director, Program for Economic Research

Sophia Johnson
Assistant Director

The [Capital Fund Management \(CFM\) - PER Alternative Data Initiative](#) hosted two panel discussions in 2021:

Nowcasting Inflation which explored the use of big data to generate high-frequency inflation forecasts.

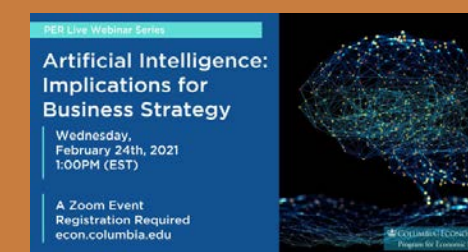
Speaker: Alberto F. Cavallo, Edgerley Family Associate Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School.

Rise of the Retail Investor which explored the use of big data regarding retail investor order flows to understand the implications of this resurgence for financial markets and regulators.

Speaker: Charles Jones, Robert W. Lear Professor of Finance and Economics at the Columbia Business School

The Department of Economics' [Market Design Initiative](#) hosted the **Dynamic Matching and Queueing Workshop** in April 2021. Speakers included Alfred Galichon (NYU), Jakub Kastl (Princeton), Mohammad Akbarpour (Stanford), Afshin Nikzad (USC), Georg Nöldeke (Basel), Olivier Tercieux (PSE), Philipp Strack (Yale), and Larry Wein (Stanford)

The Program for Economic Research (PER) launched the PER Live Webinar Series and hosted six virtual events which can now be accessed online. The PER Live Series invites finance and business thought leaders to share insights on issues at the center of the economy, and discuss the changing role of economists globally.



The Program for Economic Research announced the 2021 Field or Experimental Research and Data Purchase Grant Recipients - as follows:

Field or Experimental Research:

- Guy Aridor
- Naman Garg
- Michelle Jiang
- Victoria Mooers and Lucas Panico de Lara
- Silvio Ravaioli

Data Purchase:

- Bozidar Plavsic

Columbia Economic Review - Spring 2021 Journal published by our undergraduates.



9 | STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

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