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We would like to thank the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews for their continued support of this journal. In particular, we would like to thank Dr Huon Wardle who functions as academic link to the journal. For the re-designing of our logo we thank Katy Kibort, and for the help with setting up our type-set we thank Neil Hampshire. Last but not least we would also like to thank all our authors whose work brings this journal to life.

Ethnographic Encounters was founded in 2011 to publish outstanding work by undergraduate students of Social Anthropology.

It was inspired by the Ethnographic Encounters project that second-year students in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews do every spring where they conduct their own fieldwork project.

The works that emerged from this were so interesting and diverse that students Zoe Miller and Emily Sheppard decided to start this journal with the support and guidance from Dr. Craig Lind.

In addition to this issue, we produce a yearly special issue where submissions are opened up to other projects from anthropology students.

We remain a student-run journal and every year since our foundation we have published a volume with the best of the Ethnographic Encounters projects submitted to the journal.

Our online archives can be found at: <https://ojs.st-andrews.ac.uk/index.php/SAEE/issue/archive>

With special thanks to the University of St Andrews' Department of Social Anthropology.

EDITOR'S NOTE

*We are proud to present the newest volume of
Ethnographic Encounters!*

Welcome to this year's special edition of Ethnographic Encounters!

This edition of the journal has been a long time coming—and its publication has certainly been met with some obstacles over the last few months. Our theme of “ethnographic storytelling” could not feel more apt this year, considering the unusual circumstances that have both devastated and united the world.

As always, we encouraged contributors to explore the anthropological spaces between narrative, analysis and interpretation. In this special edition, we widened the scope of our publications from the best work produced by second-year students at the University of St Andrews as part of their assessment for our namesake module. We opened submissions to undergraduate students at any stage of their studies, which has provided this edition with refreshing depth and breadth. Thank you to the authors for their enduring patience and cooperation throughout this process, and for sharing their written work with us.

This issue commences with an excerpt from the dissertation of Eva Whittaker, who explores the individual and collective experience of singing in religious, choral music groups in both Philadelphia and St Andrews.

Katharine Kibort then introduces a thought-provoking analysis of the audiovisual content produced by contemporary Native American artists. She explores the reclamation process present in their self-representation and self-definition.

This article is followed by a contemporary analysis of hand-washing, ritual, and religion in the context of COVID-19. Andrew Barwick allows anthropological ideas of ritual and sacrifice to guide his analysis of this significant practice.

Evgeniya Pakhomova then reflects on ethnographic encounters with graduating Fine Arts students, during which the students discussed their hopes for the future, the uncertainty of artistry, and a steadfast dedication to creativity.

Finally, Anna Todsén examines the role of digital media in cultural, political and social life, specifically the ethical challenges within studying digital media and its contribution to the fluidity of online and individual identities.

On a bittersweet note, this edition will be our last as Co-Editors-in-Chief. Additionally, we say goodbye and good luck this year to Emily, Verity and Kirsten, who also graduated, and we would like to offer our most sincere thanks to the rest of our incredible team of editors—Rebecca, Katy, Sarah, Elinor and Ella—for all their hard work. We have no doubt that their passion and capability will ensure that Ethnographic Encounters continues to grow and prosper. It's in good hands.

Thank you for reading and we hope you enjoy the articles as much as we did.

Lucy & Christina