

# Mikaela Brough

PHD CANDIDATE · INFORMATION SECURITY

Royal Holloway, University of London

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## Education

### Royal Holloway, University of London

Greater London, UK

#### PHD INFORMATION SECURITY

2022-present

- Supervised by: Prof. Rikke Bjerg Jensen (RHUL), Prof. Martin R. Albrecht (KCL)

### University of Oxford

Oxford, UK

#### MSC SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

2020-2021

- Supervised by: Dr. Ina Zharkevich
- 1:1 Distinction

### McGill University

Montréal, Canada

#### BA HISTORY AND ART HISTORY

2015-2019

- Minor in Political Science
- Additional credits in Anthropology, Computer Science
- GPA: 3.6 (1:1 equivalent)

## Professional Experience

### ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

- 2022- **PhD Researcher**, Royal Holloway, University of London
- 2024-25 **Research Assistant**, Dr. Andrew Dwyer. Securing Converged Technologies. Royal Holloway, University of London
- 2023- **Teaching Assistant, Department of Information Security**, Royal Holloway, University of London.
- 2024- **Teaching Assistant, Department of Computer Science**, Royal Holloway, University of London.
- 2021-22 **Research Assistant**, Dr. Paula Sheppard. Fertility Decision-Making. University of Oxford.

### INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

- 2020 **Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Officer**, First Canadian Title. Toronto, Canada.
- 2015-2020 **Various – Sous, Chef de Partie, Commis, KP**, Various Food Employers, Canada and UK.
- 2016-20 **Freelance Researcher**, Boxing Cats Productions. Toronto, Canada.

## Peer-Reviewed Conference and Journal Publications

### PUBLISHED

- Brough, M., Jensen, R. B., & Albrecht, M. 2025. On the Virtues of Information Security in the UK Climate Movement. Proceedings of USENIX'25 Security Symposium, Seattle, USA. **Honourable Mention for Best Paper (Top 6%)**.
- Dwyer, A., & Brough, M. 2025. Securing Converged Technologies: Insights from Subject Matter Experts. Department of Science and Innovation (DSIT). Accepted/in-press.
- Brough, M., & Sheppard, P. (2022). Fertility decision-making in the UK: Insights from a qualitative study among British men and women. Social Sciences, 11(9).
- Sheppard, P., & Brough, M. (2022). Father-Toddler Bonding during the COVID-19 Lockdown: Qualitative Insights from 17 Families in Britain. Social Sciences, 11(12): 542.
- Brough, M. (2021). BENNO HERZOG, The invisibilization of suffering: the moral grammar of disrespect, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 217 pp. ISBN 9783030284480. Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford, XIII(1): 90-92.

## Awards & Grants

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### AWARDS

2025	<b>Honourable Mention for Best Paper</b> , USENIX Security '25 – “On the Virtues of...”	
2022	<b>Prof. David Parkin Prize in Ethnographic Materials</b> , University of Oxford	£200
2021	<b>Distinction</b> , School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford	1:1
2019	<b>Distinction (Canadian Equivalent)</b> , McGill University	1:1

### GRANTS

2025	<b>Student Grant</b> , USENIX Security '25 – Seattle	775 USD
2024	<b>Student Grant</b> , Real World Crypto '24 – Toronto	930 USD
2023	<b>Student Grant</b> , Real World Crypto '23 – Tokyo	1920 USD
2022	<b>PhD Funding</b> , Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council of UKRI	# 2751135

## Research Experience

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### Royal Holloway, University of London - Dept of Information Security

Egham, UK.

SUPERVISORS: PROF. RIKKE BJERG JENSEN, PROF. MARTIN R. ALBRECHT

Aug. 2022 - Present

- Doctoral Thesis: “Information Security in Environmental Movements”
- Project 1: “Exploring Information Security in the UK Climate Movement”, 3 months ethnographic fieldwork
- Project 2: “Privacy, Security, and Activism in the Philippines”, 5 months ethnographic fieldwork
- Funded by: EPSRC CDT Cybersecurity for the Everyday

### King's College London – Department of Informatics

London, UK

PIs: PROF. RIKKE BJERG JENSEN, PROF. MARTIN R. ALBRECHT

Aug. 2024 – Present

- Project Title: “Social Foundations of Cryptography
- Project Focus: Collaborative research with cryptographers and ethnographers to investigate the security needs of protesters.
- Contributions: PhD contributor, ethnographic fieldwork
- Funded by: EPSRC

### Royal Holloway, University of London - Dept of Information Security

Egham, UK.

PI: DR. ANDREW DWYER

2024-25

- Project Title: “Securing Converged Technologies”
- Project Focus: Interview study exploring potential future cybersecurity implications of technology convergence.
- Contributions: Project management, grounded thematic analysis, report writing
- Funded by: Department of Science, Innovation and Technology

### Royal Holloway, University of London - Dept of Information Security

Egham, UK.

ADVISOR: DR. SANTANU DASH.

2023

- Project: “Perceptions of Secure Software Development: A Qualitative Study of Software Engineers in the UK”
- Project focus: Understanding contextual factors that shape how devs make decisions about security tools when writing code.
- Contributions: Study design, interviewing, analysis, drafting
- Funded by: EPSRC CDT Cybersecurity for the Everyday

### University of Oxford - School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography

Oxford, UK.

PI: DR. PAULA SHEPPARD

2021-22

- Project Title: “Reproductive decision-making: Understanding the drivers of fertility postponement”
- Project focus: Identifying barriers to UK families in terms of having children through focus groups with men and women.
- Contributions: Data collection (focus groups), data analysis, drafting, dissemination
- Funded by: John Fell Research Fund, Oxford University Press

### University of Oxford - School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography

Oxford, UK.

SUPERVISOR: DR. INA ZHARKEVICH

2020-21

- Masters Thesis: “Away from Uncertainty: A Transnational Ethnography of the London (UK) Chef Shortage”, 2 months ethnographic fieldwork
- Project focus: Grounding post-brexit ‘labour shortages’ in food in experiences of uncertainty and transnational precarity.

- “Salapia Exploration Project”
- Project focus: archaeological excavation of the ancient city of Salapia in Puglia.
- Contributions: Data collection (excavation, survey)

## Invited Talks and Speaking

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*\* presenting author*

### INVITED TALKS

- Autumn 2025. *AI Ethics*. Guest Lecture: Ethics in Advanced Computing and AI. MSc Artificial Intelligence, Royal Holloway, University of London. Online.
- Summer 2025. *Information Security in the Climate Movement*. Invited talk: Cybersecurity Seminar Series. Kings College London. London, UK.
- Autumn 2024. *Research Ethics*. Guest Lecture: Research Methods. MSc Information Security, Royal Holloway, University of London. Egham, UK.
- Autumn 2024. *AI Ethics*. Guest Lecture: Ethics in Advanced Computing and AI. MSc Artificial Intelligence, Royal Holloway, University of London. Online.
- Summer 2024. *Talking about Information Security*. Invited Talk: Departmental Seminar. University of Cebu. Cebu City, Philippines.

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Brough, M. 2025. On the Virtues of Information Security in the UK Climate Movement. USENIX Security '25. Seattle, Washington, USA.
- Brough, M. 2025. Security, Privacy, and Advocacy in the Philippines. ReCAP, Re-imagining Cryptography and Privacy. The City College of New York, Massachusetts, USA.
- Brough, M. 2024. On the Virtues of Information Security in the UK Climate Movement. ReCAP, Re-imagining Cryptography and Privacy. Tufts University, Massachusetts, USA.
- Brough, M. 2024. Information Security in Environmental Movements. Inter-CDT Conference. University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.
- Brough M.** 2024. On the Virtues of Information Security in the UK Climate Movement. CDT Showcase. Royal Holloway, University of London, Windsor, UK
- Brough M.** 2024. Information Security in Environmental Movements. MISC-CS Conference. Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, UK
- Brough, M.** 2023. Exploring Secure Messaging and Perceptions of Risk: A Literature Review. STS Italia. Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy.
- Brough M.\* Jones C.\* Smith S.\* 2023. Exploring Software Developers Perceptions of Security. CDT Showcase. Royal Holloway, University of London, Windsor, UK
- Brough M.** 2023. Exploring Secure Messaging and Perceptions of Risk. CDT Showcase. Royal Holloway, University of London, Windsor, UK
- Sheppard P.\* **Brough M.** 2022. Fertility Decision Making in the UK: Insights from a qualitative study across British social classes. European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference. Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany.

### WORKSHOP TALKS

- Brough, M. 2024. Usability of Cryptographic APIs. Cryptography Research Seminar. Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, UK.
- Brough, M. 2024. Positionality in Social Science Research. Social Science Methods CDT Workshop. Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, UK.

Brough, M.. 2024. Navigating the high / low risk binary in information security research. Looking for Everyday Security Workshop. University College London, London, UK.

Brough, M. 2022. Labour Ethnographies. Ethnography Reading Group. Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, UK.

## Teaching Experience

*\*M=marking, F=facilitation, L=lecturing, LP=Lesson plans*

2024-25	<b>Introduction to Cryptography</b> , Teaching Assistant, Infosec, RHUL.	LP, F
2024-25	<b>Security Management</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M, L
2024-25	<b>Programming Fundamentals (Python and Java)</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024-25	<b>User-Centred Design</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M, F
2024	<b>Databases</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024	<b>IT Project Management</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024	<b>Internet Services</b> , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2023	<b>Security Management</b> , Teaching Assistant, Infosec, RHUL.	M

## Outreach & Professional Development

### OUTREACH

2024	<b>Public lecture/workshop for CSOs</b> , Facilitator/presenter	Manila, PH
2024	<b>Public lecture/workshop for community groups</b> , Facilitator/presenter	Cebu, PH
2024	<b>Small group public information security training</b> , Facilitator	Cebu, PH

### SERVICE

2024-	<b>Departmental Student Committee</b> , Cohort Representative	Egham, UK.
2023	<b>MISC-CS Conference</b> , Member of Organising Team	Egham, UK.

### CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

2025	<b>Privacy Camp</b> , 1 day	Brussels, BE
2024	<b>Real World Crypto</b> , 3 days	Toronto, CA
2023	<b>CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems</b> , 5 days	Hamburg, DE
2023	<b>Real World Crypto</b> , 3 days	Tokyo, JP

### PEER REVIEWING

2025	<b>USENIX Security</b> , Program Committee	Conference
2024	<b>IEEE EuroS&amp;P</b> , Sub-reviewer	Conference
2022	<b>Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health</b> , Reviewer	Journal

### CERTIFICATIONS

2024-	<b>InSTIL Teaching Development Programme</b> , Accredited by Advance HE	Pending
2025-	<b>Associate Fellow</b> , Higher Education Academy (AFHEA)	Pending

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

2024	<b>23 Things International</b> , Global Research Collaboration	Online
2024	<b>Fieldwork Training</b> , Departmental Training	Egham, UK.
2023	<b>Media Training</b> , BBC/Royal Holloway Researcher Development	Egham, UK.
2023	<b>Ethics and Data Management</b> , Royal Holloway Researcher Development	Online
2023	<b>Ethical Research</b> , Epigeum Researcher Development	Online
2023	<b>Responsible Research and Innovation</b> , UCL	Online
2023	<b>Academic Writing</b> , Royal Holloway Researcher Development	Egham, UK.
2023	<b>Presentation Training</b> , Royal Holloway/Mindful Presenter	Egham, UK.
2023	<b>Network Security Training</b> , Royal Holloway CDT Training	Egham, UK.

## VOLUNTEERING

*\*Volunteering with research partner groups cannot be included for confidentiality reasons.*

2025	<b>Greenwich Docklands International Festival</b> , Accessibility Support	London, UK.
2025	<b>Red Cross Philippines</b> , General Support	Philippines
2022-	<b>Migrateful</b> , Class Facilitator	London, UK.
2022-	<b>Mozilla</b> , Support Team	Remote
2019-	<b>FoodCycle</b> , Cook	London, UK.
2015-19	<b>World University Service of Canada (WUSC - EUMC)</b> , Executive Committee Member	Montreal, PQ
2018-19	<b>High School of Montreal Adult Centre</b> , English Third-Language Teaching Assistant	Montreal, PQ
2018-19	<b>Elimu Development Project</b> , English Second-Language Teaching Assistant	Remote
2009-19	<b>Special Olympics Ontario/Quebec</b> , Coach	Canada.

## Skills

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### PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

**Python**, Proficient – scripting, data analysis  
**R**, Proficient – data analysis  
**SQL**, Intermediate – data queries, normalisation, joins  
**C**, Familiar with – systems programming, memory management concepts  
**Java**, Familiar with – object-oriented design, academic projects

### RESEARCH AND SOFT SKILLS

**Methodology**, Proficiency in qual data collection and analysis (interviewing, participant observation, focus groups, thematic analysis), proficiency in discourse analysis (both qual and quant), good knowledge of quant data collection and analysis (surveys, questionnaires, statistical analysis, data visualisation using R), good knowledge of Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods.

**Communication and Outreach**, Proficiency in communicating across disciplines, public speaking to a variety of audiences, fostering participant relationships, recruitment across cultural lines, and ethically engaged research principles and practices.

**Intercultural Collaboration**, Good knowledge of how to position and communicate a qual project within a mixed methods or interdisciplinary project, proficiency in working collaboratively with research participants on shared goals outside research (real-world impact). Canada, UK, Philippines.

**Theory**, Proficiency in all major anthropological / sociological theories from past 100 years, contemporary ethnographic theory, cultural history of CS, contemporary debates in CS.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

**Networking**, Good knowledge of network protocols and architecture.

**Cryptography**, Strong knowledge of standard cryptographic protocols and key management.

**Operating Systems**, Strong knowledge of OS fundamentals (memory management, file systems, configuration) across Mac, Windows, and Linux. Experience in installing and configuring various Linux distributions, advanced disk management including partitioning and formatting, managing bootloaders (GRUB), kernel parameter tuning, automating maintenance tasks. Working knowledge of manual software installation via source builds and dependency management outside of package managers.

**Scripting**, Good knowledge of Bash, Python, and PowerShell scripting.

**Typesetting**, Strong knowledge of using  $\text{\LaTeX}$  for academic writing, experienced with collaborative projects using Overleaf and also working with local compilers.

**Reference Management**, Strong knowledge of using BibTeX and BibLaTeX for managing academic bibliographies.

**Docker**, Working knowledge of containerisation, experience building images, using Docker Compose, and managing containers.

**Environments**, Good knowledge of interactive data analysis using Jupyter Notebooks and VS Code, visualisation, and research workflows integrating Markdown and code.

**Version Control**, Strong knowledge of using Git for version control, branching, merging, and collaborative workflows (e.g., GitHub).

**Front End**, Working knowledge of JavaScript, CSS, and HTML.

**Other**, Good knowledge of frequentist statistics and SQL databases.

## LANGUAGES

**English**, Native speaker

**Italian**, B2 Level - Upper Intermediate

**French (Canadian)**, B1 Level - Lower Intermediate

**Filipino (Tagalog)**, A2 Level - Elementary

**REFERENCES** Available upon request.