

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.

Publications

PUBLISHED

- 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.

IN PRESS

- 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. Accepted/In-Press
- Dwyer, A., & **Brough, M.** 2025. Securing Converged Technologies: Insights from Subject Matter Experts. *Department of Science and Innovation (DSIT)*. Accepted/in-press.

Awards & Grants

2022	PhD Funding , Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council of UKRI	# 2751135
2022	Prof. David Parkin Prize in Ethnographic Materials , School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography	£200
2021	Distinction , School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford	1:1
2019	Distinction (Canadian Equivalent) , McGill University	1:1

Research Experience

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.

McGill University, Università degli studi di Foggia

Trinitapoli, Italy.

ADVISORS: DR. DARIAN TOTTEN, DR. ROBERTO GOFFREDO

2018

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

Presentations

* *presenting author*

INVITED TALKS

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.

CONTRIBUTED PRESENTATIONS

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. Usability of Cryptographic APIs. Cryptography Research Seminar. Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, 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.. 2024. Navigating the high / low risk binary in information security research. Looking for Everyday Security Workshop. University College London, London, 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.

Teaching Experience

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

2025	Programming Fundamentals (Python and Java) , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024	User-Centred Design , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M, F
2024	Databases , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024	IT Project Management , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2024	Security Management , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M, L
2024	Introduction to Cryptography , Teaching Assistant, Infosec, RHUL.	LP, F
2024	Programming Fundamentals (Python and Java) , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M, F
2024	Internet Services , Teaching Assistant, CS, RHUL.	M
2023	Security Management , Teaching Assistant, Infosec, RHUL.	M

Outreach & Professional Development

OUTREACH

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

SERVICE

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

PEER REVIEW

2024	IEEE EuroS&P , Sub-reviewer	Conference
2022	Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health , Reviewer	Journal

CERTIFICATIONS

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

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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

VOLUNTEERING

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

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

Skills

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 \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

OTHER

Causes, Human rights, science and technology, environmental justice

Personal Interests, Guitar, flute, cooking, scuba diving, trekking

REFERENCES Available upon request.