

Sven M. Kasser

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Education

09/21 – 09/25	University of St Andrews	<i>Biology (PhD)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working on the Templeton Foundation-funded project “Quantifying gene-culture coevolution”, supervised by Kevin Lala (St Andrews) and Laura Fortunato (Oxford), in collaboration with Marcus Feldman (Stanford) and Yoav Ram (Tel Aviv)• Visiting student (remote) at the University of Oxford School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography and Stanford University Department of Biology• Passed with only typographical corrections (i.e. minor spelling and formatting errors)	
09/20 – 08/21	University of Oxford	<i>Cognitive & Evolutionary Anthropology (MSc)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade: Distinction<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Dissertation “How do sex ratio biases impact the gene-culture coevolution of human mating and marriage systems? Developing an agent-based modelling approach”, grade 73 (Distinction) and awarded Dr Nicola Knight Prize for best use of quantitative methods	
09/13 – 06/17	University of Edinburgh	<i>Psychology & Economics (MA Hons)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade: First Class Honours (MA)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Dissertation “Ruling through fear, Leading by example: Do explicit power motives predict cooperative behaviour in economic games”, grade 93 (A1)◦ Sole graduate of the inaugural class in the then newly created Psychology & Economics joint degree program	

Research Experience

09/23 – Present	Ioannidis Lab (University of California – Santa Cruz)	<i>Research Affiliate</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with Dr Alex Ioannidis on the population genomics of Oceania, including the settlement of Hawai’i and the genomic impact of colonial-era infectious diseases	
10/21 – Present	Anthrologue Lab (University of Oxford)	<i>Research Affiliate</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with Prof Laura Fortunato on replicability and methodological issues in quantitative cross-cultural analysis	

01/21 – 08/25	Social Behaviour and Ethics Lab (Bremen)	<i>Research Intern</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Dr Nadira Faber to understand the perceived moral implication of risky behaviours using an experimental economics research design 	
08/23 – 10/23	Feldman Lab (Stanford University)	<i>Visiting Scholar</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Prof Marcus W. Feldman on theoretical population genetic models, analytical methods, and empirical genomic methods to investigate gene-culture coevolution 	
02/19 – 09/20	7th Sense Research UK	<i>Senior Research Executive</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed method researcher (qualitative and quantitative techniques) at a boutique market research and brand consultancy firm in London, UK • Designed and scripted multiple online-questionnaires and surveys using XML and Python • As a senior research executive, engaged in organising and overseeing research projects, liaising directly with key client-side stakeholders, and leading regular updates as well as final presentations 	
09/14 – 06/17	University of Edinburgh	<i>Research Assistant</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteered to work directly under Dr. Adam Moore in the Edinburgh University Human Decision-Making Lab • Personally administered experiments on moral cognition in the on-campus lab • Designed and executed my own research on moral judgment and behavior under resource inequality, and helped develop hypotheses for future research 	

Professional & Volunteer Experience

02/25 – 09/25	Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies	<i>Seminar Series Organiser</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As founding member of the St Andrews Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies, served as member of the interdisciplinary seminar series organising committee • Helped design a regular seminar schedule, combining different seminar formats and speakers from across as well as outwith the university 	
10/21 – 10/24	ReproducibiliTea	<i>Local Organiser</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded and organised the St Andrews chapter of ReproducibiliTea, an open science-focused journal club with members across 135 institutions and 26 different countries • Led regular meetings, engaged with scientific stakeholders across the university, and liaised with sister organisations across the UK and abroad 	

09/22 – 09/24	BioNet - Biology Graduate Student Society	<i>President</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated academic and professional development programming over 50 graduate students, organising monthly seminars, helping run an annual research conference, and delivering grant-writing workshops while managing a small annual budget and securing departmental/external sponsorships • Served as one of the primary liaisons between grad students and the Biology department, representing student interests in departmental committees, and successfully advocating for improved graduate workspace facilities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic 	
01/21 – 09/21	Magdalen College MCR	<i>Treasurer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed around £30,000 in available funds for the running of the Magdalen MCR • Engaged in day-to-day financial managing tasks including running the MCR ledger and accounts, overseeing financial operations of the MCR bar, processing expenses, and reporting financial status at MCR committee meetings as well as back to college and the home bursar • Ran a small "social grants" scheme during COVID 	
09/18 – 01/19	Newton Europe, London	<i>Management Consultant</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked on various projects, including optimising train timings to maximize franchise revenue at a public transport contractor and increasing production line efficiency at a major UK food manufacturer • Involved in client-site engagements which led to close collaboration with senior-level and C-suite executive stakeholders 	
05/15 – 06/17	FreshSight Ltd.	<i>Director</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversaw and governed the long-term development of FreshSight as a social enterprise • Grew the company as an educational hub for student social entrepreneurs and as an innovative consultancy service for charities and third sector organizations • Worked to secure external funding to cover running costs, organised regular committee meetings with the management team as well an external advisory board, and chaired the AGM for the duration of my tenure 	

Teaching Experience

01/22 – 07/25	University of Oxford	<i>Tutor & Guest Lecturer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor for "Evolution of Human Behaviour" course (Oxbridge-style small group teaching) • Guest Lecturer in Archaeology (lectured on niche construction and gene-culture coevolution) • Guest Lecturer in Human Sciences (delivered three lectures on the evolution of human behaviour) 	

01/22 – 09/25	University of St Andrews	<i>Graduate Teaching Assistant</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Assistant for “Applied Molecular Biology”, “Ecosystems & Conservation” and “Introduction to Biology” 	
08/17 – 07/18	High School Attached to Zhejiang University, China	<i>Teacher</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed and taught a German curriculum at A1/A2 proficiency for classes of 30+ students 	

Technical & Computational Skills

- **Programming:** R (advanced)
- **Shell/Unix:** Bash scripting, AWK, High-performance computing environments
- **Data Analysis:** Statistical modeling, Machine learning (limited)
- **Research Tools:** Git, LaTeX, SPSS
- **Bioinformatics (data processing):** e.g. PLINK, VCFtools, BCFtools, SAMtools, BEAGLE
- **Bioinformatics (population genetic methods):** e.g. STRUCTURE, ADMIXTURE, TreeMix, RELATE, EEMS, MAPS, Gnomix (local ancestry inference)
- **Bioinformatics (selection inference):** e.g. ANGSD package, SELSCAN package, Ohana, Adapt-Mix, LFMM, (p)RDA

Awards & Scholarships

- NRF-funded scholarship to attend Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute at the University of St Andrews, UK (2023)
- NRF-funded scholarship to attend HRAF Summer Institute for Cross-Cultural Research at Yale University, New Haven, CT (2022)
- Best Student Presentation Prize at St Andrews University Graduate Biology Conference (2022)
- Dr Nicola Knight Prize in Quantitative Methods, awarded for the best use of quantitative methods in an MSc dissertation within the University of Oxford School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography (2022)
- Templeton Foundation-funded studentship for a PhD in Biology at the University of St Andrews (2021)
- British Psychological Society (BPS) Scottish Branch Award, awarded for the best undergraduate thesis presentation at the Scottish BPS Student Conference (2017)
- Saltire Scholarship, awarded by Entrepreneurial Scotland to fully fund a 3 month internship in Boston, USA (2016)
- Alexander Darling Prize, awarded by the University of Edinburgh Business School for the best performance in the Business Studies 1 course (2014)

Professional Memberships

- Student Fellow at the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) (2025)

- Associate Member at the Royal Society of Biology (RSB) (2025)
- Member of the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association (EHBEA) (2025)
- Member of the Cultural Evolution Society (CES) (2025)

Conference Attendance & Workshops

- Inaugural fellow, St Andrews Graduate School for Interdisciplinary Studies (2025)
- Selected participant, “Standing up for Science” science communication workshop (2024)
- Research Fellow, Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute (2023)
- Selected participant, Phylogenetic Comparative Methods Workshop at UMass Boston (2023)
- Participant, Annual Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology (2022)
- Participant, Adaptation Genomics workshop, through Physalia Courses (2022)
- Participant, European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference (2022)
- Selected participant, HRAF Summer Institute for Cross-Cultural Research (2022)
- Selected participant, Oxford — Berlin Summer School on Open Research (2021)
- Volunteer organiser, Human Behavior and Evolution Conference (2021)
- Participant, European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference (2021)
- Participant, Genspace NYC “Models of Cultural Transmission in Human Populations” workshop (2021)
- Speaker, British Psychological Society Scottish Student Conference (2017)

Conference Talks & Invited Presentations

- Kasser, S.M. (2024). “How to stop beating a dead cow: Gene-culture coevolution revisited.” Cultural Evolution Society Conference, Durham, UK.
- Kasser, S.M. (2024). “Of Rice and Men: A landscape genomics approach to understanding the role of dietary variation in adaptive human evolution.” 57th Population Genetics Group Meeting, St Andrews, UK.
- Kasser, S.M. (2023). “How to stop beating a dead cow: Reconceptualising an empirical science of gene-culture coevolution.” Invited talk, Social Complexity Seminar Series, Institute of Human Origins, School of Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University, Tempe, US.
- Kasser, S.M. (2023). “Gene-culture coevolution in the Pacific.” Diverse Intelligences Summit, University of St Andrews, UK.
- Kasser, S.M. (2023). “Gene-culture coevolution in the Pacific.” European Meeting for PhD Students in Evolutionary Biology, Millport, UK.
- Kasser, S.M. (2022). “Unravelling gene-culture coevolution in the Pacific.” Cultural Evolution Society Conference, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Manuscripts & Publications

- Kasser, S.M., Lala, K.N., Fortunato, L., & Feldman, M.W. (2025). "Not by selection alone: expanding the scope of gene-culture coevolution." *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News, and Reviews*, 34: e70007.
- Penjueli, M.A.*, Blanco-Portillo, J.*, Kasser, S.M.*, Sacco, S.*, Huang, E.C., Liu, F., Garcia, O.A., Sokol, J., Shanks, C., Taparra, K., Medina-Munoz, S.G., Chiang, C.G., Kirch, P.V., Moreno-Estrada, A., Gignoux, C., Wojcik, G., Feldman, M.W., Jha, A.R., Fox, K., & Ioannidis, A. (in preparation). "The Peopling of Hawai'i from Polynesia." *These authors contributed equally to this work.
- Kasser, S.M. (2021). "How do sex ratio biases impact the gene-culture coevolution of human mating and marriage systems? Developing an agent-based modelling approach." MSc thesis, University of Oxford, UK.
- Kasser, S.M. (2017). "Ruling by fear, Leading by example: Do explicit power motives predict cooperative behaviour in economic games." Undergraduate dissertation, University of Edinburgh, UK.

Referees

Prof Kevin N. Lala (Supervisor)

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