



**Gary Hussey: Editor  
Post Doctoral Fellow**

Welcome to the first edition of Socio Spotlight, the School of Sociology's new magazine! In Socio Spotlight we detail some of the recent achievements of some of our school members, including staff, graduate, and post-doctoral researchers. In here we highlight some of our school's recent books, articles, grants, projects, as well as other news. Our ambitions for this new magazine, however, is not limited to merely listing some of the school's most recent outputs. But rather, our aim is to provide a space for us to get better acquainted with each other's work and interests. Of course, this first edition is in no way exhaustive in its showcasing of the recent activity at our school, and a lot more will be included in the next issue.

This first issue makes abundantly clear the depth and breadth of expertise in our school. Publications by UCD Sociology's team deepen our understanding of violence, discrimination, xenophobia, policing, and polarisation. Research conducted in our school also brings into relief the ongoing challenges faced by disadvantaged communities in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Questions of gender and sexuality are also grappled with in recent outputs by members of our school, both staff and post-graduate researchers.

The numerous co-authored articles and reports evidence a spirit of collaboration and show that our school is deeply enmeshed within international research networks. Taken together all these publications and research projects demonstrate a vibrant research community at UCD's School of Sociology - a community that is actively engaged with some of the most urgent contemporary challenges.



welcome





## Lea David

### Director of Research, Impact & Innovation

Hello everyone and welcome to our first edition of Socio Spotlight (Deirdre, our School Manager, has an amazing story to tell on how we ended up with this title!), that aims at making our research more accessible to our faculty members but also to our students, and the wider community. The general idea is to have this magazine twice a year, fingers crossed 😊.

This first edition is just a pilot – we are still like geese in the fog, not really sure what to do with it, what should be in it or where it will go. Yet, none of this would be possible without Gary Hussey, our postdoc, who happily (I hope) took this giant project on his shoulders! So thank you Gary, this is amazing, and though still far from perfect, it is our first born and we love it as it is!

Our next edition will look different, with more personal angles. We ask you to share the vignettes from your fieldwork, anecdotes from your classroom, your successes both big and small, what happens when you simply cannot write a word, how your research ideas are born, or anything else happening during the research and teaching process – on stage and back stage. Articles, books and grants look sterile on our CVs but all that is always entwined in real life stories that push the curiosity further and fuel the cutting edge sociological research in our School, and yet, we are too busy, distracted and oblivious to appreciate how fabulous our School is!

Let's celebrate our sweat, hard work, anxiety, hyper productivity and stillness, work and rest, joy and disappointment, and all the shades of lucidity that we embrace along the way!



# CRIME AND CONFLICT

Studies in Irish Crime History

## Crime and Conflict in Northern Ireland, 1920–2022

In his research Aogán, an Associate Professor at UCD Sociology, explores questions of social order and social control. Bridging areas of sociology and criminology, he is especially interested in various aspects of policing, such as how policing adapts to as well as shapes changing social environments, policing scandals, questions of legitimacy and community, and so on. Some of these questions are skilfully taken up in his new book *Crime and Conflict in Northern Ireland, 1920–1922*, a fascinating study of the dynamics of crime in Northern Ireland, from the formation of the state until the present. While ‘the Troubles’ have been the subject of enormous scholarly attention, in this work Aogán focuses on a little studied aspect – the relationship between conflict and crime. The book takes on appears to be something of a paradox. While Northern Ireland has become synonymous with violence and conflict, its crime rates have been largely low and stable. *Crime and Conflict in Northern Ireland* examines how the conflict impacted crime and the criminal justice system. Aogán also details the complex ways in which conflict and communal divisions shaped as well as suppressed and sometimes enabled crime.



Studies in Irish Crime History

1920–2022

Crime and Conflict in Northern Ireland,

Aogán Mulcahy

NEW BOOK



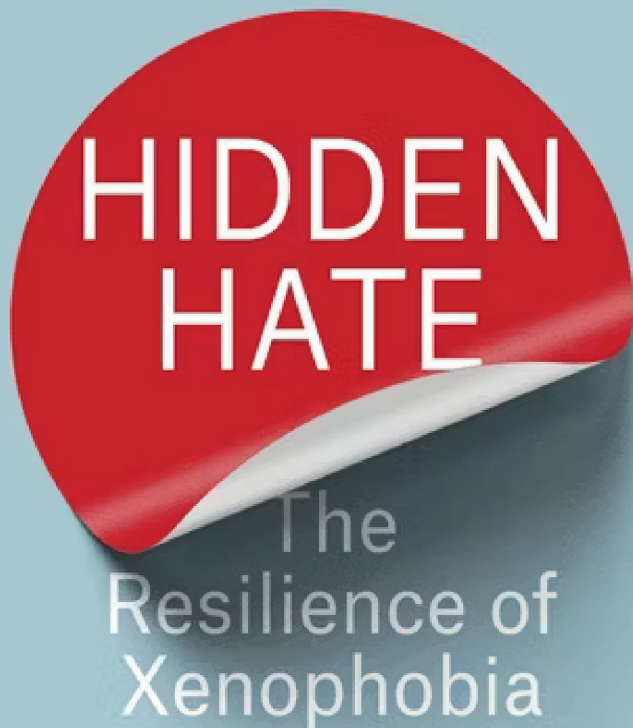
# Aogán Mulcahy

The book is published as part of the Cork University Press series Studies in Irish Crime History and is available now [here](#)





## Mathew Creighton



**MATHEW CREIGHTON**

Matthew is the principal investigator on a major Horizon Europe funded project, **Equal Strength**. The project brings together a consortium of ten European research institutions. Equal Strength studies forms of structural and cumulative discrimination, prejudice, and hate crimes against religious and ethnic minorities. Details [here](#)

**Mathew Creighton**, an Associate Professor at our school, has just published a critical and timely – indeed urgent - intervention on xenophobia and its remarkable durability. This work, *Hidden Hate: The resilience of xenophobia* published by Columbia University Press, is a major contribution to our understanding of prejudice in ostensibly tolerant societies. In *Hidden Hate*, Mathew calls into question some of the major explanatory tropes relied upon to account for the persistence and potency of xenophobia against immigrants. Factors such as economic instability, antagonistic identities, and so on, are all found wanting in explaining the phenomenon of contemporary xenophobia. This is especially the case in comparatively well-off societies where unemployment remains relatively low.

Mathew sheds a light on the hidden reservoir of xenophobic beliefs and attitudes that lurk just below the surface in our societies. While these beliefs may remain durable, they are not always discursively permissible. This, however, can change. We have, unfortunately, witnessed this shift in such norms across multiple contexts in recent years. The politicians and other social actors, who say the ‘quiet part out loud’, shift the parameters of public and political discourse, changing what is what is both doable and sayable. What changes in not so much the extent of xenophobic attitudes, but their legitimization. The analysis *Hidden Hate* presents of xenophobia is decidedly challenging. But its interrogation that is of increasing relevance in the Irish context where there have been several attacks on asylum centres and prospective homeless accommodation. In our crises ridden conjuncture, where migrants and minorities are scapegoated, onto which many contemporary anxieties are projected, *Hidden Hate* is essential reading.

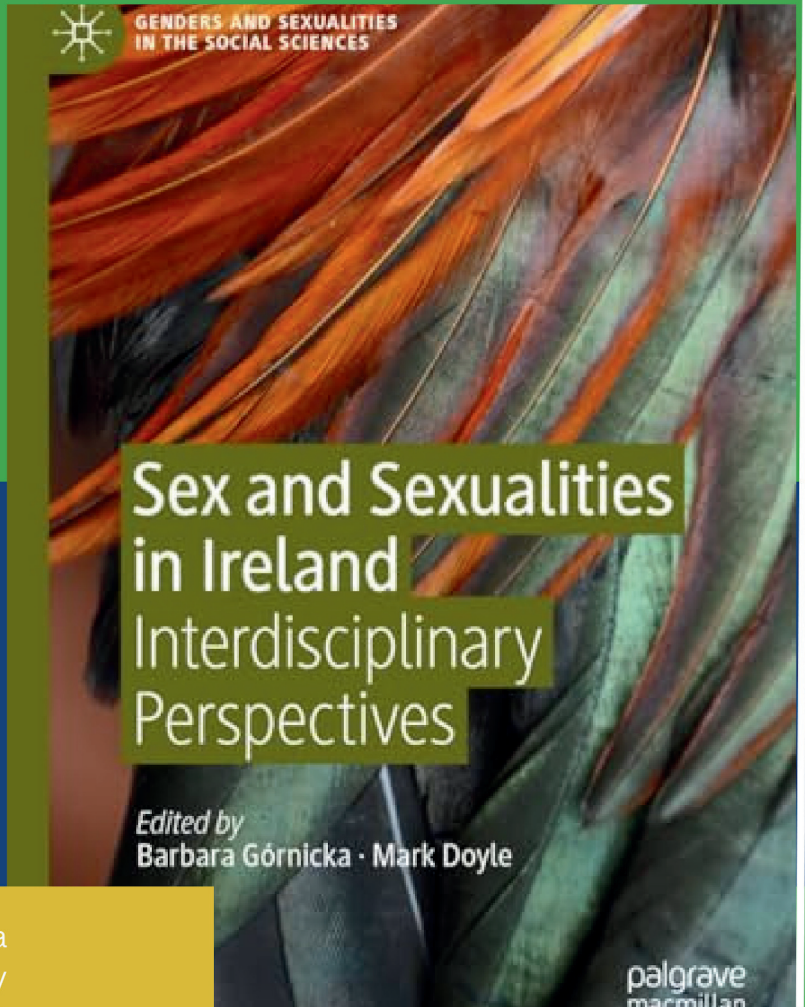
*Hidden Hate* is published by Columbia University Press and is available now:  
<https://cup.columbia.edu/book/hidden-hate/9780231203173>



## Barbara Górnicka

We congratulate UCD Sociology's Barbara Górnicka, Assistant Professor, on her newly published edited volume *Sex and Sexualities in Ireland: Interdisciplinary perspectives*, co-edited with Mark Doyle (SETU, Waterford). The book brings together a range of scholars across various disciplines, shedding light on the multiple aspects of sexuality in Ireland. A key strength of the volume is that it does not simply detail a straightforward narrative of sexual liberation and progress, but rather situates Irish sexualities in their various historical contexts and the structural changes that have transformed sexual expression.

The seventeen chapters explore a range of contexts, issues, and challenges including, but not limited to, health practices and sex, sexuality and minorities, male migrant online sex work in Ireland and so on. *Sex and Sexualities in Ireland* is a nuanced and essential collection for those who seek to grapple with sexuality in Ireland in all its complexities.



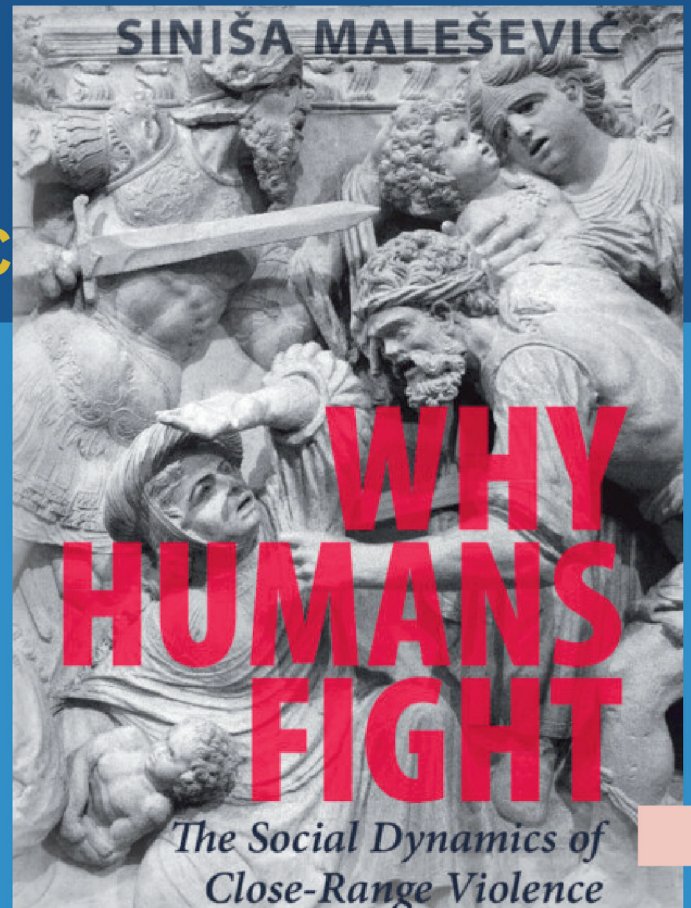
In a recently published chapter Barbara and her colleagues also explored issues around social media use related to a major rape trial in Northern Ireland. This chapter, 'Social media and political participation: Making sense of Digital Feminist Twitter Artifacts in the aftermath of a Belfast Rape Trial and #IBelieveHer' is part of the *Handbook of Social Media in Education, Consumer Behavior and Politics, Volume 1: Social Media and Systems Behaviour*, published by Elsevier. Find link [here](#)

NEW BOOK

# WHY HUMANS FIGHT



SINIŠA  
MALEŠEVIĆ



Our school was proud to see the publication of Prof. Sinisa Malešević's recent book, *Why Humans Fight: The social dynamics of close-range violence*. This highly ambitious work is the latest in Sinisa's long-standing sociological interrogation of our relationship to violence. As such, the book sits comfortably alongside two of his major texts *The Rise of Organised Brutality* and *The Sociology of War and Violence*. In *Why Human's Fight*, Sinisa eschews reliance on hackneyed deferrals to man's proclivity towards violence, and instead focuses on the ideological and organisational contexts that make violence possible. In a critical tour de force, *Why Humans Fight* tackles some of the major explanatory approaches around individual violence, before developing its own more sociological analysis.

In the past year Sinisa gave number of invited talks, including the keynote speech at the Sociological Association of Ukraine's annual conference, in Kyiv (via Zoom). The title of his paper was 'Historical Sociology and the War in Ukraine'. In November, Sinisa presented at the Norwegian Defence University College in Oslo. His paper was on the sociological legacies of the Crimean War.

## Links:

[Why Humans Fight: The social dynamics of close-range violence \(Cambridge University Press\)](#)



# VIOLENT AFFECTIONS



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ALEXANDER SASHA KONDAKOV

VIOLENT  
AFFECTIONS

QUEER SEXUALITY, TECHNIQUES OF  
POWER, AND LAW IN RUSSIA

UCLPRESS

Alexander  
Kondakov



NEW BOOK

Assistant Professor and Ad Astra Fellow, Alexander Kondakov's recent book, *Violent Affections: Queer Sexualities, Techniques of Power, and Law in Russia* is a major and timely intervention which brings together developments in contemporary queer theory and affect theory. Published in September 2022 with UCL Press, *Queer Sexualities* is a theoretically and methodically innovative, as well as empirically robust, interrogation of the imbrications and dynamics of emotions and power which undergird anti-queer violence in Russia. The book mobilises a substantial empirical corpus made up of over 300 cases of violence against the LGBT community. These instances of violence examined in *Queer Sexualities* take place both before and after the passing of the controversial 'Gay Propaganda Law'.

## Links:

***Violent Affections: Queer Sexualities, Techniques of Power, and Law in Russia* is an Open Access publication, and is available as a Free Download at UCL's website. Find the link here: <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/192307>**

For Alexander, the case of Russia provides an aperture through which he renders intelligible the shift in late-modernity's configurations of power as captured by Foucault's Panopticon, to our contemporary more 'neo-disciplinary' relations of power which are characterised as being decidedly more fluid and fragmentary. We have moved from the Panopticon to the 'Memeticon'. As *Queer Sexualities* develops, Alexander details how violent affections circulate, not only through the body, but from body to body.



# LEA DAVID



LEA DAVID

## THE PAST CAN'T HEAL US

The Dangers of Mandating Memory  
in the Name of Human Rights

In her research [Lea David](#), Assistant Professor and Ad Astra Fellow, continues to interrogate the relationships between human rights, memory, and politics - some of the core questions which animated her provocative and brilliant study published in 2020, *The Past Can't Heal Us: The dangers of mandating memory in the name of human rights*. Lea has recently published in the Palgrave Encyclopaedia of Memory Studies, an essential resource for those working within memory studies and related disciplines. Her entry is concerned with the concept 'Moral Remembrance.' The challenges posed by moral remembrance features throughout Lea's work including her chapter 'National memory, moral remembrance, and populism' in the forthcoming edited volume published by Cambridge, *Claiming the People's Past: Populist Politics of History in the Twenty-First Century*.

Lea has given a number of invited talks on these pressing questions of the place of memory and human rights including at the launch of the Serbian edition of her book at the Fund for Humanitarian Law, Belgrade, Serbia, as well as the ASEN Zadar Summer School of Nationalism in Croatia.

In another recent article, Lea mobilises what she terms as 'desire objects' – that is, objects which are found at sites of atrocity and belong to victims. Through this concept, Lea explores and traces how human-object relations can shape political action.

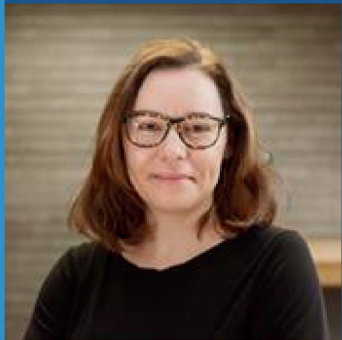
*A shoe, a watch, a broken watch, and marbles'*  
Vol. 9 No. 2 (2022): S:I.M.O.N. – SHOAH: INTERVENTION.  
METHODS. DOCUMENTATION.  
[https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0222/swl\\_ldav01](https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0222/swl_ldav01)



# Emeka Dumbili

Emeka Dumbili, Assistant Professor and Ad Astra fellow at our school, was guest editor along with Ediomu-Ubong Nelson, of a special issue of *Drugs, Habits and Social Policy* titled 'Frictions in Drug control: prescription opioids, prohibition and consumption cultures in Africa'. The special issue explores the patterns and drivers of opioid consumption in Africa, as well as the challenges and failures of control of non-prescribed opioid use, and unmet health care needs. Link to the special issue [here](#)

Emeka also recently published articles on aspects of alcohol consumption in African countries. In one such article, published in the *British Sociological Association journal*, Emeka explores drinking games and other transgressive drinking patterns amongst Nigeria's youth. Link [here](#).



# Marta Eichsteller

Marta, Assistant Professor and Ad Astra fellow, is one of the authors of a major report on the Covid-19 pandemic and chronic poverty. The *Chronic Poverty Report 2023: Pandemic Poverty* is published by the Chronic Poverty Action Network (CPAN). CPAN is a network of researchers, policy makers, and other actors, aimed at tackling chronic poverty and getting to zero extreme poverty.

The report examined some of the negative effects of Covid-19 restrictions on those in or near poverty. Such restrictive measures, when and where they are adopted, need to be complemented by sufficient mitigation efforts to minimise their negative effects on vulnerable populations. Link to the CPAN report [here](#)

Marta has contributed to Methodspace - an online community for social and behavioural research methods.

Find a link to her Methodspace article on doing biographical research [here](#)

And a link to a video recording of her Methodspace discussion [here](#)



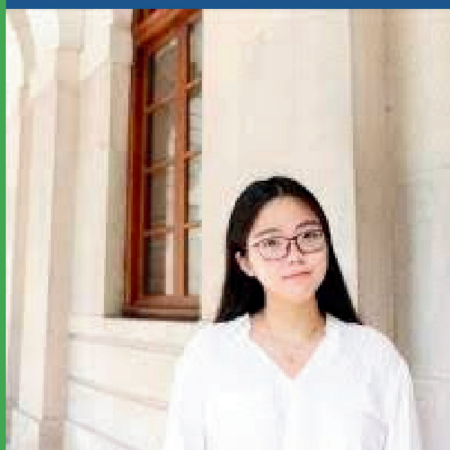


## Egle Gusciute

Egle, Assistant Professor, in her current research is bringing much needed light to aspects of the Irish housing market. The current housing crisis, as Egle's research finds, is regularly more acutely felt by minorities. Her field experiment in Dublin yielded evidence of discrimination against ethnic minorities in the rental housing market. There is also evidence of ethnic hierarchy, as both Polish migrants are discriminated against in comparison to Irish nationals, but to a lesser extent than Nigerian nationals. Egle has published these findings in a recent article in the Journal of Ethnic and Migration studies. Egle is further developing this research and is working on new field experiments focussing on discrimination towards Ukrainian refugees.

Egle received funding from the CoSSL Research Funding Scheme to carry out a project entitled 'Sustainable Agriculture and Gender Equality (SAGE): Women's Role in Ireland'. This project explores barriers to female farmers in adapting to sustainable agriculture.

The link to the article [here](#).



## Yuliang Lu

Yuliang is a PhD candidate at the School of Sociology. She has recently published an article in the Journal of Family Violence, bringing into focus the multiple forms of domestic violence experienced by LGBT+ people in China. This is an important contribution, as domestic violence in LGBT+ relationships have not been the subject of significant scholarly attention. This qualitative study makes use of the court ruling on domestic violence and employs content and discourse analysis in its interrogation of this empirical content. The article looks at fifty-three cases of family violence, forty of which are perpetrated by LGBT+ intimate partners. Yuliang further breaks down these cases into various categories, including break-up violence, sexual violence, and violence experienced in every day life. As Yuliang argues, these cases underline the urgent need for greater legal support, the overcoming of stigma, and a wider acknowledgement of LGBT+ experiences within the judicial system.

Yuliang's article is available open access [here](#).



# SARA O'SULLIVAN

Associate Professor Sara O'Sullivan's main areas of research are gender, the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), sociology of higher education and sociology of the media. A hybrid scholar, Sara's work is informed by scholarship from the discipline, and teaching and learning research; a combination she describes as working well to help understand the complexity, diversity and changing nature of higher education systems and student experiences. Sara also teaches qualitative research methods to graduate students and has a particular interest in the process of analysing qualitative data.

Sara is currently researching Gender Pay Reporting in Ireland. In December 2022 organisations in Ireland with more than 250 employees were required to publish a report on their gender pay gap, either on their website or in some other public forum. This research will analyse these reports. (HS-LR-23-03-OSullivan).



Sara presenting 'Exploring the Gender Pay Gap in Ireland: An Analysis of 2022 Company Reports' at the 50th Annual Sociological Association of Ireland Conference, UCD in June 2023

Sara also features in the aforementioned edited volume, Sex and Sexualities in Ireland. Her chapter, 'No woman should have to travel for the healthcare they deserve. #repealthe8th', explores the constitutional ban on abortion in Ireland and the feminist mobilisations against it. Her analysis then charts some of the changes of how abortion and reproductive health issues were discussed in the public sphere by mapping the use of #repealthe8th on Twitter (now X).

Sara was proud to collaborate with one of her students, Carmel Maria Moore, who took Sara's master course on qualitative methods. The article published in Acta Paediatr explores understandings and experiences of parents around blood component transfusion in neonatal care. Article [here](#)

Sara recently completed a Digital Badge in Universal Design and Learning. This digital badge was created by AHEAD and UCD as part of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.



The badge is certificate of recognition for the skills acquired through the UDL course. UDL is aimed at reducing the barriers to education and learning. In a strong endorsement, Sara says that the opportunity to implement UDL approaches within her modules was extremely useful.





## Mary Collins

Mary Collins is our Undergraduate Administrator, having joined the School of Sociology in 2021. Before this she worked as a project officer in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion department in UCD. Having originally completed a degree in neuroscience, Mary completed a postgraduate in Psychology, focusing on the experiences of students transitioning from further education to higher education. Most recently she completed a postgraduate diploma in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and was selected from dozens of applicants to participate in the pilot roll out of the Digital Badge for Universal Design Beyond the classroom. As part of this, she is responsible for developing and implementing the strategic rollout of Universal Design for Learning in the School of Sociology.



## Sarah Carol

Funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations scheme, Sarah, an Assistant Professor, conducted research on how the Covid-19 pandemic variously impacted Palestinian refugees, Bedouins, as well as majority group members in the West Bank. As it is by now increasingly clear, the Covid-19 pandemic had a disproportionate effect on vulnerable minorities who are more often in a disadvantaged socio-economic position. Palestine experienced very high levels of Covid. Populations in Palestine are already subject to cumulative disadvantages owing to conflict and the ongoing occupation. As we move into a post-pandemic period, the focus of this project was on the ways Covid-19 effected individuals' well-being in Palestine.

In an article published in Frontiers of Public Health Sarah and Ahmad Amro paint a nuanced and complex picture of attitudes around the prioritisation of Covid-19 booster vaccines in the West Bank. The study is concerned with in-group preferences. The aim of the study was to bring into relief the extent Bedouins, internally displaced Palestinians, and majority-group members, in the West-Bank prioritise booster shots for their own group over others. Link [here](#)

# VIOLENCE, SPACE, AND POLITICS



**Gary Hussey**

In September we welcomed Gary to our school as an Irish Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellow. His work is largely concerned with developing what is termed a 'post-foundational' analysis of the relationships between space and violence. As such, his work is located within emerging debates taking place in contemporary social and spatial thought. His time at UCD will be spent writing a monograph, provisionally titled *Spatial Antagonism: A post-foundational analysis of violence, space and the political in the north of Ireland, c. 1868-1975*. Gary's work while theoretical is also very much empirical, making extensive use of historical archival material and other sources.

Find links to Gary's recent publications in *Critical Discourse Studies* [here](#) and *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* [here](#)

## Higher education and engagement

**Daniel Guigui**, a PhD candidate at the School of Sociology, recently published article in *Higher Education* which will be of interest to those working within the Sociology of Education as well as those concerned with longitudinal and cohort studies. Conducted with colleagues in Trinity College, and the ERSI, the study looks at the factors that predict the engagement of post-graduate research students in Ireland. Shedding light on these various aspects of student engagement is crucial in ensuring the progression and future success of post-graduate researchers. Some of these relevant factors include students' relationship with their supervisors and their engagement with their departments. Based on this study, the authors argue at HEIs must adopt practices that acknowledge and address the various and sometimes different needs of domestic and international post-graduate researchers. Link to article [here](#)



**Daniel Guigui**

Daniel's thesis project is titled: **'Shared Spaces, Shared Stories: Situating the Practice of Home-Sharing in Autobiographical Narratives of Dublin- and Munich-based Hosts of Ukrainians'**



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 15th Feb 2024 @1pm Room D422

Sociology  
Seminar  
Series

Dingxin Zhao is director of the Center for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, and chair of the Department of Sociology, Zhejiang University. He is also Max Palevsky Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Chicago. His research covers historical sociology, political sociology, social movements, social change and economic development. His interests also extend to sociological theory and methodology. Zhao has publications in journals such as American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, American Behavioral Scientist, Social Forces, Mobilization, and Sociology. He is the author of awards-winning books *The Power of Tiananmen* (2001) and *The Confucian-Legalist State* (2015) in English, and several other books in Chinese. His current research project is on the epistemological and ontological aspects of social science methodologies.

Dr. Dingxin Zhao

Changing Patterns of Social  
Protest in Post-Mao China

This talk argues that collective actions in post-Mao China have developed in three overlapping phases. The first phase, between 1976 and 1989, is characterized by the large-scale state-centered protests. The second lasts roughly between 1992 and 2002. Protests of this period tend to be small-to-medium in size, local and economic-oriented. The third phase started around 2002 and lasts until 2012. In this period, protesters gain significant rights consciousness, protests are increasingly proactive and grow a populist tendency, and some protests (particular the on-line protests) have experienced a tendency of repoliticalization. This talk provides an interpretation of this pattern and speculates about the future development of collective actions in



UCD School of Sociology  
Scoil na Socheolaíochta UCD

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 15th Feb 2024 @1pm Room D422

Sociology  
Seminar  
Series

## Dr. Yanfei Sun Popular Religion in Post-Mao China

Yanfei Sun is currently associate professor of sociology at Zhejiang University. She graduated from University of Chicago with a PhD in sociology in 2010. She was a Mellon Research Fellow of Columbia University Society of Fellows (2010-2013), a visiting associate professor at Harvard University, and a lecturer at the University of Chicago. Her research mainly concerns the intersection between religion and politics, particularly religious changes, religious toleration, secularism, and religious nationalism. From September 2023 to July 2024, she is a fellow at the Berlin Institute for Advanced Study (Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin).

This talk will examine the situation of popular religion in post-Mao China, by focusing on a major form of popular religion, the territorial cult. The post-Mao revitalization of the territorial cult is not simply the resurrection of tradition after a hiatus of suppression. Rather, the religion has assumed a changed character in the process of its resurgence. This talk will analyze the pattern of these changes and the structural forces behind. It will also explore the effect that the Chinese government's promotion of traditional Chinese culture in the last decade has on the territorial cult.

School Seminar



UCD School of Sociology  
Scoil na Socheolaíochta UCD

# SOCIO SPOTLIGHT: Illuminating UCD Sociology's Research Landscape

*Over to you:*

*Feedback welcome!*

*Any suggestions plus items to  
be included in our next issue*

*can be sent to  
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Seán L'Estrange, Faculty



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