FROM THE EDITOR

A note on this year’s COVID-19 and BLM special issue.

This 2019/2020 edition of the Student Anthropologist has taken on new dimensions that mirror the changing circumstances of the world at large. I found it necessary to reevaluate our typical journal structures as the priorities and responsibilities of many of our editorial team members and authors (like those of most people) shifted over the last year. Instead of focusing on full-length research articles, I made the decision to expand our commentary section and give students a platform to address the global ramifications of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movements. Students educated in all four subfields replied to my call for papers and I included ten of their meditations on the disturbances and innovations rippling through social, material, and economic life. With these new commentaries, the total number of pieces in the 2019/2020 edition reached twenty-one. The full set of original research articles, think pieces, photo commentaries, and book reviews offers a nuanced glimpse at the issues piquing the curiosity of young scholars today, in particular our discipline’s relationship to activism—from movements for racial equity (Symes; Nguyen; Haeberle) to calls for freedom of gendered and sexual expression (Carlos; Iafrate), work towards climate justice ( Boughton; Rasiulis), and advocacy for alternative medical models (Ding, Katzman; Murray; Taaseen; Krapf). Many of our authors interweave these questions with theoretical and methodological concerns as they ruminate on how anthropologists might better serve communities in need while improving traditional structures of knowledge production (Rasiulis; Harkins, Lucas, Strickland; Hirst). These same themes appear in several students’ critical reflections and summaries of books written by advanced scholars (Frempong; Marr; Emma Kalm; Salovaara; Seiler; Hansen).

As the National Association of Student Anthropologists’ flagship, peer-reviewed journal, the Student Anthropologist offers important opportunities for students to apply anthropological thinking to issues (such as those covered here) which affect both academia and broader society. This worthwhile mission requires the help of many individuals. Over the last two years, I have had the pleasure of working with several women who deserve special recognition for their contributions to this publication. Peer Review Editor Deirdre Patterson and Book Review Editor Kira Stalker spurred on the early stages of this edition. Copy Editor Rachael Root provided essential finishing touches to every article and Design Editor Laura Murray (whose photographs were accepted for publication before she became part of our editorial team) pulled together this beautiful PDF. As always, we are indebted to Janine McKenna, director of the AAA Publishing Board, for her advice and her efforts to archive the SA through Wiley.

While reading the pages that follow, I hope new students will find relatable and thought-provoking ideas that inspire them to submit their own work for publication in the 2020/2021 issue.

Bridget Kelly, Editor in Chief
University of Michigan

Below: An image from Nicolas Rasiulis’s photo essay with Dukha reindeer herders.
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Cover image: “Dukha person demonstrating traditional fishing technique, with child on back,” taken by Nicolas Rasiulis.

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