

**MICHELLE L. O'BRIEN**  
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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Armed Conflict, Demography, Quantitative Methodology

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## EDUCATION

### 2018 – Ph.D., Sociology

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- Dissertation: “*The Long Shadow: The Long-Term Consequences of Armed Conflict for Population Change in Tajikistan*”  
Chair: Steve Pfaff

### 2014 – M.A., Sociology

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- Thesis: “*Migration as an Adaptive Response to Nationalism in Russia*”  
Winner - 2015 Outstanding Performance for the Master of Arts Degree

### 2007 – B.A., Sociology

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

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## PUBLICATIONS

**O'Brien, Michelle L.** 2018. “Migration as an Adaptive Response to Ethnic Nationalism in Russia.” *Migration Studies*. 6(2): 187-204.

Groeneveld, Jürgen, Anna Klabunde, **Michelle L. O'Brien**, and André Grow. 2016. “How to Describe Agent-Based Models in Population Studies?” Pp. 237-54 in *Agent-Based Modelling in Population Studies*, vol. 41, *The Springer Series on Demographic Methods and Population Analysis*, edited by A. Grow and J. Van Bavel. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Williams, Nathalie E., **Michelle L. O'Brien**, and Xiaozheng Yao. 2016. “Using Survey Data for Agent-Based Modeling: Design and Challenges in a Model of Armed Conflict and Population Change.” Pp. 159-84 in *Agent-Based Modelling in Population Studies*, vol. 41, *The Springer Series on Demographic Methods and Population Analysis*, edited by A. Grow and J. Van Bavel. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS

**O'Brien, Michelle L.** 2016. “Global Asia: Turning Points in Central Asia, 1900-2016.” *The Seattle Times: Newspapers in Education*. November 9.

## WORKING PAPERS

“The Long-Term Consequences of Armed Conflict for Migration: The Case of Tajikistan,” Under review at *European Journal of Population*.

“The long term consequences of armed conflict on migration in Nepal: An Agent-Based Model” with Nathalie Williams

“Armed conflict and fertility transition in sub-saharan Africa” with John Casterline

“Did political unrest help drive emigration from East Germany?” with Steven Pfaff

“Twitter responses after the 2015 Nepal Earthquake” with Adrian Dobra and Nathalie Williams

## PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

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“Geospatial Graphical Models of Human Response to Emergencies” (with Adrian Dobra and Nathalie Williams)

- *Algorithms for Threat Detection workshop*, Co-hosted by the National Science Foundation, National Geographic Information Agency, and American University. September 14-16, 2017.

“Retraditionalization? Marriage and Fertility Timing in Post-Conflict Tajikistan.”

- Session: Population Processes. *American Sociological Association*, August 12-15, 2017.
- *Institute for the Study of Religion, Economics and Society Graduate Student Conference*, Chapman University, June 1-4, 2017.

“Weak Institutions and International Migration after Armed Conflict in Tajikistan.”

- *Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention*, Harriman Institute, Columbia University, May 4-6, 2017.
- *Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, April 27-29, 2017.

“Measuring Anti-Immigrant Sentiment Using Big Data Techniques.”

- *Graduate Trainee Spotlight*, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington, March 10, 2017. *Note: Best Poster Winner.*

“Familiar Adversaries, New Minorities, and the Legacy of the Soviet Union in Central Asia.”

- *Global Asia: Turning Points in Modern Asian History. Newspapers in Education*. Hosted by *The Seattle Times*. October 18, 2016. *Note: Invited Speaker.*
- *Washington State Council for the Social Studies Spring Conference*, March 11-13, 2016.

“Gender, Violence, and Migration in Contemporary Russia.”

- Session: Social Movements, Conflict, and Population Dynamics. *American Sociological Association*, August 20-23, 2016.
- *Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism Conference*, London School of Economics, April 19-21, 2016.
- Session: Migration Dynamics Between Central Asia and Russia. *Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention*, Harriman Institute, Columbia University, April 14-16, 2016.

“Migration as an Adaptive Response to Ethnonationalism in Russia.”

- Session: Ethnic Conflict. *American Sociological Association*, August 22-25, 2015.
- Poster session on Migration and Urbanization. *Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, April 30-May 2, 2015. *Note: Best Poster Winner*
- Session: Migration Policy. *Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention*, Harriman Institute, Columbia University, New York, NY. April 22-25, 2015.

“Understanding Central Asian Migration to Russia.”

- *Migration and Refugees: Peril and Hope*, a Community College Master Teaching Institute hosted by the Ellison Center for Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies at the University of Washington. July 2015. *Note: Invited speaker.*

“Migration and Marriage Timing in Nang Rong, Thailand,” (with Sara R. Curran)

- Session: Migration, Health, and Reproduction. *Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, April 30-May 2, 2015.

“Population Response to Political Conflict in Nang Rong, Thailand.”

- Session: Demographic Trends over Time and Space. *International Graduate Student Conference*, East-West Center, Honolulu, HI, February 12-14, 2015.

“An Agent-Based Model of Armed Conflict and Population Dynamics: Developing Demographic Methods for Survey Based Agent-Based Model Design.” (with Nathalie Williams and Xiaozheng Yao)

- *Recent Developments in Agent-Based Modeling for Population Studies*, KU Leuven, Belgium, September 18-19, 2014.

“Demographic Dividends and Migration Dynamics: Cohort Influence & Migration Momentum in Thailand.” (with Sara R. Curran)

- Session: Internal and International Migration in Developing Countries. *Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, May 1-4, 2014.

“Cohort Influence and Cumulative Causation: Reconsidering Demographic Factors in Explanations of Migration Momentum.” (with Sara R. Curran)

- *Migration Dynamics, Networks and Beyond | THEMIS Conference*, Oxford University, September 24-26, 2013.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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September 2017 – December 2017 – Research Assistant to Dr. Adrian Dobra. Project involves building geolocated databases of conflict and threat events, developing machine learning models, and the geospatial modeling of behavioral responses to emergencies. Funded by the National Science Foundation.

September 2016 – September 2017 – Research Assistant to Dr. Sara Curran. Project involves analysis of Nang Rong project data as well as support to new research initiatives at the Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology. Funded by the National Institute of Health.

September 2013 – September 2015 – Research Assistant to Dr. Nathalie Williams. Project involves simulation research on the effect of conflict events in Nepal’s Civil War on demographic change. Funded by the National Institute of Health.

September 2013 – September 2015 – Research Assistant to Dr. Sara Curran. Project involves statistical analysis of demographic change in Nang Rong, Thailand.

July 2010 – July 2012 – Strategic Researcher at Local 775 of the Service Employees International Union. Duties include corporate research to expand union membership, economic and market analysis, policy analysis and white papers, and domestic travel to support organizing campaigns.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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### *Primary Instructor*

- Summer 2018 – Research Methods in Sociology
- Spring 2018 – War
- Summer 2015 – Research Methods in Sociology

### *Teaching Assistant*

- Winter 2018 – Social Problems
- Spring 2014 – Research Methods in Sociology
- Spring 2013 – Sociological Theory
- Winter 2013 – Sociological Theory
- Autumn 2012 – Introduction to Sociology

### *Guest Lectures*

- “Operationalization of Ambiguous Variables – Coding Nationalism and Ethnic Politics in Russia”
  - Spring 2014 - Research Methods in Sociology
  - Spring 2014 – Comparative International Studies (Graduate)

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

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2018

- Travel Grant, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington (\$500)
- Travel Award, Department of Sociology, University of Washington (\$300)

2017

- Boba Research Fellowship, Ellison Center for Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies, University of Washington (\$2000)
- Best Poster, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Graduate Trainee Spotlight, University of Washington

2016

- Training Fellowship (Renewal), Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington

2015

- Training Fellowship (Primary), Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington
- Award for Outstanding Performance for the Master of Arts Degree, Department of Sociology, University of Washington
- Nomination to the Distinguished Thesis Award, University of Washington
- Best Poster, Migration and Urbanization Session, Population Association of America Annual Meeting
- Travel Grant, East-West Center, Honolulu, HI (\$300)
- Travel Grant, Director’s Fund, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington (\$550)
- Travel Grants, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington (\$500)

2014

- Travel Grant, Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences, University of Washington (\$1,000)

- Travel Grant, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington (\$500)

2013

- Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Russian, University of Washington (\$7,500)
- Travel Grant, Graduate Fund for Excellence and Innovation, University of Washington (\$500)
- Travel Grant, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, University of Washington (\$500)
- Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation Graduate Fellows Research Program

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS**

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### **Service**

2018-present

Member, Board of Directors, Lifting Hands International

2016-2017

Graduate Student Volunteer, International Conference on Social Informatics (SocInfo), eScience Institute at the University of Washington

2015-2016

Facilitator, *Presenting Your Research Effectively*, TA/RA Conference at the University of Washington

Graduate Student Assistant, Annual Meeting of the International Migration Section of the American Sociological Association

2014-2015

Graduate Student Grant Coordinator, Mellon Foundation: *States Markets and Societies*, University of Washington. Principal Investigator: Gary Hamilton

Coordinator, Seminar on Cultural, Organizational, Political, and Economic Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Washington

2013-2014

Coordinator, Graduate Student Research Symposium, Department of Sociology, University of Washington

### **Affiliations**

American Sociological Association

Population Association of America

International Union for the Scientific Study of Population

Association for the Study of Nationalities

Central Eurasian Studies Society

## **INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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### **Extended Travel and Fieldwork**

Tajikistan – 2017

Myanmar – 2016

Nepal – 2015  
Bulgaria – 2010  
Austria – 2007  
Russia – 2006, 2007

### **Language Proficiencies**

English, native  
Russian, advanced

### **TECHNICAL PROFICIENCIES**

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R, Stata, Python, GIS

### **REFERENCES**

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Steven Pfaff  
Professor  
Department of Sociology  
University of Washington  
206-616-9377  
[pfaff@uw.edu](mailto:pfaff@uw.edu)

Stewart Tolnay  
Professor Emeritus  
S. Frank Miyamoto Endowed Professor  
Department of Sociology  
University of Washington  
206-685-2284  
[tolnay@uw.edu](mailto:tolnay@uw.edu)

Nathalie Williams  
Associate Professor  
Department of Sociology  
University of Washington  
206-616-6270  
[natw@uw.edu](mailto:natw@uw.edu)

Sara Curran  
Director, Center for Studies in Demography  
& Ecology  
Associate Professor, International Studies  
University of Washington  
206-459-9236  
[scurran@uw.edu](mailto:scurran@uw.edu)

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