



GORSEBROOK  
RESEARCH  
INSTITUTE



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## OUR MISSION

[RESEARCH ON AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF ATLANTIC CANADA](#)

Established in 1982, the Gorsebrook Research Institute for Atlantic Canada Studies at Saint Mary's University is the regional hub for research and collaborative scholarship on Atlantic Canada. Our Atlantic Canada recognizes First Nation communities and their land sovereignty, the ethnic and cultural diversity of those who were settled as part of forced immigration and colonization, and those who are here by their own choice and agency. Our focus on interdisciplinarity facilitates the intellectual exchanges needed to advance understandings of Atlantic Canada.

# WELCOME

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The past year has been significant in our 39-year history. The move to remote operations for SMU created some challenges, but we figured out how to navigate the new reality and used the time to revamp some of our activities.

We completed the reinvigoration of our Board of Directors and welcomed 8 new board members: Sara Beanlands, Afua Cooper, Rosalie Francis, Gregory Kennedy, Sylvia Parris-Drummond, Michael Petrou, Raymond Sewell, and Danika van Proosdij.

We developed an exciting new suite of funding opportunities (outlined below) to support research and community engagement, and we redesigned the workspaces so that our visiting researchers have the space needed for intellectual exchange and the building of new research relationships. This process was supported by Mathias Rodorff, the GRI's new research and activities manager. An invaluable addition to our team, Mathias took over from Jackie Logan when she retired in 2019. As manager of the GRI from 2001 until 2019, Jackie was instrumental to the success of the GRI. We send her our heartfelt thanks for everything she did for us over many years.

Since assuming the role of chair, it has been my pleasure to be part of such an inspiring and collaborative board. Our deep commitment to facilitating interdisciplinary research is enabling us to make significant contributions to Saint Mary's mission of building stronger relationships with the communities that make up Atlantic Canada. We promise exciting things to come!

Best wishes,

S. Karly Kehoe

Canada Research Chair in Atlantic Canada Communities





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# RESEARCH AT THE GRI



## DR. JOANNE COLLINS-GONSALVES

E-Mail: [joanne.collins-gonsalves@smu.ca](mailto:joanne.collins-gonsalves@smu.ca)

### Research Project

Atlantic Caribbean history, the Catholic Church and Portuguese in Guyana, and the wider Caribbean from 1835.

Dr. Collins-Gonsalves' current research is focused on Guyana (formerly British Guiana) and the wider Caribbean with special reference to the Portuguese immigrants in the post-emancipation period. From 1835, a large influx of Portuguese, primarily from Madeira arrived in Guyana to work on the sugar plantations. She is currently working on two papers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries connected to this community and the Catholic Church within the context of Atlantic Caribbean history. The first focuses on "The Portuguese Immigrants and the Transformation of the Roman Catholic Church in British Guiana 1835-1865." The second paper is grounded in the twentieth century, titled "The St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Georgetown, Guyana: The Early Years 1945-1950", it will document the conceptualization and formation of the first Roman Catholic Hospital in Guyana, the negotiations between the Sisters of Mercy in Dallas, Pennsylvania, USA and the Roman Catholic Sword of the Spirit Movement in Guyana. Among other projects, Dr. Collins-Gonsalves has presented at conferences and seminars and she has also completed a peer reviewed book chapter "Historical Perspectives on the Portuguese in the Caribbean" in *Identities in the Lusophone World: Impacts of Education, Economics, Nationalism, Religion and Settlement* edited by Robert Kenedy and Fernando Nunes (2021).

## DR. SHANNON CONWAY

E-Mail: [shannon.conway@uOttawa.ca](mailto:shannon.conway@uOttawa.ca)

### Research Project

Culture, Identity, and Nationalism in Children's Literature, 1990-2015.

Upon receiving my PhD in History from the University of Ottawa in October 2020, I began looking for an appropriate research institution to apply to work with and collaborate. With their focus on Atlantic Canadian Studies, the Gorsebrook was a great fit for my research interests in post-confederation Newfoundland, contemporary Canada, identity(ies), nationalism(s), regionalism and interdisciplinarity. While my graduate degrees are in History, my background includes Philosophy, Political Science, Policy Studies, and Anthropology, which heavily influence my historical research. My expectations of working with the GRI are to become a member of a scholarly community with a shared focus on Atlantic Canada, with whom I can share my research, learn from, collaborate with, and continue to grow as an academic researcher, while contributing to the institute. My doctoral work focused on constructions of Canadian and Newfoundland identities since 1949. From that research, I began to formulate my current project on perceptions of Newfoundland culture, identity, and nationalism in Newfoundland children's literature from 1990 to 2015. At present, I have identified and itemized a wide selection of source material that I will avail of once I return to Newfoundland. While currently residing in Ottawa, I am originally from outport Newfoundland.

# GRI FUNDING

## RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over the past year, we have been working to develop a number of funding opportunities that will enable us to support new research and community engagement across the region. Here's a taster of what we'll be offering:

Research support: modest funds for **SMU faculty** those who require seed money to undertake research to produce new knowledge that focuses on Atlantic Canada.

Conference support: modest funds for **SMU faculty** undertaking research on a topic relevant to Atlantic Canada. May include guest speaker support, conference attendance, and online delivery.

Fostering Partnerships: two streams of funds to support 1) **research partnerships** between SMU researchers and external researchers and 2) **community-GRI partnerships** that will connect a community with SMU researchers to work on innovative and impactful projects that matters locally.

Community Initiatives: Funding earmarked for Atlantic Canada community-based projects from **individuals working outside the university** on issues, challenges, priorities identified in their own community.

For more information, please email us at [gorsebrook@smu.ca](mailto:gorsebrook@smu.ca)



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# NEWS / UPCOMING EVENTS

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

The Government of Canada will support the project ***A Black People's History of Canada*** led by our very own board member, Dr. Afua Cooper! Dr. Cooper is joined by Dr. Karolyn Smardz Frost, Natasha Henry and Adrienne Shadd. On 8 April 2021, The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage, [announced more than \\$1 million in funding to this Dalhousie University project](#). Through workshops and conferences this project will support leading Black history scholars and organizations to create new classroom-ready learning materials and digital media, in English and French, about the history of Black Canadians.

The **10th International Hockey Conference** will take place from 4-6 June 2021 in blended fashion (online/in person) at SMU. Established, at the GRI, by Dr. Colin Howell in 2001, The Hockey Conference has been a driving force for academic research on the sport. It has facilitated interdisciplinary conversations among scholars, artists, athletes, coaches, administrators, members of sports media, and fans. The Conference returns to SMU this year in celebration of Dr. Howell's retirement after 50 years of service. The theme is "hockey in a changing world" and the keynote speaker will be women's hockey pioneer Angela James. More information is available at [www.thehockeyconference.ca](http://www.thehockeyconference.ca)

**Military Service, Citizenship and Political Culture in Atlantic Canada, 1700-2000 workshop:** this first bilingual workshop of the SSHRC-funded Partnership Development Project will be hosted, as a bilingual event on 9-11 June 2021, by the Institut d'études acadiennes de l'Université de Moncton. It features preliminary papers by 15 researchers from across Atlantic Canada looking at the intersection of different forms of military service with evolving ideas of citizenship and community in our region. More information is available at <https://www.umoncton.ca/iea/node/46>

**Stories of Place: Coastal Communities and Rural Settlement on Cape Breton Island and RSC Atlantic Open Academy symposium.** Subject to travel being permitted within Atlantic Canada, this symposium will be held in Chéticamp (Inverness County, Nova Scotia), on 27-28 August 2021. The event is in connection with the research project *Repenser l'Acadie dans le monde* led by Gregory Kennedy of the Université de Moncton and Clint Bruce of the Université Sainte-Anne, and SMU's Karly Kehoe and Alexander MacLeod's Stories of Place project. Organized by Dr. Hilary Doda (GRI Postdoctoral research fellow) and Dr. Greg Kennedy (UdeMoncton and GRI board member), the event will include speaker panels, a keynote address by Dr. David Worthington (University of the Highlands and Island, Scotland), a heritage sector roundtable discussion, Acadian site visits, and a student research showcase. For more information, please email Hilary: [Hilary.Doda@smu.ca](mailto:Hilary.Doda@smu.ca)

**Research student training day:** Since the last event, which was held in October 2019, was so well-received by the ACST students, we were encouraged to offer this research training day as an annual event to students. It will be organized and led by Mathias Rodorff and is planned for the autumn 2021 term. Fingers cross for an in-person event! For more information, please email Mathias Rodorff: [Mathias.Rodorff@smu.ca](mailto:Mathias.Rodorff@smu.ca)



# RESEARCHERS / BOARD



## OUR PEOPLE

### Research associates:

**Dr. Joanne Collins-Gonsalves**; (Gorsebrook Research Institute); 2020-2023.

Research: *Catholic Church, Portuguese in Guyana, and the wider Caribbean from 1835.*

**Dr. Shannon Conway** (Independent scholar); 2021-2023.

Research: *Newfoundland Culture, Identity, and Nationalism in Children's Literature (1990-2015).*

**Dr. Afua Cooper** (Department of Sociology and History, Dalhousie University); 2020-2021.

Research: *African-Nova Scotian community in Atlantic Canada and the history of enslavement in Canada.*

**Dr. Terrence Murphy** (Department of History, SMU); 2020-2023.

Research: *Catholic community in Atlantic Canada.*

**Dr. Don Nerbas** (Department of History, McGill University); 2021-2023.

Research: *Transformation of Cape Breton Coal Fields in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

### Visiting scholars:

**Dr. Rob Dunbar** (Department Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, U.K.); 2021.

**Dr. Claudine Bonner** (Department of Sociology, Acadia University); 2020-2021.

Research: *African diaspora migration to the Atlantic region.*

**Dr. Willeen Keough** (Department of History, Simon Fraser University); 2020.

**Dr. Annie Tindley** (School of History, Newcastle University, U.K.); 2019.

**Dr. Kirsten Sandrock** (Department of English Philology, University of Göttingen, DE); 2019.

### Postdoctoral research fellows:

**Dr. Hilary Doda** (funded by CRC in Atlantic Canada Communities); 2019-2021.

Research: *Overshot weaving and Scottish settler tradition in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Cape Breton.*

**Dr. Jill Campbell-Miller** (funded by NSHRF); 2017-19.

### Board members:

**Sara Beanlands** (Senior Archaeologist Boreas Heritage Consulting) [sbeanlands@boreasheritage.ca](mailto:sbeanlands@boreasheritage.ca)

**Dr. Afua Cooper** (Department of Sociology, Dalhousie University) [afua.cooper@dal.ca](mailto:afua.cooper@dal.ca)

**Rosalie Francis** (Mi'kmaq Lawyer, RFrancis Law) [rosalie@rfrancislaw.ca](mailto:rosalie@rfrancislaw.ca)

**Dr. Colin Howell** (Department of History, SMU) [colin.howell@smu.ca](mailto:colin.howell@smu.ca)

**Dr. Renée Hulan** (Department of English, SMU) [renee.hulan@smu.ca](mailto:renee.hulan@smu.ca)

**Dr. S. Karly Kehoe** (GRI Board chairperson) (Department of History, SMU) [karly.kehoe@smu.ca](mailto:karly.kehoe@smu.ca)

**Dr. Alexander MacLeod** (Department of English, SMU) [alexander.macleod@smu.ca](mailto:alexander.macleod@smu.ca)

**Dr. Gregory Kennedy** (Depart. of History, Université de Moncton) [gregory.kennedy@umoncton.ca](mailto:gregory.kennedy@umoncton.ca)

**Dr. Nicole Neatby** (Department of History, SMU) [nicole.neatby@smu.ca](mailto:nicole.neatby@smu.ca)

**Sylvia Parris-Drummond** (CEO Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute) [sylvia.parris@dbdli.ca](mailto:sylvia.parris@dbdli.ca)

**Dr. Michael Petrou** (Department of History, Carlton University) [michael.petrou@hotmail.com](mailto:michael.petrou@hotmail.com)

**Dr. Danika van Proosdij** (Department of Geography, SMU) [dvanproo@smu.ca](mailto:dvanproo@smu.ca)

**Dr. John Reid** (Department of History, SMU) [john.reid@smu.ca](mailto:john.reid@smu.ca)

**Raymond Sewell** (Indigenous Student Advisor, SMU) [raymond.sewell@smu.ca](mailto:raymond.sewell@smu.ca)

# A brief history of the Gorsebrook

From its inception, the Gorsebrook Research Institute (GRI) has been responsive to the evolving challenges and priorities of Atlantic Canada. Formed in 1982 as the research arm of the MA program of Saint Mary's University's (SMU) Atlantic Canada Studies (ACST) program, the GRI facilitates innovative collaborations between universities, government, industry, and the community. The GRI continues to demonstrate a core focus on timely and relevant research. Opportunities for continued and expanded partnerships offer the GRI a unique position from which to strengthen our communities through regional challenges and the post-COVID world.

The story of the GRI most properly begins with the creation of the multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary field of Canadian Studies to promote regional understanding in academia. It should then come as no surprise that interdisciplinary thinking was beginning to gain traction at precisely the same time as Canadian universities were undergoing dramatic changes. Out of this concern arose University of New Brunswick's academic journal *Acadiensis* in 1971. SMU was undergoing its own passing of the "old order" during the 1960s and 1970s, as it transitioned from a Jesuit-run Catholic boys' college to a more secular, co-ed university, which resulted in a rapid growth of its student and faculty population. SMU became a regional pioneer in innovative interdisciplinary programs, including Women's Studies, International Development, and ACST.

In 1975, SMU set about training the next generation of regionally focused scholars with the creation of the interdisciplinary ACST undergraduate program. In 1982, and building on the success of the university and the ACST program, the Gorsebrook Research Institute was founded by SMU faculty members Drs. Ken MacKinnon (English), Donald Higgins (Political Science) and Colin Howell (History). From providing research assistance to ACST members, the GRI is now facilitating academic research, promoting interdisciplinary and inter-university cooperation, and serving as a resource base for universities, governments, and the private sector.

In its 39-year history, much has happened. From its modest beginnings in a single office in the McNally Building, and later in the basement of the Oaks, the GRI has grown into one of the most active research institutes on campus. Since 2006, it has been located at the Inglis Street Research House (5960 Inglis Street) offering well-equipped offices and research opportunities.

The GRI's interdisciplinary focus has been a strength. Its research activities have evolved over time in response to social, political, and academic development. Initially, the GRI research activities focused on the strategic objectives of SMU and the ACST program including political economy, history and the environment. Many of the GRI's early publications were concerned with the fisheries, and to a lesser extent, oil, gas, forestry, and rural economies. The 1990s saw a shift towards gender, ethnicity, and community. By the 2000s, the GRI boasted an active conference and publication program, supported unique research projects, and hosted visiting scholars, post-doctoral fellows, student associates and SMU faculty.

Since its foundation, the GRI has established a reputation as a hub for the interdisciplinary study of Atlantic Canada, considered in national and international contexts. Public outreach and scholarly exchange are integral to a host of activities that include hosting major conferences and symposia, attracting distinguished visiting scholars, facilitating major SSHRC research applications, and hosting and mentoring postdoctoral fellows.

The COVID-19 Pandemic may forever change our ways of communicating and working together, but it has given us the opportunity to re-consider how SMU engages with a wide range of communities as its research tackle some of the big questions about the future.

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