



SESYNC Feedbacks

News from the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center

ON OUR MINDS | Challenging Racism by Looking Within & Without



Educating Ourselves

Like much of the nation, SESYNC is saddened, frustrated, angry, and troubled over recent events as they painfully remind us of the enduring consequences that systemic racism and oppression continue to have on people of color in our community.

So, at SESYNC, we are using this time for reflection, education, and introspection, and we are encouraging our staff to learn, listen, and lead in these difficult but necessary conversations. Below, we're sharing some of the books and articles that are currently on our reading lists with links for additional information:

- [So You Want to Talk about Race](#) by Ijeoma Oluo

- *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein
- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley
- *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- *"White Academia: Do Better"* by Jasmine Roberts on *Medium.com*
- *"Why Every Environmentalist Should Be Anti-Racist"* by Leah Thomas in *Vogue*

We hope that you'll share with us what's on yours.

GRAD PROGRAM | Keeping Teams Connected



SESYNC's Graduate Program Plugs in but Keeps the Connection Human: Here's how your team can do the same

COVID-19, and the uncertainty it has brought to the world, has shaken up how many groups are able to work together—including SESYNC's Graduate Pursuits. Despite the disruptions that teams have faced, Dr. Nicole Motzer, Assistant Director for Interdisciplinary Science, says SESYNC's grad teams are continuing to move forward at all stages of their Pursuits—albeit in new ways.

While members of teams in the later stages of their research, having already completed their in-person meetings, haven't seen too many changes, Motzer shared that other groups are having to replace in-person meetings with online gatherings. For example, many teams in the mid-stages of their research have had to move their final meetings online, and SESYNC's fifth cohort has been forced to move its leaders' wrap-up meeting online, as well. Meanwhile, the newest cohort of teams has had to launch their projects remotely. [Read more.](#)

IMMERSION PROGRAM | Adopting a New Format This Fall



SESYNC's Immersion Program Immerses Itself in a Digital World

By: Alaina Gallagher

SESYNC's Immersion Program is known for immersing the Center's resident postdoctoral fellows in the theories and methods foundational to socio-environmental systems through its series of collaborative workshops. But, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the Program is now finding itself immersed in an increasingly virtual world.

So, to better serve the postdoc community and the workshops' invited Distinguished Scholars during this uncertain period, the Immersion Program is taking a novel, digital approach to its core feature---its workshops. For the first time, the Immersion Program will be transitioning its usual 2-day, in-person workshops this fall to an online learning format. While the format may change---such as the meetings' length, the number of invited scholars, and the scope and delivery of the material presented---Dr. Christine Maietta, Assistant Director of Education at SESYNC, said the workshops' main objectives will not. [Read more.](#)

RESEARCHER SPOTLIGHT | Sustaining Collaboration



Researchers Share Key Ingredients for Building Momentum for Interdisciplinary Collaboration

By: Rachel Swanwick

Finding solutions to address pressing global issues with social and environmental components requires researchers to collaborate across disciplines and break down traditional academic paradigms that have

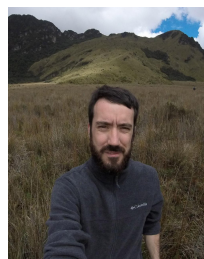
historically limited the creation of such cross-cutting teams. Doing so can be both challenging and rewarding. Although there is no one-size-fits-all formula for this process, many researchers are finding innovative ways to work together and pave the way for this research approach.

Earlier this year, a SESYNC workshop afforded just the opportunity for one of these cross-cutting, interdisciplinary research teams to form. Led by Principle Investigator Emily Bell, a postdoctoral fellow at Duke University, the team emerged from a group of early-career researchers whose expertise spanned the fields of ecology and engineering to policy and governance. Finding synergies among areas of research that can at times feel disparate was the first obstacle they needed to overcome. Ultimately, the researchers came together over their shared interest in environmental justice. [Read on.](#)

POSTDOC SPOTLIGHT | Celebrating Two Postdocs' Successes

SESYNC Bids Adieu to Two of Our Postdocs

As postdocs Xavier Benito and Florian Gollnow prepare to embark on their next great adventure, we're celebrating their time here at SESYNC by highlighting their research and achievements below.



Xavier Benito - Xavier joined SESYNC in 2018, interested in exploring resilience at the paleoecological-scale by integrating social and biophysical records to understand the dynamics of complex socio-ecological systems. While at SESYNC, Xavier focused his

research on the issue of regime shifts in the high-altitude tropical Andes, working with collaborating mentor Albert Ruhi (UC Berkeley and SESYNC postdoctoral alumnus). [Learn more.](#)



Florian Gollnow - Also part of the 2018 postdoc cohort, Florian is a geographer and land use science researcher, whose work focuses on understanding the causes and the spatio-temporal dynamics of land use changes, as well as the loss of natural ecosystems

as a major cause of global environmental change. His interests are in tropical deforestation, its socio-environmental interactions in space and time, and the effectiveness of different strategies for reducing deforestation. [Learn more.](#)

STAY CONNECTED | Follow Us on Social Media

Don't forget to follow our social media to keep in touch and stay up to date on everything related to SESYNC!

For example, check out this video on our [YouTube channel](#) where SESYNC postdoc Lauren White explains the [basics of disease modeling](#).

AN INTRODUCTION TO DISEASE MODELING

Lauren White, PhD

National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center

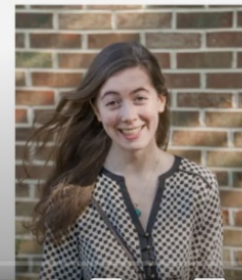
April 14, 2020



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@sesync @LAWWhite_Ecology



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NEW PUBLICATIONS | SESYNC in the Journals

"Preparing interdisciplinary leadership for a sustainable future." Published in *Sustainability Science* by Christopher G. Boone, Steward T. A. Pickett, Gabriele Bammer, Kamal Bawa, Jennifer A. Dunne, Iain J. Gordon, David Hart, Jessica Hellmann, Alison Miller, Mark New, Jean P. Ometto, Ken Taylor, Gabriele Wendorf, Arun Agrawal, Paul Bertsch, Colin Campbell, Paul Dodd, Anthony Janetos, and Hein Mallee. This paper resulted from the Workshop, [Interdisciplinary Research Matters: Pathways to Successful Organizational Models](#).

"Climate anomalies, land degradation, and rural out-migration in Uganda." Published in *Population and Environment* by former SESYNC postdoc Maia Call and colleague Clark Gray.

"Socioeconomic drivers of urban pest prevalence." Published in *People and Nature* by Chris Sutherland, Andrew J. Greenlee, and Daniel Schneider, as part of the Pursuit, [Socio-Spatial Ecology of the Bed Bug and Its Control](#).

"Benthic Foraminifera and Diatoms as Ecological Indicators." Published in the book *Modern Trends in Diatom Identification* by SESYNC postdoc Xavier Benito.

"Lessons from the past, policies for the future: resilience and sustainability in past crises." Published in *Environment Systems and Decisions* by SESYNC postdoc Merle Eisenberg, former SESYNC postdoc Lee Mordechai, and colleagues John Haldon, Adam Izdebski, and Sam White.

"Behavioral, Physiological, Demographic and Ecological Impacts of Hematophagous and Endoparasitic Insects on an Arctic Ungulate." Published in *Toxins* by SESYNC postdoc Ophélie Couriot and colleagues Kyle Joly, Matthew D. Cameron, and Eliezer Gurarie.

"Distributed urban network systems in the tropical archaeological record: Toward a model for urban sustainability in the era of climate change." Published in *The Anthropocene Review* by Vernon L. Scarborough and Christian Isendahl, as a result of the Foundation: [If the Past Teaches, What Does the Future Learn?](#)

"Characterizing disproportionality in facility-level toxic releases in US manufacturing, 1998-2012." Published in *Environmental Research Letters* by former SESYNC postdoc Mary Collins and former SESYNC fellow Simone Pulver with colleagues Dustin Hill and Ben Manski.

"Emergent conservation outcomes of shared risk perception in human-wildlife systems." Published in [*Conservation Biology*](#) by former SESYNC postdocs Neil Carter and Andres Baeza and former staff member Nicholas Magliocca.

"Plant litter amendments in restored wetland soils altered microbial communities more than clay additions." Published in [*Soil Biology and Biochemistry*](#) by SESYNC staff member Christine Maietta and colleagues Victoria Monsaint-Queeney, Lindsay Wood, Andrew H. Baldwin, and Stephanie A. Yarwood.

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