



ISISA

Newsletter

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EDITORIAL

This newsletter gives you a quick insight as to what to expect in the 17th *Islands of the World* Virtual Conference happening in June. Registrations are open and you still have a chance to send in an abstract to present at the conference. Apart from this, you will find a number of articles from our ISISA members around the globe.

Anyone who has something to say or share about islands and Island Studies, or can submit a review about a suitable book, is welcome to send them over to me, to be considered for the next issue of the ISISA Newsletter.

Kindly send over material for the July 2021 Newsletter by not later than June 15, 2021.

Thank you for your continued support and contributions.

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ISISA

17th *Islands of the World* Virtual Conference:

14 – 18 June, 2021

From musicals to policy discussions, ISISA's 2021 online conference has something for everyone. We have just ended the year 2020, a year none of us will particularly want to remember, but won't to be able to forget.

We were supposed to spend some time together this past summer in St. John's, Newfoundland and instead we ended up organizing the very first Global Island Studies Webinar. The folks at the Harris Centre, the organizer of the 2020 ISISA conference, are determined that in 2021, even if we cannot get together in person, we will get to show each other what we are up to on-line.

And we are building a fabulous lineup for you this June. We are excited to confirm a panel featuring actress Petrina Bromley and former Mayor of Gander, Derm Flynn, who will join us to discuss the events of 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland, that inspired the international musical sensation *Come From Away*. Just how good is *Come From*



Is the World Islanded?

Ilan Kelman

Are we all islanders now? The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 curtailed travel, stopped many of us meeting each other in person, and led to numerous lockdowns restricting movement from

one's home. In a sense, we have all been islanded. But only if we accept physical distance as an island characteristic.

The notion that islands and islanders are isolated and marginalised, while lacking connections with others, is challenged as much as it is demonstrated. Some inhabited islands have few transportation links and some have small population numbers. Others are international hubs or are characterised by continual travel in and out. Some islanders have dealt with limited physical connections by embracing the online world, a situation which many of us privileged enough were easily able to do when COVID-19 emerged. Those left behind, whether due to COVID-19 or not, result more from standard social difficulties of poverty, inequity, and lack of external support than due to being an island or islander--or not.

As always, degrees of physical and non-physical connectedness might or might not be reflective of being islanded. As always, those with resources and options can generate or avoid opportunities, as they wish. This can mean islanding or de-islanding oneself, as per specific preferences, depending also on what being "islanded" means. We must still improve support for those who lack choices, whether those opportunities are for more isolation or for more connectivity.



Islanded two metres apart (photo: Ilan Kelman)