

MING FEI LI

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PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2026- **Postdoctoral Associate, Evolutionary Anthropology, Duke University**
Project: Daasanach Health & Life History Project
Supervisor: Herman Pontzer

EDUCATION

- 2026 **Ph.D., Evolutionary Anthropology, University of Toronto**
Collaborative specialization in Environmental Studies
Project: Socioecological risks influence activity and sleep in a rural agropastoral community in South Africa
Supervisor: David Samson
- 2020 **M.Sc., Evolutionary Anthropology, University of Toronto**
Project: Influence of age, sex, and dominance rank on intragroup spatial position, foraging strategy, and feeding success in wild vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*)
Supervisor: Julie Teichroeb
- 2017 **B.A. & Sc., Anthropology and Biology, McGill University**

PUBLICATIONS (*equal contributions)

Peer-reviewed contributions

- 2026 Kilius, E., **Li, M.F.**, & Samson, D.R. Assessing sleep architecture in rural Eastern Cape villagers of South Africa using ÖURA ring data. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 38(2), e70215. DOI: 10.1002/ajhb.70215
- 2025 **Li, M.F.**, Lecheko, P., Phuthing, T., Lesholu, T. & Samson, D.R. Winter sleep extension and fragmentation in a South African agropastoral community. *Sleep Health*[†], 11(4), 477-485. DOI: 10.1016/j.sleh.2025.05.008
[†] Special Issue “Sleep Deserts: Environments and Sleep”
- 2025 **Li, M.F.**, Lecheko, P., Phuthing, T., Lesholu, T. & Samson, D.R. Low-to-Moderate Daytime Physical Activities Predicted Higher-Quality Sleep Among Habitually Active Agropastoralists. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 37(2), e70008. DOI: 10.1002/ajhb.70008
- 2025 Nagendran, L.*, **Li, M.F.***, Samson, D.R., & Schroeder, L. The impact of Daylight Saving Time on dog activity. *PLOS ONE*, 20(1), e0317028. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0317028
- 2022 **Li, M.F.***, Nagendran, L.*, Schroeder, L., & Samson, D.R. The activity patterns of nonworking and working sled dogs. *Scientific Reports*, 12(1), 7999. DOI: 10.1038/s41598-022-11635-5
- 2022 Smeltzer*, E.A., Stead*, S.M., **Li, M.F.**, Samson, D.R., Kumpan, L.T., & Teichroeb, J.A. Social sleepers: the effects of status on sleep in terrestrial mammals. *Hormones and Behavior*, 143(5), 105181. DOI: 10.1016/j.yhbeh.2022.105181

- 2022 **Li, M.F.**, Swaisgood, R.R., Owen, M.A., Zhang, H., Zhang, G., Qiu, J., & Martin, M.S. Consequences of nescient mating: Artificial insemination increases cub rejection in the giant panda (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*). *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 247, 105565. DOI: 10.1016/j.applanim.2022.105565
- 2021 **Li, M.F.**, Arseneau-Robar, T.J.M., Smeltzer, E.A., & Teichroeb, J.A. Be early or be tolerated: vervet monkey, *Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, foraging strategies in a dispersed resource. *Animal Behaviour*, 176, 1-15. DOI: 10.1016/j.anbehav.2021.03.010
- 2020 Woods, H.J., **Li, M.F.**, Patel, U.A., Lascelles, B.D.X., Samson, D.R., & Gruen, M.E. A functional linear modeling approach to sleep–wake cycles in dogs. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), 22233. DOI: 10.1038/s41598-020-79274-2

Publications in review

- 2026 **Li, M.F.** & Samson, D.R. Guard dogs are associated with increased nighttime awakenings among livestock herders in high-risk environments. (In revision).
- 2026 **Li, M.F.***, Nagendran, L.*, Kiru, C., Schroeder, L., & Samson, D.R. Who is disrupting whom? The impact of co-sleeping on humans and their dogs. (Under review).
- 2026 Kilius, E., McKinnon, L., **Li, M.F.**, & Samson, D.R. The Students’ Gambit: Canadian university students’ perceived vulnerability to disease and situational COVID-19 risk in the transition back to campus. (Under review).

Reports and encyclopedia entries

- 2022 Belecky, M., Stolton, S., Dudley, N., Dahal, S., **Li, M.F.**, & Hebert, C. *Living with Tigers: How to manage coexistence for the benefit of tigers and people*. WWF International, Switzerland.
- 2019 Landry, F., & **Li, M.F.** Costs of Group Living. In J. Vonk & T. Shackelford (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Animal Cognition and Behavior*. Springer International Publishing.
- 2019 **Li, M.F.** Infanticide. In J. Vonk & T. Shackelford (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Animal Cognition and Behavior*. Springer International Publishing.
- 2019 **Li, M.F.** Philopatry. In J. Vonk & T. Shackelford (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Animal Cognition and Behavior*. Springer International Publishing.

Non-peer-reviewed contributions

- 2018 **Li, M.F.** Significance and decline of customary law among the Samba people of Lushoto, Tanzania. *McGill Undergraduate Journal of Anthropology*, 8(1), 19-27.
- 2017 **Li, M.F.**, & Kecelioglu, Z. Notre-Dame de la Salette. *Redpath Museum Society Research Journal*, 5, 24-28.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 **Li, M.F.** & Samson, D.R. Restless but reassured: The influence of guard dogs on sleep quality among herders experiencing stock theft. 94th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Biological Anthropologists. Poster.

- 2025 **Li, M.F.**, Lecheko, P., Phuthing, T., Lesholu, T. & Samson, D.R. Low-to-moderate intensity daytime physical activities predicted higher quality sleep among habitually active agropastoralists. 50th Annual Meeting of the Human Biology Association. Podium presentation (flash talk).
- 2025 Kilius, E., McKinnon, L., **Li, M.F.**, & Samson, D.R. The Students' Gambit: Canadian university students' perceived vulnerability to disease and situational COVID-19 risk in the transition back to campus. 50th Annual Meeting of the Human Biology Association. Poster.
- 2024 **Li, M.F.**, Mercado Malabet, F., & Samson, D.R. Ranging pattern of village and cattle post dogs in the Eastern Cape. 103rd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists. Poster.
- 2024 **Li, M.F.** & Samson, D.R. Seasonal sleep variation among rural South African agropastoralists. 93rd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Biological Anthropologists. Podium presentation.
- 2024 Kilius, E., **Li, M.F.**, & Samson, D.R. Sleep architecture and nighttime vigilance in a rural agropastoral community in South Africa. 93rd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Biological Anthropologists. Poster.
- 2022 **Li, M.F.**, Smeltzer, E.A., Arseneau-Robar, T.J.M., & Teichroeb, J.A. Feeding strategies in a social forager: The influence of sex, dominance, and intragroup spatial positions on feeding success in *Chlorocebus pygerythrus*. XXVIIth Congress of the International Primatological Society. Virtual podium presentation.
- 2021 **Li, M.F.**, Smeltzer E.A., & Teichroeb, J.A. Navigating networks: Stronger social bonds correlate with greater feeding tolerance in wild vervet monkeys. 49th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology[†]. Podium presentation.
[†] Invited talk for symposium “*The Modern Primatologist's Toolkit: New Approaches and Perspectives*”
- 2021 Kilius, E., McKinnon, L., & **Li, M.F.** Rebuilding a healthy student community: Preliminary survey results from University of Toronto students in Fall 2021. 49th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology. Poster.
- 2021 McKinnon, L., Kilius, E., & **Li, M.F.** Social connectivity, health, and accessibility: Preliminary survey results from students returning to campus in Fall 2021. 49th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology. Poster.
- 2021 Stead, S.M., Smeltzer E.A., Kumpan, L.T., **Li, M.F.**, Samson, D.R., & Teichroeb, J.A. Slumber in numbers: Impacts of social hierarchies on sleep in terrestrial mammals. 49th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology. Podium presentation.
- 2021 **Li, M.F.**, Nagendran, L., Schroeder, L., & Samson, D.R. Environmental, human, and biological drivers of sled dog (*Canis familiaris*) activity. 58th Annual Conference of the Animal Behavior Society. Virtual podium presentation.
- 2021 **Li, M.F.**, Smeltzer, E.A., & Teichroeb, J.A. Network approach reveals evidence of biological market principles in a wild primate group. 8th Annual Medusa Graduate Conference. Virtual podium presentation.

- 2020 **Li, M.F.**, Smeltzer, E.A., Arseneau-Robar, T.J.M., & Teichroeb, J.A. Foraging strategies in wild vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*) when resources are dispersed. 57th Annual Conference of the Animal Behavior Society. Virtual podium presentation.
- 2019 **Li, M.F.**, Smeltzer, E.A., & Teichroeb, J.A. The early monkey gets the matoke: The influence of sex, rank, and arrival time on feeding strategies and food acquisition in *Chlorocebus pygerythrus*. 47th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology. Podium presentation.
- 2019 **Li, M.F.** Risky foraging in wild vervet monkeys and its implications for crop-raiding. 6th Annual Medusa Graduate Conference. Podium presentation.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2021- **Project Lead**, “*Effects of environmental and socioeconomic risks on activity, sleep, and health in an agropastoral community in the Eastern Cape,*” University of Toronto
Collaborators: David Samson, Erica Kilius
- 2020- **Co-Lead**, “*Canid sleep: Assessing the influence of domestication on activity patterns in dogs and wolves,*” University of Toronto
Collaborators: Lavania Nagendran, David Samson, Lauren Schroeder, Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve Ltd, Snowy Owl Sled Dog Tours Inc, Wolf Science Center, Wolf Park
- 2021-22 **Co-Lead**, “*Social distance: Perspectives on social connectivity, health, and an equitable transition back to campus,*” University of Toronto
Collaborators: Leela McKinnon, Erica Kilius
- 2021-22 **Research Assistant**, “*Human-tiger coexistence,*” WWF Tigers Alive, WWF-Cambodia
Supervisor: Mike Belecky
- 2020-22 **Research Associate**, “*Maternal care and reproductive success in the giant panda,*” PDXWildlife, China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda, San Diego Zoo
Collaborator: Meghan Martin
- 2018-20 **Project Lead**, “*Social foraging and feeding tolerance in wild vervet monkeys,*” University of Toronto
Collaborators: Julie Teichroeb, Eve Smeltzer, T. Jean M. Arseneau-Robar
- 2017-18 **Conservation Intern**, “*Stereotypic behaviors and mother-infant interactions in giant pandas,*” PDXWildlife, China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda
Supervisors: Meghan Martin, Nathan Wintle
- 2017 **Field School**, *East Africa Field Study Semester*, McGill University
- 2016 **Field School**, *Marine Mammals*, McGill University, Huntsman Marine Science Centre
- 2016 **Research Assistant**, *Zooarchaeology Lab*, McGill University
Supervisor: James Savelle

GRANTS & AWARDS (*competitive)

- 2026 ISEMPH Student Travel Award (\$1,000 USD)
- 2026 Canada Postdoctoral Research Award (CPRA) from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada* (\$140,000 CAD)
- 2025 University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies Doctoral Completion Award (\$9,000 CAD)
- 2025 University of Toronto Edward W. Nuffield Graduate Travel Fellowship (\$2,823 CAD)
- 2025 Sigma Xi Grants in Aid of Research* (\$1,000 USD)
- 2024 University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies Conference Travel Grant (\$610 CAD)
- 2024 University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology Conference Award (\$1,000 CAD)
- 2023 University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies Research Travel Grant (\$4,868 CAD)
- 2023 University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology Research Travel Grant (\$965 CAD)
- 2022 Canada Graduate Research Scholarship-Doctoral (CGS-D) from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada* (\$110,000 CAD)
- 2022 University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology Research Travel Grant (\$922 CAD)
- 2021 University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology Pilot Research Award (\$3,740 CAD)
- 2021 University of Toronto Global Student Engagement Award* (\$3,000 CAD)
- 2021 Ontario Graduate Scholarship* (\$15,000 CAD)
- 2021 Sigma Xi Grants in Aid of Research* (\$1,000 USD)
- 2021 University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts & Science, Study Elsewhere of Less Commonly Taught Languages Fund* (\$1,890 CAD)
- 2021 University of Toronto, The School of the Environment, Beatrice and Arthur Minden Graduate Research Fellowship* (\$3,500 CAD)
- 2020 University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts & Science Top Doctoral Award* (\$40,000 CAD)
- 2020 University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology Conference Travel Award (\$500 CAD)
- 2019 University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies Conference Grant (\$930 CAD) – *declined due to Covid-19 travel restrictions*
- 2018 McGill University, David & Erica Davidovic Science Internship Award* (\$2,000 CAD)
- 2017 McGill University, Science Lab Without Borders Undergraduate Award* (\$2,735 CAD)

INVITED TALKS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- 2025 *Diet, activity, and sleep in rural agropastoral villages*, Ha Nkai and Mpharane Community Halls, South Africa
- 2023 *O robetse jwang? Effects of environmental and socioeconomic risks on sleep in an agropastoral community*, Ha Nkai and Mpharane Community Halls, South Africa
- 2022 *Use of Actigraphy in Field Research*, Sleep and Human Evolution Lab, University of Toronto Mississauga
- 2022 Panelist at Trinity College Environmental Studies High Table, University of Toronto

TEACHING EXPERIENCE & TRAINING

Course Instructor, University of Toronto Scarborough

ANTD40: Anthrozoology: Exploring human and nonhuman animal interactions (Fall 2024)

Teaching Assistant, University of Toronto (St. George, Scarborough, Mississauga)

ANT100: Introduction to Anthropology

ANTA01: Introduction to Anthropology: Becoming Human

ANTB14: Evolutionary Anthropology

ANTB15: Contemporary Human Evolution and Variation

ANT220: Introduction to the Anthropology of Health

ANT332: Human Origins I

ANT335: Human Evolution

ANT338: Laboratory Methods in Biological Anthropology

ANT407: Quantitative Methods in Archaeology and Biological Anthropology
ENV100: Introduction to Environmental Studies
ENV337: Human Interactions with the Environment

University of Toronto Teaching Assistants' Training Program Certifications
Accessible, Inclusive, and Anti-Oppressive Pedagogies

MENTORSHIP

Nicholas Katsiochristos (undergraduate student, University of Toronto Scarborough)
Christopher Kiru (master's student, University of Toronto Mississauga)
Talha Nadeem (undergraduate student, University of Northern British Columbia)

MEDIA COVERAGE

2025 [Do dogs hate daylight saving time too?](#) *National Geographic*.
2025 [How sled dogs and pets respond when the clocks change.](#) *BBC News*.
2025 [Does daylight saving time affect dogs? It depends if they have to work.](#) *The Washington Post*.
2025 [The Annual Quirks & Quarks Holiday Question Show.](#) *CBC Radio*.
2022 [Upcoming time change can adversely affect sleep quality, research shows.](#) *University of Toronto Mississauga News*.
2022 [Giant pandas more likely to reject cubs after artificial insemination.](#) *The New Scientist*.

SERVICE

2020-22 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Subcommittee, Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology
2019-21 Conference Organizing Committee, Anthropology Graduate Student Union, University of Toronto
2020 Virtual Conference Planning Committee, Canadian Association for Biological Anthropology
2020 Skype a Scientist
2019-20 Event Organizing Committee, Got Anthropology Speaker Series, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto

REVIEWER

Animal Behaviour (n = 2)
Proceedings of the Royal Society B (n = 1)