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**Diana Hubbard\*** ([diana.hubbard@bc.edu](mailto:diana.hubbard@bc.edu)) and **Adam Saltz**. *An annular refinement of the transverse element in Khovanov homology.*

In 2006, Plamenevskaya proved that the homology class of a certain distinguished element in Khovanov homology is an invariant of transverse links. In this talk we will present an annular refinement of this element,  $\kappa$ , and will show that while  $\kappa$  is not an invariant of transverse links, it is a conjugacy class invariant of braids. We will see applications of  $\kappa$  relating to transverse links, braid destabilization, and the word problem in the braid group. (Received January 14, 2016)