

William J. Robertson

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2022- Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis
2021-2022 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis

EDUCATION

PhD, Anthropology (2021) University of Arizona
MA, Anthropology (2013) The University of Texas at San Antonio
BA, Anthropology (2010) The University of Texas at San Antonio

AREAS OF INTEREST

Medical anthropology; anthropology of care; queer and trans anthropology; the body and embodiment; risk; conceptualizations and practices of biomedical research (e.g., clinical trials, experimentation); medical education, training, specialization, and expertise; clinical ethnography; social science of human papillomavirus (HPV); anal cancer; science and technology studies; health disparities; science, medicine, and popular culture; teaching and pedagogy; culture theory

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed

Robertson, William J. 2020. A Tale of Two Shitties: Extreme Examples of Professional Habitus from an Anal Cancer Prevention Clinic. *Journal of Extreme Anthropology* 4(2): 20-41.
Robertson, William J. 2017. "Believe It or Not": The Medical Framing of Rectal Foreign Bodies. *Culture, Health, and Sexuality* 19(8): 815-828. doi: 10.1080/13691058.2016.1263874.
Robertson, William J. 2017. The Irrelevance Narrative: Queer (In)Visibility in Biomedical Education. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 31(2): 159-176. doi: 10.1111/maq.12289.

Non-Reviewed

Robertson, William J. 2021. *Dirt and Care: Queer Care in an Anal Dysplasia Clinic*. PhD Dissertation. (Co-chairs: Susan J. Shaw and Eric Plemons; Committee Members: Mark Nichter, Susan Stryker, and Victor Braitberg)
Robertson, William J. 2019. Challenging heteronormativity in medicine. In *Routledge Handbook of the Medical Humanities*, ed. Alan Bleakley. London: Routledge. Chapter 8: 105-113.
Robertson, William J. 2016. Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome. In *The Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, ed. Nancy Naples. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell. doi: 10.1002/9781118663219.wbegss622.
Robertson, William J. 2013. Queering Biomedicine: Culture and (In)Visibility in a Medical School. Master's Thesis. (Chair: K. Jill Fleuret; Committee Members: Michael L. Cepek, Jamon Halvaksz, and Craig Klugman)
Robertson, William J. 2013. Medical Authority and Queer Health Disparities. *Anthropologies* 17 (March).
Robertson, William J. 2012. "It's the revolution!" Queer Liberation and Anthropological Inquiry. *SfAA News: A Publication of the Society for Applied Anthropology* 23(3): 26-27.

Book Reviews

Robertson, William J. 2017. Mythbusting Bodies, Genders, and Sexualities (review of *50 Great Myths of Human Sexuality* by Schwartz & Kempner 2015). *Anthropology Book Forum*.
<http://journals.sfu.ca/abf/index.php/abf/article/download/97/101>
Robertson, William J. 2017. Media, Medicine, Citizen, Capital: Theorizing the Production of Health and Disease

(review of *Making Health Public* by Briggs & Hallin 2016). *Anthropology Book Forum* 3(1).

Other Publications

Robertson, Will. 2014. Learning to Teach Anthropology. Invited Guest Post. Teaching Culture blog. University of Toronto Press. Online: <http://www.utpteachingculture.com/learning-to-teach-anthropology/>

Forthcoming

Milena A. Melo, K. Jill Fleuriel, Carla Pezzia, and **William J. Robertson**. Anthropological Linguistics, Health, and Healthcare. Invited peer-reviewed chapter for *The Handbook of Language, Health, and Healthcare*, eds. Glenn Martinez & Pilar Ortega.

In Review

Robertson, William J. and Emma N. Bunkley. Iatrogenic Necropolitics: Forced Anal Examinations and State-Sanctioned Homophobia. Submitted to *Culture, Health, and Sexuality* on August 23, 2022. Revisions submitted February 1, 2023.

Robertson, William J. The Butt of the Joke: Camp Humor and Queer Care. Submitted to *Medicine Anthropology Theory* on June 30, 2022. Revisions submitted on January 4, 2023.

In Preparation

Robertson, William J. Queering the Anthropology of Care. To be submitted to *Critique of Anthropology* in spring 2022.

TEACHING: Courses Taught

The University of Memphis

Undergraduate Courses

Department of Anthropology

Cultural Anthropology (Fall 2021, Fall 2022)

Medical Anthropology (Spring 2023)

Culture/Kin/Family (Fall 2021, Summer 2022, Spring 2023)

Queer Anthropology (Spring 2022)

Culture, Society, and Mental Health (Spring 2022)

Helen Hardin Honors College

Dungeons & Dragons: An Academic Adventure (1-credit Honors Forum, Fall 2022, Fall 2023)

Graduate Courses

Department of Anthropology

Critically Applied Medical Anthropology (Fall 2023)

Data Analysis & Writing (Fall 2023)

Queer Anthropology (Spring 2022)

Culture, Society, and Mental Health (Spring 2022)

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Honors College

Dungeons & Dragons: An Academic Adventure (2 sections, Fall 2020)

Risk, Society, and Culture (Independent Study, Fall 2020)

Social Justice in American Medicine (Independent Study, Spring 2020)

The Civic Ethos (1 credit hour; 1 section Fall 2019, 8 sections Spring 2020)

Tutorial I: Justice (2 sections, Fall 2019)

Department of Anthropology

Anthropology of Biomedicine (Fall 2017)

Sex, Gender, and Culture (Summer 2014)

Kinship and Social Organization (Spring 2014)

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Spring 2014)

Introduction to (Four-Field) Anthropology (Fall 2013)
Language, Thought, and Culture (2 sections, Fall 2012)

The University of Arizona

School of Anthropology

Women's Health in Global Perspective (Summer 2017, 2018)

TEACHING: Student Mentoring (Current)

Master's Advisor

Gilleland, Emma (UofM Anthropology)

Houlihan, Quinn (UofM Anthropology)

Master's Practicum Committee Member

Johnson, Lily (UofM Anthropology)

Riles, Crys (UofM Anthropology)

Master's Thesis Committee Member

Benoit, Allison (UofM History)

PhD Committee

Allen-Bey, Lacie (UT-San Antonio)

TEACHING: Student Mentoring (Past/Graduated)

Master's Practicum Committee Member

Babcock, Lydia (UofM Anthropology) "The Clinic to Prison Pipeline"

Blue, Sharlecia (UofM Anthropology) "Evaluating Breastfeeding Barriers and Analyzing how African American Women Benefit from Emotional Support Groups"

Carnes, Mary (UofM Anthropology) "Engaging Local Knowledge for COVID-19 Vaccine Equity through Anthropology and Human-Centered Design: A Practicum with the CommuniVax Coalition"

Demato, Ryan (UofM Anthropology 2021) "Using Parental Narratives to Address Negative Discourse, and the Biomedical Gaze Towards Disability"

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Advisor

Iglesias, Enrique (UTSA Honors College) "Transforming U.S. Medical Education and Culture: A Decolonial and Feminist Approach"

Other Mentoring Activities

Paredes, Daisy (UTSA Honors College) 2020 McNair Scholars Program (worked on NSF-GRFP application over eight weeks in Summer 2020; awarded NSF-GRFP in fall 2020)

TEACHING: Other Activities

Pathway to the Health Professions (UTSA) (Summer 2016, 2017) - Taught anthropology to high school students and first-year college students to help prepare for socially responsible practices in health careers (Funded by Health Careers Opportunities Program (HCOP) through US Department of Health and Human Services).

GRANTS

Awarded (Research)

2023 University of Memphis College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Research Grant. Award: \$6,500.

2019 University of Arizona GPSC Research and Project (ReaP) Grant. Award: \$1,000.

2018 The Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant. Project Title: “Screening Sex: An Ethnography of an Anal Dysplasia Clinic.” Award: \$19,980.

Awarded (Travel)

2019 Traditions, Transitions, and Treasures Fund, School of Anthropology, University of Arizona. \$700.

2019 University of Arizona Women’s Studies Advisory Council (WOSAC) Travel Grant. \$500.

2019 University of Arizona GPSC Travel Grant. \$750.

2017 University of Arizona GPSC Travel Grant. \$750.

2016 University of Arizona GPSC Travel Grant. \$750.

Attempted

2022 The Wenner-Gren Foundation Engaged Research Grant (co-PI with Lindsey Feldman; listed as collaborator due to Foundation policy). Round 2 elimination, full review.

2017-2018 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant – Cultural Anthropology Program. Submitted 3 times, ranked: (1) Not Competitive, Needs Serious Revision; (2) Not Competitive, Needs Moderate Revision; (3) Competitive (not funded).

2017- 2018 Agency for Healthcare Research Quality (AHRQ) R36 Dissertation Grant. Submitted 2 times: (1) unscored, not discussed; (2) scored 46, referred for Council Review (not funded)

2017 The Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant. Submitted 2 times: (1) round 1 elimination, not referred for further review; (2) round 2 elimination, full review.

AWARDS AND HONORS

2020 Andrew William Amann, Jr. Dissertation Award. School of Anthropology, University of Arizona. \$10,000.

2019 Summer Dissertation Fellowship, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona. \$6,000.

2019 Graduate College Fellowship (spring semester). University of Arizona. \$2,500.

2015 Emil W. Haury Educational Fund Scholarship. School of Anthropology, University of Arizona. \$500.

2014 50 Best Cultural Anthropology Dissertations 2013. Anthropologyworks. Culture in Global Affairs Research and Policy Program at the George Washington University.

2013 University Graduate Student Teaching Award (Departmental nomination, university-wide award). UTSA.

2012 The Meritorious Achievement Award for Graduate Students in Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, UTSA. \$1,000.

2010 First Place, Undergraduate Research Paper. COLFA Spring Research Conference. UTSA.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Co-Principal Investigator (With Lindsey Feldman; May 2022-April 2024)

Queer Carceral Care: An Engaged Ethnography on LGBTQ+ Health and Life After Release from Prison

- Planning and grant writing from May 2022-July 2022; IRB proposal development in Fall 2022
- Phase 1 of data collection to begin March 2023.

Principal Investigator (June 2018 – May 2019)

Dissertation Research

- Designed and carried out ethnographic project at Anal Dysplasia Clinic-MidWest in Chicago, IL, USA. Conducted participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews and unstructured informal interviews, and focus groups. Collected, processed, and analyzed all data for project.

Research Assistant (June 2018 – May 2019)

The ANCHOR Study (Anal Cancer HSIL Outcomes Research Clinical Trial)

- National PI: Joel Palefsky (UCSF)
- Site PI: Gary Bucher, MD
- Location: Anal Dysplasia Clinic – MidWest (ADC-MidWest), Chicago, IL, USA

- Responsibilities: administering informed consent to participants, medical assisting with participant exams, specimen processing, data entry, retention outreach

Graduate Research Assistant – Qualitative Data Manager (August 2014 – December 2016)

RxHL: Medical Adherence, Health Literacy, and Cultural Health Beliefs in a Massachusetts Community Health Center (NIH Award Number R01HL120907)

- PI: Susan J. Shaw
- Location: Tucson, AZ, USA
- Responsibilities: qualitative data management; qualitative data transcription and analysis (coding in Atlas.ti); maintenance of project EndNote database; supervising undergraduate interns

Research Assistant/Coordinator (December 2011 – May 2013)

Qualitative Examination of LGBT Physician and Medical Student Experiences

- PI: Craig Klugman
- Location: San Antonio, TX, USA
- Responsibilities: assisting with IRB paperwork; preparing, conducting, and transcribing interviews, recruiting participants; analyzing interview transcripts using grounded theory

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND WORKSHOPS

Conference Session Organization

- 2022 Therapeutic Landscapes: The (Un)Making of Clinical and Healing Spaces. Session Co-Chair, Co-Organizer & Co-Chair Jessica M. Reid (UTSA). AAA Meeting. Seattle, WA. (*Accepted.*)
- 2021 Responsibility, Risk, and Care. Session Co-Chair, Co-Organizer with Daisy Paredes (UTSA). AAA Meeting. Baltimore, MD.
- 2020 Responsibility, Risk, and Care. Session Co-Chair, Co-Organizer with Daisy Paredes (UTSA). AAA Meeting. St. Louis, MO. (*Accepted, but conference cancelled due to coronavirus pandemic.*)
- 2019 Humor, Health, and Medicine. Session Chair, Co-Organizer with J. M. Reid (UTSA). AAA Meeting. Vancouver, BC.
- 2016 Somatechnics of HPV. Session Chair, Co-Organizer with Nolan Kline. AAA Meeting. Minneapolis, MN.
- 2015 Borders, Bodies, and Health: A Medical Anthropological View. Session Chair and Organizer. Open Embodiments Conference. Tucson, AZ.

Paper Presentations

- 2022 Anal Cancer Prevention: A Case Study in Bordering Sex/Gender and Sexuality. SfAA Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT.
- 2020 Caring About/Caring For: Theories of Care from a Clinical Trial. SfAA Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM. (*Accepted, but conference cancelled due to coronavirus pandemic.*)
- 2019 The Butt of the Joke: Humor at an Anal Dysplasia Clinic. AAA Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC.
- 2016 (With Nolan Kline) A Call for a Medical Anthropology of Human Papillomavirus. AAA Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.
- 2016 “Believe It or Not”: The Medical Framing of Rectal Foreign Bodies. Queer(ing) Arizona: A Graduate Student Conference. Tucson, AZ.
- 2014 The Irrelevance Narrative: Queer (In)Visibility in Medical Education and Practice. AAA Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.
- 2010 Queer Pop: Heteronormativity and Queer Commodification in American Popular Culture. College of Liberal and Fine Arts (COLFA) Spring Research Conference, UTSA, San Antonio, TX.

Poster Presentations

- 2019 The Syndemic of HPV-related Anal Disease and Environments of Risk Among HIV+ Transgender Women. Co-authors: Noah Goss, PAC, and Gary Bucher, MD. SFAA Annual Meeting, Portland, OR.
- 2016 (Presented by Dina Gavrilyuk) Medication Adherence, Health Literacy, and Cultural Beliefs (RxHL) Study. UMCCTS Community Engagement and Research Symposium, Worcester, MA.
- 2015 (With Amanda Jean Hilton) The Burden of Cost: A Mixed- Methods Approach to Exploring Ethnic Differences in Cost as a Barrier to Medication Adherence. AAA Meeting, Denver, CO.
- 2014 (Presented by Susan J. Shaw) RxHL: Medication Beliefs, Adherence, and Health Literacy in a Massachusetts Community Health Center. 6th Annual Health Literacy Research Conference, Bethesda, MD.
- 2012 Heteronormative Biomedicine: LGBT Experiences in Medical Environments. Faces of Health: Rowdy Wellness Week. Hosted by Health Education Department of Student Health Services, UTSA, San Antonio, TX.

Discussion Panels

- 2014 Science of Group Differences; Bullying and the Bystander (Moderator); The Intersections of Sciences and Humanities; Good Food, Bad Food; and LGBTQ Identities. CONvergence, Minneapolis, MN. July 4-6.
- 2014 Gender Identity and Expression: Equality and Inclusion on Campus. Women's History Month, UTSA, San Antonio, TX. March 18.
- 2014 Teaching Un(der)prepared Students. Anthropology Teaching Forum, UTSA, San Antonio, TX. Feb 19.
- 2013 Queer Rights Beyond Marriage. GLBTQ of UTSA (student org). UTSA, San Antonio, TX. Oct 21.
- 2013 *Spring Awakening* Talk Back. Discussant with cast. The Playhouse, San Antonio, TX. June 7.
- 2013 *Spring Awakening* Education Night. Post-show panel discussant. The Playhouse, San Antonio, TX. May 18.
- 2013 Personal Perspectives on Queer Culture. LGBT Graduate Student Symposium. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. April 10.
- 2012 Faces of Health. Rowdy Wellness Week Research Discussion Panel. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. April 5.

Invited Talks

- 2022 Dirt and Care: Queer Care in an Anal Dysplasia Clinic. University of Oxford Gender, Disability, and Race in Medical Anthropology virtual seminar series. May 12.
- 2022 Ethnography in Clinical Contexts. UofM-Lambuth Honors College Spring Speaker Luncheon. April 20.
- 2021 Medical Education as Socialization. The Pre-Medical Society at UTSA. Feb. 9.
- 2016 Screening Sex: Enacting HPV Through Gender and Sexuality. Deep Dish, Institute for LGBT Studies, UA. Tucson, AZ. Oct. 27.
- 2016 Queer Disclosure: Identity, Biopolitics, and Medical Practice. Bihl Haus Arts. San Antonio, Texas. June 11.
- 2015 Gender Words, Gender Norms: How Language and Culture Shape Doing Gender. Oslo Pride. Oslo, Norway. June 21.
- 2014 On Silence: Oppression and Liberation. GLBTQ of UTSA (student organization). UTSA, San Antonio, TX. April 17.
- 2013 Queer Health Disparities. LGBT Graduate Student Symposium. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. April 10.

Invited Workshops

- 2016 Teaching Anthropology, Society for Cultural Anthropology Student-Faculty Workshop, run by Angela Jenks and Leah Zani. Annual AAA Meeting, Minneapolis, MN. November 19.

Guest Lectures

- 2021 Medical Anthropology and Clinical Ethnography. School of Communication Sciences and Disorders Seminar. University of Memphis, Memphis, TN. September 29.
- 2019 Introduction to Transgender Issues. Sex, Gender & Culture. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. June 7.
- 2014 Sex: A Biocultural Approach. Forensic Anthropology. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. February 19.
- 2013 Queering Biomedicine. Queer Studies. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. October 11.
- 2013 Heteronormativity in Medical Education. Medical Anthropology. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. April 16.
- 2012 Heteronormative Biomedicine. Queer Studies. UTSA, San Antonio, TX. September 19.

SERVICE

Scholarly

Editorial Board:

Arizona Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies (2015-2016)

Peer Reviewer:

Social Science & Medicine (8 reviews, 2016-2022)

Human Organization (1 review, 2023)

Routledge Book Edition Reviewer (1 review, 2022)

Journal of Extreme Anthropology (1 review, 2020)

Sexuality & Culture (1 review, 2020)

Medicine Anthropology Theory (1 review, 2019)

Student Anthropologist: The Journal of the National Association of Student Anthropologists (1 review, 2018)

Discipline

2022-2023 Annual Meeting Program Organization Committee, SfAA, 2023 Cincinnati Meeting

2022 Human Sexuality & Anthropology Interest Group (HSAID) Book Prize Committee Member

University

2023- Women & Gender Studies Advisory Board. University of Memphis.

2019 Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC) Grant Reviewer, Spring 2019. University of Arizona.

2017 Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC) Grant Reviewer, Spring 2017. University of Arizona.

2016 Award Committee, Inclusive Excellence Awards. University of Arizona.

2016 Steering Committee, Queer(ing) Arizona: A Graduate Student Conference. University of Arizona.

2015-2016 College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Representative, Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC), University of Arizona.

2015-2016 Five-Year Review Committee for Dean of SBS, Graduate Student Member. University of Arizona.

2015-2016 Search Committee for Vice Provost of Diversity and Inclusion, Graduate Student Member. University of Arizona.

2015 Graduate & Professional Student Council (GPSC) Travel Grant Judge, Fall 2015. University of Arizona.

2015 Graduate Mentor, Summer Research Institute, University of Arizona.

2014 Mentor, LGBT Mentoring Program, University of Arizona.

Departmental

2022- MA/MPH Liaison and Advisor, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis

2022-2023 Medical Anthropology Faculty Search Committee Member, University of Memphis

2021- Faculty advisor for Anthropology Club, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis

2021- Library liaison, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis

2021-2022 Diversity and Inclusion Committee Member, Department of Anthropology, University of Memphis

2012-2013 Service Committee Chair, Anthropology Graduate Student Association of UTSA

2011-2012 Service Committee Member, Anthropology Graduate Student Association of UTSA

2011-2013 Graduate Mentor, Undergraduate Mentor Program. Sponsored by Service Committee of AGSA of UTSA

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Anthropological Association

Society for Applied Anthropology

Society for Medical Anthropology

Association for Queer Anthropology

Association of Feminist Anthropologists

Society for the Anthropology of North America
Lambda Alpha Anthropology Honors Society (lifetime membership)
American Association for the History of Medicine
National Association of Student Anthropologists (2012-2021)

Last Updated: March 2023