

Trevor J. Durbin
Curriculum Vitae

Kansas State University
Department of Sociology, Anthropology,
and Social Work
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INTERESTS

Applied and interdisciplinary research, ethnographic methods, medical anthropology, hospital ethnography, agricultural health and safety, children's health and safety, environmental anthropology, the Anthropocene, climate change, nature conservation, marine protected areas, bureaucracy, anthropological theory, pedagogy, Oceania, Rocky Mountain West, American Midwest

EDUCATION

PhD, Rice University, 2015
Cultural Anthropology
Thesis Title: Big Ocean: Marine Conservation, Bureaucratic Practice, and the Politics of Vagueness in the Pacific Islands
Committee: James Faubion, Dominic Boyer, Cymene Howe, Kerry Ward

BS, Pacific Union College, 2007
Chemistry, emphasis biochemistry
Summa Cum Laude

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2020-Present External Investigator, National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS), Marshfield Clinic Research Institute

2017-Present Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, Kansas State University

2016-17 Post-doctoral Research Associate, Department of Anthropology, University of Wyoming

- 2014-16 Instructor of Cultural Anthropology, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, Kansas State University
- 2013-14 Pre-doctoral Fellow, Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences (CEHNS), Rice University

NON-ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2012 Visiting social scientist, National Environment Service, Cook Islands Government, Rarotonga, Cook Islands
- 2012 Social science consultant, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), Apia, Samoa
- 2011-12 Intern, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), Apia, Samoa

PUBLICATIONS

Publications Under Review

Trevor J. Durbin, Amber A. Neely, Casper G. Bendixsen, and Sarah Strauss. (under review) “The Big Lie: Discursive Risk Analysis and Wildland Firefighter Safety in the Western United States.” *Environmental Research: Health*

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Trevor J. Durbin. (2023) “Charisma Work, Microstates, and the Production of Authoritative Marine Space in Oceania.” *Anthropology Matters*, 21(1).

Trevor J. Durbin. (2023) “Teaching to Cultivate a Better Anthropocene: Metaphor Work and the Conceptual Development of an Environmental Anthropology Course.” *Journal of Sustainability Education*, 28.

Ryan T. Klataske, **Trevor J. Durbin**, Kathrine L. Barnes, Kyle Koshalek, Casper G. Bendixsen. (2023) “Parent Perspectives on the Benefits and Risks of Child-Livestock Interactions.” *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 164.

Trevor J. Durbin, Ryan Klataske, and Casper G. Bendixsen. (2023) “Transitional Workplaces: Alt-Meat and Beef Producer Health and Safety in the Kansas Flint Hills.” *Journal of Agromedicine*, 28(1), 61-68.

Casper Bendixsen, **Trevor J. Durbin**, and Jakob Hanschu. (2020) “‘Progressive Ranching’ and Wrangling the Wind as Ecocultural Identity Maintenance in the Anthropocene” in the *Routledge Handbook of Ecocultural Identity*. (pp. 164-178.) Routledge.

Danielle Jensen-Ryan, Rachael Budowle, Sarah Struss, **Trevor J. Durbin**, Tyler A. Beeton, Kathleen A. Galvin. (2019) “A Cultural Consensus of Fire and Futility: Harvesting Beetle-Kill for Wood-Based Bioenergy in Wyoming and Colorado.” *Energy Research & Social Science*, 58, 101272.

Trevor J. Durbin, Casper Bendixsen, Daniel Jensen-Ryan, Abigail Molzer, and Sarah Strauss. (2019) “The Dangerous Middle: Situational Awareness and Worker Perception of Beetle Kill.” *Journal of Agromedicine*, 24(2), 157-166.

Trevor J. Durbin (2018) “‘What now, Fishgate?’: Scandal, Marae Moana, and Nation-Making in the Cook Islands.” *The Contemporary Pacific*, 30(1), 1-31.

James Bennett, Robin Roth, Sarah C Klain, Kai Chan, Patrick Christie, Douglas A Clark, Georgina Cullman, Deborah Curran, **Trevor J. Durbin**, Graham Epstein, Alison Greenberg, Michael P Nelson, John Sandlos, Richard Stedman, Tara L Teel, Rebecca Thomas, Diogo Veríssimo, Carina Wyborn (2017) “Conservation Social Science: Understanding and Integrating Human Dimensions to Improve Conservation.” *Biological Conservation*, 205, 93-108.

Cymene Howe, Jessica Lockrem, Hannah Appel, Edward Hackett, Dominic Boyer, Randall Hall, Matthew Schneider-Mayerson, Albert Pope, Akhil Gupta, Elizabeth Rodwell, Andrea Ballesterio, **Trevor Durbin**, Fares el-Dahdah, Elizabeth Long, Cyrus Mody (2015) “Paradoxical Infrastructures: Ruins, Retrofit & Risk.” *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 41(3), 547-565.

Reports

Trevor J. Durbin, Sarah Strauss, Casper Bendixsen, Danielle Jensen-Ryan, Abigaile Molzer. “Assessing Worker Perceptions of Health and Safety Risk in Beetle-Killed Forests.” (May 2018) Report prepared for the High Plains and Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HICAHS).

Nalini S. Rao, Tim Carruthers, Paul Anderson, Loraini Sivo, Tracey Saxby, **Trevor Durbin**, Vainuupo Jungblut, Terry Hills, Stuart Chape (2013) “An Economic Analysis of Ecosystem-based Adaptation and Engineering Options for Climate Change Adaptation in Lami Town, Republic of the Fiji Islands.” A technical report by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, Apia, Samoa

Daniel Wagner (Ed.) (2013) “Big Ocean: A Shared Research Agenda for Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas.” Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument & UNESCO World Heritage Site (PMNM)/NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (contributing author)

Trevor Durbin and Andrew Kennedy (2012) “Understanding and Applying the Precautionary Principle: A Sociocultural and Legal Approach.” Noumea Convention Information Paper.

AWARDS, HONORS, AND GRANTS

- 2020-25 Principal Investigator, Kansas Research – “Farm Kid Paradox: Anthropological Inquiry into the Benefits and Risks of Child-Livestock Interaction.” CDC-NIOSH 6 UH54OH009568-11-1 *National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety*. (\$117,000)
- 2018-19 Outstanding Faculty Award for the College of Arts and Sciences, Mortar Board Senior Honor’s Society (K-State Chapter).
- 2016 Principal Investigator – “Assessing Worker Perceptions of Health and Safety Risk in Beetle-Killed Forests.” High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health & Safety Emerging Issues Grant Program (Co-PI Sarah Strauss; \$25,000)
- 2016 Principal Investigator – Slater Fund Grant, Department of Anthropology, University of Wyoming (\$1,000)
- 2015 Nominated for the John W. Gardner Award for Best Dissertation in the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences, Rice University
- 2011-12 Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, Social Science Research Institute, Rice University (\$4,000)
- 2010 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Honorable Mention
- 2008-12 Rice University Graduate Fellowship, Department of Anthropology

INVITED TALKS

- 2022 “Teaching to Cultivate a Better Anthropocene: From Failure to Nurture.” Open Learning & Teaching Collaborative, Plymouth State University, Plymouth, NH (October 13)
- 2018 “Risk Perception in Beetle Kill Logging Areas.” High Plains and Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (HICAHS) Research Symposium. Colorado State University. Fort Collins, CO. (September 6)
- 2018 “Big Lies and Dangerous Middles: Using Ethnographic Listening to Understand Forest Worker Safety.” Marshfield Clinic Research Institute Scientific Seminar Series, Marshfield, WI. (April 25)
- 2017 “Making Marae Moana: The Contributions of Scandal and Vagueness.” Colorado State University, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources Frontiers of Conservation Social Science Lecture Series, Ft. Collins, CO (February 17)
- 2016 “The Vague Pacific: Toward an Anthropology for Horizontal Life,” University of Wyoming, Department of Anthropology Fall 2016 Seminar Series, Laramie, WY

(December 2)

- 2014 “Toward a Political Ecology of Vagueness in an Age of Ocean Integration,” Rice University Department of Anthropology Brown Bag Lecture Series (September 3)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND POSTERS

- 2023 “An Anthropological Investigation on Effective Ethnographic Methods for Identifying Challenges and Barriers in the Emergency Department.” (3rd author with Richard Simonson and Raymond Chan) Paper abstract submitted to the 2023 International Symposium on Human Factors and Ergonomics in Health Care, Orlando, FL (March 26-29)
- 2018 “Designing Student Empowerment and Activisms through Wayfaring in the Anthropocene.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting— Science and Environmental Education in a Changing World: Part 1- Human-Ecological Learning, Activism, and Community Justice, San Jose, CA (November 14)
- 2017 “Our Lives Have Become This Forest”: The Conflicting Values and the Ethical Dilemmas of Multiple Use Management in Beetle-killed Forests.” (with Sarah Strauss), Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) Annual Meeting, Santa Fe, NM (March 28-April 1)
- 2016 “Sustainable Biofuel Feedstocks from Beetle-killed Wood, Bioenergy Alliance Network of the Rockies (BANR): Task 6, Health and Safety.” (with Sarah Strauss, Rob Keefe, Peter Kolb, and Xuexian Qin) Poster presented at the BANR annual meeting, Laramie, WY (October 3-5)
- 2014 “A Pre-Ethics of (Im)possibility in the Anthropocene.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting—Producing Anthropology, Washington, D.C. (December 3-7)
Panel invited by the Society for Cultural anthropology and the Environment and Anthropology Society.
- 2014 “Concealments and Revelations of Imagination: Environmental Opacity and Bureaucratic Secrets of the Pacific Ocean.” American Ethnological Society Spring meeting in collaboration with the Society for Visual Anthropology— In/visibility: Projects, Media, Politics, Boston, MA (April 10-12)
- 2013 “Between the Lines: The Bureaucratic Practice of Applied Scholarship as Ethnographic Device.” New Directions in Anthropology Graduate Student Conference, Rice University, Houston, TX (March 22-23)
- 2010 “Wrangling Wind: Speculative Futures Among Ranchers in Texas and Wind Energy Companies.” (with Casper Bendixsen) American Anthropological

Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (November 17-21)

- 2009 “Collaborative Knowledge Production in Science and Technology Studies and the Anthropology of Science.” STS Across Borders Graduate Student Conference Department of Science & Technology in Society, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA (March 20-22)

ROUNDTABLES, THINK TANKS, AND WORKSHOPS

- 2023 Invited Presenter and Discussant. “What is ethnography, anyway? Participating and observing behind the lines.” *Observing on the Front Lines Human Factors Transforming Healthcare* Webinar Series (April 20)
- 2016 Invited Participant, Think Tank on the Human Dimensions of Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas, Big Ocean Network & NOAA, Honolulu, HI (February 8-10)
- 2014 Roundtable discussant, “Energy and Environmental Humanities Moving Forward,” Cultures of Energy Spring Research Symposium, Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences (CEHNS), Houston, TX (April 24-26)
- 2014 Participant, Collaborative Ethnography Workshop, Sponsored by the American Ethnological Society, American Ethnological Society Spring meeting— In/visibility: Projects, Media, Politics, Boston, MA (April 10-12)
- 2014 Invited Participant, Think Tank on Infrastructure and the Human Sciences, Social Analytics faculty, Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences (CEHNS), Houston, TX (March 14)
- 2011 Invited Participant, “Big Ocean Network: A Research Agenda and Science Dissemination Strategy for Large-Scale MPAs,” Marine Conservation Think Tank, Big Ocean Network & the Society for Conservation Biology, Auckland, NZ (December 2-5)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS (Instructor)

Classes Taught: ANTH 204, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (200-300 students); ANTH 315, Introduction to Medical Anthropology and Global Health; ANTH 310, Environmental Anthropology in the Anthropocene; ANTH 602, Anthropological Theory; ANTH 518, Trends in Anthropological Theory; ANTH 301, Initiation to Anthropology; ANTH 501, Proficiency Development (Student Teaching); DAS 195, CAT Community: Cultures of Healing and Global Health

Cloud County Community College, Junction City, KS (Instructor)

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Spring 2013, Fall 2013)

Highland Community College, Wamego, KS (Instructor)

General Anthropology (Fall 2013)

Rice University, Houston, TX (Teaching Assistant)

Culture, Energy, and the Environment (Spring 2014)

The Social Life of Clean Energy (Spring 2011)

SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Pro-bono Consulting

2022-Present Consultant, Medical Anthropology and Ethnographic Methods, Human Factors Team, Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, MO

Public Talks, Guest Lectures, and Training Sessions

- 2022 “Using Ethnographic Listening to Understand Complex Systems.” Training delivered to staff and faculty of Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, MO (October, asynchronous)
- 2022 “Doing Collaborative Ethnography in a Pediatric Emergency Department Setting.” Training delivered to staff and faculty of Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, MO (November 2)
- 2022 “How to Think Like an Anthropologist.” Talk delivered to staff and faculty of Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, MO (September 2)
- 2021 “What is Healing? An Anthropological Perspective.” Talk given to Pre-Health Ambassadors, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS (November 30)
- 2021 “Locating Climate Change: Vulnerability and Hope in the Gilbert Islands.” Talk given for the panel *Let's Talk Climate Change: What's at Stake and What Can We Do?*, hosted by Students for Environmental Action (SEA), Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS (March 4)
- 2016 “Anthropology for Improved Ocean Health,” Guest lecture, Anthropology of Global Issues, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY (September 28)
- 2010 “Wrangling Wind: Rethinking Community Resistance to Wind Farm Development” Guest lecture, The Social Life of Clean Energy, Rice University,

Houston, TX (March)

Conference and Panel Organization

Panel organizer and chair, “Heritage and Innovation: Intersections of Energy, Agriculture, and Ethics,” Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) Annual Meeting, Santa Fe, NM (March 28-April 1, 2017)

Discussant: Casper Bendixsen

Organization and planning team, Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences (CEHNS) 3rd Annual Symposium (April 24-26, 2014)

Panel co-organizer and co-chair (with Maria Vidart-Delgado), “Producing in/visibility: Secrets, concealment, and opacity in ethnographic fields,” American Ethnological Society Spring meeting— In/visibility: Projects, Media, Politics, Boston, MA (April 10-12, 2014)

Discussant: Hugh Gusterson

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

One month (2017) of ethnographic fieldwork, including participant-observation, interviews, and archival research exploring the ritual burning of bark-beetle effigies as a means of coping with catastrophic landscape change due to western pine beetle epidemics in Custer, SD. Two undergraduate student researchers supervised and trained in ethnographic methods.

One month, over two summers (2016-2017), of ethnographic and mixed methods research assessing expert, community, and worker perceptions of health and safety risks associated with recreation, logging, and fire fighting in beetle-killed forests throughout Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado (with Sarah Strauss).

Fourteen months (2011-2012) of ethnographic fieldwork among experts, agency professionals, government officials, and traditional leaders throughout the Pacific Islands region, including participant-observation at international conferences as an intern with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) and as a visiting researcher with the Cook Islands National Environment Service. Fieldwork was largely conducted in Samoa and the Cook Islands, with strategic short-term research in the Gilbert Islands (Republic of Kiribati), Fiji, and New Zealand.

Rapid ethnographic assessment (with Casper Bendixsen) of the cultural and social drivers of resistance to, and acceptance of, wind farm development among ranchers in West Texas (Fall 2010)

ONGOING RESEARCH

Farm-Kid Paradox: Anthropological Inquiry into the Benefits and Risks of Child-Livestock Interaction

Five years (2020-2025) of ethnographic research (including participant and direct observation, semi-structured interviews, free-listing, and pile-sort techniques) to understand discursive gaps and risks among three communities: parents raising children around beef cattle, parents raising children around dairy cattle, and agricultural safety professional. This project has three broad aims: (1) identify how these three communities understand the risks and benefits of the common livestock activities children perform, (2) understand the similarities and differences in how these communities think about benefits and risks, and (3) refine existing injury prevention materials by bridging cultural and communication gaps. Funded by CDC-NIOSH (6 UH54OH009568-11-1) in collaboration with the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety. Read more at: <https://marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs/FarmKidParadox>

Collaborative Hospital Ethnography in the Children's Mercy Emergency Department, Kansas City, MO/KS

In addition to providing methodological training and support, I was asked by the Children's Mercy Human Factors team to help design and participate in collaborative, interdisciplinary ethnographic research to identify hidden factors contributing to post-pandemic challenges in two emergency department campuses.

RESEARCH COMPETENCIES

Ethnographic fieldwork, collaborative ethnography, organizational ethnography, event ethnography, mixed methods collaboration, discursive risk analysis (DRA), thematic data analysis, use of qualitative data analysis software (Nvivo and Atlas.ti); grant writing.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA)