

Rita M. Bouwens (she/her)
 PhD Student and Graduate Teaching Assistant
 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 Department of Anthropology
 109 Davenport Hall, 607 S. Mathews Ave. Urbana, IL, 61801
bouwens2@illinois.edu

Education

Ph.D. (2027 expected) Anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 Advisor: Dr. Jane C. Desmond

M.A. (2021) Applied Anthropology, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS. Thesis title:
 “A Zoological Spectacular: Conservation in an American Zoo.”
 Co-advisors: Dr. Kate McClellan and Dr. David M. Hoffman

B.A. (2016) *Summa Cum Laude*, Anthropology, Modern Languages and Literatures (Spanish and French), Beloit College, Beloit WI.

Research Interests

Environmental anthropology, multispecies ethnography, human-animal relationships, political ecology, wildlife conservation

Grants, Scholarships, and Awards

External Grants, Scholarships, and Awards:

2019	(Alternate) Fulbright U.S. Student Program, Institute of International Education, Open Study/Research Award, Costa Rica
2014-2016	Wisconsin Foundation for Independent Colleges Rath Scholarship. \$12,000/year
2014-2016	M. Alice Smith Scholarship. \$4,000/year
2015	Ronald E. McNair Scholar Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program award, U.S. Department of Education. \$2,800/summer
2014	Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, U.S. Department of State. \$4,000

Internal Scholarships and Grants:

2018-2019	Mississippi State University Office of the Graduate School Incoming Student Fellowship. \$2,500
2012-2016	Eaton Merit Scholarship. Beloit College. \$10,000/year
2015	Mouat and Whiteford Endowed Research Fund. Beloit College Department of Anthropology. \$1,600

2013 Lockwood Field School Scholarship. Beloit College Department of Anthropology. \$500

Research Experience

Jan 2020-Aug 2021 Master's student, thesis research. Designed, conducted, and analyzed IRB-approved ethnographic research on conservation in an American zoo.

Aug-Dec 2019 Master's student, graduate ethnographic methods course. Helped design and conduct IRB-approved ethnographic research in Starkville, MS on tailgating, wrote an NSF-style mock proposal about live animal mascots.

Jan-May 2016 Student, undergraduate ethnographic methods course. Designed and conducted IRB-approved ethnographic research in Beloit, WI on barriers to pet adoption.

Jan-May 2015 Student, Associated Colleges of the Midwest. San Pedro de Montes de Oca, Costa Rica. Designed and conducted IRB-approved ethnographic research in San Rafael de Heredia, Costa Rica. Studied human-animal relationships, specifically regarding people's perceptions of and interactions with livestock and companion animals and how those categories are defined and constructed.

Mar-July 2014 Student, Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Beloit, WI. Designed and executed IRB-approved exploratory ethnographic research project about food choice and political economy in Beloit, WI. Interviewed and conducted participant observation in Beloit area restaurants.

June 2013 Ethnographic field school participant, Beloit College Department of Anthropology, directed by Dr. Lisa Anderson-Levy and Dr. Nancy Krusko. Kingston, Jamaica. Researched coming-of-age narratives from Jamaican women in a 3-week-long ethnographic field school. Conducted IRB-approved participant observation and interviews at internship site. Interned for the Jamaica Cultural Development Center.

Publications

2021 "Anthropology from the Bedroom: Navigating Ethnographic Methods in the Time of COVID-19." Consortium of Practicing and Applied Anthropologists.
<https://www.copaainfo.org/post/anthropology-from-the-bedroom-navigating-ethnographic-methods-in-the-time-of-covid-19>

Conference and Symposium Presentations

May 2021 "A Zoological Spectacular: Conservation in an American Zoo." Virtual presentation. Witnessing and Worlding Beyond the Human: An Interdisciplinary and Interspecies Conversation (May 28-29, 2021) by Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

- March 2021 “A Zoological Spectacular: Conservation in an American Zoo.” Virtual poster presentation. Mississippi State University Graduate Student Research Symposium.
- March 2021 “A Zoological Spectacular: Conservation in an American Zoo.” Virtual poster presentation. 81st Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology (March 23-27, 2021). Remote.
- Nov. 2015 “From Papaya-Eating Dachshunds to Animals that Taste Good: Perceptions of and Interactions with Animals in San Rafael de Heredia, Costa Rica.” 14th Annual International Symposium (November 18th, 2015). Beloit, WI.
- Aug. 2014 “Who Eats What and Why?: A Political Economy Study of Food Choice in Beloit, WI.” 23rd Annual McNair Scholars Symposium. University of California, Berkeley. Berkeley, CA.
- Nov. 2013 “Behave Yourself!: An Ethnographic Study of the Self through Coming-of-Age Narratives from Kingston, Jamaica.” 12th Annual International Symposium (November 20th, 2013). Beloit, WI.

Relevant Coursework

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	Social and Cultural Theory
Field School Preparation	Field Research in Cultural Anthropology
McNair Research Preparatory Seminar	Research Design in Anthropology
Anthropology of the Consumer Society	Reflexivity
ACM Costa Rica field research program	Ethnographic Methods (undergrad and grad)
Environment & Society (grad)	Applied Cultural Anthropology (grad seminar)
Adv. Cultural Geography (grad seminar)	Current Cultural Theory (grad seminar)
Environmental Anthropology (grad sem.)	Quantitative Methods in Anthropology (grad seminar)

Teaching, Internships, and Work Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant

2021-present	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ANTH 103: Anthropology in a Changing World
2020-2021	Mississippi State University CO 2413: Introduction to News Writing and Reporting
2018-2020	Mississippi State University AN 1143: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Seasonal Team Member

2019-2021	John Ball Zoo Grand Rapids, MI
-----------	-----------------------------------

Facilitated admissions and guest experiences (camel rides, budgerigar aviary, zipline, ropes course, funicular tram)

Instructor of Record

2016-2018 Henan University
Kaifeng, Henan, China
Undergraduate English Writing and Oral English

Museum Attendant

2015-2016 Logan Museum of Anthropology. Beloit, WI.

Tutor

2013-2016 Beloit Memorial High School Upward Bound. Beloit, WI.

Intern

June-July 2015 Collections, Black Point Estate Museum. Lake Geneva, WI.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant

Aug-Dec 2014 Beloit College
FREN 110: Intermediate French
ANTH 206: Social and Cultural Theory

Office Assistant

2013 Office assistant for the Beloit College Department of Anthropology.
Beloit, WI.

Languages

Spanish (proficient in speaking, reading, and writing)
French (semi-proficient in speaking, reading, and writing)

Technological Skills

MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software
QDA Miner Lite qualitative data analysis software
SPSS Statistical Analysis

Memberships and Affiliations

2021-present Society for Applied Anthropology
2015-present Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society
2014-present Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program
2013-present Ronald E. McNair Scholar Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program
2013-2014 American Anthropological Association