

Virginia Kuulei Berndt, PhD

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EDUCATION:

- Ph.D.** – Sociology, University of Delaware (2021)
Comprehensive Exam Areas: Health and Sociological Theory
Dissertation: *Women’s Embodied Experiences with Contraception and its Medicalization*
(Chair: Ann V. Bell, PhD)
- M.A.** – Sociology, Lehigh University (2016)
Thesis: *Different Disasters, Differential Impacts: The Effect of Droughts and Floods on Women’s HIV Burden in Developing Nations* (Chair: Kelly F. Austin, PhD)
- B.A.** – Sociology and Philosophy, Millersville University of Pennsylvania (2013)
Thesis: *Life, Money, and Liberty: Religious Frames and the Contraceptive Clause of the Affordable Care Act* (Chair: Carrie Lee Smith, PhD)
Departmental Honors
- A.A.** – Social Sciences, Harrisburg Area Community College (2011)
Highest Honors

ACADEMIC POSITIONS:

Assistant Professor of Sociology – Texas A&M International University (2021-present)

PUBLICATIONS:

BOOKS:

Brown, Brian and **Virginia Kuulei Berndt**. (Forthcoming) *Body Art (Arts for Health)*. Emerald Publishing. [\[Link to Book Listing\]](#)

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES:

Manzer, Jamie L., **Virginia Kuulei Berndt**, and Ann V. Bell. 2022. “Intersections between Culture, Contraception, Knowledge and the Body in the USA.” *Culture, Health & Sexuality* (Online First). [\[DOI\]](#)

Manzer, Jamie L., **Virginia Kuulei Berndt**, and Ann V. Bell. 2022. “Comparing methods of long-acting reversible contraception: A qualitative study of Delaware women’s perceptions of intrauterine devices and the implant.” *Contraception* 113: 73-77. [\[DOI\]](#)

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei and Ann V. Bell. 2021. “‘This is What the Truth is’: Provider-patient interactions serving as barriers to contraception.” *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness, and Medicine* 25(5): 613-629. [\[DOI\]](#)

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei and Ann V. Bell. 2021. “Contextualizing Barriers to Long-Acting Reversible Contraception in Delaware.” *Contraception* 103(6): 439-443. [\[DOI\]](#)

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei and Kelly F. Austin. 2021. “Drought and Disproportionate Disease: An Investigation of Gendered Vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS in Less-Developed Nations.” *Population and Environment* 42(3): 379-405. [\[DOI\]](#)

Austin, Kelly, Mark D. Noble, and **Virginia Kuulei Berndt**. 2021. “Drying Climates and Gendered Suffering: Links Between Drought, Food Insecurity, and Women’s HIV in Less-Developed Countries.” *Social Indicators Research* 154(1): 313-334. [\[DOI\]](#)

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei. 2020. “Contextualizing Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings: A Comparison of State-Level Contraceptive Refill Policies, Title X Clinic Availability, and Emergency Refill Laws in California, Texas, South Dakota, and New York.” *Sociological Viewpoints* 34(1): 115-133. [\[DOI\]](#)

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei. 2018. “Gender, Disaster, and Women’s Access to Contraception and Reproductive Healthcare.” *Sociology Compass* 12(12): e12645. [\[DOI\]](#)

Austin, Kelly F., Michelle Choi, and **Virginia Berndt**. 2017. “Trading Sex for Security: Unemployment and the Unequal HIV Burden Among Young Women in Developing Nations.” *International Sociology* 32(3): 343-368. [\[DOI\]](#)

ARTICLES IN PROGRESS:

Berndt, Virginia Kuulei and Ann V. Bell. “‘I Just (Don’t) Know:’ Embodied Aversion as an Expansion of Embodied Knowledge.”

INTERVIEWS & MEDIA:

2023 – **Laredo Morning Times**. “[TAMIU professor from Turkey pleads for locals to help home country.](#)”

2022 – **E&E News**. “[Packing a hurricane go bag? Don’t forget your birth control.](#)”

2022 – **Laredo Morning Times**. “[Sociology expert weighs in on Roe v. Wade repercussions.](#)”

2022 – **Dvino Magazine**. “Roe v. Wade decision could affect gay marriage.”

2021 – **Vox**. “[It’s time to stop describing lifesaving health care as elective.](#)”

2021 – **E&E News**. “[SCOTUS may limit abortion access. So might climate change.](#)”

2020 – **YASS Magazine**. “[Virginia Berndt on body positivity and awareness towards invisible illnesses.](#)”

2020 – **UDaily**. “[How is COVID-19 Impacting Delawareans?](#)”

GRANTS AND AWARDS:

RESEARCH AND PROGRAMMATIC GRANTS:

2023-2024 – (Co-Investigator) Multi-Disciplinary Training of the Next Generation of Public Health Practitioners of South Texas, awarded to Cindy Salazar-Collier. Texas A&M International University Innovation Grant. Role: Co-Investigator. Award Amount: \$47,850.

2021-2025 – (Co-Investigator) GET PHIT: Gaining Equity in Training for Public Health Informatics and Technology, awarded to Eric Boerwinkle and Jiaje Zhang. U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology: The PHIT Workforce Development Program. Role: Co-Investigator, Committed effort: 20%. Subaward amount: \$453,600 over four years.

2021 – (Principal Investigator) University Research Grant, Texas A&M International University: “Women’s Experiences with Contraceptive Access and Use at the U.S.-Mexico Border during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” Award amount: \$10,000

2015 – (Principal Investigator) Dale S. Strohl Research Fellowship Award, Lehigh University: “Global Environmental Degradation and HIV/AIDS Prevalence among Women.” Award amount: \$5,000

SUBMITTED GRANT PROPOSALS:

2023 – (Co-Principal Investigator) ERIDA: Expanding Research in Data Analytics. Requesting \$899,416 over three years from the National Science Foundation. Principal Investigator: John Kilburn, Co-Principal Investigators: Geoffrey Hubona and Ned Kock.

AWARDS:

2018 – Natural Hazards Center: Annual Hazards and Disasters Student Paper Competition

2016 – Lehigh University: Donald T. Campbell Social Science Research Prize (Finalist)

2016 – Lehigh University: Graduate Life Leadership Award (Honorable Mention)

2013 – Millersville University: Outstanding Sociology Senior Award

RESEARCH ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE:

2016-2021: University of Delaware

“Delaware Contraceptive Access Now (Del-CAN) Evaluation.”
Principal Investigator: Ann V. Bell, PhD

2020: Disaster Research Center (DRC), University of Delaware

“COVID-19: Community Impacts and Adaptation Study.”
Principal Investigators: Tricia Wachtendorf, PhD; James Kendra, PhD

2015-2016: Lehigh University

“Community-Based Research in Bududa, Uganda” (Remote duties from USA).
Principal Investigator: Kelly F. Austin, PhD

COURSES TAUGHT:

UNDERGRADUATE:

SOCI 3304: Sociological Theory

SOCI 4375: Special Topics (Sociology of Disasters)

SOCI 4375: Special Topics (Introduction to Health, Medicine, & Society)

GRADUATE:

SOCI 5301: Contemporary Studies of Social Problems (Sociology of Reproduction)

SOCI 5301: Contemporary Studies of Social Problems (Women, Gender, & Health)

SOCI 5305: Sociology of Health & Illness

TEACHING COURSEWORK AND PROFESSIONALIZATION:

- 2021** – Basics of Online Teaching and Learning, CIRTL, University of Delaware
- 2018** – SOCI 698: Teaching Social Science, University of Delaware
- 2014-2015** – Teacher Development Program, Lehigh University

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

ASA = American Sociological Association	SFP = Society for Family Planning
ESS = Eastern Sociological Society	SSSP = Society for the Study of Social Problems
ISA = International Sociological Association	SWS = Sociologists for Women in Society
NEEDS = Northern European Emergency & Disaster Studies	UD SOCCJ = U. Delaware Dept. of Sociology & Criminal Justice
OSSD = Organization for the Study of Sex Differences	

2023 – **International Workshop on HIV & Women:** (*Invited*) “Impact of Food Insecurity.”

2023 – **ESS:** “News Coverage of the Right to Contraceptives Post-*Dobbs*.”

2022 – **SSS:** “Contextualizing Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings.”

2022 – **ESS:** “‘I Just (Don’t) Know:’ Understandings of and Embodied Aversion toward Contraception.”

2021 – **ASA:** “‘I don’t know how it affects the body’: The relationship between contraception and the anatomical body.”

2021 – **ASA:** (*Invited*) “Entering the Academic Job Market During COVID-19: Guidance on Successful Sociology Placements in Troubling Times.”

2020 – **SFP:** “‘I really can’t take it out now’: Provider and administrator attitudes and experiences with early LARC removal.”

2020 – **ASA:** “Body Positivity & Bourdieu: An Analysis of the Body Positive Movement’s Past, Present, and Future.”

2020 – **SSSP:** “Invisible Contradictions: Complicating and Contextualizing Barriers to Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC).” (Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic)

2020 – **ESS:** “The Persistence of the Paradigm: Providers’ Selective Incorporation of Emerging Contraceptive Knowledge.”

2020 – **ESS:** “The Delaware CAN intervention: Reducing unintended pregnancy by increasing access to contraception.”

2019 – **ASA:** “‘It throws your body off:’ Women and provider knowledges in contraceptive conceptualization and decision-making.”

2019 – **NEEDS:** “Drying Climates and Disproportionate Disease: Droughts and the HIV Burden among Women in Less-Developed Nations.”

2019 – **OSSD:** “Present Women’s Healthcare Policies Worsen Future Disaster Impacts.”

2019 – **UD SOCCJ Conference:** “‘But you kept your ovaries:’ Rethinking hormonal hierarchies and menopausal symptom legitimation among hysterectomy patients.”

2019 – ESS: “Contrasting Knowledges & Impactful Interactions: Contraceptive Knowledges, Hierarchies, Desires, and Decision-Making at the Interactional Level.”

2019 – ESS: “Moving beyond the individual: Providers as potential barriers to contraception.”

2018 – ISA: “Different Disasters, Differential Impacts: The Effect of Droughts and Floods on Women’s HIV Burden in Developing Nations.”

2018 – Natural Hazards Workshop: “Disasters and Women’s Access to Contraceptives.”

2018 – UD Grad. Student Forum: “Compromised Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings.”

2018 – ESS: “What is ‘Natural?’ The Medicalization of Contraception and Its Impact on Women’s Contraceptive Understanding and Decision-Making.”

2018 – UD SOCCJ Conference: “Women’s Online Chronic Reproductive Illness Forums: Creating & Maintaining Health Disparities?”

2017 – UD Grad. Student Forum: “Violence, Sugar, and Sustenance: Intimate Partner Violence against Young Women in Less-Developed Countries involved in Sugar Daddy Relationships.”

2017 – ESS: “Complicating and Contextualizing Barriers to Contraceptive Use.”

2016 – ESS: “Trading Sex for Security: Unemployment and the Unequal HIV Burden Among Young Women in Developing Nations.”

2014 – ESS: “Life, Money, and Liberty: Religious Frames and the Contraceptive Clause of the Affordable Care Act.”

2014 – SWS: “Life, Money, and Liberty: Religious Frames and the Contraceptive Clause of the Affordable Care Act.”

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING & PRESIDING:

2023 – SSSP: “Invisible Disabilities and the Body in Physical and Virtual Spaces.”

2023 – SSSP: “Reproductive Bodies and Autonomy.”

2022 – SSSP: “Reproductive Justice: Race, Intersectionality, and Health.”

2021 – SSSP: “Mind, Body, and Fitness.”

2021 – SSSP: “Being Made Vulnerable in the Era of COVID-19: Global Responses and Perspectives.”

2018 – ASA: Roundtable – “Intimate Partner Violence.”

2017 – UD Grad. Student Forum: “(en)Gendered History, Governance, & Social Institutions”

INVITED LECTURES & PRESENTATIONS:

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

2023 – TAMIU: “Songs & Signs” (Prof. Emily Vanchella)

2023 – TAMIU: “Your Voice, My Voice, Our Voice” (Profs. Omar Ramirez, Janet M. Carrillo)

2022 – TAMIU: “Social Warrior for Issues that Matter” (Prof. Janet M. Carrillo)

2021 – American University: “Power, Privilege, & Inequality” (Prof. Zephi Francis)

2020 – Millersville University: “Social Statistics” (Prof. Carrie Lee Smith)

2020 – University of Florida: “Medical Sociology” (Prof. Harvey L. Nicholson Jr., PhD)

2018 – University of Central Florida: “Medical Sociology” (Prof. Harvey L. Nicholson Jr., PhD)

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2023 – TAMIU: “Turkey-Syria Earthquake Relief Effort”

2022 – TAMIU: “Ecofeminism, HIV, and Droughts: Understanding the Connection between Women’s Health and the Environment”

2021 – University of Delaware: “Drying Climates and Gendered Suffering”

2020 – University of Delaware: “Hindsight is 2020: COVID-19 Community Impacts”

ACADEMIC SERVICE & AFFILIATIONS:

TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

- College of Arts & Sciences (COAS):
 - Graduate Council Member (Appointed)
 - TAMIU’s Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee (TIDE)
- Job Search Committees:
 - Advanced Assistant/Associate Professor, Criminology
 - Assistant Professor, Public Administration
- Sociology Program:
 - Assessment Co-Coordinator (BA, MA)
 - Master’s Thesis Committee Member: Erica Benavides-Moore
 - Graduate Advisory Committee Member: Iraida Elizondo
- Sames Mentorship Program: Mentor to two local high school seniors
- TAMIU Fashion Society: Faculty Advisor

AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (ASA) – SECTION ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF BODY & EMBODIMENT

- Social Media Manager: Communications Committee (2020-present)
- Member: Mentorship, Nominations, & Membership Committees (2019-present)
- Contributor: “Ask a Mentor” Column (2021)
- Council Member: Student Representative-Elect (2020-2021)

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS (SSSP)

- Health, Health Policy, and Health Services Division: Co-Chair (2023-2025)
- Health, Health Policy, and Health Services Division: Graduate Student Paper Award Committee (2023)
- Sport, Leisure, and the Body Division: Graduate Student Paper Award Committee (2022)

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Graduate Student Council: Jan Burrows Award Committee Chair (2016; 2019)
- Graduate Student Council: Vice-President (2017-2018)
- Graduate Student Council: Graduate Student Government Senator (2017-2018)
- Graduate Student Conference: Keynote Speaker Committee Chair (2018)
- Minority Mentor Lecture Series: Workshop Committee Co-Chair (2020)

DISASTER RESEARCH CENTER (DRC) AFFILIATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE (2017-2021)

- Russell Dynes Summer Scholar (2018, 2019)

MANUSCRIPT REFEREE SERVICE (BY JOURNAL):

BMJ Open

Disasters

Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness, & Medicine

Health Education and Behavior

International Journal of Comparative Sociology

International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction

International Sociology

Qualitative Health Research

Qualitative Sociology

Social Problems

Social Science Research

Sociological Inquiry

Sociology Compass

The Lancet Planetary Health

Women's Health

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

American Sociological Association

Eastern Sociological Society

International Sociological Association

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Sociologists for Women in Society

Southern Sociological Society