

Virginia Kuulei Berndt, PhD

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Texas A&M International University
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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**. *Body Art (Arts for Health)*. Under Contract with Emerald Publishing (Manuscript complete.)

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. [\[DOI\]](#)

- 2020 –*International Sociology* Feature:International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- 2018 –*International Sociology*’s Topic of the Month

ARTICLES IN PROGRESS:

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

INTERVIEWS:

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:

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.

TRAVEL GRANTS:

2016-2020 – Travel Awards from The University of Delaware Office of Graduate Studies, The Disaster Research Center, The Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studies, and Eastern Sociological Society. Total: \$4,675

2016 – Travel Awards from Lehigh University’s Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Health, Medicine, & Society, and Graduate Student Senate. Total: \$550

2011 – Guy and Helen Swope Travel Award, Harrisburg Area Community College. Award amount: \$1,000.

AWARDS:

2020 – Laura Bassi Scholarship (Honorable Mention) – Bassi Foundation, Editing Press

2018 – Annual Hazards and Disasters Student Paper Competition (Winner) – Natural Hazards Center, University of Colorado, Boulder

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

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

2013 – Outstanding Sociology Senior Award (Winner) – Millersville University

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: Sociology of Disasters
- SOCI 4375: 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:

2023 – *(Invited)* “Impact of Food Insecurity.” International Workshop on HIV and Women (Virology Education), Seattle.

2023 – “News Coverage of the Right to Contraceptives Post-*Dobbs*.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Baltimore.

2022 – “Contextualizing Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings.” Southern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Birmingham.

2022 – “‘I Just (Don’t) Know’: Understandings of and Embodied Aversion toward Contraception.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Boston.

2021 – “‘I don’t know how it affects the body’: The relationship between contraception and the anatomical body.” American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Virtual Meeting.

2021 – *(Invited)* “Entering the Academic Job Market During COVID-19: Guidance on Successful Sociology Placements in Troubling Times,” American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Virtual Meeting

2020 – “‘I really can’t take it out now’: Provider and administrator attitudes and experiences with early LARC removal.” Society for Family Planning Annual Conference, Washington, DC. (Virtual poster presentation due to COVID-19 pandemic).

2020 – “Body Positivity & Bourdieu: An Analysis of the Body Positive Movement’s Past, Present, and Future.” American Sociological Association Annual Conference, San Francisco. (Virtual presentation due to COVID-19 pandemic)

2020 – “Invisible Contradictions: Complicating and Contextualizing Barriers to Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC).” Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Conference, San Francisco. (Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic)

2020 – “The Persistence of the Paradigm: Providers’ Selective Incorporation of Emerging Contraceptive Knowledge.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Philadelphia.

2020 – “The Delaware CAN intervention: Reducing unintended pregnancy by increasing access to contraception.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Philadelphia.

2019 – “‘It throws your body off:’ Women and provider knowledges in contraceptive conceptualization and decision-making.” American Sociological Association Annual Conference, New York City.

2019 – “Drying Climates and Disproportionate Disease: Droughts and the HIV Burden among Women in Less-Developed Nations.” Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studies, Uppsala, Sweden.

2019 – “Present Women’s Healthcare Policies Worsen Future Disaster Impacts.” Organization for the Study of Sex Differences, Washington, D.C. (Accepted for presentation)

2019 – “‘But you kept your ovaries:’ Rethinking hormonal hierarchies and menopausal symptom legitimation among hysterectomy patients.” University of Delaware Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice Annual Graduate Student Conference, Newark.

2019 – “Contrasting Knowledges & Impactful Interactions: Contraceptive Knowledges, Hierarchies, Desires, and Decision-Making at the Interactional Level.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Boston.

2019 – “Moving beyond the individual: Providers as potential barriers to contraception.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Boston.

2018 – “Different Disasters, Differential Impacts: The Effect of Droughts and Floods on Women’s HIV Burden in Developing Nations.” XIX International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology, Toronto.

2018 – “Disasters and Women’s Access to Contraceptives.” 43rd Annual Natural Hazards Workshop, Broomfield, CO.

2018 – “Compromised Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings: An Analysis of State-Level Contraceptive Policies, Title X Clinic Availability, and Emergency Refill Laws in North Carolina and Illinois.” University of Delaware Annual Graduate Student Forum, Newark.

2018 – “What is ‘Natural?’ The Medicalization of Contraception and Its Impact on Women’s Contraceptive Understanding and Decision-Making.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Baltimore.

2018 – “Women’s Online Chronic Reproductive Illness Forums: Creating & Maintaining Health Disparities?” University of Delaware Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice Annual Graduate Student Conference, Newark.

2017 – “Violence, Sugar, and Sustenance: Intimate Partner Violence against Young Women in Less-Developed Countries involved in Sugar Daddy Relationships.” University of Delaware Annual Graduate Student Forum, Newark.

2017 – “Complicating and Contextualizing Barriers to Contraceptive Use.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Philadelphia.

2016 – “Trading Sex for Security: Unemployment and the Unequal HIV Burden Among Young Women in Developing Nations.” Eastern Sociological Society Annual Conference, Boston.

2014 – “Life, Money, and Liberty: Religious Frames and the Contraceptive Clause of the Affordable Care Act” Eastern Sociology Society Annual Conference, Baltimore.

2014 – “Life, Money, and Liberty: Religious Frames and the Contraceptive Clause of the Affordable Care Act” Sociologists for Women in Society Winter Conference, Nashville.

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING & PRESIDING:

2023 – Organizer: “Invisible Disabilities and the Body in Physical and Virtual Spaces.” Society for the Study of Social Problems, Philadelphia.

2023 – Organizer: “Reproductive Bodies and Autonomy.” Society for the Study of Social Problems, Philadelphia.

2022 – Co-Organizer: “Reproductive Justice: Race, Intersectionality, and Health.” Society for the Study of Social Problems, Los Angeles.

2021 – Organizer: “Mind, Body, and Fitness.” Society for the Study of Social Problems, Virtual.

2021 – Co-Organizer: “Being Made Vulnerable in the Era of COVID-19: Global Responses and Perspectives.” Society for the Study of Social Problems, Virtual.

2018 – Presider: Roundtable – “Intimate Partner Violence.” American Sociological Association, Philadelphia.

2017 – Moderator: Paper Session – “(en)Gendered History, Governance, & Social Institutions” University of Delaware Annual Graduate Student Forum, Newark.

INVITED LECTURES & PRESENTATIONS:

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

2023 – “Songs & Signs” course, Texas A&M International University (Professor: Emily Vanchella, PhD)

2023 – “Your Voice, My Voice, Our Voice” course, Texas A&M International University (Professors: Omar Ramirez, Janet M. Carrillo)

2022 – Guest Lecture: “Social Warrior for Issues that Matter” course, Texas A&M International University (Professor: Janet M. Carrillo)

2021 – Guest Lecture: “Power, Privilege, & Inequality” course, American University (Professor: Zephi Francis)

2020 – Guest Lecture: “Social Statistics” course, Millersville University of Pennsylvania (Professor: Carrie Lee Smith, PhD)

2020 – Guest Lecture in “Medical Sociology” course, University of Florida (Professor: Harvey L. Nicholson Jr., PhD)

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

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2023 – “Turkey-Syria Earthquake Relief Effort.” Texas A&M International University

2022 – “Ecofeminism, HIV, and Droughts: Understanding the Connection between Women’s Health and the Environment.” TAMIU Philosophical Society, Texas A&M International University

2021 – “Drying Climates and Gendered Suffering,” University of Delaware Disaster Research Center

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

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 Committee (2020-present)
- Member: Nominations Committee (2021-2022)
- Contributor: “Ask a Mentor” Column (2021)
- Council Member: Student Representative-Elect (2020-2021)
- Member: Membership Committee (2019-2020)

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