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Anthropology
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Education

PhD, Rice University, 2010. Anthropology
Dissertation Title: "American extreme: An Ethnography of Astronautical Visions and Ecologies"
Advisors: Faubion, J. D., Ninetto, A., Mody, C.

BA, *Summa cum laude*, University of California, Davis, 1991.
Major: History; Minor: Anthropology

Professional Positions

Assistant Professor, Anthropology, UC Irvine (2012-present).
Complimentary Research Associate, Rice University. (September 2010 - May 2014).
Lecturer, University of Houston. (September 2011 - May 2012).
Lecturer, University of Houston, Clear Lake. (January 2011 - May 2012).
Instructor, Rice University. (January 2009 - May 2012).
Senior Project Manager, UC Davis Health System. (December 2000 - July 2002).
Research Project Manager, UC Davis Health System. (April 2000 - December 2000).
Assistant Statistician and Project Analyst, UC San Francisco: Center for Reproductive Health Research and Policy (now: Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health). (June 1998 - April 2000).

Professional Memberships

American Anthropological Association.
Anthropology and Environment Society.

RESEARCH

Publications

Book Chapters, Peer-Reviewed

Olson, Valerie "NEOspace: the Solar System's Emerging Environmental History and Politics." New Natures: Joining Environmental History with STS. 2013. Ed. Dolly Jørgensen Ph.D., Finn-Arne Jørgensen Ph.D., & Sara Pritchard. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press.

Robinson, Julie A., Kelly J. Slack, Valerie A. **Olson**, Michael H. Trenchard, Kimberly J. Willis, Pamela J. Baskin, Jennifer E. Boyd. "Patterns in Crew-initiated Photography of Earth from the ISS – Is Earth Observation a Salutogenic Experience?." 2011. Psychology of Space Exploration: Contemporary Research in Historical Perspective. Ed. Douglas A. Vakoch Ph.D.. Washington, D.C: NASA History Program Office.

Journal Articles, Peer-Reviewed

Olson, Valerie A. and Messeri, Lisa. 2015. Beyond the Anthropocene: UnEarthing an Epoch. Environment and Society: Advances in Research. 6: 28–47

Battaglia, Debbora, David Valentine, and Valerie **Olson**. 2015. "Relational Space: An Earthly Installation." Cultural Anthropology. 30(2), 245 - 256.

Valentine, David, Valerie A. **Olson**, and Debbora Battaglia. 2012. "Extreme: Limits and Horizons of the Once and Future Cosmos." Anthropology Quarterly 85(4): 1007-1026.

Olson, Valerie A. 2012. "Political Ecology in the Extreme: Asteroid Activism and the Making of an Environmental Solar System." Anthropological Quarterly 85(4): 1027-1044.

Olson, Valerie A. 2010. "The Ecobiopolitics of Space Biomedicine." Medical Anthropology 29(2): 170-193.

Hodge, Margaret, Patrick Romano, Danielle Harvey, Steven J. Samuels, Valerie A. **Olson**, Mary Jane Sauve, Richard L. Kravitz. 2004. "Licensed Caregiver Characteristics and Staffing in California Acute Care Hospital Units." Journal of Nursing Administration 34(3): 125-33.

Lang, Thomas A., Margaret Hodge, Valerie A. **Olson**, Patrick S. Romano, and Richard L. Kravitz. 2004 "Nurse-patient Ratios: A Systematic Review on the Effects of Nurse Staffing on Patient, Nurse Employee, and Hospital Outcomes." *Journal of Nursing Administration* 34(7-8): 326-337.

Hodge, Margaret B., Steven M. Asch, Valerie A. **Olson**, Richard L. Kravitz, and Mary Jane Sauve. 2002. "Developing Indicators of Nursing Quality to Evaluate Nurse Staffing Ratios." *Journal of Nursing Administration* 32(6): 338-45.

Journal and Blog Articles, Other

Olson, Valerie A. 2015. The Environment's Environment: Making the Anthropocene's Boundaries Visible. CASTAC Blog: Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology and Computing.
<http://blog.castac.org/2015/06/environment-environment/>

Valentine, David, Debbora Battaglia, and Valerie A. **Olson**. 2009. "Encountering the Future." *Anthropology News* 50.9: 11-15. (33% contribution)

Olson, Valerie A. 2005. "Historical Perspectives on Anthropology and the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence: Panel discussion, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting 2005." *Anthropology Today* 22(2): 25.

Magazine Articles

Olson, Valerie and Elitsa Ranova. "Deep Blue Something: Life in Inner Space." *Edno* July 2006: 134 - 135. (Publication in Bulgarian.
<http://edno.bg/index.php/en/edno-magazine>). (85% contribution)

Invited Speaker Presentations

Invited Speaker, "Doing Ethnographies in/of Systems Science and Technology in Outer Space, Ocean, and Desert," Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies' Research Seminar Series, Yale University, New Haven, CT (upcoming November 4, 2015)

Invited Speaker, "Subjects of the System: Subjectivity in Systems Science and Technology," Tsukuba Global Science Week, Tsukuba University, Tsukuba, Japan. (Sept 28, 2015).

Invited Speaker, ““Sustainability as a Cultural Concept,” Back Bay Science Center, Sponsored by Newport Beach Conservation, Newport Beach, CA (June 27, 2015)

Panelist and Featured Speaker, “The Final Frontier: Renewing America’s Space Program Conference” Sponsored by Atlantic Council Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security and SAIC, Washington, DC. (September 16, 2014).

Keynote Speaker, The 6th Annual McGill University Anthropology Graduate Student Conference, "Keynote Address," McGill University Department of Anthropology, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. (March 21, 2014).

Guest Curator and Speaker, California State University, Chico. Valene Smith Museum of Anthropology, for "Infinity and Beyond: Humanity's Quest to Explore Space" Exhibition, Chico, California. (2012 – 2013).

Invited Speaker, "The Deepwater Horizon Spill: Beneath the Surfaces," Miller Worley Center for the Environment, Mt. Holyoke University, South Hadley, Massachusetts. (February 18, 2011).

Other Scholarly Presentations

UCI OCEANS Conference, “Building Partnerships for Ocean Health in Southern California, “Aren’t Humans Part of the Ecosystem? Lessons Learned from Deepwater Horizon,” Newkirk Center for Science and Society, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, California. (May 8, 2015)

Annual Meeting of the Society for Literature, Science and the Arts, "Flowtastrophe," Society for Literature, Science And the Arts, Panel: The Aquatic Anthropocene, Dallas, Texas. (October 9, 2014).

UC Irvine Earth Systems Science Seminar Series, "Ecosystems as Anthropological Objects of Study: an Example and a Discussion," UC Irvine Earth Systems Science, University of California, Irvine, Croul Hall 3101. (February 26, 2014).

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, "Oil As Water: the Elemental Politics of Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration," Panel: Scarcity, Adequacy, Excess: Watery Values and the Materiality of Politics, Chicago, Illinois. (November 4, 2013).

Annual Meeting of the Society for the Social Studies of Science, Panel: Dirt: Thinking With and About Soil, San Diego, California. (October 10, 2013).

University of Tsukuba - Global Science Week, "Can the Oyster Point? The Indexical Lives of Animals in Ecosystem Science and Politics," Panel: Technology, Anthropology, Umwelt, Tsukuba University, Tsukuba, Japan. (October 2, 2013).

California State University, Chico and Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology , "To Infinity and Beyond" "We All Live in the 'NEOverse'," California State University, Chico and Valene L. Smith Museum of Anthropology, Chico, California. (April 18, 2013).

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Panel: Alter(native) Visions of Futures and Outer Spaces, San Francisco, California. (November 17, 2012).

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, "Governing Socio-Natural Infrastructures: Ecosystem Health Indicators after the Deepwater Horizon Spill," Panel: Ecobiopolitics Today II (Second Session of Double Panel). (November 15, 2012).

Annual Meeting of the Society for the Social Studies of Science, "Pricing Natural Treasures and Animal Ghosts: Scientific Collaborations to Financialize the Gulf Ecosystem after the Deepwater Horizon Disaster," Panel: From Many Angles: The Deepwater Horizon Disaster and Disaster Science. (November 5, 2011).

Bringing STS Into Environmental History Workshop, "NEOecology: Near Earth Objects and the Solar System's Extreme Environment History and Politics," Cornell University, Research Council of Norway, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and the Network in Canadian History of the Environment, Trondheim, Norway. (August 2010).

Society for Cultural Anthropology Annual Meeting, Olson, V. (Coordinator/Organizer) and Romain, T. (Coordinator/Organizer), "From Foresight to Forepositioning: Ontological Tactics in Technology Advocacy," Panel: Geek Cosmologies: Crafting Future Nature/Cultures, Santa Fe, New Mexico. (May 2010).

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, "The Political Cosmology of Planetary Ends and Means," American Ethnological Society and Society for Cultural Anthropology, Panel:

- Extreme: Histories and Economies of Humanness Inside Outerspaces, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (December 4, 2009).
- Society for the Anthropology of Religion Annual Meeting, with Weibel, D. "I Have Filled it with Energy!": The Manufacture of Relics by Voyagers to Sacred Space(s)," Pacific Grove, California. (March 2009).
- Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, "Synchronizing Space Time: Temporal Heterogeneities and the Astronaut Body," Panel: The Body in/and Time, Washington, D.C. (November 2007).

Rice University Annual English Symposium, "The Effects of Microgravity on the Concept of Normal: Making Standard Patients in Space," Houston, Texas. (February 2007).

Society for Applied Anthropology/Society for Medical Anthropology Annual Meeting, "Earth normal/space normal: reconfigured categories of health and disability at the edge of the human environment," Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. (March 2006).

Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, "Biopower in the Extreme: Space Analog Experimentation and the Governmental Management of Survival," Panel: Biopolitics: The Historical Life of a Technology of Governmentality, Washington, D.C. (December 2005).

Rice University Annual English Symposium, "Hippocrates' work permit: the changing politics and ethics of transnational physician migration," Houston, Texas. (March 2005).

M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Clinical Ethics Directed Reading Group, "Therapeutic Misconception: a Critical Review of Recent Literature." (February 2004).

Professional Interview Articles

"A Cup of Coffee in Outer Space -- a Brief Interview with Valerie Olson," Appeared In: Cultures of Energy Blog: Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences @ Rice University. Interviewer: Trevor Durbin. <http://culturesofenergy.com/?p=1501>. (November 4, 2013).

"Anthropologist Gets Immersed in NASA Culture," Interview appeared In: Rice University News. Brotzen, Franz. Tagline: "When Valerie Olson came to Rice, she wanted to study the culture of scientific

experimentation. But she didn't know how close she would get to the subject."

<http://news.rice.edu/2007/09/05/anthropologist-gets-immersed-in-nasa-culture/>

Contracts, Grants and Sponsored Research

Grants (PI, Co-PI, and Participation as Investigator, Collaborator, or Adviser)

Olson, Valerie (Principal Investigator in Sub-Award), "Explaining Ecological Catastrophe: A Pilot Ethnographic Study on the Production of Explanatory Models of the "BP Spill" and its Social and Natural Ecologies," NOAA - National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, (October 2010 - March 2013).

Olson, Valerie. (Co-Principal Investigator), "Extending Human Presence: spacecraft design practices and the making of a social outer space" NSF - National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant (June 1, 2006 - May 31, 2007)

Professional Service

Journal Article Reviewer: American Anthropologist, Cultural Anthropology, Progress in Human Geography, HAU, The Mars Journal, Estuaries and Coasts