

Robert W. Penner Curriculum Vitae

Department of Anthropology, Sabin Hall G33

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Education:

Ph.D. Anthropology, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2022-Present

M.A. History, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2017-2019

Thesis title: Overcoming Disruptions of Human Adjustment Processes to Ecological Shifts in Revolutionary Burkina Faso 1983-1987: The Inter-Relationship Between Externally Imposed Migration, Coordination of NGO Activities, and the Process of Ecological Renewal Through Land Reform (2019). Thesis Advisor: Dr. Marcus Filippello

B.A. Political Science and History, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2012-2016 (Magna Cum Laude)

Research Interests:

Digital Anthropology, Virtual World Ethnography, Internet Culture, Digital Folklore, Imagined World Building, Hegemony & Counterhegemony, Late Capitalist Realism, Liminality & Rites of Passage, Nostalgia, Hauntology, Anthropology of the Future

Positions Held:

Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2023-Present

Information Technology Teacher, Milwaukee College Preparatory School, 2021-2022

Graduate Project Assistant, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2018-2019

Publications:

Penner, Robert W., "The Profits of Insanity: The Urbanization and Economic Development of Asylum Poor Farms in Wisconsin, 1890-1920" (2017). UW-Milwaukee Digital Commons, History and Urban Studies 971: Seminar on the History of American Urban Problems 1:1-33, https://dc.uwm.edu/history_hist97/1/.

Conference Presentations:

27th – 30th of March 2024, Popular Culture Association National Conference. “The Backrooms of Late Capitalism: Digital Folklore, Liminal Spaces, and the Organic Emergence of a Virtual World.” Chicago.

30th of March 2024, 25th Annual Chicago Ethnography Conference: Worlds of Culture. “Networks of Nostalgia and Organic Emergence: A Discord Server Ethnography of a Virtual World.” Northwestern University.

4th – 6th of April 2024, American Ethnological Society & Association for Political and Legal Anthropology Spring Conference: Repair. “The Backrooms of Late Capitalism: Liminal Spaces, Fearful Nostalgia and the Organic Emergence of a Virtual World.” University of Pittsburg.

13th of April 2024, Anthropology Student Union Student Research Symposium. “The Backrooms of Late Capitalism: Liminal Spaces, Fearful Nostalgia and the Organic Emergence of a Virtual World.” University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

4th of May 2024, University of California at Santa Cruz Anthropology Graduate Conference Creating Anthropologies: Moving Between and Beyond Boundaries. “The Backrooms of Late Capitalism: Liminal Spaces, Fearful Nostalgia and the Organic Emergence of a Virtual World.” University of California at Santa Cruz.

4th of March 2023, Anthropology Student Union Student Research Conference: 21st Century Anthropology. “The Backrooms: An Introduction to an Expansive Digital Imagined World.” University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

29th – 30th of March 2019, Stony Brook History Graduate Student Association Graduates Conference: Movement and Migration. "Africa, Burkina Faso, Migrant labor, circular migration, colonialism, revolution, Atlantic World." Stony Brook University.

14th – 16th of February 2019, Midwest Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference: Artifice. “Economic Imposition, Spatial Navigation and African Revolution in an Atlantic World Context.” University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

27th of April 2018, 24th Annual Urban Studies’ Student Research Forum: Exclusionary Spaces. “The Profits of Insanity: The Urbanization and Economic Development of Asylum

Poor Farms in Wisconsin.” University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Awards & Fellowships:

Chancellors Award 2023-2024 (\$7500)

Graduate Research Travel Award 2018-2019 (\$1000)

Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship 2015-2016 (\$2000)

Coursework & Research Experience:

Fall 2023 ANTHRO 641: The Anthropology of Tourism (Research work on “Misuse and Misunderstanding of the Constitution of Liminal Phases in the field of Tourism Anthropology”) Advisor: Dr. W. Warner Wood, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Fall 2023 ANTHRO 801: Survey of Physical Anthropology (Research work on “Evolutionary Depictions: The use of Metaphorical Imagery as Counter-Factual Simulation to Render the Distant Past and Future”) Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Campbell, Associate Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Spring 2023 ANTHRO 940: Problems in Cultural Anthropology, Social Theories of Modernity (Research work on The Backrooms as a Counter-Hegemonic form of Symbolic Resistance) Advisor: Dr. Thomas Malaby, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Spring 2023 ANTHRO 802: Perspectives on Prehistory (Research work on “The Future Promises New Pasts: Futurological Anthropology and the Archaeological Record”) Advisor: Dr. Jason Sherman, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Fall 2022 ANTHRO 840: Digital Anthropology (Research work on “The Backrooms: Origins, Concepts, and the Creation of an Expandable Imagined World”) Advisor: Dr. Thomas Malaby, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Fall 2022 ANTHRO 560: Anthropological Research Methods (Research work on “Problems of Digital Anthropology: Ethnographic Methods and Future Imaginaries”) Advisor: Dr. Paul Brodwin, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Spring 2019 HIST 850: Play and Popular Culture in Modern Europe (Research on “Contemporary Analysis of the Material Culture of Vacation in the Soviet Union: Assessing

Fun, Leisure and the Play Element within Physical Structures and Ideological Constraints)
Advisor: Dr. Christine Evans, Associate Professor, History Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Fall 2018 HIST 940: Revolutions in the Atlantic World (Research work on “Economic Imposition, Spatial Navigation and African Revolution in an Atlantic World Context”)
Advisor: Dr. Marcus Filippello, Associate Professor, History Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Fall 2018 ANTHRO 744: Social Agency and Social Structure (Research work on “Spatial Navigation, Revolution and Reaction: Circular Migration Between Cote d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso as a Product of Atlantic World Interactions and an Initiator of a Revolutionary Process”) Advisor: Dr. Thomas Malaby, Professor, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Spring 2018 HIST 840: Colloquium on Gender and Imperialism (Research work on “Interpretive Applications of Modernization and Dependency Theory: Women’s Liberation in African Marxist-Leninist and Revolutionary Socialist States”) Advisor: Dr. Carolyn Eichner, Professor, History Department and Women & Gender Studies, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Fall 2017 HIST 971: Seminar on American Urban History (Research work on The Profits of Insanity: The Urbanization and Economic Development of Asylum Poor Farms in Wisconsin, 1890-1920) Advisor: Dr. Amanda Seligman, Professor, History Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Fall 2017 HIST 850: Colloquium in European History (Research work on “Fluctuations in Gaullist Consistency: Operation Barracuda as a Turning Point in French Neo-Colonial Policy in Africa”) Advisor: Dr. Neal Pease, Professor Emeritus, History Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Spring 2016 HIST 600: Capstone in 20th Century US History (Research work on “Successful Utilization of Political Destabilization Tactics in a Cold War Environment: The United States and Grenada”) Advisor: Dr. Joe Austin, Professor Emeritus, History Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Fall 2015- Spring 2016: Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (Research work on “Voting and Participation in Authoritarian Regimes Since 1972”) Advisor: Dr. Ora John Reuter, Associate Professor, Political Science Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Fall 2015 POL SCI 500: Capstone in Political Science (Research work on “The Decline of the Coup in Africa: Distinct Explanations for Failures in Regime Authority Consolidation After 1991”) Advisor: Dr. Shale Horowitz, Professor, Political Science Department, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Archival Research:

2019 University of London SOAS Library Archives (Overcoming Disruptions of Human Adjustment Processes to Ecological Shifts in Revolutionary Burkina Faso 1983-1987)

2019 Milwaukee City Archive Zeidler Municipal Building (The Historical Circumstances of the Presence of Lead Laterals in Milwaukee)

2018 University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Golda Meir Library Archives (The Profits of Insanity: The Urbanization and Economic Development of Asylum Poor Farms in Wisconsin, 1890-1920)

Professional Associations:

African Studies Association (former member, 2018-2019)

American Anthropology Association (current member, 2022-Present)

Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology & Computing (2023-Present)

Popular Culture Association (current member, 2023-Present)

University and Departmental Service:

Anthropology Student Union (member 2022-present)

Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honors Society (former member, Vice President 2014-2015, President 2015-2016)

Community Service and Organizing:

Get the Lead Out Coalition of Milwaukee – Archival Researcher and Steering Committee Member, 2017-Present.

Milwaukee Autonomous Tenants Union – Intake and Research Coordinator, 2020-Present.

Colectivo Collective Union (IBEW Local 494) - Volunteer Organizing Committee, 2019-2021.

Languages and Competencies:

English (fluent)

French (intermediate in reading, writing, speaking, 3 Semesters of French Language)

Blender 3D Rendering Software (beginner)

Professional References:

Dr. Thomas Malaby

UW-Milwaukee Professor of Anthropology

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Dr. Marcus Filippello

UW-Milwaukee Associate Professor of History

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Dr. Carolyn Eichner

UW-Milwaukee Professor of History and Women & Gender Studies

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Dr. Christine Evans

UW-Milwaukee: Associate Professor of History

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