

RYAN CECIL JOBSON

The University of Chicago
Department of Anthropology
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PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2019 – Present Neubauer Family Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, The University of Chicago
Faculty Affiliate, Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Latin American Studies
Faculty Affiliate, Committee on Environment, Geography, and Urbanization (CEGU)
Faculty Affiliate, Committee on International Relations
- 2017 – 2019 Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship, Department of Anthropology, The University of Chicago

EDUCATION

- 2017 Ph.D., Anthropology and African American Studies, Yale University
2014 M.Phil, Anthropology and African American Studies, Yale University
2011 B.A., Anthropology and Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania
summa cum laude with distinction in Anthropology and Africana Studies

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2015 Allan H. Smith Fellowship, Department of Anthropology, Yale University
2014 Stuart Taylor Travel Fund, Department of African American Studies, Yale University
2014 Fulbright IIE U.S. Student Fellowship, Trinidad and Tobago
2014 MacMillan Center Dissertation Research Grant, Yale University
2013 Alice S. Bloomfield Fellowship, Department of Anthropology, Yale University
2013 MacMillan Center Pre-Dissertation Research Grant, Yale University
2012 National Science Foundation REG Supplement (Douglas Rogers, PI)
2012 Schwartz Family Foundation Conference Fund, Department of Anthropology, Yale University
2012 SSRC-Mellon Mays Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant
2012 Williams Fund Grant, Department of Anthropology, Yale University
2011 Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
2011 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
2011 Phi Beta Kappa, Delta Chapter of Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania
2010 Penn Humanities Forum Mellon Undergraduate Research Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania
2010 W.E.B. Du Bois College House Research Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania

- 2009 Department of Anthropology Undergraduate Research Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania
- 2009 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania
- 2009 Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, University of Pennsylvania
- 2009 University Scholar, University of Pennsylvania
- 2008 W.E.B. Du Bois College House Endowed Scholarship, University of Pennsylvania

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Book Manuscripts in Preparation

- n.d. *The Petro-state Masquerade: Oil and Sovereignty in Trinidad and Tobago*

Journal Articles

- 2020 “States of Crisis, Flags of Convenience: An Introduction.” *Small Axe* 62: 67 – 77.
- 2020 “The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn: Sociocultural Anthropology in 2019.” *American Anthropologist* 122(2): 259 – 271.
Reprinted in *Déjà Lu* Issue 10 (March 2022) an initiative of the World Council of Anthropological Associations.
- 2018 “Road Work: Highways and Hegemony in Trinidad and Tobago.” *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 23(3): 457 – 477.
- 2016 “The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology Since the Eighties.” With Jafari Sinclair Allen. *Current Anthropology* 57(2): 129 – 148.
Reprinted in *Sociocultural Anthropology: Critical and Primary Sources*. Barbara Miller, ed. Pp. 195 – 218. London: Bloomsbury.

Chapters in Edited Volumes

- 2021 “Dead Labor: On Racial Capital and Fossil Capital.” In *Histories of Racial Capitalism*. Destin Jenkins and Justin Leroy, eds. Pp. 215 – 230. New York: Columbia University Press.

Special Issues Edited

- 2020 “States of Crisis: Disaster, Recovery, and Possibility in the Caribbean.” *Small Axe* 62.

Book Reviews

- 2013 “Modernity of this Century: Four Ethnographic Perspectives.” With Erik Harms, Caroline Merrifield, and Sayd Randle. *Anthropology of This Century* 8.

Bibliography and Encyclopedia Entries

- 2019 “Race.” *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*. John L. Jackson, Jr., ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Interviews

- 2020 “The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn? Considerations and Reflections—Ryan Cecil Jobson and Kamari Clarke Interviewed by Lucia Cantero.” *AmericanAnthropologist.org*. July 20.
- 2020 “Public Thinker: Yarimar Bonilla on Decolonizing Decolonization.” *Public Books*. May 27.

Other Writing

- Forthcoming Comment on Shreya Subramani’s “The Entrepreneurial Catch: Towards an Analytic of Racial Responsibilization.” *Current Anthropology*

- 2020 “Warning Signs: Mike Pompeo Goes to Guyana.” With Matthew Quest. *National Workers Union Trinidad & Tobago (WorkersUnion.org.tt)*. September 18.
Reprinted in *The Daily Observer*. Antigua & Barbuda. Pp. 18 – 19. September 23.
Reprinted in *Stabroek News*. Guyana. Pp. 8. September 28.
- 2019 “Black Gold in El Dorado: Frontiers of Race and Oil in Guyana.” *SSRC Items*. January 8.
- 2016 “Decolonization Matters.” *Anthropology News*. Association of Black Anthropologists Guest Column. September/October.
- 2015 “The Chavez Doctrine or Revolutionary Socialism?” *Counterpunch*. October 31.
- 2015 “Sheikhs, Shale, and Socialism: Oil War in the Americas.” *Counterpunch*. February 13.
- 2014 “The Highway Re-Route Movement of Trinidad and Tobago: From Dependency to Democracy.” *ENGAGEMENT: The Official Blog of the Anthropology & Environment Society*. October 26.
- 2013 “Seven Minutes in Panama: 42 and the Comforts of Civil Rights.” *Postcolonial Networks*. June 20.
- 2012 “Independence Dreams and the Gaza Don: A Review of Vybiz Kartel’s *The Voice of the Jamaican Ghetto*.” *ReggaeTimes.com*. September 26.

Under Review

- n.d. “Trinidad 1937: Cultivation and Counter-Plantation Desire.” *Cultural Anthropology* (Colloquy Collection, “Plantations as Affective Infrastructures,” Eds. Sophie Chao and Alyssa Paredes)
- n.d. “Deepwater Sovereignty, or, the Political Theology of the Petrostate.” *Current Anthropology*

SELECTED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks

- 2022 “‘As a fire runs up a forest’: Counter-plantation futures and the Trinidad oil strike of 1937.” Rutgers University, New Brunswick, Online, March.
- 2022 “‘As a fire runs up a forest’: Counter-plantation futures and the Trinidad oil strike of 1937.” Energy History Working Group, Consortium for History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, Online, February.
- 2022 “Panel Conversation: Reckoning with Institutional Practices and Incentive Structure.” 2021 College and University Fund for the Social Sciences Conference: “Social Science Reckonings,” Social Science Research Council, Online.
- 2021 “The University as an Ethnographic Question, Part 2” with Anand Pandian. Department of Anthropology, Harvard University, Online, February.
- 2021 “Is it possible to decolonize Anthropology?” with Kamari Maxine Clarke. A webinar hosted by the ‘Theory from the Margins’ consortium, Oslo, Norway, January.
- 2020 “Resistance to the New Imperialism and Extractivism in the Caribbean.” An online seminar hosted by Anti-Imperialists for Global Justice (AIGJ), Online, November.
- 2020 “The Case for Letting Anthropology Burn? Race, Racism, and its Reckoning in American Anthropology.” The Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Online, September.
- 2019 “Race and Capitalism or Racial Capitalism: A Discussion on History, Theory, and World Building.” Robert L. Heilbroner Center for Capitalism Studies, New School for Social Research, New York, NY. November.

- 2019 “Unlocking Modernity: From Brown Sugar to Steel.” Newberry Library Seminar on the History of Capitalism. Chicago, IL. January.
- 2018 “Deepwater Sovereignty, or, the Political Theology of the Petrostate.” Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. November.
- 2018 “Deepwater Sovereignty, or, the Political Theology of the Petrostate.” Caribbean Energy Policy, Societies, and Law Conference. The Faculty of Law & Institute of Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. October.
- 2018 “Geographies of Energy: Petrotrin, Petrostates, and People in the Caribbean.” Department of Geography, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. October.
- 2018 “Cold Stacking, Frozen Capital, and Black Labor: From Plantation Slavery to Fossil Fuels.” The Old History of Capitalism (Exploratory Seminar), Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. May.
- 2018 “Deepwater Sovereignty: The Political Theology of the Petrostate.” Department of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. May.
- 2018 “Deepwater Sovereignty: The Political Theology of the Petrostate.” Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, Rice University, Houston, TX, March.
- 2016 “The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology Since the Eighties.” With Jafari Sinclair Allen. Critical Anthropology of Race Lecture Series, Brown University, Providence, RI, April.
- 2015 “Seeing Like a Failed State: Infrastructures, Corruption, and Democracy in Trinidad and Tobago.” Workshop on Political Anthropology in the Caribbean, University of the West Indies-St. Augustine, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, June.

Conference Presentations

- 2021 “States of Crisis, Flags of Convenience: On Changing Climates and Caribbean Criticism.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Georgetown, Guyana (Virtual), June.
- 2018 “Downstream Citizenship: The Trinidad and Tobago Model and Its Malcontents.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Havana, Cuba, June.
- 2017 “‘Anthropology will be decolonized or it will be nothing at all’: Reading ‘The Decolonizing Generation’ Toward Radical Black Futures.” Second Annual Conference of the African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, March.
- 2016 “Deepwater Sovereignty: Risky Business and Postcolonial Statecraft in Trinidad and Tobago.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, November.
- 2016 “Independent Thought at the End of History: Toward a Post-New World Philosophy.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, June.
- 2016 “Deepwater Sovereignty: Offshore Extraction and Postcolonial Statecraft in Trinidad and Tobago.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, June.
- 2014 “The Infrastructure of the Postcolony: Corruption, Citizenship, and the Highway Re-Route Movement of Trinidad and Tobago.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., December.
- 2014 “Carbon Citizens: Oil, Modernity, and Failure in Trinidad and Tobago.” Mellon Mays Graduate Student Summer Conference, Emory University, June.
- 2014 “Postcolonial Citizenship and the Art of Failure.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Mérida, Mexico, June.
- 2013 “The Quagmire of Modernity: Melville Herskovits and Leslie White, A Reluctant Reprise.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November.

- 2013 “Nature, Temporality, and Imperial Designs: Trinidad Lake Asphalt and the Production of Modernity.” Mellon Mays Graduate Student Summer Conference, Bryn Mawr College, June.
- 2013 “Nature, Temporality, and Imperial Designs: Trinidad Lake Asphalt and the Production of Modernity.” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Grand Anse, Grenada, June.
- 2012 “Modernity’s Nature: Photography and Spectacle in the Oilfields of Colonial Trinidad,” American Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November.
- 2012 “Modernity’s Nature: Photography and Spectacle in the Oilfields of Colonial Trinidad,” Capture 2012: Photography, Nature, Human Rights, Yale University, October.
- 2011 “Black Gold: Petroleum Circuits and African Diasporic Dialogues,” Producing Race: Technology and the African Diaspora, Columbia University, October.
- 2011 “Wanderers in Time and Space: Nation, Diaspora, and Temporality in Trinidad and Tobago,” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, Willemstad, Curaçao, May.
- 2011 “(Re)politicizing August First: Diaspora, Neoliberalism, and the Commodification of Emancipation Day,” Penn Humanities Forum Undergraduate Research Conference, University of Pennsylvania, March.
- 2010 “Who’s Gonna Save My Soul Now?: (Un)natural Disasters and the Politics of State Violence,” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November.
- 2010 “From Haiti to Hip-Hop (and Reggae): ‘Objective’ Violence in the Neoliberal Diaspora,” Caribbean Studies Association Annual Conference, St. Peter, Barbados, May.
- 2010 “(Corpo)real Natives: Toward a (Native) Ethnography of Diasporic Identification,” Society for the Anthropology of North America and Association of Black Anthropologists Conference, University of Colorado—Denver, April.

Roundtables

- 2019 “Race as a sliding signifier, Racism as a system of meaning: Global conjectures.” A roundtable session held at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC, November.
- 2017 “Anthropology and/as African Diasporic Intellectual History.” A roundtable session held at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, December.
- 2015 “Race and Revolution in Real Time: From Fanon to #Ferguson.” A roundtable session co-organized with Christien Tompkins (University of Chicago) held at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, November.

Campus Talks

- 2022 “As a fire runs up a forest’: Counter-plantation futures and the Trinidad oil strike of 1937.” Race and Capitalism Project Brown Bag, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, March.
- 2022 Moderator. “Energy Histories and Geographies: A Discussion with Thea Riofrancos (Providence College) and Julie Klinger (University of Delaware).” Faculty Working Group for the Committee on Environment, Geography, and Urbanization, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, February.
- 2022 Moderator. “Protests and Migration: Rejection of Right-Wing Authoritarianism and U.S. Imperialism in Haiti,” Mamyrah Dougé-Prosper (University of California, Irvine). The Center for Latin American Studies, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, February.
- 2021 Faculty Roundtable. “Antipolitics: From New Anarchisms to the Alt-Right.” 3CT Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, February.
- 2020 Discussant. “Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future.” Social Sciences Collegiate Division, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, January.

- 2018 “Deepwater Sovereignty: The Political Theory of the Petrostate.” Center for Latin American Studies, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, May.
- 2014 Comment on Orlando Patterson’s “Institutions, Colonialism, and Economic Development: The Acemoglu-Johnson-Robinson (AJR) Thesis in Light of the Caribbean Experience.” Center for Historical Enquiry & the Social Sciences, Yale University, New Haven, CT, January.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS ORGANIZED

- 2022 “Sou Sou: A Humanities Laboratory in Caribbean Studies” (with Jessica Swanston Baker & Kaneesha Chelle Parsard). A twelve-month Transdisciplinary Research Idea Incubator supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago (\$15,000).
- 2022 “Fossil Capital in the Global South” (with Elizabeth Chatterjee and Victoria Saramago). A twelve-month collaborative Faculty Research Project supported by the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society at the University of Chicago (\$25,000).
- 2021 “The Caribbean: Crucible of Modern Racial Formations” (with Jessica Swanston Baker). A twelve-month Transdisciplinary Research Idea Incubator supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago (\$8,500).

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA ORGANIZED

- 2019 “States of Crisis: Disaster, Recovery, and Possibility in the Caribbean.” An international conference cosponsored by the Small Axe Project and Columbia University Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy and co-organized with David Scott (Columbia University) and Yarimar Bonilla (Rutgers University), Heyman Center for the Humanities, Columbia University in the City of New York, May 3-4.

TEACHING

- 2023 Energy and Society II. Division of the Social Sciences. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2022 Power in the Streets: The Political Thought of C.L.R. James (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Autumn.
- 2022 Colonizations III. Division of the Social Sciences. The University of Chicago. Autumn.
- 2022 Burning Issues in Anthropology: Michel-Rolph Trouillot and his Interlocutors (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Spring.
- 2022 Colonizations III. Division of the Social Sciences. The University of Chicago. Spring.
- 2022 Marxism, Anarchism, and the Black Radical Tradition. Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2022 Race/Capital/Extraction (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2021 An Island is a World: Readings in Caribbean Ethnography (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Spring.
- 2021 Colonizations III. Division of the Social Sciences. The University of Chicago. Spring.
- 2021 Oil, Power, Modernity: The Anthropology of Energy. Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2021 Sovereignty/Territory/Coloniality (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2020 Race/Capital/Extraction (Graduate). Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.

- 2020 Decolonizing Anthropology: Africana Critical Theory and the Social Sciences. Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Winter.
- 2019 Power, Identity, Resistance I. Division of the Social Sciences. The University of Chicago. Autumn.
- 2018 Decolonizing Anthropology: Africana Critical Theory and the Social Sciences. Department of Anthropology. The University of Chicago. Spring.
- 2016 Africana Critical Theory and the Social Sciences. Department of African American Studies. Yale University. Fall.
- 2014 *Teaching Fellow*. Department of Anthropology, Yale University. Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology. Dr. Erik Harms. Spring.
- 2011 *Teaching Assistant*. Center for Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania. New Black Reconstructions: The History of Women and Men of African Descent at the University of Pennsylvania. Rev. Dr. Charles Howard and Brian Peterson, M.S.Ed. Spring.
- 2010 *Teaching Assistant*. Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Public Interest Workshop: Public Interest Ethnography. Dr. Peggy Sanday. Fall.
- 2009 *Teaching Assistant*. Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Public Interest Workshop: Public Interest Ethnography. Dr. Peggy Sanday. Fall.

STUDENTS SUPERVISED

Undergraduate (University of Chicago)

Adriana Gonzales (Anthropology)
 Gabrielle Mahabeer (Anthropology & Critical Race and Ethnic Studies)
 Jordan Cooper (Anthropology)
 Michelle Yang (Anthropology)

Graduate (University of Chicago)

Annie Lloyd (MAPSS)
 Alexa Olivares (MAPSS)
 Angela Romea (MAPSS)
 Carol Iglesias Otero (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Clayton Hawkins Lewis (MAPSS)
 Dinayuri Rodriguez (PhD Committee Chair, Anthropology)
 Emma Pask (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Francesca Gonzalez (MA, International Relations)
 Hilary Leathem (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Jacob Siegel (MAPSS)
 Jolen Martinez (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Joshua Babcock (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Kasia Kaczowka (PhD Committee Co-Chair, Anthropology)
 Kiara Houston (MAPSS)
 Maya Singhal (MAPSS)
 Michael Clevenger (MAPSS)
 Nikki Grigg (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Osakhare Omoregie (MAPSS)
 Paulina Gomez (MAPSS)
 Rachel Howard (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Reed McConnell (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Roxanne Dobson (MAPSS)
 Sabena Allen (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Sarah Shaer (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
 Skyla Zhu (MAPSS)
 Tanima Sharma (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)

William McCollum (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)
William Ockendon (PhD Committee Member, Anthropology)

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

2022 Manuscript Reviewer, *Journal of Cultural Economy*
2021 Manuscript Reviewer, *Current Anthropology*
2021 – 2024 Editorial Committee, *Small Axe*
2021 Manuscript Reviewer, *Small Axe*
2020 Manuscript Reviewer, *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*
2019 – 2024 Associate Editor, *Transforming Anthropology*
2019 – 2022 Corresponding Editor, *Current Anthropology*
2018 Manuscript Reviewer, *Transforming Anthropology*
2017 Reviewer, American Academy in Berlin Prize Fellowship
2017 Manuscript Reviewer, *American Anthropologist*
2017 Manuscript Reviewer, *Current Anthropology*
2013 – 2014 Graduate Fellow, Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, Yale University
2010 – 2011 Steering Committee, Penn Undergraduate Humanities Forum, University of Pennsylvania

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Anthropological Association
 Association of Black Anthropologists
 Society for Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology

American Studies Association

Caribbean Studies Association

LANGUAGES

English (native speaker)

Jamaican Creole (proficient)

Trinidadian English (proficient)

Spanish (reading comprehension)

REFERENCES

Deborah A. Thomas
R. Jean Brownlee Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of Pennsylvania
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David Scott
Ruth and William Lubic Professor
Department of Anthropology
Columbia University in the City of New York
das133@columbia.edu

Jafari Sinclair Allen
Associate Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of Miami
jsa118@miami.edu