

Robin Conley Riner
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EDUCATION

2011 **Ph.D., Anthropology**, UCLA
2007 **M.A., Anthropology**, UCLA
2002 **B.A., Anthropology and Linguistics**, New York University, Magna Cum Laude

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2023-present Faculty Ombuds, *Marshall University*
2021-present Professor of Anthropology
Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Marshall University
2016-2021 Associate Professor of Anthropology
Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Marshall University
2012-2016 Assistant Professor of Anthropology
Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Marshall University
2011-2012 Visiting Instructor of Anthropology
Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Marshall University

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Conley, R. (2016). *Confronting the Death Penalty: How language influences jurors in capital cases*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Edited and Co-authored Books

Duranti, A., R. George, and R. Conley Riner, eds. (2023). *A New Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. Wiley Blackwell.

Conley Riner, R. (2019). *Readings in Cultural Anthropology: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives*. Cognella Academic Publishing.

Conley, J., W. O'Barr and R. Conley Riner (2019). *Just Words: Law, Language, and Power*, 3rd edition. University of Chicago Press.

Avineri, N., L. Graham, E. Johnson, R. Conley Riner and J. Rosa, eds. (2018). *Language and Social Justice in Practice*. New York: Routledge.

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

Conley Riner, R. (forthcoming). Telling of killing: The discursive construction of morality in accounts of taking life. In D. Galasinski and J. Ziolkoska, eds., *The Handbook of Language and Death*. Bloomsbury.

Conley Riner, R. (2023). Legal language and its ideologies. In A. Duranti, R. George and R. Conley Riner, eds. *A New Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. Wiley Blackwell.

Black, S.P. and Conley Riner, R. (2022) Care as a Methodological Stance: Research ethics in linguistic anthropology. In S. Perrino and S. Pritzker (eds.), *Research Methods in Linguistic Anthropology*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Conley Riner, R. and E. Vartkessian. (2018) Communicating Humanity: How defense attorneys use mitigation narratives to advocate for clients. In Avineri, N. et al. (eds). *Language and Social Justice in Practice*. New York: Routledge.

Conley Riner, R. (2017) Discourses of Death: The influence of language on capital jurors' decisions. *Journal of Criminal Justice & Law* 1(1):43-56.

Conley, R. (2013) Living with the Decision that Someone Will Die: Linguistic distance and empathy in jurors' death penalty decisions. *Language in Society* 42(5):503-526.

Conley, R. & J.M. Conley (2009) Stories from the Jury Room: How jurors use narrative to process evidence. *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society* 49(2).

Conley, R. (2008) "At the time she was a man": The temporal dimension of identity construction. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 31(1):28-47.

Reprinted in R. Robson, ed. (2011) *Library of Essays on Sexuality and Law: Vol. III, Sexual Freedom*. Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing.

Other Publications

Conley Riner, R. (forthcoming) Language and the Law. In *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Conley Riner, R. (forthcoming). Language and Violence. In M. Aldenderfer, ed. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. Oxford University Press.

Conley, R. (2018). Legal Language. In *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Conley, R. (2018) Book Review: Our Word is Our Bond: How Legal Speech Acts, by Marianne Constable. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*.

Conley Riner, R. (2017) Book Review: Professional Discourse, by Kenneth Kong. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 27(1):117-119.

Conley, R. (with N. Avineri). (2016) The Confederate Flag and the Lives of Symbols. *Huffington Post: The Blog*.

Conley, R. et al. (2015) Silent Meditation: Speech, power, and social justice. *Anthropology News*, February 26.

Conley, R. (2012) From Victims to Accusers: Redefining rape in today's political climate. *Anthropology News*, Opinion Column, November.

Publications in Progress

Conley Riner, R. and B. Carnes (revisions submitted to editor). Moral Conflict in a (Post)War Story: Narrative as enactment of and reflection on moral injury. *Ethos*.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS & LECTURES

- 2019 "A culture of killing? The language of Texas death penalty jurors." *Legal Communication in a Multilingual and Multicultural Context*. University of Wuppertal, Germany.
- 2016 "Discourses of Death: The language of capital jurors' decisions." *Department of Anthropology*, Whitman College.
- 2016 "Confronting the Death Penalty: How language influences jurors in capital cases." *Criminal Justice Speaker Series*, University of Houston Downtown. Houston, TX.
- 2016 "Agents of the State: Narratives of killing in state contexts." CLIC Colloquium, *Center for Language, Interaction, and Culture*, UCLA.
- 2013 "Facing Death: Language, objectivity and empathy in jurors' death penalty decisions." University of Louisville, Department of Sociology.
- 2013 "Facing Death: Language and embodied communication in death penalty trials." *Law & Language Workshop*, Johns Hopkins University.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Chaired Panels

- 2018 Co-chair (with Immaculada Garcia Sanchez), "Linguistic Anthropology as Pedagogy: Understanding and critiquing 'culture' in the classroom." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*, San Jose, CA.
- 2016 Co-chair (with Kristiana Willsey), "Telling War Stories: Examining the narratives of U.S. military veterans." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Minneapolis, MN.
- 2013 Chair, "Discourses of oppression and morality through time." *Annual meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Boston, MA.
- 2013 Chair, "Healing rifts in anthropological theory and practice." *Southern Anthropological Society Annual Meeting*. Johnson City, TN.
- 2011 Co-chair (with Hadi Deeb), "Bodies of Law: Regrounding Reason and Mind in the Interactionally Situated Legal Subject." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Montreal, Quebec.

Conference Papers/Roundtables

- 2023 The embodied poetics of yoga: Parallelism and communion within a military veterans' yoga program. *International Pragmatics Association Annual Conference*. Brussels, Belgium.
- 2022 (with John M. Conley) "The ethics and language ideologies of forensic linguistics." *Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Virtual.
- 2021 "Reconceptualizing Language and Law: Conversations with legal professionals." *American Association of Applied Linguistics Annual Conference*. Virtual.
- 2019 (with Elizabeth Vartkessian) "Communicating Humanity: How defense attorneys use mitigation narratives to advocate for clients." *Law and Society Association Annual Meeting*, Washington, DC.
- 2019 Panelist, Changing Climates of Politics and Law. *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*, Vancouver, Canada.
- 2018 (with Netta Avineri) "Who's Civil? Whose Discourse?: A linguistic anthropological approach to current debates in higher education. *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*, San Jose, CA.
- 2017 "There's beauty in the breakdown: Examining moral injury among combat veterans." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*, Washington, DC.
- 2016 "Telling of Killing: Narrative tropes in veterans' stories of combat." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Minneapolis, MN.
- 2015 "Juries in Mexico: Tracking the implementation of a democratic institution." *Annual meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Seattle, WA.
- 2014 "The Bloody Part of the Knife: The interactional construction and elision of violence in U.S. death penalty trials." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Washington, D.C.
- 2014 (with Kira Cope), "Higher education and the culture of poverty in West Virginia." *Appalachian Studies Association Annual Conference*. Huntington, WV.
- 2014 "The Ironic Outlier: Understanding life sentences in Texas capital murder trials." *Annual meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Minneapolis, MN.
- 2014 "The body and the word: Paralinguistic ideologies in jurors' death penalty decisions." *American Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Conference*. Portland, OR.
- 2013 "Linguistic Ideologies and Dehumanization in U.S. Legal Practice." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Chicago, IL.
- 2013 "Agents of the State: Jurors' negotiations of accountability in death penalty decisions." *Annual meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Boston, MA.
- 2013 "Does talk lie?: Understanding experience in ethnography and(of) law." *Southern Anthropological Society Annual Meeting*. Johnson City, TN.
- 2012 "Mens rea, legal decision-making, and reading others' minds: A brief anthropological reflection on international legal practice." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. San Francisco, CA.
- 2012 "Facing Death: Language, rationality, and empathy in jurors' death penalty decisions." *Midwest Law and Society Retreat*. University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2011 "Modeling 'Normal' Humans: The Role of Defendants' Affective Displays in Jurors' Death Penalty Decisions." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. Montreal, Quebec.
- 2011 "Living with the Decision that Someone Will Die: Empathy in Texas Death Penalty Trials." *Society for Psychological Anthropology Biennial Meeting*. Santa Monica, CA.
- 2010 "Empathy and Objectivity in Jurors' Death Penalty Decisions." *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. New Orleans, LA.

- 2010 “Arguing Empowerment: Addressing Holdout Jurors in Texas Death Penalty Cases.” *Annual meeting of the Law and Society Association*. Chicago, IL.
- 2010 “Giving Death in Texas: Reflections on the Vanishing Sense of Place in Ethnography.” *Southern Anthropological Society Annual Meeting*. Savannah, GA.
- 2009 “Future Danger: Temporality and Person Construction in Texas Death Penalty Trials.” *Bi-annual conference on Language, Interaction and Social Organization*. Santa Barbara, CA.
- 2009 “Future Danger: Constructing Dangerous Persons in Texas Death Penalty Trials.” *Symposium about Language and Society – Austin*. Austin, TX.
- 2008 “Stories from the Jury Room: How Jurors Use Narrative to Process Evidence.” *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. San Francisco, CA.
- 2008 “How Capital Jurors Interpret the Future Danger Issue” and “Stories from the Jury Room: How Jurors Use Narrative to Process Evidence.” *Joint Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association and the Canadian Law and Society Association*. Montreal, Canada.
- 2006 “The Ethnographic Illusion of the Coherent Self.” *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. San Jose, CA.
- 2005 “Achieving the Possible: Hypothetical Narratives in Jury Decision Making.” *Annual Conference of the International Linguistic Association*. New York, NY.
- 2005 “Don’t You Wish You Knew the Real Story’: Applying Discourse Analysis to Actual Jury Deliberations.” *11th Annual Conference on Language, Interaction and Social Organization*. Santa Barbara, CA.

LEGAL EDUCATION

- 2023 “Language, Power, and Gender in Legal Settings” (with John M. Conley). *Robinson Bradshaw Women’s Initiative CLE*. Charlotte, NC.
- 2023, 2019, 2017,
2015 “Ethnography and Qualitative Methods in Legal Research.” *Master of Laws in Judicial Studies Program*, Duke Law School.
- 2022 “Language Matters.” *Advancing Real Change, Inc.*, Mitigation Training. Baltimore, MD.
- 2021 “Linguistic Bias and Law.” *Advancing Real Change, Inc.*, Webinar Series.
- 2020 “Evaluating Linguistic Bias in the Law.” *Annual Judicial Conference*, Utah State Courts.
- 2018 “Linguistic Evidence: What it is and how to use it.” *NC Court of Appeals Training*, Raleigh, NC
- 2016 “Linguistic Evidence: What it is and how to use it.” *Festival of Legal Learning*, Chapel Hill, NC.
- 2016 “Confronting the Death Penalty: How language influences jurors in capital cases.” *Capital Update Seminar*, Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, San Antonio, TX.
- 2015 (with John M. Conley) “How Jury Deliberations Really Work.” *Festival of Legal Learning*. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill School of Law.
- 2012 “Language and Jurors’ Death Penalty Decisions: Helping jurors individualize defendants and take individual responsibility for their sentences.” *The Mind and Criminal Defense*, Center for American and International Law.
- 2012 “Linguistic Distance and Jurors’ Death Penalty Decisions.” *Master of Laws in Judicial Studies Program*, Duke Law School.

- 2010 “Interviews with Capital Jurors: What the Jurors are Saying Post Verdict.”
Capital Litigation for the Defense, Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers' Association.
- 2010 “How Badly Jurors Misunderstand their Instructions During the Punishment
Phase: A Report on Interviews with Actual Jurors.” *The Mind and Criminal
Defense*, Center for American and International Law.

SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

External

- 2023 *WV Humanities Council Major Grant* (with Christina Franzen), “Bringing War Home.”
- 2022 *WV Department of Health and Human Resources*, “Recovering Identity After War”
- 2022 *WV Humanities Council Major Grant* (with Christina Franzen), “Testament: Recovering
identity after war”
- 2020 *WV Humanities Council Major Grant* (with Christina Franzen), “The Wars Within, the Wars
Without: Lucan’s Civil War Through Modern Veterans’ Eyes”
- 2016 *WV Humanities Council Fellowship*, “Narratives and Experiences of Trauma: A study of
veterans’ stories of combat”
- 2009 *National Institute of Justice Graduate Research Fellowship*, “Discourses of Death: Language, Juries,
and future danger in Texas death penalty trials”
- 2009 *Wenner Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grant*, “Discourses of Death: Language, Juries, and future
danger in Texas death penalty trials”

Internal

- 2020 Hedrick Program Grant for Teaching Innovation, Marshall University (with
Christina Franzen, Kim White, and Chris White)
- 2020, 2012 Summer Research Award, Marshall University
- 2019 John Marshall Summer Scholar Award, Marshall University
- 2016 Pickens Queen Teaching Award, Marshall University
- 2016, 2013 INCO Faculty Development Grant, Marshall University
- 2015, 2014 Quinlan Endowment Grant for Faculty Travel, Marshall University
- 2013, 2012
- 2013 MU-Advance Path Forward Travel Award, Marshall University
- 2012 MU-Advance Faculty Development Initiative Mini-Grant, Marshall University
- 2008, 2007 UCLA Department of Anthropology Research Grant
- 2006, 2005 UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship
- 2004 UCLA Pauley Fellowship
- 2002 Edward Sapir Award for Outstanding Student in Linguistic Anthropology,
New York University
- 2002 Founders Day Award, New York University
- 2002 Honors Scholar, New York University
- 1998 New York University Trustees’ Fellowship

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Marshall University

Courses taught: Linguistic Anthropology
Methods in Language and Culture

Language, Gender, and the Body
Explorations in Language and Identity
Cultural Anthropology
Ethnographic Research
Theory in Ethnology
Crime and Custom
Law, Culture, and Society
American Ethnicities
Anthropology of Globalization
Death and Dying in the Ancient and Modern World
Dance for Musical Theater

University of California, Los Angeles

Courses taught: Gender and Language in Society
Culture and Communication
History of Anthropology

Teaching Assistantships (UCLA)

Courses TAed: Culture and Communication, Prof. H. Samy Alim
Language in Culture, Prof. Marjorie Goodwin

SERVICE

Marshall University

2022-present Chair, *Ad Hoc Committee on Shared Governance*
2021-present Faculty Representative, *Marshall University Board of Governors*
2018-2020 EDGE Mentor
2013-2016 Director of Undergraduate Studies, *Department of Sociology & Anthropology*
2018-2021 Member, *John Marshall University Scholar Award Committee*
2018-2021 Member, *College of Liberal Arts Research Committee*
2018-2020 Member, *Faculty Senate Executive Committee*
2016-2019 Faculty Senate Representative, *University Academic Planning Committee*
2016-2018 Chair, *College of Liberal Arts Research and Creativity Conference Committee*
2016 Interim Director, *Women's Studies Advisory Board*
2015-2106 Chair, *Faculty Concerns Committee*
2014-2022 Member, *Sexuality Studies Program Committee*
2014-2020 Member, *Faculty Senate*
2013-present Member, *College of Liberal Arts Research and Creativity Conference Committee*
2012-present Member, *Women's Studies Advisory Board*
2011-present Faculty Advisor, *Anthropology Club*

Professional

2019-present Editorial Board Member, *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*
2014-2016 Co-chair, *Ethnography, Law & Society CRN*, Law and Society Association
2014-2016 Core Member, *Language and Social Justice Committee*, American Anthropological Association

Community

- 2017-present Board Member, *Branches Domestic Violence Shelter*, Huntington, WV
2016 Honor Flight Guardian
2015 Job Application Consultant, *Harmony House*, Huntington, WV

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2023 *Foundations of Organizational Ombuds Practice*, International Ombuds Association
2023, 2020, 2011 *Writing Across the Curriculum Workshop*, Marshall University
2023, 2016 *Quality Matters Certification: Applying the QM Rubric*
2021 *John Marshall Leadership Fellows Program*, Marshall University
2017, 2013, 2012 *iPed Conference on Teaching and Learning*, Marshall University
Research Bootcamp for New Faculty, Marshall University

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2019-present *Bodies at War: Moral injury and veterans' embodied narratives of recovery*
VA-sponsored ethnographic study of a VA yoga program
- Videorecordings and participant observation in veteran yoga program
 - Person-centered interviews with veteran participants
 - Funded by the John Marshall Scholars Award
- 2014-2020 *Narratives and Experiences of Trauma: A Study of Veterans' Stories of Combat*
Project conducted with TSgt. (ret.) Bryan D. Carnes
- Investigated experiences of U.S. combat veterans who have been engaged in and responsible for the loss of enemy life to better understand and facilitate their transition into post-deployment life
 - Person-centered interviews with combat veterans of OEF and OIF
 - Funded by the WV Humanities Council
- 2013-2016 *Higher Education in Appalachia: An interdisciplinary study*
Collaborative research project, Marshall University
- Collected ethnographic, interview, and survey data with anthropology and sociology undergraduates, graduate students and faculty investigating experiences of poverty, higher education, and employment in the Central Appalachian region
 - Findings presented to the administrative offices of Marshall University and higher education boards in West Virginia as well as to academic audiences
- 2008-2010 *Discourses of death: Language, juries and future danger in Texas death penalty trials*
Independent research project, Houston, TX
- Ethnographic research of death penalty trials and jury decision-making in Texas
 - Funded by the National Institute of Justice and the Wenner Gren Foundation
- 2005-2007 *Research Assistant and Assistant to the Director, Center for Language, Interaction and Culture*, Alessandro Duranti, Anthropology Department, UCLA
- 2005-2006 *Language, Genetics and Intersexuality: Discourse practices of a genetics laboratory*
Independent research project, UCLA

- Video-recordings of laboratory interaction and interviews with geneticists and doctors regarding the medical construction of sex and sexuality in laboratory and hospital settings

2004 *Research Assistant*, Prof. Noel Enyedy
 Graduate School of Education & Information Sciences, UCLA

2000-2002 *Undergraduate Research Assistant*, Anthropology Dept., NYU

2001 *Research Assistant*, Prof. Neil Vidmar, Duke University Law School

2000 *Research Assistant*, Prof. Donald Clifford, University of North Carolina Law School

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2017-2019 *Consultant*, Texas Defender Service, Houston TX

- Consulted on legislative bill to amend Texas capital jury instructions

2007 *Intern*, Texas Defender Service, Houston, TX

2005-2006 *Paralegal*, Candiotty & Block, Los Angeles, CA

2002-2004 *Paralegal*, Schlam, Stone & Dolan, New York, NY

PROFESSIONAL DANCE EXPERIENCE

2011-present *Performer and choreographer*, Jeslyn Dance Gallery, Huntington, WV
Teacher, 4th Avenue Arts, Huntington, WV and Academy of Arts at January's, Charleston, WV

2004-2011 *Principal Dancer*, Kybele Dance Theater, Los Angeles, CA
Teacher, Your Neighborhood Studio & Katnap Dance Studio, Los Angeles, CA

1998-2004 *Performer*, GiBa in Motion, Washington Square Repertory Dance Company, Skip Costa Core Movement Project, and Arch Dance, New York, NY