

Craig Robertson

e-mail: cr.robertson@northeastern.edu
Tel: 617 335-7433

Current Academic Position

Associate Professor, Program in Media and Screen Studies, Northeastern University, 2012-

Academic Employment History

Assistant Professor, Communication Studies, Northeastern University, 2005-12

Assistant Professor, History and Society Division, Babson College, 2004-05

Education

Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Institute of Communications Research, 2004
Dissertation: *"Passport Please": The United States Passport and the Documentation of Individual Identity, 1845-1930.*

Winner: Best Dissertation, Critical Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association, 2004.

M.A. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Speech Communication, 1996.

Post-Graduate Diploma, University of Canterbury, New Zealand, Journalism, 1993.

B.A (Hons) University of Otago, New Zealand, History, 1991.

Publications

(i) Books

The Passport in America: The History of a Document. Oxford University Press, 2010.

(ii) Edited Collections

Media History and the Archive. Ed, Craig Robertson. Routledge, 2011.

[expanded version of special issue of *The Communication Review* 13:1 (2010)].

Thinking With James Carey: Essays on Communications, Transportation, History. Eds, Jeremy Packer and Craig Robertson. Peter Lang, 2006.

(iii) Articles and Chapters (refereed)

"Learning to File: Reconfiguring Information and Information Work in the Early Twentieth Century." *Technology and Culture* 58:3 (forthcoming 2017).

"'Built Like a Skyscraper'." *Harvard Design Magazine* No. 42 (forthcoming Fall/Winter 2016).

"Paper, Information and Identity in 1920s America." *Information and Culture: A Journal of History* 50:3 (2015): 392-416.

Winner: Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Library and Information History Group (U.K.): Library History Essay Award, 2016.

"'You Lie!' Identity, Paper, and the Materiality of Information." *The Communication Review* 17:2 (2014): 69-90.

"Photography," in *Media History and the Foundations of Media Studies.* Ed. John Nerone. Blackwell, 2013.

"Four Documents, a Non-Citizen, and a Diplomatic Controversy: The Documentation of Identity in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 22 (2009): 476-496.

“A Documentary Regime of Verification: The Emergence of the U.S. Passport & the Archival Problematization of Identity.” *Cultural Studies* 23 (2009): 329-354.

“Locating the Border.” *Social Identities* 14 (2008): 447-456.

“A Ritual of Verification? The Nation, the State & the Passport” in *Thinking With James Carey: Essays on Communications, Transportation and History*. Eds. Jeremy Packer and Craig Robertson. Peter Lang, 2006.

“Mechanisms of Exclusion: Historicizing the Archive & the Passport” in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions & the Writing of History*. Ed. Antoinette Burton. Duke University Press, 2005.

“The Archive, Disciplinarity and Governing: Cultural Studies and the Writing of History.” *Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies* 4 (2004): 450-471.

“A Sporting Gesture? BSkyB, Manchester United, Global Media, and Sport.” *Television and New Media* 5 (2004): 291-314.

“Locating the Dunedin Sound: Authenticity, Affect, and Alternative Music.” *Information, Theory and Society* 1 (2002): 23-39.

Presentations: Conferences and Invited Talks

2016

Roundtable: The Powered Up Medium.

The Toronto School: Then/Now/Next. McLuhan Center for Culture and Technology, University of Toronto, October [Invited].

How Does Paper Work? Rethinking Paper and Media Through the History of the Filing Cabinet. What is Media? International Conference organized by the University of Oregon, Portland, April.

2015

Information as Modular: Organizing Paper in Early 20th Century Filing Cabinets. Society for the History of Technology Conference, Albuquerque, October.

The Emergence of the Filing Cabinet: The Spatial and Temporal Storage of Modern Information. Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, Montreal, March.

2014

Information at Your Fingertips: Teaching Filing in 1920s and 1930s America. The Histories of American Capitalism, Cornell University, November.

2013

Handling Information: The Filing Cabinet and the Mediation of Information Labor. National Communication Association Conference, Washington DC, November.

Learning to File: Efficiency, Office Workers, and the Emergence of the Filing Cabinet. American Studies Association Conference, Washington DC, November.

“The Segregation and Housing of Various Records Not Bound”: The Filing Cabinet and Early 20th Century Information. Society for the History of Technology, Conference, Portland (ME), October.

Paper, Memory and Efficiency.

Paper Work: The Materials and Practices of Modern Information Cultures (symposium) University of Otago (NZ), May.

Rethinking the Filing Cabinet as Information Technology.

Dept. of Media, Film and Communication, University of Otago (NZ), May. [Invited].

“A More Useful and Purposeful History”: The Problems of People, Paper and Information in the United States, 1880-1940.
Dept. of History, University of Otago (NZ), March.
[Invited].

2012

Vertical Filing and the Emergence of the Modern Office
Crossroads, Bi-Annual Conference of the Association of Cultural Studies, Paris, July.

“A More Useful and Purposeful History”: Files, Paper, and the Materiality of Identity.
Cultural Studies Association (U.S.). 10th Annual Conference, San Diego, April.

2011

Respondent: *The Passport in America: The History of a Document*: Panel discussion on book.
Center for the Study of Citizenship, Wayne State University, April.
[Invited].

The Problems of People, Paper and Information: The Emergence of the Passport in the United States.
Institute of Communications Research, University of Illinois, February.
[Invited].

2010

“There was no suspect list other than in the brain of the official himself”: Rethinking Security as a Problem of Information in World War 1.
National Communication Association Conference, San Francisco, November.

2009

Identity as Information: The Failed ‘Universal Fingerprinting’ Campaign.
National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, November.

Learning to Document Identity: The Emergence of the U.S. Passport, 1840-1930.
Frontiers of New Media Symposium, University of Utah, September.
[Invited].

Storing and Transmitting Identity: The Emergence of the Modern U.S. Passport.
Media in Transition 6, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, April.

Thumbs Down: Modernity, Alienation, and the Failed Universal Fingerprinting Campaign.
Cultural Studies Association (U.S.) 7th Annual Meeting, Kansas City, April.

The National Archives and the History of the Passport.
New England Archivist Society Annual Meeting, Boston, March.
[Invited].

2008

Making the State Visible: The Emergence of the Passport in the United States.
Visible Memories Conference, Syracuse University, October.

The Passport and Changing Attitudes to Public and Private in 1920s America.
Humanities Inside/Out Panel Series, Northeastern University, March.
[Invited].

2007

Writing Communications History from the Archive.
National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, November.

Fend for Yourself Without Being Seen: Surveillance, Citizenship Requirements for Medicaid, and a Neoliberal Logic of Disposability.
Cultural Studies Association (U.S.) 5th Annual Meeting, Portland, Oregon, April.

2006

Policing the Crisis or Collecting Art? The Problem of Authority & Ownership in the NYPD's Graffiti Database.

International Communication Association Conference, Dresden, Germany, June.

Locating the Border.

National Communication Association Conference, San Antonio, November.

Documenting a Healthy Nation? Medicaid and the Citizenship Verification Provision.

National Communication Association Conference, San Antonio, November.

Visualizing Security: Digitalizing Surveillance & the Body (Respondent).

National Communication Association Conference, San Antonio, November.

[*Invited*].

2005

Visualizing the State: The Emergence of the Passport as an Authoritative Document.

National Communication Association Conference, Boston, November.

Identification as an Archival Problematic: The Development of Identification Documents.

National Communication Association Conference, Boston, November.

Homeland (In-)Securities. (Roundtable).

National Communication Association Conference, Boston, November.

[*Invited*].

A New Visual Technology: The Passport and the Documentation of Individual Identity.

International Communications Association Annual Conference, New York, May.

Seeing People, Reading Documents: The Emergence of the Passport in the 1920s.

Kansas State Cultural Studies Conference on Visual Culture, March.

2004

"To Resemble a Resemblance": The Passport Photo and the Production of Identity.

National Communication Association Conference, Chicago, November.

Reading Bodies, Reading Documents: Passports at the U.S. Border in the 1920s.

[CTRL]: Controlling Bodies/Controlling Spaces, McGill University, Montreal, October.

2003

'Passport Please': The Identification of Immigrants and the Nationalization of the U.S. Frontier.

National Communication Association Conference, Miami, November.

Over-Reaching? Cultural Studies and the Problem of Interdisciplinary Work.

National Communication Association Conference, Miami, November.

"The Passport Nuisance": The Documentation of U.S. Travelers and the Production of National-Citizens 1870-1930.

American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Hartford, CT, October.

"From the Face of the Bearer Rather Than From the Face of the Document": Passports and African-Americans in Nineteenth Century "America."

International Communications Association Annual Conference, San Diego, May.

2002

A Technology of Verification? Practices of Modernity and the Emergence of the Passport.

National Communication Association, New Orleans, November.

Producing Loyal Citizens: The Passport and the Protection of Americans Abroad.

National Communication Association, New Orleans, November.

2001

Who are “We” and Where Do “We” Come From? The Passport, the Nation, and Communications History.
National Communication Association Conference, Atlanta, November.

Making Freedom More Flexible: The Emergence of the Modern Passport.
International Communication Association Conference, Washington D.C., May.

1999

League-al Identity: Mobility, the Passport and the League of Nations.
National Communication Association Conference, Chicago.

A Sporting Gesture? B SkyB and Manchester (Dis)United.
National Communication Association Conference, Chicago.

Mobilizing the Dunedin Sound.
International Association for the Study of Popular Music Biannual Conference, Nashville, September.

The ‘Myth’ of the Dunedin Sound: Authenticity, Affect and Alternative Music.
Eighth Annual Cultural Studies Symposium, Kansas State University, March

Media Appearances/Non-Academic Publications

Online:

Natasha Frost, “The History of Passport Photos, From ‘Anything Goes’ to Today’s Mugshots,”
Atlas Obscura, September 8, 2017
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/passport-photos-history-development-regulation-mugshots>
[Interviewed, quoted]

Sandra Kinsley, “The 1920s Women who Fought for the Right to Travel Under Their Own Name,”
Atlas Obscura, March 27, 2017
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/us-passport-history-women>
[Interviewed, quoted, and main source for article].

Tao Tao Holmes, “Passports Were Once Considered Offensive – Perhaps They Still Are,” *Atlas Obscura*, December 9, 2015.
<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/passports-were-once-considered-offensive-perhaps-they-still-are>
[Interviewed, quoted, and main source for article on the history of the passport].

Print:

Craig Robertson, “How The Passport Became an Improbable Symbol of American Identity”
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/how-passport-became-improbable-symbol-american-identity-180962064/>

Craig Robertson, “Passports in American Culture,” *Insights on Law and Society: A Magazine for Teachers of Civics, Government, History & Law* 14:3 Spring 2014, 4-9.

Christopher Klein, “The Insider: Craig Robertson,” *Boston Globe*, January 6, 2013.
<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/travel/2013/01/06/the-insider-craig-robertson-author-the-passport-america-the-history-document/0wPOizum6cnGWe07SeU9gK/story.html>
(Q&A about *The Passport in America: The History of a Document*).

Jennifer Schuessler, “The Paper Trail Through History,” *New York Times*, December 16, 2012.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/books/noting-the-history-of-the-paper-trail.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>
(includes 4-paragraph summary of research, with quotation).

Radio

“Passports Please” *BBC Radio 4*
 Interviewed for this documentary
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08nrzpr>

This Way Up, Radio New Zealand, June 29, 2013.
 20-minute Interview, History of the US Passport.
<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/thiswayup/20130629>

Travel with Rick Steves, Program 298, September 1, 2012.
 10 minute Interview, History of the US Passport.
<http://www.ricksteves.com/radio/protected/descriptions.cfm?showID=413>
 (syndicated on 250+ NPR affiliates).

Catskills Review of Books, WJFF 90.5 FM
 Interview: *The Passport in America*, November 6, 2010
<http://www.thecatskillreviewofbooks.com/?p=3>

Teaching

(i) Areas of Teaching Expertise

Media/Communication technology; Media/Communication history; information studies; surveillance; media theory; cultural theory.

(ii) Experience

Northeastern University
 Theories of Media and Culture
 Television: Text and Context
 20th Century Media
 Special Topics: Surveillance, Media and Culture
 Methods and Research in Communication
 Surveillance and Media (MA course)
 The Document (MA course)
 Information (MA course)

Babson College
 Introduction to Media Studies
 Bodies in Motion: Migration and Meaning in the U.S.

Service

i) University

Program in Media and Screen Studies

Program Coordinator, 2014-15
 Interim Director 2013-14
 Curriculum Committee Chair, 2011-15

Department of Communication Studies

Graduate Program Coordinator, 2011-12
 Graduate Program Committee, 2005-09
 Search Committee, Position in New Media, 2010-11
 Search Committee, Position in Global/Intercultural Communication, 2010-2011
 Search Committee, Administrative Assistant, Summer 2010
 Search Committee, Position in Public Advocacy and Rhetoric, 2008-09
 Media Studies Curriculum Committee, 2005-11

College of Arts, Media, and Design

Search Committee for Chair, Dept. Art and Design, 2016-17
Chair, Dean's Working Group on Restructuring Media Arts/Studies, 2015-16
Search Committee for Chair, Dept. Music, 2014-15

ii) Professional

Chair, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association, 2009-10
Vice-Chair, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association, 2008-09
Legislative Assembly, National Communication Association, 2008-11
Vice-Chair (Elect), Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association, 2007-08
2nd Vice Chair, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association, 2006-07
Editorial Board, *The Communication Review*, 2006-
Editorial Board, *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 2008-
Editorial Board, *Information and Culture*, 2013-
Member, International Communication Association
Member, National Communication Association
Member, American Studies Association
Member, Society for History of Technology
Member, Society of Cinema and Media Studies

ReferencesResearch:

Lisa Gitelman
Professor, New York University
gitelman@nyu.edu

John Nerone
Emeritus Professor, University of Illinois
jnerone@illinois.edu

Jonathan Sterne
Professor, McGill University
letters@sterneworks.org

Teaching/Department Service

Joanne Morreale
Associate Professor, Northeastern University
j.morreale@northeastern.edu