

## COURTNEY BERNE, PhD

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### EDUCATION

**Temple University:** PhD, Geography, Environment, and Urban Studies, Philadelphia, PA.

**The University of Chicago:** Master of Arts, Humanities, Chicago, IL.

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst:** Bachelor of Arts, Theater, Amherst, MA.

**RESEARCH INTERESTS:** As an interdisciplinary, more-than-human feminist geographer, my research focuses on multispecies spaces of hope amidst urban environments, while pertaining to race, marginalization, subversive mobility, personal agency and spatial sovereignty.

*Areas of interest:* Environmental Humanities, Animal Geography, Black Geography, Eco-feminism.

*Dissertation:* Three articles concerning the politics of Black horsemen since Black Lives Matter; the therapeutic benefits of urban horse riding for populations experiencing chronic precarity; and a story map documenting the slow erasure and evolution of Black-run horse stables across Philadelphia.

### HUMAN-ANIMAL/ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES TEACHING EXPERIENCE

#### **NTT Lecturer**

September 2025 – May 2026

#### **Rutgers University**

New Brunswick, NJ

-Instructor of *Conservation, Introduction to Environmental Studies* and *World Cultural Regions* for undergraduates interested in pursuing degrees in Environmental Studies and/or Geography.

#### **Instructor of Record**

January 2022 – May 2024

#### **Temple University**

Philadelphia, PA

#### Course Design:

-*Animal Geographies*: pioneered new course focusing on the sub-field of Animal Geography as a special topic, cross listed between Environmental Studies & Geography, Environment and Urban Studies departments for undergraduates interested in pursuing fields related to human-animal studies.

- *Animals in the City*: designed original online, asynchronous course based on dissertation research regarding inter-species relationships within urban environments, their impacts, importance and ways in which they inform spatial dynamics, resource use/acquisition and social sustainability.

#### Course Instruction:

-*Environment and Society*: first PhD candidate tasked with teaching Environmental Studies course for undergraduate majors embarking in the field.

- *Sustainable Environments*: instructor for summer as well as online, asynchronous sections of general education requirement for first year undergraduates.

#### **Teaching Assistantship**

August 2018 – May 2022

#### **Temple University**

Philadelphia, PA

- *Environment and Society*; *Sustainable Environments*; *Global Cities*; *Research Design*; *African Development (Geography, Environment and Urban Studies & Environmental Studies departments)*: within courses listed, duties included - assisting professors in large lecture as guest speaker, facilitating recitation sessions, grading, proctoring, tutoring, and advising during office hours.

#### **Instructor of Record**

August 2022 - December 2022

#### **Thomas Jefferson University, East Falls**

Philadelphia, PA

-*Animals and Society*: taught two sections of specialized course on human-animal relations to students pursuing both social science and STEM fields by building on previous content while also integrating

inter-species experiential learning and my own urban-equine dissertation research.

**TA & Immersive Synchronous Lecture Teaching Fellow  
Rutgers University**

September 2017 – May 2018  
New Brunswick, NJ

- *Environmental Studies (Geography Department)*: Assisted Geography professor in lectures for undergraduates regarding examining human-environment interactions and systems of global change.
- *Life of Primates (Anthropology Department)*: Assisted Anthropology professor in seminar with synchronous lecture set-up while maintaining class attendance, grading, and evaluating student progress.

**AP Reader (ETS) College Board**

June 2018 – current

- Served as table reader for the Educational Testing Services and Advanced Placement college exams under Human Geography both on site and virtually.

**PUBLICATIONS**

- Berne, C. (2025). *Black Riders & their Horses since 'Black Lives Matter': East Coast Addition* [Advance publication]. *Society & Animals*. [dx.doi.org/10.1163/15685306-bja10255](https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-bja10255)
- Berne, C. (2025). *Encountering the Cowboy: Remembering, Relating and Reclaiming Philadelphia's Black Horsemen*. [Under Review]. *Material Culture*.
- Berne, C., & Valdez, F. (2025). The Evolution of Fletcher Street's Horse Stables: A Legacy of Philadelphia's Black Riders: Past and Present. <https://fletcherststorymap.com/>

**PRESENTATIONS**

- Berne, C. (2025, March 27). *Historical Erasure and the Re(riding) of Black Horsemen* [Panelist]. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Detroit, MI, United States.
- Berne, C. (2024, April 18). *Beyond BLM: How Black Horsemen/women Color Human-Equine Kinship* [Organizer, Moderator & Panelist]. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI, United States.
- Berne, C. (2024, February 23). *From the Horse's Mouth: First Person Narratives from Philadelphia's Black Riders* [Panelist]. Dimensions of Political Ecology Annual Meeting, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, United States.
- Berne, C. (2023, September 30). *Multi-Species (In)Justice* [Moderator & Panelist]. 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Nature-Society Workshop, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
- Berne, C. (2022, February 15). *Encounters, Kinship & the Urban Refuge: How Philadelphia's Black Horsemen Trouble Time and Space* [Panelist]. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Manhattan, NY, United States.
- Berne, C. (2021, April 9). *Equine as equalizer: Human-Equine mythologies & Black Urban Horsemanship* [Panelist]. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, United States.
- Berne, C. (2020, April 6). *Horseman of the Anthropocene: Black Urban Cowboys, Resilience & Reclamations of Space* [Panelist]. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, United States.

**WRITING & ELL TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Lecturer  
Rutgers University**

September 2017 – May 2018  
New Brunswick, NJ

- *Expository Writing (Writing Department)*: Instructed first year college students to synthesize a diverse range of reading material in order to respond to it sequentially over the course of the semester.

**Instructor** June 2007 - March 2016  
**DePaul University, English Language Academy** Chicago, IL  
 - *Foundations/Advanced/University Bridge Writing*: taught writing to international students for multi-tiered academic analysis.  
 - *Foundations/High-Intermediate/Advanced/University Bridge Reading*: developed international students' understanding of literary genres in academic and real-world contexts.  
 - *Advanced/University Bridge Spoken English*: instructed international students to improve speaking and listening skills.

**Lecturer** August 2007 - May 2016  
**The School of the Art Institute Chicago** Chicago, IL  
 - Instructed *Fluency 1 & Fluency 2* classes, preparing international students to critique, analyze, evaluate, discuss, understand, respond to, and write about Art History (1870's-current).  
 - Ran small group tutorials for English language learners in Art History specifically focused on: academic writing, reading, and presentation skills.

**Instructor** June 2015 - August 2015  
**Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage Trust** Chingola, Zambia  
 - Designed curriculum to assist locals across language abilities/ages to learn English for capacity building, wildlife conservation and communication with international visitors.  
 - Awarded self-directed grant funding from: The Pollination Project and The School of the Art Institute to facilitate program.

**Instructor** Sept 2009 - June 2010  
**Dept. of State English Language Fellow, Brawijaya University** Malang (East Java), Indonesia  
 - Designed curriculum for *Writing IV*, *Drama One/Two*, and *American Studies* while providing English language tutoring during office hours.  
 - Served as presenter, moderator, master of ceremonies, and judge for conferences, panels and seminars.

### **AWARDS & CERTIFICATIONS**

**Graduate Certificate: Temple University** December 2021 - May 2025  
 Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies  
**Loretta C. Duckworth Scholars Studio Externship** September 2024 – May 2025  
 Full funding for academic year to support creation of digital story map documenting the erasure of black horse stables in Philadelphia using ArcGIS.  
**Harris Webber Graduate Fellowship** September 2023 – December 2023  
 \$12,500 to dedicate fall semester solely on dissertation research and writing.  
**Public Policy Lab Fellowship** September 2021 – May 2022  
 \$2,000 to participate in bi-monthly interdisciplinary workshops with faculty and graduate students.  
**Temple University Graduate Research Summer Grant** Summer 2022 – 2019  
 \$6,000 for summer research re: black urban cowboys (2022 & 2021) & great apes (2019).  
**Global Studies Graduate Research Grant** Summer 2019  
 \$1,500 for summer research at the National Zoological Park, Washington DC.  
**School for International Training** Summer 2005  
 TESOL certification, Chicago, IL.

### **PROFESSIONAL (CAPTIVE ANIMAL) EXPERIENCE**

**Board Secretary** September 2021 – current  
**Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club** Philadelphia, PA

- Co-facilitating and accompanying members of non-profit Riding Club to annual meeting with the Federation of Black Cowboys in Marathon, New York while facilitating black horsemen/women networking opportunities.

- Advocated for land tenure with Parks and Recreation and City Council regarding relocation to Fairmount Park while volunteering services for stable maintenance and equine animal husbandry.

### **Great Ape Research Intern**

May – August 2019

### **Smithsonian's National Zoological Park**

Washington, DC

- Collected quantifiable data on gestural communication between mother/infant dyads via ZooMonitor/ethograms as contribution towards ongoing study.

- Provided daily presentations regarding ongoing research, animal geography, and conservation for the general public, volunteers (Friends of the National Zoo) and NZP great ape keepers.

### **Independent Consultant**

Fall 2015 - Winter 2016

### **Arcus Foundation**

Remote

- Revised, refined, summarized and updated internal captive ape range sanctuary and rescue center database.

### **Animal Husbandry Intern**

Winter 2013 & Winter 2014

### **Center for Great Apes**

Wauchula, FL

- Assisted animal care staff in daily activities including feeding, enrichment, and cleaning enclosures.

### **Lester E. Fisher Center for the Study & Conservation of Apes**

January - December 2013

### **Behavioral Data Intern**

Chicago, IL

- Monitored chimpanzee and gorilla behavior for the purposes of data analysis in order to advance working knowledge of primate biology, behavior, cognition and captive space management.

## **UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Temple University Graduate Student Association: Organizer**

2022 – 2023

Served as organizing member of Graduate student union prior to and during a successful strike for better wages, health care and working conditions.

### **American Association of Geographers (AAG): Grad Officer**

2019 – 2021

Co-created annual conference newsletter for AAG's yearly meeting, including interviewing keynote speakers for newsletter content.

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

### **American Association of Geographers**

Graduate Student Member

2017 – 2025

Graduate Student Officer

2019 – 2021

### **Animals & Society Institute**

Graduate Student Member

2021 – 2025

## **REFERENCES**

### **Jacob Shell, PhD**

Dissertation Advisor/Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Environment, and Urban Studies (GENUS), Temple University: jacob.shell@temple.edu (857) 998-9829

### **Allison Hayes-Conroy, PhD**

Dissertation Committee/Associate Professor, GENUS, Temple: anhc@temple.edu (856) 261-5137

### **Fletcher Chmara-Huff, PhD**

Dissertation Committee/Asst Professor, GENUS, Temple: fletcherch@temple.edu (215) 204-8396