

Robert McDonald, PhD

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### Education

Ph. D., Communication Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, concentration in Rhetorical Studies, 2016

Dissertation Title: *The Prophets of Incentives: Economic Tropes in Theory, Policy and Culture*

Director: Christian Lundberg

Committee: William Balthrop, Lawrence Grossberg, Fredric Jameson, Michael Palm

M. A., Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin, concentration in Rhetoric and Language, 2010

Thesis Title: *The Subprime Object of Ideology*

Director: Dana Cloud

Reader: Joshua Gunn

B. J. with High Honors, University of Texas at Austin, 2008, Journalism

B. A. with High Honors, University of Texas at Austin, 2008, Government

### Single-Author Books

*Works Like a Charm: Incentive Rhetoric and the Economization of Everyday Life*, State University of New York Press (Insinuations: Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, Literature series), publication date August 2023

### Refereed Journal Articles, Book Reviews & Invited Book Chapters

“Enforcing Unbreakable Laws: Detective Fiction and the Rhetoric of Economic Orthodoxy,” *Western Journal of Communication*, vol. 87 (2023). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2022.2155067>

“Market Affect and the Rhetoric of Political Economic Debates,” book review, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, vol. 55, no. 2 (2023), 208-214. DOI: 10.5325/philrhet.55.2.0208

- “*Desiring the Bomb: Communication, Psychoanalysis, and the Atomic Age*,” book review, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* vol. 106, no. 2 (2020), 213-216. DOI: 10.1080/00335630.2020.1744817
- “Slavoj Žižek and Communication Studies.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.593>
- “Metastasis and Retroactive Causality in Incentive Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* vol. 104, no. 4 (2018), 400-21. DOI: 10.1080/00335630.2018.1519257
- “From ‘Incentive Furie’ to ‘Incentives to Efficiency,’ or the Movement of ‘Incentive’ in Neoclassical Thought,” *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* vol. 21, no. 2 (2018), 115-30. DOI: 10.1080/15362426.2018.1474045
- “*Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right’s Stealth Plan for America*,” book review, *Journal of Cultural Economy* vol. 11, no. 4 (2018), 371-5. DOI: 10.1080/17530350.2018.1463277
- “*Freakonomics* as a Discourse of Perversion,” *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2017).

#### Competitive Grants Applied for/in Progress

- National Humanities Center Summer Residency Program (\$7500), awarded January 2023
- National Humanities Center Summer Residency Program (\$7000), November 2021 (unsuccessful)
- Vice Chancellor for Research and Friends of the Hall Center Book Publication Award (\$1000), awarded October 2021
- Public Scholars Group, Hall Center for the Humanities (\$500), December 2020 (unsuccessful)
- First-Year Seminar, Office of First-Year Experience (\$500), awarded November 2020
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty Travel Award (\$700), awarded February 2020
- January Jumpstart 2020, Center for Teaching Excellence (\$1000), awarded December 2019
- New Faculty General Research Fund, University of Kansas (\$8,000), awarded April 2019
- Robert L. Platzman Memorial Summer Research Fellowship, University of Chicago (\$3,000), March 2019 (unsuccessful)
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty Travel Award (\$700), awarded January 2019
- Hall Center for the Humanities Faculty Travel Grant (\$1,000), awarded December 2018

#### Awards, Honors and Acceptances

Division's Top Paper, Economics, Communication and Society Division, National Communication Association, Indianapolis, IN, November 2020

Rhetoric Society of America 2019 Summer Institute, Neoliberalism and Rhetorical Scholarship Workshop, College Park, MD, June 2019

Hall Center for the Humanities Faculty Colloquium, "The Cultural Lives of Neoliberalism," University of Kansas, Fall 2016

Nominee, Outstanding Honors Instructor, KU Honors Program, Fall 2016

Rhetoric Society of America 2015 Summer Institute, Rhetoric and Economics Workshop, Madison, WI, June 2015

Royster Society of Fellows five-year endowed fellowship, Graduate School, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Outstanding Achievement in Service and Leadership Award, Department of Communication Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 2013

Distinguished Leadership Award, Royster Society of Fellows, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, May 2012

Outstanding Master's Student, Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin, May 2010

Laureate Paper, James L. Golden Outstanding Student Essay in Rhetoric for "Asiatic Modes of Resistance: SDS and 'The New Radicals in the Multiversity,'" May 2009

Outstanding First-Year Graduate Student, Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin, May 2009

Academic Achievement Award, Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 2008-2009

Communication Studies Graduate Council NCA Annual Convention Travel Scholarship, September 2008

Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society, inducted April 2009

Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society, inducted May 2008

Senior Fellow, College of Communication Honors Program, University of Texas at Austin, Fall 2006-Spring 2008

#### Invited Talks & Lectures

"Critical and Rhetorical Methods in Communication Studies," Drury University, March 7, 2022

“Psychoanalysis and Rhetorical Methods,” University of Denver, April 28, 2021

“Reflections on the Rhetoric of Economics,” UMKC Economics Club, University of Missouri-Kansas City, April 12, 2019

### Teaching Appointments

*Assistant Professor*, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas

- ❖ Seminar on Ideology (graduate), Fall 2022
- ❖ Sex, Fate & Death (First-Year Seminar), Fall 2021, Fall 2022-Spring 2023
- ❖ Rhetoric & Social Influence, Fall 2018, Spring 2021
- ❖ Critical Theory as Critical Method (graduate), Spring 2021
- ❖ Seminar on Kenneth Burke (graduate), Spring 2020
- ❖ Rhetoric & Popular Culture, Spring 2019-Spring 2020, Spring 2021-Spring 2022, Spring 2023
- ❖ Persuasive Speaking, Spring-Fall 2019
- ❖ Honors Speaker-Audience Communication, Fall 2018, Spring 2022

*Lecturer*, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas

- ❖ Rhetoric & Popular Culture, Fall 2016, Spring 2018
- ❖ Honors Speaker-Audience Communication, Spring 2016-Spring 2018
- ❖ Speaker-Audience Communication, Fall 2015-Spring 2016, Spring 2017

*Instructor*, Department of Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- ❖ Rhetoric & Public Issues (Online) Fall 2015-Spring 2016
- ❖ Rhetoric & Public Issues, Fall 2013
- ❖ Introduction to Public Speaking, Spring 2011, Summer 2012
- ❖ Introduction to Media History, Theory and Criticism, Spring 2012

*Screening Coordinator*, Department of Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- ❖ Introduction to Media History, Theory & Criticism, Fall 2013, instructor Neal Thomas

*Graduate Research Consultant*, Department of Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- ❖ Advanced Rhetorical Criticism, Fall 2012, instructor Carole Blair

*Teaching Assistant*, Department of Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- ❖ Rhetoric & Public Issues, Spring 2013, instructor Carole Blair
- ❖ American Independent Cinema, Spring 2013, instructor Richard Cante
- ❖ Public Speaking, Fall 2011, Fall 2012 instructor Christian Lundberg
- ❖ Introduction to Media History, Theory & Criticism, Fall 2011, instructor Michael Palm

*Teaching Assistant*, Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas at Austin

- ❖ Fall 2008-Spring 2009, Fall 2009-Spring 2010: Political Communication, instructor Sharon Jarvis
- ❖ Summer 2009: Communicating about Controversy, instructor Dana Cloud

Competitively Selected Conference Presentations & Responses

- “Optimism, Optimization and Finitude: Badiou Against the Economists,” Central States Communication Association Annual Convention, St. Louis, April 1, 2023.
- “The Black Studies Rejoinder to *The Theory of Moral Sentiments: A Response to Catherine Chaput’s Market Affect*.” National Communication Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, November 20, 2022.
- “Challenges in—and to—Shared Governance,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, November 19, 2022.
- Respondent, “Cultural Studies of the Economy in PLACE,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, November 18, 2022.
- “Nudge Theory and the Neurotic’s Question,” Lacan: Clinic & Culture Conference, Pittsburgh, October 15, 2022.
- “Liberal Feminism and the ‘Family Firm’ Metaphor in Economic Discourse,” Rhetoric Society of America Biannual Conference, Baltimore, May 27, 2022.
- “Unemployment and Enjoyment: Questions of Value in Rhetorical Theory,” Central States Communication Association Annual Convention, Madison, WI, April 1, 2022.
- “The Discourse of the Economist,” LACK Conference, Burlington, VT, April 29, 2021. (Conference postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19.)
- “Music, Food, Cigarettes: Economies of Enjoyment in Chicago School Economics,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Indianapolis, November 19, 2020. (Division’s Top Paper.)
- “(Re)considering Rhetoric and Psychoanalysis: A Symposium on Jacques Lacan’s *Transference*,” Rhetoric Society of America Conference, Portland, OR, May 24, 2020. (Conference canceled due to COVID-19.)
- “Baltimore in the Early Morning: On Psychoanalysis and Structure in Rhetorical Scholarship,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Baltimore, November 16, 2019.
- “Lacan contra Becker, or When Neoclassical Economic Theory Discovers Metonymy,” LACK Conference, Worcester, MA, May 9, 2019.
- “Structure, Sign and Theatre in the Discourse of Derrida and Psychoanalysis,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Salt Lake City, November 8, 2018.

- “On *An American Utopia*,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Dallas, November 16, 2017.
- “Henry Spearman and Neoclassical *Prosopopœia*,” Economics, Communication and Society Pre-conference, National Communication Association Annual Convention, Dallas, November 15, 2017.
- “Neither Nudges nor Liberty: Evaluating the Subject of Behavioral Economics in Social Policy,” American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, November 9, 2017.
- “Metaphor and Metonymy in Gary Becker’s *The Economic Approach to Human Behavior*,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Philadelphia, November 11, 2016.
- Respondent, “Critical/Cultural Approaches to Economics,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Philadelphia, November 10, 2016.
- “Approaching Gen(d)eral Equilibrium: Equal Pay Legislation and the Language of Incentives,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Las Vegas, November 20, 2015.
- “Neoliberalism? ‘As if!’” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Chicago, November 22, 2014.
- “Unemployment, Economies of Enjoyment and Truth at *Mi-Dit*,” International Žižek Studies Conference, University of Cincinnati, April 4, 2014.
- “Plato’s Stepchildren: Deleuze in Rhetoric and Composition,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Washington, D.C., November 21, 2013.
- “On *The Bonds of Debt: Borrowing against the Common Good*,” Value at Risk: Speculative Capital and the Politics of Debt—A Symposium, George Washington University, November 20, 2013.
- “Idols of the Marketplace,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Orlando, November 16, 2012.
- “Alterity, the Market, and Perverse Enjoyment,” International Žižek Studies Conference, SUNY Brockport, April 29, 2012.
- “Finitude’s Wake: Temporality and the Subject in Late Capitalism,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, November 18, 2011.
- “The Limits to Communicative Capitalism: A Discourse on Discursivity,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, November 17, 2011.
- “The Fin(anci)al Frontier,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, November 17, 2010.

- “Negotiating Knowledge and Risk: An Ethnographic Account of Financial Work,” Scholar to Scholar Presentation, National Communication Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, November 16, 2010.
- “Speaking (Ill) of the Dead: Deliberation, Decorum, and Political Death,” coauthored with Dr. Bryan McCann, National Communication Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, November 16, 2010.
- “The Subprime Object of Ideology,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, November 15, 2010.
- “Alan Greenspan and the Objects of Financial Ideology,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, November 14, 2010.
- “*Twilight* of the Postmodern Economic Paradigm,” Rhetoric Society of America Biennial Conference, Minneapolis, May 31, 2010.
- “Why Not to Blair: The Taste of Hugh Blair and *What Not to Wear*,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Chicago, November 15, 2009.
- “Asiatic Modes of Resistance: SDS and *The New Radicals in the Multiversity*,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Chicago, November 15, 2009.
- “‘Before the U.S. Turns into France’: Class Anger and American Capitalism,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Chicago, November 14, 2009.
- “T.I.N.A. Fashion: *What Not to Wear*, Post-feminism, and the Logic of Consumption,” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Chicago, November 12, 2009.
- “Asiatic Modes of Resistance: SDS and the NLF,” 1968: A Global Perspective, University of Texas at Austin, October 12, 2008.

#### University and Departmental Service

Member, Committee on Undergraduate Studies and Advising (CUSA), College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, University of Kansas, 2023-2026

Member, CUSA Subcommittee on Curricular Changes and Degree Requirements, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, University of Kansas, 2023-2026

MA Advisor, Ned Gidley, 2021-present

PhD Advisor, Ian Montgomery, 2020-present

Faculty Advisor, Lambda Pi Eta Honors Society, University of Kansas, 2021-

Faculty Reviewer, Undergraduate Research Awards, Center for Undergraduate Research, University of Kansas, 2020

Discussant, Professionals for Inclusion and Social Justice Graduate Research Conference, University of Kansas, February 28, 2020

Dissertation committee—Phil Samuels, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2019

Comprehensive exam committee—Lindsey Kraus, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2019-2020

Undergraduate honors thesis director, Jamie Hawley, graduated 2020

Undergraduate Committee, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2018-present

Kim Giffin Research Award Committee, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2019

Dissertation committee—Matthew Kay, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2018-present

E. C. Buehler Teaching Fellowship Award Committee, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2018

Comprehensive exam committee—Matthew Kay, Department of Communication Studies, University of Kansas, 2017

Departmental Senator, Graduate and Professional Student Federation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2013

Director, Royster Advanced Mentoring Program, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Fall 2012-Spring 2013

President, Graduate Student Association, Department of Communication Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Fall 2012-Spring 2013

Secretary, Graduate Student Association, Department of Communication Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Fall 2011-Spring 2012

Covenant Scholars/Royster Society of Fellows Graduate Mentoring Coordinator, 2011

#### Professional Memberships and Service

Reviewer, Routledge Press

- Literature
- Communication Studies

Reviewer, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*



Member, American Studies Association

Member, Rhetoric Society of America

- Reviewer, 2022 Biannual Convention

Member, National Communication Association

- Vice-Chair: Economics, Communication & Society, 2021-24
- Pre-conference Committee: Economics, Communication & Society, 2019-20
- Respondent: Rhetoric & Communication Theory 2017; Economics, Communication & Society 2020, 2023
- Recruitment Committee: Economics, Communication & Society, 2018-19
- Secretary Nominee: Rhetoric & Communication Theory, 2017
- Chair: Top Paper Panel, Rhetoric & Communication Theory, 2016
- Reviewer: Critical/Cultural Studies; Rhetoric & Communication Theory; Economics, Communication & Society; Political Communication
- Nominating Committee Member: Rhetoric & Communication Theory, 2014

#### Other Work Experience

*Associate Editor, The Daily Texan*, University of Texas at Austin, Summer 2007

*Senior Student Associate*, Fine Arts Library, University of Texas at Austin, Fall 2004-Summer 2008

#### Professional References

- ❖ Christian Lundberg, Associate Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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  - Phone: 919-962-7720
- ❖ V. William Balthrop, Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
  - E-mail: [ywb@email.unc.edu](mailto:ywb@email.unc.edu)
  - Phone: 919-942-8251
- ❖ Fredric Jameson, Knut Schmidt-Nielsen Professor of Comparative Literature, Duke University
  - E-mail: [jameson@duke.edu](mailto:jameson@duke.edu)
  - Phone: 919-682-5739