Rachel Fox, MS, MA, PhD

School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Grand Valley State University
324 Lake Ontario Hall, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale, Michigan 49401
foxr1@gvsu.edu | http://rachelefox.com | she/her/hers pronouns
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5368-9871

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2024 – Present | Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Grand Valley State University
School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies

EDUCATION

2024 | PhD in Communication, Science Studies, & Critical Gender Studies
University of California, San Diego
Dissertation: *Misdiagnosing Fat Oppression: Weight Stigma and the Anti-Obesity Assemblage*
Boatema Boateng & David Serlin, Committee Co-Chairs

2018 | Master of Arts in Communication, University of California, San Diego

2015 | Master of Science in Narrative Medicine, Columbia University

2014 | Bachelor of Arts in Biology, Wesleyan University

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Fat Studies
- Science and Technology Studies
- Feminist Studies/Critical Gender Studies
- Weight Stigma
- Disability Studies
- Critical Media Studies

WRITING

Peer Reviewed Articles

Basinger, E., Arroyo, A., Asbury, M., **Fox, R.**, Otis, H., Miller, N., Giles, H., & Turner, M. (2025). Dialogue on Difference: Fat Liberation in Communication. *Communication Monographs, 92*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2024.2444318

Fox, R., Park, K., Hildebrand-Chupp, R., & Vo, A. T. (2023). Working toward eradicating weight stigma by combating pathologization: A qualitative pilot study using direct contact and narrative medicine. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12717

Fox, R. (2019). Obesity: The Post Mortem: Reviving History and Dehumanizing Fatness via Televised Dissection. *Women's Studies*, *48*(3), 223–245. https://doi.org/10.1080/00497878.2019.1594812

Fox, R. (2018). Against progress: Understanding and resisting the temporality of transformational weight loss narratives. *Fat Studies*, *7*(2), 216–226. https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2017.1372992

Reprinted in *The Future is Fat: Theorizing Time in Relation to Body Weight and Stigma*. 2021, Taylor & Francis/Routledge.

Book Chapters

Fox, R. (Forthcoming). The (Mis)Use of Fat Performance in Weight Stigma Interventions with Health Professionals. *The Fat Performance Reader*, Under Contract with *Intellect Books*.

Book Reviews

Fox, R (2021). "*Fat* by Hanne Blank." *Emotion, Space and Society,* 38:C, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2020.100761

Fox, R (2018). "Why Diets Make Us Fat by Sandra Aamodt." *Fat Studies,* 7:2, 240-242, https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2017.1369344

Writing for a General Audience

Fox, R. (2022, May 17). Valuing Fatness: A Fat Studies Reading List. *Pipe Wrench*. https://pipewrenchmag.com/fat-studies-reading-list/

Fox, R. (2021, November 17). Fat Pain is Not Your Profundity. *The Polyphony*. https://thepolyphony.org/2021/11/17/fat-pain-is-not-your-profundity/
Reprinted by the *International Society of Critical Health Psychology* https://ischp.net/2022/05/12/fat-pain-is-not-your-profundity/

Fox, R. (2021, July 22). An Open Letter to the Well-Intentioned Medical Students Who Want to Do a Capstone Project on Weight Stigma. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@rachel.fox/an-open-letter-to-the-well-intentioned-medical-students-who-want-to-do-a-capstone-project-on-weight-c3501b1d8f9f
Reprinted in the *Weight and Healthcare Newsletter* https://weightandhealthcare.substack.com/p/letter-to-med-students-doing-a-weight

Fox, R. (2014, June 17). Too Fat to Be a Scientist? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/too-fat-to-be-a-scientist
Covered by NPR *Cosmos & Culture*: A Fresh Cry Of Pain: Fat-Shaming In Science

HONORS & AWARDS

2025 | Dean's Innovation Grand Grand Valley State University

2023 – 2024 | UC President's Dissertation Year Fellowship UC San Diego

2023 | Recognition of Expertise in Equitable and Evidence-Based Teaching UC San Diego

2021 | Inaugural Junior Fellow Centre for Fat Liberation and Scholarship

2021 | Democracy Lab Mini-Grant + Stipend UC San Diego

2020 | Judith and Neil Morgan Fellowship UC San Diego

2016 – 2020 | Kroner Family Dean's Fellowship UC San Diego

2017 | Narrative Medicine Fellowship Columbia University

2017 | Research Grant USC Keck School of Medicine

2016 | First Year Fellowship UC San Diego

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

2024 – Present | Grand Valley State University School of Interdisciplinary Studies/ Frederik Meijer Honors College

INT 201: Diversity in the United States
HNR 351: Medicine, Health, and Oppression
HNR 201: Live, Learn, Lead
HNR 151/152: Seeing and Being Seen: Surveillance, Technology, and Self

2021 | UC San Diego Department of Communication

COMM 108G: Politics of Bodies: Gender and Biomedicine

2016 | Sarah Lawrence College Master's of Health Advocacy Program

Graduate Seminar: Illness & Disability Narratives

2015 – 2016 | Rutgers University Women's and Gender Studies Department

Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Graduate Teaching Consultant

2020 – 2023 | UC San Diego Teaching & Learning Commons, Engaged Teaching Hub

Core Planning Team Member & Facilitator: Unpacking Anti-Blackness and Dismantling Systemic Racism in Educational Practices: An Action-Oriented Learning Community for UC San Diego Educators

Original Workshops Developed & Facilitated: Reimagining Teaching; Supporting Students While Preserving Yourself: Strategies for One-on-One Interactions; Setting Up a Good Mentoring Relationship & Giving Feedback on Graduate Student Writing; Teaching Tough Topics in DEI Courses; Demystifying Office Hours; Responding to Microaggressions in the Classroom; Evidence-Based Pedagogy for Neurodiverse Classrooms

Remote Instructor: Introduction to College Teaching; Course Design Series

Additional Specializations: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion; Supporting Student Well-Being; Universal/Accessible Design; Syllabus Design; Teaching Observations and Consultations

Teaching Assistant

2017 – 2020 | UC San Diego Department of Communication

COMM 100B: Communication, Culture, and Representation
COMM 100A: Communication, the Person & Everyday Life
COMM 10: Introduction to Communication
COMM 100C: Communication, Institutions, and Power

2015 – 2016 | Columbia University Masters in Narrative Medicine Program

Embodied Borderlands
Illness & Disability Narratives

SPEAKING | 2025

Fox, R. "The Anti-Obesity Orientation of Weight Stigma Research," International Weight Stigma Conference, July 6, 2025.

Fox, R. "Why Debunking 'Obesity Science' Won't Solve Fat Oppression," Canadian Sociological Association, June 13, 2025.

Invited Series Speaker: "The (Mis)Use of Fat Suffering in Weight Stigma Interventions," Columbia University Narrative Medicine Volvox Alumni Forum, April 16, 2025.

2024

Fox, R. "Selling Stigma: Afflictive Power and Fat Oppression," UC San Diego Science Studies Colloquium, November 25, 2024.

Invited Workshop: Fox, R., Mercedes, M., & Kriete, M. "Training the Trainers: How to Address Weight Stigma in DEIJ Efforts," the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, March 4 & 5, 2024.

Invited Workshop: Fox, R., Mercedes, M., & Kriete, M. "Understanding and Resisting Anti-Fatness in the Age of Ozempic," Weight Inclusive Nutrition & Dietetics and Weight-Inclusive Dietitians in Canada, February 22, 2024.

Invited Workshop: Fox, R., Mercedes, M., & Kriete, M. Global Interprofessional Educational Workshop on Weight Stigma, the University of the Pacific, January 26, 2024.

2023

Invited Workshop: Fox, R., Mercedes, M., & Kriete, M. "Obesity Elimination Won't Save Us: A Fat Activist Teach-In for Spotting Fat Oppression," UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, July 31, 2023.

Invited Panelist: "Reimagining Wellness: Confronting Weight Stigma, Fat Phobia, and Advancing Maternal Health," Georgia Society for Public Health Education (GASOPHE), July 26, 2023.

Fox, R., Mercedes, M., Kriete, M., & Payne, B.H. Workshop: "Critiquing Fat Oppression in the Age of Wegovy," International Weight Stigma Conference, June 28-29, 2023, Denver, CO, USA.

Fox, R. "Why Debunking the "Obesity Epidemic" Won't Solve Weight Stigma," International Weight Stigma Conference, June 28-29, 2023, Denver, CO, USA. https://youtu.be/Oo3IxiCMHN0

Invited Presentation & Panelist: "Why Debunking the "Obesity Epidemic" Won't Solve Fat Oppression," Philosophical Dimensions of Knowledge Production in The Science Of 'Obesity' Symposium, Cambridge, UK, June 22-23, 2023.

Invited Series Speaker: "Fat *Oppression* is a Feminist Issue: A Case for Feminist Divestment from the Anti-Obesity Assemblage," UC Davis Trans Science & Technology Studies Research Cluster, April 5, 2023.

2022

Fox, R. "Hypothesizing Medicine as the Primary Source of Weight Stigma: Introducing the Medical Devaluation Model," International Weight Stigma Conference, July 15, 2022, Berlin, Germany, Hybrid. https://youtu.be/z0XBktJlnBc

Joint Conference Session: "Medicine, Structural Stigma, and Pathologization: A New Approach toward Studying and Fighting Weight Stigma" with Rowan Hildebrand-Chupp, Katherine Gershfeld, and Corinne Grady

Fox, R. "Constructing Weight Stigma without Fat Politics: Entrenching Anti-Fatness in Stigma Interventions with Health Professionals," Fat Studies New Zealand Conference, July 5-7, 2022, Remote. https://youtu.be/O37bcjosqdg

Fox, R. "Constructing Weight Stigma without Fat Politics: Entrenching Anti-Fatness in Stigma Interventions with Health Professionals," Science Studies Program Conference, April 18, 2022, San Diego, CA.

2021

Fox, R. "The Historiography of Fatness is Itself Oppressive," Science Studies Student Choice Speaker Conference, April 9, 2021, San Diego, CA.

2018

Fox, R & Park, K. "Narrative Medicine as a Novel Weight Stigma Reduction Method," Association for Size Diversity and Health, August 3-5, 2018, Portland, OR.

Fox, R. "*Obesity: The Post Mortem*: Reviving History and Abjecting Fatness via Televised Dissection," Empowered Bodies Graduate Conference, June 26, 2018, York, UK.

Fox, R. "Narrative Medicine as a Novel Weight Stigma Reduction Method," International Weight Stigma Conference, June 18-19, 2018, Leeds, UK.

Fox, R & Park, K. "An Affective Challenge to Fat Phobia in Medical Education," UCSD/UCLA Graduate Student Conference on Culture, Health, and Mind, May 19, 2018, San Diego, CA.

Fox, R & Park, K. "Weight Stigma Reduction among Medical Students through Narrative Medicine," International Health Humanities Consortium Conference: Frankenstein@200, April 20-22, 2018, Stanford, CA.

Fox, R. "Fat Embodiment as Pedagogy," UC San Diego 11th Annual Graduate Visual Arts Symposium: Sensory Disruptions: Confronting the Primacy of the Visual, March 3, 2018, San Diego, CA.

2017

Fox, R & Hartman-Rogers, J. "Emotional Labor and the Affective Performance of Objectivity in Fat Studies," UC San Diego Science Studies Program Biennial Graduate Conference, May 19-20, 2017, San Diego, CA.

Fox, R. "A Hybrid Actor-Network Theory Analysis of the *Let's Move!* Campaign," PCA/ACA 2017 Annual Conference, April 12-14, 2017, San Diego, CA.
Panel Chair: Fat Ambivalence and Liminality

Fox, R & Park, K. "Weight Stigma Reduction among Medical Students through Narrative Medicine," Best of Cool Ideas Oral Presentation at the Innovations in Medical Education Conference, February 25, 2017, Los Angeles, CA.

GUEST LECTURES

2024

Class Visit: "Anti-Fatness, Embodiment, and *Obesity: the Post Mortem*," Grand Valley State University, *Embodied*, Coeli Fitzpatrick, Julia VanderMolen & Leifa Mayers, November 12, 2024.

"Why Debunking the "Obesity Epidemic" Won't Solve Weight Stigma," UC Davis First Year Seminar, *FYS 003 Love-Weight Relationship: Origins of anti-fat messaging and how to address it in today's society*, Professor Blaine Christiansen and Instructor Sophie Orr, February 29, 2024.

2023

"Constructing Weight Stigma without Fat Politics: Entrenching Anti-Fatness in Stigma Interventions with Health Professionals," UC Davis First Year Seminar, *FYS 003 Love-Weight Relationship: Origins of anti-fat messaging and how to address it in today's society*, Professor Blaine Christiansen and Instructor Sophie Orr, March 9, 2023.

2022

"The Power of Medical Media & the Injustice of *Obesity: The Post Mortem*," UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 108G: Gender and Biomedicine*, Professor Lillian Walkover, November 7, 2022.

2021

"The Impact of Diet Temporality on Fat People," Alma College Psychology Department, *Abnormal Psychology*, Professor Kelly Cuccolo, November 2, 2021.

2020

"Fat People's Experiences of Time," UC San Diego Sociology Department, *SOCI 135: Medical Sociology*, Professor CJ Valasek, July 16, 2020.

"Encoding and Decoding" UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 100B: Communication, Culture, and Representation,* Professor David Serlin, February 25, 2020.

"The Saussurean versus the Peircean Model of Semiotics" UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 100B: Communication, Culture, and Representation,* Professor David Serlin, January 23, 2020.

2019

"Fatness and the (Ab)Normal." SUNY Purchase Art History Department, *ARH 4006/5006 Investigating Normal,* Professor Elizabeth Guffey, November 25, 2019.

"Over-weight: The Story of a Label." UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 100A: Communication, the Person, and Everyday Life*, Professor Lilly Irani, November 21, 2019.

"'A Baby's Photograph is a Stupid Thing': Eugenics and Family Photography at the Turn of the 20th Century." UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 107: Visual Culture Before and After Photography*, Professor David Serlin, November 14, 2019.

"Obesity: The Post Mortem: Surveilling Fatness, Inside and Out." UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 100B: Communication, Culture, and Representation*, Professor Barbara Bush, August 26, 2019.

"*Obesity: The Post Mortem*: Realism, Fatphobia, and Documentary Film Making." UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 103F: How to Read a Film*, Professor Caroline Collins, September 3, 2019.

"*Obesity: The Post Mortem:* A Lesson on Fatness, Corpses, and Normalization." UC San Diego Communication Department, *COMM 108D: Politics of Bodies: Disability,* Professor Louise Hickman, May 28, 2019.

2018

"Weight Stigma Reduction among Medical Students through Narrative Medicine: Using Narrative Medicine Post-Degree," Columbia University MS Program in Narrative Medicine, Volvox Series, Virtual Lecture, May 9, 2018.

"Fat Embodiment, Phenomenology, and Care," Columbia University MS Program in Narrative Medicine, *NMED PS5028 Bodies, Illness, and Care: Perspectives from Phenomenology and Beyond*, Professor Craig Irvine, March 21, 2018.

MEDIA APPEAR-ANCES

2024

Podcast: *Embodiment for the Rest of Us*, Season 4 Episodes 9 & 10, December 5 & 19, 2024.

Documentary: The Cost of Losing: The Risks and Rewards of the Weight-Loss-Drugs Boom, NBC San Diego, October 3, 2024

Houseal, J. "How News Media Can Prevent Contributing to Weight Stigma." University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Journalism Ethics, July 23, 2024.

2023

Deaderick, L. "Online Abuse of Lizzo Illustrates Connections of Body Shaming, Race and Gender." *The San Diego Union Tribune*, June 11, 2023.

Salunke, S. "Paving the Way for the Field of Disability Studies," University of California Global Health Institute, March 8, 2023.

2021

Chang-Cook, A. "Where to Turn When Social Media Worsens Body Image Issues." *Consumer Reports*, November 8, 2021.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

2023 – 2024 | An Interprofessional Education Program on Weight Stigma
Co-Primary Investigator
University of the Pacific
Co-leading the development, implementation, and evaluation of an interprofessional education program aiming to teach health professions students across fields to spot and intervene on weight stigma; Co-leading the development and preliminary validation of a scale measuring knowledge and beliefs about weight stigma

2023 – 2024 | Lessons about Weight in the Medical School Curriculum
External Research Advisor
University of Minnesota Medical School

2023 – 2024 | Weight Stigma Quality Improvement Project
External Research Advisor, Presenter, and Focus Group Facilitator
Planned Parenthood Federation of America & Duke University School of Nursing

Co-developed an introductory lecture on weight stigma targeted towards Planned Parenthood clinicians and staff; advised the creation of a pre/post intervention evaluation survey; and facilitated focus groups for a doctoral dissertation project.

2021 – 2023 | Reforming Medical Education to Improve Access to Healthcare for Fat Patients: A Mixed Methods Study
Capstone Research Advisor
Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine, Quinnipiac University

2016 – 2018 | Weight Stigma Reduction among Medical Students through Narrative Medicine
Co-Primary Investigator
USC Keck School of Medicine

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Service to the Profession

Peer Reviewer

- *Fat Studies Journal*
- *Western Journal of Nursing Research*
- *Stigma & Health*
- *Health Psychology*
- *Sociology Compass*
- *Science, Technology, & Human Values*

2023 – Present | Advisory Committee Member
Medical Students for Size Inclusivity

Service to the University

2025 – Present | Brooks College Curriculum Committee
Grand Valley State University

2020 – 2021 | Qualifying Preparation Course Graduate Student Coordinator
UC San Diego Communication Department

2020 – 2021 | Anti-Racist Program Reform Committee Member
UC San Diego Science Studies Program

2017 – 2020 | Graduate Student Coordinator, UC San Diego Transdisciplinary Disability Studies (TDS) Working Group
Position funded by the UC San Diego Institute for Arts and Humanities

MENTORING

Current Mentees

- **Michael Greer,** Ph.D. Candidate, Philosophy, The Graduate Center, CUNY
- **Magdalyn Hallead**, Undergraduate Student, Grand Valley State University
- **Kylie Flanagan,** Undergraduate Student, UC Santa Cruz
- **Emily Sanders,** Undergraduate Student, University of New Mexico
- **Blakeley H. Payne**, Ph.D. Student, Information Science, University of Colorado at Boulder

Past Mentees

- **Sophie Orr**, Ph.D., Biomedical Engineering, University of California, Davis
- **Laurel Neufeld**, Medical Student, University of Minnesota

- **Katherine Gershfeld**, Medical Student, Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University
- **Corinne Grady**, Medical Student, Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University

REFERENCES

Boatema Boateng, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Communication, UC San Diego
Media Center and Communication Building (MCC)
University of California San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive, MC #0503, La Jolla, CA, 92093-0503
bboateng@ucsd.edu | (858) 534-8990

David Serlin, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Communication, UC San Diego
Media Center and Communication Building (MCC)
University of California San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive, MC #0503, La Jolla, CA, 92093-0503
dserlin@ucsd.edu | (858) 534-6327

Martha Lampland, Ph.D
Professor, Department of Sociology, UC San Diego
Department of Sociology
University of California San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive, MC# 0533, La Jolla, CA 92093-0533
mlampland@ucsd.edu | (858) 534-5640

Carolyn Sandoval, Ph.D.
Senior Director of Instruction and Pedagogy and Director of Engaged Teaching, UC San Diego
Teaching + Learning Commons
University of California San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive, MC# 0402, La Jolla, CA 92037-0402
c2sandoval@ucsd.edu | (858) 246-3236