

Brandon Blackburn
Curriculum Vitae

Institution: Department of Film and Media Studies, 2000 Humanities Gateway, Irvine, CA 92697
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EDUCATION

- Ph. D Candidate. Film and Media Studies, University of California, Irvine** 2023–Present
Dissertation: “Erotic Dissonance: Disengagement, Refusal, and Fracture in Inter-relational Systemically-Mediated Play Objects,” (Expected Defense: June 2026)
Chair: Dr. Aaron Trammell
Committee: Dr. Bo Ruberg, Dr. Braxton Soderman
- M. A. Visual Studies University of California, Irvine** 2023
Thesis: “Black Anachronism: Narrative Potential in *Harlem Unbound*”
Advisor: Dr. Aaron Trammell
- B. A. English, Colby College** 2017
- B. A. Germanic Studies, Colby College** 2017
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PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Journal Articles

- Blackburn, Brandon** (2025). “Violent Spectacle of the Wrong Body: Transphobia in *The Last of Us Part II*.” *Studies in the Fantastic* (Special Issue: Gendered Violence in/at/around Fantasy and Horror Video Games).
- Blackburn, Brandon** (2025). “Fluid Dynamics: Precarity and Porousness in Ecological Solo Journaling Games.” *Analog Game Studies* (Special Issue: Queer Analog Game Studies).
- Zegura, Cass and **Brandon Blackburn**. (2024). “‘I Can Feel You Here’: Queering Intimacy and Haptics in First-Person Shooters and Beyond.” *Platform Intimacies*. TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies Issue 48.

Book Chapters

- Maria Alberto, PB Berge, **Brandon Blackburn**, Adrianna Burton, & Hibby Thach (In press). “You Strange and Violent Queers”: A Collaborative Disaster-Queer Autoethnography of Playing *Thirsty Sword Lesbians*. (Forthcoming 2025). In S. Hedge (Ed.) *Essays on Indie Tabletop Roleplaying Games*. McFarland Publishing.
- Blackburn, Brandon** and Trammell, Aaron (2024). “Pressure, Pain, Playthrough.” *Playthrough Poetics: Gameplay as Research Method*. Edited by Milena Droumeva. Amherst College Press.

Book Reviews

Blackburn, Brandon (2024). "Book Review of *The Privilege of Play*." University of Washington.

Other Publications

Blackburn, Brandon (2022). "Bardsung: Review" Gamers with Glasses.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Internal

Michael and Stacey Koehn Graduate Student Summer Fellowship in Critical Theory	2025
Gerard Graduate Award Endowment for Visual Studies	2024
Grant Writing and Research Development Institute for Humanities PhD Students	2023
Humanities Center Graduate Student Research Grant	2023
Gerard Fellowship	2021, 2022, 2023
Grant Writing and Research Development Institute for Humanities PhD Students	2023
VGSSIG Graduate Student Registration Award	2023
Humanities Center Graduate Student Research Grant	2023
School of Humanities (SOH) Fellowship	2021

External

Society of Cinema and Media Studies Video Games Scholarly Interest Group Graduate Student Registration Award	2023
English Teaching Assistant Fulbright to Germany	2017–2018 (Accepted)
English Teaching Assistant Fulbright Scholarship to Austria	2017–2018 (Declined)
Colby Gamma Kappa Chapter of the National German Honorary Society	2017

CONFERENCES AND TALKS

Invited Talks — External

Blackburn, Brandon (2024). "Discussion of 'Erotic Dissonance: Disengagement, Refusal, and Fracture in Inter-relational Systemically-Mediated Play Objects.'" *Playful Horizons Speaker Series*. University of Alberta.

Conference Presentations

Blackburn, Brandon (September 2025). “‘I Can’t Lie to You About Your Chances, But... You Have My Sympathies’: Racial Movement Rhetorics in the Designed Interface of Horror in *Alien: Isolation*.” Conference on BIPOC Game Studies. September 12–14, 2025.

Blackburn, Brandon (June 2025). “Splat!: Ballistic Fluidity in *Carrion*.” Console-ing Passions Annual Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (June 2025). “‘Disobedience Will Not be Tolerated’: Sequence-Breaking in *Metroid Dread*” Canadian Game Studies Association (CGSA) Annual Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (June 2024). “No Will to Break”: Monstrous Neutrality in *Hollow Knight*. Console-ing Passions Annual Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (April 2024). “Violent Spectacle of the Wrong Body: A Transphobic Reading of *The Last of Us Part II*.” Gendered Violence In/At/Around Video Games Symposium.

Blackburn, Brandon (March 2024). “Intimate Refusal: The Erotics of Hardlock in *Unsung*” Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (July 2023). “Haunting, Dwelling” Generation Analog Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (April 2023). “Black Anachronism”: Narrative Potential in the Work of Chris Spivey.” Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference.

Blackburn, Brandon (July 2022) “Settler Destruction” 2022 Generation Analog Conference.

COURSES TAUGHT

University of California, Irvine, Irvine USA (2022–Present)

Instructor of Record

Introduction to Film Analysis

Summer 2023 and 2024

Designed and taught introductory course for the Film and Media Department. Students were able to identify basic film analysis techniques and write cohesively about technical and social aspects of film.

Teaching Assistant

Gender & Feminism in Everyday Life

Fall 2025

New Media & Digital Technologies

Summer 2025

History of Digital Media

Spring 2025

Social Analysis of Computing

Winter 2025

Games and Emotion

Fall 2024

The Studio Era

Spring 2025

The Silent Era

Winter 2024

Contemporary Cinema	Fall 2023
Introduction to Digital Culture	Spring 2023
US Broadcasting Media & Analysis	Winter 2023
Intro to Film Analysis	Fall 2022

SERVICE

Profession

- (2025) Co-chair for “🔥 Critical Methodologies For Post-Game Studies (or, why games never worked in the first place and that’s the whole damn point,” panel for CGSA.
- (2024) Chair for “Digital Self and Subjectivities,” panel for SCMS.
- (2023) Analog Games Correspondent for IndieCade.
- (2023) Correspondent for Diana Jones Award, GenCon.
- (2023) Chair for “Places of Play: New Approaches to Gaming,” panel for SCMS.
- (2022) Founding member of Tabletop Research in Practice (TRIP).
- (2022) Playtester for *Loy Loy: The Savings Game* at GenCon.
- (2022) Juror for IndieCade.

University

- (2022–Present) Founding member and co-chair of Queer Approaches to Media Research Cluster
 - (2023–2025) Mentor for The Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience (DECADE)
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LANGUAGES

English, native
German, fluent
Spanish, conversational

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS)
Tabletop Research in Practice (TRIP)
Queer Approaches to Media
Critical Approaches to Technology and the Social (CATS Lab)

REFERENCES

Aaron Trammell (Academic Co-advisor)
Email: trammell@uci.edu

Bo Ruberg (Academic Co-advisor)
Email: bruberg@uci.edu

Braxton Soderman (Dissertation Committee Member)
Email: asoderma@uci.edu