

Curriculum Vitae  
September 2021

**ROBERT ALLEN KOPACK**

Department of Geography  
Faculty Instructor  
University of South Carolina  
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- Ph.D.**                      **University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario**                      **2020**  
*Department of Geography and Planning*  
*Committee: Robert Lewis, Matthew Farish,*  
*Lynne Viola, Rajyashree Narayanareddy*  
*Dissertation: "The Afterlives of Soviet Secret Cities:*  
*Environment and Political Economy in Defense Industry Sites*  
*in Kazakhstan after 1991"*
- M.S.**                      **Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan**                      **2013**  
*Department of Geography*  
*Supervisor: Kyle Evered*  
*Master's Thesis: "Monuments and Memory in the*  
*Landscapes of Kazakhstan"*
- B.A.**                      **University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado**                      **2006**  
*Majors: History; Russian Studies (with honors)*

**THEORETICAL & RESEARCH INTERESTS**

defense industries/conversion; democratization; global security; Cold War militarism; economic and energy policy; environmental governance; aerospace technopolitics; social justice; health disparities; post-Soviet transformations; Central Asia; Kazakhstan

**LANGUAGES**

Russian (Fluent); Polish (Fluent); German (Literate); Turkish (Beginner); Kazakh (Beginner)

**ACADEMIC POSITIONS**

- 2020-**                      **Faculty Instructor**  
Department of Geography, University of South Carolina. Columbia, South Carolina
- 2019-20**                      **Instructor**  
Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina. Columbia, South Carolina
- 2018**                      **Graduate Teaching Assistant**  
University of Toronto Department of Geography and Planning, Toronto, Ontario
- 2017**                      **Visiting Scholar**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Geography, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

- 2013-16 Teaching Assistant**  
University of Toronto Department of Geography and Planning. Toronto, Canada
- 2015 Research Assistant**  
Archival research into US defense contractors and industrial dispersal in the United States during the Cold War. University of Toronto Department of Geography and Planning, Toronto, Canada
- 2014 Research Assistant**  
Archival research into legislation and policies related to the dispersal of industry in the United States during the Cold War. University of Toronto Department of Geography and Planning. Toronto, Canada
- 2012 Teaching Assistant**  
Michigan State University Department of Geography, East Lansing, Michigan

### **PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS**

- 2021 Kopack, Robert.** 2021. "Baikonur 2.0: "Inland-Offshore" Space Economies in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan." *Culture, Theory, and Critique*, special issue "Theorizing Special Territorial Status and Extraterritoriality." DOI: 10.1080/14735784.2021.1929363 (special issue editor).
- 2019 Kopack, Robert.** "Rocket Wastelands in Kazakhstan: Authoritarian Governance and the Baikonur Cosmodrome." In *Environmental Governance in an Authoritarian/Populist Era*. James McCarthy Ed. (Reprint)
- 2019 Kopack, Robert.** "Rocket Wastelands in Kazakhstan: Authoritarian Governance and the Baikonur Cosmodrome." *Annals of the American Association of American Geographers*. 109(2):556-567, special issue "Environmental Governance in Authoritarian and Populist Regimes."

### **OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

- 2021** Androus, Zachary, Magdalena Stawkowski, and **Robert Kopack.** 2021. "Introduction: Special Territorial Status and Extraterritoriality." *Culture, Theory and Critique*, special issue "Special Territorial Status and Extraterritoriality." DOI: 10.1080/14735784.2021.1942109.

### **GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS (Total funding \$219,000)**

- 2020** *European Research Council* in collaboration with the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. Project title: "The Social Life of Space Debris." Co-PI with Christine Bichsel Ph.D., Department of Geosciences. (under review: \$250,000)
- 2015** *Association of American Geographers (AAG)/National Science Foundation (NSF)*. (\$1,200 travel award to attend International Geographical Union (IGU) annual convention in Moscow, Russia)
- 2015** *University of Toronto. Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL)*. Almaty, Kazakhstan. (\$4,350 for Kazakh language)
- 2014** *Department of Geography and Planning University of Toronto. Graduate Improvement Award for Travel and Research*. (\$1000)
- 2013** *Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS)*. Academic Year Fellowship. (\$33,500 declined in lieu of other funding). Michigan State University

- 2013** *Foreign Language Area Studies*. (FLAS). Summer Fellowship. (\$7,500 declined in lieu of other funding). Michigan State University
- 2012** *International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), Individual Advanced Research Opportunity (IARO)*. Project PI. Fellowship used for four-month thesis fieldwork and archival research in Kazakhstan. (\$10,500)
- 2012** *Foreign Language Areas Studies (FLAS) Academic Year Fellowship, Turkish*. (\$33,500). Michigan State University
- 2012** *Graduate Office Fellowship (GOF)*. Awarded by Department of Geography, Michigan State University for summer research in Kazakhstan. (\$1,500)
- 2012** *Departmental Conference Funding Award*. Michigan State University, Department of Geography. for present a paper at the American Association of Geographers Conference in New York, NY. (\$850)
- 2011** *Museums, Community, and Collaborations Abroad Educational Grant* for Atomic Testing Museum (Nevada) and the Karaganda EcoMuseum in Kazakhstan titled *Nuclear Weapons Legacy: The Tale of Two Cultures*. Recipients: Atomic Testing Museum, Las Vegas, Nevada and The Karaganda Ecological Museum and Center, Karaganda, Kazakhstan. (\$120,000)
- 2011** Northern Eurasian Earth Science Partnership Initiative (NEESPI). Irkutsk. *Land Use Change on Nuclear Ground: The Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site as Research Laboratory and Traditional Pasture Land*. (\$6,000 travel grant. declined in lieu of other funding)

#### **PROFESSIONAL NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- 2019** American Association of Geographers (AAG). Washington D.C. April 3-7. Presenter: *Monotown Renaissance: Waste, Governance, and Boosterism in Stepnogorsk, Kazakhstan*.
- 2019** Island Dynamics. Special Territorial Status and Extraterritoriality: Exceptional Sovereignties and Sovereign Exceptions. Longyearbyen, Svalbard. January 20-24. Presenter: *Former Closed Cities in Kazakhstan: Governance and the New Political Economies of Industrial Reinvestment and Decline*.
- 2018** American Association of Geographers (AAG). New Orleans, Louisiana. April 10-14. Presenter: *Rocket Wastelands in Kazakhstan: Scientific Authoritarianism and the Baikonur Cosmodrome*.
- 2018** The Association of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). Boston, Massachusetts. December 6-9. Presenter: *From Secret to Spectacle: Bioweapons, Uranium, Rare Earths and the Post-Soviet Afterlives of Stepnogorsk, Kazakhstan*.
- 2016** American Association of Geographers (AAG). San Francisco, California. March 29-April 2. Presenter: *Commercializing the Naval of the World: Information, Ecology, and the Baikonur Cosmodrome*
- 2015** International Geographic Union (IGU). Moscow, Russia. August 17-21, 2015. Presenter: *Yuri Gagarin, Abay Kunanbayev, and Karlag: Monuments and Memory in the Landscape of Karaganda*.
- 2015** The Association of American Geographers (AAG). Chicago, Illinois. April 21-25. Presenter: *Is There a Future to the Soviet Past in Kazakhstan: New Monuments to Heroic Figures and Baleful Episodes*.

- 2014** The Canadian Association of Geographers Ontario Division (CAGONT). Toronto, Ontario. October 24-25. Presenter: *Is there a Soviet Present in Kazakhstan: New Nationalism and Old Figures in Karaganda's Everyday Landscapes.*
- 2014** Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). San Antonio, Texas. November 20-23. Presenter: *Roadside Picnic in Kurchatov: Science Fiction in the Landscapes of Kazakhstan.*
- 2013** Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). Boston, Massachusetts. November 21-24. Presenter: *Reading the Russian Villain in the X Files: The Waning Use-Value of the Cold War in American Popular Imagination.*
- 2013** The Association of American Geographers (AAG). Los Angeles, California. April 9-14. Presenter: *Refashioning the Soviet Techno-Industrial Landscape for a New Kazakh Future.*
- 2012** Northern Eurasian Earth Science Partnership Initiative (NEESPI). Irkutsk June 24-July 2. Presenter: *Land Use Change on Nuclear Ground: The Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site as Research Laboratory and Traditional Pasture Land.* (unable to present in person due to visa restrictions).
- 2012** The Association of American Geographers (AAG). New York, New York. February 24-28. Presenter: *The Power of Symbols in Kazakhstan: Memorial Landscapes and Contested Memories.*
- 2012** The Association of Central Eurasian Students (ACES). Bloomington, Indiana. March 3. Presenter: *Neglected by Neoliberalism: Soviet Memorial Landscapes in Transition.*

### **PANELS ORGANIZED & CHAIRED AT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS**

- 2017** American Association of Geographers (AAG). Boston, Massachusetts. April 5-9. Panel Organizer: *Geographies of the Wasteland.* Presenter: *Kazakhstan's Defense Installations and Emergent Economies of Ruin.*
- 2015** The Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). Philadelphia. November 19-22. Panel Chair/Presenter: *From the Cold War to the Global Market: Baikonur and the Legacies of the Soviet Space Program*

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

#### **Undergraduate Courses**

- *Introduction to Geography* (100-level)
- *Globalization and World Regions* (100-level)
- *Understanding Other Cultures* (100-level)
- *Comparing Cultures Through Film* (200-level)
- *Geography of Europe* (200-level)
- *Cultural Geography* (300-level)

#### **Teaching Assistant**

- *Cities and Urban Life* (100-level)
- *Introduction to Meteorology* (100-level)
- *Historical Geography of North America* (200-level)
- *Historical Geographies of Urban Exclusion and Segregation* (200-level)
- *Geography of the USA* (200-level)

## **Student Mentoring**

### **Committee member: Masters Thesis**

John Rinehart: "Logistics and the New Imaginary of Economic Development" (in progress)

## **SERVICE AND OUTREACH**

- 2020 University of South Carolina  
Deans Advisory Staff  
Curriculum Review Advisor  
Geography Departmental Advisor  
Faculty Senate, Member of Scholastic Standards and Petitions Committee  
Faculty Member of the Critical Ecologies Lab
- 2017 Invited Lecture: "The Afterlives of Closed Cities." Department of Geography, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- 2016 University of Toronto Department of Geography and Planning  
Professional Development Committee
- 2013 University of Toronto Department of Geography and Program in Planning.  
Member of the Graduate Geography and Planning and Society (GGAPSS)
- 2012 Michigan State University Department of Geography.  
Graduate liaison to Faculty

## **IN THE MEDIA**

- 2016** *Postcards from Stanland*. Athens: Ohio University of Press, Mould, David. Contributed book cover photograph; interviewed for the book.
- 2012** "Warming to Life in the Hot Zone." *Times Higher Education*. January 12, 2012. p. 41-43 Mould, David. Interviewed for the article.
- 2011** "In Kazakhstan, the Grass is Greener on a Nuclear Test Site." *Transitions Online*. June 9, 2011. <http://www.tol.org/client/article/22461-in-kazakhstan-the-grass-is-greener-at-the-nuclear-test-site.html>, Mould, David. Interviewed for the article.

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- The American Association of Geographers (AAG). Member since 2011
- Russian, Central, and East European Specialty Group. Member since 2011
- The Center for East Russian and Eurasian Studies (CESS). Member since 2011
- The Association of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). Member since 2011
- National Russian Honor Society, *Dobro Slovo*. Member since 2006