

Robert W. Pfaff

Curriculum Vitae

January 2021

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Detroit, MI 48202

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EDUCATION

- 2021 PhD Urban and Regional Planning, University of Michigan
Dissertation: *Regions, Race, Rail, and Rubber: An Analysis of How Transportation Planning Decisions Contributed to Regional Segregation, 1922 - 1973*
Dissertation Committee: Joseph Grengs (Chair), June Manning Thomas, Scott Campbell, Heather Ann Thompson, Matthew Lassiter
- 2015 M.A., History, Wayne State University
- 2014 B.A., History, Wayne State University

PUBLICATIONS

Book Reviews

- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, review of “Power Moves: Transportation, Politics and Development in Houston” by Kyle Shelton in *Planning Perspectives* 35 (September 2020), 923-925
- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, review of “American Autotopia: An Intellectual History of American Roadside at Midcentury” by Gabrielle Esperdy in *Journal of Planning History* (JPH). Forthcoming.
- 2019 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, review of “A People’s Atlas of Detroit” ed. by Linda Campbell, Andrew Newman, Sara Safransky, and Tim Stallmann, in *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (JPER). Forthcoming.

Manuscripts in Submission

- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, “Rubber Versus Rail: An Early History of the Detroit Street Railways, 1920 – 1956.” submitted to *Journal of Planning History* (JPH), June 2020.

Manuscripts in Preparation

- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, and Jonathan English, “How Race and Region Shape Public Transit: A Comparative Study of Detroit and Toronto, 1945-1970.” Target Journal: *Journal of the American Planning Association* (JAPA).
- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, Shreyas Kousik, and Sophie Jantz, “Design Standards for the Greater Good: A History of Federal Regulations for Emerging Automotive Technologies” Target Journal: *Journal of the Transportation Research Record* (TRR).

Online News/Blogs

- 2020 **Pfaff, Robert W.**, “From Rail to Rubber: How Public Transportation in Detroit Exacerbated Racial Segregation” *The Metropole Blog* (Urban History Association) Forthcoming.

GRANTS

- 2020 Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship, Federal Highway Administration
- 2019 Part-Time Faculty Professional Development Grant, Wayne State University, \$5,000
- 2018 Rackham Pre-Candidate Doctoral Research Grant, University of Michigan, \$1,500
- 2018 Rackham Professional Development Grant, University of Michigan, \$400
- 2017 Detroit School of Urban Studies, Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop (RIW) Grant, Annually Renewed and ongoing, University of Michigan, Total \$20,0000
- 2016 Harvey G. and Joyce H. Behner Graduate Fellowship, University of Michigan, \$5,000
- 2015 Gerald R. Dreslinski Research Grant, Wayne State University, \$2000
- 2013 Sterne-Lion Research Grant, Dept. of History, Wayne State University, \$1,500
- 2013 Undergraduate Research Grant, Wayne State University, \$2,300

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2020 Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellow, Federal Highway Administration
- 2018 Tilly Graduate Student Travel & Paper Award, Social Science History Association
- 2015 Gerald R. Dreslinski Endowed Memorial Award, Wayne State University
- 2014 Graduate Professional Scholarship, Wayne State University
- 2014 Heart & Soul Award, Michigan Campus Compact
- 2014 F. Richard Place Endowed Memorial Award, Wayne State University
- 2013 Mark & Linee Diem Research Award, Dept. of History, Wayne State University
- 2013 Phi-Alpha-Theta Membership, Wayne State University
- 2010 Green & Gold Scholarship, Wayne State University

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Events Organized

- 2020 Panel Co-Organizer, “Transportation Equity in Slow-Growth Cities”, Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Virtual Conference, November 5-9.
- 2020 Round Table Co-Organizer & Discussant, “The Detroit School of Urban Studies”, Urban History Association, Detroit, October 8-11.
- 2020 Panel Co-Organizer & Discussant, “Learning from Detroit: Urban Theory from Detroit’s Institutional Histories”, Urban Affairs Association, Washington D.C., April 2-4
- 2020 Panel Co-Organizer, “Learning from Detroit: Urban Theory from Detroit’s Depopulation and disinvestment Urban Affairs Association, Washington D.C., April 2-4
- 2018 Symposium Co-Organizer, “Road Out Of Poverty: A Transportation & Economic Mobility Symposium” Poverty Solutions, University of Michigan, March 15
- 2018 Conference Co-Organizer, “Networks of Power and Knowledge” Biennial Graduate Student Conference, Planning + Architecture Research Group, University of Michigan, March 9-10
- 2017 Symposium Co-Organizer, “Urban Futures: Michigan Cities Symposium”, at the College of Literature, Science and the Arts Bicentennial Celebration, University of Michigan, November 14

Papers Presented

- 2021 “Regions, Race, Rail, and Rubber: An Analysis of How Transportation Planning Decisions Contributed to Regional Segregation, 1922 – 1973” Transportation Research Board, Virtual Conference, January 2021
- 2020 “Historical Perspective on Transportation Disinvestment: A Case Study of Detroit Michigan” Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Virtual Conference, November 5-9.
- 2020 “Transportation Segregation: How Public Transportation Disinvestment Divided the Detroit Region, 1922 – 1970”, Urban History Association, Detroit, October 8 – 11.
- 2019 “From Rail to Rubber: A History of Street Rail Conversion in Detroit, Michigan, 1920 – 1965” Society for American City and Regional Planning History, Washington D.C., October 31 – November 3
- 2019 “Rhetoric in, Pocket Book Out: A Historical Analysis of Suburban Opt-Out Transportation Funding in Metropolitan Detroit” Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Greenville, October 24-27
- 2018 “Shifting Geographies of Queer Neighborhoods in Rustbelt Cities: A Case Study of Detroit, Michigan.” Social Science History Association, Phoenix, November 8-11
- 2018 “Start and Stop: A Historical Comparison of Regional Transit Efforts in South-East Michigan, 1967 – 2016” Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Buffalo, October 25-28
- 2015 “Empire, Insurance, Property, and the rise of the British Merchant Marine, 1650 – 1800” Midwestern Conference for British Studies, Detroit, September 24-27
- 2014 “Rubber Versus Rail: The Decline of the Detroit Street Railways, 1922 – 1956” International Conference for Transportation, Traffic, and Mobility (T2M), September 18-21
- 2014 “Benjamin Franklin: Diplomacy, Legacy, and France, 1776 – 1778” National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Lexington, Kentucky, April 3-5
- 2014 “Rubber Versus Rail: A History of the Detroit Street Railways” National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Lexington, Kentucky, April 3-5

INVITED TALKS

Invited Presentations

- 2019 Invited Speaker, “A History of Detroit: Historical Contexts of the Motor City for New Urban Educators” Seven Mile Student Organization, Detroit Michigan, November 2019

On-Campus Talks

- 2018 Panel Moderator, “Qualitative Metrics for Transportation Equity” at “Road Out Of Poverty: A Transportation & Economic Mobility Symposium” University of Michigan, March 15
- 2017 “Detroit Street Railways: How the History of Metropolitan Expansion and Suburbanization killed the streetcar in Detroit”, LunchUP presentation, University of Michigan, April 2017
- 2017 “Rubber Versus Rail: A History of the Detroit Street Railways”, American Historical Workshop, University of Michigan, February 2017
- 2017 Respondent, Emerging Voices Lecture Series, Planning + Architecture Research

- Group invited lecture series, Professor Kian Goh, “How To Be An Accomplice: Urban Research and Practice in a Time of Socio-Ecological Uncertainties”, University of Michigan, January 2017
- 2016 Panel Discussant “Approaching Gender, Sexuality, and Intersectionality Within Our Disciplines”, Rackham Workshop on Intersectionality, University of Michigan, November 2016

Architectural Reviews

- 2019 Invited Reviewer, “ARCH 509 - The Politics of Balance” Architecture Studio, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, November 2019

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Michigan

Undergraduate Introduction to Urban Planning (W2017, F2018, W2019)

Instructor of Record, University of Michigan

Metropolitan Structures (W2021)

Part-Time Faculty III, Department of History, Wayne State University

History of Detroit (F2019, W2020, F2020)

History of the World since 1945 (W2016)

History of Gender, Women, and Sexuality in the Modern World (SP2015, F2015, SP2016, W2016, SP2017, F2017, SP2018, SP2019)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2019 Graduate Student Research Assistant, Michigan Mellon Foundation Research Grant, “Egalitarian Metropolis”.

Worked as an archival researcher to create a digital humanities component to redlining survey data from Federal archives. This research is currently being developed into a public museum exhibit of redlining in Detroit.

- 2014 Faculty Research Assistant, Department of History, Wayne State University
Assisted faculty in primary-source archival research, document analysis, and database creation for research tracking.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- 2019 – 2020 Buildings, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee Student Representative, University of Michigan
- 2017 – 2021 Co-Coordinator, Detroit School Series, Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop, University of Michigan
- 2018 – 2019 Student Representative, Urban Planning Faculty Committee, University of Michigan
- 2018 – 2019 Student Reviewer, *AGORA Journal of Urban Planning and Design*, University of Michigan

- 2016 – 2018 President, Planning + Architecture Research Group (P+ARG), Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop, University of Michigan, 2016 – 2019
- 2017 – 2019 President, Urban Planning Doctoral Student Organization (UPdoc), University of Michigan
- 2016 – 2017 President, Planners Network Chapter, University of Michigan
- 2016 – 2017 Co-Chair, Detroit Outreach, Urban Planning Students Association (UPSA), University of Michigan
- 2016 – 2019 Department Steward, Graduate Employee Organization #3550, Department of Urban Planning, University of Michigan
- 2015 Chair Selection Committee, Department of History, Wayne State University
- 2015 University Tenure and Promotion Committee Student Representative, Wayne State University
- 2014 Tenure and Promotion Committee Student Representative, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Wayne State University
- 2013 – 2014 Facilities Support Services and Technology Committee Student Representative, Wayne State University
- 2013 – 2014 Co-President, Undergraduate History Student Association, Wayne State University
- 2013 – 2014 Vice President of Finance, Unite for Sight Club, Wayne State University

Related Experience

- 2019 – 2020 Dissertation Writing Group Coordinator, Rackham College for Graduate Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
- 2015 – 2016 Assistant Coordinator, GED Alternative Education Program, Fitzgerald Public High School, Warren, MI
- 2014 - 2015 Student Assistant, Learning & Retentions Grants, Office of the Provost, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
- 2013 – 2014 Peer Mentor, Department of History, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- 2016 Association of the Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP)
- 2016 American Planning Association (APA)
- 2017 Society for American City and Regional Planning History (SACRPH)
- 2018 Urban History Association (UHA)
- 2018 Social Science History Association (SSHA)
- 2019 Urban Affairs Association (UAA)

LANGUAGES

- English (native)
- Spanish (good reading, writing, speaking)
- French (good reading, writing, speaking)