

Zane Austin Willard

Department of Communication
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Pronouns: he/him/his

Education

PhD, University of South Florida, College of Arts & Sciences, Communication, present
Major Area: Critical Cultural Studies
Minor Areas: Media & Technology Studies, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Advisor: Aisha Durham, Ph.D.
Committee: Diana Leon-Boys, Ph.D., Jose Angel Maldonado, Ph.D.,
& Rachel E. Dubrofsky, Ph.D. (Syracuse University)

MA, University of South Florida, College of Arts & Sciences, Communication, 2023

BA, University of Tampa, College of Arts & Letters, Communication & Film, 2021
Minors: History & Cinema Studies

BA, University of Tampa, John H. Sykes College of Business, Economics, 2021

Professional Positions

Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2023-present

Graduate Assistant of Communication Education, College of Engineering, University of
South Florida, 2022-present

Graduate Research Associate, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2023-2024

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2021-2023

Publications

Refereed Journal Articles

Zane Austin Willard & Rachel E. Dubrofsky. (2024). *RuPaul's Drag Race: Queer Authenticity and Strategic Westernness*. *Communication, Culture, and Critique*, 17(3), 170-176. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcae025>

Zane Austin Willard & Alisha L. Menzies. (2024). Fashioning Zaya Wade in the Press: Authenticity, Black Femininity, and Transnormativity. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 48(4), 581-598. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01968599241233735>

Zane Austin Willard. (2024). Fostering Critical Consciousness: Critical Service-Learning and Intersectional Reflexivity in the First-Year Classroom. *Communication Teacher*, 38(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2023.2263533>.

Zane Austin Willard. (2022). Reframing Performance's Ontology: Hybridity in Contemporary Performance Art's Ontology. *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*, 18(3), 390-402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14794713.2022.2097982>.

Book Chapters

Kailin Regutti, **Zane Austin Willard**, & Mahuya Pal. (Accepted, In Press). Regimes of Visibility in Disney's CSR: Corporate Wokeness, Neoliberalism, and Promotional Industries. In L. Edwards, C. Bourne, J. V. A. Cabanes, and G. Castro (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Promotional Culture and Society* (pp. 205-216). Sage.

Commentaries & Forums

Kailin Regutti & **Zane Austin Willard.** (Accepted, In Press). The Affective Labor of Cross-Disciplinary Communication Education: Enacting a Feminist Praxis. *Feminist Pedagogy* [Special Issue: "When Resistance Seems Futile: Teaching Under Ideological Threat"].

Awards

James E. Popovich Award (for MA student success in Graduate Studies), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Elias J. & Vivian Zrake Nader Award (for MA student success in Critical Cultural Studies, Performance & Rhetoric), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Fellowships

Elinor Ostrom Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$3500), 2024-25

Frederic Bastiat Research Intensive Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$5000), 2023-24

Frederic Bastiat Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$2500), 2022-23

Don Lavoie Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$1000), 2021

President's Leadership Fellow, Office of Student Leadership & Engagement,
The University of Tampa, (\$4000), 2016-20

Grants

Recipient, National Communication Association Student Caucus Travel Grant, (\$200), 2023

Recipient, University of South Florida Student Government Travel Grant, (\$500),
Spring 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024

Teaching

University of South Florida—Department of Communication

Instructor of Record
Public Speaking

Graduate Teaching Assistant
Introduction to Communication
Communication & Cultural Diversity

University of South Florida—College of Engineering

Graduate Instructional Assistant
Globalization & Technology
Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications
***Assists with Intercultural, Interpersonal, and Media Communication Components

Invited Talks

"Tik Tok: Not Just for Kids Anymore," Co-Presenter with Alisha L. Menzies, Ph.D.,
Controversies in Communication Series, University of Tampa College of Arts and
Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning Institute, virtual,
2021.

"We Are What We Say: Celebrity and Communication Mistakes," Co-Presenter with Alisha
L. Menzies, Ph.D., *Controversies in Communication Series*, University of Tampa
College of Arts and Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning
Institute, Crescent Club, The University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.

Conference Presentations

Competitive Paper, "*Red, White, and Royal Blue*: Homonationalism in a Popular Gay Rom-
Com," *Communicating with Greater Regard about Marginalized Identities*,
International and Intercultural Communication Division, National Communication
Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

Competitive Paper (co-authored with Sarah Marshall and Mahuya Pal), "Organizing
Trans/Queer Antagonism: A Necrocapitalist Critique of Anti-Trans Youth Healthcare
Bills," *Exploring Greater Regard in Healthcare for the LGBTQ Community*, Caucus on
LGBTQ Concerns, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans,
Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

- Paper (part of a competitive panel), “Camping and Racializing Morality: The Vilification of Black Women on *The Traitors*,” *Race and Reality TV after Racial Reckoning*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).
- Discussant (part of a competitive panel), *Considering the Margins: The Contemporary Crisis of Health Disparities*, Health Communication Division, Activism and Social Justice Division, Black Caucus, Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, IDEA Council, SWA/NA, Middle East Caucus, Women’s Caucus, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).
- Competitive Paper, “Queen of the USA: The Homonational Drag Queen in Public Media,” *Queer Publics*, American Studies Association convention, Baltimore, Maryland, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).
- Competitive Paper (co-authored with Alisha L. Menzies), “Reimagining Media Literacy as Activist Pedagogy: Enacting a Feminist Praxis,” *Reimagining the Feminist Frontier of Risk and Advocacy in Society*, Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender convention, Excelsior Springs, Missouri, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).
- Competitive Paper (co-authored with Sarah Marshall), “Policing Trans and Erasing Intersex Youth: A Queer Rhetorical Criticism of Anti-Trans Youth Healthcare Bills,” *A Matter of Record(s): Transgender Legal Classifications in Global Perspective*, International Trans Studies Conference, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, USA, 2024.
- Paper (invited), “*Drag Race*, Drag Queens, and Drag Bans: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of Drag Bans in U.S. Popular Media,” 13th Annual Women’s and Gender Studies Research Colloquium, Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2024.
- Paper (part of a competitive panel) (co-authored with Rachel E. Dubrofsky), “*RuPaul’s Drag Race*: Queer Authenticity vs. Western Whiteness,” *Liberating Queerness: Queer Theory’s Radical Potential for Making Sense of the Past, Critiquing the Present, and Imagining the Future*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.
- Discussant (part of a competitive panel), *Existing & Resisting Anti-Woke: Graduate Student Perspectives*, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.
- Discussant (invited, part of a competitive panel), *Permission to Scream: From Frustration and Futility to Boundary Pushing and Academic Freedom in Teaching Communication Across Disciplines*, Instructional Development Division, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

Competitive Paper, “The Life and Death of Gay Promiscuity in *When We Rise*,” *Top Papers in Gender Studies*, Gender Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023. *****Runner-Up for Top Student Paper**

Competitive Paper, “Melancholia in the Chicanx Art of AIDS: Tracing *Memento Mori* in the *Rasquache* Aesthetic,” *Bodies and Agency*, Identity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.

Competitive Paper, “Are you ready for Thai Tea?: Performing-not-performing Queer Asia on *RuPaul’s Drag Race UK vs The World*”, *Things You Say You Love: The Examination of Culture, Youth, and Gender Perspectives*, Popular Communication Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.

Competitive Paper, “Exhibiting Performance Art: An Ontological Debate,” *Contributed Papers in Performance Studies*, Performance Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Greenville, South Carolina, USA, 2022.

Competitive Paper, “The Strategic Rhetoric of Straightness and the Commodification of Queerness in the Cinema of AIDS,” *Queer and Trans Media Studies*, Society for Cinema and Media Studies convention, virtual, 2022.

Competitive GIFTS Presentation, “Enhancing the First Year Experience: The Community as an Agent for Connection,” *Great Ideas for Teaching Students*, Florida Communication Association convention, virtual, 2021.

Additional Conference Participation

Panel Discussion Chair & Session Organizer, *Social Justice in Community-Engaged Scholarship: Graduate Student-Activists Perspectives*, Activism and Social Justice Division, Applied Communication Division, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

Paper Panel Chair, *Race and Reality TV after Racial Reckoning*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

Paper Panel Chair, *Mapping, Curating, and Performing Indigenous Memory: Rhetorical and Communication Theories Affront the Challenge of Representation*, Rhetorical and Communication Theory Division, Indigenous Caucus, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

Session Organizer (with Alisha L. Menzies) *Considering the Margins: The Contemporary Crisis of Health Disparities*, Health Communication Division, Activism and Social Justice Division, Black Caucus, Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, IDEA Council,

SWA/NA, Middle East Caucus, Women's Caucus, National Communication Association convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 2024. (forthcoming).

Paper Panel Chair & Session Organizer, *Liberating Queerness: Queer Theory's Radical Potential for Making Sense of the Past, Critiquing the Present, and Imagining the Future*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

Panel Discussion Chair & Session Organizer, *Existing & Resisting Anti-Woke: Graduate Student Perspectives*, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

Panel Discussion Co-Chair & Session Organizer (co-chair with Alisha L. Menzies), *Critical Pedagogies in the Times of Anti-Woke: Existing and Resisting in the Classroom*, Scholarship on Teaching and Learning, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

Paper Panel Chair, *Sexuality and Gender in Communication*, Gender Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.

Undergraduate Poster Judge, Florida Communication Association convention, virtual, 2021

Invited Class Lectures

"Doing Critical Cultural Work in Graduate School," Guest Lecture for Critical Cultural and Media Studies, Syracuse University's Master of Arts in Communication, online, 2024.

"The Future of Critical Cultural Studies: Returning to Contexts and Conjunctures," Guest Lecture for *Communication and Cultural Studies*, University of South Florida Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2024.

"Designing Qualitative and Critical Research Projects," Guest Lecture for *Global Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2024.

"Beyond the Numbers: The Realities of Economic Decision-Making for Engineers," Guest Lecture for *Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, virtual, 2023.

"Going Global: The Politics of Global Drag Identity on *Drag Race*," Guest Lecture for *Global Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2023.

"Textual Analysis & Critical Media Studies: Interrogating Popular Culture," Guest Lecture for *Popular Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2023.

- “Critical Media Studies in Intercultural Communication,” Guest Lecture for *Intercultural Communication*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “Media as Public Pedagogy,” Guest Lecture for *Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “Media Analysis: Masculinity in HBO’s *Chernobyl*,” Guest Lecture for *Globalization & Technology*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “Intersectionality and The Reality of Demographics in Decision-Making,” Guest Lecture for *Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “Masculinity as Performance in Popular Media,” 3-Class Lecture Series for *Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “Movie Posters: Iconography and Visual Rhetoric in Practice,” Guest Lecture for *Visual Literacy*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.
- “The Sanctuary: Museums and Galleries as Sacred Places,” Guest Lecture for *History of Video Art*, University of South Florida Department of Humanities, virtual, 2021.
- “Interpreting Oppression Through Storytelling,” Guest Lecture for *Introduction to Gender Studies*, University of Tampa College of Arts & Letters, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021.
- “Sorry, Not Sorry: Race and Gender in Cancel Culture,” Guest Lecture for *Popular Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021.
- “Blurring Lines: Authenticity, Friendship, and Peer Mentoring,” Guest Lecture for *Peer Mentoring*, University of Tampa First Year Peer Mentorship Program, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.
- “Cancel Culture & Communication Mistakes,” Guest Lecture for *Mass Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.

Group Art Exhibitions—Juried

- The University of Tampa’s Alumni Photography Showcase
Ferman Center for the Arts, Florida, USA, 2023
Fleur de Nuit, No. 1, 2021

#visibleUSF: Queering the Art Narrative through Curatorial Activism

Carolyn M. Wilson Gallery, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022

Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021

Sunspot Triptych, 2021

4 Paintings 1 Drawing, 2020

Convergence: A Contemporary Photography Exhibition

Indianapolis Art Center, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 2022

Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021

Fleur de Nuit, 2021

The 2021 Contemporary Art Survey

The Lincoln Center, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA, 2021

Sunspot Triptych, 2021

May 2021 Group Art Show

Jones Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri, USA, 2021

Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021

A Certain Kind of Blue

Analog Forever, Virtual, 2021

Cosmic Self-Portrait Diptych, 2021

Film Festivals—Juried

Solo Projects

Lift-Off Filmmaker Session

Lift-Off Global Network, London, UK, 2019

Gendered Fitness (2019)

Switzerland (2018)

Tampa International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

Tampa Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2018

Switzerland (2018)

Official Short-Film Selection

Toronto Alternative Film Festival

EVN Film Studios, Toronto, Ontario, CAN, 2018

Switzerland (2018)

Semifinalist, Short Documentary

The University of Tampa's Black Box Film Festival

Reeves Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2018

Switzerland (2018)

Collaborative Projects

IMPACT Doc Awards

Virtual Exhibition, 2018
Wolfpack Squad (2018)
Role: Lead Editor
Award of Merit

One-Reeler Short Film Competition
Virtual Exhibition
Wolfpack Squad (2018)
Role: Lead Editor
Honorable Mention

Group Exhibitions—Non-Juried

Recycling is Art Gala
Henry B. Plant Park, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021
Penetration (2021)

The University of Tampa's NASAD Exhibition
The University of Tampa's Black Box Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA
Switzerland (2018)
Big Creek (2017)

Professional Service

Organizer and Facilitator, "PhD Application Workshop," NCA's Activism and Social Justice Division Graduate Student Committee, 2024.

Vice Chair, Graduate Student Committee, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication Association, 2024.

Editorial Assistant for Mahuya Pal, *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 2023-24

Moderator for Alisha L. Menzies, "Between the Lines: Creating and Understanding Social Media Identities," *Controversies in Communication Series*, University of Tampa College of Arts and Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning Institute, Charlene Gordon Theater, The University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

Member, Constitutional Convention Committee, Florida Communication Association, 2021-22

University Service

Peer Mentor for 1st Year PhD Students, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2024-25

Session Leader with Bianca Siegenthaler, "Navigating the 2nd Year of Your MA," Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Peer Mentor for 1st Year MA Students, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25

Media

Interviewed for my work with The OUT Foundation and CrossFit Big Guava for *UT Life*, “UT Senior Promotes Inclusive Wellness with The OUT Foundation,” February 24, 2021, <https://www.ut.edu/news-and-ut-life/ut-senior-promotes-inclusive-wellness-with-the-out-foundation>.

Professional Development

Graduate Student Affiliate, Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life at University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, 2024-present.

Participant, *Accountability in the Classroom and with Colleagues and Mentors*, Workshop Led by Allison Cleve-Roberts (USF Associate Dean of Academics) and Clara Buie (USF Assistant Vice-President of Student Success), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2024.

Curriculum Collaborator (invited), Wrote Applied Scenarios for Keith Berry & Joyce L. Hocker. (2025). *Interpersonal Conflict* (11th edition). McGraw-Hill, 2024.

Participant, *Communication Careers Beyond the Academy*, Workshop Led by Krystal Bresnahan (Independent Scholar & Communication Consultant), Graduate Communication Association, University of South Florida, 2023.

Participant, *Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education*, Workshop Led by Tim Henkel, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2023.

Online Instructor Re-Certification, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2023.

Participant, *Microaggressions in the Academy*, Workshop Led by Lisa Hanasono, (Bowling Green State University), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Participant, First-Year Public Speaking Instructor Workshop Series Led by Aubrey A. Huber and David Dooling, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022-2023.

Participant, *Teaching with HB7*, Workshop Led by Rachel E. Dubrofsky, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022

Online Instructor Certification, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2022

Reviewer

Journals

International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media—2023

Conference Submissions

International Communication Association

Popular Media & Culture Division—2024

LGBTQ Studies Interest Group—2024

Global Communication and Social Change Division—2024

National Communication Association

Activism and Social Justice Division—2024

Critical and Cultural Studies Division—2023, 2024

Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns—2023, 2024

GLBTQ Communication Studies Division—2023, 2024

Student Section—2022, 2023

Southern States Communication Association

Identity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Division—2024

Gender Studies Division—2023, 2024

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Commission on Graduate Education—2023

Memberships

International Communication Association

National Communication Association

Southern States Communication Association

Society of Cinema and Media Studies

American Studies Association

Surveillance Studies Network