

James S. Bielo, Ph.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor, Miami University
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(Updated: August 29, 2008)

Research and Teaching Interests:

Linguistic Anthropology
Social Semiotics
Anthropology of Religion
Anthropology of Christianity

History of Anthropological Theory
Ethnographic Field Methods
Qualitative Data Analysis

Education:

Ph.D., 2007, Anthropology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.
Dissertation Title: Textual Ideology, Textual Practice: A Discourse-Centered Approach to Protestant Bible Study.
M.A., 2004, Anthropology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.
B.A., 2001, Anthropology, Radford University, Radford, VA.

Teaching:

Positions:

- Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Miami University, August 2008-present
- Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Michigan State University, Summer 2007 – Spring 2008
- Adjunct Instructor, Department of Anthropology, Grand Valley State University, Winter 2007; Summer 2008.
- Instructor, Department of Anthropology, Michigan State University, Fall 2005 – Fall 2006

Courses:

- Language and Culture (MSU, anthropology major course, 400-level)
- Ethnographic Field Methods (MSU, anthropology major course, 400-level)
- Peoples of the World (Miami U, general education course, 100-level)
- Cultural Diversity in the United States (Miami U, general education course, 100-level)
- Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (GVSU, general education course, 200-level)
- Culture and Environment (GVSU, anthropology major course, 300-level)
- Biocultural Evolution (MSU, general education course, 200-level)
- Christianity in the United States (MSU, community elective)

Publications:

Book:

In Press *Words Upon the Word: An Ethnography of Evangelical Group Bible Study*. New York: New York University Press.

Refereed Articles:

- 2008 Cultivating Intimacy: Interactive Frames for Evangelical Bible Study. *Fieldwork in Religion*. 3(1):.
- 2008 On the Failure of “Meaning”: Bible Reading in the Anthropology of Christianity. *Culture and Religion*. 9(1):1-17.
- 2007 “The Mind of Christ”: Financial Success, Born-Again Personhood, and the Anthropology of Christianity. *Ethnos*. 72(3):315-338.
- 2007 Recontextualizing the Bible in Small Group Discourse. *SALSA XIV: Texas Linguistic Forum*. Vol. 50. Austin: Texas Linguistics Forum.
- 2004 “Walking in the Spirit of Blood”: Moral Identity among Born-Again Christians. *Ethnology*. 43(3):271-289.

Edited Volume:

Forth. *Biblicism: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Social life of the Christian Scripture*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Book Chapters:

- Forth. Encountering Biblicism. In *Biblicism: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Social life of the Christian Scripture*. James S. Bielo, ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Forth. Textual Ideology, Textual Practice: Evangelical Bible Reading in Group Study. In *Biblicism: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Social life of the Christian Scripture*. James S. Bielo, ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Forth. Why Some Theories Work and Others Do Not: Analyzing Discourse in the First Bush-Kerry Debate (or, Why George Bush is Incredibly Articulate...For Real). In *African Language Teaching and Learning (Festschrift for David Dwyer)*. David Dwyer and Bill Derman, eds. Press TBA.
- 2003 “Social Solidarity: how the Arsenal changed the social world of the surrounding region.” In *The Radford Arsenal: Impacts and Cultural Change in an Appalachian Region*. Mary B. LaLone, et al., eds. Radford, VA: Brightside Press. Pp. 95-108.

Manuscripts under Review:

- n.d. “How much of this is promise?”: God as Sincere Speaker in Evangelical Bible Reading. (special issue on “Language Ideologies in the Anthropology of Christianity,” edited by Jon Bialecki and Eric Hoenes del Pinal; submitted to *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*)

- n.d. "Are You a Christian?" and Other Necessary Questions: Reflexive Reflections in the Anthropology of Christianity. (special issue on "Missionary Impositions: Negotiating the Gap Between Researcher and Research Community," edited by Hillary Crane and Lisa DiCarlo; submitted to *Anthropological Quarterly*)

Manuscripts in Preparation:

- The "Emerging Church" and the Anthropology of Christianity. (article manuscript; to be submitted to *Religion*, September 2008)
- The Trouble with Reference: Language Ideologies among "Emerging" Evangelicals. (article manuscript; to be submitted to *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, October 2008)
- "The Pajama-din on the Blogosphere": The Emerging Church and Weblog Culture. (article manuscript; to be submitted to *American Ethnologist*, December 2008)

Academic Presentations:

Conference Panels Organized:

- 2006 "Encountering the Text: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Biblicism." American Anthropological Association meetings, November, San Jose, CA.

Conference Papers Presented (*invited):

- Forth. *The Problem with Propositions: Ideologies of Belief and Language Among 'Emerging' Evangelicals. American Anthropological Association meetings. November, San Francisco, CA.
- 2008 Recoiling from Reference: Language Ideologies among "Emerging" Evangelicals. Arizona Linguistics and Anthropology Symposium, May 2008, Tuscon, AZ.
- 2008 Preparing to Witness: Narratives of Attempted Conversion among American Evangelicals. Georgetown University Round Table – Telling Stories: Building Bridges among Language, Narrative, Identity, Interaction, Society and Culture, March, Washington, D.C.
- 2007 *"Are You a Christian?" and Other Key Questions: A Case in Reflexive Ethnography. American Anthropological Association meetings, November, Washington, D.C.
- 2007 *Ideologies: Linguistic, Semiotic, Textual. Society for the Anthropology of Religion meetings, April, Phoenix, AZ.
- 2006 Dialectical Interpretations: textual ideology and practice in conservative Christian Biblicism. American Anthropological Association meetings, November, San Jose, CA.
- 2006 Navigating Religion and Spirituality: contesting categories in a Mainline women's Bible study. Society for the Scientific Study of Religion meetings, October, Portland, OR.
- 2006 Recontextualizing the Bible in Small Group Discourse. Symposium About Language and Society–Austin meetings, April, Austin, TX.
- 2004 "These Aren't Just Words, It's Life": moral identity through Bible study discourse. Central States Anthropological Society meetings, April, Milwaukee, WI.

- 2001 Religious Experience in an African-American Church: Sunday service and beyond. Southern Anthropological Society meetings, April, Nashville, TN.

Invited Class and Public Lectures:

- 2008 Recoiling from Reference: Language Ideologies among “Emerging” Evangelicals. Kalamazoo College, Guest lecturer in Introductory Anthropology class, April, Kalamazoo, MI.
- 2008 Recoiling from Reference: Language Ideologies among “Emerging” Evangelicals. Michigan State University, Faculty and Graduate Student Lecture Series, April, East Lansing, MI.
- 2008 What is Cognitive Anthropology? Michigan State University, ANP320: Social and Cultural Analysis. March, East Lansing, MI.
- 2008 What Kind of Reformation? Semiotic Ideologies among “Emerging” Evangelicals. Michigan State University, Undergraduate Anthropology Club, February, East Lansing, MI.
- 2007 Small Group Bible Studies as Interpretive Communities. Michigan State University, Religion and American Culture Colloquium Series, January, East Lansing, MI.
- 2006 Textual Ideology, Textual Practice: Interpreting the Bible in Small Group Discourse. Michigan State University, Faculty and Graduate Student Lecture Series, November, East Lansing, MI.
- 2006 Qualitative Analysis Software: Conceptual and Practical Reflections on *AtlasTi*. Michigan State University, ANP429: Ethnographic Field Methods. November, East Lansing, MI.
- 2006 Bible Study, Discourse, and Interpretation: a now (but not yet) dissertation. Michigan State University, Faculty and Graduate Student Lecture Series, March, East Lansing, MI.
- 2005 Bible Study, Discourse, and Interpretation: reflections and laments on methodology. Michigan State University, Department of Anthropology, ANP429: Ethnographic Field Methods. November, East Lansing, MI.
- 2004 Ethnographic Methodology. Michigan State University, Department of Anthropology, ANP429: Ethnographic Field Methods. November, East Lansing, MI.
- 2004 Qualitative Data Analysis. Michigan State University, Department of Anthropology, ANP824: Ethnographic Writing. October, East Lansing, MI.
- 2003 “These Aren’t Just Words, It’s Life”: strategies and choices in qualitative research analysis. Michigan State University, Faculty and Graduate Student Lecture Series, November, East Lansing, MI.

Honors and Awards:

- 2006-07 Ron Hart Outstanding Teaching Award, Awarded by the Michigan State University Department of Anthropology

Research Grants:

- 2004 Graduate Student Research Enhancement Award, Awarded through the Michigan State University Graduate School. \$450.
- 2003 National Science Foundation Pre-Dissertation Training Grant, Awarded through the Michigan State University Department of Anthropology. \$2,500.

Community and Professional Service:

- 2002, Index Author; *Social Memory and History*. Jacob Climo and Maria Cattell, eds. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- 2006, On-Campus Assistant Director; Undergraduate Ethnographic Field School and Internship Program, 2007, MSU. Director: Fredric M. Roberts. Topic: “The Changing Food System of Prescott, Arizona.”
- 2007, Faculty Mentor; McNair/SROP Scholars Program, Michigan State University.
- 2007, Workshop Mentor, “Being a recent Ph.D.,” National Association for Student Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association Meetings, Washington, D.C.
- 2007, Instructor, six-week course, “Christianity in the United States,” Michigan State University Alumni Lifelong Education Evening College.

Professional Associations:

- 2003-present: Member, American Anthropological Association (AAA)
- 2006-present: Member, Society for Linguistic Anthropology (SLA)
- 2006-present: Member, Society for the Anthropology of Religion (SAR)
- 2006-present: Research Associate, The Institute for Signifying Scriptures (ISS)

Research Experience:

Christianity in the United States:

- October 2007 – present: *Principal Investigator*, ethnographic fieldwork.
Topic: The Emerging/Emergent Church in the U.S.
- Jun 2004 – Dec 2005: *Principal investigator*, dissertation fieldwork. Ethnographic research with six Protestant congregations in Lansing, Michigan.
Topic: Bible study discourse.
- May 2003 – Aug 2003: *Principal investigator*, pre-dissertation fieldwork.
Ethnographic research with three Protestant congregations in coastal Virginia.
Topic: Bible study discourse.
- Jan 2002 – May 2002: *Principal investigator*, pre-dissertation fieldwork.
Ethnographic research with one Protestant congregation in mid-Michigan.
Topic: Bible study discourse.
- Sep 2001 – Dec 2002: *Research analyst* for Dr. Fredric Roberts – Associate Professor of Anthropology, MSU. Ethnographic research with eight Protestant congregations

Aug 2000 – Dec 2000: Topic: Congregational identity.
Principal investigator, undergraduate fieldwork.
Ethnographic research with one Protestant congregation in central Appalachia.
Topic: African-American religious experience.

Oral History:

May 2001 – Aug 2001: *Research assistant* for John Akers, M.A. – Tempe Historical Museum. Oral history research.
Topic: “History of early Tempe, Arizona.”

Aug 2000 – Apr 2001: *Research assistant* for Dr. Mary LaLone – Professor of Anthropology, Radford University. Oral history research.
Topic: “Community impacts of the Radford Arsenal in central Appalachia.”

Aug 2000 – Dec 2000: *Research assistant* for Dr. Mary LaLone – Professor of Anthropology, Radford University. Oral history.
Topic: “Economic livelihood strategies in central Appalachia.”

Aug 1999 – Dec 1999: *Research assistant* for Dr. Melinda Wagner – Professor of Anthropology, Radford University. Oral history research.
Topic: “Cultural attachment to land in central Appalachia.”

Other Topics:

Aug 2004 – Aug 2005: *Research assistant* for Dr. Tom Tomlinson – Director, Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences, MSU. Ethnographic research.
Topic: “Family and Health Professionals’ Perceptions of PVS Patients.”

Mar 2004 – Sep 2004: *Research analyst* for Dr. Linda Hunt – Associate Professor of Anthropology, MSU. Ethnographic research.
Topic: “Race and Ethnicity in Genetics Research.”

Feb 2003 – May 2003: *Research assistant* for Dr. John Schweitzer – Professor of Urban Affairs, MSU. Ethnographic research.
Topic: “Sense of community in urban neighborhoods.”

References:

- Dr. Fredric Roberts: Professor Emeritus, Anthropology, Michigan State U.
Address: 302 Plaza Dr., Prescott, AZ 86303
Email: robertsf@msu.edu.
Phone: 928-776-1149
- Dr. Mindy Morgan: Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Michigan State U.
Address: 354 Baker Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824
Email: morgan37@msu.edu.
Phone: 517-353-2950
- Dr. David Dwyer: Professor Emeritus, Anthropology, Michigan State U.
Address: P.O. Box 1091, Mackinaw City, MI 49701
Email: dwyer@msu.edu.
Phone: 231-436-5654
- Dr. Robert Hitchcock: Professor and Chair, Anthropology, Michigan State U.
Address: 354 Baker Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.
Email: hitchc16@msu.edu.
Phone: 517-353-2950
- Dr. Amy DeRogatis: Associate Professor, Religious Studies, Michigan State U.
Address: Morrill Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.
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