

Samuel Berlin

I am a labour and development geographer using tools from cultural geography and ethnographic methods to research everyday and emotional experiences of work, inequality, and aspiration, with a Chinese regional focus. I am an experienced educator dedicated to using the thematic, contextual, and methodological breadth of my research to support students as they become social scientists.

Academic interests

- Critical political economy: development, class, labour, migration, urbanization
- Securitization, infrastructures, and technological change
- Time, futures, and everyday life
- LGBTQ+ politics, queer and trans theories
- Social theory, continental philosophy, postcolonial theory, and affect
- Contemporary Chinese and European societies
- Ethnography, life history, and narrative methods

Academic employment

Teaching Fellow

2024-

Durham University, United Kingdom

Responsibilities include:

- Designing and delivering lectures and seminars on queer geographies and feminist and queer theory for second-year undergraduates in *Theory and Concepts in Human Geography* and *Social and Cultural Geographies*;
- Delivering lectures and seminars on social theory for masters students in *Philosophy and Theory*;
- Designing and delivering lectures on interviewing and providing training and field experience in qualitative research methods and design to first-year undergraduates in *Introduction to Geographical Research*;
- Supervising undergraduate and postgraduate dissertation students;
- Participation in the PhD progression process as an examiner;
- Marking coursework, exams, and both undergraduate and masters dissertations;
- Research development through two short fieldwork-based projects in Shandong and Yunnan Provinces, China, to support publications and an ESRC New Investigator grant proposal in development.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

2021-2023

University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

- Research fellow responsible for UK fieldwork for ORA-funded multi-country project *Atmospheres of (counter)terrorism in European cities*
- Responsibilities included:
 - Qualitative fieldwork including interviews, participant observation, and sensory methods carried out in four countries, as well as transcription and data analysis;
 - Presenting findings at academic conferences and in both academic and non-academic writing;
 - Administration, including risk assessment, ethics and grant applications,

- reporting to funders, organizing workshops, data management, and website maintenance;
- Lecturing on security policy and practice and the social impacts of security.

Education

PhD Geography 2015-2021
University of Bristol, United Kingdom

- Thesis title: *Developmental Politics and Everyday Life: Working and Aspiring on Taohua Street*
- Thesis supervisors: Prof Maria Fannin (Bristol), Dr Mark Jackson (Bristol)
- Examiners: Prof Michele Lancione (Politecnico di Torino), Dr Juan Zhang (Bristol)
- Conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Shandong and Beijing, China, from October 2017 to April 2018
- Made research visits to Shandong University (October 2017) and Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong University (December 2017)
- Funded by a University of Bristol doctoral studentship

MSc Human Geography (Society and Space) (Distinction) 2014-2015
University of Bristol, United Kingdom

- Dissertation: *Trans Space: Transition, Embodiment and the Politics of Passing*

BA Chinese and Geography (Joint Honours, 1:1) 2006-2010
School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and King's College London, United Kingdom

Awards and scholarships

Durham University Research and Development Fund, £4,090 2024

- Enabled scoping visit to existing field site in Shandong Province, China in preparation for ESRC New Investigator grant application
- Funded fieldwork for project *Developmental knowledges and time metaphor: a case study of tourism in Yunnan*
- Facilitated research visit to Xi'an-Jiaotong Liverpool University in Suzhou, China

Royal Town Planning Institute Early Career Small Research Grant (PI), £8,665 2023

- Funded project to examine impacts of incoming Prevent Duty on businesses and other managers of urban public space
- Declined due to change in employment

Royal Geographical Society Small Research Grant, £500 2022

- Facilitated fieldwork on pan-European security planning in Brussels, Belgium

Worldwide Universities Network Research Mobility Program, £2,858 2016

- Funded visits to meet with researchers working on Chinese labour cultures at Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong University

Royal Geographical Society Slawson Award, £2000, and 2016

British Council Newton Fund PhD Placement, £3000 2016

- Facilitated doctoral fieldwork in Shandong, China

Prizes

University of Bristol Outstanding Research Performance Prize (MSc) 2015

Journal articles

Benjamin, C., **S. Berlin**, S. Fregonese and P. Simpson. (In review) "Big ugly lumps? (Counter)terrorism, everyday felt experience, and the normalisation of hostile vehicle mitigation." *City*.

Fregonese, S., P. Simpson, D. Masson, S. Runkel, C. Benjamin, **S. Berlin**, K. Ciax and A. Drongiti. (2024) "Atmospheres of (counter)terrorism: a research agenda." *Progress in Human Geography*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325241268951>

Berlin, S. (2024) "Cultures of labour: aspiration, developmental futures and the materiality of memory after Chinese economic reform," *Social and Cultural Geography*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2024.2342833>

Berlin, S. (2019) "On Becoming a 'Blue-Eyed, Blond American Friend': Difficult Fieldwork, Positionality and Being a Participant-Researcher," *Made in China*, 4(3), 108-111.

Edited books, chapters and collections

Fregonese, S., P. Simpson, D. Masson, S. Runkel, C. Benjamin, **S. Berlin**, K. Ciax and A. Drongiti. (Book proposal in review) *Urban (counter)terrorism: materialities, practices, atmospheres*. Ambiances, Atmospheres and Sensory Experiences of Spaces book series, Routledge.

Simpson, P. and **S. Berlin**. (Accepted) "Non-representational approaches." In: D. Masson, ed. *The Handbook of Atmospheres*, Routledge.

Berlin, S. (2022) "Feeding the Future: The Politics of Aspiration in a Chinese Market Street." In: S. Kehoe and G. Wielander, eds. *Cultural China 2021*, University of Westminster Press, 44-48.

Berlin, S. and S. Brice. (2022) "The Ontopolitics of Gender as Transindividual Relation." In: C. Cremin and I. Buchanan, eds. *Deleuze, Guattari and the Schizoanalysis of Trans Studies*, 9-34.

Book reviews

Berlin, S. (2022) "Book review: Bodies, Affects, Politics: The Clash of Bodily Regimes," *cultural geographies*, 29(2), 330-331.

Conference presentations

2024. "Developmental time: disorientation, narrative and economic subjectivity after crisis." Presented at the *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference*, London.

2023. "Project Servator: atmospheric methods in counterterrorism." Presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, Denver, Colorado.

2023. "Affective counterterrorism and atmospheric policing." Presented at *Neue Kulturgeographie 2023: Geographies of Overlapping Crises*, Halle (Saale), Germany.

2022. "Mass violence, securitization and social difference: Everyday (in)securities after the Plymouth 'incel' shooting." Presented at the *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference*, Newcastle.

2021. "Labour, developmental aspiration and exteriorised memory in contemporary China," Presented at the *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference*, online.

2019. "Aspirational temporalities in peri-urban China," Presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, Washington, DC.

2019. Panel participant: "Conducting Fieldwork in China: Negotiating Power and Positionality," Presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, Washington, DC.

2018. "Positionality and the encounter: resonances and the unknown," Presented at the *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference*, Cardiff.

2016. "Trans ethics," Presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, San Francisco.

Convened conference sessions

2023. "Urban atmospheres of (in)security, disaster, and recovery." *Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers*, Denver, Colorado.

2022. "Securing and recovering urban atmospheres?" *Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference*, Newcastle.

Invited seminars

2024. "PGR professionalization workshop: Imagining (and funding) your next project." Workshop presented at Department of China Studies, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China.

2023. "Project Servator: affective counterterrorism and atmospheric policing." Presented at Social Justice, Cities and Citizenship Seminar Series, School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK.

2022. "Exteriorised memory and developmental aspiration in peri-urban China." Presented at PLACES Geography and Planning Laboratory, CY Cergy Paris Université, Cergy, France.

Teaching

Lecturer, Social and Cultural Geographies (L2) 2024
Durham University

- Designed and delivered lectures on queer and trans geographies covering topics including gay and lesbian urban geographies, the Cultural Turn and intersectional critiques, performativity and heteronormativity, trans theory, queer time and critiques of the family, homonormativity and homonationalism, and global sexualities and genders
- Designed and delivered a workshop about corporate Pride as a focus of queer critique and activism

Lecturer, Theory and Concepts in Human Geography (L2) 2024
Durham University

- Delivered lectures on feminist theory covering topics including feminist genealogies, feminist praxis, social construction of identity, situated knowledges, and intersectionality
- Designed and delivered seminars on masculinities and lad culture, performativity and drag, and social reproduction theory

Lecturer, Introduction to Geographical Research (BA) (L1) 2024
Durham University

- Supported student groups in designing qualitative research projects carried out over two daytime field trips to Newcastle

Lecturer, Urban Planning, Design and Security (L3) 2022
University of Plymouth

- Designed and delivered lectures on urban security policy and practice in relation to terrorism in the UK

Teaching assistant, Migration and Development (L3) 2018-2019
University of Bristol

- Designed and delivered seminars on theories of migration and development
- Supervised students in designing and implementing independent research projects

Teaching assistant, Philosophy, Social Theory and Geography (L2) 2015-2019
University of Bristol

- Designed and delivered seminars on social theory covering thinkers including Butler, Marx, Foucault, Nietzsche, Haraway and Stiegler
- Delivered writing tutorials to practice using social theory in coursework

Demonstrator, Qualitative Methods (L2) 2015
University of Bristol

- Supported students practising interview methods

Additional scholarly activities

Evaluation research training volunteer 2023
The World Transformed 2023, Liverpool

- Trained volunteers in qualitative research methods to assess the experience of a major yearly activist festival and assisted in data collection at festival

Founder 2024
Chinese Ethnography Reading Group (online)

Founder 2023
Social Geography Reading Group (online)

Founder 2015-2019
Gender and Sexuality Reading Group

- Funded by Gender Research Group, University of Bristol

Intern 2016
OutStories Mapping LGBT+ Bristol Project (<https://outstoriesbristol.org.uk/map/>)

- Worked on collaborative LGBT+ interactive map project between University of Bristol, Bristol City Council and an LGBT+ non-profit
- Edited audio, transcribed and uploaded geographical information to online map
- Conducted public outreach

Editor, writer and event planner 2015-2016
Bristol Society and Space Blog editorial committee

- Maintained website showcasing research from University of Bristol master's students
- Reviewed and edited student publications
- Organized and ran an event with invited speakers about alternative futures

Departmental service

Open Day presenter 2018
Designed and ran six undergraduate Open Day presentations for University of Bristol School of Geographical Sciences' Historical & Cultural and Political Economy research groups

Widening participation teaching assistant 2016
Assisted in cultural geography taster class for University of Bristol's Widening Participation program

Languages

English: native

Mandarin: fluent (spoken and written)

- New HSK (Chinese proficiency test): Level 6 (of 6) 2014
- HSKK (Chinese speaking test): Advanced 2014

German: moderate comprehension and speaking (approx. B1 level)

French: everyday comprehension and speaking (approx. A2 level)