

CURRICULUM VITAE

Elena Lesley

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RESEARCH INTERESTS: Medical and psychological anthropology, global mental health, applied anthropology, transitional justice, immigrant/refugee health, humanitarianism, SE Asia

CURRENT POSITION:

Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Science, Technology, and International Affairs
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University
Washington, DC

EDUCATION

- 2022 PhD, Anthropology, Emory University
Dissertation: *“Testimony as Transformation: Resilience, Regeneration and Moral Action through Spiritually-Adapted Narrative Therapy in Cambodia”*
- Winner of the Marjorie Shostak Prize for Excellence and Humanity in Ethnographic Writing (2022)
- 2015-16 Intermediate / Advanced Khmer, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Southeast Asian Summer Studies Institute (non-degree)
- 2013 M.S., Global Affairs, Rutgers University
- 2004 B.A., Political Science, Brown University
Honors / *magna cum laude* graduate

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2020-21 Dean’s Teaching Fellow for Diversity and Inclusive Pedagogy, Emory University,
Center for Faculty Development and Excellence
- 2015-21 Course Instructor, Emory University College of Arts & Sciences and Rollins
School of Public Health
- 2013-14 Senior Research Specialist, Princeton School of Public and International Affairs
- 2012-2013 Editor and Staff Writer, Tunisia Live/Global Productions

- 2005-2008 Staff Writer, Tampa Bay Times/The St. Petersburg Times
**Focused on healthcare and political reporting for Florida's largest newspaper*
- 2004-2005 Editor and Staff Writer, The Phnom Penh Post
**Henry Luce Scholar placement at leading Cambodian newspaper*

HONORS/ FELLOWSHIPS

External Fellowships

- 2022 Culture, Mind, and Brain fellowship, Foundation for Psychocultural Research, Co-PIs Kathy Trang (Harvard University) and Seinenu Thein-Lemelson (UCLA) (\$53,505)
- 2020-21 Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship, Institute for Citizens and Scholars (Formerly: The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation) (\$27,500)
- 2018-19 Blakemore Freeman Fellowship, Blakemore Foundation (\$48,500)
**Awarded for advanced language study in Khmer to support research*
- 2017-18 Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, Wenner-Gren Foundation (\$18,400)
- 2017-18 Senior Research Fellowship, Center for Khmer Studies (\$11,000)
- 2016 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Advanced Khmer), University of Wisconsin-Madison (\$6,500)
- 2015 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Intermediate Khmer), University of Wisconsin-Madison (\$6,500)
- 2015 Khmer language fellowship, Center for Khmer Studies (Declined)
- 2014 Magistretti Graduate Fellowship, University of California-Berkeley (Declined)
**Awarded competitive university-wide graduate admission fellowship providing stipend top-off to the five-year funding package offered by Berkeley's Anthropology Department.*
- 2012 Research Fellow, Council of American Overseas Research Centers (\$10,000)
- 2008-09 Fulbright IIE (Cambodia) (\$30,000)
**Received an additional 3-month extension to my original 12-month grant*
- 2004-05 Henry Luce Scholar (Cambodia), The Henry Luce Foundation (\$27,000)

Internal Fellowships (Georgetown)

- Pending [with Professor Emily Mendenhall] International Collaborative Grant (\$15,000)
- Pending [with Professor Emily Mendenhall] Medical Humanities Grant (\$12,000)

Internal Fellowships (Emory)

- 2020-21 Dean's Teaching Fellowship (\$23,000)
**Awarded Emory's most competitive dissertation completion fellowship with placement in the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence.*
- 2020 Emory College Online Teaching Strategies Fellow
**Nominated by the Department of Anthropology to lead faculty in the summer ECOTS training course.*
- 2016 Laney Graduate School Pilot Funds
**Pilot research in Cambodia*
- 2016 Emory Graduate Student Council
**Awarded for organizing Global Mental Health Symposium with the Anthropology Department and School of Public Health*
- 2015 Laney Graduate School Training Funds
**Awarded for Khmer language training*
- 2014 George W. Woodruff Fellowship, Emory's Laney Graduate School (\$156,000 plus tuition waiver)
**Awarded Emory's most prestigious admission fellowship, which covers all tuition and fees and offers a supplement to the standard PhD student stipend.*

Internal Fellowships (Rutgers)

- 2011 Raimondo Fellow, Eagleton Institute of Politics
- 2011 Master's Scholarship, Rutgers' Graduate School

Awards/Honors

- 2021 George Armelagos Award for Excellence in Teaching by a Graduate Student (Emory)
- 2020 Martha and Bill Dobes Outstanding Graduate Teaching Fellow Award (Emory)
- 2020 Summer Residency, National Humanities Center
- 2019 Spicer Travel Award, Society for Applied Anthropology
**Awarded for presentation about gender-based violence under the Khmer Rouge*
- 2004 Betsy Amanda Lehman Memorial Award for Excellence in Journalism (Brown)
- 2002 Aided Internship Grant (for summer internship in U.S. Senate) (Brown)
- 2001 Irving Lysander Foster Award for Excellence in the Study of French (Brown)

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS***Books and book chapters***

- In prep. *Memory Chiseling: Remembering to Forget in Transitional Justice-Linked Cambodian Mental Health Therapy*
(planned submission to University of California Press, Spring 2023)
- 2022 Lesley, Elena [Co-authored with Hoy Vathana]. "Reconstructing the 'Small Family' after Democratic Kampuchea: Forced Marriage, Ritual Renewal and Parent-Child Entanglement in Cambodia." In *Challenging Conceptions: Children Born of Wartime Rape and Sexual Exploitation*, Eds. Kimberly Theidon and Dyan Mazurana. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 2015 Lesley, Elena. "Death on Display: Bones and Bodies in Cambodia and Rwanda." In *Necropolitics: Mass Graves and Exhumations in the Age of Human Rights*, Eds. Francisco Ferrandiz and Antonius Robben, 213-239. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- 2014 Lesley, Elena. "Memory at the Site: Witnessing, Education and the Repurposing of Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek in Cambodia." In *Remembering Genocide*, Eds. Nigel Eltringham and Pam Maclean, 131-151. London: Routledge.

Journal articles

- Revised & Resubmitted Lesley, Elena. "Visions of the Variable 'Good': Authoritarianism, Transformation and Resilience in the Context of a Cambodian Mental Health Intervention." *American Ethnologist*.
- Forthcoming June 2023 Lesley, Elena. "Therapeutic Improvisation in Cambodia: Moderated Exposure, the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes and the Quest to Weave the 'World's Longest Krama.'" *Memory Studies*. Invited contribution to special issue on "Sites of Reckoning," eds. Jennie Burnet and Natasha Zaretsky.
- Forthcoming Lesley, Elena. "The Anthropologist as Audience: Fortifying moral agency through active listening." *Medicine Anthropology Theory*. Invited contribution for special issue on "Moral Agency for the Marginalized and how Psychological Anthropology can Help," eds. Neely Myers and Tali Ziv.
- 2021 Lesley, Elena. "Immaterial Alliances: Constructions of Self-Other Relations and Conceptions of Belonging in the Therapeutic Narratives of Muslim and Buddhist Cambodians." *Ethos: Journal for the Society of Psychological Anthropology* 48(3): 379-400.
- 2021 Lesley, Elena. "Lessons for the Future: Khmer Rouge Survivor Testimonies as Sites of Individual and Social Regeneration." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 86(3): 570-591.
- 2019 Lesley, Elena. "Cultural Impairment and the Genocidal Potential of Intoxicants: Alcohol Use in Colonial North America." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 13(1): 88-97.
- 2014 Lesley, Elena [Co-authored with Kosal Path]. "Post-Genocide Cambodia: The

Politics of Justice and Truth Recovery." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 8(2).

Journal articles in preparation

- In review Hinton, Alex and Elena Lesley. "Rethinking Localization as Torque: Lessons from the Khmer Rouge Tribunal." *International Studies Review*. Invited contribution to special issue on "Localization in World Politics: Bridging Divides across Conflict and Post-Conflict Response, eds. Jennifer Welsh and Adam Kochanski.
- In prep. Lesley, Elena. "Reinvigorating Ritual: Improvisation of Buddhist Monks in a Cambodian Mental Health Intervention." For the *Journal of Global Buddhism*.
- In prep. Lesley, Elena. "Parsing the Role of the Past in the Present : Class background, "Thinking a Lot" and differential distribution of trauma-related symptoms among elderly Cambodians." *Social Science and Medicine – Mental Health*.

Guest Editorship (Special Journal Issues)

- 2023 *Twenty-Five Years of Psychosocial Interventions in Emergency Contexts: Lessons Learned and Future Directions* (in preparation for *BMJ Global Health* with Emily Mendenhall)
- 2023 *Mental Health and Disruption in Southeast Asia: Emerging Voices from Cambodia, Burma, and Vietnam* (in preparation for *Social Science and Medicine – Mental Health* with Kathy Trang and Seinenu Thein-Lemelson)
- 2014 *Post-Genocide Cambodia: The Politics of Justice and Truth Recovery* (published in *Genocide Studies and Prevention* with Kosal Path)

Invited Book Reviews

- In prep. Review of "The Movement for Global Mental Health: Critical Views from South and Southeast Asia," for *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.

Political Science case studies

- 2014 Lesley, Elena. "Improving Consultation and Cooperation to Create a National Strategy: Drafting Estonia 2020." Princeton University: Innovations for Successful Societies.
- 2014 Lesley, Elena. "Mapping a Transformation Journey: A Strategy for Malaysia's Future: 2009-2010." Princeton University: Innovations for Successful Societies.

SELECTED JOURNALISTIC PUBLICATIONS

NOTE: During the six years I worked fulltime as a professional journalist (See "Journalistic Employment" section), I published roughly 1200 pieces in outlets such as *Granta*, *The Huffington*

Post, The Tampa Bay Times/St. Petersburg Times, The Sacramento Bee, The Oregonian and The Phnom Penh Post, among others. A small selection of these publications is below.

- 2022 Multi-Generational Voices from the Wreckage of War-Torn Ukraine
Washington, DC: *Think Global Health*
(<https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/multigenerational-voices-wreckage-war-torn-ukraine>)
- 2017 ការរាក់ទាក់របស់ពលរដ្ឋកម្ពុជា ដើរតួជាឯកអគ្គរាជទូតវប្បធម៌ សម្រាប់អ្នកចំណូលថ្មី
ម្តងជាប់ម្តង (The Hospitality of Cambodians)
Phnom Penh: *The Phnom Penh Post-Khmer*
(Khmer-language article in one of Cambodia’s major newspapers)
- 2009 Truth and Reconciliation: A Dispatch from the Khmer Rouge Trials
London: *Granta*
(Long-form article in leading U.K. literary magazine: <https://granta.com/truth-and-reconciliation/>)
- 2008 Dispatches: Anlong Veng. Seeking Reconciliation in Cambodia
London: *Granta*
(Long-form article in leading U.K. literary magazine: <https://granta.com/dispatches-anlong-veng/>)
- 2008 Democracy, Cambodian Style
New York: *The Huffington Post*
(https://www.huffpost.com/entry/democracy-cambodian-style_b_115393)
- 2006 The Forgotten, now Demoralized Solider: Veterans injured in Iraq suffer from life-changing brain injuries
Tampa Bay Times/St. Petersburg Times
- 2006 In-Patient Mental Health Care ends in county as Oaks closes
Tampa Bay Times/St. Petersburg Times
- 2006 Medicare Part D a blessing for some, a burden for others
Tampa Bay Times/St. Petersburg Times
- 2005 Public Land deals flaunt intentions of law
The Phnom Penh Post
- 2004 Perceptions of Government’s recent Rectangular Strategy could influence donors at CG meeting
The Phnom Penh Post
- 2004 New Study Finds Overwhelming Support for KR Trial
The Phnom Penh Post

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Hawaii Pacific University, College of Health and Society

- 2022 Instructor, Public Health Program Planning (PH 6460): College of Health and

Society (*online*)

2022 Instructor, Health Policy, Law, and Advocacy (PH 6400): College of Health and Society (*online*)

Emory University, College of Arts and Sciences

2021 Instructor, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: Concepts and Methods (ANT 202): College of Arts & Sciences (*online*)

2020 Facilitator, Emory Summer Teaching Intensive workshop

2020 Instructor, Emory Online Teaching Strategies training program

2020 Instructor, Religion, Health and Healing (ANT 337): College of Arts & Sciences
**Co-supervised related Directed Reading for Jessie Washington, PhD Candidate in Religion studying psychological wellness in Black faith communities*

2016 Assistant Instructor, Cross-Cultural Issues in Mental Health (ANT 331): College of Arts & Sciences

2016 Teaching Assistant, Four-Field Introduction to Anthropology (ANT 101): College of Arts & Sciences

2015 Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: Concepts and Methods (ANT 202): College of Arts & Sciences

Emory University, Rollins School of Public Health

2020 Instructor, Emory's Rollins School of Public Health (GH 525): Qualitative Data Analysis with MAXQDA software (*online*)

Brown University, Department of English

2011 Instructor, Brown University: Introduction to Journalism

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

September 2022 "Disruption, Health, and Technology," Program in Science, Technology, and International Affairs, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington DC.

September 2022 "Decolonization in the Everyday Life of the Academy: Perspectives from Southeast Asia and its Diaspora," Southeast Asian Mental Health Initiative, Virtual.

September 2022 "Torque: Searching for Localization at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal." The Center for International Peace and Security Studies, McGill University, Montreal, QC.

April 2022 "The Role of Spiritually-Adapted Mental Health Care Treatment in Cambodia's Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding Efforts." Mershon Center for

International Security Studies, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

- April 2022 “Mental Health Treatment for Genocide Survivors in Cambodia.” Emory University Department of Anthropology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.
- November 2021 “Testimony as Transformation: Resilience and Regeneration through Therapeutic Adaptation of the Funerary *Bangsokol* Ritual.” Council on Southeast Asia Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT.
- September 2021 “Reconsidering Legacies of ‘Justice’ in the Context of Tribunal-Related Outreach.” Center for Khmer Studies, Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Presentation held virtually).
- October 2020 “The Legacy of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.” University of Maryland – College Park, International Studies Department. (Presentation held virtually).
- March 2020 “Therapeutic Assemblages in Cambodia: The Justice Mandate, Mental Health Improvisation and Moderated Exposure at the Toul Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes.” Global Studies Institute, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.
- March 2019 “Considering the Mental Health Impact of Gender-Based Violence under the Khmer Rouge.” Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meeting, Portland, OR. (*Winner of the SfAA Spicer Award*)
- February 2019 “Therapeutic Narratives among Khmer Rouge survivors in Cambodia.” Pomona College, Department of Anthropology, Claremont, CA.
- October 2018 “Overcoming a Divisive History: The Individual and Communal Impact of Narrative Psychotherapy on Khmer Rouge Survivors.” Center for Khmer Studies, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- April 2018 “An Anthropological Approach to Psychological Outreach.” Royal University of Phnom Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- December 2017 “First they Killed my Father.” George Mason University School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Washington DC.
- January 2016 “Material Traces of Atrocity in Cambodia and Rwanda.” Portland State University, History and Anthropology Departments, Portland, OR.
- March 2014 “The Memory Mandate: The Use of Monuments in Post-Genocide State Building.” Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton, NJ
- November 2013 “Tunisia after the Arab Spring.” Defiance College, Defiance, OH.
- October 2013 “Local Responses to International Sites of Memory in Cambodia.” Rutgers University, Division of Global Affairs, Newark, NJ.

- June 2013 "Approaches to Transitional Justice in Three Post-Conflict Settings." International Center for Transitional Justice, New York, NY.
- April 2011 "Justice and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia." Rutgers University Law School, Newark, NJ.
- April 2011 "Cultural Impairment and the Genocidal Potential of Intoxicants," paper presented at the symposium "Critical Genocide Studies: Reflections from the Raphael Lemkin Archives," Rutgers University, Division of Global Affairs, Newark, NJ.
- October 2009 "After Pol Pot: Reporting the Khmer Rouge tribunal in Cambodia." Rutgers University, Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Newark, NJ.
- April 2009 "Reporting the Khmer Rouge tribunal." Royal University of Phnom Penh, Department of Media and Communication, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- February 2009 "Limited Culpability at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia." Royal University of Law and Economics, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- March 2023 *Accepted* "Mining the Past for Meaning: Intergenerational Memory Transmission in the Context of Cambodian Mental Health Therapy." Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Boston, MA.
- November 2022 *Accepted* "From Patients to *Pnieu* (Clients): The Increasing Marketization of the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization in Cambodia." American Anthropological Association, Seattle, WA.
- April 2022 "Rebuilding the 'small family' in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia." Presenter for panel discussion, "Challenging Conceptions: Children Born of War-time Rape and Sexual Exploitation." International Studies Association Annual Convention, Nashville, TN.
- November 2021 "Testimony as Merit Creation: Spiritual dissonance, consonance and improvisation in hybrid Testimonial Therapy among Khmer Rouge survivors." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting: Baltimore, MD.
- April 2021 "A new way to 'Mien Brayoch' (Have Usefulness): Moral agency in the community dissemination of Khmer Rouge survivor narratives." Society for Psychological Anthropology Biennial Meeting (held virtually).
- November 2019 "From Envisioned Justice Cascades to Linguistic Transformation: The Multifaceted Legacy of the Khmer Rouge in Contemporary Cambodia." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting: Vancouver, BC.

- June 2019 "Histories of Trauma and Post-Genocidal Justice in Cambodia." University of Wisconsin - Madison, Department of History: Wisconsin, Madison.
- April 2019 "Selfhood, divine agency and historical responsibility in the testimonial narratives Buddhist and Muslim Khmer Rouge survivors." Society for Psychological Anthropology Biennial Meeting: Santa Ana, New Mexico.
- November 2018 "Reconsidering Trauma, Resilience, Recovery, Rehabilitation." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting: San Jose, CA.
- March 2017 "Closing the Life Story? The Examination of Cambodian Testimonies in the Context of the Buddhist Practice of Naikan." Society for Psychological Anthropology Biennial Meeting: New Orleans, LA.
- July 2016 "Mental Health Outreach at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal." Southeast Asian Summer Studies' Institute Joint Student Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison: Madison, WI.
- November 2016 "Between Cultural Diversity and Clinical Exigencies: The Role of the Anthropologist in Global Mental Health." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting: Minneapolis, MN.
- July 2015 "What Remains: The Politics of Memorialization in Cambodia." Southeast Asian Summer Studies' Institute Joint Student Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison: Madison, WI.
- June 2013 "Records of Death on Display: Local Interpretations of Mass Graves in Cambodia and Rwanda." International Association of Genocide Scholars Biennial Conference. University of Siena: Siena, Italy.

SERVICE

Panel Organizer, Chair and Discussant Roles

- 2023
Accepted Organizer: "Reanimating the Past: Legacies of Violence and Disruption among Cambodian and Cambodian American Communities." Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference, Boston, MA.
- 2022 Co-Organizer: Inaugural "Southeast Asian Mental Health Conference." Virtual.
- New biennial conference organized with initiative co-founders from Harvard and UCLA. Over 850 people registered to attend the conference, and we hosted presentations from roughly 60 early-career scholars from Southeast Asia.
 - Served as coordinator of presentation mentorship program, connecting over 60 early-career scholars from SE Asia with senior academic mentors.
 - Spearheaded effort to have conference qualify for Continuing Education credits (ACCME, ANCC, APA, and ASWB).

- Organized and led instructional webinars for scholars in SE Asia on topics such as how to write a conference abstract.

- 2022 Moderator: "Disruption and Recovery." Southeast Asian Mental Health Conference. Virtual.
- 2022 Moderator: "Adversity and Resilience." Southeast Asian Mental Health Conference. Virtual.
- 2022 Discussant: "Interventions." Southeast Asian Mental Health Conference. Virtual.
- 2021 Chair: "Ethical and Economic Change and the Nature of Social Transformation." American Anthropological Association Meeting in Baltimore, MD
- 2019 Organizer and Chair: "From Envisioned Justice Cascades to Linguistic Transformation: The Multifaceted Legacy of the Khmer Rouge in Contemporary Cambodia." American Anthropological Association Meeting, Vancouver, BC
- 2018 Organizer and Chair: "Reconsidering Trauma, Resilience, Recovery, Rehabilitation." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Jose, CA
- 2016 Co-Organizer: "Emory Global Mental Health Symposium." Rollins School of Public Health and Emory Department of Anthropology, Atlanta, GA.
- 2011 Discussant: "Justice and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia." Rutgers University Law School, Newark, NJ.
- 2011 Co-Organizer: "Critical Genocide Studies: Reflections from the Raphael Lemkin Archives," Rutgers University, Division of Global Affairs, Newark, NJ.

Reviewer/Editor

- 2021-present Peer reviewer for *Social Science and Medicine – Mental Health*
- 2020-present Peer reviewer for *Ethos: Journal of the Society for Psychological Anthropology*
- 2016-present External reviewer for Brown University Fellowships Office
- 2017 External reviewer for Graduate Women in Science fellowship
- 2015 Copy editor for book manuscript, *The Gebusi: Lives Transformed in a Rainforest World*, Bruce Knauft, Waveland Press.
- 2013 Guest Editor for "Justice in Cambodia" special issue of journal *Genocide Studies and Prevention*.
- 2010-2017 Publications Coordinator, Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights.
- 2011-2013 Rutgers Division of Global Affairs and *France24*, student blog editor

Other Professional Service

- 2021-present Freelance Expert Witness for Refugee and Asylum Claims (trauma, psychiatric, mental health, and psychosocial-based claims)
- 2019-present Serve as freelance Khmer-English and English-Khmer translator for the Center for Victims of Torture
- 2021 Provost Distinguished Teaching Award Committee (Emory)
- 2020-21 Course design intern for Emory's Department of Anthropology
- 2017-18 Co-founder and interviewer for the Society for Psychological Anthropology's "Voices of Experience: An Engaged Psychological Anthropology Interview Series"
- 2016-2018 Core Team Member, Emory Global Mental Health Network, collaboration with Rollins School of Public Health
- 2014-15 Board Member, Emory Anthropology Graduate Student Association

LANGUAGES

English (Native speaker); Khmer (Fluent); French (Fluent); Russian (Intermediate proficiency/heritage speaker)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Anthropological Association
International Studies Association
Association for Asian Studies
Society for Medical Anthropology
Society for Psychological Anthropology
Society for Applied Anthropology
American Academy of Religion