

## **DR. LESLIE D. ACTON**

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### **EDUCATION**

- 2017 **Duke University**, Durham, NC  
PhD, Marine Science and Conservation  
Dissertation: "Negotiating Ocean Territory in Bermuda and the Sargasso Sea"
- 2012 **Duke University**, Durham, NC  
Master of Environmental Management  
Concentration: Coastal Environmental Management
- 2006 **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, Chapel Hill, NC  
B.S. Biology, cum laude  
Minor: Chemistry

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- 2022- **Lecturer of Environment and Society**, Brown University, Institute at Brown for Environment and Society
- 2020-22 **Assistant Professor**, University of Southern Mississippi, Division of Coastal Sciences, School of Ocean Science and Engineering
- 2017-19 **NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, Colorado State University, Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

- 2021 Faculty Research Seed Funding Grant, University of Southern Mississippi **(\$3800)**
- 2017-19 National Science Foundation, State and non-state territorial practices and polycentric governance in UK and US large marine protected areas. Social, Behavioral, and Economic Science Postdoctoral Research. Fellowship Award No. 1714335, **(\$138,000)**
- 2016 Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship, Duke University **(\$5500)**
- 2015 The Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy Research Grant **(\$7500)**
- 2014, 15 Graduate Award for Research and Training, Duke University Center for International Studies **(\$2000, \$1500)**
- 2011 The Lazar Foundation, Duke University **(\$1200)**
- 2011 The Whitney Lawson Chamberlin Memorial Endowment Fund, Duke University **(\$1000)**
- 2011 The Nicholas School Internship Fund, Duke University **(\$1000)**

## PUBLICATIONS

### Peer-Reviewed Articles († advised graduate student)

- 2022 Melvin, E.†, **L. Acton**, L. Campbell. (Un)claiming rights, resources, and ocean spaces: Marine genetic resources and area-based management tools in high seas governance negotiations. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 0.
- 2022 Campbell, L.M., R. Fail, R. Horan, **L. Acton**, J. Blackwatters, A. Garcia Lozano, N. Gray, R. Gruby, E. Melvin, G. Murray, E. Wiehe. Architecture and Agency for Equity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction. *Earth System Governance*, 13.
- 2021 **Acton, L.**, R.L. Gruby, and 'A. Nakachi. Does polycentricity fit? Linking social fit with polycentric governance in a large-scale marine protected area. *The Journal of Environmental Management*, 290.
- 2020 Artis, E., N. Gray, L. M. Campbell, R. L. Gruby, **L. Acton**, S. B. Zigler, L. Mitchell. Stakeholder perspectives on large marine protected areas. *PLoS ONE*, 15(9).
- 2019 **Acton, L.**, L. M. Campbell, J. Cleary, N. Gray, P. Halpin. What is the Sargasso Sea? The problem of fixing space in a fluid ocean. *Political Geography*, 68: 86-100.
- 2018 Bennett, A., **L. Acton**, G. Epstein, R. L. Gruby, M. Nenadovic. Embracing conceptual diversity to integrate power and institutional analysis: Introducing a relational typology. *International Journal of the Commons*, 12(2).
- 2017 Gruby, R.L., L. Fairbanks, **L. Acton**, E. Artis, L.M. Campbell, N.J. Gray, L. Mitchell, S.B.J. Zigler, K. Wilson. Conceptualizing social outcomes of large marine protected areas. *Coastal Management*, 45(6): 416-435.
- 2015 Gruby, R. L., N. J. Gray, L. M. Campbell, **L. Acton**. Toward a social science research agenda for large marine protected areas. *Conservation Letters*, 9(3): 153-163.
- 2014 Johnson, M., C. Hannah, **L. Acton**, R. Popovici, K. Karanth, E. Weinthal. Network Environmentalism: Citizen Scientists as Agents for Environmental Advocacy. *Global Environmental Politics*, 29: 235-245.

### Book Chapters

- 2021 Campbell, L. N. Gray, S. Zigler, **L. Acton**, R. Gruby. World-making through mapping: Large scale marine protected areas and the transformation of the global ocean. In M. Himley, E. Havice, and G. Valdivia (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Resource Geography*. Taylor and Francis.
- 2020 Gray, N., **L. Acton**, L. M. Campbell. High seas conservation territories, science, and the geopolitics of oceans governance. In S. O'Lear (Ed.), *A Research Agenda for Environmental Geopolitics* (pp. 30-43). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- 2014 Epstein, G., A. Bennett, R. Gruby, **L. Acton**, M. Nenadovic. (2014). Studying power with the social-ecological system framework. In M.J. Manfredi, A. Reckhemmer, and J.J. Vaske (Eds.), *Understanding society and natural resources: forging new strands of integration across the social sciences* (pp. 111-135). Netherlands: Springer.

## Outreach Reports and Popular Press

- 2020 **Acton, L.** and L.M. Campbell. Human Dimensions of Large Marine Protected Areas: Negotiations Over A Proposed Large Scale Marine Protected Area in Bermuda, 2010-2015. figshare. Preprint.  
<https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.12420149.v1>
- 2020 Silver, J., **L. Acton**, L.M. Campbell, N.J. Gray. How a global ocean treaty could biodiversity in the high seas. The Conversation. Available at  
<https://theconversation.com/how-a-global-ocean-treaty-could-protect-biodiversity-in-the-high-seas-139552>
- 2015 Gray, N., R.L. Gruby, L.M. Campbell, **L. Acton**. Marine Wilderness or Peopled Seas? Current Conservation 9(2): 13-17. Available at  
<https://www.currentconservation.org/issues/marine-wilderness-or-peopled-seas/>

## Working Papers (\* equal authorship)

- In review **Acton, L.** The fluid unknown: Territorializing oceans through shared spatial imaginaries in Bermuda's EEZ. Revise and resubmit to Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space.
- Acton, L.**, L. Campbell, R. Gruby. Making Waves: How the erosion of funder-state trust disrupted large-scale marine conservation initiatives in the Atlantic Ocean. In prep for submission to a special issue in Frontiers in Marine Science.
- Acton, L.\*** and L. Fairbanks\*. Policy Mobilities, Polycentricity, and Enlivened Governance in Coastal Seas.

## INVITED TALKS

- 2021 "Frontiers and Dynamics in Large-Scale Ocean Governance." Invited for University of Southern Mississippi Research Day, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

## SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 "Staking claims to ocean space through a failed large-scale marine protected area proposal." Annual Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute Virtual Meeting, Destin, Florida.
- 2021 "People, Power, and Polycentricity: Governance across Worldviews in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument." International Association of the Study of the Commons Polycentricity Virtual Conference, Tempe, Arizona.
- 2019 "Territory and Polycentricity in Large Scale Ocean Governance: the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument." Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, Washington, DC.
- 2019 "Polycentricity and Social Fit: Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument." 2nd International Association for the Study of the Commons Workshop: Working Together on the Commons, Tucson, Arizona.

- 2018 “Where is the Sargasso Sea? The problem of fixed space in a fluid ocean.” Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- 2016 “Space for Conservation: Negotiating oceans governance in Bermuda and the Sargasso Sea.” International Marine Conservation Congress, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador.
- 2015 “Shaping the Governance of Ocean Spaces: Global Politics of Marine Protected Areas at the World Parks Congress 2014.” Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, Chicago, Illinois.

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Coastal and oceans governance; political ecology; common-pool resource (CPR) theory; conservation policy; international oceans policy; coastal communities; polycentricity; qualitative methods

## TEACHING AND MENTORING ACTIVITY

### Instructor

- 2022 Aquatic Ecosystem Management (University of Southern Mississippi, Co-instructor with L. Hamdan), spring, graduate level
- 2021 Qualitative Research Methods (University of Southern Mississippi), fall, graduate level
- 2021 Special Problems in Qualitative Research Methods (University of Southern Mississippi), spring, graduate level
- 2020 Marine Policy and Governance (University of Southern Mississippi), fall, graduate level
- 2016 International Conservation and Development (Duke University, Co-instructor with L. Campbell), spring, undergraduate and graduate level

### Graduate Student Mentorship

*Currently serving as primary advisor*

Emily Melvin (PhD student)

Camilla (Bella) Witherspoon (Masters candidate)

*Currently serving as committee member*

Sara Marriott (PhD candidate)

## SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

### Manuscript Reviewer

Coastal Management, The Geographical Journal, The International Journal of the Commons, Maritime Studies, Policy Studies Journal, Political Geography, Sustainability Science, BioSciences

## Proposal Reviewer

Law and Science Program, National Science Foundation; Research Seed Grant, University of Southern Mississippi

## University Service

### *The University of Southern Mississippi*

- 2021- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for School of Ocean Science and Engineering (**co-chair**, school level)
- 2020- Coast Women in Science Diversity and Inclusion Seminar Series Committee (**co-leader**, multi-institutional across Mississippi coast)
- 2020- Seminar Series Committee (**member**, department level)
- 2020-21 Website Committee (**member**, school level)

### *Duke University*

- 2015-16 Graduate Student Representative (**chair**, departmental graduate student group)
- 2015-16 Annual Sutherland Memorial Seminar (**co-organizer**)
- 2014- 15 Seminar Series Co-Organizer, Mostly Marine Informal Seminar Series
- 2013-14 Duke University Marine Lab Seminar Series (**co-organizer**)

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- 2012- American Association of Geographers
- 2020- International Studies Association
- 2021- International Association of the Study of the Commons