

ALEXANDRE FRENETTE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
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EMPLOYMENT

2018 – present Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN
Assistant Professor, Sociology

2018 – 2022 Associate Director, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy
Fall 2021 Acting Director, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy

2014 – 2018 Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
Postdoctoral Scholar, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

EDUCATION

2014 Ph.D., Sociology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York
M.A., Sociology, Queens College, City University of New York
B.A. Honors, Psychology, Concordia University (Montréal, Canada)

Dissertation: “The intern economy: Laboring to learn in the music industry”

- Winner of the 2013 Labor and Employment Relations Association’s Thomas A. Kochan and Stephen R. Sleigh Best Dissertation Award.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Sociology of Work	Sociology of Culture	Social Inequality
Sociology of Organizations	Sociology of Education	Qualitative Methods

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Frenette, A. (In press). *Blame the intern: On (not) breaking into the creative economy*. Princeton University Press.

Edited Volumes

Frenette, A. (Ed.). (2017). Arts graduates in a changing economy. *American Behavioral Scientist* 61(12).

Refereed Articles

Martin, N. D., Frenette, A., and Gualtieri, G. (2023). “Campus connections for creative careers: Social capital, gender inequality, and artistic work.” *Poetics: Journal of Empirical Research on Culture, the Media, and the Arts*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2023.101763>.

Miller, A. L., Martin, N. D., & Frenette, A. (2022). “Unpacking high-impact practices in the arts: Predictors of college, career, and community engagement outcomes.” *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 52(3), 190-210.

Frenette, A. (2019). Leveraging youth: Overcoming intergenerational tensions in creative production. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 82(4), 386-406.

Frenette, A. & Ocejo, R. E. (2019). Sustaining enchantment: How cultural workers manage precariousness and routine. *Research in the Sociology of Work* 32, 35-60.

Frenette, A. Martin, N. D., & Tepper, S. J. (2018). Oscillate wildly: The under-acknowledged prevalence, predictors, and outcomes of multi-disciplinary arts practice. *Cultural Trends* 27(5), 339-352.

Frenette, A. (2017). The rise of creative placemaking: Cross-sector collaboration as cultural policy in the US. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 47(5), 333-345.

Martin, N. D. & **Frenette, A.** (2017). Lost in transition: College resources and the unequal early-career trajectories of arts alumni. *American Behavioral Scientist* 61(12), 1487-1509.

Frenette, A. (2015). From apprenticeship to internship: The social and legal antecedents of the intern economy. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* 13(2), 351-360.

Frenette, A. (2013). Making the intern economy: Role and career challenges of the music industry intern. *Work and Occupations* 40(4), 364-397. [Lead article]

- Winner of the 2013 Society for the Study of Social Problems Labor Studies Division's Harry Braverman Award.

Book Chapters

Tepper, S. J. & **Frenette, A.** (2019). Cultural policy. In L. Grindstaff, J. R. Hall, & M.-C. Lo (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural sociology, 2nd edition* (pp. 378-386). New York: Routledge.

Frenette, A. (2016). 'Working at the candy factory': The limits of nonmonetary rewards in record industry careers. In B.J. Hracs, M. Seman, & T. Virani (Eds.), *The production and consumption of music in the digital age* (pp. 85-98). New York: Routledge.

Frenette, A. & Tepper, S. J. (2016). What difference does it make? Assessing the effects of arts-based training on career pathways. In R. Comunian & A. Gilmore (Eds.), *Higher education and the creative economy: Beyond the campus* (pp. 83-101). New York: Routledge.

Frenette, A. (2013). Media workers. In V. Smith (Ed.), *Sociology of work: An encyclopedia*. (pp. 578-581). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Ramadier, T., Lee-Gosselin, M. E. H., & **Frenette, A.** (2005). Conceptual perspectives for explaining spatio-temporal behaviour in urban areas. In M. E. H. Lee-Gosselin & S. T. Doherty (Eds.), *Integrated land-use and transportation models: Behavioural foundations* (pp. 87-100). Oxford: Elsevier.

Book Reviews

Frenette, A. (2014). [Review of the book *Climbing the charts: What radio airplay tells us about the diffusion of innovation*, by G. Rossman]. *Sociologica* 8(2).

Frenette, A. (2011). [Review of the book *The opera fanatic: Ethnography of an obsession*, by C. E. Benzecry]. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 36(4), 404-407.

Frenette, A. (2009). [Review of the book *Telling about society*, by H. S. Becker]. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 34(4), 1142-1144.

Frenette, A. (2006, January). [Review of the book *Doormen*, by P. Bearman]. *Canadian Journal of Sociology Online*.

Frenette, A. (2006). [Review of the book *Only hope: Coming of age under China's one-child policy*, by V. Fong]. *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 35(1), 24-25.

Reports and Other Publications

Frenette, A., Martin, N. D., & Gaultieri, G. (2024). *Breaking in (or not): Internships and growing inequalities in the transition from college to career*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, National Endowment for the Arts: Grant# 1891792-38-22

Cornfield, D., **Frenette, A.**, & Rainock, M. (2022). *Diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices in local arts agencies in the United States*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy.

Frenette, A., Gaultieri, G., & Robinson, M. (2021). *Growing divides: Historical and emerging inequalities in arts internships*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project.

Frenette, A., & T. J. Dowd (equal lead authors) with R. Skaggs & T. Ryan. (2020). *Careers in the arts: Who stays and who leaves?* Strategic National Arts Alumni Project Special Report. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project.

Wynn, J. R. & **Frenette, A.** (2019). Fyre debacle shows how smaller acts can get burned in modern music festival economy. *The Conversation* (March 4).

Frenette, A. (2017). Arts graduates in a changing economy. *American Behavioral Scientist* 61(12), 1455-1462.

Skaggs, R., **Frenette, A.**, Gaskill, S., & Miller, A.L. (2017). *Artists in their communities: SNAAP annual report*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University, School of Education.

Skaggs, R., **Frenette, A.**, Gaskill, S., & Miller, A.L. (2017). *Career skills and entrepreneurship training for artists: Results of the 2015 SNAAP survey module*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University, School of Education.

Frenette, A., Miller, A. L., Martin, N. D., Gaskill, S., & Tepper, S. J. (2016). *Institutional connections, resources, and working across disciplines: What arts alumni are saying*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University and Arizona State University, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project.

Frenette, A., Dumford, A. D., Miller, A. L., & Tepper, S. J. (2015). *The internship divide: The promise and challenges of internships in the arts*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University and Arizona State University, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project.

Frenette, A. (2014, May 14). The year of the intern [Blog post]. *Work in Progress: Sociology on the economy, work and inequality*.

Manuscripts in Progress

“The internship divide: Unequal pathways and payoffs among arts alumni” (Article, with Nathan D. Martin)

“Depreciating expertise: Cultural and economic processes of age discrimination in creative production” (Article)

“Passion regimes: How organizations attract eager newcomers and facilitate high job turnover” (Article, with Katherine V. Beekman)

“Who stays and who leaves? Understanding the career pathways of artists” (Article, with Tim Dowd)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS (*INVITED PRESENTATIONS)

2025 *“Blame the intern: On (not) breaking into the creative economy.” Book talk at Department of Sociology Speaker Series, Vanderbilt University.

“Coping with devalued expertise: Age and contested legitimacy among cultural workers.”
- Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, Montréal, QC, Canada.
- Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, Charlotte, NC.

“Passion regimes: How organizations attract eager newcomers and facilitate high job turnover.” Paper co-presented with Katherine V. Beekman at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Boston, MA.

*“AI and the political economy of music and the arts.” Panelist, “Music in the Real World” Symposium, Blair School of Music, Vanderbilt University.

2024 “Passion regimes: How organizations attract eager newcomers and facilitate high job turnover.” Paper co-presented with Katherine V. Beekman at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montréal, QC, Canada.

2023 “Breaking in (or not): Internships and growing inequalities in the transition from college to career.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA.

“Precarious pathways: Internships in the transition from arts school to career.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Baltimore, MD.

“Equal opportunity? Precarious arts workers and sexual harassment law.”
- Paper co-presented with Gillian Gualtieri at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Baltimore, MD.
- Paper co-presented with Gillian Gualtieri at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA.

2022 “Campus connections for creative careers: Social capital, gender inequality, and artistic work.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin and Gillian Gualtieri at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Los Angeles, CA.

*“The new mailroom: How music industry interns become socialized into precarious work.” Paper presented at the Workshop in Cultural Affairs, Indiana University.

2021 *“Strike while the iron is hot: How IATSE and others are using this moment to stand for labor.” Panelist, Wendland-Cook Program in Religion and Justice, Vanderbilt University.

“The internship divides: Historical patterns and growing inequalities.” Paper presented at the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project Symposium, Indiana University.

“Depreciating expertise: Cultural and economic processes of age discrimination in creative production.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association.

“Growing divides: Historical and emerging inequalities in arts internships.”

- *Presented with Gillian Gualtieri at the Student Success Conference, the annual meeting of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design.
- *Presented with Gillian Gualtieri at International Council of Fine Arts Deans webinar.

*“Uneven experiences and rewards in the intern economy: The case of arts and design graduates.” Paper presented at the Center for College-Workforce Transitions, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

“Degrees of precarity: Educational experiences and entrepreneurial careers of arts graduates.” Paper co-presented with Rachel Skaggs and Megan Robinson at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society.

2020 “Sociology and the side hustle: A theory of work in and between the creative industries.” Paper co-presented with Richard E. Ocejo and Jonathan R. Wynn at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

*“Unpacking the entrepreneurial skills gap: Educational experiences and career outcomes among arts graduates.” Paper presented with Rachel Skaggs and Megan Robinson at the *Leveraging Creativity* symposium organized by the Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Lab, Indiana University Center for Cultural Affairs.

“Welcome to the hip cubicle: How music industry interns become socialized into precarious work.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Philadelphia, PA.

2019 *“The internship divide, revisited.” Paper presented at the Annual Symposium on College Internship Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

“Cool kids and wise dinosaurs: The paradoxes of youth and aging in the cultural industries.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York, NY.

“Cool kids and wise dinosaurs: Intergenerational tensions and synergies in creative production.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, New York, NY.

*“The rise of creative placemaking: Cross-sector collaboration as cultural policy.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Industry Studies Association, Nashville, TN.

“Social networks and the career outcomes of arts alumni.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the Industry Studies Association, Nashville, TN.

“Career, side hustle, or hobby? Theorizing gigs through ethnographies of creative work.” Paper co-presented with Richard E. Ocejo and Jonathan R. Wynn at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Boston, MA.

2018 “Cool kids and wise dinosaurs: The paradoxes of youth and aging in the cultural industries.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA.

“Who stays and who leaves? Understanding the career trajectories of arts alumni.” Paper co-presented with Timothy Dowd at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA.

2017 “Lost in transition: College resources and unequal early-career trajectories of arts alumni.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montréal, Canada.

“The mailroom model: How to be the hip Horatio Alger Jr.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, San Diego, CA.

“Social networks and the career outcomes of arts alumni.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, Portland OR.

2016 “The internship divide: Unequal pathways and payoffs among arts alumni.” Paper co-presented with Nathan D. Martin at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Seattle, WA.

*“Internships and careers.” Paper presented at annual meeting of the Arts Schools Network, Charleston, SC.

*“The internship divide: The promise and challenges of internships in the arts.” Paper presented at Career Issues in Art and Design conference, New York, NY.

“Sustaining enchantment: Work practice strategies among culture workers.” Paper co-presented with Richard E. Ocejo at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Boston, MA.

2015 “Working at the candy factory: The limits of nonmonetary rewards in record industry careers.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago, IL.

“Becoming jaded: Aging out and short careers in the music business.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, New York, NY.

*“Le marché des stagiaires: enjeux, embûches et perspectives d’aspirants dans l’industrie des arts à New York.” Paper presented at Nouveaux regards sur les pratiques artistiques et culturelles contemporaines conference, Keynote, Montréal, Canada.

2014 “The degradation of unpaid work: Paying your dues as a music industry intern.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, San Francisco, CA.

“Consuming labor: Charisma and identity in music industry work.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

“The chosen, the choosers, and the others: How unpaid internships lengthen the school-to-work transition and reproduce inequality.” Paper presented at The Young and the Jobless: Youth Unemployment in Times of Crisis Conference, Middlebury, VT.

*“Work without employment: Unpaid internships and the struggle for visibility.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Special Presidential Session, Baltimore, MD.

TEACHING

Courses taught

Vanderbilt University

New undergraduate course introduced:

SOC 1020 Contemporary Social Issues: Work & Careers in the Creative Economy (Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025, and Spring 2026)

Additional course taught:

SOC 3615 Human Behavior in Organizations (Fall 2021, Fall 2023, Spring 2025, and Spring 2026)

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York

Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences, Department of Sociology (Spring 2014 as Adjunct Lecturer).

Baruch College, City University of New York

Introduction to Sociology (two sections), Department of Sociology (Fall 2005 as Adjunct Lecturer).

RESEARCH TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Dissertation Committees, Vanderbilt University

Katherine V. Beekman, (Chair, 2025-present)
 Adam Schoenbachler, (Committee member, 2022-25)
 Hannah Ingwersoll (Committee member, 2021-23)
 Megan Jordan (Committee member, 2021-22)

Master's Thesis Committees, Vanderbilt University

Adam Schoenbachler (Chair, 2019-20)

Special Area Exam/Paper Committees, Vanderbilt University

Katherine V. Beekman, (Chair, Work and Culture, 2025)
 Savannah Bastian (Second reader, Work, 2022)
 Hannah Ingwersoll (Second reader, Education, 2019)

Undergraduate Research Advising, Vanderbilt University

Marco Fievre-Ricot (Second reader, Sociology Honors Thesis, 2024-25)

Teresa Xu (Second reader, Sociology Honors Thesis, 2022-23)
Nancy Yuan (Second reader, Sociology Honors Thesis, 2021-22)
Fehintola Agboola (Second reader, Sociology Honors Thesis, 2021-22)
Cyrus Lloyd (Chair, Sociology Honors Thesis, 2020-21)

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

2025-26 Vanderbilt-Liverpool Joint Research Seed Grant, Vanderbilt University and University of Liverpool: “Comparing and Contrasting Models of Music Industry Internships in Nashville (USA) and Liverpool (UK).” PI, with Mathew Flynn (University of Liverpool PI). (£3,000)

2023-25 Cornelius Vanderbilt Dean’s Faculty Fellow, College of Arts and Science, Vanderbilt University.

2022-23 National Endowment for the Arts, Research Grants in the Arts: “The Internship Divides: Historical Patterns and Growing Inequalities in the Transition from Arts School to Career.” PI, with co-PI’s Gillian Gualtieri and Nathan Martin. (\$25,000)

2020-22 National Endowment for the Arts, Research Grants in the Arts: “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies and Practices in Local Arts Agencies in the United States.” Co-PI with Daniel Cornfield. (\$17,000)

2016-18 National Endowment for the Arts, Research: Art Works Grant. “Who Stays and Who Leaves the Arts.” Co-PI with Timothy Dowd and Steven Tepper. (\$15,000)

2017-18 Arizona State University, Institute for Social Science Research, Seed Grant. “Creative Placemaking as Ambiguous Work: Role and Jurisdictional Challenges in Cross-sector Collaborations.” (\$3,000)

2017-18 Arizona State University, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, Seed Grant. “Creative Placemaking as Ambiguous Work: Role and Jurisdictional Challenges in Cross-sector Collaborations.” (\$3,000)

2013 Labor and Employment Relations Association, Thomas A. Kochan and Stephen R. Sleigh Best Dissertation Award.

2013 Society for the Study of Social Problems, Labor Studies Division, Harry Braverman Award (Best Article).

2010-11 City University of New York, Doctoral Students’ Council, Travel and Research Grant. (\$300)

SERVICE

Service to the profession

Work and Occupations, Member of Editorial Board (2016-present)

Poetics, Member of Editorial Board (2025-present)

National Endowment for the Arts, Grant Panelist, FY23 Research Grants in the Arts (2022)

American Sociological Association:

Organizations, Occupations, and Work Section, Member, Nominations Committee (2025-26)
Sociology of Culture Section, Co-Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2024-25)
Sociology of Culture Section, Graduate Student Mentor (2021-22)

Society for the Study of Social Problems, Member of Joseph B. Gittler Award Committee, (2014-15)

Ad-hoc reviewer for:

American Journal of Sociology; British Journal of Sociology; Cultural Sociology; Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society; Journal of Cultural Economics; Organization; Poetics; Qualitative Sociology; Research in the Sociology of Work; Social Forces; Social Psychology Quarterly; Sociological Forum; Sociological Perspectives; The Sociological Review; tripleC; Work and Occupations

Conference Organizer, “Who stays and who leaves the arts: Findings from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project” symposium (half-day conference). Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. May 2017.

Conference Co-organizer, “Three million stories: Arts graduates in a changing economy” conference. Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. (300+ attendees) March 2016.

Service to the department

Vanderbilt University, Department of Sociology

Undergraduate Program Committee (Fall 2018, 2019-21, 2024-25)
Advisory Chair Selection Committee (2023-24)
Speakers, Nominations, Website, and Publicity Committee (2023-24)
Graduate Program Committee (Spring 2022, 2025-26)

Service to the university

Curb Center Advisory Group, Vanderbilt University (Fall 2022-present)

Associate Director, Vanderbilt University, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy, August 2018-August 2022

Acting Director, Vanderbilt University, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy, Fall 2021

University service prior to Vanderbilt

Arizona State University, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts
Career and Professional Development Services Advisory Board, university-wide (2017-18)
Admissions Committee, Creative Enterprise and Cultural Leadership (2015-18)
Creative Enterprise Curriculum Task Group (2014-15)

The Graduate Center, City University of New York
Executive Committee, Department of Sociology (2008-9)
Theory & Exams Committee, Department of Sociology (2006-7)

Service to the community

Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, Member of Research Advisory Board (2024-present)

Nashville Public Television, Member of Community Advisory Board (2021-24)

Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities and ArtPlace America, Member of Advisory Group
(2020-22)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Sociological Association
Organizations, Occupations, and Work
Sociology of Culture
Aging and the Life Course
Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology
Eastern Sociological Society
Southern Sociological Society

LANGUAGES

French: Speak, read, and write fluently