KATERINA TRAUT

CONTACT

Email: Katerina.traut@vanderbilt.edu
Phone: (347) 556-0830
Address: 1715 Eastland Avenue, Nashville, TN 37206

EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University
PhD, Political Science, Expected May 2023
Prospectus Defense *March 2020*
Comprehensive Exams in Political Theory and Comparative Politics *Sept 2019*
Certificate in College Teaching, *May 2021*
Gender Certificate, Expected May 2023

Lehigh University
B.A, Political Science and Africana Studies *May 2017*
With *High Honors*
Cum. GPA 3.7; *Major GPA* Political Science 3.91 and Africana Studies 3.96
SIT International Honors Program Human Rights Spring 2016: Nepal, Jordan, Chile

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Title: Constructions of Power: Political theory of Atlantic Architecture

Political theorists critical of empire and race are concerned with legacies of historical governance structures and the politics of epistemology. A newer subfield, political theorists of architecture use architecture in a number of ways to study as a way to study power, culture, and citizenship. Given that infrastructure, architecture, and transportation were fundamental to colonialism, imperialism, and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, political theorists concerned with their legacies should investigate the ways in which we can use historical architectures to theorize power and meaning. My feminist grounded normative theory of architectural history uses bodily sensation, care, and attendance to human life to guide criticism and generate normative prescriptions. In my dissertation, I study architectures that supported colonial and racialized governance and knowledge: European fortification on the West Coast of Africa. I present a method that builds on Grounded Normative Theory, Grounded Theory, and Black Feminist and Atlantic thought. I use ethnographic and archival fieldwork in Ghana and England and fortification history to criticize normative conceptions of personhood, labor, war, and security.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Race and race theory, postcolonial and decolonial theory, feminist methodology, grounded normative theory, architecture, digital humanities, fortification, community-engaged research, art

PUBLICATIONS

"The potential of 3D models and virtual reality of architecture to position users 'in the wake' of slavery and colonialism." (February 2022). *The Center for Digital Humanities Blog*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. https://www.vanderbilt.edu/digitalhumanities/the-potential-of-3d-models-and-virtual-reality-to-position-users-in-the-wake-1/

"Giving 'Substance to Freedom and Democracy': Black Woman Intellectual Vicki Garvin" (2017). *The Lehigh Review Volume 25*.

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND RESIDENCIES

Meharry-Vanderbilt Community-Engaged Research Core, Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, 2022-2023
"Building Community in a Changing Nashville: Brooklyn Heights Community Garden"
($5,000 for research, $1,000 for the non-profit organization)

Mellon Graduate Fellowship in Digital Humanities, Vanderbilt University, 2021-2022
"Brooklyn Heights Community Garden: A History of Northeast Nashville"
StoryMap (work in progress)
(one year of funding, ~$30,000)

Curb Center Public Scholars Program, 2021-2023, "Growing Food, Growing Ourselves: Art for Healing in the Brooklyn Heights Community Garden" ($2,000)

Dissertation Enhancement Grant, Vanderbilt Graduate Leadership Institute, October-December 2021 ($2,000)

National Humanities Center Graduate Student Summer Residency Program, Summer 2020
Focus: Passionate Teaching in an Online Environment;
Using Digital Humanities in teaching (introduction to thinking with ArcGIS)

Vanderbilt University Trans-Institutional Partnership 'Africa at a Crossroads' Summer Research Award, Summer 2018 ($3,500)

Vanderbilt Department of Political Science Competitive Summer Training Award, Summer 2018 ($1,500)

Strohl Undergraduate Research Grant, Summer 2016 ($5,000)

Iacocca International Internship: Ghana Sites of Memory, Summer 2015 (Full expenses and stipend paid)

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

2021 Erwin Hargrove Outstanding TA in Political Science Award, Vanderbilt University, *November 2021*

Paper "Giving 'Substance to Freedom and Democracy': Black Woman Intellectual Vicki Garvin" *May 2017*

- 1st place Williams Prize Award for a Paper in International Relations, Political Science, and History
- Kachel Award for Non-Fiction writing in English

William R. Scott Award for Contribution and Excellence in Africana Studies *April 2017*

Lehigh University Scholarships

- Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Scholar, 2013-2015
- Lehigh University Alumni Endowed Scholarship Recipient

Lehigh University Undergraduate Ethics Symposium Paper Presentation "Education in Ethics as an Individual vs. as a Collective" *April 2015*

WORK, SERVICE, PROFESSIONAL, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Secretary and Historian Board Member, Brooklyn Heights Community Garden, Nashville TN, January 2022-present
South Arts Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit, Chapel Hill, NC November 2022
Participant, Transformative Justice 101 & 201 for TN TJ Collective, Training hosted by Healthy & Free TN with Mia Mingus, May 2021-present
Gallery Attendant, Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery, June 2022-present
Event Organizer and Producer, "Speakeasy Spoken Word Workshop", Brooklyn Heights Community Garden, May 2022
Moderator, *Digital Black Atlantic with Roopika Risam and Kelly Baker Josephs,* April 2022, Vanderbilt
Sales Volunteer, Kindling Arts Festival 2022, Nashville, TN
Certified Yoga Instructor, Shakti Yoga University, April 2021
Graduate Writing Consultant, The Writing Studio, Vanderbilt University, August 2020-May 2021
Diversity & Inclusion Training, Triluna Wellness, Nashville, TN September 2020-January 2021

President, Political Science Graduate Student Association, Vanderbilt University, April 2019-21
Comparative Politics Job Search Graduate Student Organizer, Fall 2019
Assistant, Social and Political Thought Workshop, Spring 2019
Conference Assistant, Hannah Arendt's *Life of the Mind* International Conference, Vanderbilt University, under Dr. Wout Cornelisson
Graduate Student Counsel Liaison, Political Science Department, Fall 2018-Spring 2019
Event Organizer and Producer, "Sexuality and Art Workshop", Women's Center, Lehigh University Spring 2017
President, Lehigh University Feminist Alliance Club, Lehigh University, 2015-2017
Undergraduate Representative, Lehigh University Committee on Discipline, 2014-2017
Debate participant, Topic: Sexual Assault on College Campuses, "Business Matters" Channel 69 Lehigh Valley News, Allentown, PA, April 2015
Assistant Teacher & Tutor, America Reads America Counts, September 2013-June 2015
Resident Assistant, Lehigh University Residence Life, August-December 2015
On-Campus Representative, Student Senate, Lehigh University, September 2014-May 2015
Committees: Inclusive Excellence, Club Affairs
Head Math SAT Coach, Let's Get Ready Non-Profit Organization: provides SAT preparation to first generation students applying to college, Jamaica, NY, May-August 2014

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association, September 2022
Discussant for Panel "History, Memory, and Identity in Qualitative and Multi-Method Research"
Vanderbilt Graduate Student Conference, November 2021
"Architectural History as Method in Political Theory"
Western Political Science Association virtual, April 2021
Southern Political Science Association virtual, January 2021
American Political Science Association virtual, September 2020
Robert Penn Warren Graduate Virtual Summer Conference Vanderbilt University, May-June 2020
Served as chair for session: Contesting Gender Dynamics and Norms in Dance and Theater (Interdisciplinary meeting)
International Feminist Journal of Politics Annual Conference, March 2020
Paper presentation: "'Thrust outside the gates of the city': Bringing Space to Sheth's Technology of Race"
Western Political Science Association Annual Conference, April 2020 (accepted for presentation; in-meeting conference cancelled)
Paper: "Re-thinking Concepts in Political Theory: Nussbaum's 'normal' and Medina's 'blindness'"
co-authored with Dr. Brooke A. Ackerly

TEACHING-RELATED EXPERIENCE

Primary Instructor

PSCI 1103 Justice: Introduction to Political Theory *Summer 2020*

Teaching Assistant

PSCI 3242 Politics of Police and Prisons, American Politics *Spring 2022*
PSCI 2267 Political Participation and Representation, American Politics *Spring 2021 (Guest Lectured)*
PSCI 2263 Religion and Politics *Fall 2020*
PSCI 3253 Ethics and Public Policy *Spring 2020 (Guest Lectured)*
PSCI 1103 Justice: Introduction to Political Theory *Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2019 (Guest Lectured)*
PSCI 2203 Modern Political Philosophy *Fall 2018 (Guest Lectured)*

TA Expert Panelist, Teaching Assistant Orientation, Center for Teaching *Summer 2021*

Online Course Design Institute, Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University *Summer 2020*

Guest Lecture WGS 1160 Sex and Society *Spring 2018*

Audre Lorde's "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

PSCI Feminist Decolonial & Postcolonial Social & Political Thought
PSCI Studies in Comparative Analysis
PSCI Feminist Social and Political Thought
PSCI Research Design
PSCI Race and Racism in American Politics
PSCI The Politics of Gender
PSCI Political Theory Core
PSCI African Politics
PSCI Hannah Arendt: Political Thinking and the Life of the Mind
PHIL Philosophy of Race and Racism
HIST Atlantic World History 15-19th Century
HIST Studies in Comparative History: History from the Margins
GSS Gender, Power, and Justice
GSS Gender & Sexuality: Feminist Approaches

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Vanderbilt Racial Justice Grand Challenge subcommittee *March 2019-present*

Working with faculty across campus to identify research, community engagement, and teaching strategies for improving racial justice at Vanderbilt

Dr. Brooke Ackerly *Spring 2019*

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT WORKSHOP, Vanderbilt University

Discussant, Lucas G. Pinheiro, paper "Factory, Colony, Plantation: Race and Capitalism After Slavery" *Spring 2019*
Discussant, Christine Keating, paper "Plural Sovereignty and la Familia Diversa in Ecuador's 2008 Constitution" *Fall 2018*

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"Brooklyn Heights Community Garden: A History of Northeast Nashville"
Brooklyn Heights Community Garden is a registered 501(c)3 on a .56 acre plot of land in the Northeast Nashville neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights. This Digital Humanities project contributes a StoryMap that combines photographs, historical maps and plats, contemporary maps and geospatial information, autobiography, audio recording, interviews, and text to the Brooklyn Heights Community Garden. They will host this StoryMap on their website. As a geography of growth, healing, relationship-building, work, art, and play, this community garden needed a way to share the long tradition they are a part of and the significance of a historically Black place in Nashville, TN. The neighborhood is changing quickly with the rest of Nashville's development and gentrification. Conceptualized within a longer tradition of colonialism and racism, story-telling and memory-keeping is particularly important for this community and neighborhood. This map is a part of a long-term project of documenting this neighborhood's history and contribution to Nashville's artistic, cultural, and urban farming landscape.

"Changing our words or changing our minds: political theory and political epistemology"
co-authored with Dr. Brooke A. Ackerly

Postcolonial and feminist methodologies reveal that foundational political concepts rely on epistemologies that reinforce the political hierarchies of history, including racism, cultural imperialism, ableism, and patriarchy. Thus, political theorists face the challenge of using words and concepts whose meanings are embedded in the same conditions of epistemic inequalities and oppression that their scholarship seeks to address. Martha Nussbaum and José Medina illustrate the depth and tenacity of the problem even as they challenge the conceptual frontiers and epistemic boundaries of justice. To illustrate the importance of political epistemology to political theory, we trace the conceptual and historical baggage associated with Nussbaum's critical examination of "normal" and Medina's redeployment of "blindness" using tools of disability, critical race, feminist, and indigenous theorists: (1) genealogy, (2) feminist social criticism, and (3) grounded normative theory. We demonstrate the importance of these three methods and political epistemology for political theory.

REFERENCES

Brooke A. Ackerly, Ph.D.

brooke.ackerly@vanderbilt.edu

615-322-6231

Allison P. Anoll, Ph.D.

allison.p.anoll@vanderbilt.edu

615-322-6222

Brandon R. Byrd, Ph.D.

brandon.r.byrd@vanderbilt.edu

615-322-9370