

Dr. Zoé Samudzi

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Education

September 2016 – June 2021: University of California, San Francisco

PhD in Medical Sociology (Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences)

Dissertation title: “Capturing German South West Africa: Racial Production, Land Claims, and Belonging in the Afterlife of the Herero and Nama Genocide”

October 2013 – September 2014: The London School of Economics and Political Science

MSc in Health, Community and Development (Department of Social Psychology), Distinction

August 2010 – December 2012: University of Pittsburgh

B.A. in Political Science, Cum Laude

Teaching

August 2022: Charles E. Scheidt Visiting Assistant Professor of Genocide Studies and Genocide Prevention at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Worcester, MA)

July 2022-June 2023: Assistant Professor in Photography at the Rhode Island School of Design (Providence, RI)

Courses Taught

Clark University (2023-present)

Africa, Colonialism, and Genocide: From the Berlin Conference to Now (Fall 2023)

Looking at Violence: Epistemes of Atrocity (Fall 2023)

Rhode Island School of Design (2022-23)

Looking at Violence: Epistemes of Atrocity (Fall 2022)

Special Topics: The Image & Difference (Spring 2023)

Advising

Sydney Howard (MFA Photography 2024, thesis committee member)

Clara Delgado (MFA Photography 2024, thesis committee member)

Elena Bulet I Lopic (MFA Photography 2024, thesis committee member)

Sarah Meftah (MFA Photography 2024, thesis committee member)

Kerr Cirilo (MFA Photography 2023, thesis committee member)

Anique Jordan (MFA Photography 2023, thesis committee chair)

Kai Wasikowski (MFA Photography 2023, thesis committee chair)

Research Affiliations

August 2021-Present: Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Race, Gender, and Class, University of Johannesburg (Johannesburg, South Africa)

My research agenda largely revolves around exploring [post]coloniality, eugenic science, and visual culture in post-settler colonial Southern Africa. Some topics of inquiry include the formal and epistemological relationships between imperial classificatory photography and fine art sculpture, the role of ethnographic and national museums in South Africa and Namibia (respectively) in constructing national and transnational indigenous identity/citizenship, and patriotic histories and the contested landscapes of genocide memory in Namibia.

July 2022-June 2023: Research and Teaching Fellow with the Center for Social and Equity and Inclusion at the Rhode Island School of Design (Providence, Rhode Island)

As a teaching and research fellow for the Center for Social Equity and Inclusion, I will be conducting ongoing research about imperial violence and visibility, the afterlives of the Ovaherero and Nama genocide, and inter-medium translations of racecraft. I am also running a series of faculty-facing workshops about pedagogical approaches to dealing with atrocity images in the classroom.

July 2021-June 2022: Postdoctoral Fellow, ACTIONS Program (School of Nursing), University of California-San Francisco (San Francisco, California)

My postdoctoral research centralized transgender self-determination in reproductive justice and Black feminist frameworks. My particular interests lay in the epistemic tensions in cisnormative reproductive science and health practice, necropolitics with regards to resource deprivation and preventable death, and hegemonic productions of race-gender identity.

February 2021-February 2022: Research Fellow with the Secrecy, Power, and Ignorance research Network

I conducted research for a project about white internationalism, the settler international, and the racialized dynamics of white solidarity and political (re/de)nunciation in the context of independent Rhodesia (1965-1979) and its legacies in the present.

February 2020-August 2021: Research Fellow at Political Research Associates (Boston, Massachusetts)

With funding from the Nathan Cummings Foundation, I was responsible for creating a cross-sector framework for understanding and combating both structural and movement-based white nationalism and white supremacy as it relates to anti-blackness, antisemitism, xenophobia, and gender & sexual identity. The framework is a movement-facing analytic intended to assist grassroots groups working on gender, racial, and economic justice in synthesizing these ideas into their organizational frameworks with the goal of building multiracial democracy across (and among) targeted communities.

Artistic Fellowships & Residencies

June 2023-Present: Guest residency with the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

June 2023-Present: Curatorial Research Fellowship with Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections) (Dresden, Germany)

In correspondence with the Research Department of the Dresden State Art Collections, and in the context of the research project "Decolonizing Socialism. Entangled Internationalism," I will be conducting research on the solidarity relations between the SWAPO Party of Namibia and the GDR in preparation for a research- and archive-based exhibition presentation in the Albertinum from May to August 2024.

January 2023: Pressing Matter consortium Artist-in-Residency Program (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

Collaborating with South African social practice artist and researcher Zara Julius, we will be creating a twinned sonic project and publication that, per the mission on the residency's website, "investigates the potentialities of 'colonial objects' to support societal attempts to deal with the colonial past and its afterlives, and with conflicting claims by different stakeholders for these objects within museums."

September 2019-December 2019: Columnist-in-residence at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Open Space

Open Space is SFMoMA's interdisciplinary commissioning platform, and as a columnist-in-residence for fall 2019, I wrote about the research done in Yerevan, Armenia from April to June 2019. Related to my research about Germany's participation in the Ottoman Turkish genocide, I considered the politics of a state whose identity was partially created around Soviet-suppressed and belated memorializations of genocide survivorship. My three Armenia-specific pieces were about [videogame awareness-raising and the politics of empathy](#), [atrocious images and Susan Meiselas' photographic ethics](#), and [Nazik Armenakyan's 2015 photojournalist work](#) about nonagenarian survivors of the genocide.

March 2018-December 2018: Artist-in-residence at the Ashara Ekundayo Gallery (Oakland, CA)

I was the inaugural artist-in-residence at the Ashara Ekundayo Gallery, a black feminist gallery and cultural space in that exclusively showcases contemporary and new media art by black women and non-binary people. As a resident, I served as a curatorial assistant and helped create descriptive copy for multiple shows. At the end of my tenure, I curated a show entitled "Elemental" that considered blackness as a state of matter. Following my show, I was [interviewed by Contemporary And \(C&\)](#).

June 2017-July 2018: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) Fellow (San Francisco, CA)

I was selected as a member of the 2017/18 Public Imagination cohort of the YBCA Fellows Program. My project will be exploring the concept of hostile architecture and defensive design. My fellowship project for the YBCA Public Square was a series of photographs engaging security theology and used Old Testament scripture, images evoking the Virgin Mary, and visual cues of communication and surveillance to convey the role of white womanhood as a deified figure within (à la a study of Klaus Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*) and enforcer of white supremacy.

Service to the University

August 2022-May 2023: Member of the steering committee for the Center for Social Equity and Inclusion at the Rhode Island School of Design

August 2022-Present: Member of the Race, Medicine, and Social Justice research cluster (part of the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice at Brown University)

April 2021-July 2022: Faculty lead for the Curriculum Working Group of the REPAIR Project at the University of California, San Francisco

August 2021-July 2022: Member of the Steering Committee of the REPAIR Project

February 2020-November 2020: Member of the Institute for Human Genetics Committee on Genetics and Society at the University of California, San Francisco

Service to the Profession

June 2023-Present: Member of the International Association of Genocide Scholars

March 2023-Present: Member of the Photography Network

January 2023-Present: Member of “Memory in Motion,” a transnational working network organizing around a site of learning and memory of colonialism in Germany (funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the Hamburg Ministry of Culture and Media)

August 2021-Present: Editorial board member of the *Ellipses [...] Journal for Creative Research*

August 2021-Present: Advisory board member for the Center for Medicine, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies in the History of Medicine at Cedars-Sinai Hospital (Los Angeles, California)

Conferences

May 2023: “Civilization Breaks: Colonialism, Slavery, and the Holocaust” conference co-organized with Michael Rothberg and Ben Ratskoff through the Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles

Peer Reviewed Publications

Forthcoming (2024): “Indigeneity and Biologized Citizenship: Genomic Sovereignty, the Postcolonial African State, and the San” in *Journal of Southern African Studies*

Forthcoming (2024): Guest editing a special issue of *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* titled “Anti-Black Colony, Anti-Black Germany”

Forthcoming: “Tracing German Anti-Blackness” in “Black Europe Here to There,” a special issue of *Central European History*

Zoé Samudzi (2023): “Haunted by Denial,” in *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 53(1): 94-96 (<https://doi.org/10.1525/hsns.2023.53.1.94>)

Zoé Samudzi (2021): “Looting the Archive: German Genocide & Incarcerated Skulls” in *Social and Health Sciences* 19(2); “Necrocapitalism and Psychic Violence” special issue, guest edited by Lara Sheehi (<https://doi.org/10.25159/2957-3645/10490>).

Zoé Samudzi (2021): “Paradox of Recognition: Genocide and Colonialism” in *Postmodern Culture* 31(1); “Troubling the Grounds” special issue, guest edited by SA Smythe (<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/800019>).

Zoé Samudzi and Jenevieve Mannell (2015). Cisgender male and transgender female sex workers in South Africa: Gender variant identities and narratives of exclusion. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*. DOI: 10.1080/13691058.2015.1062558

Non-Peer Reviewed Academic Work

Emanuel Admassu and Zoé Samudzi (2023): “Aesthetics and Monumentality” in the Canadian Centre for Architecture’s “Figuring Territoriality” issue

Public Scholarship

(2023) “On Solidarity’s Blindspots: Thinking with Bla(c)k Oceanian Indigeneity,” a dialogue with Anaïs Duong-Pedica (*The Funambulist Magazine* Issue 46, “Questioning Our Solidarities”)

(2022) “Journey from ‘the Center of the World’: On U.S. Exceptionalism and Disgust” (*The Funambulist Magazine* Issue 41, “Decentering the U.S.”)

(2021) Guest editor of Issue 37 of *The Funambulist Magazine*, “Against Genocide”
Contributor of the editor’s note, “Against Genocide: Introduction”

(2021) “Looking After: On Museums and Human Remains” (*Artforum*, July 7)

(2021) “In Absentia of Black Study” (*New Fascism Syllabus*, May 31)

(2021) German translation: “Schwarzsein. Über die Abwesenheit der Black Studies in der Erinnerungsdebatte” (*Geschichte der Gegenwart*, June 9)

(2021) “Thank You for Your Sacrifice: How the Rush for Hydroxychloroquine Exemplifies the Need for Anti-Racism and Disability Justice in the Valuation of Pandemic Life,” co-authored with AM Kanngieser (*Society and Space*, April 19)

(2020) “Reparative Futurities: Thinking from the Ovaherero and Nama Colonial Genocide” (*The Funambulist Magazine* Issue 30, “Reparations”)

(2019) “Policing the Borders of Suffering” (*Jewish Currents*, June 21)

(2019) “The Science and Spectacle of the Swarm” (*The New Inquiry*, March 26)

(2018) “Racial Terror by the Rules” (*Verso*, [February 5](#))

Books

1000 Words | Writer Conversations, edited by Lucy Soutter and Duncan Wooldridge (2023)

“Reparative Futurities: Postcolonial Materialities and the Ovaherero and Nama Genocide” in *For Antifascist Futures: Against the Violence of Imperial Crisis*, edited by Alyosha Goldstein and Simón Ventura Trujillo (Common Notions, 2022)

As Black as Resistance: Finding the Conditions for Liberation (co-authored with William C. Anderson) (AK Press, 2018)

Editorial Work

March 2022-Present: Associate Editor with [Parapraxis Magazine](#)

Select Writings

Artforum

- Present Danger: North Korea’s Monumental Gifts to Africa ([May 23, 2022](#))

Architectural Review

- Private Property: The Right to Our Own Bodies ([February 2022](#))

SSENSE

- Did You Get the Shot? ([April 2021](#))

March: a journal of art & strategy

- Against the Limits of the Archive: A Cultural History of Arshile Gorky (October 2020)

Art in America

- Restitution’s First Wave: Bénédicte Savoy’s *Africa’s Struggle for Its Art* ([April 7, 2022](#))
- The ICE Man Painteth ([April 6, 2021](#))
- Paradox of Plenty ([February 16, 2021](#))
- The Sculptural Politics of Cacao ([September 15, 2020](#))

Artnet

- Museums Can, and Do, Talk about Race, Just Not Whiteness (part of the responses to the Burns Halperin Report) ([December 27, 2022](#))

BOMB Magazine

- Interview with Meleko Mokgosi ([Winter 2023](#))

The New Republic

- White Witness and the Contemporary Lynching ([May 16, 2020](#))

Jewish Currents

- Under the Hood (on the Philip Guston retrospective) ([November 16, 2022](#))
- An Object Not Meant to Object: On *The Wayland Rudd Collection* ([June 6, 2022](#))
- “Visions in Penal Time,” a conversation with Nicole Fleetwood ([January 4, 2021](#))
- A Journey into the Heart of Whiteness ([July 22, 2020](#))

Parapraxis Magazine

- “We Are Not All Like That”: On David Goldblatt’s distant photographs of white Afrikaners ([November 2022](#))

Selected Talks, Presentations, and Panels

June 2023: “*Amt 45 i: Talks*,” a symposium including Alexander Weheliye, Denise Ferreira da Silva, and Saidiya Hartman on the work of Cameron Rowland at the Städelschule (Frankfurt, Germany)

April 2023: “Challenging White Supremacy, Settler Colonialism, and Dominant Narratives” for Gonzaga University’s 7th International Conference on Hate Studies (Spokane, WA)

February 2023: “Extraction: Spectral Memory and Space-Time,” as part of the opening programming for the spring exhibition FLIGHT at Malmö Konsthall (Malmö, Sweden)

February 2023: Transmediale—a model, a map, a fiction

“How Images Matter,” with Anthony Downey, Alaa Mansour, and Lesia Kulchynska (moderator)

“Witnessing Beyond Imagining,” with Anna Engelhardt, Francesco Sebregondi, and Stefanos Levidis (moderator)

“Unscalable,” with AM Kanngieser, Brett Story, Cassandra Troyan, Vienne Chan, and Mindy Seu (participant)

December 2022: “Media Practice in an Emergent World Order” symposium at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA)

November 2022: Closing plenary panel for the Holocaust Educational Foundation’s “Lessons and Legacies XVI: The Holocaust: Rethinking Paradigms in Research and Representation” (featuring Rob Innes, Alex Hinton, Amos Goldberg, and moderated by Dagmar Herzog) (Ottawa, Canada)

November 2022: “Pan-Africanism, Communism, Anti-Fascism: A Radical Provocation” (featuring Charisse Burden Stelly, Doreen Mende, Charlotte Misselwitz and moderated by Avery F. Gordon) at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, Germany)

October 2022: “Sounding and Sculpting: Transnational Bodies in Hans Lichtenecker’s Archive” for Illuminations: 10th Anniversary Symposium for the Dark Room Race and Visual Studies Seminar at Dartmouth University (Hanover, NH)

September 2022: “Racial Capitalism and the Pandemicene” for the panel “Conversations on Spatial Collapse: The Straw, The Camel” for the Center for Complexity’s Fourth Annual Symposium at the Rhode Island School of Design (Providence, RI)

December 2021: “The Sculptural Image: Imperial German Racecraft Across Visual Mediums” for the panel “Rethinking Art in German Colonialism” for Symposium on Race, Inequality, and Visual Culture: New Questions, New Voices at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA)

October 2021: “Fall Honors Lecture: Black Struggles and Abolition” (with Rinaldo Walcott) for Emerson College

October 2021: "A German History of Namibia or a Namibian History of Germany?" for the Einstein Forum's *Historiker Streiten* symposium (Potsdam, Germany)

October 2021: "'Bastard Study' and the Transnationality of German Anti-Blackness" for the "German Colonialism and its Afterlives (sponsored by the Black Diaspora Studies Network)" panel at 45th Annual German Studies Association Conference

November 2020: "[*Fraught Desert Memorials*](#)" for Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art and Planning's *Into the Desert: Questions of Coloniality and Toxicity* series

September 2020: "Racism, Racialization, and Anti-Blackness" (with Sophia Azeb, Eve M. Troutt Powell, and discussant Fred Moten) for New York University's Hagop Kevorkian Center for the Near Eastern Studies' *Global Uprising* series

August 2020: "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House: Abolitionist Feminist Futures" (with Gail Lewis, Miss Major, and Hortense Spillers) for the *Revolution is not a one-time event* program organized by Che Gossett, Lola Olufemi, and Sarah Shin

February 2020: "Public Art and Ethics Today" panel with Dewey Crumpler and Cristóbal Martínez at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Arts (San Francisco, CA)

April 2019: "Nazism and Colonialism: Holocaust Exceptionalism to the Exclusion of German South West Africa is Genocide Denialism." Presented at the UNC Charlotte Center of Holocaust Genocide and Human Rights Studies International Conference on Genocide Denial (Charlotte, North Carolina)

April 2019: Joint keynote with William C. Anderson entitled "Black Anarchy: Abolishing Today in Search of Tomorrow," for the Annual Americas Forum at Wesleyan University (Middletown, Connecticut)