**MATTHEW COETZEE**

1222 Academy Place, South Bend, IN 46616 • (606) 303-2074 • [mcoetze2@nd.edu](mailto:mcoetze2@nd.edu)

**EDUCATION**

**University of Notre Dame** Notre Dame, IN

Ph.D., Sociology with Minor in Screen Cultures Expected May 2026

Dissertation: *Rupture and Repair: Community Responses to State Failure and Racial Violence in Post-Apartheid South Africa* || Advisors: Ann Mische & Terry McDonnell

**University of Notre Dame** Notre Dame, IN

M.A., Sociology 2023

Thesis: *Disruptive Events, Adhocracies, and Symbolic Boundaries in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Democratic Resilience on the Fly in July 2021* || Advisors: Ann Mische & Lyn Spillman

**SOAS University of London** London, UK

M.S., Public Policy and Management 2021

**Yale University**  New Haven, CT

B.A., Double Major in Sociology and African Studies (with Distinction) 2018

GPA: 3.81 *||* Advisors: Philip Smith & Grace Kao

**RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

Cultural Sociology; Theory; Qualitative Methods; Digital Sociology; Social Movements and Collective Behavior; Political Sociology; Global and Comparative Sociology

**HONORS & AWARDS**

Harry Frank Guggenheim Emerging Scholars Award, Guggenheim Foundation, $25,000 (2025 – 2026)

Becker Award, Best Graduate Research Paper in Sociology, University of Notre Dame (2024)

R.F. Thompson Award for Outstanding Research in African Studies, Yale University (2018)

Rhodes Scholarship Finalist – Southern Africa (2018)

**PUBLICATIONS**

Coetzee, Matthew C. 2025. "Re-Curating Robben Island: Cultural Objects, Digital Memory, and the Entropic Afterlives of National Heritage." American Journal of Cultural Sociology.

**Book Manuscript Under Review.** Smith, Christian, Matthew Coetzee, and Bridget Ritz. Re-enchanted America. Manuscript Under Review at Oxford University Press.

**Under Review.** Coetzee, Matthew C. “*Contingent Memory Activation: Collective Memory, Crisis Response, and the Dynamics of Social Action*.” *American Journal of Sociology.*

**Invited for Resubmission to Special Issue.** Coetzee, Matthew C. “*When Meaning Acts: A Critical Realist Cultural Sociology from the Global South” Sociological Theory*” *Sociological Theory.*

**Submitted**. Summers-Effler, Erika, Matthew Coetzee, Hyunjin Kwak, and Justin Van Ness. "Mapping Social Change Efforts: A Dynamic and Integrative Four-Quadrant Framework."

**Working Paper**. Summers-Effler, Erika, Matthew Coetzee et. al. *“Nuance, Transposability, and Creativity: How Perception Produces the Potential for Social Change.”* Manuscript in preparation

**Working Paper**. Coetzee, Matthew C. “*Perceptual Aperture Dynamics: Cognition and Cultural Responses to Disruption and Stability.”* Manuscript in preparation

**Working Paper**. Coetzee, Matthew C. “*Structural Integration at Elite Universities: Symbolic Boundary Making of Pan-African Identity”* Manuscript in preparation

**Working Papers**. Coetzee, Matthew C. “*Protest Performance and Strategic Misalignment: Solidarity, Audience, and the Limits of Mobilization in Hong Kong”* Manuscript in preparation

**Working Papers**. Coetzee, Matthew C. “*Decentralization and Anomie in Local Governance”* Manuscript in preparation (Theory and Society – add comparison with CT)

**PRESENTATIONS**

**American Sociological Association Annual Meeting**, *Panel Discussion,* Chicago, USA (Aug 2025)  
"*Rupture, Repair, and the Civil Sphere: Moral Solidarity and Dynamics of Perception in Post-Apartheid South Africa*."

**Collective Behavior & Social Movements: On the Many Impacts of Social Movements,** Northwestern University, Chicago, USA (Aug 2025)

“Contingent Memory Activation and Civil Repair: Collective Memory and Crisis Response in Post-Apartheid South Africa”

**Civil Sphere Theory Working Group, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria (Oct 2025)**

**“***Eventful Sociology and Civil Sphere Theory: Resisting Unrest in Post-Apartheid South Africa”*

**Social Science History Association Annual Meeting,** Culture Network, Chicago, USA (Nov 2025)  
"Rupture, Repair, and the Civil Sphere: Moral Solidarity and Dynamics of Perception in Post-Apartheid South Africa."

**Democracy, Autocracy, and Protest: Social Movements in Times of Crisis,** San Diego, USA (June 2025) “Contingent Memory Activation and Civil Repair: Collective Memory and Crisis Response in Post-Apartheid South Africa.”

**American Sociological Association Annual Meeting**, *Panel Discussion,* Montréal, Canada (Aug 2024) "Adhocracies, Collective Memory, and Cohesion Amidst Civil Unrest in Post-Apartheid South Africa."

**University of Notre Dame, Rome Global Gateway**, Rome, Italy (Apr 2023)  
"Has Western Christianity Become Obsolete? Shifts in Deep Culture and Young Adult Indifference."

**Civil Sphere Theory Working Group, University of Trento**, Trento, Italy (Oct 2021)  
"Founding Moments and Civil Repair," Lyn Spillman with Matthew Coetzee and Isaac Kimmel.

**GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

Wilsey Distinguished Graduate Fellowship, $44,000 (2025 – 2026)

Pre-Doctoral Fellow*,* Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University (2025 – Present)

Kellogg Institute Fellow, $6,000 annually (2021 – Present)

Institute of Arts and Letters: Technology and the Common Good Research Grant, $4,300 (2024)  
Kellogg Institute Graduate Research Grant, $3,750 (2022)  
Sorin Fellow, de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (2021 – Present)  
Yale-China Fellowship, $15,000 (2018 – 2020)

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**University of Notre Dame** Notre Dame, IN

*Teaching Experience, Department of Sociology* 2022 - Present

***Assistant Instructor***

Foundations of Sociological Theory (SOC 34090)   
Kinship on the Margins: Encountering Poverty and the Catholic Social Tradition (PS 30600)  
Confronting Social Issues: International (THEO 33938)  
Research on American Cultural Change and Secularization I & II (SOC 40966 & 44966)  
U.S. Change & Secularization III (SOC 43966)

***Teaching Assistant***  
Marriage and the Family (SOC 20342)

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**University of Notre Dame,** Graduate Research Assistant 2021 - Present

• Assisted Prof. Lyn Spillman on founding moments, civil repair, and moral communities (1619 Project & America 250 Projects).  
• Supported Prof. Andrew Junker (Chinese University of Hong Kong) in analyzing Hong Kong’s Anti-Extradition Bill Protests (“Antielab”), dramaturgy, and social movements.

**Project Manager 2022-2024**  
Professor Christian Smith, University of Notre Dame  
Why Religion Went Obsolete: The Demise of Traditional Faith in America, Oxford University Press  
• Managed a team of six undergraduate researchers conducting and coding 220+ in-depth interviews   
• Led data coding and thematic analysis of interviewees’ religious life histories.  
• Compiled appendices and selected quotations for the published book.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**NTK Academic Group** Hong Kong, HK  
***Instructor, English and Humanities Department***(2020 – 2021)  
• Taught English and Humanities at Hong Kong’s leading academic group for international curricula.  
• Developed and published academic course materials, including Writing for Academic Achievement, Literary Analysis and Commentary, and Standardized Test Preparation.

**Yale-China Association** Changsha, China  
***Yale-China Fellow*** *(2018 – 2020)*  
• Continued a 120+ year tradition of cross-cultural engagement through education and healthcare initiatives in mainland China.  
• Established new Yale-China education initiatives in Western Hunan in partnership with local NGOs

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION**

American Sociological Association

Social Science History Association

Mobilization: International Quarterly

**SERVICE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

*Graduate Student Volunteer*, Open Search Committee, University of Notre Dame (2024)

*Ethnography Workshop Coordinator,* University of Notre Dame (2024 – Present)  
*Founding Member,* Friends at Midnight, Catholic LGBTQ+ Faith Group, Notre Dame (2024)  
*Volunteer Coordinator*, St. Augustine’s Church Soup Kitchen, South Bend, IN (2023 – Present)