

# Dr. Steven Torrente

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## Education

**Doctor of Philosophy**, *University of Kansas*, Lawrence KS, U.S.A.  
Political Science (exam subfields: international relations and political theory)

**Master of Arts**, *The New School*, New York, NY, U.S.A.  
International Affairs

**Bachelor of Science**, *Tufts University*, Medford, MA, U.S.A.  
Mechanical Engineering

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## Doctoral Dissertation

Title *Toward a Political Ethics of Torture*  
Defended July 7, 2015  
Supervisor Brent J. Steele  
Synopsis Despite intense debate about torture as a counter-terrorist practice, ethical theorists have not converged on an answer. Instead, competing approaches to torture ethics are highly-idiosyncratic and cannot be meaningfully compared. I counter this dilemma by analyzing torture ethics as a *social* rather than ethical problem. I use Bruno Latour's Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to put all participants in the debate on equal footing, without forcing an unjustifiable resolution to their normative and metaethical differences. I then develop shareable descriptions of torture so the debate can proceed without language connected to proprietary ethical frameworks. My approach makes a political ethics of torture possible even within a network of disagreeable actors.

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## Academic Appointments

2016–present **Metropolitan State University of Denver**, *Affiliate Instructor*, Dept. of Political Science.  
2015–2016 **Univ. of Nebraska, Kearney**, *Visiting Assistant Professor*, Dept. of Political Science.  
2014–2015 **Univ. of Kansas**, *Joseph P. Harris Fellow*, Dept. of Political Science.  
2013–2014 **Univ. of Kansas**, *Graduate Research Assistant*, Dept. of Graduate Studies.  
2011–2013 **Univ. of Kansas**, *Graduate Teaching Assistant*, Dept. of Political Science.  
2009 **The New School**, *Research Assistant*, The Lower Manhattan Project.

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## Awards

2014–2015 Joseph P. Harris Fellowship award for doctoral dissertation completion.

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## Courses Taught

- 2016-2018 PSC 3050 Introduction to Political Theory (MSU)  
2016-2018 PSC 1020 Political Systems and Ideas (MSU)  
2016-2017 PSC 2230 Introduction to International Relations (MSU)  
2015-2016 PSCI 170 Democracy as a Political Idea (UNK)  
2015-2016 PSCI 373 Ancient Political Thought (UNK)  
2015-2016 PSCI 377 Political Inequality (UNK)  
2011-2013 POLS 301 Introduction to Political Theory (KU, as graduate teaching assistant)

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## Publications

- article “Beyond Just War: Jan Patočka’s Solidarity of the Shaken.” *Telos* No. 181 (Winter 2017).
- chapter “Virtues and Capabilities.” Lead author (with Harry D. Gould) in *The Oxford Handbook of International Political Theory*, edited by Chris Brown and Robyn Eckersley.
- chapter “Extraordinary Rendition.” **accepted** for *Legislating Morality in America: Debating the Morality of Controversial U.S. Laws and Policies*, edited by Don Haider-Markel. ABC-CLIO publishing.
- article “International Ethics and Non-Monotheistic Religious Traditions.” **Under review** with *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia for International Studies*.

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## Research in Progress

- Book Proposal *Toward a Political Ethics of Torture*. Adaptation of dissertation research.
- Working paper *Religion and International Relations: Reflections on Foundational Issues*. Inquiry into how IR scholars can study religion, in light of research trends that problematize “religion” as a category. For a book collaboration with T. Heilke and B. Steele.
- Working paper *The Researcher’s Basic Situation: Scientific Perspectives in International Relations and Political Science*. Extension and criticism of work in international relations methodology by Patrick Jackson and Daniel Levine.
- Working paper *International Ethics After the Subject*. Changing concepts of the subject and their implications for studying ethics.
- Working paper *Lefebvre at 40: Articulating Postmodern Space for Critical and Constructivist IR*. Presented at ISA Annual Convention, Toronto, March 2014.
- Working paper *Statistics, Hermeneutics, and Hobbes: Leviathan is not about Anarchy*. This is a close reading of *Leviathan*, by machine.
- Working paper *Habeas Factum: A Meditation on Scientific Production*. A companion piece to the statistical analysis of *Leviathan* that foregrounds the labor and material inputs required to make a new factual claim.

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## Research and Teaching Interests

- Subfields International relations, political philosophy.

Substantive Interests Torture, violence, state formation, international ethics, religion/political theology, philosophy of science, spatial theory, quantitative text analysis.

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## Professional Associations and Service

Peer review Served as a reviewer for a forthcoming special issue of *Critical Studies on Security*, edited by Daniel Bertrand Monk.

ISA International Studies Association Convention. Organizer and chair of “Assessing the Normative Turn: is International Relations Ethical?” (2017). Chair & discussant for “The Ethics of Drone Violence” (2017). Chair for town-hall panel “Ethical IR in theory & practice (2018). Discussant for “Human Rights and Responsibilities in the Global Market” (2018).

UNK Faculty Advisor to Model United Nations student group. Supervised 15 students on trip from Nebraska to Boston for national Model United Nations conference.

PSGA University of Kansas Political Science Graduate Association (since 2011). Service at various events, a term as Secretary, and a term on the Faculty Committee.

ISA (since 2010) Section memberships: International Ethics, Theory, Religion and International Relations.

APSA (since 2010)

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## Technical Skills

Computing R programming, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, knitR.