

## Biography

Hi, my name is Armani Porter and I am from New Orleans, Louisiana. I am currently a student within the MA Program in the Social Sciences at the University of Chicago (concentration: cultural anthropology). My research employs ethnographic and genealogical methods to inform the creation of data infrastructures. In short, through observant participation of everyday life, I address social problems through the implementation of novel data management techniques. For example, my master's thesis is concerned with legal developments in Chile where a recent bill proposed in congress contains a ban on the commercialization of "neurodata." In this paper, I demonstrate how Judeo-Christian anxieties regarding the commodification of the body could be assuaged through the use of a blockchain ledger. I intend to pursue a career in both academia and industry and will be applying to PhD programs in Cultural Anthropology Fall 2022.

## Personal Statement

After two years of serving as a member of the Student/Postdoc Committee, I express my interest in the open Chair position. I have had broad exposure to the field of neuroethics as I have engaged with neuroethical questions within the disciplines of neuroscience, theology, Cognitive Science of Religion, bioethics, and cultural anthropology. In addition, this work has taken place on an international scale as I have had research affiliations with various institutions including the National University of Singapore, *La Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*, the University of Connecticut, the University of Notre Dame, Duke University, and the University of Chicago. The highly interdisciplinary and international nature of my research is a personal response to the intellectual blind spots that manifest in academic literature due to disciplinary reproduction.

I am interested in the practice of theory as well as the theory of practice and consider myself situated within the “making and doing” subfield of cultural anthropology. Through gaining an understanding of the institutions that produce life, this knowledge can be used to inform the creation of data infrastructures. I am specifically interested in data management practices as they relate to the storage and transmission of “neurodata” for both humanitarian and commercial purposes. Geographically, I am interested in neuroethics within the context of the Americas, namely the Southern Cone of South America.

I have served as the Operations Lead for Rymedi LLC, a blockchain based data and supply chain management company within the life sciences. I have also served as a member of the IEEE Standards Development Working Group for Blockchain in Healthcare and the Life Sciences. During this time, I became familiar with the importance of decentralized data governance. For example, I proposed a data stewardship protocol that enables third-party data sharing while ensuring the privacy of patient data. This protocol is in use by Rymedi today and is particularly useful for those who are members of vulnerable populations. On a related note, my talk at the 2019 INS Conference, “The Brain as Best Defense: A Study on the Presence of Neurological Data in the United States Justice System,” demonstrates that although the presentation of a brain scan does not increase a defendant’s likelihood of receiving a favorable outcome on appeal, it is important to note that a significant population of those who are incarcerated are unable to obtain a brain scan as a form of evidence due to a lack of access to healthcare. Given this, through decentering the healthcare system by allowing greater access to data, this creates the possibility for a more equitable distribution of resources both within and outside the hospital walls.

Further, my interest in the decentralization of scientific data extends beyond the field of neuroethics. For example, my master’s practicum at Duke University, “Death, DNA and Data: An Exploration of Ethical, Legal, and Practical Considerations Regarding the use of Investigative Genetic Genealogy to Identify Missing Migrants in the United States,” examines a novel forensic technique as a potential solution to regulations that prevent the cross-referencing of DNA data between commercial, non-profit, and state-owned genetic databases. In light of my professional and academic interests, as Chair I offer the Student/Postdoc Committee a perspective that is postured towards preventing the concentration of power that often occurs as a result of scientific endeavors.

I am beyond grateful for this nomination and am thankful for your time and consideration.

Peace,



Armani Niko Porter

# ARMANI PORTER

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## EDUCATION

- University of Chicago** 2022  
MA Program in the Social Sciences (Concentration: cultural anthropology)  
Master's Thesis: "Data Stewardship and Judeo-Christian Anxiety: Neurodata Regulation in Chile"
- Duke University** 2020  
MA Bioethics and Science Policy (Concentration: philosophy)  
Master's Practicum: "Death, DNA, and Data: An Exploration of Ethical, Legal, and Practical Considerations Regarding the use of Investigative Genetic Genealogy to Identify Missing Migrants in the United States"
- University of Notre Dame** 2018  
BA Neuroscience and Behavior  
Senior Project: "Personal Uniqueness: Adaptive Behavior within Adolescence"  
Theology (double major)  
Senior Project "Anarquía en la iglesia"

## RESEARCH

- University of Chicago**  
Department of Anthropology 2021-  
Supervised by Kaushik Sunder Rajan, PhD  
Interests: Genealogy, Death Ethnography, Political Economy, Neurorights, Chile
- Department of Anthropology 2021-  
Supervised by Michael Dietler, PhD  
Interests: Aesthetics, Blockchain, Frankfurt School  
Project Title: "NFTs and Walter Benjamin"
- Duke University**  
Initiative for Science and Society 2018 –2020  
Supervised by Nita Farahany, PhD, JD- Science, Law, and Policy Lab
- Northwestern University** 2018—2020  
Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago  
Department of Pediatrics  
Supervised by Sara H. Katsanis- Genetics and Justice Lab
- University of Notre Dame**  
Department of Psychology 2015 – 2018  
Advised by Daniel Lapsley, PhD- Moral and Adolescent Psychology Lab
- Department of Theology 2017 – 2018  
Advised by Peter Casarella, PhD  
Affiliated with *La Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*
- Department of Theology Summer 2016  
Advised by Patrick Deegan, PhD  
Project Title: "Jesus, Buddha, and the King: A comparative study of Catholicism within the context of Southeast Asian dictatorship regimes"
- University of Connecticut**  
Department of Anthropology Summer 2017  
Advised by Dr. Dimitris Xygalatas, PhD - Experimental Anthropology Lab  
Project Title: "Collective Effervescence and Group Synchrony"
- National University of Singapore** Summer 2016  
Department of Physiology  
Advised by Dr. Chen Zhi Xiong, PhD - Neurodevelopment and Cancer Lab  
Project Title: "The Effect of KIF1Bbeta and CSPG4 in Neuroblastoma Apoptosis"

## RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

### **The Keenan Institute for Ethics Religion and Public Life Conference**

Fellowship Presentation, Subversive Life: A Reformation of Identity in Chile, June 2020

### **International Neuroethics Society**

Invited Talk, The Brain as Best Defense: A Study on the Presence of Neurological Data in the United States Justice System, October 2019

Poster Presentation, The Brain as Best Defense: A Study on the Presence of Neurological Data in the United States Justice System, October 2019

### **Society for the Advancement for Chicanos and Native Americans in Science**

Invited Talk, Exploring Diversity and Career Pathways in Science Policy, November 2019

### **Midwestern Psychological Association**

Poster Presentation, Personal Uniqueness: Adolescent Adaptive Behavior, April 2018

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Rymedi**

June 2020-June 2021 (1 year)

Job Title: Operations Lead (Full Time)

Rymedi is a blockchain based supply-chain and data management company postured towards the life sciences.

### **M&M Educational Group**

Spring 2020

Job Title: Spanish Tutor

### **Center for Multicultural Affairs at Duke University**

Spring 2019 – Spring 2020

Job Title: Native American Graduate Assistant

### **Duke Master in Interdisciplinary Data Science**

Spring 2019

Job Title: Teaching Assistant

Course: Data Science Ethics

### **Duke Fuqua School of Business**

Fall and Spring 2019

Job Title: Teaching Assistant

Course: Ethical and Legal Issues in Analytics

### **SciPol Science Writer**

Fall 2018 – Spring 2020

Job Title: Graduate Assistant

### **Office of the Vice President at the University of Notre Dame**

Summer 2018

Job Title: Worker Participation Committee Summer Associate

## LEADERSHIP

### **IEEE Standards Development Working Group for Blockchain in Healthcare and the Life Sciences Member**

2020 – 2021

### **International Neuroethics Society Student Postdoc Committee Member**

2019 –

### **Trademark, Licensing, and Human Rights Committee Member (at-large, Notre Dame)**

2018 –

This committee is a continuation of the Worker Participation Committee

Member of the Licensee and Factory Assessments Subcommittee

2018 –

### **Duke University Hospital Ethics Committee Member**

2018 – 2020

### **Duke Libraries Graduate and Professional Students Advisory Board Member**

2018 – 2020

### **Duke University Native Student Advisory Board Member**

2018 – 2020

### **Student Worker Participation Committee Member**

2015 – 2018

### **Worker Participation Committee Member**

2016 – 2018

### **Diversity Council Representative for The Wabruda**

2015 – 2017

### **Vice President of the Native American Student Association of Notre Dame**

2015 – 2017

### **Alumni Relations Commissioner of the Black Student Association**

2016 – 2017

### **Vice President of BridgeND**

2016 – 2017

## PUBLICATIONS

Porter A, Krenzer W, Farahany N, (2019) The Brain as best defense: A Study of the Presence of Neurological Data in the United States Justice System [abstract], *AJOB Neuroscience*

## AWARDS

<b>University of Chicago's Center for Latin American Studies Tinker Field Research Grant</b> Master's Thesis Grant	2021 – 2022
<b>Doan Fellowship Program</b> Senior Thesis Grant	2017 – 2018
<b>Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts</b> Summer Comprehensive Grant	2015
<b>Flatley Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement</b> Research Assistantship Grant	2015
<b>Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies</b> Summer Research Grant	2015

## SCHOLARSHIPS

<b>University Scholarship</b>	2020 – 2021
<b>Bioethics Master Scholarship</b>	2018 – 2020
<b>Frazier Thompson Scholarship</b>	2017 – 2018
<b>Provost's Scholarship</b>	2014 – 2018
<b>University Scholarship</b>	2014 – 2018
<b>Notre Dame Federal Credit Union Scholarship</b>	2017

## FELLOWSHIPS

<b>Doan Fellowship Program at the University of Notre Dame</b>	2016 – 2018
<b>Dean's Fellowship Program</b>	2016 – 2018
<b>Tocqueville Fellowship Program for Inquiry into Religion and Public Life</b>	2017 – 2018
<b>The Kenan Institute for Ethics Religion and Public Life Fellowship</b>	2019–2020

## ATHLETICS

<b>Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League</b> Coach Derek Brown: Baltimore Dodgers	2013 – 2015
<b>University of Notre Dame Varsity Baseball</b> Coach Mik Aoki: Notre Dame Fighting Irish	2013 –2014

## SHADOWING

<b>John's Hopkins University</b>	Summer 2015
<b>Maria Oliva-Hemker, MD</b> , Division Chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology	
<b>Karla Au Yeung, MD</b> , Pediatric Gastroenterologist	
<b>Doug B. Mogul, MD, MPH</b> , Pediatric Gastroenterologist	
<b>Wikrom W. Karnsakul, MD</b> , Pediatric Gastroenterologist	
<b>Dylan Stewart, MD, FACS</b> , General Pediatric Surgery	
<b>David J. Hackam, MD, PhD</b> , Division of General Pediatric Surgery	
<b>Jeffrey R Lukish, MD</b> , General Pediatric Surgery	

## COLOQUIA/WORKSHOPS

<b>Center for Buddhism and East Asian Religions at the University of British Columbia</b> Buddhism & Technology: Historical Background and Contemporary Challenges September 2019	
<b>International Network for Interreligious Research and Education</b> Normative Religious Traditions and Their Authority (Leipzig University), July 2018 Religious Heritage in a Diverse Europe (University of Groningen), June 2019	
<b>Notre Dame Consultation on Intellectual Virtues and Science Education</b> Intellectual Virtue in Academia, May 2017	
<b>University of Notre Dame Department of Philosophy</b> Current Issues on Self-Consciousness, November 2017	

## LANGUAGES

English – Native language
Spanish – Advanced Conversational