

Ruth Porter Groff  
Saint Louis University  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
[ruth.groff@slu.edu](mailto:ruth.groff@slu.edu)

## EDUCATION

*York University (Canada)*, Ph.D.  
*University of Toronto*, M.A.  
*Swarthmore College*, B.A. with Honors (Philosophy)

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

*Saint Louis University*, St. Louis, MO - Associate Professor (2014-); Assistant Professor (2008-14)  
*University at Albany/SUNY*, Albany, NY - Visiting Assistant Professor (2006-08)  
*Williams College*, Williamstown, MA - Visiting Assistant Professor (2004-06)  
*Marquette University*, Milwaukee, WI -

" Conceptualizing Causal Powers: Activity, Capacity, Essence, Necessitation," *Synthese*, 2021, Special Issue: New Foundations of Dispositionalism, June 18, 2021. <DOI>10.1007/s11229-021-03229-x.

" What Does the Doing? On Powers, Things and Powerful Things," in (ed). Anne Sophie Meincke, *Dispositionalism: Perspectives from Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Science*, Library Series, 2020, pp. 27-40.

" Sublating the Free Will Problematic: Powers, Agency and Causal Determination," *Synthese*, Special Issue, 196, January 2019, pp. 179-200.

" Causal Mechanisms and the Philosophy of Causation," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 47:3, 2017, pp. 286-305.

" The Myth of Metaphysical Neutrality," 2015 Cheryl Frank Memorial Award Lecture, *Journal of Critical Realism*, 15:4, 2016, pp. 409-418.

" On the E

## Reviews

(Review Symposium Participant) "Tuukka Kaidesoja's Critical Realist 'Transcendental Realism'": Comments on Tuukka Kaidesoja's, \_\_\_\_\_ (Routledge: London and New York, 2013), *Journal of Social Ontology*, 2015.

(Review Essay) "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Causal Powers and Contemporary Metaphysics": (eds.) Bird, Ellis and Sankey, \_\_\_\_\_, Routledge, 2012; (ed.) Marmodoro, \_\_\_\_\_, Routledge, 2009; Mumford and Anjum, \_\_\_\_\_, Oxford, 2011; Tahko, \_\_\_\_\_, *Journal of Critical Realism*, Volume 13, Number 4, August 2014, pp. 422-442.

(Review) "Wholes, Parts, Form and Powers": Dave Elder-Vass, (2010) \_\_\_\_\_, *Metascience*, 2012, Vol. 21, Issue 2, pp. 399-402.

(Respondent) "Taking Relativism Seriously: Review Symposium of \_\_\_\_\_ (Groff, 2004)." *Journal of Critical Realism*, 2005, Vol. 4, Number 1, pp. 221-246.

(Review), Andrew Collier, (2003) \_\_\_\_\_, *Journal of Critical Realism*, 2004, Vol. 3, Number 2, pp. 378-384.

## PRESENTATIONS

Invited speaker, "Carving Talk of Powers at its Joints." Research Colloquium for Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Cognition/Webinar Series of the Nordic Network for Metaphysics, hosted by Aarhus University, Denmark, October, 2021.

Invited speaker, "Conceptualizing Causal Powers." International Conference sponsored by Science and Religion working group of the Higher Education and Social Transformation initiative, held at Centre Sévres (Jesuit Faculty of Theology), Paris, France, October 2019.

Invited speaker, "The Devil is in the Categories." Northern Illinois University, Department of Philosophy, April 2019.

"On the Metaphysics of Alienation and Reification." Critical Social Ontology Workshop, October 2018.

"Are Social Structures (a) Entities; (b) Properties; (c) Essences; (d) Other?" Critical Social Ontology Workshop, June 2017.

"Truth, Negative Dialectics and the Virtue of Intellectual Courage." Midwest Political Science Association, April 2017. Paper (and proposed panel) accepted; relocated to Saint Louis University, ATLAS Week.

Invited speaker, "Social Ontology and \_\_\_\_\_." Midwest Annual Workshop in Metaphysics, University of Nebraska, October 2016.

Invited speaker, "On the Fetishism of Commodities and the (Metaphysical) Secret Thereof." Creighton University, October 2016.

Invited speaker, "Powers, Essentialism and Agency: A Reply to Alexander Bird." International conference on powers, dispositions and essentialism, Department of Philosophy, American University in Beirut, April 2016.

"What Is It That Social Structures Can Do?" International conference on social science and the philosophy of causation (Phil Gorski and Ruth Groff, co-organizers), Yale University, March 2016.

Cheryl Frank Memorial Lecture, "On the Myth of Metaphysical Neutrality." International Association for Critical Realism Annual Meeting, University of Notre Dame, July 2015.

"Contemporary Humean Metaphysics and the Commodity Form." International Society for MacIntyrean Enquiry Annual Meeting, July 2015.

Keynote public lecture, "Powers, Categories and the Metaphysics of Agency." International conference on "Real Possibilities, Indeterminism and Free Will," University of Konstanz, Germany, March 2015.

Invited speaker, "Essence and Species-Being." Marx and Philosophy Association panel; American Philosophical Association, Central Division, February 2015.

Invited speaker, "What Exactly are Causal Mechanisms Again?" International conference on "Powers, Mechanism, Singularism," Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Oslo, Norway, September 2014.

Invited speaker, "I Blame Hume. Also, Bad Readings of Kant Plus (For What It's Worth) the Commodity Form." Conference on "Theory After Poststructuralism," Williams College, Department of Religion, May 2014.

Invited speaker, "Causal Mechanisms." Social Theory Workshop, University of Michigan, Department of Sociology, October 2014.

Invited speaker, "Metaphysics, Causal Powers and Social Theory." International conference on realism and explanation, Department of Sociology, Yale University (held in NYC), August 2013.

Keynote speaker, "Practices, Institutions and the Self-Valorization of Value." International Society for MacIntyrean Inquiry, Annual Meeting, July 2013.

Invited speaker, "What Does the Doing? On Powers, Things and Powerful Things." International conference on the ontology of dispositions sponsored by the Powers and Identity of Agents project at the University of Innsbruck, July 2013.

"Aristotle, Critical Theory and the Critique of Liberal Formalism." Midwest Association for Political Science, April 2009.

"Situating Critical Realism Philosophically." American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, Marx and Philosophy Association panel, December 2008.

"Utilitarianism, Empiricism and Flourishing: The Clash of Categories in the Work of John Stuart Mill." American Political Science Association, September 2007.

Invited plenary speaker, "Realism, Causality and Relativism." International Association for Critical Realism Annual Meeting, August 2007.

Invited speaker, "Why Social Scientists Should Care About Metaphysics." Conference on Realism, Queen's University (Canada), 2004.

"Contemporary Anti-Essentialism and the Empiricist Tradition." American Political Science Association, 2003.

### Invitations to Comment

American Philosophical Association, Central Division, "A Plea for Anti-Anti-Individualism: How Over-Simple Psychology Misleads Social Policy." March 2017.

American Philosophical Association, Central Division, "A Problem for Theories of Power." February, 2015.

Society for Philosophy of Agency, session on "Abilities and Powers" (paper by Randolph Clarke), American Philosophical Association Eastern Division, December 2013.

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY & SERVICE

Coordinator and founding member of the Critical Social Ontology Workshop (CSOW), an international multi-disciplinary academic association. The 1st Annual Meeting was held in June of 2017. See my Powers, Capacities and Dispositions blog or the Critical Social Ontology Workshop fb page for details. The 2nd Annual Meeting was held in October of 2018. The 2020 and 2021 conferences were cancelled due to COVID. 2022 will be held via Zoom in March, 2022.

Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Aristotelian Studies and Critical Theory.

Member of Extended Research Network, Dynamis: The Finnish Network for Metaphysics.

Research Associate, Centre for Contemporary Aristotelian Studies in Ethics and Politics (CASEP).

Consultant, Yale University (2015-17); Templeton-funded project on critical realism and social science (I am a member of the Critical Realism Network, in this capacity). In the summer of 2015 I taught in a week-long post-doctoral session sponsored by the project, in addition to conducting an internet webinar on metaphysics and social science in advance of the session; in

March, 2016 I co-organized an international working conference at Yale that brought together social scientists and metaphysicians.

Member, 2018 Program Committee, Midwest Political Science Association (Co-Chair, Political Theory: Normative and Critical sub-section – 60+ papers).

Member, 2017 Program Committee, Southern Political Science Association (Chair, Political Theory Section – 70+ papers).

Steering Committee Member (2011-2015), International Association for MacIntyrean Inquiry; co-organizer of 2015 annual conference on the theme "Traditions of Ideology Critique" (60+ papers).

International Collaborator, Causation in Science project, Dir. R. Anjum (Norwegian Research Council).

External Examiner (one of two; international) of the \_\_\_\_\_, for Doctoral Dissertation (Metaphysics), Utrecht University, 2014.

Book Reviews Editor, *New Political Science*, 2008-2011.

Editor (worked under General Editor), *Journal of Critical Realism*, 2007-2010.

External reviewer, U.K. Arts & Humanities Research Council, 2011.

Peer Referee, journal articles: *American Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophical Quarterly*, *Synthese*, *European Journal of Philosophy*; *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*; *Philosophy of Social Science*; *British Journal of Philosophy of Science*; *Political Theory*; *New Political Science*; *Cambridge Journal of Economics*; *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*; *Journal of Social Ontology*; *Philosophy & Social Criticism*.

Peer Referee, book manuscripts: *Routledge*; *Polity Press*; *Continuum Press*; *Cambridge University Press*; *Oxford University Press*; *Temple University Press*.

Faculty Writing Mentor, Saint Louis University (2015 - present).

Secretary of College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council, Saint Louis University (2017-18).

Tenure reviewer, Department of Philosophy, Franklin & Marshall College, 2017.

York University Graduate Student Scholarship, 1994.

Swarthmore College – Hannah Leedom Fellowship (for graduate study), 1992.

Swarthmore College – W.W. Smith Charitable Trust Scholar; Penniman Scholar.

## TEACHING

I teach courses in the history of Western social, political and moral philosophy, and on the Frankfurt School. I also teach a course on social ontology and the analysis of structural power, called "Capitalism, Patriarchy and Racism," as well as an upper-level seminar on . I regularly teach Plato and Aristotle in some depth, and have also taught an intensive course on Kant's . Various of my courses are cross-listed (philosophy/political theory). Since 2018 I have designed and taught three new courses, which I plan to continue to offer: "Theories of the Capitalist State," "Fascism" and "Radical Political Thought."

## REFERENCES

Available upon request.