**Research Statement**

Overall

My research centres around how we use media and art to relate to each other. I have come to this position by focusing on satire, and have come to incorporate a broader interest in news media and public art. Within these topics, I am particularly interested in the claims made in lay discourse: what the force is of statements idea like “erasing history,” “just joking,” or “political correctness.” As a result I use philosophy that falls within the areas of trust, aesthetics, philosophy of humour, social epistemology, philosophy of language, and a touch of ethics and political philosophy. Below, I organize them into the areas of “satire and humour,” “mass media and trust,” and “public art, commemoration, and heritage.”

Satire and Humour

This has been the focus of my dissertation. I develop an account of satire with an eye to making sense of how people talk about satire, and why satire is given such prominence in the current political moment. I focus mostly on trust and humour, and pursue the following questions:

* How do we use humour to negotiate personal relationships?
* How do we use humour to navigate political relationships?
* How do our personal relationships determine what we are willing to accept as humour?
* Why do people expect satire to be politically powerful?
* Why are accusations of humourlessness so important to reactionary politics?

Mass Media and Trust

This is informed by contemporary interest in “fake news,” I am interested in the reasons why institutions are trusted, and whether they are trustworthy, that go beyond those that are standardly considered in e.g. discussions about trust and expert testimony. I am also interested in how mass media allows for the propagation of common images, and how those common images may become the bases for common identities. Within this, I am interested in the role of advertising in media, not just in how advertising may influence people but in how advertising serves as an ideological model that determines how mass media is organized.

* What does it mean for a public institution to be trustworthy?
* What is it that the general populace is counting on media to do, such that media professionals either are or are not responsive to this counting-on?
* Can an institution fail to be trustworthy even if its constituent members are responsive to being counted on?
* What is the role of advertising in mass media?
* How does advertising affect the trustworthiness of the platforms on which the ads are served?

Public Art, Commemoration, and Heritage

This is informed by contemporary interest in the politics of monuments, especially confederate monuments and whether to remove them. I am interested in the claim that public art has on politics and identity, how public art embodies history, and what claim we expect history to have on the present. I view this approach as a good way to extrapolate values of art that the contemporary philosophy of art has difficulty dealing with.

* What is the role of public art in collective identity?
* How does public art create connections across time?
* What is the particular value of trans-generational art?
* How does art access the past?
* What elements of the past can art access?
* What are the different ways that art can convey heritage?