

# Daniel T. Kessler, M.A.

## Education

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**Master of Arts in Narrative Systems Analysis** **2017-2019**  
NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study  
Advisor: Karen Hornick  
Master's Thesis: *Narrative Systems Modeling: Techniques for Classifying, Databasing, and Mapping Narrative Systems*

**Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing & Theatre** **2008-2012**  
Oberlin College  
Advisors: Dan Chaon & Matthew Wright

## Research Interests

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Human-centered and universal design approaches for supporting psychosocial and learning outcomes; developing interdisciplinary methods for studying emerging media forms; using machine learning and natural language processing to examine the impacts of human-computer interactions on users

## Employment

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**Research Assistant & RallyPoint Fellow** **Harvard University, Nock Lab** **2020-**

- **Natural language processing:** Eight types of machine-learning topic models, linguistic inquiry and word count analysis, and related statistical analysis and data visualization.
- **Qualitative analysis and annotation:** Transcript and user post analysis; comprehensive qualitative coding; codebook creation; term frequency analysis; word clouds; related staff training.
- **Project management:** Managed four projects for a psychology lab specializing in suicide prevention research (Nock Lab); collaborated with research teams from non-profit, academic, corporate, and government partners; related staff training and writing of IRB materials.
- **Literature reviews:** Created the manual used to train staff in literature reviews; 14 comprehensive reviews.
- **Survey and intervention design:** Designed surveys and intervention mock-ups for complex randomized-controlled trials; designed information pamphlets for study participants.
- **Grant writing:** Grant and other content writing (e.g., whitepapers, press releases).

**Director of Grants** **GreenSpot Smart Mobility** **2018-2019**

- **Community projects:** Designed, pitched, and received outstanding grant and municipal support for e-mobility programs that would provide free, fully-electric transit services to low-income and marginalized communities; my projects were finalists for national and international awards from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Ford Foundation, and others.
- **Grant writing & venture capital:** Management and tracking of all grant writing and venture capital activities, including researching and locating new funding prospects and writing and submitting all grants and pitch decks.
- **Public-private collaborations:** Worked with municipalities, transit agencies, energy companies, and community representatives to institute new e-mobility infrastructures in the public right of way.
- **Marketing & design:** Designed and created all marketing materials including the company website, art and branding on public electric vehicle charging stations, community and street signage, conference materials, and other community outreach materials.

**Teachers & Learning Games Coordinator** **QKids** **2016-2018**

- **Curriculum Development:** Developed curriculums and assisted in development of literacy games for ESL.

- **Project Management:** Managed New York-based teachers, programs, and events for an international leader in online ESL games; maintained social media presence.
- **Teacher training:** Hired and trained new teachers in ESL and online tutoring methods.

**Academic Tutor** **Thinking Caps & Self-Employed** **2011-2018**

- **Tutoring:** English, math, and science tutoring for elementary, middle, and high school students; a focus on students with special needs (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia).
- **Lesson planning:** Planned lessons based on individual student needs and plans, coordinating with classroom teachers and counselors; created targeted learning materials (e.g., worksheets, practice tests) for students with specific needs.
- **Test prep:** Test prep for PSATs, SATs, and specific regional tests in California and New York.

**Summer Research Assistant** **Harvard University, Nock Lab** **2016**

- Data collection and analysis; literature reviews; foundational research for future projects relating to the psychological contexts and impacts of military suicide and related prevention efforts.

**Development & Grants Manager** **San Francisco Playhouse** **2012-2016**

- **Fundraising:** Managed all charitable giving and raised over \$7.5M for San Francisco's largest family-owned theatre company, overseeing individual, corporate, and foundation-based fundraising; worked with board of directors to cultivate new producer, board, and donor prospects; received prestigious Salesforce Development Award (awarded to a single non-profit each year and out of thousands of competing applicants; worth \$120k) alongside dozens of other awards.
- **Events management:** Catering, staffing, and overseeing 120+ private events for high-tier donors.
- **Marketing:** Created, customized, and maintained a Salesforce database of 50,000+ patrons, linking high-value prospects with public records data to improve marketing and cultivation efforts.
- **Design:** Designed and distributed all fundraising brochures, emails (MailChimp), and most marketing visuals; final edits on all fundraising and marketing content.
- **Early promotion:** Promoted after 3 months from Development Associate to Development Manager, and after another 2 months to Development & Grants Manager.
- **Art studio showcases:** Managed, staffed, and arranged catering for three private art showings at San Francisco's Weinstein Art Gallery.
- **Educational programming:** Maintaining and marketing educational programming for the Rising Stars program supporting underserved high schoolers in the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Project Manager & Research Associate** **California College of the Arts** **2012-2017**

- **Project Management:** Comprehensive scheduling, materials tracking and safe-keeping, and related personal assistant work for Professor Emeritus and former CCA President Dr. Stephen Goldstine.
- **Original research:** Literature reviews, identifying original documents from troves of historical materials from numerous San Francisco libraries, museums, and other institutions; scheduling and co-interviewing participants of historical round table events.
- **Text and transcript analysis:** Analyzed, transcribed, and annotated original audio recordings from four international round tables on modern art featuring prominent anthropologists, linguists, and artists such as Gregory Bateson, George Boas, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Marcel Duchamp.
- **Material handling:** Acquired, handled, and recorded content of original and never-before-released historical and personal documents (e.g., penny postcards) from some of the world's most recognized artists.
- **Two-year research residency:** For two years, I also served as a live-in research resident on this project.

**Art Studio Assistant** **California College of the Arts** **2012-2014**

- **Project Management:** Grant writing; international conference scheduling and staffing; mixed-media material acquisition; museum curation scheduling; and other management duties for the private multimedia art studio of CCA Professor Dr. Lynn Marie Kirby.
- **Art & Design:** Photo manipulation; video editing; web design.

- Summer Projects Manager** **SF Arts Education Project** **2013**
- **Teaching:** Teaching students about professional production and rehearsal practices.
  - **Stage Management:** managing a youth production of *On The Town* performed at UC Berkeley's Taube Music Hall; rehearsal scheduling, blocking, and transportation management.
  - **Grant Writing:** Grant writing for three large-scale community arts projects.
- Copywriter** **Brafton News** **2011-2012**
- **Environment:** Wrote evergreen copy for Discovery, National Geographic, and others.
  - **Technology:** Product announcements, data security articles, and pieces about new workplace technologies.
  - **Business:** B2B copywriting (e.g., whitepapers for tech companies); press releases.
  - **Community:** Nightlife reviews; product reviews; political events.
  - **Medical:** Seasonal evergreen copy (e.g., "Top 10 Foods to Combat Winter Colds").
- Writer's Asst. to Pulitzer Winner Nilo Cruz** **National Playwrights Conference** **2011**
- Assisted with script edits, workshopping, and rehearsal scheduling; printed and distributed script materials to cast and crew; personal assistant duties to Mr. Cruz for the summer conference.

## Awards & Honors

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| ● Finalist, The Paradox Prize                    | Fund for our Economic Future    | 2019      |
| ● Finalist, Fort Mobility, City: One             | Ford Foundation                 | 2019      |
| ● Finalist, South Bronx Clean Design Partnership | U.S. Department of Energy       | 2019      |
| ● Horn Fund Award for Environmental Game Design  | New York University             | 2019      |
| ● Gallatin Graduate Student Scholarship          | New York University             | 2017-2019 |
| ● Horn Fund Award for Environmental Game Design  | New York University             | 2018      |
| ● Horn Fund Award for Environmental Game Design  | New York University             | 2017      |
| ● Playwriting Residency                          | Blue Mountain Puppet Players    | 2013      |
| ● Playwriting Residency                          | LaMaMa Exp. Theatre Club        | 2012      |
| ● John F. Oberlin Scholarship                    | Oberlin College                 | 2008-2012 |
| ● Student Playwriting Residency                  | National Theatre Institute      | 2011      |
| ● Gold Circle Award                              | Columbia Scholastic Press       | 2008      |
| ● Gold Circle Award                              | Columbia Scholastic Press       | 2008      |
| ● Silver Circle Award                            | Columbia Scholastic Press       | 2007      |
| ● Elizabeth Bishop Prize in Prose Fiction        | Walnut Hill School for the Arts | 2007      |
| ● Full Scholarship, Walnut Hill Writing Program  | University of Edinburgh         | 2007      |

## Publications

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### Peer-Reviewed Papers

- Bentley, K., Zuromski, K.L., Fortgang, R., Madsen, E., **Kessler, D.T.**, Lee, H., Nock, M.K. (Under Review). *Implementing Machine Learning Algorithms for Suicide Risk Prediction in Clinical Practice: A Focus Group Study*. PsyArXiv. DOI:10.31234/osf.io/6m5qd.
- Low, D.M., Zuromski, K.L., **Kessler, D.T.**, Ghosh, S.S., Nock, M.K. and Dempsey, W. (2021, November). *It's quality and quantity: the effect of the amount of comments on online suicidal posts* EMNLP 2021 First Workshop on Causal Inference & NLP. Nov. 7-11, 2021: Online and in the Barceló Bávaro Convention Centre, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

### Papers In Preparation

- **Kessler, D.T.** *Disclosure as heroic virtue: deploying a narrative framework in peer-to-peer support forums for military servicemembers to recast the experience of suicidal ideation*. Manuscript in preparation.
- Franz, P.J., Mou, D., Stubbing, J., **Kessler, D.T.**, et al. *Narrative bibliotherapy as a scalable intervention for suicidal thoughts*. Manuscript in preparation.

- Zuromski, K.L., **Kessler, D.T.**, Heaton, D., Tatem, M., Steinberg, J., Mou, D., Nock, M.K. *Impact of COVID-19 on suicidal thoughts and behaviors as indicated through Twitter posts*. Manuscript in preparation.
- Zuromski, K.L., Jones, N., **Kessler, D.T.**, Low, Daniel, Kastman, E., Wilks, C., Gowel, D., Nock, M.K. *Analysis of a peer-to-peer support social media platform for military servicemembers*. Manuscript in preparation.

### Unpublished Manuscript

- **Kessler, D.T.** (December, 2019). *Narrative Systems Modeling: Techniques for Classifying, Databasing, and Mapping Narrative Systems*. Successfully defended at New York University, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York, NY.

## Presentations

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### Conference Presentations

- **Kessler, D.T.**, Zuromski, K.L., Low, D., Nock, M.K. (2021, October). *Using topic modeling to describe suicide-related content from an online social media platform for military servicemembers*. Presented at the 5th Annual Technology in Psychiatry Summit (TIPS), Blitz Talks. Mclean Hospital, Belmont, MA.
- Harrel, A., **Kessler, D.T.**, Zuromski, K.L., Nock, M.K. (August, 2020) *Improving detection and understanding of suicide risk in the military: a mixed-methods analysis of social media posts*. Conference Presentation of The Leadership Alliance & SROH: University of Buffalo, SUNY and Harvard University.
- **Kessler, D.T.** (January, 2020). *How Intelligent Systems Change Archetypal Narrative Acts*. Presented at the 1st Annual NYU Systems Conference: New York University, New York, NY.

### Posters

- **Kessler, D.T.**, Zuromski, K.L., Low, D., Wittler, E.M., Nock, M.K. (2021, November). *Examining online disclosures of suicide risk: a qualitative analysis of data from a military social media platform*. Poster presented at the 55th Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, New Orleans, LA.

## Game Design

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### *Grammatical Nonsense*

### **World Maker Faire (2018), Come Out & Play Festival (2017)**

Now played in 3 countries, 48 schools, and 29 states, as well as used by speech-language practices, reading specialists, and families; an evidence-based and universally designed storytelling game supporting language and literacy development for children who struggle with attention, reading, and social skills; fully funded on IndieGoGo (2021).

### *Junker & The Sunken City*

### **Horn Family Fund for Environmental Research (2017-2019)**

Following an initial research period of one year (during which I investigated practices and methods used in environmental science-based learning games), this game applied contemporary and novel educational design principles in an evidence-based material and environmental science-based adventure and role-playing game.

### *Mars Colony Quest*

### **New York Hall of Science (2017)**

An immersive role-playing game that taught physics, climate science, and biological science principles to young children and their families; the game was also used to inspire design thinking in children through an interactive and museum-wide experience.

### *Habitat*

### **New York PS 118 (2017)**

A kindergarten tile matching game in which players are given colored grid boards and race to flip over and match the tiles to place animals in the appropriate habitats. Players roll a large dice with animals imprinted to determine which animals will be matched each round.

## Professional Writing

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### Play Productions & Readings

● Banshees	Full-Length Reading	San Francisco Playhouse	2017
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● Hypnosis for Salesmen	Full-Length Reading	Gough Street Playhouse	2015
● The Brothers Savage	Full-Length Production	Manhattan Repertory Theatre	2015
● Seed	One-Act Production	IBEX Puppetry (Jim Henson Co.)	2014
● The Natives Are Restless	One-Act Production	Dixon Place Theatre	2014
● Seed	One-Act Showcase	Producer's Club	2013
● The Brothers Savage	Full-Length Reading	Dramatists Guild of America	2013
● Hypnosis for Salesmen	Full-Length Production	Oberlin College	2011
● Once Upon a Mind	Full-Length Production	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2011
● The Brothers Savage	Full-Length Reading	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2011
● Seed	One-Act Workshop	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2011
● Belle & the Fruit Fly	Full-Length Reading	Oberlin College	2011
● Dutchman Walking	One-Act Showcase	Oberlin College	2010
● Gravity of an Apple	One-Act Showcase	Oberlin College	2010
● Bear & Bee	One-Act Reading	Oberlin College	2010
● Goddess	One-Act Reading	Oberlin College	2009
● Mojave	One-Act Showcase	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2009
● Horizons	One-Act Showcase	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2009
● Flood City Dream Works	One-Act Showcase	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2009
● After the Fall	One-Act Reading	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2009
● Boat to New York	One-Act Showcase	Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center	2009
● The Last Mongrel	One-Act Showcase	Hygienic Arts Center	2009

### Poetry & Prose

● <i>Girl on the Moon</i>	Plum Creek Review	Poetry	2012
● <i>Straw Men</i>	Spiral Magazine	Prose	2012
● <i>Yoshino</i>	Spiral Magazine	Poetry	2011
● <i>The Obituary of D.O.A.</i>	Blue Pencil Magazine	Prose ( <i>Elizabeth Bishop Prize</i> )	2007

### Journalism & News Reporting

2010-2013

Discovery; National Geographic; Publisher's Clearing House; Health & Lifestyle; Modernline; Medtera; Microbuilt; Findmaster; Proformative; Sage; Fixmo; ProofPoint; Viridian; Xtium; Cbeyond; Panorama; Litco; FileTrek

### Grant Writing (*awards received*)

National Endowment for the Arts; American Theatre Wing; Bernard Osher Foundation; Shubert Foundation; San Francisco Grants for the Arts; Dramatists Guild of America Fund; Bank of America Foundation; Society for Community Work; Bothin Foundation; Kimball Foundation; Aroha Philanthropies; Salesforce Foundation; San Francisco Arts Commission; Kenneth Rainin Foundation; Fleishhacker Foundation; East Bay Community Foundation; Ululani Foundation; RHE Charitable Foundation; Mechanics Bank; Sequoia Fund (Bohemian Club); Barth Foundation (Tournesol Project); Ellen Michelson Family Foundation; NYSERDA; MTA; Eversource

## Key Courses

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Below are relevant courses taken at New York University (NYU), Oberlin College (OC), UCLA Extension School (UCLA), Harvard Extension School (HE), and Connecticut College's National Theatre Institute (NTI).

**Programming & Design Computing:** Creative Computing (NYU), Code Lab (NYU), CS50: Intro to Computer Programming (HE), Introduction to 3D Animation (HE), Designing Simulations & Games for Learning (NYU), Designing Games for Kids (NYU), Independent Study: Game Design in Practice (NYU)

**Social Sciences:** Independent Reading: Writing in Neuroscience (OC), Intro to Linguistic Anthropology (OC), Intro to Cultural Anthropology (OC), Intro to Religious Studies: Lived Religion (OC), Intro to Archaeology (OC), Ecological Perspectives on Forager Lifeways (OC), Principles of Economics (OC)

**Media & Performance Studies:** Topics in Digital Media: Games Studies (NYU), Designing Meaningful Interactions (NYU), Master Class in Documentary (NYU), One-Hour Spec Drama (UCLA Extension), Collaboration Experience (NTI), Playwriting: Advanced Techniques for Contemporary Stage (NTI), Playwriting: Professional Observership (NTI), Play Lab (NTI), Prof. Development for Writers (NTI), Advanced Playwriting (NTI), Theater of the Millenium (OC), Introduction to Theatre Arts (OC), Voice for the Actor (OC), Stage Management (OC), Playwriting Workshop (OC), Advanced Writing Project I (OC), Advanced Writing Project II (OC), Directing II: Non-Dramatic Work (OC), Screenwriting (OC)

## Other Training

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**Master Classes in Performance Studies (NTI):** Brian Dennehy (Monologue Interpretation), Adam Bock (Playwriting), Young Jean Lee (Collaborative Writing), Greg Allen (Neofuturist Writing), Donna DiNovelli (Playwriting), Kate Snodgrass (Playwriting), James McLindon (Playwriting), G.W. Mercier (Film Writing), Samuel Brett Williams (Playwriting), Yuriy Kordonskiy (Script Analysis), Steven Fried (Script Interpretation)

### Professional Observerships (NTI)

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|---|----------------|------|
| ● New Dramatists Theatre Company              | New York, NY   | 2011 |
| ● Roundabout Theatre Company                  | New York, NY   | 2011 |
| ● The New Group                               | New York, NY   | 2011 |
| ● Victory Gardens Theatre                     | Chicago, IL    | 2011 |
| ● Apollo Theatre                              | Chicago, IL    | 2011 |
| ● Actors Theatre Louisville (Humana Festival) | Louisville, KY | 2011 |

### Internships

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| ● Creative Affairs Internship     | Dramatists Guild of America   | 2012 |
| ● Copywriting & Central Resources | Brafton News                  | 2012 |
| ● Stage Production                | Clubbed Thumb Theatre Company | 2011 |
| ● Prospect Research & Fundraising | The Wang Theatre              | 2011 |

## Technical Proficiencies

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**Programming Languages:** Python, C, C#, C++, JavaScript, p5.js, Open Processing, HTML, CSS

**Software:** Maya, Unity, Twine, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, NVivo, MaxQDA, Qualtrics, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Audition, iMovie, JASP

## Service & Committees

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- **Invited Speaker**, Health Technology Talk, Society & Computing Club, U. Buffalo 2021
- **Game Design Workshop Teacher**, Friends Seminary, Cambridge (2nd Graders) 2021
- **Storytelling Workshop Teacher**, Fayerweather Street School (2nd Graders) 2021
- **School Resources Drive Fundraiser**, as part of IndieGoGo campaign 2021
- **Beta Tester**: Shrine's Legacy, Baldur's Gate III, POE II 2017-2021
- **Classroom Material Designer**, Friends Seminary, New York (1st Graders) 2020
- **Pro-bono Grant Writer**, Chacruna Institute for Psych. Plant Medicines 2020
- **Invited Conference Panelist**, NYU Systems Conference 2019
- **Fundraiser / Walker**, New York AIDS Walk (Team Wooden Shoe) 2017-2018
- **Playwriting Workshop Teacher**, The Neighborhood Playhouse Jr. Acting School 2017
- **Pro-bono Grant Writer**, New Repertory Theatre 2016
- **Literary Committee Member**, San Francisco Playhouse 2013-2015
- **Literary Committee Member**, The Magic Theatre 2012-2013
- **Public Park Clean-Up Worker**, Annual Day of Service (Oberlin Rotary Club) 2008-2012
- **Department Representative**, Theatre Department 2009-2012
- **Co-Chair**, Oberlin Buddhist Fellowship (Student Group) 2011-2012
- **Co-Chair**, Oberlin Student Theatre Organization (Student Group) 2009-2012
- **Member**, Oberlin Radio (Student Group) 2010-2011
- **Member**, Musical Student Theatre Organization (Student Group) 2009-2011
- **Residential Advisor**, Barnard House, Oberlin College 2009-2011
- **Student Mentor**, Mentors in Violence Prevention 2007-2008
- **New Orleans Clean-Up Worker**, 3-week clean-up following Hurricane Katrina 2006