

Newsletter Fall 2023

Rutgers Philosophy Department

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Questions about Rutgers Philosophy?

For information about the graduate program, contact program coordinator Mercedes Diaz: diaz@philosophy.rutgers.edu.

For information about the undergraduate program, contact program coordinator Jessica Koza: jesskoza@philosophy.rutgers.edu.



Professor Derrick Darby Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Derrick Darby, the Henry Rutgers Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a prestigious honor recognizing his work in the intersection of hip hop and politics, as well as his focus on social and political philosophy. Having joined Rutgers in 2020, Darby previously held the distinction of being the first Black tenured philosophy professor at the University of Michigan.

In his fifth book, Darby looks at the effects race and racism have on philosophical questions. He emphasizes the importance of addressing racial and economic injustices through collective efforts, advocating that antiracists should come together to devise what he calls “big tent remedies.”

In Darby’s signature course “Rhymes and Reasons: Hip Hop and Philosophy,” he invites artists like Melle Mel and Rah Digga to talk to students. Darby’s commitment to diversity in philosophy can also be seen in his role as the director of Rutgers University-New Brunswick’s Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy, which introduces undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds to the discipline.

Congradulation, Derrick!



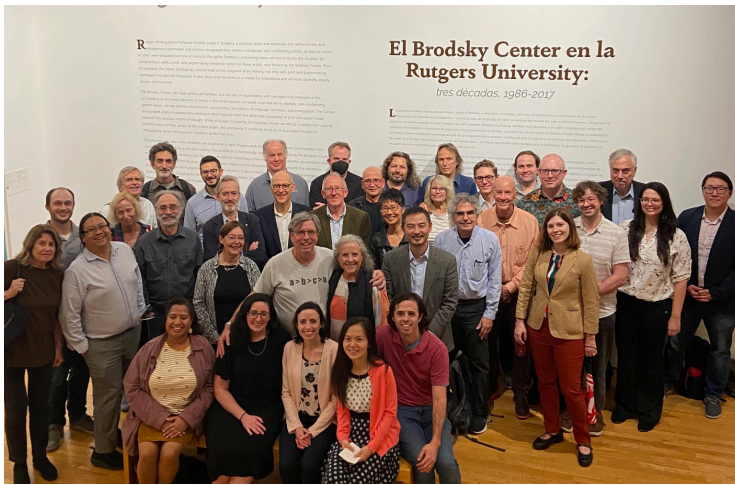
RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Conference In Honor of Larry Temkin | October 27

Organized by Professors Alex Guerrero, Frances Kamm, and Mike Otsuka with the assistance of Mercedes Diaz, Kayla Jackson, and Jess Koza.

On October 27, 2023 the Philosophy Department hosted a conference in honor of Prof. Larry Temkin who recently retired. The speakers were Jacob Ross, Shelly Kagan, Jeff McMahan, Frances Kamm, and Gustaf Arrhenius. It was followed by a dinner at the Zimmerli Museum at which tributes to Larry were given.



Highlights of 2023 Department Events

Metaphysical Mayhem | July 31 - August 4

Professors co-organizers: Jonathan Schaffer, Alex Skiles; grad students co-organizers: Diego Araña, Jordan Bridges.

The "Metaphysical Mayhem" event, a week-long bi-annual graduate student workshop in metaphysics hosted by the Rutgers Philosophy Department, successfully resumed from July 31st to August 4th, 2023, after a hiatus caused by the pandemic. The event featured a mix of professor and student presentations on diverse topics such as free will, grounding, social ontology, being and value, identity and the self, acts, events, causation, mereology, fusion and decomposition, and ontology and vagueness. Participating professors included Shieva Kleinschmidt, Brian Leftow, Kris McDaniel, Carolina Sartorio, Brad Skow, and Dean Zimmerman, alongside Karen Bennett, Jonathan Schaffer, Ted Sider, and Alex Skiles. The event wrapped up on August 4th with discussions on presentism, time-series, timelessness, properties, relations, and superpositions.



Rutgers Annual Lectures | October 2-6

Renowned philosopher and John Dewey Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Columbia University Philip Kitcher delivered three lectures at the Rutgers Lectures in Philosophy from October 2 to 6, held in Alexander Library. Kitcher covered a diverse range of topics from ethical change and social friction in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" to the stifled lives of fallen women in 19th-century fiction, including Emma Bovary, Anna Karenina, and Effi Briest. The final lecture delved into Wordsworth's philosophical poem "The Recluse" and his approach to the moral agent, exploring the religious impulse disconnected from specific doctrines. Kitcher's discussions aimed to offer reflections on contemporary societal conditions and ethical life.

NEWLAMP 2023 | July 24-28

The 2023 Northeast Workshop to Learn About Multicultural Philosophy, or NEWLAMP 2023, took place at Rutgers on July 24-28, 2023. The goal of this summer institute is to equip philosophy teachers with the competency to integrate modules on traditionally underrepresented areas of philosophy in their undergraduate courses. NEWLAMP 2023 focused on Mesoamerican, Latin American, and Latinx moral, social, and political philosophy. The workshop was led by Carlos Alberto Sanchez (San Jose State University), James Maffie (University of Maryland), and Stephanie Rivera Berruz (Marquette University). Twenty philosophy faculty from a wide range of institutions attended the workshop to work on building a better curriculum and a broader canon. The chief program coordinator for NEWLAMP 2023 is our own Alex Guerrero.



Philip Kitcher during one of the lectures



NEWLAMP Workshop, 2023

God and Fine-Tuning Summer School | July 03-21

The seminar explored three types of fine-tuning arguments, examining the perspectives of both advocates and critics. Physicists are intrigued by the fact that the initial conditions, cosmological constant, and certain other features of our universe had to satisfy narrow constraints if anything interesting was to emerge from the big bang. Some are led to posit a multiverse, and a few engage in theological speculation. The seminar brought together some of the best scientists defending fine-tuning arguments — Luke Barnes (Western Sydney University), cosmologist and co-author of *A Fortunate Universe* (Cambridge, 2016), and Aron Wall (Cambridge), high-energy physicist — as well as philosophers of science critical of fine-tuning arguments, such as Barry Loewer (Rutgers), Neil Manson (U. of Miss.), and Hans Halvorson (Princeton).

More Events and Colloquia

- 01/14-16 Perceiving Divine Presences Workshop Play by Play organized by Dean Zimmerman
- 03/09 Prof. Eric Mandelbaum (CUNY), The Best Game in Town: The Re-Emergence of the Language of Thought Hypothesis Across the Cognitive Science
- 03/17-18 The First Rutgers Analytic Theology Seminar (RATS) organized Brian Leftow and assisted by Frederick Choo.
- 03/23 Rutgers Climate Lecture, Prof. Julie Walsh (Wellesley)
- 04/07 Prof. Cailin O'Connor (UC, Irvine)
- 04/14-16 The Psychology and Epistemology of Religious Experience workshop organized by Tim Perrine.
- 04/20 Class of 1970 Annual Lecture, Prof. Tim Maudlin (NYU), Science and Metaphysics: Friends, Enemies, or Passing Acquaintances?
- 04/27 Mesthene Lecture- Prof. Susanne Bobzien (All Souls College)
- 04/28 Prof. Jake Quilty-Dunn (Rutgers University)
- 07/09-15 The Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy- Director: Derrick Darby and Coordinated by Mercedes Diaz
- 10/12 Prof. Nina Emery (Mt. Holyoke College)
- 10/19 Prof. Thi Nguyen (University of Utah)
- 11/30 Prof. James Owen Weatherall (UC, Irvine)



DEPARTMENT ON STRIKE IN SOLIDARITY WITH UNION WORKERS

This past spring, Rutgers AAUP-AFT, Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union, and AAUP-BHSNJ (health science faculty) joined forces to launch the first ever academic workers' strike in Rutgers' 257-year history. We won significant wage increases, increased job security for lecturers, salary equity across campuses, greater department-level control over course scheduling, and recognition of postdocs, grad fellows, lecturers, BHSNJ members, and winter/summer instructors. Additionally, we demanded a living wage for graduate students and provisions for the common good of the university community, including a \$15 minimum wage for campus workers and an affordable housing program.

Throughout, the RU Philosophy played a crucial role on the picket line, with the majority of the department participating in this historic effort—the department even turned into a “strike HQ” for a few days as several members met to make strike signs and regroup. The strike lasted five days, ending when union officials imposed a suspension of strike activity after a non-binding “framework” for a tentative agreement was reached. The strike marked a monumental shift in our union’s understanding of how we win transformative contracts, laying the groundwork for future wins by making strike threats more credible and by showing our members that when we’re organized, we win a better University for all.



Faculty Accomplishments

Alec Walen will publish the paper “Deontology in Graphs: An Elucidation,” in the *Journal of Contemporary Legal Issues* (forthcoming this fall). Walen also presented the invited talk “The Limits of Culpability: Why the Criminal Justice System Needs a Complementary Foundation in Fair Forfeiture,” at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security, and the Law (Oct. 17, 2023).

Daniel Hausman had his book *How Health Care Can Be Cost-Effective and Fair* published by Oxford University Press. Additionally, the book *The Inexact and Separate Science of Economics* was published by Cambridge University Press.

Martin Lin’s paper “The Contingency of the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles in Leibniz” will be published in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*. Additionally, his entries on “Mode,” “Mind-Body Identity,” “Faith,” and “Conception” were published in the *Cambridge Spinoza Lexicon*. Lin also contributed to the edition “Powers and Abilities in Early Modern Philosophy” (published by Routledge) with the paper “Spinoza on Powers and Abilities.” Professor Lin has also shared his insights through invited talks, such as “Leibniz’s Idealism and the Problem of Extension” at the UT Austin Annual Early Modern Conference and “Spinoza on Powers and Abilities” at Humboldt University of Berlin.

Zoe Jenkin published the paper “Perceptual Learning” in *Philosophy Compass*, “Epistemic and Aesthetic Conflict” in *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, and “The Function of Perceptual Learning” in *Philosophical Perspectives*. Jenkin also published two book reviews in *Mind and Language* and *The Journal of Philosophical Research* respectively. She will also publish the paper “Learning in the Social Being System”, co-authored by Lori Markson, in the journal *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. In the spring Jenkin gave the keynote address at the Gateway Graduate Conference at the University of Missouri St. Louis. She also published a book comment on Christopher Hill’s new book *Perceptual Experience* in a symposium at the Pacific APA. This fall, she gave a colloquium talk at UC Santa Cruz, and a talk at the New England Workshop on Metaphysics. In November Jenkin gave a colloquium talk at MIT and a colloquium talk at Princeton Cognitive Science department.

Barry Loewer will have his book *What Breathes Fire into the Equations* published by Oxford University Press (see column below for our interview!). Moreover, his paper “Probability and Typicality in Statistical Mechanics” is featured in a memorial volume for Detlef Durr. Loewer has also presented insightful talks, including “Probabilities and Counterfactuals” at Stanford and “Laws and Ratbag Idealism” at UC Berkeley. His paper “Counterfactuals and Time’s Arrows,” published by Cambridge University Press, adds to the scholarly discourse on counterfactuals and the nature of time.

Faculty Highlight

Barry Loewer: Bringing Lewis Back to Quine



An interview on his forthcoming book
What Breathes Fire into the Equations

We asked Barry Loewer to introduce his book, and he began by explaining its title: it comes from a question asked by Stephen Hawking, “What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?” The book’s mission is to answer that question, or at least what Loewer takes Hawking to be asking, which is: what laws of nature are, and how they determine the fundamental ontology of the universe.

There are primarily two different ideas about what laws do: one comes from David Lewis, and the other from David Armstrong and Tim Maudlin. Lewis’ idea is that laws systematize, while Armstrong’s and Maudlin’s is that laws govern. In Armstrong’s version there are certain kinds of fundamental properties called ‘universals,’ which are connected by a relation called ‘contingent necessitation’. Universals are over and above the fundamental facts in the world, but they make the fundamental facts do what they do. Maudlin takes laws to be fundamental items that evolve the state of the world as time passes. “I really liked Lewis’ idea that laws systematize,” says Barry. “I thought the governing view was interesting too, but I didn’t like it. I didn’t like it because I couldn’t

More Faculty Accomplishments

A symposium on **Juan Comesaña's** book, *Being Rational and Being Right*, was published in *Philosophical Studies*, with contributions from Mark Schroeder, John Hawthorne, and Roger White. Comesaña also participated in the Urbino Summer School in Epistemology.

Carolina Sartorio had her book *Causalism: Unifying Action and Free Action* published by Oxford University Press. Additionally, she gave an invited talk at the Metaphysical Mayhem, called "The grounds of free will." Sartorio has also given talks at a metaphysics workshop in Buenos Aires.

Holly Smith published the article "Can a Single Account of Supererogation Handle Both Finite and Infinite Cases?" in *Philosophical Studies*. Further expanding on this topic, she has also published "Even More Supererogatory," in the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. Additionally, Smith presented at the Pacific Division Meetings of the APA in April 2023.

Michael Glanzberg has actively contributed to philosophical discourse through talks and engagements in various locations. He has presented talks in Riga (Latvia), London, Warsaw, and at the University of Connecticut. Additionally, Glanzberg provided comments at the American Association of Mexican Philosophers meeting in New York.

Dean Zimmerman delivered the invited talk "On Cosmological Arguments" for the a Science-Religion-Philosophy conference in Istanbul. He also co-organized the three-week summer school "On fine-tuning arguments for the existence of God and/or a multiverse." Additionally, Zimmerman organized the seminar "On divine attributes" at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome

Alex Guerrero received the Lebowitz Prize at the Pacific APA in 2023 and delivered the Lebowitz Prize Lecture in the same event. Additionally, he gave an invited talk titled "Representation, Deference, and Subordination" at the Political Deference and Partisanship conference held at Harvard University's Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Ethics. Guerrero also co-organized the NEWLAMP conference.

Michael Otsuka had his book *How to Pool Risks Across Generations: The Case for Collective Pensions* published by Oxford University Press. This publication is part of a book series featuring revisions and expansions of Oxford Uehiro Centre Lectures in Practical Ethics. He also delivered an invited talk about his book in the Leuven Institute for Advanced Studies in Belgium.

understand how it is that things over and above ordinary facts can do anything to the ordinary facts. That's how my book got started." While Barry preferred the Lewisian view about laws, he also identified problems with it: most importantly, Lewis relies on the metaphysical notion of 'perfectly natural properties', properties which are said to carve nature at its metaphysical joints. Barry was searching for an alternative that kept the Lewisian view that laws systematize, but that didn't rely on such metaphysical notions as that of perfectly natural properties. That's how he came up with the idea of the Package Deal Account (PDA).

Barry's explanation of laws traces back to Quine's project of naturalizing metaphysics. On that, he said: "If I were to advertise my book, I'd say it's bringing Lewis back to Quine. If in fact I can convince people that I've done that, [...] I will be very happy. And in the course of doing that, it builds a kind of metaphysical view of the world that connects metaphysics and epistemology." Barry then told us a story about what an ideal science would look like: science started by looking at the macroscopic facts of the world (which is a Quinean assumption). Some macroscopic facts are more important than others: in particular, some of the most important are bodies in motion. If we imagine an ideal, final theory, the author defends that this theory will be a package, which will package together the macroscopic facts, in the terms that human beings are interested in. Statistical mechanics plays a crucial role in this package. This is the core of the PDA.

When we asked what are the next steps of the project, Barry explained that there will be a second book coming along developing the importance of statistical mechanics to philosophy. "The only reason I could finish this book is a good friend of mine..." Barry pauses for a moment and then continues, giggling: "she's not only my friend, she's my wife [...]. She said, 'You know, you really have two books here, and you're never going to finish it unless you divide it into two books'. She was right." Barry's next book is called *The Mentaculus Vision*, named after a theory created by Arthur Gopnik, an eccentric character in the film *The Serious Man*, directed by the Coen brothers.

Barry's book, *What Breathes Fire into the Equations*, will be published in the spring of 2024, by Oxford University Press.



An excellent illustration by Eli, Barry's Grandson

More Faculty Accomplishments

Frances Kamm had the Paperback edition of her book *Almost Over: Aging, Dying Dead* published. She published the article “Abortion Bans and Cruelty” in *Journal of Practical Ethics* and “Allocation of Scarce Resources, Disability, and Parity” in *Philosophical Studies*. She also contributed various chapters to *Handbook on Supererogation*, *Lanson Lectures in Bioethics*, and *Pandemic Ethics: From COVID 19 to Disease X*. She gave the Keynote Lecture, “Considering the Rationality of Suicide,” at the 5th International Conference on Philosophy and Meaning in Life (ICPML). In addition, Kamm presented at the Conference in Honor of Larry Temkin, Center for Ethics, Philosophy, and Public Policy, University of St. Andrews, and Social Philosophy and Policy Conference.

Susanna Schellenberg co-authored a paper with M. Peterson titled “Block on Attribution, Discrimination, and Adaptation,” published in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Moreover, she published “The Generality and Particularity of Perception” in *Mind & Language*. Schellenberg contributed two papers to the collection *Perceptual Experience and Empirical Reason*. She also published the paper “Capacities-First Philosophy” in *Contemporary Debates in the Philosophy of Mind*. Schellenberg delivered invited talks at Brown University, the GSU Neurophilosophy Forum, the Princeton Workshop in Mind and Epistemology, and the Winter Perception Workshop in San Diego. Additionally, she delivered a keynote talk at the Mind and Matter 2023 conference in Helsinki and was interviewed by the Dissenter podcast on “The Unity of Perception: Content, Consciousness, Evidence”

Larry Temkin’s book, *Being Good in a World of Need*, is being released in paperback by Oxford University Press in early 2024. In addition, it is being translated into Chinese, with an expected release in China sometime in 2024.

In addition to being elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, **Derrick Darby** published his new book *A Realistic Blacktopia: Why We Must Unite to Fight* with Oxford University Press. Darby was invited to lecture at places that include Columbia University Political Theory Workshop, Princeton University Black Political Thought conference, Harvard University, and so on. He also gave public lectures at Kutztown University and University of Zurich Center for Ethics.

Elizabeth Camp gave an invited talk titled “Identity Labels as Interpretive Frames for Building Agency” at the Society for Philosophy and Psychology in Pittsburgh. Additionally, Camp delivered another invited talk titled “Stories and Selves: A Twisted Love Story about the Meaning of Life” as the World Philosophy Day Lecture at North Carolina State. Camp also organized a two-day workshop titled “Perspectives on Perspectives in Language,” which brought together linguists, psychologists, and philosophers, featuring notable speakers such as Dan Lassiter, Ethan Nowak, Samia Hesni, Paula Rubio-Fernandez, and Callan Howland.

Ernest Sosa gave the Gustav Bergmann Public Lecture and the Keynote talk at the graduate conference of the University of Iowa (March). In May, he gave the Jowett Lecture at Oxford, a Lecture at the University of Helsinki and a talk at the University of Glasgow. In June, Sosa was the keynote speaker at the Bled Epistemology Conference (Lake Bled, Slovenia). In August, he gave a lecture series in a weeklong conference in Santiago, Chile, and two plenary conference lectures at Vrije University in Amsterdam. In September, Sosa gave the keynote lecture, about Strawson and virtue epistemology, at a conference on the philosophy of Peter Strawson at Oxford. In October, Sosa gave two keynote talks at the conference “The Epistemology of ES,” at the University of Seville, and he also participated in author-meets-critics encounters in two days of talks about his recent Epistemic Explanations.

Placements Updates

Please join us in congratulating our recent graduate students for their placement results! To find full placement information, please visit <https://philosophy.rutgers.edu/placement>.

- **Ting-An Lin**, University of Connecticut, tenure-track
- **Pamela Robinson**, University of British Columbia - Okanagan, tenure track
- **Daniel Rubio**, Toronto Metropolitan University, tenure track
- **Christopher Fruge**, Oxford, Junior Research Fellowship (3-4 years)
- **Anton Johnson**, SUNY - Geneseo, postdoc (1 year)

New Faculty Spotlights

Interview Questions

Question (1): What philosophical questions are you finding particularly interesting at the moment and why?

Question (2): What are you most looking forward to about being at Rutgers?

Question (3): What are your non-philosophical interests and hobbies?

Zoe Jenkin

Assistant Professor
Epistemology, Philosophy
of Mind, Philosophy of
Psychology



(1). Very broadly, my research is at the intersection of philosophy of mind and epistemology. More specifically, right now I am interested in epistemic agency, epistemic responsibility and reasoning, especially unconscious reasoning. There's this, for example, question about what aspects of our mind are really something we're doing versus the mere underlying causal processes. Where does the self actually become involved in cognition? Another project I'm working on is about perceptual learning. I'm interested in questions such as 'What is the function of perceptual learning?'; 'What is the difference in function between perception and belief?'

(2). Getting to know the faculty, postdocs and graduate students and interact with such an excellent philosophical community.

(3). My kittens; they are my main interest and hobby. I also like reading novels that are set in different places and times because I like escapism. Another interest of mine is baking.



Mimolette (Mimi) & Bliquet

(1). Right now, a lot of the work that I'm doing is on the structure of mental representation. For example, whether there is a language of thought, or whether there are other kinds of mental representations that don't look anything like language (iconic forms of representation). And another strand of my work is on belief, so something I'm working on is the idea that one of the core functions of belief is not to get you to the truth, but rather to protect your self-concept, and this has the important function of preventing you from getting depressed.

(2). The people in the department; grad students and faculty. It's a really lovely community of super smart people.

(3). I play guitar; basketball (I can't really play, but I'm a huge fan of the NBA); cooking. I tried to braise a short rib, but ... the pan exploded and one of the shards landed on my toe. I had to get nine stitches!

Jake Quilty-Dunn

Assistant Professor
Philosophy of mind, psychology,
& cognitive science



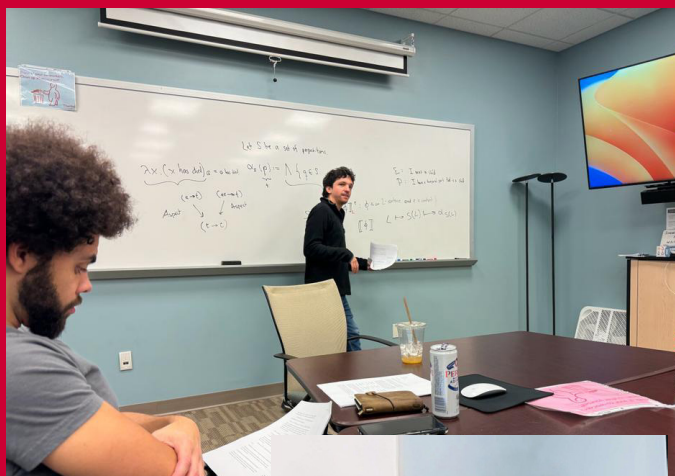
Welcome, Zoe and Jake!

Graduate Student Work-in-progress Talks

Graduate Student Work-in-progress Talks are a great space for graduate students to present work for commentary to an audience of only other graduate students. We had fully packed schedules for both Spring and Fall 2023, and it had become pivotal activity for the graduate student community both academically and beyond. Appreciations go to the organizers of the talks: Adrian Liu in the spring and Jordan Scott in the fall.

Spring speakers: Kayla Jackson, Diego Arana, Frederick Choo, Jordan Scott, Audrey Powers, Caroline von Klempere, Adrian Liu, Evan Welchance, Cal Howland and AG McGee, Minghui Yang

Fall speakers: Mia Accomando, Bram Vaassen, Itamar Weinshtock Saadon, Avraham Sommers, Andrew Rubner, Adrian Liu, James McIntyre, Trevor Woodward, Audrey Powers, Caroline Hoskins, Rhys Borchert, Diego Araña



Top: Graduate student Diego Arana talking about “aspects” in metametaphysics.

Right: Visiting student Rhys Borchert presenting “When to Disbelieve your Lying Eyes”



Graduate Student Accomplishments

Fernanda Abrahão delivered an invited talk at the Brazilian Encounter of Female Analytic Philosophers, titled “Self-Reference, Circularity and Paradoxes.” She also delivered a talk on the same topic at the São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Contemporary Logic, Rationality, and Information (SPLogIC), which won, together with five other talks, the prize for best talks in the conference.

Frederick Choo will publish the paper titled “The Subjective Ought and the Accessibility of Moral Truths” in the *American Philosophical Quarterly*. Moreover, Choo presented a paper titled “Desire Satisfactionism and the No-Future Time-of-Desire View” at the 16th Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (RoME XVI) held at the University of Colorado-Boulder. His presentation earned him the Young Ethicist Prize.

Jordan Bridges presented a poster at the Society for Philosophy and Psychology Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh during the summer.

Itamar Weinshtock Saadon co-authored a paper titled “Evolutionary Debunking of (Arguments for) Moral Realism,” together with Arnon Levy, which was published in *Synthese*. Additionally, Saadon, along with David Enoch, co-authored a chapter titled “Oh, All the Wrongs I Could Have Performed! Or: Why Care about Morality, Robustly Realistically Understood,” which is part of the *Oxford Handbook of Moral Realism*. In terms of conference contributions, Saadon presented a poster at the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) conference in Pittsburgh during the summer.

Timothy Perrine (postdoc) has published papers in *Episteme*, *Metaphilosophy*, *Philosophia*, and *Logos & Episteme*, as well as encyclopedia entries for Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy and Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Moreover, he organized a workshop on the Psychology and Epistemology of Religious Experiences.

Bram Vaassen (visiting postdoc) had his paper “Absence and Abnormality” published in *Analysis*. Additionally, Vaassen’s paper “Mental Causation for Standard Dualists” has been accepted for publication in the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. He also presented to the Philosophy of Time Society at the Central APA in Denver, the University of Bergen, The Chalmers University AI colloquium, and at the Lake Forest experimental philosophy seminar.

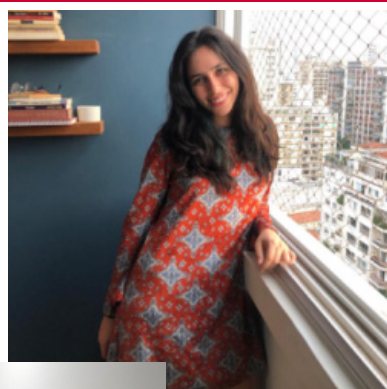
Meet the First Years!

Interview Questions

- 1) What areas of philosophy are you most interested in right now?
- 2) What are your non-philosophical interests and hobbies?
- 3) What philosophy paper or book impressed you the most when you read it?
- 4) What are you most excited about in grad school?

Oliver Wolf

1. Philosophy of language, semantics, and pragmatics, and related interests in the philosophy of science, metaphysics, and metaethics.
2. Linguistics, especially phonology; the peoples of the former Soviet Union, especially the Caucasus and Central Asia. Hobbies: cooking, hiking, and Magic: the Gathering.
- 3) Everything of Quine's that I've read (Don't ask me what I think now.)
- 4) I'm honestly just really excited to read a lot, discuss those readings with others, and develop my interests in the process!



Fernanda Abrahao

1. Right now, my primary interests are in logic and the philosophy of mathematics, but I also hold an interest in philosophy of language and metaphysics.
2. I love watching films, especially horror and film noir. I also enjoy writing fiction, and cooking.
3. In my philosophy readings, two pieces that stood out to me are Heraclitus' aphorisms and Parmenides' poem "On Nature".
4. I'm excited to do philosophy with a community of such smart people!

Ethan Muse

1. Philosophy of religion and the philosophy of science.
2. A few of my non-philosophical interests are astronomy, college football, and conspiracy theories/fringe theories. Relatedly, a few of my non-philosophical hobbies are amateur astronomy, watching college football, and listening to people argue about conspiracy theories/fringe theories.
3. *Nature, Contemplation and the One* by John Deck. Ironically, however, the book had the effect of making Plotinus' *Enneads* sound like an even more impressive achievement than itself.
4. I'm most excited about having more freedom to pursue my academic interests than ever before.



Minsoo Cho

1. I'm interested in metaphysics and philosophy of action right now.
2. Playing with my daughter and cooking (including baking)
3. Quine's "On What There Is"
4. Doing philosophy with superb colleagues.



Zhiguo Huang

1. I'm currently interested in Philosophy of mind and cognitive science, especially consciousness and agency.
2. I love reading, cooking, watching soccer and playing video games.
3. *The Embodied Mind and Philosophy* & *The Mirror of Nature*
4. Learning about various fields in philosophy.



Daniel Binenboym

1. Metaphysics, logic
2. Games of all sorts, archery
3. Descartes' "Meditations on First Philosophy"
4. Learning!

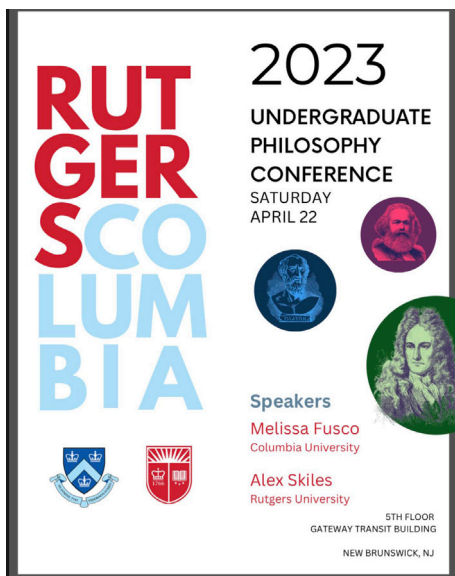


Questions about our graduate program?

Contact our graduate program coordinator Mercedes Diaz: diaz@philosophy.rutgers.edu or admission director Michael Otsuka: michael.otsuka@rutgers.edu

Undergraduate Highlights

Phi Sigma Tau, the Philosophy Honors Society, organized the **3rd Annual Rutgers-Columbia Undergraduate Philosophy Conference** on April 22, 2023. The officers involved were Anja Ramesh, Wilhelm McGinnis & Jake Khawaja along with Ken-na Srivastava. Keynote Speakers were Prof. Melissa Fusco (Columbia University) & Prof. Alex Skiles (Rutgers University).



Left: Organizers and speakers at the 3rd Annual Rutgers-Columbia Undergraduate Philosophy Conference.

Right: Undergraduate student Juan Cadile (Iona University) presenting "Creativity of Interplay"



The **Rutgers Philosophy Club** meets every Thursday at 6pm in room 413 in the College Ave Student Center. For the 2023-2024 academic year, the philosophy club is organized by Jessica Hernandez (president), Ryan Skinner (co-president), Jacob Stevens (treasurer), Annie Liang (Liaison), and Kashvi Gupta (secretary).

Selected events in Spring and Fall 2023:

- Aaron Rabinowitz on conspiracy theories
- Avraham Sommer on morality and self-interest
- Patrick Brooks on the origin of conspiracy theories
- Jerry Piven on the philosophy of death denial
- Adrian Liu on the Justification of Power
- William Gruen on Heraclitus of Ephesus
- G. R. Tomaini on Discourse on Justice and Praxis
- Emanuel Ordóñez Angulo on Virtual Subjectivity



Letter from the Chair

Karen Bennett, Department Chair

Dear friends of the department,

Another year over! Time flies when you're having fun.

As the rest of the newsletter shows, we have been very busy with numerous events, ranging from ordinary colloquia to the Rutgers Lectures to various workshops and conferences.

We are thrilled to welcome several new colleagues. Although Juan Comesaña and Carolina Sartorio joined the department in Fall 2022, they worked remotely for their first year, and have just this fall joined us in New Jersey. Jerry Piven, who previously taught for us as a part-time lecturer, has taken up a multi-year contract as an NTT, bringing stability to our undergraduate offerings in phenomenology and existentialism. And Zoe Jenkin and Jake Quilty-Dunn, 50/50 in Philosophy and the Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science, are the department's first junior hires in roughly twenty years. Exciting! We are in the midst of making some further hiring decisions and hope to have more news for you soon.

Still, the universe keeps throwing challenges at us. We went on strike last spring, to raise wages and working conditions for adjuncts and graduate students. The current Israel-Hamas war has sent a grad student home for military service. And the School of Arts and Sciences is still struggling with the budget. Soon we will be told that we must hitchhike to conferences, and burn old manuscripts for warmth. 🙄

I hope the winter break has provided you with some quiet downtime and a chance to reconnect with friends and family. Best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year!



Would you like to donate to Rutgers Philosophy? Go to <https://philosophy.rutgers.edu/donate-to-philosophy>!