



# ARPA 2021

## Hindsight / Foresight

The Atlantic Region Philosophers Association

2021 Annual Meeting

22-23 October 2021

MountAllison  
Philosophy

\*Due to Covid-19 outbreaks, Mount Allison hosted this meeting virtually. The event was originally scheduled to be held in October 2020 in Sackville, New Brunswick.

## **Atlantic Region Philosophers Association Annual Meeting October 22-23, 2021**

Online via Zoom / Mount Allison University

Dear ARPA participants,

We're excited to host an online meeting of the Atlantic Region Philosophers Association on October 22 and 23, 2021.

In this program you'll find the conference schedule, a list of presenters (and paper abstracts) in alphabetical order, and some instructions on how to participate in this year's event using Zoom videoconferencing software.

The theme of our planned conference in 2020 was 'Hindsight', more or less purely for the pun, but we were excited by the philosophical work and reflection it would occasion. In May 2020, it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic was going to interrupt our efforts to bring people safely to Sackville, and we elected to cancel ARPA for the year. (Many thanks to the Dalhousie Colloquium for hosting an October 2020 of 'quasi-ARPA'). In early 2021, with vaccines available and restrictions lowering around the world, we renewed planning for an in-person ARPA again. We recast our theme as 'Hindsight / Foresight', but this didn't help us forecast that we would be frustrated again by increasing COVID-19 cases and regional restrictions.. (I invite you to insert a remark about the Owl of Minerva if you have a good one.) So once more we won't be able to welcome you to Sackville in the balmy New Brunswick autumn. But we will keep calm and carry on to do philosophy together by remote digital connection.

Many thanks to each and all for your patience and understanding as we shifted our attention a few weeks ago to planning for an online event. Everyone is invited to send us a mailing address, and we're very happy to post a small parcel of items from Sackville and Mount Allison Philosophy that we would have gifted you in person. Some of you have already done so with your Eventbrite registration, and others may email [philosophy@mta.ca](mailto:philosophy@mta.ca).

A special Thank you is owed to Angela Thibodeau, who worked on details for both in-person and online versions of the event. Another special thank you to our local organizing committee across nearly two years, including Jane Dryden, Emily Bingeman, Drew Inkpen, and Roopen Majithia. Finally, thanks to Sally Haslanger for being so accommodating and eager to participate in ARPA all this time since 2019.

On behalf of the Mount Allison philosophers, we're looking forward to seeing you soon,

Robbie Moser  
Head, Department of Philosophy  
Mount Allison University

## **Zoom Links ARPA 2021**

To participate in the sessions of ARPA 2021, please use the following Zoom links accordingly.  
(These links were also copied in the body of the email in which you were sent this document.)

Use this link to join Dr. Drew Inkpen just ahead of the conference start time for a quick practice of the Zoom functionality (including our owl-themed breakout rooms), from 1:00-2:00pm Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>:

**ARPA - Practice Session 1:00pm-2:00pm Friday**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89044069154?pwd=a3EwLy9JUEVNdlVxQ0NkTHZvcFB0UT09>

Use this link to participate in the paper sessions on Friday, October 22:

**ARPA - Friday Session 2:00pm-5:30pm Friday**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82399959136?pwd=RGFHTWNIWZRM2lpWkxUYmY5aVFoUT09>

Use this link to attend Dr. Sally Haslanger's Keynote Session, on Friday Oct. 22 (7:30 pm Atlantic):

**ARPA - Keynote Session 7:30pm-10:00pm Friday**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87043993705?pwd=ejJvNEhDeFVNbG9hcVE1NVdFYURHUT09>

Use this link to participate in the paper sessions on Saturday, Oct. 23:

**ARPA - Saturday Session 9:00am-5:00pm Saturday**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83883421262?pwd=UlljYlNHOUR6ZVN4T084NE1IalQyZz09>

Use this link to attend the Annual General Meeting during the lunch break on Saturday, Oct. 23:  
(The meeting will start at 1:00pm)

**ARPA - AGM 12:00pm-2:00pm Saturday**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88437170806?pwd=TkxJR0V0eUs2MmUwYi8zUVZKRcUUT09>

**ARPA 2021 Schedule**  
(Online via Zoom / Mount Allison University)

**Friday, October 22**

	<b>Breakout Room 1 'Snowy Owl'</b>	<b>Breakout Room 2 'Great Horned Owl'</b>	<b>Breakout Room 3 'Saw-Whet Owl'</b>	<b>Breakout Room 4 'Barred Owl'</b>
2:00-2:50	"Going Meta with Leonard Cohen" <b>Jason Holt</b> (Acadia)	"The Interpretative Dimensions of Evidence" <b>Alexandra Cunningham and Alexander Wentzell</b> (Calgary)	<i>Panel:</i> "Gaia, reconsidered" <b>W. Ford Doolittle</b> (Dalhousie) <b>Letitia Meynell</b> (Dalhousie) <b>Celso Neto</b> (Dalhousie)	"Is there a thought experimenter's regress?" <b>Cameron C. Yetman</b> (Western/Dalhousie)
3:00-3:50	"Self-narrative as a distinct narrative form" <b>Dana Doucette</b> (Birkbeck College, London)	"The Epistemic Conceit of 'True Beliefs' and the Belief in Evil People" <b>Lissa Skitolsky and Lara Millman</b> (Dalhousie)		" <i>Bewusstsein Überhaupt</i> : Monopsychic Consciousness or Regulative Idea?" <b>Daniel Adsett</b> (American University in Bulgaria)
4:00-4:50	"Nietzsche, Trump, and the Social Practices of Valuing Truth" <b>Daniel I. Harris</b> (Trent)	"Fuller on Post-Truth" <b>Bernard Wills</b> (Grenfell)	"Taking the Climate Crisis to Court" <b>Nathan Brett</b> (Dalhousie)	"How to Have an Insight: Weil and Murdoch on the Value of Attention" <b>Mark Fortney</b> (UofT Mississauga)
5:30-7:30	<i>Break</i>			
7:30	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</b> <b>Sally Haslanger</b> Ford Professor of Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies (MIT) "Historical and Material Roots of Our Social World: Bodies, Resources, and the Environment"			

## Saturday, October 23

	Breakout Room 1 ‘Snowy Owl’	Breakout Room 2 ‘Great Horned Owl’	Breakout Room 3 ‘Saw-Whet Owl’	Breakout Room 4 ‘Barred Owl’
9:00-9:50	<i>Book Symposium:</i> “Cora Diamond’s <i>Reading Wittgenstein with Anscombe, Going On to Ethics</i> ”	“The Unresolved Scope of Morality: Darwin, Moral Inconsistency, and Survival” <b>Richmond Campbell</b> (Dalhousie)	<i>Panel:</i> “Connecting Philosophy & Science: Metaphors & the Human Microbiome” <b>Tyler Curry</b> (Yorkville) <b>Jane Dryden</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Juan Facundo</b> (Independent) <b>Caleb Foster</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Shruti Gosai</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Drew Inkpen</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Tori MacBeath</b> (McMaster) <b>Mackenzie Scott</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Jonah Walker-Sherman</b> (Mt.A)	“Inspecting Society’s Dualism: An Argument for Increased Empathy Toward The Mentally Ill” <b>Aidan Peters</b> (St.F.X.)
10:00-10:50	<b>Steven Burns</b> (Dalhousie) <b>Cora Diamond</b> (Virginia) <b>Jennifer Flynn</b> (MUN) <b>Robbie Moser</b> (Mt.A.) <b>Patrice Philie</b> (Ottawa) <b>Amy Ward</b> (Guelph)	“Gender Violence: Resistance, Resiliency, and Responsibility” <b>Sylvia Burrow</b> (CBU)		“Markets In A Society Organised In The General Interest” <b>Robert Ansell</b> (St. Mary’s)
11:00-11:50		“What kind of materialism is F.A. Lange talking about in his <i>History of Materialism</i> ?” <b>Scott Edgar</b> (St. Mary’s)	“Kant’s Cosmopolitan Commitment to Environmental Preservation” <b>Nikolas Hamm</b> (McGill)	“ ‘I Knew All Along’: Post-Self-Deception Judgments and Hindsight Bias” <b>Martina Orlandi</b> (Penn State)
12:00-2:00	<i>Lunch break &amp; AGM</i>			
2:00-2:50	<i>Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus</i> Centenary Symposium  <b>Lynette Reid</b> (Dalhousie) <b>Jimmy Plourde</b> (UQTR) <b>Mathieu Marion</b> (UQAM) <b>Michael Hymers</b> (Dalhousie)	“What’s Wrong with Calling COVID-19 ‘The Chinese Virus’: Microinvalidations, Negligence, and a Duty of Care” <b>Emma McClure</b> (St. Mary’s)	“The clinical algorithm as an epistemic tool” <b>Eve A. Roberts</b> (King’s)	“Can we develop more ethically sound harm-benefit analyses in the animal sciences?” <b>Andrew Fenton</b> (Dalhousie)
3:00-3:50		“The Ethics of Praise” <b>Emily Bingeman</b> (Mt.A.)	“Nonhuman Animals, Transportation Technologies, and Epistemic Injustice” <b>Andrew Lopez</b> (Queen’s)	“Language as the Given: Normative Conceptual Holism, Concept Acquisition, and Nonlinguistic Concepts” <b>Erik Nelson</b> (Dalhousie)
4:00-4:50				

## **ABSTRACTS**

### **ARPA 2021**

**ADSETT, Daniel** (American University in Bulgaria)

Bewusstsein Überhaupt: Monopsychic Consciousness or Regulative Idea?

In his philosophical works, Karl Jaspers constructs a theory of *Bewusstsein überhaupt*, translated variously as consciousness-as-such or consciousness-in-general. On his view, *Bewusstsein überhaupt* is but one of seven modes of the Encompassing (*das Umgreifende*) and refers to that mode which allows for the construction and communication of universally valid, objective truths. When, for example, a scientist unearths a new law of nature, that new law of nature is valid for *Bewusstsein überhaupt* – it is valid for every consciousness indiscriminately. This notion of *Bewusstsein überhaupt*, however, is not originally Jaspers' own. In his 1909 study of the concept, Hans Amrhein traces the concept back to Immanuel Kant's 1783 *Prolegomena* and shows how the concept played an important role throughout 19<sup>th</sup> century German philosophy. Yet, the status of *Bewusstsein überhaupt* has remained problematic. While some have suggested Kant advances an Averroistic monopsychism, others, such as Hans Vaihinger, have argued that *Bewusstsein überhaupt* is nothing but a regulative idea, a concept that remains useful while not corresponding to anything real. In the paper that follows, I investigate whether *Bewusstsein überhaupt*, as deployed in the German tradition from Kant to Jaspers, is best understood as a regulative idea or as a reference to some real monopsychic reality. Concluding that it is best understood as a regulative idea, I will then examine some of the implications of denying *Bewusstsein überhaupt* a real existence.

**ANSELL, Robert** (Saint Mary's University)

Markets In A Society Organised In The General Interest

It is noted that markets are not necessarily capitalist or individualistic, and that it can be in the general interest for a society to have markets for goods and services. However it is also argued that markets need to be structured in a certain way in order to prevent behaviour that is not in the general interest. The paper discusses what market structures would be appropriate to avoiding individualism, while accommodating the virtues of markets.

**BINGEMAN, Emily** (Mount Allison University)

The Ethics of Praise

While praise is often considered to be the counterpart to blame, it has received little focused attention by moral philosophers. This lack of attention is often justified by the assumption that the risks of harm involved in our praising practices are less pressing than the risks involved in our blaming practices.<sup>1</sup> My project aims to establish that there is a range of 1 serious harms found in our praising practices, and that this gives us reason to pay more attention to the ethics of praise. I outline three structural features of our praising practices that make them liable to cause harm. First, praise functions to communicate social norms and therefore can be used as a tool to enforce those norms

and exert control. Second, praise often reaches beyond the intended scope of the praiser, and therefore aggregates to form more powerful patterns of social control. And last, praise, because of its apparent innocuousness, can be more difficult to resist than blame. I explore two main cases of harmful praise that serve to demonstrate the seriousness of these harms: praising trans women for passing as cis women; and praising people with disabilities for performing everyday tasks.

<sup>1</sup>See, e.g. Wolf, 1980, p.156; Watson, 1996, p. 242; Vargas, 2013, p.5; Pereboom, 2014, p. 102; Tognazzini & Coates, 2018; Anderson et al., 2020, p.3.

**BRETT, Nathan** (Dalhousie University)

### Taking the Climate Crisis to Court

In a previous ARPA presentation (Taking Climate Change Seriously), I concluded that government inaction on climate change is a form of discrimination. In this paper I want to look at the question from a legal point of view. Is this inadequate response a form of discrimination that is recognized by the Canadian Charter of Rights? In *LaRose*, the BC case in which 15 young people sued the federal government for its inadequate climate response to the climate crisis, has so far not met with success. The court did not find sufficient evidence of a violation of rights to send this case forward to trial. That decision is now under appeal. The similar Ontario case *Mathu*, involving seven young people on the other hand, has made it by this first legal hurdle. Justice Carole J. Brown ruled in favour of plaintiffs, allow the case to proceed to trial. Much of this paper will concern the judge's reasons for this decision. In the process I will be defending Justice Brown's decision.

The question of discrimination against young people resulting from an inadequate response to the escalating crisis is, of course, only one of the issues at stake in this case. Charter Section 7 rights to life, liberty, and security of the person are also at issue. Discrimination (unequal treatment) will remain as the focus of this discussion. However, the increased risks and harms under consideration in a previous paper are virtually the same as those identified in Section 7. If government inaction is discriminatory, it is because the lives, freedom and security of younger people are in greater jeopardy than those of adults. Two concepts of age discrimination will be considered. Of particular concern will be the Crown's contention that a merely "temporal" difference in the impact (the same impacts but at a different time) of government-legislated policy cannot be equated with discrimination by age. I argue that this is a mistake, both about the impacts and about the nature of age discrimination.

**BURNS, Steven** (Dalhousie University)      See **FLYNN, Jennifer**

**BURROW, Sylvia** (Cape Breton University)

### Gender Violence: Resistance, Resiliency, and Responsibility

*Gender violence* refers to a collection of harms and abuses enabled or sustained by systemic social practices, structures, and institutions and which target members of groups following gender lines inextricably linked to sexual orientation (Kenway and Fitzclarence 1997; Terry 2007; Merry 2011). Philosophical analyses of gender violence explore harms resulting from rape and sexual assault to draw awareness to deep and lasting effects on the self connected to dehumanization (Cahill 2001;

Anderson 2005), social control (Burgess-Jackson 2000), domination (Hampton 1999), disrespect (Frye and Shafer 1977), and subjugation (Dworkin 1974); and which connect to loss of abilities to pursue one's own interests or rights (Frye 1983), constitute oneself as a moral subject (Heyes 2016), or maintain personal identity (Brison 1996, 2002). Philosophical examination touches on threat of harm connected to fear and vigilance present within rape culture, focussing on sexual aggression and assault as everyday occurrences (Card 1991; Burgess-Jackson 2000; Cahill 2001, May et al. 2010) and contexts of intimate partner violence (Friedman 2003, 2005, 2017; Jaggar 2007; Card 2007; Sloan-Lynch 2012). Such discussions are generally oriented toward addressing violence against women rather than the broader scope of gender violence, and tend to overlook impacts of routine, everyday *threat* of harm posed by living within contexts of gender violence.

In this paper, I investigate possibilities of response to the threat of gender violence for the purpose of articulating *resistance* as a means of enhancing autonomy. This analysis separates responsibility to resist from those belonging to oppressive groups and those more marginalized. Resisting harm to the self posed by threat of violence is importantly self-protective in two senses, I suggest: for resisting physical and sexual harm; and for protecting against harms to autonomy. While each is significant, my aim in this paper is to explore the latter. I investigate resistance as a capacity shared by many cognitively and physically diverse persons, exploring how this capacity can be undermined both through oppressive social norms and values, and through fear and a sense of vulnerability. I recognize that resistance may prove difficult to pursue because of undermined autonomy, particularly when under threat of violence. But I hold out for the view that, for those able to pursue resistance, it can provide a significant source of resilience and thus prove an important contributor to autonomy. Those who are resilient are capable of responding to adversity through reframing matters or circumstances to allow more choice and, I suggest, such response calls for an optimism that we can and will overcome adversity.

**CAMPBELL, Richmond** (Dalhousie University)

### The Unresolved Scope of Morality: Darwin, Moral Inconsistency, and Survival

In comparing humans and other animals, the dominant philosophical view is that morality is unique to humans. This is also the perspective of Abrahamic religions and would appear to be the dominant view among the public. What might support this view?

There is the abstract nature of our moral thinking, as in the language used to formulate complex moral principles, such as the Golden Rule. It is widely held that other animals lack this capacity that is necessary to recognize moral inconsistency in responses to moral norms.

Darwin rejects this human centered view of morality. While he allows that marked differences exist, he sees them as a matter of degree rather than kind. Moreover, he sees the differences to be in intellectual powers rather than in the capacity to be moral.

In Part 1, I argue in defense of Darwin that (1) other animals can think abstractly and likely can recognize moral inconsistency, (2) the latter capacity need not be highly developed to respond to moral norms; and (3) the Darwinian function of morality is the same for both humans and other animals. In Part 2, I argue that (4) this perspective reveals that humans alone can recognize the scope of morality is as an unresolved moral issue and (5) if we do not respond to this issue consistently, we thereby jeopardize the survival of most animal life.



**CUNNINGHAM, Alexandra & WENTZELL, Alexander** (University of Calgary)

### The Interpretative Dimensions of Evidence

Evidentialism is the view that what confers justification on a belief is its being in accordance with one's evidence. However, in some cases, particularly those necessitating greater social sensitivity, purely following our evidence appears to lead us toward beliefs that are not only unjustified, but perhaps problematic to hold. This suggests that, sometimes, in order to reach justified beliefs, we must go beyond our evidence. The challenge for the evidentialist is to show how we can respond to normatively charged cases without taking into account anything extra-evidential. We believe this challenge can be met when we examine how a believer should interact with their evidence. Our goal is twofold: we will, on the one hand, identify four interpretative dimensions along which we should evaluate our evidence and, as a result, argue that seemingly normative considerations are not extra-evidential in nature and are in fact truth relevant. By adding these four interpretative dimensions to our epistemic toolbox, we can, as believers, develop greater foresight in properly evaluating our evidential situations, and the hindsight to diagnose where our interpretations of the evidence might have gone wrong, given the possibility of evidential support being merely ostensible rather than actual.

**CURRY, Tyler** (Yorkville)

See **DRYDEN, Jane**

**DIAMOND, Cora** (Virginia)

See **FLYNN, Jennifer**

**DOOLITTLE, W. Ford** See **MEYNELL, Letitia, NETO, Celso, & DOOLITTLE, W. Ford**

**DOUCETTE, Dana** (Birkbeck College, University of London)

### Self-narrative as a distinct narrative form

Is our identity something that “exists,” or is it merely a product of our language? Whether identity is merely a linguistic construction or a tangible element of the self, the ways in which we communicate these concepts are key to our understanding of identity. Narrative theories of the self are those centered around the shared concept that narrative plays a crucial role in relation to our identity. This identity, referred to as the narrative self, is dependent on narrative. Regardless of whether narrative is responsible for constituting the self or is merely the way in which identity is understood, there is a commonality among these theories: self-narrative. - As Rom Harré put it, “We are the story we tell ourselves about ourselves.”

We are seemingly wired to understand things in terms of narrative. We comprehend historical events by placing them into a narrative: complete stories that have beginnings, middles, ends, protagonists and antagonists. Are all narratives the same in their structure and application? What are the differences between self-narrative, fictional narrative, and historical narrative? Are these differences trivial?

Life is different from that of a story. There are no clearly defined middles and endings, or beginnings. Therefore, self-narrative must possess characteristics that are distinguishable from those

found within fictional narrative. In order for self-narrative to be distinct from fictional narrative, it must also be distinct from such mediums as the memoir. Self-narrative is non-trivially distinct from both fictional and non-fictional narrative due to its requirement of linear temporality in order for interpretation.

**DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**, panel moderators (Mount Allison University)

Panel: Connecting Philosophy & Science: Metaphors & the Human Microbiome

**CURRY, Tyler** (Yorkville)  
**FACUNDO, Juan** (independent)  
**FOSTER, Caleb** (Mount Allison)  
**GOSAI, Shruti** (Mount Allison)  
**MACBEATH, Tori** (McMaster)  
**SCOTT, Mackenzie** (Mount Allison)  
**WALKER-SHERMAN, Jonah** (Mount Allison)

Interest in the human microbiome – especially the gut microbiome – has grown substantially over the last twenty years, and has spread to a wide number of disciplines. Research has connected our microbiome to many different features of human existence – our digestion, our immune system, our weight, our personalities, and our moods. This work often engages questions of human difference: why do *some* humans respond/act differently, and is it connected to their microbiota? The scientific questions raised here often intertwine with ethical and political questions about the relations in and between different groups, as well as what we take to be the desired norm or standard for human health and functioning.

In explaining the microbiome and its multifaceted effects, researchers, medical professionals, and professional purveyors of probiotics have made use of a range of metaphors, each of which can have different implications for scientific and biomedical treatment of the microbiome, but also our understanding of ourselves and our relations with human and nonhuman others. For this panel, our research team, the *Gut Reactions Working Group*, will present some of the research that we undertook this summer on different but interrelated strands of the human microbiome, as well as considering what might be in store for microbiome research.

**EDGAR, Scott** (Saint Mary's University)

What kind of materialism is F.A. Lange talking about in his *History of Materialism*?

Friedrich Albert Lange was a German philosopher who was most active in the 1860s and 1870s. His best-known work was the massive and important *History of Materialism and Criticism of Its Present Significance* (1866/1773-5). In Lange's time, the book was widely viewed as important for at least two reasons. First, it was an early representative of the long histories of philosophy that were, at that time, being written as textbooks for undergraduate curricula. Second, Lange offered an interesting (and for many, convincing) account of materialism and its limits in response to debates about materialism that had been ongoing in German philosophy since the 1850s.

However, in some ways, it is a puzzling book for contemporary readers, not least because

Lange often uses the term ‘materialism’ in ways that are at odds with our contemporary usage. Further, in fairness to contemporary readers, Lange’s conception of materialism can be difficult to track, as it shifts depending on which historical periods and figures he is talking about. In this paper, I develop an interpretation of Lange’s conception of materialism, and in so doing show that it is at least consistent. One surprising result of my interpretation is that it explains why Kantian *idealists* in Lange’s own time thought that large and central parts of Lange’s materialism were consistent with their idealism.

**FACUNDO, Juan** (independent)

See **DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**

**FENTON, Andrew** (Dalhousie University)

Can we develop more ethically sound harm-benefit analyses in the animal sciences?

S-218 would have given great apes, cetaceans, and elephants legal standing and restricted their use to non-harmful science. The aspiration of the bill’s authors and sponsors to substantively restrict harmful research on animals coheres with increasingly common commitments to harm—benefit analyses as way to off-set the “science-first” orientation of the 3Rs (however disingenuous in practice). Harm-benefit analysis in animal research is plagued with problems that do not so easily attach to its use in human research (e.g., the “common currency” problem). This is partially because potential human research subjects or their surrogates perform a harm-benefit analysis of a proposed scientific activity when they consider giving their informed consent. I will show how the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* may offer ways to advance a more ethically sound approach to harm-benefit analysis in animal research and, in so doing, better align it with its human counterpart.

**FLYNN, Jennifer**, session chair (Memorial University)

Atlantic Wittgenstein Reading Group

Book Symposium: *Reading Wittgenstein with Anscombe, Going On to Ethics*

Author and commentator: Cora Diamond, Professor Emerita, University of Virginia

**BURNS, Steven** (Dalhousie University)

**DIAMOND, Cora** (University of Virginia)

**MOSER, Robbie** (Mount Allison University)

**PHILIE, Patrice** (University of Ottawa)

**WARD, Amy** (University of Guelph)

We are an informal group of ARPA members who seek opportunities to discuss the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. We first met at ARPA (SMU) in 2017. We welcome anyone interested to join our third public meeting. Our proposed book symposium is dedicated to Cora Diamond’s recent book *Reading Wittgenstein with Anscombe, Going On to Ethics*. Diamond’s book is of three parts. Briefly, parts I and II examine the relation between the thought of Wittgenstein and Anscombe. Part III looks at ethics with particular reference to Anscombe, Wiggins, and Williams. Main presenters will address what is of most interest to them. Our current planning indicates that this will make for balanced coverage of

Diamond's book, with two (sets of) presenters interested in Parts I and II, and two presenters interested in Part III. Professor Diamond will be dedicated time to provide some overview of her book, and to respond to all presentations.

#### I. Introduction and Opening Remarks

9:00-9:10: Introduction (J. Flynn): 5-10 minutes

9:10-9:30: Preliminary remarks (C. Diamond): 20 minutes

#### II. Reading *Wittgenstein with Anscombe*, Parts I and II

9:30-9:45: Presentation (P. Philie)

9:45-10:00: Presentation (A. Ward & R. Moser)

10-10:15: Response (C. Diamond)

\*\*\*\*10:15-10:30: BREAK\*\*\*\*

#### III. Reading *Wittgenstein with Anscombe*, Part III

10:30-10:45: Presentation (J. Flynn)

10:45-11:00: Presentation (S. Burns)

11:00-11:15: Response (C. Diamond)

\*\*\*\*11:15-11:30: BREAK\*\*\*\*

#### IV. Open Discussion

11:30-12:00: Questions and Discussion (all)

**FORTNEY, Mark** (University of Toronto at Mississauga)

How to Have an Insight: Weil and Murdoch on the Value of Attention

In *The Sovereignty of Good*, Iris Murdoch describes how a mother-in-law, through solitary reflection, can learn to revise her incorrect view of her daughter-in-law's character. Murdoch doesn't think that hindsight necessarily gives the mother-in-law an epistemic advantage. Instead, she thinks that only through using the right form of attention can the mother-in-law learn to see her daughter-in-law in a better light.

Many readers of Murdoch think that the attention she has in mind consists in focusing intently on some object of thought. But this makes it hard to understand why we should endorse her advice for the mother-in-law. This kind of attention might help us correct some quick, casual

misjudgments of character, but shouldn't help us when the misjudgment concerns someone with whom we are well acquainted and have had ample time to judge.

In this paper, I provide a more charitable reading of Murdoch's account. I argue that she has in mind a specific variety of attention that Simone Weil discussed, and which I call "negative attention". Negative attention consists in refraining from focally attending to any one object of thought while diffusely attending to a question and information that is relevant to answering the question.

**FOSTER, Caleb** (Mount Allison)

See **DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**

**GOSAI, Shruti** (Mount Allison)

See **DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**

**HAMM, Nikolas** (McGill University)

Kant's Cosmopolitan Commitment to Environmental Preservation

In this paper, I show that the capacity of natural environments to contribute to moral development, and the cosmopolitan duty of government to promote the moral and cultural cultivation of its citizens, together result in a global duty of environmental protection. In short, I show, first, that moral development can be occasioned by certain types of affective experience—namely experiences of the sublime and of beauty in nature—and second, that humans have individual, social and political duties to promote moral development in oneself and others.

Since the attempt to make moral progress is morally obligatory, I argue that we have a subsidiary duty to promote and protect any means available by which to satisfy this obligation. Since experiences of nature satisfy this criterion, it follows that we ought to a) make the experience of nature accessible to all individuals, and b) establish strict principles of environmental protection to ensure that nature perseveres *in its natural state*. In addition to the contribution to the discussion of Kant's practical and political philosophy, this conclusion provides a new avenue for Kantians to engage in discussions of environmental ethics, the value of nature, public policy, and debates concerning environmental preservation and restoration.

**HARRIS, Daniel I.** (Trent University)

Nietzsche, Trump, and the Social Practices of Valuing Truth

Because he is for many synonymous with postmodern accounts of truth, those interested in so-called post-truth politics have often turned to Nietzsche. However, while Nietzsche offers valuable resources for thinking about post-truth, this is not because Nietzsche gives up on truth but because he is prescient in realizing what is at stake in our esteem for it. Nietzsche argues neither that there is no truth, nor that truth is not valuable, but that the specifically unconditional value we attribute to truth raises the spectre of nihilism, a situation in which what we value most is revealed to lack the value we have attributed to it. The politics of Donald Trump is a harbinger of this nihilism because Trump flaunts our shared social practices of valuing truth. Since Nietzsche was so vexed by the

issues concerning truth now presented by Trump, Nietzsche's responses to these issues are a vital starting point in thinking through the present moment. Nietzsche's account can help a society disoriented by an unabashed indifference to truth, for Nietzsche helps us to see the truth will not set us free. Instead, it is up to us to make and keep it free.

**HASLANGER, Sally**, Keynote Speaker (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Historical and Material Roots of Our Social World: Bodies, Resources, and the Environment

Consider a social event such as eating a meal together. The existence of this event depends not just on human minds (collectively engaged or not), but also on human bodies and edible stuff that has been produced, distributed, prepared, and served according to local customs. A potato is a species of plant, but once it is baked and served with sour cream, it is part of our social world. Human bodies and the environment both set constraints on the social world and are, at the same time, part of it. This talk will consider the interdependence of the social and the material world and forms of explanation that do justice to their interdependence.

**HOLT, Jason** (Acadia University)

Going Meta with Leonard Cohen

Here I explore the aesthetics of "going meta" using Leonard Cohen as a case study. My starting assumption is that the height of Cohen's poetry occurs in his literary middle period, specifically the volumes *The Energy of Slaves* (1972) and *Death of a Lady's Man* (1978). I hypothesize that it is importantly a higher-order understanding through self-reference, intertextual reference, etc. that sets these works apart and elevates them among Cohen's other literary works. This account is confirmed by noteworthy songs from the middle and late periods of Cohen's music career. In the course of my analysis, I offer a threefold typology of Cohenesque meta-devices. Along with (1) self-referential and other "intratextual" meta-devices, we find (2) intertextual references and (3) "supratextual" references across multiple works. Such devices, I argue, enhance those works in which they appear by providing a perspective that fosters better integration of elements within and suggested by those works. Though going meta is not always either a part or a mark of artistic success (e.g., breaking the fourth wall in comedies), it tends to add an appreciable significance to works otherwise good enough to merit such "indulgence."

**HYMERS, Michael** (Dalhousie University)

See **PLOURDE, Jimmy**

**INKPEN, Andrew** (Mount Allison University)

See **DRYDEN, Jane**

**LOPEZ, Andrew** (Queen's University)

Nonhuman Animals, Transportation Technologies, and Epistemic Injustice

While animal ethicists have brought attention to transportation technologies' role in roadkill, railkill, and airkill, focus and argument against its proliferation or in favor of its reform has focused on general nonhuman wellbeing, whether based on weaker welfare concerns or stronger animal rights concerns. However, little attention has been paid to how transportation technologies negatively affect the epistemic practices of nonhuman animals. In this paper, I argue that a consequentialist approach to epistemic injustice can make sense of how transportation and transportation technologies negatively impact the distribution of epistemic goods among nonhuman animals. Development has negative downstream effects on nonhuman animals' ability to acquire 'answers' to 'questions' they have an interest in answering, namely, acquiring both true beliefs about conspecifics and their environment, as well as acquisition of behaviors and skills that enable everyday successful coping. For instance, ungulates that migrate over long distances rely on older conspecifics to learn where and when to travel for grazing purposes, and so have their practical goals bound up with acquisition of beliefs and skills for successful navigation. Transportation development and technology, however, leads to disruption of migration routes, longterm climate change that impacts plant growth, and the death of experienced conspecifics in encounters with transportation technologies.

**MACBEATH, Tori** (McMaster)

See **DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**

**MARION, Mathieu** (Université du Québec à Montréal))

See **PLOURDE, Jimmy**

**McCLURE, Emma** (Saint Mary's University)

What's Wrong with Calling COVID-19 "The Chinese Virus": Microinvalidations, Negligence, and a Duty of Care

I'll argue that calling COVID-19 "the Chinese virus" is a microinvalidation—an underdiscussed but extremely common type of microaggression—and former President Trump (and others) should have had the foresight to avoid this incendiary way of speaking. Microinvalidations are a covert type of linguistic aggression. Rather than directly demarcating a particular group of people for inferior treatment, they rely upon indirect means. For example, Trump claimed that his use of "Chinese virus" was merely an attempt to be "accurate"—while simultaneously rekindling historical stereotypes linking Asian immigration with dangerous and deadly contagion. As this example shows, microinvalidations have the potential to be extremely damaging, and the risk of harm to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) populations was obvious and widely discussed. Based on this known potential for harm, Trump meets the legal definition of negligence: he failed in his duty to protect AAPI people from the foreseeable violence inspired by his microinvalidation. However, most microinvalidations should not be dealt with in a court of law, since the foreseeable risk of damage usually falls below the threshold for legal liability. Yet I'll argue that even in these more everyday instances, our moral duties are illuminated by comparisons to negligence law.

**MEYNELL, Letitia, NETO, Celso, & DOOLITTLE, W. Ford (Dalhousie University)**

*Panel: Gaia, reconsidered*

James Lovelock, often working with Lynn Margulis, proposed the Gaia Hypothesis – that the biosphere is “an active adaptive control system able to maintain the Earth in homeostasis”, and suitable for life over 4 billion years. The hypothesis, widely publicized in the late 1970s, was instrumental in establishing Earth Systems Science as a discipline, but many of its implications for neoDarwinian theories of evolution by natural selection (ENS) were and remain controversial. We are part of an international team attempting, via philosophical re-examination and computational modeling, to make the Gaia Hypothesis a legitimate Darwinian one.

**MILLMAN, Lara (Dalhousie University)**      See **SKITOLSKY, Lissa & MILLMAN, Lara**

**NELSON, Erik (Dalhousie University)**

Language as the Given: Normative Conceptual Holism, Concept Acquisition, and Nonlinguistic Concepts

Normative conceptual holism (NCH) is the view that (1) grasping a concept is a type of normative state or relation, (2) in order to grasp any one concept, one must grasp many concepts, and (3) satisfying conditions (1) and (2) is only possible for beings that have linguistic capabilities. Normative conceptual holists, such as Sellars, McDowell, and Brandom, have claimed that other accounts of conceptual capabilities, such as empiricist accounts of concept acquisition, fall into the Myth of the Given. The Myth of the Given is the myth that some content can be both epistemically independent and epistemically efficacious. However, I argue that normative conceptual holists also fall into the Myth of the Given when trying to explain concept acquisition. In order to show this, I argue that it is possible to build a reductio using the central tenants of NCH that has the absurd result that no has, had, or ever will grasp a concept. This reductio demonstrates that normative conceptual holists are relying on language to play an epistemically independent and epistemically efficacious role in their account of concept acquisition. NCH can only escape the reductio by rejecting (3) and allowing for the possibility of nonlinguistic conceptual capabilities.

**NETO, Celso**      See **MEYNELL, Letitia, NETO, Celso, & DOOLITTLE, W. Ford**

**ORLANDI, Martina (Pennsylvania State University)**

‘I Knew All Along’: Post-Self-Deception Judgments and Hindsight Bias

People deceive themselves about a wide variety of things: that their partner is honest, that they are not going bald, that their child is not a bully, etc. In those fortunate circumstances when they manage to come out of self-deceit and accept reality, an interesting phenomenon occurs. The



formerly self-deceived often confess to having known the truth ‘all along’ (Archer 2013; Levy 2004; Sanford 1988). Accounting for these post-self-deception judgments poses a serious challenge for some theories of self-deception because, if genuine, they call into question the core feature of prominent theories of self-deception according to which the self-deceived individual does not believe the unwelcome truth, a tenet which many influential accounts of self-deception endorse (Mele 2001; Van Leeuwen 2008). In light of this, a common strategy has been to question the veracity of the judgments themselves and suggest that if post-self-deception judgments are unreliable accounts of self-deception are under no obligation to accommodate them (Sanford 1988; Levy 2004).

Yet the many philosophers who have made this claim have only gestured at their reasons, without providing us with a substantive argument for why post-self-deception judgments are not to be trusted. This is the argument that I aim to provide in my paper. My aims are twofold. One is identificatory. Given that post-self-deception judgments are still undertheorized, in the first half of the paper I provide an analysis of what post-self-deception judgments are and the challenges that accommodating them raise. This characterization proves useful for isolating the kind of theories that post-self-deception judgments target, since not all characterizations of self-deception are equally threatened by post-self-deception judgments.

In the second half of the paper I then advance my argument against the veracity of postself-deception judgements. Drawing on psychological literature, I argue that post-self-deception judgments are compatible with a particular type of hindsight bias known as “foreseeability”, where individuals believe that “an event is more predictable after it is known than it was before it became known” (Roese and Vohs 2012: 411). I show that post-self-deception judgments are caused by motivational inputs, that is, by the desire to develop a coherent narrative that explains why a proposition so clearly warranted a posteriori failed to be endorsed. I conclude that we should caution against trusting post-self-deception judgments because, being instances of hindsight bias, they may not accurately track previous self-deception experiences. In the last part of the paper I focus on the implications of my conclusion and argue that identifying post-self-deception judgments as hindsight bias carries negative consequences for the individual’s epistemic future. In fact, empirical research shows that hindsight bias impairs learning because mistakenly thinking of the past as predictable, bounds individuals to the making same missteps in the future (Pezzo 2011). In light of this, I suggest, formerly self-deceived individuals who confess to have ‘known all along’ might be more vulnerable to future self-deceits.

**PETERS, Aidan** (Saint Francis Xavier University)

### Inspecting Society’s Dualism: An Argument for Increased Empathy Toward The Mentally Ill

The success of television shows which are based on watching the chaos of the lives of real people unfold, especially in the case of the mentally ill, tells us something about the negative implications of commonplace views on dualism and free will (and the related concept of responsibility). Rather than empathizing with someone with an eating disorder, delusions, substance use disorders, mood disorders, etc, we tend to mock and/or stigmatize them. Society justifies this response through viewing the mind and body as distinct categories, wherein we have much more free will over the former components of ourselves, and thus see psychological disorders as faults in free will, and therefore a lack of virtue deserving of punishment. To argue that an empathetic response is a more appropriate/ethical response to symptoms of mental illness, I will contest Cartesian mind-body duality (and related theories) and subsequent societal views which differentiate the nature (referring

to the sufferer's relations of responsibility and impairment to their condition) of neurological and other physical health problems from mental health problems and criticize our corresponding views on permissible responses to such conditions.

**PHILIE, Patrice** (University of Ottawa)

See **FLYNN, Jennifer**

**PLOURDE, Jimmy** (Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières)

Symposium: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) Centenary

**REID, Lynette** (Dalhousie): “Truth and the bipolarity of the proposition”

**PLOURDE, Jimmy** (UQTR): “Truth and the Correspondence Theory”

**MARION, Mathieu** (UQAM): « Arithmetic and the saying-showing distinction »

**HYMERS, Michael** (Dalhousie): “Hadot’s Early Wittgenstein”

**REID, Lynette** (Dalhousie)

See **PLOURDE, Jimmy**

**ROBERTS, Eve A.** (University of King’s College)

The clinical algorithm as an epistemic tool

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Algorithms are pervasive in modern society. Broadly, an algorithm is a set of directions for doing something accurately and uniformly. Some algorithms are depicted as diagrams of sequential steps, typically with branch points leading to discretionary pathways in the process. In medical practice, a clinical algorithm is presents diagrammatically a multi-step diagnostic or treatment process relating to disease management.

The problem with clinical algorithms is that, while seemingly comprehensive, in the real-life application they may not always work—usually because the process being depicted is too complicated to be summarized simply. This problem arose in an attempt to update clinical algorithms for Wilson disease, a genetic disorder leading to hepatic and neurological damage. Instead of abandoning the effort, we saw an opportunity: we identified uncertainties, called them ‘gray areas’, and then provided an extensive table of issues to consider when trying to sort out ‘gray area’ situations. Most of these issues articulated underlying assumptions or tacit complexities. This novel way to design a clinical algorithm can be utilized proactively to seek out contentious or unclear areas in diagnostic or treatment practice. Thus it can serve as an epistemic tool. Likewise, it draws attention to problems of idealization in biomedical practice.

**SCOTT, Mackenzie** (Mount Allison)

See **DRYDEN, Jane, and INKPEN, Andrew**

**SKITOLSKY, Lissa & MILLMAN, Lara** (Dalhousie University)

The Epistemic Conceit of ‘True Beliefs’ and the Belief in Evil People

There is a view, sometimes articulated by academics and/or politically left-leaning individuals, that everyone who voted for Donald Trump in 2016 is ignorant, stupid, blatantly opposed to fundamental human rights, evil, or any combination of these. Statements asserting that Trump supporters are *evil* or *stupid* are presumably hurled with the intention of forcefully communicating the opposition’s rage and disgust toward the racist, misogynist, and homophobic commitments of the Trump administration. Such sentiments communicate more than this, though. Such sentiments demonstrate a significant *misunderstanding* of the nature of belief and the nature of evil. As Hannah Arendt articulates in her report on *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, it is not accurate to think of ‘evil’ as rooted in the nature of individual persons. Instead, evils should refer to the horrific events and actions that perpetuate suffering. (Arendt suggests this, but this idea is explicitly stated and developed by Claudia Card in *The Atrocity Paradigm*.) The controversy of Arendt’s analysis comes from her insistence that evils are often carried out in banal ways – indeed, even the horrific genocide orchestrated in Nazi Germany was carried out by thoughtless and ordinary people.

More than this, if we insist that ‘the Other’ is deeply evil, vile, and stupid, consider what this says about belief acquisition and our evaluation of our own epistemic and ethical position. This judgment implies that *we* are superior (read: good and rational, unlike *them*), and this turns on the assumption that our beliefs are *better*. In assuming that our beliefs are better, we take ‘the Other’ to be deeply mistaken (they aren’t as smart as we are, since they have arrived at bad beliefs), and deeply immoral (in order to vote for Trump, they must be evil). These assumptions are wildly unfounded. Psychological studies consistently demonstrate our unreliability when reasoning about beliefs, and further suggest we are not in the position to reason objectively about evidence, especially when it does not align with our already existing views. Additionally, as Octave Mannoni points out, we reason about our beliefs in ways that both acknowledge and defer the evidence that disputes them: “I know very well, but all the same . . .” Moreover, as Arendt illustrates in her description of Eichmann, evils can (and often do) occur without the conscious and diabolical, strategic hand of a person who wants to do evil for the sake of evil.

In this paper, we draw on Arendt’s analysis of the banality of evil and Mannoni’s analysis of belief insulation – paired with contemporary psychological findings and feminist critiques of Western epistemology – to problematize the view that we are in a position to judge the character of ‘the Other’ based on their false beliefs. While it is tempting to think of ‘the Other’ as evil and unreasonable, this demonization only deepens systemic and ideological divides. If it remains controversial to recognize Nazis (or insert your choice of ‘Other’ here) as *human-all-too-human*, we will perpetuate the conditions that produce political evils and erode civic relations.

**WALKER-SHERMAN, Jonah** (Mount Allison)

See **DRYDEN, Jane**

**WARD, Amy** (University of Guelph)

See **FLYNN, Jennifer**

**WILLS, Bernard N.** (Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland)

#### Fuller on Post-Truth

In a recent book sociologist and philosopher of science Steve Fuller advises us, somewhat wryly, to relax and enjoy playing the post truth game. This of course raises the question of whether there is a post truth condition (and what it means and does not mean!) to say we are in one. It also raises the question of what to do about those aspects of the post truth condition which on their face seem less than enthralling: post truth is all fun and games till someone loses an eye! The author, though, suspects that whatever is the case normatively Fuller seems right descriptively: there may well be no universal process or method for certifying all knowledge claims and whacking all potential moles back in place (or if there is we have no consensus about it). The author argues that we may indeed have lost control of 'truth' (though who exactly is 'we'?) but as our problems are not really epistemological anyway but social and political there are much more pressing questions than 'method' and 'warrant'. The post truth condition may, on those terms, be an opportunity to address them.

**YETMAN, Cameron C.** (Western University)

#### Is there a thought experimenter's regress?

The "experimenter's regress" (Collins 1985) arises when the best or only check on the proper functioning of an experimental apparatus is its result, while the best or only check on the result is the proper functioning of the apparatus. The regress takes hold particularly at the frontier of science, where theories are in flux and consensus is elusive. Interestingly, thought experiments (TEs) often play a central role at this tender stage, helping to develop theories and adjudicate between available options. Given that TEs are kinds of experiments (Mach 1897; Sorensen 1992), this raises the possibility that they are also vulnerable to a form of regress. In this paper, I explore this possibility using the Feynman-Bondi "sticky bead argument" as a case study, and I argue that the existence of the thought experimenter's regress depends centrally on the prior knowledge of the person performing a given TE – a feature which appears unique to TEs.