Registration: upstairs in Commons, Friday 8:30am-5pm and Saturday 8:30am-12pm
If you need to register/pay outside of those times, find Lauren Ashwell or David Cummiskey
Cash or check for registration and conference dinner payment
Regular attendee: $40 registration
Retired Faculty: $20 registration
Undergraduate: free registration
Conference dinner: $30
All talks are upstairs in Commons (go up the stairs outside the dining hall; there is also an elevator in the hallway)

Friday September 25th

Undergraduate Session: 9:30am-11:30am Room 226
Chair: Susan Stark

9:30am Real, Delicious Tomatoes: Defending Deep Ecology Against Relativism
Britta Clark (Bates College)

10am Friendship as the Mirror of Virtue: Aristotelian Friendship as the Condition for City-Building
Alex Sarappo (Colby College)

10:30am Does The Dao Support Individual Autonomy And Human Rights?
Caroline Carr (College of the Holy Cross)

11am A Woman’s Place: Reflections on the Political Thought of Rousseau and Wollstonecraft
Beba Cibrali (Wellesley College)

11:30 Lunch for purchase at Commons

Session 1: 12:30pm – 2:30pm

Session A1 Room 226
Chair: Robert McKay (Norwich University)

12:30pm Intuitionism as a Normative Ethical Theory
David Kaspar (St. John’s University)

1:10pm Removing the Veil: Justifying Morality via Open Deliberation
Timm Triplett (University of New Hampshire)

1:50pm The Impossibility of Praiseworthy Wrongdoing and Blameworthy Right-Doing
Kristian Olsen (University of New Hampshire)
Session B1 Room 201
Chair: John Waterman (Colby College)

12:30pm Opacity or Asymmetry: A New Look at the Problem of the Essential Indexical
Pengbo Liu (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

1:10pm Kripke's Rotating Disk Argument – What It Is and What It Is Not
Jeff Buechner (Rutgers University-Newark and The Saul Kripke Center CUNY, The Graduate Center)

1:50pm Possibilities of Misidentification
Lauren Ashwell (Bates College)

2:30pm Break

Session 2: 3pm – 4:20pm

Session A2 Room 226
Chair: Val Dusek (University of New Hampshire)

3pm Adolescents, Medical Decision-Making, and the Law
Madison Kilbride (Princeton University)

3:40pm Some Critical Reflections on The Right to Be Forgotten
Herman Tavani (Rivier University)

Session B2 Room 201
Chair: David Kaspar

3pm Objecting to Feit and Cullison on Knowledge
Timothy Kirschenheiter (Wayne State University)

3:40pm Epistemic Oppression(s) and Ameliorative Epistemology
Emily McWilliams (Harvard University)

4:20pm Break

Session 3: 4:40pm – 6pm

Session A3 Room 226
Chair: William Altenburg (Founder, Smarts Hill Laboratories)

4:40pm Meta-(Bio)philosophy: An Analysis
Subrena Smith (University of New Hampshire)

5:20pm Does evolution refute moral realism?
Whitley Kaufmann (University of Massachusetts, Lowell)
Session B3  Room 201  
Chair: James Couch (Keene State College)

4:40pm On the Psychological Foundations of Skepticism  
John Waterman (Colby College)

5:20pm Ontological Difference and Ontological Commitment  
Joshua Tepley (Saint Anselm College)

6pm-6:30pm Reception – Room 221/222

6:30pm Conference Dinner – Room 221/222

7:30pm Catherine Elgin’s Keynote Address: Epistemic Normativity – Room 221/222

Saturday September 26th

Special Plenary Session on Catherine Elgin's work Room 226  
Chair: Lauren Ashwell

9am Construction versus Deconstruction: Goodman, Elgin, "Science Wars," and Education  
Val Dusek (University of New Hampshire) and Christie Hammer (University of Southern Maine Lewiston/Auburn)

9:20am Epistemic Respect and the Commonwealth of Epistemic Ends  
Kenneth Walden (Dartmouth College)

9:40am Catherine Elgin on the Future of Philosophy in Her Essay “The Legacy of Quine’s ‘Two Dogmas of Empiricism’”  
William Altenburg (Founder, Smarts Hill Laboratories)

10am Response from Elgin and general discussion

11:15 Lunch for purchase at Commons

12:05 NNEPA Business Meeting – Room 225

Session 4: 12:30pm – 2:30pm

Session A4 Room 226  
Chair: Kiki Berk (Southern New Hampshire University)

12:30pm Normativity, Neuroscience, and the Philosophy of Art  
William Seeley (University of New Hampshire)

1:10pm Concerning On Dreams 459b24-460a26  
Landon Elkind (University of Iowa)

(3rd talk cancelled from this session)
Session B4  Room 211
Chair: May Sim (College of the Holy Cross)

12:30pm The Intentional Circularity and Temporal Incompleteness of Hegel’s Dialectical System
Edward Beach (University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire and University of Maine, Orono)

1:10pm Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Operationalism: The Inadequacy of Data
George Miller (University of Maine, Farmington)

1:50pm Shared Trajectories: The Conception of Bildung in Gadamer and Dewey’s Understanding of Education
James Couch (Keene State College)

2:30pm Break

Session 5: 3pm – 4:20pm

Session A5  Room 226
Chair: Mark Okrent (Bates College)

3pm Primitives, Essence and the Nature of Definition
Sam Elgin (Yale University)

3:40pm The Conditions for Analysis in Leibniz
Montgomery Link (Suffolk University)

Session B5  Room 211
Chair: Susan Stark (Bates College)

3pm Objective Illocutionary Force?
Casey Johnson (University of Connecticut)

3:40pm Empathy’s Web: The Virtue of Empathic Attunement
Gina Campelia (The Graduate Center, CUNY, and Einstein Center for Bioethics)

4:20pm Break

Session 6: 4:40pm – 6pm

Session A6  Room 226
Chair: David Cummiskey (Bates College)

4:40pm Self-Determination and the Metaphysics of Human Nature in Aristotle and Mencius
May Sim (College of the Holy Cross)

5:20pm The Structure of Agrippan Skepticism
Roger Eichorn (University of Chicago)
The conference will be held at Commons (also called “New Commons), upstairs (rooms will be marked)

Main areas for visitor parking on campus:

1) Bardwell St (off Russell St – note there is another Bardwell St south of campus, and this doesn’t really look like a street).
2) Behind the gymnasium off Russell St

Early in the morning on Friday, Bardwell St and the adjacent lot near the entrance at Russell St tend to have spots free. Saturday there should be no problem parking on Bardwell St.

There is also on-street parking on Campus Ave, Central Ave, Nichols St, and Wood St. Please check for parking signs if parking off campus.
Catherine Elgin, in her essay “The Legacy of Quine’s ‘Two Dogmas of Empiricism’” concludes philosophy is facing a fundamental change. She claims Quine’s paper has ‘reconfigured’ philosophy by eliminating the distinction between analytic/synthetic propositions and rejecting the necessary/contingent and a priori/a posteriori dualisms. I review Elgin’s analysis of the consequences of Quine’s program and her response defining a pragmatic epistemology. I compare Quine and Elgin on the problem of verification with their distinct visions of a linguistic epistemology tethered to reality. She shows the consequence of the blurring of methodologies as science explores literary methods in descriptions and philosophers search for truths experimentally. I show Elgin’s view of Quine’s philosophical legacy is correct, but stress it simultaneously freed empirical science to enter epistemology and metaphysics. I show contemporary science is expanding knowledge of what we are, how we think, and verify propositions. She concludes the future of philosophy yields much to science, but Elgin forever reserves the answers to the questions of how we ought to live, organize ourselves, and guide our culture as the work of philosophy. I conclude, Catherine Elgin has observed recent philosophy wisely; the roles of philosophy and science are changing and that is Quine’s legacy.

Lauren Ashwell
Bates College
Possibilities of Misidentification

We appear to have a special, seemingly direct relationship to our own thoughts that we don’t have to the thoughts of others. Those who have delusions of thought insertion, however, claim not only to be aware of another’s thoughts, but to have another’s thoughts in their own mind. To those of us who don’t experience this, it seems an incredibly strange error to make – surely we can’t misidentify who has the thoughts we are aware of through introspection! Yet the existence of thought insertion delusions shows that this kind of misidentification is not just possible – it actually happens. So thought insertion delusions seem to threaten the principle of Immunity to Error through Misidentification (IEM) of our introspective mental state attributions (Campbell, 1999a). However, in “Pathologies of Thought and First-Person Authority,” Michael Young (2015) argues that thought insertion delusions are not counterexamples to this immunity principle, once we properly formulate it. I argue that Young’s defense of his formulation turns on features quite independent of being a case of introspection or a use of the first-person indexical, and that experiences of thought insertion do show us something interesting about introspection.

Edward A. Beach
University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire and University of Maine, Orono
The Intentional Circularity and Temporal Incompleteness of Hegel’s Dialectical System

This paper explores key questions concerning the internal consistency of Hegel’s logic and what their implications are for his theory of knowledge. Dieter Henrich has provided voluminous textual evidence showing that Hegel’s Science of Logic does not, in practice, provide a linear deduction of logical categories. On the contrary, at every stage it borrows thought-forms proper to subsequent stages in the system in order to effect its dialectical transitions. In particular, as Henrich convincingly shows, key arguments in Hegel’s section on the Logic of Being draw on insights belonging to the Logic of Essence in justifying the ostensibly prior section’s development. This procedure is evidently circular, and therefore in Henrich’s eyes untenable. Yet if Hegel’s system includes features of circularity, does it follow that it is necessarily fallacious? In reply, I argue that the only way of resolving the apparent logical anomalies in Hegel’s texts is to recognize that he rejects the linear-deductive model altogether and espouses a unique form of dialectically circular reasoning. I also maintain that Hegel considered his entire system, including the Logic, to be temporally incomplete, susceptible to error, and theoretically open-ended, although on another level it is also eternally perfect and complete.
Jeff Buechner
Rutgers University-Newark and The Saul Kripke Center, CUNY The Graduate center

Kripke’s rotating disk argument: what it is and what it is not

Saul Kripke’s rotating disk argument has been badly misunderstood by philosophers. In 2001, Mind published Craig Callender’s “Humean Supervenience and Rotating Homogeneous Matter,” a withering attack on Kripke’s rotating disk argument, arguing that it was bad philosophy and incoherent. Callender took the argument to be what many philosophers take it to be: in a universe in which there exists only a single object—a uniform disc composed of a homogenous material—it is impossible to determine whether the disk is stationary or rotating. My talk will be an exposition of what Kripke’s rotating disc argument is and what it is not. It is taken by Kripke to be a refutation of a particular view of the identity of objects over time—i.e., four-dimensionalism (whose most ardent supporter is, perhaps, Ted Sider). Kripke argues that the four-dimensionalist will not be able to distinguish a rotating from a stationary disc by stacking together three-dimensional instantaneous world time-slices and that there is a mathematical theorem concerning the admissible automorphisms of a three-dimensional instantaneous world time-slice which refutes four-dimensionalism. Kripke has extrapolated from his refutation of four-dimensionalism that the use of Minkowski space-time to represent the mathematical structure of space-time in contemporary physics is similarly defective, and that there are aspects of the special theory of relativity which cannot be captured in Minkowski space-time. I will briefly mention how Minkowski space-time repeats the errors of four-dimensionalism, make some remarks on Humean supervenience and whether it similarly repeats the errors of four-dimensionalism, and introduce a new criticism of four-dimensionalism that concerns the continuum—many instantaneous world time-slices that are stacked in any given non-instantaneous temporal interval.

Gina Campelia
The Graduate Center, CUNY and Montefiore-Einstein Center for Bioethics

Empathy’s Web: The Virtue of Empathic Attunement

Taking a step back from the often discordant accounts of empathy in philosophy, psychology and social neuroscience, this paper examines empathy from the perspective of virtue ethics. Namely, after considering some standard cases of empathic excellence, a distinction is drawn between empathic practices and the virtue of empathic attunement. Four conditions of empathic attunement are delineated: (1) aiming at empathic understanding for its own sake, (2) sensitivity to the particularity of self and other, (3) empathic concern for the other’s emotional well-being, and (4) genuine and reflective emotional receptivity. Armed with these conditions, it is contended that empathic attunement is a virtue of character insofar as it demonstrates unique respect and care, and deepens social connections. Further, it is argued that empathic attunement is an epistemic virtue insofar as it is a unique method for acquiring important knowledge. Finally, Aristotle’s Doctrine of the Mean is used to defend empathic attunement against three common moral concerns: (a) that is can be used for harm, (b) that it can be selfishly motivated, and (c) that one can over-empathize to one’s own detriment. It is argued that these cases typify two extremes of empathic practices, but are not inimical to the whole of empathic practices. They do not prohibit the existence of empathic attunement as a virtue unique to these practices of coming to know and knowing how another feels.

Caroline Carr
College of the Holy Cross

Does The Dao Support Individual Autonomy And Human Rights?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) lists what have come to be called “first” and “second” generation rights. First generation rights are civil and political (for instance, the right to vote, freedom of speech, freedom to assemble); second generation are social, economic, and cultural (protection against unemployment, universal healthcare, equal pay). However, Western and Asian nations are in disagreement about whether or not all of these generations of rights should be universal. While Western nations strongly believe that first generation
rights should be universal, Asian nations insist that their unique “Asian values” require second generation rights to precede first generation rights. It turns out that many of these “Asian values” are derived from the Confucian tradition. However, scholars debate whether Confucianism supports first-generation rights, second generation rights, or both. I have concluded that Confucianism supports both generations of rights. After analyzing the Confucian values in detail, it is clear that Confucians need access to the first and second generation of rights in order to best follow the tradition.

Beba Cibralic  
*Wellesley College*  
*A Woman’s Place: Reflections on the Political Thought of Rousseau and Wollstonecraft*

This paper will explore the writings of Rousseau and Wollstonecraft in respect to gender relations, education, and the treatment of women in society. I will begin by explicating Rousseau's view on gender in the context of his broader philosophical work. Following this, I will outline and analyse Wollstonecraft’s powerful critique of Rousseau’s position. Next, I will highlight the flaws with Wollstonecraft’s emphasis on gender neutrality in the social sphere, and then move to a more charitable reading of Rousseau. I will conclude with the suggestion that Rousseau’s contributions to the study of individualism and equality may help contemporary feminists in their pursuit of justice in both the private and public spheres.

Britta Clark  
*Bates College*  
*Real, Delicious Tomatoes: Defending Deep Ecology Against Relativism*

Deep Ecology, a popular 1960’s environmental movement arising from the work of Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, is founded on a metaphysic which allows for subjective, personal experience and a variety of viewpoints and environmental philosophies or “ecosophies” to serve as a foundation for action. This pluralistic approach, however, can easily be critiqued by noting that Deep Ecology could clearly descend into relativism and an acceptance of environmental philosophies which are not ecologically sustainable. In this paper, I will offer arguments which defend Deep Ecology against the complaint of relativism by suggesting that Naess’ unique ontology can maintain its pluralistic roots while at the same time offering the means to place value on different worldviews. First, I will offer a brief explanation of what Naess defines as ‘real,’ which is most easily understood within his framework of concrete contents and abstract structures. Secondly, I will suggest two ways in which we might consider Naess’ ontology, contrary to the critique that it is too based in subjectivity and emotionality, is helpful towards evaluating environmental viewpoints.

James Couch  
*Keene State College*  
*Shared Trajectories: The Conception of Bildung in Gadamer and Dewey’s Understanding of Education*

The recognition that Dewey and Gadamer share common ground in respect to their overarching philosophies of experience, allows a propaedeutics to bear conceptual fruit regarding the two thinkers views of education. It is in this general vein that the current work is undertaken. Understanding that both Dewey and Gadamer sought a corrective to the modern epistemological separation of subject and object through aesthetic experience allows their views on education to come into focus, as education for both must reflect the goal of achieving a harmonious existence between individual subjects and the objective world. Support for this is discovered due to the rootedness of each thinker in the German philosophic tradition, particularly the cultivating process of self and society associated with the conception of Bildung. The exploration of this shared ground between Dewey and Gadamer provides not only a timely reminder of the existential responsibility of education; but, through the relatedness of the thinkers, a further expansion of their individual thought is gained. In other words, this work will show that
Dewey and Gadamer’s engagement with the German idea of Bildung, specifically in regard to Hegel’s conception, reinforces the close proximity of their thought concerning experience, while simultaneously providing additional relief to the similarity of their views on education.

Val Dusek and Christie Hammer
University of New Hampshire and University of Southern Maine Lewiston/Auburn
Construction versus Deconstruction: Goodman, Elgin, “Science Wars,” and Education

Nelson Goodman’s version of denial of absolutist metaphysical realism escaped condemnation in the Science Wars. Was this because Goodman’s of early work in association with Russell and Carnap’s logical constructivism, and Goodman’s collaboration with Quine? This paper examines the contrast Goodman’s relativism to that of postmodernists. Goodman and Elgin’s position is an ideal corrective to the Science Wars. Elgin has been the leading applier of Goodman’s constructivism for science education. Can the kind of relativism, or multiple worlds constructivist position as advocated by Goodman, Elgin be taught to K-16 science students without throwing them into the “adolescent relativism of indifference” to either position on an issue, with claims of “who’s to judge?” or total confusion? Here is a legitimate form of relativism that avoids “sophomoric relativism.” We do have a criticism of Elgin’s notion of an epistemic agent who employs Putnam’s “division of epistemic labor,” involving acceptance of professionals or specialists. As Marx criticized economics division of labor, we question overuse of the division of intellectual labor. Laypersons defer to physicists on string theory. Yet experts in genetic engineering, agriculture, nutrition science, and military often present policy advocacy as pure implications of expertise. The epistemic agent should be conceived more as an active participant than as an acceptor of various authorities. We discuss a more proactive role for the lay agent.

Landon Elkind
University of Iowa
Concerning On Dreams 459b24-460a26

I argue that a section from Aristotle’s De Insomnii shows that the eye and the eye’s seeing capacity undergo change in the actualization of sight. At De Anima 418a5, Aristotle offers the assimilation thesis: in perceiving, “what has the power of sensation” changes from being unlike the perceived object to being like it. Aristotle’s interpreters dispute whether “what has the power of sensation” refers to (1) the eye (matter), (2) the eye’s seeing capacity (form), or (3) both (the compound of matter and form). In a colorful passage from De Insomnii, Aristotle apparently claims menstruating women can color a clean mirror red with their eyes. Raphael Woolf rightly highlights this passage as evidence that the eye (matter) changes in the actualization of sight; this weighs against (2). But Woolf too hastily takes the passage as evidence for (1) to the exclusion of (3). I offer an interpretation favoring (3) that is preferable to Woolf’s reading.

Roger E. Eichorn
University of Chicago
The Structure of Agrippan Skepticism

The term ‘Agrippan skepticism’ is relatively new to both the historical and the epistemological literature on skepticism, yet the set of problems to which it refers represents core issues in the theory of knowledge and justification, issues whose shape has changed little since Aristotle anticipated the Agrippan Trilemma in thePosterior Analytics (72b). Focusing on Sextus Empiricus’s presentation of the Five Agrippan Modes in Outlines of Pyrrhonism, I argue that the structure or system of the Five Modes has not been adequately understood by contemporary commentators. Specifically, I argue for the indispensibility of the two modes that frame the famous Trilemma of regress, circularity, and dogmatism. My interpretation turns on the idea that these oft-neglected
modes—disagreement and relativity—function to establish epistemico–doxastic standards that are central to the Agrippan problematic.

Sam Elgin
Yale University
Primitives, Essence and the Nature of Definition

Metaphysics has experienced something of a revolution since the mid 1990’s. Debates no longer exclusively concern modal criteria - whether proposed accounts provide necessary and sufficient conditions for various phenomena. Instead, philosophers often inquire into the real definition of different entities. Despite the central role definition has come to play, our understanding of it remains in its infancy. This paper aims to clarify the notion of definition. I argue that accounts provided by Kit Fine and Katherine Koslicki are committed to a principle I dub ‘Definition and Identifying Essential Properties (DIEP)’. According to this principle, for any x, if x can be uniquely identified by its essence then x has a complete definition. This principle is intuitive, and it is consistent with all previously discussed examples of merely partial definition. Nonetheless I argue that it is false. I appeal to two other metaphysical principles: Primitive Fundamentalism (according to which all primitives lack complete definitions) and Primitive Essentialism (according to which at least some primitives can be uniquely identified by their essences). Each of these needs defense. Jointly, they entail that DIEP is false. The failure of DIEP opens space for a new theory of definition. What - rather than identifying entities by their essences - does definition accomplish? I propose that definition is concerned with a sort of complete metaphysical explanation, and close by discussing some implications this has for other philosophical debates.

Casey Johnson
University of Connecticut
Objective Illocutionary Force?

Suppose I make an utterance, intending it to be a request. You don’t take it to be one. Is there an objective fact of the matter about who is correct? Are there objective facts about whether a given utterance has a particular illocutionary force? Since the 1950s, philosophers of language have used Austin’s distinctions between locutions, illocutions, and perlocutions. In that time, it has been assumed that there is an objective fact of the matter about what illocutionary force, if any, each locution has. An utterance is, objectively, either an assertion, or a command, or a question, or mere vocalizing etc. but not more than one of these. In this paper, I argue that objectivists about illocutionary force face some grave difficulties. I consider several flavors that this objectivism might take, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of each. I demonstrate that none of them fares particularly well.

David Kaspar
St John’s University
Intuitionism as a Normative Ethical Theory

Recent years have seen a resurgence of moral intuitionism. Most of this work has been metaethical in character. It is intuitionism’s distinct contribution to normative ethics that I’ll be exploring in this paper. I’ll first outline intuitionism as a normative ethical theory, and reveal some of its hidden normative ethical virtues. One thing I provide is an account of the general stringency of different kinds of actions, something previous commentators have thought intuitionism doesn’t, or can’t, provide. Then I’ll show how, in comparison with intuitionism, rival normative theories have several overlooked vices. Other theories, such as utilitarianism and Kantianism, provide less satisfactory explanations of why certain acts are wrong than intuitionism.
Whitley Kaufmann  
*University of Massachusetts, Lowell*

Does evolution refute moral realism?

The Redundancy Argument, first developed by Michael Ruse, is an argument against moral objectivism. It holds that, since we have an evolutionary explanation of the origin of ethics that does not require that ethics be objectively true, then it would be redundant and unnecessary to posit that ethics is objectively true. I argue the contrary: the lack of an evolutionary explanation for ethics is strong evidence in favor of moral objectivism as an explanation for why we value ethics.

Madison Kilbride  
*Princeton University*

Adolescents, Medical Decision-Making, and the Law

Many philosophers have argued that it is morally permissible to deny children certain rights because children, unlike adults, are incapable of governing themselves through reason. American courts have echoed this sentiment. While this view may justify paternalism towards younger children, it is less clear how well it extends to older children and adolescents. In fact, there is compelling empirical evidence suggesting that adults and adolescents do not differ substantially with respect to the cognitive capacities commonly believed to underlie medical decision-making competence. If adults do not possess a level of competence that adolescents fundamentally lack, then one must appeal to some other morally or legally relevant difference between these two groups in order to defend paternalism towards adolescents. Philosophers, clinicians, and judges have undertaken this challenge. Though many accounts of pediatric decision-making have been proposed, none of them has successfully articulated the extent to which children should be autonomous in the medical setting. Each of the existing approaches is too restrictive, not restrictive enough, or radically inconsistent. In light of these weaknesses, I argue that we need a new framework for deciding when pediatric patients should—and should not—be permitted to make their own medical decisions.

Timothy Kirschenheiter  
*Wayne State University*

Objecting to Feit and Cullison on Knowledge

In this paper, I first offer Richard Feldman’s No Essential Falsehoods account of knowledge. Next I offer two objections against this account, one of which comes from Neil Feit and Andrew Cullison. Then I consider Feit and Cullison’s edited account of the No Essential Falsehoods theory of knowledge. I offer an objection against this account that shows that Feit and Cullison offer too narrow of an understanding of knowledge. Next, I consider Feit and Cullison’s attempt to alter their account of knowledge in order to handle cases of knowledge from false belief offered by Peter Klein and Ted Warfield. Finally, I criticize this final account of knowledge offered by Feit and Cullison.

Montgomery Link  
*Suffolk University*

The Conditions for Analysis in Leibniz

Leibniz’s profound and influential understanding of an analysis through an infinite sequence of propositions seems to be accompanied by a background condition not unlike the ancient to apeiron. Leibniz designed his theory of analysis to overcome metaphysical and logical constraints, limitations he saw on the one hand in the Scholastic understanding of the underlying subject, and on the other hand in the Cartesian construal of geometric figures in
terms of algebraic equations. While Leibniz had a good number of different theories, in the Nouveaux essais he specifically identified three basic kinds of overarching analyses. Throughout, the focus will be on the paradigmatic Leibnizian analysis, as understood by us from our perspective today. This paradigmatic analysis is constrained by the philosophical tradition in which Leibniz was working, within a picture of reality as composed of substances and attributes. Propositions reflect that reality insofar as they are true predications of subjects. The challenge was to formulate the analysis of the proposition in order to incorporate relations. The difficulty in the reduction arises because relations, unlike accidents, had “one leg in one [subject] and the other in the other”. They followed a “third way”. Therefore, the Scholastic and Aristotelian tradition constrained analysis because asymmetric relations between subjects technically cannot be reduced to predicates of individual subjects without losing the logical interconnections between the relata. Although Leibniz believed, in keeping with his nominalism about relations, that this in principle should be accomplished, he was unable to carry it out. Frege’s later more comprehensive analysis, stripped of conceptualist restraints, keyed off the function concept using multiple quantified variables instead of the concept of subject. In this way the Begriffsschrift extended logic to incorporate the analysis of relations. The second principle influence on Leibniz mentioned above is the clarity gained by the Cartesian analysis of geometry; however, the Cartesian picture of algebraic exactness had finite parameters. Leibniz realized that it is no less clear to allow for other curvilinear shapes that can be accessed only by infinite analysis, under the condition that the form is preserved. Leibniz himself extended algebra to incorporate the analysis of these objects. Not just the objects of geometry but also the rigor of geometric deduction and logical reasoning are essential to the picture. These inferences are based on the inherence of the concept of the predicate in the concept of the subject, and on “definitional replacement”.

Pengbo Liu
*University of Massachusetts, Amherst*

Opacity or Asymmetry: A New Look at the Problem of the Essential Indexical

It is widely accepted that indexical attitudes are in some sense essential to the explanation of our actions. Recently, a number of authors (e.g., Cappelen and Dever [2013], Devitt [2013], Magidor [forthcoming]) have challenged this view. They argue that the famous cases discussed by Perry, Lewis, and others show nothing particularly problematic or essential about indexical attitudes, for such cases are just instances of some general problem (e.g. opacity of action-explanation). In this paper, I argue that it is misleading to construe the problem of the essential indexical in terms of opacity of action-explanations; instead, the problem is better characterized by what I will call the explanatory asymmetry between indexical and non-indexical thoughts. This new way of looking at the problem of the essential indexical will provide us with an adequate response to the challenge.

Emily McWilliams
*Harvard University*

Epistemic Oppression(s) and Ameliorative Epistemology

Epistemic oppression is something that happens when external conditions impinge on our flourishing qua epistemic agents, in a way that is non- incidental. Miranda Fricker’s work on epistemic injustice gives us two examples of epistemic oppressions; namely, testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice. But to a large extent, contemporary analytic epistemology still lacks the vocabulary for analyzing the myriad phenomena that constitute epistemic oppression. I suggest a way forward, via a particular philosophical methodology. Sally Haslanger has distinguished three different methodologies for conducting philosophical inquiry about some concept: conceptual, descriptive, and ameliorative inquiry. Epistemologists have focused their efforts disproportionately on conceptual and descriptive inquiry. Ameliorative inquiry is unique in that it begins with the normative question of why we should want a particular concept in the first place. I argue that in doing conceptual and descriptive inquiry, epistemologists have implicitly assumed particular answers to this question, and those assumptions have precluded us from seeing the phenomena that constitute epistemic oppression as theoretically-relevant. Ameliorative inquiry can help us move past these limitations.
George Miller  
*The University of Maine at Farmington*  
Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Operationalism: The Inadequacy of Data

The basic idea of operationalism is that the meaning of a concept is determined by the measurements or operations we are able to make in its name, so for example the concept associated with the word "temperature" would be determined by what we are able to do with thermometers and other measuring devices. Merleau-Ponty argued over a half-century ago that although operationalism is a type of abstraction which may be useful in the natural sciences, it sometimes results in "vagabond endeavors", and it would be a true disaster if it ever became dominant in the human sciences. He suggested that in order to counteract the temptations of operationalism, science should maintain a focus on the sensible world—on our preconceptual engagement with things through perception. I argue that operationalism is alive and well and also highly problematic in our culture, where it is now embedded in institutional practices rather than appearing as a theory in the philosophy of science. In education and healthcare for example, students and patients are increasingly being defined in terms of data and a fixed set of actions which can be performed. Merleau-Ponty's critique shows us both why operationalism is problematic and what might be done about it.

Kristian Olsen  
*University of New Hampshire*  
The Impossibility of Praiseworthy Wrongdoing and Blameworthy Right-Doing

Several philosophers have recently argued that praiseworthy wrongdoing and blameworthy right-doing are possible. I believe that these philosophers are mistaken. In this paper, I give a general argument that demonstrates that praiseworthy wrongdoing and blameworthy right-doing are not in fact possible. Then, I rebut what I take to be the best argument for thinking that they are.

Alex Sararro  
*Colby College*  
Friendship as the Mirror of Virtue: Aristotelian Friendship as the Condition for City-Building

In Books VIII and IX of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle takes what initially seems a peculiar diversion into an exhaustive analysis of friendship, especially in a text with the explicit goal of unearthing the highest good as it manifests itself in communities. I argue that this diversion is not extraneous, that it is in fact pivotal, for in my analysis of Aristotle, it is friendship, and not justice, that should be considered most foundational for city building, in an Aristotelian sense. Further, I demonstrate the ways in which friendship stands notably apart from many of Aristotle's other virtues in its surprising facility for resolving both the semantic and ethical difficulties of modern relationships.

William Seeley  
*University of New Hampshire*  
Normativity, Neuroscience, and the Philosophy of Art

There is a standard Wittgensteinian concern within philosophy of art that causal explanations in psychology and neuroscience apply equally to our engagement with art that is done well and art that is done poorly and so do not contribute to our understanding of the normative dimension of artistic appreciation. This skeptical concern is often used to challenge the relevance of psychology and neuroscience to our understanding of art. I sketch a crossmodal model for perception which demonstrates that those affective processes responsible for encoding the biological and instrumental value of stimuli plays a critical productive role in perceptual processing. I argue, drawing on
examples from painting, sculpture, dance, and film, that the ensuing model for affective perception dissolves these skeptical philosophical concerns.

May Sim  
*College of the Holy Cross*

**Self-determination and the Metaphysics of Human Nature in Aristotle and Mencius**

If self-determination enables one to know truths and rule oneself, then it’s central to metaphysics and ethics because metaphysics concerns truths, and ethics grasps good actions requiring self-rule. Given its significance to theory and practice, comparing Mencius’s and Aristotle’s views illuminates it and the challenges for each author’s view. Despite their differences, Aristotle and Mencius agree on a common human nature determining what’s good for humans. Both believe that human nature enables one to know reality and the good. Nevertheless, closer examinations show differences in their conceptions of the self, how it knows truths, the nature of truth, and the effectiveness of the wise/virtuous on the world. Whereas men aren’t by nature virtuous or vicious for Aristotle but need cultivation, men are by nature good for Mencius. For Mencius, human beings are born with four specific feelings corresponding to four virtues. They just need to think to grasp these four principles in their nature; without thought, they’re led astray by material things and fail to be good. Aristotle agrees that material pleasures are misleading and thought is required to grasp the principles of truth and right action, but disagrees that these principles are innate and accessible to thought alone. Closer examination shows their agreeing that cultivation is necessary for using one’s mind, but disagreeing about the role of feelings in wisdom, whether theoretical and practical wisdom are separate, their sources and effects. Comparing them offers resources for understanding ‘self-determination’.

Subrena Smith  
*University of New Hampshire*

**Meta-(Bio)philosophy: An Analysis**

I think that it is interesting to think about what we are doing when we do philosophy. For some people, philosophy (as with other modes of enquiry) at least in part requires one to engage with data. To this end, they see it as fruitful to incorporate empirical considerations into their philosophical investigations. For some others, ‘tis not the place of philosophy to rely on empirical resources. The first stance is particularly obvious in much of contemporary philosophy of science. It seems a philosophically fruitful enterprise, then, to assess if and to what extent empirical considerations can enhance philosophical endeavors. In this paper, I will engage with this metaphilosophical topic by considering Ruth Millikan’s evolutionary biological orientation to doing philosophy.

Herman T. Tavani  
*Rivier University*

**Some Critical Reflections on The Right to Be Forgotten**

In May 2014, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled in favor of a controversial data-protection principle commonly referred to as the Right to Be Forgotten (RTBF), sometimes also described as the “Right to Erasure.” This ruling affects citizens residing in all European Union (EU) nations, who now enjoy a right to have some online personal information about them “erased” under certain conditions and circumstances, and it also affects all search engine companies operating in those countries because they must comply with EU law. My talk focuses mainly on the arguments that have been advanced in the RTBF debate (both leading up to and extending beyond the ECJ’s ruling), and my main objective is show that the arguments put forth so far on both sides of the debate are not only flawed but, in some cases, also confused. In my analysis I question why many RTBF supporters, who also typically defend the EU model of privacy (or “data protection”) as a human right, assume that this broad right (comprising a bundle of sub-rights or “data protection” principles) entails a right to be forgotten/right to erasure. Conversely, I
ask why many who oppose RTBF, including (American-owned) search engine companies such as Google, assume that because U.S. citizens (and citizens of other non-EU countries) do not enjoy a broad or overarching right to privacy, from which a right to erasure might be derived, they should have no expectations regarding a right to have any online personal information about them erased. I also note that no one has yet shown, or even seriously considered, why it is not possible, in principle at least, for one to have both (a) a full-blown right to privacy and yet not have a right to be forgotten, and (b) a right to be forgotten and not have a (full-blown) right to privacy. In the concluding section of my talk, I argue that the (case-by-case based) criteria currently used by search engine companies (operating in EU nations) for considering individual RTBF-related requests from EU citizens to have existing links to online personal information about them removed from search-engine indexes is inconsistent and, at times, also arbitrary.

Joshua Tepley  
Saint Anselm College  
Ontological Difference and Ontological Commitment

Heidegger insists that being is not an entity, a claim I call the “Thesis of Ontological Difference.” A problem for the Thesis is that it seems to contradict a number of claims that are central to Heidegger’s philosophy of being, such as “the being of material substances is presence-at-hand” and “this table and I have different kinds of being.” These claims, when translated into the “canonical notation of quantification,” straightforwardly entail that being is something (some thing, some entity). The purpose of this paper is to develop and evaluate this problem for Heidegger’s philosophy of being.

Timm Triplett  
University of New Hampshire  
Removing the Veil: Justifying Morality via Open Deliberation

I consider the prospects for a justification of morality based on a deliberative model such as John Rawls uses for justifying some distributions of social and economic goods over others, and Bernard Gert uses for justifying morality. Unlike their deliberative models, however, mine does not rely on a “veil of ignorance” or “blindfold of justice” that imposes epistemic limitations on what deliberators can know about themselves and their social status. I argue that a surprisingly strong justification of morality can be obtained without imposing such limitations. If so, then such a justification will be more compelling to the individual imagining herself as a deliberator than Rawlsian and Gertian scenarios can be. For the individual will see that it is she herself who is engaging in these deliberations, with all her actual beliefs and values, rather than some abstract and epistemically deprived version of herself.

Kenneth Walden  
Darmouth College

In "A Commonwealth of Epistemic Ends" Catherine Elgin argues against epistemic individualism and in favor a universalization requirement on epistemic justification analogous to Kant's Formula of Universal Law. I think she's right, but her view needs to be supported by a Kantian theory of value that turns out to sound pretty radical: the object of intrinsic epistemic value is not true belief or understanding, but rather our capacity for inquiry, and our most fundamental epistemic duties are not to believe true things or follow reliable methods, but rather to respect this capacity.
Philosophy has had a long and serious engagement with skepticism. To motivate skeptical doubts we typically describe scenarios involving evil demons or brains in vats. But most non-philosophers don’t take these cases seriously, and consequently don’t find philosophical doubts very compelling. Nonetheless, many non-philosophers do take skeptical worries about climate change and the safety of vaccination very seriously. So while many philosophers would say that we do know CO₂ is causing the world to heat up, we don’t know whether it really exists, and many non-philosophers say the opposite: we do know the world exists, but not whether it’s really getting warmer. Why the disconnect? In this talk I’ll describe a theory of the psychological foundations of doubt that can make sense of both ordinary and philosophical kinds of doubt. I’ll end by defending a distinction between good and bad kinds of doubt.