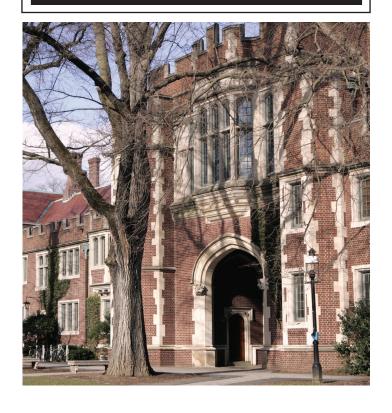# PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
CLASS OF 2023
CLASS DAY RECEPTION

MONDAY, MAY 29, 2023

2:30PM

1879 HALL COURTYARD

Opening Statement

John P. Burgess
Princeton University
Director of Undergraduate Studies

Announcement of Honors

Presentation of Prizes

John Martyn Warbeke 1903
Prize in Aesthetics

John Martyn Warbeke 1903
Prize in Metaphysics and Epistemology

Class of 1869 Prize in Ethics

Alexander Guthrie McCosh Prize

Isabelle M. Balson

Ryan J. Beeler

Stav Bejerano

Becca Berman

Austin Carbone

Gregory Ginzburg Dorman

Benjamin A. Edelson

Don Geci

Anna R. Goodman

Lulu Hao

Thomas P. Huleatt

James R. Jourlait

Jacob Katz

Matthew Kuenne

Yuqi Liang

Kate Liu

Jonathan S. Malo

Daelum A. Mawji

Nhuquynh T. Nguyen

David A. Veldran

Reid M. Zlotky

Natalia E. C. Zorrilla

Chair
Benjamin C.A. Morison

Director of Undergraduate Studies
John P. Burgess

Director of Graduate Studies
Hendrik Lorenz
Daniel Garber, *Acting Director of Graduate Studies (Spring 2023)*

Professor
Lara M. Buchak
John P. Burgess
Adam Newman Elga
Daniel Garber
Hans Halvorson
Desmond P. Hogan
Elizabeth Harman, *also University Center for Human Values*
Mark Johnston
Thomas P. Kelly
Boris C. Kment
Sarah-Jane Leslie
Hendrik Lorenz
Sarah E. McGrath
Benjamin C. A. Morison
Jacob M. Nebel
Gideon A. Rosen
Michael A. Smith

Assistant Professor
David Builes
Grace E. Helton
Harvey Lederman
Una Stojnic

FACULTY

Visiting Faculty

Barry Lam

Justine E. H. Smith

Lecturer

Lidal Dror

Alex Kerr

Daniel Kranzelbinder

Adam Lerner

Jason Yonover

Joseph Moore

Cosim Sayid

Associated Faculty

Charles R. Beitz, *Politics*

Renee Bolinger, *University Center for Human Values*

Andrew Chignell, *Religion, University Center for Human Values*

Robert P. George, *Politics*

Jonathan Gold, *Religion*

Daniel Heller-Roazen *Comparative Literature*

Mirjam Kotwick, *Classics*

Sanjeev R. Kulkarni, *Electrical Engineering*

Melissa S. Lane, *Politics*

Tania Lombrozo, *Psychology*

Victoria McGeer, *University Center for Human Values*

Alan W. Patten, *Politics*

Philip N. Pettit, *University Center for Human Values*

Peter Singer, *University Center for Human Values*

Anna Stilz, Politics, *University Center for Human Values*

Isabelle M. Balson
Human Values, Human Possibility, Human Nature: An Anti-Skeptical Position on Moral Responsibility

This Senior Thesis represents a multi-channeled exploration of an anti-skeptical position on moral responsibility. Through the examination of a series of questions such as the permissibility of Strawson's objective stance and whether moral responsibility is essentially interpersonal, I eventually defend a strong anti-skeptical response to the moral responsibility skeptic.

Ryan J. Beeler
Discounting Generative AI

In this Senior Thesis, I examine whether AI-generated art should be considered less aesthetically valuable than human-made art purely in virtue of its being made by a robot. Ultimately, I argue that while Generative AI successfully evades most common aesthetic criticism, Generative AI should be discounted for its inability to author authentic personal style.

Stav Bejerano
Animal Exploitation and the Capitalist Growth Drive: Towards an Eco Socialist Philosophy

What is exploitation? What makes it wrong? Previous attempts at answering these questions (from Marx to G.A. Cohen) have major shortcomings, so I developed a novel account of exploitation addressing these difficulties. My account is also uniquely suited to apply to sentient non-human animals, and I explore the potential for a multispecies, post-exploitation politics. The second half of my thesis focuses on the structure of environmental arguments against capitalist economies' need for continuous growth – and explores non-growth-based alternatives.

Becca Berman
Philosophy's Blind Spot: Why the Marginalization of Feminist Philosophy is Bad for Philosophy (and Very Wrong)

A much-needed wake up call, this thesis makes lucid the serious need for academic philosophy to better incorporate and value feminist philosophy.

The marginalization of feminist philosophy hinders the realization of philosophy's epistemic goals and the production of the best philosophical output. The marginalization of feminist philosophy also contributes to an inferior view of women and the dearth of women practicing philosophy. Let's do better, philosophy — to do better philosophy.

Austin Carbone
The Good and The Bad: Is it necessary to be moral to achieve a happy life? The Essence of Morality and Redefining What It Means to Live a Happy Life: A Dissertation Analyzing Aristotelian and Kantian Ethics

Through critical analysis of Aristotle's theory of ethics in his Nicomachean Ethics, I supplement Immanuel Kant's deontological pursuits for the philosophical study of morality and construct my own argument, rooted in part with my own unique experiences, for redefining what a "happy" or "well-lived" life is for individuals, and holistically. This connection between morality and the value of life calls for promoting virtuous behavior, moral excellence, and freedom by referencing the qualities and characteristics of human nature and the capacity to reason. I work to further the philosophical discussions of morality in hopes of fighting for a better understanding of what it means to live a well-lived life through virtuous behavior as well as considering someone's individual moral obligations to him or herself and society.

Gregory Ginzburg Dorman
Towards A Harmony of Interests: Considerations on Industrial Policy

The United States has increasingly begun to use industrial policy for national/political and economic ends. I understand this development through a line of political philosophical thought that argues that strategic government intervention in the economy is a necessary component of the democracy/capitalism relationship. Despite its technocratic nature, industrial policy opens more aspects of our economic life to societal consideration – and ultimately, to democratic deliberation, however flawed.

Benjamin A. Edelson
Moral Methodology

This senior thesis sketches an argument against mind-independent moral facts. I argue that because we have no reliable way of knowing such facts, we should conclude (at least preliminarily) that there are no such facts. I examine a number of ways people try to commonly justify their knowledge of moral facts and argue that there is good reason to doubt that any of them would be reliable.

Don Geci
The Philosopher-Poet an Exegesis of the Mystical and Scientific in Parmenides

As the earliest rational thinkers in the history of Western philosophy, the Pre-Socratics present an essential, but equally enigmatic, subject of study. These characters, and their novel mode of thinking, emerged against a backdrop of mythopoetic mysticism. This embryonic philosophy can be appreciated in various Pre-Socratic fragments, but none are nearly as elucidating as Parmenides, who wields both paradigms in order to communicate his philosophy of being. This thesis examines his poetry within the context of these two modes of knowing.

Anna R. Goodman
From Shame to Success: Recharacterizing shame in the context of social movements about gender, consent, and sexual assault

What makes social movements that work to make change around gendered issues like sexual assault successful? Some philosophers have argued that shame is a necessary moral emotion for social movement success. I find that these thinkers tend to oversimplify some of the less useful, gendered parts of shame. In my thesis I examine the tension between shame as a force for positive social change and shame as a regulatory mechanism for maintaining gender roles and preventing survivors of sexual assault from speaking about their experiences. By looking at the social movement Teach Us Consent and how it successfully changed consent education for all students from K-10 in Australia, I argue

we need to characterize our understanding of shame to form a more nuanced, gendered approach.

Lulu Hao
There's Something About Beauty…

Alexander Nehamas' account of beauty, as understood by analogy with love and friendship, is examined and explained. It is argued that this provides us with all the materials we need for a meta-aesthetic view of beauty.

Thomas P. Huleatt
Reasons for Loving a Particular Person: A Personalistic Analysis

What are the reasons we have for loving a particular person? This thesis looks to find answers to that question in light of Karol Wojtyla's philosophy of the person. In the first chapter I, lay out some of the existing arguments for what exactly love might attach to when we love a particular person. Does it attach to the qualities of the person we love, or is there something more fundamental such as the person's being, or is our reason for love simply because we are committed to do so? With those views on the table, I introduce in chapter two Wojtyla's unique philosophical view of the person that combines both a phenomenological and metaphysical approach placing fundamental value in the individual's experience and ability to form him or herself through properly ordered action. Finally, in chapter three I apply Wojtyla's philosophy to the questions of chapter one about what it means to love a particular person. Given the basic nature of individual experience in Wojtyla's philosophy, I conclude that any attempt to give a universal account of the reasons for loving a particular person is doomed to fail, because love between person's is by its very nature personal and therefore unique to the two particular people loving each other. The best we might do is give individuals a framework for how to think about their personal reasons for loving.

James R. Jourlait
Justification by Noumenal Dispositions Alone? A Reading and Reformed Critique of Kant's Doctrine of the Atonement

How can sinful man be made right with a holy God? After unfurling the foundations of Kant's pure religion of reason, I offer a critique of his anthropocentric solution to the problem of justification from a Reformed perspective arguing that it is only in the Reformed doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement that the answer to this theology quandary is to be found.

Jacob Katz
ChatGPT Wrote This Title: What Underlies Disagreement about Human Enhancements

This thesis engages with debates about the use of enhancements in three contexts: sports, procreation, and self-development. Rather than argue for or against the use of enhancements in a given context, my goal is to identify the underlying preferences, values, and opinions which motivate disagreement between pro and anti-enhancement positions.

Matthew Kuenne
Moral Responsibility in Question; An Exploration of Compatibilism and Skepticism About Responsibility

In Moral Responsibility in Question, An Exploration of Compatibilism and Skepticism About Moral Responsibility, I argue that in order to preserve moral responsibility in the face of determinism and skepticism, we must view free will as the exercise of rational deliberation between the discrete number of options that are confined by any given state of affairs.

Yuqi Liang
Rethinking the Dualism of Practical Reason and Impartiality in Ethics

Is Sidgwick right in claiming that the conflict between egoism and utilitarianism—known as the Dualism of Practical Reason—cannot be resolved at all? I shall discuss whether both sides of the Dualism are self-evident, whether reasons in support of egoism are genuine reasons, and

how insights into our evolutionary history may shed light on the debate. All things considered, I believe that reasons against rational egoism are weighty (though not decisive) and that the Dualism of Practical Reason, though not fully dissolvable, need not lead one to total pessimism about the role of reason in ethics.

Kate Liu
Love in Life: a Nehamasian Alternative to Wolf's Hybrid View of Meaning in Life

This Senior thesis examines the distinct features of one's life that make it meaningful, taking Susan Wolf's hybrid view of meaning in life as a starting point. In the first part of this essay, I argue that Wolf's conception of meaningfulness overlooks important sources of meaning in our lives, while also collapsing into the very notions of welfare she hopes to avoid. In the second part, I propose an alternative conception of meaning as endless loving. This view, I maintain, not only addresses the critiques of Wolf presented in the first part, but also raises new implications for how we can add meaning to our lives.

Jonathan S. Malo
Against the Unintelligible Existence of Matter: A reinterpretation of the Master Argument in The Principles of Human Knowledge.

The Master Argument can be a confusing argument for readers of *The Principles of Human Understanding.* My aim is to reconstruct Berkeley's attack on the doctrine of abstract ideas found in the introduction in order to reinterpret a more generous account of the master argument in which Berkeley is attempting to show the impossibility of matter insofar as it is an abstract concept which requires us to divorce existence from perception.

Daelum A. Mawji
Public Trust: A Comparative Analysis of Blockchain and Its Centralized Alternatives

This Senior Thesis dispels common misconceptions of decentralized assets and evaluates how much public trust they deserve based on the same metrics used to measure public trust in previous centralized counterparts and scientific research.

Nhuquynh T. Nguyen

On the Preservation of Moral Integrity: A Philosophical Analysis of Conscientious Objection in Medicine

This Senior thesis explores the possibility of reconciling professional duties with conscientious objection by adopting a compatibilist stance that recognizes the importance of personal conscience. I argue that a need-based theory of distributive justice can serve as the primary framework for assessing the moral permissibility of conscientious objection. The proposed framework shows that conscientious objection may be morally permissible in certain cases, provided it does not infringe upon an objective need. However, it also argues that conscientious objection to abortion is morally impermissible because abortion is an objective medical necessity.

David A. Veldran

Deontology and the Limits of de Lazari-Radek and Singer's Sidgwickian Ethics

This Senior Thesis considers Katarzyna de Lazari-Radek's and Peter Singer's attempt to rehabilitate and extend Henry Sidgwick's (1838–1900) case for hedonistic utilitarianism in their 2014 book *The Point of View of the Universe: Sidgwick and Contemporary Ethics.* It contends that they fail to overcome a challenge posed by deontology—and ought to change their tack.

Reid M. Zlotky

Love, Beauty, Rationality and Faith: Affirmation in Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence

Love, Beauty, Rationality and Faith: Affirmation in Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence is an attempt to provide further exegetical support for a more subtle and unusual interpretation of Nietzsche's eternal recurrence currently in the literature. The eternal recurrence is widely understood to be either a metaphysical claim or a thought experiment used to test whether people affirm their lives, and that affirmation is the epitome of Nietzsche's philosophical project.

Natalia E.C. Zorrilla
The Foundations of Personhood: A Blueprint for the Human Right to Housing

Housing advocates often justify policy proposals by referencing a "human right to housing." But does this right exist, and what might it entail? I defend a human right to housing grounded in personhood. My argument combines James Griffin's theory of human rights with the lived experience of people experiencing homelessness.