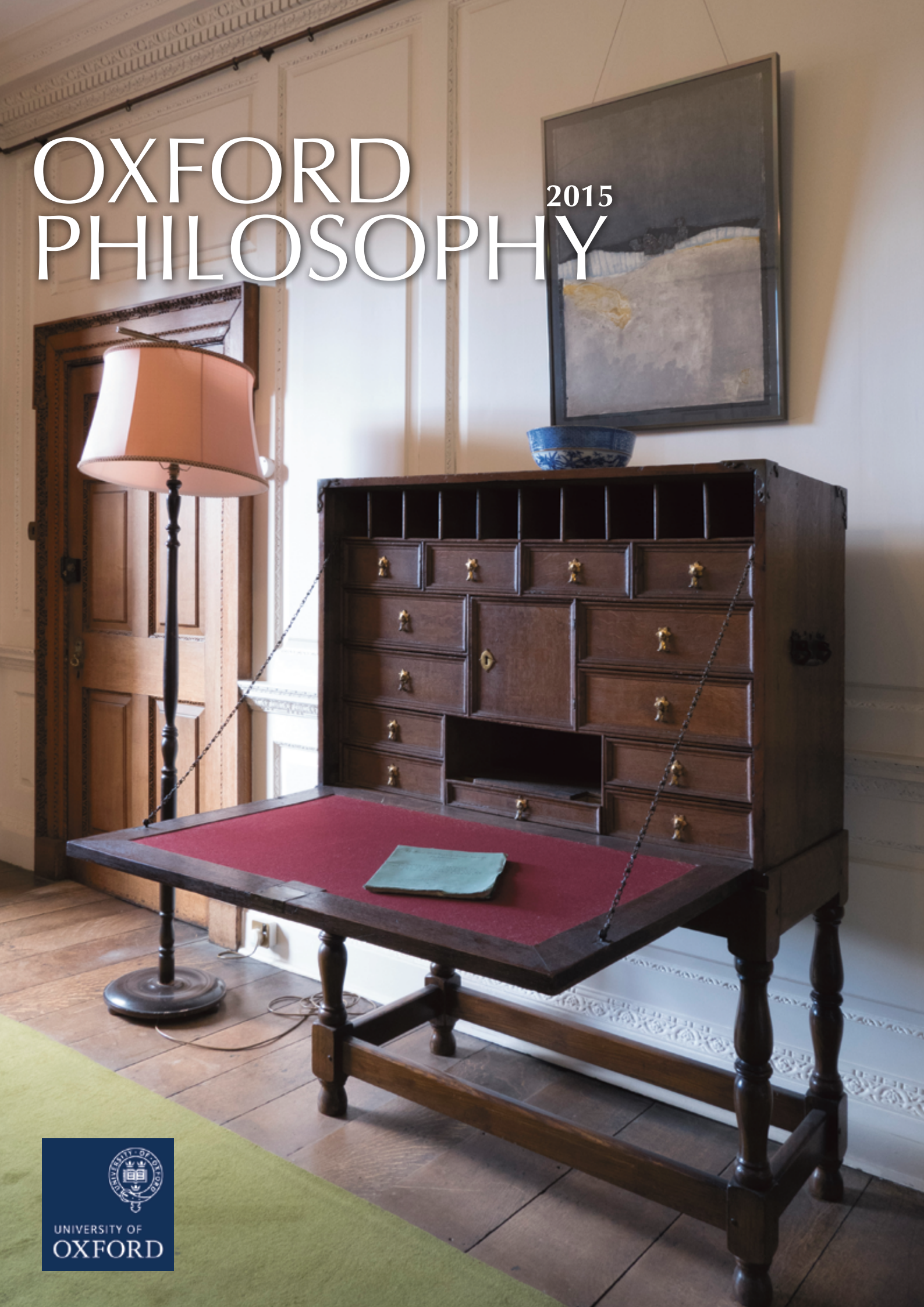

OXFORD PHILOSOPHY

2015

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD


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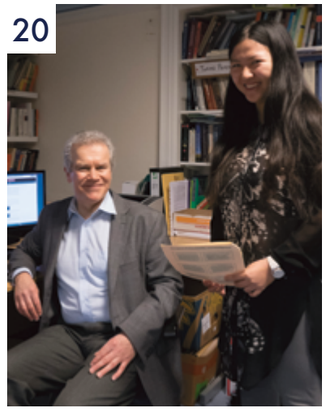
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CONTACT US

Oxford Philosophy
Faculty of Philosophy
Radcliffe Humanities
Radcliffe Observatory Quarter
Woodstock Road
Oxford, OX2 6GG
UK

email: news@philosophy.ox.ac.uk
tel: +44 (0)1865 276926

For news, events and further information, please visit:
www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk

CREDITS

Editors — James Knight, Paul Lodge

Art Direction & Design — Keiko Ikeuchi, www.keikoikeuchi.co.uk

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WELCOME

from the Chair of the Faculty Board

Edward Harcourt
Keble College

Though it now seems like a long time ago, the big news shortly after I wrote my last introductory piece for *Oxford Philosophy* was the REF – the Research Excellence Framework, a septennial government review in which all UK university departments are rated on the quality of their research, and on which in turn depends a substantial chunk of our funding. As the sixth edition of this publication was able to note briefly, Oxford came out as the top-rated UK philosophy department, with respect both to the proportion of Faculty members whose work received the top 4* rating and to the quantity of research produced that was rated 4*. For the uninitiated, unlike GCSEs – where if you do well you get an A, but if you do really well you get an A* – all REF grades are starred, a curious bit of bureaucratic hype. And in case my conjoining the words 'quantity' and 'research' elicits a sigh, REF assessments are made on the basis of one's best four article-length pieces in a roughly seven-year period – no good at capturing the contributions of the Wittgensteins or the Gettiers who publish nothing for decades, but nonetheless some way from the assessment by weight which I suspect is the picture some older hands may carry in their heads as an example of how things are not as they used to be. In any case, the recent REF was a huge success for the Faculty. The only challenge it poses – which we are confident we will be able to rise to – is how to do as well or better next time.

The last academic year saw the Faculty not only appoint Ofra Magidor – since 2007 a tutorial fellow at Balliol – as the new Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy, but also make no less than five new appointments to tutorial fellowships: in ancient philosophy, Luca Castagnoli (Oriel, from Durham) and Dominic Scott (LMH, from the University of Virginia via Kent); in moral philosophy, William MacAskill (Lincoln, from Emmanuel College, Cambridge) and Andreas Mogensen (Jesus, from All Souls); and in the philosophy of language, Paul Elbourne (Magdalen, from Queen Mary University of London). A warm welcome to them all. Sadly, however, the staff losses to competitor institutions which I mentioned last year also continued, with the departure due at the end of this academic year of David Wallace (Balliol) to the seemingly insatiable University of Southern California, and of Thomas Johansen (Brasenose) to Oslo. Both will be much missed.

Another significant departure was that of Tom Moore, the Faculty's long-serving Head of Administration and Finance, who left us in the course of 2015 to become Bursar at Nuffield. Tom became HAF (as it was then not called) in the early 2000s, but had been with the Faculty in one role or another for even longer, as evidenced by the hairstyles in some nostalgic photographs on show at his well-attended farewell in the summer.

A good news story which I mentioned last year, and which has now reached a conclusion, is the Teaching Fund. The Fund originated in a £60m commitment by the university to secure match funding in order permanently to endow 75 tutorial fellowships in colleges, with around 50 of these earmarked for the Humanities. It is pleasing to note that Philosophy secured the highest number of tutorial fellowships funded by the Teaching Fund of any faculty in the Humanities, endowing in perpetuity no less than 12 posts. Our warm thanks to the colleges and to their donors for the magnificent contributions which made this achievement possible.

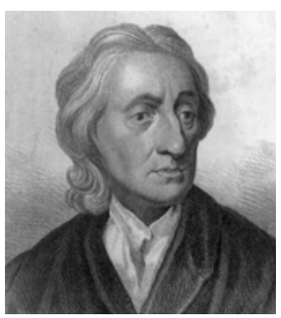
Though we depend significantly on the generosity of private donors, the last year has also seen the Faculty continue its record of success in attracting funding from charities and research councils to fund both individual research and its many collaborative research projects. The research funded from these sources that's under way in the Faculty at the moment includes work on responsibility and healthcare (Wellcome Trust), uncertainty and precaution (European Research Council), virtue and understanding (Templeton Foundation) and the development of character (Arts and Humanities Research Council). No less significant, in its way, to the intellectual vitality of the Faculty is the very large number of distinguished philosophers we are able to host each year. Last year these included Rae Langton from Cambridge for the John Locke lectures ('Accommodating Injustice'), Christine Korsgaard from Harvard for the Uehiro Lectures ('Fellow Creatures: The Moral and Legal Standing of Animals') and Sarah-Jane Leslie from Princeton, who gave the Gareth Evans lecture. This Hilary Term another series of Uehiro lectures – from Samuel Scheffler of NYU, addressing the question 'Why Worry About Future Generations?' – is taking place. Already the largest concentration of philosophers at least in the west, the Oxford Faculty is very fortunate to be able to attract so many more of the world's leaders in our field to come and talk to us.

Unveiling of Portraits of Women Philosophers

On 21 January 2016, the Faculty was proud to hold the formal unveiling of the portraits of distinguished Oxford women philosophers that were featured in *Oxford Philosophy 2014*. The ceremony was attended by one of those featuring in the portraits – Professor Dorothy Edgington as well as friends and family of the other honorands.

The installation of the portraits augments a collection that was previously housed in the Ryle Room at 10 Merton Street, and which now appear on the gallery outside the new Ryle Room in the Radcliffe Humanities building.

Dorothy Edgington *right*. Nick Ralwins, husband of the late Susan Hurley, *left*. Brothers of the late Kathy Wilkes, Patrick, Andrew and Robin, *below*.



John Locke Lectures 2016-20

The John Locke Lectures are among the world's most distinguished lecture series in philosophy. The series began in 1950, funded from the generous bequest of Henry Wilde.

Ted Sider (Rutgers University) will give the next series of lectures, in Trinity Term 2016. The title will be 'The Tools of Metaphysics and the Metaphysics of Science.' Dates and topics of individual lectures will be posted on our website in due course. http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/john_locke_lectures

The Faculty is also delighted to announce that the following people have agreed to give the John Locke Lectures in Oxford in the following years: 2017 **Michael Smith** (Princeton); 2018 **Peter Railton** (Michigan); 2019 **Philip Pettit** (Princeton /ANU); **2020 Susan Wolf** (UNC, Chapel Hill)

Ofra Magidor Elected 11th Waynflete Professor

The 1st September 2015 saw Ofra Magidor (Fairfax Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at Balliol College) succeed John Hawthorne as Waynflete Professor-elect of Metaphysical Philosophy in the Faculty of Philosophy. She will become Waynflete Professor of Philosophy on 1st October 2016, at which time she will also become a Fellow of Magdalen College. Previous holders of the chair include R.G. Collingwood, Gilbert Ryle, P.F. Strawson, and Dorothy Edgington. Ofra's research interests are in Metaphysics, Philosophy of Logic and Language, Epistemology, and the Philosophy of Mathematics. She is author of the book *Category Mistakes* and has published work on a wide range of other topics, including the metaphysics of persistence, arbitrary reference, the problem of vagueness, possible worlds semantics, and strict finitism.

Edward Harcourt wins AHRC Network Award

Edward Harcourt (Keble College) has won an AHRC Research Network award for a network entitled 'The Development of Character: Attachment Theory and the Moral Psychology of Vice and Virtue'. The award will fund three international conferences in the course of 2016 and 2017, at the Centre for Advanced Studies, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich; at Oxford; and at the University of California, Davis. Attachment theory correlates genetic endowment, early nurture and other environmental conditions with attachment classifications, and these in turn with character traits like the capacity for intimacy, co-operativeness, and 'resilience'. It has thus captured the interest of policy-makers who see 'building character' as a key to combating social deprivation.

Nick Bostrom at the UN and in *The New Yorker*

On October 7th Nick Bostrom, Director of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, spoke alongside Max Tegmark from the Future of Life Institute at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The event was titled 'CBRN National Action Plans: Rising to the Challenges of International Security and the Emergence of Artificial Intelligence.' UN delegates were briefed on the development of national action plans to respond to CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear) threats, and also received a briefing led by Nick and Max Tegmark, aimed at enhancing awareness of the current and likely future capabilities of artificial intelligence and autonomous robotics.

In November 2015, Nick was also featured in *The New Yorker*. The article 'The Doomsday Invention', which features Nick and his best-selling book *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* and throws light on Nick's philosophical ideas and on the Future of Humanity Institute.

Hilary Greaves and Paul Lodge Receive University Teaching Excellence Awards

Hilary Greaves (Somerville College) and Paul Lodge (Mansfield College) were both recipients of University Teaching Excellence Awards in 2015, two of only seven awarded across the whole of the Humanities Division. Awards are given either to individuals or to teams as a public acknowledgement of excellence in teaching and learning. Hilary received her award (in absentia) for the development of teaching methods focussed around the creation of a supportive community among students using an innovative structure modelled on scientific research groups. Paul received an award for his contribution to the ongoing efforts to increase the representation of women in the Philosophy Faculty through the development of courses on early modern women philosophers and on recent work on the status of women in academic philosophy.

Luca Castagnoli **Oriel College**

Luca studied philosophy at the University of Bologna and the University of California, Berkeley, and in 2005 obtained a PhD in Classics from the University of Cambridge. He was a Research Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and then a Lecturer/Senior Lecturer in Ancient Philosophy at Durham University for eight years. He has published a monograph on ancient self-refutation arguments and some two dozen articles on a variety of ancient philosophical subjects, especially logic and epistemology. He is working on his next two monographs, on Greek logic and ancient philosophical theories of memory, and editing *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Logic.*

Paul Elbourne **Magdalen College**

Paul read Literae Humaniores and took an MPhil in General Linguistics and Comparative Philology at Oxford (Corpus Christi College) before doing his PhD at MIT. There he followed the interdisciplinary PhD programme in semantics, which involves training in both linguistics and philosophy. Before returning to Oxford, he taught at Marlboro College in Vermont, New York University, and Queen Mary University of London. His research interests lie in natural language semantics and the philosophy of language.

William MacAskill **Lincoln College**

Will returns to Oxford following a Junior Research Fellowship at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Prior to this he completed the BPhil and DPhil in philosophy at Oxford, having been an undergraduate in philosophy at Cambridge. He works on decision-making under normative uncertainty and on "effective altruism", the theory of how individuals can do the most to make the world a better place. He has published articles on normative uncertainty in *Ethics*, *Mind* and the *Journal of Philosophy*. He is also the author of *Doing Good Better: Effective Altruism and a Radical New Way to Make a Difference*, an introduction to the idea of effective altruism.

Andreas Mogensen **Jesus College**

Andreas joins us from a fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford, where he completed a DPhil on evolutionary debunking arguments in ethics in 2014. Prior to that he was a BPhil student at Jesus College, having completed an undergraduate degree in philosophy at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. His research interests focus primarily on issues in moral epistemology and normative ethics, with side interests in applied ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of biology. Andreas also acts as a senior advisor to Giving What We Can, a charity established by moral philosophers and philosophy students working in Oxford to encourage greater giving to the most effective causes.

Dominic Scott **Lady Margaret Hall**

Dominic Scott works mainly in ancient Greek philosophy, though he also has research and teaching interests in normative and applied ethics. He was a lecturer in the Philosophy Faculty at Cambridge for 18 years, and a Fellow of Clare College for 20. He has also been a Professor at the University of Virginia and held visiting appointments elsewhere in the US, including Harvard and Princeton. In 2015-16 he is a Visiting Fellow in Philosophy at Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, supported by the Alexander von Humboldt and the Carl Friedrich von Siemens Foundations. He has written and edited a number of books on ancient philosophy and recently co-authored a book on the current state of the *Humanities, The Humanities World Report 2015*.

The Philosophical Heritage of Medieval Oxford

Professor **Cecilia Trifogli** (All Souls) explores Oxford's rich philosophical culture in the middle ages and the way in which it is currently being revived for contemporary audiences.

Robert Grosseteste

Philosophy at Oxford has illustrious origins. Starting from the time of its foundation at the beginning of the 13th century until the end of the 14th century, the University of Oxford was renowned, together with the University of Paris, as a great centre for the study of philosophy. One of its first chancellors was Robert Grosseteste (c. 1168-1253), an eminent philosopher and theologian, who had a pivotal role in the introduction of Aristotelian thought to Oxford. The two most famous medieval thinkers active at Oxford are no doubt John Duns Scotus and William Ockham, but there are many other less known figures who contributed to the prestige of Oxford philosophy in the Middle Ages: for example, Roger Bacon and Robert Kilwardby in the 13th century; Henry of Harclay, Walter Burley, Adam Wodeham, Thomas Bradwardine and John Wyclif in the 14th century.

The closest medieval analogue to our present-day Philosophy Faculty would be the so-called arts faculty. In Oxford, like everywhere else at the time, the teaching programme in this faculty was organized around set texts, and these were almost exclusively works by Aristotle (in Latin translation): especially the *Physics*, *De Anima*, the *Metaphysics*, and the *Ethics*. Aristotle was regarded as the greatest, if not the only, philosophical authority by medieval thinkers, as their standard reference to him, 'the Philosopher', clearly indicates. Accordingly, a large portion of medieval philosophical literature is in the form of commentaries on Aristotle's works. However, what we would nowadays consider philosophical thinking was not restricted to the lecturing on Aristotle's works in the arts faculty. On the contrary, substantial and also original philosophical discussions took place in the faculty of theology, and so the writings of the theology professors constitute another major source for the study of medieval philosophy. In particular, it is in their commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (the main text-book of the theology faculty) that Scotus and Ockham gave the most comprehensive presentation of their own philosophical views. More generally, the nature of the set texts and of the teaching in the theology faculty, compared to that of the philosophy faculty, allowed a much greater degree of freedom in the choice of philosophical topics to be singled out for in-depth discussions, not confined to those arising from Aristotle's texts. Thus, the philosophical heritage of medieval Oxford comes from two distinct institutional settings: the Aristotelian faculty of philosophy and a more flexible faculty of theology.

Medieval Oxford excelled both in the field of Aristotelian studies and in the 'innovative' areas of philosophical speculation. In the field of Aristotelian studies, a clear example comes from the early phase of the reception of the *Physics* around the middle of the 13th century: far from providing a mere exegesis of this difficult Aristotelian text, the great majority of the arts faculty of this period engaged with it critically, and showed an impressive philosophical insight: indeed, they largely set the agenda for the discussion of the *Physics* for the next one hundred years. They also displayed a very high degree of independence from the authoritative

views of 'the Commentator' par excellence, namely, Averroes, who was often criticized. Oxford scholarship on Aristotle's *Physics* definitely eclipsed that of Paris in that period. Among the innovative discussions, one of the most remarkable, for both its extension and philosophical sophistication, was that concerning the ontological status of universals at the beginning of the 14th century. The main protagonists of this debate were all Oxford scholars: Scotus, Ockham, Burley, Henry of Harclay, and Walter Chatton. Many other areas can be mentioned to which Oxford gave an outstanding contribution, often surpassing that of Paris: the debates on the ontological status of relations, of quantity, and of successive things, on the intellectual cognition of singulars, the application of mathematical methods to philosophical and theological problems pursued by a group of Oxford scholars known as 'the Oxford calculators' or also 'Mertonians'.

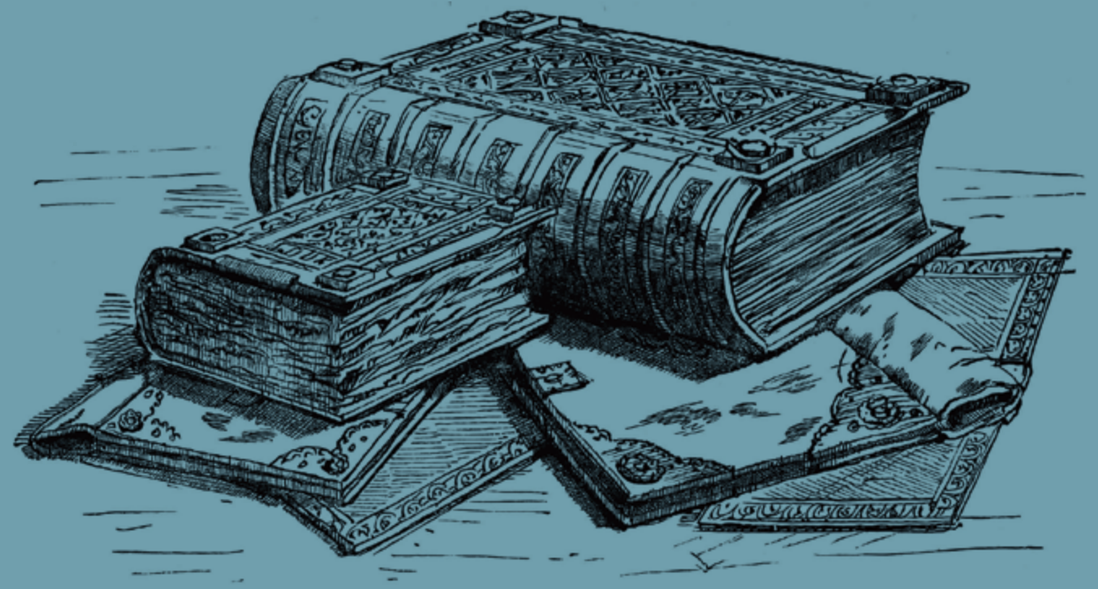
The philosophical heritage of medieval Oxford is not of purely historical interest. On the contrary, it still has great value today as specifically philosophical heritage, to a great and pervasive extent that I myself would not have imagined before coming to Oxford in 1999. In my sixteen years of teaching in the Philosophy Faculty, where there is strong emphasis on the philosophical interest of the history of philosophy, I have lectured on a great variety of topics in medieval philosophy: some falling within the contemporary 'philosophical orthodoxy' but others quite outlandish, like for example, the Aristotelian view of the continuum and the question of the unity or plurality of substantial forms in a material substance. The philosophical insight provided by the medieval sources has received positive feedback, sometimes in very modern terms: "This is cool stuff!", as an undergraduate once commented in response to my attempt to make sense of a very obscure part of Scotus' discussion of individuation. Discussions of this material with students have been stimulating. The new BPhil system has helped consolidate my confidence in the lasting philosophical interest

The philosophical heritage of medieval Oxford is not of purely historical interest. On the contrary, it still has great value today as specifically philosophical heritage

of medieval speculations. Students on the BPhil are on a course whose attraction is in part the opportunity to work with those at the very forefront of modern trends in philosophy, but some BPhil students, after receiving their first exposure to medieval thought in my graduate classes, then chose medieval philosophy as one of their essay options: this is quite an excellent outcome and one of which I am very proud. I do hope that many more BPhil students will be attracted to the subject in the years to come.

The Oxford experience, however, has also urged me to bring into focus a major problem that scholars of medieval philosophy have to face when they try to show the philosophical importance of this part of the history of philosophy: that of making medieval philosophical ideas conceptually accessible to the contemporary philosophical audience. In their original sources these ideas are hidden under a thick layer of highly technical jargon, mostly of Aristotelian origin, which is assumed as familiar and thus left unexplained. The translation of the original Latin texts into English or any other modern language is not adequate to solve this problem. What is needed is a kind of conceptual translation, aimed both at clarifying the literal sense of medieval writings and at pointing out the relevant philosophical issues that they address. This is a very hard task and is being taken more and more seriously in the current scholarship, especially in the English-speaking world. It is worth mentioning here two scholars who were in Oxford until not long ago, in the theology faculty (interestingly enough!) and who have accomplished this task in an admirable way: Marilyn McCord with her pioneering works on Ockham, and Richard Cross with his recent studies on Scotus.

In addition to the problem of making the philosophical heritage of medieval Oxford conceptually accessible, there is the more basic one of making it materially accessible. With a few notable exceptions, this extremely rich heritage is for the most part buried in medieval manuscripts, handwritten in tiny script, difficult to decipher and with a complex system of abbreviations. It is yet to be made available in modern editions. The importance of making medieval works accessible as printed texts cannot be underestimated. There is no doubt



that our present knowledge of even major figures like Scotus and Ockham, whose works have in the most part been edited, remains somewhat limited by the fact that we do not yet have access to many of their contemporary sources. While the fundamental value of editions is recognized by all genuine scholars of medieval philosophy, even those without any personal inclinations to text-editing, editorial projects rarely find the institutional support that they deserve from universities and funding bodies in Britain today. It is therefore crucially important that the project of editing medieval philosophical texts of British (predominantly Oxonian) origin has a prestigious institutional home in the British Academy and its series 'Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi' ('Medieval British Authors').

The series started long ago, with the publication of the *Memorials* of St. Anselm in 1969, but it is only in recent years, since Professor John Marenbon was appointed as Project Director for the series and I took over in 2007 the chair of the Medieval Texts Editorial Committee that supervises the project, that the series has consolidated its status as the institutional home for the edition of medieval philosophical texts. It has indeed attracted a large number of very good proposals concerning works of major medieval philosophers – like Grosseteste, Kilwardby, Adam of Buckfield, Wyclif – by highly qualified scholars. The intended audience of the editions published in this series consists primarily but not exclusively of scholars of medieval philosophy. In most cases the works published are of a general philosophical interest and have the potential to attract specialists who come to medieval philosophy from a background in philosophy, rather than in history or theology. Since these new specialists do not always read Latin, the decision that the Latin texts edited in the series should normally have facing English translation is indeed relevant. We think that in this way the series is able to play a significant role not only in showing the interest and importance of British (especially Oxford) philosophy in the Middle Ages, but also more generally in promoting the study of medieval thinkers in Philosophy departments.

I have myself devoted large part of my scholarly activities to the editing of medieval philosophical texts. In particular, I have contributed two volumes to the 'Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi' series the edition of the question *On the Intellectual Soul* by the Oxford 14th-century philosopher Thomas Wylton (joint work with Lauge Nielsen and Gail Trimble, published in 2010) and the edition of the commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* by the Oxford 13th century philosopher Geoffrey of Aspall (joint work with Silvia Donati and Jennifer Ashworth, in print), and I have plans for further contributions. Text-editing is something I utterly enjoy and of the importance of which I am totally convinced. A good edition, compared to a monograph on a fashionable theme, is something that will be read and used for a much longer time: a good edition is for forever (or almost).

Accommodating Injustice

How to hinder justice with words

In Trinity Term 2015, **Rae Langton** (University of Cambridge) gave the John Locke lectures. Her series 'Accommodating Injustice' saw her develop the ideas of the 32nd White's Professor of Moral Philosophy J. L. Austin to tackle contemporary issues surrounding the establishment of authority and patterns of domination and subordination in public speech.

As philosophers, we could do a better job of accommodating injustice—in the sense of attending to actual injustice, making space for it in our theorizing, instead of being so ready to build our castles in the air. But as speakers and hearers, we do a good job of accommodating injustice—in the sense of adjusting to injustice, and helping it along. We do many things with words, as J.L. Austin said, and what we do with words can help build and perpetuate injustice in ways that follow rules of accommodation.

By 'accommodation' I mean a process of adjustment that tends to make speech acts count as 'correct play'. This familiar phenomenon has been studied by linguists and philosophers, and occurs in widely varying contexts, from informal presupposition introductions ('Even George could win'), to ceremonial performatives ('I hereby name this ship the Queen Elizabeth'). It has a four-part pattern, described by David Lewis: an utterance, a requirement, the holding of certain felicity conditions, and a felicitous outcome. The implications of accommodation for philosophy of language have been discussed widely; for epistemology, to some degree; for ethics and politics, barely at all. I shall put a spotlight on the way injustice feeds into accommodation, and emerges from it.

We shall be looking at the darker side of something with a familiar bright side. Accommodation is ubiquitous, inevitable, and responsible for the good, as well as the bad, in our lives as speakers and hearers. Knowledge, humour, and intimacy all depend on it. Even accommodation's dark side relies on something bright, on human virtues, our powers to make sense of each other, trust each other, and co-operate. But, to borrow Iago's words, it can turn those very virtues 'into pitch', and out of our own goodness make a snare that does enmesh us all.

When we are alert to accommodation's pattern, we will see many instances, said Lewis. He was right. Philosophers have focused on presupposition, and standards for knowledge. But there is much more. Authority follows rules of accommodation, and this includes epistemic and practical authority (Lecture 1). Norms follow rules of accommodation, through commands, standard-shifting, generics, and presuppositions about normality (Lecture 2). Knowledge follows rules of accommodation, through lies and misleading assertions, standard-shifting, stake-shifting, and the adjustment of credibility and confidence (Lecture 3). These in turn silence some speakers, by placing limits on 'correct play', when attempted speech acts misfire, or fail to be accommodated (Lecture 4). Our accommodating attitudes, as hearers, are part of the problem, and they have two roles, as psychological effects, and as felicity conditions for the speaker. (Lecture 5).

This means that our account of accommodation needs extending. It needs to be mapped at two levels: first, an evolving abstract normative structure, tracking the speech acts performed ('illocution' in Austin's terms); and second, the evolving epistemic and psychological states of participants, tracking some significant effects ('perlocution' in Austin's terms). These mappings don't compete, but complement each other. The account of evolving common ground needs expanding to include conative and affective states, as well as cognitive, to help model speech acts that appeal to non-doxastic states, including desire and emotion: for example, advertising, pornography, propaganda, and hate speech.

Speech acts are enabled by absence, a hearer's failure to block, as well as by presence, a hearer's uptake: whether a speech act is 'happy' depends on extrinsic factors, including later acts and omissions of others. There are implications for metaphysics: a speech act's nature at a given place and time depends non-causally on what happens elsewhere and later. There are implications for silence: it includes illocutionary failure, misfires, and failures of accommodation. And there are implications for politics: free speech requires more than state non-interference.

Attending to these problems thus makes visible some solutions (Lecture 6). Speech acts are revealed as things we do together with words, involving the attitudes, acts and omissions of hearers and bystanders, as well as speakers. Free speech looks different on this picture, and demands richer resources: the action, not merely inaction, of other agents—states, institutions, hearers and bystanders—can be needed to secure it.

Rae Langton
Professor of Philosophy and Professorial Fellow of Newnham College, University of Cambridge

THE LECTURES Accommodating Injustice

The John Locke Lectures took place over a period of six weeks in Trinity Term 2015. The following are outlines of individual lectures themselves.

LECTURE 1 Accommodating authority

Both the exercise and the distribution of authority follow rules of accommodation. Authority is a felicity condition for performing certain speech acts, such as knighting or firing, which themselves in turn can alter facts about authority. The conferral and removal of authority can happen formally, via ceremonial speech acts, or informally, via presupposition accommodation. Authority can be practical or epistemic. Practical authority can also be grounded in epistemic authority, as when a doctor's expertise enables her to issue commands. Drawing on work by Ishani Maitra, I argued that the informal accommodation of epistemic and practical authority explains how subordinating speech can get authority, including informal hate speech that ranks certain people as inferior, and destroys their credibility.

LECTURE 2 Accommodating norms

Background social norms determine whether and how an attempted speech act is accommodated. Social norms themselves follow rules of accommodation, in a variety of ways: through authoritative speech acts of permitting or requiring; through informal 'conversational exercitives' that alter permissibility facts within conversations (as Mary Kate McGowan has described); and through speech acts that 'normalize' certain behavior. Presupposition-introduction can be a potent normalizer. Anti-semitic propaganda can presuppose it is normal to despise Jews, and that this is widely known. Pornography can presuppose that women who say 'no' don't refuse, and that this is widely known. Presupposing that a behaviour is normal is a double-whammy: conveying that the behavior is normal, and that knowledge of it is normal too.

LECTURE 3 Accommodating knowledge

Accommodation plays a routine role in this transmission of knowledge and ignorance, through assertions, and presupposition accommodation. Rules of accommodation bear on knowledge in four other ways, depending on one's account of knowledge, and all have potential political import. First, standards for knowledge can shift over time, following rules of accommodation. Second, what matters can follow rules of accommodation – the issue of stakes. Third, the distribution of credibility can follow rules of accommodation – the issue of epistemic authority. Speakers can alter the epistemic standing of participants (themselves or others), benefiting through inflation, or suffering through loss, of credibility, including self-credibility. Fourth, accommodation enables what we can call 'maker's knowledge' of socially constructed truths, in the way a judge who delivers sentence knows what the sentence will be.

LECTURE 4 Silence as accommodation failure

Justice Brandeis said the remedy for evil speech is 'more speech, not enforced silence': bad speech can be fought with good. This is admirable but mistaken. Besides material constraints on time, money, or education, there are distinctive structural handicaps on a capacity to fight bad speech with good. Sometimes it is difficult or impossible to get good speech accommodated. Illocutionary disablement is encountered when a speaker is allowed their words, but literally cannot do what they intend with them: for example, a woman says 'No', meaning to refuse sex, but fails to have her refusal recognized. Sometimes it is difficult or impossible to block bad speech, and prevent its accommodation. For example, it can be hard to block presuppositions, given the deflection of hearer attention, the asymmetric pliability of accommodation, the cost of being uncooperative, and the cost of contradicting apparent shared knowledge.

LECTURE 5 Accommodating attitudes

Our attitudes as hearers are involved in accommodation, and not only through the updating of belief in light of what speakers say. In illocutionary accommodation, our attitudes serve as felicity conditions for the force of a speaker's utterance (cf. the notion of 'uptake' in J. L. Austin), whereas in perlocutionary accommodation, our attitudes are among the effects of a speaker's utterance. On this picture, the attitudes of hearers are not only effects, but also partial determinants of what a speaker does with words. And accommodation will also need to include attitudes that go beyond belief, such as desire and hatred, if we are to understand the workings of speech that enacts norms, sparks desire, or recruits hearers to hatred.

LECTURE 6 How to undo things with words

Rules of accommodation allow unjust social norms and patterns of authority to emerge from speech acts in informal ways, and from unlikely sources, even from the helpful acts and omissions of those who don't speak. Hate speech and pornography exploit these mechanisms, as do social generics and more. If the force of a speech act can be enabled by failure to block, there are implications for the responsibility of individual hearers, individual bystanders, institutions and the state. All are more-than-complicit fellow actors in what we do together with words. Given the costs and challenges, there can be no perfect duty to block or interrupt the injustices described. What then? More active individuals: the cultivation of epistemic virtues of alertness and judgement; practical virtues, capacities to intervene and block where one is able, as an imperfect duty. More active institutions: free speech as not merely non-interference, but a capability to be supported, requiring concrete economic and educational resources (cf. the work of Martha Nussbaum and Susan Brison); and a role for the state as not only a practical, but an epistemic authority, promoting conditions for knowledge, since some knowledge is part and parcel of justice.

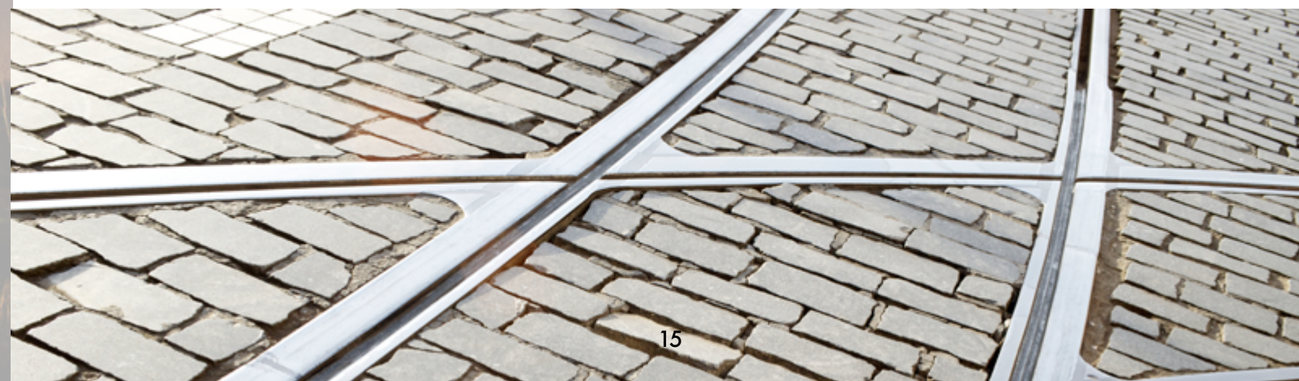
PRACTICAL ETHICS

White's Professor of Moral Philosophy, **Jeff McMahan** (Corpus Christi) takes a critical look at the place of the burgeoning field of practical ethics within the study and teaching of ethics.

For much of the twentieth century, many philosophers, particularly in Britain, were contemptuous of the idea that reasoning about substantive moral issues could be considered philosophy. According to A. J. Ayer, for example, moral philosophy explains "what people are doing when they make moral judgements; it is not a set of suggestions as to what moral judgements they are to make. … All moral theories … in so far as they are philosophical theories, are neutral as regards actual conduct." This, he observed, is "one reason why many people find moral philosophy an unsatisfying subject. For they mistakenly look to the moral philosopher for guidance." Similarly, C. D. Broad wrote that "it is no part of the professional business of moral philosophers to tell people what they ought or ought not to do. Moral philosophers, as such, have no special information not available to the general public, about what is right and what is wrong."

As Peter Singer noted in his Tanner Lecture in Oxford early this past summer, this exalted view of philosophy as too pure to descend to the consideration of practical matters is now a relic of a narrow and long discarded conception of philosophy. Nor had it been the prevailing view prior to the twentieth century. The classical Greek and Roman philosophers, as well as Kant, Mill, and Sidgwick (who published a book with the title *Practical Ethics*), would have been surprised to learn from Ayer that a substantial proportion of their work was not actually philosophy.

Even though what is variously referred to as 'practical ethics' or 'applied ethics' is now universally recognized as a legitimate area



of philosophy, it is still regarded by some philosophers as a ghetto within the broader area of moral philosophy. This view is in one way warranted, as there is much work in such sub-domains of practical ethics as bioethics and business ethics that is done by writers whose expertise is in medicine, health policy, business, or some area other than moral philosophy, and whose standards of rigour in moral argument are deplorably low. These writers also tend to have only a superficial understanding of normative ethics. Yet reasoning in practical ethics cannot be competently done without sustained engagement with theoretical issues in normative ethics. Indeed, Derek Parfit believes that normative and practical ethics are so closely interconnected that it is potentially misleading even to distinguish between them. In his view, the only significant distinction is between ethics and metaethics, and even that distinction is not sharp.

One cannot, for example, understand the morality of war without addressing a broad range of issues both in normative ethics and in other areas of philosophy, such as: the bases of moral liability to be harmed or killed; the nature of proportionality as a constraint on the different forms of justification for harming; whether non-consequentialist reasoning can apply in conditions of factual and normative uncertainty; whether people can constitute group agents that can be collectively responsible; whether agents' intentions are relevant to the permissibility of their action; whether there is a constraint against doing harm that is stronger than the reason to prevent equivalent harm from occurring; and so on. If, for instance, one believes both that there is no moral difference between causing harm as an intended means and causing the same harm as a side effect, and that the reason not to do harm is significantly stronger than the reason to prevent equivalent harm from being done by others, one will find it difficult to avoid being committed to a form of pacifism.

Similarly, one cannot reach defensible conclusions about the moral dimensions of issues such as climate change, reparations for historical injustice, and screening for disability without addressing central issues in population ethics, such as the so-called 'Non-Identity Problem', how reasons deriving from impersonal considerations might weigh against harms and benefits to particular individuals, and so on. Nor is it possible to get to the bottom of problems such as abortion and the use of animals for food or experimentation without confronting some of these same issues in population ethics, or without investigating the bases of moral status, the conditions for the possession of rights, and indeed the metaphysics of personal identity.

Because of these dependencies, one debate within practical ethics concerns the precise nature of the relation between practical and normative ethics. One reason for preferring the label "practical ethics" to "applied ethics" is that the latter may seem to beg this question by suggesting that the relation must be "top-down", with normative ethics having a certain logical priority. This view certainly has its advocates. R.M. Hare, for example, thought that one must first analyse the logic of moral language, then derive from that analysis the correct theory of metaethics, then extract from that the correct normative ethical theory (two-level consequentialism), and finally apply this latter theory to the practical questions to determine what the answers are. Relatively few moral philosophers work this way now. Some work almost entirely from the bottom up, addressing practical issues without any commitment to a normative theory but with the aim of reasoning toward general principles that may eventually, presumably with some refinement, be subsumed within a normative theory we reach only at the end of this process. Some, indeed, think it presumptuous to suppose that one could be confident about having the correct normative theory without having first thought carefully about a broad range of practical moral issues to determine what considerations are morally significant and also to be able to test candidate theories for the plausibility of their implications for the issues. William James once wrote that 'no one sees farther into a generalization than his own knowledge of the details extends'. One might similarly contend that no one sees more deeply into a normative theory than his understanding of its implications extends. I believe there is an essential interdependency or symbiosis between practical and normative ethics. It is difficult to do good work in either without at the same time working in the other. Practical moral problems inevitably raise theoretical issues of the sorts mentioned earlier but these issues cannot be adequately understood in abstraction from their application to practical problems. Thus, not only does good work in normative ethics deepen our understanding of practical moral problems but good work in practical ethics illuminates theoretical issues in normative ethics as well.

Practical moral problems inevitably raise theoretical issues… but these issues cannot be adequately understood in abstraction from their application to practical problems.

Although I have only recently arrived in Oxford and still have only a limited sense of how moral philosophy is taught here, the impression I derived from marking undergraduate examination scripts in ethics this past spring is that to the extent that practical ethics is taught at Oxford at all, the dominant approach is top-down, from theory to practice. Students seem thoroughly schooled in the debates among partisans of consequentialist, Kantian, deontological, and virtue ethics, and also seem well acquainted with the varieties of 'anti-theory' in ethics, from particularism to Williams's critique of the ambitions of systematic ethical theory. They seem trained to analyse and evaluate the competing normative theories and the opposing approaches to ethics in ways that are independent of thinking about substantive moral issues. Yet if what I have said about the interdependence of normative and practical ethics is true, we surely need to integrate a substantially greater component of practical ethics into the undergraduate curriculum. Oxford has for many years had a highly active Centre for Practical Ethics and the Philosophy Faculty now appears in the 'Philosophical Gourmet Report' rankings with the highest rating in 'applied ethics' of any Anglophone philosophy department in the world. We are therefore exceptionally well positioned to undertake a salutary expansion of our undergraduate offerings in moral philosophy.

Equality, Diversity *and* **Professional Philosophy**

Oxford D Phil **Fiona Jenkins** (Australian National University) explores the ways in which academic philosophers are engaging with the under-representation of women in their ranks.

In May 2015 Oxford hosted a workshop addressing a problem that has been increasingly receiving attention - the question of diversity and equality in philosophy. The workshop also tackled the ethics of a range of aspects of our academic lives, including staff-student relationships, writing responsible references, and standards of conduct in philosophical conversation. The workshop brought together participants and contributors from around the world to discuss issues that have recently won philosophy a certain degree of bad publicity.

So: what's the problem? Professional philosophy today looks not that different from how it looked 25 years ago, in terms of the gender, colour and class of its tenured practitioners. Despite its place among the humanities, philosophy has a lower rate of appointing female professors than many of the areas of science that have so far been better known for their problematic gender gap. Over 80% of full professors of philosophy in the UK are men, and the picture is slightly worse in the USA as well as Australia. Philosophy's 'problem with women' has in fact been known and discussed for years, but recent commentary has also focused on the dearth of black philosophers, and many other minorities who are either not choosing philosophy or seem to be squeezed out at all levels. Given that enrollments of undergraduate students in philosophy classes are fairly gender-balanced (though less so in Oxford's PPE degree than in Philosophy degrees elsewhere in the UK), it is worth asking how it can be the case that the ranks of professional philosophy are still disproportionately filled with men (at about 75% of all continuing positions) who are white and generally of a similar class and background.

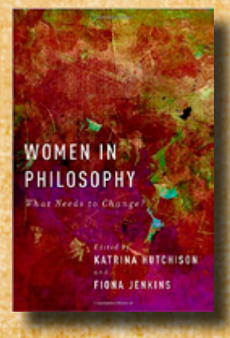
Before a conversation about this as a practical problem to be fixed, it is worth thinking about why it matters. For many in the profession, there seems to be a deep disjunction between a willingness to accept that there are equality issues to be address, and an unwillingness to see them as being very important, especially for 'philosophy itself'. There are various ways to articulate the sense that it does not matter much. One professor of philosophy explained to me that although 'in principle' he was sympathetic to the concern about women's underrepresentation, given the financial rewards of philosophy as a career relative to other, more lucrative choices, he was not too fussed. Another version of the view that women might well be choosing to avoid philosophy for their own good reasons appeared in David Papineau's *Times Literary Supplement* review of a book I co-edited, *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* (OUP 2013). Professional philosophy, he suggests, is a bit like professional snooker: it's not that women are incapable but that they can't be bothered with, to quote Steve Davis, "something that must be said is a complete waste of time – trying to put snooker balls into pockets with a pointed stick."

Neither intervention sells philosophy very high. Papineau does argue that its snooker-ish tendencies are in part an indictment of philosophy itself, which has veered toward a 'scholastic' preoccupation with the technical minutiae of established positions, suiting men who relish competition per se, but not women (no small generalisation here) who require pursuits to be important in their own right. He also agrees that if there are forms of bias that exclude women, then these should be addressed on grounds of equality. He takes it that it would be a mistake, however, to believe that the gender imbalance in philosophy as a profession fundamentally affects the character and epistemic integrity of philosophy as a discipline.

Does equality and diversity matter in a way that's intrinsic to good philosophy? One response to this question is to point out how much philosophers draw on experience to make their arguments. If that experience is relatively shared among a homogeneous group, how much easier is it to believe one has found broad agreement and how much easier is it to speak, as if from a position of universal truth, about what is 'morally permissible' and the like? Papineau proposes in the *TLS* that while "good practice in [politics, law and medicine] often demands familiarity with the problems of marginalized groups", "this line of thought has no obvious application to philosophy." Amia Srinivasan, who co-authored with Daniela Dover a paper presented at the conference, responds with the well-made point that "theorizing well about, say, inequality, pornography or racial hate crimes – to take a few central topics of philosophical interest – might require one to know something about being poor, a woman, or non-white. Insofar as philosophy is in the business of getting the world right, it would seem useful to have more philosophers who are acquainted with some of its less savoury aspects."

My own paper at the workshop came at the question of why this matters from another angle, by looking at how perceptions of 'excellence' in philosophy track social networks and status hierarchies better than they track anything we might reliably regard as independent evidence of value. This inflects the character of the discipline in multiple ways, limiting in particular the importance accorded to the major contributions of feminist philosophers across all fields of the discipline. For instance, the fact that we differentiate between 'epistemology' and 'feminist epistemology' and that the latter rarely appears in the most highly-ranked journals, tells a story both about how women's contributions to research continue to be overlooked by many men and about the failure of most philosophy to grapple with gender as a basic aspect of identity, experience and social relations.

One of the differences I observe between disciplines like philosophy, politics and economics and others like sociology, anthropology and history is that in many contexts in the latter group there has been a productive uptake of feminist scholarship, leading to general acknowledgment that a complex understanding of gender is fundamental in research design and analysis. In disciplines and regions where this exchange has taken place there are also higher levels of women's participation and status. In philosophy, on the other hand, there is a powerful perception of what constitutes 'mainstream' work that reinforces long-standing practices of exclusion – of the many Asian philosophies, or of race-based perspectives as much as of feminist work.



Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change? Ed. Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins (OUP 2013)

Some very important work is going on to challenge and change all this, and particularly the poor judgment it can tend to support. At the workshop Sally Haslanger, who has been powerfully setting the agenda in this discussion for some years, tackled head-on the shifts in understanding philosophical method that are needed to foster diversity. Helen Beebee, a former British Philosophical Association president, described the BPA's guide to good practice which departments in the UK are invited to sign up to. Jennifer Saul talked about the measures she has taken as Chair of her department to shift patterns in appointment toward greater balance, by applying findings from the psychological literature on how implicit bias affects decision.

It was wonderful to have these ideas presented and debated among an at least fairly diverse group of around 70 men and women (and perhaps even some non-normative genders in between) who attended the day. There is plenty of food for philosophical thought in the issues surrounding the continuance of the 'great (white) man' tradition into our discipline today and plenty of work to do to foster the better practices that will in turn support more rigorous and diverse philosophising.

Computer Science and Philosophy in **LIFE** and at **OXFORD**

Peter Millican and **Jenny Yang** (both of Hertford College) offer us tutor and student perspectives respectively on our fledgling degree course Computer Science and Philosophy.

Young people applying for university often have little idea of where their interests will lead over the next several years, and school experience can be misleading, especially with subjects like mathematics that are so different at university. Many students end up studying degrees that they tolerate rather than love, and this gives a powerful argument for Oxford's joint programmes. Computer Science and Philosophy is wonderfully flexible, with a very wide range of interesting courses on both sides, a third year which can be up to 75%-25% either way, and an optional fourth year which can be 100% on one side if desired. Thus a student can – though appropriate choices – end up doing as much of either subject as would be done in a three-year single honours programme, and all of these choices can be made as he or she progresses, responding to changing interests and opportunities.

The only course specific to Computer Science and Philosophy, 'Turing on Computability and Intelligence', comes in the first year, giving a solid theoretical basis to the joint degree. It is packed with fascinating and perplexing arguments, from Cantor's work on infinite sets, through Hilbert's programme, Gödel's Theorem, and leading up to Turing's seminal 1936 paper (which, unlike Gödel, we cover in gory detail, studying the original text in full). Having thus explored the foundation of computer science in the 'Turing Machine', we finish off with discussion of Turing's 1950 paper on the 'Turing Test', and its legacy in recent philosophy of mind.

Unlike the companion degrees combining philosophy with mathematics or physics, however, there is no compulsion for students to continue focusing explicitly on the overlap of the two disciplines. Computer science and Philosophy have so many links – going well beyond the obvious areas of logic, artificial intelligence, and the ethics of information and of automated/robotic systems – that any attempt to cover it thoroughly would be hopeless. Better to allow students to choose their own path, which might focus on logic and theory, or AI and cognitive science, but equally might extend to such things as the aesthetics of computer creativity, or the epistemology of the computer models on which so much research now depends (from astrophysics, biochemistry and climate change, through economics, politics and sociological trends, to zoological dynamics). Students can enjoy and benefit from the variety of the two subjects even when studied entirely independently. But in fact there is virtually no area of philosophy to which computing skills are irrelevant (e.g. I have used computational analysis of texts in my scholarship on David Hume, and computational modelling of ethics and economic/political systems). And many areas of computing lead quickly to philosophical questions when pursued deeply.

The new degree is still small, but it has been delightful to teach the excellent students it has attracted. Alongside their academic studies, a fair proportion have been applying their skills practically, working independently during vacations towards what they hope will be successful startup companies, and attracting interest from major employers. Computer science opens the door to wonderful careers (in terms of pay, hours, working conditions, and intellectual interest), while philosophy ensures that these young people will stand well above most of the techie crowd in their ability to communicate, discuss, and argue a case, whether with managers, in the boardroom, or with politicians. Just as PPE, another wonderfully flexible degree, has equipped many in the past for prominent leadership roles, I confidently expect the same for Computer Science and Philosophy.

Professor Peter Millican
Gilbert Ryle Fellow, Hertford College

I always enjoy telling people that I study Computer Science and Philosophy. Just the name of my course is enough to get people thinking, drawing connections between two disciplines that are generally seen as very different. This is justified to an extent – computer science can most generously be said to date back 200 years, while philosophy is over ten times older. But much of the supposed difference is rooted in misconception.

Two years ago, I was loaded with such misconceptions as I sought my dream degree. I thought that computer science was mostly hacking, and philosophy mostly meditating on the human condition. Thankfully I was wrong. Computer Science and Philosophy offers huge freedom and variety both in content and in methodology. On both sides of the course, there is theory and practice. Both programming and developing arguments can be highly creative and highly technical. The course involves deep analysis, as well as throwing out wild ideas; rigid proof as well as experimentation; evaluating the work of others and developing your own. We learn of historical contributions and contemporary developments in both fields. There are also plenty of beautiful and elegant results: some absolute, others deeply ambiguous.

Much of what we learn in the first year ties back to logic and computability. At the beginning of the 20th century, logicians such as Hilbert and Russell were eager to find a formal system of axioms and deductive rules from which all logical and mathematical truths could be deduced. Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems showed that for any consistent system, there would be some unprovable truth – including the system's own consistency.

Then, perhaps we could settle for an incomplete system, if there were a decision procedure that would tell us whether a given sentence was provable within the system. The issue of finding this procedure was named the Entscheidungsproblem. Church and Turing independently developed proofs that this procedure was *impossible*. In their proofs, published in the same year, each of them developed an idea that would become a foundation of computer science. Church created the lambda calculus, which became the basis for functional programming languages such as LISP and Haskell. The Turing machine embodied aspects that are fundamental to today's computers, most notably programmability: a single machine could perform any computation, given the right program.

It is highly rewarding to study the abstract roots of computer science, while simultaneously utilising the technologies they led to.

Computer Science and Philosophy offers huge freedom and variety both in content and in methodology.

Although the formal limitations of machines have been shown, there are still many questions concerning their capabilities. Could a machine be conscious? The problem of consciousness has occupied philosophers for centuries. The intuitive arguments against materialism date back to Leibniz – in any thinking machine, we could find only "pieces which push one against another, but never anything by which to explain a perception. This must be sought, therefore, in the simple substance, and not in the composite or in the machine." But contemporary debates are less welcoming to the concept of immaterial souls, and Turing would happily grant one to a computer anyhow. Other potential sources of consciousness are suggested: self-reference and quantum processes, to name but a couple. These are found unconvincing and the debate rumbles on.

Many feel uneasy with how deeply technology has become integrated into our lives. Cautionary thinkpieces are common: a web search for the phrase 'machine taking over' nets 90 million results. Philosophical analysis lets us make sense of how technology alters concepts that are fundamental to us – intelligence, knowledge, meaning, personhood, reality. Both computer science and philosophy are essentially linked in our developing world.

Jenny Yang
Computer Science and Philosophy, Hertford, 2014

IN CONVERSATION

The Hon Jesse Norman MP

Jesse Norman is Conservative MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire and Chairman of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee. He read Literae Humaniores ("Lit Hum") at Merton College and later did a PhD in philosophy at UCL.

You read Lit Hum and later did a PhD in philosophy, but you're also a historian who has written on Burke. Lit Hum is often feted as a strongly interdisciplinary degree: how much do you feel it shaped you in terms of your aptitudes and later interests?

Very much. Lit Hum does not have the cultural centrality it exercised even a half-century ago. But its genius is that it combines two settled and modally distinct kinds of inquiry – philosophy and history – with a deep immersion in ancient literature and textual analysis. I find myself constantly drawing on it even now, three decades after I left Oxford.

Lit Hum students often specialise in ancient philosophy, but your PhD thesis was on philosophy of mathematics. That's quite an unusual trajectory. How did it come about that you developed these particular interests?

My MPhil was on visual reasoning in logic, with particular respect to the work of the American philosopher C. S. Peirce, a man much neglected now but whom I regard as one of the greats. My PhD then addressed how we reason with diagrams in geometry, using Euclid. It's not specifically focused on ancient philosophy as such, though; in part it's an attack on logicist views of mathematical reasoning, and an attempt to give a modern vindication of some claims by Kant in the first *Critique*.

Do you have any particularly fond recollections of studying philosophy at Oxford, e.g. of tutorials or of tutors?

Yes. I was rather lucky to have John Lucas and David Bostock as my tutors. Very little indeed escaped them.

How did your academic career inform your careers in banking and in politics?

There's not much philosophy in finance! I went from being a Director at Barclays to my graduate work in philosophy at UCL, and then to stay on at UCL for a bit. But I have found philosophy a superb training for politics, in making and assessing different arguments, analysing other people's positions, reflecting on different priorities, policy analysis and so on. It also encourages listening and a certain modesty about one's own capabilities, which can only be good for anyone in politics.

How would you suggest that the study of philosophy might be useful in politics / to politicians?

See above. But actually philosophy can have its drawbacks- as the career of Arthur Balfour reminds us. I think the study of history is far more useful even than philosophy in politics, as offering some protection at least against foolish innovation and arrogance. That's certainly one lesson I have learned from writing about Burke and, now, Adam Smith.

Are there any politicians who strike you as having a particularly "philosophical" approach to politics?

Not today. I think Lincoln and Burke are the two greatest exponents of politics as a kind of philosophic practice.

Lit Hum was often held to be a degree for those preparing to govern. Similar things are said of PPE. Is the degree's current strong showing in the House a good thing?

No: I think PPE is positively dangerous in some respects. I have written about its perils on my website (www.jessenorman.com).

Would Parliament benefit from more philosophers?

I doubt it. But it would benefit if more MPs had done some philosophy.

In your view, what is most difficult about, and what constitutes success in, policy-making?

Effective policy-making is deeply dependent on context as well as policy. As Burke says, "Circumstances give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour and discriminating effect." Successful policymaking is cautious, proportionate, clear in direction, consensual where possible and builds on what has been achieved already. Alas, it is rarely done this way today.

In recent times, the humanities have come under attack and are sometimes considered as less worthy of study and of funding than the STEM subjects. What is your view on the future and the merit of the humanities and the arts in education?

Don't fret. The humanities and arts have a glorious future. The question for any technocratic activity is what to aim at, what to admire. That's where a liberal education is so valuable.

Is a career in politics the best way for a principled, idealistic person to change the world for the better?

Yes, provided that they come to it with genuine experience, patience and an independent mind. And, with some glorious exceptions, over the age of 35.

Can you tell us some of your favourite philosophers, and explain how they have influenced you in your work (either positively or negatively)?

Aristotle, Kant, Peirce, Hume and (though these are more contested) Smith and Burke. It would take far too long to explain how they've influenced me, but readers are welcome to guess at how from stuff I have written on topics that are loosely in the philosophies of politics and economics, much of which is free and online at my website (www.jessenorman.com).

Successful policymaking is cautious, proportionate, clear in direction, consensual where possible and builds on what has been achieved already.

Reassessing **Biopsychosocial Psychiatry**

Will Davies introduces the Oxford Loebel Lectures and Research Programme, where he is currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow

As a branch of medicine, psychiatry is under continual pressure to conform to a reductive biomedical model, according to which genuine mental disorders are classified as diseases, to be characterised primarily in biological terms. But contemporary psychiatry also draws heavily on psychotherapeutic approaches, which focus on the psychosocial factors involved in mental disorder. Here concepts of abnormal or impaired belief, experience, and social structure take priority over concepts of neural dysfunction. This heterogeneity continues to generate much uncertainty concerning the conceptual foundations for psychiatry. What exactly is psychiatry a science of? Mind or brain? Individual or society? Dysfunction or deviance? Answering these questions requires a broad, reflective, and analytical view of psychiatric research and practice: these questions demand philosophical attention.

One compelling and yet inchoate thought is that psychiatry surely spans many different levels of explanation: biological, psychological, and social. Such holistic concepts date back to Hippocrates, but during the second half of the twentieth century found new voice in George L. Engel's biopsychosocial model (BPS) of psychiatric illness. BPS was as broad as it was ambitious. Engel saw BPS not only as an all-encompassing framework for clinical practice; it was intended to usher in a non-reductive metaphysics for mental illness. Given its scope, it is not altogether surprising that BPS has as yet failed to translate into any clearly identifiable research programme. And yet psychiatrists everywhere continue to pay lip service to the BPS ideal of psychiatry as an integrative discipline. The BPS model is, in a sense, everywhere and yet nowhere.

The Oxford Loebel Lectures and Research Programme (OLLRP) was founded in 2013 with the aim of reassessing the biopsychosocial model of psychiatric illness. The OLLRP was established through the generosity of Dr Pierre Loebel, Clinical Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at the University of Washington, and his wife Felice Loebel. In over forty years as a psychiatrist, Dr Loebel developed deep concerns about the theoretical basis for the field. Bringing together philosophers, psychologists, and psychiatrists, the OLLRP seeks to review the best available evidence for interactions between the biological, psychological, and social factors that contribute to mental illness, and to clarify and conceptualise these interactions. The agenda is not so much retrospective as prospective: what relevance does the BPS model have for research and practice in contemporary psychiatry? In what ways does the BPS model permeate or implicitly guide scientific thinking in such areas? Can we reconceive the BPS model in more plausible, detailed, terms, in order to capture its continuing influence within psychiatry?

Given its scope, it is not altogether surprising that BPS has as yet failed to translate into any clearly identifiable research programme. And yet psychiatrists everywhere continue to pay lip service to the BPS ideal of psychiatry as an integrative discipline.

The project has already seen several significant events in Oxford. The inaugural Loebel Lectures were delivered in October 2014 by Professor Kenneth S. Kendler, Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Prof Kendler's research has sought to clarify the complex interrelations between genetic and environmental factors in the development and onset of psychiatric illness and other behavioural disorders. Combining techniques from molecular genetics and genetic epidemiology, this work has clarified the ways in which genetic predispositions and environmental insults combine to cause disorders such as schizophrenia, major depression and alcoholism. Kendler's Lectures reviewed some key findings, arguing that they illustrate the dappled, or multi-level, nature of psychiatric causation.

Kendler's conclusion raises issues that are familiar to those working in the general philosophy of science, and areas such as philosophy of biology and psychology. How are we to make sense of claims such as that low socioeconomic status can be a cause of schizophrenia, or that social defeat can be a cause of depression? Can such claims be cashed out in terms of causal mechanisms? Do they require such explanations? What are the consequences of these aetiological claims for the classification of mental disorders? These questions were among those taken up by commentators on Kendler's Lectures, whose contributions are to be gathered in a forthcoming volume with Oxford University Press, entitled *Rethinking Biopsychosocial Psychiatry*.

The Loebel Lectures for 2015 were given by Professor Steven E. Hyman, director of the Stanley Centre for Psychiatric Research at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, and Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology. Prof Hyman discussed a number of theoretical challenges facing modern psychiatry. In particular, the potentially dehumanising threat of mechanistic explanations from neuroscience, and the under-appreciated complexity of the gene-environment interactions involved in psychiatric illness. 2016 will see Professor Essi Viding, Professor of Developmental Psychopathology at UCL, deliver the third set of Loebel Lectures.

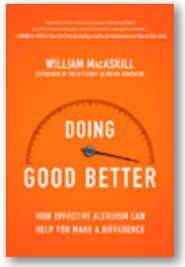
In terms of research, the OLLRP has an outstanding interdisciplinary advisory board, who are providing valuable input and guidance on our projects. Professor Glyn Humphreys, Watts Professor of Experimental Psychology, recently published a series of articles on the visual perception of social cues, particularly in relation to self-relevant and high-reward stimuli. This research has the potential to inform us about psychiatric disorders involving misperceptions or misattributions of self-relevance, and to improve understanding of the perceptual corollaries of disorders in which representations of self are distorted or impaired. Prior to his sudden and untimely passing in January 2016, Glyn and I were working together on a theoretical paper discussing these issues. Another collaborator, Professor Neil Levy, has written widely on issues concerning agency and responsibility, consciousness, and the nature of addiction. We are developing the idea that mental illness consists in some dysfunction in the subject's capacities to respond appropriately to reasons, capacities that are themselves socially scaffolded. As such, we argue, these capacities can be impaired by deleterious or disadvantageous changes in one's social environment. Although such socially-constituted impairments typically are not sufficient for mental disorder, they nonetheless play a key role in explaining the onset of many mental illnesses.

While the OLLRP was prompted by lingering questions about the BPS model, it is moving well beyond that into more detailed consideration of multi-level psychiatric causation; the role of social perception in mental illness; and an externalist metaphysics of mental disorder. Our continued focus on these issues hopefully will shed new light on the conceptual foundations for psychiatry, and thereby improve clinical understanding of these complex, unwieldy, and ultimately harmful and distressing phenomena.

Doing Good Better

William Macaskill (Faber and Faber, 2015)

The philosophy of effective altruism applies data and scientific reasoning to the normally sentimental world of doing good. In *Doing Good Better*, William MacAskill introduces the principles underlying effective altruism and sets out a practical guide to increasing your impact through your charity, volunteering, purchases and choice of cause. On a whistle-stop tour of the key issues facing a would-be do-gooder, he answers questions like: Why are some charities far more effective than others? How can cosmetic surgeons do more good than charity workers? Does boycotting sweatshops make things better or worse for the global poor?



Humanities World Report 2015,

Dominic Scott (with Poul Holm and Arne Jarrick)

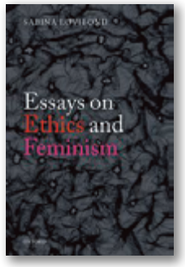
Available to download from the Palgrave website

The first of its kind, this book gives an overview of the humanities worldwide. Published as an Open Access title and based on an extensive literature review and enlightening interviews conducted with 90 humanities scholars across 40 countries, the book offers a first step in attempting to assess the state of the humanities globally. Its topics include the nature and value of the humanities, the challenge of globalisation, the opportunities offered by the digital humanities, variations in funding patterns around the world, and the interaction between humanities and society.

Essays on Ethics and Feminism

Sabina Lovibond (OUP, 2015)

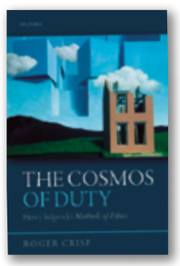
Essays on Ethics and Feminism is a selection of the shorter writings of Sabina Lovibond, one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary philosophy since the 1980s. This work lays claim to a broad thematic unity based on its affiliation to the realist or rationalist tradition in moral philosophy. Some of the essays seek to clarify the relation of feminism to that tradition, to anti-rationalist tendencies, and other conceptual resources for critical thinking which were called into question over (roughly) the last third of the twentieth century—not least by feminist writers heedful of 'continental' European developments.



The Cosmos of Duty: Henry Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics

Roger Crisp (OUP, 2015)

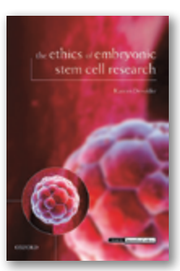
Roger Crisp presents a comprehensive study of Henry Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics*, a landmark work first published in 1874, offering a fresh view of the text which will assist any moral philosopher to gain more from it. Crisp argues that Sidgwick is largely right about many central issues in moral philosophy: the metaphysics and epistemology of ethics, consequentialism, hedonism about well-being, and the weight to be given to self-interest, and he argues that Sidgwick's long discussion of 'common-sense' morality is probably the best discussion of deontology we have.

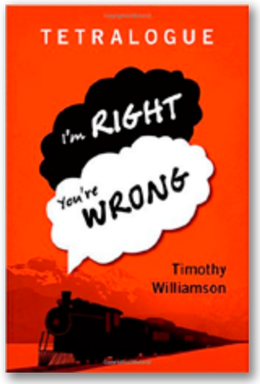


The Ethics of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Katrien Devolder (OUP, 2015)

Embryonic stem cell research holds unique promise for developing therapies for currently incurable diseases and conditions, and for important biomedical research. However, the process through which embryonic stem cells are obtained involves the destruction of early human embryos. Katrien Devolder focuses on the tension between the popular view that an embryo should never be deliberately harmed or destroyed, and the view that embryonic stem cell research, because of its enormous promise, must go forward. She provides an in-depth ethical analysis of the major philosophical and political attempts to resolve this tension. Devolder argues that the central tension in the embryonic stem cell debate remains unresolved. This conclusion has important implications for the stem cell debate, as well as for policies inspired by this debate.





TETRALOGUE
I'm Right, You're Wrong
(OUP, 2015)

Timothy Williamson

Wykeham Professor of Logic

The dialogue is one of the oldest forms of philosophical writing, going back at least to Plato. Berkeley wrote his *Three Dialogues*, Hume his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* and parts of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* read like a conversation between two voices, perhaps inside his head. At philosophy conferences, the discussion periods are often more illuminating than the preceding lectures. These days, however, academic writing in philosophy rarely takes dialogue form. Complex sub-clauses, footnotes, and formulas are awkward in conversation. Much of my own research is best articulated in academic style. But some ways of thinking (or of not thinking) about philosophically important matters – such as truth and falsity, disagreement and intolerance – are so widespread and influential in society and culture beyond the philosophy profession that they need to be addressed by philosophers in non-academic terms too. Recalling the distinctive strengths of dialogue form, I realized how well-suited it is for such a book.

Most people have had the experience of talking with others coming from profoundly different points of view – on politics, morality, religion, science, art ... Such conversations often end in deadlock, each side convinced that it is right and the other wrong, its arguments strong and the other's weak, but frustrated at its inability to persuade the other. An onlooker, overhearing the conversation, may notice a symmetry in the situation and wonder whether there is really an objective truth of the matter. Even the participants, if not immune to self-doubt, may imagine how things would look to a third party and wonder the same thing. There's a political dimension to such disputes too: if one side has more power they may be able to enforce their viewpoint on the other, at least in outward behaviour. Some think that only relativism about truth and falsity permits a fully tolerant attitude towards diverse points of views. For relativists, truth is in the eye of the beholder. Others think that toleration needs a different basis because such relativism is incoherent and self-defeating. Thus deadlock in a dispute generates a second-order dispute about the meaning of the deadlock. The second-order dispute may itself reach deadlock. The two disputes interact with each other: for instance, can one simultaneously accept both a religious claim and relativism about the truth-value of that claim?

A dialogue can enact such debates on the page. Mine is called *Tetralogue* because it has four characters. Two disagree on scientific versus magical explanations of an everyday event, the other two on relativist versus absolutist interpretations of that disagreement. The first dispute sparks the second, which intertwines with it. I set the dialogue on a train because there one can easily be drawn into a long conversation with strangers, however annoying one finds them. Sometimes, it is their way of arguing that annoys one most. But caring about how to argue is a step towards arguing well. Philosophy is not, and should not be, an emotion-free zone. Readers will, I hope, find plenty to annoy them in *Tetralogue*.

Watch Tim interviewed about *Tetralogue* on Youtube

YouTube **https://youtu.be/IHFKwGgBPQU**

Locke's Desk

John Locke's desk is now in the possession of his former college, Christ Church. Locke is believed to have designed the desk for his own use, and commissioned its manufacture while he was still a Student of Christ Church, but living in London.

For nearly three decades he used it not only for writing but also for filing his ever-growing collection of papers – letters, speeches, love-poems, lists of his books, furniture and other items, financial documents, and papers written as Secretary to the Board of Trade. These meticulously organised papers remained in the desk long after Locke's death in 1702, as an heirloom of the Lovelace family: now known as the Lovelace collection, they comprise one of the most important collections of personal papers to survive from the 17th century, and are now in the Bodleian Library along with most of the surviving volumes of Locke's extensive library.

Lindsay Judson
Christ Church

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Oxford Philosophy

Faculty of Philosophy
University of Oxford