Department of Philosophy, Newsletter
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Dr. Dave Blanks  
*Lecturer*

I completed my dissertation at Ohio State University under the supervision of Ben Caplan. My research primarily concerns issues regarding the metaphysics of modality. My dissertation focuses on the metaphysics of dispositions, such as the fragility of a vase. I argue for a particular account of what such dispositional properties are, called counterfactualism, according to which dispositions are counterfactual properties. On my view, dispositions depend on the laws of nature. Thus, my current research focuses on the laws of nature and the way in which laws ground dispositions. I moved to College Station with my wife Alexis. We try to stay active outdoors, camping, hiking, canoeing, and backpacking, and have enjoyed getting to explore different parts of Texas. In my spare time, I like to play disc-golf and soccer.

Dr. Amir Jaima  
*Assistant Professor*

I was born on the tiny archipelago nation of Antigua and Barbuda (which also includes the uninhabited island, Redonda). I did my undergraduate studies at Swarthmore College, and my doctoral research in philosophy at SUNY Stony Brook. My primary research interests are in Aesthetics and Africana Philosophy, converging as Africana Philosophy of Literature. The interdisciplinary nature of my research extends also to the writing of fiction in ways that both inspire and are informed by my philosophical work. Along with my family, I look forward to becoming a part of the TAMU community in general, and the philosophy department in particular.

“I am really delighted to be teaching at A&M…”
I am really delighted to be teaching at A&M this year and am enjoying getting to know the students and other faculty here! I completed my Ph.D. at Loyola University Chicago last fall, but I am originally from Texas and completed my undergraduate degree at Southwestern University in Georgetown. My current research is focused on Foucault, sexual violence, and sexuality, but I am broadly interested in social/political philosophy, gender, and race. Currently I am teaching contemporary moral issues and medical ethics. Outside of teaching and researching, most of my free time right now is spent unpacking and spending time with my daughter and husband. Many thanks to everyone for welcoming me into the department, and please feel free to stop by and say hi when you get a chance!

To learn more about the new faculty, view their university profiles at https://philosophy.tamu.edu/faculty-directory/.
**Faculty Accolades**

**Dr. Jose Bermudez  
Professor**

Dr. Jose Bermudez’s book, *Understanding “I”: Language and Thought*, was published by Oxford University Press in December 2016 in the Lines of Thought series ([https://goo.gl/1YANOP](https://goo.gl/1YANOP)). Additionally, in May 2016, he gave a series of lectures at the Institut Jean Nicod at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris entitled “Framing the Self”. This is material from his current book project *The Power of Frames*, which will be published by Cambridge University Press. Also, he was awarded a grant of $37,000 by the Philosophy and Psychology of Self-Control project at Florida State University. As part of this project, he will organize a workshop in College Station on May 15–16, 2017. Furthermore, Dr. Bermudez’s textbook, *Cognitive Science: An Introduction to the Science of the Mind*, is being translated into Farsi.

**Dr. Dan Conway  
Professor**

Dr. Dan Conway was awarded an Arts and Humanities Fellowship from the Office of the Vice-President for Research at TAMU. The topic of his research is the nature and forms of evil. The program is described in further detail at the following link: [https://goo.gl/E01E19](https://goo.gl/E01E19). Additionally, CLLA has a report of the Fellows on their website: [https://goo.gl/ymueI1](https://goo.gl/ymueI1).

**Dr. Tommy Curry  
Associate Professor**

“Dr. Tommy J. Curry was recently awarded the USC Shoah Foundation and A.I. and Manet Schepps Foundation Teaching Fellowship for his work on Black men and the various genocidal logics imposed upon them in the United States. Upon visiting the USC Center for Advanced Genocide Research in January, Dr. Curry discovered testimonies of Jewish men who were raped by German SS and other Jewish Kapos in concentration camps. A summary of his research on sexual violence during the Holocaust can be be viewed here: [https://goo.gl/6PbXiX](https://goo.gl/6PbXiX). His research and findings will also be presented at a conference in the Spring semester here at Texas A&M University. Dr. Curry was also awarded the Alain Locke Award for Public Philosophy by the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy for his commentaries on anti-Black racism that have appeared on NPR, Salon.com, Forbes.com, and various networks throughout Black Talk Radio, and his public intellectual work on the domestic abuse, rape, and death of Black men and boys in the United States. In 2016 alone, Dr. Curry has published two books and has one in press. His books, *The Philosophical Treatise of William H. Ferris: Selected Readings from The African Abroad* and *Evolution in Western Civilization*, were published in August 2016 with Rowman & Littlefield International Publishers. Curry’s monograph, *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood*, is being published by Temple.

Dr. Stephen Daniel
Professor


Dr. Ted George speaking at a Departmental Reception, Fall 2016

Dr. Ted George
Associate Professor and Department Head

Dr. Ted George was invited to the André Schuwer Lecture at the 55th annual meeting of the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, Oct. 20–22, 2016, Salt Lake City, Utah. The lecture, sponsored by the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center, Duquesne University, is entitled, “Are We a Conversation? Hermeneutics, Exteriority, Inheritability.” The final version of the lecture is forthcoming as an article in *Research in Phenomenology*. Information about the SPEP program can be found here: [https://goo.gl/09qTjY](https://goo.gl/09qTjY).

Dr. Kenny Easwaran
Associate Professor

Dr. Kenny Easwaran had a paper selected for *The Philosophers’ Annual* ([http://www.philosophersannual.org/](http://www.philosophersannual.org/)) for the second year in a row. The goal of *The Philosopher’s Annual* each year is to select the ten best papers published in philosophy in the preceding year. Dr. Easwaran’s paper “Dr. Truthlove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Bayesian Probabilities” ([https://goo.gl/ErbygS](https://goo.gl/ErbygS)) was selected for the 2016 edition (featuring their selections for the best papers of 2015), and his paper “Decision Theory without Representation Theorems” ([https://goo.gl/PNhC2q](https://goo.gl/PNhC2q)) was selected for the 2015 edition.
Information about the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center, Duquesne University, can be found here: https://goo.gl/NF1wvx. Dr. George has also recently become a Fellow of an Institute for Philosophical Research at Western Sydney University. The following is a link to the College of Fellows: https://goo.gl/CLhIlJ.

Dr. Claire Katz

Professor

Claire Katz gave a series of lectures in Dublin, Ireland at UC Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, and for SWIP Ireland in January 2016. She was named an Ambassador for Philosophy Ireland, the organization promoting pre-college philosophy throughout Ireland. Information on Philosophy Ireland can be found here: http://philosophyireland.ie/. In March 2016, she published a co-authored paper with Oona Eisenstadt in Telos. In May, she gave one of the keynotes at the Southwest Seminar in Continental Philosophy. In June, she, along with several faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students launched the Aggie School of Athens: a week-long philosophy summer camp for teens and tweens (the camp will run again Summer 2017). The camp hosted forty-six participants in middle and high school from Texas and beyond. Information on the Philosophy for Children program at Texas A&M and the Aggie School of Athens summer camp can be found here: http://p4ctexas.tamu.edu. Dr. Katz and Desirae Embree, Ph.D. student in English, were interviewed in August 2016 by PLATO: Philosophy, Learning, and Teaching Organization. The interview focuses on Dr. Katz’s initiative to host the first ever pre-college philosophy camp on the Texas A&M Campus. You can read the interview here: http://www.plato-philosophy.org/pre-college-philosophy-summer-camp-texas/.

Dr. Chris Menzel

Professor

Dr. Christopher Menzel is the 2016-17 Alvin Plantinga Fellow at the Notre Dame Center for Philosophy of Religion. A paper he wrote in the fall at the Center entitled “The Argument from Collections” will be appearing in J. Walls and T. Dougherty (eds.), Two Dozen (or so) Arguments for God: The Plantinga Project, which will be published by Oxford University Press. Another paper, “Haecceities and Mathematical Structuralism”, is forthcoming in the journal Philosophia Mathematica and can be found online at https://goo.gl/KrhbYs.
Dr. Gregory Pappas
Professor

Dr. Gregory Pappas has recently become the Vice-President (President-Elect) of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP), 2016-2018. SAAP also recently bestowed to Dr. Pappas the Inter-American Philosophy Award: best paper concerning Latin American, Latino/a or indigenous philosophies across the Americas (“Zapatismo, Luis Villoro, and American Pragmatism on Democracy, Power, and injustice”) from the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Information about SAAP can be found here: [http://www.american-philosophy.org/](http://www.american-philosophy.org/).

Dr. Linda Radzik
Professor

Dr. Linda Radzik became the Director of Undergraduate Studies. You can contact her at lradzik@tamu.edu or stop by her office, YMCA 301H, during her office hours (MWF 9-11:20 a.m.). You can visit her university profile at [https://philosophy.tamu.edu/people/linda-radzik/](https://philosophy.tamu.edu/people/linda-radzik/).

Dr. Gary Varner
Professor

Dr. Gary Varner was an instructor and facilitator at a workshop on teaching agricultural animal bioethics in Baltimore January 26-28, 2017. Twenty professors of animal science and veterinary medicine from across the country attended the workshop to be introduced to pedagogical materials and techniques developed by a team of philosophy and animal science faculty from five universities, including Varner from Texas A&M. The workshop and curriculum development were funded by a major grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. For more information, please visit: [https://vet.purdue.edu/CAWS/bioethics/index.php](https://vet.purdue.edu/CAWS/bioethics/index.php).
Graduate Student Accolades

Patrick Anderson

Patrick Anderson’s article, “Pan-Africanism and Economic Nationalism: W.E.B. Du Bois’s Black Reconstruction and the Failings of the ‘Black Marxism,’” was accepted for publication into the *Journal of Black Studies* in December 2016.

Chris Black

Chris Black serves as the graduate student convener of the Continental Philosophy Study Group. During the Fall, the Study Group met three times. The theme for the academic year is “Birth, Life, and Death,” and selected readings by Jaspers, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Derrida were discussed in detail. The study group is comprised of students and faculty from various departments who share a common interest in continental philosophy. The group is open and new participants are always welcomed. Meetings are held approximately once a month, along with a semesterly special event or guest speaker, and readings are distributed online in advance of each meeting.

Wendy Bustamante

In 2016, Wendy Bustamante won the Center for Philosophical Studies Best Graduate Student Essay Prize, presented at the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain Division of the American Society for Aesthetics.

Alex Haitos

In the Summer semester of 2016, Alex Haitos earned the International Conference Presentation Grant from the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies for a conference in August in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Karen Davis

Karen Davis earned the Texas A&M University Dissertation Fellowship from the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies in 2016. Also, Davis was awarded the Summer of 2016 for Advancement in Research Award from the Texas A&M University Philosophy Department.
Brittany Leckey

Dr. Brittany Leckey successfully defended her dissertation, *Irritatingly Incomplete: The Ontologically Reconsidered Filmic Image*, on October 14th, 2016. Dr. Theodore George chaired her committee. Further, her article “Capra’s the Matter with Capra: Sullivan’s Travels as Narrative and Textual Complicitous Critique” was published in *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, Volume 34.1, and is now available. Finally, she received a Glasscock Research Fellowship which enabled her to travel to the Stanley Kubrick Archives at the University of London, UK, in July 2016. Leckey will be presenting her findings in a paper that she will give at the Glasscock Center on April 4th from 4–5pm.

Curry O’Day

Curry O’Day was awarded the Fasken Research Award at Texas A&M University to support his doctoral research during 2016-2017.
Cora Drozd

Cora Drozd, junior Philosophy Major, studied at Oxford University as an associate member during Summer 2015. She studied Classical Philosophy and St. Augustine’s Philosophy of History under the Oxford tutorial method. Cora intends to attend law school after graduation.

“My tutors used the Socratic method to question my ideas...I felt vulnerable not always having answers or explanations, but quickly realized that this was an exciting way to learn.”

Ashley Phillips

Ashley Phillips, senior Philosophy major, served as an intern for Texas Values, a non-profit organization, during Summer 2016. Additionally, she will be attending Texas A&M University’s law program in Fall 2017.
Staff Accolades

Jamie Bosley  
*Business Coordinator III*

Jamie Bosley attended Texas A&M University as a student, working in the College of Science Dean’s Office as a student worker. During that time, she arranged and attended the Stephen Hawking lecture in March 2003. She began working in the Philosophy Department in 2008 as an Administrative Assistant. She received a promotion to Business Coordinator II in 2010 and another promotion to Business Coordinator III in 2016. Jamie earned the CLASS Award (College of Liberal Arts Superior Service Award) in 2011. She is a member of the CLLA Business Council (2011 to present) and the International Association of Administrative Professionals (2012 to present). Additionally, Jamie serves as an HR Liaison (2012 to present), QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper (2014 to present), Leaders Excelling in Academics and Service Primary Student Advisor (2015 to present), and as a Green Dot Bystander Intervention (2015 to present).

Kristine Hughes  
*Executive Assistant I*

Kristine Marie Hughes started working in the Department of Philosophy in February of 2016. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies and a minor in History from St. Edward’s University in Austin, TX. Kristine spent her childhood living in Tripoli, Libya and Jakarta, Indonesia and still has aspirations of being back overseas one day. As a part of the Philosophy staff, Kristine handles Concur travel expenses for faculty and graduate students, assists with the graduate program, handles reimbursements, coordinates social events for the department, books travel arrangements for faculty, graduate students, and colloquium guests, and many other tasks as assigned by the department head. Kristine also serves as a member of the Liberal Arts Staff Committee and has attended Green Dot Training.
Philosophy Born of Struggle Conference

Dr. Tommy J. Curry, Executive Director, hosted the Philosophy Born of Struggle Annual Conference at Texas A&M University November 3-5, 2016. The keynote address was Dr. Lisa Corrigan and the Keynote Panel included Rozena Maart, Philile Langa, and Zaria Govender. Dr. Rozena Maart was presented with the William R. Jones Award. A complete schedule can be found at: http://philosophy.tamu.edu/html/publicevents-conferences.html.

North American Society for Philosophical Hermeneutics

Dr. Ted George, Director, hosted the annual meeting of the North American Society for Philosophical Hermeneutics (NASPH) at Texas A&M University September 29–October 1, 2016. The conference featured keynote addresses by Mirela Oliva, University of St. Thomas, and Charles Bambach, UT Dallas, as well as a special panel on Applied Hermeneutics that features Nancy Moules, University of Calgary, Jean Grondin, University of Montreal, and Graham McCaffrey, University of Calgary. A full program can be found at: http://philosophy.tamu.edu/documents/2016NASPH_program.pdf. The North American Society for Philosophical Hermeneutics (NASPH) was established in 2005 to advance the study of Hans-Georg Gadamer, major figures and themes associated with the tradition of hermeneutics, as well as the dialogues that have formed between hermeneutics and deconstruction, critical theory, and other contemporary movements of philosophy.
Colloquia and Public Events

The Philosophy Department Colloquia and Public Events Committee held two events during Fall 2016. On Friday, November 4, 2016, Dr. Lisa Corrigan gave the presentation, “Orval Faubus and the Language of Segregation: Homonationalism, Sexualized Violence, and Racial Anxiety during the Little Rock Crisis”. On Thursday, December 1, 2016, Dr. Scott Pratt and Dr. Erin McKenna presented, “Fanaticism and the Future of Dewey’s Past”. The Colloquia and Public Events Committee will be hosting the Davenport/Distinguished Alumni Speaker Event on Thursday, April 20, 2017. Christopher Robichaud, from the Harvard Kennedy School, will be speaking. Please check the Philosophy Department website for further details about this event.

Drs. Clare Palmer and Gary Varner are organizing a workshop on “Engineering and Animal Ethics.” The focus of the workshop will be on how advances in engineering can positively (or negatively) affect the welfare of non-human animals. With funding from Dr. Martin Peterson’s Sue and Harry Bovay Chair in the History and Ethics of Professional Engineering and Dr. Palmer’s College of Liberal Arts Cornerstone Fellowship, fifteen scholars from Texas A&M and eleven other universities in the United States, Canada, and Europe will make presentations. After the March 29 workshop, the presentations will be revised into papers that will be considered for inclusion in a special issue of the Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics.