

# ALEXANDER NICHOLAS HAITOS

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**AOS:** American Philosophy, Metaphysics

**AOC:** History of Philosophy, Phenomenology and Existentialism

**Teaching Competencies:** Logic (Term, Sentence, and First-Order Predicate Logic),  
Philosophy of Medicine/Medical Ethics

## EDUCATION

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**Ph.D. Philosophy**, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX August 2018

Dissertation: Finding the Foundations of the World in Aesthetic Experience: The Radical Empiricism of William James and the Metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead

Director: John J. McDermott

Committee: Daniel Conway, Theodore George, Mary Ann O'Farrell

**M.A. English**, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX December 2015

Thesis: Pitfalls of Perfection: Rethinking Hawthorne's Treatment of Science and the Danger of Extremes in "The Artist of the Beautiful" and "The Birthmark"

Director: Mary Ann O'Farrell

**B.A. Philosophy**, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA May 2010

Highest Honors, Departmental Honors, President's Scholar 2010–2011

South Mountain College Program, Fall 2007–Spring 2010

Study Abroad, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy, Spring 2009

## FACULTY POSITIONS

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2018- Adjunct Professor, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

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2017 Young Scholar Award, for Best Doctoral Essay, from the International Process Network, Paper title: "The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education"

Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP) Travel Grant Recipient, to participate in the 20<sup>th</sup> Summer Institute in American Philosophy (SIAP)

2016 International Conference Presentation Grant from the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

- 2014 International Travel Award from the Texas A&M University College of Liberal Arts  
International Travel Award from the Texas A&M University Graduate Student Council
- 2012 Texas A&M Philosophy Department Graduate Student Essay Prize, Paper title: “The Possibility of Authentic Being-with Others in *Being and Time*”
- 2011 International Travel Award from the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at Texas A&M University  
Young Scholar Award, for Young Process Scholar Essay Contest, from the International Process Network (one of two recipients), Paper title: “Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation”

## **TEACHING**

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### Southern Connecticut State University

#### **Courses Taught**

- 2018 Introduction to Philosophy/Critical Thinking (Fall, 2 sections)

### Texas A&M University

#### **Courses Taught**

- 2016 Introduction to Logic (Summer)  
2015 Introduction to Philosophy (Fall)

#### **Courses Co-Taught**

- 2017 The Philosophies of W. James and A. N. Whitehead (Fall, Instructor: John J. McDermott, Graduate Seminar)  
Led 3-week unit on Whitehead’s *Modes of Thought*

#### **Guest Lecturer**

- 2015 American Philosophy (April 7, Instructor: John J. McDermott, advanced course)  
3-hour lecture on the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead
- 2014 Introduction to Philosophy (October 24, Instructor: Harris Bechtol)  
On the transition from Kant’s theoretical to his practical philosophy  
Introduction to Philosophy (March 3, Instructor: John J. McDermott)  
On philosophies of substance and philosophies of process

#### **Teaching Assistant**

- 2011-12 Engineering Ethics (Fall-Spring, Instructor: C.E. Harris)  
Writing intensive course; taught two 25-student sections weekly, graded essays and exams, and held office hours

#### **Training**

- 2015-16 Academy for Future Faculty Certificate, Center for Teaching Excellence: yearlong course with seminars focused on classroom teaching and on the professional expectations for a beginning professor

2015 Philosophical Pedagogy Seminar (Spring): workshop on teaching philosophy classes; delivered two lectures and received critical feedback from instructor and peers—introductory lecture on Aristotle’s notion of form; advanced lecture on Whitehead’s philosophy of experience

### Lehigh University

#### **Apprentice Teacher**

2009 Symbolic Logic (Fall, Instructor: Aladdin Yaqub)  
Taught two classes, held office hours, graded exams

2008 Philosophy of Religion (Fall, Instructor: Michael Raposa)  
Taught a class on process theology, held exam reviews

#### **Grader**

2008 The Examined Life (Fall, Instructor: Gordon Bearn)

### **PUBLICATIONS**

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#### **Essays**

“The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” in *Rhythm, Process, and Poiesis: Education from a Whiteheadian Point of View*, Vesselin Petrov, ed., Cambridge Scholars (forthcoming 2019).

“The World ‘Hangs Together’: Nature, non-being, and infinity in John Scotus Eriugena and Alfred North Whitehead,” in *Mind in Nature*, Maria-Teresa Teixeira, ed., Cambridge Scholars (forthcoming 2019).

“The Problem of Novelty and the Atomization of Time,” in *A. N. Whitehead’s Thought through a New Prism*, Aljoscha Berve and Helmut Maaßen, eds., Cambridge Scholars (2016), pp. 119-134.

“Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation,” translated into Japanese by Hideki Mochiji, *Sophia Philosophica* 24 (Tokyo, 2012), pp. 89-107.

#### **Under Contract / Commissioned**

*Variations on Some Themes of Process Metaphysics*, co-editor with Helmut Maaßen, a volume in the *European Studies in Process Thought* series published by Cambridge Scholars (contract pending, publication expected 2019).

“Aesthetics of Existence: A Whiteheadian Existential Sensibility,” in *Variations on Some Themes of Process Metaphysics*, Alexander Haitos and Helmut Maaßen, eds., Cambridge Scholars (essay complete, publication expected 2019).

#### **In Preparation**

“Here’s a Surprise! The oft overlooked connection between James, Dewey, and Whitehead,” for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

## Book Reviews

Gare, Arran. *The Philosophical Foundations of Ecological Civilization*. Oxford: Routledge, 2017. Review solicited by *Process Studies*; publication in Fall/Winter 2018 issue.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- 2018 “Possibility and Beautiful Things: The Artistic Union of Past, Present, and Future,” 5<sup>th</sup> European Summer School for Process Thought, Budweis, Czech Republic, August 6-10
- 2017 “The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” 11<sup>th</sup> International Whitehead Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal, July 25-28  
“Time, Possibility, and Process,” 11<sup>th</sup> International Whitehead Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal, July 25-28  
“James and Whitehead: A Metaphysical Aesthetic,” Summer Institute in American Philosophy, Eugene, Oregon, July 10-15
- 2016 “The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” 4<sup>th</sup> European Summer School for Process Thought, Sofia, Bulgaria, August 1-6
- 2015 “Aesthetics of Existence: A Whiteheadian Existential Sensibility,” 10<sup>th</sup> International Whitehead Conference, Claremont, CA, June 4-7
- 2014 “The World ‘Hangs Together:’ Nature, non-being, and infinity in John Scotus Eriugena and Alfred North Whitehead,” 12<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the International Society of Neoplatonic Studies, Lisbon, Portugal, June 16-21
- 2012 “The Problem of Novelty and the Atomization of Time,” 2<sup>nd</sup> European Summer School for Process Thought, Mülheim, Germany, August 5-10
- 2011 “Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation,” 8<sup>th</sup> International Whitehead Conference, Tokyo, Japan, September 26-29

## SERVICE

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- 2015- Present Executive Committee, International Process Network  
*Duties include:* monthly meetings online, correspondence with committee regarding conference funding and organization, and other activities concerning process thought worldwide

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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Aug 2012- Aug 2018 Research Assistant to Distinguished Professor John J. McDermott, Texas A&M University

*Responsibilities include:* research for and editing of manuscripts; assistance maintaining professional correspondence; assistance organizing courses; assistance maintaining professional archives

*Selected projects:* Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott’s introduction to the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly’s* Special Issue on John Dewey (Spring 2013)

Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott's essay  
"Keeper of Things" (*International Journal for Cultural Research*, Sept. 2013)

Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott's essay  
"Josiah Royce: Alive and Well" (*The Relevance of Royce*, Fordham University Press,  
2014)

## **ARCHIVAL RESEARCH**

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2017 Whitehead Archive, Heinrich-Heine-Universität, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Philosophical Association  
Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy  
International Process Network  
European Society for Process Thought

## **LANGUAGES**

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German (reading)

## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

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**Title**—Finding the Foundations of the World in Aesthetic Experience: The Radical Empiricism of William James and the Metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead

In this manuscript, I use William James's radical empiricism to widen the interpretive parameters of Alfred North Whitehead's thought in order to address the aesthetic character of experience. Understanding the aesthetic core of Whitehead's metaphysics is essential to comprehending his broader philosophy and has far-reaching implications for the existential and social dimensions of human life.

I offer a two-pronged approach to understanding Whitehead that is salutary for opening engagement with his thought, both within and beyond circles already familiar with his philosophy. The first prong is to articulate the metaphysical sweep of James's radical empiricism and its contributions to the thickness of Whitehead's philosophy. I expand upon the radically empirical character of Whitehead's metaphysics through a discussion of time and possibility, showing that these two ideas, properly understood, are essential to grasping Whitehead's theory of actual occasions and thus his account of process and experience. The second prong is to emphasize Whitehead's rendering of aesthetics as the fulcrum of his philosophy, the node through which its various complexities are synthesized. By conceiving of the world in processual and compositional terms, Whitehead is conceiving of the world in aesthetic terms, in terms of feeling, affect, value, possibility, and achievement. Without this grounding in aesthetic experience and expression, Whitehead's philosophy loses its experiential purchase.

These two prongs merge because Whitehead's aesthetics cannot be adequately appreciated without working through James's radical empiricism and Whitehead's own understanding of

time and possibility. Thus, in much of this manuscript, I elaborate the metaphysical substructure necessary to working on Whitehead's aesthetics in broader existential, social, political, environmental, and scientific contexts. I show that appropriation is a key notion in the radically empirical *Weltanschauung* and that Whitehead's complex treatment of temporality accommodates and reconciles the seeming antitheses of atomism and continuity, and of privacy and publicity. The resultant version of Whitehead's metaphysics makes the transition to understanding the aesthetic dimension of experience and the various applications of Whitehead's ideas that much more coherent.

Breaking upon aesthetics with the metaphysics of radical empiricism in hand, I clarify two aspects of Whitehead's philosophy. Not only is Whitehead's metaphysics developed along the contours of aesthetic experience, but Whitehead's aesthetics harbors an existential sensibility whose implications for political and cultural matters are largely unexplored. Thus, interpreting Whitehead's writings, I show how aesthetics and metaphysics converge in a potent vision of the world as creative pursuits yielding value within a thoroughly relational fabric. By developing the themes of a pluralistic, relational world and of pervasive aesthetic experience, I invite Whitehead into deeper conversation with James and Dewey, fortifying Whitehead's position as a preeminent philosopher in the American strand. Offering a reinvigorated account of Whitehead's philosophy, I place him at the threshold of more conversations than he himself entered, more than Whitehead scholarship has yet been able to explore.

## REFERENCES

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**John J. McDermott**, University  
Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and  
Humanities in Medicine, Regents Professor  
Texas A&M University  
Department of Philosophy & Humanities  
Email: [mcdermott@tamu.edu](mailto:mcdermott@tamu.edu)  
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**Helmut Maaßen**, President—European  
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