Kathleen Akins

Areas of Interest
I am interested in virtually all issues in the philosophy of mind as well as the metaphysical and epistemic problems they engender—from the nature of mental representation and intentionality, to colour perception, embedded cognition, cognitive development, the emotions, consciousness and the self. What unifies all of these investigations is a neuro-philosophical approach. I begin any project with the problem as traditionally conceived by philosophy; then I look at what recent neuroscience has unearthed on the topic. The task is then to use the empirical literature to re-conceive of the traditional philosophical problem while at the same time using the philosophical insights to drive forward the experiments in neuroscience. I regard my work as essentially interdisciplinary (although in practice I tend to spend more time reading neuroscience simply because of the sheer volume and complexity of the recent scientific literature).

Current Research Projects
My single largest project is a monograph on colour vision (More Than Mere Colouring: On The Nature of Spectral Vision). This monograph gives a physiological theory of colour vision (here, the methodology was bit inverted—first the philosophical views made me doubt the current neurophysiological interpretation of research results; then those new views about the physiology of colour vision gave rise to quite counter-intuitive conclusions about colour properties and colour phenomenology).

For more information on this and other research projects, please see Dr. Akins' website.

Holly Andersen

Current Research Interests
Explanation and mechanisms; metaphysics of causation; temporal experience; and psychology and philosophy of action/agency

PERSONAL SITE: https://sites.google.com/site/andersenphilosophy

VIVA FASS Listing:
Theories of Value and Moral Responsibility
Theories of Knowledge
Science and Scientific Method
Philosophy
Natural Sciences
Evolution
Decision Making
Cognition

Endre Begby

Current Research Interests
I have wide interests in philosophy. Much of my recent work has focused on questions at the intersection of
philosophy of mind/psychology and language/linguistics. But I am now about to start an SSHRC supported project entitled “The Epistemology of Social Prejudice,” which I hope will result in a book manuscript over the next couple of years. Additionally, I have done a fair amount of work in political philosophy, and occasionally dabble in the odd bit of history. I teach and supervise across all these areas.

PERSONAL SITE: http://endrebegby.synthasite.com/

Sam Black
Areas of Interest
Social and Political Philosophy, Ethics, History of 17th Century Philosophy

Current Research Projects
I began my career in political philosophy examining the relationship between individual and group rights. Since then, my interests have come to embrace more foundational questions in social philosophy. The three projects on which I am currently working include: (1) the place of skepticism in an adequate theory of public reason, (2) the historical role that skepticism played in the development of seventeenth century moral and political philosophy, and (3) a book length manuscript that defends an account of reasons to be moral.

Thomas Donaldson
Current Research Interests
The analytic/synthetic distinction; the metaphysics of mathematics.

Nicolas Fillion
Areas of Interest
Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mathematics, Logic, Scientific Computation, History of Mathematics

Nic's main research contributions are in the philosophy of science and applied mathematics, but his research and teaching include the history of science & mathematics, formal logic, decision and game theory, critical thinking, philosophy of language, and epistemology broadly construed. In addition to his teaching and research activities, he has also been involved with various outreach, regulation, and curricular initiatives to promote the teaching of philosophy and critical thinking in BC high schools.

Current Research Projects
Nic has ongoing research projects in all his areas of interests. Please consult his personal website for an up-to-date description.
Funded research: "The third pillar of scientific rationality", SSHRC Insight Grant, $75,713, 2018-2022 (Collaborators: Rob Corless and Chris Smeenk)

PERSONAL SITE: http://www.nfillion.com
Martin Hahn
Areas of Interest
My original interest in philosophy centred around philosophy of language, theory of reference in particular. I was, and remain, especially interested in the connections, and differences, between linguistic reference and intentionality and the consequences of direct reference theory for accounts of mental representation. A related area of research has been anti-individualism or externalism and its relation to the first set of issues.

Current Research Projects
My interest in mental representation has naturally lead to issues concerning the intentionality of perception and the project that has occupied most of my research time over the past several years: colour, its perception, phenomenology and metaphysics. The project, which is a collaborative effort with Kathleen Akins, is going to result in a book which argues for a new account of colour perception which solves some long-standing puzzles in neuroscience. The account also supports several quite unusual, but we believe ultimately correct, conclusions about the phenomenology and metaphysics of colour. I have also been working on some general issues in the theory of perception, the role and nature of sensations in particular.

Dai Heide
Areas of Interest
Kant, Early Modern Philosophy, Normative Ethics, Applied Ethics, Symbolic Logic

Jill McIntosh
Areas of Interest
AOS: Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science, and Metaphysics
AOC: Epistemology, Philosophy of Biology, and Philosophy of Language

PERSONAL SITE: http://www.sfu.ca/~jillmc

Lisa Shapiro
Areas of Interest
Early Modern Philosophy, Feminism and Philosophy
Also: Philosophy of Mind (especially perception and emotions), Moral Psychology, Philosophy of Personal Identity

Current Research Interests
I am the Principal Investigator (PI) in SSHRC Partnership Development Grant to further develop network of researchers invested in developing New Narratives in the History of Philosophy. I will be working with colleagues Marguerite Deslauriers at McGill and Karen Detlefsen at University of Pennsylvania, as well as others in Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, Finland, Sweden, France, Turkey and the Netherlands among others, to connect up researchers and their students to develop a set of activities and tools to stimulate both research in and teaching of the history of philosophy that incorporates women and currently non-canonical philosophers into the narratives that form the history of philosophy.
My research interests have focused on early modern philosophy, and in particular on how early modern conceptions of human nature impact accounts of human understanding, both of our perceptions of the world and in our ability to have knowledge of it. Of particular interest is the role of affective states, including pleasure, pain, and the passions or emotions, in our understanding (rather than in our motivations to action). To hone in on the problem I am interested in, I have focused on Descartes, Spinoza and Hume, as well as Condillac, but am growing interested in Malebranche.

Related to this interest, I am currently editing a volume on Pleasure for the new Oxford Philosophical Concepts series. Essays in the volume will examine philosophical accounts from Aristotle through contemporary philosophy that foreground aspects of pleasure other than its role in motivating action. I am also hoping to return to my book manuscript, tentatively titled: Descartes through The Passions of the Soul. In it I aim to show how the Passions lends insight into Descartes' ontology, his account of body-mind causation (and causation generally) and his philosophy of mind.

I’m committed to current efforts to rehabilitate writings of the women philosophers of the early modern period. These women include (but are not limited to) Moderata Fonte, Marie de Gournay, Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, Margaret Cavendish, Mary Astell, Madame de Sevigne, Catherine Cockburn Trotter, Olympe de Gouges, Emilie du Chatelet, Gabrielle Suchon, Marie Thiroux D'Arconville, to name a few. To this end, I'm interested in historiographical and well as philosophical issues.

Electronic versions of publications, as well as drafts of works in progress, can be found at lisacshapiro.wordpress.com.

VIVA FASS Listing:

- Theories of Value and Moral Responsibility
- Theories of Knowledge
- Subjectivity or First-Personal Experience
- Sensory Perception
- Philosophy
- Literature
- Inequality/Equality
- History
- Feminism
- Evidence (as a research focus, not as a method)
- Emotion and Affect
- Education
- Cognition

Evan Tiffany

Areas of Interest

Moral Psychology, esp. Practical Reason
Ethical Theory
Current Research Projects

My current research centres on issues in practical reason and moral agency. Regarding the former, I am specifically interested in the nature and ground of normative force, both from a historical and contemporary perspective. It is increasingly common in the contemporary literature to treat reasons as normatively and conceptually primitive. But even if this kind of primitivism is true, there remain important and interesting questions concerning the kind of normative force that reasons are supposed to have. Here I think it is instructive to look to the early modern natural lawyers such as Suarez, Hobbes, Pufendorf, and Locke, and the way in which they succeed or fail to distinguish the special normative force of Law as opposed to counsel. Locke’s view, for example, is deflationary relative to Suarez, in that Locke reduces all normativity to the force of Recommendation, giving up entirely on the distinctive force of Demand central to scholastic natural law. My own view of normative force is even more deflationary in that genuine reasons are not characterized by a higher-order property of normative authority, but by their existential significance to our deliberative and emotional lives.

In the area of moral agency, I defend a kind of Kantian-cum-Strawsonian view of moral responsibility. The view is (neo-)Kantian in that I take responsibility to require a commitment to libertarian freedom, not because of worries about the ability to do otherwise (leeway libertarianism) or ultimacy (source libertarianism), but because the right kind of normative responsiveness to reasons is incompatible with a naturalistic explanation of action. The view is Strawsonian insofar as I take this commitment itself to be ultimately grounded in our social natures. Contrary to other neo-Kantians, I think the move to a “standpoint” justification of freedom – i.e. thinking of one’s commitment to freedom as justified from the practical or second-personal point of view – creates a special justificatory problem, for we need to know if we are morally justified in taking up the second-personal stance toward a specific person in a specific set of circumstances. In answering this justificatory challenge, I see these ascriptions of blame as essentially practical choices that we make in dialogue with others as we navigate our shared social space of personal relationships; and I am hoping that a virtue ethics of blame can provide the right kind of criterion of correctness for these choices.
Jennifer Wang

My research centers on topics in metaphysics (esp. modality) and philosophy of logic. I also have interests in epistemology, early modern philosophy, and classical Chinese philosophy.

VIVA FASS Listing:

Theories of Knowledge
Philosophy