Australasian Society
for Continental Philosophy

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Online - 21 November

University of Melbourne - Parkville, 24 - 26 November

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The ASCP would like to acknowledge the **Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation**, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the conference is taking place. We respectfully acknowledge the Elders, past and present, and acknowledge their 60,000 year unceded sovereignty of these lands.

EXECUTIVE OF THE AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY

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Web Coordinator: James Garrett (Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy)

E: contact@ascp.org.au

W: https://ascp.org.au/

FB: www.facebook.com/groups/aussoccontiphil/

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Australasian Society
for Continental Philosophy

WELCOME

BY CONFERENCE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The ASCP is pleased to once again participate in the Congress of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, with our Annual Conference returning to the University of Melbourne's Parkville campus. We thank CHASS and the University of Melbourne – especially the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies and Dr Andrew Inkpin – for their support in making this conference happen.

This year's conference includes a range of events that show how the Society is evolving. For the first time, the conference will start with a dedicated Online Day on the 21st of November. It features a wide range of exciting papers from new and returning members, and concludes with a plenary panel on Publishing in Philosophy that gives all conference participants a chance to meet the editors of key journals in our field. We thank Joe Hughes, Marguerite La Caze, Christopher Mayes, Dimitris Vardoulakis, and Magdalena Zolkos for generously offering to participate, and Daniele Fulvi for organising this panel.

The 2025 Conference Programme also features the inaugural ECR Prize Panel. The ASCP's ECR Prize was awarded for the first time this year to Sofia Kartavtseva (UNSW) for her paper "The Body Reinvented: A Sadeian Grotesque Study of Gender", presented at the 2024 Annual Conference. Congratulations Sofia! The Prize includes the opportunity to organise a panel at the following conference. Sofia's panel, 'Queering the Sadeian: A genealogy of the sexually undetermined body", featuring Charlie Clements and James Martell, will be held in Parallel Session 8 on Wednesday the 26th. The ECR Prize will be held again this year – more details can be found on the ASCP website.

The conference will also see the return of our popular HDR/ECR event 'Pint Sized Philosophy' (Monday Nov 24), the annual Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lunch (Tuesday Nov 25), and Bibliofête. The latter, which gives authors who have not had other launch events the chance to celebrate their new books, will be held during this year's conference dinner on the 25th.

The Society's new initiatives extend beyond the conference. The executive committee submitted a response detailing concerns about the ARC's proposed funding restructure, and (with the help of Miriam Bankovsky) developed a policy statement on academic freedom.

We also launched an Events Grant scheme, aimed at encouraging members to organise events that promote Continental Philosophy. There will be two rounds each year offering up to $1000 in funding, with calls for EOIs going out in April and September. Priority will be given to events that are organised by or feature precariously employed scholars, regional scholars, and scholars from underrepresented groups. The inaugural recipients of the Events Grants are Daniel Lopez and Michael Lazarus, who will be organising a two-day event on Gillian Rose, Aristotle, Marx, and Hegel; and Elliott Patsoura and Jonathan McCoy, for a symposium on Lacan's "Science and Truth". We encourage everyone to keep an eye out for more news about those exciting events early next year – and to consider submitting applications in the next round.

Supporting precariously employed members is a high priority for the committee, and we would like to thank Magdalena Zolkos – a beloved longtime member of the ASCP and one of this year's keynotes – who kindly donated her travel funding to the John Dalton Bursary Scheme, meaning that we were able to award a greater number of travel bursaries (and with more funding per award) this year.

The Conference Committee also extends a special thanks to Christine Polowyj, our Administrative Officer, whose remarkable work and dedication have once again been crucial to making this conference run as smoothly as possible.

We would also like to acknowledge the vital contribution of the student volunteers during the conference.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that the 2026 Annual Conference will be held at Macquarie University from the 1st to the 3rd of December (with an additional online day). We are deeply appreciative of the support that Macquarie's outstanding philosophers have already provided to make this happen, and look forward to sharing the beautiful Wallumattagal Campus in Dharug Country with our members.

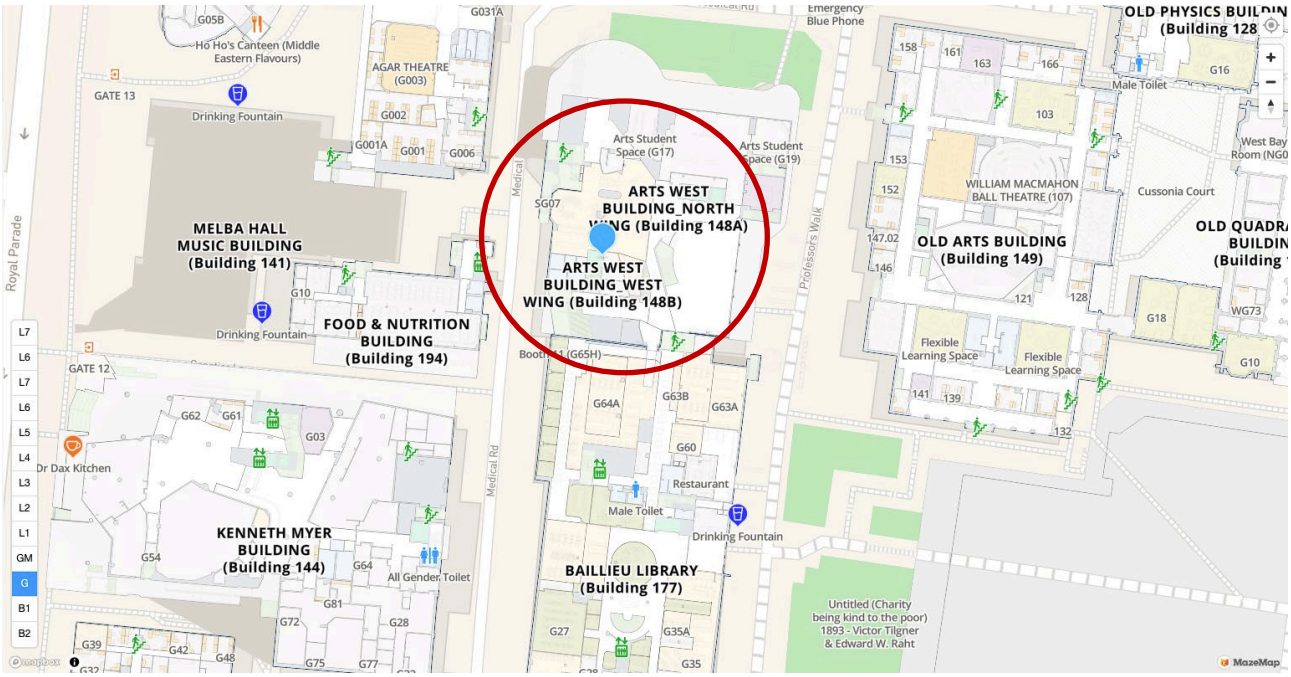
Sincerely,

Charles Barbour
Daniel Brennan
Andrew Inkpin
Joeri Mol
Jacinta Sassine
Marilyn Stendera

VENUE

The ASCP conference will be held at The University of Melbourne – Parkville Campus.

Please use this interactive map to navigate campus buildings, rooms and features.



REGISTRATION

The registration/information desk will operate in the Arts West foyer, Building 148B. Register directly here.

CONFERENCE DINNER

On Tuesday, 25 November, join us on the Rooftop at PA's, close to the Conference, at 191 Gratton Street, Carlton. Starting at 6:30pm, immediately after the keynote address.

You can purchase a dinner ticket either in combination with conference registration, or separately here.

MORNING AND AFTERNOON TEA

We are providing morning and afternoon for participants who are registered as attending the conference. Morning and afternoon tea will be served at the Arts West foyer, Building 148B.

LUNCH

Lunch is not provided. However, there are many options on campus.

WIFI ACCESS – EDUROAM

Melbourne University participates in the Eduroam network. Eduroam is a global initiative that gives staff and students access to the wireless networks of other educational and research institutions, with the credentials of their home institute. Click here for how to connect.

ACCESSIBILITY

All conference venues are wheelchair accessible. All rooms and theatres where sessions (including keynotes and plenaries) are held have hearing aid loops.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Information about the University of Melbourne Health Service can be accessed here.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Contact University Security at any time by calling **834 46666** or **1800 246 066** (free call). In any life-threatening situation, always call Victorian emergency services first via 000 (0 000 from a University landline). Call University Security immediately after calling emergency services.

Blue help phones on campus

Blue emergency help phone booths at various points in the campus are a contact point with University Security if you feel threatened, need security, or require security information. Activate the phone by pressing the 'emergency' button. Pressing this button generates an alarm in the security control room and activates CCTV cameras. A security officer will answer the call and dispatch help if required. You can find emergency phone locations on the Parkville and Southbank campuses on the University's map website.

Patrolling and monitoring the campus

The University has trained security officers that patrol our campuses 24 hours a day on foot, on bicycles and in vehicles. These officers are responsible for the safety of the University community and its property. University grounds and buildings are monitored by CCTV that is always supervised by trained security officers.

Details here.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parkville is the University of Melbourne's original and main campus, located just a few minutes from Melbourne's central business district. Read more here.

ONLINE PARTICIPATION

Online participants need to register for the Conference. Registration includes 12 months membership with the ASCP.

Registered participants will receive Zoom details on Wednesday, 19 November.

KEYNOTES

The keynotes will be streamed online. All registered participants will receive the Zoom details prior to the conference.

AGM PARTICIPATION

The AGM will be streamed online. Zoom details will be distributed prior to the AGM.

You will need to be a member of the ASCP to attend the AGM. Registration to the conference includes membership. Membership can also be purchased separately from conference registration on the ASCP website.

PUBLISHING IN PHILOSOPHY: MEET THE EDITORS – ONLINE DAY FEATURE

Friday, 21 November | 3:00 - 4:30pm | Online

This session is designed to offer all members – especially HDRs and ECRs – a better understanding of the publishing landscape. Organised by Daniele Fulvi, the panel features Joe Hughes, Marguerite La Caze, Christopher Mayes, Dimitris Vardoulakis, and Magdalena Zolkos, who will give advice from an editor's point of view, and speak to their own extensive experience in writing and publishing impactful philosophy. Come along with your questions for the editors!

PINT SIZED PHILOSOPHY – APPLY NOW!

Monday, 24 November | 7:15pm | The Clyde, 385 Cardigan Street, Carlton

"Pint Sized Philosophy" is a networking and social event particularly aimed at higher degree researchers and early career researchers attending the ASCP conference, although all conference attendees are encouraged to attend. This event will involve a competitive presentation by HDR and ECR members of the ASCP. This competitive presentation event follows a 3-minute thesis style format, where HDR and ECR's will have 3 minutes to introduce themselves and present their current research.

Please email your application to ASCP representative, Joeri Mol jmol@unimelb.edu.au by Wednesday, 19 November. Participants wanting to present are asked to apply with a brief (200 word) abstract and biography.

Please note, as there will be a limited number of presenters, the first to apply will receive priority placement.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY LUNCH

Tuesday, 25 November | 1:00pm | Room 556

Join us for an informal lunch discussion focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion in philosophical practice, academia and our community. This open forum session welcomes all conference attendees to share and contribute to discussions about fostering inclusive practices in philosophy. Conference participants are welcome to drop in, whether to listen, share, or engage in dialogue. Light refreshments will be provided.

BIBLIOFETE

Tuesday, 25 November | 7:00pm | PA's Rooftop, 191 Grattan Street, Carlton

Back by popular demand! This year we will be kicking off our conference dinner with a celebration of our members' recent book publications! For every nominated book, we will invite a short commentary by another member of the ASCP to present the work. For authors, this is a great chance to promote your publication and help keep the community up to date on the latest philosophical writings.

ASCP AFFILIATED JOURNAL

Philosophy, Politics and Critique is published by Edinburgh University Press. From its three issues per year, one will be an ASCP issue.

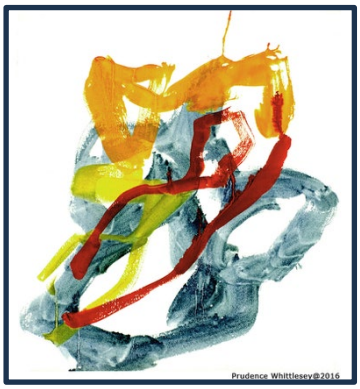
The latest issue of *Philosophy, Politics and Critique* features articles from the 2024 conference and can be found here.

Registration for the ASCP conference includes a personal subscription to the journal.

KEYNOTES

ELEANOR KAUFMAN

Structure in French Philosophy, Before and After 1966



The weird, mind-bending dimension of structure as it was developed by thinkers like Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, and Deleuze was later subsumed under the categories of the binary and the synchronous, then renounced and dismissed as "structuralism." This talk considers structure's vibrancy and decline, and specifically events in 1966 that arguably inaugurated a sea change. The significance of Althusser and Derrida in this context and beyond will be highlighted. Eleanor Kaufman is professor of Comparative Literature, English, and French and Francophone Studies, and affiliate of the Center for the Study of Religion, the Center for the Study of Women, and the Center for Jewish Studies. She is currently the Vice Chair of the University of California Systemwide Committee on Planning and Budget and Chair of its Task Force on Agriculture and Natural Resources. She received an A.B. from Harvard University and a Ph.D. from Duke University and has taught at Cornell University and the University of Virginia. Her primary research is on twentieth-century French philosophy, with secondary interests in Medieval philosophy and theology (Christian and Islamic), psychoanalysis, and Medical humanities. In addition, she teaches and advises on topics in critical theory, nineteenth- and twentieth-century French and Maghrebian literature, and literature and philosophy of the Jewish diaspora.

Eleanor Kaufman is Professor of Comparative Literature, English, and French and Francophone Studies at UCLA. She is the co-editor of *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minnesota, 1998) and the author of *The Delirium of Praise: Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, Klossowski* (Johns Hopkins, 2001), *Deleuze, the Dark Precursor: Dialectic, Structure, Being* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), and *At Odds with Badiou: Politics, Dialectics, and Religion from Sartre and Deleuze to Lacan and Agamben* (forthcoming, Columbia University Press). She is working on three additional book-length projects: *"Structure: A Counterhistory of Twentieth-Century French Philosophy,"* currently supported by UC President's and Guggenheim Fellowships; *"Rocks, Plants, Objects, and Stars: Classification in French Phenomenology"*; and *"The Jewry of the Plain,"* on the archives and cemeteries that commemorate Jewish settlement in remote regions of the American West at the end of the nineteenth century, and simultaneously a meditation on the work of Jacques Derrida. She began studies of Medieval and Late Antique philosophy a decade ago under the auspices of a Mellon New Directions fellowship.

MAGDALENA ZOLKOS

Survivals, Phantoms and Transmissions in Georges Didi-Huberman's Philosophy of the Imprint

Making an imprint, everyone knows what it is; everyone knows how to do it; everyone, at one time or another, has done it: by making footprints, […] or with ink-stained fingers or by rubbing coins on a sheet of paper'. This is how Georges Didi-Huberman opens his book on the archaeology and anachronism of l'empreinte, or the action of creating resemblance through contact, rather than imitation—drawing the reader's attention to the fact that practices and effects encompassed within this rubric are ubiquitous, mundane and heterogeneous. Hovering at the border of art, play, and mechanical (re)production, they are often unwitting and even involuntary, as we emboss surfaces through gestures simply by virtue of having—or being—bodies. It is therefore striking that Didi-Huberman also associates the imprint with an operation of 'magical' and 'ichnological' power that is quite unique: through haptic transmissions and the taking of forms, the imprint becomes a medium of survival of the bygone, a site of phantasmal return (revenance) and of memory—of what adhered to it, what touched, crushed, crumpled or caressed it at some point and has now departed. The 'dual condition' of the imprint means that at the same time as it affords us the contact with absence it has embossed, it also distances and fractures our connection to it.

This talk outlines aspects of Didi-Huberman's philosophy of the imprint pertaining to temporality, survival and gesture, and articulates, through the psychoanalytic lens, how it can inform our thinking about both the political dimension of art and the ways art mediates ethical relations. In particular, the paper considers the thought of Didi-Huberman's long-time friend and collaborator Pierre Fédida, sketching lines of adjacency between Didi-Huberman's concept of the imprint and Fédida's notion of transference as 'recreating an experience of absence', and arguing that this illuminates the psychic dimension of our encounter with images—or, in Didi-Huberman's words, with 'what we see and what [simultaneously] looks at us'. The discussion concludes with an analysis of contemporary artworks utilizing imprinting techniques: Pascal Convert's 1999-2003 wax series, which raise political and ethical questions about images documenting oppression and mass atrocity in three contexts—Bosnia, Algeria, and Palestine (The Pietà of Kosovo; The Madonna of Bentalha; The Death of Mohamed Al Dura).

Magdalena Zolkos is Associate Professor in the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy at the University of Jyväskylä (Finland). She is the author of *Reconciling Community and Subjective Life. Trauma Testimony as Political Theorizing* (Bloomsbury) and *Restitution and the Politics of Repair: Tropes, Imaginaries, Theory* (Edinburgh University Press), and the editor of, most recently, *The Didi-Huberman Dictionary* (Edinburgh University Press) and, with Marguerite La Caze, *Contemporary Perspectives on Vladimir Jankélévitch: On What Cannot Be Touched* (Lexington). She is currently completing a manuscript on images in ethical, political and psychoanalytic perspectives focused on Didi-Huberman's philosophical method of visual analysis, *Georges Didi-Huberman's Political Philosophy of Visuality: Between Desire and Symptom-Formation* (under contract with Routledge).

CHRISTOPHER MAYES

Eating Sovereignties: food practices as biopolitical sites of genocide and resistance

In *The Threepenny Opera*, Bertolt Brecht writes, “Food is the first thing. Morals follow on”. Brecht highlights, among other things, that ethical action is difficult—if not impossible—without basic needs being met. Human rights philosopher Henry Shue echoes this, arguing that the right to food underpins other rights and ethical ideals. While a full stomach may have priority on practical-physiological grounds, food and its provision shouldn’t be reduced to apolitical basic needs or “bestial acts” in Brecht’s words. Food is a site of biopolitical significance in at least three ways: it sustains and mediates biological life, it is tied to the economic and physical strength of populations, and it gives shape (and flavour) to communal life. The denial and destruction of food practices have consequences beyond hungry stomachs, just as their maintenance and restoration has significance beyond feeding them. In this paper I will examine the biopolitical intersection of foodways, genocide, and resistance in Victoria and Palestine. Drawing on the work of Zahi Zalloua, Irene Watson, and Kyle Whyte, I argue that food practices play an important role in (re)establishing nonstatist sovereignty that destabilise present understandings of ourselves and the social reality built on stolen lands.

Christopher Mayes is a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy and the co-convener of the Philosophy and History of Ideas research group at Deakin University. His research interests include political philosophy, history and philosophy of emerging technologies, and bioethics. Chris is the author of *The Biopolitics of Lifestyle: Foucault, Ethics, and Healthy Choices* (Routledge, 2016) and *Unsettling Food Politics: agriculture, dispossession, and sovereignty in Australia* (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018). He also co-hosts *Undisciplinary*: a podcast the explores the history, ethics and politics of health.

PLENARY SESSION

PANEL IN HONOUR OF MARGUERITE LA CAZE

This plenary panel is dedicated to celebrating and honoring the profound and influential body of work produced by Marguerite La Caze.

Professor La Caze is a distinguished scholar whose research critically spans across European philosophy, feminist philosophy, moral psychology (especially the emotions) and aesthetics, including philosophy and film.

This panel serves as a testament to the transformative impact Professor La Caze has had on these fields, inspiring a generation of scholars and profoundly enriching our understanding of the human condition.

Professor La Caze holds a BA (UQ); MA (Melbourne); and PhD (UQ), and is an Australian Research Fellow 2003-2007. She held an ARC Discovery Grant 2015-2018 on 'Ethical Restoration After Oppressive Violence: A Philosophical Account' and was a visiting Fellow at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland in 2022.

Her current research projects include: Film philosophy and non-violent resistance;
Ontologies of force: Violence, non-violence, and resistance; Hannah Arendt and power; Beauvoir and cinema.

ONLINE DAY: Friday, 21 November

Zoom
Links will be provided closer to the conference

All times below are in AEDT (GMT+11)

9:00 – 9:15	**Conference Opening**
Zoom Room 1	Welcome: Charles Barbour (Chair of the ASCP)
9:15 – 10:45	**Parallel Session 1**
Zoom Room 1	Chair: Charles Barbour Tsz Chun Chan, *A Critical Reflection on Gaming Culture from a Lacanian-Hegelian Perspective* Carlo Crosato, Politics Is (Not) a Serious Thing. Play as Politics Halit Evrim Bayindir, *Indifference and Repetition: Deleuze and Malabou on 'the Always-Already's Authority'*
Zoom Room 2	Chair: Elliot Patsoura Audrey Wasser, *Literary Criticism as a Problem of Teleological Judgment* Petra Brown, *Vulnerability, relationality and natality: an Arendtian challenge to Western political philosophy* Felicity Joseph, *Radical change and the epiphanic moment: Some questions concerning an existential understanding of mind-change and its political implications*
Zoom Room 3	Chair: Jacinta Sassine Jingni Huang, *The Semi-Living Language of Generative AI: From Merleau-Ponty's The Prose of the World to Machine Prompts* Zhong Xian Chua, *Imagining the Remainder: Laclau and Merleau-Ponty on the Materialist Basis of the Imagination*
Zoom Room 4	**Panel: Transcendence and Refraction: Selections** Chair: Ansgar Allen and Maureen Alsop (Daniel Brennan - Zoom) William Walsh, *The Poems - A Novella* Ansgar Allen, *The Unteachable* Maureen Alsop, *Today Yesterday After My Death* Eric Blix, *Melanie Index*
10:45-11:00	**Break**
11:00-12:30	**Parallel Session 2**
Zoom Room 1	Chair: Charles Barbour Michael-Francis Polios, *Formation and Disruption: Spinoza and Francis Bacon on a Science of Singular Things* Jurgis Viningas, *In what sense is Deleuze a Leibnizian?* Ehsan Azari Stanizai, *The Comedy of Beautiful Soul in Moliere's The Misanthrope: Lacan encounter with Hegel*
Zoom Room 2	Chair: Elliot Patsoura Cheuk Yin Ko, *How does technology affect art development in modern society?* Zhi Li, *An Interdisciplinary Interpretation of Young Marx's Critique of Religion*
Zoom Room 3	Chair: Jacinta Sassine Suen Lin, *Dancing of the abstraction - Hegel and Mondrian* Florge Paulo Sy, *Breaking Through Burnout: Radicalizing Han's Reading of Hegel Through Nancy* Thomas Mical, *Acid Leibniz ... Soft Machines in the Psychedelic-Cybernetic Imagination*
Zoom Room 4	Chair: Daniel Brennan Rutwij Nakhwa, *The Dialectic of Second Nature and Liberation in Hegel's Patriotism* Eusebius Nkwagu, *Ontology and the Power Dynamics – Emmanuel Levinas' Ethical Frame* Arundhati Dubey, *Thinking as Syncopated Figuration: Jean-Luc Nancy's Hegelian Radicalization of Kant*
12:30-1:30	**Lunch**

1:30-3:00	**Parallel Session 3**
Zoom Room 1	Chair: Charles Barbour Annie James, *Intruding agencies: A critical autoethnography of menstrual pain through thing-power* Dong Yang, *The Grey-Chaos and The Concealed Tonalities: Gilles Deleuze and Michel Henry on the Vital Forces of Painting*
Zoom Room 2	Chair: Elliot Patsoura Janflor Mc.Louie Ullero, *The Imperative of Responsibility and Climate Justice: Re-Reading Hans Jonas in the Anthropocene* Lewis Rosenberg, *Developing Deep Environmental Hermeneutics* Farhan Cundī Idris, *Desire and The Ontology of Signs in Maurizio Lazzarato and John of Damascus*
Zoom Room 3	Chair: Jacinta Sassine Bing Xing, *Heterotopian Subject or Inverted Panopticism? - The Possibilities and Limits of Interpreting Foucault from an Eastern Perspective* Thomas Dojan, *Philosophy is a Preparation for Dying. Death Literacy and Community Caring in Plato: A Social Network Analysis of the Phaedo*
3:00-4:30	**Panel: Publishing in Philosophy – Meet the Editors**
Zoom Room 1	Chair: Daniele Fulvi Speakers: Joe Hughes, Marguerite La Caze, Chris Mayes, Magdalena Zolkos, Dimitris Vardoulakis
4:30-4:35	**Close**

DAY 1: Monday, 24 November 2025

The University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus, Arts West Building

8:30 – 9:20	**Registration – Foyer**
9:20 – 9:30	**Conference Opening**
Foyer	Welcome: Charles Barbour (Chair of the ASCP)
9:30 – 11:00	**Parallel Session 1**
156	**Stream: Philosophy & Poetry, Panel 1** Chair: Andrew Benjamin Diana Barnes, *Wilful Renegotiation of Senecan Stoicism in the Poetry of Lady Anne Southwell (1574-1636)* Julia Thwaites, *Agamben's poetic body and the vivisection of language and life*
261	**Book Panel: Dimitris Vardoulakis, *The Agonistic Condition: Materialism and Democracy*** Chair: Nicole Anderson Speakers: Nicole Anderson, Charles Barbour, Claire Colebrook, Dimitris Vardoulakis
262	Chair: Andrew Inkpin Conor Jedam, *Dystopia Now! The Political Function of Imagining the Future* Kishore Saval, *Hamlet and Merleau-Ponty: The Observed Observer* Kelly Herbison, *'Seeing With' Style in Merleau-Ponty*
355	Chair: Joeri Mol Joel Bourland, *Intersubjectivity and Commodification: Benjamin's Critical Adaptation of Husserlian Empathy* Ella Gabriel, *AI and the Limits of Empathy* Eva Skinner, *Sisyphus, the Synecdoche, and the Castle - Representations of Absurdism within Kauffmann's Synecdoche, New York, and Franz Kafka's The Castle*
361	Chair: Daniele Fulvi Maddy Shield, *Guilty Thoughts* Brigitte Assi, *The Grammar of Sex: Intelligibility and Desire* Gustavo Ruiz da Silva, *How the History of Philosophy Finally Became a Story*
455	Chair: Daniel Brennan Christine Polowyj, *Creative logic, philosophical reason and the unconscious* Kat Henry, *Smooth-time: what long durational performance art might reveal about time and temporalities* Max Deutscher, *Silence of the dance*
555	Chair: Marilyn Stendera Pat McConville, *From Confucius to Expert Systems: Thinking skillful coping from a classical Chinese philosophical perspective* Chi-keung Chan, *Affect Beyond Boundaries: Massumi, Enactivism, and Wang Yangming* Lily Elston-Leadbetter, *How to do Phenomenology Today?*
11:00 – 11:30	**Break: Morning Tea – Foyer**

11:30 – 1:00	**Parallel Session 2**
156	**Stream: Philosophy & Poetry, Panel 2** Chair: Diana Barnes Kate Lilley, *Complaint's Elegy* Monty Patton, *From Supersession to Deconstruction*
261	**Panel: Weird Computing** Chair: Jason Tuckwell Timothy Jackson, *Excess and effective theory: ontogenetic computation with Gilbert and Georges(s)* Jason Tuckwell, *An organological computability 'reinscribed in the history of life'* Anthony Uhlmann, *Rhythmanalysis, Analogue and Digital: Bachelard, Shannon and Computing*
262	Chair: Chris van Rompaey Janice Richardson, *Spinoza's Conception of the Individual: The "No Enemy Within" Problem* Jon Rubin, *All you need is love, love, love, love of an eternal and infinite being that can't love you (qua you) back: on love and enjoyment in Spinoza's* Short Treatise Julian Castano-Gallego, *Substance as Information: Reconciling Spinoza's and Simondon's accounts of Transindividuality*
355	Chair: Andrew Poe Richard Iveson, *Physics of Philosophy: When and Where Light has No Future* Jacob Ritz, *Badiou's Speculative Metaontology: Between Heidegger and Kant* Luke Maher, *On the analytical unity of apperception*
361	Chair: Norma Lam-Saw Jennifer Ang, *Responsibility Gaps and Moral Blindness in Human-AI Systems* John Lechte, *Introduction to a Philosophy of Responsibility* Max Hoddinott, *Abu Ghraib, Human Rights, and the Politics of Victimhood*
455	Chair: Chris Danta Andrew Inkpin, *Merleau-Ponty on motor intentionality and the act of painting* Alex Paterson, *The Phantom World of Scrolling* Madeline Helyar, *Poetic Experience and Epistemic Value*
555	Chair: Scott Kirkland Luara Karlson-Carp, *Negating Critique: Performativity and the End of Limits* Fabio Bucci and Brett Allen, *Kant Can't Kill Plato : Plato, Transcendence or Bust* Marianna Parry, *Has Plato read the Torah? Parallels between Plato's Laws and the Mosaic Law of the Torah / Pentateuch*
1:00 – 2:00	**Lunch**
2:00-3:30	**Marguerite La Caze Plenary Session – Forum Theatre, Arts West, 153**
	Chair: Daniel Brennan Speakers: Joanne Faulkner, Max Deutscher, Sameema Zahra, Daniel Brennan
3:30-4:00	**Break: Afternoon Tea – Foyer**

4:00-5:30	**Parallel Session 3**
156	**Stream: Philosophy & Poetry, Panel 3** Chair: Monty Patton Justin Clemens, *Perversity Versity: Milton's Satan between Philosophy and Poetry* Emma Simpson-Weber, *A Cynical Poetics: Reading Diogenes in Isabella* Whitney's A Sweet Nosegay, or Pleasant Poesy, Containing a Hundred and Ten Philosophical Flowers *(1573).*
261	**Stream: Ecology & Practice, Panel 1** Chair: Marilyn Stendera Codie Condos Distratis, *Reading Continuity (and Difference) in Plumwood* Simone Thornton, *Hope-less* Paige Maguire, *Freedom in the unknown – facing the climate crises with despair*
262	Chair: Kelly Herbison Katrina Jaworski, *More-than-human agencies in cinematic representations of male suicide* Pamela Isaacs, *Sensation in Art: the Nonsensuous Response* Danica Janse van Vuuren, *Moving Beyond Stigma and Blame: A Phenomenology of Desire and Choice in Suicidal Ideation in Depressed Patients*
355	Chair: Martin Kovan Benedict Santilli, *I Think Therefore You Are* Jesse Brindley, *Towards the use of abstraction for life: On the modernities of Kierkegaard and Simmel* Sumera Saleem*, Precarity and oceanic thought: The politics of migration*
361	Chair: Scott Kirkland Scott Kirkland, Figures: *On Agamben's Christian Problem* Chloe Anastasia, *Two Figures of Kingship: Frederick II and Christus Fiscus*
455	Chair: Andrew Inkpin Jodie McNeilly, *Intuiting the 'non-object' in a phenomenology of things: a hoarder's experience* Sameema Zahra, *Parenthood in the Alienworld* Vania Alarcon Castillo, *Ethical Normativity in Husserliana 28*
555	Chair: Jessica Whyte Leonard D'Cruz, *From Neoliberalism to the Neoreaction: Does the Second Trump Administration Represent a New Governmentality?* Jasper Lear, *Alain Badiou and Michel Foucault: modesty, discontinuity and the subject* Timothy O'Leary, *Reframing Social Cohesion: The Politics of Sensibility*
5:30-7:00	**Keynote Address: Magdalena Zolkos – Arts West, Kathleen Fitzpatrick Lecture Theatre**
	Chair: Jacinta Sassine Keynote speaker: Magdalena Zolkos, *Survivals, Phantoms and Transmissions in Georges Didi-Huberman's Philosophy of the Imprint*
7:15	**Pint-sized Philosophy, The Clyde Hotel**

DAY 2: Tuesday, 25 November 2025

The University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus, Arts West Building

9:00 – 9:30	**Registration – Foyer**
9:30 – 11: 00	**Parallel Session 4**
156	**Stream: Ecology & Practice, Panel 2** Chair: Oliver Feltham Claire Colebrook, *Steps Away from an Ecology of Practice* Daniele Fulvi, *Challenging the Moral Hazard Argument in Climate Change Mitigation: a Transitional Justice Approach*
261	**Stream: Gillian Rose Memorial, Panel 1** Chair: Lillian Phillips Robert Lucas Scott, *The Risk of Action* Daniel Andrés López, *The Work of Love*
262	**Panel: Jacques Lacan: the Unconscious, the Woman & the m/Other** Chair: Joeri Mol Sheila Cavanagh, *What Lacan said about the m/Other* Nicol Thomas, *What can be there for the (not-all)woman who doesn't exist?* Claire Baxter, *The Sphinx and the Riddle which is Oedipus*
355	**Panel: Intimate Politics: Heteropessimism, Sexual Silence, and Reciprocity Revisited** Chair: Erin Stapleton Millicent Churcher, *Sexual Reciprocity, Revisited: Just Sex and Mutual Regard* Finola Laughren, *The influence of heteropessimism on popular feminist sexual ethics* Louise Richardson-Self, *In Almost Absolute Silence*
361	**Book Panel: Alistair Macaulay, *Artistic Agency: Thinking Creation with Post-War French Philosophy*** Chair: Antonia Pont Speakers: Tim Deane-Freeman, Sean Bowden, Antonia Pont, Caitlyn Lesiuk, Philipa Rothfield, Andrea Eckersley
455	Chair: Kyle Gleadell Jessica Whyte, *Economic Sanctions: Between Economic Coercion and the 'Mute Compulsion of Economic Relations'* Angelita Biscotti, *Invisible Hand Job: Adam Smith, Boycotts and Divestments* Melvin Kivinen, *Recognition and Overcoming De-Identification*
555	Chair: Charles Barbour Jacinta Sassine, *Archiving the Self: Data and the Destruction of Memory* Norma Lam-Saw, *Algorithmic Governmentality: Preemption, Recursivity, and Exception* Lauren Pedersen-Hor, *'I Built This FYP Brick by Brick': An Extended Consideration of the Algorithmic Panopticon (Algopticon) in Trying to Understand TikTok's Algorithmic Practices*
11:00 – 11:30	**Break: Morning Tea – Foyer**

11:30 – 1:00	**Parallel Session 5**
156	**Stream: Ecology & Practice, Panel 3** Chair: Daniele Fulvi Oliver Feltham, *An Ecological Imagination of Time* Marilyn Stendera, *Phenomenology, deep time, and ecological affectivity* Luca Martin, *Geophilosophy as Anarchist Methodology*
261	**Stream: Gillian Rose Memorial, Panel 2** Chair: Gregory Marks Jasper Kloss, *A Contemporaneous Witness* Lucy Myers, *'The Politics of a Phenomenology': Gillian Rose on Alienation* Lillian Phillips, *Rose and Repetition*
262	**Stream: Heidegger Today, Panel 1** Chair: Sean Ryan Maciek Czerkawski, *Being Is Not a Non-Universal Kind: Rethinking the Ontological Difference* Kyle Gleadell, *The Question Concerning Economy - A Heideggerian Critique of Economic Reason* Yingying Bai, *"Synthesis" or "Time"? - Heidegger's Interpretation of the Three Syntheses in the A-edition Deduction of Critique of Pure Reason*
355	**Panel: Ambiguous Identities** Chair: Talia Fell Talia Fell, Dealing with Differences between Women: *The Theories and Practices of the Italian Feminist Movement and the USA's Combahee River Collective* Karin Sellberg, *Battles of Womanhood: Reading the Culture Wars through Simone de Beauvoir* Mikel Van Dyken, *Merleau-Ponty: Beyond Murdoch's Modern Man*
361	Chair: Daniel Brennan Lior Levy, *Existentialism as a humanism: on the philosophical relevance of existentialism at a time of war* Talia Morag, *Sartre, Putnam, and the Student's Dilemma* Steven Segal, *Hermeneutic Existential Phenomenology as Therapeutic Activity: Disclosing the Mood of Convention*
455	Chair: Charles Barbour Conor Spence, *Necromantic Media: Reconceptualising Large Language Models* Dongsui Ru, *Divergent Paths in Critical Theory of Technology: A Marx-Heidegger Comparison* Finn McGee, *Young Max Horkheimer on Theory and Praxis*
555	Chair: Joeri Mol Allan James Thomas*, Divergent Lifeworlds and Ontological Violence: on Autistic Masking and Existential Alienation.* Johann Cheong Zu Han*, Lacan and Wittgenstein: Two philosophies of language for literary criticism* Kurt Doglione*, Intuition and Philosophy*
556	**Book Panel: Vincent Lê, *Unknown Lands: Decoding Nick Land's Accelerationist Philosophy*** Chair: Vincent Lê Speakers: Julia Ely, Bryan Cooke, Daniel Lopez
1:00 – 2:15	**Lunch** **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lunch, Room 556**

2:15 – 3:45	**Parallel Session 6**
156	**Stream: Ecology & Practice, Panel 4** Chair: Marilyn Stendera Stephen Pigott, *The Lonely End of the World: Ethical Subjectivity and the Human Condition in the Anthropocene* Lily Grainger, *Ecologies of Connection: Reclaiming Time and Relation in the Age of AI*
261	**Stream: Gillian Rose Memorial, Panel 3** Chair: Robert Lucas Scott Aeva Milos, *The Agon: Illness as Catalyst in Gillian Rose's 'Love's Work'* Gregory Marks, *You Must Believe in Spring: Poetics of Unhappy Consciousness*
262	**Panel: Critical Antiquities** Chair: Justin Clemens Tristan Bradshaw, *Use, Utility, and Traditions that Split* Rebecca Hill, *Reading Heraclitus with the River, Today* Andrew Poe, *Constituting Police: Rancière and the Force of Public Slaves in Democratic Athens*
355	**Roundtable: Neither Frankfurt nor Freiburg: Alternative Philosophies of Technology in Postwar Germany** Chair: Charles Barbour Speakers: Christopher Conti and Matthew Holt
361	Chair: Andrew Inkpin James Patterson, *Goethe as a Model of Nietzschean Sublimation* Lachlan Liesfield, *Participation, Agency, and Contemporary Art* Ghislain Deslandes, *Affectio societatis or the Invisible Ground of Organizations: Henrian perspectives*
455	Chair: Daniel Brennan Daniel Mcloughlin,*Agamben, Sovereignty and the fascism analogy in the age of Trump 2.00* Joanne Faulkner, *Infancy and the articulation of public memory* Ross Barham, *Bakhtin on Victim Blaming & Punching Down*
555	Chair: Lachlan Ross Martin Kovan, *Foreseeable but Unintended: the thanatology of mass-killing in war* Kalenga Leon Kalumba, *"Centre is everywhere and margins are nowhere": Exploring Marshall McLuhan's acoustic world* Rachel Walls, *Nihilism at an End of Cinematic Literacy*
3:45 – 4:15	**Break: Afternoon Tea – Foyer**
4:15 – 5:45	**Keynote Address: Eleanor Kaufmann – Arts West, Kathleen Fitzpatrick Lecture Theatre**
	Chair: Charles Barbour Keynote address: Eleanor Kaufmann, *Structure in French Philosophy, Before and After 1966*
6:30	**Conference Dinner & Bibliofête – PA Rooftop & Bar**

DAY 3: Wednesday, 26 November 2025

The University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus, Arts West Building

9:00 – 9:30	**Registration – Foyer**
9:30 – 11:00	**Parallel Session 7**
156	**Stream: Stiegler, Memory and (Artificial) Intelligence?, Panel 1** Chair: Brendan Cartmel Daniel Ross, *Artificial Stupidity and the Immense Regression* Haipei Zhang, *Technology and Aesthetics in the Community by Default: Lyotard and Stiegler on "Art and Communication"*
261	Chair: Matt Marasco James Kent and Gene Flenady, *Enlightened Myth: Hegel's Christianity via Horkheimer and Adorno* Brendan Duncan-Shah, *Marxist Theories of the Subject* Anna Cerritelli, *Form and Matter in Hegel*
262	**Stream: Heidegger Today, Panel 2** Chair: Ingo Farin Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's topology from the beginning* Andrew Benjamin, *Heidegger the 'Fourfold' and Place of Relational Ontology* Claire Colebrook, *Ownness and Immanence*
355	Chair: Sean Bowden Dominic Williams, *Coerced from Stupidity, forced into ignorance: A Deleuzo-Spinozist Ethics on AI integration.* Timothy Deane-Freeman, *Included Exclusions: rethinking the paradox of constituent power with Luhmann and Deleuze* John C. Brady, *What Problems Are Not: A vindication of the seventh postulate of Deleuze's dogmatic image of thought*
361	Chair: Lucien Finch Arden Rushwood, *Authenticity and Conservatism: Negotiating the public/private distinction* Finnegan Hassey, *A Chance for Freedom: Inclusion and Participation in Hannah Arendt's American Republic* Jack Keenan, *Gianni Vattimo and the meaning of rock'n'roll*
455	Chair: Jack Reynolds Peter Evans, *The View from Somewhere: Phenomenology and Quantum Foundations* Darcy Forster, *A Metaphysical Reappraisal of the Ego-Dissolution Hypothesis* Greg Hainge, *Il n'y a plus de hors corrélation: Discorrelation in the Anthropocene*
555	Chair: Jon Rubin Lubica Ucnik, *Death of God in the Age of Liberalism* Chris van Rompaey, *Libertas philosophandi and the Early Modern Attack on Aristotle* André Martins, *Is Spinoza's philosophy deterministic?*
11:00 – 11:30	**Break: Morning Tea – Foyer**

11:30 – 1:00	**Parallel Session 8**
156	**Stream: Stiegler, Memory and (Artificial) Intelligence?, Panel 2** Chair: Brendan Cartmel Patrick Crogan, *Hayles and Stiegler on LLMs* Ben Nunquam, '*The development of an economy of controversies': Stiegler's debate with Pierre Laurent of the French Communist Party* James Dutton, *Reading Différance, Thinking Care: Dis-Automatizing the Future*
261	**Book Panel: Vincent Lê and Caitlyn Lesiuk, *One Hundred and Fifty Years of Tragedy: Nietzsche, Art, Philosophy*** Chair: Justin Clemens Speakers: Vincent Lê, Caitlyn Lesiuk, Sean Bowden, Edward Colless, Marilyn Stendera
262	**Stream: Heidegger Today, Panel 3** Chair: Andrew Benjamin Ingo Farin, *Heidegger's Concepts of Dasein and Sein in Relation to Herder, Jacobi, Fichte, Hölderlin, and Feuerbach*. Martin Leckey, *The Evolution of Heidegger's Question of Being* Daniel Quill, *Natality and Authenticity: A Comparison of Arendt and Heidegger's Readings of Saint Augustine*
355	Chair: Louise Richardson-Self Lachlan Ross, *How dare you make me live: two theses on biopower without health* Reginald Nagaiya, *Rethinking the relation between sovereignty and democracy in Hannah Arendt, Antonio Negri and Chantal Mouffe* Ashlee Wilson, *Death by Law: Agamben and the Normalisation of Post-Roe v Wade Medical Neglect*
361	**Panel: Queering Sade** Chair: Dimitris Vardoulakis Sofia Kartavtseva, *Queering the Sadeian: a genealogy of the sexually undetermined body.* Charlie Clements [online], *Sade's Negative Affect as Theory* James Martell [online], *Sade, Preciado, and Khôra: Queer Surfaces of Devastation for Stupid Times*
455	Chair: Jacinta Sassine Ricardo Rojas Campos, *Walter Benjamin's cunning* Yuxin Ouyang, *The Explanatory Limits of Free Competition Model: The Sore of Naturalism* Sophie Veksner, *Differently-individuated Subjects?*
555	Chair: Sheila Cavanagh Joeri Mol, Alone: *Surviving Our Mediated-Selves in the Wilderness* Steven Churchill, *Lacan and Foucault's Early Search for a Method: Convergence and Conflict at the Limits of French Psychiatry* Will Pan, *Towards a New (Dis)ontology of Ideology*
1:00 – 2:15	**Lunch**
1:15 – 2:15	**ASCP Annual General Meeting – Arts West, Forum Theatre, 153**

2:15 – 3:45	**Parallel Session 9**
156	Chair: Greg Hainge Adrian Moore, *Philosophy and Terror Revisited: October 7 as Derridean Event* Jack Parry, *Deconstructing the mind: Derrida's 'writing' as a biological process* Lucien Finch, *The Age of Anxiety as an Existential Vulnerability*
261	Chair: Tristan Bradshaw Baiju Parakkal Anthony, *Literature as Knowing: A Feminist Critique of Plato's Epistemology* David Macarthur, *Existentialism and Skepticism as a Lived Experience* Jack Reynolds and Aymen Moutwari, *Phenomenology and science sans objectivism?*
262	**Stream: Heidegger Today, Panel 4** Chair: Jeff Malpas Emile Alexandrov, *Heidegger's Way* Alec Clinton, *Between Poetry and Philosophy: Romantic Themes in Heidegger and Benjamin* Sean Ryan, *Luxury and the Labyrinth*
355	Chair: Ross Barham Catherine Legg, *Reflections on the Yoorrook Walk for Truth by a philosopher who 'works on truth'* Cameron Duff, *Mapping Naarm for a People to Come* Sayed Ahmed, *Spatial Perceptions of Women for Urban Religious Spaces: Built Form and Religion in Sylhet City, Bangladesh.*
361	Chair: Marilyn Stendera Daniel Brennan, *Critical Phenomenology and Lucy Ellmann's Ducks, Newburyport* Beau Kent, *Quasi-Transcendental Structures?: Between Sartre and Foucault* Chris Danta, *The Poetics of Verticality in Bo-Young Kim*
455	Chair: Jacob Ritz Erin Stapleton, *Exploitation as Method* Ramesh Dheeravath, *For a new interpretation of Gadamer's agreement and tradition'* Queenie Carling, *From Noumenon to Will: Continuity and Critique in Kant and Schopenhauer's Metaphysical Idealism*
555	Chair: Rachel Walls Matt Marasco, *Hegel's Negative Aesthetics: Fine Art and Physiognomy* Mira Gibson, *Investigating our aesthetic and ethical relationship with urban vegetation* Robert Sinnerbrink, *Audiovisual arguments: On documentary as philosophy*
3:45 – 4:00	**Break: Afternoon Tea – Foyer**
4:00 – 5:30	**Keynote Address: Christopher Mayes - Arts West, Kathleen Fitzpatrick Lecture Theatre**
	Chair: Marilyn Stendera Keynote Address: Christopher Mayes, *Eating Sovereignties: food practices as biopolitical sites of genocide and resistance*

BOOK PANELS

Dimitris Vardoulakis, The Agonistic Condition: Materialism and Democracy

Chair: Nicole Anderson
Speakers: Nicole Anderson, Charles Barbour, Claire Colebrook, Dimitris Vardoulakis

Monday, Parallel Session 1

Alistair Macaulay, Artistic Agency: Thinking Creation with Post-War French Philosophy

Chair: Antonia Pont
Speakers: Tim Deane-Freeman, Sean Bowden, Antonia Pont, Caitlyn Lesiuk, Philipa Rothfield, Andrea Eckersley

Tuesday, Parallel Session 4

Vincent Lê, Unknown Lands: Decoding Nick Land's Accelerationist Philosophy

Chair: Vincent Lê
Speakers: Julia Ely, Bryan Cooke, Daniel Lopez

Tuesday, Parallel Session 5

Vincent Lê and Caitlyn Lesiuk, One Hundred and Fifty Years of Tragedy: Nietzsche, Art, Philosophy

Chair: Justin Clemens
Speakers: Vincent Lê, Caitlyn Lesiuk, Sean Bowden, Edward Colless, Marilyn Stendera

Wednesday, Parallel Session 8

ROUNDTABLE

Neither Frankfurt nor Freiburg: Alternative Philosophies of Technology in Postwar Germany

Chair: Charles Barbour
Speakers: Christopher Conti and Matthew Holt

A roundtable conversation on post-war philosophy of technology in Germany.

THEMATIC STREAMS

To find out more about individual papers and speakers participating in thematic streams and panels, please check the abstracts section.

PHILOSOPHY AND POETRY

Organizer: Andrew Benjamin

The stream continues an ongoing study of the complex forms taken by the relationship between philosophy and poetry. This project has now a more formal presence as a research grouping within CRAM (Critical Research Association Melbourne) in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne.

PHILOSOPHY AND POETRY, PANEL 1

Chair: Andrew Benjamin

Diana Barnes, *Wilful Renegotiation of Senecan Stoicism in the Poetry of Lady Anne Southwell (1574-1636)*
Julia Thwaites, *Agamben's poetic body and the vivisection of language and life*

Monday, Parallel Session 1

PHILOSOPHY AND POETRY, PANEL 2

Chair: Diana Barnes

Kate Lilley, *Complaint's Elegy*
Monty Patton, *From Supersession to Deconstruction*

Monday, Parallel Session 2

PHILOSOPHY AND POETRY, PANEL 3

Chair: Monty Patton

Justin Clemens, *Perversity Versity: Milton's Satan between Philosophy and Poetry*
Emma Simpson-Weber, *A Cynical Poetics: Reading Diogenes in Isabella Whitney's A Sweet Nosegay, or Pleasant Poesy, Containing a Hundred and Ten Philosophical Flowers (1573)*

Monday, Parallel Session 3

ECOLOGY & PRACTICE

Organizers: Oliver Feltham & Marilyn Stendera

This stream focuses on the consequences of the concept of ecology for rethinking and remodelling political and social practices in the light of ecological disaster. Ranging from enquiries into transitional justice, our relationship to slow or deep time, and the ethical articulation of continuity between human and animal, the papers in this stream all build a bridge between a moment of diagnosis and the urgency of prescription.

ECOLOGY & PRACTICE, PANEL 1

Chair: Marilyn Stendera

Codie Condos Distratis, *Reading Continuity (and Difference) in Plumwood*
Simone Thornton, *Hope-less*
Paige Maguire, *Freedom in the unknown – facing the climate crises with despair*

Monday, Parallel Session 3

ECOLOGY & PRACTICE, PANEL 2

Chair: Oliver Feltham

Claire Colebrook, *Steps Away from an Ecology of Practice*
Daniele Fulvi, *Challenging the Moral Hazard Argument in Climate Change Mitigation: a Transitional Justice Approach*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 4

ECOLOGY & PRACTICE, PANEL 3

Chair: Daniele Fulvi

Oliver Feltham, *An Ecological Imagination of Time*
Marilyn Stendera, *Phenomenology, deep time, and ecological affectivity*
Luca Martin, *Geophilosophy as Anarchist Methodology*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 5

ECOLOGY & PRACTICE, PANEL 4

Chair: Marilyn Stendera

Stephen Pigott, *The Lonely End of the World: Ethical Subjectivity and the Human Condition in the Anthropocene*
Lily Grainger, *Ecologies of Connection: Reclaiming Time and Relation in the Age of AI*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 6

GILLIAN ROSE MEMORIAL

Organizer: Gregory Marks

This December marks thirty years since Gillian Rose's untimely passing at the age of 48. From her first monographs on Adorno and Hegel, through her polemics with poststructuralism, to her late turn toward the problems of theology and metaphysics, Rose's brief career stands as a major contribution to the philosophy of the last century, the full importance of which has yet to be recognised. In memory of Rose's interventions in philosophical thought, this stream presents a series of papers on or inspired by her works, encompassing the themes of politics, rationality, theology, and poetry as she conceived them – in styles ironic, severe, and speculative.

GILLIAN ROSE MEMORIAL, PANEL 1

Chair: Lillian Phillips

Robert Lucas Scott, *The Risk of Action*
Daniel Andrés López, *The Work of Love*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 4

GILLIAN ROSE MEMORIAL, PANEL 2

Chair: Gregory Marks

Jasper Kloss, *A Contemporaneous Witness*
Lucy Myers, *'The Politics of a Phenomenology': Gillian Rose on Alienation*
Lillian Phillips, *Rose and Repetition*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 5

GILLIAN ROSE MEMORIAL, PANEL 3

Chair: Robert Lucas Scott

Aeva Milos, *The Agon: Illness as Catalyst in Gillian Rose's 'Love's Work'*
Gregory Marks, *You Must Believe in Spring: Poetics of Unhappy Consciousness*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 6

HEIDEGGER TODAY

Organizer: Ingo Farin

It will be difficult to write the history of philosophy of the 20th century without the name Martin Heidegger and without an outline of his philosophy. Almost fifty years after his death, Heidegger is still very much discussed today, and there is not much agreement on his philosophy. This panel addresses select themes of his philosophy and discusses their significance in today's philosophical landscape.

HEIDEGGER TODAY, PANEL 1

Chair: Sean Ryan

Maciek Czerkawski, *Being Is Not a Non-Universal Kind: Rethinking the Ontological Difference*
Kyle Gleadell, *The Question Concerning Economy - A Heideggerian Critique of Economic Reason*
Yingying Bai, *"Synthesis" or "Time"? - Heidegger's Interpretation of the Three Syntheses in the A-edition Deduction of Critique of Pure Reason*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 5

HEIDEGGER TODAY, PANEL 2

Chair: Ingo Farin

Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's topology from the beginning*
Andrew Benjamin, *Heidegger the 'Fourfold' and Place of Relational Ontology*
Claire Colebrook, *Ownness and Immanence*

Wednesday, Parallel Session 7

HEIDEGGER TODAY, PANEL 3

Chair: Andrew Benjamin

Ingo Farin, *Heidegger's Concepts of Dasein and Sein in Relation to Herder, Jacobi, Fichte, Hölderlin, and Feuerbach.*
Martin Leckey, *The Evolution of Heidegger's Question of Being*
Daniel Quill, *Natality and Authenticity: A Comparison of Arendt and Heidegger's Readings of Saint Augustine*

Wednesday, Parallel Session 8

HEIDEGGER TODAY, PANEL 4

Chair: Jeff Malpas

Emile Alexandrov, *Heidegger's Way*
Alec Clinton, *Between Poetry and Philosophy: Romantic Themes in Heidegger and Benjamin*
Sean Ryan, *Luxury and the Labyrinth*

Wednesday, Parallel Session 9

STIEGLER, MEMORY AND (ARTIFICIAL) INTELLIGENCE?

Organizer: Brendan Cartmel

STIEGLER, MEMORY AND (ARTIFICIAL) INTELLIGENCE?, PANEL 1

Chair: Brendan Cartmel

Daniel Ross, *Artificial Stupidity and the Immense Regression*
Haipei Zhang, *Technology and Aesthetics in the Community by Default: Lyotard and Stiegler on "Art and Communication"*

Wednesday, Parallel Session 7

STIEGLER, MEMORY AND (ARTIFICIAL) INTELLIGENCE?, PANEL 2

Chair: Brendan Cartmel

Patrick Crogan, *Hayles and Stiegler on LLMs*
Ben Nunquam, *'The development of an economy of controversies': Stiegler's debate with Pierre Laurent of the French Communist Party*
James Dutton, *Reading Différance, Thinking Care: Dis-Automatizing the Future*

Wednesday, Parallel Session 8

THEMATIC PANELS

TRANSCENDENCE AND REFRACTION: SELECTIONS

Organizers: Ansgar Allen and Maureen Alsop

This panel includes readings by authors published by Erratum Press (UK) and Erratum Press publisher, author of Sick List (BC Editions). Foregrounding literature's scope in relation to writer's interpersonal aesthetic inquiry, panellists will read selections from recent fictions, followed by a dialogue on experimentation and style with reference to Hélène Cixous and her concept of *l'écriture féminine*. The discussion will examine the mechanics of fragmentation, rupture, and writing against the machine—writing as resistance to patriarchy.

Together, the writers will explore liberation through form, including stream of consciousness, oblique tone, atmosphere-driven narratives that value lyric intensity over conventional plot, and elegiac, layered language that unsettles established reading practices. The panel argues that such experimental strategies are not merely stylistic choices but urgent, necessary interventions.

William Walsh, *The Poems - A Novella*
Ansgar Allen, *The Unteachable*
Maureen Alsop, *Today Yesterday After My Death*
Eric Blix, *Melanie Index*

Online Day, Parallel Session 1

WEIRD COMPUTING

Organizer: Jason Tuckwell

This panel engages information theory and computability from the alternate perspectives of French philosophies of science, biology, literary studies, and aesthetics.

Timothy Jackson, *Excess and effective theory: ontogenetic computation with Gilbert and Georges(s)*
Jason Tuckwell, *An organological computability 'reinscribed in the history of life'*
Anthony Uhlmann, *Rhythmanalysis, Analogue and Digital: Bachelard, Shannon and Computing*

Monday, Parallel Session 2

JACQUES LACAN: THE UNCONSCIOUS, THE WOMAN & THE M/OTHER

Organizer: Sheila L Cavanagh

This panel presentation will focus on the unconscious, the Woman (who does not exist), and the m/Other in Lacanian theory. Each panellist has clinical and theoretical expertise in Lacanian psychoanalysis. The panel papers will contribute to our understanding of gender, sexuality, subjectivity and unconscious processes relevant to film, life and culture.

Sheila Cavanagh, *What Lacan said about the m/Other*
Nicol Thomas, *What can be there for the (not-all)woman who doesn't exist?*
Claire Baxter, *The Sphinx and the Riddle which is Oedipus*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 4

INTIMATE POLITICS: HETEROPESSIMISM, SEXUAL SILENCE, AND RECIPROCITY REVISITED

Organizer: Millicent Churcher

Intimate politics pushes beyond consent-based frameworks for thinking through the entanglements of power, sexual agency, and ethics.

Through engaging with themes of heteropessimism, sexual silence, and reciprocity, this panel seeks to open up new conversations and conceptual resources for approaching the politics of intimacy.

Millicent Churcher, *Sexual Reciprocity, Revisited: Just Sex and Mutual Regard*
Finola Laughren, *The influence of heteropessimism on popular feminist sexual ethics*
Louise Richardson-Self*, In Almost Absolute Silence*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 4

AMBIGUOUS IDENTITIES

Organizer: Talia Fell

The year 2025 has demonstrated that identity categories that we took for granted are, in fact, inescapably ambiguous. Concepts such as 'woman' have again become semantic battlegrounds. In this panel, we each respond to a recent trend that seeks to solidify these concepts that defy neat categorisation. We look to existentialism, transgender studies, and ideas that arose out of the consciousness-raising movements in Italy and the USA.

Talia Fell, *Dealing with Differences between Women: The Theories and Practices of the Italian Feminist Movement and the USA's Combahee River Collective*
Karin Sellberg, *Battles of Womanhood: Reading the Culture Wars through Simone de Beauvoir*
Mikel Van Dyken, *Merleau-Ponty: Beyond Murdoch's Modern Man*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 5

CRITICAL ANTIQUITIES

Organizer: Andrew Poe

The relationship between continental thought and ancient worlds is an underexplored discourse in philosophical debate. This panel offers a set of papers concerned with rectifying that condition. Utilizing ideas and instances from ancient thought and history, these papers serve to engage alternative poles from which to consider cultural moments in our present. In this way, we work to outline both what ought to be transformed in the present, as well as disclosing alternative possibilities to contemporary normative orders. Through explorations of such diverse topics as Rancière's democratic theory and ancient ideas of police, to critical readings of Heraclitus' fragments in conjunction with modernity-coloniality and Indigenous law of care for Country, and a broadside against the assimilation of Aristotle's thought to capitalist modernity in a tradition stretching from Adorno to Agamben, we aim to uncover critical re-foundations in ancient worlds. This panel draws continental philosophy and ancient thought into closer discourse, examining the ways in which ancient thinkers and worldviews can help elucidate discourse in the contemporary condition.

Tristan Bradshaw, *Use, Utility, and Traditions that Split*
Rebecca Hill, *Reading Heraclitus with the River, Today*
Andrew Poe, *Constituting Police: Rancière and the Force of Public Slaves in Democratic Athens*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 6

QUEERING SADE

Organizer: Sofia Kartavtseva

2024 ECR Prize Panel

This panel explores the possibility of reading the Sadeian body as queer and considering Sade himself as a queer theorist. Such an approach invites several lines of inquiry. The analysis of Sade's language of corporeality as revealing ambiguities within libertine physicality and its impact on the relationships queering the logic of domination and subjugation. Additionally, a case-study of Sade's position within the history of sensuality as a counter-Enlightenment defying its structural bifurcations while drawing force through

performative engagement with enlightened dispositions. The panel seeks to reexamine Sadeian conduct and its reception history, reconsidering the framework of naked power hierarchy in favor of polyvalent readings. These investigations open new avenues for understanding both Sadeian textuality and broader questions of sexuality, power, and embodiment within the critique of Modernity.

Sofia Kartavtseva, *Queering the Sadeian: a genealogy of the sexually undetermined body.*
Charlie Clements [online], *Sade's Negative Affect as Theory*
James Martell [online], *Sade, Preciado, and Khôra: Queer Surfaces of Devastation for Stupid Times*

Tuesday, Parallel Session 8

ABSTRACTS

SAYED AHMED

University of New England
Co-authors: Stephen Wood, Sonya Glavac, Sanaz Alian

Spatial perceptions of women for urban religious spaces: built form and religion in Sylhet City, Bangladesh.

Sylhet has a unique blend of Muslim and Hindu traditions; such deviation is rooted in Buddhist folk culture and creates cooperation rather than conflict between the two mainstream religions. Urban morphology and symbolic sacralisation in South Asian cities like Sylhet are interrelated, while Western researchers often overlook such ‘leaky’ relationships because they are pessimistic about the future of religion. Religion’s presence in public spaces impacts spatial practices as vital nutrients for survival, even in contemporary everyday life, and female devotees perceive and experience religious spaces from very different perspectives. However, despite extensive research on urban morphology and religion separately, there is very limited literature to capture religious perceptions and experiences in urban spaces from the same platform, especially from gendered segregation of public space and boundary making. This boundary is more psychological than physical. This research aims to fill an existing gap in third-world contexts, which also comprises its novelty, but using western sociological and philosophical tools (mainly Baudrillard) never highlighted before. The methodology of the research will map key morphological and religious‘ dissonances’ in the city, which might include festival trajectories, street life observations, pedestrian densities, informal and formal religious activities, public and private interface types with religious commodification, and the identification of strict mental boundaries between gendered urban religious spaces. 31 illustrative (not representative) interviews with inhabitants about religious signs and symbols were conducted, coded, and compared accordingly. The study will investigate the impact of urban morphology on sacred experiences, the relationship between consecrated entities and religious activities and how the same public space can differ from gendered perspectives.

Sayed Ahmed, architect and academician, graduated with a bachelor’s degree from SUST, Sylhet, Bangladesh, in 2012 and has held various positions: lecturer at Bangladesh University, Dhaka, from 2012 to 2015; assistant professor at Leading University, Sylhet, from 2021 to the present (on study leave). He obtained a master’s degree in architecture and cultural heritage from Anhalt University of Applied Sciences, Dessau, Germany, in 2017. He has been a juror for the world’s largest architecture student design competition, INSPIRELI (Czech Republic), since 2018. His first book, Architectural Guide of Dhaka, was published by DOM Publishers, Berlin, Germany, in 2023."

VANIA ALARCON CASTILLO

Australian Catholic University

Ethical Normativity in Husserliana 28

Volume 28 of the Husserliana series reunites the texts of the lessons imparted by Husserl in Göttingen between 1908 and 1914. The topic of these lessons revolves around the emotional and volitional spheres. As a whole, the general project reflected in these lessons seems to be aimed at justifying the possibility of a formal ethical discipline, against the criticism posed by psychologism, which ultimately leads to an ethical scepticism. Husserliana 28 conveys Husserl's early views on the topic of ethics, from the perspective of static analyses, which will be modified over the years. In this presentation, I plan to discuss the issue of ethical normativity in Husserliana 28. Within this work, the idea of normativity is described as “... the general power of various kinds of norms to guide our experiences in diverse ways in all areas of human life” (Heinämaa, Hartimo, Hirvonen 2022, 1). In order to do so, I will go over emotional and willing acts, their objects, and the laws that rule over them.

Vania Alarcon Castillo is currently studying her PhD in Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University (ACU), with a thesis centered on the problem of ethical normativity in Husserl's static and genetic analyses. Her main areas of research are phenomenology and ethics.

EMILE ALEXANDROV

University of Tyumen

Heidegger's Way

This talk proposes that Heidegger can be read as both a culmination of European thought and a thinker straining beyond it. While he must undoubtedly be situated within a modern philosophical context, his later work engages Taoism in more than mere borrowings. Phrases from Was heißt Denken? - Wir sind unterwegs (we are on the way) and Das Denken selber ist ein Weg (thinking itself is a way) suggest that Heidegger's post-war thinking seeks a non-metaphysical comportment that lets things show themselves, resonant with the Taoist idea of ziran (自然, 'naturalness', 'spontaneity'). Accordingly, we focus on that Freiburg lecture course delivered in the winter semester 1951–52 and the summer of 1952, where Heidegger prises thinking free from representation and re-orients it as a receptive, path-like practice rather than a project of mastery. We conclude by considering whether Heidegger's abortive mid-1940s attempt to translate the Tao Te Jing (Dao De Jing) aimed to speak from the nearness of things without the scaffolding of categories. In essence, we show that the distinctiveness of Heidegger's late path lies in a deliberate turn away from what he took to be philosophy's over-emphasis on ratio, towards the way to presence.

I hold a PhD from University of Notre Dame (Australia), and specialise in metaphysics across Graeco-Arabic philosophy and Esoteric Buddhism, with recourse to Heidegger and Neoplatonism. I am currently an Assistant Professor of philosophy at the University of Tyumen, and authored The Other Platonist Beginning: Heidegger and Neoplatonism."

ANSGAR ALLEN

Erratum Press

The Unteachable

Ansgar Allen will read from The Unteachable (forthcoming with Anti-Oedipus Press). In this theory-fiction several misreadings of key figures from philosophy and theory are offered up, most notably what the author describes as a heretic misreading of some passing remarks Pierre Klossowski made about a concept he called 'the unteachable'. In addition to its experiment in undomesticated theoretical reading (a refusal to observe disciplinary constraints and 'correct' takes), the novel also experiments again with the monologue. This literary device offers, rather counter-intuitively, a staging ground for multiple perspectives wound into its coiled narrative structure, wherein one topic can only migrate to another through the relentless peregrinations of incremental changes of focus. This is an experiment which finds (what Cixous envisages for l'écriture féminine as) "the very possibility of change" in one of literature's more claustrophobic, unreasonable, and persistently negative forms. The monologue might even be described as the putrefying agent within what Cixous calls "the phallocentric tradition", an internal perversion of its "self-admiring, self-stimulating, self-congratulatory phallocentrism".

Ansgar Allen is the author of several novels including The Sick List (Boiler House Press), Midden Hill (Schism Press), Plague Theatre (Equus Press) and The Wake and the Manuscript (Anti-Oedipus Press), as well as other books including Cynicism (MIT Press). He is editor-in-chief at Erratum Press, and co-edits the imprint Risking Education at Punctum Books.

MAUREEN ALSOP

Today Yesterday After My Death

Today Yesterday After My Death is a hybrid novel that investigates our collective past, present, and future amid the violence of war. A terrestrial nocturne, it traces the celestial path of a glittering solar analemma. Traversing the merciless centuries of human battle through overlapping epochs and killing fields—the Byzantine Empire, the Crusades, The Battle on the Field of Abraham, World War I from the Great Retreat through the Battle of the Somme, and World War II—with a gaze fixed upon The Bourbaki Panorama, the human capacity for loss absolves, evolves, dissolves, and revolves. The book yields to an immeasurable blending of the world as a time without time, and time itself as a fragile, uneasy truce. The book, as innovative fiction, explores the collapse of linear time and the philosophy of immanence and recurrence—

using motifs of cosmology, war, and memory to meditate on human violence and literary narrative as intertwined patterns of destruction and transcendence.

Maureen Alsop, PhD is a psychologist and writer. She is the author of seven poetry collections, including visual poetry and an experimental/hybrid novel, Today Yesterday After My Death, a finalist for The Big Other. Her poems and short stories have appeared in numerous journals including AGNI, The Kenyon Review, South Dakota Review, The Lincoln Review among others. She is the winner of several poetry prizes including those from Harpur Palate and Bitter Oleander and a recent Roderick Centre Fellowship. maureen@mandalapsych.com.au

CHLOE ANASTASIA

Trinity College

Two Figures of Kingship: Frederick II and Christus Fiscus

By exegeting two figures of kingship outlined by Ernst Kantorowicz, this paper aims to demonstrate how changing what the King figures changes the nature of kingship. The King's Two Bodies is a kind of library of different techniques for imagining how sovereignty connects heaven and earth, and therefore how the structures through which we organise our earthly lives reflect something eternal or immortal. Frederick II positions the emperor—himself—as what I will call a 'living figure' of Justice. In this arrangement, the emperor's role is to embody and enact a Justice which lies beyond him. Henri de Bracton positions the fisc—the assets of the commonwealth—as the good the King serves. The fisc is a representation of the life of the people, so in serving it the King is what I will call an 'abstract figure' of the People. This concept of kingship is enabled firstly by the financialisation of the People, and secondly by the incorporation of the monarchy. The combination of these features creates the state as a self-perpetuating system by positioning it as both heavenly and earthly, both temporal and eternal, through the abstraction of a monetary economy.

Chloe Anastasia is a doctoral candidate at the University of Divinity, working on Spinoza's Woman problem and its relationship to the history of the modern subject. Her work touches on medieval mysticism, the relationship of the social to the emergence of modern science, particularly biology, and the articulation of the material with the symbolic in psychoanalysis.

NICOLE ANDERSON

Macquarie University

Nicole Anderson is Professor at Macquarie University, Sydney; Affiliate Faculty at Arizona State University, and Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra. She is the founding editor of the Derrida Today Journal published by Edinburgh University Press. Aligned with the journal is the Derrida Today International Conferences (derridatoday.com), of which Nicole is the founding Executive Director.

JENNIFER ANG

Singapore University of Social Sciences

Responsibility Gaps and Moral Blindness in Human-AI Systems

The invention of autonomous learning machines (ALMs) gave rise to the problem of responsibility gap: manufacturers and operators are not held responsible for the moral faults of ALMs since they no longer are able to predict the machine's future behaviour. (Matthias 2004, 175). In response, some scholars tried to show that an ALM can be considered an agent of moral importance, by establishing a conceptualization of ALMs as a different type of agent that can explain the nature of agency in moral situations. Others explain that moral responsibility can be distributed between humans and the ALM in a meaningful way.

In this presentation, I will show that both approaches are unsuccessful, and explain some challenges to making morally responsible decisions in human-AI decision-making systems. I will propose a relational-centric account of moral responsibility – as a matter of knowing whom an agent is responsible *to* and responsible *for* – that can guide the development of appropriate attitude and responsible behaviour. To do so, I draw on perspectives of what it means to live in a moral community, and related notions of authenticity and responsibility from Continental philosophers such as Hannah Arendt and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Jennifer Ang is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Singapore University of Social Sciences. She is the author of Justified Unforgiveness: A Moral Case against Silence, Neglect and Forgetfulness (Bloomsbury, 2025) and Sartre and the Moral Limits of War and Terrorism (Routledge, 2010, 2014).

BAIJU ANTHONY

Co-author Anupam Yadav

Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani

Beyond the Autonomous Knower: Literature, Voice, and the Ethics of Feminist Epistemology

This paper advances a philosophy of voice and its associated ethical practices by addressing two interrelated concerns: how to responsibly formulate a feminist epistemology grounded in epistemic responsibility, and how literary texts function as sites for its development. Methodologically, the study adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining feminist epistemological theory with critical-interpretive literary analysis. Literature is treated as an epistemic practice in its own right, capable of reconfiguring dominant modes of knowledge. A feminist epistemology rooted in epistemic responsibility highlights three interlocking dimensions: the situatedness of the knower, the critical interrogation of ignorance as a socially embedded phenomenon, and the ethical obligations of epistemic practice. Through close readings, the paper demonstrates how literary texts enact a threefold epistemic reorientation: first, by decentering Cartesian models of the autonomous, disembodied knower in favour of relational subjectivity; second, by legitimizing narrative, affect, and emotion as epistemic resources alongside reason and abstraction; and third, by democratizing epistemic space through the inclusion of historically marginalized voices. In synthesizing theoretical and textual analysis, the paper shows how literature contributes to a pluralized feminist epistemology that cultivates epistemic humility, vigilance, and solidarity. Such a framework redefines the practice of knowing as an ethical, situated, and collectively accountable enterprise.

Baiju Anthony is a PhD Research Scholar at Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, specializing in feminist epistemology with an emphasis on epistemic responsibility and ethical practices of knowing. He holds an MPhil in Philosophy from the University of Delhi and a Licentiate in Philosophy from DVK, Bangalore. He has authored seven scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals and collaborated with the Munich School of Philosophy on a project addressing epistemic injustice, contributing to an international publication on the subject. His current research integrates philosophy and literature to examine how narrative, affect, and marginalized voices reorient epistemic frameworks toward inclusivity.

BRIGITTE ASSI

Australian National University

The Grammar of Sex: Intelligibility and Desire

This paper interrogates the moralising language taken up by feminists that designates sex into normative categories of good/bad. Taking up a psychoanalytic perspective of sexuality, as a site of opening possibilities to ways of organising subjectivity, I argue that these transformative features of sexuality are lost in current neoliberal feminist discussions. I hold that important questions of sexuality are in danger of misarticulation due to moralising grammar, and that the feminist project benefits from taking up a psychoanalytic framework of sex, rather than a normative one. Using the works of Alenka Alenka Zupančič, I argue that the destabilising nature of sex opens us up to thinking about sexuality as a site of contested disturbance and discovery, rather than the expression of good/bad actions.

Brigitte Assi is a current MPhil student at the Australian National University, under the supervision of Fiona Jenkins. Her work centres around sexuality and psychoanalysis, with special consideration to questions of intelligibility, objectification, desire, and language. Her project maintains the endlessly transforming power of sexuality, whilst also interrogating how sexuality becomes a site of destabilisation.

YINGYING BAI

Sichuan University

Synthesis" or "Time"? - Heidegger's Interpretation of the Three Syntheses in the A-edition Deduction of Critique of Pure Reason

Heidegger's interpretation of Kant has long been controversial and is often criticized as a violent interpretation of Kant's text. As in interpreting *Critique of Pure Reason*, Heidegger connects *the three syntheses* in the A-edition of Transcendental Deduction with *time*: the synthesis of apprehension in the intuition relates to the temporal horizon *the present*, the synthesis of reproduction in the imagination to the temporal horizon *the past*, and the synthesis of recognition in the concept to the temporal horizon *the future*. These three syntheses are in essence the syntheses of time, and they belong to time together. From the perspective of cognitive faculties, the three syntheses share a common root, namely the transcendental apperception. Heidegger further asserts that transcendental apperception is temporal, even is time itself. Through analyzing in detail, this paper attempts to show the place where Heidegger's interpretation follows Kant's text, and the place where it goes beyond Kant, and how Heidegger uses Husserl's phenomenological model of inner time-consciousness to interpret the three syntheses in the A-edition Deduction in *Critique of Pure Reason*.

I am a doctoral student from Philosophy Department of Sichuan University in China. My research interests are Phenomenology and classical German philosophy. My doctoral dissertation discusses Heidegger's interpretation of the transcendental subject in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. My master dissertation discusses Heidegger's thoughts on nature and technology. I hold a project “Mind Philosophy and Mental Health” funded by Philosophy Department of Sichuan University. (2025.07 - Present). I have published a book titled Nature and Technology: a Discourse between Artist Hayao Miyazaki and Philosopher Heidegger, Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2023.

CHARLES BARBOUR

Western Sydney University

Charles Barbour is Associate Professor in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts and a member of the Institute for Culture and Society at Western Sydney University.

ROSS BARHAM

Head of Philosophy, Melbourne High School

Bakhtin on Victim Blaming & Punching Down

Analytic Philosophy has recently provided the 'hermeneutic resource' of giving the name 'Epistemic Injustice' to phenomena extensively investigated in the Continental Tradition for at least a century. In this paper, Mikhail Bakhtin's Marxist philosophy of language is shown to provide a dialetical analysis of why Victim Blaming and Punching Down (among other injustices) are oppressive.

Head of The Philosophy Faculty at Melbourne High School. PhD from Melb Uni on Davidson, Brandom and Tomasello concerning how language provides us with the concept of objectivity. Masters on philosophical conceptions of saintliness (presented as a course for the MSCP). Honours on metaphilosophy.

DIANA BARNES

University of New England

Wilful Renegotiation of Senecan Stoicism in the Poetry of Lady Anne Southwell (1574-1636)

In this paper I will investigate the cluster of poems on stoic and Christian themes in the Folger Miscellany of Lady Anne Southwell (1574-1636). At first look the cluster seems to be following the ordering of the Justice Lipsius edition of Seneca which was translated into English by Thomas Lodge and first published 1614. I will begin by examining “A Paraphrase upon Lucius Annaeus Seneca on his Book of Providence”, “Anger” and “In this Frail World” with reference to Seneca, Lipsius’s commentary and Lodge’s translation in order to

understand how Southwell is using stoic philosophical ideas. Then I will consider those most obviously stoic poems within the miscellany as a whole collection, and look for other correlations and oblique adaptations. This work fits into my current research project on early modern women's engagement with stoic and neostoic philosophy.

Diana G. Barnes is an Associate Professor in English Literary Studies at the University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales. Her field of research is early modern literature with a particular interest in gender and intellectual history. Her book Epistolary Community in Print, 1580-1664 was published with Ashgate in 2013. Currently she is completing a contracted book The Early Modern Bubble and an ARC Discovery Project on Early Modern Women's engagement with stoicism.

CLAIRE BAXTER

The Australian Centre for Psychoanalysis

The Sphinx and the Riddle which is Oedipus

Oedipus solved the riddle of the Sphinx when nobody else could. ‘‘What becomes four-footed, and two footed and three footed?’’ Asked the Sphinx. ‘‘Man’’, answered Oedipus, and thus freed Thebes from the murderous reign of the Sphinx. It has long been accepted that Oedipus gave the correct answer, however, an examination of the original Greek shows that the riddle is not a philosophical question, but a linguistic one. This paper considers what Oedipus’ response as wrong rather than right means to psychoanalytic theory, with respect to Sigmund Freud’s interpretation of the meaning of the riddle, and Jacques Lacan’s reinterpretation of the Oedipus Complex. I further consider what it is that ‘the woman wants’, and what the encounter between Oedipus and the Sphinx might say about the sexual relation.

Claire Baxter is a psychoanalyst in Melbourne, Australia, and a member of the Australian Centre of Psychoanalysis. Claire was the co-director of an amateur, online theatre dedicated to the exploration of Ancient Greek tragedy from 2022-2025.

HALIT EVRIM BAYINDIR

Royal Holloway, University of London

Indifference and Repetition: Deleuze and Malabou on ‘the Always-Already’s Authority’

This talk focuses on Deleuze and Malabou's respective attempts to overcome what Malabou calls ‘the transcendental principle of the always-already’. For Malabou, this principle traps thought within the illusion that experience is always-already conditioned by a ‘transcendental trauma’ – a claim Deleuze wouldn’t reject. Drawing on contemporary neuroscience, Malabou identifies a ‘post-traumatized subject [which] disconnects the structure of the always-already’. This subject becomes the ‘figure’ for cultivating a new faculty of thought, which emerges after the exhaustion of the transcendental and becomes capable of thinking this post-traumatic interruption. Deleuze’s solution, conversely, deploys Difference and Repetition’s three syntheses of time to reconfigure the always-already into an ‘always-variable’ pure past (Mnemosyne) and penetrate its ‘lived experience’ (Eros). The subsequent desexualisation of Eros (reflux) enacts a depotentialisation of the transcendental as already-given potential, producing the difference that irreversibly breaks with the always-already. While Deleuze subordinates the always-already trauma to a supra-traumatic, differential transcendental, Malabou pursues the inverse trajectory: a trauma that ‘relinquishes’ the transcendental itself. Consequently, Deleuze’s three syntheses yield a ‘genital’ thought – neither ready-made nor ‘regressing’ to pre-given trauma – whereas Malabou’s new faculty is not only ‘born’ but also confronts the ‘indifference’ revealed in its destruction.

Halit Evrim Bayındır is a PhD researcher in Philosophy at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the editor of Open Philosophy's topical issue, ‘Nihilism through a Contemporary Lens: Post-Continental and Other Perspectives'. His papers and reviews are published in Chiasma: A Site for Thought, 15 Years of Speculative Realism, Society and Space, and Deleuze and Guattari Studies.

ANDREW BENJAMIN

University of Melbourne

Heidegger the 'Fourfold' and Place of Relational Ontology

The aim of this paper will be to offer an interpretation of Heidegger's "fourfold" (das Geviert) the aim of which is to undo the predominantly anthropocentric conceptions of the relationship between human being and place. Part of the argument will be that the relation between ‘earth’, ‘sky’, ‘divinities’ and ‘mortals’ is such that any specificity - for example the specificity of ‘mortals’ (which can be understood as finite human beings, and is thus a thinking of finitude) is an after-effect of the network of relations identified by the use of the term "fourfold". No one term within the relation is to be privileged. Centrality therefore has to be attributed to the relation itself. This allows for identification of the ‘fourfold’ as an instance of a more general concern with the relational ontology.

Andrew Benjamin is an Honorary Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne

ANGELITA BISCOTTI

Invisible Hand Job: Adam Smith, Boycotts and Divestments

Recent research in aesthetics and philosophy show a different Adam Smith: one who recentred a capacity for sympathetic identification in ethical relating, critiqued the excesses of the wealthy, believed in every person's capacity for moral complexity, and noted that excessive policing and regulation did not reduce crime. This paper is exploratory, experimental and speculative: what Adam Smith might say about the ethics and effectiveness of boycotts and divestments?

Angelita Biscotti is an artist, writer and PhD candidate in English and Creative Writing in Naarm. Find them at http://angelitabiscotti.com.au

ERIC BLIX

Melanie Index

Melanie Index (Erratum, 2026) is a multi-modal novel exploring love and print technologies. Who do we love in a networked world? Is the humanistic tradition of romantic love obsolete, or perhaps modified by telecoms and on-demand content delivery? Melanie Index might be considered a Romance adapted to a world of high-powered personal computing, or it might be a conceptualist study of the codex and its attendant literary forms as obsolete or irrelevant communications systems. Eric Blix is the author of the novel, The Prodigious Earth (Erratum, 2022), and the story collection, Physically Alarming Men (Stephen F. Austin, 2017). Melanie Index is forthcoming from Erratum in 2026.

His work has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, including 3:AM, Best Small Fictions, Caketrain, The Collagist, Western Humanities Review, and others. He is an Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing at Valdosta State University. He spends most of his time in St. Petersburg, Florida, where he runs the online journal, The New Monuments.

JOEL BOURLAND

University of Western Australia & Murdoch University

Intersubjectivity and Commodification: Benjamin's Critical Adaptation of Husserlian Empathy

Walter Benjamin addressed the extent to which our dreams, desires, and relationships are modeled on mass-marketed images. Central to what he called the “commodification of things” is our daily encouragement to identify with the staged enjoyments and unapproachable icons of films, ad campaigns, and popular culture. Benjamin refers to this tendency of the collective imagination as an “empathy with inorganic things,” or “empathy with the commodity-soul.” In fact, he reserves the term “empathy” (*Einfühlung*) exclusively in this critical capacity.

This talk situates Benjamin's project in relation to the phenomenological tradition. For Husserl, empathy is the primordial act that opens onto intersubjective objectivity, i.e., onto a world of agreed-upon objects and common-sense meanings. Benjamin, by contrast, employs the concept to account for representations of quite a different sort: images of longing, fantasy, and projection. If ‘others' anchor intentionality, then the manners I have of interpreting my world will be refracted through their attitudes, gestures, and intentions: this, without regard to their reality as ‘people' or the reality of the desirable contexts and experiences they apparently envelop. Motivating this encounter with phenomenology, I argue, is Benjamin's consistent rejection of the notion that the ‘abstract' nature of concepts stems from their being generalities.

Joel Bourland teaches in Philosophy, Media Studies, English, and Art History in Perth, Australia. His PhD dissertation examines Walter Benjamin's theories of modern experience and commodification of the self. Currently, he is adapting his thesis into a book and working on ideas of performance and intersubjectivity in the writings of Bergson, Husserl, and the Pragmatists.

TRISTAN BRADSHAW

University of Wollongong & University of Sydney

Use, Utility, and Traditions that Split

Economic and liberal thought have long treated the paired concepts of “use” and “utility” in solipsistic terms, splitting commodities and their users from the social formations they inhabit. Such abstractions gesture towards a deeper split between those empowered to shape social spaces and those excluded from that power. Despite its roots in Marxism, there is ”troublingly” a dominant tradition within Critical Theory that often reproduces this split, assimilating and naturalizing the disempowering effects of capitalism. However, tracing Marx's concept of the commodity back to Aristotle–his original source–reveals important alternative ways of thinking about use and utility. These alternatives, I argue, offer more effective means of disrupting capitalist norms and imagining transformative forms of action and association.

Tristan Bradshaw is a political theorist and classicist whose research is concerned with radical democracy and driven by the methods of critical antiquities. He is Lecturer in the School of Liberal Arts at the University of Wollongong, Honorary Associate in the School of Humanities at the University of Sydney, and founding co-director of the Critical Antiquities Network. He received his PhD from Northwestern University in 2021 with a dissertation entitled, The Use of Humans: Aristotle, Marx, and the Specters of Indeterminate Utility. He has two books in preparation: A Critical Antiquities Manifesto and an edited volume on antiquities in Marx and his reception, both with Ben Brown.

JOHN C.BRADY

University of Sydney

What Problems Are Not: A vindication of the seventh postulate of Deleuze's dogmatic image of thought

In Difference & Repetition, Deleuze argues that we are beholden to a systematic illusion concerning the modality of problems. In this paper, I argue we can independently verify this result. In attempting to define what a problem is, almost all anglophone philosophers have made use of natural language analysis, analysing the contexts in which saying “here is a problem” would be appropriate. Since we can all identify problems, everyone must know in some implicit fashion what a problem is. This ‘knowledge’ is then what is brought to surface through natural language methods. Though this method seems sound, it invariably traces out a concept of problems that I call the ‘implicit image’. When investigated in detail, this implicit image of problems reveals itself to merely be a practical-heuristic for solving problems, not a coherent account of problems themselves. Beholden to this implicit image of problems, we are led to the absurd consequence that we can only identify those problems for which we currently have solutions, as predicted by Deleuze.

John C. Brady is a PhD student in philosophy at the University of Sydney, working on the concept of problems, predominately utilizing the work of Gilles Deleuze.

DANIEL BRENNAN

Bond University

Critical Phenomenology and Lucy Ellmann's Ducks, Newburyport

This paper explores how Lucy Ellmann's experimental novel Ducks, Newburyport illuminates the political dimensions of everyday domestic life through what might be understood as a critical phenomenological lens. The novel's stream-of-consciousness form reveals the mundane sphere—baking, list-making, household routines—as always already entangled with larger historical and political structures rather than separate from them. Drawing on Lisa Guenther's framework of critical phenomenology, particularly her concept of quasi-transcendental structures, I examine how Ellmann's narrative technique demonstrates the constitutive relationship between domestic experience and political reality. The protagonist's obsessive cataloguing weaves together grocery lists and school shootings, pie recipes and environmental collapse, suggesting that the domestic operates as a site where broader power relations are both reproduced and potentially contested. The novel's formal innovations—its refusal of conventional narrative boundaries and temporal structures—perform a kind of phenomenological analysis that reveals how consciousness itself is shaped by historical contingencies while remaining open to transformation. This reading contributes to ongoing conversations about how contemporary literature engages with critical phenomenological methods and what domestic spaces might offer for understanding political subjectivity.

Associate Professor Daniel Brennan (Bond University) is the author of The Political Thought of Vaclav Havel (Brill, 2017), Surfing and the Philosophy of Sport (Lexington Books, 2021), and the co-editor of the volume Hannah Arendt and the History of Thought (with Professor Marguerite La Caze) (Lexington Books, 2022).

JESSE BRINDLEY

La Trobe University

Towards the use of abstraction for life: On the modernities of Kierkegaard and Simmel

This paper attempts to ‘de-neutralise' Georg Simmel's work by formulating its ethico-political aims. Søren Kierkegaard critiques modernity as that which ‘levels' difference and distinction, thereby flattening experience into increasingly fewer dimensions of meaning. Monetisation, abstraction, and advertisement are its instruments. But this is only part of modernity. Simmel's social critique is, by contrast, ‘reciprocal': the ‘flatness' of contemporary life results from abstractive processes which, as part of that same process, obscure its processual origin. Understood in this way, Simmel's positive project has two goals: 1) critiquing processes which flatten experience; 2) channelling these processes into abstractions useful for life.

I am a PhD candidate at La Trobe University, broadly interested in social theory/sociology, critical theory, German idealism, cultural theory/criticism, political economy, and, of course, continental philosophy. My current work investigates the relevance of Georg Simmel's work for contemporary times.

PETRA BROWN

Co-author Tim Neil

Deakin University

Vulnerability, relationality and natality: an Arendtian challenge to Western political philosophy

"We are all born into bodies that we are utterly incapable of independently sustaining as babies and children, and we all die in bodies", write Sarah Rushing in her book *The Virtue of Vulnerability*. In the history of Western philosophy, embodiment is something that political theory has frequently bracketed when theorizing citizenship, agency, and what it means to be human, suggests Rushing. Against this tradition, how can we 'reimagine the political potential of embodiment' in a way that includes space for vulnerability as a virtue in political life? Our presentation picks up Rushing's question to consider how Arendt's concept of natality can help us to think about a political life that affirms embodiment, that respects vulnerability as inherent to the human condition, and political life as a way to practice the virtue of vulnerability in relationality towards each other.

Dr Petra Brown is a philosopher, writer, and artist based in Geelong. Her research focuses on existential-phenomenological ethics, political theology, and feminist philosophy. She lectures at Deakin University and explores questions of identity, expressiveness, and meaning-making through both academic scholarship and creative practice.

Dr Tim Neal is a Melbourne-based philosopher, photographer, and chartered accountant. His research focuses on Hannah Arendt's philosophy, particularly the ontology of natality and its ethical and political implications. He completed his PhD at Deakin University and now works as an accountant alongside his ongoing philosophical and photographic practice.

FABIO BUCCI

Co-author Brett Allen

Kant Can't Kill Plato: Plato, Transcendence or Bust

Augustine scorned what he called the “pagan philosophers”. Kant discarded them as dogmatists and Russell, 187 years later, would snub any philosophical problems that “transcend our cognitive powers”. As a counterattack to these statements and positions, we claim that the central object of Plato’s supposed “groping” was actually securing a path of knowing that he understood as the only true “path of a science”. And so, while Kant corners himself in a mundane a priori knowledge, Plato’s work, a contrario, does not conceive a transcendental other than one set to the supramundane. Plato makes a profound distinction between the limitation (an illusion) of a knowledge based on intellectual reasoning and its counterpart - the knowing of oneself as a whole. Thus, we propose that Plato is aligned with the tradition of Indian philosophy which places illusion as the key problem to true understanding.

Fabio is an independent scholar (AU/FR) in Philosophy, History with a background in Fine Arts and Architecture. His latest research is a comparative study of Plato and Indian philosophy. And, through the lens of the critique of value/dissociation, the effect of Capital on time and space, and the subject's cognitive dissonance within this relationship. His previous research was on the impact of capital on commons and land use-rights. He is a member of the French Crise & Critique Association and Publishing House.

Brett is an independent scholar (AU) in Philosophy. He studies and practiced the Buddha Dhamma, with short forays into the study (though not the practice) of other Eastern traditions, including Indian and Chinese. His studies on Western philosophy primarily focused on the Ancients”Plato in particular.

QUEENIE CARLING

The University of Melbourne

‘For a new interpretation of Gadamer's agreement and tradition'

The contention of this paper is to develop a new interpretation of the key term ‘tradition', in order to defend the Gadamerian view that understanding, in addition with interpretation, involve a fusion of horizons whose locus is linguistic. The expanded interpretation is posited as a response to Habermas' objection that the method as idealistic of language. For if recognition is all that is required for understanding, upon taking up the historical horizon by meeting tradition with our own situatedness, and all understanding in the task of interpretation and meaning is linguistically infused, then language as medium for domination and social power is veiled. The new interpretation of tradition, expands traditions to all potential sets of relationships that include prejudices as their foundation for understanding. Furthermore, it maintains Gadamer's theory; all understanding is linguistically infused, and traditions share the informal nature of natural languages. This paper reforms Habermas' interpretation of tradition as a productive site which yields distorted outcomes of the inability to come face to face with language. Whilst language is not a closed system to which we can orient ourselves, it is as Habermas maintains: by being radically situated, the hermeneutical experience reveals and raises the relationship between the speaking subject and language. The reformation I posit is; it is precisely *in virtue of the fact* that traditions and the natural languages are not a closed system that allows for regimes of false authority to be exposed.

Queenie Carling is an Undergraduate Student majoring in Philosophy. Her areas of interest include hermeneutics, epistemology, psychoanalysis and poetry.

JULIAN CASTANO-GALLEGO

Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

Substance as Information: Reconciling Spinoza's and Simondon's accounts of Transindividuality.

Transindividuality is a concept that has generated substantial academic interest since its inception in print by Gilbert Simondon almost 50 years ago. It has taken various intellectual routes that allow us to think through philosophical problems in the realms of ontology (G. Deleuze), epistemology (A. Bardin) and phenomenology (V. Morfino). One central route has been the effort to assert transindividuality *avant la lettre* in thinkers such as Baruch (Benedictus) de Spinoza despite Simondon explicitly denying the possibility of thinking the work of Spinoza as transindividual. Scholars such as Étienne Balibar and Jason Read have elucidated some potential similarities; however, they do not sufficiently resolve the metaphysical impasse Simondon sees in Spinoza, that is, the claim that substantialist metaphysics cannot conceive of the subject beyond the constraints of unity and stability. This paper focuses on this particular issue and will demonstrate that the metaphysical apparatus built by Spinoza in the *Ethics* does indeed allow for transindividuality to obtain. Crucially, I suggest that, under careful analysis, the notion of Information in Simondon and Substance in Spinoza, perform the same metaphysical function for transindividuality.

Julian Castano-Gallego is a PhD candidate and interdisciplinary researcher with a background in finance, economics and political theory. He lectures at Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland where he also coordinates their Critical Theory Network. His research lies at the intersection between philosophy and psychoanalytic theory. Particularly, it is concerned with the social and political consequences of the ways in which we theorise our subjectivity. He has published on the sociopolitical consequences of anger as a transindividual affect."

SHEILA CAVANAGH

York University

What Lacan said about the m/Other

This paper analyses an apparent contradiction in Lacan's writing on the m/Other and the maternal instinct. He has been charged by post-Lacanian feminist theorists like Bracha L. Ettinger (2006) with neglecting the m/Other alongside the entire field of procreation. Indeed, he says more about the paternal function than he does about the maternal function. But, at the same time, Lacan acknowledges the grandiosity of the m/Other in the life of the subject. He refers to the (Real) almightiness of the mother, to the way she constitutes a virtual field of symbolic annihilation, to the way the subject's own speech, a speech directed to themselves, is produced in the locus of the Other. Of equal significance is the way the m/Other occupies the place of the *Thing* (*das Ding*). Without negating valuable feminist insight and critique stemming from Ettingerian psychoanalysis, I suggest that Lacanian teachings do not preclude the m/Other. Rather, the clinical significance of the m/Other is articulated under the auspices of the Other, in relation to Lacan's emphasis upon the subject's discourse (bound as it is by the desire of the Other), and through his occasional references to what evades the Symbolic tapestry, namely procreation.

Sheila Cavanagh is a professor at York University and a psychoanalyst in formation at the Lacan School of Psychoanalysis. She co-edits Australian Feminist Studies and her scholarship in queer theory, transgender studies, and Lacanian psychoanalysis has been published internationally. Cavanagh is completing a book titled Bracha L. Ettinger & Jacques Lacan: psychoanalysis, sexuality, and the m/Other for publication with Palgrave Macmillan.

ANNA CERRITELLI

Deakin University

Form and Matter in Hegel

Form and matter in Hegel's Science of Logic appear very similar to classical accounts of the same topic. Despite Hegel being situated in a post-Kantian theoretical framework, he will ultimately concur with these classical accounts that form determines matter. That is, form is the active aspect of reality which brings determination to a passive matter. In this paper, I will explain how Hegel will maintain this classical idea of form and matter in his philosophy. One important shift from the classical schema however, I will argue, is that Hegel will derive matter from form itself. Matter is in some sense implicit in the very idea of form. What I will

then argue is that it is this understanding of the derivation of matter from form that will enable Hegel to think of matter as being determined. That is, matter is not only produced from form, but it is determined by it as well. It is this formal mediation in relation to matter which, I will also argue, is a major conclusion of the second book of his Logic, Doctrine of Essence.

Anna Cerritelli is a Masters student at Deakin University. She is interested in early modern philosophy as well as 19th and 20th century continental philosophy. Her current focus is on the relation between Hegel and Deleuze.

CHI-KEUNG CHAN

National Taiwan University

Affect Beyond Boundaries: Massumi, Enactivism, and Wang Yangming

Since Spinoza, affect has been recognized as central to human life, shaping how we experience, think, and act. In the twentieth century, this insight was expanded by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and, through Brian Massumi's influential interpretations, came to define the "affective turn" in the humanities and social sciences. This paper examines Massumi's conception of affect and its potential to connect with diverse philosophical traditions and disciplines. In dialogue with contemporary theories of embodied cognition and enactivism, I argue that affect provides a shared framework for understanding how knowledge emerges through bodily engagement, resonance, and dynamic interaction with the world. I then extend this framework to Chinese philosophy, focusing on the Neo-Confucian thinker Wang Yangming. His philosophy shows how affect underlies multiple dimensions of thought: metaphysically, the doctrine of "one body" affirms that humans and the myriad things share one vital energy; epistemologically, knowing emerges through embodied practice and affective perception; ethically, moral life is grounded in genuine, wholehearted, compassionate sorrow. By bringing these perspectives into dialogue, this article shows how affect emerges as a universal and transformative category that connects continental philosophy, cognitive science, and Chinese thought.

Chi-keung Chan is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at National Taiwan University. His research focuses on Confucian philosophy, comparative philosophy, and interdisciplinary studies, especially moral psychology and embodied cognition. He has held visiting positions at the Harvard-Yenching Institute, MIT, and Boston University, and has received a number of prestigious fellowships and grants, including the Harvard-Yenching Institute Visiting Scholars Fellowship, two Fulbright Awards, the NSTC International Outstanding Young Scholars Program, and the MOST Einstein Program. His recent work has appeared in leading international journals such as Philosophical Explorations, International Philosophical Quarterly, Dao, and Philosophy East and West.

TSZ CHUN CHAN

Hong Kong Baptist University

A Critical Reflection on Gaming Culture from a Lacanian-Hegelian Perspective

A trend in gaming culture is that gamers are becoming increasingly anti-woke, anti-DEI, and even shifting toward more conservative positions. The first part of this paper attempts to explore how the masculine mode of libido becomes the fundamental horizon for gamers through the reproduction of jouissance. The logic adopted by some gamers closely resembles the structure of racist discourse: for example, pro-LGBTQ+ or pro-DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) content is perceived as "destroying" the gaming industry and stealing their enjoyment by banning hypersexualized characters and introducing non-binary or diverse representations. Within this framing, enjoyment is imagined as something being taken away by the Other, triggering a reactionary defense of masculinity and misogyny within gaming culture.

The second part will turn to the so-called "progressives," namely those who, from the gamer's perspective, are responsible for introducing DEI and "woke" ideas and imposing them on the community. I suggest their approach neglects the dynamics of the master–slave dialectic: that is, the defense mechanism when gamers encounter ideas that appear unfamiliar, alien, or even threatening to their established categories of understanding.

I am a Year 4 student study B.A. (Hons) in Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics at HKBU. I studied Critical Phenomenology during my exchange at Queen's University. My interests also include Lacanian psychoanalysis and Radical Theology.

JOHANN CHEONG ZU HAN

The University of Nottingham Malaysia

Lacan and Wittgenstein: Two philosophies of language for literary criticism

I am interested in comparing two philosophies of language”Lacan's, particularly in his early paper ‘The Field and Function of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis', and Wittgenstein's, perhaps unorthodoxly, in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*“”and asking what these mean for the practitioner of literary criticism. That is, what attracts the literary critic to these two philosophies, and how do they translate to critical practice?

There are two themes I focus on: the *textures* and the *limits* of language. I argue that in Lacan's philosophy, the primary attraction for the critic is a reality constituted by words, much like the fictional and poetic realities of literature. However, Lacan's profession as a psychoanalyst shapes his understanding of language's limits and what we do with them”which ultimately has little value for criticism. In Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, however, the nature of language's relation to the world emphasizes silence and parsimony, and the limits of language enable what is literary about life to manifest. It is through remaining silent that poetry and fiction can blossom. This makes the critic's task an especially difficult one, balancing between speech and silence.

Johann Cheong Zu Han is a doctoral student at the University of Nottingham Malaysia. He did his BA in English with Creative writing at Nottingham, and a MA in Literature & Philosophy at the University of Sussex. He is interested in the philosophy of criticism, the intersection of literature and philosophy, and Malaysian Anglophone literature. His dissertation reads Ludwig Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus and its uses for critical practice.

ZHONG XIAN CHUA

Leiden University

Imagining the Remainder: Laclau and Merleau-Ponty on the Materialist Basis of the Imagination

Any attempt at imagining society leaves a remainder. This remainder can be understood as the materialist basis for the imagination; even though it must be integrated into the imagination to ward off ideological errors, it cannot be integrated as merely one imagination amongst others. This presentation discusses how Laclau and Merleau-Ponty provide two ways to integrate the remainder. Borrowing from Heidegger's ontological difference, Laclau integrates the remainder as the ontological dimension of society, contrasting it to the ontic imaginations of society. By incorporating the remainder as the ontological limit to all ontic imaginations, the remainder is imagined as an incompleteness to society, leading Laclau to formulate radical democracy as a political program. However, his account of radical democracy is insufficient because it assumes the ontological and the ontic as two separate dimensions. Contra Laclau, Merleau-Ponty provides a hyper-reflection that integrates the remainder as the depth of ontic imaginations, obtaining a chiasm between the ontological and ontical dimensions of society. With the chiasm, Merleau-Ponty softens both dimensions into a “Third term”, which he identifies as the historical dimension of society. I develop this historical dimension as auto-figuration, providing an alternative political program to Laclau's radical democracy.

I am a PhD candidate at Leiden University working on Merleau-Ponty's philosophy. My recent papers are on Merleau-Ponty's hyper-dialectic and Fink's Sixth Cartesian Meditation (both under review). The first paper develops a Merleau-Pontian epoche and reduction to clarify what he calls the hyper-dialectic, while the second paper discusses the merits and mistakes of Fink's phenomenology. I am also co-editing a volume titled "Movements of the Dialectic", a collection of papers on the various modes of dialectical thinking provided by Merleau-Ponty, Althusser, and subsequent Marxists. I will be presenting a draft of my paper on Laclau and Merleau-Ponty."

MILLICENT CHURCHER

Australian Catholic University

Sexual Reciprocity, Revisited: Just Sex and Mutual Regard

Good sex – sex that is consensual, fulfilling, and conducive to one's flourishing – is both an ethical issue and an issue of justice (Gavey 2018. Also de Beauvoir 1953). It is commonly said that a key component of good sex is *reciprocity*. Yet what is concerning is that reciprocity is being understood and enacted by sexual actors

– especially heterosexual actors – in strikingly reductive and potentially damaging ways. This talk reflects on the conditions that can help to ensure a standard of reciprocity plays a role in supporting, rather than undermining, good sex. In particular, I develop the idea of ‘mutual regard' as an enabling condition for responsible enactments of reciprocity in intimate contexts.

I am a lecturer in Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University (Strathfield campus). My research interests include social imaginaries, affect, institutions, epistemic injustice and sexual ethics. My current project –Â ’Retooling Sexual Justice: Concepts beyond Consent' – aims to expand the conceptual toolkit for thinking through the conditions that can support, as well as undermine, good sex. My work in this area has appeared in Hypatia (‘Sexual Fluency: Embedded Imaginaries and Unjust Sex', 2024) and Angelaki (‘Reframing Honour in Heterosexual Imaginaries', 2019, with Moira Gatens)

STEVEN CHURCHILL

Lacan and Foucault's Early Search for a Method: Convergence and Conflict at the Limits of French Psychiatry

I contend that the relation between Jacques Lacan's doctoral thesis, On paranoid psychosis in its relation to the personality (1932), and Michel Foucault's first book, Mental Illness and Personality (1954), can be understood in terms of an uneven pattern of convergence and conflict. Initially, Lacan and Foucault converged in their personality-centred approach to mental illness, against the prevailing French neuro-psychiatric model, while diverging in terms of treatment modalities: Lacan employed Freudian psychanalysis with its linguistic emphasis, whereas Foucault employed Pavlovian evolutionary psychology and Marxist sociology. Both thinkers then converged again in attempting to supress these works: Lacan bought up all remaining copies of the original print run of his thesis, despite a later reprint. Foucault forbade reprints or translations of his first book, despite a later rewrite. Finally, both diverged once more in search of systematic innovation: Lacan expanded his distinctive structuralist-linguistic formulation of psychoanalysis. Foucault, meanwhile, used his historical analyses of paradigms themselves, as constitutive of experiences of mental illness in different epochs. I conclude that Lacan and Foucault's early methodologies might have provided the grounds for a form of anti-psychiatry to emerge in France at the time, had they rejected the neuro-psychiatric paradigm conclusively from the outset.

Steven Churchill is a philosopher and writer living in Melbourne, Australia. Steven has lectured in the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy, and has also served as Tutor in Philosophy at La Trobe University. Steven's writing is informed by themes of disability and mental health, art and politics.

FARHAN CIBAI IDRIS

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Desire and The Ontology of Signs in Maurizio Lazzarato and John of Damascus

Post-autonomist Marxist thinkers, are distinct in the sense that they use the concept of “real subsumption” to explain how capitalism has permeated all aspects of life, including the affects and desire (Hardt & Negri, 2005). The post-autnomomist thinker Lazzarato, drawing from the work of Deleuze and Guattari, senses how capitalism captures desire in conditions of current exploitation (biopolitical life, power), implicating the production of subjectivity (Lazzarato, 2014). Power is mediated by signs and meanings we encounter from the everyday world, however it doesn’t operate through representation or meaning, Lazzarato (following Guattari) terms it a-signifying semiotics. Similarly, the horizon of life for John of Damascus (d. 749) is mediated by God’s desire to bring all beings to the state of apokatastasis, by way of signs that humans can follow to shape their desire for a divine life, through scripture, icons, liturgy and sacramental practices (Louth, 2002). This paper thus explores desire through semiotics in the intersection of post-Autonomist Marxist philosophy and late antique Christian metaphysics.

Farhan is a Singaporean arts educator and PhD researcher researching on political theology and the convergences between post-Marxist thought and Late Antique Christian Neoplatonism.

JUSTIN CLEMENS

University of Melbourne

Perversity Versity: Milton's Satan between Philosophy and Poetry

In Book I of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Satan is remonstrating with his 'nearest mate' Beelzebub while pressed on the burning lake of hell. Beelzebub has voiced his fear that the very survival of the devils is an indication not of their continued powers of revolt against God but an index of their infinite and impotent suffering without any escape into death. Satan at once responds: 'If then his Providence/Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,/Our labour must be to pervert that end,/And out of good still to find means of evil.' This incredible statement finds its own fulfillment in Book XII "" the final book of the epic "" where the Archangel Michael will even admit to the Fall as ushering in Satan's 'perverted world.' The Fall "" the world itself, our world "" turns out to be the perversion we had to have. In making this claim, Milton is simultaneously drawing our attention to the paradoxical status of the '*vertere*' (the turning) of the verse itself.

Dr Justin Clemens FAHA is Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne. His recent publications include Barron Field in New South Wales (Melbourne UP 2023), cowritten with Thomas H. Ford. He is currently working on a book about how psychoanalysis perverted perversion.

CHARLIE CLEMENTS

Tufts University

Sade's Negative Affect as Theory

This presentation argues that fluidity, as well as Sade's focus on non-normative bodily uses and sexual practices, function as a demonstration of his nascent position as a progenitor of what would become queer theory. I make this argument not simply by drawing parallels between the concerns of the field and those of the writer, but by reading Sade through Gilles Deleuze's Coldness and Cruelty as well as the late concepts of Deleuze and Guattari found in What is Philosophy? In particular, I will read Sade within the context of Deleuze and Guattari's argument that art and philosophy differ only in what they produce (affect vs. concept), but that they fundamentally share aims (the creation of the new). Simply put, I argue that Sade is a philosopher by other means. Following this, I will explore the issue of transgression or negativity as a method of queerness throughout history and put this in the context of Deleuze's earlier work on Sadism. The cumulative result will be to show that Sade is a queer theorist avant la lettre through the creation of perpetually transgressive affects.

Charlie Clements is in the late stages of his dissertation "Literature Without Relation: Immanence and Expression in Modernity and it's Aftermaths" which looks at the metaphysical assumptions of 20th-century Irish and British fiction with a focus on the issues of form, non-knowledge, and representation. He recently published a coedited volume—Beckett and Nature—with Bloomsbury and has work forthcoming in Angelaki on the negativity shared by Bataille and Deleuze. His other interests include post-45 global Anglophone fiction, comparative Japanese fiction, and the literature of radical politics.

ALEC CLINTON

University of Melbourne, Australian Catholic University

Between Poetry and Philosophy: Romantic Themes in Heidegger and Benjamin

Like the early Romantics, Heidegger and Benjamin afford poetry a central place in their thought. For both, language is not a form of representation in the service of a subject but is the disclosure of truth itself. There is a productive moment then in all interpretation/translation such that thinking – in the words of Romantics like Schlegel and Novalis – potentializes meaning inherent to the work of art itself, modalising the world into new potentialities for thinking and acting. Given this elevation of poetry to an ontological structure of all human and natural activity, which I will argue is at work in Benjamin and Heidegger, romantic hermeneutics makes poetry philosophical and the philosophical poetic. Yet one wonders where this leaves philosophy today. How productive is the romantic notion that literary and poetic language genuinely affords a possibility of disclosing a world and other ways of being? Are there limits to an emphasis on the intimacy between poetry and thinking, fiction and reality, language and life? Such questions are especially pressing in the face

of a modern proclivity to conceal or even collapse any substantial distinction between fiction and truth more broadly. The final goal of this presentation is to therefore explore whether a reappraisal of romanticism, as it plays out in the work of Benjamin and Heidegger, is called for today.

Alec Clinton is a recent Masters graduate from KU Leuven, Belgium. He has written theses on Walter Benjamin's concept of language and the role of language in the phenomenological works of Husserl and Heidegger. He has a broad interest in phenomenology, hermeneutics, early German Romanticism, and Critical Theory. He currently studies a Masters of Social Work at the University of Melbourne and is a sessional tutor in philosophy at the Australian Catholic University.

CLAIRE COLEBROOK

Monash

Ownness and Immanence

To what extent is embracing one's identity a form of transcendence that generates a necessary ethical commitment to the form of life one would seek to attain? To what extent is the refusal of form, identity or normativity a more immanent and therefore authentic mode of existence and ethics? In this paper I will argue that this opposition need to be destroyed -- by way of Heideggerian Destruktion -- for the sake of a temporaly nuanced transcendnce in immanance, which is also a new modality of identity politics.

Steps Away from an Ecology of Practice

The concept of an ecology of mind decanters and distributes cognition. The mind is not its own place: what appears as mind — the subject who views and masters the world — is generated from complex relations that produce points of relative stability. It follows that in a twenty-first century confronted with an inability to master, feel or control ecology one might think not about how we think, but how we act, and the practices that have brought ecological crisis into being. An ecology of practice would no longer consider what we know and then ask what must be done and how, but would ask what we do and how doing otherwise might generate something other than the myth of mind. This ecology of practice is, however, only possible with something like mind in a higher state.

Claire Colebrook is Cecile Parrish Chair of Literature at Monash University. Her most recent book is Who Would you Kill to Save the World (Nebraska 2023)

CODIE CONDOS DISTRATIS

University of Queensland

Reading Continuity (and Difference) in Plumwood

Continuity and difference are key concepts that Val Plumwood employs throughout her corpus of feminist environmental philosophy. They have political, social and ecological implications and are essential to her challenge to multiple problematics of relationship conditioned by Western dualism, a logic of domination. According to her ‘critical ecological feminism’, both continuity and difference are paired and need to be thought through together. In this paper, I will consider how continuity and difference are entangled for Plumwood. I will additionally elaborate on how continuity plays a key role in responding to human exceptionalism (anthropocentrism), a form of oppression that involves the structuring of the world from the human experience, believed to be more important than the experience of the world from other-than-human life. Plumwood claims that anthropocentrism hinges on a conception of the human where what is taken to be authentically ‘human’ are qualities of mind or reason, by exclusion of and in opposition to nature, which is at best accidental to the human. This ‘hyper-separation’ or strict cleavage of human and nature fails to see an overlap—indeed, a continuity between—the two. Continuity is essential for designating relationship, but difference is also essential, to the extent that it retains self-other boundaries in order to prevent boundary collapse. I will consider this further with reference to Lisa Kretz’s (2009) reworking of Plumwood’s continuity, ‘open continuity’, which extends Plumwood to think a more porous view of the self. I will argue for this more open continuity, based on a positive, non-hierarchical difference.

Codie is a PhD student in philosophy at the University of Queensland. Her research engages the works of Australian ecofeminist philosopher Val Plumwood (1939-2008), exploring her intersections with Adriana Cavarero's philosophy of birth and Luce Irigaray's philosophy of sexual difference.

CHRISTOPHER CONTI

Western Sydney University

Neither Frankfurt nor Freiburg: Alternative Philosophies of Technology in Postwar Germany

A roundtable conversation on post-war philosophy of technology in Germany

Matthew Holt is Associate Professor, Deputy Director (Education), and Applied Cybernetics Lead at the Australian National University's School of Cybernetics. His research is in the history and theory of artificial intelligence, cybernetics, the design sciences, and systems thinking. With colleagues at the School, he is currently developing and delivering a suite of short courses on cybernetic approaches to complex systems and the impact of emergent technologies, including AI.

Christopher Conti is Senior Lecturer of Literary Studies at Western Sydney University and member of the Writing and Society Research Centre. His current research on metaphysical horror explores the intersections between modernist literature, critical theory, theology, and philosophical anthropology with special reference to Hans Blumenberg and Leszek Kolakowski. He is the author of Proofs: 104 short stories (Puncher & Wattmann, 2012).

PATRICK CROGAN

Freelance

Hayles and Stiegler on LLMs

Bernard Stiegler died before developments in Large Language Models came to prominence as the latest shock of the 'New AI's' emergence. Consequently his writings do not specifically address LLMs. N. Katherine Hayles has recently published *Bacteria to AI* (2025) which incorporates discussion of Open AI's ChatGPT system as a case in point about LLMs, and continues to update her views as LLMs continue to develop. This paper will look at Hayles' recent work as continuing a dialogue with Stiegler's thought on AI and technology more generally, most notably via her explicit engagement with the latter in *Bacteria to AI*. The aim is both to draw out parallels between their longer-term projects' respective theorizations of technology and to propose a limitation of Hayles' work from the viewpoint of advancing a critical take on AI. In short, while Hayles' work contributes significant resources to the task of apprehending the nature and stakes of AI, and despite its efforts to moderate the excesses of the neo-materialist rejection of 'anthropocentrism' in her recalibrating of 'human' agency, I argue that her account of LLMs indicates a mis-understanding of them as cognitive agents. This is symptomatic of her apparent mis-understanding of Stiegler's project.

Patrick Crogan is a media and technology theorist who has explored film, television, animation, videogames, military tech and online media from a philosophy of technology perspective (Heidegger, Derrida, Virilio). He has worked on and with Bernard Stiegler, including in special issues of Cultural Politics and Culture Machine, translations and numerous essays in journals and book collections. He is currently completing a manuscript for Routledge on Stiegler's media theory.

CARLO CROSATO

University of Bergamo

Politics Is (Not) a Serious Thing. Play as Politics

In 2018, Giorgio Agamben published a volume that brings together the entire Homo Sacer series. The complete edition includes several previously unpublished pages, which remain untranslated into other languages to this day. The talk I am presenting offers a critical reconstruction of the additional pages appended to Stasis (volume 2.2 of the series). In Stasis, Agamben's original goal was to show that the paradigm of civil war runs through the entirety of Western history as the space in which the political dimension is defined. The first part of my talk will examine how modern political discourse aimed to establish order after the decline of transcendent authority. While ancient politics accepted the ongoing potential for

politicization and depoliticization, modernity confined this dynamic to the sovereign, excluding civil war and relegating the political to the city's margins, while the city itself is reduced to the unpolitical relations of economic management. The core of my talk will focus on the third level of Agamben's analysis. In the new pages of Stasis, Agamben engages in dialogue with Carl Schmitt, who perhaps more than anyone else has outlined the genealogy of modern political thought. In doing so, Schmitt unveils the intimate connection between modern politics and war—namely, the friend/enemy distinction. Only in this way can politics assume the earnestness of human life, that is, its constant exposure to violent death. Yet Agamben uncovers, at the heart of Schmitt's genealogy, a fundamental element that Schmitt seeks to conceal, thereby turning it into the unfounded foundation of contemporary power. This element is play, understood as a form of conflict governed by rules and limits but oriented toward the construction of friendships and alliances. The conclusion of my talk will attempt to think play beyond Agamben himself. If we turn to Johan Huizinga, play is not a tool for the profanation of Western political ontology. To return to the premodern agonistic dimension is to break through the modern conceptual constellation and rediscover the true political nature of the human: a conflictual play of concrete relations that modern depoliticization has annihilated in order to establish sovereign order.

Carlo Crosato, born in Treviso on August 3, 1988. Currently cultore della materia (subject expert) at the Department of Law and at the Department of Letters, Philosophy, Communication of the University of Bergamo. In 2018, I obtained a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Ca' Foscari University of Venice, with a dissertation in political philosophy on the critiques developed by Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben of the modern concept of sovereignty. In February 2025, I concluded a one-year research fellowship in philosophy of law at the Department of Law of the University of Bergamo. I am a member of various scientific and editorial boards of Italian academic journals and book series. I am also a member of CISE (Interuniversity Center for Studies on Ethics), based in Venice. My academic output currently includes more than 50 publications, including 5 monographs, 6 edited volumes, and 30 journal articles or book chapters. Between June and July, I taught a series of lectures at the Winter School of the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy (MSCP).

MACIEK CZERKAWSKI

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen

Being Is Not a Non-Universal Kind: Rethinking the Ontological Difference

The 'ontological difference' – 'OD' for short – is Heidegger's thesis that 'the Being of beings' — roughly, what explains what it is for beings to be — "is" not itself a being.' (SZ: 6 [2]) This paper develops a new – non-literal – reading of OD, which allows (contra most extant readings) that Being might be a being in some sense and even (contra all extant readings) that it might be determined by a 'kind of Being' distinctive to itself (alongside presence-at-hand, readiness-to-hand, Dasein's Being, etc.). The thesis of the paper is that, when Heidegger denies that Being is 'a being,' he wants to say instead that Being is not a 'non-universal kind' – roughly, a set of features had only by some, rather than all, objects in the domain of our language. I offer close readings of two passages taken from Heidegger's Being and Time (1927), each addressed to OD: the 'Indefinability Passage' and the 'Plato Passage' at SZ: 4 [1] and SZ: 6 [2], respectively. In each case, I argue, OD makes more sense in terms of my reading rather than others (in the second case drawing also on Plato's Sophist, a close reading of the eponymous Platonic dialogue Heidegger develops in 1924).

I am employed as a Lecturer in Philosophy and General Education by CUHK-Shenzhen in China. Before that, I was an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Maria Curie-SkÅ‚odowska University (UMCS) in Lublin, Poland. I completed my graduate work at the University of Warwick (MA) and the University of Oxford (DPhil) in the UK.

LEONARD D'CRUZ

University of Melbourne

From Neoliberalism to the Neoreaction: Does the Second Trump Administration Represent a New Governmentality?

This talk critically diagnoses the political rationality behind the Second Trump Administration. Trump has frequently been characterised as a "neofascist" leader, which is understandable insofar as his agenda is marked by extreme nationalism, a cult of personality, and contempt for liberal democracy. However, such a characterisation overlooks what is distinctive about his current approach to governing. After all, several of his core policies have been heavily influenced not by traditional fascist ideology, but rather by the ideas of the

"neoreaction". While this ideology certainly resonates with traditional reactionary movements, it can be distinguished from fascism by its strong belief in market capitalism and economic freedom. Indeed, the neoreaction is heavily influenced by Austrian School economics, neoliberal political economy, and libertarian political theory. In this way, it claims to support authoritarian rule not simply in the name of order and social cohesion, but – somewhat paradoxically – as a means of promoting personal freedom. I will argue that the neoreactionary elements of the current administration do represent a new governmentality, albeit one that transforms themes already present in both neoliberalism and traditional reactionism.

Leonard D'Cruz is a Tutor in Sociology at the University of Melbourne, where he completed his PhD in 2023. His research examines the methodological foundations of social and political philosophy, with a particular focus on the thought of Michel Foucault. His work has appeared in Philosophy & Social Criticism, The Southern Journal of Philosophy, Angelaki, and Theory, Culture & Society (forthcoming).

CHRIS DANTA

Australian National University

The Poetics of Verticality in Bo-Young Kim

A distinctive feature of recent South Korean science fiction is that the novum, the strange newness that sets the text's story world apart from the reader's, often relates to sensory perception. In this paper, I argue that Bo-Young Kim pioneers this technique of the perceptual novum. Kim's method in story after story is to transform a highly conspicuous element of the mundane world of her human readers—like the operation of gender, the fact of biological life or the meaningfulness of art—into a perceptual novelty for her nonhuman characters. "The Origin of Species" tells of a group of robots that first discover and then recreate organic life in the laboratory thousands of years after it has been extinguished from the Earth because of environmental disaster. In "Last of the Wolves," the unexpected sadness of losing his human servant Albi causes the dragon master to suddenly notice her artwork for the first time and begin to recognise her effort to represent him in her paintings. Biological life and aesthetic representation by humans are perceptual novums in these two stories, phenomena that the nonhuman character cannot initially comprehend or perceive until an event in the narrative renders them comprehensible or perceptible.

Chris Danta is professor of literature in the School of Cybernetics at the Australian National University and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2021–25). His research operates at the intersection of literary theory, philosophy, science, and theology. He is the author of Literature Suspends Death: Sacrifice and Storytelling in Kierkegaard, Kafka, and Blanchot (2011) and Animal Fables After Darwin: Literature, Speciesism, and Metaphor (2018). He is currently working on a book titled Future Fables: Literature, Evolution, and Artificial Intelligence."

TIMOTHY DEANE-FREEMAN

Deakin University

Included Exclusions: rethinking the paradox of constituent power with Luhmann and Deleuze

The "paradoxical" nature of constituent power has been a common theme in constitutional theory. That a power might be simultaneously absolute and circumscribed, foundational and founded, suggests a conceptual incoherence which bristles against our habitual ways of thinking. In this paper, I draw on the work of both Niklas Luhmann and Gilles Deleuze in order to argue that the "paradox" of constituent power derives in fact from the paradoxical structure of *sense* (*sens*/*Sinn*). Indeed what both Deleuze and Luhmann demonstrate, each in their own way, is that any given distribution of sense is codetermined along with a nonsense that it simultaneously opposes and works to formalise, as such including it as excluded. My claim is that an attention to this shared conception of the paradox of sense can help us to better grasp the paradoxical nature of constituent power, which exemplifies the operation according to which a given system of norms or signs is always founded on the basis of an element that system includes by excluding. I conclude with a brief discussion of some downstream implications of such an approach for constitutional theory, and for theories of constituent power in particular.

Dr. Timothy Deane-Freeman is an Associate Teaching Fellow at Deakin University. He is the author of the monograph Deleuze, Digital Media and Thought (Edinburgh University Press, 2024) and the co-editor of the collection Artistic

Agency: Thinking Creation With Post-War French Philosophy (Springer Nature, 2025). His research is dedicated to the intersections of thought, politics and aesthetics.

GHISLAIN DESLANDES

ESCP Business School

Affectio societatis or the Invisible Ground of Organizations : Henrian perspectives

Henry's philosophical project, centered on life as self-affection and the radical interiority of the subjective body, seems alien to administrative sciences, a field dominated by objectification, representation and quantification (Henry, 1973; 1975; 1984). Management sciences are a prime example of this type of inauthentic knowledge, producing results and models without inquiring about their very possibility. The result is widespread disaffection with managed work, as evidenced by international surveys (https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx).Critical management studies have certainly also denounced these illusions, but they remain prisoners of a metaphysics of visibility and objectified relationships (Deslandes, 2023). For his part, Michel Henry calls for a 'postcritique', and it is from this perspective that the central concept of affectio societatis emerges. Transposed into a phenomenological reading, this notion articulates the emotional attachment that motivates collective action beyond any contractual obligation. He thus bases organisational belonging not on calculated interest, but on vital resonance. At its highest level, affectio societatis refers to the common good: the love of shared life as the horizon of collective work. In this sense, rethinking organisations means reinstating management's praxeological dimension: the science of subjective bodies oriented towards care, culture and conviviality.

I am a professor at ESCP Business School, in the Law, Economics, and Humanities (LEH) department. I have published in numerous philosophical journal (Etudes, Le Portique, Philosophy of Management, Revue de philosophie Économique, Rue Descartes, etc.) and in organisation studies (Business Ethics Quarterly, Europan Management Review, Journal of Business Ethics, Leadership, Organization, Organization Studies, etc.). Former program director at the Collège International de Philosophie (CIPh), I am also the author of various philosophical essays translated into English, such as Antiphilosophy of Christianity (Springer, 2021) and The Idea of Beginning in Jules Lequier's Philosophy (Lexington Books, 2023).

MAX DEUTSCHER

Macquarie, University of Queensland

Silence of the dance

Despite the co-operation between music and the bodily movements of dance, there is a daunting silence in the acts of dance. Does it make sense to ask what a dance (or dancer) is saying? Nietzsche wrote of dance as a metaphor for thought. Alain Badiou sets out from Nietzsche in pursuing the idea of thinking as a line of thought that we may project in parallel with the idea of the dance. We could say that angled projections between these parallel lines permits the production of distinctive kinds of ‘thinking-in' – thinking-in-dance, thinking-in-writing and so on. Thought is marked by a kind of velocity, as the dance is marked by a virtual ‘weightlessness'.

I attempt to pull these lines together by examining the ways in which music and dance, in their differences – permit sense and articulation to each modality as truth productions"" Despite the co-operation between music and the bodily movements of dance, there is a daunting silence in the acts of dance. Does it make sense to ask what a dance (or dancer) is saying? Nietzsche wrote of dance as a metaphor for thought. Alain Badiou sets out from Nietzsche in pursuing the idea of thinking as a line of thought that we may project in parallel with the idea of the dance. Each of these parallel lines constitute the production of their own distinctive kind of ‘thinking-in' – thinking-in-dance, thinking-in-writing-poetologically, and so on. Thought is marked by a kind of velocity, as the dance is marked by a virtual ‘weightlessness'. I attempt to pull these lines together by examining the ways in which music and dance, in their differences – give sense and articulation to each modality as truth productions.

RAMESH DHEERAVATH

University of Allahabad

From Noumenon to Will: Continuity and Critique in Kant and Schopenhauer's Metaphysical Idealism

This paper examines the complex philosophical relationship between Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer, with a focus on their respective contributions to metaphysical idealism. It delineates Kant's foundational distinction between phenomena and the unknowable noumenon, emphasizing the limits of human cognition imposed by a priori forms of intuition and categories of understanding. The analysis then transitions to Schopenhauer's reinterpretation, which, while accepting Kant's transcendental idealism, radically identifies the noumenon as the singular, irrational, and knowable Will. This redefinition fundamentally alters the understanding of ultimate reality, human cognition, freedom, and suffering. The paper argues that Schopenhauer's philosophy represents a reductive transformation of Kant's system, shifting the focus from rational duty to the inherent suffering of existence and proposing aesthetic contemplation and asceticism as paths to liberation. This intellectual trajectory established a distinct and influential philosophical path, particularly impacting later psychological and irrationalist thought.

I'm an Assistant Professor of Philosophy, and my research interests are Speculative Metaphysics and Philosophy of Language.

KURT DOGLIONE

The University of Queensland

Intuition and Philosophy

John Ó Maoilearca suggests that for Henri Bergson, "vague imagery is actually the most precise means available" when it comes to suggesting and communicating his intuition of duration (Bergson's conception of temporality). In contrast, he suggests that a "clear concept is not only lacking but also unwanted (and harmful)." Expanding on this notion more broadly, this talk aims to explore the role, function, and adequacy of intuition as a philosophical method. Throughout, I hope to answer the following questions: in what way can clear concepts be considered harmful to intuitions like duration? What place, if any, does intuition have in philosophy? What is the relationship between intuition and the understanding?

I have been a PhD candidate at the University of Queensland since the beginning of 2022. Primarily, my work has explored the philosophy of Henri Bergson. Most recently, I have engaged Gaston Bachelard's extended critique of Bergson's philosophy. I have suggested that Bachelard presents an interesting and potentially justifiable critique of Bergson's work that is often too hastily dismissed.

THOMAS DOJAN

University of Cologne

"Philosophy is a Preparation for Dying." Death Literacy and Community Caring in Plato: A Social Network Analysis of the Phaedo

This study explores the intersection of philosophy, community caring, and death literacy through a social network analysis (SNA) of Plato's *Phaedo* and the death of Socrates. It emphasizes the ancient idea that philosophy serves as a preparation for dying, aligning with the contemporary pursuit of a "good death" within recent community care frameworks. By mapping Socrates' social network at the end of his life, the study analyzes the relationships among 28 individuals involved in or connected to Socrates' final moments, focussing on key figures such as Crito, Simmias, and Cebes who played significant roles at the end of his life. The analysis demonstrates that Socrates had a highly interconnected network, with SNA metrics quantiatively indicating the influence of members within the community. The study thus underscores the relevance of social networks in understanding community caring and death literacy across the ages, linking classical studies with contemporary palliative care approaches. It also highlights the importance of kinship, friendship, and shared faith in shaping end-of-life experiences both in ancient and modern contexts. Ultimately, the study advocates for integrating insights from social network analysis into community-based

approaches to death and dying, emphasizing philosophy's enduring role in fostering moral and social preparedness for death.

Thomas Dojan holds degrees in philosophy (PhD) and psychology (MS) and is certified as a trained psycho-oncologist by the German Cancer Society (DKG). He has worked as research fellow at the University Hospital in Cologne in Germany where he contributed to end-of-life health services research with a focus on palliative and hospice care. His other research interests include ancient Greek philosophy and medicine, phenomenology, psychoanalysis and the medical humanities.

ARUNDHATI DUBEY

Indian Institute of Technology

Thinking as Syncopated Figuration: Jean-Luc Nancy's Hegelian Radicalization of Kant

This paper highlights the centrality of Hegel's understanding of immanent negativity and becoming in Jean-Luc Nancy's anti-foundationalist philosophy, especially in its attempts to respond to questions such as: What does it entail to think or philosophise in our post-truth world? What is the status of thought in our contemporary when the edifice of epistemology and metaphysics stands questioned? Analysing one of the most prominent attempts in the history of philosophy to discern foundations for philosophy, i.e., Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Nancy turns Kant upside down and suggests that thought self-presents insofar as its self-identity is interrupted, i.e., as a "syncopated figuration." This paper suggests that Nancy's reversal of Kant's system relies on a Hegelian correction of Kant, specifically Hegel's temporalization of the Kantian limits of pure reason. Emphasizing the proximity of Nancy's thought to Hegel's philosophy by explicating their take on Kant's transcendental philosophy, this paper argues that the re-actualisation of Hegel's temporalization of Kantian limits and exposition of becoming in Nancy's work opens up the possibility to think differently and infinitely from within our finitude. Hegel's working of immanent negativity in thought and being delivers us from the seemingly contradictory impasse of our time: either retreating to the substantial metaphysical ideas of God, substance, etc. or being reduced to our finite and disparate existence and succumbing to the impossibility of thought.

Arundhati is a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. Her research is on love, community, and the question of sexual difference, focusing on the work of Jean-Luc Nancy to think about alternative ways to solidarity and collective action that are not rooted in substantial identities. Her research interests include Ancient Greek thought, Continental Philosophy, Feminist Philosophy, and Psychoanalysis.

CAMERON DUFF

Co-author Andrea Eckersley

RMIT University

Mapping Naarm for a People to Come

Widespread adoption of the toponym Naarm, the ancestral name for what is now central Melbourne in the languages of the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin nations, evokes the promise of a new political community in Victoria. Naarm is lived in this promise, in social, political and affective attachments to place, to community, and the collective subjectivities that might yet populate it. Yet of course Naarm also names a site of dispossession and erasure, the home of a people long dispersed. Naarm is a heterotopia in this respect, a home for a "people to come" (Deleuze, 1997), something that must be cultivated, expressed and sustained in a labour of invention. This paper explores instances of this labour in a brief assessment of recent cartographic works by non-Indigenous artist Andrea Eckersley. We ground this assessment in Deleuze's (1989:217) remarks about the "conditions of struggle" whereby artists manipulate the forces of "becoming" by which "the missing people…invent themselves". Reflecting on Eckersley's maps, we explore some of ways a people to come invent themselves in novel experiences of place. Eckersley's maps trace the political and administrative machinery of dispossession and displacement in Naarm, while providing glimpses of new collective experiences of belonging.

Cameron Duff is Professor of Political Science at the Centre for Organisations and Social Change in the College of Business and Law at RMIT University in Melbourne. Duff's recent program of research explores the role of social

innovation in responding to complex health and social problems in cities. Working in transdisciplinary teams, Duff seeks to advance conceptually informed accounts of social impact, place and community, with a focus on theories of organisational and social change.

BRENDAN DUNCAN-SHAH

Independent Researcher

Marxist Theories of the Subject

A theory of the subject is a theory of the conditions under which political agency emerges from within a given social structure. The Marxist tradition is committed to a highly distinctive theory of the subject, according to which certain groups of social actors, in virtue of their location within the economic structure or social relations of production, are especially well-placed to become political agents. Standard glosses of the Marxist theory of the subject, however, frame the transition between these elements—social location and political agency—as in some sense automatic. Social location is taken to naturally produce a political subject or agent; location within the economic structure is a sufficient condition for the emergence of political agency. As the standard view has it, the Marxist tradition is univocal on this point. This paper argues that the standard view is false, at least for some thinkers from the Marxist tradition. Political agency is not a necessary consequence of social location. Instead, the Marxist tradition furnishes political thought with a theory of the subject that, far from being committed to economic reductionism, places due weight on the properly political, ideological and even cultural factors that go into the formation of a subject.

Brendan Duncan-Shah is a student of philosophy working on Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri land. He was written and presented in various places at various times on Marxist philosophy, the philosophy of G.W.F Hegel and on certain strands within the Indian philosophical tradition, in particular on Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy.

JAMES DUTTON

University of New South Wales

Reading Différance, Thinking Care: Dis-Automatizing the Future

This paper considers the accounts of automation and différance in Bernard Stiegler's late work to argue for a negentropic temporality of thinking-one best identifiable, it argues, in the durational pro-cess of reading. Taking up Stiegler's at times idiosyncratic interpretation of Derrida's différance, this paper explores how the temporizing pro-cess gestured to by this non-concept risks being excised by contemporary approaches to IT and computation. This temporal passage is one short-circuited by the automated "reading" undertaken by newly marketed "artificial intelligence" (themselves merely rehashes and incremental updates to data storage and processing programmes). Such automation works to reduce the time taken to "read" pro-cess information to zero, but in so doing collapses openings towards différance and, according to Stiegler, individuation and negentropic becoming. Every contingent temporality initiated by reading-through (as opposed to instantaneous identification and categorization) opens to protention, and this uncertain opening is the passage through which futures can be made through transindividuating work of politics, dialogue and critique. Taking up Stiegler's work on the care required for thinking (using a differential formula of his own) this paper concludes by suggesting that, to care for and open up liveable futures, time needs to pass by reading.

James Dutton is a Lecturer in English and Media Studies at UNSW Canberra. His recent essays have appeared in journals such as Paragraph, Philosophy & Rhetoric and Cultural Critique, and his book Proust Between Deleuze and Derrida: The Remains of Literature was published by Edinburgh University Press in 2022.

LILY ELSTON-LEADBETTER

University of Queensland

How to do Phenomenology Today?

Phenomenology is a diverse and interesting field of study. It is a philosophy, a human science research methodology, and a way of living. What this presentation does is outline the relationships between these

different elements of phenomenology and show how they work together. I will discuss how phenomenology is actually done, rather than questioning the validity of its concepts or tools. When we attempt to craft an honest analysis of human experience, we gather data about a phenomenon, we analyse this empirical information and then propose our philosophical conclusions. But it is not so simple, for there is little agreement on the ‘right' way to do phenomenology. I hope to lend some clarity to the situation by explaining a classical approach, then by highlighting how the methodology has developed with the new field of critical phenomenology. I ask: do these new approaches improve our capacity to analyse the enormous variety of human experience?

Lily is a PhD student at the University of Queensland focussing on critical phenomenology and she is the editor-in-chief of the student philosophy journal.

PETER EVANS

University of Queensland

The View from Somewhere: Phenomenology and Quantum Foundations

Quantum theory makes observation itself a problem: when---and for whom---does a measurement yield a determinate result? I argue that phenomenology provides non-optional constraints on any answer. Building on recent work by Steven French integrating HPS and phenomenology within quantum foundations, and drawing on Merleau-Ponty's ideas about operative intentionality, body-schema, and intersubjective alignment, I show how skilled, embodied, intersubjective practice makes instrumental readouts publicly accessible as measurement outcomes, in a way that is consonant with key structural features of quantum theory. The upshot is a modest program for collaboration between phenomenology and quantum foundations to clarify talk of 'objectivity' in the quantum context.

Dr Evans is a Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Queensland specialising in the philosophy of physics. His research interests include time, causation, and agency in modern physics, especially quantum foundations, and the epistemology and methodology of science, especially analogue experimentation. As such, his research is informed by the latest experimental and theoretical results from the physical sciences. He is currently Lead CI on an ARC DP exploring the role that agency plays both in the physics of embodied learning as well as quantum theory.

INGO FARINNONE

Heidegger’s Concepts of Dasein and Sein in Relation to Herder, Jacobi, Fichte, Hölderlin, and Feuerbach.

Heidegger’s concepts of Sein and Dasein, as well as his philosophy overall, stand in close, albeit unacknowledged, relation to modern German philosophy, especially German Idealism and its early and later critics, who took issue with Kant’s transcendental philosophy as a philosophical subjectivism. In this paper I argue that Heidegger’s philosophy must be situated within this modern philosophical context. The prevalent interpretations today that link Heidegger almost exclusively to Ancient Greek philosophy must be relativized in order to make room for the relevant German philosophical context of overcoming Kant’s subjective idealism and cognitivism. However, as I will show, Heidegger is not moving in the direction of an objective idealism either. In fact, Heidegger is on his way to a non-metaphysical, explicitly this-worldly, and even non-reductively materialist and holistic conception of philosophy.

Ingo Farin taught philosophy in Germany, the US, and in Australia. He translated one book by Husserl and one book by Heidegger from German into English and has been the co-authors of three edited volumes on Heidegger and a handful of articles on Heidegger. He is now happily retired from university life.

JOANNE FAULKNER

Macquarie University

Infancy and the articulation of public memory"

In recent decades, public history narratives have integrated the experiences and perspectives of children, particularly through the rise of oral history and memory studies, where the privileging of archival or documentary evidence has given way to description of what it was like to live in a particular time and place. This is especially so for recording victims' and survivors' accounts of historical events through oral testimony of experiences from childhood. A normative cluster of thoughts and feelings about childhood mediates these far distant memories, not only in their telling or curation of those reminisces for an audience, but also for the subjective experience of memory for those who remember. Distrust also lingers behind ‘memory,' often disparaged as an unreliable technology for retrieval of the past, especially where the source of this record is *childhood* memory. The child, as Locke taught, is a purer vessel for experience, but is an irresponsible custodian of memory.

This paper explores these significances of memory through its association with ‘the child,' and brings them into dialogue with the concept of ‘infancy,' as elaborated respectively by Agamben and Lyotard. The context of this work is an investigation of the evocation of ‘childhood' by museums and other public memory sites, to increase visitor engagement. I argue that the power of imagined childhood to optimise nostalgia and poignancy, supplement memory, and engage public attention, is volatile, its activation inciting differential effects, individually and collectively.

Joanne Faulkner is a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies and recovering philosopher, working at Macquarie University. Her books include Representing Aboriginal Childhood: the politics of memory and forgetting in Australia (Routledge 2023) and Young and Free: [post]colonial ontologies of childhood, history, and memory in Australia.

TALIA FELL

The University of Queensland

Dealing with Differences between Women: The Theories and Practices of the Italian Feminist Movement and the USA's Combahee River Collective

In this paper, I explore theories and practices that came out of the Italian feminist movement in the 1970s. This movement was distinctly anti-institutional and involved the formation of consciousness raising groups through their practice of '*autocoscienza*'. In these groups, women aimed to share their experiences and create a self-determined understanding of what it means to be a woman subject, both on the individual and collective level. One of the issues they faced was how to deal with differences between women, particularly differences in terms of skills, aptitudes, and positions of power. I discuss the way they dealt with this through their practice of '*affidamento*', or 'entrustment', which prioritised the formation of mentor-like relationships between women in the public sphere. I contrast these ideas and practices to those that came out of consciousness raising groups in the USA, particularly from the Combahee River Collective (CRC), which addressed differences between women in terms of categories like race and sexuality. The CRC, which included Audre Lorde as one of its members, argued for the effectiveness of fighting against oppression along identity lines, thus initiating the practice of 'identity politics'.

Talia Fell is a PhD candidate at The University of Queensland in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry. She researches the philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir, analysing what it means for women to relate to each other as authentic subjects. She has recently published the following journal articles: "Envy between Girls: A Philosophical Analysis of Simone de Beauvoir and Elena Ferrante" (2025) and "Hannah Arendt and Rubbish: The Objects that Belong Nowhere in the Human Condition" (2023).

OLIVER FELTHAM

American University of Paris

An Ecological Imagination of Time

This paper is part of a book on the collective imagination of time under the condition of ecological disaster. It sets out a framework for analyzing the kind of temporality at work in both ecosystems and popular ecological writing. To determine the scientific construction of ecological time, in this paper I draw on Catherine and Raphael Larrère's genealogy of the concept of ecology in *Du bon usage de la nature: pour une philosophie de l'environnement* (Paris: Flammarion, 2009). To determine how ecology shapes the collective imagination of time, I turn to classical popular ecological writing from Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac* to Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*. The goal of this enquiry is not to play a vulgar empiricist multiplication of population longevities against literary metaphors competing for archetypal status, but rather to identify how people already imagine themselves within ecological time in ordinary life, and, further, how such identifications might be amplified.

Oliver Feltham is an Australian philosopher working in Paris. He has published two works on the genealogy and comparative ontology of political action: Anatomy of Failure: Philosophy and Political Action (London: Bloomsbury 2013) and Destroy and Liberate: Political Action on the Basis of Hume (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2019). He translated Alain Badiou's Being and Event, wrote a monograph on Badiou's philosophy, and has published on Jacques Lacan. He has recently written two tragicomedies, Twig and Gull, on ecological catastrophe as lived through by animals. He is Professor of philosophy at the American University of Paris.

LUCIEN FINCH

Australian Catholic University

The Age of Anxiety as an Existential Vulnerability

The social-scientific community is in broad agreement: We are in an age of rapidly escalating anxiety levels. Various analyses have been conducted to explain this escalation; however, no epidemiological consensus has been reached. I argue that this impasse is the inevitable result of anxiety's reduction to cognitive-behavioural symptoms. This reduction blinds analysts to the existential and empirically unobservable aspects of anxiety outlined by thinkers such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger. These aspects, including death-awareness and freedom-before-possibility, are ever-present sources of human anxiety. As long as they are neglected, any attempt to explain our age of anxiety will fall short.

The integration of existential notions of anxiety into a causal account of the age of anxiety presents a methodological problem: If the types of anxiety described by Kierkegaard and Heidegger are permanent, how can they be said to have increased? To overcome this problem, I claim that it is not the existential components themselves that have changed, but our awareness of them. External conditions have heightened our existential self-awareness and therefore made us more anxious. This claim relies on a modification of Thomas Fuchs' notion of ‘existential vulnerability,' which describes a state in which one is continually confronted with the limits of existence.

I am a PhD candidate in philosophy at the Australian Catholic University. My research focuses on the 'age of anxiety,' which I investigate from a phenomenological perspective. I completed my honours in philosophy at the university of Melbourne in 2021 and then completed a two year research masters of philosophy at KU Leuven, Belgium. I have published two academic papers pertaining to the philosophy of mental illness. "

DARCY FORSTER

University of Sydney

A Metaphysical Reappraisal of the “Ego-Dissolution” Hypothesis

It is taken for granted in the literature that terms such as “ego death” and “ego-dissolution” offer accurate and valid descriptions of the psychedelic experience. However, this paper, drawing on an argument first formulated by 19th century German philosopher Friedrich Schelling, suggests that the ego-dissolution hypothesis is by no means self-evident and is, in fact, only one way of describing an experience could just as

well be described from the opposite direction: namely, as the world dissolving in my own intuition. This opens up a question: if there is nothing from the mere experience itself that suggests either I have dissolved in the world, or the world has dissolved in me, which account should we prefer? I intend to show why metaphysical questions such as these are still relevant today in contexts like psychedelic-assisted therapy.

Darcy Forster is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney completing a thesis on the philosophy of Friedrich Schelling.

DANIELE FULVI

Western Sydney University

Challenging the Moral Hazard Argument in Climate Change Mitigation: a Transitional Justice Approach

In this talk, I analyse the moral aspects of Carbon Dioxide Removal technologies (CDRs) for climate change mitigation, through what I call 'transitional justice.' In light of the recent acceleration of the climate crisis, the Climate Overshoot Commission has deemed climate overshoot as inevitable. Similarly, the IPCC has acknowledged that current pledges are not on track to meet the Paris goals. The IPCC has also clarified that CDRs are now "unavoidable" – together with more ambitious emissions reductions targets – if climate change mitigation is to be attempted. This raises the question: are CDRs compatible with a just transition, given the highly non-ideal circumstances in which such a transition is to be achieved? I argue that there is a strong case for adopting CDRs within a just transition, despite some potentially unjust facets of these technologies. While I do not contend that CDRs are morally good or acceptable simpliciter, I also show that framing CDRs as a moral hazard to climate change mitigation is not conducive to a just transition. Instead, I clarify that, in the current context of the climate crisis, it is a notional opposition to CDRs that constitutes an actual moral hazard to sufficient mitigation.

Daniele Fulvi is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University Node of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Synthetic Biology. He specialises in modern and contemporary continental philosophy and environmental ethics, and his current research focuses on the ethical and social dimensions of synthetic biology applied to climate change mitigation. He is also a member of the editorial team of the journal Environmental Philosophy, and associate editor of the Encyclopedia of the Anthropocene (forthcoming, Springer Nature).

ELLA GABRIEL

Deakin University

AI and the Limits of Empathy

In this paper, I argue, that current Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems are ontologically barred from engaging in genuine empathy (E). This is not a critique of AI's technical sophistication, nor an echo of Dreyfusian scepticism toward AI research, but rather, an argument grounded in the phenomenology of empathy itself and the kind of subject capable of its performance. Edith Stein describes empathy (E) as a unique mode of intentionality, wherein, one subject apprehends the inner life of another through their embodied presence and expressive actions without negating alterity. Further, Stein asserts that the fulfilment of this act is dependent on the empathiser possessing a unified self (U) and a lived body (L). Current AI systems, despite their technological sophistication, possess neither, and are thus excluded from the act of empathy (E). This thesis reveals that genuine empathy, when conceived of in its most pregnant sense, is an ontologically demanding act of intentionality beyond the grasp of contemporary AI systems – for the 'I' that matters in empathy is not the 'I' of intelligence, but rather, the 'I' of the self and the 'I' of the other.

I completed my Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours) at Notre Dame Fremantle, where my thesis applied Edith Stein's phenomenology of empathy to contemporary AI systems. I've since relocated to Melbourne and am in the process of commencing a PhD through Deakin. My proposed research brings Stein into conversation with Wittgenstein and Spinoza to explore the ontological and ethical limits of artificial empathy.

MIRA GIBSON

Investigating our aesthetic and ethical relationship with urban vegetation

With the growing number of people living within and spending time in urban areas, our relationship with urban greenery constitutes a significant amount of our ongoing relationships with plants. Yet, our relationships with plants in urban areas is undertheorized as environmental philosophy typically focuses on wilderness areas. I will begin by exploring the different aesthetic techniques that are commonly used to incorporate plants into urban spaces, with specific reference to Arnold Berleant's concept of observational landscapes and Ronald Hepburn's distinction between trivial and serious aesthetic appreciation of nature. From here, I will argue that these aesthetic techniques construct and reinforce the problematic objectification of urban plants and that this aesthetic objectification of plants encourages and justifies an anthropocentric ethical attitude, where plants are objects to be exploited by humans. I will exemplify this aesthetic and ethical relationship with plants with various examples of urban greenery around Brisbane, including the ANZAC Square Gardens and the Roma Street Gardens.

Mira Gibson is a passionate voice within Australian philosophy. She recently graduated from the University of Queensland with First Class Honours in Philosophy, where she wrote two theses focusing on the distinction between erotica and pornography with reference to romance novels and the analysis of aesthetic techniques utilised within the development of urban green spaces. She has presenting experience with Australasian Association of Philosophy Online 2024 Conference as well as multiple philosophy seminars held at UQ. Through this experience, she has come to greatly appreciate the value of public dialogue to challenge and inspire her ideas.

KYLE GLEADELL

Murdoch University

The Question Concerning Economy – A Heideggerian Critique of Economic Reason

In this paper, considering Heidegger's later work, I provide a critique of the proliferation of economic rationale in the contemporary world with a specific focus on the impact economic reason has on modern science. Throughout his life Heidegger was critical of the predominance of scientific and technological forms of reason that obscured the ontological basis of our thinking the world. Heidegger's critique of the research undertaken by modern science, which serves to secure an objectified account of nature, and his critique of the technological enframing (*Gestell*) of the world, are fairly well known. However, little work has been done on extending Heidegger's critique of scientific and technological reason to the economic rationalisation of the modern world. Hence, I take up this point of analysis and look to the way economic rationale frames the way we understand the modern world. As I argue, economic reason not only marks a shift in the emphasis placed on modern research but also alters scientific objectivity and instrumental forms of means-end reasoning. Economic rationale not only obscures the objectification inherent to scientific inquiry but also supplants the striving for scientific truth.

Kyle Gleadell is an early career academic working in philosophy and history. He received his doctorate in philosophy at Murdoch University in 2025. His PhD project examined the relation between modern science and our understanding of world and human being. His research draws on the work of Martin Heidegger, Edmund Husserl, and Hans-Georg Gadamer, as well as other thinkers situated in the tradition of phenomenology and hermeneutics. Other research interests include the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, as well as the theoretical work of Erwin Schrödinger and Werner Heisenberg.

LILY GRAINGER

University of Wollongong

Ecologies of Connection: Reclaiming Time and Relation in the Age of AI

Generative AI is increasingly mediating life practices, offering outputs that simulate human relation while bypassing the reciprocity and responsiveness that authentic connection and collaboration requires. In doing so, it risks isolating individuals from community and in turn from the 'slow' process that enable us to cultivate skill, meaning, and shared narrative and cultural production. The mass production of AI-generated content (or AI-slop) accelerates cultural homogeneity, threatening the diversity of voices and practices that sustain a vibrant cultural ecology. Thus, it promotes an individualist monoculture that amplifies already dominant

voices and deepens existing marginalisations, often supressing communities and enacting a form of digital colonialisation. By using frameworks of phenomenology and ecofeminism, this paper seeks to explore how AI outsourcing and over-reliance impacts an *ecology of connection* and argues for reclaiming slowness as an ethical and political act of resistance. By slowing down, engaging bodily with processes, and centring collaboration over competition, we can attempt to resist algorithmic acceleration and restore relational ecologies that support creativity, plurality and care.

Lily Grainger is a PhD candidate at the University of Wollongong, working at the intersection of ecofeminism, queer theory, and Milton studies. Her research challenges hierarchical dualisms within the literary tradition to reimagine texts through alternative philosophical frameworks. By recentring marginalized narratives of nature and the feminine, Lily contributes to ongoing conversations about embodiment, relationality, and the nonhuman. Her thesis investigates the entanglement of nature and bodies in John Milton's Paradise Lost (1674)

GREG HAINGE

University of Queensland

"Il n'y a plus de hors corrélation": Discorrelation in the Anthropocene.

Despite their differences, the philosophers referred to collectively as speculative realists are united in their opposition to the idea of Correlationism. Correlationism denotes the philosophical position (that has dominated Western philosophy since Kant) that we can never access objects, things, or reality independent of their correlation with human thought, language, or experience. This, for the speculative realists, leads to a deeply problematic, anthropocentric form of philosophy. I will argue that, since the advent of the Anthropocene, there can be no escape from the correlation. Referring to the current geological epoch in which human activity has had the dominant impact on the climate and environment, the Anthropocene marks the moment when the anthropogenic mass of our planet exceeds its total biomass. More than this, the anthropogenic mass we have created is inextricably entwined with the biomass as microplastics (amongst other anthropogenic materials) inhabit and transform all living organisms, including humans.

What is needed at this juncture then is not an escape from the Correlation via a return to the great outdoors (Meillassoux), nor an object-oriented ontology (Harman), nor a scientific nihilistic realism (Brassier) but, I will claim, the means to distort the correlation, a discorrelation that recognises the ineluctability of the correlation but not its current form.

Greg Hainge is Professor of French and Head of the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Queensland. A Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, he is the author of 3 monographs, including *Noise Matters: Towards an Ontology of Noise*, and over 60 articles and book chapters that cover a diverse range of disciplines, including Critical Theory, literature, film, sound and music. He is co-Editor-in-Chief of *Culture, Theory and Critique*, and co-editor of the Bloomsbury Academic book series ex:centrics.

FINNEGAN HASSEY

University of New South Wales

A Chance for Freedom: Inclusion and Participation in Hannah Arendt's American Republic

I argue that Hannah Arendt's portrayal of the American Revolution in On Revolution (1963) is grounded in the construction of a novel foundation myth which envisions the political structure of the United States as predicated on the same notions of inclusive recognition and debate which comprise her pluralist, participatory understanding of political life. In describing her narrative of the Revolution as an activity of mythmaking, I do not just emphasise the degree to which her narrative is aesthetically embellished or misleading about actual persons and events. Rather, Arendt's account is mythic in the manner of its deliberate construction: she continuously draws from an established array of mythic devices and literary conventions to advance her own political and philosophical framework. To support this claim, I examine three conventions in particular: the prominent role of heroic action in her account of political performance, her emphasis on the constitution of the human world through fiction-generating activities of founding, and her view of collective remembrance as a preservatory mechanism for the sanctity of the political. Through this discussion, I contend that Arendt took up her defence of the American Republic as a defence of the possibility of freedom and political revitalisation in her lifetime.

Finnegan Hassey is a PhD Candidate in Philosophy with the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales, working under the supervision of Associate Professors James Phillips and Jessica Whyte. His work combines research in political philosophy as well as social and intellectual history to engage with historical and contemporary forms of resistance and radical community-building. He has a particular interest in the academic study of human rights and rightlessness, especially in the work of the German American philosopher Hannah Arendt.

MADELINE HELYAR

University of Melbourne

Poetic Experience and Epistemic Value

Sartre contends that unlike the prose writer, who uses language to convey meaning, the poet refuses to use language as an instrument of communication. Instead, the poet treats words as objects in themselves, presenting them as a painter might present colours or forms on a canvas. In Sartre's view, poetry is an ‘art of things', unconcerned with truth and unable to reveal the nature of the world in the way that prose can.

This paper argues that although Sartre is right in observing that poetry presents language as an object, he is mistaken in dismissing it as incapable of disclosing truth or offering insight. Whereas our ordinary experience presents language as a transparent vehicle for meaning, our experience of poetry affords us an awareness of language itself, in all its opacity and imprecision. The poetic experience reveals how our words and concepts can fail to capture certain aspects of the world, highlighting the limitations of language and conceptual thought. In doing so, poetic experience can draw us closer to those aspects that ordinarily lie just beyond our linguistic and conceptual grasp, perhaps providing us a better purchase on them than ever before.

Madeline Helyar is completing a master's degree in philosophy at the University of Melbourne. Her philosophical interests centre around phenomenology, aesthetics, and the philosophy of language and linguistics. Her master's thesis looks at the nature and value of the poetry, specifically exploring the difference between poetic and ordinary experiences of language.

KAT HENRY

University of Melbourne

Smooth-time: what long durational performance art might reveal about time and temporalities

This paper puts forward a possible definition of time arsing from an ongoing interrogation into temporalities of performance explored by durational performance artist, theatre director and University of Melbourne performance researcher Dr. Kat Henry (Faculty of Fine arts and Music). The paper uses as a case study a performance originating in 2017 by Dr. Henry called TimePod. TimePod was a room-sized, sculptural temporal isolation chamber that was sound-proofed, allowed in no natural light, and within it held no indicators of the passage of clock time. Kat inhabited the TimePod for 240 hours – 10 days without leaving or having any interaction with clock-time artbiters. In the TimePod project she applied a practical three-tiered process of acknowledgement, interruption and de-structuring, and encounter, to significantly disrupt clock-time temporality. In this paper Kat discusses the TimePod project, and how long durational performance art might disrupt and interrogate particular temporalities. She offers an idea of constructed temporality, which exists as a practical expression of the condition of change, which arises from what Kat terms smooth-time - a conception of the fundament material of time.

Dr. Kat Henry is a lecturer at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, where she coordinates the Master of Theatre (Directing) course. As well as having a long career as a theatre director at Queensland Theatre, Sydney Chamber Opera, and Melbourne Theatre Company, among others, Kat is an internationally acclaimed performance artist. She holds a PhD from Monash University in performance philosophy, researching durational performance art, time and temporality. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Performing Arts (First Class Honours), and a Postgraduate Diploma of Directing from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA).

KELLY HERBISON

The University of Melbourne

'Seeing With' Style in Merleau-Ponty

Merleau-Ponty's concept of style plays a general explanatory role in his writings on how we meaningfully organise and identify thematic unity in the world. Particularly interesting to me are his suggestions that aspects of the intentional field are propagated when we grasp the style of the artwork or other. Though Merleau-Ponty does not use the language of propagation often, I suggest that this term helpfully highlights the thought that one's encounters with others and aesthetic objects can disclose aspects of the intentional field which may have otherwise gone unnoticed by her. On the basis of this, I propose that to stylise is to 'see with' the other or object. This reframing underscores the collaborative and – I hope to show – potentially ongoing ways that we are moved by objects and others when we grasp their style.

Kelly is a PhD candidate in Philosophy at The University of Melbourne.

REBECCA HILL

RMIT University

Reading Heraclitus with the River, Today

This paper engages with Heraclitus. Part One compares Heraclitus with the consciousness of modernity-coloniality and Part Two reads him in relation to the fundamental Indigenous law of care and respect for Country. Some sayings of Heraclitus are posited in a neutral voice and given without beginning or end (D30). He describes a*kosmos* in which there is stepping into river(s) (D12) and the coming of the sun new every day (D6). This is a situated thinking of*phusis* which sits in tension with the neutral voice of D30. The consciousness of coloniality-modernity is also posited without limits of beginning or end, but coloniality-modernity gives space and time as out of joint and is striated by the interests of capital. Indigenous thinkers teach that the law of respect and care for Country never changes. The law has ethical force and is not neutral. In a Yolŋu world, "we are all mothers, in relationship with things as a mother "¦ and as a child" (*Songspirals*), and Irene Watson, a woman of the Meintangk and Tanganekald, "works towards a more proper place, the place where the grandmothers are sitting." Bunitj clan elder Bill Neidjie teaches "earth is my mother or my father."

Rebecca Hill lives near the Birrarung on Wurundjeri Country. She conducts research in feminist philosophy, decolonial theory, and critical Indigenous studies. She is co-editor of Topologies of Sexual Difference: Space in Philosophy and Art after Irigaray (SUNY, 2025) and the author of "Spirits of Resistance: a Politics of Feeling in Boochani's 'A Letter from Manus Island' and No Friend but the Mountains" in the Journal of Australian Studies. Rebecca is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT. She is a codirector of the Luce Irigaray Circle and the convener of the Philosophies of Difference Group.

MAX HODDINOTT

The University of New South Wales

Abu Ghraib, Human Rights, and the Politics of Victimhood

Soon after the public broadcast of now-notorious photographs depicting the torture of Iraqi detainees inside Abu Ghraib prison, it became (and remains) commonplace to comprehend these acts as human rights violations. In this paper, I revisit prominent reactions to the scandal in order to pose a series of critical questions about the political dimension of this human rights frame. Placing the prison torture alongside other incidents in occupied Iraq which did not attract the same kind of attention, I argue that the embrace of a human rights frame contributed to the emergence of a hierarchy of victimhood within which certain harms were afforded far greater attention than others. Rather than accepting this hierarchisation as spontaneous or self-evident, I ask what it is about the Abu Ghraib scandal that saw it rapidly elevated to the position of paradigmatic human rights violation. In particular, I contend that this frame draws upon a historically dominant conception of human rights which takes immediate, direct, bodily, and easily traceable harm as its object of concern. In making this argument, I aim to problematise perceptions of human rights as antipolitical

and challenge the progressive impulse to expand their scope in radical or otherwise unconventional directions.

Max Hoddinott is a PhD candidate in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. His research draws upon critical theoretical resources from philosophy and law to contemplate the politics of human rights, with a focus on the 2003-04 occupation of Iraq.

JINGNI HUANG

The Semi-Living Language of Generative AI: From Merleau-Ponty's The Prose of the World to Machine Prompts

If Merleau-Ponty were alive today, how might he respond to the now-familiar phenomenon of humans “flirting” with chatbots through language? In his unfinished work *The Prose of the World*, Merleau-Ponty examines the distinction between “spoken language” (*langage parlé*) and “speaking language” (*langage parlant*), and between “instituted speech” (*parole instituée*) and “instituting speech” (*parole instituante*), conceiving language as the embodied extension of gesture and style. From this phenomenological perspective, this paper asks whether the language generated by large language models can ever qualify as *langage parlant*, rather than merely *langage parlé* . Without embodiment, is AI language reduced to statistical correlation, stripped of expressivity? While much current discourse dismisses AI language as an inferior derivative or a mere “stochastic parrot,” I propose instead to read it through Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of language as a new occasion to rethink expression, institution, and style.

Jingni is a Ph.D. student at National Chengchi University, Taiwan. Her research focuses on human–machine communication and the philosophy of technology. She is currently working on her dissertation, which adopts a phenomenological approach to explore “deathbots” and their implications for communication and mourning.

ANDREW INKPIN

University of Melbourne

Merleau-Ponty on motor intentionality and the act of painting

Merleau-Ponty’s talk of ‘motor intentionality’ in Phenomenology of Perception has been a major source of interest in his work, due both to its clear relevance in understanding the distinctiveness of embodied agency and the characteristically vague ways in which Merleau-Ponty presents it. It is not obvious, for example, what precisely Merleau-Ponty thinks motor intentionality is, how this notion should be applied in understanding Schneider’s behavioural abnormalities, nor how – beyond the suggestion that it is unimpaired – it is relevant to conceiving normal subjectivity. The aim of this talk is to consider whether and how the notion of motor intentionality can be applied to the act of painting, as another case of embodied action that Merleau-Ponty considers in later work. I begin by reviewing what (relatively little) Merleau-Ponty says specifically about motor intentionality in Phenomenology and some of the interpretative problems this gives rise to. Having proposed a reading of this notion that maximizes its exegetic and philosophical plausibility, I turn to Merleau-Ponty’s discussions of the painter at work – particularly Matisse and Cézanne – and consider the extent to which these are illuminated by and/or constitute a problem case for Merleau-Ponty’s conception of motor intentionality.

Andrew Inkpin is a lecturer in modern European philosophy at the University of Melbourne.

PAMELA ISAACS

La Trobe University

Sensation in Art: the Nonsensuous Response

My paper will examine nonsensuous perception and the haptic in art together with their wider implications for shaping ways of being in the world. Vision has been privileged in aesthetic experience, however art as a "being of sensation" (Deleuze) has the power to activate a more multi-sensory, embodied, affective modality. The haptic/optic opposition of aethetic theory contrasts a distanced, representaional and anthropocentric

visuality of the optic with a close, embodied, tactile, felt visuality of the haptic. I will trace this contrast from Alois Riegl, Henri Maldiney, Deleuze and Guattari through to Brian Massumi and his notion of nonsensuous perception. Taken together the haptic and nonsensuous perception reveal art as a perceptual field which has the power to open up spaces for challenging traditional understandings of the subject, allowing for an attunement to and sensing with the world, which recognises the liveliness of everything.

I am currently enrolled in a PhD in Visual Art at La Trobe University in Bendigo. I completed a Masters in Visual Art in 2022, looking at folding and unfolding processes, drawing on Deleuze's The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque. My current project looks at pattern and repetition in art as expressive of the liveliness of the more-than-human.

RICHARD IVESON

University of Queensland

Physics of Philosophy: When and Where Light has No Future

In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant leverages a commonsense understanding of light to justify the elevated status of transcendental Subject, wherein the cognition of pre-existing relations of simultaneity make it possible to account for changes of state based on contiguity. But what becomes of spacetime once the notion of simultaneity no longer holds? Under what conditions could an instantaneous interaction such as that disclosed by faster-than-light transport take place, one that has no regard for temporal linearity or spatial contiguity but which is nonetheless dependent upon the order in which its actions are undertaken? When mediated locality necessarily fails to produce certainty, it discloses *non*locality instead as the prior condition of predictive certainty. Two things become clear: first, certainty is not related to prediction and second, having superluminal transport as its minimum requirement, certainty is thus irreducible to physical interaction at every level. Turning then to the role of light in space-like separated events, we find a measure of the *im*possibility of both perfect prediction into the future *and* perfect retrodiction into the past. In negotiating incommensurable relations of space and time, light imposes the limit that renders them distinct: the instantaneous as the timeless *a priori* of time in concert with the infinite as the unbounded *a priori* of space. Hence, at the event horizon of a black hole, light is stripped of its future by spatial distribution in its pure form, by the instant and infinite impossibility of being as becoming.

I received my PhD at Goldsmiths College, University of London, after which I was awarded a three-year postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Queensland. Since then I have taught at universities in Viet Nam and London and am currently Editor-in-Chief of Culture, Theory & Critique. My most recent book, Being and Not Being: End Times of Posthumanism and the Future Undoing of Philosophy, was published in 2023.

TIMOTHY JACKSON

University of Melbourne

Excess and effective theory: ontogenetic computation with Gilbert and Georges(s)

The physicalist paradigm which undergirds modern science is based on the notion of “effective theorisation”. The development of an effective theory is predicated on identifying those properties of fundamental variables which remain constant at the spatiotemporal scales relevant to the theory's domain of application. Effective theories are grounded on invariance – all describable variation is computable as a vector “within” a space predefined by static boundary conditions. The question of the *genesis* of the state or phase space (the theory's “ontology”) is formally meaningless. There is no outside. Whilst effective theories are generally considered *non*-fundamental, in practice this question of (onto)genesis is indefinitely deferred by an approach which can always nest a “higher level” theory inside a “lower” one, a frame within a frame, without ever having to “solve” the frame problem. In this talk, I will subject this paradigm to a critique derived from the work of Gilbert Simondon, Georges Canguilhem, and Georges Bataille. Focussing on the key notion of *excess* – the pre-individual; the generativity of life; the sovereign expenditure of insubordination – I will ask the apparently illegitimate question: how might we account for the *ontogenesis* of effective theory and computability, critiquing their presuppositions without denying their extraordinary “success”?

Dr Timothy N. W. Jackson is an evolutionary systems scientist with a philosophy habit. His work on chemical ecology and the evolution - molecular, anatomical, and behavioural - of the molecules and critters involved, has forced him to think.

ANNIE JAMES

Christ University

Intruding agencies: A critical autoethnography of menstrual pain through thing-power

This paper draws on critical autoethnography to analyse four years of writing documenting my menstrual pain. I argue that the body, in this context, does not act as a single or stable object, but as a shifting assemblage of vital forces — an interstitial field where object and subject fold into each other. Drawing on Jane Bennett's vital materialism and Jean-Luc Nancy's theorisation of the body as intruder, I frame the forces of muscular cramps, inflamed nerves, endometrial shedding, and inherited reproductive histories not as passive biological facts but as agents with 'thing-power', both intrusive and irreducibly material. Rather than simply positioning menstrual pain as a disruption, I argue that it constitutes a method of qualitative inquiry in its own right, expanding the dominant biopsychosocial ontology, which continues to render the body as passive matter, opening space to consider an account of more-than-human agencies. Here, writing the body becomes a way of attuning to its intruding agencies, not simply to assimilate them into human agency, but to think with and through them.

I'm a fifth-year PhD candidate in health psychology at Christ University, Hosur Road. My work applies feminist new materialisms and STS (science and technology studies) to qualitative health research on women's reproductive and mental health. My doctoral study explores how patients navigate more-than-human ecologies in fertility care in South India through grounded theory.

DANICA JANSE VAN VUUREN

Co-author Dr Patrick McConville

Deakin University

Moving Beyond Stigma and Blame: A Phenomenology of Desire and Choice in Suicidal Ideation in Depressed Patients

When patients are diagnosed with suicidal depression, many are met with stigma and blame from their treating physician. It is often asserted in clinical commentary that (1) such patients have a selfish desire to die, such as to end their own pain, at the devastating expense of those they impact; and (2) that such patients are ultimately in control of whether they choose to act on their suicidal ideation (SI). When patients act on their SI, they are not only often blamed, but this blame rests on the assumption that they freely chose to end their life. Such an attitude of blame can impact quality, accuracy, and effectiveness of care provided. Through an evaluation of disruptions in temporality, agency, and drive via what Thomas Fuchs terms existential feelings of illbeing, I show phenomenologically that such patients often inhabit a very different state of being compared to that of their treating physician. I argue that such patients do not typically want to die but feel incapable of choosing not to end their life. Subsequently, I show that there emerges an ethical need to address patients in a just manner that responds coherently to the structure of their disorder.

I hold a PhD in Philosophy from Deakin University. My research primarily focuses on the overlap between phenomenology and psychiatry, where I aim to provide a deeper and practically relevant phenomenological understanding of cases in major depression, suicide, and trauma. The paper to be presented is adapted from my work in a co-authored chapter with Dr Patrick McConville.

KATRINA JAWORSKI

University of South Australia

More-than-human agencies in cinematic representations of male suicideIn contemporary Western contexts, suicide is often understood as an explicitly individual choice and act. This understanding has been advanced by an anthropocentric perspective, which sees suicide as a thoroughly human phenomenon. But what if the exercise of agency in suicide is more than human? In response, this paper examines the gendering of male suicide as an important site of understanding the socio-cultural constitution of suicide. I begin by briefly discussing traditional and more progressive ways of understanding male suicide. Drawing on elements of Judith Butler's and Karen Barad's philosophical work, I thentheorisemale suicide as performative byanalysingselected scenes from the Hollywood films,*Leaving Las Vegas*,*Monster's Ball*and*A Star is Born*,

with each film representing a different method of suicide. In so doing, I unpack the way human and non-human agencies engender violence in male representations of suicide. Throughout the paper, I argue that agency in male suicide is more-than-human because that which is human depends on non-human materialities. I also argue that non-human materialities offer new possibilities of challenging hegemonic, and by extension, masculinist interpretations of male self-destruction.

Katrina Jaworski is an Associate Professor in Cultural Studies at the University of South Australia, Australia. Her research focuses on the agency of suicide, with attention to gender, sexuality, relational ethics and poetry. Sometimes she also works on Rwandan genocide, the philosophy of dying bodies, trauma and the cultural politics of thinking. Alongside numerous articles, to date she has sole-authored The Gender of Suicide (Routledge, 2016) and co-edited Women Supervising and Writing Doctoral Dissertations (Lexington, 2015), Rethinking Madness: Interdisciplinary and Multicultural Reflections (Brill, 2020) and Reframing Suicide: The Development of Critical Suicide Studies (Routledge, 2024).

CONOR JEDAM

The University of Queensland

Dystopia Now! The Political Function of Imagining the Future

In this paper, I argue that imagining utopian futures is an ethically and politically important way in which we express ourselves as future-oriented beings, especially when hopeful futures seem implausible. When we engage with utopian narratives, either eutopian or dystopian, we perform a unique type of prolepsis which places the life-narrative of the audience in dialogue with the fictional narrative of the work. Prolepsis, a concept most associated with literary theory, understood in a general sense as the evocation of a future event, is the concept which gives structure to the temporal and ontological relationship between the world of the imaginer(s) and the world which is imagined. By drawing from Mark Currie's tripartite understanding of prolepsis, I demonstrate how engagement with utopian narratives constitutes narratological, structural and rhetorical prolepses. Furthermore, I argue that the temporal and ontological disruption entailed by this combination of prolepses allows for new ways of considering and criticising the present, which in turn informs how we think, act, and live as political agents. Ultimately, this paper works towards a philosophical understanding of how imagined futures inform how we inhabit the world today.

Conor Jedam is a student at The University of Queensland, undertaking a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Philosophy in 2025. His thesis explores the connections between the utopian impulse, prolepsis, hope, fear, agency, and Indigenous temporalities to explain how the practice of imagining and telling stories about dystopian futures allows for ethical relationships and political agency in a chaotic world. He is also interested in feminist philosophy, environmental philosophy, and aesthetics. Conor's other recent philosophical activities include his role as student ambassador with the UQ Critical Thinking Project and reviewing for this year's edition of Exordium, UQ's Student Philosophy e-Journal.

FELICITY JOSEPH

University of New England

Radical change and the epiphanic moment: Some questions concerning an existential understanding of mind-change and its political implications

It is not uncommon to change our minds, but to change them radically – for instance from one side of the political spectrum to another, or from theism to atheism or vice versa – are arguably events worthy of philosophical attention. Drawing upon the traditions of phenomenology and existentialism, and Sophie Grace Chappell’s recent work on the ethics of ‘epiphanies’, I consider some puzzle cases of radical changes of mind and consider what qualities they might have in common, whether they might be seen as authoritative, and whether and how these can be understood as phenomenological events in lived time that yield a new phenomenological ontology, i.e. that reveal a new vision of the structure of the world. I consider such radical change against the background of the current political climate and ask: what if the change that was meant to herald a newly progressive era was not the right kind of change? I distinguish between change at an institutional level and existential change at the level of individual ‘hearts and minds’, and suggest that a phenomenologically-informed politics needs to pay more attention to the latter.

Dr Felicity Joseph is a Lecturer in Philosophy and Political Theory at the University of New England, Australia. Her PhD thesis was on the phenomenology of embodiment, and she has a particular interest in political applications of phenomenological and existentialist thought. She is a co-editor of The Bloomsbury Handbook of Existentialism (2024) and her recent paper 'The Degendering of Virtue: Beauvoir and Wollstonecraft on Virtue and Equality' was shortlisted for the 2025 Annette Baier Prize by the Australasian Association of Philosophy. She is currently researching the political philosophy of care work.

KALENGA LEON KALUMBA

Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy

Centre is everywhere and margins are nowhere": Exploring Marshall McLuhan's acoustic world.

Marshall McLuhan provided us with an unusual conceptualisation of the electric world. McLuhan, who rose to prominence and died prior to the dot-com boom, provided us with useful insight into how electric media reshapes us as individuals and collectives. The proliferation of electric media has for McLuhan suggested that we have moved from a visual (sequential and specialised) world to an acoustic (non-linear and retribalised) world. What ontological questions does the use of electric media impose on us. Furthermore, what does this suggest about the role of the philospher, the artist and so on.

I completed my Master's thesis at Deakin University on reconsidering the idea of Blackness beyond the scope of ontology. I have delivered two lecture series at the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy. I am interested in ontology, mimetics, virtuality, eschatology and finding new interfaces of being that resist existing frameworks.

LUARA KARLSON-CARP

University of Melbourne

Negating Critique: Performativity and the End of Limits

If critique begins with the claim that experience is subjectively conditioned, then inherent to critique is the problematic of how to account for—and how to immanently account for—the limits of this conditioning mediation. Since its incipient Kantian moment, critical thought has continuously sought to undermine any transcendence assumed to ground such limits or to provide epistemic criterion for their determination. Judith Butler's claims about performativity constitute one particularly influential effort in this regard, one elaborated as a theory of gender, but which provides an account of a general social ontology. Butler seems to follow Foucault's Nietzschean-inspired reorientation of the Kantian project as grounded in an historical a priori, where limits of knowledge are constituted in and through contingent and local practices of power that can be analysed in their specificity. But in their formulation of performativity, Butler's uptake of Foucauldian genealogy largely neglects situated historical analysis, and seems to retain only the aspects of genealogy concerned with denaturalising hypostasised ontological and normative statements. As performativity is not presented as the modality of gender in relation to a given dispositif, it constitutes less a historical analytics of power than a reflexive ontology of materialisation. Butler's critical framework therefore loses Foucault's historicisation of the a priori, as well as Kant's formalist one. The critical gesture in performativity instead becomes the very claim about what limits are: performative effects of discursive practice. Critique is therefore no longer about a relation to the limits of knowledge, but is enacted through the assertion of an ontological process. As such, whilst effective in undermining and preventing naturalised ontological claims, it cannot account for its own limits. Critique becomes wholly immanetised at the expense of a totalisation of performativity as mediation without limit. This raises the question of what critique might constitute absent the structural negativity once thought to be its condition.

Luara Karlson-Carp is an MA candidate at the University of Melbourne and the Secretary of the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy. Her writing can be found in Technophany: A Journal of Philosophy and Technology and the Sydney Review of Books.

SOFIA KARTAVTSEVA

University of New South Wales

Queering the Sadeian: a genealogy of the sexually undetermined body.

This paper is presenting a genealogical account of the Sadeian body as queer. I seek to explicate the value of his libertine novels as underscoring the rigid gender dichotomy at the time of its solidification in post-revolutionary modernity. Drawing on the close reading of libertine sexual conduct, I compose an account of embodiment that consistently undoes gender difference through action. Sade's monist ontology of nature encompasses polymorphic corporeality that, while engaged in an ostentatious performance of hierarchical power relations, defies expectation by engaging characters in a network of resignifications through gender transitivity, cross-dressing and shifting sexual object preferences. In his formulation of sexuality as public and directly sustaining political power, Sadeian text stretches the terrain of the possible modes of existence.

Sofia Kartavtseva is a Master's by Research candidate at the University of New South Wales, specialising in continental philosophy and queer theory. She holds a BA (summa cum laude) with an honours thesis in aesthetics, focusing on the problem of the open work of art. Sofia is a casual academic at UNSW, tutoring in first-year Introduction to Philosophy and second-year Political Philosophy, and has previously held a research assistant position at The International Laboratory for Logic, Linguistics and Formal Philosophy at HSE Moscow and taught high school philosophy. She plans to commence doctoral studies upon completion of her Master's.

JACK KEENAN

The University of Melbourne

Gianni Vattimo and the meaning of rock'n'roll

In The End of Modernity, Gianni Vattimo identifies a "pathos of authenticity" as a characteristic of a reactive response to the loss of meaning associated with modernity (23). This 'reactive authenticity' attempts to ""reappropriate"" the meaning lost to industrial and technological processes by establishing a zone where human"use-values" have predominance over (non-human) "exchange-values" (22). In short, authenticity attempts to outflank nihilism by regaining stable meaning in human-centred activities. In Vattimo's eyes this is a losing game, for nihilism will inevitably catch up and show the lie of stable meaning by revealing the true nature of values to lie in processuality and indefinite transformation (21).

My paper will investigate how Vattimo's analysis might be applied to the history of rock'n'roll and the promises of meaning, freedom and authenticity that it has offered mass culture. Were these promises illusory from the get-go? Or was there a moment when they were - or could have been - substantiated? These questions will be pursued with reference to the legacies of existentialism, the rise of 'Hip' as a cultural form and the music of artists like Robert Johnson and the Rolling Stones.

I'm a student at the University of Melbourne. I presented a paper at last year's conference on Rancière and Descartes.

BEAU KENT

Deakin University

Quasi-Transcendental Structures?: Between Sartre and Foucault

In her paper "Six Senses of Critique for Critial Phenomenology", Lisa Guenther gives one definition of critique as 'a quasi-transcendental, historically-grounded study of particular lifeworlds'. In a brief explanation of the term 'quasi-transcendental' in a footnote, Guenther names two concepts that seem to approximate the quasi-transcendental quite closely: the practico-inert from Jean-Paul Sartre's Critique of Dialectical Reason and the historical a priori as deployed by Michel Foucault in The Archaeology of Knowledge. This paper attempts to understand what a 'quasi-transcendental' structure for critical phenomenology might look like given these two very different conceptual touchstones. Guenther's aim is to give an account of phenomenological structure which is constitutive of experience but which is simultanesouly historically contingent, that is, constituted. Can this be found between Sartre and Foucault? I suggest that the answer may be found in a conception of the quasi-transcendental which she explicitly turns away from, that of Jacques Derrida.

Beau Kent (he/they) is a Masters student in philosophy at Deakin University. His philosophical work centers predominantly around critical phenomenology, adoption studies, and deconstruction. He is currently working on a thesis on critical phenomenology and intercountry adoption archives. They also currently work as a research assistant at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation.

JAMES KENT

Co-author Gene Flenady

Monash University

Enlightened Myth: Hegel's Christianity via Horkheimer and Adorno

Arguably one of the major antagonisms of our current historical moment is configured around the problem of tradition. For some, the historical traditions that we inherit as a society are either something to conserve entirely; for others, they are to be progressively overcome in the name of human freedom. In this paper we suggest that one way into the problem of tradition is via a reading of Hegel’s account of Christianity, as refracted through Horkheimer and Adorno’s account of myth in Dialectic of Enlightenment. We argue that such a reading serves both to exemplify that dialectic, and to sharpen Hegel’s attempts to make explicit a demythologising movement within the Christian myth itself. For Hegel, this demythologising movement does not result simply in a post-religious secularism but rather in a certain configuration of the rational and sensible, one that aims to preserve myth and tradition as the ground of thinking while also understanding its own status. While Hegel’s reinterpretation of Christianity as an “Enlightened Myth” is not a solution to the antagonism between conservativism and progressivism today, it nonetheless serves to bring into sharper relief the stakes and structure of that antagonism.

James Kent is assistant lecturer at the University of Melbourne. He works at the intersection of the philosophy of history, aesthetics and ethics.

Gene Flenady is an Education-Focused Lecturer in Philosophy at Monash University. His current research mobilises the resources of German idealism and the critical social theory tradition to normatively assess the implications of new technologies for tertiary pedagogy.

SCOTT KIRKLAND

Trinity College

Figures: On Agamben's Christian Problem

This paper is concerned with the status of the figure in the work of Giorgio Agamben. In his recent work on the interpretation of scripture, Agamben centres Auerbach's notion of the *figura* in order to attempt to illuminate Benjamin's concept of the dialectical image. The figure is able to be lifted from the narration of a historical continuum in order to "flash up" in the instant of interpretation, and so serves to elucidate Agamben's conception of the messianic. However, as will be shown, Agamben has to implicate himself in a history of anti-semitic interpretation, in which the figure can only be retroactively produced in light of the moment of fulfilment. That is, figures from Jewish history become figures precicely at the moment at which the fulfilment arrives. This paper challenges Agamben's reading of Auerbach by turning to Ernst Kantorowicz's reading of Dante, and by in turn reading Kantorowicz and Auerbach against Agamben's concerns. This paper concludes with some reflections on Agamben's concern with the middle voice and Kantorowicz's revisioning of the sovereignty of *humanitas* over *homo* in his invocation of Virgil's crowning and mitiring of Dante pilgrim over himself in the reflexive formula: "te sopra te *corono e mitrio*".

Scott Kirkland is a Political Theologian working at Trinity College, Melbourne.

MELVIN KIVINEN

Australian Catholic University

Recognition and Overcoming De-Identification

Following the theorisation of ideological interpellation advanced by Althusser, and structuralist theories of the subject following Lacan, critiques of ideology have come to offer important resources for comprehending and resisting forms of domination. In the works of Slavoj Å½iÅ¾ek and Alain Badiou, we are provided the means for de-identification with dominant ideological structures in the singularity of the “act” or the “event”. However, as critics have pointed out, these theories are often missing their other side “” a theory of counter- or re-identification for navigating the overcoming such regimes of domination. This pays an undue emphasis to the “ethical” in its singularity which obscures the ramifications for our everyday affairs – how we take ourselves to be, the dispensation of justice, and the praise or denunciation of certain behaviours and social formations.

To this end, I return to a concept which has been received with hostility by this tradition: recognition, as first formulated by Fichte and Hegel, and revived by “recognition theory”. Whereas in Lacan, recognition has been reserved to the “mirror stage” or a flirtation with Kojève, reducing recognition to the status of an imaginary illusion, by returning to the conception of the subject and object in the works of Benjamin and Adorno, and Adorno's theory of mimesis, we may draw out how recognition remains an essential concept for not only breaking with certain regimes of misrecognition (de-identification), but develop conceptions of ourselves and others grounded in a form of recognition which allows us to develop this second side (re-identification). This provides certain correctives between these traditions as mediated by Adorno and Benjamin: an enriched conception of the subject for recognition theory, and a stricter normative core for ideology critique.

I'm a doctoral candidate at the Australian Catholic University, interested in the intersections between critical theory, classical German philosophy, political economy, recognition theory, and psychoanalysis.

JASPER KLOSS

The University of Melbourne

A Contemporaneous Witness

Gillian Rose's The Broken Middle turns upon a re-reading of Kierkegaard's leap of faith”a ‘moment' characterised by a ‘suspension of the ethical'. It is a work, and a reworking of Kierkegaard's momentary suspension, set against all those images of Hegel's philosophical System as an ‘eternally arrested movement'. It is equally opposed to the repeated attempts at abandoning Hegel which follow from them, staged by a ‘tradition of the new, which understands itself to be “modern” and hence without tradition'. Rose opts for the middle, perpetually broken; it is always reconfigured in time and history, never beyond the inheritance of our ancient society. What, then, is the status of the ‘moment'“”arresting, fixed”in Rose's writing?

Reading the ‘contemporaneous witness' of The Broken Middle alongside Rose's critique of Walter Benjamin's own momentary ‘now-time' (Judaism and Modernity), with its ‘aberrated mourning' and ‘stasis of desertion', this paper will develop the connection between the temporal/historical dimension of Rose's middle and her reflections on mourning, modernity and tradition. Bringing together the terms, ‘suspension', ‘witnessing' and ‘authorship', as they appear in The Broken Middle, it will assess how Rose holds to the category of the ‘moment' without severing its ties to time, movement and history.

I am a student and writer at The University of Melbourne, working in the field of contemporary literature and continental (post-Hegelian) philosophy. I have completed my honours thesis, which engaged both the experimental poetics of the Language School and the philosophy of conceptual art, and am now turning to opportunities for further study. My writing has appeared in Jacobin and Cordite Magazines.

CHEUK YIN KO

Hong Kong Baptist University

How does technology affect art development in modern society?

Art is an essential part of human life and is deeply integrated into our daily experiences. However, the rise of AI has transformed how we create and appreciate art. In the first part, I will explain how art has become a symbol for educated people and niche culture lovers (in Hong Kong, we call them “indie” people), drawing on Benjamin’s idea of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. Since art has become easier to access, people can now upload photos of artworks to present themselves as cultured or educated—especially influencers on social media. By doing so, they gain more followers with this “educated” image, which in turn provides them with greater opportunities to grow their businesses online. In this way, art becomes commercialized. In the second part, I will discuss whether generating artwork with AI changes its meaning. With the rise of AI, the mode of art creation has shifted, as the process of making art has been greatly simplified. Yet, I do not believe this is a positive change, as it significantly alters the meaning of art.

Ko Cheuk Yin is completing her honours degree in Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics at Hong Kong Baptist University. Her areas of interest are primarily cultural criticism and psychoanalysis. She is currently conducting research on Cyberpunk 2077 through the lens of Slavoj Å½iÅ¾ek's social theory and psychoanalysis, as well as on large-group awareness training in Taiwan from a psychoanalytic perspective.

MARTIN KOVAN

University of Melbourne alumnus

Foreseeable but Unintended: the thanatology of mass-killing in war

Recent history has afforded the global spectacle of multiple theatres of war in which untold numbers of civilians have with apparent impunity been killed as unintended but foreseeable targets of military action. The ethics of just war and international humanitarian law present rubrics of proportionality to conceptualise and evaluate civilian liability as morally permissible. It can however be questioned whether these are able to resolve epistemic and normative vagueness around the morality of lethal harm, especially with respect to cost-benefit calculations informing its theorisation as a thanatology—that is, as a logic of lethality acceptable to a collective biopolitics. This paper engages the rationality of that ethics, and McMahan’s progressive theorisation of just war, before turning to the Freudian unconscious, and other ontological constraints, in accounting for the failure of the former in the face of genocide.

Martin Kovan graduated with a PhD. in Philosophy from University of Melbourne in 2020. His philosophical and other writing has appeared regularly in Australia and overseas, and his monograph "A Buddhist Theory of Killing: a philosophical exposition", published by Springer in 2022, featured in the ABC "Philosopher's Zone", among other global venues. He works largely between Buddhist philosophy and contemporary ethics, metaphysics, and phenomenology, most recently with respect to studies in lethality, biopolitics, and political resistance.

NORMA LAM-SAW

Western Sydney University

Algorithmic Governmentality: Preemption, Recursivity, and Exception

In The Digital Regime of Truth: From the Algorithmic Governmentality to a New Rule of Law"" (La Deleuziana, 2016), Antoinette Rouvroy posits algorithmic governmentality as a regime of truth that operates by targeting ""the excess of the possible over the probable."" For Rouvroy, algorithmic systems act on correlations to foreclose the virtual - the dimension of unrealized possibilities and the capacity to disobey - by acting on informational and physical environments to prevent actualization rather than through legal prohibition. While Rouvroy emphasizes governmental rationality and the foreclosure of possibilities, Stiegler's response attends to the epistemological implications, positing that algorithmic systems operationalise analytical understanding while eliminating synthetic reason, producing what he argues are entropic and self-destructing processes - fundamentally irrational systems where understanding becomes calculus but reason disappears. This paper consider the these two approaches to algorithmic governmentality alongside two other mid-2010s examinations of the technical and juridical infrastructures of algorithmic power. Louise

Amoore's 2013 The Politics of Possibility illustrates the temporal mechanisms through which predictive analytics enacts Rouvroy's pre-emptive foreclosure: data acts on imagined possibilities rather than probabilities, enabling recursive loops where predictions shape interventions, which generate data that refines predictions, foreclosing contestation before alternatives actualize. Julie Cohen's 2019 Between Truth and Power however identifies how US juridical architecture enables these operations through what she terms ""the biopolitical public domain"" - where law constructs personal data as freely extractable raw material while trade secret protections render algorithmic processing legally opaque, creating normalized states of exception where predictive power operates beyond democratic scrutiny.

Together, these mid-2010s works suggest algorithmic mediation operates both discursively - through governmental and epistemological shifts - and materially, through the technical and juridical infrastructures of predictive analytics and intellectual property law. As machine learning and generative AI extend these dynamics across domains, this paper considers what reading these thinkers together offers for understanding how algorithmic systems shape the conditions of knowledge production

Norma-Lam Saw is an Associate Lecturer in Arts (English and Philosophy) at Western Sydney University. Her research background explored the political praxis of radical passivity at the intersection of literature and philosophy. Her current research explores interdisciplinary relationships between language, technology (data, AI) and agency.

FINOLA LAUGHREN

University of Sydney

The influence of heteropessimism on popular feminist sexual ethics

This paper explores the influence of pessimism about heterosexuality in and on popular feminist ideas of sexual ethics. “Heteropessimism” is taken from Asa Seresin’s (2019) discussion of the paradoxical practice of feeling disappointment, embarrassment or even despair about current forms of heterosexual relationships, coupled with an inability to imagine heterosexuality as anything but irredeemable. For Seresin, heteropessimism involves performative disaffiliations with heterosexuality that ironically express profound attachments to heterosexual life worlds, and which serve to further entrench rather than decrease the normative force of heterosexuality. In this paper, I adapt the term to capture a wider range of feminist politics, including some which have an unironic attachment to heterosexuality. My aim in this paper is twofold. I want to show how apparently divergent feminist ideas of sexual ethics nevertheless cohere around a pessimistic view of heterosexuality. And I want to elucidate some of the ethical tensions and questions to which the increasing influence of heteropessimism gives rise.

Finola Laughren is employed as a teaching fellow at the University of Sydney and as a casual academic at Menzies School of Health Research. She has authored academic papers in Australian Feminist Studies, the Australian Journal of Human Rights, and Continuum and is a member of the Affirmative Feminist Boys Studies research group.

JASPER LEAR

Deakin University

Alain Badiou and Michel Foucault: modesty, discontinuity and the subject

The relationship between Alain Badiou and Michel Foucault lacks significant consideration due to a perceived chronological and theoretical divorce. For instance, the delayed translation of *Being* & *Event* (2006) into English situates Badiou's work ‘post' Foucault's (especially for an anglophone audience). Furthermore, Badiou's hostile treatment of Foucault (see *Theory of the Subject* (2013) and *Logics of Worlds* (2019)) presents an adversarial relation. This paper will examine and challenge the perceived divorce between these two philosophers, arguing instead for a proximity, both chronological and theoretical. It will proceed as follows: 1) a proximity will be articulated through Badiou's distinction between philosophical modesty and immodesty, in which a shared intellectual tradition becomes apparent, 2) a common concern for the organisation of historical discontinuity and the central status of the subject will be emphasised through an association with the French epistemological tradition, 3) finally, the differences between Badiou and Foucault's concept of the subject are interrogated in reference to the previously articulated philosophical terrain. The purpose of this paper is thus not only to articulate a philosophical relationship between these two thinkers, but to continue to place Badiou's work amongst his contemporaries'.

Jasper Lear (he/him) is currently undertaking a PhD at Deakin University, working on the theory of the subject in the philosophy of Alain Badiou. Their broader interests however include (post)structuralist and antihumanist theories of the subject, 'contemporary French philosophy', epistemological breaks/discontinuity, theories of ideology, and the attempts to square accounts of action and change with processes of determination.

JOHN LECHTE

Macquarie University

Introduction to a Philosophy of Responsibility

While a key focus of this paper will be the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, who proclaims that, 'infinite responsibility for the other: *the radical impossibility of immanence!* (*Alterity and Transcendence* 1999: 127), I will also endeavour to introduce a historical perspective. The latter will comprise an interpretation of responsibility in Sophocles play, *Oedipus Rex*. Taking the play as a point of departure, some hypotheses will be considered regarding the notion of responsibility in Ancient Greece. Within a contemporary context, the paper will also consider Hannah Arendt's distinction between responsibility and guilt. Both responsibility in Greece and Arendt's notion of responsibility will then be considered in conjunction with Levinas's philosophy.

John Lechte is Emeritus Professor in Sociology at Macquarie University in Sydney. His books include: Genealogy and Ontology of the Western Image (2012); Agamben and the Politics of Human Rights (with Saul Newman) (2013); The Human (2018), Violence and the Image (2023), and the Philosophy of the Medium (2024. Paperback 2025).

MARTIN LECKEY

University of Melbourne

The Evolution of Heidegger's Question of Being

In his 1935 lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger includes a diagram showing the traditional separation between being and four other concepts – becoming, seeming, thinking and the ought. This suggests an opposition between how things are and how they should be, how they seem, and so on. Heidegger suggests, however, that being in fact encompasses these four in a unity. Over the years, this schema evolved, culminating in the unity of a more poetic fourfold: earth, sky, gods and mortals. I will discuss this evolution, and the ways that time (and space) might fit into these schemas, as well as some other terms he used for being such as the Greek terms *phusis*, *alētheia* and *logos*. I will attempt to cut through the jargon and the poetry to uncover Heidegger's conception of reality, and the place of humans in that reality. I will argue that the picture that results is still a fruitful one to think through and develop in our own ways.

Martin Leckey is an Honorary Fellow in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Melbourne. His research areas are in philosophy of physics (space and time and quantum theory), contemporary Platonist metaphysics, as well as the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Other research interests are in the philosophy of art (particularly Raphael in Renaissance art) and philosophy of disability.

CATHERINE LEGG

Deakin University

Reflections on the Yoorrook Walk for Truth by a philosopher who 'works on truth'

A pragmatist philosophical orientation suggests that we begin an inquiry into truth by asking: What is the purpose of reflecting philosophically on truth? What problems are we trying to solve? If we were to solve them, what would it look like on the other side? On June 18th 2025, I participated in the final leg of the Yoorrook Walk for Truth. This event's poignant public excavation of a set of truths which somehow survived the strenuous efforts of many Victorians to bury them across 150 years led me to reflect on the gravity, and unavoidability, of truth. I want to explore the idea that the weight of this event offers a rebuke to what we in Western philosophy have lately made of our own conceptual heritage as regards truth, on both the 'realist' and 'antirealist' sides of what we imagine to be our most fundamental debate over this concept.

Dr. Catherine Legg teaches philosophy at Deakin University in Melbourne. Her main research interests lie in the philosophies of mind, language, and logic, where she works to bring the distinctive ideas of pragmatist Charles Peirce into mainstream debates; she also has research profiles in AI and education. She is current editor of the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy's “Pragmatism” entry. In 2008, she inaugurated the field of 'cat metaphysics' with the assistance of the late Bruce, who had a ‘personal chair'. This remains something of a niche area.

LIOR LEVY

University of Melbourne

Existentialism as a humanism: on the philosophical relevance of existentialism at a time of war

French existentialism was born in a time of war. The term “existentialism” was not chosen by its key figures, Sartre and Beauvoir, but assigned to them as a legacy they were compelled to confront. Neither identified as existentialists before the late 1940s, when they reluctantly adopted the name first given to them by Gabriel Marcel. By accepting the term and applying it retrospectively to their work, both suggested that existentialism was a philosophy particularly suited to times of war. Yet they explored the meaning and relevance of ""existentialism"" through another key concept: “humanism.” In his 1946 lecture *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Sartre argued that if existentialism has a distinct meaning, this meaning should be thought in relation to humanism, so that eventually existentialism must be recognized as a form of humanism. Thinking about existentialism through this connection between humanism and war, clarifying the unique meaning to be found in existentialism qua humanism, I turn to the relevance of existentialism for our time. Does existentialism still offer viable ways of thinking in a world haunted by disasters, violence, mass killing, and displacement? To whom does it speak today, and how—if at all—does it persist as a living mode of thought?

I am a philosopher based at the University of Melbourne. I specialize in feminist philosophy, phenomenology, and aesthetics. Together with Massimo Leone I am currently editing Masks and Faces - Critical Perspective across disciplines forthcoming in the Routledge/FACETS Advances in Face Studies

ZHI LI

School of Philosophy, Wuhan University

An Interdisciplinary Interpretation of Young Marx's Critique of Religion

As the beginning of Young Marx's theoretical exploration, his critique of religion has long been regarded as classic critique of philosophy, but the fact is unexpected. Marx's law major study, sensitivity to political issues, attention to social issues and historical facts, and prominent interest in political economy make his critique of religion appear in stages of his thought development as the intersection of law and philosophy, political-religious issues research, the overlap of historical investigation and critique of political economy. On the road of Marx's turn to historical materialism, his critique of religion has always been present and repeatedly displayed an interdisciplinary nature, realizing the leap from critique of thought to general critique of reality. Revealing the multidisciplinary elements contained in young Marx's critique of religion will provide a more imaginative, transparent and multidimensional space for understanding historical materialism and its origins.

Zhi Li, female, a Chinese professor, works at School of Philosophy, Wuhan University. My major is Karl Marx's Practical Philosophy, Political Philosophy and Ethics, Young Marx and Engels' thoughts. I have published 3 books on Karl Marx, including the book The Concept of Individual in the Thought of Karl Marx (Palgrave Macmillan,2023). Another volume on Young Engels is in press.

LACHLAN LIESFIELD

Macquarie University

Participation, Agency, and Contemporary Art

The historical development of Participatory Artworks over the last century has since produced a general set of language to describe it. Such discussion often invokes the categories of 'agency' and 'presence' in describing the participants experience of the work, and its ethical and political valence. In this talk I want to argue that instead under capital the categories of participation and agency are tto frequently used synonymously, especially in the realm of art. In this talk I want to pry these two concepts apart, and suggest why mere participation is not agency in any strong definition, and also explain why this misapprehension appears to occur at the same time participatory art develops. To do so I will draw on the work of Deleuze and Guattari in 'Anti-Oedipus' (among others) to suggest that there are features of the capitalist social formation that produce these outcomes.

Lachlan Liesfield is a PhD candidate at Macquarie University. His current research is focused on developing an ontology and genealogy of participatory art. Other areas of interest include political philosophy and anthropology.

KATE LILLEY

University of Sydney

Complaint's Elegy

Where elegy is aligned with the drive of mourning toward consolation and historical memorialisation (actual deaths of actual persons) complaint tends toward the typological and meta, generalizing recurring tableaux of annihilation and abandonment. Complaint in general is inseparable from the rendering of subjectivity/writing *as* grievance. This paper considers the toggling of elegy and complaint and the trope of last words in the poetry of the Restoration Jane Barker, especially ‘Resolved never to versifie more', through Drew Daniel's understanding of melancholy as ‘assemblage', ‘an expressive array of materials and postures and cases distributed across the social surround' (7), and 'the troubling admixture of spectatorship and shared experience' (134) it promotes (*The Melancholy* Assemblage: Affect and Epistemology in the English *Renaissance*, 2013).

Kate Lilley is a queer poet-scholar specialising in early/modern poetry and poetics. Her most recent book, Tilt, won the Victorian Premier's Award for Poetry.

SUEN LIN

Dancing of the abstraction - Hegel and Mondrian

In the paper I compare Mondrian’s art and art theory and Hegel’s philosophical system, namely the logic and the aesthetics. There are obvious similarities, - even the deep intellectual kinship between them are undoubtful. The basis of this study is an approach that there is a theoretical tradition which focuses the whole intead of the particularity, which prioritize the concrete, living process instead of the abstract staticicity. (A) In the first part I will in abstracto (1) summarize Mondrian’s fine art and try to interpret it with the help of Hegel’s philosophy. After this, to comprehend the topic closer, in concreto : (2) I will interpret one painting of Mondrian (Composition, 1916), in respect to Hegel’s philosophy: how could understand a painting of Mondrian in the mirror of the hegelian dialectical thinking. The lines as pure forms of abstraction compose squares which look like systematic in spite of that processual somehow. This is more obvious on Mondrian’s late works when the squares start to dance as a living, processual totality. This moving rhytm apppears in a mere logical way, as Hegel’s liquid categories flowing through each other. In the second part (B) I will compare Mondrian’s and Hegel’s view on art. For this I will analyze a platonic style dialogue was written by Mondrian, and some articles which were publicated in the De Stijl on style, form and god and Hegel’s works on aesthetical categories the art itself and its place in his system.

Bálint, Molnár (born 1992), Hungarian author, living in Taiwan. Studied Philosophy and Sociology in the university ELTE, Faculty of Humanities in Budapest. Area of interest: German Idealism; especially Hegel, Environmental Ethics and German Romantic Aesthetics. Took part numerous national and international conferences in these fields. Former university lecturer. Writing short stories in incognito. Paints non-figuartive pictures in his freetime.

DANIEL ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

Deakin University and La Trobe University

The Work of Love

Divine comedy in the work of Gillian Rose" (López, 2025) suggested that Gillian Rose's most famous writing, Love's Work, ought to be read as an example of divine comedy, according to Rose's own definition thereof. Divine comedy, as Rose understands it, is a genre that satisfies the requirements of speculative (in the Hegelian sense) philosophy, while also attaining to the unity of form and content characteristic of classical art. Crucially, this suggests the possibility of a speculative poetics that may traverse the dichotomies of modern life — such as between universal and particular, or between law and love — without relapsing into romantic irony and subjectivism, on the one hand, or into an all-too-severe formalism, on the other. Taking this analysis of Love's Work as its point of departure, this paper will analyse material from the Gillian Rose archive at Warwick University library — including notes, personal correspondence, poetry and unpublished manuscripts — in order to further elucidate personal, poetic and philosophical dimensions of Rose's autobiography.

Dr Daniel Andrés López is a Lecturer (casual) in political philosophy at La Trobe University and a Commissioning Editor for Jacobin magazine. His first book, "Lukács: Praxis and the Absolute" was published by Brill in 2019. His academic writing has appeared in journals such as Thesis Eleven, Historical Materialism and Science & Society, while his non-academic writing has appeared in Jacobin, Salvage, Overland, Aeon, Cordite, Arena, and elsewhere. He is presently working on a second PhD in creative writing at Deakin University, focusing on Gillian Rose's philosophy of love and poetics.

DAVID MACARTHUR

The University of Sydney

Existentialism and Skepticism as a Lived Experience

Existentialism is supposed to undermine skepticism about the external world and others. If there is no mind-world dualism, if the world and others are the shared context of meaning that we are always already involved in then the problem of skepticism seems not only an unreal problem but unavailable. Commenting on Kant's saying it is a scandal to philosophy that there is no satisfactory proof of the external world, Heidegger famously says that ""the 'scandal of philosophy' is... that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again."" But this apparent victory over skepticism depends upon seeing it as nothing more than an argument. In this paper I want to suggest that in spite of overcoming mind-world dualism, skepticism remains a lived reality in the sense that it is an experience we are subject to with its own phenomenology – something that existentialism is well suited to investigate but which, at the same time, it seems curiously blind to.

Existentialism is supposed to undermine skepticism about the external world and others. If there is no mind-world dualism, if the world and others are the shared context of meaning that we are always already involved in then the problem of skepticism seems not only an unreal problem but unavailable. Commenting on Kant's saying it is a scandal to philosophy that there is no satisfactory proof of the external world, Heidegger famously says that ""the 'scandal of philosophy' is... that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again."" But this apparent victory over skepticism depends upon seeing it as nothing more than an argument. In this paper I want to suggest that in spite of overcoming mind-world dualism, skepticism remains a lived reality in the sense that it is an experience we are subject to with its own phenomenology – something that existentialism is well suited to investigate but which, at the same time, it seems curiously blind to.

David Macarthur (Ph.D. Harvard) is Professor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney who has published widely on skepticism, liberal naturalism, metaphysical quietism, pragmatism, Wittgenstein and philosophy of art (especially about architecture, photography and film). He edited Hilary & Ruth-Anna Putnam, Pragmatism as a Way of Life (Harvard, 2017); and with Mario De Caro co-edited: Naturalism in Question (Harvard, 2004); Naturalism and Normativity (Columbia, 2010); Hilary Putnam: Philosophy in an Age of Science (Harvard, 2012); Hilary Putnam: Philosophy as Dialogue (Harvard, 2022); and The Routledge Handbook of Liberal Naturalism (2022). With Stephen Hetherington he co-edited Living Skepticism (2022).

LOUIS MAGEE

Independent researcher

Martin Heidegger's other beginning....."the other beginning's unexpected.....! ouch!

Keeping in mind Heidegger's continuous preparations for such a possibility.

PhD at Melbourne University

PAIGE MAGUIRE

University of Queensland

Freedom in the unknown – facing the climate crises with despair

Metaphysical freedom, which can allow for balanced change in our understanding of ecology, creates opportunities to develop a mindset in line with our ever-changing relationship with nature. This, in our current state of global climate-crisis provides opportunities to reflect on our appeals to futility and approaches to nature that are frequented and unaccepting of our responsibility to nature. The greater existential despair that is concurrent with the climate crisis has many individuals and governments appealing to futility when faced with the idea of changing their behaviour patterns. Camusian despair starts the path to metaphysical freedom. Accessing despair or a state of participatory change requires a balanced relationship with the unknown. A relationship wherein the unknown is simultaneously accepted and confronted, i.e., absurdity. Absurdity, and the creation of one's own meaning – constrained by responsibility – allows for fluid understanding and responsive action with the eco-network. Freedom in absurdity, is a concept grounded in historical examples of despair encouraging change, e.g., the holocaust and the care given to the Musselman. Ecology and our position within the greater eco-network are given a definition by us and our understanding of these concepts is ever evolving; living in a state of absurdity, this would be accepted.

Paige Maguire is an accomplished environmental philosopher and activist who writes extensively on the topic of eco-revolution, animal ethics, and eco-feminist philosophy. She currently undergoing her PhD in environmental philosophy at the University of Queensland while leading campaigns and learning circles for The Wilderness Society. She has presented at various environmental conferences and eco-festivals. Recently, Ms Maguire participated in the Young Leader Programme with UNITAR where she gained experiencing presenting at the UN headquarters in Geneva for an international audience.

LUKE MAHER

University of Wollongong

On the analytical unity of apperception

In this paper, I defend an account of 'analyticity' in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason which includes both the epistemic function of analytic judgments as well as their logical structure. I defend Kant's claim that this component structure rests on identity and non-contradiction, but I suggest further that this structure is what Kant calls 'analytical unity'. The advantage of this account of analyticity, and thus of analytical unity, is revealed when comparing the two versions of the Transcendental Deduction. In the A-Version, 'transcendental unity of apperception' is the supreme principle of the understanding. However, in the B-Version, this principle is dissolved into two: the 'original-synthetic' and 'analytical unity'. I argue that this shift is not merely clarificatory. Rather, the difference amounts to the realisation of the 'analyticity' of the principle of apperception as an 'identical proposition'. The principle of apperception consists in the analytical unity of the 'I think', rather than an 'I'. I further substantiate this account of analyticity and analytical unity with a brief overview of other sections of the Transcendental Analytic, and also the Paralogisms, where I focus on Kant's analysis of the 'I think' as the analytical unity of apperception.

Luke Maher is an Honours student in Philosophy at the University of Wollongong. He is researching Kant's theory of apperception, with further interests in Kant's practical philosophy, Neoplatonism, early modern philosophy, and German Idealism.

JEFF MALPAS

University of Tasmania

Heidegger's topology from the beginning

This paper focusses on the topology present in Heidegger's early work, especially *Being and Time*. To this end, the discussion proceeds through an explication of the topological elements that are present in the form of key terms and ideas such as facticity, questionability, being-in, existential spatiality, and there-being or *Dasein*. It also briefly explores the way the term *Dasein* figures in German philosophical discourse prior to Heidegger in ways that are not only reflected in Heidegger's early work, but also draw directly upon that term's topological connotations.

Jeff Malpas is Emeritus Distinguished Professor at the University of Tasmania in Hobart, Honorary Professor at the University of Queensland, and Adjunct Professor at Latrobe University. His most recent book is _In the Brightness of Place_ (SUNY, 2023).

MATT MARASCO

La Trobe University

Hegel's Negative Aesthetics: Fine Art and Physiognomy

This paper argues that Hegel's aesthetic theory is a negative aesthetics. The depiction of subjectivity – limited by its finite form and content – constrains spirit, revealing the representational failure of such images. For Hegel, the work of art is caught in a perpetual impasse: the materially rich medium of architecture produces a “meaningful symbol” devoid of spirit and the spiritually rich medium of poetry a “meaningless sign” devoid of material. Art, therefore, cannot escape contradiction, and the task of *Hegel's Aesthetics* is to expose this. To that end, Hegel employs physiognomy to locate spirit in what appears least spiritual. This paper considers his remarks on the *Laocoön* statue and portraits of Christ. In the former, infinite suffering is reduced to a trivial detail of the forehead, while in the latter divine spirit is rendered as ordinarily finite. Hegel snubs the beauty of the *Laocoön* and promotes depictions of God in his “self-negation.” These examples illustrate Hegel's method of mediating artworks by confronting the impasse of their necessary failure. In recognising that spirit is irreducible to material form, his aesthetics draws attention to the “negatived” subject which counters that deadlock.

Matt Marasco is a sessional academic at La Trobe University. His research examines post-Kantian thought, critical theory and aesthetics, with a strong focus on the historical, theoretical and practical dimensions of photography.

GREGORY MARKS

La Trobe University

You Must Believe in Spring: Poetics of Unhappy Consciousness

The final essays of Gillian Rose, published in Mourning Becomes the Law (1996), take on the problems of modern philosophy – the separations of law and ethics, theoretical and practical reason, body and spirit – as species of melancholy which perpetually reenact their diremption while effacing its intelligibility for thought. In a word, Rose’s diagnosis redoubles what Hegel called the ‘unhappy consciousness’ or the imagined breach between fallible consciousness and an absolute source of truth utterly beyond it. By rendering this division unthinkable, modern thought does not overcome it but makes it the unspoken condition of its unmourned and unmended despair. Against this logic of separation, Rose suggests a ‘rhetoric of virtue’ and ‘syntax of eternity’ as poetic means of representing but not mending this breach. Through the indirect statements of double meaning, paradox, and implication, poetic language presents a stylistic answer to philosophy’s formal limitations. By following the literary references in Rose’s late works, this paper will elaborate on her theorisation of speculative poetics as a strategy of creative misrecognition with the goal of making the unthinkable legible.

Dr. Gregory Marks is a writer and researcher living on Dja Dja Wurrung country. He completed his PhD in 2020 at La Trobe University. His thesis was on the Gothic narratives and posthuman nightmares of Thomas Pynchon's novels. His

work as appeared in Overland, Literary Encyclopedia, Gothic Nature Journal, and Thesis Eleven. He has presented locally and internationally on critical and literary theory, ecological fiction, and the philosophy of history.

JAMES MARTEL

Lyon College

Sade, Preciado, and Khôra: Queer Surfaces of Devastation for Stupid Times

Close to the end of his Nouvelle histoire de la révolution française (2012), Jean-Clément Martin mentions Sade in the context of “a society in search of itself (...)” that, “together with the desire for peace and the need to have fun (...) reflects on its entry into the modern world and on the heaviness of blood that words carry…” (686). At the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, when the Western country that ruled hegemonically throughout the 20th century is going through a right wing revolution marked by stupidity, a literature like Sade’s seems to resonate with the utmost upheaval and uprooting of foregone assumptions and guardrails. While thinkers like Paul B. Preciado have shown how it is perhaps only a philosophy of queerness and transness that can get us out of the necropolitics of neo-traditional, neo-fascist regimes, techno-ideologues like Peter Thiel and fascist “thinkers” like Curtis Yarvin call for an amalgamation of religious-administrative monarchy and transhuman evolution obsessed with an end of the world as a democratic experiment. The desire for and terror in front of such devastation is something that Sade portrayed exemplarily, both as a promise for something absolutely new, modernity, new economic and bodily relations, as well as a threat to all life as the sacred foundation of the world. In this presentation I will consider how Sade’s visions pair with our fantasies and nightmares of queer surfaces of absolute creation & destruction, and how such surfaces relate to both the promise of an absolute transition and the nightmare of a return to (the) absolute(s).

James Martell is Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Lyon College, the author of Beckett and Derrida (2024) and Modernism, Self-Creation, and the Maternal (2019), the editor of Understanding Sade, Understanding Modernism (2025), and co-editor of books like Tattooed Bodies (2022) and Beckett and Nature (2025).

LUCA MARTIN

University of Melbourne

Geophilosophy as Anarchist Methodology

This paper advances an anarchist reading of Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophy as a means though which one can determine the links between anthropocentrism, the state, and climate collapse. Deleuze and Guattari's notions of territory, stratification, and the Earth will be interpreted as concepts applicable within an anarchist critique of state power and will be utilised in a discussion of the political roots of climate collapse. It will be argued that the state is a form of strata which articulates the relationship between humanity and the Earth according to an immanent logic of hierarchy. Furthermore, it will be argued that this articulation of state power renders the multitudes of the Earth legible according to the logic of the state and reproduces the conditions necessary for the exploitation and degradation of the Earth by capitalism.

Luca is a Master of Arts student, currently studying at the University of Melbourne, who writes on post-structuralism, environmental philosophy, and anarchist political theory. His master's thesis examines the links between the state-form and anthropocentrism, advocating an anarchist reading of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's geophilosophy. He has previously written on Martin Heidegger and the Deep Ecology movement and continues to volunteer his time in Melbourne's left-wing communities.

ANDRÉ MARTINS

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)

Is Spinoza's philosophy deterministic?

My hypothesis is that the widespread association of Spinoza’s philosophy with determinism derives less from his own writings than from an interpretative tradition that emerged in the eighteenth century. In the context of the so-called Pantheism Controversy, Jacobi, in particular, projected onto Spinoza a physicalist materialism that was absent from his system. This interpretation would be at the origin not only of the challenge to

Spinoza by Jacobi and his contemporaries, but also of that found in Kant and German Idealism. This determinism would later be formulated by Laplace in the following century. Could there, however, be in Spinoza another kind of determinism—one that is non-physicalist? This hypothesis seems to lead to a Platonic reading of Spinoza. At the heart of the debate over Spinoza's supposed determinism lies the difficulty in understanding his ontology, in particular the ontological status of the attributes of extension and thought. This difficulty is still present today in Spinozist approaches to double-aspect neuroscience.

Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Holds a PhD in Philosophy from the Université de Nice, France, and a PhD in Psychology – Psychoanalytic Theory from UFRJ, Brazil. Faculty member of the Graduate Program in Philosophy and the Graduate Program in Bioethics and Public Health, where he supervises both doctoral and master's research. Author of several books published in Brazil and France, as well as articles in Brazil, France, Germany, Hungary, Belgium, Portugal, and the United States. His research focuses primarily on ethics, epistemology, and ontology within Continental Philosophy, with particular emphasis on Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Winnicott.

PAT MCCONVILLE

Deakin University

From Confucius to Expert Systems: Thinking skillful coping from a classical Chinese philosophical perspective

Hubert Dreyfus's phenomenology offers both an account of expert knowledge and action, and criticism of Socratic-Platonic universalisability. In this presentation, I explore his criticisms of the notion of universalisability present in western philosophy, and consider the model of knowledge and action which emerges from an alternative, Chinese cultural tradition: the teachings of Confucius, as expressed in the Analects. I point out similarities and differences between the cultivation and expression of skill in Confucius's spiritual autobiography and Dreyfus's framework for skill acquisition. While much of Dreyfus's approach is consistent with Confucius, the Confucian account ultimately returns to the same problem of universalisability Dreyfus finds problematic in Socrates. I suggest that the Chinese Daoist approach of wu-wei, effortless (non)action, better fits Dreyfus's account, especially as he extended it with a stage of mastery beyond expertise.

Pat McConville is a philosopher and bioethicist. He is Lecturer in the School of Medicine at Deakin University, Australia. He has published in the fields of phenomenology of health and illness, medical devices, biomedical research ethics, and aesthetics.

FINN MCGEE

Young Max Horkheimer on Theory and Praxis

How should we understand theory and praxis? Marx gave a famous answer in his *Theses on Feuerbach* according to which theory, i.e. thinking, is only true if proven true by praxis. By the 1930s, in the face of the defeat of the November Revolution, the self-destruction of the October Revolution, and the rise of European fascism, such a conception no longer seemed tenable. If praxis, which was the proof of theory, is destroyed then what is the status of theory? Either we abandon the theory or rethink theory and praxis. Across a series of essays, lectures, notes, and discussions from the late 1920s to early 1940s, a young Max Horkheimer, the leading figure of early Critical Theory (CT), rethinks theory and praxis. This paper reconstructs and critically develops this problematic of young Horkheimer's work. By doing so, the politics of early CT are also clarified. In short, theory is rescued without, however, losing its ultimate index to praxis. Three key problems are considered in detail: (1) theory after the defeat of praxis, (2) the concept of critical theory, and (3) wrong vs. true praxis. Of particular significance is Horkheimer's arguments for workers' councils and something like communisation theory.

Finn McGee recently completed Honours in philosophy at the University of Melbourne with a thesis on Max Horkheimer.

DANIEL MCLOUGHLIN

University of New South Wales

Agamben, Sovereignty and the fascism analogy in the age of Trump 2.0

Giorgio Agamben's thought was amongst the most important influences on the critical humanities as it grappled with the authoritarian politics of the War on Terror. However, it was also deeply controversial, not least because of the comparisons it drew between the politics of liberal democracies and that of Nazism. This paper considers the utility of Agamben's critique in the age of Trump 2.0. I argue that the deepening authoritarianism of the second Trump administration has made Agamben's reference to fascism more relevant than it was in the context of the War on Terror. However, it has also undermined the political efficacy of his critique, whose appeal was derived, in part, from the purchase of the liberal democratic norms it was being used to criticise. I analyse the limits of Agamben's use of the fascism analogy in the contemporary context by comparing it to two other critical theorists, Stuart Hall and Wendy Brown, both of whom warned that neoliberalism was giving rise to a new form of authoritarianism that was distinct from classical fascism, and needed to be theorised in its specificity.

Daniel McLoughlin is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales. He has published extensively on the work of Giorgio Agamben and Carl Schmitt, and his research interests include theories of sovereignty and biopolitics, Marxist state theory, neoliberalism, the politics of human rights, and theories of political crisis. He is the editor of Agamben and Radical Politics (2016) and the co-editor of The Politics of Legality in a Neoliberal Age (2017).

JODIE MCNEILLY

Australian Catholic University

Intuiting the 'non-object' in a phenomenology of things: a hoarder's experience

When things give themselves to us [uns geschenkt], our encounter with their material essence opens us not only to fulfillment of the object in perception, but arguably the dimensions of a thing's 'non-objectness' that is not readily intuited when the attitude is of things always being 'given for us' [für uns gegeben]. In giving themselves to us, 'things' take on an independent value and dignity in themselves that the 'for us' denies. In this paper, I explore (through Husserl) the 'non-objectness' of things as a dimension not caught by our usual, purposeful encounters with them when taken as objects for us. The non-objectness of things either (i) do not avail their material essences to our theoretical, thematising grasp, or are (ii) passed over by a perfect adumbration and never caught by any horizon of an experience that expects the world to be given for us. I argue that in their independence, things call to us in ways that require a special kind of intuition. These structures may not be found in the analyses of usual object perception, but in the experience of the 'hoarder' who finds value in things beyond 'rational forms' of attachment and detachment. I propose that the hoarder in their relationship with things poke holes in sensible adumbration and widen horizons to intuit the non-objectness of things. I ask: could they, with this special access, be the 'true mystics of things'? Thus calling us to the 'more-than-human' in ways that value things in themselves.

Jodie McNeilly lives and works on the unceded land of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people. She is a Lecturer in the School of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University. Her publications and transdisciplinary research interests consider the limits and utility of Husserlian phenomenology for religious belief, ecology and performance.

THOMAS MICAL

Esoteric Library of the Kangra Valley

Acid Leibniz ... Soft Machines in the Psychedelic-Cybernetic Imagination

Monadology defines a transfinite series of cascading points of consciousness unevenly distributed in degrees inside wild nature (enfolded within the pleats of matter). The fascination of the spectacular vision of worlds-within-worlds opened up by the microscope here simulates this metaphysical model of consciousness. Leibniz philosophy, this panpsychism is apparently infinite, extensive and intensive, a distributed intelligence zooming all the ways down and in all the ways up. From the vantage point of soulful consciousness, the infinite tissue of monads (window-less infinitesimal points of intelligence) across beings and ecosystems is the deep structure of mind. Consciousness for Leibniz comes in degrees, in total an

immaterial category of substance parallel to the fabric of everyday materiality, with each conscious point-intensity (the monads) cascading down through the machines of nature. Leibniz' metaphysics is an exceptional model. The challenge is to reconcile this panpsychic model to the possibilities of changes of states of consciousness, and from that to re-define an expanded mode of psychic realism reciprocating with the soft machines of nature. Perhaps studies of the varieties of psychedelic consciousness provides the missing link between levels of mind. Leibniz' fundamental model of the labyrinth of the continuum is already an expansive model of the determinism and automatism of materialism, permeated by an expansive differentiated scattered array of points of consciousness in pre-established harmony with fine-grain materialism. This initial asymmetry anticipates the slippage of mental substance a material substance, by shifting states of consciousness, specifically hallucinatory altered states of consciosuness, as experienced in the trips of the psychedelic experience. The risk and promise of this trajectory of thought is to reconfigure certain tendencies in Leibniz metaphysics of mind to open up a vision of an Acid Leibniz, Leibniz as a proto-psychedelic philosopher of mind.

Thomas Mical has been a tenured professor of Architectural Theory and Superhumanities for many decades in the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and India. He is currently Director of the Esoteric Library of the Kangra Valley (Indian Himalayas). His current research focuses on a tandem cybernetic-psychedelic aesthetics.

AEVA MILOS

University of Melbourne

The Agon: Illness as Catalyst in Gillian Rose's 'Love's Work'

After revealing her diagnosis with advanced ovarian cancer, Gillian Rose writes: “…by this work, I may die forward into the intensified agon of living” (Love’s Work 71). Published months before her passing, Love’s Work (1995) can be loosely situated within a canon of autobiographical writing by female thinkers from the late twentieth century, including Susan Sontag’s Illness as a Metaphor (1978) and her later AIDS and Its Metaphors (1989), Audre Lorde’s The Cancer Journals (1980) and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s Dialogue on Love (1999). This paper is interested in tracing illness as a literary object and understanding that a proximity to death hybridises a form of writing and theory rooted, first and foremost, in the personal and historical conditions of which it is situated in. Through supplementary analysis of Mourning Becomes the Law (1996), this paper seeks to develop Rose’s philosophical and political interventions on materiality, fallibility and time through the poetics of Love’s Work. Together with Sontag, Lorde and Sedgwick, Rose emphasises a commitment to the “forward” movement of living and dying within the labour of experience. For these writers, illness is, thus, the meeting ground for a thinking through of history.

Aeva Milos is a writer and editor working on unceded Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung land. She recently completed her BA (Honours) at the University of Melbourne in English. Her thesis explored Hélène Cixous's 'writing-in-the-present'. She is an online editor with Voiceworks.

JOERI MOL

University of Melborune

Alone: Surviving Our Mediated-Selves in the Wilderness

Lacan famously proclaims that ‘the other arrives before the self'. At no time is this more true than when the contestant in a reality TV show is dropped in the wilderness, left to survive by themselves and a few tools. ‘Alone' chronicles the struggles of ten participants partaking in an American survival series. Each isolated from the others, the contenders compete for a million-dollar grand prize given to whom can endure nature's hardships the longest. At night–hunched over a makeshift fire– they recount the events of the day in front of a self-operated video camera. Their stories vary from battling hunger to having to fend off wild animals” pumas, wolverines, grizzly bears. Yet all these are but side-stories to the actual struggle playing out on screen: the encounter with the self. And of course–as Lacan emphatically argues– the encounter with the self is an encounter with the Other. In the Écrits, Lacan differentiates among the ‘small other' and the ‘Big Other', capturing the realms of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, respectively. However, in Lacanian psychoanalysis the small other–typically the (paternal) carer–plays but a subservient role to the Big Other, standing in for society write-large. My analysis of ‘Alone' showcases that survival in the wild–often depicted as the quintessential masculine endeavour–is in fact often injured by grand narratives in which male

contestants see themselves featured. By contrast, it is the ability to make a home that carries the day, sheltered by our small other.

I research markets both inside and outside organisations. I am particularly interested in processes of financialisation and evaluation and how price and value are brought into an (often) uneasy relationship. Some of my research concerns are: what is the viability of critique in the face of the market? Can we emancipate ourselves from the market as employees, consumers and citizens? What is the relationship between the state and the market and what is the scope for market regulation? Some of my work has appeared in the Journal of Management Studies, Sociological Methodology, Marketing Theory, British Journal of Management and Social Networks. I often lose sleep over the uncertain fate of the dusky hopping mouse.

ADRIAN MOORE

University of Queensland

Philosophy and Terror Revisited: October 7 as Derridean Event

This paper revisits Derrida's reflections in Philosophy in a Time of Terror to examine the events of October 7, 2023, and their aftermath. Derrida's concept of the "event" as both unforeseeable and overdetermined provides a framework for interrogating how October 7 has been narrated, politicised, and instrumentalised. I argue that the Israeli state's response, culminating in the devastation of Gaza, exposes a global complicity in genocide that cannot be reduced to questions of security or self-defence. The liberal framing of antisemitism as a moral horizon paradoxically enables the erasure of Palestinian suffering, reinscribing exclusion at the very site where universality is claimed. To call October 7 an "event" is not to sanctify it but to mark its disruptive force in the political imaginary, and to trace how Derrida's insistence on justice as undeconstructible unsettles both the justificatory discourses of state violence and the proceduralism of international law. In confronting the undecidability of justice, I argue that philosophy must resist the closure of security narratives and attend to what is rendered uncountable: the disappeared, the displaced, and the sacrificed.

Adrian Moore is a philosopher and author based on the Gold Coast, QLD. He was conferred a PHD in 2019 by the University of Queensland, with a thesis focussing on the works of Nietzsche and Camus, particularly their engagements with Buddhist and Taoist philosophies. Adrian's ongoing research includes deconstructive critiques of contemporary liberal political theory, as well as comparative studies in East-West philosophy."

TALIA MORAG

Australian Catholic University

Sartre, Putnam, and the Student's Dilemma

In this paper I revisit Sartre's Student's Dilemma, and the question of difficult moral choices. I compare Sartre's rejection of moral theories and the denial that they give us a decision-making procedure to Putnam's view on morality, which he presents in Ethics without Ontology. Moral theories, on Putnam's view, are not true or false in some absolute sense, but should be regarded as more or less useful ways of seeing choice situations or providing moral considerations. In a way, moral theories are for Putnam tools that solve moral problems, rather than descriptions of moral reality. Putnam takes himself to resist an ontology of ethics, yet I shall argue that turning theories into problem-solving tools still presupposes an ontology, given the assumption that moral problems normally have solutions. While Sartre rejects the idea of moral solutions, he still endorses the idea that an individual's choice is taken with the idea of its universal relevance. In contrast to both Sartre and Putnam, I shall suggest that some moral matters need not be seen as problems to be solved, a compromise reached, or a choice for everyone. Accepting the difficulty of moral choices, the fact that we may not find peace in our judgment, and that a moral problem remains a problem, may be the paradigm of a genuine moral moment. I suggest that moral tools are better seen as tools of clarification, regarding what is stake in a given situation, rather than a problem-solving kit.

Dr. Talia Morag (PhD, University of Sydney) is a Senior Lecturer of philosophy at the Australian Catholic University in North Sydney. She works on ethics and philosophical psychology, especially liberal naturalism, psychoanalysis, emotion, social psychology, moral psychology and the philosophy of TV. She is the author of Emotion, Imagination, and the Limits of Reason (Routledge, 2016), and the editor of Sartre and Analytic Philosophy (Routledge, 2023). She also received the

Annette Baier Prize (2020) for her paper: “Comparison or seeing as? The Holocaust and Factory Farming,” in the collection Morality in a Realistic Spirit: Essays for Cora Dimond, edited by Gleeson and Taylor.

LUCY MYERS

Australian Catholic University'

The Politics of a Phenomenology': Gillian Rose on Alienation

In this paper, I want to pose the question of what is the standing of the concept of alienation in the movement of Gillian Rose's Hegel Contra Sociology. In the first chapter, Rose renders Lukacs' reification (often taken as synonymous with alienation) as a misstep which cannot grapple with the neo-Kantian structures it in turn reifies nor as a fitting comprehension of Marx's commodity fetishism, which is seen as Marx's later ('mature') continuation of alienation. However, in the last chapter Rose accuses Marx of this same reification, arguing neither his theory of alienation nor his Theses on Feuerbach effectively articulate the conditions for potentiality of thought through this same act of reification. Rose, however, does not dismiss alienation as a concept completely - rather we need to return to the Hegelian notion of it to realise its revolutionary potential. This paper is an attempt to articulate the specific consequences of Rose's intervention for alienation studies and for Marxism more broadly. Working from and with Rose, I follow her demand for the need for a historical-phenomenological account of alienation.

Lucy Myers is a candidate in the Masters of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University, where her research is on the concept of alienation in the history of philosophy and the (im)possibilities of Heideggerian Marxism. She lives and labours on unceded Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country.

REGINALD NAGAIYA

Western Sydney University

Rething the relation between sovereignty and democracy in Hannah Arendt, Antonio Negri and Chantal Mouffe

Throughout contemporary political theory, there has been a widespread consensus that democracy is in crisis. This is owing to recent events such as the invasion of Iraq in 2004; the collapse of the financialized economy in 2008; the rise of nationalist populism in both Europe and North America, the ongoing refugee crisis, the persistent failure of democratic states to address the legacies of colonialism; and the increasing marginalization of minorities. Such events prompt us to rethink the nature and meaning of democracy. This article does precisely that, namely it investigates the question: to what extent can we think of a democratic politics without presupposing a unified conception of the people. It does so through a theoretical analysis of the political theories of Hannah Arendt, Antonio Negri and Chantal Mouffe. The first section of this article will show that despite the differences among these theorists, what they all have in common is a shared commitment to conceiving of politics without presupposing a homogenous conception of the people. Instead, they place central emphasis on a specific form of action which both establishes the identity of the people and the power that they possess. I demonstrate this by providing an overview of their respective positions, elucidating how they each attempt to conceive of a politics without a unified conception of the people through placing an emphasis on a conception of action that is devoid of a means and ends logic. The second section draws on the recent work of Dimitris Vardoulakis to argue that by accounting for the identity of the people and the power that it possesses through one form of action, Arendt, Negri and Mouffe do not adequately solve the problem as it leads to the reaffirmation of a politics that is facilitated by an exclusionary logic.

Graduate research student at Western Sydney University, undertaking research in the area of political philosophy, specifically exploring the question: to what extent can we think of a space outside the realms of sovereignty in a democracy without presupposing a uniformity.

RUTWIJ NAKHWA

Indian Institute of Technology

The Dialectic of Second Nature and Liberation in Hegel's Patriotism

This paper approaches Hegel's thinking of “patriotism” [*Patriotismus*] or the “political disposition” [*politische Gesinnung*], arguing that its central anchoring concept is habit [*Gewohnheit*], or what, following Montaigne, Hegel calls second nature. In Hegel's systematic political philosophy or philosophy of objective spirit, the *Philosophy of Right*, “patriotism pure and simple, is certainty based on *truth* ... and volition which has become *habitual*“ (Â§268). I will elaborate habit's key role in Hegel's system in connecting his *Philosophy of Nature* and *Philosophy of Spirit*, as well as, within the latter, subjective spirit to objective spirit. In subjective spirit, Hegel discusses habit in his speculative anthropology, grappling with the emergence of the human being from nature, and, in objective spirit, Hegel insists on a habit of the ethical, which, in its true form, is patriotism. This paper argues for Hegel's unique conception of political life as second nature or ethical habituation, especially in comparison and contrast to Aristotle (habit without freedom) and Kant (freedom is without habit), whose two positions, I contend, mark the limits of contemporary political discourse. The paper raises the question of the relevance of patriotism as a concept *for us*, either with or beyond Hegel.

Rutwij Nakhwa is a PhD candidate in Philosophy at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Bombay, writing his dissertation on Hegel's political philosophy, focusing on his conception of patriotism and its relation to affects, alongside research interests in Marx, psychoanalysis, film and literary theory, and B. R. Ambedkar.

EUSEBIUS NKWAGU

University of Vienna

Ontology and the Power Dynamics – Emmanuel Levinas’ Ethical Frame

Ontology presupposes “human relationship to things such as self, world, and others.” (Howe, 2006, 423). Anya Daly argues that "ontology is political and the political is intrinsically ontologically informed." (Daly, June 2022, 341). It informs and shapes politics and political activities. Ontology and politics are intrinsically connected. Ontology controls the worldview from the perspective of power. Politics is about power dynamics. It is about who controls what, who and how it is used. The main political motive is self-interest and the main goal is Spinoza’s conatus. As such, the political actors need power to survive; the more power they have, the greater their chances of survival. Ontological drives are the tools for political strategy. In the presentation, we will examine Levinas' ethical theory in the context of the challenges posed by new geopolitics and nationalism, through the lens of Spinoza's conatus, especially from the perspective of economics, security, and sociopolitical interests (immigration, refugee crisis, homelessness). Based on Emmanuel Levinas’ ethical theory, we will argue that ethical consciousness shapes and reinforces us into the humanity of the human person, which is the fundamental feature of humanity. His ethical position offers hope for the future of humanity.

A PhD researcher in the Philosophy Department at the University of Vienna, Austria. My Research interests are metaphysics, ontology, phenomenology and ethics.

BEN NUNQUAM

Federation University

‘The development of an economy of controversies’: Stiegler’s debate with Pierre Laurent of the French Communist Party

The French Communist Party's (PCF) ‘General Assembly of the Digital Revolution’ [États Généraux de la Révolution Numérique] recorded a debate in February, 2016 titled: ‘The Digital Revolution: Between Alienation and Emancipation’ [Révolution numérique - Entre aliénation et émancipation] between Bernard Stiegler and the National Secretary of the PCF, Pierre Laurent. It is not transcribed or widely known.

Bernard was co-organising a credible alternative to the ‘Smart City’ (an American neoliberal urbanisation concept) by directly involving the PCF and others. The debate allows us to see Bernard's work with the PCF

up close and represents a period of intense effort he undertook to articulate layperson insights into his late conceptual work on contributory economy, neg-entropy, proletarianisation/de-proletarianistion of work, etc.

I argue the debate contains important lessons for similar interventions in Australia because of vulnerabilities we share with Europe caused by the US imperialist project in the global capitalist market economy. Bernard's practical proposal for the de-proletarianisation organises ordinary people with academics and professionals to adopt industrial problems as 'controversies'. It provides a credible alternatives and interventions in the political economy. Bernard's process relies on collaborative knowledge to 'de-proletarianise' us within the milieu of expanded networks afforded by the expansion of digital infrastructures.

Ben is a PhD candidate at Federation University focusing on the work of Bernard Stiegler in the area of Philosophy of Technology. Ben's research examines animality, technological issues of scale and industrialisation (the latter through his activities as a trade unionist).

TIMOTHYO'LEARY

University of New South Wales

Reframing Social Cohesion: The Politics of Sensibility

In Australia and around the world, there is a consensus that political and social polarization is increasing. In Australia, this phenomenon is often equated with a loss of 'social cohesion'. The need to increase social cohesion then becomes an object of both political discourse and government policy. In this way of thinking, cohesion and polarization are seen as opposites, but I will argue that they are two sides of the same process. This paper will give a preliminary outline of my attempt to critically explore the theoretical assumptions behind this simple binary, by drawing on my concept of the 'conduct of sensibility'. This concept, which combines ideas of Foucault and Rancière, attempts to grasp the processes through which individuals and groups are led to see (and not see) and feel (and not feel) certain things in their social environment. Insofar as these shared sensibilities are always exclusive of other modes of perception, they are necessarily both 'cohesive' and 'polarizing'. I will end by addressing the question of what a critique of this mode of thinking can hope to achieve.

Timothy O'Leary is Professor of Philosophy in the School of Humanities & Languages, UNSW. He has worked and studied in Ireland, France, Hong Kong, and Australia. He has published extensively on the work of Michel Foucault. In recent years, he has published on the contribution of works of fiction to practices of critique. His current project is a more expansive investigation of the critical potential of the concept of 'sensibility'. He is a co-Convenor of the Critique Now group at UNSW and a co-founding member of the Terra Critica network based at the University of Utrecht.

YUXIN OUYANG

Wuhan University

The Explanatory Limits of Free Competition Model: The Sore of Naturalism

As one of the theoretical foundations of classical economics to modern economics, free competition has formed a new theoretical pattern with the continuous deformation and differentiation of several industrial technological revolutions. Although the modern competition model is still trying to provide a more accurate economic explanation for the economic development and institutional choice of capitalist society, it still cannot eliminate the crisis and contradiction behind economic growth from the root. In fact, hidden behind the model of free competition is its naturalistic core, which predetermines that free competition can neither bring about a natural and sustained increase in wealth nor justify the eternal natural legitimacy of capitalism. The naturalistic criticism of the free competition model is to clearly point out the limitations and problems exposed by the model in explaining economic reality, including the lack of social historicity and reductionist logic. Faced with these problems, productivity innovation may become the essence of "competition" that is not controlled by the logic of capital, and replace the free competition model with a new theoretical paradigm.

Yuxin Ouyang , female, 26, is a Ph.D. candidate in Marxist Philosophy at the School of Philosophy, Wuhan University. Her research interests include Marxist political economy and the theoretical foundations of Marxist philosophy, with a particular emphasis on Capital and the contemporary relevance of Marx's crisis theory. She has co-authored a paper published in Population Research and delivered a presentation at the 25th World Congress of Philosophy.

WILL PAN

University of Melbourne

Towards a New (Dis)ontology of Ideology"

In 1970, Louis Althusser published an article "Idéologie et Appareils d'ideologies d'Etat" in *La Pensée*. For Althusser this essay was his intellectual renaissance, another important contribution to philosophy since *Lire le Capital*. But for theorists of Ideology, this essay served the basis of the framing of the problem of Ideology for the next 55 years. Then on, discussions on Ideology were compelled to engage with concepts such as ISAs and Interpellation. And I argue that although theoists such as Butler, Balibar, Zizek and so on have since challenged Althusser and refomulated Althusser's "notes towards an inverstigation", they have failed to escape the Althusserian Problematic. The aporia Althusser leaves us - the distance between the "individual" and "subject" in the context of reproduction persists.

This paper will attempt to establish the conditions to proceed beyond this "aporia". By employing Lacanian Psychoanalysis, especially Jacques Lacan's reading of Marx's theory of the extraction of surplus value in the newly translated Seminar XVI, this paper will attempt to rethinks the links of subjection formation in Capitalist ideology and its relationship to reproduction.

Will is an honors graduate from University of Melbourne in Philosophy. He currently tutors in the Criminology department. Will is primarily interested in the question of Ideology in the Marxist and Psychoanalytic Tradition.

BAIJU PARAKKAL ANTHONY

Birla Institute of Technology and Science

Literature as Knowing: A Feminist Critique of Plato's Epistemology

This paper delineates Plato’s critique of literature in The Republic with Lorraine Code’s feminist epistemology, offering a theoretical and textual analysis of how each outlines the epistemic value of literature. Plato regards poetry as mimesis—a deceptive imitation that is thrice removed from the truth and a menace to rational order. In contrast, Code reestablishes literature as a site of situated, relational, and affectively engaged knowing. Drawing from What Can She Know? and Ecological Thinking, the paper analyses the Platonic ideal of the disembodied, universal knower and affirms literature’s role in fostering epistemic responsibility, moral imagination, and narrative understanding. Methodologically, this study implements a comparative philosophical approach, incorporating close textual reading of primary sources (Plato’s Republic and Ion) with feminist epistemological theory to investigate how literature functions as a medium of knowledge. The analysis prioritizes on concepts such as situated knowledge, the “ideal knower,” and epistemic remapping to interrogate the epistemic and ethical implications of narrative form. Ultimately, the paper argues that while Plato seeks to silence poets in his pursuit of rational purity, Code restores literature as an indispensable mode of knowing—grounded not in abstraction, but in the complexity and plurality of human experience.

Baiju Parakal Anthony is a research scholar specializing in feminist philosophy. He holds an M.Phil. from the University of Delhi and a Master's degree from Pondicherry Central University. With over eight years of teaching experience, he has contributed significantly to academic discourse through the publication of seven scholarly articles. His research interests span feminist philosophy, literary theory, and epistemology.

JACK PARRY

Swinburne University of Technology

Deconstructing the mind: Derrida's 'writing' as a biological process

Continental philosophy and neuroscience provide different perspectives on the questions of consciousness and lived experience. The thinking and methodologies of Jacques Derrida are commonly associated with the analysis and critique of books and writing. In this paper, the methodology of deconstruction is applied to the field of neuroscience. In particular, we look at the language and terminology that has been derived through the interpretation of empirical data and subject it to a process of deconstruction.

Derrida is also known for the concept of Différance. The key idea of Différance is that meaning is never fixed or present in full. Derrida flips the commonsense idea positing that writing in fact precedes speech. The key here lies in what constitutes writing in the first place. We must look beyond language and consider human writing in its most primordial form - biological writing.

Using Derrida's articulation of 'writing' framed as a primordial biological process this paper performs a comparative deconstruction of the two opposing views of the mind as either wired or resonant.

Jack is an interdisciplinary researcher and animator at Swinburne University of Technology. His interests lie across the full spectrum from pure creativity to the utterly abstract. Jack practises eidetic animation, a technique that he uses to form conceptual visual bridges between multiple disciplines, including philosophy, biology, engineering, AI and traditional creative practices. Jack also uses continental philosophy to explain and teach animation techniques and practices, with a view to a better understanding of the nature of lived experience as animation-artist and in the spectatorship behind the phenomenology of animation."

MARIANNA PARRY

Deakin University

Has Plato read the Torah? Parallels between Plato's Laws and the Mosaic Law of the Torah / Pentateuch

Several philosophers of antiquity such as Aristobulus of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, Numenius of Apamea and Clement of Alexandria have argued that Plato was directly influenced by the Mosaic Law possibly during his studies in Egypt. Numenius even referred to Plato as ‘Moses writing Attic'. A fresh look at Plato's *Laws* considers the parallels between this final dialogue, the only one without Socrates, and the Mosaic Law in the Torah (Pentateuch). It is argued that all of the Ten Commandments (Decalogue), in a form adopted to polytheism, appear in Plato's *Laws*, though scattered through the 12 books. Plato also explicitly approves of the adoption of laws of foreign origin ‘so long as we judge them superior' (Book III, 703c). He discusses the Flood (Book III, 677) and mentions “the case of a whole society going into exile” (Book IV, 708b), which strengthens the argument that the parallels between the Mosaic Law and Plato's *Laws* are unlikely to be a mere coincidence. It is also plausible that prior to the Septuagint, being the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Ancient Greek in Alexandria circa 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, there may have been earlier translations of the Torah.

Marianna is a PhD Candidate (Philosophy) at Deakin University researching Lev Shestov's philosophy, including at the Sorbonne Bibliothèque Archives. She runs Parry & Associates Legal Services, is a co-founder of Parry Studios and a former editor of the Monash University Law Review (2009). Her academic background includes Bachelor of Biomedical Science (2001), Masters Qual. Critical Studies (2002), and LLB (Hons) from Monash University. She received Sir John Monash Award for Excellence 2002, Monash University Medal for Academic Excellence (Law) 2010, Supreme Court Prize for Best Honours Student and prizes for Best Research Paper, Legal Reasoning, Ethics, Property and Environment Law.

ALEX PATERSON

University of Queensland

The Phantom World of Scrolling

This presentation is based on the first chapter of my PhD, which is a critical phenomenology of the practice of digital scrolling. In this presentation, I explore how the practice of digital scrolling situates the subject in relation to the material world around them. I ask, in essence, what kind of world is given to us by scrolling. I begin with a phenomenological description of screens, which is combined with analysis drawn from Maurice Merleau-Ponty to argue that a primary effect of scrolling is that the material world which the subject inhabits recedes into the absolute periphery and that, while scrolling, the world for the subject essentially becomes that which is displayed upon the screen. I then draw from Gunther Anders' *The World as Phantom and Matrix* to explore the nature of this pseudo-world of scrolling and its bizarre and unsettling qualities. I conclude with analysis inspired by Fredric Jameson to explore relevant ideological implications and argue that the phantom world of scrolling is one in which the horizons of possibility are limited to the act of consumption.

I am a PhD student at the University of Queensland, working primarily in the fields of critical phenomenology and affect theory. My thesis is entitled: Flight From Being - A Critical Phenomenology of Scrolling. The project, as the name suggests, combines phenomenology and critical theory to explore the practice of scrolling and its implications for subjectivity, social relations, and politics. Outside of my thesis work, I am currently working on an article which argues for the fundamental incompatibility of digitality and meaningful climate action.

JAMES PATTERSON

University of Queensland

Goethe as a Model of Nietzschean Sublimation

Nietzsche's use of “sublimation” (*Sublimierung*) is an underappreciated aspect of his assessment of morality, yet it is central to understanding the will to power. This paper proposes that sublimation should be read in the context of Nietzsche's ever-developing configuration of the "pessimism of strength" and his praise of Goethe. Nietzsche's genealogical method and prospective on an impending age for free spirits depends on the view that impulses are sublimated and directed towards higher expression. His condemnation of certain historical tendencies, and approval of others, remains unclear without appreciating the role of sublimation. Arguments in the scholarship for a positive view of sublimation describe it as an overcoming of impulses which can manifest in artistic expressions. Arguments against this reading pose that Nietzsche's wide use of sublimation means that it is not singularly positive or negative. Considering this debate, we must re-examine sublimation and the examples Nietzsche gives, read in context of recurring concepts in his thought. His praise of Goethe as a "man of tolerance, not from weakness but from strength" [G IX 49] links sublimation with his enigmatic contrast of "Dionysus versus the Crucified" [EH IV 9], forming a central tension that Nietzsche wrestled with throughout his life.

James is in his final year of studying a dual Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts at the University of Queensland. His research interests include German idealism, aesthetics, and political philosophy.

MONTY PATTON

The University of Melbourne

From Supersession to Deconstruction

In this paper, I argue that Hamacher's *Magisterarbeit*, “Version of Meaning: A study of Hölderlin's Late Lyric Poetry,” is to be read as a critique of the logic of supersession which finds its most sophisticated modern exposition in the philosophy of Hölderlin's friend, Hegel. I Intend to demonstrate that, for Hamacher, the logic of supersession issues in a corresponding practice of interpretation – specifically, a hermeneutic in which the formal elements of poetic language are presumed to be sublated semantically. By contrast, Hölderlin's late lyric poetry may is to be read as a critique of the logic underwriting this joint understanding of historical development and poetic process. In his interpretation of “The Only One,” Hamacher demonstrates that the deeds of Hölderlin's Christ—specifically, his *kenosis* and his departure from mortal creation—mark an epochal change which breaks with the logic of supersession, and so too the means in accordance with which the lyric subject strains to understand the messianic advent. I'll demonstrate, first, that this break is registered formally; and second, that the consequences of this break shape the predicament of post-Hegelian criticism. Finally, I'll conclude with some reflections on relationship between supersession and deconstruction.

Monty Patton is a PhD candidate in Literary Studies at the University of Melbourne. His current research focuses on the literary criticism of Werner Hamacher, examining the intersections of poetics, philology and deconstruction. Monty's work engages critically with the reception of German Idealism and its implications for contemporary literary criticism.

LAUREN PEDERSEN-HOR

Deakin University

I Built This FYP Brick by Brick': An Extended Consideration of the Algorithmic Panopticon (Algopticon) in Trying to Understand TikTok's Algorithmic Practices

Surveillance studies has a long-held obsession with the panopticon. The newest adaptation, the algorithmic panopticon or ‘algopticon', conceives a framework for understanding surveillance in the age of the platform economy where algorithms predict and guide our every move. Much of the literature on the algopticon focuses on delivery app surveillance to contextualise corporate power within algorithmic practices. Inversely, there is not much research contextualising social power. As such, this paper will consider the algoptic framework in the context of the short-form video platform, TikTok.

TikTok is renowned for its algorithm, whose ‘For You' page predicts your desires and presents them to you before you even knew you wanted them. These predictions, and the app's popularity, gives an enormous capacity for social influence, seen through the proliferation of ‘influencer culture'. This influence has caused a stir in the US due to the platform's ties to China, raising national security and data privacy concerns.

This paper will show that the algoptic framework is too narrow to account for all algorithmic practices on TikTok, as current iterations do not provide any explicit consideration of user contributions to algorithms, but that it is a good launching point in understanding power dynamics on the platform.

Lauren Pedersen-Hor is a current PhD candidate at Deakin University whose work focuses on the philosophical and practical dimensions of algorithmic structures within social media platforms. Her previous work has focused on the French poststructuralist movement, politics of the body, and the philosophical dimensions of critical areas of study (i.e. critical fashion studies). She is primarily interested in interdisciplinary philosophical work that discusses contemporary issues of importance to the general public.

LILLIAN PHILLIPS

University of Melbourne

Rose and Repetition

"*The Broken Middle* begins with *Repetition* as proper noun—Kierkegaard's 1843 work, semi-autobiographical, written under a pseudonym. The pseudonym, as Kierkegaard knew, is both repetition and interruption; in his *Philosophical Fragments*, he calls it a, double reflected communication form...[which] establishes a chasmic gap between reader and author and fixes the separation of inwardness between them... the conscious, teasing revocation of the communication...[important] lest the relation be changed to that of a rote reciter who writes for rote reciters.

How are we to understand repetition in Rose's work? Certainly, it is fundamental to her critique of the poststructuralist Nietzschean/Kierkegaardian/Heideggerian inheritance; it even allows us to understand the path of thought *as properly historical*—as she writes, the ‘abstruse story' of Neo-Kantianism itself ‘might be considered a mere intellectual curiosity were it not for the way intellectual history repeats itself.'

But reading *Love's Work*, we see a Rose implicated, at her end, in the poststructuralist triune of death/writing/love. The difference is that the representation of experience, here, is not the breakage of the dialectic; it is dialectical breakage”I come to terms with my inability to overcome the past, and its confusion. I die still in the grip of an old life made new. Between these two, repetition and representation, I want to read a notion of authorship, and a new historical position of the philosopher-writer, to a point of poststructuralist kinship that Rose would likely despise.

Lillian Phillips is a writer and researcher based at the University of Melbourne. Her work is mostly an attempt to think historically about the tension between the Hegelian dialectic, Marxism, and avant-gardist transgression in 20th century literature, philosophy, and art.

STEPHEN PIGOTT

Deakin University

The Lonely End of the World: Ethical Subjectivity and the Human Condition in the Anthropocene

The idea of 'the end of the world' expresses not just a fear about whatever disaster might be keeping us awake at night, it is also a problem of the disappearing social bonds that threaten the world of collective experience and common understanding. Hannah Arendt traced the sources of this worldlessness and showed how it has produced in us a condition of intense loneliness, as humans become alienated from each other and from the earth. Arendt described three transformative events of modernity, and to these we may add a fourth: the Anthropocene, which can be seen as a continuation of the alienating transformations of the modern age. This loneliness might be addressed with a renovated understanding of the human condition derived from a posthumanist notion of subjectivity. Beginning with a comparison of plurality in the work of Arendt and alterity in the work of Emmanuel Levinas, I develop a notion of ethical subjectivity that that responds to the unfulfillable demand of the other and which allows ethics to stand up on its own, as it were, without recourse to the standard justificatory frameworks of moral philosophy. This prompts a challenge to the humanist assumptions within conventional accounts of human subjectivity. Reading the work of Rosi Braidotti and Travis Holloway, I push on the question of who, or what, counts as human as we elaborate our understanding of 'the human condition'. The Anthropocene is not a single disaster; it is a cascading series of events that has ended countless other worlds: cultures, species, and entire ecosystems have fallen to the forces of anthropocentric modernity. The aim now is to declare a subject position that overcomes the anthropocentric humanist dialectic of self and other and which sees 'the human' as a hybrid, world-making (and therefore meaning-making) assemblage. On this view, the 'end of the world' might not be such a disaster after all. It may, in fact, be the beginning of something much better.

Stephen Pigott is a recent honours student in philosophy at Deakin University.

ANDREW POE

Australian Catholic University

Constituting Police: Rancière and the Force of Public Slaves in Democratic Athens

This essay explores the Western origins of the police. Ancient democratic Athens offers an important historical framework to reconsider this idea. While modern conceptions of policing emerge through histories of slave patrols and state power over wealth and capital, ancient forms of policing present an alternative history, one which complicates police, slavery, and democracy. The earliest proto-police force was composed of slaves—nomadic Scythians captured in war—used to maintain and control public spaces. Building on Jacques Rancière's 7th thesis on police from his essay "Ten Theses on Politics." this essay clarifies how democracy transforms through its understanding of police. As I show, Rancière makes the surprising and infamous claim that "(t)he police is not a social function but a symbolic constitution of the social," explaining that the essence of police is "a certain way of dividing up the sensible." My essay offers a reading of Rancière's thesis in conjunction with the history of the force of public slaves in ancient Democratic Athens, highlighting the ways in which the Scythians divide the sensible differently than might be expected by modern police, and how this can allow us to reimagine democracy.

Andy Poe is an Associate Professor of Social and Political Thought at the Australian Catholic University. He is a political theorist with research interests in democratic theory, continental philosophy, forms of protest, political violence, and law and society. Most recently, Andy is the author of Political Enthusiasm: Partisan Feeling and Democracy's Enchantments (2022). His current research explores the philosophy of abolitionism, considering the example of police in democracies. He is also currently an affiliate of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Sydney.

MICHAEL-FRANCIS POLIOS

Duquesne University

Formation and Disruption: Spinoza and Francis Bacon on a Science of Singular Things

According to Spinoza, we are persevering beings that maintain a certain pattern of change in the midst of countervailing, ambient forces. This fact of perseverance Spinoza names a thing's form *(forma)* or nature *(natura)*. Commentators typically argue that formal essences function to ground nature's fixed and unchanging laws, situating Spinoza in a quasi-Aristotelian tradition that privileges the demonstrability of scientific thought. Bodies thus have natures by virtue of which their proper operations and actions are supposed to follow, grounding their intelligibility in respect of nature's formal structure. I argue, on the contrary, that it is Francis Bacon's retooling of Aristotelian formal causation that equips Spinoza with the clue to thinking the production of singular things.

This raises an interpretive dilemma. What motivates Spinoza to adopt Bacon's method of interrogating the structure of material bodies? To what extent does this motivation reflect the demands of his mature metaphysical system – a thoroughly monist ontology in which all extant modes are fully expressed? My contention is that Spinoza's appeal to Bacon is symptomatic: it represents the demand to develop a science of singular things in the face of a metaphysics in which bodies have no intelligible structure outside of their actual effect production.

Michael-Francis is a PhD student at Duquesne University conducting research on Spinoza that focuses on the material formation of physical, ethical, and political bodies within the nexus of ideas that crisscross the early-modern period. They specialise more broadly in seventeenth-century metaphysics, contemporary political philosophy, and the history of materialism.

CHRISTINE POLOWYJ

University of Melbourne

Creative logic, philosophical reason and the unconscious

Because the goings-on of the world are multiply traumatising, I am interested in ways we can creatively unpack the anguish, exploring the self as a being-in-the-world to discover unexpected angles of philosophical interpretation and enquiry. Referencing Bergson's metaphysics in *The Creative Mind*, I consider the value – necessity, even – to seek to engage philosophical enquiry within, through intuition, creativity and poetry. Queerying logic, I draw on some of Wittgenstein's later ideas to play along with Lacan's *Formations of the Unconscious*, exploring ways to attract philosophical possibilities atomised in the unconscious depths. I approach this presentation as an opportunity to prompt conversation about the ways creative practice can disrupt norms of logical enquiry and validate emotion as a tool of philosophical enquiry and analysis.

Christine is an undergraduate student majoring in the History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Melbourne. She enjoys thinking about AI, feminism, mental illness and creativity in the contexts of science, society and the self, and likes to consider what logic is and where, and how, it is broken or disrupted.

DANIEL QUILL

The University of Queensland

Natality and Authenticity: A Comparison of Arendt and Heidegger's Readings of Saint Augustine

This paper explores the relationship between the thought of Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt, with particular emphasis on their readings of the works of Augustine. While Arendt's relationship with Heidegger has received considerable attention in the past, limited scholarship has engaged with this relationship in terms of Arendt's 1929 dissertation Der Liebesbegriff bei Augustin. The scholarship which does consider Heidegger's influence on Arendt's early thought tends to focus on the former's 1927 Being and Time, and typically understands the origin of Arendt's later concept of natality as a 'being-towards-life' developed in opposition to a Heideggerian 'being-towards-death.' Against this reading, I offer a close textual comparison

of Arendt's reading of Augustine with Heidegger's less examined interpretation offered in his 1921 lecture series 'Phenomenological Interpretation of Confessions, Book X.' Particular attention is paid to the original German publication of Arendt's dissertation, which has only been made available in English in a substantially revised form wherein Arendt removed many of her initial uses of Heideggerian language. Ultimately, I conclude the groundwork for Arendt's concept of natality was laid not in opposition to Heidegger's emphasis on death, but by extending the latter's understanding of 'authenticity.'

Honours student at The University of Queensland currently researching the development of liberalism from economic, political, and philosophical perspectives. I have a particular interest in the works of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, and Hannah Arendt, as well as the political writings of heterodox economists and the typically unexamined economic writings of mainstream philosophers.

JACK REYNOLDS

Co-author Aymen Moutwari

Deakin University

Phenomenology and science sans objectivism?

This paper reconsiders the role of the phenomenological critique of "objectivism" for understanding the relationship between phenomenology and empirical science, as well as naturalism, a position which typically defers to science. It also considers the viability of scientific realism in light of the critique of objectivism, ultimately arguing in favour of the possibility of non-objectivist scientific realism as a legitimate option for the phenomenologist. It considers the role of some key sciences in general terms (physics, biology and psychology), along with case studies on the role of mathematics in phenomenological psychopathology and deep computational phenomenology, arguing that they can, in some instances, provide support for non-objectivist construals, and a path for phenomenology and science sans objectivism.

JANICE RICHARDSON

Monash University

Spinoza's Conception of the Individual: The "No Enemy Within" Problem

The usual way of thinking about Spinoza's definition of an "individual" is to consider a human being as paradigmatic and then to debate the extent to which the State can be classified as such an individual, within the terms of his definition. Superficially, this follows a popular tradition of viewing the State as akin to a human body, as illustrated by the cover of Hobbes' *Leviathan*, approved by Hobbes, in which the State is portrayed as a giant sovereign comprised of tiny subjects, pictured within the boundaries of the sovereign's body. The twist in Spinoza's rendition is that Matheron (amongst others) has employed a detailed analyses of Spinoza's oeuvre to argue that the State is genuinely (not merely metaphorically) a Spinozist individual. This is problematic for Marxists because of the condition that, to be deemed a Spinozist individual, it is necessary that nothing within that individual undermines its endeavour to thrive and survive. I consider these and other organisations (such as contemporary universities) that may be classified as Spinozist individuals and the tipping point at which they – like human suicides as understood by Spinoza – are overwhelmed by "external forces".

Janice Richardson is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, Monash University. She has published four single authored books mainly on feminist philosophy, the latest of which is Law, Selfhood and Feminist Philosophy: Monstrous Aberrations (Abingdon UK, Routledge, 2024). Her journal articles include those in Feminist Legal Studies, Law and Critique, Ratio Juris, Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities, Minds and Machines: Journal for Artificial Intelligence, Philosophy and Cognitive Science, Textual Practice, and Parrhesia: A Journal of Critical Philosophy.

LOUISE RICHARDSON-SELF

University of Tasmania

In Almost Absolute Silence

This paper aims to articulate elements of the sexed and sexual silencing that women with persistent pelvic pain experience. I ask, why and how is the pained woman inhibited from expressing her experience in a socially meaningful way, and what are the phenomenal, imaginal, and existential consequences of her (imposed) silences? I ask, too, how her silence may be transformed.

Louise Richardson-Self is a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Tasmania. Her research interests include French feminisms, social imaginaries, embodiment, and social justice. She is the author of Hate Speech Against Women Online and Justifying Same-Sex Marriage.

JACOB RITZ

The University of Queensland

Badiou's Speculative Metaontology: Between Heidegger and Kant

In this presentation, I contend that Alain Badiou interlaces Heideggerian and Kantian problematics to realise his doctrine of the not-One. While scholars have noted Badiou's thematic continuity with Martin Heidegger's *Seinsfrage* and Immanuel Kant's theory of apperception, the unity of these themes remains underappreciated. I begin by explaining that Badiou's speculative metaontology rests on two fundamental notions: inconsistent multiplicity and the count-as-one. I then draw on Justin Clemens and Ian Hunter to contextualise Badiou's subtractive ontology as an attempt to dialectically sublate Heidegger's critique of the metaphysics of presence. In contrast to this previous work, I argue that Badiou's distinction from Heidegger *qua* subtraction depends on his interpretation of Kantian apperception. Whereas the subtractive approach enables Badiou to break with the ontology of presence without reproducing the tensions that pervade Heidegger's early existential hermeneutics, his appeal to Heideggerian ontology allows him to overcome Kant's meta-critical problem. I conclude that, in formulating his doctrine of the not-One, Badiou resolves central issues in both Kant's and Heidegger's metaphysics through the integration of their core motifs.

Jacob Ritz is a PhD student and casual academic at the University of Queensland. He is currently researching the ethics of thinking, the philosophy of mathematics, and metaphysics through his PhD thesis on Immanuel Kant and Alain Badiou.

RICARDO ROJAS CAMPOS

Monash University

Walter Benjamin's cunning

In this paper, I will examine Thesis IV of Walter Benjamin's "On the Concept of History", where the philosopher provides a glimpse of his understanding of the Marxist notion of class struggle. Here, Benjamin claims that class struggle "is a fight for the crude and material things without which no refined and spiritual things could exist. But these latter things ["¦] are alive in this struggle as confidence, courage, humor, cunning [*List*], and fortitude, and have effects that reach far back into the past" (*SW* 4, 390). Despite the apparent relevance of the fragment for evaluating Benjamin's engagement with the Marxist tradition, it has received very little attention in the Benjamin literature–probably due to the perplexing assertions being put forward, which reinforce the image of Benjamin as a heterodox Marxist, at best. I contend that we can approach the difficulties of this text through an analysis of the notion of cunning–term which connects Thesis IV to central passages of some of Benjamin's most important writings (e.g. his construction of Ulysses as a cunning figure in the Kafka essay). This reading also helps clarify the fourth Thesis' relation to the fundamental Benjaminian question of the task of the materialist historian.

Ricardo Rojas Campos has recently obtained his master's degree in philosophy from Monash University, with a thesis examining Walter Benjamin's philosophy of history. Likewise, he has been employed as a teaching associate at the university since 2022, where he is a tutor for multiple philosophy units. Alongside his research on Walter Benjamin's thinking, his recent work primarily engages with Latin American Marxism and decolonial theory, with a particular interest in the reconceptualization of Marxist frameworks from the Global South.

LEWIS ROSENBERG

Texas A&M University

Developing Deep Environmental Hermeneutics

Philosophical hermeneutics defends the position that the relationship of human beings to their world is characterized by interpretation. “Environmental hermeneutics” holds that our relationship with nature is not only a material or “physical” one, but a hermeneutic one of interpreting and responding to meaning. But the development of environmental hermeneutics has been limited by a lack of clarity about the character of interpretative activity in relation to nature. To address this, I distinguish between two forms of environmental hermeneutics, “shallow” and “deep” (using terms inspired by Arne Naess). Where “shallow” environmental hermeneutics views interpretation as a conversation in culture about nature, “deep” environmental hermeneutics views nature as itself an active contributor to the emergence of meaning. In the first part of my paper, I articulate the distinction between shallow and deep environmental hermeneutics, and give some arguments as to why the latter is a worthy project. In the second part of my paper, I give a close reading of Gadamer's article “Natur und Welt” (GW7) to explore the possibilities and limitations of his thought for developing a deep environmental hermeneutics.

Lewis Rosenberg is a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University. He previously completed a Masters at Western Sydney University. His research employs phenomenological and hermeneutical methods to the investigation of concepts in environmental philosophy such as nature, history, technology and value.

DANIEL ROSS

Artificial Stupidity and the Immense Regression

Many thinkers are engaged in trying to identify and comprehend the fundamental significance of those new forms of so-called artificial intelligence referred to as Generative Artificial Intelligence (incorporating text, image and video generation tools). Unfortunately, Bernard Stiegler’s death prevented him from responding to developments that have unfolded since the arrival of ChatGPT. Nevertheless, Stiegler’s far-sighted understanding of the “breaking of the chain of photons” that came with the advent of digital photography, the almost prophetic vision of social media he described as the “allegory of the anthill”, and his account of the role of “artificial stupidity” in the production of an “immense regression”, all provide crucial perspectives from which to try to grasp what’s beginning to emerge today. Here we argue that any critique of generative AI should focus on at least three interrelated dimensions: proletarianisation; the cinematic condition; epistemological doubt.

Daniel Ross is the author of Violent Democracy (2004) and Psychopolitical Anaphylaxis (2021), as well as the co-director of the film The Ister (2004) and translator of many books and articles by Bernard Stiegler.

LACHLAN ROSS

The University of Melbourne

How dare you make me live: two theses on biopower without health

The first thesis: biopower without health is only ostensibly a strange idea, as the monitoring and maintaining of civilian physical health involves state interest in ‘cultural' health. Certain bodies will be deemed detrimental to this, and pushed to the periphery so that the core population can thrive. If this latter defensive role becomes the only legitimate function of the state, it is an extreme expansion of what is traditionally only one aspect of biopower, but not necessarily a paradigm shift. The second: biopower and liberalism more generally are being rejected and dismantled, via a revolution of truth and lies. The truth is that liberal tolerance, ‘wokeness' in general, and enforced health are technologies of power. The lie is that ‘real' freedom is awaiting the patriot who goes to war on them. Dr. Joseph Ladapo has recently stated that ending vaccine mandates in Florida ‘will strengthen the sovereignty of patients'. Foucault imagined that the perfect form of government was the self-government of the Enlightened. What if it is rather a government that destroys itself? The proudly unenlightened who cheer on this process will believe themselves finally free when it is completed. For Foucault, this is how they get you.

Lachlan Ross is Marx, Nietzsche, and Frankfurt School scholar. His most recent research relates to the relationship between Adorno's concept of living death and Marx's concept of alienation. He has lectured in Philosophy and Criminology.

DONGSUI RU

Wuhan University

Divergent Paths in Critical Theory of Technology: A Marx-Heidegger Comparison

The critiques of technology developed by Marx and Heidegger embody distinct theoretical approaches. Marx proceeds horizontally, examining the alienating power of the technological system through the combined force of technology-capital and related social factors. He points to the profound shift from the humanization of technology to the technologization of humans, revealing the source of technology's alienating power and the potential path to overturn capital. Heidegger, conversely, traces vertically backward, questioning back to the origin and source of modern technology's controlling force. However, Heidegger's retrospective approach neglects important social factors related to technology. Even though Heidegger recognizes technology's appropriation and domination of humans, he interprets this dominating technological force as a mystical and transcendental mode of thought—"Gestell" (Enframing)—and thus fails to truly uncover the root cause of technological alienation. Hence, the crucial insight from Marx's critique of technology is that technology itself does not possess decisive power; it generates alienating, human-controlling force only when integrated into the complex web of society. Otherwise, we risk falling into "Technological Fetishism", understanding technology as an isolated factor separable from society and mistakenly attributing to it the ultimate power to either dominate or liberate society.

Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy specializing in Frankfurt School critical theory, with extended research interests in Heidegger’s Philosophy and Western Marxist Philosophy. Current doctoral work builds on my Master's thesis analyzing Adorno's conceptual dialectics through the "Constellation" framework. Actively investigating intersections between critical theory and dialectical materialism.

JON RUBIN

MSCP

All you need is love, love, love, love of an eternal and infinite being that can't love you (qua you) back: on love and enjoyment in Spinoza's Short Treatise.

In the Ethics, love plays a perplexing number of antagonistic roles. Its passionate form is defined as, “nothing but joy with the accompanying idea of an external cause”. When the object of our passionate love is external, love is a nuisance but when this switches from external to internal, in the affects of philautia and pride, it is the most dangerous of passions. Then there is the curious absence of a reasonable form of love (traditionally, friendship) and the even more curious presence of an intellectual form, the intellectual love of God, that is the climax of the Ethics.

To begin to unravel these tangles, I will turn to Spinoza’s earlier Short Treatise, where love plays a more explicitly central role. What is love in the Short Treatise? It is: “nothing but enjoying a thing and being united with it”. But what does it mean to enjoy a thing? And what sense can we give to being united with a thing?

To understand Spinoza’s early ideas on love will require a dive into its eclectic roots: Augustinian, Jewish neo-Platonic, Scholastic, and hilariously heretical, as mysticism sought to avoid pantheism and theological-rationalism vainly tried to keep intellect and will separate.

Jon Rubin taught the graduate program, ‘The Philosophy and Ethics of Mental Health', for eight years in the Medical School of the University of Warwick, before moving to Australia. He has taught for the MSCP since 2015, on a range of topics (from Aristotle to Deleuze). More recently he taught undergraduate philosophy at the ACU. His research is currently split between Spinoza and scholastic philosophy.

GUSTAVO RUIZ DA SILVA

Monash University

How the "History of Philosophy" Finally Became a Story

This paper explores two examples of fictional nominalist ways of writing the History of Philosophy: how Michel Foucault wrote about Gilles Deleuze in « *Theatrum Philosophicum* » (1970), and how Paul Veyne wrote about Michel Foucault in « *Foucault révolutionne l'histoire* » (1979). To interpret these examples, I show how Pierre Klossowski, in « *La Vocation Suspendue* » (1950), « *Roberte ce soir* » (1953), and « *Nietzsche et le Cercle vicieux* » (1969), introduced Nietzsche into the French environment, moving the historiography of philosophy toward a literary debate. The influence of Nietzsche on Klossowski and subsequently on Foucault is highlighted, showcasing the transformation of the « Moi » into multiple representations, a simulacrum with multiple repetitions and trickeries. After Foucault comments on Klossowski, in « *La Prose d'Actéon* » (1964) and « *La pensée du dehors* » (1966), this new understanding transformed the writing of the History of Philosophy into a Story of Philosophy. To clarify that, I show how the use of metaphors and hyperboles worked as stylistic devices to fictionalize philosophical figures, creating a grey area where philosophical reference operates on verisimilitude rather than truth or falsehood.

Double PhD candidate (Philosophy) at the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) and Monash University (Australia). Former Visiting Graduate Student at the University of São Paulo (Brazil) and Johns Hopkins University (USA). Recipient of Warwick PhD and Early Career Research Fellowship, Monash-Warwick Joint PhD Scholarship, and SLAS' PG & PD Research Support Grant. Editor of the upcoming volume “Foucault and Desubjectivation” (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026).

ARDEN RUSHWOOD

University of Queensland

Authenticity and Conservatism: Negotiating the public/private distinction"

This paper examines connections between the ethical ideal of authenticity and conservative political philosophy, in order to clarify the role of authenticity in political life. I invoke Hannah Arendt’s distinction between the public and private realms, identifying her characterisation of the social as a domination of the public by private interests as a key expression of inauthenticity, with the example of revolution highlighting the practical consequences of inauthenticity in political affairs. This view reinforces ideas of authenticity characterised by a recognition of limitation, establishing a connection to conservatism understood fundamentally as a philosophy of limitation. The revolutionary attitude, as with the social realm, constitutes a failure to confront the possibility that one might be mistaken; the overestimation of certainty and the neglect of genuine doubt renders them both a failure to meet the conditions of authenticity. With this in mind, I will locate authenticity within the public and private realms but not the social, ultimately arguing that an authentic politics must maintain the integrity of the distinction while permitting the sharing of perspectives across the divide. From this, I suggest that a truly authentic politics necessarily involves a negotiation between the public and the private realms..

Arden is a researcher in philosophy from the University of Queensland, with a primary interest in investigating applications of authenticity to questions of social and political relevance. His work engages at the intersection of existentialism and pragmatism to further clarify what it means to be an authentic being, and specifically to collaborate authentically with others in the realm of politics.

SEAN RYAN

RMIT University

Luxury and the Labyrinth

In a little-known passage meditating on a late-career trip to Greece, Heidegger poses the startling question whether there might be a connection between luxury and the labyrinth. Confronted with the artefacts of the Minoan civilisation, which give evidence of a “highly stylized and refined” existence “dedicated to the joys of life,” he explains: “As an adjective the word *luxus* means something that is moved from its place, displaced and dislocated, such that it evades and deviates from what is customary.” The diversion of and from the everyday is manifest in the “adornment and embellishment” both of the frescos on the palace walls and of

everyday utensils, in their “amazing” gleam and shine. But, Heidegger reflects, the essence of this shine remains enigmatic; it raises the question: “What is it that shines in things and hides itself in their shine?” [1]

Heidegger's ‘answer' to this question is set out in his earlier essay on the essence of truth, an interpretation of the (post-Minoan) Greek word *aletheia*. The classical definition of truth, as the correspondence of statements with facts, is, more essentially, an errancy before the mystery that things *are*. Errancy is the incessant diversion that estranges from the customary and allows it to shine; the ‘counter-essence' of truth is also the essence of luxury. [2]

This encounter with luxury – traditionally marked as oriental, feminine, parvenu, vicious – offers insight into Heidegger's late understanding of the ‘beginning' and ‘end' of Western thought.

[1] Heidegger, Martin, Sojourns: *The Journey to Greece*, trans. John Panteleimon Manoussakis, State University of New York Press: Albany, NY, 2005, pp. 23-24. Heidegger, Martin, ‘*Aufenthalte’, Zu Hölderlin | Griechenlandreisen* (Gesamtausgabe Band 75), Vittorio Klostermann: Frankfurt am Main, 2000, p. 227.

[2] Heidegger, Martin, ‘On the Essence of Truth’, trans. John Sallis, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeil, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 136-154; Heidegger, Martin, ‘Vom Wesen der Warheit’, *Wegmarken* (Gesamtausgabe Band 9), Vittorio Klostermann: Frankfurt am Main, 1976, pp. 177-202.

Sean Ryan is a senior lecturer and research integrity advisor in the College of Design and Social Context at RMIT University. His most recent publications and papers have addressed: the ontology of stuff; the horizonality of planetary thinking; Eugen Fink's phenomenology of fashion and desire; and interpretive criticality in Heidegger's thinking.

SUMERA SALEEM

Australian Catholic University

Precarity and oceanic thought: The politics of migration

Critiques of migration bring to focus the debates around the political, the economic, and the affective. Following the context of blue humanities and drawing on Judith Butler's insights on precarity, I argue that climate change renders the lives of the human and the nonhuman exposed to systematic violence and vulnerability. The ocean emerges as a political site of precarity where fluid borders and extractive capitalism perpetuate the conditions of violence and invisibility. This paper engages with oceanic thought as a critical inquiry towards the ethics of care through the philosophical lens of precarity.

Sumera Saleem is a poet, and PhD candidate in blue humanities at the Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia. Her research interests involve colonialism, environment and religious identity in world literature.

BENEDICT SANTILLI

La Trobe University

I Think Therefore You Are

On June 28 in Geneva, 1962, at a ceremony marking the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Claude Lévi-Strauss delivered a speech that suggested that Rousseau not merely contributed toward, but rather, founded ethnology and anthropology through a reupholstering of Descartes’ cogito – ‘I think therefore I am’. Through a fracturing of the lonesome Cartesian cogito, Rousseau established a founding principle for anthropological and ethnological inquiry – that thought is inherently social and inter-relational – ‘I think therefore you are.’ This paper hopes to illuminate Lévi-Strauss’ insights for contemporary anthropology, primarily through his deep intellectual and romantic inheritance from Rousseau. While critical of Lévi-Strauss, I hope to explore how and in what ways his thought is still able to speak toward a rejuvenated and ethical philosophical anthropology today in the clutches of (post)modernity.

Benedict Santilli, BA, MA PhD candidate (Anthropology); Casual Academic, Department of Social Inquiry. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

JACINTA SASSINE

Western Sydney University

Archiving the Self: Data and the Destruction of Memory

This paper explores the intersections between ancient critiques on 'writing' knowledge and the role of the law as an archive of cultural memory. In Plato's Phaedrus, Socrates claims that while textual inscription may appear to secure knowledge, it risks severing it from the living exchange of ideas - the death of true understanding. Building on this critique, this paper examines how contemporary data regimes problematically codify and preserve personal information in an Age of Algocracy, increasingly characterised by artificial intelligence, data proliferation, and the apparent calcification of culture.

In a time where 'death profiles' outlive their subjects, why might we say it is not only the right to be counted, but the right to be forgotten that is more urgent than ever? This paper asks whether law can mediate the way we understand memory and forgetting, and individual identity and collective memory.

Dr Jacinta Sassine is an Associate Lecturer in the School of Law and admitted lawyer of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. She conducts interdisciplinary research and teaches across legal philosophy, political theory, literature, and data and privacy law. Her research draws on ancient rhetorical traditions and contemporary technologies to explore the intersections of law, language, and power, with a particular focus on how authority is constructed and contested. Jacinta has managed several research projects with industry and government partners that have reflected her interest in justice and communication-based projects, particularly surrounding digital rights and responsible technologies.

KISHORE SAVAL

Australian Catholic University

Hamlet and Merleau-Ponty: The Observed Observer

Ophelia calls Hamlet "Th'observed of all observers" (3. 1. 156). This remark interests me because of a phenomenological problem: that all observers are observed, even when they are alone.

In *Hamlet*, observers are divided from themselves because they are tangible from where they touch, visible from where they see, and hearable from where they speak. Although these reversible dimensions of our experience necessarily envelop one another, they can never coincide with one another. In this regard, *Hamlet* has an unexpected affinity with the thinking of Merleau-Ponty, whose entire later philosophy is dedicated to exploring "the coiling over of the visible upon the seeing body, of the tangible upon the touching body, which is attested when the body sees itself, touches itself seeing and touching the things, such that...it...draws this relationship and even this double relationship from itself, by dehiscence or fission of its own mass."[i] In my talk, Merleau-Ponty reads *Hamlet*, and reversibly, *Hamlet* reads Merleau-Ponty, in order to explore what it means to make seeing visible.

[i] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*. A. Lingis, trans. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968, 146.

Kishore Saval is Senior Lecturer in Arts at Australian Catholic University. Formerly, among other things, he was Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at Brown University. He is the author of two books: Reading Shakespeare through Philosophy (Routledge, 2014) and Shakespeare in Hate (Routledge, 2016)"

ROBERT LUCAS SCOTT

University of Cambridge

The Risk of Action

Thinking and acting, for Gillian Rose, are a matter of risk. The outcomes of critical rationality, political action, even a love affair, cannot be secured or guaranteed in advance. Instead, they can only be discovered 'by taking the risk of action, and then by reflecting on its unintended consequences, and then taking the risk, yet again, of further action, and so on.' Both theory and practice involve the 'risk of positing and failing and positing again.' Politics in particular, she writes, 'does not happen when you act on behalf of your own damaged good, but when you act, *without guarantees*, for the good of all – this is to take *the risk* of the *universal* interest.' With reference to her readings of Hegel's critique of Kant and Fichte (in *Hegel Contra*

Sociology) and Kierkegaard's notion of the suspension of the ethical (in *The Broken Middle*), this paper will explore the meanings of risk and action in Rose's work. It will also develop a Rosean critique of Slavoj Žižek's theory of the 'abyssal' act which, despite some cosmetic similarities with Rose's theory, ultimately renounces the risk of an impure beginning in the middle for the fantasy of a pure beginning.

Robert Lucas Scott is Arts Research Fellow at Jesus College, University of Cambridge. He is the author of Reading Hegel: Irony, Recollection, Critique (University of Chicago Press, 2025) and coeditor of Gillian Rose's Marxist Modernism (Verso, 2024). He is currently writing a book on Gillian Rose.

STEVEN SEGAL

Independent Scholar

Hermeneutic Existential Phenomenology as Therapeutic Activity: Disclosing the Mood of Convention

This paper argues that Hermeneutic Existential Phenomenology (HEP) can be seen a therapeutic activity. From a Heideggerian perspective human existence is not grounded in an inner self but in being-in-the-world, already shaped by conventions that make a world intelligible. These conventions are not merely conceptual beliefs; they are mooded structures of disclosure that determine what appears necessary, meaningful, or unavoidable.

To illustrate this, the paper examines Heidegger's late admission of political error. Heidegger acknowledged the mistake, yet did not disclose the mood through which his involvement once appeared compelling—particularly the mood of historical urgency and national destiny. The error is recognised, but the world that made the error possible remains unexamined.

HEP works precisely here: by making the mood of convention speakable, staying with its breakdown, and enabling the emergence of a post-"error" way of inhabiting a world.

Dr Steven Segal is a psychologist, leadership educator, and philosophical counselor based in Sydney. He has published two books, edited two further volumes, and authored over thirty peer-reviewed articles. His work focuses on how individuals and leaders navigate existential disruption and discover new possibilities for being. Drawing on Heidegger, Ubuntu, Aristotle, and lived therapeutic experience, he emphasises emotional wisdom, attunement, and embodied presence. Steven is currently writing a book on the therapeutic dimensions of philosophy, exploring how philosophy can serve as a way of orienting ourselves when familiar frameworks falter.

KARIN SELLBERG

University of Queensland

Battles of Womanhood: Reading the Culture Wars through Simone de Beauvoir

The term 'woman' has increasingly become a contested space in Anglo-American cultural and political discourse, as a set of 'culture wars' have ignited around identity discourses in general. In 2025, a number of controversial policy documents were introduced, the most controversial of which were undoubtedly the US President Donald Trump's Executive Order on January 20, 2025 'Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government' and the UK Supreme Court Decision on 16 April 2025 in the case *For Women Scotland Ltd (Appellant) v The Scottish Ministers (Respondent).*

In this paper, I will analyse why specifically the term 'woman' has become such a battleground. I will critique the definitions of 'woman', 'sex' and 'gender' in these policy documents through the lens of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and *The Ethics of Ambiguity* and Susan Stryker's *When Monsters Speak*, arguing that we require less stable identity categories, that allow us the freedom to change over time. I will suggest that the recent policy documents ignore the reality that all bodies are both subject and object, and the status of these positions undergo transformations as they travel through life.

Karin Sellberg is a lecturer in humanities at the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, University of Queensland. They are primarily a literary studies scholar with research interests in feminist philosophy, trans* and queer theory, and their publications include two books; Gender: Time (2018) and Corporeality and Culture (2014) and a forthcoming book on transgender identity narratives.

SHERON SENDZIUK

Nietzsche and the Coherence of Truth: Aletheia, Language, and Becoming

Nietzsche is often dismissed as a brilliant yet incoherent thinker, whose paradoxes and aphorisms resist sustained philosophical consistency. This paper challenges that view by arguing that Nietzsche's treatment of truth is best understood through a minimal form of *alethic coherentism*. What may appear as contradiction is better seen as rhetorical strategy: Nietzsche stages multiple perspectives to unsettle fixed interpretations and compel active engagement.

Against the correspondence theory of truth–which grounds truth in accurate representation of reality–Nietzsche anticipates a coherence model, where truth emerges from the internal consistency of perspectives and linguistic frameworks. In *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*, truth appears as a "mobile army of metaphors"; in *The Gay Science* and *Beyond Good and Evil*, perspectivism exposes objectivity as a concealed judgment.

Drawing on Nietzsche's philological sensitivity to *aletheia* as "unforgetting," the paper introduces his "problem called nature": the difficulty of articulating coherence without metaphysical foundations. In dialogue with Heidegger's ontological reappropriation of *aletheia*, Nietzsche emerges not as incoherent but as a coherent critic of metaphysical closure.

Reframing Nietzsche in this way highlights his enduring relevance: truth as coherence within becoming, shaped by language, perspective, and life itself.

Previously enrolled in a PhD at UQ with Professor Tim Mehigan and Emeritus Professor Jeff Malpas, currently withdrawn prior to second confirmation. I have published a chapter in an edited book entitled, "Pretext, Context, and Textual Tradition: Friedrich Nietzsche's 'Hermeneutics of Hermeneutics' and the Problem Called Truth" in Hermeneutics Between Berlin and Paris: The Search for Ethics, 2025 Pages 123-148.

MADDY SHIELD

University of Queensland

Guilty Thoughts

The fact that we can–and often do–feel guilty over thoughts, feelings, or desires that we experience but do not express to others, and which are therefore private and non-voluntary, is a somewhat puzzling phenomenon to philosophers. This is because the dominant philosophical explanation for why we feel guilt is that it results from an act of moral transgression: we feel guilty when we perceive ourselves to have done something morally wrong. This definition has arguably led philosophers to tie guilt to a consequentialist account of morality, since on this view guilt is fundamentally concerned with wrongdoing. However, I argue that the idea that guilt is unconcerned with either motivation or character fails to satisfactorily explain the phenomenon of guilty thoughts. If we reconceptualise guilt as stemming not from enacting wrongdoing per se but from a sense of failed solidarity with others, as I suggest we should, then in my view the emotion is rendered much more compatible with a non-consequentialist view of morality. Clearly, we do not only feel guilty over things we have chosen to do; whether we should or not is another matter.

Maddy is a recent PhD graduate and early-career philosopher working in the field of emotions. She looks at the emotions of shame, guilt, and love from a phenomenological and moral psychology perspective.

EMMA SIMPSON-WEBER

The University of Queensland

A Cynical Poetics: Reading Diogenes in Isabella Whitney's A Sweet Nosegay, or Pleasant Poesy, Containing a Hundred and Ten Philosophical Flowers (1573).

In the dedicatory epistle to her Sweet Nosegay, Isabella Whitney invokes the cynic Diogenes when she likens her poetic endeavours to 'the pore man which having no goods, came with his hands full of water to meete the Persian Prince withal'. Critics have established Whitney's interest in material culture (both objects and her economic and social position), but her engagement with philosophy has been neglected in the

scholarship. Addressing this gap, this paper focuses in detail on Whitney's prefatory address to establish the poet's particular interest in cynical philosophy, and to establish how she pitches it against material culture. It investigates Whitney's reception of post-Socratic thought, and will argue that she applies it to ironically critique early modern London's interest in material wealth, highlighting the natural wealth of her imaginative authorship by contrast.

Dr Emma Simpson-Weber is a Lecturer in English Literary Studies at the University of Queensland, Australia. She has particular research interests in gender, authority, and virtue ethics in early modern literature. She has published articles in Parergon, and she is preparing a book entitled Women and Virtue in English Prose Romance, c.1590-1690 for submission to a press. This current paper is the beginning of a new research project on early modern women's literary engagement with philosophy. She served as an ECR member of Parergon's editorial committee (ECC).

ROBERT SINNERBRINK

Macquarie University

Audiovisual arguments: On documentary as philosophy

Philosophical approaches to cinema have long attempted to define documentary in relation to problems of representation, objectivity, truth, and the fiction/non-fiction distinction. Within film theory debates have also centred on the question of objectivity (derided as a myth), truth-claims (sceptically dismissed) and the fiction/non-fiction distinction (deconstructed and discarded). The ethics of documentary, moreover, has focused on how filmmakers represent their subjects, whether they claim truth or objectivity, and whether they call attention to documentary's constructed nature. This ethical discourse on documentary, however, conflicts with the sceptical, subjectivist, and deconstructive approaches brought to its definition. Rather than focusing on ontological, epistemic, and ethical questions in isolation, I propose rethinking philosophical approaches to documentary guided by the question, 'What can documentary do?' We can productively recast these debates via the pragmatic idea of documentary as offering audiovisual 'arguments' with performative effects. Drawing on the etymological meaning of 'argument' (to posit a position, to assert or declare, to make clear, prove, or show, to accuse, charge, or reprove, to censure or critique, to persuade or convince) would enable us to foreground the idea of documentary *as* philosophy – as contributing to philosophical understanding and ethical experience via (non-fictional) cinematic means.

Robert Sinnerbrink is Professor of Philosophy at Macquarie University. He is the author of New Philosophies of Film (Second Edition): An Introduction to Cinema as a Way of Thinking (Bloomsbury, 2021), Terrence Malick: Filmmaker and Philosopher (Bloomsbury, 2019), Cinematic Ethics: Exploring Ethical Experience through Film (Routledge, 2016), New Philosophies of Film: Thinking Images (Continuum, 2011), and Understanding Hegelianism (Acumen, 2007/Routledge 2014). He is also the editor of Emotion, Ethics, and Cinematic Experience: New Phenomenological and Cognitivist Perspectives (Berghahn, 2021) and a co-editor (with Lucy Bolton and David Martin-Jones) of Contemporary Screen Ethics: Absences, Identities, Belonging, Looking Anew (Edinburgh UP, 2023).

EVA SKINNER

University of Queensland

Sisyphus, the Synecdoche, and the Castle - Representations of Absurdism within Kauffmann's Synecdoche, New York, and Franz Kafka's The Castle

Charlie Kauffmann's Synecdoche, New York is a cinematic mise-an-abyme, which examines the life of a theatre director (Caden Cotard) as he attempts to construct an immersive, evolving production, eventually collapsing the lines between fiction and reality as his vision consumes him. As Kauffmann's protagonist faces the symptomatic agonies of isolation, and an inevitable death, his suffering becomes emblematic of something beyond himself - the futility of meaning. Franz Kafka's The Castle explores similar themes through its protagonist, K, who faces similar conditions to Kauffmann's Cotard- stagnance, ostracism, loneliness, and futility - the hidden absurdities and contradictions of the establishment. Both works mirror themes of absurdism by underscoring the hidden falsities of a 'meaningful' society - echoing concepts postulated within Albert Camus' The Myth of Sisyphus. Whilst Camus' praised The Castle's depiction of man's struggle within an absurd condition, he proposes that Kafka's work ultimately forsakes absurdism through hope, incidentally deifying K's suffering. In this essay, I propose that Kauffman's Cotard mirrors The Castle in its successful depiction of man's struggle for meaning in an absurd society, but ultimately completes Camus' Sisyphean arc

toward true absurdism, as Cotard, unlike K, turns hopelessly 'to stone,' opening himself to the 'tender indifference' of his empty world.

Eva Skinner is an undergraduate philosophy student at the University of Queensland preparing to commence an Honours thesis in film philosophy. She currently works for the UQ Critical Thinking Project, through which she has participated in research projects in AI, ethics, education, and discursive leadership.

CONOR SPENCE

University of Western Australia

Necromantic Media: Reconceptualising Large Language Models

This paper analyzes Large Language Models (LLMs) as a form of 'necromantic media'. Building on Chris Chesher's (2023) concept of 'invocational media', this analysis synthesizes Martin Heidegger's (1977) critique of technology as 'En-framing' with Karl Marx's (1992) concept of 'dead labour' to reveal a necromantic political economy residing at the heart of generative AI. I argue that LLMs operate by enclosing vast archives of past human expression before reanimating this data through deep learning. This process creates a standing-reserve of what I term 'undead labour': an abrogated, but nonetheless potent and exploitable facsimile of labour power. Examining this necromantic cycle, I reveal how techno-capitalism has redefined the limits of capital by appropriating collective knowledge, mutating the dynamics between living and dead labour, and territorialising future cultural production. This paper reframes current debates about AI by exposing the exploitative ontological core of this new technology.

Dr. Conor Spence is an early career researcher and sessional academic affiliated with the University of Western Australia. His research operates at the intersection of philosophy and digital cultures, with a focus on the political economy of AI, digital ontology, and critical theory. His recent work has appeared in Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology.

EHSAN AZARI STANIZAI

Western Sydney University

The Comedy of Beautiful Soul in Moliere's The Misanthrope: Lacan encounter with Hegel

As an appropriation of Plato and Aristotle's ideas of 'good' and 'beauty', the conception of the beautiful soul has become the guiding ethos of the European Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. The key thinkers, such as Kant and Rousseau, set out to espouse the beautiful soul as a symbol of enlightened humanity and an ideal acting conscience in a broader social environment in the discourse of the Enlightenment. In his epistolary Nouvelle Héloïse, Rousseau critically advocates the beautiful soul in terms of innate qualities of goodness and innocence in human nature, which remains under the threat of the corrupting influence of universal social and cultural mandates as well as the demands of the instincts and reason. Kant saw the beautiful soul as a priori foundation for the highest good and morality. Conversely, Hegel critically highlights and incorporates the conception of the beautiful soul into his philosophical system. In the Phenomenology of Spirit, he sees the conception as the exclusive and inward-looking individuality that remains isolated and antithetical to the universal socio-culturally validated individuality. This individual with an egotistic and self-certain spirit is aware of the antithesis between himself and the universal other. The irreconcilability between one's beautiful soul and the stereotypical universal being causes an individual mind and action the utmost stubbornness to the point of madness. The beautiful soul, especially its comic importance, was discovered by Molière before Hegel. The protagonist of The Misanthrope, Alcest, is a prototype of a radically self-certain stubborn individual who wages war against the world to superimpose his compulsive and subjective self-values. Molière brings to light a character who is an obsessive worshipper of his own beautiful soul or inner laws. What causes laughter in Alcest is his ignorance of seeing his part in making his pathological isolation. On the other hand, the lack of feeling and emotion and fixation with subjective thinking is another point of importance to the philosophy of comedy. Similarly, Alcest's sadomasochistic self-victimization in terms of finding a purely honest heart of Alcest is another point of interest for comedy.

Lacan explores the notion of the beautiful soul concerning Hegel and Molière in Écrits, where he deciphers the law of the beautiful soul, nothing but the law of the modern ego that denies its part in the world's disorder. He unveils this in the constitution of identifying the ego and the I in the mirror stage and the

imaginary order, which is plagued with misrecognition, aggressiveness, and narcissistic impulses of love and hate. Lacan also exposes Hegel's beautiful soul, who, in the early chapters of the Phenomenology, the author renounces the follies of humanity in his time. Lacan illustrates the beautiful soul and its perpetual war by elaborating on Molière's comedy. This essay seeks to unravel the notion of the beautiful soul in Kant, Rousseau, and Lacan's critique of Hegel and his treatment of Alcest and his beautiful soul. By way of illustration, I will first demonstrate the performance of the beautiful soul in Rousseau's novel and present Lacan's reading of Molière's, whereupon Alcest cannot see the source of incongruity within his beautiful soul. I will expose Lacan, Alcest's pursuit of preserving the beautiful soul that brings him to madness, something that Hegel anticipated about the beautiful soul. I will then discuss Lacan's drawing of Hegel to the vortex of the comedy of the beautiful soul.

Dr Ehsan Azari Stanizai was born in 1958 in Logar province, south of Kabul. After graduating from university, he worked as a literary editor for the Kabul Times. Following the invasion of Afghanistan by the Russian forces, he began to work as the editor of an English academic journal, WUFA, Writers Union of Free Afghanistan in Pakistan, where he was living as an Afghan refugee. In 1992, he migrated to Australia and settled in Western Sydney.

He studied English literature at Macquarie University, where he obtained his MA and PhD in English literature. He has taught at Macquarie University and other cultural institutions and is currently an Adjunct Fellow with the University of Sydney's Writing & Research Group. He is working on two books: Poststructuralist Desire and Psychoanalysis and Sufism: Jung, Freud, Lacan and Rumi. He has tutored and lectured at Sydney University, Macquarie University, University of Western Sydney, and NIDA-National Institute of Dramatic Arts (Writing for Performance).

He is frequently writing about Afghanistan in the international media. He spent time in Kabul last year. He worked as a Senior Specialist in English with the Education Ministry of Afghanistan. Still, he resigned after six months because it was too difficult for him to keep up with a corrupt government and gruesome, insecure city. He resigned from his post, which the World Bank funded. He returned to Australia to live in abject poverty but refused to live with free money in his own country, occupied by foreign forces. Although politics is not his field of study or research, he likes it as his hobby. He authorises Alcan and the Destiny of Literature: Desire, Jouissance and the Sinthome in Shakespeare, Donne, Joyce and Ashbery, Continuum, 2008. www.continnumbooks.come

ERIN STAPLETON

University of Melbourne

Exploitation as Method

A great deal of contemporary philosophical work, including, ironically, in continental philosophy, writes in loyal service of the legacy of canonical authors. In the preface to my book The Intoxication of Destruction, I explained my resistance to this through my approach to Georges Bataille's thought as exploitation, where, instead of remaining faithful to Bataille's project or politics, I transformed elements I found use in and highlighted the shortcomings of others to create an entirely different project. In this paper, I expand on this method to consider how exploitation as a philosophical approach (inspired by the cultural and cinematic phenomenon) operates as a disruptive force, undermining the deference that characterises much of philosophy today. Key to the exploitation method is a refusal to the worship of canonical philosophers (overwhelmingly dead white male ones), acknowledging prejudices that inform and limit ideas, and refusing to practice the loyalty that philosophy has come to demand. By transforming ideas into a position of service to the work of Indigenous and Black philosophers, queer and feminist philosophers and others, that have otherwise been dismissed as secondary and particular examples, thereby reversing the hierarchy of contemporary western philosophical tradition.

Erin Stapleton is a Senior Tutor in Media and Communications at the University of Melbourne. They research the intersections between gender, colonialism and queer theory, digital and media cultures, and critical theory. Her book The Intoxication of Destruction in Theory, Culture and Media: A Philosophy of Expenditure After Georges Bataille was published by Amsterdam University Press in 2022. Other recent publications include 'Media, Riots and the Social Contract of Gender during COVID-19" (2025) in Theory Culture and Society and "The Spotted Seppuku: Commodifying Suicide with Yayoi Kusama" (2023) in Third Text.

MARILYN STENDERA

University of Wollongong

Phenomenology, deep time, and ecological affectivity

Terms like ‘solastalgia' and ‘climate grief' are by now well-known and widely used in both scholarly and popular responses to the climate crisis, which has also resulted in increasing scrutiny of and scepticism towards these attempts to capture the affective dimensions of ecological destruction. This paper will take up that critical lens, focusing on one small but important aspect of what makes these conceptualisations of ‘ecological affectivity' at best inadequate and at worst harmful: their shallow, reductive temporalities. I will suggest that we can generate interesting insights about the temporal failures of ‘solastalgia' and ‘climate grief' if we draw together two perspectives on time that might initially seem incompatible: the phenomenological tradition on the one hand, and discourses about ‘deep time' on the other. As Ted Toadvine notes in his recent book *The Memory of the World* (2024), it is hard to see what phenomenological and geological models of time could say to each other if we assume that the former focuses on time as we live it, and the latter on time that radically exceeds us. Taking up Toadvine's claim that we can overcome this impasse, I want to propose that this dialogue provides us with useful resources for interrogating the limitations of the aforementioned ‘ecological affects' – especially the ways in which their reductive temporalities constrain horizons for political practice.

I'm a Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Wollongong. My research focuses mainly on phenomenology, the philosophy of cognition, and the history of philosophy, and I'm particularly interested in time. More recently, my work has turned to focus on the relationship between time and death, grief, technology, and ecology. My first book, Heidegger's Alternative History of Time, was co-written with Emily Hughes and came out in 2024 through Routledge.

FLORGE PAULO SY

Independent researcher

Breaking Through Burnout: Radicalizing Han's Reading of Hegel Through Nancy

In late-modern society, man, according to Byung-Chul Han, suffers from the violence of excessive subjectivity that is caused by the disappearance of the negativity of the Other. To combat this problem, Han has suggested fostering man's receptivity to otherness. My paper finds that this suggestion involves a conception of man that Han implicitly affirms but that his invocation of Hegelian dialectics to describe the emergence of late-modern society seems to deny—namely, that man is not self-enclosed. Although Han's reading of Hegelian dialectics can be said to be non-traditional to warrant his suggestion tout court, it is not radical enough to warrant his suggestion's implementation, since it still admits of the dialectics' enclosing function. To address this limitation, my paper turns to Jean-Luc Nancy who, in his own reading of Hegel, is able to conceive the interruption of the enclosing function because of the priority that he gives to the role of the negative in the dialectics. It will, therefore, be shown that Nancy's thought reinforces Han's endeavor to remedy late-modern society's poverty of negativity as well as pave the way for a new mode of existence outside late-modern society.

Florge Paulo A. Sy is from Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines. He graduated with a bachelor's and master of arts degree in Philosophy from the University of San Carlos. He also graduated with a second master of arts degree in Continental Philosophy from the University of Staffordshire. He has taught the subjects the philosophy of man, ethics, and logic at both the high school and college levels. His research interests include figures and topics related to classical and continental philosophy, such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Luc Nancy, phenomenology, ontology, and ethics.

ALLAN JAMES THOMAS

RMIT University

Divergent Lifeworlds and Ontological Violence: on Autistic Masking and Existential Alienation.

Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion of ‘forms of life’ has been usefully applied to the empathic disjunction that often exists between autists and allistics (aka not-autistics) – what Damien Milton refers to as the ‘double empathy problem’. Neither side ‘gets’ the other, because the base suppositions of their realities differ in each case.

Neurological privilege means allistics tend to read this empathic breach as evidence of dysfunction: the autist isn't just different, they're wrong, pathological, disordered compared to the allistic norm. The autist, on the other hand, has no choice but to attempt to fathom the lifeworld of the allistic as best they can. The autist must learn to 'mask' their difference by simulating their best guess at that alien mode of life as best they can, in order not to be excluded from participation in a world built by and for allistics. My argument is that this constitutes a form of ontological violence imposing an existential alienation with very real consequences for the autist, in the form of much higher levels of anxiety, depression and suicide rates amongst autists compared to the general population.

I teach Cinema Studies at RMIT, with a particular interest in the work of Gilles Deleuze (which resulted in 'Deleuze, Cinema and the Thought of the World', published by EUP in 2018). The late discovery of my own multiple neurodivergences has turned those interests towards a politics of neurological difference, its consequences and possibilities.

NICOL THOMAS

Australian Centre for Psychoanalysis; International of Forums – School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field; Centre for Lacanian Analysis Aotearoa

What can be there for the (not-all)woman who doesn't exist?

In *l'étourdit* (1972), Lacan gives us the ravage; that a woman expects more substance from her mother than her father, and this lack—which we hear everyday in the clinic of psychoanalysis—is a ravage, a devastation.

A woman is precisely *not* a Mother. Can we make a little headway in the transmission of "feminine" jouissance, as demonstrated in Lacan's table of sexuation (1973), working through the impossibility of not only the substance-supposed-to-be of the m/Other but also La femme, who doesn't exist anyway? What is the difference between the Law (Name) of the Father and the Law of the Mother?

In what way can psychoanalysis speak well about the difference of castration between position "man" [phi] and position "woman" [the not-all]? What know-how can we create with the clinical "fact" that there is no other of the phallus in the unconscious? What sort of a lack is this?

Dr Nicol Thomas is a psychoanalyst in private practice in naarm/Melbourne, Australia. She also supervises analysts and conducts workshops in Aotearoa. She regularly presents clinical workshops, international days of the School and lectures in Aotearoa.

SIMONE THORNTON

University of Wollongong

Hope-less

'Hope was never for the hopeless': since reading Chelsea Watego's words, they have been on repeat in my mind. If hope is not for the hopeless, who then is it for? Watego argues that hope is a weapon of colonisation, utilised to perpetuate colonial existence. In this talk, I attempt to link her argument to climate change education and environmental degradation in general. I hold that in the face of ongoing crisis, hope is more harmful than helpful.

Simone Thornton is a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy in the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the University of Wollongong, where she teaches Environmental Philosophy, Global Ethics and the Meaning of Life, and is an honorary lecturer at the University of Queensland. Her research interests intersect social, political, environmental and educational philosophy with a focus on eco-rationality. Simone is a founding member of the Australian Philosophy Research Group along with Gilbert Burgh, Mary Graham and Michelle Boulous Walker.

JULIA THWAITES

Trinity College Theological School

Agamben's poetic body and the vivisection of language and life

In *The Sacrament of language: An Archaeology of the Oath*, Giorgio Agamben defines the human as “the living being that, in order to speak, must say “I.” It is in uttering the shifter “I” that the individual places their body at stake in language, and by the same motion, makes themself subject to the violent teleological and temporal conditions of the signifier. It follows that in seeking exemplary forms of life that escape language's violent direction, Agamben looks to those figures who cannot be made to say “I” precisely because their lives and bodies are already forfeit—as seen in Agamben's well-known messianic readings of the *Muselmann*, Melville's Bartleby, and the ancient Roman slave. Yet there exists a second strand of thought in Agamben's work that sees the divergence of language and life occur not through forfeiture of the body and confrontation with death, but via poetic language that is so equivocal as to make the shifter “I” moot. This paper will discuss Agamben's poetic body, appearing most often as the feminine, as the site of the vivisection of language and life, a means of living unsworn to the signifier.

Julia Thwaites is a PhD Candidate at Trinity College Theological School.

JASON TUCKWELL

Western Sydney University

An organological computability ‘reinscribed in the history of life'.

Following George Canguilhem's recommendation, that ‘[t]he history of mechanism must be reinscribed in the history of life', this paper considers how computability might be recomposed in organological terms. I begin with Simondon's critical interrogation of information theory and his insistence that a qualitative dimension of information becomes operative between physical and vital individuation. Following a short recapitulation of the major features of this schema, I will focus on a genetic process Simondon describes within information itself and wherein a new transoperative property emerges. Transoperative processes – where operations enter into communication with other operations – are potentialized since information performs here as a field (after the notion in *Gestalttheorie*). Since transoperative processes enable the generation of a new kind of qualitative information, these fields are a necessary condition for the living. Between the physical and the vital, between nature and the living, is also the precise, medial zone where Simondon elaborates his theory of technics: this can be considered as a theory of artificialization, with analogies to nature. In bringing these threads together, I will suggest this points towards an organological theory of networked communication, both different from and comparable to the modern computational paradigm.

Jason Tuckwell is an Associate Lecturer in English at Western Sydney University. His research interests include Aristotle, Simondon, aesthetics, and technology, with a particular focus upon problems of creative and technical praxes. He is the author of Creation and the Function of Art: Techné, Poiesis and the Problem of Aesthetics (Bloomsbury Studies in Continental Philosophy, 2018) and the editor of a special issue “In the Light of Simondon”, SubStance, 167, (2025). He has other recent publications in Philosophy Today, Angelaki, and Transcultural Studies.

ĽUBICA UČNÍK

Murdoch University

Death of God in the Age of Liberalism

Modern society is in crisis. We read this indictment everywhere: in science, philosophy, political science, as well as in popular books, magazines, newspapers and online. The culprits of the crisis are usually identified (depending on the writer) as science, modernity, the Enlightenment, death of God, loss of faith, secularisation, individualism, loss of morality, post-modernity, all of which led to nihilism and disenchantment. In this paper, by returning to the beginning of modern thinking, I re-examine this never-ending crisis by opening up critical space to investigate one of its manifestations, liberal thought. I proceed from Jan Patočka’s analysis of “Supercivilisation” (the early 1950s) and Gilles Lipovetsky’s analysis of “The Rule of Hyperculture” (the early 2000s), to reflect on today’s crisis in morality, which is a corollary to the crisis of liberalism. As Patočka observes, modern science led to a formalising of all ‘reality,’ stripping it of qualities,

and reducing nature and humans to a constellation of forces, believing they are under human control. This supposed mastery will lead us to ever more perfect society. In the process, everything is reduced to the movements of human atoms, which we imagine manipulating, while stripping them of any beliefs in transcendence and responsibility.

Dr Ľubica Učník is Adjunct Associate Professor in Philosophy, the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Western Australia. Her research is in the history of ideas, asubjective phenomenology, and the history of mathematisation/formalisation.

ANTHONY UHLMANN

Western Sydney University

Rhythmanalysis, Analogue and Digital: Bachelard, Shannon and Computing

This paper makes use of terminology related to Peirce's theory of signs (icon, index, symbol) in developing a reading of differences between analogue and digital computing and their potentials and limitations. In 1936 Gaston Bachelard published La dialectique du la durée, which includes a chapter entitled 'Rhythmanalysis'. Reading almost like a story by Jorge Luis Borges, this essay cites a now lost work of a mysterious Brazilian philosopher, Lucio Alberto Pinheiro, setting out the concept of 'Rhythmanalysis'. This concept relies on the idea of rhythms or waves and relates to the concept of duration, but can be applied to Lord Kelvin's understandings of the machinic reproduction of wave patterns that gave rise to analogue computing. In 1937 Claude Shannon completed his Masters Thesis 'A Symbolic Analysis of Relay and Switching Circuits' (published in 1938), which set out parameters essential to building digital computers working with Boolean logic and the application of interactions between 1 and 0, as symbols for on and off, open and closed within systems of circuits. In this paper I will draw out differences between analogue and digital computers and how these might be considered in relation to the continuum of Peirce's theory of signs with the 'continuous' analogue biased towards the icon, and the 'discontinuous' digital biased towards the symbol. It sets out to develop insights into these relations and the light they shed on the potentials and limitations of computational models of thought.

Anthony Uhlmann is the author of four monographs, Beckett and Poststructuralism (1999), Samuel Beckett and the Philosophical Image (2006), Thinking in Literature: Joyce, Woolf, Nabokov (2011), J. M. Coetzee, Truth, Meaning, Fiction (2020). He has just completed a book on Spinoza and Literature with Moira Gatens. He has been working with Jason Tuckwell and others in a reading group related to French philosophy and technology.

JANFLOR MC.LOUIE ULLERO

National University, Philippines

The Imperative of Responsibility and Climate Justice: Re-Reading Hans Jonas in the Anthropocene

Hans Jonas's *Imperative of Responsibility* formulated a new ethic for technological civilization: act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the continued existence of genuine human life on Earth. Though written decades before the climate crisis became a dominant theme, Jonas's framework resonates profoundly with contemporary debates on climate justice. This paper re-reads Jonas in the context of the Anthropocene, emphasizing his insistence on responsibility to future generations as a foundation for climate ethics. I argue that Jonas provides not only a moral grounding for intergenerational justice but also a conceptual bridge between existential risk and political obligation. At the same time, Jonas's framework requires expansion: climate justice today demands attention not only to future humanity but also to global inequalities, nonhuman life, and ecological systems. By revisiting Jonas's imperative, I explore how his ethics can be reinterpreted to meet these demands, offering a continental philosophical account of responsibility adequate to the planetary challenges of our time.

Janflor Mc.Louie S. Ullero is a PhD candidate and researcher at the University of Santo Tomas. His research interests include John Rawls, Environmental Ethics, Political Philosophy, and Existentialism. He is an active member of different philosophy associations in the Philippines. He is an Associate Professor at the School of Arts and Sciences, National University, Philippines – Fairview Campus.

MIKEL VAN DYKEN

The University of Queensland

Merleau-Ponty: Beyond Murdoch's Modern Man

“We have wished to encourage people to think of themselves as free, at the cost of surrendering the background.”

It is in her essay, “Against Dryness,” that Iris Murdoch mounts this critique of what she calls ‘the modern man' (pp. 18). Exemplative of this turn, for her, is Jean-Paul Sartre, whom she spends a significant portion of her philosophical oeuvre critiquing. Murdoch contends that existentialism as a whole has misattributed a false sense of subjective freedom which obstructs us from seeing the objective Good in the world. In response, she proposes an ethics grounded in attention: turning towards the love which is already in the world.

In this paper, I situate a critical analysis of Murdoch's positive view of ethics within the context of her negative critique of Sartre. I make particular use of her praise of French painter, Paul Cézanne, to argue that the complete rejection of existentialism renders her philosophy unable to meaningfully maintain the conception of love that she calls for. I consult Maurice Merleau-Ponty's own writings on Cézanne, and his criticisms of Sartre, to conclude that any ethics based in attention requires an acknowledgement of the role of ambiguous freedom in the creation of moral value.

Mikel Van Dyken is an Advanced Humanities and Philosophy student at the University of Queensland. His research interests include disability studies theory, queer theory, and phenomenology. He is completing his honours thesis in 2025, interrogating Sartre and Merleau-Ponty's views on the body in reference to contemporary models of disability. He received the Ian Hinckfuss Prize in Philosophy in 2022 and has published three journal articles from 2023 to 2024. He has also worked for the past three years in disability support through the University of Queensland's Diversity, Disability and Inclusion services.

CHRIS VAN ROMPAEY

Independent scholar

Libertas philosophandi and the Early Modern Attack on Aristotle

In a disputation titled ‘On the Freedom of Philosophising’, Adriaan Heereboord, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leiden during the 1640s, launches a sweeping broadside against the excessive veneration of Aristotle that characterised the academic philosophy of his time. The vehemence of Heereboord’s attack arises from a directive by the university curators, in an effort to quell dissension over the philosophy of Descartes, that the texts of Aristotle alone be taught. There is no justification, Heereboord argues, for treating Aristotle as sacrosanct; philosophical truth derives from the ‘perceptions of sense’ and the ‘dictates of reason’, not from the authority of a single individual. Under the catchphrase libertas philosophandi, Heereboord documents a range of historical objections to Aristotle. It turns out, though, that the purposes for which the authors he cites seek freedom from the Aristotelian yoke vary considerably. Looking briefly at Hellenistic, patristic, and scholastic examples, and more fully at the positions of Heereboord’s immediate predecessors, the paper will survey the reasons behind the various objections to Aristotle and show that the libertas in question is not always as free as it might seem. It will also consider the extent to which Heereboord’s criticism of Aristotle is justified.

Chris van Rompaey completed a PhD at Deakin University where he subsequently taught in the School of Communication and Creative Arts. He is currently engaged in the translation of selected disputations from the Meletemata of Adriaan Heereboord.

SOPHIE VEKSNER

University of Melbourne, The New Centre of Research & Practice

Differently-individuated Subjects?

In this paper I try to critically develop Simondon's concept of individuation by contextualising it through the work of experimental pedagogue Fernand Deligny. Specifically, I look at the lignes d'erre or ‘wandering lines'

of autistic residents of Deligny's ‘attempts'. I consider the subject in relation to their milieu, the (trans)individuation of the subject in contexts suspended from language and in the primacy of gesture, and what it means to consider lignes d'erre–visually transposed cartographic traces of the subject–as aesthetic objects.

I am currently studying Honours at University of Melbourne in History and Philosophy of Science. My thesis is on the problem of intersubjectivity in the context of Bayesian prior elicitation.

JURGIS VININGAS

Duquesne University

In what sense is Deleuze a Leibnizian?

My presentation examines Deleuze's reception of Leibniz's dynamical metaphysics in *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze scholars are familiar with key Leibnizian themes in his thought: the infinitely small difference, the distinction between clear but confused and distinct but obscure perception, and the logic of compossibility and incompossibility of essences. However, the importance of Leibniz's dynamical metaphysics for Deleuze's ontology has been overlooked, especially in the Anglophone world. This is partially because of the dominant interpretation, in Anglophone scholarship, of Leibniz as a thinker who holds that all existing beings are soul-like monads, and that bodies are only well-founded phenomena. Yet Leibniz, at least in his middle period (1680's to 1690's), pursued realist metaphysics of corporeal substances grounded in force. Within the Francophone tradition, by which Deleuze's understanding of Leibniz was shaped, Leibniz's metaphysics of force has been an important topic. I argue that Deleuze remains committed to classical metaphysics, in a Leibnizian sense of the term, insofar as he is committed to the idea of a primitive, metaphysical factor grounding qualitative and extended phenomena, even as he remains critical of Leibniz's subsumption of sufficient reason in the principle of identity.

I am a PhD candidate in philosophy at Duquesne University. I am currently working on a dissertation on the concept of ontological difference in Deleuze and his predecessors.

RACHEL WALLS

Charles Sturt University

Nihilism at an End of Cinematic Literacy

Entertainment media is increasingly moving toward non-narrative forms. In some cases, this experimentation is intentional; such as in animated series such as *Pop Team Epic!*;(Gerasimov, 2023-5). In many cases, however, non-narrative forms are unintentionally formed through a plastic set of low-attention media engagements. The disparate nature of short-form passive media entertainment experienced on social media platforms engages audiences with unending surprising encounters. The promise of the end of one short clip is the lack of relation it bears to the next. Low-attention algorithmic media viewing on social networking platforms presents an unintentional but radical departure from traditional screen media. The disparity of form that has increasingly taken up hours of viewing-time suggests screen media as a fractured entertainment in a state of being-at-an-end (Heidegger, 1927, 1962). Despite clear delineation in platforms and formats, shorter, low-attention media is creating room for experimentation in more intentionally designed entertainments. This paper examines the tension between worlds of production and distribution that present as incompossible *prima facie* – but are moving slowly toward one another.

Rachel has a background in film and television production, having worked as a promo producer, editor, copywriter, and creative director before moving into animation in the early 2000s. Undertaking a Master of Animation at UTS (2009), and a subsequent PhD (UTS, 2024), Rachel has been active in media both as a creator and interrogator of its many forms. Her current research focus articulates intersections of abstract animation and orthodox screen language.

WILLIAM WALSH

The Poems – A Novella

Reading from The Poems—a novella (Erratum Press, 2025). The book is an epigrammatic meditation on the life of verse, with poems alone providing character, plot, and setting. The idea that drove the writing of the book was to make a narrative using simple, declarative sentences. With objectivity foregrounded in this way, each poem appears on the page whole and alive. The goal was to use personification as more than just a literary device but literally as a force that animates all poems. The book is less concerned about what poems mean than what poems are. MacLeish said it best in his Ars Poetica: A poem should not mean / But be.

William Walsh writes fiction that incorporates appropriation and experiments with compositional constraints. His books include The Poems (2025), The Poets (2024), ON TV (2024), Forty-five American Boys (2021), Stephen King Stephen King (2017), Unknown Arts (2011), Ampersand, Mass. (2011), Pathologies (2010), Questionstruck (2009), and Without Wax (2008). Over the years, his work has appeared in a number of journals, including Always Crashing, Hobart, Juked, LIT, McSweeney's Internet Tendency, New York Tyrant, and Quarterly West, as well as anthologies like Dzanc's Best of the Web, The &NOW Anthology of Innovative Writing, and The Norton Anthology of Exceptionally Short Fiction.

AUDREY WASSER

Miami University

Literary Criticism as a Problem of Teleological Judgment

Recently, my home discipline of literary studies has been host to a number of debates about methods of reading. We quarrel about “the way we read now,” about surface versus depth reading, and about how best to teach reading to undergraduates. In this paper, I argue that contemporary literary-critical treatments of “reading,” even when the term is intended in a passive sense, are implicitly invested in the question of how critical discourse is produced--of how conceptual claims about literary texts are produced so they can contribute to a common project of knowledge. I show that this production depends on a certain exercise of teleological judgment, in the sense that Immanuel Kant defines it in his Critique of Judgment. Kantian resources can help us understand how readers and critics produce the very object of their critical reflection by determining it in accordance with an immanent, teleological principle of judgment that he calls purposiveness. And I argue for the appropriateness of thinking about purposiveness as the basis of every act of textual interpretation. In concluding, I supplement Kant’s account by considering Gilles Deleuze’s counterintuitive treatment of judgment, which offers resources for thinking about acts of judging and justification as fundamentally creative.

Audrey Wasser is Associate Professor of French in the Department of French, Italian, and Classical Studies at Miami University, Ohio. She is the author of The Work of Difference: Modernism, Romanticism, and the Production of Literary Form (Fordham 2016), and the co-editor, with Warren Montag, of Pierre Macherey and the Case of Literary Production (Northwestern 2022). She has published articles on Proust, Beckett, Deleuze, and Spinoza, and is currently at work on a book on literary judgment.

JESSICA WHYTE

University of New South Wales

Economic Sanctions: Between Economic Coercion and the ‘Mute Compulsion of Economic Relations'.

Economic sanctions are generally understood to involve the coercive use of economic power for political ends. Most theorisations of the coercive power of sanctions understand economic coercion as ‘the threat of act by a sender government or governments to disrupt economic exchange with the target state, unless the target acquiesces to an articulated demand.' (Drezner). Such a definition is in line with the neoliberal understanding of coercion, offered by Friedrich Hayek, according to which “one man's actions are made to serve another man's will, not for his own but for the other's purpose”. Yet, while the *imposition* of sanctions is narrowly coercive, in the sense that particular agents impose sanctions on others in order to achieve particular concessions, the mechanisms through which sanctions operate are opaque and abstract. Sanctions impoverish people, increase unemployment, degrade health systems, cause inflation, devalue

currencies, and all without intending to have a particular effect on any particular person. This has made it all too easy to obscure the devastating effects of economic coercion. Those whose biological life and life chances are degraded by economic sanctions are not mere collateral damage; the coercive strategy of economic sanctions operates via the life of the population. But their wills are not the direct targets of economic power, and their suffering is largely indistinguishable from the suffering of the poor under capitalism everywhere. In this paper, I draw on the thought of Karl Marx on the mute compulsion of economic relations and Simone Weil on abstract domination, in order to better understand the operations of economic sanctions.

Jessica Whyte is Scientia Associate Professor of Philosophy and Law at the University of New South Wales, and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow. She is the author of two published monographs: Catastrophe and Redemption: The Political Thought of Giorgio Agamben (SUNY, 2012), and The Morals of the Market: Human Rights and the Rise of Neoliberalism (Verso, 2019). She is currently working on Economic Sanctions after the Cold War.

DOMINIC WILLIAMS

Federation University

Coerced from Stupidity, forced into ignorance: A Deleuzo-Spinozist Ethics on AI integration.

The pervasive rhetoric on AI relies on a rather tenuous acceptance of the technology's presence, a presupposition that invites humanity to accept the technology and learn how to "integrate" it positively. The risks are quickly sidestepped, and a form of neoliberal fatalism is adopted: it is here, learn to use it, it will make your job easier, and so on. Resistance to the presupposition of positive integration has become difficult, and identifying problems is seen as an unnecessary and miscreant narrative. In this paper, I aim to identify problems with the presupposition of positive integration of AI into human art and knowledge practices. With a Deleuze-Spinoza inspired relational ethics, I propose that AI produces a sadness upon the body whereby the affective milieu becomes coded to such an extent that the body is no longer able to grow. The AI-Human relation, I propose, is poisonous to the human body. The AI prosthetic saturates the epistemological and aesthetic becomings of humanity with a homogenising and totalitarian existential code. This is a coding we are coerced into accepting, one that obscures bêtise (stupidity) and deploys an aesthetics of ignorance rather than contemplation.

Dominic's research is in ethics and literature with a particular interest in Deleuze's expressionist philosophy. His current project deploys Deleuze's plicatory expressionism into the ethics of reading. He is currently teaching in Literature, Screen and Digital Media, and Ethics as a Scholarly Teaching Fellow.

ASHLEE WILSON

Deakin University

Death by Law: Agamben and the Normalisation of Post-Roe v Wade Medical Neglect

The post-Roe landscape reveals a legal-political order in which women's deaths from medical neglect are not anomalies but structural outcomes of sovereign power. Drawing on Giorgio Agamben's notions of homo sacer, bare life, nomos and the state of exception, I examine how legality itself becomes a technology of abandonment. In the suspension of protection, the law does not withdraw, rather, it reasserts its force through exposure. This leaves women as subjects who may be killed through inaction yet cannot be said to have been murdered. Reading Agamben through Penelope Deutscher's feminist critique, I suggest that the sovereign claim over reproductive life enacts a biopolitical inversion: the fetus is positioned as politically alive, while the pregnant woman is rendered existentially bare. The case of Amber Nicole Thurman, who died following medical denial of care, exposes the necropolitical logic by which reproductive bodies are governed through fear, hesitation and bureaucratic control. Post-Roe America thus materialises Agamben's assertion that the exception has become the rule. However, a feminist engagement insists that what is at stake is not merely the inclusion of women within political life, but the very conditions through which life is rendered, intelligible, recognised and allowed to persist.

I have just completed my Honours year at Deakin University where I completed a thesis titled: Abortion Bans: Reproductive Violence, Women and the State. My research looks at reproductive rights, abortion laws, biopolitics, and

feminist political theory. I examine how law and policy intersect to shape and regulate women's reproductive lives, with the aim of supporting women in securing and exercising their rights

BING XING

Wuhan University

Heterotopian Subject or Inverted Panopticism? – The Possibilities and Limits of Interpreting Foucault from an Eastern Perspective

In the preface to The Order of Things, Foucault discusses Borges's fictional Chinese encyclopedia and the possibility of the East as a heterotopia, which reveals the limits of Western thought. The question remains, however: Can the real East—not an imagined one—truly overcome Western limits and offer an alternative form of thought and subjectivity? From Foucault's analyses of Tunisia, Iran, China, and Japan, the significance of the East lies in its representation of a mode of practice opposed to the regime of truth in Western epistemology, which can be further connected to his later idea of the self-forming subject within an aesthetics of existence. As a heterotopia, the East suggests an aestheticized relationship between body and world: the body no longer needs to submit to the strict rules of rationality but becomes one with the world through practice. However, the problem is that, as revealed by Foucault's analysis of the dialogue between the Shogun and William Adams, in the real East, the relationship between power and knowledge is so evident that it becomes common sense. When this power-centered society is combined with a de-subjectifying aesthetics, it leads to the weakening of subjectivity, serious misinterpretations of Foucault, and risks such as the acceptance of existing authority, cyber-panopticism, or even fascism. Therefore, attempting to use the East as a whole to overcome the West remains untenable.

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DONG YANG

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The Grey-Chaos and The Concealed Tonalities: Gilles Deleuze and Michel Henry on the Vital Forces of Painting

In light of the recent translation and publication of Gilles Deleuze's lectures on fine arts, Sur la peinture (1980-1981) / On Painting (2025), a systematic and critical study of the artistic and metaphysical components and conditions of modern European arts that certainly precedes his later monograph, Francis Bacon: the Logic of Sensation, this essays seeks to reflect on the sources and mechanism of the vital force in still images in Deleuze's thesis on painting, a concept that he is more concerned with in the early lectures with a broad scope than his book length study of Francis Bacon. In the lectures, Deleuze analyzed the artworks of such artists as Kandinsky, Francis Bacon, and Henri Maldiney, repeatedly attempting to ground the kinetic forces—exemplified in the "pulses" of still paintings—in the chromatic and diagrammatic variations that coexist and are constantly in transition. Life emerges in the gradational changes of these qualitative differences, which create what he terms "the grey-chaos," an unstable milieu that artists present on canvas. The second half of the essay draws the connection between Deleuze's lectures and book and Michel Henry's study of Kandinsky, Voir l'inivisible (1988)/ Seeing the Invisible (2009), which came out a few years later and showed an apparent influence of Deleuze's thought. There, Henry in part continues Deleuze's arguments about the importance of abstraction in generating movements and forces in painting, but also emphasizes the concealed nature of these forces at work and relocates the vital forces back to the artists' subjectivities, and thereby opens up the dimension where the vital forces of painting operate—between the artist and the viewer, mediated by the artworks above beyond the surface of the canvas.

Dong Yang is a visiting assistant professor of Chinese and East Asian Studies at Oxford College of Emory University. His research interests include French philosophy (especially Deleuze and Barthes), aesthetics, film-philosophy, and animation.

SAMEEMA ZAHRA

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Parenthood in the Alienworld

In this paper I examine the challenges of parenthood for immigrant parents living in Australia. The existing models of parenting workshops widely used in Queensland (For eg. Triple-P and The Circle of Security) focus on the best ways to provide discipline and support to the children. While these models acknowledge the diversity in parents' situations, it fails to acknowledge the intersubjective nature of parenting. By looking at Beauvoir's work on devotion and generosity I highlight that parent child relationship is primarily a relationship between two subjects, which differs from the attachment model that primarily focuses on the parent as the attachment figure. Next I elaborate the peculiarity of the experience of parenthood of immigrants by going to Husserl's ideas of homeworld (Heimwelt) and alienworld (Fremdwelt) and how these models fail to capture the parenting experience of immigrants. I claim that there is need to examine these models of parent training that rest on an incomplete understanding of parent child relationship. Finally I claim that by going beyond the limited lens of behaviourism and attachment style, there can be a possibility of thinking about parenthood as an intersubejctive relation.

Sameema is a lecturer in School of Philosophy, at Australian Catholic University. Her research is in the field of feminist phenomenology and continental ethics/politics with a sustained focus on Beauvoir and successors; interfaces between feminist philosophy, lived experience and mental-health practice; research translation via public-facing media and practitioner collaboration.

HAIPEI ZHANG

Technology and Aesthetics in the Community by Default: Lyotard and Stiegler on “Art and Communication”

This paper offers a comparative analysis of two presentations by Lyotard and Stiegler at the 1985 conference “Art and Communication.” At that time, Lyotard and Stiegler were in a mentor-student relationship, sharing a critical stance toward new communication technologies: in line with Heidegger’s critique, that such technologies produce a crisis in art and aesthetics through calculation. Lyotard emphasizes how aesthetic experience of the artwork is deprived of space and time, while Stiegler interrogates what art becomes under Gestell, which imposes deterritorialization and detemporalization upon the aesthetic community. When Lyotard frames the problem and potential by opposing art and communication technologies, Stiegler insists that art has always already been a form of telecommunication, even tracing back to the Lascaux paintings. By supplementing one’s idea with another, this paper evaluates the possibilities opened by new technologies: for Lyotard, the evocation of the sublime feeling; for Stiegler, the reinvention of a community of singularity and improbability—both emerges from a default.

Haipei Zhang is a post-graduate student in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne. Her research focuses on Bernard Stiegler's philosophy of technics, with a specific interest in his institutional and social practices, particularly the economy of contribution. Her current work is based on Stiegler's early career and intellectual development in the 1980s.