



# Indiana Philosophical Association

Fall 2015 Meeting at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana  
13-14 November 2015, Dennis Hall and Landrum Bolling Center

## Meeting Program

Fri, 13 Nov 11-11:45	<i>Registration, Second Floor, Dennis Hall</i>	
11:45-12	<i>Welcome</i>	
	<b>Dennis Hall 214</b>	<b>Dennis Hall 220</b>
	<b>Ancient</b> Chair: Adriel Trott (Wabash College)	<b>Epistemology</b> Chair: Jeff Dunn (Depauw University)
12-12:55	Aristotle on Communities of Equals	Process Reliabilism and Inferentially Justified Beliefs
Speaker: Commenter:	Zoli Filotas (Carleton College) Jeremy Skrzypek (Saint Louis U)	Peter Murphy (U Indianapolis) Paul Shephard (IU Bloomington)
1-1:55	Aristotle on external goods: applying the politics to the NE	Cognitive Character and Epistemic Obligation
Speaker: Commenter:	Matthew Cashen (SIU Edwardsville) Lara Mitias (Antioch)	Nicholas Tebben (Towson U) Peter Murphy (U Indianapolis)
2-2:55	Socrates' Demonic Sign	Evidentialism, Knowledge, and Evidence Possession
Speaker: Commenter:	Charlene Elsby (IUPUI, Fort Wayne) Vince Trafolla (Xavier University)	Timothy Perrine (IU Bloomington) Christa Johnson (Ohio State)
2:55-3:15	<i>Break with Refreshments</i>	
	<b>Teaching philosophy</b> Chair: Sarah Vitale (Ball State)	<b>Inter- and Intra-agential disagreement</b> Chair: Kevin Harrelson (Ball State)
3:15-4:10	Learning to Listen: Accounting for Difference in Philosophy Instruction	Seemings and the Equal-Weight View
Speaker: Commenter:	Charles Dalrymple-Fraser (U Toronto) Lisa Kretz (U Evansville)	Josh White (Purdue) Clarence White (Ivy Tech Community College)
4:15-5:10	Thinking about bias	Exclusionary desires
Speaker: Commenter:	Lisa Kretz (U Evansville) Zoli Filotas (Carleton College)	Rachel Fredericks (Ball State) Lavender M. McKittrick-Sweitzer (Ohio State)
5:10-5:20	<i>Break</i>	
5:20-6:45	Keynote Address, Loose Lecture Hall (LBC 105) <b>Aristotle and the Politics of Life:</b> <b>Taking Turns in the Aristotelian Polis</b> Walter Brogan, Villanova University	
6:45 Reception to follow in LBC 101.		

Sat, 14 Nov 8:15-9	<i>Registration, Third Floor South Lounge, LBC</i>	
	<b>LBC 315</b>	<b>LBC 327</b>
	<b>Epistemology and language</b> Chair: Benjamin Rossi (Notre Dame)	<b>History of modern</b> Chair: Charlene Elsby (IUPU, Fort Wayne)
9-9:55	Confidence Level Invariantism	Faint Impressions, Forceful Ideas
Speaker:	Logan Douglass and Paul Shephard (IU Bloomington)	Alexander Bozzo (Marquette U)
Commenter:	Brett Mullins (Miami U)	Charles Dalrymple-Fraser (U Toronto)
10-10:55	Non-Arbitrary Inference: an Objection to Strong Bayesianism	Psychological Readings of Kant's Second Analogy and the Representation of Causality
Speaker:	Brett Mullins (Miami U)	Andrew Roche (Centre College)
Commenter:	Landon D. C. Elkind (U Iowa)	Daniel Lindquist (IU Bloomington)
11-11:55	On the Analysis of Soritical Predicates	Spinoza's Causal Likeness Principle and Monism
Speaker:	Landon D. C. Elkind (U Iowa)	Brandon Rdzak (Purdue)
Commenter:	Matt Carlson (Wabash)	Timothy Folk (Purdue)
12-1:45	<i>Lunch and Business Meeting</i> <i>Lunch served in the Richmond Room (LBC 101)</i>	
1:45-2	<i>Student Awards Presentation</i>	
	<b>Metaphysics</b> Chair: OPEN	<b>Ethics</b> Chair: Lisa Kretz (U Evansville)
2-2:55	Removing an Incoherence in Armstrong's Ontology of Truthmakers	Excuses and Blame-Based Theories of Moral Wrongness
Speaker:	Hao Hong (IU Bloomington)	Benjamin Rossi (Notre Dame)
Commenter:	Reyes Espinoza (Purdue)	Matthew Cashen (SIU Edwardsville)
3-3:55	Objects as Processes: Dissolving the Problem of Collocated Objects	The Intrapersonal Paradox of Deontology
Speaker:	Graham Renz (U Missouri, St. Louis)	Christa Johnson (Ohio State)
Commenter:	Hao Hong (IU Bloomington)	Benjamin Rossi (Notre Dame)
4-4:55	Koslicki's Overdetermination Problem	Rawls' Instability and the Aggressive State
Speaker:	Jeremy Skrzypek (Saint Louis U)	Lavender M. McKittrick-Sweitzer (Ohio State)
Commenter:	Graham Renz (U Missouri, St. Louis)	Mallory Parker (Purdue)

Note: A student session with Prof. Walter Brogan will be held in LBC 211 from 2-4pm Saturday.

IPA Executive Officers 2015-2016:

President                      Kevin Harrelson, Ball State University  
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Abstracts of papers:

**Friday session I: Early Afternoon**

**Title:** Aristotle on Communities of Equals

**Author:** Zoli Filotas (Carleton College)

**Abstract:** According to Aristotle, free Greek men should normally give themselves over to political institutions involving ruling and being ruled by turns. He says repeatedly that this form of rule is suited to ‘communities of equals’. This paper considers what he means. I argue that he does not think, as many commentators have suggested, that all members of a normal political community are pre-politically equal (or even nearly equal) to each other in value. Rather, I argue, based on a reconsideration of a famous passage from EN V) that he thinks political practices introduce equality into human relationships in one of several oblique ways. I close by suggesting that Aristotle recommends egalitarian practices for communities of Greek men because these communities (which are necessary to achieve the human end) have members similar enough to disagree amongst themselves about who is better than whom. Treating each other as equals is for Aristotle good insofar as it holds off faction; it thus a necessary adaptation to certain human failings.

**Title:** Aristotle on external goods: applying the politics to the NE

**Author:** Matthew Cashen (Southern Illinois U Edwardsville)

**Abstract:** It is uncontroversial that Aristotle believes goods such as friendship, money, and health are valuable, but there is a controversy as to why. Some think Aristotle believes they are valuable in themselves; others think Aristotle believes they are valuable only insofar as they enable virtuous activity. I defend the latter view by presenting evidence not from the Ethics, which has been the source for virtually all discussion of this topic, but from the Politics. I argue that the Politics is clear: goods “external to the soul” are valuable only insofar as they help us to engage in virtuous activity.

**Title:** Socrates’ Demonic Sign

**Author:** Charlene Elsby (IUPUI, Fort Wayne)

**Abstract:** In Plato’s texts, and especially in the *Apology*, the Platonic Socrates refers to a *daimonion*, or *daimonion sēmeion* (demonic sign) that appears only to contradict Socrates in some course of action on which he is about to embark. Socrates infers, as well, that its not interfering is a sign that what he is doing is right. I argue that the Socrates’ *daimonion* is not a divine spirit in its own right, i.e., the Greek *daimōn*. *Daimonion* is used in an adjectival or diminutive sense, describing Socrates’ sign; it is a human reflection of a divinity, the divine in the human, the culmination of Socrates’ participation in the reasoning (*logismos*) of the divine. As a “demonic man”, Socrates maintains a relation to the divine, having become habituated to the same reasoning.

**Title:** Process Reliabilism and Inferentially Justified Beliefs

**Author:** Peter Murphy (U Indianapolis)

**Abstract:** Under what conditions is an inferred belief epistemically justified? I argue against Alvin Goldman’s answer by posing problems for each of the two necessary conditions on inferentially justified belief that he proposes. I do so without questioning the general merits of process reliabilism. My conclusion is that process reliabilists need to look elsewhere for a defensible view of inferentially justified belief.

**Title:** Cognitive Character and Epistemic Obligation

**Author:** Nicholas Tebben (Towson U)

**Abstract:** There are norms that specify how something ought to be, and norms that say what one, under some conditions, ought to do. This paper argues that there is some reason to believe that knowledge requires comportment with a norm of the latter kind. The argument proceeds by comparing Sosa’s virtue epistemology, which requires of knowers only that they satisfy requirements on how believers ought to be, with another view which differs only in that it includes a deontological requirement, and showing that Sosa’s view is subject to a

counterexample to which the other view is not. It then discusses why knowledge might have such a condition, by showing that it would allow the corresponding concept to play an important social role.

**Title:** Evidentialism, Knowledge, and Evidence Possession

**Author:** Timothy Perrine (IU, Bloomington)

**Abstract:** Evidentialism has shown itself to be an important research program in contemporary epistemology, with evidentialists giving theories of virtually every important topic in epistemology. Nevertheless, at the heart of evidentialism is a handful of concepts, namely evidence, evidence possession, and evidential fit. If evidentialists cannot give us a plausible account of these concepts, then their research program, with all its various theories, will be in serious trouble. In this paper, I argue that no evidentialist has yet to give a plausible account of evidence possession and that the prospects for doing so are dim.

### **Friday Session II: Late Afternoon**

**Title:** Learning to Listen: Accounting for Difference in Philosophy Instruction

**Author:** Charles Dalrymple-Fraser (U Toronto)

**Abstract:** Recently, there has been a considerable focus on the disproportionate representation of privileged identity groups in philosophy. In this paper, I identify a pervasive barrier to inclusivity in our teaching practices in philosophy, and discuss how we can alter our behaviours to effect positive change. Specifically, I argue that there is sufficient reason to suspect that there may be differences between the intuitions and perspectives of different identity groups, despite recent experimental philosophy literature, and that a failure to properly account for these differences in the classroom has erected barriers to participation and engagement. In promoting pedagogical goals of encouraging speech, rather than listening to difference, we have simultaneously encouraged and invalidated student contributions, silencing the difference we seek to promote. Finally, by identifying some common problematic practices, I offer some ways in which we can change our behaviours to better foster inclusivity in our classrooms.

**Title:** Thinking about bias

**Author:** Lisa Kretz (U Evansville)

**Abstract:** A recent qualitative study at an Indiana University brought to light some of the ways in which bias is conceptualized by some students. Such conceptualizations often confused having a perspective with being biased, which renders the possibility of pursuing knowledge in the classroom impossible. As such, I contend it would be worthwhile to provide a defensible definition of bias early on for students, and to flag the various ways bias actually problematically operates. For example: belief perseverance through ignorance, epistemic conformity due to social pressure, the disproportionate weight given to vivid, concrete, examples over abstract ones, wishful-thinking and the associated less-rigorous assessment of information that fails to support the desired conclusion, empathetic biases such as in-group, friendship, similarity, and here-and-now bias, and differential and unjustified attributions of rhetorical credibility. Then the techniques used in philosophy of remaining open to multiple perspectives and imaginatively adopting them can be used to contentiously work against bias as properly understood.

**Title:** Seemings and the Equal-Weight View

**Author:** Josh White (Purdue)

**Abstract:** The equal-weight view is a conciliatory approach to disagreement that says each party to a peer disagreement should give equal weight to her opponent's assessment of a disputed proposition. Tomás Bogardus has recently offered a novel defense of the equal-weight view that depends on a distinction between what he calls knowledge from reports and knowledge from direct acquaintance. Bogardus employs this distinction to show that the equal-weight view does not succumb to several proposed counterexamples. Despite the originality of his approach, I think Bogardus has failed to vindicate the equal-weight view. This is because his central distinction does not account for the role that seemings play in the formation of our beliefs. Once these

seemings are accounted for, Bogardus's key distinction breaks down, rendering his strategy for avoiding the troubling implications of the counterexamples that have been proposed against the view ineffective.

**Title:** Exclusionary desires

**Author:** Rachel Fredericks (Ball State)

**Abstract:** In this paper, I direct our attention to a class of desires, which I call exclusionary desires. The objects of these desires are things under descriptions such that, were the desires satisfied, it would be logically or causally impossible for people other than the desiring subject to possess them. Starting from the assumption that we are morally responsible for our desires because they reflect our evaluative judgments and are in principle subject to rational revision, I provide two arguments for the claim that we should, morally speaking, alter social structures and our individual psychologies to minimize exclusionary desires, though we should not necessarily blame individuals for having them.

### **Session III: Saturday Morning**

**Title:** Confidence Level Invariantism

**Authors:** Logan Douglass and Paul Shephard (IU, Bloomington)

**Abstract:** In the wake of counter examples such as DeRose and Stanley's famous bank cases, invariantists have struggled to explain intuitive data related to pragmatic encroachment. Driven by the intuitive force of bank case type examples, some epistemologists have abandoned invariantism in favor of contextualism or relativism, while others have tried reviving invariantism in modified forms, including Stanley's own interest-relative invariantism. Short of denying the intuitive data of bank case examples, is there any hope for the epistemologist looking to defend invariantism in its traditional form? We believe so. In this paper, we will be defending an underexplored view which we will call confidence level invariantism. Roughly, confidence level invariantism claims that a certain degree of belief is a necessary condition for knowledge. We believe confidence level invariantism is capable of solving bank cases while avoiding the problems of rival theories.

**Title:** Non-Arbitrary Inference: an Objection to Strong Bayesianism

**Author:** Brett Mullins (Miami U)

**Abstract:** Probabilism states that if there exists a numerical representation of one's degree of belief, a credence, then those representations must conform to the probability calculus. Strong Bayesianism adds to Probabilism the completeness constraint that all epistemic states have a representation. In this paper, I introduce non-Arbitrary Inference (nAI) as necessary for rationality beyond synchronic consistency. Intuitively, nAI is a principle that requires there exist a reason, if one prefers some assignment of credences or epistemic weight to another. Formally, for probability distributions  $Pa$  and  $Pb$ , if  $Pa$  is strictly preferred to  $Pb$ , then there exists a member  $e$  of the agent's information set such that  $e$  induces the strict preference between  $Pa$  and  $Pb$ . Any assignment of credences when the agent's relevant information set is empty violates nAI. There is at least one epistemic state without a representation, undermining Strong Bayesianism.

**Title:** On the Analysis of Soritical Predicates

**Author:** Landon D. C. Elkind (U Iowa)

**Abstract:** Soritical predicates, such as 'bald', 'child', 'tadpole', 'heap', and so on, force prima facie compelling paradoxes upon defenders of principles of classical logic, e.g., the law of bivalence. But the burden of showing that defenders of classical logic are committed to paradoxes lies on those that propound them. I invent such a propounder, Sir Sorities, to emphasize where the dialectical burden lies, and I argue that we should reject the premises of a sorites argument. For there is an illicit move from our linguistic mastery of natural language predicates such as 'bald' to a logical predicate 'F' standing for a unique and logically simple property. Our communicative mastery of 'bald' rather suggests that soritical predicates are logically complex, and we should demand some analysis of the soritical predicate before buying into sorites premises.

**Title:** Faint Impressions, Forceful Ideas

**Author:** Alexander Bozzo (Marquette U)

**Abstract:** Hume seems to claim that impressions and ideas are distinguished according to their degree of force and vivacity, but he also admits that “it is not impossible but in particular instances they may very nearly approach to each other” (T 1.1.1.1; SBN 1). Indeed, Hume claims that in sleep, fever, madness, or any very violent emotion, these two species of perception may be indistinguishable from one another. Hume’s comments constitute a direct challenge to the force and vivacity interpretation of the impression/idea distinction. In this paper, I argue against two alternative accounts—viz., the objective realm interpretation and the copy principle interpretation—and defend the force and vivacity interpretation. Hume avoids any charge of inconsistency because “impression” for him means “forceful perception when perceived in common circumstances,” and “idea” means “faint perception when perceived in common circumstances.” I show how his experimental method renders such an interpretation plausible.

**Title:** Psychological Readings of Kant’s Second Analogy and the Representation of Causality

**Author:** Andrew Roche (Centre College)

**Abstract:** Some readings of Kant’s Second Analogy in his *Critique of Pure Reason* construe him as arguing that one must be justified in believing that an event is caused if one is to be justified in believing that an event has occurred at all. Call this an epistemological reading. On other readings, Kant argues that one must represent an event to be caused if one is to experience an event at all. Call this a psychological reading. There is good reason to adopt a psychological reading of Kant’s Second Analogy, but in this paper I contend that it is *prima facie* difficult to see how Kant plausibly introduces the representation of causality into his argument, so construed. I consider three proposals and contend that a hybrid of all three is required.

**Title:** Spinoza’s Causal Likeness Principle and Monism

**Author:** Brandon Rdzak (Purdue)

**Abstract:** As Jan Cover recognizes, one of Spinoza’s projects in the *Ethics* is to argue against traditional theists “who suppose that an immaterial, unextended God could be the cause of a world of extended bodies.” The implication of such a project has been appreciated to an extent within Early Modern scholarship, but hasn’t been much appreciated outside of it. That goes especially for traditional theism. In this essay I bring to the fore a principle underlying Spinoza’s project, a “causal likeness principle” whose plausibility, I argue, puts pressure on traditional theists who suppose God is the cause of the world to accept some variety of monism such that everything fundamentally falls under one kind or type of substance (for instance, physical or mental kind).

#### **Session IV: Saturday Afternoon**

**Title:** Removing an Incoherence in Armstrong’s Ontology of Truthmakers

**Author:** Hao Hong (IU, Bloomington)

**Abstract:** D. M. Armstrong argues that his truthmaker theory supports an ontology of states of affairs, and claims that this “truthmaker argument” is the fundamental argument for the existence of states of affairs. In my paper, I argue that there is an incoherence in Armstrong’s truthmaker theory and some ontological theses he is committed to; the incoherence not only undermines Armstrong’s truthmaker argument for the existence of states of affairs, but poses a threat to his truthmaker theory in general. I then evaluate several possible revisions to Armstrong’s ontological theses and make my own proposal.

**Title:** Objects as Processes: Dissolving the Problem of Collocated Objects

**Author:** Graham Renz (U Missouri, St. Louis)

**Abstract:** The author finds “traditional” accounts of the collocation of objects unacceptable, i.e. it is denied two objects can be located in the exact same region of space-time. This paper argues the basic distinction between conventional and non-conventional objects, grounded in the characteristic actions of objects, allows for an intuitive and parsimonious solution to collocation. First, the distinction between conventional and non-

conventional objects is explicated and defended. Next, the notion of non-conventional, intrinsically unified objects (processes) is explored and unpacked. In the final section, that account is put to work dissolving the problem of collocated objects by locating conventional objects in the mind, and non-conventional objects in the external world.

**Title:** Koslicki's Overdetermination Problem

**Author:** Jeremy Skrzypek (Saint Louis U)

**Abstract:** In her 2008 book, *The Structure of Objects*, Kathrin Koslicki articulates and defends a Neo-Aristotelian hylomorphic account of material objects. One notable feature of her account is that it countenances a certain amount of overlapping, yet numerically distinct, material objects. At the very least, Koslicki is committed to the claim that there are composite wholes that are numerically distinct from the material objects that serve as their material constituents. In this paper I argue that this feature of Koslicki's account, when accompanied by her preservationist diachronic theory of composition, gives rise to a certain sort of systematic causal overdetermination. I argue further that this sort of systematic causal overdetermination, which is a potential concern for other accounts of material objects as well, is particularly troublesome for Koslicki's view, since, given her own metaphysical commitments, it's not clear that any of the standard ways of avoiding it are available to her.

**Title:** Excuses and Blame-Based Theories of Moral Wrongness

**Author:** Benjamin Rossi (Notre Dame)

**Abstract:** Many moral theorists argue that the concept of moral wrongness is connected to, and can be understood in terms of, the concept of blameworthiness. This tradition has its earliest roots in Mill's *Utilitarianism*, and can be found in the work of, among others, Alan Gibbard, Stephen Darwall, and John Skorupski. Their ambition is to offer a non-circular analysis of the concept of moral wrongness in terms of blameworthiness. While these views have been criticized on various grounds, it has not generally been thought that they encounter difficulties accounting for moral excuses. Indeed, it is often that by including a disjunction in the *analysans*—for example, *S's A-ing* is morally wrong if and only if *S* is either excused or blameworthy for *A-ing*—these analyses can adequately account for moral excuses. But in attempting to account for moral excuses, these views wind up being either false or circular.

**Title:** The Intrapersonal Paradox of Deontology

**Author:** Christa Johnson (Ohio State)

**Abstract:** In response to the paradox of deontology, many have argued that the agent-relativity of deontological constraints accounts for why an agent may not kill one person in order to prevent five others from killing. Constraints provide reasons for particular agents not to kill, not reasons to minimize overall killings. However, this response leads to the worry that agents ought to kill one if it would prevent their own future five killings. Although responses to the original paradox are prevalent in the literature, this intrapersonal paradox is often passed-over. In this paper, I consider two different approaches to the intrapersonal challenge. I first reject the view that agents are indeed morally permitted to violate constraints in order to minimize their overall violations. I then defend the view that deontological constraints are both agent- and time-relative and show how this wards off paradox.

**Title:** Rawls' Instability and the Aggressive State

**Author:** Lavender M. McKittrick-Sweitzer (Ohio State)"

**Abstract:** In *A Theory of Justice* John Rawls formulates an intricate domestic foundation for justice. Thomas Pogge considers the implications of this domestic foundation for global justice in his work *Realizing Rawls*. When doing this, Pogge argues that Rawls' scheme is unstable because it leaves open the possibility of global justice devolving into a *modus vivendi*. I argue that Rawls' work directly addressing global justice, *The Law of Peoples*, is also vulnerable to this critique, especially due to his oversight of the aggressive state. To flesh out this argument

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I give a brief overview of how Pogge's critique applies to *A Theory of Justice*. I then explain Rawls' conception of global justice as seen in *The Law of Peoples*. To demonstrate the persistent weakness of Rawls' argument and its continued susceptibility to Pogge's critique, I illustrate where there is room left for the aggressive state.