7-8 November 2017
University of Edinburgh

Forms of Knowledge

Literature and Philosophy
International Conference

Conference Brochure
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Conference Programme

Day One: Tuesday 7th November

Location: Project Room 1.06, 50 George Square, EH8 9LH

0845-0900 Registration and Coffee
0900-0910 Welcome
0910-1030 *Fiction and Knowledge: Realising Philosophy through Fiction*

**Dr Gilbert Plumer**
(Law School Admission Council, USA, retired)
Is There Such a Thing as Literary Cognition?

**Charlotte Arnaoutou**
(Paris-Sorbonne University)
“This is not the story of a crime”: Metaphysical Detective Fiction or gumshoe philosophy in Chesterton and Borges

**Dr William Goodwin**
(University of South Florida)
The Novel as “Intuition Pump”

Chair: Dr Alex Thomson

1045-1200 *Boundaries of Knowledge: Epistemology in Henry James and Herman Melville*

**Emilia Halton-Hernandez**
(University of Sussex)
“I know, I know, I know!”: Henry James’s *In the Cage* and the Epistemophilic Instinct in Late Nineteenth-Century Society

**Patrick Jones**
(University of Geneva)
The Lesson of Zola: Henry James and Creative Evolution

**Dr Dean Casale**
(Kean University)
Incrustability and the Limits of Knowing: Paul de Man, Hannah Arendt and Herman Melville’s “Bartleby, the Scrivener”

Chair: Dr Andrew Taylor

1200-1310 Interval for lunch
1310-1430  
_Affect and Knowledge: Reading and Feeling_

**Dr Birgit Breidenbach**  
(Queen Mary University of London/University of Warwick)  
Odd Affinities: Compassion as Affective Knowledge

**Sibyl Adam**  
(University of Edinburgh)  
Affective Knowledge in Migrant Literature

**Doug Battersby**  
(University of York/Trinity College Dublin)  
Richard Rorty: Knowing Criticism and Inspired Reading

Chair: Dr Michelle Keown

1445-1600  
_Poetical Knowledge: The Philosophy of Poetry_

**Dr Francesca Manzari**  
(Aix-Marseille University)  
Poetic Forms of Knowledge, Philosophical Forms of Enjoyment

**Florence Schnebelen**  
(Paris-Sorbonne University)  
The Concept of Experience in Romantic Writing: Paradoxical Epistemology and Philosophical Versatility

**Vivek Santayana**  
(University of Edinburgh)  
Cinctures of Sound: Music, Poetry, and Knowing the Divine in the Poems of W.H. Auden

Chair: Dr Lee Spinks

1600-1630  
Interdisciplinary Research Poster session

1715  
Additional event: The Department of European Languages and Cultures have kindly invited participants in the Forms of Knowledge conference to their French Seminar Series, at which our keynote speaker, Professor Sandra Laugier, will give a talk entitled “Civil Disobedience and Democracy.” This event will take place in David Hume Lecture Theatre A (located in David Hume Tower, beside 50 George Square) and will be followed by a wine reception.
Day Two: Wednesday 8th November

Location: Moreau-Evrard Room (1st floor), French Consulate, Lothian Chambers, 59-63 George IV Bridge, EH1 1RN

1000-1010  Registration and Coffee
1010-1015  Welcome
1015-1135  *Existential Knowledge: From Theory to Practice*

**Chloé Vettier**
(Princeton University)
Shame in Jean-Paul Sartre’s *La Nausée*, or how it affects Sartre’s practice of philosophy and literature

**Richard Elliott**
(University of Edinburgh)
Sartre’s Existentialism in Richard Yates’s *Revolutionary Road*

**Salomé Paul**
(University College Dublin/Paris-Sorbonne University)
State, Fate and Freedom in Sartre’s *The Flies* and Camus’s *Caligula*

Chair: Dr Nicola Frith

1150-1310  *Representations of Knowledge: Stanley Cavell and Martin Heidegger through page, stage and screen*

**Dr Danielle Petherbridge**
(University College Dublin)
Recognition and Acknowledgement in Coetzee, Cavell and Honneth

**Professor Thomas Deane Tucker**
(Chadron State College)
Marriages of Convenience – Thinking Through Cavell, Malick, and Godard on Philosophy, Cinema, and Literature

**Brittany Rebarchik**
(Loyola University Chicago) Embodied Dread in *Hamlet*

Chair: Dr David Levy

1310-1415  Interval for lunch
1415-1535

Evolving forms of Knowledge: Contemporary Reconfigurations of Literature and Literary Theory

Dr David Kerler
(University of Augsburg)
(De)Constructions of Happiness in Mark Ravenhill’s Candide

Suzanne Black
(University of Edinburgh)
In What World? – Character Integrity in Unauthorised Adaptations

Dylan Vaughan
(University of Western Ontario)
The Harsh Words of a Small Child: Jean-François Lyotard and the Judgment of Infancy

Chair: Dr Simon Malpas

1550-1645

Science and Knowledge: Following the Science in Literature and Philosophy

Dr Christopher Kitson
(Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh)
Empiricism, Fiction and the Thought Experiment: the case of HG Wells and Ernst Mach

Dr Ingrid M. Hoofd
(Utrecht University)
How Meetings Matter: on the Accelerated Enactment of the Science-Narrative Tension in the work of Karen Barad

Chair: Dr Anouk Lang

1700-1800

Keynote speech: Ethics, Literature, and What Matters

Professor Sandra Laugier, Full Professor of Philosophy at the University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne and senior member of the Institut Universitaire de France (IUF)

Chair: Dr Alix Cohen
# Abstracts

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Keynote Speech:

“Ethics, Literature, and What Matters”

Delivered on Wednesday 8th November at 5pm by

Prof. Sandra Laugier

Full Professor of Philosophy
at the University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne
and senior member of the Institut Universitaire de France (IUF)
Sibyl Adam (University of Edinburgh)

Affective Knowledge in Migrant Literature

What does it feel like to migrate? This talk will discuss the relationship between migrant subjectivity and affect as a type of knowledge in literature. While literary scholarship about migrant literature tends to valorise exceptional events or extreme events, much of this literature is primarily concerned with the everyday negotiation of cultural difference as an embodied experience. Affective knowledge, consisting of feeling and emotion, is often associated with the feminine, so also risks being dismissed. Emphasising the relationship between feeling and materiality, I will discuss how affective knowledge needs to be analysed as an everyday experience. To pose such a critical stance that stresses the quotidian in widely exoticised and exceptionalised identities and groups is to be inherently political. Paul Gilroy, for instance, stresses convivial culture as a solution to Britain’s neurotic postcolonial melancholia by proposing that there is a ‘liberating sense of the banality of intermixture and the subversive ordinariness of this country’s convivial cultures’. This talk will give an account of different types of affective knowledge, including particular emotions such as anxiety and irritation, and more fluid, abstract ways of experiencing the world with historical and contemporary examples. Affect is a productive way to describe the experience of migrants as intersectional, and as such I will explore how issues of gender and class converge with religion and ethnicity. Ultimately this will show how affect as something notoriously difficult to describe is narrated in this body of writing, bringing together epistemology and literature.

Biography

Sibyl Adam is a fourth year PhD student in English Literature, funded by the Wolfson Foundation. Her thesis theorises migration as an everyday experience using affect theory in a genealogy of texts about Muslim women migrating to the UK from 1906 to 2012. She has published on melancholic migration in the journal C21 Literature and has a forthcoming book chapter about affect and migrant literature in the edited collection New Directions in Diaspora Studies.
Charlotte Arnautou (University of Paris-Sorbonne)

“This is not the story of a crime”: Metaphysical Detective Fiction or gumshoe philosophy in Chesterton and Borges

The notion of "metaphysical detective fiction" (MDF) may seem something of an oxymoron. Where metaphysics is concerned with abstract concepts and deals with fundamental questions about being and knowing, detective fiction is regarded as an intrinsically unserious literary form, a "literature of escape", whose interest lies primarily in empirical clues and hard facts. However, a brief look at the pool of authors of MDF leaves no doubt as to the fertility of this seemingly unnatural union. From Chesterton's Father Brown stories to Borges's Fictions and Nabokov's Pale Fire and, closer to us, Eco's The Name of The Rose, it seems that detective fiction, with its interest in the ratiocinative process, has lent itself rather well, more specifically, to epistemological questions: what, if anything, can we know? What, if anything, is real?

Within this frame, semiotic concerns take on a specific fictional role. These are fictionalised, mainly through unreliable, ambiguous or truncated texts (letter, notes etc), to introduce epistemological puzzles. Through this and other devices (like parody or subversion), MDF challenges the conventions of the genre, such as narrative closure (some crimes remain unsolved) and the detective’s role as surrogate reader. Instead, MDF explicitly speculates about the workings of language, the structure of a narrative and the nature of reading. What matters is no longer the enigma, but the code or the method to solve the puzzle. Thus, in staging the difficulty of deciphering texts and of meaning-making, MDF also questions philosophical systems contaminated by the fictional desire of closure: how to understand the clues supposed to lead to truth while resisting the temptation of incorporating them into a system that verges on fiction?

This paper aims to take a glimpse at this highly self-reflexive genre through a cross study of G.K. Chesterton’s “The Wrong Shape” and “The Honour of Israel Gow” and J.L. Borges’s “Death and The Compass”.

Biography

Charlotte Arnautou is a PhD student in literature at the University of Paris-Sorbonne and a former student of the Ecole Normale Supérieure Lettres et Sciences Humaines. Her research focuses on the Western theory of fiction, on the use of fiction as a rhetoric device in public debate and the work of G.K. Chesterton.
Richard Rorty: Knowing Criticism and Inspired Reading

The American philosopher Richard Rorty has received a great deal of attention across the humanities, but, despite writing extensively about literature, ‘Rorty’s authority as a literary scholar has remained ambiguous’ (Leypoldt, 145). This paper will examine Rorty’s understanding of literature and literary criticism in order to explore what his philosophical thought might offer scholars concerned with contemporary debates about interpretative method. I show that Rorty simultaneously advances two radically incommensurable models for literary criticism: ‘strong textualism’ and ‘inspired reading.’ The strong textualist ‘asks neither the author nor the text about their intention but simply beats the text into a shape which will serve his purpose’ (Consequences of Pragmatism, 151). The paucity of this approach - its failure to register the aesthetic distinctiveness of individual works - is manifest in Rorty’s own readings of Nabokov, Orwell, Dickens, James, and Proust, which eschew close textual analysis and consequently reiterate the same conclusions about richly varied texts. Ironically, it is precisely this kind of criticism that Rorty vehemently critiques in his discussion of ‘inspired reading,’ where he suggests that critics too often take up a ‘knowing’ stance towards texts (Achieving Our Country, 126). Rorty wants critics to begin by setting aside knowledge as a goal and to instead register their own affective investments in particular works by offering ‘inspired readings’ that are ‘the result of an encounter with an author, character, plot, stanza, line or archaic torso which has made a difference to the critic’s conception of who she is, what she is good for, what she wants to do with herself’ (Interpretation and Overinterpretation, 106-7). In the conclusion to the paper, I consider Rorty’s thinking about literature in light of recent debates about affect, surface reading, and interpretative suspicion, and argue that his accounts of ‘liberal irony’ and ‘inspired reading’ together offer a new vantage from which to approach the thorny question of how critics should read and write about literature.

Works Cited:


Biography

Doug Battersby has written a PhD on the relationships between knowing and feeling in late modernist fiction at the University of York and Trinity College Dublin, under the supervision of Derek Attridge and John Bowen, and supported by scholarships from the AHRC and the Leverhulme Trust. His forthcoming publications include articles for Textual Practice and Modernism/modernity.
Suzanne Black (University of Edinburgh)

In What World? Character Integrity in Unauthorised Adaptations

The question of how to position the relative ontologies of works of fiction and their adaptations has been tackled in literary theory by turning to philosophy. In the 1970s, Possible Worlds Theory applied modal semantics to narrative theory with David Lewis, Thomas Pavel, Lubomir Doležel and Umberto Eco each expounding different theories. This has developed into several areas such as transfictionality, which aims to account for the transposition of textual elements like character, plot or setting from one fictional text to another, and Possible Worlds Theory’s relevance to digital culture with its ability to foster vast, highly-networked intertexts.

Digital fanfiction offers one such example of inherently intertextual, networked literary production that incorporates transfictionality and the applicability of transfictionality to fanfiction intertexts has already been intimated by critics such as Marie-Laure Ryan and Veerle van Steenhuyse. I will continue this line of inquiry and extend it with a case study of characters in fanfiction texts who challenge the ontological boundaries of both the text and fictionality.

Working with Ryan’s existing narratological work on transmedia fiction and supplementing it with work from within fanfiction studies, I argue that Possible Worlds Theory provides a useful model for understanding the relative ontologies of fanfiction as a microcosm of intertextuality. By extending narratological practices, that are rooted in philosophical premises, to a new digital context I will offer a new way of modelling and understanding the relationships between works of fiction and their adaptations in fanfiction.

Biography

Suzanne Black is a second-year PhD candidate in English literature at the University of Edinburgh. She is interested in how digital fictions, such as fanfiction, and representations of the digital in printed contemporary fiction can be understood by reference to models of intertextuality, narratology, genre theory, gender theory and digital media, and by the aid of digital humanities computational analysis techniques of distant reading.
Odd Affinities: Compassion as Affective Knowledge

In this paper, I explore the affective concept of compassion as an aesthetic form of knowledge and understanding. In doing so, I will, first, revisit Martha Nussbaum’s study of the conceptual history of compassion in *Upheavals of Thought*. Defining compassion as a painful emotion caused by the awareness of another’s misfortune, Nussbaum assigns a pivotal ethical role to this phenomenon in her political philosophy. In a second step, I transfer the concept of compassion to the realm of literature and discuss the ways in which reading has been understood as a compassionate activity, which enables recipients to access forms of understanding that are considered to be diametrically opposed to rational thought: we all *know* that what Anna Karenina decides to do is wrong; however, we come to *understand* her plight and *feel* her pain.

I will, then, focus on a significant turn in the philosophical and aesthetic interpretation of compassion in the age of modernity. Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway* offers an alternative view of compassion, which places this affective structure at the heart of textual interpretation. As the three characters Clarissa Dalloway, Peter Walsh and Septimus Warren Smith establish a hermeneutic triangle, within which they interpret and empathise with one another, the characters mirror the reader’s activity in following an experiential structure marked by ‘compassion, comprehension, absolution’ (as Peter Walsh phrases it). In this context, compassion fills a void left by the crisis of rationality that is embodied by the post-war experience and allows for ‘odd affinities’ with people or characters one has never spoken to. Ultimately, compassion is thus part and parcel of an intersubjective form of affective knowledge that becomes a new paradigm for the modern age.

Biography

Dr Birgit Breidenbach is a Teaching Fellow in Comparative Literature and Culture at Queen Mary University of London as well as an Early Career Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Study at the University of Warwick. Having earned a B.A. at the University of Giessen, Germany, and an M.A. at Warwick, Birgit completed a Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literary Studies at Warwick with a thesis on the role of mood in the literature of European modernity. Her published and presented work focuses on literary and aesthetic theory, affect and the interplay between philosophy and literature.
Inscrutability and the Limits of Knowing: Paul de Man, Hannah Arendt and Herman Melville’s “Bartleby, the Scrivener”

Literary texts reveal “truths” and offer insights, but they often work in an opposite manner, by defining, describing and delimiting what’s knowable. That is, often through the narration of difficult, wrenching human experiences – witness writers like Kafka and Beckett – literary texts bring their audiences to the cognitive boundaries of what we do not and cannot know; they articulate and enact epistemological quandaries and crises. This move toward the inscrutable is neither malicious nor nihilistic; these ‘darker’ literary works express, through their direct, unvarnished visions of the essential absurdities of the human condition, a deep empathy and humaneness. And moreover, they help expand the emotional and intellectual capacities of their audiences.

I would argue that Herman Melville’s short story, “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” is a purposeful philosophical study of inscrutability – of the persistence of ‘the unknown’ and alienation in human relationships. Of course, Bartleby, with his famous refrain of “I would prefer not to,” is a keen exemplar of what Melville has called “the Everlasting No,” and his descent into isolation, silence and suicide, offers a haunting character portrait of the mysteriousness and depth of human suffering. But Bartleby is not the main character of Melville’s tale – the un-named Lawyer-Narrator is – and although Bartleby’s “strangeness” is of profound interest, what most engages Melville (and by extension, the attentive reader) is the Lawyer-Narrator’s understanding of, response to and interaction with Bartleby. “Bartleby, the Scrivener” is an ‘inside-narrative’ of a consciousness (the Lawyer-Narrator’s) in epistemological and ethical crisis; and through this intense and ironic examination of conscience – because it is done by a mostly unaware, self-serving and self-deluding narrator – Melville is able to shrewdly critique the ideological underpinnings of the Capitalist ethos and sentimental Christianity that largely define nineteenth-century America.

My paper, “Inscrutability and the Limits of Knowing: Paul de Man, Hannah Arendt and Herman Melville’s Bartleby, the Scrivener,” will focus on the ways that Melville uses narration and narrative point-of-view for the philosophical ends of critique. My reading places Melville’s story in dialogue with two modern philosophers: first, it examines how Paul de Man’s essay “The Epistemology of the Metaphor” parallels and intersects with Melville’s explorations of the limits of language and human understanding in “Bartleby, the Scrivener”; and second, my paper takes up the issue of an individual’s moral relationship to fellow human beings, by placing the Lawyer-Narrator’s response to Bartleby within the ethical framework proposed by Hannah Arendt in her two essays, “Collective Responsibility” and “Thinking and Moral Considerations.”

Biography

Dr Dean Casale earned his Ph.D. from Stony Brook University, New York in 1992, and specializes in American Literature and Literary Theory. He was awarded NEH Summer Fellowships to Princeton University and to Michigan University. He has presented on a range of topics – from Captivity Narratives to American Exceptionalism to Blues and The New Negro to Rap and the Public Intellectual – at conferences at home, and abroad, in Canada, India, Portugal and Germany. He is presently finishing a book entitled An Aesthetics of Consumption: E. A. Poe and the Magazine Industry.
Richard Elliott (University of Edinburgh)

Sartre’s Existentialism in Richard Yates’s *Revolutionary Road*

Richard Yates’s first and most celebrated book, *Revolutionary Road*, is often viewed as a novel of suburban malaise, and placed alongside the work of other chroniclers of the suburbs, such as John Cheever and John Updike. However, despite Yates’s professed distaste for “-isms”, *Revolutionary Road* transcends its suburban settings to engage with key ideas in Sartre’s early existentialism, namely Sartre’s insistence that “existence precedes essence” and his concept of “bad faith”. Through the central characters of Frank and April Wheeler, the novel interrogates Sartrean questions of essence. Frank is constantly trying to live up to expectations of what he sees as his masculine essence and Yates explores the construction of this essence through Frank’s relationship to his job, his military past, and to the male body. If Frank is unable or unwilling to escape the constrictive idea of an essence, April, at least initially, appears much more capable of embracing what Sartre might term responsibility for her freedom. However, as the narrative unfolds, the scope of April’s freedom comes under increasing pressure from various sources.

In exploring the extent to which one is able to define oneself through action, *Revolutionary Road* enables the reader to see how Sartre’s concepts of “facticity” and “transcendence” might apply to everyday life in 1950s America. This paper will show how viewing the novel through an existential lens both freshly illuminates Yates’s text and allows us to think through the strengths and limitations of key Sartrean concepts.

**Biography**

Richard Elliott is currently a Second Year PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh. He is researching fiction written across cultural boundaries in British and American literature from the 1960s to the present day. This study will focus on novels by authors such as James Baldwin, William Styron, Percival Everett, and Zadie Smith.
Dr William Goodwin (University of South Florida)

The Novel as ‘Intuition Pump’

One way of approaching the question of how we learn from novels is to think of them as thought experiments. Because there is a growing philosophical literature that hopes to elucidate how thought experiments can contribute to either scientific or philosophical knowledge, this understanding of the novel offers the prospect of an account of how novels can contribute to knowledge (Egan, 2016). There are, however, important limitations on this broad strategy. On one hand, in compelling cases where knowledge is generated by thought experiments in scientific contexts these thought experiments are typically reconstructed as arguments for a general conclusion. However, it is only by procrustean effort that novels be reconstructed as such arguments. On the other hand, in philosophical contexts, it is not clear that thought experiments yield knowledge at all. Instead, some allege, they can and often do result in misleading or unreliable intuitive judgments about the nature of our concepts or the plausibility of various philosophical positions (Brendel, 2004). So the analogy between thought experiments and novels is strained in those cases where it might offer an account of knowledge, but perhaps more plausible in contexts where what is gained by interacting with the thought experiment is something more akin to corrigible philosophical insight.

Daniel Dennett has offered an account of the role of thought experiments in philosophy as ‘intuition pumps.’ According to him, throughout the history of philosophy “all the great and influential stuff has been technically full of holes but utterly memorable and vivid.” The great thought experiments of philosophy are not sound arguments for anything; instead they are “wonderful imagination grabbers, jungle gyms for the imagination.” The cognitive products of intuition pumps are not conclusions, but ‘intuitions,’ which “structure the way you think about a problem” and underwrite judgments about the plausibility or desirability of various philosophical positions (Dennett, 1996). So, thinking of novels as intuition pumps, offers the prospect of explaining how and why they contribute to philosophy without thinking of them as arguments for knowledge claims in anything like the scientific sense.

In this paper, I will develop the idea of the novel as intuition pump by presenting the sorts of philosophical intuitions and plausibility judgments prompted by engaging with George Orwell’s Nineteen-Eighty Four and Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels.

References:

Biography

Dr William Goodwin is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of South Florida. He works primarily in the philosophy of science, with particular interests in chemistry, climatology, Kuhn and Kant. Recently, he has begun investigating the relations between science and society as portrayed in classic novels. He is author of “Volatile Spirits: Scientists and Society in Gulliver’s Third Voyage” in Jonathan Swift and Philosophy (Lexington, 2017) and “Wheat can become Rye” forthcoming in Nineteen Eighty-Four and Philosophy.
“I know, I know, I know!”: Henry James’s *In the Cage* and the Epistemophilic Instinct in Late Nineteenth-Century Society

Henry James’s 1898 novella *In the Cage* tells the story of an unnamed working class girl who comes to know about the secret lives of the upper classes through her job as a telegraph worker. Explaining to a customer about the scandalous stories she encounters in her dealings with upper class customers, she says: “‘I like them, as I tell you—I revel in them. But we needn’t go into that,’’ she quietly went on; “for all I get out of it is the harmless pleasure of knowing. I know, I know, I know!’” (James 169). The telegraph girl is not so concerned with what she knows, but instead the sense that she is in possession of knowledge, that she is privy to the secret affairs of the upper classes and in a position of importance in her knowing.

In this paper, I would like to explore Freud, Jean-Paul Sartre and Melanie Klein’s concept of ‘epistemophilia’, the drive for knowledge, in order to think about James’s novella and the cultural moment in which it was written. For Freud, the epistemophilic instinct is grounded in the child’s attempt to understand procreation. Therefore, the epistemophilic instinct derives from a position of exclusion—of not knowing and not being able to control access to knowledge. The novel’s engagement with the desire for knowledge will be explored in its relation to the class system and the politics of inclusion and exclusion with regards to information, and the emerging print culture of late nineteenth-century British society. It is my argument that new technologies like the telegraph and generic innovations in journalism in the late 1800s contributed to an epistemophilic drive amongst the working classes that reached a fever pitch. I wonder if the story suggests that the desire to know for the sake of knowing is an important but potentially problematic step in the achievement of a class consciousness for the girl.

**Biography**

Emilia Halton-Hernandez is a CHASE-AHRC funded PhD student at the School of English at the University of Sussex. Here PhD thesis is provisionally entitled “‘The formless thing which gives things form’: The world of the preverbal and Marion Milner’s autobiographical, psychoanalytic and artistic works, 1934-2012”. She is more broadly interested in 19- and 20-century literature, life writing, visual culture, psychoanalysis and affect theory.
How Meetings Matter: on the Accelerated Enactment of the Science-Narrative Tension in the work of Karen Barad

The work of Karen Barad, notably her impressive Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning, has gained widespread recognition for lying at the base of the so-called ‘materialist turn’ in the humanities. The work has done so by outlining an ‘agential realism’ that seeks to think together ‘words’ and ‘matter’ through an inventive retelling of Niels Bohr’s interpretation of the quantum experiments. Meeting the Universe Halfway moreover starts with a long intervention in Michael Frayn’s theatre play Copenhagen on the debate between Bohr and his colleague Werner Heisenberg about the role of physics in nuclear war, in which Barad claims that Frayn misrepresents Bohr’s standpoint and misses certain crucial aspects of this debate. Interestingly therefore, while Barad founds her alleged epistemic shift on an empiricist paradigm within physics via Bohr’s ideas about an objective, if non-representational, realism as well as on his belief in the reproducibility of and falsification via experiments, she also uses storytelling as a crucial rhetorical device to ground these scientific claims. This paper seeks to situate the aporetic tension between narrative and science in Barad’s work in what it with Jacques Derrida identifies as the larger ‘auto-immune’ aspect of academia, in which academia’s problematically progressivist outlook gets accelerated via the dialectical enactment of this tension’s discursive and material conditions. It will illustrate this by teasing out how Barad uses stories to make an argument for ‘agential realism’ while obscuring its own material-discursive situatedness. This paper in turn supplements Barad’s version of quantum physics by setting up an alternative dialogue between Jacques Derrida and Heisenberg, eventually implicating Barad’s productive yet oppressive crossover between the sciences and the humanities in the cybernetic and nuclear acceleration of contemporary academia.

Biography

Ingrid M. Hoofd is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Media and Culture at the Humanities Faculty of Utrecht University, the Netherlands. Her research interests are issues of representation, feminist and critical theories, philosophy of technology, game studies, and information ethics. She is the author of Higher Education and Technological Acceleration: the Disintegration of University Teaching and Research (Palgrave, 2016), and Ambiguities of Activism: Alter-Globalism and the Imperatives of Speed (Routledge, 2012). Her research analyses the ways in which alter-globalist activists, as well as left-wing academics, mobilise what she calls ‘speed-elitist’ discourses and divisions in an attempt to overcome gendered, raced, and classed oppressions worldwide. These analyses outline the accelerated tensions and relationships between various new technologies (electronic games, e-learning platforms, and social media) and activist-academic moral imperatives from a critical-cultural and deconstructionist perspective.
The Lesson of Zola: Henry James and Creative Evolution

In this paper I argue that Henry James’s critique of naturalism in ‘Émile Zola’ (1903) is highly reminiscent of what Herbert Schnädelbach calls the ‘anti-rational metaphysics’ of vitalism: ‘a philosophical position which makes into the foundation and creation of everything something which essentially stands opposed to rationality, reason, concepts, or the Idea – life as something irrational’. The essay is first and foremost an inquiry into Zola’s ‘singularly simple’ artistic evolution, which for James is testament to ‘the danger of the mechanical all confident and triumphant’. For Angus Wrenn such assertions are evidence of James’s cultural and philosophical conservatism, of his abiding and anachronistic commitment to the idealist aesthetics of Second Empire writers such as Edmond About. Although by no means fully divested of this conservatism, I want to suggest instead that James’s critique demonstrates a keen responsiveness to his intellectual milieu, and that he shares his contemporaries’ anxieties concerning the biologisation of life. To advance this claim, I place James in dialogue with Henri Bergson, whose hugely influential L’évolution créatrice (1907) represents vitalist thought at its most subtle and sophisticated. Their allegiances are not limited to the fact that James shares Bergson’s suspicion of any thinking in which ‘tout est donné’: in which the course is straight, the mould well-wrought, and the end product foreseeable in advance. In addition to offering a critique of scientism that accommodates a more capacious notion of science and the scientific method, James maintains that the novel is an open system, and that the most interesting parts of Zola’s vast oeuvre are the anomalies, accidents, and failures, something which resonates strongly with Bergson’s attempts to conceptualize evolution beyond mechanism and finalism.

Biography

Patrick Jones is a teaching and research assistant at the University of Geneva. He writes primarily on modern literature and continental philosophy, and is currently working on a doctoral project entitled ‘Henry James and the Phenomenology of Life’ under the supervision of Professor Simon Swift.
Dr David Kerler (University of Augsburg)

(De)Constructions of Happiness in Mark Ravenhill’s *Candide*

The present paper explores constructions and deconstructions of happiness in Mark Ravenhill’s *Candide* (2013). Based on Voltaire’s same-named satirical novel (1759), Ravenhill’s play re-reads 18th century discourses on happiness and optimism (first and foremost Leibnizian optimism with the concept of “the best of all possible worlds”), relocating them in a contemporary postmodern context and literary form. Drawing on various theories of the so-called “happiness turn” (such as Sara Ahmed, Alain Badiou, Lauren Berlant or Ruut Veenhoven), it will be argued that whereas 18th century optimism/happiness were located in God and religion, these notions of happiness re-appear permutated in the promises of capitalism and the myths of self-definition/individuality and love in the 21st century, thereby (re-)creating the precarious realities they actually try to overcome. A close reading of selected passages shall thereby elucidate not only the various happiness discourses the play addresses critically, but also the aesthetic and formal means with which literature may perform and engage in philosophical ideas.

**Biography**

Dr David Kerler is Assistant Professor of English Literature at the University of Augsburg. His research focusses on postmodern literature and film, English Romanticism, and poststructural and cultural theory.
**Empiricism, Fiction and the Thought Experiment: the case of H G Wells and Ernst Mach**

The thought experiment is a topic of sustained and increasing interest in philosophy. It is widely recognised as a vitally important tool in philosophical practice, particularly in analytic philosophy. Nevertheless, the thought experiment's proximity to fiction marks it out as problematic. This is especially the case for empiricist epistemologies, which must confront the question of how the mere contemplation of imagined scenarios can yield genuine knowledge.

This paper traces an analogy between two late nineteenth-century figures who took seriously the potential of the thought experiment from an empiricist standpoint: one a philosopher of science, the other a writer of fiction. Ernst Mach popularised the term Gedankenexperiment and defended the usefulness of the practice within a radically empiricist framework. H G Wells produced fantastic works of fiction which thematise and enact such an approach.

The paper begins by setting out the similarities between Mach's and Wells's philosophical outlooks, describing how their empiricism extends in both cases to forms of scientific antirealism. It goes on to discuss Mach's appeal to evolutionary theory to ground his account of the reliable intuition which makes thought experiment effective. I then turn to consider Wells's darwinian fable *The Time Machine*, describing how this novel takes the status of inherited evolutionary intuitions as a central concern. After this I argue that Wells's text performs this theory in its narrative mode, which juxtaposes self-conscious artifice (the framed narrative is playfully cast as a thought experiment itself) with an empirically attentive narration of possible world. The paper concludes by considering whether this juxtaposition, undoubtedly a productive tension in literary terms, ultimately highlights the problems with Mach’s and Wells’s view of the thought experiment.

**Biography**

Dr Christopher Kitson works in literature, particularly literature and philosophy and intellectual history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He completed his PhD at Queen's University, Belfast with a thesis on the Kantian sublime and constructions of autonomy in the long nineteenth century. He is currently postdoctoral fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh where he is pursuing a project on the literary thought experiment.
Poetic Forms of Knowledge, Philosophical Forms of Enjoyment

In the Introduction to his book Stanzas: The Words and the Phantasm in Western Culture, Giorgio Agamben writes about the separation between poetry and philosophy:

The split between poetry and philosophy testifies to the impossibility, for Western culture, of fully possessing the object of knowledge (for the problem of knowledge is a problem of possession, and every problem of possession is a problem of enjoyment, that is, of language). In our culture, knowledge [...] is divided between inspired-ecstatic and rational-conscious poles, neither ever succeeding in wholly reducing the other. Insofar as philosophy and poetry have passively accepted this division, philosophy has failed to elaborate a proper language, as if there could be a royal road to truth that would avoid the problem of its representation, and poetry has developed neither a method nor a self-consciousness.

Notwithstanding the division, Agamben states the possibility for poetry and for philosophy to aim their true project, which is knowledge for poetry and joy for philosophy. From Agamben's inquiry, it appears that medieval poetry was a particular form of knowledge, which reunited possession and joy. And somehow Agamben implies that philosophy should always be a “topology of gaudium”, that is, a textual place where knowledge is achieved by questioning the form of its coming into being.

My paper will deal with French philosophers Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and the way their styles, the form of their texts succeed in what Agamben defines “the enjoyment of what cannot be possessed”. I will particularly focus on Derrida’s The Post Card and on Deleuze and Guattari’s A Thousand Plateaus.

Biography

Dr Francesca Manzari is Maître de conferences at the Aix-Marseille University in Comparative Literature. Her fields of specialisation are the relation between literature and philosophy, the French Theory, theory of literature, theories of literary translation and Provençal and Tuscan medieval Poetry. Francesca is the author of a book published by Peter Lang in 2009, Écriture derridienne entre langage des rêves et critique littéraire. She is currently working at a book about poetry and philosophy, the division between inspired-ecstatic and rational-conscious poles.
State, Fate and Freedom in Sartre’s The Flies and Camus’s Caligula

The concept of the tragic, separated from tragedy as a literary genre, has been defined by German romantic philosophers in the 19th century, and especially by Hegel. Using Greek tragedies, he gave a political meaning to the idea of tragic, stating that three components were essentials to make a tragic play: the State, the Fate and the individual Freedom. This pattern was used and discussed by Sartre and Camus to highlight their own philosophical theories. My aim will be to highlight how that their plays serve as an illustration of their philosophical essays, Being and Nothingness, The Myth of Sisyphus and The Rebel.

The Flies and Caligula, besides being both rewritings of classical texts, deal with the issues of individual Freedom and the authoritarian state, which is highly linked with religion, and thus with Fate, as Aegisthus is the puppet of Jupiter and Caligula aspires to be a Nietzschean god. In both plays, religion, as well as Fate, is a joke used by the heads of state to master people, which matches with the metaphysical view of the absurdity. The question of Freedom, however, is handled differently according to the existentialism of Sartre or to the philosophy of the revolt of Camus. Thus, Orestes illustrates the Sartrian thought “existence comes before essence” as the murder of his mother is a component of his being which frees him from Jupiter’s domination since he feels no remorse. As for Caligula, he is a complex character illustrating, simultaneously, the man of absurdity, since nothing has any value to him, and the rebel, since he wants to change the world which is symbolized by his purchase of the moon. But Caligula’s Freedom, which is at some point alike to Nietzsche’s, is not a good one according to Camus’s view.

Biography

Salomé Paul is a second-year PhD student in Comparative Literature at University College Dublin and Paris-Sorbonne university, under the direction of Messrs Eamonn Jordan and Bernard Franco. Her thesis, Contemporary Variations upon The Greek Tragic Myth in Anouilh’s, Sartre’s, Camus’, Paulin’s, Kennedy’s and Heaney’s Theatre, deals with the connection between Literature and Philosophy. Indeed, tragedy and the tragic idea have been defined by philosophers. Moreover, two dramatists of her corpus, Sartre and Camus, are mostly known for their philosophical works, and their plays serve as an illustration of their theories.
Elizabeth Costello, the fictional character at the center of J.M. Coetzee’s novel *The Lives of Animals* implores us to acknowledge the suffering and vulnerability of others. Costello describes this as a faculty or empathetic ‘capacity’ to ‘imagine’ oneself as somebody else that is prior to abstract thought. In Cavellian terms, she makes a distinction between ‘knowing’ what it might be like to be an other, and ‘acknowledging’ the experience of others. As Cavell explains, when we use the language of ‘knowledge’ as ‘acknowledgement’ in this recognitive sense, what we are expressing is a sense of sympathy. In this sense, to say that ‘I know you are in pain’ is not a statement merely of fact or certainty but instead indicates the need for an ethical response. Cavell’s notion of acknowledgement arises in the context of a response to skepticism and the attempt to address the problem of how we can ‘know’ other minds. Instead of seeking a solution to this problem based on some ultimate foundation or certainty, Cavell’s claim is that we must simply accept the existence of others and that such a primary level of acceptance is required before being able to ‘know’ them. In a manner akin to Costello’s concern about the predominance of abstract thought, Cavell mounts a similar critique by pointing to the limits of knowledge in relation to the question of the other’s existence. In this paper, I examine the notion of ‘acknowledgement’ in philosophy and literature as explicated in the work of Coetzee and Cavell and bring them together with what I argue are similar lines of thought in the recognition theory of Axel Honneth. Here, I examine the complexity of ‘acknowledgment’, as well as failures of acknowledgement that result in objectifying or reifying stances.

**Biography**

Dr Danielle Petherbridge is Lecturer in Philosophy at University College Dublin. From 2013-2015 she was IRC Marie Curie International Research Fellow at Columbia University, New York. She works and teaches in the areas of continental philosophy, philosophy and literature, critical theory, and phenomenology. Her current research project, entitled Encountering the Other, provides an examination of theories of intersubjectivity and self/other relations across different philosophical traditions. Her book publications include: *Body/Self/Other: The Phenomenology of Social Encounters* (2017) with Luna Dolezal; *The Critical Theory of Axel Honneth* (2013); *Axel Honneth: Critical Essays, with a Reply by Axel Honneth* (2011).
Is There Such a Thing as Literary Cognition?

Literary cognitivism is defined as the thesis that fictional narrative can yield knowledge in a way that depends essentially on its being fictional. Many hold that literary fiction can yield knowledge, but is there any essential dependence of such knowledge on fictionality? This paper argues that there is little reason to believe that the case for literary cognitivism has been successfully made. For example, according to Nussbaum, novels stimulate the sympathetic imagination; that is what they contribute that is supposedly special in making us recognize such things as the equal humanity of others. Yet there is nothing that precludes a suitably written historical, biographical, or other nonfictional narrative from doing the same. Ellison’s *Invisible Man* could give us the phenomenal knowledge of what it is like to experience systematic racial oppression regardless of how autobiographical the book is. Generally, fictional narrative can be regarded as making a supposition and seeing what would, or could very well, follow, as in Weir’s *The Martian*. With a little more critical interpretation, one can see a fictional narrative as generalizing from a supposed example, as constructing a supposed counterexample to a generalization, or as working out the negative implications of a supposition in the manner of a *reductio ad absurdum*, as one might understand Huxley’s *Brave New World*—the supposition being that society is organized along the lines dictated by hedonistic utilitarianism. But for all such cases, my concern is that the supposition could simply be, or have been, an epistemic possibility (‘suppose X, which for all we know, occurs sometime’) or probabilistic (e.g., ‘suppose X, which could very well happen’), not counterfactual supposition, i.e., distinctively fictional supposition. It is unclear what difference it could make for learning from Huxley’s book whether the supposition is counterfactual, or simply epistemic or probabilistic.

Biography

Dr Gilbert Plumer is Retired Associate Director for Assessment Projects and Research, Law School Admission Council (USA). Taught philosophy at Illinois State University, Parkland College, and in the University of Wisconsin system. Most recent publications are: “The Transcendental Argument of the Novel,” forthcoming in *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* (FirstView published 5 Sept 2017, [https://doi.org/10.1017/apa.2017.16](https://doi.org/10.1017/apa.2017.16)) and “Analogy, Supposition, and Transcendental in Narrative Argument,” in Paula Olmos (ed.), *Narration as Argument* (Cham: Springer, 2017), pp. 63-81. His other publications are listed at:

[http://philpapers.org/s/Gilbert%20Plumer](http://philpapers.org/s/Gilbert%20Plumer)

[https://independent.academia.edu/GilbertPlumer](https://independent.academia.edu/GilbertPlumer)
Brittany Rebarchik (Loyola University Chicago)

Embodied Dread in *Hamlet*

It is no secret that Hamlet is paralyzed. A driving force causes continuous hesitation for the prince of Denmark as he navigates his complicated existence. Scholars have attributed his paralysis to his fear which manifests in his self-doubt and confused loyalties. I propose a discussion into how the *ontological* concept of ‘dread’ incapacitates Hamlet throughout the play. This discussion hinges on philosopher Martin Heidegger’s concept of dread. Dread, in this sense, is not defined merely as intense fear. Ontological dread is experienced as the feeling of existential powerlessness. In the face of dread, one confronts a void where there is no possibility to exist meaningfully. Yet, it is this void which propels our quest for a purposeful and worthwhile existence because it demands action—to turn one’s back to dread and actively seek understanding, possibility, and truth in one’s surroundings. I will discuss instances within the play where Hamlet confronts dread and, by doing so, finds the impetus to take action. I will also address how dread in *Hamlet* becomes epistemological as Hamlet realizes his dread is embodied in the characters of Gertrude and Claudius. It is only after this epistemological realization that he is able to confront and overcome the dread that they exemplify. With this awareness Hamlet is able to end his life free of the angst and impotence that is often attributed to his death.

Biography

Brittany Rebarchik is a PhD student at Loyola University Chicago. She studies Early Modern Literature (with a focus on Shakespeare) alongside existential philosophy. She endeavours to reveal new facets and motivations of Shakespeare’s characters by combining literature and philosophy. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on the ontological development of Shakespeare’s characters when they are faced with dread and other nefarious existential crises. Most recently, she had a chapter published in the book *The Whirlwind of Passion: New Critical Perspectives on Shakespeare* by Cambridge University Press.
The Spanish Civil War and the Second World War were watershed moments in the life and works of W.H. Auden: he was disillusioned with the liberal humanist and Marxist politics of his youth and the role of poetry in achieving political change. While he famously said that ‘poetry makes nothing happen’, his conversion to Christianity through his reading of Søren Kierkegaard led him to seek truth, both spiritual and ethical, in music, as he wrote later that we should ‘let music for peace / Be the paradigm’. My paper will examine Auden’s attitude towards these two ways of knowing — poetry and music — and evaluate, firstly, why Auden considers music to be a higher form of truth, and secondly, what the nature of this truth is. In the first section, I will examine how Auden’s poetry performs a wider debate within the philosophy of music about ‘absolute music’. It is because, for Auden, the meaning of music is sufficient in itself rather than mimetic reference to something outside of it that it becomes a higher form of expression. In the second section, I will assess the Christian meaning of absolution and forgiveness that Auden locates within music. His poems are in conversation with Kierkegaard’s notion of the place of music in religion. While Kierkegaard argues that music is part of an ‘aesthetic’ hedonism that one must leave behind to progress to ethical or religious life in Christianity, for Auden the aesthetic is the way through which one attains these higher truths. Auden’s meditation on the meaning of poetry and music reflect contrasting approaches — the intellectual and the affective, the critical humanist and the theological — to moral questions of what is right. My paper will evaluate his belief that these truths must be felt through music rather than reasoned through words.

**Biography**

Vivek Santayana is Doctoral Candidate in English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. He took an MA in Philosophy and English Literature in 2015 and an MSc in Literature and Modernity in 2016 from the University of Edinburgh. His doctoral project is on the politics of style in the late fiction of Nadine Gordimer. His main research focus is postcolonial studies, but he is also interested in the ecocriticism and the environmental humanities, medical humanities, literature and science, and the philosophy of science. His MSc dissertation was in the field of word and music studies.
The Concept of Experience in the Romantic Writing: Paradoxical Epistemology and Philosophical Versatility

Romanticism proves itself to be a decisive breaking point both in the history of knowledge and in aesthetic enquiry. Early Romantic writings reveal an urge for philosophical textuality inside new literary forms, be it an intricate and often broken language, as in Friedrich Schlegel’s and Coleridge’s theoretical writings, or an oracular poetry, as in Novalis’.

Experience has the distinctive feature to be altogether an intellectual, a phenomenological and an affective form of knowledge. Therefore, experience appears to be a key concept in understanding the effort initiated by Early Romantic writers striving to seize the meaning beyond the being and the world. Experience embodies what French critic Georges Gusdorf called “the romantic scandal”: it relates to science and objectivity (Erkenntnis) as well as to personal life and subjectivity (Erlebnis, or the Existence, as we live it). The concept of experience develops two modes of intelligibility that wouldn’t traditionally overlap: scientific observation with strict deduction competes with intuition and divination. Logic has to cope with a certain illuminism. Romantic epistemology is constantly switching from proof to indemonstrable and from fact to sensation, challenging categorisation. Thus, the romantic writings of experience, whether in prose or poetry, whether in essay or in fiction, necessarily combine two philosophical directions allegedly irreconcilable: essentialism and phenomenology. The I, acting as a theoretical and a lyrical support, is reshaping the contours of philosophical logic when experiencing the world and itself in it: Novalis writes in his novel Heinrich von Ofterdingen that we ‘inhabit’ the world, making use of a word that will be dear to Merleau-Ponty; however, this assertion doesn’t imply any relativism in Novalis’ works. At the same time, Coleridge alters the Cartesian cogito (I think, therefore I am) when writing ‘Sum quia sum’ (I am because I am) recapitulating personal evidence and eternal harmony. These examples show how much the contortions of the romantic writings can encourage a redefinition of existing categories in its shattering attempts at grasping the absolute.

Biography

Florence Schnebelen is currently writing a dissertation in Comparative Literature at Paris-Sorbonne University on the Paradigms of Experience in German, English and French Early Romanticism. Her research focuses on romanticism’s ontology, epistemology and aesthetics, particularly on the philosophical legacy of Kant in fiction and poetry from the late 1790’s to the 1820’s.

After teaching three years at Paris-Sorbonne University, Florence was appointed as assistante in the English Department of Geneva University (Switzerland). She was a Visiting Research Fellow at Brown University in 2015 and 2016 and has presented her research at Yale University, Liège University and Lyon Ecole Normale Supérieure.
Marriages of Convenience—Thinking Through Cavell, Malick, and Godard on Philosophy, Cinema, and Literature

In his review of *Terrence Malick: Film and Philosophy* (a book I co-edited), Jason Wesley Alvis adopts Jack’s (the eldest son) opening voice-over inner dialogue in *The Tree of Life* as a trope for the relationship between film and philosophy as explored in the book’s essays and in the films of Malick: ‘Mother. Father. Always you wrestle inside me. Always you will.’ Similarly, Robert Sinnerbrink in *New Philosophies of Film: Thinking Images* likens the film-philosophy relationship to a marriage. Despite the old adage that philosophy is the ‘mother of all disciplines,’ Alvis admits that he can’t tell who is the father and who is the mother in the film-philosophy marriage. Sinnerbrink too is a bit wary of the nuptials, calling it a ‘sometimes felicitous, sometimes fractious, marriage of convenience.’

Stanley Cavell has spent a career practicing philosophy wedded to both cinema and literature, somehow showing fidelity to each in works such as *Pursuits of Happiness: The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*. On the other hand, Jean-Luc Godard, who is perhaps our best living filmmaking philosopher and who is notoriously hostile to writing screenplays, treats philosophy and literature together as twin mistresses, lifting passages whole cloth from written works in both categories as dialogue for his cinematic characters.

In this paper, I hope to sketch a short schematic of these intertwined relationships—in/between philosophers, filmmakers, and writers and literature, philosophy, and the moving image.

Biography

Professor Thomas Deane Tucker is a Professor of Humanities at Chadron State College. He is the author of a monograph on Marcel Duchamp and Jacques Derrida titled *Derridada: Duchamp as Readymade Deconstruction* published by Lexington Books and co-editor of *Terrence Malick: Film and Philosophy* published by Bloomsbury. He is currently busy writing a book on images of walking in cinema under contract with the University of Edinburgh Press.
Dylan Vaughan (Loyola University Chicago)

The Harsh Words of a Small Child: Jean-François Lyotard and the Judgment of Infancy

It would appear that the question of judgment no longer needs to be asked. From Jean-Luc Nancy’s hesitancy in “Dies Irae” (1985) to Gilles Deleuze’s polemical “Pour en finir avec le jugement” (1993), judgment has been characterized as an antiquated form of thinking, a relic inherited from the Kantian tradition of philosophy. In short, judgment has been—to borrow from Derrida—“préjugé”: the subject of a prejudice. Yet what has been forgotten is the fundamental relation between language and judgment, one intimated by Kant himself in deducing the famous transcendental categories of the mind from the form of the logical proposition. As such, the problem of language will always also be the problem of judgment; a rule, a law, or a concept cannot be divorced from its necessary form of expression. To acknowledge this compels us to return to a philosopher now similarly neglected: Jean-François Lyotard. Often seen as a mere adherent to Kantian reflective judgment, the metamorphosis of judgment in his work is often overlooked, as is how this transformation is linked to what I argue to be his proper literary concept: infantia (Lectures d'enfance, 1991). In proffering a reading of an essay from Lectures d'enfance titled "Prescription"—itself a reading of Kafka's "In the Penal Colony"—I argue that within Lyotard's concept of infancy inheres a re-thinking of judgment that is neither the generality of a universal rule nor the singularity of a new rule in every instance. Instead, it offers an image of judgment as the continual birth of one rule as it drawn out, in a perfectly straight line, through one’s entire life, a law that is literally in statu nascendi. What will be further explored is how this form of judgment constitutes one of the very ends of language and literature, as the very site in which inscription and enunciation is sutured to law.

Biography

Dylan Vaughan is a PhD candidate at the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism at the University of Western Ontario. His current research is on Jean-François Lyotard's concept of the infans or infancy and its relation to his over-all philosophy of language and literature.
Shame in Jean-Paul Sartre’s *La Nausée*, or how it affects Sartre’s practice of philosophy and literature

At the end of Sartre’s *La Nausée* (1938), the narrator Antoine Roquentin confesses his intention to write a story that would “make people ashamed of their existence.” Though many critics have commented on this specific project, no one has yet provided an extensive analysis of shame in Sartre’s first novel. This presentation will focus extensively (and exclusively) on its critical importance, arguing that shame is, in *La Nausée*, the pivotal point where Sartre’s philosophical ambitions meet his literary expectations. First, shame initiates Roquentin’s epistemological conversion from one form of knowledge to another: in the first pages of his diary, it allows him to transition from a positivist to a phenomenological understanding of himself, somehow reflecting Sartre’s own progression in *Esquisse d’une théorie des émotions* (1938). Second, shame informs a new type of art, one that would be committed to convert its audience. It is thus no coincidence that, just as the song “Some of these Days” makes Roquentin ashamed of himself, Roquentin’s prospective story will seek to reproduce the same effect on his readers, changing their approach to existence. Thus, *La Nausée* provides an illustration of the fact that, for Sartre, literature and philosophy both share the same goal, which is, to make “people ashamed of their existence.”

Biography

Chloé Vettier is a doctoral candidate in French Literature at Princeton University. Her research addresses the intersections of shame and autobiographical writing, with a focus on the works of Jean Genet, Marcel Jouhandeau and Maurice Sachs. In her dissertation, she also examines how the literary use of shame in the 1930s and 1940s might be symptomatic of the philosophical turn to ontology. Before arriving at Princeton, Chloé received a Bachelor’s and Master’s in French Literature from La Sorbonne-Paris IV. She is currently a fellow at the ENS-Ulm.
Venue Locations and Other Information

Day One: Project Room 1.06 (turn right at the top of the stairs to the first floor), 50 George Square, EH8 9LH
Day Two: Moreau-Evrard Room (1st floor), French Consulate, Lothian Chambers, 59-63 George IV Bridge, EH1 1RN
Getting from 50 George Square (Day One) to French Consulate (Day Two)
Places to Eat

Day One

The nearest venue – DHT café – is located in the David Hume Tower in George Square. Other nearby venues are located in Appleton Tower, the Business School, and the Main University Library (all shown on the map below).

http://www.accom.ed.ac.uk/for-students/our-cafés/george-square-campus/
Day Two

There are a large number of cafés and sandwich shops located close to the French Consulate, especially on George IV Bridge, Victoria St, and the Grassmarket.