Benjamin Kultgen

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Education

PhD – Philosophy
    University of Colorado Boulder   2018

Graduate Certificate in Cognitive Science
    University of Colorado Boulder   2018

AB – Philosophy
    Harvard University   2008

Areas of Specialization

Ethics, Metaphysics

Areas of Competence

Philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, epistemology, philosophy of language

Dissertation: *Vagueness and Ethics*

My dissertation is a series of essays on vagueness, ethics, and their intersection. Central topics include the viability of standard indeterminacy and epistemic accounts of vagueness, whether or not moral vagueness exists, and the possibility of posthumous harm. Given the destructive power of arguments from vagueness, I propose a methodological stance I call "Vagueness Last". On a Vagueness Last approach we test all reasonable non-vagueness explanations of a case of purported vagueness before at last settling on it being a case of genuine vagueness.

Committee: Graham Oddie (chair), Ned Hall, Chris Heathwood, Michael Huemer, Raúl Saucedo

Awards

Morriston Teaching Award – Philosophy Department, University of Colorado Boulder: AY2017-18
    Awarded to one graduate student annually for best philosophy instructor.

GPTI Teaching Excellence Award – University of Colorado Boulder: AY2016-17
    Awarded annually to up to ten graduate instructors (out of hundreds of graduate students teaching at CU). The semester-long selection process reviews the instructor's teaching dossier, and includes two unannounced classroom observations by two different faculty from outside the instructor's home department. This university-wide award is the highest possible distinction for a graduate instructor at the University of Colorado.

Fellowships

CU Boulder Philosophy Department Dissertation Fellowship, Fall 2016
CU Boulder Center for Western Civilization Summer Study Grant 2013
Philosophy Dept. Summer Research Assistantship 2013 w/Robert Pasnau
Philosophy Dept. Summer Research Assistantship 2012 w/Robert Hanna
University of Colorado Boulder First Year Graduate Fellowship AY2011/12

Research Papers

"More or Less Vague" (under review)
"Posthumous Repugnancy" (preparing for submission)
"Is There Moral Vagueness?" (preparing for submission)
"Single Desires, Repeated Frustrations" (in progress)
"What Could Be So Bad About Guns?" (in progress)
"A Better Defense of Abortion" (in progress)

Presentations

"Is There Moral Vagueness?"
> AGENT Conference (Austin Graduate Ethics and Normativity Talks), November 2018

"Posthumous Repugnancy"
> Center for Values and Social Policy, University of Colorado Boulder, March 2018*

"A More or Less Vague Problem"
> Arizona State University Philosophy Graduate Conference, February 2018

'*' for invited; refereed otherwise

Commentary

RoME (Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress), August 2018, "Death's Harm, Reasonable Compassion, and Phenomenal Continuity" – *commentator*

University of Colorado Boulder Rocky Mountain Philosophy Conference, April 2015, "Private Access to Physical Properties" – *commentator*

University of Colorado Boulder Rocky Mountain Philosophy Conference, April 2012, "Competing Aims: Velleman vs. The Guise of the Good" – *commentator*

Service

Philosophy Graduate Student President	AY2017-18
Philosophy Graduate Curriculum Committee Graduate Representative	AY2016-17
Philosophy Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Graduate Representative	AY2013-14
Philosophy Department Social Event Coordinator	AY2011-12, AY2012-13

Courses Taught

Philosophy and Society, Phil: 1200, 2 sections per term, CU	S15, S16
Intro to Philosophy, Phil: 1000, 2 sections per term, CU	F15, F17
Intro to Early Modern Philosophy, Phil: 1020, CU	SMR16
Ethics, Phil: 1100, 2 sections per term, CU	S17, S18. S19
Philosophy and the Sciences, Phil: 1400, CU	SMR17
History of Science: Ancients to Newton, Phil: 3410, online, CU	SMR18, F18
Contemporary Social Problems, Phil: 1200, online, CU	F18
Philosophy and Law, Phil: 2220, CU	S19

enrollment per section is approx. 37 students

Teaching Assistant Work

Intro to Philosophy, instructor: Graham Oddie, CU	F12
Philosophy and Society, instructor: Michael Huemer, CU	S13
CU Summer Seminar 2013. Topic: Justice. Director: Robert Pasnau, CU	SMR13
Philosophy and the Sciences, instructor: Carol Cleland, CU	F13
Intro to Philosophy, instructor: Dan Kaufman, CU	S14
Ethics, instructor: Robert Hanna, CU	F14

Graduate Level Coursework

Mind & Language
- Proseminar: Physicalism – Daniel Stoljar (Harvard)
- Philosophy of Language – Bernard Nickel (Harvard)
- Philosophy of Action – Doug Lavin (Harvard)
- Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein – Richard Moran (Harvard)
- Philosophy of Mind – Robert Rupert (CU)
- Issues and Methods in Cognitive Science – Eisenberg and Kim (CU)
- Topics in Cognitive Science – Tamara Sumner (CU)
- Seminar in Philosophy of Mind: Philosophy of Psychology – Robert Rupert (CU)
- Proseminar in Psychology: Advanced Research Methods of Experimental Psychology – Eliana Colugna (CU)

Metaphysics & Epistemology
- Philosophy of Biology – Peter Godfrey-Smith (Harvard)
- Pragmatism – Peter Godfrey-Smith (Harvard)
- Proseminar: Metaphysics – Forbes, Hanna, Oddie, Koslicki (CU)
- Seminar in Metaphysics: Indeterminacy – David Barnett (CU)
- Epistemology – Michael Huemer (CU)
- Seminar in Metaphysics: Ontological Collectivism – Raúl Saucedo (CU)
- Seminar in Metaphysics: Infinity – Michael Huemer (CU) *audited*

Values

- Seminar in Ethics: Reasons and Rationality – Scanlon, Parfit (Harvard)
- Proseminar: Ethics – Heathwood, Norcross, Hosein, Boonin (CU)
- Seminar in Ethics: Welfare – Chris Heathwood (CU)
- Seminar in Ethics: Justice and Institutions – Adam Hosein (CU)

History

- British Empiricism – Jeffrey McDonough (Harvard)
- Plato – Dominic Bailey (CU)
- Kant – Bob Hanna (CU) *audited*
- Hobbes – Dan Kaufman (CU)
- Seminar in History: Medieval Metaphysics – Robert Pasnau (CU)

References

Ned Hall, Norman E. Vuilleumier Professor of Philosophy, Harvard, ehall@fas.harvard.edu

Chris Heathwood, Assoc. Professor of Philosophy, CU Boulder, chris.heathwood@colorado.edu

Michael Huemer, Professor of Philosophy, CU Boulder, owl232@earthlink.net

Graham Oddie, Professor of Philosophy, CU Boulder, graham.oddie@colorado.edu

Robert Rupert, Professor of Philosophy, CU Boulder, rupertr@colorado.edu