Φ Dustin Troy Locke Φ

Philosophy Department
Claremont McKenna College
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Positions

Professor of Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College, 2023 – present

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College, 2015 – 2023

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College, 2009 – 2015

Education

PhD   University of Michigan, Philosophy, June 2009

Quidditism. My dissertation defends the thesis that a property's role in nature is only contingently realized by that property and examines the epistemic consequences of this thesis (full abstract below).

Committee: Jim Joyce (Chair), Allan Gibbard, Andy Egan

BA   Texas Tech University, Philosophy and English (*summa cum laude*), Dec 2002; also attended University of North Texas, 1999 – 2000, University of New Mexico, 1998 – 99

RESEARCH AREAS

Specializations   Epistemology, Moral Epistemology, Writing Pedagogy

Competencies   Metaphysics, Philosophy of Science/Language/Religion

BLIND-REVIEW JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

"The Levels System: A Mastery Learning Approach to Teaching Philosophical Writing". 2023. *Teaching Philosophy* 46: 1 – 39

"An Explanationist Account of Genealogical Defeat". Co-authored with Dan Korman. 2023. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 106: 176 – 195

"I, Trolley: Self-redirection and Hybrid Trolley Cases". 2021. *Utilitas* 33: 1 – 16

"The Normative Significance of Cognitive Science Reconsidered". 2020. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 70: 502 – 523

"Against Minimalist Responses to Moral Debunking Arguments" (Winner of Marc Sanders Prize in Metaethics). Co-authored with Dan Korman. 2020. *Oxford Studies in Metaethics* 15: 309 – 332

"Implicature and Non-Local Pragmatic Encroachment". 2017. *Synthese* 194: 631 – 654

"Knowledge, Explanation, and Motivating Reasons". 2015. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 52: 215 – 232

"Practical Certainty". 2015. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 90: 72 – 95

"Knowledge Norms and Assessing them Well". 2014. *Thought* 3: 80 – 89

"The Decision-Theoretic Lockean Thesis". 2014. *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 57: 28 -54

"Quidditism without Quiddities". 2012. *Philosophical Studies* 160: 345 – 363

PEER-EDITED VOLUME/JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

"Modal Security and Evolutionary Debunking". Co-authored with Dan Korman. 2023. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 47: 135–156

"The Clear and Concise AF Assignment: A Quick and Effective Way to Teach Basic Writing Skills". Forthcoming in *The Art of Teaching Philosophy: From Preparation to Practice* (tentative title). Brynn Welch (ed.). Bloomsbury Publishing

"Debunking Color Realism". Co-authored with Dan Korman. 2023. *Evolutionary Debunking Arguments*. Diego Machuca (ed.). Routledge.

"Evolutionary Debunking and Moral Relativism". 2019. Co-authored with Dan Korman. In Martin Kusch (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Relativism*. New York: Routledge. pp. 190-199

"The Epistemic Significance of Moral Disagreement". 2017. *The Routledge Handbook of Metaethics*, David Plunkett and Tristram McPherson (eds.). Routledge. Pp. 499 – 518

Review of Kieran Setiya's *Knowing Right from Wrong* (2012). 2014. *Ethics* 124: 649 – 656

"Darwinian Normative Skepticism". 2014. *Challenges to Moral and Religious Belief: Disagreement and Evolution*. Michael Bergmann and Patrick Kain, eds., Oxford University Press. Pp. 220 – 236

"A Partial Defense of Ramseyan Humility". 2009. *Conceptual Analysis and Philosophical Naturalism*, David Braddon-Mitchell and Robert Nola, eds., MIT Press. Pp. 223 – 241

PRESENTATIONS

"Pragmatic Encroachment and Testimonial Injustice", with Grace Kelleher, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, March 2023

"Fostering Viewpoint Diversity Through Collaborative Teaching", Teaching Summit, CMC, January 2022

"Debunking Color Realism", Evolutionary Debunking Workshop. February 2021

"The Levels System", The Writing-Attentive Classroom: A Lunch Series with Faculty, Claremont McKenna College, March 2019

"Darwinian Moral Relativism", The Texas Epistemology Extravaganza, April 2019

"Against Minimalist Reponses to Moral Debunking Arguments" with Dan Korman, Mad Meta, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 2018

Panel on the Formal Epistemology Perspective on Probability and Perception, Probability and Perception Workshop, University of California, Berkeley, March 2017

"Virtual Reality in the Classroom", Teaching and Technology Summit, CMC, 2017

"The Normative Significance of Neuroscience Reconsidered", The Texas Epistemology Extravaganza, April 2016

"Thought Experiments and the Significance of Moral Psychology to Moral Philosophy", Southern Methodist University, January 2016

"The Normative Significance of Neuroscience Reconsidered", CLAP workshop, Austin TX, January 2016

"The Normative Significance of Neuroscience Reconsidered", University of Texas at San Antonia, December 2015

"The Epistemic Significance of Moral Disagreement", Prindle Institute of Ethics' Workshop on Moral Epistemology, July 2015

"The Pragmatic Sensitivity of Knowledge Attributions", Society for Exact Philosophy, Cal Tech, June 2014

"Knowledge, Belief, and Pragmatic Sensitivity", Pacific APA, April 2014

"Practical Certainty", SUNY Fredonia, April 2013

"Knowledge, Explanation, and Motivating Reasons", Georgetown University Philosophy Conference: Reasons and Reasoning, April 2013

"Practical Certainty", California State University San Bernardino, Nov 2012

"Darwinian Normative Skepticism", Challenges to Religious and Moral Belief Conference, Purdue University, Sept 2012

"It's Still Not What You Know that Counts", Pacific APA, April 2012

"Darwinian Normative Skepticism", Purdue Seminar on Knowing in Religion and Morality, June 2011

"Knowledge-free Decision Theory', Pacific APA, April 2011

"Quidditism without Quiddities", Metaphysics: Aristotelian, Scholastic, and Analytic, July 2010

"The Practical Significance of Skepticism", University of Nevada, Las Vegas, March 2010

"Ramsification and Useless Knowledge-*which*", Society for Exact Philosophy, Laramie, Wyoming, May 2008

"Quidditism and Knowledge-*which*", University of Texas Graduate Student Philosophy Conference, April 2008

"A Partial Defense of Ramseyan Humility", Southeast Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of Florida, March 2007

"A Partial Defense of Ramseyan Humility", NYU/Columbia Graduate Student Philosophy Conference, NYU, March 2007

AWARDS, HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND GRANTS

Gould Center Faculty Research Grant 2021 - 2022

Research grant for projects that involve student research assistants. Awarded to my project "Philosophy Unlocked". Students RAs are William Parker (CMC '23) and Fangzhangyi "Kylie" Chen (CMC '23).

Gould Center Faculty Research Grant 2020 - 2021

Research grant for projects that involve student research assistants. Awarded to my project "Philosophy Unlocked". Students RAs are Sophie Gitlin (CMC '22) and Emma Kresch (CMC '22).

Gould Center Faculty Research Grant, 2019 – 2020

Research grant for projects that involve student research assistants. Awarded to my project "Philosophy Unlocked". Students RAs are Sophie Gitlin (CMC '22) and Emma Kresch (CMC '22).

Viewpoint Diversity Course Grant, 2019

> Claremont McKenna College grant, funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. Piercarlo Valdesolo and I received this grant to develop and teach our course "Bad Science".

Marc Sanders Prize in Metaethics, 2018

> $10,000 essay competition administered by Russ Schafer-Landau on behalf of the Marc Sanders Foundation and *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*. Awarded to "Against Minimalist Responses to Moral Debunking Arguments", co-authored with Dan Korman.

Faculty Research Grant, March 2017
> Travel funds for participation on the Panel on the Formal Epistemology Perspective on Probability and Perception, Probability and Perception Workshop, University of California, Berkeley

Dean of Faculty Research Grant, 2010
> Summer research funds for travel to Prague to present "Quidditism without Quiddities" at the conference "Metaphysics: Aristotelian, Scholastic, and Analytic"

Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship, 2008 – 09
> A one-year fellowship awarded to outstanding doctoral candidates from across disciplines at The University of Michigan

Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, Summer 2008
> Financial support for visiting The Australian National University and The University of Sydney

Charles L. Stevenson Prize, 2007
> Awarded by the Philosophy Department at The University of Michigan for best candidacy dossier submitted during the calendar year 2006

College of Arts and Sciences Merit Scholarship, 2002
> Awarded to outstanding arts and sciences students at Texas Tech University

Claude V. Bridges Memorial Scholarship, 2002
> Awarded to outstanding philosophy students at Texas Tech University

Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society, 2001
> English honor society at Texas Tech University

Phi Sigma Tau Philosophy Honor Society, 2000
> Philosophy honor society at Texas Tech University

SERVICE (FACULTY)

- o Philosophy Department Chair, CMC, Fall 2023 – present

- o Curriculum Committee, CMC, Fall 2023 - present

- o ChatGPT Working Group, CMC, 2023

- o Writing Committee, CMC, 2021/2022

- o Philosophy Department Speaker Coordinator, CMC, 2021/2022

- o Organizer for Marcus Schultz-Bergin department talk, CMC, 2021

- o Colloquium Commentator, Southern Society for Psychology and Philosophy, 2020

- o Colloquium Commentator, Pacific APA, 2021

- o Chair of Department Promotion Committee for Adrienne Martin, CMC, 2020/2021

- o FIS for Angela Vossmeyer, CMC, 2020/2021

- o Institutional Review Board, CMC, 2020/2021 – 2021/2022

- o Chair of Ad Hoc Student Evaluations Committee, CMC, 2019 - 2021

- o Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure Committee, CMC, 2015/2016 – 2020/2021

- o FIS for Bill Lincoln, CMC, 2018/2019

- o Faculty Athletic Representatives Committee, CMC, 2017/2018, 2018/2019

- o Department Hiring Committee, CMC, 2017/2018

- o FIS for Dan Livesay, CMC, 2017/2018

- o Program Committee, Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Society, 2016 – 2018

- o FIS for Giorgi Areshidze, CMC, 2016/2017

- o Department Promotion Committee for Drew Schroeder, CMC, 2016

- o Department Committee to Investigate Capstone Requirement, CMC, 2016

- o Administration Committee, CMC, 2014/2015

- o Department WASC evaluation committee, CMC, 2013/2014

- o Department Website Supervisor, CMC, 2013-2015, 2016

- o Department Student Activities Supervisor, CMC, 2013/2014

- o Department Student Recruitment Committee, CMC, 2013 - 2016

- o Department Promotional Video Producer, CMC, 2013

- o College Judiciary Board, CMC, 2010/2011, 2011/2012

- o Department WASC evaluation committee, CMC, 2011/2012

- o Department Hiring Committee, CMC, 2010/2011

- o Faculty Athletic Representatives Committee, CMC, 2010/2011

- o Department Representative for Prospective Students, CMC, Fall 2009, Fall 2010

- o Department Representative for Incoming Students, CMC, Spring 2011, Spring 2012

- o Colloquium Commentator, Central APA, Winter 2011, Winter 2013

- o Colloquium Committee Chair, Pacific APA, Spring 2010

SERVICE (GRADUATE STUDENT)

- o Graduate student representative to the Department Executive Committee, Fall 2008

- o Mentor for first-time graduate student instructors, 2006-07

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (FACULTY)

- o Reason and Reality, CMC, Fall 2013 (two sections), Spring 2014, Fall 2016, Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2019 (two sections), Fall 2019, Spring 2020 (two sections), Fall 2020 (two sections), Fall 2021 (two sections)
- o Bad Science, CMC, Fall 2019
- o Naturalism and Morality, CMC, Fall 2018, Spring 2021 (two sections)
- o Advanced Seminar: Living with Uncertainty, CMC, Spring 2015, Spring 2018
- o Skepticism, CMC, Fall 2009, Spring 2012, Fall 2017
- o Belief, Justification, and Religion, CMC, Spring 2011, Spring 2013, Spring 2017
- o FHS: Fact, Fiction, and Simulation, CMC, Fall 2016

- o   Advanced Seminar: Theism, Naturalism, and Morality, CMC, Spring 2014
- o   Philosophical Questions, CMC, Fall 2009, Spring 2010, Spring 2011, Spring 2012, Spring 2013
- o   Honors Philosophical Questions, CMC, Fall 2010, Fall 2011
- o   Theism, Naturalism, and Morality, CMC, Fall 2011
- o   Language and Reality, CMC, Spring 2010
- o   FHS: Theism, Naturalism, and Morality, CMC, Fall 2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (GRADUATE STUDENT)

Primary Instructor
- o   Problems of Philosophy, Summer 2009
- o   Problems of Religion, Summer 2007 (single class of 50 students)
- o   Introduction to Logic, Winter 2007

Section Leader
- o   Philosophy of Science, w/ Laura Ruetche, Winter 2009
- o   Philosophy of Science, w/ Carl Hoefer, Winter 2008
- o   Philosophy of Religion, w/ Ed Curley, Fall 2006
- o   History of 17th and 18th Century Philosophy, w/ Louis Loeb, Winter 2006
- o   Introduction to Philosophy, w/ Louis Loeb, Fall 2005
- o   Introduction to Philosophy, w/ Jim Joyce, Winter 2005
- o   Introduction to Philosophy, w/ James Woodbridge, Fall 2004

Grader
- o   Introduction to Logic, w/ Rich Thomason, Winter 2007

Writing Tutor
- o   University Writing Center, Texas Tech University, 2002

Substitute Teacher
- o   Lubbock Independent School District, K-12, 2001 – 02

GRADUATE COURSEWORK IN PHILOSOPHY

Epistemology
- o   Candidacy Reading Course on Quiddistic Skepticism, Jim Joyce
- o   Seminar on the Semantics-Epistemics Interface, Thony Gillies
- o   Seminar on Foundations of Statistical Inference, Jim Joyce, Michael Woodruff (Statistics)
- o   *Analyses of Knowledge, Jason Stanley

Metaphysics/Philosophy of Science
- o   Seminar on the Metaphysics of Modality, Boris Kment
- o   Philosophy of Mind, Peter Ludlow
- o   Physics and Chance, Larry Sklar
- o   *Seminar on the Nature and Scope of Scientific Theories, Larry Sklar
- o   *Space and Time, Larry Sklar
- o   *Seminar on Probability, Carl Hoefer (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Language
- o   Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein, Ian Proops
- o   Proseminar on 20th Century Analytic Philosophy, Peter Railton, Jason Stanley
- o   *Seminar on Relative Truth, Andy Egan
- o   *Seminar on Meaning as Normative, Allan Gibbard
- o   *Seminar on Semantics, Peter Ludlow
- o   *Seminar on Descriptivism, David Braddon-Mitchell (University of Sydney)

Logic

- o   Mathematical Logic, Larry Sklar
- o   *Modal Logic, Richmond Thomason

Ethics/Meta-ethics
- o   Seminar on Recent work in Meta-ethics, David Velleman
- o   *Seminar on Ethics and Evolutionary Psychology, Allan Gibbard, Peter Railton, Chandra Sripada (Psychiatry)

History
- o   Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics, Rachana Kamtekar
- o   Hume's Metaphysics and Epistemology, Louis Loeb
- o   *Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Ian Proops
- o   *Seminar on Dewey's Ethics and Political Philosophy, Elizabeth Anderson

* indicates audit

REFERENCES

David Braddon-Mitchell	Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney +61 2.9352.2222 *dbm@mail.usyd.edu.au*
Andy Egan	Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan (734) 764 – 6285 *egana@umich.edu*
Allan Gibbard	Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan (734) 764 – 6285 *gibbard@umich.edu*
Carl Hoefer	Department of Philosophy, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona +34 93.581.81.73 *carl.hoefer@icrea.es*
James Joyce	Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan (734) 764 – 6285 *jjoyce@umich.edu*
Larry Sklar	Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan (734) 764 – 6285 *lsklar@umich.edu*
Edwin Curley (Teaching)	Department of Philosophy, University of Michigan (734) 764 – 6285 *emcurley@umich.edu*

Dissertation Abstract
Dustin Troy Locke
University of Michigan

Quidditism

Introduction. Having *mass* disposes objects to resist acceleration; having *positive charge* disposes objects to repel other objects with positive charge. In general, properties realize certain roles in the workings of nature. What is the relationship between these roles and the properties that realize them? According to 'quidditism', the roles are *contingently* realized by the properties that in fact realize them—that is, one and the same role might have been realized by some other property. I defend quidditism against the leading alternative: dispositionalism. According to dispositionalists, all it is to have *mass* is to be disposed to resist acceleration, to curve spacetime, etc. Hence, necessarily, any object with these dispositions has mass, and so the role actually realized by mass is *necessarily* realized by mass. Dispositionalists often charge quidditism with unacceptable consequences—epiphenomenal and unknowable "quiddities" or "inner natures" of properties. I respond to these charges on behalf of quidditism.

In Defense of Quidditism. I begin by arguing that dispositionalism is untenable. After showing that several standard arguments against dispositionalism are unsuccessful, I defend an argument suggested by Denis Robinson. According to Robinson, it is possible to have properties with roles that are *indistinguishable* save by reference to the very properties in question. If such a case is possible, then properties cannot be individuated *solely* by their nomological roles and hence dispositionalism is false. I proceed to show that quidditism can be had without quiddit*ies*, and thus can be had without epiphenomenalism. The arguments to the contrary proceed either from a misconception of what quidditism is, or they rely on an implicit (and false) assumption to the effect that quidditism implies that there is something "over and above" nomological roles in virtue of which properties are individuated.

Quidditistic Skepticism vs Traditional Skepticism. I turn next to an examination of quidditism's epistemic implications. Here I develop and defend an argument from a soon to be published paper by the late David Lewis. Following Lewis, I argue that quidditism implies that we will never know which properties realize at least some of the nomological roles. At the core of my case is an argument against Jonathan Schaffer's contention that quidditist skepticism is merely a species of traditional (brain-in-a-vat) skepticism and can thus be refuted as such. I agree with Schaffer that at one level quiddistic skepticism looks very much like traditional skepticism: in both cases we have incompatible hypotheses, each of which is consistent with our evidence. I argue, however, that quidditist skepticism has a certain feature that traditional skepticism lacks and which allows it to survive the standard responses to traditional skepticism: in the case of quidditistic skepticism, the hypotheses under consideration can be distinguished *only* through the use of "blind" reference-fixing (such as when we let 'Julius' refer to the inventor of the zipper *whoever he may be*).

Quiddistic Knowledge is Useless Knowledge. Finally, I argue that the kind of skepticism implied by quidditism has, unlike traditional skepticism, no practical implications. Despite some views to the contrary, it really does matter whether you are justified in believing that the faces you see around you are other *people*, rather than mere images in an envatted brain. Being justified in such beliefs is, in part, why you are justified in performing certain actions—for example, helping out what appears to be a friend in need. Quidditist knowledge is not like this. Knowing which properties realize the various nomological roles is in principle irrelevant to any decision problem we will ever face. Interestingly, the reason for this is exactly the reason that quiddistic skepticism survives the standard responses to traditional skepticism. Because the various hypotheses can be distinguished only via blind reference-fixing, it follows that even if we *could* know the truth about which properties realize the various nomological roles, we would know it only under a guise that rendered that knowledge useless.