

JOHN P. WATERMAN

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Visiting Assistant Professor 2014 - 2016
Colby College, Maine

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Philosophy 2015
The Johns Hopkins University

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship 2012
University of Arizona

M.Sc., History and Philosophy of Science - Distinction 2006
The London School of Economics & Political Science

B.A., Philosophy - Dual Honors 2000
Vassar College

TEACHING EXPERIENCE - SOLE INSTRUCTOR

Colby College

Bioethics 2016
The Cognitive Science of Religion 2015
Introduction to Epistemology 2015
Introduction to Formal Logic 2014
Seminar in Moral Psychology & Experimental Philosophy 2014

The Johns Hopkins University

The Theory of Knowledge: Classic and Contemporary Questions 2014
The Cognitive Science of Religion 2012; 2013; 2014
The Cognitive Science of Political Philosophy 2013
Theories of Philosophical Reasoning (Cognitive Science & Rationality) 2012; 2013
Introduction to Biomedical Ethics 2011; 2012
Philosophy and the Future of Humanity (Ethics of Technology) 2010; 2012
Foundations of Logic and Mathematics 2010

Stevenson University (as an adjunct)

Bioethics 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014
Introduction to Philosophy 2011; 2012; 2013

RESEARCH

AOS: EPISTEMOLOGY / PHILOSOPHY OF COGNITIVE SCIENCE

AOC: EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY / MORAL PSYCHOLOGY / LOGIC / BIOETHICS

DISERTATION ABSTRACT

Why is it that we can know so much about the world, but skeptical arguments seem so hard to resist? My dissertation examines skeptical arguments and their cognitive foundations. Just as vision scientists investigate the psychological foundations of illusion to better understand how perception is successful, I think that by investigating the cognitive causes of doubt we can better understand the nature of knowledge. Most contemporary accounts of the skeptical problem trace its origin to linguistic confusions. I argue that this strategy is inadequate because it does not do justice to skepticism's intransigence: linguistic mistakes are easy to recognize, but skeptical doubts are hard to dislodge. I argue, instead, that the skeptical problem is a byproduct of a conflict between two separate components of our epistemic psychology. Specifically, I defend the idea that we deploy two different heuristic standards of evaluation towards potential beliefs. Toward favored sources, like perception and the testimony of friends, we apply the heuristic *can I accept P?*, and search for evidence that is consistent with P. Toward disfavored sources, like the arguments of rivals, we ask instead *must I accept P?*, and search for possibilities in which P might be false. These two standards, the first fallibilist and the second infallibilist, are inconsistent, but this does not lead to incoherence in everyday life because the cues that prompt each strategy are well delineated. Skeptical arguments, however, do lead to conflict because they induce us to apply the infallibilist standard to a favored source of evidence, and this leads to the conflicting intuitions at the heart of the skeptical problem.

PUBLICATIONS

"Counterfeit Testimony: Lies, Trust, and the Exchange of Information" with Nick Tebben (forthcoming) in *Philosophical Studies*.

"Infallibilism, Skepticism, & Cultural Differences" with Karen Yan, Joshua Alexander, and Chad Gonnerman in Stephen Stich, Jason Stanley, & Masaharu Mizumoto (eds.), *Epistemology for the Rest of the World* (forthcoming). New York: Oxford University Press.

"The Market for Testimony: A Reply to Our Critics." with Nick Tebben, in *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective* 4, no. 5 (2015): 43-51.

"Epistemic Free-Riders and Reasons to Trust Testimony," with Nick Tebben in *Social Epistemology* 29, no. 3 (2015): 270 - 279.

"Salience and Epistemic Egocentrism," with Joshua Alexander & Chad Gonnerman in James Beebe (ed.), *New Directions in Experimental Epistemology* (2014). London: Bloomsbury Press.

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS

Framing why we disagree about disagreement
(w/ J. Alexander, D. Betz, & C. Gonnerman)

Society for Philosophy and Psychology, June 2016

Infallibilism, Skepticism, & Cultural Differences
(w/ K. Yan, J. Alexander, & C. Gonnerman)

APA Central Division Meeting, Feb. 2015

Society for Philosophy and Psychology (Poster), June 2014

Mid-South Philosophy Conference, Feb. 2014

Epistemology for the Rest of the World, Tokyo, Japan, Aug. 2013

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Skepticism and Semantic Blindsight

APA Central Division Meeting, Feb. 2014
NEH Institute on Experimental Philosophy, July 2012

Salience and Epistemic Egocentrism
(w/ J. Alexander & C. Gonnerman)

Southern Society for Philosophy & Psychology, Feb. 2014
Society for Philosophy & Psychology, June 2013

Epistemic Free-Riders
(w/ Nick Tebben)

Evolutionary Patterns Conference, U. of Lisbon-PT, May 2013
Northern New England Philosophy Association, Oct. 2012

Radical Skepticism and Rational Error

European Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Aug. 2012

Questioning Contextualist Error Theory

APA Pacific Division Meeting, April 2012
Northwest Philosophy Conference, Nov. 2011

Intuitions are Not a Natural Kind

Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, April 2011
-SSPP Graduate Student Paper Award

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

“The Psychological Foundations of Skepticism,” University of Maine - Orono, Oct. 2015; “Teaching the Intellectual Moves of the Social Sciences,” Bates College, Sept. 2015; “The Experimental Humanities,” Colby College, October, 2014; “Experimental Philosophy,” Colby College, March 2014; Comments on Joe Ulatoski’s “Defending Positive Experimental Philosophy,” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Feb 2014; Comments on Bryan Appley’s “A Dilemma for Vogelian Skepticism,” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Feb 2013; Comments on Ron Wilbur’s “The Probability of the Possible,” Northwest Philosophy Conference, Nov 2012.

AWARDS

Vassar College DPS Fellowship (2000); Harry Ordan Memorial Fellowship for Philosophy (2000); M.Sc. Dissertation accepted with Distinction, London School of Economics (2006); LSE Nominee, Mind Association Fellowship in Philosophy (2006); Southern Society for Philosophy & Psychology Prize for best Graduate Student essay (2011); Dean’s Teaching Fellowship, The Johns Hopkins University (2012); National Endowment for the Humanities, Fellowship in Experimental Philosophy, University of Arizona (Summer 2012); Dean’s Prize Fellow, The Johns Hopkins University (2012-14); Allen T. Grossman Teaching Fellowship, The Johns Hopkins University (2013).

SERVICE

JHU Hammond Society President (2007 – ‘08); Editor, Hammond Society Undergraduate Philosophy Essay Award (2008 – 2012); Assistant to the Eastern APA Secretary-Treasurer (2009 – 2013); Referee, Society for Philosophy & Psychology (2012); Referee, Florida Philosophical Association (2012); Chair, APA Eastern Division Meeting (2013); Referee, *Philosophical Psychology* (2014); Referee, *Topoi* (2014); Referee, *Synthese* (2015).

REFERENCES

Advisor

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University of Arizona
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