

# Justin C. Fisher – Curriculum Vitae – January 16, 2011

Southern Methodist University • Department of Philosophy

Hyer Hall 210D • P.O. Box 750142 • Dallas, TX 75275

(469)877-8724 • fisher@smu.edu • <http://www.justin-fisher.com/>

## Employment.

**Southern Methodist University** – Assistant Professor. 2008 – present.

**University of British Columbia** – Assistant Professor without review. 2006 – 2008.

**Harvard University** – Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Evolution and Theology of Cooperation Project. Summer 2007.

## Education.

**University of Arizona** – Ph.D. in Philosophy with minor in Cognitive Science. December 2006.

**University of Connecticut** – M.A. in Philosophy. May 2001.

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln** – B.S. with honors in Math, Philosophy, Computer Science and Political Science. August 1998.

## Research.

**Areas of Specialization:** Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Science (esp. Biology), Metaphysics, Epistemology and Decision Theory.

**Areas of Competence:** **Philosophy of Language, Metaethics, Logic, Philosophy of Mathematics, History of Philosophy (esp. Early Modern and Analytic).**

**Dissertation:** *Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis.*

**Committee:** Terry Horgan (advisor), David Chalmers, Joseph Tolliver, Chris Maloney.

**Description:** I propose that we think of our shared concepts as having whatever application conditions they would need to have in order best to deliver benefits in the ways they have regularly delivered benefits in the past. This combines naturally with a philosophical methodology for discovering the correct application conditions of our shared concepts, the methodology that I call *Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis*. I articulate and defend this methodology, and show how it may fruitfully be applied to problems in philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, and metaphysics.

## Publications (available on my website).

- ♦ “Dispositions, Conditionals and Auspicious Circumstances.” *Philosophical Studies*. (forthcoming).
- ♦ “Why Nothing Mental is Just in the Head.” *Noûs*. 2007, 41: 318-34.
- ♦ “On Higher-Order and Free-Floating Chances.” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. 2006, 57: 691-707.

- ◆ “Does Simulation Theory Really Involve Simulation?” *Philosophical Psychology*. 2006, 19: 417-32.
- ◆ Review of *Contemporary Debates in Cognitive Science*. *Notre Dame Philosophical Review*. November, 2006. [3000 words]
- ◆ Critical Notice for *The Bounds of Cognition*. *Journal of Mind and Behavior*. 2008, 29: 345-357.
- ◆ “What Can Game Theory Tell us About Humans?” to appear in *Evolution, Games and God*. Sarah Coakley and Martin Nowak, editors. Harvard University Press.

#### **Other Work in Preparation** (see my website).

- ◆ *Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis*.
- ◆ “The Challenge of Syntactic Typing”
- ◆ “Virtue-Based Decision Theory”
- ◆ “Meta-Semantic Arguments against Skepticism”
- ◆ “Pragmatic Experimental Philosophy”
- ◆ “The Authority of Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis”
- ◆ “Sharp Probabilities and Arrow’s Theorem”
- ◆ “The Practical Value of Knowledge Attributions”
- ◆ “Representational Content and the Keys to Success”
- ◆ “Sleeping Beauty and The Inconsistent Triad” (with Sarah A. Wright)
- ◆ “Color Representations as Hash Values”
- ◆ “Emotions as Modes of Cognition”
- ◆ “Why ask Why? What Good Explanations Deliver and How they Deliver It”

#### **Honors & Awards.**

- ◆ The Philosopher’s Annual selected “Why Nothing Mental is Just in the Head” as one of the “ten best articles published in philosophy” in 2007.
- ◆ APA Graduate Travel Stipends to present papers at the 2005 Central APA and the 2006 Central APA.
- ◆ William James Prize for best graduate student paper in philosophy, “Does Simulation Theory Really Involve Simulation?” Society for Philosophy and Psychology, 2004.
- ◆ Best Research Poster Prize for “Don’t Know Much About Qualia... Or Do We?” Toward a Science of Consciousness, 2004.
- ◆ William H. Fink Prize for outstanding philosophy graduate student. University of Arizona Philosophy Department, 2003.

## **Additional Education.**

**Seminar on Perceptual, Religious, and Moral Skepticism.** Purdue University. June 8 – 24, 2011.

**National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute on Experimental Philosophy.** University of Utah. June 22 – July 17, 2009.

**Australian National University.** Visiting Graduate Student. June 2005 – August 2005.

**University of North Carolina.** Visiting Graduate Student. August 2004 – May 2005.

**Summer School in Philosophy Probability and the Special Sciences.** University of Konstanz. July 27 – August 2, 2003.

## **Selected Presentations.**

Listed by area and current title (actual titles of particular presentations may have differed).

### **Presentations in Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science.**

#### **“Pragmatic Experimental Philosophy”**

- ◆ Bootcamp on Experimental Philosophy of Free Will. Yale, August 2011.
- ◆ American Philosophical Association – Eastern. Boston, December 2010.
- ◆ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (with commentary by Thomas Nadelhoffer). Atlanta, April 2010.
- ◆ Florida International University (colloquium series). November 2008.

#### **“Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis”**

- ◆ University of British Columbia (colloquium series). March 2008.
- ◆ Southern Methodist University. Dallas. January 2008.
- ◆ Western Canadian Philosophical Association (with commentary by Erin Greer). Saskatoon, October 2007.
- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology (with commentary by Joseph Cruz). St. Louis, June 2006.
- ◆ Online Philosophy Conference (with commentary by Frank Jackson). April 2006.
- ◆ University of St. Andrews. Scotland, November 2005.
- ◆ University of Arizona (colloquium series). Tucson, September 2005.
- ◆ Australasian Association of Philosophy. Sydney, July 2005.

#### **“Meta-Semantic Arguments Against Skepticism”**

- ◆ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology. New Orleans, March 2012.
- ◆ Dallas Philosophers Forum. Dallas, January 2012.
- ◆ Seminar on Perceptual, Religious and Moral Skepticism. Purdue, June 2011.

#### **“Color Representations as Hash Values”**

- ◆ Central APA (with commentary by Benj Hellie). Chicago, April 2006.
- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Winston-Salem, June 2005. (poster)

**“Representational Content and the Keys to Success”**

- ◆ Pacific APA (with commentary by Simon Evnine). Portland, March 2006.
- ◆ Lehigh University. Bethlehem, March 2006.
- ◆ Georgia State University. Atlanta, February 2006.
- ◆ Australian National University (mental representation reading group). Canberra, August 2005.

**“Emotions as Modes of Cognition”**

- ◆ University of North Carolina (seminar on emotions organized by Jesse Prinz). Chapel Hill, September 2004.

**“The Challenge of Syntactic Typing”**

- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Toronto, June 2008. (poster)
- ◆ Ohio University. Athens, OH. January 2008.
- ◆ Society for Exact Philosophy. Vancouver, May 2007.
- ◆ University of British Columbia (colloquium series). Vancouver, November 2006.

**“Does Simulation Theory Really Involve Simulation?”**

- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology convening with the European SPP. Barcelona, July 2004. (winner of William James prize for best graduate student paper).
- ◆ Society for Exact Philosophy. Vancouver, May 2003.

**“Don’t Know Much About Qualia... Or Do We?”**

- ◆ Towards a Science of Consciousness. Tucson, April 2004. (poster – winner of best poster prize).
- ◆ University of Arizona (Consciousness Discussion Series). Tucson, March 2004.
- ◆ University of Connecticut (Grue Bag Series, for graduate students). Spring 2001.

**“Why Nothing Mental is Just in the Head”**

- ◆ University of British Columbia + Simon Fraser University Annual Philosophy Colloquium. March 2008.
- ◆ University of Arizona, Consciousness Club. Tucson, October 2003. (invited talk, for an audience primarily of undergraduate students).
- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Pasadena, June 2003. (poster).
- ◆ Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness. Memphis, May 2003.
- ◆ University of Arizona (Consciousness Discussion Series). November 2002.

**“Critique of Adams & Aizawa’s *The Bounds of Cognition*”**

- ◆ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology. (Author meets critics session). Savannah, March 2009.

**“Commentary on Marcus Arvan” (commentary)**

- ◆ Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Bloomington, June 2009.

**“Commentary on Nick Georgalis” (commentary)**

- ◆ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Durham, March 2005.

**Presentations in Philosophy of Science.**

**“Why ask Why? What Good Explanations Deliver and How they Deliver It”**

- ◆ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology. New Orleans. March 2011.
- ◆ Workshop on Evolution and Theology of Cooperation. Harvard, May 2007.
- ◆ Northern Arizona University (colloquium series). Flagstaff, November 2005.
- ◆ Australian National University (PhilSoc series). Canberra, July 2005.

**“The Cultural Evolution of Altruism”**

- ◆ Harvard University (Evolution and Theology of Cooperation lunch series). February 2007.

**“On Higher Order and Free-Floating Chances”**

- ◆ Society for Exact Philosophy. Toronto, May 2005.
- ◆ University of North Carolina (Triangle Ellipse philosophy of science reading group). Chapel Hill, January 2005.

**“Reasons to prefer Multi-Level- over Individual-Level-Selectionist Accounts”**

- ◆ University of Connecticut, Grue Bag Series (for graduate students). Storrs, Spring 2000.

**“Commentary on Jan Sprenger on Explanation and Confirmation” (commentary)**

- ◆ Formal Epistemology Workshop. Pittsburgh, May 2007.

**“General Commentary on All Papers” (commentary)**

- ◆ Culture in Evolutionary Perspective. Vancouver, April 2007.

**Presentations in Metaphysics.**

**“Dispositions, Conditionals, and Auspicious Circumstances”.**

- ◆ Central APA. Chicago, April 2005. (winner of graduate student travel stipend).
- ◆ University of North Carolina (Work in Progress Series). Chapel Hill, January 2005.

**Presentations in Epistemology & Decision Theory.**

**“The Practical Value of Knowledge Attributions”**

- ◆ NEH Summer Seminar on Experimental Philosophy. July 2009.

**“Pragmatic Conceptual Analysis and Our Reasons for Following Norms”**

- ◆ Arizona Summer Workshop in Philosophy (for graduate students). Tucson, October 2005.

**“The Java Problem – Another Puzzle About Self-Locating Belief”**

- ◆ Australian National University (Probability reading group). Canberra, July 2005.

**“Sleeping Beauty and Two Theories of Probability” (with Sarah Wright)**

- ♦ Australian National University (Probability reading group). Canberra, July 2005.
- ♦ Wittgenstein Symposium. Kirchberg, Austria. August 2003. (We were added as a late addition to the schedule.)
- ♦ Summer School in Philosophy Probability and the Special Sciences. Konstanz, Germany. July 2003.

**“Disposition-Based Decision Theory”**

- ♦ Australian National University (NotYASS series). Canberra, July 2005.
- ♦ Tucson Interdisciplinary Workshop on Decision-Making. Tucson, March 2004.
- ♦ Society for Exact Philosophy. College Park, MD, May 2004.
- ♦ Arizona Summer Workshop in Philosophy (for graduate students). Tucson, June 2002.

**“Commentary on Zachary Ernst & Sara Chant” (commentary)**

- ♦ Formal Epistemology Workshop. Berkeley, May 2006.

**Presentations in Language, Linguistics, and Psycho-Linguistics.**

**“How Smart Languages Learn to Teach Themselves to Stupid Children”**

- ♦ Dallas Philosophers Forum. Dallas. September 2010.
- ♦ Emerson-Wier Liberal Arts Symposium. Chickasha. April 2010.
- ♦ Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Philadelphia. June 2008. (poster)
- ♦ University of British Columbia (Linguistics colloquium series). January 2007.
- ♦ University of British Columbia (Cognitive Systems series). September 2007.
- ♦ Duke Conference on Evolution of Cognition. Durham, NC. April 2005.
- ♦ University of North Carolina (Epistemology of Language reading group). February 2005.

**“Using Neural Nets to Discover Abstract Structure in Serial Data-Streams”**

- ♦ University of Arizona (computational vision discussion group). Tucson, October 2003 (series of three talks).

**Teaching.**

**Courses Taught:**

- ♦ *Minds, Brains and Robotics*. Spring 2010, 2011, 2012.
- ♦ *Philosophy of Biology*. UBC: Spring 2008; SMU: Spring 2009, Fall 2010, Summer 2011.
- ♦ *Epistemology*. Fall 2010.
- ♦ *Meaning and Methodology (Advanced Topics)*. Fall 2009.
- ♦ *Introduction to Philosophy (Honors)*. SMU: Fall 2009, Spring 2010.
- ♦ *Introduction to Philosophy*. SMU: Fall 2008, Spring 2009, 2011, 2012.
- ♦ *Metaphysics 450A*. University of British Columbia: Spring 2007.
- ♦ *Philosophy of Mind 451A*. University of British Columbia: Fall 2006, 2007.
- ♦ *Cognitive Systems 300 (team-taught)*. UBC: Fall 2006, 2007; Spring 2007, 2008.

- *Cognitive Systems 200 (team-taught)*. UBC: Fall 2006, 2007; Spring 2007, 2008.
- *Philosophy of Science*. Arizona: Summer 2002, Summer 2004.
- *Minds, Brains, and Computers. (PHIL/PSYCH 346)*. Arizona: Summer 2003.
- *Ethics and Economics*. University of North Carolina: Fall 2004.
- *Business Ethics*. Arizona: Winter 2001-2.

#### **Courses Assisted:**

- *Introduction to Philosophy* (Fall 1999, Fall 2000).
- *Mind, Matter and God* (Fall 2001).
- *Introduction to Logic* (Spring 2000, Spring 2001).
- *Introduction to Critical Thinking* (Spring 2002).
- *Calculus III* (3 semesters at UNL).
- *Calculus II* (3 semesters at UNL).
- *Emerging Leaders* (Spring 1995).

#### **Courses I Could Teach:**

**Graduate:** Philosophy of Mind, Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Language, Metaphysics, Epistemology

**Upper-level undergraduate:** Logic, Early Modern Philosophy, History of Analytic Philosophy, Pragmatism, Philosophy of Math, History of Science, Philosophy of Physics, Philosophy of Social Science, Philosophy of Economics, Game Theory, Decision Theory, Metaethics.

**Lower-level undergraduate:** anything in the analytic philosophical tradition; anything linking analytic philosophy to related disciplines.

#### **Service.**

- ♦ Refereeing for *Synthese*, *British Journal for Philosophy of Science*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.
- ♦ Conference refereeing for *Society for Philosophy of Psychology*, *Southern Philosophy for Philosophy and Psychology*.
- ♦ Cognitive Systems Program Committee. University of British Columbia. 2006-2008.
- ♦ Organized 2003 Arizona Summer Workshop in Philosophy (for graduate students).
- ♦ Vice President, University of Connecticut Graduate Student Senate. 2000-2001.

#### **Affiliations.**

- ♦ American Philosophical Association.
- ♦ Society for Exact Philosophy.
- ♦ Society for Philosophy and Psychology.
- ♦ Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology.

#### **References.**

**Terry Horgan**  
University of Arizona  
Department of Philosophy  
thorgan@u.arizona.edu

**David Chalmers**  
Australian National University  
Department of Philosophy (RSSS)  
chalmers@anu.edu.au

**Alan Hájek**

Australian National University  
Department of Philosophy (RSSS)  
alanh@coombs.anu.edu.au

**Richard Healey**

University of Arizona  
Department of Philosophy  
rhealey@u.arizona.edu

**William Lycan**

University of North Carolina  
Department of Philosophy  
ujanel@isis.unc.edu

**Graduate Courses Attended.**

**Courses in Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science.**

- ♦ Ruth Millikan – Seminar on Concepts
- ♦ David Chalmers – Seminar on Meaning, Reason and Modality
- ♦ Alvin Goldman – Seminar on Simulation Theory
- ♦ John Pollock – Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence
- ♦ Terry Horgan – Seminar on Intentionality and Phenomenology
- ♦ John Pollock & Terry Horgan – Connectionism
- ♦ Michael Turvey (Psychology) – Seminar on Perception
- ♦ John Pollock – Seminar on Cognition from a Design Stance
- David Chalmers – Seminar on Perception (audit)
- William Lycan – Survey of Philosophy of Mind (audit)
- Güven Güzeldere – Philosophy of Neuroscience (audit)
- Jesse Prinz – Seminar on Emotions (audit)

**Courses in Philosophy of Science (esp. Biology).**

- ♦ Jenann Ismael – Survey of Philosophy of Science
- ♦ Richard Healey – Survey of Philosophy of Biology
- ♦ Richard Healey – Seminar on Gauge Theories in Physics
- ♦ Ross Buck (Psych.) & Benson Ginsburg (Biology) – Seminar on Evolution of Communication
- ♦ Richard Sosis (Anthropology) – Seminar on Human Behavioral Ecology
- ♦ Massimo Piatelli-Palmarini (Psych) – Series on Evolutionary Theory
- Luc Bovens & Stephan Hartmann – University of Konstanz, Summer School in Philosophy, Probability, and the Special Sciences (audit)
- Marc Lange and Alex Rosenberg – Philosophy of Biology (audit)

**Courses in Metaphysics, Epistemology and Logic.**

- ♦ John Pollock – Survey of Contemporary Epistemology
- ♦ L.A. Paul and Joseph Tolliver – Seminar on David Lewis
- ♦ Crawford Elder – Seminar on Ontology, Modality and Kinds
- ♦ Tom Bontly – Seminar on Supervenience and Mental Causation
- ♦ Scott Lehmann – Formal systems, Gödel, Mathematical realism
- Keith Simmons – Set Theory (audit)
- Ram Neta – Seminar on Epistemological Skepticism (audit)
- L.A. Paul – Seminar on Metaphysics of Mind (audit)

**Courses in Language and Linguistics.**

- ♦ Ruth Millikan – Pro-Seminar on Analytic Philosophy of Language
- ♦ Ruth Millikan – Seminar on Pragmatics
- ♦ Marga Reimer – Pro-Seminar on Analytic Philosophy of Language
- ♦ Robert Michael Harnish (Phil.) & Merrill Garrett (Psych.) – Experimental Pragmatics
- ♦ Massimo Piatelli-Palmarini (Psych) and Heidi Harley (Ling.) – Seminar on Compositionality
- ♦ Heidi Harley (Linguistics) – Syntax I
- ♦ Massimo Piatelli-Palmarini (Psych.) & Tom Bever (Ling.) – Relation of Biology and Learning Theory to Linguistics

- Carol Fowler (Psychology) – Seminar on Speech Perception (audit)
- Mike Hammond (Linguistics) – Seminar on Computational Linguistics (audit)

**Courses in Ethics.**

- ♦ Julia Annas – Seminar on Emotions and the Law
- ♦ Paul Bloomfield – Seminar on Meta-ethics
- Julia Annas – Seminar on Contemporary Virtue Ethics (audit)

**Courses in History.**

- ♦ Sam Wheeler Plato Seminar – Ethics, Epistemology and Metaphysics
- ♦ David Owen Hume Seminar – Hume's Treatise
- ♦ Michael Gill History of Ethics Seminar – British Moralists