



PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIUM SERIES

SPRING 2025

1. Friday, January 31, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“Beyond Borders: Creating a New Philosophy of Migration from Colombia Up.”

Allison Wolf, Dept. of Philosophy, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia

Almost all philosophical work related to immigration explores the issue through the lens of the way migration is framed in the United States and Europe. That is, the aspects of immigration taken to be salient, what are taken to be “problems” requiring solutions, and the relevant parties in most philosophy of immigration up to this point are those identified as most pressing from the perspective of the United States and Europe. As such, its primary focus has been on questions of borders and border security (for example, to what extent should borders be opened or closed or what mechanisms are justified to enforce a nation’s border and immigration policies?) and admissions policies (such as which immigrants should be prioritized for admission, the number of migrants to grant admission to each year, etc). But what would happen if we took a Global South nation as our point of departure instead? How would philosophy of immigration and immigration justice change?

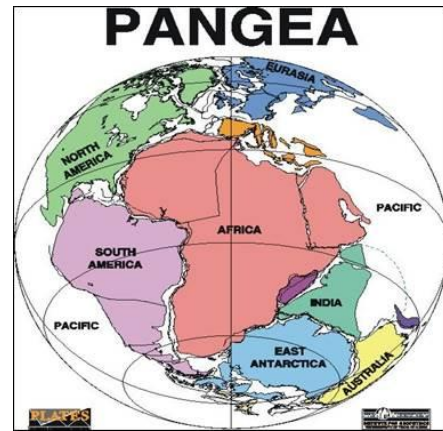
This is precisely the question that I will explore in this talk. More specifically, I will take Colombia as my starting point for exploring migrations in the Americas and the philosophical questions they raise, particularly in relation to identifying the injustices migrants face and responding to those injustices in ways that improve migrant lives and experiences in a concrete and measurable way. After giving a brief overview of traditional philosophical approaches to immigration, I will explain some issues of migration in relation to Colombia (that is, the influx of Venezuelan migrants; transit migration through Colombia by Haitians, Venezuelans, and those from numerous African nations; internal displacement; and emigration from the South American nation). Then, I will suggest new questions these empirical realities raise questions that go far beyond border security and regularization (though those do exist in different forms), for example, in relation to how they are treated in the receiving nation on a daily basis, what is required beyond granting legal status, and the differences (if any) between internal migration and external migration. I will conclude by presenting a feminist approach to the philosophy of migration that I maintain is more apt than the traditional philosophical approaches for understanding migration from a Global South perspective.

2. Friday, February 14, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“Assessing Visual Arguments: Toward a ‘Multimodal’ Logic.”

Leo Groarke, Dept. of Philosophy, Trent University

Visual arguments that support conclusions with pictures instead of (or in addition to) sentences and words have been discussed for decades, but the logic of such arguments remains an emerging field of study. I will discuss the logical assessment of visual arguments and different approaches to it. In the process I will discuss the work of Michael Gilbert, Ian Dove, Georges Roque, Anthony Blair, and others.



3. Friday, February 28, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“Fringe Theories.”

Laura Gradowski, Dept. of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh

The term ‘fringe’ is often used to disparage or dismiss a theory as unserious, or obviously false. By contrast, I outline an account that is neutral about the epistemic status of fringe theories. Historical precedent suggests that intolerance towards fringe theories—expressed, e.g., by way of the term ‘pseudoscience’—can be epistemically harmful to science itself. Several theories across the sciences were initially ridiculed and dismissed as fringe, delaying the uptake of groundbreaking research. I consider the risks of increased tolerance towards fringe theories, and I defend the view that fringe theories are fundamental to the health of science.

4. Thursday, March 6, 2025, 7:00pm, Barrick Museum Auditorium [Note the day, time, and place]

“A Backlash against a Rise in Knowledge not Racism.” [University Forum Lecture]

Muhammad Ali Khalidi, Dept. of Philosophy, The Graduate Center, CUNY

There is a clear generational and demographic divide in the U.S. (and elsewhere) on Israel/Palestine, which is due in no small part to the role of higher education and political solidarity movements in changing the understanding and conceptions of Palestine among students, young people, racialized people, and other marginalized groups. That is why the political class and the corporate establishment are going after universities — not because they’re hotbeds of antisemitism, but because they have been debunking the standard Zionist narrative for the past few decades, and this is now bearing fruit in a mass movement that opposes the automatic bipartisan US support and bankrolling of Israeli apartheid and occupation. What role can students and faculty members play in opposing and resisting this assault? More importantly: How can we work for justice in Palestine/Israel despite these obstacles?

5. Friday, March 7, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“Episodic Memory and Joint Agency.”

Muhammad Ali Khalidi, Dept. of Philosophy, The Graduate Center, CUNY

This paper has two aims: first, to defend the claim that episodic memory is a distinct psychological capacity, and second, to propose a possible evolutionary function for this capacity. On the first score, I use two inferences to the best explanation to argue that it is likely that there is a human psychological capacity whose function it is to represent past experiences. To satisfy the second aim, I propose a distinct evolutionary function for the capacity of episodic memory, having to do with motivating prosocial behavior.

6. Friday, March 28, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“A Different Type of Framing Effect.”

Natalie Hsiao and Bill Ramsey, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Nevada Las Vegas

Experimental philosophy has exposed several ways in which ostensibly philosophically irrelevant factors influence the sort of intuitive reactions people have to the hypothetical cases that are common in philosophical discourse. However, one potentially important influencing factor that has not been examined is the framing language typically employed to introduce and describe philosophical thought experiments. Philosophers commonly present and characterize vignettes by stating what the cases “clearly show,” thereby informing audiences of the intuitive response that is expected. We wondered if such language could influence peoples’ reactions to the cases. To test this possibility, we presented subjects with two versions of three well-known thought experiments in philosophy. In one version, the vignette was bracketed in language similar to the language used in the original philosophical presentation. In another version, the exact same vignette was presented with language suggesting the case revealed something radically different; indeed, a claim diametrically opposed to the original exposition. Our findings suggest that there is indeed an influence that comes from the way philosophical cases are introduced and described (i.e., “framed”). Our studies revealed an influence promoting conformity with the suggestive framing language. We explain these findings and various dimensions of this important issue.

7. Friday, April 11, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“A Fieldian Transparency Account of Truth Dependence.”

Susanna Melkonian-Altshuler, Institute of Philosophy, University of Vienna

According to Aristotle’s *Categories* (14b, 14-22), there is an explanatory asymmetry between truth and the world: the truth of a proposition depends on how things described by the proposition are, but how these things are doesn’t depend on the truth of the proposition. Call this “truth dependence.” In this talk, I will look at the problem that truth dependence causes for deflationism, and in particular, Field’s (e.g., 1994, 2008) transparency theory of truth. The main problem is that we don’t get the explanatory asymmetry, since, according to Field’s transparency theory, a sentence and its truth ascription are cognitively equivalent, and cognitive equivalence seems to imply a symmetry. In response, I will argue that we can provide a transparency theorist account of truth dependence if we embrace the Fieldian notions of extended disquotational truth and disquotational truth conditions.

8. Friday, April 25, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213

“Crossing Borders through Philosophy for Children”

Amy Reed-Sandoval, Jeshua Evans, Britney Gonzalez Hernandez, and Rachel Schell, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Nevada Las Vegas

Since its founding as an academic subfield and community outreach initiative, Philosophy for Children (or “Pre-College Philosophy”) has always confronted borders and barriers, both figurative and material. The most obvious of these, of course, is the academic “border” that often serves to keep children and young people out of philosophy by maintaining that only adults are capable and worthy of “real” philosophical activity. In recent years, Philosophy for Children practitioners have also explored how the borders and barriers of class, language, race/ethnicity, gender, and ability—not to mention material borders themselves—also impact *which children*, and *which communities*, are granted the status of philosophical knowers.

In this presentation, students and faculty from the UNLV Department of Philosophy will reflect on how they explored these questions while doing philosophical outreach with working-class children at the U.S.-Mexico border. First, Amy Reed-Sandoval will provide a brief overview of the state of the literature on “positionality,” borders, and Philosophy for Children. Second, Jeshua Evans, Britney Gonzalez Hernandez, and Rachel Schell will each present a research question they have been exploring since they visited the U.S.-Mexico border in a 2024 study away program in which they conducted Philosophy for Children outreach activities. Finally, following a discussion of these research presentations, the presenters will facilitate a fun, collaborative Philosophy for Children activity and dialogue with audience members; all attendees are welcome to participate.

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**For more information contact the
Philosophy Department at: 702-895-3433**