

Stephen Petersen

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AREAS

Areas of specialization

Epistemology, philosophy of mind, cognitive science

Areas of competence

Philosophy of science, logic, philosophy of language

EDUCATION

University of Michigan

PhD, philosophy 1996–2003

Belief-Desire Coherence

Committee: Eric Lormand (chair), Jessica Wilson, James Joyce, Thad Polk.

Harvard University

AB, philosophy with mathematics 1988–1992

PUBLICATIONS

“Designing intelligences with servile desires” (forthcoming), *Robot Ethics*, MIT Press.

“Analysis, schmanalysis” (2008), *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 38(2):289–300.

“The ethics of robot servitude” (2007), *Journal of Experimental and Theoretical Artificial Intelligence*, 19(1):43–54.

“Construing faith as action won’t save Pascal’s wager” (2006), *Philo*, 9(2):221–229.

“Functions, creatures, learning, emotion” (2004), Hudlicka, E. and Cañamero, L., editors, *Architectures for Modeling Emotion: Cross-Disciplinary Foundations*, The American Association for Artificial Intelligence, AAAI Press.

UNDER REVIEW

“Utilitarian epistemology” (implications for puzzles in epistemology if epistemic value is taken to be purely instrumental)

“An ideological yet coherent naturalism” (a proposal for construing naturalism that saves it from internal incoherence)

“White’s black box, Kolmogorov’s Turing machine, and simplicity” (a response to Roger White’s argument that we have probabilistic reason to prefer simpler theories)

“Simplicity tracks truth because compression tracks probability” (a suggestion from Shannon information theory about the theoretical virtue of simplicity)

ACADEMIC POSITIONS AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Niagara University , Assistant professor	2006–present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special topics in philosophy: artificial life Philosophy of science Philosophy of language Metaphysics Epistemology Philosophy of mind (twice) Logic Introduction to philosophy (multiple times) 	
Kalamazoo College , Mellon postdoctoral fellow	2004–2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metaphysics and mind (team-teaching) Early modern philosophy Theories of knowledge Senior seminar: inference to the best explanation (team-teaching) Philosophy of artificial intelligence Philosophy of science Logic and reasoning Introduction to philosophy 	
University of Michigan , Visiting assistant professor	2003–2004
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metaphysics and epistemology Introductory logic (twice) Introduction to philosophy 	
University of Michigan , Graduate student instructor (sole instructor)	2000–2002
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philosophy of mind (twice) Upper division logic Introduction to philosophy (twice) Introductory logic 	
University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching , Consultant	2000–2003
<p>Helped develop and perform nationally-acclaimed interactive presentations on better university teaching; issues included disability in the classroom, women in the sciences, and hiring practices.</p>	
University of Michigan , Teaching assistant	1997–2000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics (with David Velleman) Introduction to philosophy (with Sally Haslanger and then with Louis Loeb) 	

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- “Naturalism as a coherent *ism*”, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee invited talk, fall 2009.
- “Comments on Carl Wagner’s *Jeffrey conditioning and external Bayesianity*”, the Formal Epistemology Workshop, University of Wisconsin-Madison, summer 2008.
- “Utilitarian epistemology”, University of Buffalo epistemology seminar, spring 2008.

“Utilitarian epistemology and the value of knowledge”, the Value of Knowledge Conference, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, summer 2007.

“Minimum message length as a truth-conducive simplicity measure”, the Formal Epistemology Workshop, Carnegie Mellon University, spring 2007.

“Embodied intelligence without the bodies”, the University of Buffalo Center for Cognitive Science, spring 2007.

“Artificial intelligence is possible / Artificial intelligence is impossible”, Niagara University 150th Anniversary Speaker Series, spring 2007.

“Naturalism is (literally) self-explanatory”, the Center for Inquiry, spring 2007.

“When you can both keep it and give it away: the ethics of intellectual property”, 13th Annual International Conference Promoting Business Ethics, fall 2006.

“The ethics of robot servitude” (multiple presentations)

- North American Computing and Philosophy Conference, summer 2006.
- University of Buffalo Center for Cognitive Science, fall 2006.
- Canisius College, spring 2007.

“Learning and computational epistemology”, Western Michigan University invited speaker, fall 2005.

“Some future: comments on Gilbert Harman’s *The future of the a priori*”. University of Michigan, spring 2001 colloquium.

FELLOWSHIPS

2004–2006: Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship

2001: Mellon Dissertation Fellowship

2000: Rackham Fellowship

1996-1999: Regents’ Fellowship

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Peer review

Synthese 2006–present

Minds and Machines 2009–present

Niagara University

Sustainability committee 2008–present

Energy sub-committee chair 2009–present

Advisor, NU improv group 2008–present

Search committee 2006–2009

(three separate searches)

Instructional technology committee 2006–2008

Kalamazoo College

Comprehensive exam committee 2005

Revised comprehensive examinations and senior requirements for the philosophy department.

LANGUAGES

Japanese, ancient Greek

REFERENCES

Eric Lormand

University of Michigan
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Jessica Wilson

University of Toronto
jessica.m.wilson|at|utoronto.ca

Marc Alspector-Kelly

Western Michigan University
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James Joyce

University of Michigan
jjoyce|at|umich.edu

Chris Latiolais

Kalamazoo College (teaching reference)
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Ashley McDowell

Kalamazoo College (teaching reference)
mcdowell|at|kzoo.edu

David Velleman

New York University (teaching reference)
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February 16, 2010