

# Devin Sanchez Curry

## CURRICULUM VITÆ

Scovel Hall, 944 College Mall  
Wooster, OH 44691

dcurry@wooster.edu  
devinsanchezcurry.com

SPECIALIZATIONS: Philosophy of Mind; History and Philosophy of Science

COMPETENCIES: Ancient, Modern, and Analytic Philosophy; Epistemology; Moral Psychology

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

#### The College of Wooster

Perry-Williams Postdoctoral Fellow in Philosophy 2018-2019

### EDUCATION

#### University of Pennsylvania

Ph.D. in Philosophy MAY 2018

Dissertation: *How Beliefs are like Colors*

Committee: G. Hatfield (Supervisor), E. Camp, Z. Domotor, M. Weisberg

Certificate in Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience JAN 2015

Certificate in College and University Teaching OCT 2014

#### York University

M.A. in Philosophy OCT 2012

#### The College of William & Mary

B.A. in Philosophy with High Honors MAY 2011

### DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Teresa believes in God. Anouk—a cat—believes it's dinner time. Kyrie is a Flat Earther. *How Beliefs are like Colors* is about the nature of beliefs like these. Part I distinguishes the attitudes of belief that people attribute to each other in ordinary life from the cognitive states of belief posited by cognitive scientists. Part II argues that to have an attitude of belief is to live—to be disposed to act, react, think, and feel—in a pattern that an actual belief attributor identifies with taking the world to be some way.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Peer-Reviewed Articles

"Beliefs as inner causes: the (lack of) evidence"  
*Philosophical Psychology* 2018

"Cartesian critters can't remember"  
*Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 69, 72–85 2018

"Cabbage à la Descartes"  
*Ergo*, Vol. 3, No. 24, 609–637 2016

## TEACHING

**Instructor of Record at Wooster**

PHIL 30400: Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science FALL 2018

**Instructor of Record at Penn**

PHIL 024: Human Nature SPRING 2017

PHIL 001: Introduction to Philosophy SUMMER 2016

PHIL 003: History of Ancient Philosophy Online (with Nabeel Hamid) SUMMER 2015

**Teaching Assistant at Penn**

PHIL 025: Philosophy of Science (Prof. Michael Weisberg) SPRING 2015

PHIL 003: History of Ancient Philosophy (Prof. Susan Sauvé Meyer) FALL 2014

PHIL 004: History of Modern Philosophy (Prof. Gary Hatfield) SPRING 2014

PHIL 072: Biomedical Ethics (Prof. Andrew McAninch) FALL 2013

**Volunteer Teacher**

Children and Philosophy Initiative at B.B. Comegys Elementary School SPRING 2017

Philadelphia Futures High School Philosophy Club 2016-2017

## PRESENTATIONS

**Conference and Colloquia Presentations**

(\* = peer-reviewed; † = invited)

“Interpretivism and norms”

American Philosophical Association Eastern Division (Savannah, GA)\* JAN 2018

“How Beliefs are like Colors”

Utica College Guest Lecture (Utica, NY)† FEB 2018

The College of Wooster Philosophy Roundtable (Wooster, OH)† NOV 2017

Kenyon College Common Hour Talk (Gambier, OH)† FEB 2017

“Cartesian Critters Can’t Remember”

Representing Reality (Potsdam, NY)† MAY 2017

“Davidson’s theory of mind is normative. Should it be?”

The Legacy of Donald Davidson (Toronto, ON)\* APR 2017

“Beliefs as inner causes: the (lack of) evidence”

Society for Philosophy and Psychology (Austin, TX)\* JUN 2016

“Doxastic Particularism”

SUNY Potsdam Philosophy Forum (Potsdam, NY)† APR 2016

“Cabbage à la Descartes”

HPPC Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy (Princeton, NJ)\* FEB 2015

“How Thoughts and Feelings are like Colors”

Society for Philosophy and Psychology, poster session (Vancouver, BC)\* JUN 2014

Philosophy of Biology Dolphin Beach North (Long Beach Island, NJ)† NOV 2013

“Morgan’s Munificent Canon”

Int. Soc. for the Hist., Phil. and Soc. Stud. of Biology (Montpellier, FR)\* JUL 2013

“Sophist’s Sophists”

Penn Ancient Philosophy Workshop (Philadelphia, PA)\* APR 2013

“On the Inevitability of Anthropomorphic Bias in Comparative Psychology”

Society for Philosophy and Psychology, poster session (Boulder, CO)\* JUN 2012

York University Graduate Philosophy Conference (Toronto, ON)\* MAY 2012

### Invited Comments

On Daniel Burnston and Jonathan Cohen's "Perceptual Integration, Modularity, and Cognitive Penetration"

American Philosophical Association Eastern Division (Philadelphia, PA) DEC 2015

On Robert Lurz's "Is Adaptive Use of Commentary Keys Evidence of Monkey Metacognition? A Logical Challenge"

Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (Austin, TX) FEB 2013

### Selected Departmental Presentations

"Personal Philosophies"

Penn Graduate Student Colloquium MAR 2016

"Descartes's Neurophysiology of Memory"

Penn History and Philosophy of Science Workshop MAY 2015

"Physics : Color :: Neuroscience : Belief"

Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Retreat FEB 2015

"Inside, Outside and Around the Head"

Penn Graduate Student Colloquium APR 2014

"Morgan's Munificent Canon"

Penn History and Philosophy of Science Workshop MAY 2013

### Workshop Reports

"Perceptual Learning" (with Louise Daoust, Ting Fung Ho, and Ben White) MAY 2017

"Perceptual Learning and Expertise" (with L. Daoust, T.F. Ho, and B. White) FEB 2017

### FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Perry-Williams Postdoctoral Fellowship 2018-2019

Eastern APA Graduate Student Travel Stipend JAN 2018

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship 2017-2018

Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Fellowship MAR 2017

The Interdisciplinary Study of Perceptual Learning Associateship 2016-2017

Robert A. Fox Graduate Prize Fellowship 2016-2017

Society for Philosophy and Psychology Minority Travel Award JUNE 2016

Departmental Nominee, Graduate Fellowship for Teaching Excellence MAR 2015

George W.M. Bacon Fellowship 2014-2015

Gondos-Beers Fellowship 2013-2014

ISHPSSB Student Travel Grant JULY 2013

Several Penn Travel Grants 2013-2018

Benjamin Franklin Fellowship 2012-2017

York Graduate Scholarship and International Tuition Fee Scholarship 2011-2012

Jerry Miller Award for Best Essay in Philosophy MAY 2011

### SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Participant, American Association of Philosophy Teachers Workshop FALL 2017

Graduate Representative to the Faculty, Penn Philosophy Department 2016-2017

Organizer, Penn Children and Philosophy Outreach Initiative	2015-2017
Organizer, <i>Sophie's World</i> event at the Free Library of Philadelphia	SUMMER 2015
Developer, History of Ancient Philosophy Online Course	2014-2015
Coordinator, Penn Graduate Student Colloquia	2014-2015
Member, Penn Philosophy Outreach Committee	2014-2018
Student Organizer, Penn-Rutgers-Princeton Social Epistemology Workshop	SPRING 2014
Webmaster and Listserv Manager, Penn PGSA and Penn Chapter of MAP	2013-2018
Delegate, Philosophy Grad Student Association Constitutional Committee	FALL 2013
Occasional Research Assistant for Gary Hatfield	2013-2018
Member, Penn Chapter of Minorities and Philosophy	2013-2018
Planner, Penn Philosophy Visiting Students Weekend	SPRING 2013
Research Assistant, Kristin Andrews's textbook <i>The Animal Mind</i>	SUMMER 2012
Indexer, Kristin Andrews's monograph <i>Do Apes Read Minds?</i>	WINTER 2012
Graduate Assistant for Muhammad Ali Khalidi	WINTER 2012
Graduate Assistant for Kristin Andrews	FALL 2011
M.A. Representative to the Faculty, York University Philosophy Department	2011-2012
Referee for: Society for Philosophy and Psychology	
Penn-Rutgers-Princeton Social Epistemology Workshop	
York University Graduate Philosophy Conference	

RESEARCH LANGUAGES: Spanish (reading and speaking); French (reading); Latin (reading)

## GRADUATE COURSEWORK

(\* = audited)

### Systematic Philosophy

Mind in Nature* (Gary Hatfield)	FALL 2017
Agent Architectures* (Lisa Miracchi)	FALL 2016
Biological Concepts of Race* (Michael Weisberg)	SPRING 2014
Contempt, Shame and Disgust (Adrienne Martin)	SPRING 2014
Evolution and Perception (Gary Hatfield)	FALL 2013
Epistemology and Democracy (Alex Guerrero)	FALL 2013
Epistemology and its Limits (Daniel Singer)	SPRING 2013
Epistemic Realisms (Gary Hatfield)	FALL 2012
Philosophy of Psychology* (Gary Hatfield)	FALL 2012
Philosophy of Animal Minds (Kristin Andrews)	SPRING 2012
The Self (David Jopling)	SPRING 2012
Core Theoretical Philosophy 1 & 2 (Judy Pelham & Claudine Verheggen)	SPRING 2012
Folk Psychology and Animal Cognition (Kristin Andrews)	FALL 2011
Davidson's Theory of Meaning (Claudine Verheggen)	FALL 2011
Core Practical Philosophy 1 & 2 (Louis-Philippe Hodgson & Robert Myers)	FALL 2011

### History of Philosophy

Ancient Skepticism* (Susan Sauvé Meyer)	SPRING 2015
Episodes in the Interaction of Philosophy and Psychology (Gary Hatfield)	SPRING 2015
Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Rolf-Peter Horstmann)	FALL 2014

From Natural Philosophy to Modern Science* (Karen Detlefsen)	FALL 2014
Continental Rationalism (Karen Detlefsen)	SPRING 2013
Hellenistic Philosophy (Susan Sauvé Meyer)	SPRING 2013
Late Plato (Charles Kahn)	FALL 2012
Proseminar: History of Analytic Philosophy (Elisabeth Camp)	FALL 2012
<b>Neuroscience and Psychology</b>	
Spec. Topics in Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience (Martha Farah)	FALL 2014
Neuroethics (Martha Farah)	SPRING 2014
Special Topics in Animal Behavior* (Dorothy Cheney & Robert Seyfarth)	SPRING 2014
Animal Behavior* (Dorothy Cheney & Robert Seyfarth)	FALL 2013
Foundations of Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience (Martha Farah)	FALL 2013
Cognitive Neuroscience* (Matt Weber)	FALL 2013
<b>Toolkit</b>	
Dissertation Seminar (Philosophy Faculty)	2012-2017
Latin for Reading Knowledge (Kelcy Sagstetter)	SUMMER 2014
French for Reading Knowledge (Lisa Bromberg)	SUMMER 2013
Formal Logic (Scott Weinstein)	SPRING 2013

## REFERENCES

Gary Hatfield Adam Seybert Professor of Philosophy University of Pennsylvania hatfield@phil.upenn.edu	Elisabeth Camp Associate Professor of Philosophy Rutgers University elisabeth.camp@rutgers.edu
Michael Weisberg Professor and Chair of Philosophy University of Pennsylvania weisberg@phil.upenn.edu	Kristin Andrews Research Chair in Animal Minds York University andrewsk@yorku.edu
Karen Detlefsen Professor of Philosophy and Education University of Pennsylvania detlefse@phil.upenn.edu	Susan Sauvé Meyer (teaching reference) Professor of Philosophy University of Pennsylvania smeyer@phil.upenn.edu

## DISSERTATION SYNOPSIS

Teresa believes in God. Karl Ove believes he lacks what it takes to become a capital 'W' Writer. Lucinda believes she lost it. Maggie's wife believes that the Earth is flat, and also that Maggie should be home from work by now. Anouk—a cat—believes it is dinner time. *How Beliefs are like Colors* is about what believing is: it concerns what, exactly, we are saying about Teresa, Karl Ove, Lucinda, Maggie's wife, and Anouk when we say that they believe.

In particular, I offer an account of the beliefs that people attribute to each other (and other animals) in everyday life, ranging from simple and trivial beliefs (like Anouk's) to complex and significant beliefs (like Teresa's). I distinguish these *attitudes* of belief from the *cognitive states* of belief posited by (some) cognitive scientists. Cognitive states of belief may or may not exist. Regardless, attitudes of belief are tendencies of whole persons to live in patterns that interpreters identify with taking the world to be some way. This attributor-relative theory of believing is uniquely able to account for the real but diverse phenomena tracked by researchers, scholars, novelists, and lay folk when they claim that so-and-so believes such-and-such. Believers base their senses of self, and self-worth, on their beliefs. We all attribute innumerable little beliefs to each other, weaving together our own idiosyncratic understandings of who the people in our lives are. We also praise, blame, trust, and fear people based on what they believe. Shared beliefs forge close friendships; divergent beliefs end romances. *How Beliefs are like Colors* provides a new framework for thinking about these core features of our social and personal lives.

Part I of the dissertation motivates the distinction between attitudes of belief and cognitive states of belief. Inspired by Gilbert Ryle, this distinction defuses much of the acrimony between philosophers concerned with understanding the objects of ordinary social cognition and philosophers concerned with understanding how believers' cognitive systems function. Chapter 1 surveys the history of Rylean accounts of belief (including both dispositionalisms and interpretivisms), Chapter 2 explores the many varieties of belief (and theories thereof) at play in the current philosophical and psychological literatures, Chapter 3 marshals empirical evidence against the widespread dogma that lay people ordinarily construe beliefs as inner causes, and Chapter 4 exploits an analogy between belief and color to argue against conflating attitudes with cognitive states. Like colors, attitudes of belief evolved to be ecological signifiers, not cogs in cognitive systems. A satisfactory account of the former need not entail any particular account of the latter.

Part II then develops my relativistic Rylean view that to have an attitude of belief is to live—to be disposed to act, react, think, and feel—in a pattern that an actual belief attributor identifies with taking the world to be some way. Chapter 5 unpacks this definition and answers common objections, Chapter 6 develops the conceptual machinery required to capture the idiosyncratic styles of belief on display in the works of novelists like Jane Austen, Harper Lee, and Zadie Smith, Chapter 7 argues that beliefs exist relative to the actual models wielded by individual belief attributors (as opposed to intersubjectively binding norms of interpretation), and Chapter 8 applies my account of belief to live debates about mental state attribution capacities and anthropomorphism in animal cognition research. Abstracts for all eight chapters are available at [www.devinsanchezcurry.com/writing](http://www.devinsanchezcurry.com/writing).