

Jacob Stump

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1-647-217-7010 (mobile)
Citizenship: US

AOS: Ancient Philosophy, Ethics (esp. Applied Ethics)

AOC: Philosophy of Emotions, Aesthetics, Moral Psychology

EMPLOYMENT

Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto, 2017-18

EDUCATION

PhD in Philosophy, University of Toronto, 2011-2017 (defended June 2017)

Collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

Dissertation: *Socratic Method and Moral Motivation*

Committee: Rachel Barney (supervisor), Brad Inwood, James Allen, Tom Hurka

In my thesis, I argue for a new account of the role of philosophical argument in changing a person's core values within the context of Plato's dialogues. Many scholars frequently endorse two broad claims: that Plato thinks philosophical argument incapable of changing a person's core values; and that Plato rejects Socrates' project, as outlined in the *Apology*, of using argument to achieve such a task. I argue against both claims. In doing so, I develop a novel account of Socrates' project of philosophical conversion, one that shows it to be more sophisticated and successful than commonly supposed.

BA in Philosophy, Ancient Greek, & German, Wabash College, 2007-11

Awarded with highest honors

PUBLICATIONS

"The Other Socratic Method" (under review)

"On Socrates' Project of Philosophical Conversion" (under review)

"Protreptic and Socrates' Erotic Art" (under review)

"Socratic Refutation and Moral Motivation" (in progress, available upon request)

"The Importance for Plato of What People Care About" (in progress)

"Ruling Desires in Plato" (in progress)

"Ruling Desires and Bodyguard Beliefs" (in progress)

"Beauty and Aesthetic Merit: Two Currencies of Aesthetic Judgment" (in progress)

"Loving Animals and Eating Meat" (in progress)

AWARDS & HONORS

Robinson Graduate Fellowship in Ancient Philosophy, University of Toronto (2016-17)

Awarded to select graduate students conducting research in ancient philosophy.

Connaught International Doctoral Scholarship, University of Toronto (2011-16)

Awarded to 10 international scholars annually to provide additional, year-round support for the length of the PhD program.

Martha Lile Love Award for Excellence in Teaching Philosophy, University of Toronto (2015)

Awarded to one graduate student annually for excellence in teaching philosophy.

Lilly Scholarship, Wabash College (2007-11)

Wabash's most prestigious scholarship, awarded to the three incoming students who show the most potential for leadership and academic excellence.

Rhodes Scholarship, Finalist (2011)

J. Harry Cotton Prize in Philosophy, Wabash College (2011)

Awarded annually to the student judged to have done the best work in philosophy.

Phi Beta Kappa, Wabash College (2010)

LANGUAGES

Ancient Greek (advanced reading proficiency)

Latin (intermediate reading proficiency)

German (advanced reading and speaking proficiency)

French (advanced reading proficiency)

TALKS

Refereed

“On Socrates’ Project of Philosophical Conversion”

APA Pacific Division Meeting, San Diego, 2018

“Socratic Refutation and Moral Motivation”

APA Central Division Meeting, Chicago, 2018

“Motivated Reasoning in Plato”

APA Central Division Meeting, Kansas City, 2017

- “Refutation and Role-Based Epistemic Duties”
 4th Annual Canadian Colloquium for Ancient Philosophy, McMaster University,
 2016 (poster presentation)
- “Socratic Exhortation”
 Argumentation in Antiquity Conference, Humboldt University of Berlin, 2016
- “Plato’s Erotic Psychology”
 UT-Austin Graduate Conference in Philosophy, UT-Austin, 2016
 Yale Graduate Conference in Philosophy, Yale University, 2015
- “Associative Properties and Aesthetic Judgment”
 European Society of Aesthetics Conference, Dublin, 2015
- “Philosophical Conversion: Phaedrus as Case Study”
 19th Harvard-MIT Graduate Philosophy Conference, Harvard University, 2015
- “The Role of Shame in Socratic Refutation”
 International Plato Society Regional Meeting, University of Michigan, 2012
- “Opera, Eternity, and Roger Scruton’s ‘Present Tense’” (with V. Rogers, Rhodes)
 Time Theories and Music Conference, Ionian University, 2012
- “To Phthia: Elenchus and Divinity in the *Crito*”
 International Society of Neoplatonic Studies, University of Haifa, 2011

Invited

- “Aristotle’s Endoxic ‘Method’: *Eudemian Ethics* 6.1-2”
 Cornell Workshop on the *Eudemian Ethics*, Cornell University, 2015
- “Socrates’ Project of Value Transformation”
 CPAMP Working Group, University of Toronto, 2014
- “Plato on *Erōs* and Conversion”
 5th Annual Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, University of Toronto, 2014
- “Socratic Refutation and the Motivational Power of Shame”
 3rd Annual APSN Graduate Conference, Humboldt University of Berlin, 2013
- “Time’s Two Realms: The A-Series and B-Series Impasse”
 Colloquium on Kit Fine, University of Toronto, 2012

INVITED COMMENTS

TBD

- Workshop on Aristotle’s Ethics, Virginia Tech, 2018
 on Monte Johnson, “Aristotelian Protreptic in the *Protrepticus*”
 Prospective Students & Alumni Colloquium, University of Toronto, 2016
 on Marta Jimenez, “Two Kinds of Practical Empiricism in Aristotle’s Ethics”
 4th Annual Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, University of Toronto, 2013

TEACHING

As Sole Instructor

Aristotle's Ethics (University of Toronto, Fall 2017)

Philosophy of Emotions (University of Toronto, Spring 2017 & Fall 2017)

Ethics of Race and Gender (University of Toronto, Spring 2018)

Business Ethics (University of Toronto, Spring 2018)

Environmental Ethics (University of Toronto, Summer 2015 & Fall 2017)

Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (University of Toronto, Summer 2014)

English Language & Literature (Changchun University of Chinese Medicine, Fall 2006)

As TA

Introduction to Ethics (University of Toronto, for T. Hurka, Fall 2015)

Later Medieval Philosophy (University of Toronto, for D. Black, Spring 2015)

Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (University of Toronto, for J. Whiting & B. Inwood, Fall 2012 and Spring 2013)

As Grader

Moral Motivation & Moral Skepticism (University of Toronto, for B. Wald, Summer 2016)

Chinese Philosophy (University of Toronto, for V. Shen, Fall 2014)

Aesthetics (University of Toronto, for M. Kingwell, Spring 2014)

Literature & Philosophy (University of Toronto, for B. Piercy, Summer 2013)

Environmental Ethics (University of Toronto, for I. Stefanovic, Spring 2013)

Philosophy of Human Sexuality (University of Toronto, for P. Serchuk, Summer 2012)

Introduction to Philosophy (University of Toronto, for D. Hutchinson, Spring 2012)

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lead Writing TA (University of Toronto, Fall 2016 & Spring 2017)

Trained graduate student TAs on how to lead philosophy tutorials and give written feedback for the purpose of improving undergraduate philosophical writing, collaborated with professors to improve the clarity and design of their writing assignments, and received 20+ hours of training.

Essay Clinician (University of Toronto, Spring 2016)

Led workshops for undergraduate students on how to write philosophy papers, assuming no prior experience in philosophy, and met individually with 10-15 students per week to give personal instruction on how to improve the clarity of their philosophical writing and organization of their papers.

REFERENCES

Rachel Barney (supervisor)

Canada Research Chair in Ancient
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Jessica Wilson (teaching reference)

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Dissertation Abstract, *Socratic Method and Moral Motivation*

Jacob Stump

I argue for a new account of the role of philosophical argument in changing a person's core values within the context of Plato's dialogues. As philosophers, we tend to think it is possible to cause someone to change her values by reasoning with her. But that is often naïve, as can be seen by the trajectory of many political disputes: one side takes an argument to be persuasive, and the other refuses to accept it. As it happens, this is the exact progression of many Platonic dialogues. Socrates argues that his interlocutor's core values are mistaken, and his interlocutor remains unmoved. This pattern has led many scholars—including Martha Nussbaum, Gregory Vlastos, and Alexander Nehamas—to endorse two broad claims: that Plato thinks philosophical argument incapable of reforming a person's life; and that Plato rejects Socrates' project, as outlined in the *Apology*, of using argument to persuade his interlocutors to value wisdom more than money, honor, and everything else. These are distressing upshots for those who want to believe in the power of argument, for, perhaps of all philosophers, Plato is concerned the most with how philosophy can be useful in the public sphere.

Against this standard view, I argue that Plato offers a compelling account of how argument can be effective at transforming a person's values. I focus on his depiction of Socrates' methods of refutation and exhortation. As has not been appreciated by other scholars, Socrates uses these methods not to advocate wisdom's overriding importance, but rather to motivate pursuing wisdom merely for its instrumental value. In cases of refutation, Socrates shows that his interlocutors fail at their role-based epistemic duties (e.g., *qua* teacher of virtue, one must know what virtue is), thus damaging their reputation and self-esteem; to repair these, they must do philosophy. In cases of exhortation, Socrates motivates his interlocutors to do philosophy just for the sake of succeeding at some non-philosophical goal (e.g., acquiring rhetorical expertise). These tactics are surprising, however, for Socrates does not want his interlocutors to value wisdom merely as a temporary resource; he wants them to dedicate their lives to it. What explains his argumentative restraint?

There are two answers, I argue. One is a point of Platonic moral psychology: due to the influence of ruling desires—which I show to be desires for objects *qua* constitutive of happiness—any more ambitious strategy will arouse motivated reasoning, and is thus likely to fail. The interlocutor's "bodyguard beliefs" (cf. *Republic* 8.560b-e) will protect his ruling desire from rational opposition. The other is an empirical observation: often pursuing something only as a means can lead to valuing it as an end. Socrates' strategy, then, is to incentivize pursuing wisdom initially only as a means so that, eventually, his interlocutor will come to value wisdom as an end. I show that Plato thinks this transformation can happen by two main mechanisms: the power of repeated arguments to persuade where isolated arguments fail, and the ability of intellectual pleasure to reshape one's fundamental evaluative beliefs. Thus, Socrates' overall strategy is not unlike that of the professor who recruits a student to philosophy with the promise that it will improve her LSAT scores, all the while anticipating that, once the student experiences the thrill of abstract, intellectual inquiry—once she experiences the transformative power of philosophy—she will lose her legal ambitions and devote herself instead to philosophical studies. What justifies this strategy, in our eyes and Plato's, is that, in some important contexts, including the choice of a way of life, the right reasons can come into view only after taking up some practice, and so the practice cannot be motivated by the right reasons until it is taken up on some other basis.