

Grant Ramsey

Institute of Philosophy
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Area of Specialization: Philosophy of Science, especially Philosophy of Biology
Area of Competence: Logic, History of Biology since Darwin

Academic Positions

June 2016-Now

BOFZAP Research Professor (Associate Level)
Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium

September 2015-June 2016

Fellow
National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

July 2007-June 2015

Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy, University of Notre Dame
Program in History and Philosophy of Science, University of Notre Dame
Fellow
The Reilly Center for Science, Technology, and Values

Education

Duke University, August 2000 – May 2007
Ph.D. in Philosophy

The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, August 1992 – June 1997
B.S. in Biology
B.A. in Philosophy

Publications – Books (as author)

4. Ramsey, G. and Durand, P. (expected 2025) *Death and Taxa*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Fábregas-Tejeda, A. and Ramsey, G. (expected 2025) *Niche Construction and Evolutionary Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Durand, P. and Ramsey, G. (under contract) *Evolution's End: Life, Death, and the Mortality Constraint*. Oxford University Press.
1. Ramsey, G. (2023) *Human Nature*. Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685481>

Publications – Books (as editor)

4. Ramsey, G. and Aaby, B. (expected 2026) *Psychodiversity: Cognition and Sentience Beyond Humans*. Routledge.
3. Desmond, H. and Ramsey, G. (2023) *Human Success: Evolutionary Origins and Ethical Implications*. Oxford University Press.
<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/human-success-9780190096168?cc=be&lang=en&>
2. Ramsey, G. and De Block, A. (2022) *The Dynamics of Science: Computational Frontiers in History and Philosophy of Science*. University of Pittsburgh Press. <https://upittpress.org/books/9780822947370/>
1. Ramsey, G. and Pence, C. (2016) *Chance in Evolution*. University of Chicago Press.
<http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/C/bo24550500.html>

Publications – Journal Articles and Book Chapters

44. Eronen, M. I. and Ramsey, G. (forthcoming) “What are the ‘levels’ in levels of selection?” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/718990>
43. Durand, P. and Ramsey, G. (forthcoming) “Conceptual Foundations of Cell Mortality” in J. M. Hardwick and P. Durand (eds.) *The New Era of Microbial Cell Death*, Springer.
42. Fábregas-Tejeda, A. and Ramsey, G. (2024) “Driftability and niche construction” *Synthese*. 204, 162. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-024-04815-5>
41. Aaby, B., Dani, G., and Ramsey, G. (2024) “Explanatory Gaps in Evolutionary Theory” *Biology & Philosophy*. 39(22) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10539-024-09957-x>
40. Ramsey, G. and Villegas, C. (2024) “Developmental Channeling and Evolutionary Dappling” *Philosophy of Science*, 91(4): 869-886. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/psa.2024.5>
39. Meneganzin, A., Ramsey, G. and DiFrisco, J. (2024) “What is a Trait? Lessons from the Human Chin” *Journal of Experimental Zoology Part B: Molecular and Developmental Evolution*, 343(2): 65-75. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1002/jez.b.23249>
38. Ramsey, G. and Durand, P. (2023) “Cell fate: What’s evolution got to do with it?” *Yale Journal for Biology and Medicine*, 96(4): 565-568. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59249/FBHI3484>
37. Durand, P. M. and Ramsey, G. (2023) “The concepts and origins of cell death” *History and Philosophy of Life Science*, 34: 23 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40656-023-00581-8>

36. DiFrisco, J. and Ramsey, G. (2023) “Adaptationism and trait individuation” *Philosophy of Science*, 90(5): 1234-1243. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/psa.2023.28>
35. Desmond, H. and Ramsey, G. (2023) “The Manifold Challenges to Understanding Human Success” in H. Desmond and G. Ramsey (eds.) *Human Success: Evolutionary Origins and Ethical Implications*, Oxford University Press, 1-14. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190096168.003.0001>
34. Ramsey, G. and Deem, M. (2022) “Empathy and the evolutionary emergence of guilt” *Philosophy of Science*, 89(3): 434-453. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/psa.2021.36>
33. Ramsey, G. and Aaby, B. (2022) “The proximate-ultimate distinction and the active role of the organism in evolution” *Biology & Philosophy*, 37: 31. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10539-022-09863-0>
32. Ramsey, G. and De Block, A. (2022) “Tools, tests, and data: An overview of the new history and philosophy of science” in G. Ramsey and A. De Block (eds.) *The Dynamics of Science: Computational Frontiers in History and Philosophy of Science*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 3-15. DOI: <https://upittpress.org/books/9780822947370/>
31. Aaby, B. and Ramsey, G. (2022) “Three kinds of niche construction” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 73(2): 351-372. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axz054>
30. Climenhaga, N., DesAutels, L. and Ramsey, G. (2021) “Causal Inference from Noise” *Noûs*, 55: 152-170. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12300>
29. Ndhlovu A., Durand, P.M., and Ramsey, G. (2021) “Programmed cell death as a black queen in microbial communities” *Molecular Ecology*, 30: 1110-1119. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.15757>
28. Durand, P. and Ramsey, G. (2019) “The nature of programmed cell death” *Biological Theory*, 14: 30-41. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13752-018-0311-0>
27. Pence, C. and Ramsey, G. (2018) “How to do digital philosophy of science” *Philosophy of Science*, 58: 930-941. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/699697>
26. Ramsey, G. (2018) “Trait bin and trait cluster accounts of human nature” in T. Lewens and (ed.) *Why We Disagree about Human Nature*, Oxford University Press, 40-57. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198823650.001.0001>
25. Ramsey, G. and De Block, A. (2017) “Is cultural fitness hopelessly confused?” *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 68: 305-328. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axv047>
24. Ramsey, G. (2017) “What is animal culture?” in K. Andrews and J. Beck (eds.) *Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Animal Minds*,

- Routledge Press, 345-353. DOI:
<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315742250>
23. Ramsey, G. (2017) "What is human nature for?" in A. Fuentes and A. Visala (eds.) *Verbs, Bones and Brains: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Nature*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 217-230.
<http://undpress.nd.edu/books/P03289>
 22. Ramsey, G. (2016) "The causal structure of evolutionary theory" *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 94: 421-434. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00048402.2015.1111398>
 21. Ramsey, G. and Pence, C. (2016) "Chance in evolution from Darwin to contemporary biology" in G. Ramsey and C. Pence (eds.) *Chance in Evolution*, University of Chicago Press, 1-11.
<http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/C/bo24550500.html>
 20. Ramsey, G. and Pence, C. H. (2016) "evoText: A new tool for analyzing the biological sciences." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 57: 83-87. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2016.04.003>
 19. Deem, M. and Ramsey, G. (2016) "Guilt by association?" *Philosophical Psychology*, 29(4): 570-585. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2015.1126706>
 18. De Block, A. and Ramsey, G. (2016) "The organism-centered approach to cultural evolution" *Topoi*, 35: 283-290. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11245-014-9283-2>
 17. Deem, M. and Ramsey, G. (2016) "The evolutionary puzzle of guilt: Individual or group selection?" *Emotion Researcher*, Andrea Scarantino (ed.) <http://emotionresearcher.com/the-evolutionary-puzzle-of-guilt-individual-or-group-selection/>
 16. Ramsey, G. (2016) "Can altruism be unified?" *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 56: 32-38. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2015.10.007>
 15. Pence, C. and Ramsey, G. (2015) "Is organismic fitness at the basis of evolutionary theory?" *Philosophy of Science*, 82: 1081-1091. DOI:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/683442>
 14. Ramsey, G. (2013) "Human nature in a post-essentialist world" *Philosophy of Science*, 80(5): 983-993. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/673902>
 13. Ramsey, G. (2013) "Can fitness differences be a cause of evolution?" *Philosophy & Theory in Biology*, 5e:401. DOI:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.6959004.0005.001>
 12. Pence, C. and Ramsey, G. (2013) "A new foundation for the propensity interpretation of fitness" *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 64: 851-881. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axs037>

11. Ramsey, G. (2013) “Organisms, traits, and population subdivisions: two arguments against the causal conception of fitness?” *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 64: 589-608. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axs010>
10. Ramsey, G. (2013) “Culture in humans and other animals” *Biology & Philosophy*, 27: 457-479. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10539-012-9347-x>
9. Ramsey, G. (2012) “Driftability” *Synthese*, 190: 3909-3928. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11229-012-0232-6>
8. Ramsey, G. (2012) “How human nature can inform human enhancement” *Philosophy and Technology*, 25: 479-483. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s13347-012-0087-2>
7. Ramsey, G. and Peterson, A. (2012) “Sameness in biology” *Philosophy of Science*, 77: 255-275. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/664744>
6. Ramsey, G. and Brandon, R. (2011) “Why reciprocal altruism is not a kind of group selection” *Biology and Philosophy* 26: 385-400. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10539-011-9261-7>
5. Ramsey, G. (2007) “The Fundamental Constraint on the evolution of culture” *Biology and Philosophy*, 22: 401-414. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10539-006-9038-6>
4. Ramsey, G., Bastian, M. L., and van Schaik, C. (2007) “Animal innovation defined and operationalized” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 30: 393-437. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X07002373> [Note that this is a full target article, not a commentary.]
3. Brandon, R. and Ramsey, G. (2007) “What’s Wrong with the Emergentist Statistical Interpretation of Natural Selection and Random Drift?” in D. Hull and M. Ruse (eds.) *Cambridge Companion to the Philosophy of Biology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521851282.004>
2. Ramsey, G. (2006) “Block fitness” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 37: 484-498. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2006.06.009>
1. Cobb, A., Nadkarni, N., Ramsey, G., and Svoboda, A. J. (2001) “Recolonization of bigleaf maple branches by epiphytic bryophytes following experimental disturbance” *The Canadian Journal of Botany*, 79: 1-8. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1139/b00-134>

Publications – Books (as illustrator)

- Lombardi, Angel. (1998) *Respecting the Knowledge: Ethnobotany of Western Washington*. Olympia: Washington State Capital Museum.
(Illustrated by Grant Ramsey)

Publications – Magazine/Blog articles

2. Ramsey, G. (2023, May 04) “The culture of bees and the AI apocalypse” *IAI News*. https://iai.tv/articles/the-culture-of-bees-and-the-ai-apocalypse-auid-2471-grant-ramsey-auid-2471?_auid=2020
1. De Block, A. and Ramsey, G. (2015) “The Life of Culture” *OUP Blog*, <http://blog.oup.com/2015/11/the-life-of-culture/>

Publications – Encyclopedia Entries and Bibliographies

3. Rosenberg, A., Bouchard, F. and Ramsey, G. (under contract) “Fitness” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
2. Ramsey, G. and Desmond, H. (2016) “Philosophy of Biology” *Oxford Bibliography*. <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396577/obo-9780195396577-0341.xml>
1. Ramsey, G. and Pence, C. (2013) “Fitness: philosophical problems” *Wiley Encyclopedia of Life Sciences*. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9780470015902.a0003443.pub2>

Publications – Book Reviews

4. Hollocher, C. H. Pence, G. Ramsey, and M. M. Wirth. (2013) “A path to success? A Review of *Evolution, Development, and the Predictable Genome* by David L. Stern.” *Evolution and Development* 15(1): 80–82. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ede.12016>
3. Hollocher, H., A. Fuentes, C. H. Pence, G. Ramsey, D. J. Sportiello, and M. M. Wirth. (2011) “[Review of] *On the Origin of Stories: Evolution, Cognition, and Fiction*.” *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 86(2): 137-138. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/659913>
2. Pence, C. H., H. Hollocher, R. Nichols, G. Ramsey, E. Siu, and D. J. Sportiello. (2011) “[Review of] *Did Darwin Write the Origin Backwards? Philosophical Essays on Darwin’s Theory*.” *Philosophy of Science* 78(4): 705-709. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/661775>
1. Ramsey, G., H. Hollocher, A. Fuentes, C. H. Pence, and E. Siu. (2010) “[Review of] *Darwinian Populations and Natural Selection*.” *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 85(4): 499-500. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/656856>

Taxonomic web publication

Ramsey, G., Longino, J., and Kugler, C. (1998) Formicidae: *Rogeria tonduzi* <https://ants.biology.utah.edu/genera/Rogeria/species/tonduzi/tonduzi.html> .
(One of 13 published web pages on the ant genus *Rogeria*.)

Publications – Books (as series editor)

36. Ross, L. (2024) *Explanation in Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
35. Bich, L. (2024) *Biological Organization* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
34. Schickore, J. (2024) *Controlled Experiments* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
33. Lewens, T. (2024) *Cultural Selection* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009539043>
32. Rubin, H. (2024) *Inclusive Fitness and Kin Selection* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009019644>
31. Green, S. (2024) *Animal Models of Human Disease* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009025836>
30. Love, A. (2023) *Evolution and Development: Conceptual Issues* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108616751>
29. Suárez, J. and Lloyd, E. A. (2023) *Units of Selection* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009276429>
28. Elliott-Graves, A. (2023) *Ecological Complexity* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108900010>
27. Ramsey, G. (2023) *Human Nature* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685481>
26. McConwell, R. P. (2023) *Biological Individuality* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108942775>
25. Simpson, R. P. (2023) *Hylomorphism* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009026475>

24. Novick, R. P. (2022) *Evolution, Morality and the Fabric of Society* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009028745>
23. Thompson, R. P. (2022) *Evolution, Morality and the Fabric of Society* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108680752>
22. Weber, M. (2022) *Philosophy of Developmental Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108954181>
21. Pence, C. (2021) *The Causal Structure of Natural Selection* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1017/9781108680691>
20. Bourrat, P. (2021) *Facts, Conventions, and the Levels of Selection* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108885812>
19. Dupré, J. (2021) *The Metaphysics of Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009024297>
18. Fagan, M. (2021) *Stem Cells* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108680783>
17. Lloyd, E. (2021) *Adaptation* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108634953>
16. O'Connell, J. and Ruse, M. (2021) *Social Darwinism* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108879026>
15. Currie, A. (2021) *Comparative Thinking in Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108616683>
14. Ankeny, R., & Leonelli, S. (2020) *Model Organisms* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108593014>
13. Andrews, K. (2020) *How to Study Animal Minds* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108616522>
12. Brandon, R., & McShea, D. (2020) *The Missing Two-Thirds of Evolutionary Theory* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108591508>

11. De Smedt, J., & De Cruz, H. (2020) *The Challenge of Evolution to Religion* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685436>
10. Jablonka, E. and Lamb, M. (2020) *Inheritance Systems and the Extended Synthesis* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685412>
9. O'Connor, C. (2020) *Games in the Philosophy of Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108616737>
8. Rosenberg, A. (2020) *Reduction and Mechanism* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108592949>
7. Baetu, T. (2019) *Mechanisms in Molecular Biology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108592925>
6. Odenbaugh, J. (2019) *Ecological Models* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108685283>
5. Otsuka, J. (2019) *The Role of Mathematics in Evolutionary Theory* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108672115>
4. Pradeu, T. (2019) *Philosophy of Immunology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108616706>
3. Richards, R. (2019) *The Biology of Art* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108672078>
2. Ruse, M. (2019) *The Darwinian Revolution* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108672047>
1. Turner, D. (2019) *Paleoaesthetics and the Practice of Paleontology* (Elements in the Philosophy of Biology) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108671996>

Editorial Positions

Series Editor for *Elements in the Philosophy of Biology*, Cambridge University Press (2017 – present) (34 books published thus far.)
Associate Editor, *The Quarterly Review of Biology* (2023 – present)
Editorial Board, *European Journal for Philosophy of Science* (2017 – present)

Research Awards

2017 Popper Prize, <http://www.thebsps.org/about-bjps/sir-karl-popper-essay-prize/>

Awarded for:

Ramsey, G. and De Block, A. (2017) “Is cultural fitness hopelessly confused?” *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. 68: 305-328. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axv047>

2013 Popper Prize, <http://www.thebsps.org/about-bjps/sir-karl-popper-essay-prize/>

Awarded for:

Pence, C. and Ramsey, G. (2013) “A new foundation for the propensity interpretation of fitness” *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. 64: 851-881. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjps/axs037>

Teaching Awards

The *Bass Instructorship* award (2006) – awarded for excellence in undergraduate philosophy teaching.

Major Research Grants

FWO (2021): 307,400 euro (US\$345,000) for project entitled “Biological trait identity: modularity, levels, and adaptation”

Interne Fondsen KU Leuven (2021): 366,000 euro (US\$425,000) for project entitled “Plant Agency: Inferring Mental Capacities from Plant Behavior”

Interne Fondsen KU Leuven (2021): 54,318 euro (US\$59,284) for project entitled “The Mortality Constraint”

BOFZAP Startup Grant (2017): 100,000 euro (US\$116,000) for project entitled “Toward a Unified Foundation for Evolutionary Theory”

The National Science Foundation Scholars Award (2015): \$188,000 (with Charles Pence) for project entitled “The evoText Project”

Residential Fellowship Awards

National Humanities Center: Appointed as a fellow for the 2015-2016 academic year. (Accepted.)

Pittsburgh Center for Philosophy of Science: Appointed as a fellow for the 2015-2016 academic year. (Declined for National Humanities Center fellowship.)

Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies: Appointed as a fellow from September 2015 to July 2017. (Declined for National Humanities Center fellowship and BOFZAP Research Professorship.)

National Evolutionary Synthesis Center: Appointed as a fellow for the 2013-2014 academic year. (Accepted for Spring 2014 only.)

KU Leuven: Appointed as F+ Fellow summer 2013.

Graduate Student Placement

2023 – Alejandro Gordillo-Garcia: Alex defended his dissertation in the fall of 2023 and started a posdoc at the University of Padua that fall.

2021 – Bendik Aaby: Bendik defended his dissertation in the spring of 2021 and started a posdoc at KU Leuven that fall. In 2023 he started a position as an instructor at the University of Oslo.

2016 – Hugh Desmond: In 2017, Hugh accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for Biomedical Ethics and Law, KU Leuven. He is now an assistant professor Wageningen University.

2015 – Michael Deem: Michael was my second Ph.D. student and my final one while at the University of Notre Dame. In 2015, Michael accepted a tenure-track job at Indiana State University where he was Assistant Professor of Philosophy and an affiliated faculty member in The Center for Genomic Advocacy. In 2017, he accepted an Assistant Professorship at Duquesne University, holding a joint appointment in the School of Nursing and the Center for Healthcare Ethics. In 2021, he accepted a position as Associate Professor (with tenure) in the Center for Bioethics and Health Law at the University of Pittsburgh.

2014 – Charles Pence: Charles was my first Ph.D. student. During his time at Notre Dame he helped develop the evoText project and worked extensively on conceptual issues at the foundation of evolutionary theory. In 2014, he defended his dissertation and accepted a tenure-track job at Louisiana State University's Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. In January 2019 he joined the Université Catholique de Louvain as an Assistant Professor. He was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2022.

2014 - Anne Siebels Peterson: Anne's dissertation was advised by Michael Loux but she teamed up me to work on philosophy of biology, especially conceptual issues related to homology. In 2014, she accepted a tenure-track job in The Department of Philosophy at the University of Utah. She was granted tenure in 2020.

Postdoctoral Fellow Placement

2023 – James DiFrisco: James worked with me as a postdoc at KU Leuven. In 2023 he took a position as Group Leader at the Crick Institute.

2016 – Lane DesAutels: Lane came to Notre Dame after earning his Ph.D. at University of Maryland under the tutelage of Lindley Darden. We worked together until 2016 when Lane accepted a tenure-track job at Missouri Western State University, where he is associate professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion.

Presentations

75. "Fitness and Offspring Variances" Symposium talk. Biennial Meeting of Philosophy of Science Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 16, 2024.

74. "Fitness and Offspring Variances" Invited talk at Brandonfest. Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. May 4, 2024.

73. “The Price of Immortality” Invited talk. Institut d’Histoire et de Philosophie des Sciences et des Techniques CNRS/ Université Paris I, Paris, France. April 4, 2024.
72. “Fitness and Offspring Variances” Invited talk. Bristol, England. March 27, 2024.
71. “Innovativeness and Cross-Species Comparisons” Colloquium talk. Pacific APA. Commentator: Simon Fitzpatrick. Portland, Oregon, USA. March 22, 2024.
70. “Fitness and Offspring Variances” Invited talk. Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany. January 30, 2024.
69. “The Price of Immortality” Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa, October 11, 2023.
68. “Multilevel Innovativeness and Cross-Species Comparisons” Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, October 11, 2023.
67. “Tool use beyond humans” Submitted conference talk (with Gianmaria Dani) European Philosophy of Science Association Biannual Meeting, Belgrade, Serbia, September 20, 2023.
66. “What is innovativeness?” Submitted conference talk (with Andra Meneganzin) European Philosophy of Science Association Biannual Meeting, Belgrade, Serbia, September 20, 2023.
65. “Tool use beyond humans” Submitted conference talk (with Gianmaria Dani) International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, July 11, 2023.
64. “An informational approach to cultural fitness, cumulation and fidelity” Submitted conference talk (with Alejandro Gordillo-Garcia) International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, July 13, 2023.
63. “What is a chin?” Submitted conference talk (with Andra Meneganzin and James DiFrisco) International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, July 10, 2023.
62. “Anthropomorphism and the Goldilocks Principle” Symposium talk (with Bendik Aaby) Biennial Meeting of Philosophy of Science Association, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 11, 2022.
61. “Adaptation and Trait Individuation” Submitted conference talk (with James DiFrisco) Biennial Meeting of Philosophy of Science Association, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 12, 2022.
60. “Evolutionary Dappling” Invited talk. Ruhr University Bochum, Germany, October 21, 2021.

59. “Niche construction and the causal structure of evolutionary theory” Invited conference talk, Niche Construction and Other Mechanisms in Ecology and Evolution Workshop, <https://ecoevomechanisms2020.wordpress.com>
58. “Phylogenetic Competition: Defining the Selective Environment” Submitted conference talk (with Hugh Desmond) Meeting of the European Philosophy of Science Association, University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland, September 12, 2019
57. “Developmental Channeling and the Causal Structure of Evolutionary Theory” Submitted conference talk (with Cristina Villegas) Meeting of the European Philosophy of Science Association, University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland, September 13, 2019.
56. “Phylogenetic Competition: Defining the Selective Environment” Submitted conference talk (with Hugh Desmond) International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway, July 8, 2019
55. “Developmental Channeling and the Causal Structure of Evolutionary Theory” Submitted conference talk (with Cristina Villegas) International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway, July 8, 2019
54. “Phylogenetic Competition: Defining the Selective Environment” Invited talk. Institut d’Histoire et de Philosophie des Sciences et des Techniques CNRS/ Université Paris I, Paris, France. May 25, 2019.
53. “Toward a cultural evolutionary theory” Invited talk. Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany. December 11, 2018.
52. “What is the philosophy of biology?” Invited talk. Florida State University. September 29, 2018.
51. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Invited talk. University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway. April 11, 2018.
50. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Invited talk. University of Tilburg, Tilburg, The Netherlands. March 21, 2018.
49. “Biological altruism and the propensity interpretation of fitness” Invited talk. Institut d’Histoire et de Philosophie des Sciences et des Techniques CNRS/ Université Paris I, Paris, France. February 12, 2018.
48. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Submitted conference talk. The Generalized Theory of Evolution Conference, Dusseldorf, Germany. February 1, 2018.
47. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Invited talk. Institut d’Histoire et de Philosophie des Sciences et des Techniques CNRS/ Université Paris I, Paris, France. November 13, 2017.
46. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Invited talk. UNED, Madrid, Spain. May 31, 2017.

45. “Does evolutionary theory have a unified foundation?” Invited talk. University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain. May 30, 2017.
44. “Toward unified concepts of culture and innovation” Keynote talk. CultureConference 2017, Birmingham, England. May 12-26, 2017.
43. “evoText and the Philosophy of Science” Symposium talk (with Charles Pence) Biennial Meeting of Philosophy of Science Association, Atlanta, Georgia. November 4, 2016.
42. “Trait bin and trait cluster accounts of human nature” Invited talk. Eindhoven University of Technology, Eindhoven, Netherlands. September 27, 2016.
41. “Causal-possibility explanations” Submitted conference talk (with Lane DesAutels) Meeting of the European Philosophy of Science Association, Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany, September 24, 2015.
40. “The nature of human nature” Invited talk. Universiteit Antwerpen, Antwerpen, Belgium, June 24, 2015.
39. “The nature of human nature” Invited talk. Université Paris I, Paris, France. June 17, 2015.
38. “Kinds of kinds” Invited talk. *Social Kinds and/as Natural Kinds* workshop. KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium. May 26, 2015.
37. “The evoText project” Invited symposium talk (with Charles Pence) In the symposium titled “Quantitative textual analysis and philosophy: Hypothesis-testing and data-mining philosophical ideas” at the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association, Vancouver, BC. April 4, 2015.
36. “The structure of evolutionary theory” Invited colloquium talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY. December 19, 2014.
35. “Anthropomorphism and anthropodenial” Invited debate with Frans de Waal. KU Leuven, Belgium, December 4, 2014.
34. “Is cultural fitness hopelessly confused?” Invited colloquium talk. Meeting of the Southern California Philosophy of Biology, University of California San Diego, San Diego, CA. November 22, 2014.
33. “The causal structure of evolutionary theory” Invited colloquium talk. Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science, University of Irvine, Irvine, CA. November 21, 2014.
32. “Guilt as an evolutionary problem” Symposium talk (with Michael Deem) Biennial Meeting of Philosophy of Science Association, Chicago, IL. November 8, 2014.
31. “The possibility of altruism” Invited colloquium talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Leuven, Belgium. October 28, 2014.

30. "Is cultural fitness hopelessly confused?" Invited plenary talk. Human Evolution and Behavior Network, University of Antwerpen, Belgium. October 23, 2014.
29. "Human nature, culture, and the human sciences" Conference talk. Transfusion and Transformation: The Creative Potential of Interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange, Institute for Advanced Study, Durham University, UK, July 16, 2014.
28. "Is organismic fitness at the basis of evolutionary theory?" Conference talk. British Society for the Philosophy of Science Meetings, Cambridge University, UK, July 10, 2014.
27. "Using evoText to plumb the depths of the evolutionary literature" Invited talk (with Charles Pence) The National Evolutionary Synthesis Center, May 8, 2014.
26. "Guilt by association?" Conference talk (with Michael Deem) Georgetown Conference on Emotions and Emotionality, April 12, 2014.
25. "Is human nature the subject of the human sciences?" Conference talk. Human Nature(s) Conference, University of Notre Dame, April 5, 2014.
24. "Is human nature the subject of the human sciences?" Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, Duke University, February 28, 2014.
23. "Is human nature the subject of the human sciences?" Invited talk. Center for Professional and Applied Ethics, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, February 11, 2014.
22. "Can altruism be unified?" Submitted conference talk. International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, Montpellier, France. July 9, 2013.
21. "Guilt by association?" Invited talk (with Michael Deem) Cultural Evolution and the Emotions Conference, Leuven, Belgium, May 29, 2013.
20. "Fitness, selection, and the causes of evolution" Invited talk. Center for Philosophical Psychology. University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium, May 22, 2013.
19. "Human nature in a post-essentialist world." Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Maryland, College Park. March 7, 2013.
18. "Human nature in a post-essentialist world." Submitted conference talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Mississippi. February 2013.
17. "Human nature in a post-essentialist world." Submitted conference talk. Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting. November 15, 2012.
16. "Human nature in a post-essentialist world." Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Leuven, Belgium. October 19, 2012.

15. "Culture in humans and other animals." Invited keynote talk. Human Evolution and Behavior Network, University of Leuven, Belgium. October 18, 2012.
14. "What is cultural fitness?" Invited talk. Center for the Philosophy and History of Science, Boston University. December 2, 2011.
13. "Sameness in biology" Invited talk. Department of Biological Sciences, University of Illinois, Chicago. October 25, 2011.
12. "Can homology be unified?" Submitted conference talk. International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah. July 12, 2011.
11. "Drift as an individual-level process" Symposium talk. Pacific APA. Commentators: Mohan Matthen, Sarah Roe, and Vadim Keyser. April 22, 2011.
10. "Drift as an individual-level process" Invited talk. Metaphysics of Microevolution Workshop, University of Alabama, Birmingham. April 8, 2011.
9. "Can fitness differences be a cause of evolution?" Invited talk. Department of Philosophy, University of Leuven, Belgium. September 16, 2010.
8. "Human behavior and the disunity of fitness." Invited keynote talk. Human Evolution and Behavior Network, University of Leuven, Belgium. September 9, 2010.
7. "Solving and dissolving the problems of fitness" Invited talk. Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Indiana, Bloomington. April 16, 2010.
6. "Biological altruism reconsidered" Submitted conference talk. International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, Brisbane, Australia, 2009.
5. "You can't get teleology from development alone: A reply to Dennis Walsh" Invited talk. Meeting of the Four University Consortium on the Philosophy of Biology, Montreal, Quebec, 2006.
4. "Why is it good to be cultured?" Submitted conference talk. International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, Guelph, Ontario, 2005.
3. "Conceptual foundations of dual-inheritance theory: An introduction to the work of Peter Richerson" The Evolution of Cognition: Niche Construction, Culture, and Environmental Complexity (Fourth Annual Conference on Recent Work in Biology and Philosophy), Durham, North Carolina, 2005.
2. "Fitness and the fitness environment" Submitted conference talk. International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology Biannual Meeting, Vienna, Austria, 2003.

1. “Recolonization of big-leaf maple branches by epiphytic bryophytes following experimental disturbance: Evidence for autogenic factors in early succession” Submitted conference poster. 2nd International Forest Canopy Conference “Forest Canopies ’98: Global Perspectives.” Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, Florida, 1998.

Other Awards and Fellowships

At Notre Dame:

ISLA (Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts) Exploratory Seminar:
Evolution Working Group 2012
ISLA Digital Humanities Working Group 2011
Henkels Lecture Series grant 2010
Provost’s Initiative on Building Intellectual Community 2011
Provost’s Initiative on Building Intellectual Community 2009
ISLA International Travel Grant
ISLA RA Funding Grant

At Duke University:

Duke University Conference Travel Grant 2006
Duke University Graduate Fellowship 2000 – 2007
Duke University Summer Research Fellowship 2005
Duke University Conference Travel Grant 2005
Vienna International Summer University Travel Grant and Tuition 2003
Vienna International Summer University Travel Grant and Tuition 2001

Teaching Experience

At KU Leuven:

Philosophy of Mind and AI (MA), Spring 2025
Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (undergrad), Spring 2021, 2022,
2023, 2024, 2025
Philosophy of Science (undergrad), Spring 2020
Philosophy of Human Nature (graduate level), Spring 2019
Philosophy of Science (undergrad), Spring 2018

At Notre Dame:

In Search of Utopia (College Seminar, undergrad), Spring 2015
The Life and Work of Darwin (400-level, undergrad), Spring 2015
Image Makers / Image Takers (College Seminar, undergrad), Fall 2014
Philosophy of Biology (graduate level), Fall 2014
Image Makers / Image Takers (College Seminar, undergrad), Fall 2013

The Life and Work of Darwin (400-level, undergrad), Fall 2013
Scientific Images of Humanity (400-level, undergrad), Spring 2012
In Search of Utopia (College Seminar, undergrad), Spring 2013
Image Makers / Image Takers (College Seminar, undergrad), Fall 2012
Philosophy of Biology (graduate level), Fall 2012
Darwin, Philosophy, and Theology (400-level, undergrad), Spring 2012
In Search of Utopia (College Seminar, undergrad), Spring 2012
Image Makers / Image Takers (College Seminar, undergrad), Fall 2011
The Life and Work of Darwin (400-level, undergrad), Fall 2011
Philosophy of Science, Fall 2010
Heaven on Earth? Utopian Ideals and Human Nature (College Seminar, undergrad), Fall 2010
Chance and Evolution (graduate level), Spring 2010
Heaven on Earth? Utopian Ideals and Human Nature (College Seminar, undergrad), Spring 2010
Scientific Images of Humanity (200-level, undergrad), Fall 2009
Darwin, Philosophy, and Religion (400-level, undergrad), Fall 2009
Darwin in the 21st Century (graduate level), Spring 2009
The Life and Work of Darwin (400-level, undergrad), Spring 2009
Scientific Images of Humanity (200-level, undergrad), Fall 2008
Philosophy of Biology (graduate level), Spring 2008
Philosophy of Biology (200-level, undergrad), Fall 2007

At Duke University:

Philosophy of Human Nature, Spring 2007
Philosophy of Biology, Summer 2006
Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2005
Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2004
Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2004
Philosophy of Law, Fall 2003, *Teaching assistant for professor Martin Golding.*
Aristotle, Spring 2003, *Teaching assistant for professor Michael Ferejohn.*
Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2002, *Teaching assistant for professor Owen Flanagan.*
Modern Philosophy, Fall 2001, *Teaching assistant for professor Tad Schmaltz.*

Professional Review Activities

Reviewer for numerous journals, including *American Naturalist*, *Biology & Philosophy*, *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Psychology*, *Philosophy and Technology*, *Philosophy and Theory in Biology*, *Philosophy of Science*, and *Theoria*.

National Science Foundation grant proposal reviewer.

Professional Organizational Activities

Co-organizer (with Hugh Desmond): “Human Success: Evolutionary Origins and Ethical Implications” 2019, Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Co-organizer (with Andreas De Block): “The Science of Evolution and the Evolution of the Sciences” 2016, Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Organizer: The Evolution Working Group, Fall 2009 – Spring 2015.

Co-organizer: “Chance and Evolution” Sixth Annual Conference on Recent Work in Biology and Philosophy, Spring 2007, supported by the Duke University Center for the Philosophy of Biology,
<http://www.duke.edu/philosophy/bio/conference>

Co-organizer: “The Evolution of Cognition: Niche Construction, Culture, and Environmental Complexity” Fourth Annual Conference on Recent Work in Biology and Philosophy, April 2005, supported by the Duke University Center for the Philosophy of Biology,
<http://www.duke.edu/philosophy/bio/conference>

Graduate Student Representative: Duke University Philosophy Department, August 2004 – August 2005.

Employment and Research (before earning PhD)

Biology Researcher: Fieldworker and data analyst. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Biology, Robert Peet Lab, May-December 1999.

Biology Researcher: Designed and implemented study of herbivore deterrence in the *Pseudomyrmex* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) – *Triplaris* (Polygonaceae) ant-plant symbiosis in lowland Amazonian rain forest. Manu Biosphere Reserve, Peru, March-June 1998

Biology Researcher: Fieldworker and data analyst. Designed and implemented ecological study of epiphyte recolonization in big-leaf maple canopies. This research was published in *The Canadian Journal of Botany* (see citation above) International Canopy Network, Olympia, Washington, August 1997 - March 1998.

Editor: Layout Editor and Assistant Copy Editor. “What’s Up: Newsletter of the International Canopy Network.” International Canopy Network, Olympia, Washington, August 1997 - March 1998.

Biology Researcher: Designed and implemented study of the *Myrmelachista* – *Ocotea* cloud forest ant-plant mutualism. Monteverde, Costa Rica, December 1995-March 1996.

Languages

English—Native speaker

Dutch—B2

Spanish—Basic