

# CV — Luke Elson

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University of Reading  
Philosophy Department

## EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

University of Reading:

- 2022– Associate Professor.
- 2014–2022 Lecturer in Philosophy.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill:

- 2014 PhD Philosophy.
- 2009 MA Philosophy.

Exeter College, Oxford:

- 2005 BA Mathematics and Philosophy.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Journal articles and book chapters

(2021) ‘What does incommensurability tell us about agency?’ in *Value Incommensurability: Ethics, Risk, and Decision-Making*, edited by Henrik Andersson and Anders Herlitz. Routledge.

doi:10.4324/9781003148012-13

(2019) ‘Probabilistic Promotion and Ability’, *Ergo* vol. 6, no. 34.

doi:10.3998/ergo.12405314.0006.034

(2019) ‘Can Streumer simply avoid Supervenience?’, *Journal of Ethics & Social Philosophy* vol. 16, no. 3 (2019). doi:10.26556/jesp.v16i3.508

(2017) ‘Incommensurability as Vagueness: a Burden-Shifting Argument’, *Theoria* 83: 341-363. doi: 10.1111/theo.12129

(2016) ‘Tenenbaum and Raffaman on Vague Projects, the Self-Torturer, and the Sorites’, *Ethics* Vol. 126, No. 2, pp. 474-488. doi:10.1086/683533.

(2014) ‘Heaps and Chains: is the Chaining Argument for Parity a Sorites?’, *Ethics* Vol. 124, No. 3, pp. 557-571. doi: 10.1086/674844

(2014) ‘Borderline Cases and the Collapsing Principle’, *Utilitas* volume 26, issue 01, pp. 51-60. doi:10.1017/S095382081300023X

### Edited volumes, book reviews and other pieces

(Forthcoming) Edited special edition of *Ratio* in celebration of Brad Hooker’s work, with Charlotte Newey.

(2021) Review of *Companions in Guilt Arguments in Metaethics* edited by Christopher Cowie and Richard Rowland, at Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews.

(2018) ‘How a moral philosopher justifies his carbon footprint’: a general audience piece on carbon offsetting for *The Conversation*.

(2018) Review of David Sobel’s *From Valuing to Value, Analysis*, Volume 78, Issue 3, pp. 583-586. doi:10.1093/analys/any045.

(2016) Edited special edition of *Ratio* (with introduction) on Ethics and Indeterminacy.

## TEACHING

### Undergraduate modules/courses

**Mediaeval philosophy.** Autumn 2022, 2020, 2019, 2018. Chapel Hill: Summer 2013.

**Intermediate (second-year) moral philosophy.** Spring 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019; Autumn 2015, 2014.

**Introductory (first-year) ethics.** Spring 2021, 2020, 2019, 2016, 2015. Chapel Hill: Spring 2010.

**Third-year advanced ethics module on reasons.** Autumn 2018 (with Philip Stratton-Lake).

**Logic (up to predicate calculus).** Summer 2017, Spring 2015. Chapel Hill: Fall 2013, and as Teaching Assistant for Thomas Hofweber in Spring 2013.

**Epistemology.** Autumn 2015 (justification half only).

**Introduction to Philosophy (online)** at Chapel Hill: Summer 2014.

**Introduction to metaphysics** at Chapel Hill: Summer 2012.

**A literary introduction to philosophy** at Chapel Hill: Summer 2011, 2009. Also as Teaching Assistant for C.D.C. Reeve in Fall 2008.

**Introduction to Bioethics (online).** Summer 2010.

**Philosophy of Science.** Teaching Assistant for Marc Lange. Spring 2009.

### Undergraduate supervision

Supervised multiple BA dissertations and independent research projects (mini-dissertations) each year since 2014.

Supervisor of Undergraduate Research Opportunity Projects:

- ‘Nihilism and the emotions’ in Summer 2021.
- ‘Ought implies can – history and arguments’ in Summer 2017.
- ‘Climate change and rational choice’ in Summer 2015.

### PhD supervision

Primary supervisor of Tommaso Soriani, on ethics and personites. 2022--

Completed co-supervision:

1. Lanell Mason, ‘Moral Agents in a Moral World: A New Account of Moral Realism and Moral Perception’, with David Oderberg.
2. Adam Pearce on the criminalisation of climate change, with Rob Jubb (politics).
3. Livia Luzzatto on the scope of climate justice, with Rob Jubb (politics).
4. Bradley Hillier-Smith on the ethics of responses to refugees, with Brad Hooker. Viva passed January 2021.

### Seminars and classes for graduate students

Graduate Class for PhD students:

- Summer term 2021: on my book manuscript ‘unsharp choices’.
- Spring 2016: Recent work on Incommensurability and Reasons.

Graduate Research Seminar (workshop). Autumn 2019-Spring 2022, Summer 2015.

Staff-Student Reading Group. Spring 2015 on L.A. Paul, *Transformative Experience*.

Supervisor for multiple MRes Essays and Dissertations per year since 2015. Topics include: Presentism and Truthmaker Theory, The Justification of War, Psychological Egoism, Moral Overridingness, Anarchism, Nudge, Sceptical Theism, the Problem of Evil.

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE**

Reviewer for: *Analysis*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Economics and Philosophy*, *Erkenntnis*, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, *Ethics*, *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, *Journal of Ethics*, *Journal of Ethics & Social Philosophy*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Journal of Value Inquiry*, *Mind*, *Noûs*, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophical Quarterly*, *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, Routledge, *Synthese*, *Theoria*, *Utilitas*.

Equalities Officer, British Society for Ethical Theory. 2021–

Reviewer for Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe MSCA Fellowship proposals for the European Union. 2019–

the AHRC SWW doctoral training partnership.qz

External examiner for taught postgraduate programmes, School of Philosophy, Theology & Religion at the University of Birmingham. 2022–

PhD examining:

- Externally at University College, London. 2019.
- Internally at Reading, several times since 2015.

Chair of scrutiny panels for new programmes:

- BSc Biovetinerary Sciences, 2022;
- MSc Climate Change and Artificial Intelligence, 2021-22.

Conferences and workshops organised:

- (2021 April) Workshop in honour of Brad Hooker, with Charlotte Newey. Reading.
- (2018 March) Southern Normativity Group annual Conference, Reading.
- (2017 October) Moral and Rational Uncertainty one-day workshop, with Society for Applied Philosophy funding, Reading (with Patrick Tomlin).
- (2015 April) Indeterminacy in Ethics annual *Ratio* conference, Reading.

Impact and Outreach:

- Panel member, public discussion on carbon offsetting. City Conversations, London. November 2019.
- Numerous webinars for Ethical Reading, on topics including moral luck and moral dilemmas.
- Recorded 'A' Level revision videos for Massolit.

### **Main administrative roles at Reading**

Research Division Leader for Philosophy. 2022–

RRDP presentation you and your supervisor

Philosophy department representative and core group member for School of Humanities Athena SWAN application. Implemented diagnostic survey of school members and conducted focus group. 2018–

Website, blog, and social media administrator. 2014–

Director of Postgraduate Research Studies. 2019–2022.

Part (year) 3 co-ordinator. 2019–2022.

PPE co-ordinator: 2021-2022.

Internal panelist for Periodic Review of Department of Computer Science. March 2019.

Part (year) 2 co-ordinator. 2018–19

Philosophy Admissions Tutor. 2018-19

Welcome (freshers) week co-ordinator. 2018-19

Convenor, Visiting Speaker series and liaison with undergraduate Philosophy Society. 2014–2017

Reading representative at the UK-China Philosophy Programme meetings at Queen's College, Oxford and King's College, London. Spring and Summer 2016.

Member, Interview Panel for Graduate Teaching Assistant. July 2015.

### **Administrative roles at UNC Chapel Hill**

Organiser, UNC Philosophy Work in Progress series. 2008–09 and 2013–14.

External Advisor, Southern Alamance County High School Ethics Bowl Team. 2011–13.

Graduate Assistant, UNC Philosophy Colloquium. 2008–09 and 2011.

Philosophy Representative, UNC Graduate and Professional Student Federation. 2011–12.

Professional Memberships: UK Higher Education Academy (Fellow since September 2016), Mind Association, British Society for Ethical Theory, American Philosophical Association.

## **GRANTS, AWARDS, AND PRIZES**

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship, 'Austere Reasons.' Held at the University of Reading, July 2017 to August 2018. Value: €114,015.30

2020 Research Fellowship (2 terms of teaching relief and £500 travel fund), University of Reading. 2015-16.

Several Travel Awards from University of Reading.

Mind Association Conference Grant (£500) for Indeterminacy in Ethics conference, April 2015.

Prize for best graduate student paper. North Carolina Philosophical Society. February 2013.

Non-teaching Fellowships UNC Philosophy Department. 2007–2008, Fall 2012, Spring 2014.

UNC Richard Brooke Scholarship. 2008–2010 and 2011–2012.

Travel Award (x9). UNC Department of Philosophy and graduate school. 2012–13.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

A paper on value incommensurability (title TBC) at Lund University, May 2023.

'Inefficacy and Democracy':

- Debunking Inefficacy workshop, VU Amsterdam, December 2022.
- Value and Agent Relativity workshop at Grandhotel Giessbach, Switzerland, April 2022.
- APA Eastern Division Meeting, Savannah, USA. January 2018.
- Climate Science, Values and Politics workshop, Durham University, May 2015.

'Structural Rationality Avoids Determinate Substantive Irrationality' at the German Analytic Philosophy congress (GAP.11), Berlin. September 2022.

'Another Vagueness Solution to Spectrum Arguments' at the Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress. August 2022.

‘Kahane’s Wager’ at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association. Summer 2021.

‘Indeterminacy and Agency’:

- Oakland University, USA. 2021.
- Incommensurability: Vagueness, Parity and other Non-Conventional Comparative Relations workshop in Stockholm. 2019.

‘Nihilistic Despair’:

- Moral Philosophy Seminar, Oxford. 2019.
- University of Groningen. 2018.
- Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Metaethics Colloquium. 2017.
- Trinity College, Dublin. 2017.

‘Choice Under Indeterminacy’:

- University of York. May 2018.
- Hard Cases and Rational Choice conference in Bern. November 2017.
- Choice Group, London School of Economics. October 2015.

‘Ought implies Can implies Moral Rationalism’:

- Morality and Rationality Revisited conference, University of Leeds. September 2018.
- OZSW conference in Groningen. December 2016.

‘Ability and Promotion’ at Lund University. December 2017.

‘The Size of the Universe and Nihilism’:

- OZSW conference in Groningen. December 2016.
- Southern Normativity Group meeting at the University of Sussex. September 2016.

‘How Implausible is Satisficing Utilitarianism?’ at the 14th International Society for Utilitarian Studies Conference at Lille Catholic University. July 2016.

‘A Satisficing Response to Gratuitous Harm’ at the Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (RoME). University of Colorado, Boulder. August 2015.

‘Satisficing, Arbitrariness, and Indeterminacy’ at the Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (RoME). University of Colorado, Boulder. August 2013. Commenter: Preston Werner.

‘Tenenbaum and Raffaman on Vague Projects, the Self-Torturer, and the Sorites’ at University of York. October 2014.

‘Self-Torture as Practical Sorites’:

- Harvard-MIT Graduate Conference. Cambridge, MA. April 2013. Commenter: Ryan Doody. (This conference was canceled due to the Boston bombings.)
- North Carolina Philosophical Society. East Carolina University. February 2013.

‘Incommensurability as Comparative Borderlineness’:

- South Carolina Society for Philosophy. College of Charleston. March 2013.
- Fourth Dutch Conference on Practical Philosophy. TU/Eindhoven. Nov. 2012.

## Comments

On Farbod Akhlaghi-Ghaffarokh’s *An Argument for the Metaphysical Necessity of Moral Principles* at the Second Metaethics Workshop. University of Groningen. 2019.

On Rachel Handley’s *Quasi-Realism, Disagreement, and Fundamental Error* at the Conference by Women in Philosophy. Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam. July 2018.

On Anne Meylan, 'Reasons-Responsiveness and the Basing Relation,' at 'Epistemic and Practical Normativity: Meta-Normative Problems and Proposals,' Southampton, June 2015.

On Stewart Eskew, 'Moral Supervenience and Moral Knowledge: How Not to Defend Moral Perception' at APA Eastern Division. Baltimore, MD. December 2013.

On Shane George, 'Why Hard Cases are Incommensurable' at Central States Philosophical Association. Oklahoma State University, Tulsa. October 2013.

On Carl Posy, 'Kantian Discipline and the Paradoxes of Knowledge' at UNC/Hebrew University Workshop. Jerusalem. May 2013. (My comments were delivered by proxy.)

On Ayca Boylu, 'Thick Concepts and Intrinsic Goodness Attributions' at APA Pacific Division. San Francisco, CA. March 2013.