

# T. Ben Baker, JD PhD

Assistant Professor, Colby College, Department of Philosophy | [tbbaker@colby.edu](mailto:tbbaker@colby.edu)

Lovejoy 252, Waterville, ME 04901

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- **Colby College, Assistant Professor** 2023–present  
Waterville, ME  
– Department of Philosophy, Davis AI Institute
- **University of Pennsylvania, Provost Postdoctoral Fellow** 2020–2023  
Philadelphia, PA  
– Department of Neuroscience, Kordinglab

## EDUCATION

- **University of Pennsylvania, PhD Philosophy** 2020  
Philadelphia, PA  
– Dissertation: "Cognition in Nature: Information, Explanation, Embodiment"  
– Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, Graduate Certificate  
– Center for Teaching and Learning, Teaching Certificate
- **Yale Law School, JD** 2014  
New Haven, CT  
– Substantial Analytic Writing on Mens Rea and Manslaughter  
– Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic
- **Brown University, BA (Concentrations in Philosophy (honors) and Economics)** 2010  
Providence, RI

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

\* = peer reviewed publication

- **Rethinking Artificial General Intelligence: Beyond Anthropomorphism\*** 2025  
*Invited chapter: Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Today Routledge (eds. D Curry, L Daoust) (forthcoming)*
- **Use and Usability: Concepts of Representation\*** 2025  
*with R.D. Lange, A. Richmond, et al., Neurons, Behavior, Data analysis and Theory (forthcoming)*
- **Understanding Complexity Through Affordances** 2025  
*with Sonia Roberts, Under review at Minds and Machines*
- **Six Forms of Dance Cognition** 2025  
*Under Review at Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*
- **Computational Kinematics of Dance: Distinguishing Hip Hop Genres\* [\[link\]](#)** 2024  
*with T Liu, J Matelsky, F Parodi, J Krakauer, K Kording, Frontiers in Human Robotics and AI*
- **The Time is Ripe to Reverse Engineer an Entire Nervous System [\[link\]](#)** 2023  
*Position Paper, Alliance for C. elegans Neural Dynamics (ACeND)*
- **Commentary on Favela and Machery [\[link\]](#)** 2023  
*Symposium contribution for The Brains Blog*
- **Three Aspects of Representation in Neuroscience\* [\[link\]](#)** 2022  
*with B Lansdell and K Körding, Trends in Cognitive Sciences*
- **Creativity in AI-Dance Art\* [\[link\]](#)** 2022  
*Proceedings of International Conference on Computational Creativity*
- **Prospective Learning: Back To The Future [\[link\]](#)** 2022  
*Position Paper, J Vogelstein et al. working group*

- **Natural Information, Factivity, and Nomicity\*** [\[link\]](#) 2021  
*Biology & Philosophy*
- **Referee Report of (hypothetical) Philosophy101 Textbook\*** [\[link\]](#) 2021  
*Teaching Philosophy*  
– Spanish Translation by Fredy H.P. Galindo, 2023, *Cuestiones Filosofía\**
- **What Does Engaged Philosophy Look Like?** [\[link\]](#) 2016  
*with L Daoust and R Willison, Guest Post on DailyNous.com*
- **Before Their Time: Challenges to the Prohibition Against Child Marriage in Sierra Leone** [\[link\]](#) 2013  
*with A Elbogen, S Keene, Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic*

## SELECTED TALKS

- **Rethinking Artificial General Intelligence** [\[link\]](#) 2025  
*Oberlin Colloquium in Philosophy, Oberlin College*
- **Invited Symposium: Technology and Cognition** 2025  
*Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, annual meeting*
- **Moving Between Genres: A Computational and Embodied Exploration of Dance** [\[link\]](#) 2025  
*Invited contributor for Slippage: 3D Humanities Series, Northwestern University*
- **Dance Machines!** 2024  
*James Madison University, Sponsored by Philosophy & Religion department, JMU Dance program*
- **Six Forms of Dance Cognition** 2023  
*Mind the Body, University of Utah*
- **So You Think AI Can Dance?** 2022  
*Eye, Mind, and Image; Themes from Visual Studies, UPenn*
- **Symposium: Affirming Black Excellence in Neuroscience** 2021  
*Cognitive Neuroscience Society (virtual)*
- **Representation in Neuroscience** 2020  
*Neuromatch Conference 3.0 (virtual)*
- **The Factivity and Nomicity of Information** 2019  
*Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Cincinnati OH*
- **Learning to Dance with Dynamic Systems** 2017  
*Graduate BEN Talks, UPenn*
- **Neural Dynamics and Inner Representations** 2017  
*Conference on Representing Reality, SUNY Potsdam*
- **Weakness of Will in Desire-First Accounts of Rational Action** 2015  
*Philosophers' Cocoon Conference, Tampa FL*

## TEACHING

*All in-person and instructor of record*

- **Colby College, Department of Philosophy** 2023–present  
Waterville, ME
  - AI and Human Values (Spring 2025)
  - Central Philosophical Issues: Mind & Machine (Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024)
  - Philosophy of Emotion (Fall 2024)
  - Philosophy of Dance (Spring 2024)
  - Philosophy of Cognitive Science (Fall 2023)
- **University of Pennsylvania, Department of Philosophy** 2018–2020  
Philadelphia, PA
  - Philosophy and Visual Perception (Spring 2020)
  - Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2019, Summer 2018)
  - Ethics (Spring 2019)

## SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATIONS

- **Alliance for *C. elegans* Neural Dynamics (ACeND)** 2025–present  
*Project Member, Colby College*
  - Contributing theoretical insights for an interdisciplinary, nationwide consortium, proposed NSF grant to simulate *C. elegans* from molecules to behavior
- **Use and Usability: Concepts of Representation** 2025  
*CCN Generative Adversarial Collaboration*
  - Collaborative project examining representation across Philosophy, Neuroscience, Cognitive Science, and Computer Science, With Richard D. Lange, Andrew Richmond, Odelia Schwartz, Alessandro Achille, Xaq Pitkow, Rosa Cao, Nikolaus Kriegeskorte
- **Computational Kinematics of Human Movement** 2024–present  
*Building motion capture lab at Colby College*
  - Extending work on computational approaches to analyzing movement, building on a custom model of human motion used in a machine-learning pipeline for a 2024 publication

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE & LEADERSHIP

- **Departmental/College Service, Colby College** 2023–present
  - Davis Institute for Artificial Intelligence (2023–present): Discussing and sharing AI-related research with colleagues across departments, planning around Colby’s AI policies and tools, event organization
  - Search Committees (2023–2025): Two hires in Philosophy (one TT, one VAP); two hires in 2024/5 (one for Psychology and one for the Director of the Davis AI Institute)
  - Lunder Institute for American Art, Faculty Advisory Group (2024–present): Planning and participating in initiatives around integrating museum resources and visiting fellows into the work and teaching of Colby faculty, handling internal grant funding
  - Science Technology and Society Faculty Advisory Board (2023–present): Contributing to initiatives for the STS department around student participation, course options, and internal funding
  - Reuman Reading Group Organizer (2024–2025): Communications, documentation and publicity for Colby’s 27-years running faculty-student reading group in philosophy
- **Conference/Event Organization, Colby College** 2023–present
  - Philosophy Symposium (Spring 2025): Organized annual public lecture on Ethics of Social AI, with student participation, sponsored by the Philosophy department and the Davis AI institute.
  - Philosophy Symposium Organizer (2025): Ethics of Social AI - Recruited speaker and arranged logistics for Colby Philosophy’s annual philosophy symposium
  - The Flavor Continues Residency Organizer (2024): Coordinated residency for a Boston-based Hip Hop non-profit, offering community workshops, guest teaching in Colby dance classes, and a performance
  - Birge Lecture Co-organizer (Fall 2023): Helped select speaker and support publicity for Colby’s annual Kingsley Birge Memorial Lecture in Sociology
- **Conference/Event Organization, University of Pennsylvania** 2018–2019
  - Philosophy and Engagement Conference Co-organizer (2019): Collaborated on planning and executing an interdisciplinary conference exploring the intersection of philosophy and community engagement
  - Indian Philosophy Reading Group (2019): Managed communications around logistics and selecting readings for graduate student discussion group
  - Admitted Student Weekend Coordinator (2018): Organized accommodations, planned activities, and facilitated interactions between faculty and prospective graduate students during recruitment weekend