

DREW CHASTAIN

Visiting Assistant Professor
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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Philosophy, 2003
Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
Dissertation: "Interpreting Metaphor" (Award of Degree: August 13, 2003;
Committee: Forbes, Brower, Lodge)
- M.A. Philosophy, 1999
Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
- B.A. Philosophy, with minor in Anthropology, 1996
University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida
Thesis: "A Challenge for Instrumental Theories of Human Ends"

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2011-present), Visiting Assistant Professor

It Is What It Is Films, New Orleans, Louisiana (2006-2011), Director, Writer, Video Editor

Xavier University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2007-2010), Assistant Professor

Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2004-2007), Visiting Assistant Professor, Adjunct

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Life Meaning Philosophy of Spirituality Applied Ethics

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Biomedical Ethics	Race & Identity Politics	Philosophy of Art
Epistemology	History of Modern Philosophy	Political Philosophy
Philosophy of Language	Continental Philosophy	Metaphysics
Cognitive Science	Analytic Philosophy	Ancient Philosophy

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS (PEER-REVIEWED)

“Gifts Without Givers: Metaphorical Gift Language and Secular Spirituality”
 (“revise and resubmit” at *Sophia*)

ABSTRACT. Does it make good sense to view something as a “gift” if it is not intentionally provided by some form of agency? This question is of central importance in recent attempts to promote “secular spirituality,” but those explicitly developing such a philosophy – Robert Solomon among them – have yet to provide a fully satisfactory justification for viewing this or that as a gift when there is no giver. Without attempting to clear up what is meant by “spirituality,” my purpose here is to defend this general way of thinking and speaking by showing that “metaphorical gift language” serves to cultivate “existential gratitude” – or gratitude for life or some aspect of life – without violating the secular norm prohibiting supernaturalism.

PUBLISHED BOOK REVIEWS

Money for Everyone: Why We Need a Citizen’s Income. 2014. *Basic Income Studies*. 9 (1-2): 137-140.

IN PREPARATION

“Can life be meaningful without free will?”

ABSTRACT. In “Meaningfulness, Hard Determinism and Objectivity” (2008), Trevor Pisciotta argues that the judgment that someone’s life is meaningful depends necessarily on whether the subject of that life is a free agent in a deep sense. Derk Pereboom’s reply (2014) to Pisciotta helps us to see the weakness of Pisciotta’s position, but the main point of the present paper is to show that, in his reliance on Susan Wolf’s “hybrid” theory of life meaningfulness (1997, 2010), Pisciotta is not operating with an account that can help with the question of the compatibility of life meaning with deep free agency. To help indicate the limits of Wolf’s kind of approach (for this kind of question and more generally), I sketch an alternative “agency-defeat” account of meaningfulness judgments which provides

a framework for the “meaning-compatibilist” conclusion that life can be understood as meaningful even if we do not have deep free agency.

“The Meaningfulness of Attachment”

ABSTRACT. The attachments that exist between people in close relationships are meaningful, but it’s hard at first to see what this judgment amounts to exactly, or how judgments of the meaningfulness of attachment could be in any way related to judgments of the meaningfulness of words. I argue that it is because both kinds of meaningfulness judgments are tracking the *intelligibility* of something that appeal to the concepts of meaning and meaningfulness is so natural. I also argue that a satisfying account of the meaningfulness of attachment must make use of the internal standpoint on what it’s like to live a life, which goes against the lately dominant external paradigm that judges life meaning from the third-person point of view, as found in the theories of Susan Wolf and Thaddeus Metz.

“Can trivial or immoral aims make life meaningful?: What’s missing in Susan Wolf’s approach to life meaning”

ABSTRACT. Susan Wolf’s account (1997, 2010) of what makes a life meaningful is encapsulated in her slogan: “Meaning arises when subjective attraction meets objective attractiveness”. This account leads Wolf to the conclusion that trivial or immoral activities cannot confer meaning on a life because, while they may be pursued with subjective enthusiasm, they do not qualify as “objectively” valuable. Here, I’d like to try out a new way to test what we judge to be meaningful (a “miss-test”) which indicates the inadequacy of Wolf’s approach and strongly supports the conclusion that trivial and perhaps even immoral activities can make life meaningful.

PRESENTATIONS (SELECTED)

2016 “Can Trivial or Immoral Activities Make Life More Meaningful?: What’s Missing in Susan Wolf’s Approach to Life Meaning,” Long Island Philosophical Society, Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY, April 9 (see “In Preparation” above)

2016 “Can Trivial or Immoral Activities Make Life More Meaningful?: What’s Missing in Susan Wolf’s Approach to Life Meaning,” Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, February 19-20 (see “In Preparation” above)

2015 “Internal Meaning and Social Theory,” Articulating Political Philosophy and Anthropological Theory, Method, and Evidence, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, December

2015 "Gifts without Givers: Metaphorical Gift Language and Secular Spirituality," Mississippi Philosophical Association, Millsaps College, Jackson, MS, March

2015 "Gifts without Givers: Metaphorical Gift Language and Secular Spirituality," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March

2008 "Using a Course Portfolio to Measure and Improve Student Learning," Defining and Promoting Student Success Conference, hosted by the Faculty Resource Network, San Francisco, November, co-presented with Dr. Paul Schafer

2006 "'Thought Work' as Philosophical Practice in the Classroom," The 8th International Conference of Philosophical Practice, Seville, Spain, April

2004 "The New Orleans Lyceum," International Conference of Philosophical Practice, Copenhagen, Denmark, August, co-presented with David O'Donoghue, Director of The Lyceum

COMMENTARY

2016 Reply to Douglas Henry's "The Real Euthyphro Problem," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, February

2015 Reply to Heather Wilburn's "Experience and Contradiction: Thinking the Other of Damaged Life," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, March

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

2016 Organized Visiting Professor Research Group, Loyola University, 2015-present

FILM AND MUSIC

2011 *Shine*, Documentary (3 episodes), Director, Video Editor

2010 *Double Triple Zero*, Feature (85 mins), Director, Writer, Video Editor

2009 *Half Awake*, Album (by *The Way*), Keyboards

2009 *Pals*, Short (45 mins), Director, Writer, Video Editor

2008 *Triple Zero*, Short (45 mins), Director, Writer, Video Editor

2007 *Hyacinth Girl*, Music Video (5 mins), Director, Writer, Video Editor

HONORS AND AWARDS

2001 Freie Universität Exchange Fellowship, Berlin, 2000-2001

2000 Tulane Graduate Fellowship, 1997-2000

GRANTS

2010 Faculty Communities of Teaching Scholars (FaCTS) grant funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (for infusion of internationalization themes and service-learning in Health Ethics), 2009-2010

COURSES TAUGHT

Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2011-present)

Philosophy of the Human Person, 15 sections (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

Making Moral Decisions, 14 sections (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

Introduction to Philosophy, 4 sections (2011, 2012, 2013)

Xavier University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2007-2010)

Health Ethics, 19 sections (2007, 2008, 2010)

Problems in Philosophy, 7 sections (2007, 2008, 2010)

African-American Philosophy, 1 section (2009)

Great Books: Philosophy of Spirituality, 1 section (2009)

Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana (2004-2007)

Modern Philosophy, 4 sections (2004, 2005)

Philosophies of Self, 7 sections (1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007)

Introduction to Philosophy, 5 sections (2000, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2012)

Ethics, 3 sections (2006)

Philosophy of Art, 1 section (2007)

Philosophy of Film, 1 section (2007)

The New Orleans Lyceum, New Orleans, Louisiana

Baseball Ethics: You Make the Call!, 1 section (2005)

Introduction to Metaphor in Language, Art, and Culture, 1 section (2004)

Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida

Philosophy of Art, 1 section (2006)

GRADUATE QUALIFYING PAPERS

"Hidden Truths: Interpreting Metaphorical Statements Truth-Conditionally," 1999
(Committee: Forbes, Brower)

"Describing Music Metaphorically," 1998 (Committee: Zimmerman, Glenn)

GRADUATE LEVEL CLASSES TAKEN

Philosophy of Language (Forbes)	Plato (Burger)
Philosophy and Gender (Zimmerman)	Heidegger (Zimmerman)
Advanced Symbolic Logic (Lee)	Aristotle (Burger)
Mathematical Logic (Forbes)	Kant (Glenn)
Metaphysics of Modality (Forbes)	Kierkegaard (Glenn)
Philosophy of Language (Brower)	Epistemology (Brower)
Cognitive Science (Bogdan)	Rationalism (Lodge)
Philosophy of Law (Mack)	

NEW ORLEANS COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The New Orleans Lyceum, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2003-2005
Administrator and Facilitator. A leader in local initiative for "Building Communities of Inquiry."

ERACE, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2004-2005
Facilitator for discussion groups, which are free and open to the public.

REFERENCES

Karl Widerquist	Jason Berntsen	Bruce Brower
Georgetown University	Xavier University	Tulane University
School of Foreign Service	1 Drexel Drive	Chairperson
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PLACEMENT CREDENTIALS

Available from
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105 Newcomb Hall, Tulane University
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