

MICHAEL G. BUTLER

Department of Philosophy
 University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Phenomenology, 20th Century Continental Philosophy, Philosophy of Cognitive Science (esp. Embodied Cognition).

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Social and Political Philosophy, Environmental Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy

WORK EXPERIENCE

2017 – Present **Lecturer** – University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

EDUCATION

2017 PhD, Philosophy, University of Memphis

Dissertation: *Appearances of Selfhood: Merleau-Ponty, Enactivism and Instituted Self-Consciousness*

Supervisor: Dr. Shaun Gallagher

Committee: Dr. Mary Beth Mader, Dr. Somogy Varga,
 Dr. David Morris (Concordia University).

Dissertation Abstract:

My dissertation addresses a classical philosophical question: How is the sense of self I have in my perception related to the person that I am for others? In what way is the fact that there is something-it-is-like to be me related to my identity as a person in and among other people? To answer these questions, I turn to two principal resources: Contemporary enactive and embodied accounts of cognition and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Drawing on these resources, as well as work in empirical psychology, I argue that the subject achieves herself as a perceiver and person only by means of interaction with a situation that contains other people and perspectives more developed than she is. It is through engagement with these already instituted ways of perceiving and expressing oneself that one comes to enact oneself – both as a perceiver and a person.

- 2012 MA, Philosophy, Ryerson University
Major Research Paper: Freedom in Sartre and Merleau-Ponty
 Supervisor: Dr. David Ciavatta
- 2009 BA (Honours), Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Trent University

PUBLICATIONS

- Butler, M. and Gallagher, S. 2018. "Habits and the Diachronic Structure of the Self," in *The Realization of the Self*, Andrea Altobrando, Takuya Niikawa, Richard Stone (eds). Palgrave Macmillan. (6600 words)
- Butler, M. 2016. "There is No Good Answer: The Role of Responsibility in Sartre's Ethical Theory." *Sartre Studies International*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 97-107
- Butler, M. and Gallagher, S. 2017. "Merleau-Ponty" *The Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, Wiley Blackwell. (1000 words)

Translations from French to English

- Legrand, D. 2018. "The Violence of the Ethical Encounter: Listening to the Suffering Subject as a Speaking Body" *Continental Philosophy Review*, 51 (1): 43-64

Book Reviews

- Butler M. 2018. "The Birth of Sense: Generative Passivity in Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy by Don Beith" *CHOICE*, Vol. 56, No. 7 (200 words).
- Butler M. 2017. "Science as Social Existence by Jeff Kochan" *CHOICE* Vol. 55, No. 12 (200 words).

Work under review

- Butler, M. "The Minimal Self and the *Sens* of the world: Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and Husserl on the sense of ownership" manuscript under review at *Continental Philosophy Review* (7600 words)
- Butler, M. "Developmental Space: What navigation apps get wrong about the experience of movement" manuscript under review at *Evental Aesthetics* (6500 words).
- Butler M. "Buying Green – A Trap For Fools: Sartre, Serialization and Social Movements" Manuscript accepted for publication in *Earthly Engagements: Reading Sartre after the Holocene* edited by Matthew Ally and Damon Boria (5500 words).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- May 2019 *Developmental Space: What Navigation Apps Get Wrong About Our Experience of Movement*
Presented at Society for Philosophy of Technology
Texas A&M, College Station TX.
- October 2018 *Institution and the Problem of the Past: Time in Merleau-Ponty's lectures at the College de France*
Presented at "Merleau-Ponty at the *College de France*, Expression, Intercorporeity, Nature" Palacky University Olomouc. Olomouc, Czech Republic
- October 2018 *Sartre and the State of Nature: The (Re)Production of Scarcity and Sociality in the Critique of Dialectical Reason.*
Presented at the North American Sartre Society
University of Mary Washington
- March, 2018 *Being Sens-ed by the World: Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and The Significance of Place in Minimal Self-Awareness.*
Presented at the North Texas Philosophical Association
Universtiy of Texas, Dallas
- February, 2017 *Autonomy and the Embodied Mind*
Presented at the Philosophical Collaborations Conference
SIU Carbondale, Carbondale, IL (with Dr. Somogy Varga)
- June, 2016 *Embodied Knowing and the Ontology of Nature*
Presented at the Canadian Hermeneutics Institute
Toronto, Ontario
- October, 2015 *Divine Philosophers and the Nocturnal Council in Plato's Laws*
Presented at The Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy,
Fordham University, New York
- June, 2014 *There is No Good Answer: The Role of Responsibility in Sartre's Ethical Theory*
Presented at Diverse Lineages of Existentialism, St. Louis
- October, 2013 *"Do not ask me who I am and do not ask me to remain the same:" Foucault's Discontinuous Subject in The Archaeology of Knowledge*
Presented at The Canadian Society For Continental Philosophy,
Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto

- October, 2013 *Activity, Passivity and Original Choice: Responding to a Merleau-Pontean Critique of Sartrean Freedom*
Presented at the bi-ennial meeting of the North American Sartre Society, Univeristy of Windsor
- March, 2012 *Self-Portraits and Nametags: An Interactive Workshop on Questions of The Self*
Presented at Philopolis: Guelph, University of Guelph
With Jehangir Saleh
- November, 2011 *Choosing, Writing, and Freedom*
Presented at Ryerson – Concordia Graduate Conference on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*
- April, 2011 *A Difference Between Worlds: Thinking the Human/Animal Distinction along with Merleau-Ponty*
Presented at Ryerson – Concordia Graduate Conference on the Human/Animal Distinction

ADDITIONAL STUDY

- 2015 **Invited participant: ISSA Summer School.** Towards an Integrative Approach to Awareness, Kobe, Japan.
Travel, accomodation, and one month stipend funded by the Initiative for Synthesis in Studies of Awareness
- 2014 **Visiting Researcher:** University of Wollongong, Australia
Travel and one month accomodation funded by the University of Wollongong

HONOURS AND AWARDS

- 2018 UTRGV Office of Global Engagement Faculty Research Grant
\$800
- 2017 Hillary Johnson Memorial Graduate Student Teacher Award
\$300
- 2016 Graduate Student Scholarship – Canadian Hermeneutics Institute
\$750
- 2015 Bornblum Travel Award
\$500
- 2013 Bornblum Travel Award
\$1,000
- 2011 Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Master's Scholarship
\$17,500
- 2010 Ryerson Graduate Scholarship
\$7,500

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Existentialism and Phenomenology: Spring 2019

Introduction to Philosophy: Fall 2017 (5 sections) Summer 2018 (2 sections) Fall 2018 (3 sections)

Ethics, Technology, and Society: Spring 2018 (2 sections)

Ethics, Happiness, and the Good Life: Spring 2018 (3 sections) Fall 2018 (2 sections) Spring 2019 (4 sections)

Ryerson University

Philosophy of The Natural Environment: Summer 2016, 2017, 2018.

University of Memphis

Environmental Ethics: Fall 2016; Fall 2015 (Online); Summer 2015 (Online).

Values and the Modern World: Spring 2017; 2016; 2015; Fall 2014.

Elementary Logic: Summer 2017; 2016

Graduate Assistant

University of Memphis

Values and the Modern World: Spring 2014; 2013.

Biomedical Ethics (Online): Fall 2013.

Feminist Theory: Fall 2012.

Ryerson University

Ideas that Shape The World (Contemporary Canada): Fall 2011; Spring 2012.

Critical Thinking: Fall 2010; Spring 2011.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Fall 2013 - 2016	Philosophical Horizons Instructor Ran weekly discussion groups in a Shelby County Correctional facility
Spring 2013	Philosophical Horizons Instructor Fairley High School Ran weekly discussion groups in a 12 th grade AP classroom
October 2011	Guest Speaker at Ryerson University's Philosophy Café: A lunchtime speaker series for retired people Talk Title: <i>Ethical life in Hegel's Philosophy of Right</i>

SERVICE

- 2019 **Co-Coordinator**, Anzaldua Speaker Series Event
UTRGV
- 2014-15 **Co-Director**, Memphis PGSA conference
Title: Beyond Bars: The Future of Prisons
University of Memphis
- Dec 2011 – Jul 2012 **Conference Assistant**, *Varieties of Continental Thought and Religion 2012*: International conference
Ryerson University
- May 2011- Aug 2011 **Conference Assistant**, *Intimacy and Embodiment: Phenomenological Perspectives*: An interdisciplinary workshop
Ryerson University
- Peer reviewer for *Phenomenology and Mind*, *Continental Philosophy Review*, *Adaptive Behavior*.

LANGUAGES

English: First Language
French: Translation knowledge

GRADUATE COURSE WORK

History of Philosophy

Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, 2010 Ryerson, Prof. David Ciavatta
British Idealism, 2011 Ryerson, Prof. Betty Trott
Hume, 2011 Ryerson, Prof. Jim Dianda
Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, 2011 Memphis, Prof. Bill Lawson
Kant's First Critique, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Hoke Robinson
Plato's Statesman, Theatetus, and Sophist, 2011 Memphis, Prof. Tim Roche
Aristotle's De Anima, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Tim Roche
Plato's Laws, 2014 Memphis, Prof. Tim Roche
Aristotle's Metaphysics, 2015 Memphis, Prof. Tim Roche (audited)

Continental Philosophy

Continental Philosophy of Religion, 2011 Ryerson, Prof. John Caruana
Animality, 2011 Ryerson, Prof. Kym Maclaren
Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, 2011 Ryerson (audited), Prof. David Ciavatta
Intersubjectivity and the Problem of Intimacy, 2011 Ryerson, Prof. Kym Maclaren
Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 2011 Memphis, Prof. Mary Beth Mader
Derrida, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Kas Sagafhi
Capitalism and Critique, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Somogy Varga
Foucault and the Medical Sciences, 2013 Memphis, Prof. Mary Beth Mader

Advanced Readings and Research: Merleau-Ponty, 2014 Memphis, Prof. Shaun Gallagher
 Husserl, 2014 Memphis, Prof. Tom Nenon

Cognitive Science

Philosophy of Psychiatry, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Somogy Varga
 The Self, 2013 Memphis, Prof. Shaun Gallagher
 Cog-sci seminar: The Evolution of Brain, Body, and Culture 2015 Memphis, Prof. Kimbrough Oller, Ulrieke Griebel, Stan Franklin
 Readings and Research: The Emotions, 2015, Prof. Shaun Gallagher

Analytic Philosophy

Philosophy of Language, 2010 Ryerson, Prof. David Checkland
 Core Ethics, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Remy Debes
 Philosophy of Psychiatry, 2012 Memphis, Prof. Somogy Varga

COMPLETED EXAMS

Spring 2014 **Comprehensive Exam in Modern Philosophy** (Memphis)
 Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant

Fall 2013 **Comprehensive Exam in Ancient Philosophy** (Memphis)
 Plato, Aristotle, The Pre-socratics

Fall 2011 **Area Reading Exam in Critical Theory** (Ryerson)
 Lyotard, Adorno, Horkheimer, Lacan and Benjamin
 Administered by Dr. John Caruana

Area Reading Exam in The Interpersonal and Social Dimensions of Freedom and Responsibility. (Ryerson)
 Aristotle, Mill, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Sartre, De Beauvoir, Foucault
 Administered by Dr. David Ciavatta

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society for Phenomenological and Existential Philosophy
 Canadian Society for Continental Philosophy
 American Philosophical Association
 North American Sartre Society
 Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy

REFERENCES

Dr. Shaun Gallagher, Lillian and Morrie Moss Professor of Philosophy,
University of Memphis
sllghr1@memphis.edu

Dr. David Morris, Professor of Philosophy
Concordia University
David.morris@concordia.ca

Dr. Mary Beth Mader, Professor of Philosophy
University of Memphis
mmader@memphis.edu

Dr. Alexander Stehn, Associate Professor of Philosophy
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Alex.stehn@utrgv.edu

Dr. Deborah Tollefsen, Professor of Philosophy
University of Memphis
dtollfsn@memphis.edu