

Lauren Leydon-Hardy

Amherst College
Department of Philosophy
204 Cooper House
86 College Street
Amherst, MA 01002

leydonhardy@amherst.edu
www.leydonhardy.net
413-542-5840

Updated 19 September 2023

EMPLOYMENT

2019-present Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Amherst College

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Epistemology, Social Epistemology, Applied Epistemology

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Early Modern Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, Metaethics, Feminist Philosophy

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Philosophy, 2019
Northwestern University
Dissertation: *Epistemic Infringement*
Committee: Jennifer Lackey (advisor), Baron Reed, Sanford Goldberg

M.A. in Philosophy, 2011
Brandeis University
Thesis: *Justifying Falsehoods*
Advisor: Berislav Marušić

B.A. in Philosophy with Honors, 2009
University of Calgary
Thesis: *Getting Gettier'd on Testimony*
Advisor: Jeremy Fantl

PUBLISHED ARTICLES:

- “Epistemic Infringement,” in Aidan McGlynn & Jennifer Lackey (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Social Epistemology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Forthcoming)
- “Predatory Grooming and Epistemic Infringement,” in Jennifer Lackey (ed.), *Applied Epistemology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 119-147. (2021)
- “Getting Gettier'd on Testimony.” *Logos & Episteme* 2: 361-369. (2010)

PUBLISHED COMMENTS AND REVIEWS:

- “Some Resistance to the Idealized Thermometer Model.” *Episteme* 13: 423-426. (2016)
- Review of *Evidentialism and its Discontents*, Trent Dougherty (ed.), *Analysis*, 72 (4): 852-854. (2012)

ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

- Epistemic Infringement and the Wrong of Propagandizing
- R&R at *Philosophical Quarterly* as of August 6, 2023

Abstract: Arationalist theorists of propaganda hold that it is a political communications strategy that constitutively telegraphs its content via that circumvention of audience-side rationality. I take arationalists to be committed to both a descriptive and a normative thesis. On the descriptive thesis, propaganda is distinguished by the arationalism of audience-side uptake, and on the normative thesis, it is objectionable for the reason that it constitutively relies on the circumvention of audience-side rationality. Here, I argue that arationalists face a dilemma about bald-faced propaganda, which *depends* on its audiences’ reasons-responsiveness. The arationalist must choose between denying that bald-faced propaganda is propaganda or denying that bald-faced propaganda is objectionable *qua* propaganda.

Rather than because it is manipulative, I argue that the epistemic harm of propaganda is that it is epistemically infringing. That is, that it constitutively involves the systematic contravention of the norms typifying the relationship between the propagandist and their audience, with the characteristic effect of eroding the audience’s epistemic agency. The epistemic harm of propaganda is that it has the power to alienate its audience from itself both epistemically and politically by illegitimately constraining what is epistemically possible for its audience.

ARTICLES IN PREPARATION:

DRAFTS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

- Entry on “Epistemic Injustice” for *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* with Eric Bayruns García
- Gaslighting, Agency, and Epistemic Infringement

Abstract: Epistemic infringement is a type of epistemic misconduct marked by the systematic transgression of the social and epistemic norms typifying a given relationship, and which characteristically strikes at the epistemic agency of targeted individuals. My previous work on epistemic infringement has emphasized the explanatory power of this framework for the epistemology of predatory grooming. This paper explores how the concept of epistemic infringement might similarly enrich our thinking about the epistemic harms of gaslighting. Perhaps not all instances of gaslighting will involve epistemic

infringement, but I argue that in our most paradigmatic example—that of Paula in the iconic 1944 film *Gaslight*—the epistemic harm is located at neither the order of belief, nor in the maladaptation of Paula’s belief-forming mechanisms. Instead, I argue that the epistemic harm accrues to *Paula*, and to her epistemic agency, which suggests that at least in severe and protracted instances, gaslighting is apt to epistemically infringe.

- The Functional Unity of Propaganda

Abstract: Theorists of propaganda have long noted the difference between surreptitious propaganda, which aims at inculcating belief, and overt, or bald-faced propaganda, which is often absurd and used to express the power of the regime. At the same time, many have held that what is distinctive of propaganda as a political communications strategy, is that it is constitutively manipulative, and relies on by-passing audience-side rationality. One might think that it is a problem for arationalists that they cannot explain why bald-faced propaganda really *is* propaganda. But it is open to the arationalist to simply deny this, holding instead that bald-faced propaganda is propaganda in name, alone.

In this paper I argue that arationalists can only bite this bullet on the supposition that bald-faced propaganda is genuinely functionally distinct from its more surreptitious cognate. However, as I will show, the appearance of discontinuity between bald-faced and surreptitious propaganda is illusory. I defend a *functional unity thesis* and argue that propaganda in all its guises is apt to epistemically infringe, eroding an audience’s epistemic agency, and thereby illicitly constraining what is epistemically possible for the audience.

- Essentially Collaborative Epistemic Repair

Abstract: Suppose (1) that some experiences have distinctively epistemic dimensions, such that we sometimes owe it to others to understand what has happened to them. Suppose (2) that we sometimes have intrapersonal epistemic obligations, in that we may owe it to ourselves to understand what has happened to us. If (1) and (2) are right, then knowing one another and ourselves can be epistemically reparative.

In this paper I defend (1) and (2) and argue that there is a subcategory of epistemic repair that is essentially collaborative. These are cases in which subjects have intrapersonal epistemic obligations that they cannot discharge alone, through rumination or recollection, but which can be discharged indirectly, by bearing witness to the experiences of others. I explore the phenomenon of epistemically collaborative repair through (i) case studies of hermeneutical injustice, such as the case of Carmita Woods, (ii) case studies of epistemic infringement, such as the survivors of Larry Nassar’s predatory grooming, and (iii) studies of the efficaciousness of group therapy, specifically for patients exhibiting high psychopathy.

- Epistemic Agency and the Deep Self

Abstract: This paper articulates a jointly cognitive and conative deep-self account of epistemic agency.

Building on Chandra Sripada’s “self-expression” account of practical agency, I argue that the role of “cares” in Sripada’s model can be enriched by connecting that function to the crucial role that social relations, and the social and epistemic norms that govern those relations, play in shaping and giving rise to our cares. This allows us to tell a naturalistic story about the etiology of our cares, as well as our judgments about what we (should) care about. In this way, epistemic agency turns out to be essential, not only to epistemology, but to our understanding of practical agency itself.

PRESENTATIONS

“Gaslighting, Agency, and Epistemic Infringement”

Western Canadian Philosophical Association, October 20-22, 2023

“The Functional Unity of Propaganda”

Bled Epistemology Conference, Bled, Slovenia, June 5, 2023

7th Annual Meeting of the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Society, November 2-4, 2023

“Collaborative Epistemic Repair”

The University of Connecticut Humanities Institute, October 6, 2022

“Epistemic Infringement and Propaganda”

Colgate College, September 15, 2022

Episteme, August 23-24, 2021

University of Minnesota, October 15, 2021

Northwestern University, November 4, 2021

“Social Animals, Social Brains: Epistemic Health and Solitary Confinement”

Health for Humanity, Amherst College, October 19, 2020

“She was older than her years: Epistemic Infringement and Consent”

APA Pacific, *Society for the Philosophy of Sex and Love*, April 2020 (canceled)

“Epistemic Infringement and the Deep Self”

PHIL 468, Seminar on Epistemic Psychology at Northwestern University, November 2, 2021
Lafayette College, October 23, 2020
Episteme, June 16-17, 2020 (canceled)
Claremont McKenna College, March 6, 2020
New York University, March 4, 2020

“Epistemic Infringement”

Northwestern University, November 3, 2021
Oakland University, February 5, 2021
Connecticut College, October 15, 2019
PeRFEct5, University of Pennsylvania, November 15-16, 2019
Prindle Institute for Ethics Applied Epistemology Workshop, DePauw University, June 17-24, 2018
Society for Exact Philosophy, University of Calgary, May 5-7, 2017

“Predatory Grooming and Epistemic Infringement”

PHIL 468, Seminar on Epistemic Psychology at Northwestern University, November 2, 2021
Amherst College, February 19, 2019
Dissertation Research Seminar, Northwestern University, March 23, 2017

“Which Things are Reasons?”

Canadian Society for Epistemology Symposium on Epistemic Reasons, Université de Sherbrooke (Québec), November 7-8, 2014

“A Non-Factive Dual-Aspect Theory of Reasons”

III Colombian Conference on Logic, Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, La Universidad de los Andes and La Universidad del Rosaria, February 12-14, 2014
Dissertation Research Seminar, Northwestern University, February 7, 2014

“Justifying Falsehoods”

University of Calgary Graduate Student Conference, University of Calgary, March 9, 2013
Syracuse University Graduate Student Conference, Syracuse University, April 16, 2013

“Context Sensitive Semantics & Testimony”

Northwestern-Notre Dame Graduate Epistemology Conference, Northwestern University,
April 16, 2010

COMMENTARIES (*Invited)

*Robin McKenna, *Non-ideal Epistemology* book symposium, APA Central, February 21-24, 2024

*Jennifer Lackey, *Criminal Testimonial Injustice* book symposium, Stateville Correctional Centre &
Northwestern University, September 22-30, 2023

*Aidan McGlynn, "Objects or Others? Epistemic Agency and the Primary Harm of Testimonial
Injustice," Ethical Theory and Moral Practice at PEA Soup, August 11, 2020

*Commentator-at-large, *PeRFECT3* (3rd Annual Penn Reasons and Foundations of Epistemology
Conference), University of Pennsylvania, November 4, 2017

Kathryn Lindeman, "Think You've Found a Case of No True Scotsman Reasoning? Look Again."
Vancouver Summer Philosophy Conference (VSPC), University of British Columbia, July 30-
August 3, 2017

David Sosa, "Standard Bearers." *Episteme*, Mpumalanga, South Africa, July 30-31, 2016

Ryan Hebert, "Epistemic Norms, Criticizability, and Impropriety." Central APA, Chicago, IL, March
4, 2016

David Christensen, "Disagreement, Drugs, Etc.: From Accuracy to Akrasia." *Episteme*, June 12-13,
2015

Remco Heesen & Pieter Van der Kolk, "A Game Theoretic Approach to Peer Disagreement."
Central States Philosophical Association, Northwestern University, October 10-11, 2014

Jeremy Goodman, "Disagreement, Difference Splitting, and Level Connections." Brandeis University
Graduate Conference, 2010

AWARDS

- 2016-2017 *Thomas A. McCarthy Award for Teaching Excellence in Philosophy* (\$500), Department of Philosophy, Northwestern University
- 2013-2014 Graduate Research Grant (\$3000), The Graduate School, Northwestern University

TEACHING (*Cross listed with Education Studies)

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR:

- Spring, 2024 PHIL 218: Early Modern Philosophy, Amherst College
PHIL 335: Theory of Knowledge, Amherst College
- Fall, 2023 PHIL 111: Philosophical Questions, Amherst College
PHIL 482: Seminar on Epistemic Obligations, Amherst College
- AY 2022-2023 Post-reappointment sabbatical
- Spring, 2022 PHIL 111: Philosophical Questions, Amherst College
PHIL 301*: Education for Democracy with Jyl Gentzler, Amherst College
- Fall 2021 PHIL 410*: Seminar on Epistemic Agency, Amherst College
PHIL 335*: Theory of Knowledge, Amherst College
- Spring 2021 PHIL 335: Theory of Knowledge, Amherst College
PHIL 111: Philosophical Questions, Amherst College
- Fall 2020 PHIL 218: Early Modern Philosophy, Amherst College (x2)
- Spring 2020 PHIL 341: Freedom and Responsibility, Amherst College
PHIL 218: Early Modern Philosophy, Amherst College
- Fall 2019 PHIL 335: Theory of Knowledge, Amherst College
PHIL 111: Philosophical Questions, Amherst College
- Spring 2019 Building Analytical Competencies, Cook County Department of Corrections,
Division 10
- Spring 2018 Values, Cook County Department of Corrections, Division 10
(co-instructed with Jennifer Lackey and Bonnie Ernst)
- Summer 2010 Introduction to Philosophy, Brandeis University

TEACHING ASSISTANT

- 2017 Early Modern Philosophy, Baron Reed, Northwestern University
- 2016 Theory of Knowledge, Jennifer Lackey, Northwestern University

2014 Philosophical Paradoxes, Sean Ebels-Duggan, Northwestern University
 2013 Bioethics, Mark Sheldon, Northwestern University
 2013 Scientific Reasoning, Fabrizio Cariani, Northwestern University
 2012 Introduction to Philosophy, Sanford Goldberg, Northwestern University
 2011 Introduction to Philosophy, Berislav Marušić, Brandeis University
 2010 Introduction to Ethics, Kate Moran, Brandeis University
 2009 Introduction to Philosophy, Andreas Teuber, Brandeis University

TUTORING AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITATING

2016-2019 Stateville Correctional Center, Crest Hill, IL
 2009-2011 826 Boston & The English High School, Boston, MA

SERVICE

PROFESSIONAL

2020- Canadian Philosophical Association Organizing Committee, Chair of Epistemology & Metaethics

REFEREE

Ethics, Hypatia, Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophical Studies, Social Epistemology, Synthese

AMHERST COLLEGE

2021-2022 Community Standards and Review Board
 2021-2022 Committee for Untenured Faculty

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

2018-2019 Northwestern Prison Education Program (NPEP) Graduate Student Advisory Council
 2018-2019 Department of Philosophy Climate Committee (Chair)
 March 2016 Co-organizer, Pre-Central APA Epistemology Workshop
 March 2012 Co-organizer, Workshop on Knowing How with Jason Stanley
 2011-2014 Organizer, Northwestern-Notre Dame Graduate Epistemology Conference

2011-2013 Webmaster for the Northwestern LEMMings website: sites.northwestern.edu/lemmings

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

2009-2011 Brandeis Graduate Student Brown Bag Colloquium Series, Founder and Co-Organizer

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Philosophical Association (Central Division)

Canadian Philosophical Association

REFERENCES

Jennifer Lackey
Wayne and Elizabeth Jones Professor of Philosophy
Director, Northwestern Prison Education Program
j-lackey@northwestern.edu
Northwestern University
1880 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208

Baron Reed
Professor of Philosophy
b-reed@northwestern.edu
Department of Philosophy
Northwestern University
1880 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208

Sandy Goldberg
Professor of Philosophy
s-goldberg@northwestern.edu
Department of Philosophy
Northwestern University
1880 Campus Drive
Evanston IL 60208

Hilary Kornblith
Distinguished Professor
kornblith@philos.umass.edu
Department of Philosophy
University of Massachusetts Amherst
150 Hicks Way, E305 South College
Amherst, MA 01003-9274

Michael Lynch
Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
Director, Humanities Institute
mplynch@uconn.edu
University of Connecticut Humanities Institute
Homer Babbidge Library, 4th fl.
369 Fairfield Way U-1234
Storrs, CT 06269

Jyl Gentzler
Samuel Williston Professor of Philosophy
jgentzler@amherst.edu
Department of Philosophy
Amherst College
86 College St
Amherst, MA 01002