Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference 2014
Friday, September 19th & Saturday, September 20th, 2014
Fifth Floor, University at Buffalo Clininal and Translational Research Center
875 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, NY

Friday, September 19th
Session I: 9:00–9:55
Room A: Garrett Marks-Wilt and Philip Robbins
Title: The Racial Division(s) of Moral Labor: Symbolic Racism, Political Orientation, and Race-Asymmetric Moral Status Ascription

Abstract. While the structure of social cognition is reflected in the moral cognition of humans, the psychological relationships between social categorization (i.e., the assortment of individuals into social groups based on cues indicative of group membership) and moral perception (i.e., the perception of entities as moral kinds, i.e., agents qualifying for blame and punishment and patients deserving of rights and concern) remain largely unexplored. We suggest thinking about a person in terms of their social group influences ascriptions of responsibility (i.e., the extent to which a person is perceived as deserving of blame and punishment) and conferrals of rights (i.e., the extent to which a person is perceived as worthy of concern and protection) because individuals tend to sort social groups (e.g., genders, races, age groups, socio-economic classes) into moral kinds (agents, patients).

In this paper, the framework is applied to the domain of race. According to this model, moral contexts ought to yield race-asymmetric ascriptions of moral responsibility (blame, punishment) and moral considerability (concern, protection) because racial groups (Whites, Blacks) are psychologically represented and categorized as moral kinds (agents, patients). In line with research suggesting "new" racism often stem from "pro-Black" attitudes rooted in egalitarian values (e.g., Universalism, Egalitarianism), and prejudicial belief systems rooted in anti-black affect and traditional values (e.g., Individualism), it is predicted that race-asymmetric patterns of moral perception will emerge amongst observers low versus high in symbolic racism and political conservatism.

Subjects responded to a series of eight vignettes in which actors with racialized names (e.g., Chip Ellsworth III, Tyrone Payton) intentionally engaged in moral wrongdoing (agent vignettes) and were the victim of a moral wrong (patient vignettes). Results indicate a relationship between symbolic racism, political orientation, and race-asymmetric ascriptions of moral status. As expected, individuals high (compared to those low) in symbolic racism and political conservatism ascribed greater degrees of moral responsibility (blame, punishment) and lesser degrees of moral considerability (concern, protection) to Blacks (relative to Whites). Precisely the opposite patterns were observed for those individuals low in symbolic racism and political conservatism. Racial categorization, the authors conclude, can influence the perceived moral status of individuals in contrary ways as a function of the prejudices of the observer.

Room B: Kaija Mortensen, Randolph College and Chad Gonnerman, University of Southern Indiana
Title: Knowing How, Multiple Interpretations, and Order Effects

Abstract: To what factors are folk attributions of knowledge-how sensitive? Ability? Propositional knowledge? Something else? Alva Noë (2005) predicts that the folk will not attribute knowledge how in the absence of ability. Bengson, Moffett and Wright (2009) disagree, presenting experimental data that seems to show that the folk are perfectly willing to attribute know-how in the absence of ability (as predicted by Stanley and Williamson 2001). Participants on both sides of this debate appeal to folk attributions of know-how as evidence that specific theories are true (or false). The purpose of our project is to challenge the

conclusions Bengson, Moffett and Wright (2009) draw from their study and examine the role that order effects play in shaping folk responses to such cases.

Session II: 10:00–10:55
Room A: Janet Michaud and Ashely Keefner, University of Waterloo
Title: Judgements of Coercion in Mr. Big Cases
Abstract: Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers use the "Mr. Big" technique to secure confessions from noncompliant criminal suspects in cases where a lack of evidence prevents officers from taking the suspect to trial. There is growing concern surrounding the use of the Mr. Big technique as a method of eliciting confessions as this technique carries a high risk of false and coerced confessions (Smith, Stinson, & Patry, 2010; Moore, Copeland, & Schuller, 2009). We isolated a number of strategies employed by the Mr. Big technique and tested people's perceptions of the coerciveness of these strategies. Our results suggest that there are three strategies employed by the Mr. Big technique that are conducive to coercion: officer initiated conversation, asking leading questions, and the use of bribes and/or threats.

Room B: Zachary Horne and Ian Harmon,
Title: Anti-intellectualism about Know-How: Evidence from a Sentence Recognition Task
Abstract: An emerging trend in cognitive science is to explore central epistemological questions using psychological methods. Early investigations in experimental epistemology have revealed surprising differences between people's concept of knowledge and epistemic theories. However, the vast majority of these studies have focused on people's concept of propositional knowledge, or knowledge-that. In this paper, we studied people's concept of knowledge-how. We present data from two experiments that employed a sentence recognition task as an implicit measure of conceptual activation. The data from this implicit measure suggest that, contrary to widely accepted intellectualist theories of know-how, people's concept of know-how corresponds to anti-intellectualism, the view that knowing how to perform some task consists in having the appropriate skills or abilities.

Session III: 11:00–11:55
Room A: Marcus Arvan, University of Tampa
Title: Shocking News for Liberals and Economic Conservatives? Moral Judgements and the Comprehensive Misconduct Inventory
Abstract: In two recent studies, I found systematic relationships between "conservative" moral judgments and three antisocial personality traits: the Dark Triad of Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy. I also argued that is an open empirical question whether his results are "bad news" for conservatives, indicating some kind of moral character flaw underlying conservative moral judgments. Finally, in a recent paper, "Groundwork for a New Moral Epistemology", I proposed a methodology to test this hypothesis: namely, testing the same liberal and conservative judgments for relationships with overt moral misbehaviors (e.g. crime, drug abuse, bullying, etc.)—behaviors that are widely recognized, across a vast array of different cultures and eras, to be morally problematic. The present study followed through on my suggested methodology. 685 participants (427 male, 250 female, 8 unreported; mean age 30) were presented with my original 17-item Moral Intuition Survey and a 58-item Comprehensive Misconduct Inventory (the CMI-58), a survey in which respondents self-report past and present instances of overt misbehavior ranging from criminal activity to drug abuse, bullying, aggressive traffic behavior, etc. Although fairly systematic correlations were observed between self-reported misconduct and conservative economic views, much stronger and more systematic relationships were unexpectedly found between self-reported misbehavior and liberal views on social issues (i.e. issues ranging from gay marriage to the death penalty, preventative detention

of suspected terrorists, etc.). Finally, I speculate on what this might mean for moral epistemology, and suggest a broad research program for systematic investigation.

Room B: Michael Hannon, Fordham University
Title: The Universal Core of Knowledge
Abstract: Many epistemologists think we can derive important theoretical insights by investigating the English word 'know' or the concept it expresses. However, fewer than six percent of the world's population are native English speakers, and some empirical evidence suggests that the concept of knowledge is culturally relative. So why should we think that facts about the word 'know' or the concept it expresses have important ramifications for epistemology? In this paper, I argue that the concept of knowledge is universal (expressed by some word in every natural language). I also explore the implications of this thesis for philosophical methodology.

Lunch: 12:00–1:55

Session IV: 2:00–2:55
Room A: Andrew Aberdein, Florida Institute of Technology
Title: Diversity in Proof Appraisal
Abstract: What do mathematicians mean when they use terms such as 'deep', 'elegant', and 'beautiful'? And do they typically agree? Between-mathematician consensus in proof appraisals is an implicit assumption of many arguments made by philosophers of mathematics, but to our knowledge the issue has not previously been empirically investigated. By applying empirical methods, we first demonstrated that mathematicians' appraisals of proofs vary on four dimensions: aesthetics, intricacy, utility, and precision. We then asked a group of mathematicians to assess a specific proof on these four dimensions. We found widespread disagreement between our participants, suggesting that a priori assumptions about the consistency of mathematical proof appraisals are unreasonable.

Room B: Tom Wysocki, Washington University in St. Louis
Title: Arguing Over Intuitions? Deutsch's Failed Hopes
Abstract: Deutsch (2010) claims that hypothetical scenarios are evaluated using arguments, not intuitions, and therefore experiments on intuitions are philosophically inconsequential. Using the Gettier case as an example, he identifies three arguments that are supposed to point to the right response to the case. I'll present results of studies ran on Polish, Indian, Spanish, and American participants suggesting that there's no deep difference between evaluating the Gettier case with intuitions and evaluating it with Deutsch's arguments. Specifically, I'll argue that one would find these arguments persuasive if and only if one is already disposed to exhibit the relevant intuition.

Session V: 3:00–3:55
Room A: Sarah Weaver, University of Waterloo
Title: Personal Identity and Persisting as Many
Abstract: Identifying and re-identifying individuals is vitally important for animals. Animals have developed perceptual, referential, and conceptual tools to accomplish this important task. Previous work has shown that human judgments of personal identity are affected by abstract considerations involving moral values and trait attribution. Some philosophers have claimed that humans also follow a certain abstract logical rule when judging personal identity: the one-person-one-place rule, according to which a person can be in only one place at a time. In this paper, we report two experiments that, for the first time, test whether humans follow this rule when judging personal identity. We found strong evidence that participants reject this rule when

evaluating specific cases involving important personal relationships. This result fits well with recent findings on judgments of identity for inanimate objects and non-human animals.
Room B: Moti Mizrahi, St. John's University
Title: Is there such a thing as philosophical expertise?
Abstract: Experimental philosophers have challenged friends of the expertise defense to show that (a) the intuitive judgments of professional philosophers are different from the intuitive judgments of non-philosophers, and (b) the intuitive judgments of professional philosophers are better than the intuitive judgments of non-philosophers. Friends of the expertise defense have responded by arguing that the burden of proof lies with experimental philosophers. In this paper, I sketch three arguments which show that both (a) and (b) are probably false. If my arguments are cogent, then shifting the burden of proof is a futile move, since philosophical training makes no difference as far as making intuitive judgments in response to hypothetical cases in concerned.

Session VI: 4:00–4:55
Room A: James Beebe (Buffalo)
Title: TBA
Abstract:

Room B: Steven Gross, Johns Hopkins University
Title: Problems for the Purported Cognitive Penetration of Perceptual Color Experience and Macpherson's Proposed Mechanism
Abstract: Fiona Macpherson (2012) argues that various experimental results provide strong evidence in favor of the cognitive penetration of perceptual color experience. Moreover, she proposes a mechanism for how such cognitive penetration occurs. We argue, first, that the results on which Macpherson relies do not provide strong grounds for her claim of cognitive penetrability; and, second, that, if the results do reflect cognitive penetrability, then time-course considerations raise worries for her proposed mechanism. We base our arguments in part on several of our own experiments, reported herein.

Break 5:00–5:25

Keynote Address: 5:30–7:00
Room A: Jennifer Nagel, University of Toronto
Title: On the Boundary Between Philosophy and Psychology

Saturday, September 20th
Session I: 9:00–9:55
Room A: Maria Botero, Sam Houston State University
Title: What the Folk Must Know?The Role of Foreknowledge in Intentionality and Blame Ascriptions
Abstract: Numerous studies in experimental philosophy aim to understand how moral judgments influence intentionality ascriptions. In what has been termed the Knobe effect, it has been shown that when an agent's foreseen side effects are morally bad, people disproportionately judge these side effects as intentionally brought about than when an agent's foreseen side effects are morally good. However, studies that replicate this effect use vignettes where the main character always has foreknowledge of the side-effects of his actions. This fails to

replicate ordinary interactions in everyday life and trial situations where, for the most part, people do not have access to the mental states of others. In an effort to address this limitation and understand better the role that foreknowledge plays in ascriptions of intentionality and blame, we have designed a study with vignettes that describe a murder case that differ only in the side-effects produced and whether the agent has foreknowledge of the side-effects of his actions. Our findings show that people still show the Knobe effect in the absence of foreknowledge. This suggests a more extreme version of the flexibility hypothesis (i.e., flexibility of intentionality attributions) than considered before in previous studies.

Room B: Josh May, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Title: The Death of Double Effect (in Ordinary Moral Cognition)?
Abstract: The Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE) states roughly that bringing about a bad outcome is permissible (or at least easier to justify) if it is an unintended consequence of intentionally bringing about a good outcome. Many cognitive scientists and philosophers believe the DDE tacitly shapes ordinary moral cognition. I argue that, while moral cognition displays many deontological features, a traditional form of DDE does not seem among them, appealing to aspects of others' data but also my own. I explain the conflicting results in various experiments in terms of the way moral judgment is variously measured. However, it's not all bad news for DDE; there is some evidence that harming as a means is tied to what I call "agential involvement." I argue that this unifies much of our moral thinking, at least about harming others, partly based on other recent experiments. This agential involvement, tied as it is to the intentionality of an action, perhaps captures part of the spirit of DDE and fits with a rule-based approach to moral cognition.

Session II: 10:00–10:55
Room A: Katarzyna Paprzycka, University of Warsaw
Title: The Omissions Account of the Epistemic Side-Effect Effect
Abstract: I extend the omissions account of the Knobe effect and the Butler problem (forthcoming) to the epistemic side-effect effect. Knobe's harm case is a case where people attribute an intentional omission (rather than an intentional action) to the chairman. There are good reasons why the attribution of intentionality in the cases of omissions has been thought to demand the satisfaction of knowledge (not intention) condition. The knowledge claim characteristic of the epistemic side-effect effect is fruitfully thought to be a part of the satisfaction of such a knowledge condition.

Room B: Michael Nair-Collins, Florida State University College of Medicine
Title: Moral Evaluations of Organ Transplantation Affect Judgements of Death and Causation
Abstract: Two experiments investigated whether moral evaluations of organ transplantation influence judgments of death and causation. Significant differences were found in judgments of death and causation by participants randomized to read a vignette about organ removal from an unconscious patient that was framed as either morally good or bad. Those who read the morally good (vs. bad) version were more likely to believe that the organ donor was dead prior to organ removal, and that removal of his organs did not cause death. Attitudes toward euthanasia and toward organ donation predicted participants' judgments of death and causation, over and above the effect of experimental condition. Regardless of the moral valence of the scenario, participants who were more in favor of organ donation, in general, were more likely to believe that the patient was dead and that organ removal did not cause death. Conversely, participants who were more strongly opposed to euthanasia were more likely to believe that the patient was alive and that organ removal caused death. These results were replicated in a second sample of participants, using different vignettes in which salient characteristics were changed. The results are discussed in light of the theoretical framework of motivated reasoning. This framework

explains reasoning in terms of an interaction of motivational and cognitive processes, whereby motivation influences the selection of cognitive processes and representations applied to a given domain. In this case, moral evaluations of organ transplantation created the motivation to reach factual conclusions about death and causation that, in general, validated those moral evaluations. An alternative explanation – Knobe's (2010) person-as-moralist model – is also considered, according to which many basic concepts, including causation, are appropriately imbued with moral features. The findings reported here extend the application of both the motivated reasoning and person-as-moralist models into a new domain, that of judgments about death.

Session III: 11:00–11:55
Room A: Adrian Andrzej Ziolkowski
Title: Few Remarks on Methodology
Abstract: Methodological considerations are present in many discussions concerning results obtained by experimental philosophers. In my talk I will present two case studies, each showing particular methodological issue that may cause problems in certain areas of investigation of experimental philosophy. First, I will consider the differences between the within-subject and between-subject design in experiments concerning contextualism. I will argue that the within-subject design can be a source of differences in judgments that are merely a product of an interaction between that design and subjects' beliefs concerning the experimental procedure. Second, I will discuss the challenge of collecting genuine semantic intuitions in studies on the topic of reference of proper names. Here I will consider whether certain answers in surveys modeled on Kripke's thought experiments against descriptivism can be in fact identified with particular theories of reference. I will support my analysis with the results of my own studies, which I will introduce as 'methodological experiments', i.e. experiments designed to detect shortcomings of certain x-phi methods applied in previous studies. My main aim will be to draw conclusions that could help make x-phi studies more effective in reaching the goals that experimental philosophers are seeking to accomplish.

Room B: Andrew Higgins (University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign), and Jacob Levernier (University of Oregon)
Title: Mapping Human Values
Abstract: What we say about the dead may say as much about us as it does about them. Obituaries, in particular, are records of human values. When we describe our beloved dead in an obituary, we emphasize the aspects of their lives that 1) we find important, meaningful, and praiseworthy; 2) we expect that others in our communities would find important, meaningful, and praiseworthy; and 3) we can bring ourselves to say publicly, if only after a certain amount of elision and exaggeration. Our research generates and interprets maps of human values in different communities by data-mining obituaries. We use network analysis to generate maps of values and their interconnections. These maps represent, as it were, the values of a local community. The size of a term represents the number of other terms it co-occurred with another term in a single obituary.

Lunch: 12:00–1:55

Session IV: 2:00–2:55
Room A: Wesley Buckwalter, University of Waterloo
Title: Inability and Obligation: Compelling Counterexamples to "Ought Implies Can"
Abstract: It is often thought that judgments about what we ought to do are limited by judgments about what we can do, or that "ought implies can." We conducted seven experiments to test the link between obligations and abilities in ordinary moral evaluations. Moral obligations were

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repeatedly attributed in tandem with inability, regardless of the type, scope or duration of inability. This pattern continued across different ways of probing for attributions and for different levels of seriousness for the consequences of inaction. Together these results demonstrate that commonsense morality rejects the "ought implies can" principle for moral obligations, and that judgments about moral obligation are made independently of considerations about ability.

Room B: Joshua Alexander, Siena College
Title: Case Structure, Individual Difference, and the Epistemology of Disagreement
Abstract: One of the most hotly debated questions in contemporary epistemology concerns what we should do when we disagree. Some epistemologists argue that we should be moved by the fact that we disagree; others argue that it is perfectly reasonable to remain steadfast in our own beliefs despite the fact that we disagree. Both sides to this debate use what's sometimes called the "method of cases," designing hypothetical cases and using what we think about those cases as evidence that specific theories are true (or false) and as reasons for believing as such. In this presentation, we examine what factors influence how we think about the kinds of cases typically used in the epistemology of disagreement.

Session V: 3:00–3:55
Room A: Gunnar Björnsson, Umeå University
Title: Manipulators, Parasites, and Generalization Arguments
Abstract: According to manipulation arguments for incompatibilism about moral responsibility, some cases of manipulation undermine an agent's responsibility without being relevantly different from any other form of deterministic causal influence by factors outside an agent's control. If this is right, any such influence undermines the agent's responsibility, and incompatibilism follows. However, recent studies suggest that manipulation undermines responsibility only in virtue of the manipulator's intentions: when the manipulator is unaware of or uninterested in the resulting action, their actions do little to undermine agents' responsibility. This suggests that the responsibility-undermining effects of manipulation are essentially social, and that they therefore do not generalise in the way required for the argument. In this talk, however, I present experimental results showing that the effects of manipulation can be replicated for case without involvement of intentional manipulation, and without violent plausible compatibilist conditions. Based on this I sketch a new powerful form of generalisation argument and discuss ways for compatibilists to respond.

Room B: Justin Khoo, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Title: Moral Disagreement and the Exclusion Principle
Abstract: A widely accepted principle in meta-ethics and philosophy of language is that if two parties genuinely disagree by making certain claims, then at least one of those claims must be incorrect (we call this "the exclusion principle"). This principle serves as the centerpiece of many arguments in meta-ethics which challenge views on the grounds that they are incompatible with it. As a result, many meta-ethical views are designed with the goal of being consistent with the exclusion principle. In a series of experimental studies drawing on the recent empirical literature on folk moral relativism, we argue that the exclusion principle is false. Presented with a scenario in which one character says "X didn't do anything morally wrong" and another who responds to the first by saying, "No, X did do something morally wrong", participants were inclined to agree with the statement that the two characters disagree, but were also inclined to disagree with the statement that at least one of the two characters' claims must be incorrect. We discuss the upshot of this result for several kinds of moral semantic theories.

Session VI: 4:00–4:55
Room A: Masaharu Mizumoto, Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
Title: Cross-Linguistic Deference
Abstract: Philosophers who have tried to explain the Kripke- Putnam externalist semantics of the natural kind terms and proper names have done so by appealing to the notion of deference. But in order to maintain it as a semantic theory, it is essential to presuppose a notion of linguistic community. However, as a matter of historical facts, there have been such things as cross-linguistic deference, which have been ignored in the literature of philosophy of language. In this paper we present empirical data of Japanese showing that they are willing to defer to the use of a natural kind term ("water" and counterparts) by culturally influential people even if it is against the knowledge of basic chemical facts (water = $H2O$), while unwilling to do so to the same use of culturally minor people. We will then give data of American people for comparison, who turned out to be generally unwilling to defer to the use of other people. The results imply that, 1) fixation of reference is not a matter of semantic rules, except in special cases of there being shared linguistic norms, and 2) if philosophers generally ignore such phenomena of cross-linguistic deference and try to give semantic theories of reference, that may be because they just happened to be on the culturally dominant side.

Room B: Lieuwe Zijlstra, Ghent University and Yale University
Title: Explaining Variation on People's Metaethical Attitudes: Why Meta-Ethics and Normative Ethics are intertwined for the Folk
Abstract: Research about people's meta-ethical attitudes has recently shown that people possess both objectivistic and relativistic attitudes towards morality. Indeed, people vary their objectivity ascriptions depending on the moral beliefs at issue, and there is interpersonal variation in objectivity ascriptions. According to Wright (unpublished manuscript), people's objectivity ascriptions reflect a psychosocial strategy to determine their tolerance for morally divergent attitudes of others. Empirical results of Wrights' experiments indeed show that meta-ethical attitudes are related to people's tolerance of morally divergent others (cf. Skitka, Bauman & Sargis 2005; Haidt, Rosenberg & Hom, 2003). Rather than determining tolerance, we think that the essential function of meta-ethical attitudes is to support one's own moral convictions, especially if these moral convictions are central to aspects of people's identity and the social group. If true, the observed differentiation in objectivity ascriptions in previous research will follow individual-specific patterns based on people's moral convictions. Moreover, this also explains why meta-ethical attitudes are related to tolerance: to prevent influences that might weaken the strength of normative commitments. These hypotheses will be tested in questionnaire-based experiments. In a second study we also plan to manipulate people's emotional commitment to moral issues, which influences the strength of their normative commitments, in order to test whether this also increases people's objectivity ascriptions. Finally, we aim to discuss our hypotheses, methods and results with the audience.

Break: 5:00–5:25

Keynote Adress: 5:30–7:00
Room A: John Turri
Title: A New Paradigm for Epistemology