

Daniel Kaplan

Curriculum Vitae

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Areas of Specialization and Competence

- AOS Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Logic, Logic
- AOC Ancient Philosophy (esp. Aristotle), German Idealism, Kant

Education

- 2021 **PhD in Philosophy**,
(defended) *University of Pittsburgh*, Pittsburgh, PA,
Dissertation: "Substructural Content".
Committee: Robert Brandom, James Shaw, Erica Shumener, Greg Restall.
Short Abstract: It is nearly ubiquitous for philosophers interested in meaning and consequence to *first* provide a semantics for sentences and *next* define what it means for sentences to follow from one another. Structural features of consequence such as monotonicity, transitivity, contraction, and reflexivity are rarely acknowledged except insofar as they are presupposed by whatever we intend with "follows from". Since "follows from" succeeds sentence meaning, structural features are taken to presuppose robust constraints on the latter. My dissertation argues that this setup is mistaken; it misunderstands the connection between sentence meaning and what structural features require of content. For example, monotonicity is taken to follow from strong assumptions concerning the compositionality of sentence meaning. As a result the setup assumes that substructural consequence relations require different understandings of content. If we reject this setup and posit a closer relationship between meaning and consequence, then we are better able to understand what sorts of constraints are placed on semantic content by structural rules. I develop a view in which the two are maximally close: meaning just is contribution to consequence. Refiguring the relationship between meaning and consequence also yields surprising insights for the philosophy of language and meta-ethics. (*Full abstract on p. 5*)
- M.A. in Philosophy**,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2012 **B.A. in Philosophy and Mathematics (Honors)**, *magna cum laude*,
Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA,
Minor: German
Honors Thesis in Mathematics, Thesis Title: "A Classification of Nonstandard Models of Peano Arithmetic by Goodstein's Theorem" (<https://digital.fandm.edu/object/scholars-square2386>).

Certificates

- 2019 **Achievement in Pedagogy Badge**,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.

Publications

Conference Proceedings

- 2018 "A multi-succedent sequent calculus for logical expressivists". In Pavel Arazim and Tomáš Lávička (eds.) *The Logica yearbook 2017*, p. 139-153 (London: College Publications).

Appointments & Experience

- Jan. 2022–
Dec. 2023 **Horizons Post-Doctoral Fellow**, *Philosophy Department*,
Concordia University, Montreal, QC, Canada.
Research on logical expressivism and inferentialism and other tasks as assigned by the project supervisor: Prof. Ulf Hlobil.
- Fall 2017 &
AY 18–19 **Teaching Assistant and Instructor**, *Philosophy Department*,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA., Courses: .
Summer 2019: INDEPENDENT INSTRUCTOR: Introduction to Logic
Spring 2019: INDEPENDENT INSTRUCTOR: Introduction to Ethics
Fall 2018: TEACHING ASSISTANT: Introduction to Philosophical Problems (primary instructor: Dmitri Gallow)
Fall 2017: TEACHING ASSISTANT: History of Ancient Philosophy (primary instructor: Jessica Gelber)
- Spring &
Summer 2018 **Doctoral Fellow**, *University of Leipzig*,
Leipzig, Germany.
 - Funding to conduct independent research
 - Taught master's level seminar on the Philosophy of Logic
- AYs 15–17 **Graduate Research Assistant** for Robert Brandom, *Philosophy Department*,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
Research towards logical applications of logical expressivism and inferentialism
- 2011 **Hackman Summer Scholar Program:** "Joint Caring About Truth." Adviser: Bennett Helm, *Franklin & Marshall College*, Lancaster, PA.
The Hackman Summer Scholar Program provides stipends to students in order for them to undertake collaborative research projects with faculty.

Awards and Grants

- 2018 – 2020 Elizabeth Baranger Award for Excellence in Teaching, nominee (3×)
2018 Doctoral Fellow, Universität Leipzig
- 2014 – 2015 Mellon First Year Graduate Fellowship. University of Pittsburgh.
2012 John Kershner Scholar in Mathematics
- 2011 Hackman Summer Scholar Program: "Joint Caring About Truth." Adviser: Bennett Helm.
- 2011 Pi Mu Epsilon Mathematics Honor Society; positions held: President
- 2010 John B. Noss Award in Philosophy

Presentations

Refereed Talks

- Sep. 2019 "Defeasible Content." At *Defeasible Inference in Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence* at UCLA. (<https://philosophy.ucla.edu/event/defeasible-inference/>)
- June 2018 "An inferential role semantics for bilateralists." At *Logica 2018* in Hejnice, Czech Republic. (<http://logika.flu.cas.cz/en/logica/logica-20182-2>)
- May 2018 "An inferentialist account of (implicit) definition." At *PhDs in Logic X* in Prague, Czech Republic. (<https://logic.ff.cuni.cz/research/conferences/phd-logic/>)
- June 2017 'A Multi-Succedent Sequent Calculus for Logical Expressivists.' At *Logica 2017* in Hejnice, Czech Republic. (<http://logika.flu.cas.cz/en/logica-2017/logica-2017>)

- Nov. 2016 "Grounding Logic on Defeasible, Material Implications." (co-presenter: Ulf Hlobil). At the 5th Workshop on Philosophical Logic of the Argentinean Society of Philosophical Analysis (SADAF) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (<http://ba-logic.com/5th-workshop-philosophical-logic/>)
- Sept. 2016 "Conflicts between Common-sensical and Naturalistic Worldviews." At the *Idealism and the Philosophy of Mind* Conference in London, England. (<https://idealismsite.wordpress.com/conference/>)
- Dec. 2011 "Objectivity and Joint Caring About Truth." (co-presenter: Bennett Helm). At the *Psycho-Ontology Conference* in Jerusalem, Israel. (<http://www.psychoontology.org/docs/helm-kaplan.pdf>)

Invited Talks

- Sept. 2020 "*Generation and Corruption*, II.5 (332b5–)", (co-presenter: Michael Lang) at *Cornell Graduate Workshop on Aristotle, Generation and Corruption II.1-6*. (<https://philosophy.cornell.edu/annual-ancient-philosophy-workshop>)
- Aug. 2018 "Inferential role semantics for bilateralists." At the 7th Workshop on Philosophical Logic of the Argentinean Society of Philosophical Analysis (SADAF) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (<http://ba-logic.com/workshops/7th-workshop/>)
- March 2017 "Precisifying a Notion of Logical Expression." At the "Logics of Consequence" workshop at Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. (<https://sites.google.com/site/logicsofconsequence/>)

Other

- March 2019 Comments on Derek Haderlie's "Why Wishful Thinking is a Distinct Challenge for Noncognitivists", at the 20th Annual Pitt-CMU Graduate Philosophy Conference in Pittsburgh, PA.
- Apr. 2012 "A McDowellian Theory of Conceptual Content." Poster presentation at the Spring Student Research Fair, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.
- Apr. 2012 "A classification of nonstandard models of Peano Arithmetic by Goodstein's Theorem." Poster presentation at the Spring Student Research Fair, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.
- Sep. 2011 "Objectivity, Rule-Following, and Joint Commitment." Poster presentation at the Fall Student Research Fair, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.

Graduate Coursework

* = Indicates a class audited. Except where indicated classes were taken at University of Pittsburgh.

- Fall 2014
- *PHIL 2050 - Topics in the History of Philosophy (Schopenhauer)
 - PHIL 2175 - Studies in Kant (Kant's Moral Philosophy)
 - *PHIL 2335 - Topics in Contemporary Philosophy (Sellars' Philosophy)
 - PHIL 2400 - Metaphysics-Epistemology (CORE)
- Spring 2015
- *PHIL 2075 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (Aristotle EN.VI–VII)
 - *PHIL 2180 - Hegel (ch. IV of Phenomenology of Spirit)
 - PHIL 2300 - Ethics (CORE)
 - PHIL 2500 - Advanced Logic (CORE)

- Fall 2015
- PHIL 2245 -Analytic Philosophy
 - PHIL 2205 - Topics in Ethics (Bipolar Relation)
 - *PHIL 2170 - The Analytic of Kant's KrV
 - PHIL 2600 - Philosophy of Science (CORE)
- Spring 2016
- PHIL 2075 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (Aristotle's Physics)
 - *PHIL 2180 - Hegel (Philosophy of Spirit)
 - PHIL 2420 - Philosophy of Language (Deontic Logic & Decision Theory)
- Fall 2016
- *PHIL 2505 - Philosophy of Logic (Inferentialism)
 - PHIL 2130 - Leibniz
 - *PHIL 2075 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (later Hellenistic Philosophy)
 - *PHIL 2050 - Topics in History of Philosophy (Part I: Absolute Idealism, Kant's critical Philosophy)
 - PHIL 2902 - Directed Study (Philosophy of Logic and Language)
- Spring 2017
- PHIL 2075 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (Aristotle's *De Anima*)
 - *PHIL 2050 - Topics in History of Philosophy (Part II: Absolute Idealism, Hegel's Greater Logic)
- Fall 2017
- *PHIL 2180 - Hegel (Phenomenology)
 - PHIL 2900 - Teaching Philosophy
- SoSe 2018
- * Oberseminar: Kritik der Reinen Theorie (with Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer at the University of Leipzig)
 - * Kant's Doctrine of Right (at University of Leipzig)

Other

- Summer 2015 5th International Summer School in German Philosophy:
The "Idealism" in German Idealism (Kant, Fichte, and Hegel)
University of Bonn, Germany
with Michael Forster and Markus Gabriel
<https://philevents.org/event/show/17211>
- Summer 2016 2nd International Summer School in Kant and German idealism:
Freedom and Human Nature in Kant, Fichte and Hegel
University of Tübingen, Germany
with Julia Peters and Ulrich Schlösser
[link ↗](#)
- Fall 2016–Fall 2020 *Classical Philosophy and Ancient Science* Reading Group. University of Pittsburgh.
The CPAS Reading Group reads selections of ancient philosophy in the original Greek & Latin. Students take turns translating and providing commentary on texts while faculty provide feedback on their translations. The group usually devotes each of the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters to a single text.

Academic Service

- AY 19–20 Ancient Philosophy Job Search Committee.
Philosophy Department. University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA.

- AY 18–19 & Philosophy Colloquium Series: Organizing Committee.
AY 19–20 Philosophy Department. University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA.
- AY 18–19 & Student-Faculty Works-in-Progress Talks: Organizing Committee.
AY 19–20 Philosophy Department. University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA.
- Guest Editor (with Alnica Visser) of the *Hegel Bulletin*, Volume 40 - Special Issue 1 - April 2019. Topic of Special Issue: “Science of Logic.”
- Planning & Scientific Committee, “Reconsidering Hegel’s Logic”. A conference on Hegel’s *Science of Logic* at the University of Pittsburgh (April 2017). (<https://philevents.org/event/show/28938>)
- I have performed peer-review for: *Erkenntnis*, *Hegel Bulletin*, *Journal of Transcendental Philosophy*, *Análisis Filosófico*.
- 2011-2012 Pi Mu Epsilon Mathematics Honor Society. Positions Held: President.
- 2011-2012 *Stance Undergraduate Philosophy Journal*: Assistant Editorial Board Member (<http://stance.iweb.bsu.edu/>)
- 2011-2012 F&M Philosophy Club – Revived club and served as president. (<http://www.fandm.edu/philosophy/for-current-students/philosophy-club>)

Languages

English (native), German, Ancient Greek (reading), Latin (some reading)

References

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Dmitri Gallow

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Dissertation Abstract

This dissertation investigates the way in which structural rules of implication place constraints on semantic content as well as how those constraints have been misunderstood. By “structural rule” I mean the sequent calculus rules of monotonicity (weakening), transitivity (cut), contraction (aka W), and reflexivity (Idempotence). E.g.:

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \Delta}{\Pi, \Gamma \vdash \Delta} \text{ L-Monotonicity}$$

$$\frac{\Pi, \Pi, \Gamma \vdash \Delta}{\Pi, \Gamma \vdash \Delta} \text{ L-Contraction}$$

I argue that the constraints such structural rules place on the content of sentences have often been misunderstood as presuppositions of those rules. Thus, in order to deny or relax the structural rule, logicians have concluded that the presupposition must be denied as well. I illustrate this by putting forward an alternative, inferentialist understanding of content according to which the meaning of a sentence is to be understood in terms of its contribution to good implication. On this understanding, logical space is opened up to deny or relax these structural rules without denying (what are often assumed to be) obvious constraints on content.

The first part of the dissertation introduces and motivates inferentialism as well as substructural logic. In particular, I motivate the idea that implication is widely substructural and that an inferentialist approach is well suited to capturing this sort of behavior. In a chapter on defeasible reasoning, for example, I argue that understanding non-monotonic reasoning in terms of a kinematics of defeat fails to adequately circumscribe the concept of defeat; or, where it does, fails to adequately capture all of the nuances of non-monotonic reasoning. We should therefore, shift to a framework on which reasoning is understood to be fundamentally non-monotonic, rather than trying to build this into what is otherwise a monotonic theory of deduction. Another major accomplishment of this part of the dissertation is the construction of a formally tractable inferential role semantics. The semantics is proven sound and complete for a straightforward sequent calculus presentation of radically substructural consequence relations and a powerful representation theorem is proven, which reinforces the tractability and utility of the framework. The upshot of the first part of the dissertation is that (i) substructural implication is widespread, (ii) many attempts to characterize such reasoning are inadequate, and (iii) an inferentialist understanding of content has the potential to provide an adequate and philosophical enlightening account of substructural implication.

The logical space opened up by the first part of the dissertation is filled in by the second part. Here I advance the thesis of *substructural content*, according to which the behavior of sentences in substructural implications can be understood as *pushed all the way down into the content*. This idiom is intended to convey the thought that it is in virtue of features of meaning itself—and not e.g. exogetic features of implication or some hyper-intensional understanding of content—that implication is substructural. I argue for this thought by showing how structural rules of implication place constraints on content which are often mistaken for presuppositions of those structural rules. Thus, it is tacitly assumed that to deny those rules these constraints must be denied as well. But, if we instead understand content in terms of contribution to good implication, we are not forced to abandon these constraints to account for substructural implication. For example, in the case of monotonicity, it is often assumed that **P1** and **P2** below yield **C** (i.e. monotonicity):

P1: In a proper accounting of *content*, the content of a sentence *A* is insulated from the argumentative contexts in which it appears. That is, *A* has the same content regardless of what auxilliary premises surround it. (Content Insulation)

P2: If the content of *A* is unaffected by the auxilliary hypotheses with which it appears, then the contribution it makes to good implications is also so unaffected. (Implication Insulation)

C: In a proper account of *content*, sentences only figure in monotonic implications.

But we can maintain **P1** and **P2** and reject monotonicity if we reject the following unstated assumption instead, which is exactly what my understanding of substructural content allows us to do:

(P3): If the content of *A* and the manner in which that content contributes to good implication is unaffected by auxilliary hypotheses, then if *C* follows from *A* this cannot be infirmed by e.g. the addition of *B*. (Insulation Entails Monotonicity)

I provide analogous characterizations and diagnoses for the remaining three structural features. While the lessons of contraction and monotonicity concern the insulation of content in context, the lessons of transitivity and reflexivity concern the relationship between a sentence's meaning as a premise and conclusion of an implication. The constraints that each structural rule places on content may be summarized thusly:

Same content and same contribution...	(Relative to One Side of The Turnstile)	(Across the Turnstile) ...as a premise and as a conclusion
In different contexts	Monotonicity	Transitivity
Within a single context	Contraction	Reflexivity

The mistake of many accounts of substructural implication is the thought that giving up each of these structural rules require giving up the associated constraint on content. An understanding of content as substructural shows how this is not required.

Finally, in the third part of the dissertation I exhibit further applications and directions of research that are revealed by such an understanding of content. First, I examine the pragmatics of sentences whose content is understood in terms of their contribution to good implication. I believe that work by Jean-Yves Girard on ludics presents the potential to understand how two interlocutors can converge on a large enough number of implications in which a sentence is involved to successfully communicate without necessarily agreeing on every connection between every sentence in the language. This helps answer an objection familiar to holistic accounts of content (though not only holistic accounts; see, for example, recent work by John MacFarlane on vagueness), namely that if every connection a sentence has to other sentences is constitutive of that sentence's meaning then communication looks miraculous: since in order for one speaker to mean p and to be understood by the hearer as meaning p , both the speaker and hearer must have identical understandings of p and thus the hearer must share all of the relevant connections to p that the speaker has. I believe that a substructural understanding of content can be naturally developed to include a substructural pragmatics concerning that content.

I extract a general lesson from the argument I've been advancing in the dissertation and apply it to two contemporary debates. The general lesson is this: I've been exploring a tension between what we might call "dependence" and "independence". Content, as I understand it, is radically *dependent*: in the sense that the meaning of a sentence depends potentially upon the meaning of every other sentence. Changes in the meaning of another sentence (and so what follows from what) can ripple throughout the semantic universe to infect every other sentence. On the other hand, content as I understand it, is radically *independent*. The content of each sentence is completely insulated from the contexts in which it appears.

An understanding of content that shows a tension such as this to be merely apparent is philosophically useful. For example, in the philosophy of language, it can help mediate debates concerning contextualism and semantic minimalism. The minimalist in that debate claims that we must understand the semantic content of a sentence—*what is said*, strictly speaking—as almost entirely insulated from pragmatic considerations (independence). That is: (*modulo* a few minor things) a sentence's content is unaffected by the context in which it appears. Nevertheless, contextualists also rightly observe that the same sentence can be used to say (and not merely imply) quite divergent things (dependence). So it looks like the same sentence *is* used to say different things in different contexts. I believe that understanding content as substructural gives us a way of mediating this debate to a large extent. In particular, it creates a lot more space for understanding, as features of meaning, the sort of phenomena to which the contextualist appeals without abandoning the idea that content is largely insulated from the contexts in which it appears.

Another application of the thesis of substructural content can be found in meta-ethics. The literature on particularism, for example, involves a disagreement over whether it is possible to formulate rules for moral conduct given that most rules we try to formulate will necessarily include all manner of exception. A central question is whether there can be some property that an action has which makes it wrong and which holds of that action generally (and not just on particular occasions). Given that *the same* action is sometimes permitted, sometimes prohibited, this is far from clear. If we understand the obtaining of such features on the model of substructural content, then it is possible to have an understanding of properties of action which are (a) relevantly insulated from the context of performance (independence), but (b) nevertheless contribute generally to the rightness/wrongness of action (dependence).

The third and final part of the dissertation demonstrates that the thesis of substructural content doesn't just make a contribution to the philosophy of logic, but has great potential to make contributions to a number of other areas of philosophy.