

# M R. X. Dentith

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## AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

Epistemology  
Philosophy of Science  
Argumentation Theory

## AREAS OF COMPETENCY

Ethics  
20th Century French Philosophy  
19th Century German Philosophy

## EDUCATION

**PhD (Philosophy)**, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 3/2007-10/2012 (Viva held on 13/2/2012; passed with minor revisions)

- Thesis title: *In defence of conspiracy theories*
- Thesis supervisors: Drs. Jonathan McKeown-Green (Auckland) and Justine Kingsbury (Waikato)
- Thesis examiners: Associate Professor Charles Pigden (Otago) and Dr. David Coady (Tasmania)
- Academic field of interest: epistemology, philosophy of conspiracy theory

**MA (Philosophy)**, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 3/1999-2/2001, Second Class Division with Honours

- Dissertation title: *Omega and Geist: a comparison of the emerging mind of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and G. W. F. Hegel*
- Dissertation supervisor: Associate Professor Robert Wicks

**BA (Double Major: Anthropology and Philosophy)**, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 3/1996-11/1998

**Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (Primary)**, Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa/Massey University, 1/2014-11/2014

## ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai**, 2021-onwards

- Associate Professor in the *Center for International Philosophy (Zhuhai) & School of Philosophy (Beijing)*

**Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato/University of Waikato**, 2019-2020

- Teaching Fellow

**Te Pūnaha Matatini** (Research institute of Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 2020

- Researcher on *The Disinformation Project*

**New Europe College**, Bucharest, 2018

- Fellow - Research project title: *Towards an epistemology of secrecy*

**Institute for Research in the Humanities**, University of Bucharest, 2016-2017

- Fellow - Research project title: *The Ethics of Investigation: When are we obliged to take conspiracy theories seriously?*

**Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland**

- Professional Teaching Fellow, 2008-2013

## PUBLICATIONS

H-Index: 11

Citation count: 649

### PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

- "Some Conspiracy Theories," *Social Epistemology* (forthcoming)
- "The Philosophy of Conspiracy Theory in Context: An Introduction to the Special Issue on Conspiracy Theory Theory and Philosophy," *Social Epistemology* (forthcoming)
- "Suspicious conspiracy theories," *Synthese* (forthcoming). DOI:10.1007/s11229-022-03602-4
- "Debunking conspiracy theories," *Synthese*, 198, 2021, pp. 9897-9911. DOI: 10.1007/s11229-020-02694-0
- "Conspiracy theories on the basis of the evidence," *Synthese*, 6, 2019, pp. 2243-61. DOI: 10.1007/s11229-017-1532-7
- "What is fake news?," *University of Bucharest Review*, VIII(2), 2018, pp. 24-34
- "A (naive) view of conspiracy as collective action," *Filosofia e Collettività*, 22, 2018, pp. 61-71
- "The Problem of Conspiracism," *Argumenta* 3(2), 2018, pp. 327-343. DOI: 10.23811/58.arg2017.den
- "Expertise and conspiracy theories," *Social Epistemology*, 32(3), 2018, pp. 196-208. DOI: 10.1080/02691728.2018.1440021
- (with Martin Orr) "Secrecy and Conspiracy," *Episteme*, 15(4), 2018, pp. 433-450, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2017.9>
- "The problem of fake news," *Public Reason*, 8(1-2): 65-79, 2016
- "When inferring to a conspiracy might be the best explanation," *Social Epistemology*, 30(5), 2016, pp. 572-591, DOI: 10.1080/02691728.2016.1172362

### BOOKS

- *Understanding Conspiracy Theories*, Manchester University Press (forthcoming)
- *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, ISBN: 978-1-78660-828-4
- *The Philosophy of Conspiracy Theories*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, ISBN: 978-1-137-36315-2

### BOOK CHAPTERS

- "COVID-19 in Aotearoa New Zealand: the Darker Side of Paradise" in *Covid Conspiracy Theories in Global Perspective* (eds. Peter Knight and Michael Butter), Routledge (forthcoming)
- "Fun with Alex Jones and David Icke: How weird conspiracy theories inform our theories about conspiracy theory" in *Making fun of/with Conspiracy Theories* (eds. Julien Giry & Aurore Van de Winkel), forthcoming
- "Conspiracy Theory Theory, Epistemology, and Eastern Europe" in *Conspiracy Theories in Eastern Europe* (ed. Corneliu Pintilescu, Anastasiya Astapova, Onoriu Colăcel, & Tamás Scheibner), 2020
- "From Alien-shapeshifting Lizards to the Dodgy Dossier: The Conspiracists and the Conspiracy Theorists" in *Conspiracy Theories and Philosophy* (eds. Richard Green & Rachel Robison-Greene), Open Court Publishing, 2020
- "Introduction" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. ix-xii
- "What Particularism About Conspiracy Theories Entails" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. 59-69
- "The Conspiracy Theory Theorists and Their Attitude Towards Conspiracy Theory—Introduction to Section Two" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. 73-77
- (with Lee Basham) "The Psychologists' Conspiracy Panic: They Seek to Cure Everyone" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. 79-93

- (with Martin Orr) "Clearing Up Some Conceptual Confusions About Conspiracy Theory Theorizing" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. 141-53
- "Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously and Investigating Them" in *Taking Conspiracy Theories Seriously* (ed. M R. X. Dentith), Rowman and Littlefield, 2018, pp. 217-25
- (with Brian L. Keeley) "The applied epistemology of conspiracy theories" in *The Routledge Handbook on Applied Epistemology*, (eds. David Coady & James Chase), Routledge, 2018, pp. 284-94
- "The Philosophy of Conspiracy Theory: Bringing the Epistemology of a Freightened Term into the Social Sciences" in *Conspiracy Theories and the People Who Believe Them* (ed. Joe Uscinski), Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. 94-108
- "Have you Heard? - The Rumour as Reliable" in *Rumours and Communication in Asia in the Internet Age* (ed. Greg Dalziel), Routledge, 2013

#### OTHER

- (with Julia Duetz) "Reconciling Conceptual Confusions in the Le Monde Debate on Conspiracy Theories," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective* 11(10): 40-50. 2022. <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-7il>
- "Avoiding the Stereotyping of the Philosophy of Conspiracy Theories: A Reply to Hill," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective* 11 (8): 41-49. 2022. <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-74c>
- "Assessing the prevalence and nature of COVID-19 unreliable and untrustworthy information in Aotearoa New Zealand's social media, Jan-Aug 2020," Te Pūnaha Matatini, September 6th, 2020, <https://www.tepunahamatatini.ac.nz/2020/09/06/covid-19%20disinformation-in-aotearoa-new-zealand-social-media/>
- "The truth about conspiracy theories," iai News, August 26th, 2020, <https://iai.tv/articles/the-truth-about-conspiracy-theories-auid-1624>
- "The Christchurch terrorism conspiracy theories are not just false. They're dangerous," March 20th, 2019, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/20-03-2019/the-christchurch-terrorism-conspiracy-theories-are-not-just-false-theyre-dangerous/>
- "Taking Account of Conspiracy Theorising," *Colloquium*, August 15th, 2019, <https://medium.com/colloquium/taking-account-of-conspiracy-theorising-168342430f8a>
- "The Iniquity of the Conspiracy Inquirers," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 8(8), 2019, <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-4hQ>
- "Politics, Deception, and Being Self-Deceived," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 8(4), 2019, <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-48t>
- "Between Forteanism and Skepticism," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 7(11), 2018, <https://wp.me/p1Bfg0-43y>
- "Conspiracy theories and their Investigator(s)," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 6(4): 4-11, 2017, <http://wp.me/p1Bfg0-3xS>
- (with Martin Orr) "Clearing Up Some Conceptual Confusions About Conspiracy Theory Theorising," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 6(1): 9-16, 2017, <http://wp.me/p1Bfg0-3oY>
- "In defence of particularism: A reply to Stokes," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 5(11): 27-33, 2016, <http://wp.me/p1Bfg0-3jU>
- (with Lee Basham) "Social Science's Conspiracy-Theory Panic: Now They Want to Cure Everyone," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 5(10): 12-19, 2016, <http://wp.me/p1Bfg0-3fi>
- "Treating Conspiracy Theories Seriously: A Reply to Basham on Dentith," *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 5(9): 1-5, 2016, <http://wp.me/p1Bfg0-3ak>
- (with Lee Basham) "Bad thinkers? Don't be so gullible!," 3 Quarks Daily, 2015, <http://www.3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2015/08/bad-thinkers-dont-be-so-gullible.html>

## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

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- **Thinking about Artificial Intelligence in Philosophy, Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai,** “Beyond Secrecy and Privacy in the Digital World” 29/10/2022
- **Te Herenga Waka/Victoria University of Wellington Department of Philosophy Research Seminar,** “For Whom the Fake News Tolls” 12/05/2022
- **Asian Epistemology Network 8th Online Meeting,** “What are the target audience(s) of fake news?” 13/3/2022
- **Undergraduate Philosophy Journal of Australasia Conference 2021,** Keynote: “Are conspiracy theories (epistemically) suspicious?,” 21/11/2021
- **Philosophy seminar,** Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai, “Suspicious Conspiracy Theories,” 22/10/2021
- **Australasian Association of Philosophy Conference 2021,** “Fake News vs. ‘That’s Just Fake News,’” 8/7/2021
- **UCD Online Conference on the Philosophy of Conspiracy Theories,** University College Dublin,  
- “Sorting Between Warranted and Unwarranted Conspiracy Theories,” 1/7/2021
- **Sociopolitical Issues of a "Problematic Category:" Conspiracy Theories - Discourses, (Dis)Qualifications, Uses,** Universite de Tours, “Sorting Between Warranted and Unwarranted Conspiracy Theories,” 10/6/2021
- **Perspectives of Paternalism in a Democratic Society,** Palacký University Olomouc, Keynote: “What, if anything, we should do about conspiracy theories?” 22/10/2021
- **Nammour Symposium,** Sacramento State University, “What isn’t fake news?” 7/4/2021
- **Philosophy Seminar Series,** Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, “Conspiracy theorising in the age of the novel coronavirus,” 24/3/2021
- **45th Midwest Colloquium of Philosophy,** “Conspiracy theorising in the age of the novel coronavirus,” 18/3/2021
- **New Ec(h)o Systems: Democracy in the age of social media,** Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo/ University of Otago, Invited speaker, 16/3/2021
- **International Conference on Misinformation and Fake News,** Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, Is Fake News just Propaganda?, 6/2/2021
- **Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato/University of Waikato Philosophy Seminar,** “What the fake,” 5/3/20
- **New Zealand Associate of Philosophy Conference (Auckland),** “What the fake,” 10/12/20
- **Institute for Research in the Humanities Seminar,** “What is fake about fake news,” 6/2018
- **COST Action COMPACT Talk (Bilderberg),** “Romanian conspiracy theories from the perspective of an outsider,” 5/2018
- **New Europe College Seminar,** “Secrecy and Privacy,” 5/2018
- **Boise State University Public Lecture,** “Investigating Conspiracy Theories: The case for treating conspiracy theories seriously, even the (apparently) ridiculous ones,” 11/2017
- **Munroe Center for Social Inquiry Seminar Series,** CONSPIRACY THEORY – CONSPIRACY FACT: Understanding a perplexing social phenomenon, “Investigating Conspiracy Theories: The case for treating conspiracy theories seriously, even the (apparently) ridiculous ones,” 11/2017
- **Centrul de Cercetare in Etica Aplicata Seminar,** Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, “What makes ‘fake news’ ‘fake’ news?,” 4/2017
- **CELFIS Seminar,** Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, “Expertise and Conspiracy Theories,” 3/2017

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

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- Advisor to Professor Karen Douglas' (Kent) project "Consequences of conspiracy theories (CONSPIRACY\_FX)"
- Organiser of the "Conspiracy Theory Theorist Social Club" (an international, interdisciplinary online reading group around recent work on conspiracy theory theory)
- European Research Council Expert Reviewer
- Social Epistemology and Reply Collective - Full member
- Reviewer: Episteme; Erkenntnis; Diametros; Journal of Cyber Policy; Journal of Social Philosophy; Philosophia; Philosophical Psychology; Philosophical Quarterly; Philosophical Studies; Philosophy of the Social Sciences; Political Studies; Social Epistemology

## CONFERENCES ORGANISED

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- Organiser of "The 1st International Conference on the Philosophy of Conspiracy Theory" (online; February 3-6th, 2022)

## SELECTED MEDIA CONTRIBUTIONS

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- Co-host of *The Podcaster's Guide to the Conspiracy*, 2014-current, <http://conspiracism.podbean.com>
- "Should we be worried about COVID-19 conspiracy theories?," The Big Q, August 27th, 2020, <https://www.thebigq.org/2020/08/27/should-we-be-worried-about-covid-19-conspiracy-theories/>
- 'It's a hellscape': The age of misinformation is here - can government close the rabbit hole?, 2021, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/300469809/its-a-hellscape-the-age-of-misinformation-is-here--can-government-close-the-rabbit-hole>
- Poisoned All Blacks, living Elvis and the fake moon landing: What some Kiwis believe, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190624231744/https://www.stuff.co.nz/science/112877029/poisoned-all-blacks-elvis-and-the-moon-landing-what-some-kiwis-believe-in>
- The Big Q: Believing the "unbelievable:" What are conspiracy theories and how do they flourish?, <http://95bfm.com/bcast/the-big-q-believing-the-“unbelievable-”-what-are-conspiracy-theories-and-how-do-they-flourish-june>
- Interviewed for *Digi24*, 2017, <http://www.digi24.ro/opinii/cum-functioneaza-teoriile-conspiratiei-din-romania-pana-in-sua-interviu-cu-cercetatorul-matthew-dentith-731087>
- Interviewed for *Scena9*, 2017, <http://www.scena9.ro/article/conspiratii-fake-news-matthew-dentith>
- Interviewed for *Maszol*, 2017, <http://www.maszol.ro/index.php/hatter/78357-soros-fia-ciolo-es-tarsai-osszeeskuveselmelet-szakert-t-kerdeztunk>
- Interviewed for *Fort Myer's Florida Weekly*, 2015, [http://fortmyers.floridaweekly.com/news/2015-08-26/Top\\_News/conspiracy\\_theory\\_files.html](http://fortmyers.floridaweekly.com/news/2015-08-26/Top_News/conspiracy_theory_files.html)

## TEACHING HISTORY

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**Associate Professor, Center for International Philosophy**, Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai, 2021-onwards

- Lecturer for the General Education Course 'Introduction to Critical Thinking'
- Lecturer for the General Education Course 'The Epistemology of Weird Beliefs'

**Teaching Fellow, School of Social Sciences (Philosophy Programme)**, Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato/University of Waikato, 2006, 2019-2020

- Lecturer for the graduate course 'Foundations of Philosophical Research'
- Lecturer for the second/third year course 'Reason, Science and Pseudoscience'

- Lecturer for the first year course 'Critical Thinking'
- Lecturer for the first year course 'Social and Moral Philosophy'

**Tutor, Centre for Continuing Education, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 2008-2014**

- Course convenor and lecturer for 'Conspiracy Theories - Philosophy and Critical Thinking'
- Course convenor and lecturer for 'Introduction to Critical Thinking'

**Professional Teaching Fellow, School of Psychological Medicine, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 2008-2013**

- Lecturer in the third year Medical Humanities programme, teaching 'Philosophy of Medicine'
- Curriculum development and assessment redesign for 'Philosophy of Medicine'

**Professional Teaching Fellow, Department of Philosophy, Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland, 2008-2013**

- Lecturer for the first year course 'Introduction to Critical Thinking'
- Curriculum and assessment redesign for 'Introduction to Critical Thinking'
- Tutor for the first year course 'Introduction to Ethics'
- Tutor for the second/third year courses: 'Metaphysical Structures of the World;' 'Philosophy of Biology;' 'Philosophy of Social Science;' 'Problems in Epistemology'

## **REFEREES**

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### **Assoc. Prof. Liezl van Zyl**

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### **Prof. Brian L. Keeley**

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 Claremont, CA 91711  
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### **Assoc. Prof. Charles Pigden**

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