

ALEXANDER NICHOLAS HAITOS

Southern Connecticut State University
Department of Philosophy, Engleman Hall D215
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AOS: American Philosophy, History of Metaphysics, Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics

AOC: History of Philosophy, Continental Philosophy (esp. Phenomenology and Existentialism),
Philosophy and Literature

Further Teaching Competencies: Logic (Term, Sentence, and First-Order Predicate Logic),
Ethics, Philosophy of Medicine/Medical Ethics

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Philosophy, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX August 2018

Dissertation: Finding the Foundations of the World in Aesthetic Experience: The Radical
Empiricism of William James and the Metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead

Director: John J. McDermott

Committee: Daniel Conway, Theodore George, Mary Ann O'Farrell

M.A. English, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX December 2015

Thesis: Pitfalls of Perfection: Rethinking Hawthorne's Treatment of Science and the
Danger of Extremes in "The Artist of the Beautiful" and "The Birthmark"

Director: Mary Ann O'Farrell

B.A. Philosophy, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA May 2010

Highest Honors, Departmental Honors, President's Scholar 2010–2011

South Mountain College Program, Fall 2007–Spring 2010

Study Abroad, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy, Spring 2009

FACULTY POSITIONS

2018- Adjunct Lecturer, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2017 Young Scholar Award, for Best Doctoral Essay, from the International Process
Network, Paper title: "The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian
Philosophy of Education"

Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP) Travel Grant Recipient,
to participate in the 20th Summer Institute in American Philosophy (SIAP)

- 2016 International Conference Presentation Grant from the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
- 2014 International Travel Award from the Texas A&M University College of Liberal Arts
International Travel Award from the Texas A&M University Graduate Student Council
- 2012 Texas A&M Philosophy Department Graduate Student Essay Prize, Paper title: “The Possibility of Authentic Being-with Others in *Being and Time*”
- 2011 International Travel Award from the Melburn G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at Texas A&M University
Young Scholar Award, for Young Process Scholar Essay Contest, from the International Process Network (one of two recipients), Paper title: “Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation”

PUBLICATIONS

Essays

“The World ‘Hangs Together’: Nature, non-being, and infinity in John Scotus Eriugena and Alfred North Whitehead,” in *Mind in Nature*, Maria-Teresa Teixeira, ed., Cambridge Scholars (forthcoming 2019).

“The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” in *Education from a Whiteheadian Point of View: Process, Rhythm, and Poiesis*, Vesselin Petrov and Adam Scarfe, eds., Cambridge Scholars (2019), pp. 96-108.

“The Problem of Novelty and the Atomization of Time,” in *A. N. Whitehead’s Thought through a New Prism*, Aljoscha Berve and Helmut Maaßen, eds., Cambridge Scholars (2016), pp. 119-134.

“Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation,” translated into Japanese by Hideki Mochiji, *Sophia Philosophica* 24 (Tokyo, 2012), pp. 89-107.

Under Contract / Commissioned

Entries on “John Locke,” “John Dewey,” and “Eternal Objects” in *Alfred North Whitehead: Leben—Werk—Wirkung*, Aljoscha Berve and Dennis Sölch, eds., J.B. Metzler Verlag (commissioned; publication expected 2020).

Variations on Some Themes of Process Metaphysics, co-editor with Helmut Maaßen, a volume in the *European Studies in Process Thought* series published by Cambridge Scholars (contract pending, publication expected 2020).

“Aesthetics of Existence: A Whiteheadian Existential Sensibility,” in *Variations on Some Themes of Process Metaphysics*, Alexander Haitos and Helmut Maaßen, eds., Cambridge Scholars (essay complete, publication expected 2020).

In Preparation

“Aestheticizing Rationality: William James and Alfred North Whitehead on the Function of Reason” for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Book Reviews

Gare, Arran. *The Philosophical Foundations of Ecological Civilization*. Oxford: Routledge, 2017. Published in *Process Studies* 47, no. 1-2 (2018), pp. 197-203; review solicited.

PRESENTATIONS

- 2019 “Everyday Aesthetics, Everywhere Process: Aesthetics in A. N. Whitehead’s Radically Empirical Philosophy,” 12th International Whitehead Conference, Brasília, Brazil, August 27-30
“Everyday Aesthetics, Everywhere Process: The Promise of A. N. Whitehead’s Radically Empirical Metaphysics,” invited lecture at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, March 20
- 2018 “Possibility and Beautiful Things: The Artistic Union of Past, Present, and Future,” 5th European Summer School for Process Thought, Budweis, Czech Republic, August 6-10
- 2017 “The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” 11th International Whitehead Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal, July 25-28
“Time, Possibility, and Process,” 11th International Whitehead Conference, Ponta Delgada, Azores, Portugal, July 25-28
“James and Whitehead: A Metaphysical Aesthetic,” Summer Institute in American Philosophy, Eugene, Oregon, July 10-15
- 2016 “The Cultivation of Aesthetic Intensity: A Whiteheadian Philosophy of Education,” 4th European Summer School for Process Thought, Sofia, Bulgaria, August 1-6
- 2015 “Aesthetics of Existence: A Whiteheadian Existential Sensibility,” 10th International Whitehead Conference, Claremont, CA, June 4-7
- 2014 “The World ‘Hangs Together:’ Nature, non-being, and infinity in John Scotus Eriugena and Alfred North Whitehead,” 12th annual conference of the International Society of Neoplatonic Studies, Lisbon, Portugal, June 16-21
- 2012 “The Problem of Novelty and the Atomization of Time,” 2nd European Summer School for Process Thought, Mülheim, Germany, August 5-10
- 2011 “Foreseeing Novelty: Bergson and Whitehead on Possibility and Creation,” 8th International Whitehead Conference, Tokyo, Japan, September 26-29

TEACHING

Southern Connecticut State University

Courses Taught

Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2018, 2 sections; Fall 2019, 2 sections)

Texas A&M University

Courses Taught

Introduction to Logic (Summer 2016)

Mean Scores—Overall: 4.53/5; “Good instructor:” 4.73/5; “Good course:” 4.29/5

Introduction to Philosophy (Fall 2015)

Mean Scores—Overall: 4.74/5; “Good instructor:” 4.86/5; “Good course:” 4.77/5

Courses Co-Taught

The Philosophies of W. James and A. N. Whitehead (Fall 2017, Instructor: John J. McDermott, Graduate Seminar)

Led 3-week unit on Whitehead’s *Modes of Thought*

Guest Lecturer

American Philosophy (April 7, 2015, Instructor: John J. McDermott, advanced course)
3-hour lecture on the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead

Introduction to Philosophy (October 24, 2014, Instructor: Harris Bechtol)
On the transition from Kant’s theoretical to his practical philosophy

Introduction to Philosophy (March 3, 2014, Instructor: John J. McDermott)
On philosophies of substance and philosophies of process

Teaching Assistant

Engineering Ethics (Fall 2011–Spring 2012, Instructor: C.E. Harris)

Writing intensive course; taught two 25-student sections weekly, graded essays and exams, and held office hours

Training

Academy for Future Faculty Certificate, Center for Teaching Excellence (Fall 2015–Spring 2016):
Yearlong course with seminars focused on classroom teaching and on the professional expectations for a beginning professor

Philosophical Pedagogy Seminar (Spring 2015):

Workshop on teaching philosophy classes; delivered two lectures and received critical feedback from instructor and peers—introductory lecture on Aristotle’s notion of form; advanced lecture on Whitehead’s philosophy of experience

Lehigh University

Apprentice Teacher

Symbolic Logic (Fall 2009, Instructor: Aladdin Yaqub)

Taught two classes, held office hours, graded exams

Philosophy of Religion (Fall 2008, Instructor: Michael Raposa)

Taught a class on process theology, held exam reviews

Grader

The Examined Life (Fall 2008, Instructor: Gordon Bearn)

SERVICE

2015- Present Executive Committee, International Process Network
Duties include: monthly meetings online, correspondence with committee regarding conference funding and organization, and other activities concerning process thought worldwide

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Aug 2012- Aug 2018 Research Assistant to Distinguished Professor John J. McDermott, Texas A&M University

Responsibilities include: research for and editing of manuscripts; assistance maintaining professional correspondence; assistance organizing courses; assistance maintaining professional archives

Selected projects: Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott's introduction to the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly's* Special Issue on John Dewey (Spring 2013)

Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott's essay "Keeper of Things" (*International Journal for Cultural Research*, Sept. 2013)

Assisted preparing and editing the manuscript for Professor McDermott's essay "Josiah Royce: Alive and Well" (*The Relevance of Royce*, Fordham University Press, 2014)

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

2017 Whitehead Archive, Heinrich-Heine-Universität, Düsseldorf, Germany
Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Philosophical Association
Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy
International Process Network
European Society for Process Thought

LANGUAGES

German (reading), Attic Greek (reading)

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Title—Finding the Foundations of the World in Aesthetic Experience: The Radical Empiricism of William James and the Metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead

In this manuscript, I use William James's radical empiricism to widen the interpretive parameters of Alfred North Whitehead's thought in order to address the aesthetic character of

experience. Understanding the aesthetic core of Whitehead's metaphysics is essential to comprehending his broader philosophy and has far-reaching implications for the existential and social dimensions of human life.

I offer a two-pronged approach to understanding Whitehead that is salutary for opening engagement with his thought, both within and beyond circles already familiar with his philosophy. The first prong is to articulate the metaphysical sweep of James's radical empiricism and its contributions to the thickness of Whitehead's philosophy. I expand upon the radically empirical character of Whitehead's metaphysics through a discussion of time and possibility, showing that these two ideas, properly understood, are essential to grasping Whitehead's theory of actual occasions and thus his account of process and experience. The second prong is to emphasize Whitehead's rendering of aesthetics as the fulcrum of his philosophy, the node through which its various complexities are synthesized. By conceiving of the world in processual and compositional terms, Whitehead is conceiving of the world in aesthetic terms, in terms of feeling, affect, value, possibility, and achievement. Without this grounding in aesthetic experience and expression, Whitehead's philosophy loses its experiential purchase.

These two prongs merge because Whitehead's aesthetics cannot be adequately appreciated without working through James's radical empiricism and Whitehead's own understanding of time and possibility. Thus, in much of this manuscript, I elaborate the metaphysical substructure necessary to working on Whitehead's aesthetics in broader existential, social, political, environmental, and scientific contexts. I show that appropriation is a key notion in the radically empirical *Weltanschauung* and that Whitehead's complex treatment of temporality accommodates and reconciles the seeming antitheses of atomism and continuity, and of privacy and publicity. The resultant version of Whitehead's metaphysics makes the transition to understanding the aesthetic dimension of experience and the various applications of Whitehead's ideas that much more coherent.

Breaking upon aesthetics with the metaphysics of radical empiricism in hand, I clarify two aspects of Whitehead's philosophy. Not only is Whitehead's metaphysics developed along the contours of aesthetic experience, but Whitehead's aesthetics harbors an existential sensibility whose implications for political and cultural matters are largely unexplored. Thus, interpreting Whitehead's writings, I show how aesthetics and metaphysics converge in a potent vision of the world as creative pursuits yielding value within a thoroughly relational fabric. By developing the themes of a pluralistic, relational world and of pervasive aesthetic experience, I invite Whitehead into deeper conversation with James and Dewey, fortifying Whitehead's position as a preeminent philosopher in the American strand. Offering a reinvigorated account of Whitehead's philosophy, I place him at the threshold of more conversations than he himself entered, more than Whitehead scholarship has yet been able to explore.

REFERENCES

John J. McDermott, University
Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and
Humanities in Medicine, Regents Professor
Texas A&M University
Department of Philosophy & Humanities

Daniel Conway, Professor
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[Deceased: contact Dan Conway for
Professor McDermott's letter]

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[REFERENCES, CONTINUED]

Theodore George, Associate Professor and
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Texas A&M University
Department of Philosophy & Humanities
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