

Wayne Wapeemukwa

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Departments of Philosophy and Political Science
The University of British Columbia

wayne.wapeemukwa@ubc.ca
www.waynewapeemukwa.com

EDUCATION

- 2024 **Ph.D.:** Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University

Dissertation: “[Journey to a Critical Theory of Discovery](#)”

Committee: Amy Allen, Eduardo Mendieta (co-chairs); Robert Bernasconi, Ted Toadvine, Julie Reed (examiners); Brenda Macdougall (external, Métis Studies Chair, University of Ottawa)
- 2017 **M.A.:** Philosophy, The New School for Social Research
- 2013 **B.A.:** Philosophy and Political Science, *honors*, University of British Columbia

Areas of Specialization

Political Philosophy/Political Theory; 19th Century History of Philosophy—especially Marx; Indigenous/non-Western philosophies

Areas of Competence

Critical Philosophy of Race; 20th Century Continental Philosophy—especially Lacan

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2024-2026 University of British Columbia, Izaak W. Killam Post-Doctoral Research Fellow
2023-2024 Pennsylvania State University, Mellon Just Transformations Pre-Doctoral Fellow

RESEARCH

Peer-reviewed Articles

- 2025 “Speculative Expropriation.” *Political Theory*, forthcoming. Accepted pending minor revision.
- 2024 “Primitive Speculation: Marx on Precapitalism, Social Relations to Land, and Indigenous Dispossession.” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 38. **Winner:** “Best Submission by a Graduate Student,” SPEP Conference 2023. ([LINK](#))
- 2023 “Teaching and Learning Indigenous Philosophy in Viral Times: Personal and Pedagogical Reflections on how to Teach Indigenous Philosophy.” *Teaching Philosophy* 46(2) ([LINK](#))

- 2023 “It Feels Fake”: Creating Decolonizing Syllabi in the University.” *Bank Street Occasional Paper Series*, Vol. 49: Indigenous Pedagogies. Co-authors: H. Kulago and P. Guernsey ([LINK](#))
- 2021 “Land, Water, Mathematics, and Relationships: What Does Creating Decolonizing and Indigenous Curricula Ask?” *Education Studies* 57(3): 345-363. Co-author: H. Kulago ([LINK](#))

Book Chapters

- 2021 “Oedipal Empire: Psychoanalysis, Indigenous Peoples, and The Oedipus Complex in Colonial Context” in *Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity and Psychoanalytic Theory*. Eds. S. George and D. Hook. Routledge. ([LINK](#))

Non-Refereed/Specialized Articles

- 2023 “We Hear an Angel: Oedipal Empire, Rematriation, and Land Back” *Parapraxis* Issue 02: Repair. Article commissioned by the editors: Hannah Zeavin, Alex Colston, Noor Asif, Wendy Lotterman, M.E. O’Brien, Michella Rada, and Zoé Samudzi ([LINK](#))

Translations

- 2018 “The Vulnerability of the Ordinary: Goffman, Reader of Austin.” *The Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 39(2): 367-401. Translated from the French ([LINK](#))

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

- 2024-2026 Izaak K. Killam Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of British Columbia
- 2024-2026 Postdoctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
- 2023-2024 Mellon Just Transformations Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, Pennsylvania State University
- 2023 “Best Submission by a Graduate Student,” Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy
- 2023 *Finalist*: Newcomb Doctoral Fellowship
- 2022 McCourtney Democracy Research Grant, Centre for Democratic Deliberation
- 2021 Philips Fund for Native American Research, American Philosophical Society
- 2019-2023 Doctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
- 2018-2023 Edwin Erle Sparks Doctoral Fellowship, Pennsylvania State University
- 2015-2017 Provost Scholarship, The New School for Social Research
- 2015-2017 *Declined*: Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship

INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 Invited Presenter: “Land Back and Rematriation,” McMaster University Department of Philosophy Speaker Series, Hamilton, ON. ([LINK](#))
- 2024 Invited Presenter: “Philosophy’s Doctrine of Discovery,” McGill University Department of Philosophy and Critical Social Theory, Montréal, QC. ([LINK](#))
- 2023 Prize-Winning Presenter: “Speculative Expropriation, Indigenous Dispossession,” *Society for Phenomenology Existential Philosophy*, Toronto, ON. (“Best Submission by Graduate Student”)

- 2023 Invited Presenter: “Land Back as Ameliorative Politics.” *American Philosophical Association* (Pacific Division), San Francisco, CA.
- 2021 Invited Respondent: “Territorial Rights, Relational Value, Climate Change.” *American Philosophical Association* (Eastern Division), New York, NY.
- 2020 Invited Respondent: “Here, We Are: A Native American Relational Social Ontology.” *American Philosophical Association*, Philadelphia PA.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2024 "Logic of Dispossession." *Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, Albany, NY.
- 2024 "Primitive Accumulation and Sociogeny of Race." *Historical Materialism*, New York, NY.
- 2024 "Original Expropriation." *Critical Theory Roundtable*, Santa Cruz, CA.
- 2022 “Marxism, Settler-Colonialism, and Historicism.” *Historical Materialism*, London, UK.
- 2022 “Decolonizing Primitive Accumulation.” *American Philosophical Association*, Vancouver, BC.
- 2022 “WEB Du Bois on Racial Capitalism.” *American Philosophical Association*, Baltimore, MD.
- 2021 “Re-grounding Recognition Politics.” *Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy* (online)
- 2021 “Indigenous Femicide and Settler Reproductive Futurism.” *Psychology of the Other* (online)
- 2020 “Métis Scrip as Primitive Accumulation.” *Association for Political Theory*, Amherst, MA.
- 2020 “Métis-Marxism.” *Native American Indigenous Studies Association* (cancelled due to COVID-19)
- 2019 “Howard Adams on Marx, Race, and Class.” *Historical Materialism*, London, UK.
- 2019 “Métis Racialization and Dispossession.” *Canadian Philosophical Association*, Vancouver, BC.
- 2019 “Métis Resistance and Racialization.” *Diverse Lineages of Existentialism*, Washington, DC.
- 2018 “Lacan and Adorno on the Ethics of The Real.” *Critical Theory Roundtable*, Amherst, MA.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2025 Translating Marx’s *Capital* with Paul North and Paul Reitter, UC Santa Cruz. February 5 – 7
- 2023 Standpoint Theory Workshop, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC. Nov. 16 – 18
- 2021 Critical Theory Summer School. Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany. July 4 – 9.
- 2019 Atelier de Théorie Critique. Sorbonne, Paris, France. June 3 – July 21.
- 2019 Decolonial Feminist Workshop. University of North Carolina, Charlotte. May 14 – 17.
- 2018 Critical Theory Summer School. Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany. July 16 – 20

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of British Columbia

- 2025 Graduate Seminar: Indigenous Political Theory – 500-level, Department of Political Science
- 2024 Social and Political Philosophy – 300-level, Department of Philosophy
- 2024 Contemporary Political Theory – 300-level, Department of Political Science
- 2023 Contemporary Political Theory – 300-level, Department of Political Science

The Pennsylvania State University

- 2023 Normative Ethics – 300-level, Department of Philosophy
- 2022 Normative Ethics – 200-level, Department of Philosophy
- 2021 Applied Ethics – 100-level, Department of Philosophy
- 2020 The Human Condition – 200-level, Department of Philosophy

- 2020 Race, Racism, Diversity – 200-level, Department of Philosophy
2020 Philosophy and Film – 200-level, Department of Philosophy

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

University of British Columbia

- 2023 “Indigenous Philosophy”: Commissioned by the Department of Philosophy to develop and complete a syllabus for an undergraduate seminar on Indigenous philosophies

SERVICE

Academic Service

- Reviewer: *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*
2019-2022 Co-Founder, Indigenous Peoples Student Association, Pennsylvania State University
2019 Volunteer GED Tutor, Quehanna Bootcamp, Student Restorative Justice Initiative
2019 Student Volunteer, *Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*
2015-2016 New School for Social Research Lacan Salon Founder

Community Service

- 2023-Present Board Secretary: Vancouver Sea to Sky Métis Association/Chartered Community
2023-Present Board Member: Environmental Advisory Committee, Métis Nation of BC
2022-Present Youth Mentor: Métis Nation of British Columbia

LANGUAGES

- English (fluent) French (research and translation)
German (research and translation) Michif (intermediate)

REFERENCES

Glen Coulthard – Postdoctoral Supervisor
Associate Professor
Departments of Political Science and First Nations and Indigenous Studies
The University of British Columbia
Email: glen.coulthard@ubc.ca

Alison Wylie – Postdoctoral Supervisor
Professor and Canada Research Chair (Tier 1)
Department of Philosophy
The University of British Columbia
Email: alison.wylie@ubc.ca

Amy Allen – Dissertation Supervisor
Associate Dean and Distinguished Professor
Departments of Philosophy and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Pennsylvania State University
Email: ara17@psu.edu

Massimiliano Tomba – Arm’s Length Referee
Chair and Professor
Departments of Politics and History of Consciousness
University of California, Santa Cruz
Email: mtomba@ucsc.edu

Johannes Steizinger – Arm’s Length Referee
Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy
McMaster University
Email: steizinj@mcmaster.ca

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT:

“JOURNEY TO A CRITICAL THEORY OF DISCOVERY”

In July 2022, Pope Francis undertook a penitential pilgrimage to Canada, where he apologized to Indigenous peoples for “the evil” committed by Christians during the Age of Discovery. Then, in March 2023, the Holy See—the ‘government’ of the Catholic Church—issued a historic “Joint Statement [on] the ‘Doctrine of Discovery,’” identifying this “Doctrine” as *the* philosophical framework Europeans used to colonize the globe and the articulation of a conjunction of factors that birthed anti-Indigenous racism.

Despite this increased public profile, the “Doctrine of Discovery” is not salient to philosophers. Yet this paucity is not benign. Those who ignore this Doctrine’s historical and ongoing impact on Indigenous peoples offer missed opportunities at best or eliminationist agendas at worst. These are existential stakes, indeed; but there is also much at stake, philosophically.

Journey to a Critical Theory of Discovery stakes a claim on Indigenous social relations to land. In Chapter One, I examine how the Doctrine of Discovery evolved into a racialized “agricultural argument” for Indigenous dispossession and a new religion of whiteness. In Chapter Two, I reanimate Karl Marx’s lost texts on dispossession and offer my distinctive research contribution, *speculative expropriation*. In Chapter Three, I use my novel concept to demonstrate how the invention of private property and white masculinity lay at the social, political, and erotic origins of the settler state. In Chapter Four, I explore Indigenous responses to Discovery developed by Jim Brady (1908 – 1967), an Indigenous Marxist who established a partitioned mode of eco-decolonial communism. In the Conclusion, I suggest that Brady’s land-based economic co-ops pose crucial, urgent, and necessary implications for the history of our present climate crisis.

As an urgent contribution to Indigenous philosophy, Social and Political Philosophy, and Political Theory, this “journey” presents an alternative eco-political imaginary that opens up for us only when we seriously consider the wisdom embodied in Indigenous social relations to land, relations that contain concrete solutions for transcending capitalism, colonialism, and climate change. Responses to settler-colonialism must not merely seek to re-possess the land—as if it were inherently fungible—but take the even more radical step of ameliorating and recruiting land as a *subject* in decolonization; an ameliorative politics of territorial rematriation we hear echoed in the grassroots call, “Land Back.”