

PRESTON LENNON

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RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Areas of Specialization	Philosophy of AI, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Ethics, Philosophy of Mind
Areas of Competence	Epistemology, Social and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Sport

EMPLOYMENT

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow	Rutgers University Department of Philosophy	<i>2025-Present</i>
Postdoctoral Associate	Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science	<i>2022-2025</i>

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Philosophy Dissertation Committee	The Ohio State University ‘The Phenomenal Basis of Thought’ Declan Smithies (chair), Tristram McPherson, Richard Samuels, Charles Siewert (Rice University)	<i>2022</i>
M.A. Philosophy	Virginia Tech	<i>2016</i>
B.A. Philosophy	Sewanee: The University of the South (with honors)	<i>2012</i>

PUBLICATIONS

‘Are LLMs In-Between Believers?’ <i>Agency in the Age of Intelligent Machines</i> (eds. S. AbuMusab and J. Symons). Bloomsbury. (with André Curtis-Trudel)	<i>forthcoming</i>
‘Mechanistic Interpretability and Representationalism about Belief’ <i>Philosophy of AI</i> (with André Curtis-Trudel)	<i>forthcoming</i>
‘How Seriously Should We Take AI Welfare? Constraints from the Epistemology of Consciousness’ <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i> 113(2): 441-452	<i>2026</i>
‘The Value of Cognitive Experience’ <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> , 1-16	<i>2026</i>

‘Cognitive Phenomenology: In Defense of Recombination’ <i>Inquiry</i> 68(2): 483-512	2025
‘Are Phenomenal Theories of Thought Chauvinistic?’ <i>American Philosophical Quarterly</i> 61(3): 199-213	2024
‘Athletes as Workers’ <i>Journal of the Philosophy of Sport</i> 51(3): 476-495	2024
‘Aphantasia and Conscious Thought’ <i>Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Mind</i> 3: 131-155 (ed. Uriah Kriegel)	2023
‘In Defense of Cognitive Phenomenology: Meeting the Matching Content Challenge’ <i>Erkenntnis</i> 88: 2391-2401	2023
‘Delusions and Madmen: Against Rationality Constraints on Belief’ <i>Synthese</i> 200: 1-30 (with Declan Smithies and Richard Samuels)	2022

AWARDS

Thirteenth Annual Essay Prize Winner (€3,000) Centre for Philosophical Psychology, University of Antwerp	2025
Recognition of Teaching Excellence Institute for Teaching, Innovation, and Inclusive Pedagogy, Rutgers University	2024
Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science Research Award (\$2,000)	2022, 2023, 2024
University Fellowship (\$22,000) The Ohio State University	2016-7
Marjorie Grene Memorial Prize for Outstanding Graduate Student Virginia Tech Department of Philosophy	2016
Hugh Harris Caldwell, Jr. Award for Excellence in Philosophy Sewanee: The University of the South Department of Philosophy	2012

PRESENTATIONS (*refereed)(† invited)

‘The Philosophy of Science Writ Small’ (with Joseph Sommer) Philosophy of Science Association, San Diego CA*	November 2026
‘Working Memory and Consciousness: Toward a Mechanistic Account of Experience’ Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Johns Hopkins University (poster)*	June 2026
‘Evaluating Representationalist Folk Mentalism about LLMs’ (with André Curtis-Trudel) Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam NL*	October 2025

‘Formats Are Consciously Experienced’	
Having a Mind and Being Conscious, University of Fribourg CH†	<i>July 2025</i>
Method, Theory, and Reality Workshop, UMass Amherst†	<i>May 2025</i>
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Mobile AL*	<i>April 2025</i>
‘AI Consciousness and AI Ethics’	
Pacific University Oregon†	<i>March 2025</i>
Rochester Institute of Technology†	<i>March 2024</i>
C3: Complexity, Computers, and Consciousness, Imperial College London*	<i>October 2023</i>
‘The Value of Cognitive Experience’	
The Ethics of Consciousness Summer School	<i>May 2023</i>
Rice University Paris Center, Paris FR*	
‘Thinking Without Consciousness? The Unconscious Thought Paradigm in Psychology’	
Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness, New York University*	<i>June 2023</i>
‘Are Phenomenal Theories of Thought Chauvinistic?’	
Method, Theory, and Reality Workshop, UMass Amherst†	<i>May 2023</i>
Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science Colloquium Series†	<i>February 2023</i>
‘Athletes as Workers’	
American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, Montreal QC*	<i>January 2023</i>
First Annual Philosophy and Activism Conference, Missouri-St. Louis*	<i>May 2022</i>
‘Aphantasia and Conscious Thought’	
Extremes of Mind Wandering, University of Edinburgh*	<i>June 2021</i>
‘Meeting the Matching Content Challenge to Cognitive Phenomenology’	
North Carolina Philosophical Society*	<i>March 2020</i>
American Philosophical Association, Central Division, Chicago IL*	<i>February 2020</i>
Philosophy and Representation Graduate Conference, SDSU*	<i>April 2018</i>
Graduate Student Workshop, The Ohio State University	<i>March 2018</i>

COMMENTS

On Quinn Gibson’s ‘AI Companionship, Understanding, and Rule-Following’	
American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, Boston MA	<i>January 2027</i>
On Charles Siewert’s ‘Consciousness, Thought, and Self-Expression’	
Texas Area Mind and Value Workshop, Texas Tech University	<i>February 2026</i>
On Gary Bartlett’s ‘Conscious Experience and Activity’	
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Mobile AL	<i>April 2025</i>

On Matthias Michel's 'Blank Access'
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Cincinnati OH *March 2024*

On Sanford Diehl's 'Hegel and Natural Teleology in Dewey's Later Thought'
Virginia Tech Graduate Conference *November 2014*

OUTREACH

'What Can Aphantasia Tell Us About Conscious Thought?'
The Junkyard, a scholarly blog about the imagination (ed. Amy Kind) *September 2022*

'Attitudes Toward Consciousness Across Cognitive Science'
RuCCS Hivemind, Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science *March 2024*

'What is Cognitive Science?'
Cognitive Science Club, Rutgers University *October 2022*

'Delusions and Rationality' (with Declan Smithies)
Cognitive Science Club, The Ohio State University *November 2019*

TEACHING

Rutgers University Department of Philosophy
Minds, Machines, and Persons *Spring 2026*
Minds, Machines, and Persons *Fall 2025*

Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science (
Minds, Machines, and Computation *Summer 2026*
Introduction to Cognitive Science *Summer 2025*
The Philosophy of Consciousness, AI, and Sport *Spring 2025*
Introduction to Cognitive Science *Spring 2025*
The Philosophy of Consciousness, AI, and Sport *Fall 2024*
Introduction to Cognitive Science *Summer 2024*
The Philosophy of Consciousness, AI, and Sport *Spring 2024*

The Ohio State University Department of Philosophy
Introduction to Philosophy *Summer 2022*
Engineering Ethics *Spring 2022*
Contemporary Social and Moral Problems in the U.S. *Fall 2021*
Contemporary Social and Moral Problems in the U.S. *Spring 2021*
Introduction to Philosophy *Fall 2020*
Philosophy and Video Games *Summer 2020*
Introduction to Ethics *Fall 2020*
Contemporary Social and Moral Problems in the U.S. *Fall 2019*

Virginia Tech Department of Philosophy
Global Ethics *Summer 2016*

ADVISING

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Advisor for Zuhayr Thange, Rutgers Cognitive Science 2024-5
Title: “Deus Ex Machina: On the Possible Deification of AI”

TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science Badge for Professional Excellence 2024

Course Design Institute, The Ohio State University 2019
Developed a course in the philosophy of sport

SERVICE

Refereeing

Acta Analytica, Analysis (x3), *Argumenta, Asian Journal of Philosophy* (x2), *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (x2), *Ergo* (x2), *Erkenntnis, Ethics, Inquiry, Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Consciousness, Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophia, Philosophical Studies* (x3), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (x4), *Philosophy and Technology, Review of Philosophy and Psychology, Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* (x2), Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Ohio Philosophical Association

Service, Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science

Organizer of Speaker Visits (Jorge Morales, Grace Helton, Matthias Michel, Ned Block) 2024-6
Undergraduate Advising in Cognitive Science 2024-5
Cognitive Science Booth, Rutgers Day 2024
Lead RuCCS Hivemind talk, “Attitudes toward consciousness across cognitive science” 2024

Service, Ohio State Department of Philosophy

Chair of Graduate Recruitment Committee 2021
Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences Student Group, President 2018-2020
Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences Student Group, Treasurer 2016-18, 2020-22
Ohio State Philosophy and Critical Thinking Summer Camp, Instructor 2018

Service, Virginia Tech Department of Philosophy

Graduate student member of metaethics hiring committee 2016
Research assistant for Tristram McPherson 2015
Organized 12th Virginia Tech Graduate Philosophy Conference on Analytic Metaphysics 2015

Affiliations

American Philosophical Association
Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology

REFERENCES

Declan Smithies

Professor of Philosophy
The Ohio State University
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Brian McLaughlin

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and
Cognitive Science
Rutgers University
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Charles Siewert

Robert & Kathryn Hayes Chair in Humanities
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Jake Quilty-Dunn

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Justin D'Arms (teaching reference)

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