

Christopher Devlin Brown

Associate Professor  
Department of Philosophy  
Xiamen University  
christopher.devlin.brown@gmail.com  
christopherdevlinbrown.wordpress.com

### **Prior Academic Appointments**

Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Bilkent University, September 2019 - January 2021

### **Education**

Ph.D., Philosophy  
CUNY Graduate Center, Spring 2019  
Dissertation: Mentality and Fundamentality  
Committee: David Papineau (Supervisor), Barbara Montero, Graham Priest, Torin Alter, Susan Schneider

Masters, Philosophy  
University at Buffalo, 2013

B.A., Honors Philosophy  
SUNY Binghamton, 2009

### **Areas of Specialization**

Metaphysics, Philosophy of Mind

### **Areas of Competence**

Nietzsche, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, AI Ethics

### **Publications**

Single Authored

Brown, C. D. (Forthcoming). A problem for extensional articulations of physicalism. *Erkenntnis*.

Brown, C. D. (Forthcoming). Answering the difference-maker problem for Russellian physicalism. *Philosophia*.

Brown, C. D. (2023). Consciousness and categorical properties. *Erkenntnis* 88 (1): 365-387.

Brown, C. D. (2022). Quantum computation and the untenability of a “No fundamental mentality” constraint on physicalism. *Synthese* 201 (1):1-18.

Brown, C. D. (2022). Why illusionism about consciousness is unbelievable. *Ratio* 35 (1): 16-24.

Brown, C. D. (2020). Fundamental mentality in a physical world. *Synthese* 199 (1-2): 2841-2860.

Brown, C. D. (2019). Exclusion endures: How compatibilism allows dualists to bypass the causal closure argument. *Analysis* 79 (4): 587-594.

Brown, C. D. (2017). Minds within minds: An infinite descent of mentality in a physical world. *Erkenntnis* 82 (6):1339-1350.

Brown, C. D. (2017). A properly physical Russellian physicalism. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 24 (11-12): 31-50.

Co-authored

Montero, B.; Brown, C. D. (2018). Making room for a this-worldly physicalism. *Topoi* 37 (3): 523-532.

### **Public Engagement**

Brown, C. D. (Forthcoming). Overwhelming evil. *Philosophy Now*.

Brown, C. D. (2020). Two famous philistines of philosophy. *Philosophy Now* 137: 14-17.

### **Conferences**

Another Look at the Causal Closure Argument

Long Island Philosophical Society Annual Conference, St. John's University, April 2023

Russellian Physicalism and Perception

Perception and Fundamental Reality, Uppsala University, October 2022

The Hope and Horror of Physicalism

NYU Philosophy of Mind Reading Group, November 2018.

The Hope and Horror of Physicalism

First International Conference on Philosophy and Meaning in Life. Sapporo, August 2018.

If Epistemic Contextualism is True then we Don't Know Anything

2nd Context, Cognition and Communication Conference. Warsaw, June 2018.

Mind Uploading and Persistence

Mind, Selves and 21st Century Technology. Lisbon, June 2016.

## **Teaching Experience**

### **As Teaching Assistant:**

University at Buffalo, Fall 2010 - Fall 2012

World Civilization 1 (TA in charge of recitation sections), Fall 2010

World Civilization 2 (TA in charge of recitation sections), Spring 2011

Critical Thinking, Fall 2011

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2012

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2012

CUNY Hunter, Fall 2015 - Spring 2016

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2015

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2016

### **As Lecturer:**

University at Buffalo, Spring 2013

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2013

College of Staten Island, Fall 2014 - Spring 2015

Introduction to Ethics, Fall 2014

Introduction to Ethics, Spring 2015

Baruch College, Spring 2016

Capstone Seminar on Nietzsche, Spring 2016

Brooklyn College, Fall 2016-Spring 2017

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2016

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2017

City College, Fall 2017-Spring 2019

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2017

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2018

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2018

Introduction to Philosophy, Spring 2019

Bilkent University, Fall 2019 - Fall 2020

Social and Political Philosophy I, Fall 2019

Social and Political Philosophy I, Fall 2019

Social and Political Philosophy II, Spring 2020

Social and Political Philosophy II, Spring 2020

Social and Political Philosophy I, Fall 2020

Social and Political Philosophy I, Fall 2020

City College, Fall 2022

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2022

Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2022

Xiamen University, Fall 2023

Strange Minds: Simple, Group, Extended and Machine Mentality, Fall 2023

Physicalism and the Mind-Body Problem, Fall 2023

Graduate Research Methods Seminar for Philosophy in English, Fall 2023

**Referee service:**

Synthese 2023  
Erkenntnis 2022  
Journal of Consciousness Studies 2022  
Erkenntnis 2021  
Australasian Journal of Philosophy 2021  
Mind and Language 2021  
Analysis 2021  
Journal of Consciousness Studies 2021  
Erkenntnis 2020  
Problemos 2020  
Analysis 2019  
Philosophia 2019  
Journal of Consciousness Studies 2019  
Philosophical Studies 2019  
Analysis 2019

**Fellowship**

Graduate Center Graduate Assistantship, CUNY 2015-2019  
Graduate Stipend, University at Buffalo 2010-2013

**Graduate Courses at CUNY Graduate Center**

Mind, Brain, and Consciousness — David Papineau, Spring 2019 (audited)  
Causation and Related Topics — David Papineau, Spring 2017 (audited)  
Buddhist Metaphysics and the Catuskoti — Graham Priest, Spring 2016 (audited)  
Physicalism — David Papineau, Spring 2016  
History of the Mind — Peter Godfrey-Smith Fall, 2015  
Personal Identity — John Greenwood, Fall 2015  
Social Construction — Jesse Prinz, Fall 2015  
Intentionality — David Rosenthal, Spring 2015  
The Metaphysics of Sensory Experience — David Papineau, Spring 2015  
Hegel to Nietzsche — Douglas Lackey, Spring 2015  
Perception — Ned Block and Eric Mandelbaum, Fall 2014  
Proseminar — David Rosenthal and Stephen Neale, Fall 2014  
Philosophy of Religion — Steven Cahn, Fall 2014  
Metaphysics — Barbara Montero, Fall 2013 (as visiting student)  
Quine and Sellars — David Rosenthal, Fall 2013 (as visiting student)

**Graduate Courses at University at Buffalo**

Consciousness and Intentionality — Boyd Millar, Spring 2013  
Psycholinguistics — David Zubin, Spring 2013

Supervised Teaching — William Baumer, Spring 2013  
Cognitive Anthropology — Barbara Tedlock, Fall 2012  
Philosophy of Science — Thomas Bittner, Fall 2012  
Locke's Philosophy of Language — Lewis Powell, Fall 2012  
Metalogic — Randall Dipert, Spring 2012  
Stoicism — Jijuan Yu, Spring 2012  
Kant's Ethics and Aesthetics — James Lawler, Spring 2012  
Metaphysics of Personal Identity — David Hershenov, Fall 2011  
Aesthetics — Carolyn Korsmeyer, Fall 2011  
Independent Study in Epistemology — James Beebe, Fall 2011  
Contextualism, Skepticism, and Experimental Epistemology — James Beebe, Spring 2011  
Introduction to Cognitive Science — Bill Rapaport, Spring 2011  
Time, Tense, Temporal Perspective — Maureen Donnelly, Spring 2011  
Empty Terms and Fictional Characters — David Braun, Fall 2010  
Philosophy of Existence — Richard Cohen, Fall 2010  
Independent Study in Logic — David Braun, Fall 2010

### **Dissertation Summary**

Extant well-considered problems with physicalism primarily come from two sources: philosophers of mind arguing that subjective experience does not fit into a physicalist world-picture, and metaphysicians trying to figure out the particular commitments of the view. I examine the thesis of physicalism in order to produce a clearer notion of the physical and to help straighten out physicalism's entailments, while simultaneously providing a strategy for physicalists to sidestep well known anti-physicalist arguments concerning consciousness. This involves both a critical and a positive effort: on the critical side, I expose an issue with a popular way of understanding physicalism called "via negativa" physicalism, which is the view that 'physical' should be understood to mean 'not fundamentally mental'. The positive project has two components. One part defends physicalism from the ever-looming threat of the scientific insolubility of phenomenal consciousness by fleshing out a version of Russellian monism called "Russellian physicalism", which is the view that the structural/dispositional properties described by fundamental physics have inscrutable role-fillers that are not directly revealed through scientific inquiry. The other part of the positive project consists in examining the existentially relevant consequences of physicalism, which are the consequences that have a bearing on whether we ought to continue to live. Toward this end, I determine whether such things as robust free will, God, ultimate purpose and an immortal soul are consistent with the most popular versions of physicalism.

### **Research References**

David Papineau  
Visiting Presidential Professor, CUNY Graduate Center  
Professor of Philosophy of Science, King's College London  
Email: david.papineau@kcl.ac.uk Phone: +44 (0) 7775 607758

Barbara Montero

Doctoral Faculty in Philosophy, CUNY Graduate Center

Associate Professor of Philosophy, College of Staten Island of CUNY

Email: bmontero@gc.cuny.edu Phone: +1 (718) 982 2901

Torin Alter

Professor in Philosophy, University of Alabama

Undergraduate Advisor, University of Alabama

Email: talter@ua.edu Phone: +1 (205) 348-1908

Susan Schneider

Director, AI, Mind and Society ("AIMS") Group, The University of Connecticut

Distinguished Scholar, U.S. Library of Congress

Associate Professor, The University of Connecticut (Philosophy, Cognitive Science)

Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Ethics and Technology Group, Yale Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics

Email: Susansdr@gmail.com Phone: +1 (908) 938 2365

### **Teaching Reference**

Ben Vilhauer

Professor and Chair in Philosophy, City College

Email: bvilhauer@ccny.cuny.edu Phone: +1 (212) 650 7644