

ABRAHAM MATHEW

Department of Philosophy
University of Notre Dame
philosophyabe@gmail.com | abemathew.com

RESEARCH AREAS

Areas of Specialization: Ethics, Metaphysics
Areas of Competence: History of Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion

EMPLOYMENT

Postdoctoral fellow, Department of Philosophy 2025–2027
University of Notre Dame

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2020–2025
Ph.D. in Philosophy

Dissertation: “The Realm of Grace”

Committee: Kieran Setiya (chair), Tamar Schapiro, Caspar Hare, and P. Quinn White

Abstract: We should treat others better than they deserve or can demand of us—or so I argue, focusing on the ethics of repentance, forgiveness, and reciprocation. The upshot is a new challenge to an orthodoxy in ethics: the view that our moral obligations to others always correlate with a right on their part, giving them the standing to demand or enforce our compliance. Instead, I argue that we often have moral obligations to others—including to forgive and reciprocate aid—that can neither be demanded nor enforced. I offer a new theory of such obligations, arguing that they are found, not in the ‘realm of rights’ which secures our autonomy from others, but in what I term the ‘realm of grace’, where morality draws us into closer affinity with one another.

University of Toronto 2016–2020
Honours Bachelor of Arts with High Distinction: Cumulative GPA: 4.0/4.0
Specialist in Philosophy, Minor in Ethics, Law, and Society

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED

- “Forgive, Because You Were Forgiven” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, forthcoming.

BOOK REVIEWS

- Review of *Forgiveness and Its Moral Dimensions* by Brandon Warmke, Dana Kay Nelkin, and Michael McKenna (eds.), *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 20 (3-4): 342-5 (2023)

PAPERS IN PROGRESS

- “A Metaphysical Argument for Near Bias” (under review)
- “Standing in Another’s Debt” (under review)
- “The Normative Significance of Repentance”

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMENTS

* *indicates refereed talk.*

PRESENTATIONS

- “Standing in Another’s Debt”
 - Notre Dame Ethics Workshop, University of Notre Dame, October 2025
- “The Realm of Grace”
 - *Ninth Theistic Ethics Workshop, College of William & Mary, September 2025
- “Forgive, Because You Were Forgiven”
 - *University of Texas at Austin Graduate Conference, March 2025
 - *Colloquium talk, Eastern APA (New York), January 2025
 - *University of Toronto Graduate Philosophy Conference, October 2024
 - MIT Works in Progress, April 2024
 - *Seventh Theistic Ethics Workshop, Wake Forest University, September 2023
- “A Metaphysical Argument for Near Bias”
 - *Colloquium talk, Central APA (Chicago), February 2026
 - Conference in Honour of Bernard D. Katz (Virtual), October 2021
- “The Normative Significance of Repentance”
 - *Colloquium talk, Eastern APA (New York), January 2024
 - MIT Works in Progress, November 2022
- “Why Common-Sense Presentists Shouldn’t Believe in Time Travel”
 - University of Toronto Undergraduate Philosophy Research Conference, April 2019

COMMENTS

- Christine Susienka, “Bearing the Moral Weight: What’s Lost When AI Decides”, Tech Ethics eXchange NorthEast, February 2025
- Augie Faller, “Finding a Place for Politics in History”, Philadelphia Normative Philosophy Conference, October 2024
- Julia Markovits, “Praise and Blame in the Absence of Moral Knowledge”, MITing of the Minds, January 2023

TEACHING

INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

- Philosophy of Love, University of Notre Dame Spring 2026
- Introduction to Ethics and Political Philosophy, University of Notre Dame Fall 2025

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

- Philosophy of Religion (Jack Spencer), MIT Spring 2024
- Ethics (Tamar Schapiro), MIT Fall 2023
- Ethics of Technology (Kevin Mills), MIT Spring 2023
- Bioethics (Robin Scheffler, Haley Schilling), MIT Fall 2022
- Minds and Machines (E.J. Green), MIT Spring 2022
- Problems of Philosophy (Caspar Hare), MIT Fall 2021
- Persons and Value (James E. Davies), University of Toronto Spring 2019

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

COURSES FOR CREDIT

- Topics in Moral Philosophy: Living in a Strange World (Caspar Hare), MIT Spring 2022
- Metaethics (Justin Khoo, Tamar Schapiro), MIT Spring 2022
- Aesthetics (Brad Skow), MIT Fall 2021
- Insincerity (Sam Berstler), MIT Fall 2021
- Self-Knowledge (Caspar Hare, Roger White), MIT Spring 2021
- Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (Gina Schouten, Tommie Shelby), Harvard Spring 2021
- Proseminar II: Later Analytic Philosophy (Alex Byrne, Caspar Hare), MIT Spring 2021
- Problems in Metaphysics: Time, Causation, Explanation (Brad Skow), MIT Fall 2020
- Kant's Ethics (Tamar Schapiro), MIT Fall 2020
- Proseminar I: Early Analytic Philosophy (Agustin Rayo), MIT Fall 2020

COURSES AUDITED

- Topics in Aesthetics: Aesthetic Value, Imagination, and the Philosophy of Film (Justin Khoo, Brad Skow), MIT Spring 2024
- Love (P. Quinn White), Harvard Fall 2023
- Decision Theory (Jack Spencer, Branden Fitelson), MIT Fall 2021
- Logic (Andreas Ditter), MIT Spring 2021

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

- Kaufman Teaching Certificate Program, MIT Teaching and Learning Lab Fall 2023

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Organizer, Philosophy and Literature Reading Group 2024-25
- Co-organizer of MITing of the Minds, MIT Philosophy's annual alumni conference 2023-24
- Organizer, Public Philosophy Week at MIT 2023
- Co-organizer of MIT Philosophy's Colloquium Series 2022-23
- Co-organizer of SHAPE, MIT's reading group on ethics, aesthetics, history, and social/political philosophy 2022-25
- Organizer of MATTI, MIT's graduate student work-in-progress group 2021-22
- Co-organizer of Week Stata, MIT Philosophy's graduate prospective visit 2020-21
- Undergraduate representative, Philosophy Department Chair Search Committee, University of Toronto at Mississauga 2019-20
- President of the Philosophy Academic Society, University of Toronto at Mississauga 2019-20

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Volunteer, Corrupt the Youth (Philosophy outreach program for underserved high school students) 2021-present
 - Member, National Board of Directors, Corrupt the Youth 2024-26
 - Chapter Director, Corrupt the Youth - Boston 2023-24
 - Assistant Chapter Director, Corrupt the Youth - Boston 2022-23

AWARDS

- Governor General's Silver Medal June 2020
Awarded by the Governor General of Canada to the graduating undergraduate student with the highest academic standing across the University of Toronto's three campuses.
- John Black Aird Scholarship June 2020
Awarded by the University of Toronto to the graduating undergraduate student with the highest academic standing across the university's three campuses.
- Jacqueline Brunning Award May 2020
Awarded by Department of Philosophy at the University of Toronto at Mississauga for outstanding academic performance in the final year of study as a specialist or major.
- Community Enrichment Award May 2019
Awarded by the Department of Philosophy for exceptional co-curricular contributions to the philosophical community at the University of Toronto at Mississauga.

REFERENCES

- Kieran Setiya (Committee Chair)
Professor, Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, MIT
ksetiya@mit.edu
- Caspar Hare
Professor, Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, MIT
casparh@mit.edu
- Tamar Schapiro
Professor, Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, MIT
tamschap@mit.edu
- P. Quinn White
Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Harvard University
pqwhite@fas.harvard.edu
- Kyla Ebels-Duggan
Professor, Department of Philosophy, Northwestern University
kebelsduggan@northwestern.edu
- Jack Spencer (Teaching Reference)
Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, MIT
jackspen@mit.edu