

SEAN M. COSTELLO

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AOS: Early Modern; Ancient
AOC: Medieval; Mind; Metaphysics

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U.S. Citizen

EDUCATION

- University of Michigan** Ann Arbor, MI, USA
PhD in Philosophy In progress from 2020
Dissertation: Cartesian Unities of Consciousness (*title subject to change*)
Chair: Tad Schmaltz
Committee: Sonya Özbey, Janum Sethi, Jamie Tappenden
- MA in Philosophy* Winter 2024
Cognitive Science Graduate Certificate August 2022
Graduate Teacher Certificate May 2022
- University of Oxford, Hertford College** Oxford, UK
MSt in Ancient Philosophy (Distinction) October 2017 – July 2020
Hertford College Senior Scholar (2019 – 2021) (due to medical leave)
Thesis: *An Ecological Approach to Aristotle’s Theories of Light and Vision*
Supervisor: Anna Marmodoro
- University of Notre Dame** Notre Dame, IN, USA
Bachelor of Arts (Summa cum laude) August 2013 – May 2016
Majors: Honours Philosophy; International Economics (Spanish) GPA: 3.966 / 4.0
Philosophy Thesis: *The Immortality of the Human Soul in Aristotle’s De Anima*
Supervisor: Sean Kelsey
International Economics Thesis: *Uncovered Interest Parity during Mexico’s 1980s Debt Crisis*
Supervisor: Michael Pries
- Brown University** Providence, RI, USA
First Year of Studies August 2012 – May 2013

PUBLICATIONS

- [4] ‘Nocturnal Vision in Plato’s *Timaeus*’. *Ancient Philosophy* 44.1 (2024), pp. 59–81. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5840/ancientphil20244414>. (Approximately 12,800 words.)
- [3] ‘Anne Conway on memory’. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 31.5 (2023), pp. 912–931. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2023.2164920>. (Approximately 9,500 words.)
- [2] ‘Aristotle on Light and Vision: An “Ecological” Interpretation’. *Apeiron* 55.2 (2022), pp. 247–279. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/apeiron-2019-0063>. (Approximately 16,000 words.)
- [1] ‘The Object of Aristotle’s God’s Νόησις in *Metaphysics* Λ.9’, *The Journal of Greco-Roman Studies* 57.3 (2018), pp. 49–66. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23933/jgrs.2019.57.3.49>. (Approximately 6,500 words.)

BOOK REVIEWS

- [1] ‘Review of Christian Pfeiffer, *Aristotle’s Theory of Bodies*. Oxford Aristotle Studies Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. x, 230. \$60.00. ISBN 9780198779728’, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (2019). Review number: 2019.09.10. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2019/2019-09-10.html>. (Approximately 2,000 words.)

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- Hill Scholarship (*declined due to illness*)**, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2022 (covering the entire cost of the ASCSA Summer Session fees, including tuition, room for the duration of the Session, board in Athens, travel within Greece, and museum and site fees. Approximately \$5,000 USD.)
- Hertford Senior Scholarship**, Hertford College, University of Oxford, 2019 – 2021 (£5,000 GBP plus accommodation rights, dining rights, and Associate Membership of the Senior Common Room. Awarded for an outstanding record of academic achievement. Selected out of 80 postgraduate applicants from across all Colleges and degree-subjects at Oxford. Usually awarded to a final-year doctoral student.)
- Durham Centre for Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Bursary**, University of Durham, 2019 (£400 GBP awarded for presentation at the 2019 International Medieval Congress.)
- Blackwell's Scholarship**, University of Oxford, 2017 – 2018 (£1,200 GBP awarded for academic excellence.)
- Thomas J. McMahon IV Endowment for Excellence for the Pursuit of Scholarship**, University of Oxford, 2017 – 2020 (£11,366 GBP awarded for postgraduate study.)
- Dockweiler Medal in Philosophy**, University of Notre Dame, 2016 (Medal given for best essay on a philosophical topic for my undergraduate thesis, *The Immortality of the Human Soul in Aristotle’s De Anima*.)
- BonAnno Academic Achievement Award for International Economics**, University of Notre Dame, 2016 (Presented to the International Economics major with the highest academic rank.)
- Phi Beta Kappa**, 2016 (Elite academic honour society for the top 10% of graduates in the liberal arts and sciences.)
- Omicron Delta Epsilon**, 2016 (International academic honour society recognizing achievement in economics.)
- Sigma Delta Pi**, 2016 (Academic honour society recognizing achievement in Hispanic literature and language.)
- Templeton Undergraduate Research Assistantship Grant**, University of Notre Dame, Autumn 2015 – Spring 2016 (\$2,000 USD awarded for research purposes.)
- Dean’s List**, University of Notre Dame, Autumn 2013 – Spring 2016 (Awarded on a termly basis for achieving at least a 3.75 out of 4.0 GPA.)

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (all refereed)

- [16] ‘The Stoics on Visual Perception’, presented at the APA Central Division Meeting, American Philosophical Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 23 February 2024.
- [15] ‘Henry More on the Extended Mind’, presented at the Forum Descartes, Paris, France, 18 January 2024.
- [14] ‘Anne Conway on Memory’, presented at the New Voices on Women in the History of Philosophy Virtual Conference, Centre for the History of Women Philosophers and Scientists, Universität Paderborn, Paderborn, Germany, 26 February 2022.
- [13] ‘Disambiguating Anaxagoras’s notions of ψυχή and νοῦς, and their relation to σπέρματα, in Fragments B4a and B12’, presented at the second meeting of VOID: Early Greek Philosophy Workshop, University of Kent, UK, 7 September 2021.
- [12] ‘Aristotle on Building the World from the Ground (and other Elements) Up: An Education-Driven Theory of Hylomorphic Ordinary-Object Ontology’, presented at Change and Changemakers in Ancient Philosophy, Change and Changemakers Network (Siegen) and Mereology of Potentiality Project (Oxford), Siegen, Germany, 1 July 2021.
- [11] ‘Nocturnal Vision in Plato’s *Timaeus*’, presented at the 44th Ancient Philosophy Workshop, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA, 6 March 2021.

- [10] ‘Examining the self in Plato’s *Phaedrus*: what we were when we were “καθαροὶ ὄντες”’, presented at the National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Project, Reconsidering the Sources of the Self in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Periods, Texas A&M University, Texas, USA, 4 April 2020.
- [9] ‘Aristotle on the Role of Emotion in Memory’, presented at the 14th London Ancient Science Conference, Institute of Classical Studies, University College London, UK, 17 February 2020.
- [8] ‘Alexander of Aphrodisias on the Role of the Productive Intellect in Human Psychology in his *De Anima*’, presented at *De Intellectu*: Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew Texts and Their Influence on Medieval Philosophy – A Tribute to Rafael Ramón Guerrero. University of Porto, Portugal, 7 February 2020.
- [7] ‘A Powers-Based Account of Immortality and an Affordance-Based Defence of its Desirability’, presented at Death and Immortality: The Thirteenth Conference of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion, Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford, UK, 6 September 2019.
- [6] ‘Substantializing Aquinas’ Artifacts: A Path to Substancehood for Chemically-Constituted Artifacts in the Thought of Thomas Aquinas’, presented at What Is the Matter of/with Medieval Philosophy? Session II: The Matter of Metaphysics, at the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, UK, 3 July 2019.
- [5] ‘Disambiguating Anaxagoras’s notions of ψυχή and νοῦς, and their relation to σπέρματα, in Fragments B4a and B12’, presented at the 13th London Ancient Science Conference, Institute of Classical Studies, University College London, UK, 13 February 2019.
- [4] ‘Arriving at an Ecological-Structuralist Interpretation of Aristotle’s Theory of Visual Perception Through a Reconceptualization of his Theory of Light’, presented at Sensual Reflections: Re-Thinking the Role of the Senses in the Greco-Roman World, University of Cambridge, UK, 8 December 2018.
- [3] ‘A New Approach to Aristotelian Elemental Transformation’, presented at The Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy’s Annual Meeting, Christopher Newport University, Virginia, USA, 20 October 2018.
- [2] ‘The Dangers of a User-Based Model of the Self: A Regress at *Alcibiades I*, 129b–130c’, presented at Plato’s *Alcibiades I* Revisited, University of Cambridge, UK, 21 September 2018.
- [1] ‘The Glorified Body: A Fourfold Worry for the Traditional Doctrine and a Temporal, Animalist Solution’, presented at Philosophical Perspectives: The 13th Conference of the Società Italiana di Filosofia Analitica (SIFA), University of Eastern Piedmont, Novara, Italy, 7 September 2018.

POSTGRADUATE AND EARLY-CAREER CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (* indicates refereed)

- *[10] ‘Aristotle on the Role of Emotion in Memory’ presented at the Cambridge History of Memory and Emotions Workshop, Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK, 31 October 2022.
- [9] ‘Aristotle on Light and Vision: An “Ecological” Interpretation’, presented at The Cognitive Science Seminar Series, Weinberg Institute for Cognitive Science, University of Michigan, Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA, 1 February 2021.
- *[8] ‘The Contemplative, the Morally Virtuous, and the Dead: Situating *Nicomachean Ethics* I.10–11 within Aristotle’s Theory of Happiness’, presented at The Lyceum Classics Seminar, University College London, UK, 22 May 2019.
- *[7] ‘Aristotle on Building the World from the Ground (and other Elements) Up: An Education-Driven Theory of Hylomorphic Ordinary-Object Ontology’, presented before the Senior Scholarship Selection Committee of the Governing Body of Hertford College, University of Oxford, UK, 16 May 2019.
- *[6] ‘Γνωθι Σεαυτόν: The Object of God’s Νόησις in *Metaphysics* Λ.9’, presented at The Institute of Classical Studies Postgraduate Work-in-Progress Seminar Series, University College London, UK, 16 November 2018.
- [5] ‘Establishing the Sense of “χωριστός” at *De Anima* 430^a17: An Argument in Favour of Ontological Separability’, presented at the Graduate Ancient Philosophy Work-in-Progress Seminar, University of Oxford, UK, 15 November 2018.

- *[4] ‘Φύσις as an Intrinsically Self-Doctoring Doctor: The Nature / Art Analogy and Teleology in Aristotle’s *Physics* II.8’, presented at the Second University of Florida Classics Graduate Student Symposium: *Natura / φύσις vs. Ars / τέχνη*: Artificial vs. Natural in the Ancient World and Beyond, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, USA, 13 October 2018.
- *[3] ‘An Aristotelian Response to a Tripartite Issue in Ancient and Modern Ordinary-Object Ontology: Towards a Hylomorphic, Essentialist Ontology of Artifacts and Living / Non-Living Natural Substances, with an Education-Driven Account of Substantial Change’, presented at *Philosophies in the Mediterranean – Yesterday and Today: Aristotle’s Metaphysics – Yesterday and Today*, Castello di Falconara, Sicily, Italy, 5 September 2018.
- [2] ‘The Difficulty of Aristotle’s Σύμφυτον Πνεῦμα in *De Motu Animalium* 10’, presented at The Ockham Society, University of Oxford, U.K., 8 June 2018.
- *[1] ‘Biological Teleology in “The Rainfall Argument” of *Physics* II.8’, presented at The St. Andrews Graduate Conference in Ancient Philosophy: Teleology, Intelligence and Life in the Platonic and Aristotelian Tradition, University of St. Andrews, Scotland, 4 June 2018.

COMMENTS ON PRESENTATIONS

- [3] ‘Rehabilitating Reconstructionism: Comments on Luca Dondoni’s “What is a Cloud? (*Timaeus* 49a1–53a7)”’, presented at the Fourth Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, University of Michigan, Michigan, USA, 13 May 2023.
- [2] ‘A Passage Still “not of” Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*: Comments on Harry Alanen’s “*Kinēsis vs. Energeia*: A Defence of *Metaphysics* Θ.6, 1048b18-35”’, presented at the Central Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Denver, USA, 25 February 2023.
- [1] ‘Aristotle’s Theology without Eroticism: Comments on Elena Comay del Junco’s “Aristotle’s Erotic Theology”’, presented at the First Rackham Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, University of Michigan, Michigan, USA, 31 October 2020.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan

Primary Instructor:

(Responsible for all course-design, lecturing, and grading as the sole instructor)

Love, Loving, and Loss. PHIL 151. Fall Term 2023.

The Self. PHIL 152. Summer Term 2023.

Graduate Student Instructor:

(Responsible for all grading and for running two one-hour weekly meetings of my own design)

Introduction to Philosophy (for Jim Joyce). PHIL 101. Two Sections. Winter Term 2023.

Introduction to Philosophy (for Maegan Fairchild). PHIL 101. Two Sections. Fall Term 2022.

Descartes to Kant (for Janum Sethi). PHIL 289. Two Sections. Winter Term 2022.

Minds and Machines (for Eric Swanson). PHIL 340. Two Sections. Fall Term 2021.

University of Oxford

Revision Classes:

(Responsible for preparing students for their comprehensive examinations)

Plato's *Republic*. Hertford College. Trinity Term 2020.
Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Hertford College. Trinity Term 2020.

Plato's *Republic*. Hertford College. Hilary Term 2020.
Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Hertford College. Hilary Term 2020.

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

American Philosophical Association

APA Task Force on Enrolment and Major Recruitment

United States of America

February 2023 – Present

- Served as a member of the Task Force with a charge to develop new resources to support philosophy programmes in efforts to increase enrolments and numbers of majors (and minors) in philosophy.

The Philosopher's Annual

Editor

Ann Arbor, MI, USA

February 2023 – September 2023

- Served on a team of four editors to select the ten best articles published in philosophy from the literature of 2022.

University of Michigan, Department of Philosophy

Member of the Ancient Philosophy Search Committee

Ann Arbor, MI, USA

August 2022 – February 2023

- Served on the search committee for an open-rank position in ancient philosophy, where Gabe Shapiro was hired.

University of Michigan, Department of Philosophy

Member of the Philosophy Graduate Admissions Committee

Ann Arbor, MI, USA

August 2022 – April 2023

- Served on the admissions committee for the incoming fall 2023 cohort of graduate philosophy students.

American Philosophical Association

Member of the APA Board

United States of America

July 2022 – present

- Held a voting seat on the American Philosophical Association's Board as the representative for all graduate students in my position as Chair of the Graduate Student Council.
- Worked with the APA Board by attending meetings both virtually and in-person to manage concerns relating to members of the philosophical profession at all levels.

American Philosophical Association

Graduate Student Council: Secretary (2021–2022) and Chair (2022–present)

United States of America

July 2021 – present

- Appointed to a two-year term to serve on the GSC from July 2021 – June 2023. Then re-appointed for a further two-year term, from July 2023 – June 2025, becoming the first person to serve two full terms.
- Elected to serve a one-year term (July 2021 – June 2022) in the position of Secretary of the Graduate Student Council, which involves taking minutes at the monthly GSC meetings and being present as a guest at the APA Board Meetings. Also served on the 2022 GSC Selection Committee with three at-large members of the APA Board and the Executive Director to select four new appointed members of the GSC.
- Twice elected to serve a one-year terms (July 2022 – June 2023, and July 2023 – June 2024) in the position of Chair of the Graduate Student Council, which involves running the entire Council. In this position, I oversaw the publication of posts on the *Grad Student Chronicles*, an APA blog series, the realization of a GSC-sponsored APA Live and On Demand webinar, and the implementation of GSC-sponsored sessions at the 2023 and 2024 Eastern, Central, and Pacific Divisional Meetings of the APA as well as three of their respective Teaching Hubs. The Board also passed my 'Proposal for the Creation of GSC Liaison Positions for APA Non-Standing Committees' in their November 2022 meeting, expanding the GSC's presence throughout the APA. Further, as Chair, I created a mental health resources page on the APA website in order to better-address the mental health epidemic, particularly as present in academia.

University of Michigan, Departments of Philosophy & Classical Studies

Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Coordinator of the Ancient Philosophy Working Group

August 2021 – April 2023

- Coordinated the weekly interdisciplinary Greek reading group, which read Aristotle's *De Memoria* in the 2021–2022 academic year and Proclus' *Elements of Theology* in the 2022–2023 academic year.
- Coordinated the ancient philosophy work-in-progress group, which regularly meets to discuss drafts of papers by graduate students working in classics or ancient philosophy.
- Organized the Third Annual Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, held on 6-7 May 2022, with Professor Alan Code as the keynote speaker.
- Organized the Fourth Annual Workshop, held on 13-14 May 2023, with Professor Christian Wildberg as the keynote speaker.

British Philosophical Association

United Kingdom

Postgraduate Representative on the Executive Committee

November 2019 – November 2020

- Held a voting seat on the American Philosophical Association's Board and attended both virtual and in-person meetings to serve as the representative for all graduate students in my position as Chair of the Graduate Student Council.

British Postgraduate Philosophy Association

United Kingdom

President

April 2019 – November 2020

- Served as President of the national association which represents the interests of all master's and doctoral students in philosophy in the United Kingdom.
- Fostered and maintained an active postgraduate community among philosophy students, with a particular focus on assisting those students who face institutional disadvantages.
- Worked to develop a new constitution for the BPPA, outlining new responsibilities and positions, as well as creating a new election process and tiered representation system.
- Selected the annual BPPA Conference, 'titled Radical Philosophy', and hosted by the University of Manchester, as well as the annual BPPA Masterclass, titled 'Micro-Progressions: Picking Up the Voices of Others', and hosted at Durham University.

University of Oxford, Faculty of Philosophy

Oxford, UK

Library Representative

June 2019 – June 2020

- Elected representative to serve on the Committee on Library Provision and Strategy in Philosophy.
- Liaised with the Oxford University Student Union representatives on the Central Bodleian Libraries Committee and represented the Philosophy Faculty's postgraduate students in the development of plans for the new Humanities Library in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities.

University of Oxford, Faculty of Philosophy

Oxford, UK

Chair of the Ockham Society Committee

June 2018 – June 2020

- Elected Chair of Oxford's Society for postgraduate philosophy students to present their work-in-progress in a constructive and collegial environment for back-to-back one-year terms.
- Reviewed each abstract submission and made decisions on acceptances, then developed termly schedules for our weekly speaker series by forming panels and selecting session chairs.

University of Oxford, Faculty of Philosophy

Oxford, UK

Chair of the Jowett Society Committee

June 2018 – July 2019

- Served a one-year elected term as the Chair of Oxford's premier forum for external professors of philosophy to present their work to the Faculty of Philosophy. This involved directly inviting professors for the weekly lectures, finding accommodation for the speakers, gathering faculty respondents and audience-members, finding chairs for the talks, and organizing the receptions and dinners after each talk.
- As Chairman, I enacted a programme of using Jowett funding to subsidize the dinners of students who wished to join the speaker after their talks, in order to eliminate obstacles which might prevent those worried about costs from getting to know preeminent philosophers.

University of Oxford, Faculty of Philosophy
Chair of the Submission Review Committee,
The 22nd Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference

Oxford, UK
October 2017 – November 2018

- Allocated 174 submissions to reviewers, personally reviewed all those which were highly recommended by the initial reviewers (over 40), and then worked to select the speakers for the Conference.
- Invited Anna Marmodoro and chaired her keynote lecture, titled ‘Building the World without Relations. The Master Builders: Anaxagoras, Plato, Aristotle’, on 11 November 2018.

ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

University of Michigan, Centre for Research on Learning & Teaching
Graduate Student Instructional Consultant

Ann Arbor, MI, USA
August 2023 – Present

- Served as a consultant to Graduate Student Instructors from across the University to provide them with guidance and support in their capacities as teachers. This involved observing their classrooms, offering Instructors new teaching approaches and strategies, explaining how to make improvements based upon student feedback, and generally working with Instructors to help them become more-effective teachers.

University of Michigan, Wolverine Support Network
Group Leader

Ann Arbor, MI, USA
January 2023 – Present

- Led weekly peer-support groups which engaged in open dialogue with graduate students regarding their mental health and well-being.
- Acquired QPR (Question-Persuade-Refer) certified training to perform suicide intervention on campus.

University of Michigan, Sweetland Centre for Writing
Student Advisory Board

Ann Arbor, MI, USA
September 2022 – May 2023

- Served on the Student Advisory Board of the Sweetland Centre for Writing where – after comprehensively examining the website, attending a writing-workshop given by the Centre, and visiting the physical sites the Centre uses for consultations – I made recommendations in a series of Board meetings in order to change the language the Centre uses, add new pages regarding accessibility and the availability of accommodations at the Centre, and substantively increase the accessibility of the Centre for students with physical or sensory disabilities, mental health difficulties, or differing language needs.

University of Michigan
Graduate Studies Committee Representative

Ann Arbor, MI, USA
August 2020 – May 2023

- Served on the Graduate Studies Committee in order to advocate for the implementation of policies in the best interest of the Philosophy Department’s graduate programme.

University of Michigan, Rackham Graduate School
Graduate Student Representative to the Rackham Forum

Ann Arbor, MI, USA
August 2020 – May 2023

- Engaged in a forum which provided direct access to the Dean of Rackham Graduate School in order to advocate for the interests of the Philosophy Department.

University of Oxford, Blackfriars Hall
President, Middle Common Room and Junior Common Room

Oxford, UK
June 2018 – January 2019

- Served as president of the undergraduate and postgraduate community at Blackfriars Hall, which involved managing inter-college relations, fundraising, and volunteer-work as well as the organization of debates and other recreational activities.

University of Oxford, Blackfriars Hall
Treasurer, Middle Common Room and Junior Common Room

Oxford, UK
January 2018 – June 2018

- Handled the finances for the entire undergraduate and postgraduate Common Room budget at Blackfriars.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Philosophical Association, 2020 – present.

LANGUAGES

English: native speaker

Spanish: fluent reading and writing; advanced speaking

French: research-level proficiency (advanced reading; intermediate writing and speaking)

Latin: research-level proficiency

Attic Greek: research-level proficiency

REFERENCES

Tad Schmaltz

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Anna Marmodoro

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