

JENNIFER MENSCH

Associate Professor of Philosophy
School of Humanities and Communications Arts
Western Sydney University
Penrith, New South Wales, 2751 AUSTRALIA

Email: j.mensch@westernsydney.edu.au Website: Western Sydney University
[Academia](#); [Google Scholar](#); [Orcid ID](#); [PhilPeople](#)

NATIONALITY

Canadian, U.S., and Australian citizenship

EDUCATION

1996-2003, Ph.D.	<i>Emory University, Atlanta, USA</i>
2000-2001, research fellowship	<i>Philipps-Universität Marburg, Marburg, Germany</i>
1999-2000, research fellowship	<i>Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Munich, Germany</i>
1994-1996, M.A.	<i>The University of Memphis, Memphis, USA</i>
1989-1993, B.A.	<i>George Mason University, Fairfax, USA</i>

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

17th- and 18th-century Metaphysics and Epistemology, Kant and the German Enlightenment, Philosophy of Race and Racism, History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Social and Political Philosophy, Bioethics and the Medical Humanities, Environmental Ethics

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2019-present	Associate Professor of Philosophy, Western Sydney University, Australia
2015-2018	Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Western Sydney University, Australia
2012-2014	Adjunct Instructor in Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University, USA
2006-2012	Assistant Professor of Science, Technology & Society (STS) and Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University, USA. The STS Program was closed by the University on June 30, 2012; all tenure lines were terminated.
2002-2006	Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Villanova University, USA

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

2018-2020	Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University
2019	Acting Deputy Dean (Fall semester), School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University
2017-2019	Director of Academic Program, Master of Research, School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University
2005-2008	Assistant Director, Rock Ethics Institute, The Pennsylvania State University

Jennifer Mensch: j.mensch@westernsydney.edu.au

2005-2008 Director, Bioethics and Medical Humanities Minor, The Pennsylvania State University

ELECTED POSITIONS

2022-2026 Academic Senate, Member for the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, Western Sydney University

2022-2024 Board of Trustees, Academic Representative, Western Sydney University

RESEARCH GRANT

2019-2023, Discovery Project, Australian Research Council Grant: \$151,000

Bloodlines: Philosophical Anthropology from Kant to Humboldt

This project focuses on the connections between Kant's philosophy and the emergence of anthropology as a science with distinctive programs in ethnography and physiognomy. The largest aim of the project is to connect German Enlightenment philosophies of history and progress to the early comparative linguistic programs that were developed by Schlegel and von Humboldt at the end of the century and applied to evolutionary theories in the lead up to Darwin.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Generation, Heredity, Race: Key Texts in the History and Philosophy of the German Life Sciences, 1745-1845, edited by Jennifer Mensch and Michael Olson (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2025). [For link to project description and table of contents see p. 17.](#)

Kant and the Feeling of Life: Beauty and Nature in the Critique of Judgment, edited by Jennifer Mensch (Albany: SUNY Press, 2024), 320 pgs / ISBN 978-1-4384-9863-8.

[For book abstract and table of contents see p. 16.](#)

Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013, pb 2015, reprint 2019; Japanese translation rights purchased by Ittosha Inc., 2017), 246 pgs. / ISBN 978-0-226-02198-0.

[For book abstract and review blurbs see p. 15.](#)

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

"*Lebensgefühl* and *Geistesgefühl* in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*," in *Kant and the Feeling of Life: Beauty and Nature in Kant's Critique of Judgment*, edited by Jennifer Mensch (Albany: SUNY Press, 2024), pp. forthcoming.

"Kant's Four Examples: On South Sea Islanders, Tahitians, and Other Cautionary Tales for the Case of 'Rusting Talents,'" *Goethe Yearbook* vol. 31 (2024), pp. forthcoming.

"How Philosophers have Influenced the Way you Think about Race," co-authored with Michael Olson, *Futurum: Inspiring the Next Generation*, 21 (2023): 12-15. Open Source access to online site with activity sheets and podcast: <https://doi.org/10.33424/FUTURUM424>

"The Course of Human Development: 19th-century Comparative Linguistics from Schlegel to Schleicher," *International Yearbook for Hermeneutics* vol. 18 (2019): 140-154.

“Embodied Cognition in Berkeley and Kant: The Body’s Own Space,” in *Distributed Cognition in Enlightenment and Romantic Culture*, edited by Miranda Richardson, George Rousseau, and Mike Wheeler, vol. 3 of *History of Distributed Cognition, 4 vols.* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2019), ch. 5, pp. 74-94.

“Seeds of Divinity: From Metaphysics to Enlightenment in Ficino and Kant,” *Intellectual History Review*, vol. 19:1 (2019): 183-198.

“From Anthropology to Rational Psychology in Kant’s Lectures on Metaphysics,” in *Kant’s Lectures on Metaphysics: A Critical Guide*, edited by Courtney Fugate (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), ch. 9, pp. 194-213.

“Songs of Nature: From Philosophy of Language to Philosophical Anthropology in Herder and Humboldt,” *International Yearbook for Hermeneutics* vol. 17 (2018): 95-109.

“Kant and the Skull Collectors: German Anthropology from Blumenbach to Kant” in *Kant and his German Contemporaries*, edited by Corey Dyck and Falk Wunderlich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), ch. 10, pp. 192-210.

“What’s Wrong with Inevitable Progress? Notes on Kant’s Anthropology Today,” *Cogent Arts & Humanities* (2017), 4: 1390917: [Here](#)

“Neither Ghost Nor Machine: Kant, Epigenesis, and the Life of the Mind,” *Philosophy Today* vol. 61:3 (2017): 811-814.

“Caught between Character and Race: ‘Temperament’ in Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology,” *Australian Feminist Law Journal*, Vol. 43:1 (2017): 125-144.

Reprinted in *Philosophies of Difference: Nature, Racism, and Sexuate Difference*, R. Gustafsson, R. Hill, and H. Ngo, eds. (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 125-144.

“Genealogy and Critique in Kant’s Organic History of Reason,” *Con-Textos Kantianos. An International Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 1, 2015: 178-196.

“Kant and the Problem of Form: Theories of Generation, Theories of Mind,” in *Kant and the Empirical Sciences*, edited by Nuria Sanchez Madrid, special monographic issue of *Estudos Kantianos* vol. 2.2, 2014: 241-264.

“From Crooked Wood to Moral Agent: Connecting Anthropology and Ethics in Kant,” *Estudos Kantianos* vol. 2.1, 2014: 185-204.

“Kant’s Organicism. A Précis and Response to Two Critics,” *Critique. A Philosophical Review Bulletin* vol. 3, 2014: 1-2, 12-18.

“The Poem as Plant: Archetype and Metamorphosis in Goethe and Schlegel,” *International Yearbook for Hermeneutics* vol. 13, 2014: 85-106.

“Understanding Affinity: Locke on Generation and the Task of Classification,” *Locke Studies* Vol. 11, Fall 2011: 49-71.

“Intuition and Nature in Kant and Goethe,” *European Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 19:3, 2011: 431-453.

“Material Unity and Natural Organism in Locke,” *Idealistic Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1-2, Fall 2010: 149-164.

Jennifer Mensch: j.mensch@westernsydney.edu.au

“The Key to All Metaphysics’: Kant’s Letter to Herz, 1772,” *Kantian Review* Vol. 12.2, Fall 2007: 109-127.

“Kant and the Problem of Idealism: On the Significance of the Göttingen Review,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 44, No. 2, Summer 2006: 297-317.

“Morality and Politics in Kant’s Philosophy of History” in *Toward Greater Human Solidarity: Options for a Plural World* edited by Anindita Balslev (Kolkata: Dasgupta & Co, PVT. Ltd, 2005): 69-85.

“Between Sense and Thought: Synthesis in Kant’s Deductions,” *Epoche: A Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Fall 2005: 81-93.

“Kant on Truth,” *Idealistic Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Fall 2004: 163-172.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Translating the Pacific: Georg Forster and the Order of Nature in Meiners, Kant, and Herder,” co-edited with Michael Olson, invited forum discussion in the *Lessing Yearbook*, Carl Niekirk, editor.

“Kant and Forster on the Taxonomy of Race,” invited for a special issue of *Rivista di Filosofia*, edited by Alberto Bergio and Manuel Fiori.

“Species, Variety, Race: Understanding Degeneration and Inheritance in Kant,” invited for a special issue of *Critical Philosophy of Race*, edited by Robert Bernasconi and Reza Mosayebi.

“Kant and Slavery in Context: Königsberg Trade from Hull to Constantinople,” invited for *Out of Sight: Slavery in Modern European Philosophy*, edited by Lucie Mercier and Jamila Mascat.

“German Anthropology and the Science of Race,” invited for the *Oxford Handbook for German Philosophy in the 18th Century*, edited by Corey Dyck.

“Eighteenth Century Life Science Debates as Backdrop to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*,” invited for the *Cambridge Companion to Kant’s Critique of the Power of Judgment*, edited by Kristi Sweet.

“Revisiting the Kant-Forster Debate through the Lens of Buffon,” invited for publication in *Annals of Science* (2025).

“From *Bildungstrieb* to *Ursprache*: Blumenbach, Humboldt, and the Rise of Comparative Linguistics,” invited for *Johann Friedrich Blumenbach’s ‘Bildungstrieb’: On the Formative Drive in Science, Philosophy, and Politics around 1800*, edited by Gerhard Lauer and Nicolaas Rupke (London: Routledge Press).

Interview with Richard Marshal for ‘3:16am.’

“Kant’s Ethnography,” presentation and interview for ‘Kant 300,’ Brazil, organised by Klaus Denecke Rabello and Carlota Salgado, February 22, 2025.

LEXICON ENTRIES

Entries on “epigenesis [*Epigenesis*],” “generation [*Erzeugung*],” and “organism [*Organismus*],” in the *Cambridge Kant Lexicon*, edited by Julian Wuerth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 173-74, 197-99, and 320-322, respectively.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *Kant, Race, and Racism: The View from Somewhere* by Huaping Lu-Adler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023) in *Intellectual History Review* (2024), pages forthcoming.

Review of *Kant's Nonideal Theory of Politics* by Dilek Huseyinzadegan (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2019) in the *Society for German Idealism and Romanticism Review* 4:1-2 (2021): 127-132.

Review of *Byron, Shelley, and Goethe's Faust. An Epic Connection* by Ben Hewitt (London: Legenda, 2015), and *Hegel and the English Romantic Tradition* by Wayne Deakin (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) in the *Keats-Shelley Journal*, vol. 65 (2016): 168-171.

Review of *Kant's Theory of Biology*, edited by Ina Goy and Eric Watkins (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014) in *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science* vol. 5, no. 2 (2015): 367-370.

Review of *Kant and the Concept of Community*, edited by Charlton Payne and Lucas Thorpe, *North American Kant Society Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 9 (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2011) in *The Goethe Yearbook*, vol. 20 (2013): 273-275.

Review of *Kant's System of Nature and Freedom: Selected Essays* by Paul Guyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) for *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, Summer, 2006.

DISSERTATION

Concepts and Objects: Realism and Idealism in Kant's Theoretical Philosophy, PhD diss., Emory University, 2003, 225 pgs. ProQuest (AAT3103810); Rudolf Makkreel, director.

My dissertation research was supported by grants from the Lewis White Beck Fellowship, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and a four-year doctoral fellowship from Emory University. At Emory I worked with Rudolf Makkreel and in Germany I worked in Munich with Eckart Förster and in Marburg with Manfred Kuehn on Kant's theory of knowledge. In my dissertation I argued that transcendental idealism was only mistakenly understood to yield a form of ontological immaterialism and that it was a mistake, therefore, to interpret Kant as an epistemic realist in order to protect him from this charge.

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

2019-2023	Discovery Project Grant, awarded by the Australian Research Council
2023	Research Impact Grant, Western Sydney University
2021	Teaching Citation awarded by the School of Humanities and Communication Arts for "approaches to learning that influence, motivate, and inspire students to learn"
2020	Nominated for "2020 COVID Teaching Commendation," Western Sydney University
2020	Research Infrastructure Funding Grant, Western Sydney University
2018	Collaborative Research Grant, Western Sydney University
2018	Women's Fellowship Award, Western Sydney University
2016	IHP summer seminar on "Kant's Political Philosophy," funded by the Institute for the History of Philosophy, Emory University
2015	Researcher Development Award, Western Sydney University
2014	Max Kade Research Grant, Max Kade German-American Research Institute

- 2014 Department of Philosophy *Distinguished Alumna Award*, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, George Mason University
- 2014 Student Awarded Faculty Marshal, Department of Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University
- 2008 Franklin Research Grant, American Philosophical Society
- 2008 Kristeller-Popkin Travel Fellowship, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*
- 2006 Research Development Grant, Penn State University
- 2003 Research Fellowship, Villanova University
- 2001 Lewis White Beck Fellowship, Emory University
- 1999 Twelve-month research grant, University of Munich, *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)*
- 1996-2000 Four-year graduate fellowship, Emory University
- 1994-1996 Two-year graduate fellowship, The University of Memphis

PRESENTATIONS

- 2024 “Kant’s Four Examples: On South Sea Islanders, Tahitians, and Other Cautionary Tales for the Case of ‘Rusting Talents’,” *Kant’s Project of Enlightenment, 14th International Kant Congress*, Bonn, Germany, September 9-13, 2024.
- 2024 “Kant at the Forum: On the Public Use of Reason in an Age of Exploration and Empire,” Wesleyan University, Middletown, USA, April 18, 2024.
- 2024 “Ancestors and Aliens: Gaukroger on German Orientalism,” invited for *Conference in Honour of Stephen Gaukroger (1950-2023)*, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, February 2024.
- 2023 Co-Chair and Organiser, “Translating the Pacific: Georg Forster and the Order of Nature in Meiners, Kant, and Herder,” three-day seminar, *German Studies Association*, Montreal, Canada, October 5-7, 2023. [Seminar Webpage here](#)
- 2023 Seminar Leader, *Kant’s Cosmopolitanism*, Collegium Phaenomenologicum, Città di Castello, Italy, July 17-21, 2023.
- 2023 “Kant in the Classroom,” invited for the Philosophy Seminar Series, Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, March 22, 2023.
- 2022 Chair and Organiser, Memorial Panel for Rudolf Makkreel (1939-2021), *North American Kant Society* online series; April 28, 2022.
- 2022 “Epistemic Vice: On the Use and Abuse of Travel Reports by Kant and his German Contemporaries,” *Epistemic Virtue in Ancient to Early Modern Philosophy* conference, Sydney, Australia, April 21, 2022.
- 2022 “Kant’s Philosophical Anthropology,” Department of Philosophy, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia, March 26, 2022.
- 2021 “Embodied Minds: How Comparative Linguistics Became a New Branch of Philosophical Anthropology,” invited for the Philosophy

- Seminar Series, Department of Philosophy, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, May 18, 2021.
- 2020 All workshops, talks, conferences planned for 2020 cancelled due to COVID pandemic restrictions and travel bans.
- 2019 “Language and Enlightenment: On the ‘Genius of Languages’ from Condillac to Herder,” invited for *The Berlin Academy* workshop, Sydney Centre for the Foundations of Science, Sydney, Australia, November 22, 2019.
- 2019 “From Natural History to Natural Ends: Kant on Unity and Telos in the Life Sciences,” invited for *Kant on the Systematicity of the Sciences* conference, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Germany, July 10, 2019.
- 2019 “Kant’s Transcendental Deduction of the Ideas of Reason,” *Leuven Kant Conference*, Leuven, Belgium, May 24, 2019.
- 2018 “Between Form and Force: Goethe’s Response to Blumenbach and Wolff,” invited talk at the 2018 international meetings of the Society for German Idealism and Romanticism, Sydney, Australia, December 7, 2018.
- 2018 “Kant and Goethe on the Organisation of Life,” *Australian Society for Continental Philosophy*, Sydney, Australia, November 27, 2018.
- 2018 “From Philosophy to Anatomy in Early German Anthropology,” invited talk in the School of History and Philosophy of Science’s seminar series, University of Sydney, Australia, October 8, 2018.
- 2018 “The Course of Human Development: German Anthropology from Kant to Darwin,” invited talk at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, August 23, 2018.
- 2018 “Comparative Linguistics and the Limits of Interpretation,” *Hermeneutische Gesellschaft*, Freiburg, Germany, June 29-July 1, 2018.
- 2018 “Lines of Descent: German Anthropology from Kant to Girtanner and Humboldt,” *Racism and the Disciplinary Differentiation of Science and Philosophy*, University of Texas-Dallas, Dallas, USA, May 17, 2018.
- 2017 “From Politics to Morality in Kant’s *Perpetual Peace*,” invited for *Peace and Concord* workshop, Sydney University, Sydney, Australia, September 18-19, 2017.
- 2017 “Caught between Character and Race: The Role of ‘Temperament’ in Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology,” *History and Philosophy of Science* seminar, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 25, 2017.
- 2017 “Blood and Soil: From *Volk* to *Weltanschauung* in Herder,” invited for *Nature and World in German Philosophy* workshop, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, August 11, 2017.
- 2017 “A Land and its People: Language and Culture in Humboldt and Herder,” *Hermeneutische Gesellschaft*, Freiburg, Germany, June 30-July 1, 2017.

- 2017 “Looking for Mules: Heredity, Hybrids, and the Evolution of Species in Buffon,” invited for *Life Before Darwin: Nature and Evolution, 1750-1859*, Sydney University, Sydney, Australia, May 5, 2017.
- 2017 “Mary Wollstonecraft’s Reflections on the Revolution in France,” *Think Club*, Sydney, Australia, April 2, 2017.
- 2016 “German Anthropology between Blumenbach and Kant,” invited for *History and Philosophy of Race* conference, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, November 18, 2016.
- 2016 “Caught between Character and Race: Notes on Kant’s Philosophical Anthropology Today,” invited talk, Central European Institute for Philosophy, Prague, Czech Republic, September 9, 2016.
- 2016 “What’s Wrong with Inevitable Progress?” *European Consortium for Political Research*, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, September 8, 2016.
- 2016 “Kant and the Skull Collectors: Teleology and Empiricism in the Science of Man,” invited for *Science and Nature in the Long Eighteenth Century* workshop, Sydney Centre for the Foundations of Science, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 19, 2016
- 2016 “Hume and Kant on Taste,” invited talk, *Think Club*, Sydney, Australia, August 7, 2016.
- 2016 “Kant and the German Enlightenment: From Universal History to the Vocation of Man,” *History and Authority: Political Vocabularies of the Modern Age*, Australia National University, Canberra, Australia, July 27-29, 2016.
- 2016 “How to Read Kant’s ‘Determination of the Concept of a Human Race,’” *Kant’s Political Thought*, Institute for the History of Philosophy’s seminar [June 4-17], Emory University, Atlanta, USA, June 8, 2016.
- 2016 “What is Enlightenment?” invited talk, *Think Club*, Sydney, Australia, May 15, 2016.
- 2016 “Fractured Enlightenment: Organic History before and after Kant,” invited talk, Philosophy Seminar, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, April 5, 2016.
- 2016 “Climate of Fear: Science and Representation from Nogaret to Hoffman,” *Romantic Climates Symposium*, Department of English, University of Sydney, March 10, 2016.
- 2015 “Vegetable Genius: Vocabularies of Life from Rousseau to Goethe,” Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy, Sydney, Australia, December 3, 2015.
- 2015 **Author Meets Critics session on Kant’s Organicism. Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy**, Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy, Sydney, Australia, December 3, 2015. Respondents, Dalia Nassar (University of Sydney), Michael Olson

- (Macquarie University), and Diego Bubbio (Western Sydney University).
- 2015 “Seeds of Divinity: From Metaphysics to Enlightenment in Ficino and Kant,” *Ancient Theology and Civil Religion from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, Department of Italian Studies, University of Sydney, November 9-10, 2015
- 2015 “Interdisciplinary trends in philosophical discourse today,” invited for the *Nineteenth-Century Studies Group Special Event*, Department of English, University of Sydney, November 4, 2015.
- 2015 “A History of Man: On Race, Slavery, and Colonial Conquest in Kant,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, September 8, 2015.
- 2015 “Like Mother, Like Daughter: Degeneration and Regeneration in Wollstonecraft's and Shelley's Medical Imaginary,” invited for *Natural History and the Life Sciences in the long eighteenth century*, Sydney Centre for the Foundations of Science, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 18, 2015.
- 2014 **Author Meets Critics session on Kant's Organicism. Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy**, Eastern Division meetings of the American Philosophical Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, December 28, 2014. Respondents, John Zammito (Rice University) and Günter Zöllner (LMU-Munich).
- 2014 “Genealogy and Critique in Kant's Organic History of Reason,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 20, 2014.
- 2014 “Rational History, Irrational Heart: From Anthropology to Grace in Kant,” invited for *Kant Workshop*, University of Western Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 18, 2014.
- 2014 “Rewriting Prometheus: Cultural Zeitgeist from Weimar Classicism to British Gothic Fiction,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, University of Western Sydney, Sydney, Australia, August 13, 2014.
- 2014 “A Morally Hazardous Course: The Case of Evolutionary Ethics Today,” annual meeting of SRPoiSE: Socially Relevant Philosophy of/in Science and Engineering, Kitchener, Canada, June 11, 2014.
- 2014 **Author Meets Critics session on Kant's Organicism. Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy**, part of Transcendental Philosophy Research's online-live book symposia series, <http://virtualcritique.wordpress.com>, March 31-April 4, 2014. Respondents, Angela Breitenbach (Cambridge University) and Hein van den Berg (Groningen).
- 2014 “Teleology and Race in Kant's Biological Philosophy of History,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada, January 9, 2014.

- 2013 “From Anthropology to Ethics in Kant,” invited talk, Hale Ethics Series, Rochester Institute of Technology, November 21, 2013.
- 2013 “Reading Goethe with Gadamer,” invited talk, annual meeting of the *Hermeneutische Gesellschaft*, Freiburg, Germany, June 28, 2013.
- 2013 “System and Organism in the *Critique of Pure Reason*,” invited keynote, *Leuven Kant Conference*, Leuven, Belgium, May 31, 2013.
- 2013 **Author Meets Critics session on *Kant’s Organicism. Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy***, Institute for Philosophy, University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium, May 29, 2013.
- 2013 “From Gray’s Electrified Boy to Shelley’s Frankenstein: Experimental Physics, Public Education, and the Hunt for Animal Electricity in the Long Eighteenth Century,” *American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Cleveland, OH, April 5, 2013.
- 2013 “Kant’s Organic Legacy,” invited Eugene Donatio compact seminar (three lectures), Department of Comparative Literature, SUNY Buffalo, NY, March 26-28, 2013.
- 2013 “Kant’s Early Views on Race,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., February 1, 2013.
- 2012 “Kant and the Life Sciences,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany, June 27, 2012.
- 2011 Seminar Leader, *Kant’s Aesthetics*, Collegium Phaenomenologicum, Città di Castello, Italy, July 11-15, 2011.
- 2011 “Kant’s Organicism,” North American Kant Society, Eastern Division, Boston College, Boston, MA, April 8, 2011.
- 2010 “Natural Affinities: Genealogy and Natural History in Kant, Goethe, and Darwin,” invited talk, Department of Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University, PA, October 1, 2010.
- 2010 “Kant’s Theory of Intuition in the *Inaugural Dissertation* of 1770,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Chicago, IL, February 20, 2010.
- 2009 “Intuition and Nature in Kant and Goethe,” invited talk, Department of Comparative Literature, SUNY Buffalo, April 2, 2009.
- 2008 “Understanding Organism in Kant and Goethe,” Goethe Society of North America, Pittsburgh, PA, November 7, 2008.
- 2008 “The Science of Colour: Mechanism and Organism in Newton and Goethe,” German Studies Association, St. Paul, MN, October 5, 2008.
- 2008 “‘To be both Cause and Effect of Itself’: Natural Purpose and *Naturphilosophie* in Kant and Schelling,” invited talk, Freiburg University, Freiburg, Germany, June 20, 2008.
- 2006 Invited Response to “Between Human Experience and Divine Intuition: Hegel’s Response to Kant’s Limitation of Our Knowledge,” by James

- Kreines, American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 29, 2006 [read by Sally Sedgewick].
- 2006 “Colours are the Deeds of Light’: Philosophy and Science in Newton and Locke,” *Science, Medicine, Technology and Culture* series at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, April 5, 2006.
- 2006 “Kant on Morality and Politics,” *Cross-Cultural Conversation* Conference, New Delhi, India, January 9-12, 2006.
- 2005 “Kant and the Problem of Idealism. On the Significance of the Göttingen Review,” North American Kant Society, Eastern Division, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, April 22, 2005.
- 2004 Seminar Leader, Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, Collegium Phaenomenologicum, Città di Castello, Italy, July 16-25, 2004.
- 2003 Invited Response to “Dissecting Juristic Trickery: Kant on Punishment and the Social Contract,” by Frederick Rauscher, American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, Cleveland, OH, April 25, 2003.
- 2002 “Kant’s Transcendental Theory of Truth: Coherence, Correspondence, and the Anti-Realism Debate,” *Philosophy and Phenomenology of Subjectivity: Classical Systems and Recent Approaches*, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, January 15, 2002.
- 2001 Invited Response to “Physiology and the Controlling of Affects in Kant’s Philosophy,” by Maria Borges, American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, May 5, 2001.
- 2000 “Kant’s Correspondence, 1770-1772,” Philipps Universität Marburg, Marburg, Germany, November 24, 2000.
- 2000 “Kant’s Idealism: The Critical Response to Feder and Garve,” joint conference of the philosophy departments of Philipps-Universität Marburg and Bergischen Universität-Gesamthochschule Wuppertal, Marburg, Germany, May 27, 2000.
- 1999 “Sensation in Kant,” *Is the Subject Still Dead?* conference, Department of Philosophy, Stony Brook, NY, September 3, 1999.
- 1999 “Between Sense and Thought: Temporal Synthesis in Kant’s 1781 Deduction,” American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, New Orleans, LA, May 5, 1999.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

North American Kant Society, The Australian and New Zealand Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Society for German Idealism and Romanticism, German Studies Association

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Journal Referee: *Philosophical Quarterly, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, British Journal for the History of Philosophy, Kantian Review, HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science, Kant Studies Online, Journal of the Philosophy of History,*

European Journal for Philosophy of Science, Epoche. A Journal of the History of Philosophy, Journal of Philosophical Research, Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie, Journal for the History of Philosophy, Southern Journal of Philosophy, Critical Philosophy of Race, Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Medical Sciences, History of Philosophy Quarterly, Synthese, Con-Textos Kantianos, The Eighteenth Century: Studies in Theory and Interpretation, Intellectual History Review, Philosophers' Imprint, Journal of Modern Philosophy

- Book Referee: Oxford University Press, The University of Chicago Press, Routledge Press, Northwestern University Press, SUNY Press
- Grant Reviewer: Research Foundation Flanders - Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen (**FWO**)
Czech Science Foundation - Grantová agentura České republiky (**GAČR**)
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (**SSHRC**)
Australian Research Council (**ARC**)
Austrian Science Fund – Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (**FWF**)
- 2021- Mentor, Women Scholars Network, North American Kant Society
- 2015-16 Conference Referee, Biannual Meeting of the North American Kant Society
- 2008-09 Conference Organizer & Host, North American Kant Society, Eastern Division
- 2005-2007 Program Committee, North American Kant Society, Eastern Division

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Western Sydney University:

- 2022-24 People and Culture Committee, University Board of Trustees
- 2022-24 University Research Committee, Senior Researcher Appointment
- 2021 Challenge Mentor, 21C Curriculum Champions: Future Thinkers and Sustainability Advocates Division
- 2021 Planning Committee, Women's Leadership Conference
- 2019-20 Bachelor of Arts Core Review: "Critical Thinking" Unit Committee, School of Humanities and Communication Arts
- 2019-20 Graduate Events Committee, School of HCA
- 2019-20 Research Awards Committee, School of HCA
- 2018-20 Research Studies Committee, Graduate Research School
- 2018-20 Research Grants Committee, School of HCA
- 2018-20 Research and Higher Degrees Committee, School of HCA
- 2017-2019 Course Management Committee, Bachelor of Arts, School of HCA
- 2017-2019 School Academic Committee, Graduate Research School

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Jennifer Mensch: j.mensch@westernsydney.edu.au

Western Sydney University:

2019-20 Bachelor of Arts Majors Review: “Ethics” Unit Committee, Philosophy
2017-2018 Speaker Series Committee, Philosophy
2015- Faculty Liaison, Library
2015-20 M.A. Deputy Convener, Philosophy

The Pennsylvania State University:

2010-2012 Director of Public Events, Philosophy
2010-2011 Graduate Committee, STS
2010-2011 Climate Committee, STS
2009-2010 Public Events Committee, Philosophy
2008-2009 Hiring Committee, Technology and the Environment, STS
2008-2009 Chair, Climate Committee, STS
2007-2008 Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, STS

Villanova University:

2003-2004 Graduate Comprehensive Exams Committee
2003-2004 Committee for Undergraduate Curriculum
2002-2003 Hiring Committee, Environmental Ethics search
2002-2003 Faculty Director, Graduate reading/translation group (German)
2002-2004 Faculty Liaison, Research and Fellowship Programs Abroad (Germany)
2002-2004 Chair, Library Committee
2002-2004 Graduate Faculty Committee, Placement

THESIS AND DISSERTATION SERVICE

2023- James Rutherford (Dissertation Committee Member)
2022- Jennifer Don (Dissertation Committee Member)
2021-22 Walid Mariam (M.A. Thesis co-director, Western)
2018-2021 Jason Munro (M.A. Thesis Director, Western)
2017 Brendan Burnett (M.A. Thesis examiner, Macquarie)
2017 Kim Pham (M.A. Thesis co-director, Western)
2016 Maksymilian Sipowicz (M.A. Thesis examiner, Monash)
2015 Cristian Talos (Honours Thesis examiner, Western)
2009-2012 Toby Svoboda (Dissertation committee member, Penn State)
2010-2011 John Nale (Dissertation committee member, Penn State)
2007-2010 Daniel Brunson (Dissertation committee member, Penn State)
2007-2010 Alexa Schriempf (Dissertation committee member, Penn State)
2010-2011 Daniel Jensen (Honours Thesis Director, Penn State)
2008-2010 Andrew Xanthis (Honours Thesis Director, Penn State)
2006-2007 Jeffrey Markowitz (Honours Thesis Director, Penn State)

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY—COURSES TAUGHT

Graduate Courses

Philosophy of History
Critical Philosophy of Race
Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*
Kant’s Practical Philosophy
Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*

Jennifer Mensch: j.mensch@westernsydney.edu.au

Herder: From Aesthetics to Anthropology
Humanities in the Long Eighteenth Century (Master of Research Program)
Philosophy of History and Politics (Master of Research Program)
Philosophy of Race and Racism (Master of Research Program)
Racial Revolution: France, Haiti, and the Quest for Liberty (Master of Research Program)

Undergraduate Courses

Philosophy of History
Philosophy of Freedom
Philosophy of Race and Racism
Classics of Modern Philosophy
Ethics and Philosophy
Key Thinkers: Plato
Ancient Western Culture: Periclean Athens

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY—COURSES TAUGHT

Philosophy Graduate Courses

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*
Kant's Practical Philosophy
Fichte and Schelling
German Idealism
German Aesthetics

Philosophy Undergraduate Courses

Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy
Philosophy of History
Social and Political Philosophy
History of Ethics
Bioethics and the Medical Humanities
Environmental Ethics
Theories of Knowledge
Intro to Philosophy

STS Graduate Courses (Program for Science, Technology, and Society)

History of the Life Sciences
19th-century Natural History
The Darwinian Revolution

STS Undergraduate Courses

The Historical Interrelation of Science, Philosophy, and Religion
17th- and 18th-century Theories of Perception: Philosophy, Science, Art
History of Science II: History of Chemistry from Alchemy to the Buckyball
History of Western Medicine from Antiquity to the Present
U.S. Healthcare, Public Health, and Medical Ethics
Studies in Environmental Philosophy: The Food We Eat, The Choices We Make

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY—COURSES TAUGHT

GRADUATE COURSES

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*
German Idealism

Undergraduate Courses

Ethics
Honours Seminar on Modern Philosophy
Core Humanities I & II

KANT'S ORGANICISM

Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013, pb 2015, reprint 2019; Japanese translation rights purchased by Ittosha Inc., 2017), 246 pgs. / ISBN 978-0-226-02198-0.

Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy, displaces traditional narratives of Immanuel Kant's philosophy by tracing the decisive role played by eighteenth century embryological research for Immanuel Kant's theories of mind and cognition. I begin this book by following the course of life science debates regarding organic generation in England and France between 1650 and 1750 before turning to a description of their influence in Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century. Once this background has been established, the remainder of *Kant's Organicism* moves to the influential role played by models of embryological development for Kant's approach to understanding the cognitive processes responsible for the generation of knowledge, with special attention paid to Kant's Precritical writings in the 1760s and 1770s. The book closes with a reinterpretation of Kant's transcendental deduction in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

A **“highly recommended” CHOICE book**, *Kant's Organicism* has been the subject of “Author Meets Critics” sessions in Leuven (2013), Munich (2014), Philadelphia (2014), and Sydney (2015), and been peer-reviewed in over twenty international journals, including *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Kantian Review*, *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, *HOPOS*, *German Studies Review*, *ISIS*, *Estudos Kantianos*, *The Goethe Yearbook*, *Rivista di Storia della Filosofia*, *Radical Philosophy*, *Con-Textos Kantianos*, *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, and *Critical Philosophy of Race*.

Reviews of *Kant's Organicism*:

“A striking and radical rereading of the first *Critique* through the concept of ‘epigenesis.’ . . . Mensch’s reading is bold and innovative; it deserves to be debated at length by Kant scholars.”—*Radical Philosophy*

“Mensch’s attempt to interpret Kant’s transcendental philosophy in relation to eighteenth-century life sciences is original and exciting. . . . Mensch convincingly shows that questions concerning the origin of cognitions strongly informed Kant’s philosophy. This result is important, since many philosophers, often operating in the wake of Peter F. Strawson’s analytic Kant interpretation, have ignored these types of questions when studying Kant. In short: Mensch’s book is a good example of the fruitful integration of Kant studies with history of science.”—*International Studies in the Philosophy of Science*

“In this concise and tightly argued monograph, Mensch has demonstrated . . . Kant’s continual and critical attentiveness to the work of the emergent life sciences across the eighteenth century. She shows a clear grasp of what that scientific work took up and what its philosophical implications were—both for the scientists and for Kant. . . . Her account of how

Kant came to understand the thinking of the naturalists over the course of the eighteenth century and relate it to his own quest for a transcendental ground of reason in self-generation is very well wrought.”—*Kantian Review*

“*Kant’s Organicism* is an excellent and fascinating philosophical-historical study, well worth reading for any Kant scholar. It also provides a rich source of stimulating ideas for contemporary Kantian philosophers.”—*Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*

“It is exciting to see a work of scholarship that combines textual exegesis with historical analysis in a clear yet sophisticated fashion. And it is even more exciting to come across a work that paints a picture of the man from Königsberg that is as relevant for philosophy as it is for history, biology, and the history of biology.”—*Con-Textos Kantianos*

Look inside *Kant’s Organicism* at the [University of Chicago Press](#)

KANT AND THE FEELING OF LIFE

Kant and the Feeling of Life: Beauty and Nature in the Critique of Judgment, edited by Jennifer Mensch (Albany: SUNY Press, 2024), 320 pgs. / ISBN 978-1-4384-9863-8.

Kant and the Feeling of Life positions Kant’s concept of life as a guiding thread for understanding not only Kant’s approach to aesthetics and teleology but the underlying unity of the *Critique of Judgment* itself. The “feeling of life,” which Kant describes as affecting us in various ways—as animating, enlivening, and quickening the mind—lies at the heart of Kant’s philosophical project, but it has remained understudied for a theme of such centrality. This volume brings together, for the first time, essays focused on the topic of life in Kant’s work, providing a wealth of perspectives and analyses ranging from the *Critique of Judgment* to Kant’s early aesthetics, his social and political philosophy, his work connected to the body and health, and his moral theory.

“While there are other very good collections that address either the *Critique of Judgment* as a whole or Kant’s biological/scientific writings, none offer the combination of high-level scholarship *and* an editorial voice as innovative as Mensch’s. While this volume is structured as a collection of essays that follow the development of the *Critique of Judgment*, Mensch is offering the theme of life as a way not only to interpret the third *Critique* but to connect its varied discussions far beyond Kant’s text within his corpus and beyond.”—Avery Goldman, DePaul University

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|--|
| 00 | Jennifer Mensch: | <i>Lebensgefühl</i> and <i>Geistesgefühl</i> in Kant’s <i>Critique of Judgment</i> |
| 01 | Dennis J. Schmidt: | From the Beginning: Kant on the Feeling of Life Itself |
| 02 | James Risser: | The Furtherance of Life as the Bridge between Nature and Freedom in Kant’s Critical Philosophy |
| 03 | Courtney D. Fugate: | Pure Aesthetic Judging as a Form of Life |
| 04 | Colin J. McQuillan: | The Aesthetic Perfection of Life in Baumgarten, Meier, and Kant |
| 05 | Rodolphe Gasché: | On the <i>sensus communis</i> as a Feeling of Life |
| 06 | Kristi Sweet: | The Ideal of Beauty and the Meaning of “Life” in Kant’s Philosophy |
| 07 | Robert R. Clewis: | Imagination, Life, and Self-Consciousness in the Kantian Sublime |
| 08 | Rachel Zuckert: | The Momentary Inhibition and Outpouring of the Vital Powers: |

- Kant on the Dynamic Sublime
- 09 Dilek Huseyinzadegan: A Matter of Life and Death, or, the Anthropological Deduction of the Sublime
 - 10 Rudolf A. Makkreel: Kant, the Feeling of Life, and the Reflective Comprehension of Teleological Purposiveness
 - 11 Susan Meld Shell: Organizing the State: Mechanism and Organism in Kant's Political Writings of the 1780s and 1790s
 - 12 Michael J. Olson: Kant on the Feeling of Health
 - 13 Joan Steigerwald: Kant and Organic Life
 - 14 G. Felicitas Munzel: Personality: The Life of the Finite, Moral-Rational Being

GENERATION, HEREDITY, AND RACE:

KEY TEXTS IN THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE GERMAN LIFE SCIENCES, 1745-1845

A Critical Edition, edited by Jennifer Mensch and Michael Olson

Table of Contents

Introduction: overview of the project, historical context, methodology for translations and sources, additional resources. [See project description here.](#)

Part 1: Generation Theory

- 1: [1745] Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, "Concerning the Origin of Animals," *Earthly Venus*, translated by Simone Brangier Boas.
- 2: [1749] Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, "General History of Animals: Recapitulation," *Natural History, General and Particular*, translated by William Smellie.
- 3: [1752] Albrecht von Haller, Preface, *Universal History of Nature Treated According to All its Particular Parts* [German edition of Buffon's *Natural History*], translated by Antje Kühnast.
- 4: [1761] Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, "Essay on the Formation of Bodies, Translated from the Latin by a Friend of Natural Philosophy," translated by Michael Olson.
- 5: [1763] Immanuel Kant, "What can be inferred from our argument to the advantage of one or the other of the two orders of nature," in "The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God," translated by Michael Olson.
- 6: [1766] Immanuel Kant, "A tangled metaphysical knot which can be either untied or cut as one pleases," in "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer," translated by Michael Olson.
- 7: [1781] Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "On the Formative Drive and the Business of Generation," translated by Michael Olson.
- 8: [1789] Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "Attempt at an answer to the prize question assigned for the third time by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg: uti nutritio aequalibus etc.," (selection) translated by Michael Olson.
- 9: [1789] Caspar Friedrich Wolff, "On the Properties and Essential Force of Vegetable and Animal Substance," translated by Michael Olson.
- 10: [1790] Immanuel Kant, "On the necessary subordination of the principle of mechanism to the teleological principle in explaining a thing as a natural purpose," and "On conjoining mechanism to the teleological principle in explaining natural purposes as natural products," in the *Critique of Judgment*, translated by Werner Pluhar.
- 11: [1817] Johann von Goethe, "Our Objective is Stated," *Natural Science in General; Morphology in Particular*, translated by Bertha Mueller.

- 12: [1817] Johann von Goethe, “My Discovery of a Worthy Forerunner” and “Caspar Friedrich Wolff on Plant Formation,” *Natural Science in General; Morphology in Particular*, translated by Bertha Mueller.
- 13: [1820] Johann von Goethe, “Bildungstrieb,” *Natural Science in General; Morphology in Particular*, translated by Bertha Mueller.

Part Two: Heredity and Race

- 14: [1745] Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, “Varieties in the Species of Man,” *Earthly Venus*, translated by Simone Brangier Boas.
- 15: [1749] Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, “Of the Varieties of the Human Species,” *Natural History, General and Particular*, translated by William Smellie.
- 16: [1757-59] Immanuel Kant, “Differences in the Form and Colour of Human Beings in Various Parts of the Earth,” *Lectures on Physical Geography*, translated by Olaf Reinhardt.
- 17: [1766] Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, “Of the Degeneration of Animals,” *Natural History, General and Particular*, translated by William Smellie.
- 18: [1775/77] Immanuel Kant, “Of the Different Races of Human Beings,” translated by Michael Olson.
- 19: [1785] Samuel Thomas Soemmerring, “On the Physical Difference of the Negro from the European” (selection), translated by Michael Olson.
- 20: [1785] Immanuel Kant, “Determination of the Concept of a Human Race,” translated by Michael Olson.
- 21: [1786] Georg Forster, “Something More on the Human Races,” translated by Jon Mikkelsen.
- 22: [1788] Immanuel Kant, “On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy” (selection), translated by Michael Olson.
- 23: [1790] Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Contributions to Natural History*, translated by Antje Kühnast.
- 24: [1795] Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* (selection), translated by Thomas Bendyshe.
- 25: [1796] Christoph Girtanner, *On the Kantian Principle for Natural History: An Attempt to Treat this Science Philosophically* (selection), translated by Michael Olson.
- 26: [1815] Christoph Meiners, *Investigations into the difference in human natures (the differences of human types) in Asia and the southern countries in the East Indies and the South Sea Islands, along with a historical comparison of ancient and present inhabitants of the continents and islands* (selection), translated by Michael Olson.
- 27: [1826] G.W.F. Hegel, “The Natural Context or The Geographical Basis of World History,” (selection), in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, translated by Dennis J. Schmidt.
- 28: [1845] Alexander von Humboldt, “General Review of Natural Phenomena: Man, Races, Language” in *Cosmos*, translated by E.C. Otté.

Part Three: Race and Empire

- 29: [1775] Christoph Meiners, “Some Observations on the History of the South Sea Islanders,” translated by Michael Olson.
- 30: [1780] Georg Forster, “O-Tahiti” (selection), translated by Antje Kühnast.
- 31: [1786] Georg Forster, “New Holland and the British Colony in Botany Bay” (selection), translated by Robert J. King.
- 32: [1790] Christoph Meiners, “Historical Report on the True Character of the Slave Trade and the Servitude of Negroes in the West Indies,” translated by Michael Olson.

- 33: [1791] Georg Forster, "On Christoph Meiners' Anthropological Treatises in the *Göttingen Historical Magazine*," translated by Michael Olson.
- 34: [1795] Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "Letter to Sir Joseph Banks," in *On the Natural Variety of Mankind*, translated by Thomas Bendyshe.
- 35: [1797] Johann Gottfried Herder, "Negro Idylls," *Letters on the Advancement of Humanity*, translated by Michael Olson.
- 36: [1826] Alexander von Humboldt, "Political Essay on the Island of Cuba," (selection), *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of America, during the years 1799-1804*, translated by Thomasina Ross.