

Robert Engelman

4301 Broadway
Department of Philosophy
University of the Incarnate Word
San Antonio, TX 78209
(404) 630-5209
engelman@uiwtx.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Fall 2025–present: Lecturer – University of the Incarnate Word, Department of Philosophy

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Philosophy (August 2025), Vanderbilt University
B.A. Hons. Philosophy (May 2017), Boston University (*cum laude*)

RESEARCH AREAS

AOS: Social and Political Philosophy, 19th-20th Century Philosophy (esp. Frankfurt School Critical Theory)
AOC: Aesthetics (esp. music and literature), Kant

DISSERTATION

Title: *Social Criticism and the Risk of Unreasonableness*

Committee: Idit Dobbs-Weinstein, Julian Wuerth (co-chairs), Lucius T. Outlaw (Jr.), Willi Goetschel (University of Toronto)

Abstract: This dissertation offers a Kantian defense of unrestricted social criticism within contemporary debates in critical theory concerning methodological egalitarianism and authoritarianism. It examines social criticism as an everyday communicative activity with enlightenment and moral progress as its ends. By showing that social critics can not only fail to realize those ends, but also undermine them and thereby lapse into malpractice, the dissertation argues that if social criticism's ends require that the activity be unrestricted, as Kant and his successors indicate, then promoting its ends requires accepting rather than avoiding the risk of malpractice. To substantiate this risk, the dissertation reconstructs a tension in the Kantian framework, in which the ends of social criticism require social critics to proceed both with and without respect and trust for persons. The dissertation concludes by offering a normative program called *revisionary autonomism* to productively navigate this tension in a way that accepts the risk of malpractice. Revisionary autonomism takes a temporalized, open-ended relation to the question of whether or not to enact respect and trust in given episodes of social criticism, and advocates for courage and humility so as to mediate between the fearlessness of Marx's methodologically authoritarian, ruthless critique and the modesty of Allen's contextualist methodological egalitarianism.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

* = *invited*

5. Hall, Zachary and Robert Engelman. "Kant, Nonsense, and the Suprasensible Reality of Thinking: Re-Reading Wittgenstein's 'Picture Theory'." *Wittgenstein-Studien*. (Forthcoming.)

4. Engelman, Robert. "The Historicisation of the Human Senses from Feuerbach to Marx." *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, vol. 51, no. 8 (September 2025): 1333–57.
3. Engelman, Robert. "The Collegial Structure of Kantian Public Reason." *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 68, no. 10 (2025): 3926–3958.
2. Engelman, Robert. "Modern Scepticism, Metaphysics, and Absolute Knowing in Hegel's *Science of Logic*." *Hegel Bulletin*, vol. 45, no. 3 (December 2024): 442–469.
1. Engelman, Robert. "Reading Into It or Hearing It Out? Cavell on Modernism and the Art Critic's Hermeneutical Risk." In *Continuing Cavell: Must We Mean What We Say? At Fifty*, 121–34. Edited by Greg Chase, Juliet Floyd, and Sandra Laugier. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

* = *invited*

2. Engelman, Robert. "In Praise of Slacker Rock." In *90s Alternative and Philosophy: Modern Rock Meditations*, 25–36. Edited by Joshua Heter and Richard Greene. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Co. Publishers Inc., 2026.
1. APA Blog Interview with Dr. Smrutipriya Pattnaik on Work–Life Balance: <https://blog.apaonline.org/2025/01/20/apa-member-interview-robert-engelman/> (2025) *

WORK IN PROGRESS

5. Article project on suspicion and political epistemology (r&r)
4. Article project on criticisms of the concept of "propaganda" (under review)
3. Article project on the concept of "propaganda" (under review)
2. Article project that offers a social- and feminist-epistemological reading of an opera (under review)
1. Article project on Kant and social criticism (draft)

PRESENTATIONS

* = *refereed*

18. 2026: "On the Modality and Sociality of Kantian Public Reasoning: Reading Kant with and against Arendt," Tulane German Philosophy Workshop* (New Orleans, LA)
17. 2026: "'At Once of Madness and of Plainness': Cavell and Adorno on Beckett's *Endgame*," Stanley Cavell at 100: An International Centennial Conference* (Boston, MA)
16. 2025: "What is Social Criticism, and What is it For?," Pi and Phi at the University of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio, TX)

15. 2025: “Judith as Inquirer: *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle* as a Feminist Epistemological Opera,” Association for Philosophy and Literature * (Frankfurt, Germany)
14. 2024: “Actual Communication and the Critical Politics of Public Reason: Reading Kant with and against Arendt,” Tennessee Philosophical Association * (Nashville, TN)
13. 2024: “Actual Communication and the Negativity of Public Reason: Reading Kant with and against Arendt,” St. Andrews Kant and Arendt Reading Party * (St. Andrews, Scotland)
12. 2023: “Between Respect for Persons and Disrespectful Critique: Reason’s Constitutive Tension,” Tennessee Philosophical Association * (Nashville, TN)
11. 2023: “Intellectual Freedom and Cooperative Communication in Kantian Public Reason,” Vanderbilt Association for Modern Philosophy * (Online)
10. 2023: (with Zachary Hall): “Metaphysical Quietism About the Thinking Subject in Kant and Wittgenstein,” Metaphysical Society of America 73rd Annual Meeting * (Atlanta, GA) (Declined due to scheduling conflict)
9. 2021: “Unifying Contemporary Philosophical Approaches to Propaganda,” 38th NASSP International Social Philosophy Conference * (Online)
8. 2020: “Propaganda’s Soft Power” 28th Annual Critical Theory Roundtable * (Online)
7. 2020: “Micrological Analysis and Adorno’s Immanent Critique of Positivism,” 13th International Critical Theory Conference of Rome * (Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic)
6. 2020: “Recovering Alban Berg’s Philosophical Significance for Adorno,” 9th Annual Meeting of the Association for Adorno Studies * (Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic)
5. 2020: “The Aestheticization of Electoral Politics: Toward A Benjaminian Account,” American Society for Aesthetics, Pacific Division * (Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic)
4. 2019: “Walter Benjamin and the Aestheticization of Electoral Politics,” Tennessee Philosophical Association * (Nashville, TN)
3. 2019: “Reading-Into or Hearing-Out?: Cavell on Skepticism and the Art Critic’s Hermeneutic Risk,” American Society for Aesthetics, Rocky Mountain Division * (Santa Fe, NM)
2. 2019: “On Adornian Investigations: Philosophizing with a Microscope and a Telescope,” 12th International Critical Theory Conference of Rome * (Rome, Italy)
1. 2019: Roundtable on Aesthetics and Modernism, Continuing Cavell: *Must We Mean* at Fifty (Boston, MA)

COMMENTARY

(invited unless specified)

9. 2025: Matthew Delhey, “Visions of Community at the University of Berlin: Kant, Fichte, Schleiermacher,” APA Eastern Divisional Meeting (New York, NY)
8. 2024: Meredith Sheeks, “The Importance of Being Rude,” Tennessee Philosophical Association (Nashville, TN)
7. 2023: Dario Vaccaro, “Kantian Infallibilism vs. Kantian Fallibilism: An Analysis,” Tennessee Philosophical Association (Nashville, TN)
6. 2022: Elijah Millgram, “Who Was Nietzsche’s Psychologist?” Vanderbilt Philosophy Colloquium (Online)
5. 2021: Sarah Mattice, “Sampling as Hermeneutic Paradigm,” Tennessee Philosophical Association (Online)
4. 2021: Noah Greenstein, “Wittgenstein’s Wager: On [Absolute] Certainty,” Southwest Philosophical Society (Online)
3. 2020: J. M. Bernstein, “The Responsibility Nexus: Vulnerability, Dependence, and Power,” Vanderbilt Philosophy Colloquium (Online)
2. 2019: Charles E. Cardwell, Author Meets Critic session on *Hornbook Ethics* Tennessee Philosophical Association (Nashville, TN)
1. 2018: Grant Heller, “The Subjective Necessity of Taste and the Possibility of Common Sense,” Tennessee Philosophical Association: 50th Anniversary Conference (Nashville, TN)

MODERATION

3. 2022: Panel featuring Jerome Clarke, “The Data of Blackness,” and Kelly Swope, “A Dialectical Critique of Public Schooling in the United States” - Critical Theory Roundtable (Nashville, TN)
2. 2020: Leonard Harris, “What, then, is Philosophy Born of Struggle?” - Vanderbilt Philosophy Colloquium (Online)
1. 2020: Brandon Hogan, “What ‘Black Lives Matter’ Should Mean” - Vanderbilt Philosophy Colloquium (Online)

TEACHING

Instructor of Record (University of the Incarnate Word)

Fall 2026:

- PHIL 3312: Logic, one section
- PHIL 3332: Ethics, one section
- PHIL 1381: Introduction to Philosophy, one section

Spring 2026:

PHIL 3354: Continental Philosophy, one section

PHIL 1381: Introduction to Philosophy, two sections

Fall 2025:

PHIL 1381: Introduction to Philosophy, three sections

Instructor of Record (Vanderbilt University)

Spring 2025:

PHIL 1003: General Logic, one section

Fall 2024:

PHIL 1003: General Logic, one section

Spring 2024:

PHIL 1002W: Introduction to Philosophy (writing-intensive), one section

Spring 2022:

PHIL 1003: General Logic, one section

Fall 2021:

PHIL 1005: Introduction to Ethics, one section

Summer 2021:

PHIL 1002W: Introduction to Philosophy (writing-intensive), one section

Spring 2020:

PHIL 1002W: Introduction to Philosophy (writing-intensive), one section

Teaching Assistant (Vanderbilt University)

Fall 2019:

PHIL 3617: Philosophy of Language (Matthew Congdon), one section

Spring 2019:

PHIL 1005: Introduction to Ethics (Gary Jaeger), two sections

Grader (Vanderbilt University)

Fall 2023:

PHIL 3003: Formal Logic and its Applications (Scott Aikin), one section

Fall 2020:

PHIL 1003: General Logic (Matthew Congdon), one section

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND GRANTS

2023-24: Vanderbilt University - Berry Graduate Student Publication Award (\$200)
2022-23: Vanderbilt University - Berry Graduate Student Publication Award (\$200)
2022-23: DAAD and Freie Universität Berlin - Graduate Exchange Fellowship (~€1,200/month)
2022-23: Vanderbilt University - Robert Penn Warren Interdisciplinary Seminar Organizer - “Trends in Social Criticism” (\$1000)
2021-23: Vanderbilt University - Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Award (\$5,000/year)
2021-22: Vanderbilt University - Berry Graduate Student Publication Award (\$200)
2021-22: Vanderbilt University - Robert Penn Warren Interdisciplinary Seminar Organizer - “Political Ideology in Modern Life” (\$1500)
2018-23: Vanderbilt University - College of Arts & Sciences Fellowship (~\$25,000/year)
2017: Boston University - Matchette Prize for Excellence in Philosophy - Best Senior Paper
2016: University of Auckland - PHIL732: Philosophy of the Arts 2 - First in Class

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Philosophy Profession

Referee: *Philosophy* & *Social Criticism* (x1)

Professional Society Memberships: The American Philosophical Association, North American Society for Social Philosophy, Aesthetics & Ethics Research Group

University of the Incarnate Word

2025-27: Ethics Bowl Coach

Vanderbilt University

2023-25: Philosophy Graduate Colloquium Organizer
2023-24: Philosophy Graduate Professionalization Committee Member
2021-22: Philosophy Graduate Professionalization Committee Member
2020-21: Philosophy Graduate Education Committee Member
2019-21: Philosophy Programming Committee Member
2019-20: Arts Council Graduate Student Representative
2018-19: Philosophy Graduate Writing, Research, and Professionalization Committee Member

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

2024: Archival research in Glatzer/Schocken Books papers for manuscript on early 20th century philosopher Margaret Susman (Willi Goetschel)
2020-21: Editing final proofs for the *Cambridge Kant Lexicon* (Julian Wuerth)

LANGUAGES

English (native)
German (advanced)

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Fall 2018
Philosophy Proseminar - Robert B. Talisse

Black Aesthetics - Paul C. Taylor
Critical Theory - Karen Ng
Ralph Waldo Ellison - Lucius T. Outlaw (Jr.)

Spring 2019

Feminist Epistemology - Hanna Gunn
Spinoza - Idit Dobbs-Weinstein
Wittgenstein - Michael P. Hodges

Fall 2019

German Idealism - Karen Ng
Philosophy of Race and Racism - Paul C. Taylor
Twentieth-Century German Modernism - Meike Werner (German Studies)

Spring 2020

Adorno - Idit Dobbs-Weinstein
Art, Form, and Analysis (Independent Study) - Idit Dobbs-Weinstein
Kant's Ethics - Julian Wuerth
Epistemology of Disagreement - Scott Aikin

Fall 2020

Philosophical Anthropology - Karen Ng
Maimonides and Friends - Lenn Goodman
American Debates in Propaganda (Independent Study) - Paul C. Taylor

Spring 2021

Democracy (Audit) - Robert B. Talisse
Kant's Theoretical Philosophy (Visitor) - Julian Wuerth

Fall 2022/Spring 2023

Schwerpunkte in der klassischen deutscher Philosophie (at FU Berlin – Visitor) - Dina Emundts
Kolloquium Sozialphilosophie (at Humboldt University – Visitor) - Rahel Jaeggi

Fall 2024

Inquiry (Audit) - David Thorstad
The Epistemology of Democracy (Visitor) - Jacob Barrett

REFERENCES

Dr. Idit Dobbs-Weinstein

Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University, Emerita (cross-listed in Jewish Studies)

idit.dobbs-weinstein@vanderbilt.edu

Dr. Lucius T. Outlaw (Jr.)

W. Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University, Emeritus

l.outlawjr@vanderbilt.edu

Dr. Christopher Edelman (Teaching Reference)

Professor of Philosophy and Philosophy Department Chair at the University of the Incarnate Word

edelman@uiwtx.edu

Dr. Dylan Shaul

Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Riverside (cross-listed in Religion)

dylan.shaul@ucr.edu