

John Duncan Proios
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Area of Specialization: Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy

Areas of Competence: Philosophy of Life and Death, Social and Political Philosophy

Employment

Assistant Professor: University of Chicago Department of Philosophy

July 2021-present

Affiliated Faculty:

Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture

Center for Hellenic Studies

Education

Ph.D., Philosophy, Cornell University 2021

Dissertation: *Classifying Difference and Value: The Metaphysics of Kinds and the Search for the Good in Plato's Philebus*

Committee: Rachana Kamtekar (Chair), Tad Brennan, Scott MacDonald, Julia Annas (External)

M.A., Philosophy, University of Arizona 2017

B.A. with High Honors, Philosophy and Classical Studies, Swarthmore College 2015

Research

Authored Book

Freeing the Mind: Plato on Psychological Liberation (under contract with Oxford University Press)

Edited Book

Crafting Race in Plato and Aristotle, co-editor with Patricia Marechal (Oxford University Press, 2026)

Journal Articles

"The Powers of the Soul and the Pure Pleasures of Learning in Plato's *Philebus*", forthcoming in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, volume LXV

"Identity and Difference in Kind: the Metaphysics of Pleasure at the Beginning of Plato's *Philebus*", *Philosophers' Imprint*, 25, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.3998/phimp.5789>.

"Summoning Intelligence as Psychological Liberation in Plato: *Republic VII*", in *British Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 33(5): 977—998, 2025.

"A Story of Corruption: False Pleasures and the Methodological Critique of Hedonism in Plato's *Philebus*", in *Ancient Philosophy* 44(2), 363—384, 2024.

"Plato, *Sophist* 259c7-d7: Contrary Predication and Genuine Refutation", in *The Classical Quarterly*, 73(1): 66—77, 2023.

"Plato on Natural Kinds: The Promethean Method of the *Philebus*", in *Apeiron*, 55(2): 305—327, 2022.

"Ethical Narratives and Oppositional Consciousness", in *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* (now *APA Studies*), 20(3): 11—15, 2021.

"The Cause of Cosmic Rotation in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* xii 6-7", in *Ancient Philosophy*, 40(2): 349—367, 2020.

Chapters in Books

- “Ancient Greek Philosophy of Race”, with Patricia Marechal, contribution (forthcoming) to *Crafting Race in Plato and Aristotle*
- “Introduction”, with Patricia Marechal, contribution (forthcoming) to *Crafting Race in Plato and Aristotle*
- “Plato’s Scientific Feminism: Collection and Division in *Republic V*’s ‘First Wave’”, with Rachana Kamtekar, in *Handbook of Women and Ancient Greek Philosophy*, eds. Sara Brill and Catharine McKeen, Routledge Publishing, 217—234, 2024.
- “Division and Proto-Racialism in the *Statesman*”, in *misReading Plato: Continental and Psychoanalytic Glimpses Beyond the Mask*, eds. Matthew Clemente, Bryan J. Cocchiara, and William J. Hendel, Routledge Publishing, 188—201, 2022.

Encyclopedia Entries and Book Reviews

- “Hedonism”, entry in *Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy*, Springer, forthcoming.
- Kevin Corrigan, *A less familiar Plato: from Phaedo to Philebus*, Cambridge University Press, in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 2024: <https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2024/2024.08.46/>

Other work in progress

- “The Dynamics of Social Transformation in *Republic VIII*” (part of special issue of *Ancient Philosophy*)
- A paper on ideology in Plato’s *Republic* (revise and resubmit, draft available)
- A paper on the political dimensions of human mortality (draft available)
- A paper on method and metaphysics in Plato’s *Parmenides* (early stages)

Select Presentations *=Refereed

- “The Dynamics of Social Transformation in *Republic VIII*”
*West Coast Plato Workshop, Chapman University, 05/26
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 03/26
- **“Wandering Thought: Method before Metaphysics in the Deductions of Plato’s *Parmenides*”
SIFA-SISFA Workshop, Roma Tre University, 05/26
London Ancient Science Conference, 04/26
- “Mortality, the Body, and Freedom”
*Pacific APA, work-in-progress paper session, 04/26
University of Chicago, MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics, 01/26
- “Plato on Freedom”
National Hellenic Museum, Nikelly Lecture, 11/25
- “Learning from Your Environment: Knowledge, Culture, and Social Domination in Plato’s *Republic*”
University of Toronto, Workshop on Political Knowledge in Plato, 11/25
- “Plato and Liberation as Enlightenment”
Northern Arizona University, Dorrance Lecture, 10/25
- “Ancient Greek Philosophy of Race”, with Patricia Marechal
Phaenomenologicum Collegium, Citta di Castello, Italy, 07/25
Panel on *Crafting Race in Mediterranean Antiquity*, Eastern APA, New York, 01/25
- “Can Every Cook Philosophize? Plato’s Elitism about Philosophy”
CU Boulder, Morris Colloquium on Social Justice and Philosophy
- “Seeing the Bigger Picture: the Flying Philosopher’s Freedom in Plato’s *Theaetetus*”
University of San Francisco, 09/26
Boston University, Ancient Philosophy Work in Progress Group, 04/25

- University of Nebraska, Omaha, Conference on Natural Kinds, 10/23
- *“Summoning Intelligence as Psychological Liberation: Stages of Reality in Plato, *Republic* VII”
UNAM Workshop on Metaphysics and Epistemology in the *Republic*, 06/204
- “Psychological Liberation”
Panel on *The Reach of Ancient Ethics*, Pacific APA, Portland, 03/24
- *“‘The Knowledge of Free People’: Dialectic, Intelligibility, and Liberation in Plato’s *Sophist*”
Eastern APA, New York, Symposium, 01/24
UC San Diego History of Philosophy Roundtable, 10/23
- *“Calling Up Intelligence as Cognitive Liberation: *Republic* 523a-524b and 515c-516c”
Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy meeting at the Society for Classical Studies, Chicago
01/24
Pacific APA, San Francisco, Colloquium, 04/23
- *“Education for Whose Freedom? Elitism in Platonic and Athenian Pedagogy”
North American Association for Philosophy & Education, Mundelein, IL, 10/23
- *“Freeing the Mind: Plato and the Politics of Cognitive Liberation”
Caribbean Philosophy Association, 20th meeting, *Shifting the Geography of Reason: Philosophy, Literature, and Liberation*, Michigan State University, 10/22
- *“‘The Knowledge that Free People Have’: Dialectic as Cognitive Liberation in Plato’s *Sophist*”
Ancient Philosophy Society, Penn State, 04/22
- *“Race and Division in Plato’s *Statesman*”
Psychology and the Other, Virtual, 09/21
- “The Metaphysics of Kinds and Plato’s Revisionary Naturalizing Project”
Wayne State Plato Symposium, Virtual, 05/21
- “What is Philosophical Writing?” (with Amy Ramirez)
Cornell MAP Teaching Workshop, Virtual, 03/21
- *“Education as Awakening or Assimilation?”
Eastern APA Teaching Hub Poster Session, Virtual, 01/21
- *“Ethical Narratives about Class in Higher Education: A Reply to Morton”
North American Association for Philosophy & Education, Virtual, 09/20
- *“The Metaphysics of Socrates’ Anti-Hedonism: *Philebus* 12c1-13d8”
Pennsylvania Circle of Ancient Philosophy, Villanova University, 03/19
- *“The Good as a Power”
Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy at the Eastern APA, New York, 01/19
St. Andrews Annual Graduate Conference in Ancient Philosophy, 06/18
- *“The House of the Good: A Special Kind of Cause in the *Philebus*”
Eastern APA, Colloquium, Savannah GA, 01/18
University of Chicago Graduate Student Ancient Philosophy Workshop, 04/17

Comments

- Sadie McCloud, Midwestern Workshop in Ancient Philosophy
UIC, 05/26
- Elisa Freschi and Parimal Patil, Symposium on Deontic Language and Practical Motivation in
Sanskrit Philosophy, Central APA, 02/26
- Ryan Christensen, “Reciprocity and Role Reversal”, West Coast Plato Workshop, UC San Diego,
05/25
- Simona Aimar, Daniel James, Annette Martin, and Bailie Peterson, panel on “Philosophy from a
First-Generation Perspective”, Pacific APA, San Francisco, 04/25

- Freya Möbus and Justin Vlasits, “Division and Animal Sacrifice in Plato’s *Statesman*”, West Coast Plato Workshop, Northern Arizona University, 06/23
- Thomas Slabon, “Plato on Learning to Be Good: Typological Character Formation in Republic II-III”, West Coast Plato Workshop, Stanford University, 05/22
- Thomas Slabon, “Wisdom and Vision: Re-Viewing an Overlooked Analogy in *Protrepticus X*”, Central APA, Colloquium, 02/22
- Philip Yaure, “‘This Multiform Composite Nationality:’ Emancipation and Empire in Frederick Douglass’ Pan-American Republic”, Workshop on Social Ontologies of Oppression, Care, and Solidarity, University of Illinois Chicago, 02/22
- Max Robitzsch, “The Epicurean Classification of Desires Revisited”, Eastern APA, Colloquium, Philadelphia PA, 01/20
- Brennan McDavid, “Meddling in the Work of Another”, Pacific APA, Symposium, San Diego CA, 04/18
- Katherine Meadows, “Teleology in *Metaphysics* Θ.8”, Virginia Tech Workshop in Ancient Greek Philosophy, 04/18

Teaching

University of Chicago

The Art of Living	Spring 2027 (study abroad)
What is Slavery? Ancient and Modern Perspectives	Winter 2027 (grad, co-taught)
Philosophy of Life and Death	Winter 2027 (undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Autumn 2026 (undergrad)
Philosophy of Life and Death	Summer 2026 (pre-college)
Reading & Research: Spinoza’s <i>Ethics</i> in Latin	Spring 2026 (grad tutorial)
Liberation and Enlightenment	Winter 2026 (grad/undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Winter 2026 (undergrad)
History of Philosophy I	Autumn 2025 (undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Autumn 2025 (undergrad)
Philosophy of Life and Death	Summer 2025 (pre-college)
Plato’s <i>Parmenides</i>	Spring 2024 (grad)
Reading & Research: Plato’s <i>Theaetetus</i> in Translation	Winter 2024 (grad tutorial)
Ancient Greek Philosophy of Race and Ethnicity	Winter 2024 (grad/undergrad)
History of Philosophy I	Autumn 2023 (undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Autumn 2023 (undergrad)
Introduction to Philosophy of Life and Death	Summer 2023 (pre-college)
Philosophy of Life and Death	Spring 2023 (undergrad)
Reading & Research: Plato’s <i>Sophist</i> in Greek	Spring 2023 (grad tutorial)
Ideology, Knowledge, and Nature in Plato and Aristotle	Winter 2023 (grad)
Plato on Knowledge	Autumn 2022 (grad/undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Autumn 2022 (undergrad)
Introduction to Philosophy of Life and Death	Summer 2022 (pre-college)
Reading & Research: Plato’s <i>Parmenides</i> in Greek	Spring 2022 (grad tutorial)
Philosophy of Life and Death	Winter 2022 (undergrad)
Plato’s <i>Philebus</i>	Winter 2022 (grad)
Plato on Knowledge	Autumn 2021 (grad/undergrad)
Philosophical Perspectives	Autumn 2021 (undergrad)

Cornell University (always undergraduate courses)

Philosophy of Life	Spring 2021
The Ethics of Dying in Ancient Philosophy	Fall 2019, Spring 2020
Discussions of Justice: Democracy Now	Spring 2019
Introduction to Philosophy (TA)	Fall 2018, Spring 2019
Introduction to Deductive Logic (TA)	Spring 2018
Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (TA)	Fall 2017

University of Arizona (always undergraduate courses)

The Ethics and Economics of Wealth Creation	Summer 2017
History of Moral and Political Philosophy	Summer 2016
The Ethics and Economics of Wealth Creation (TA)	Fall 2016
Philosophy of Happiness (TA)	Fall 2015

Service

Departmental / University

Humanities Teaching Fellow Selection Committee	2026
Core Teaching Committee	2025-26
Undergraduate Essay Prize Committee	2023-24, 2025-26
Renewal Committee	2023-24
Diversity, Inclusion, Climate, and Equity Committee	2023-24, 2025-26
Co-sponsor, Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy Workshop	2022-24, 2025-26
Committee for Graduate Professionalization and Pedagogy	2022-23
Committee for Junior Hire Search	2021-22, 2022-23, 2026-27

Student Supervision

Dissertation	2022-ongoing, 2023-24, 2023-ongoing, 2026-ongoing
MA Thesis	2021-22, 2022-23 (x2), 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26 (x2)
BA Thesis	2022-23, 2025-26
Second Reader, BA Thesis	2021-22, 2023-24 (2x), 2025-26

Profession

Reviewer, journals: *Res Philosophica*, *Polis*, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, *Journal of Politics*, *Classical Philology*, *Diacritics*, *History of Political Thought*, *Ancient Philosophy*, *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition*, *Ancient Philosophy Today*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*
 Reviewer, presses: Cambridge University Press, Bloomsbury Publishing, Routledge Publishing
 Reviewer, grants: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Swiss National Science Foundation
 Co-organizer, Workshop on Ancient Greek Philosophy of Race, June 2023

Fellowships, Grants, & Awards

Fellowships

Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago, *Residential Faculty Fellowship*, AY 2024-25
 Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society, University of Chicago, *Research Fellowship* (with Patricia Marechal), AY 2023-25
 Cornell University, *Sage School Fellowship*, AY 2020-21

University of Arizona Center for the Philosophy of Freedom, *Philosophy, Politics, Economics, and Law Fellowship*, AY 2015-2017

Grants

Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, *Race at the Center of the Humanities*, 2023

Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, *Faculty and Postdoctoral Publication Support*, 2023

Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago, *Event Grant*, AY 2022-23

Cornell University, *Graduate School Travel Grant*, 2017, 2018, 2019

Awards

Hellenic University Club of Philadelphia, *Dr. Nicholas Padis Memorial Graduate Scholarship*, 2015-2016
Swarthmore College, *Brand Blanshard Prize*, 2015

Professional Association Memberships

American Philosophical Association

Ancient Philosophy Society

Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy

Society for Classical Studies

Languages

English (native)

Ancient Greek (reading)

Latin (reading)

French (reading)