

Christian J. Tarsney

Areas

- AOS Ethics, Decision Theory, Philosophy of AI
- AOC Political Philosophy & PPE, Metaphysics (esp. of Time, Mind), Formal Epistemology, Logic

Employment

- Aug. 2025 - **Assistant Professor**, *Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto.*
 - Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto Scarborough
 - Graduate Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto
- Sept. 2022 - **Senior Research Fellow**, *Population Wellbeing Initiative (Population Research Center), University of Texas at Austin.*
- Sept. 2018 - **Research Fellow**, *Global Priorities Institute (Faculty of Philosophy), Oxford University.*
- Sept. 2022 - Assistant Director (Philosophy), May 2022 - Sept 2022
 - Acting Director (parental leave cover), Dec 2021 - April 2022.
 - Acting Assistant Director (Philosophy), Jan 2020 - Dec 2021
 - Parental leave, 2020 & 2022
- Sept. 2017 - **Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, *Centre for Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Faculty of Philosophy), University of Groningen.*
- Aug. 2018

Education

- August 2017 **PhD**, *University of Maryland.*
 - Title: *Rationality and Moral Risk: A Moderate Defense of Hedging*
 - Supervisor: Dan Moller
- May 2011 **BA**, *University of Minnesota.*

Other affiliations and visiting positions

- 2022 - **Senior Research Affiliate**, *Global Priorities Institute, Oxford University.*
- Spring 2017 **Visiting Student**, *Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, Oxford University.*

Book

- under contract **Small Probabilities and High Stakes**, *Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Elements series).*

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- forthcoming **A Dominance Argument Against Incompleteness**, *Philosophical Review*, with Harvey Lederman & Dean Spears.
- forthcoming **Expected Value, to a Point: Moral Decision-Making under Background Uncertainty**, *Noûs*.
- forthcoming **Deception and Manipulation in Generative AI**, *Philosophical Studies* (special issue).
- 2025 **Against Anti-Fanaticism**, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 110(2): 734–53.
- 2024 **Non-Additive Axiologies in Large Worlds**, *Ergo* 11: 238–87, with Teruji Thomas.
- 2024 **Metanormative Regress: An Escape Plan**, *Philosophical Studies* 181(5): 1001–23.
- 2023 **Egyptians, Aliens, and Okies: Against the Sum of Averages**, *Utilitas* 35(4): 320–26 (discussion), with Michael Geruso & Dean Spears.
- 2023 **The Epistemic Challenge to Longtermism**, *Synthese* 201(6): 1–37.
- 2023 **Average Utilitarianism Implies Solipsistic Egoism**, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 101(1): 140–151.
- 2022 **Belief in Robust Temporal Passage (Probably) Does Not Explain Future-Bias**, *Philosophical Studies* 179(6): 2053–75, with Andrew Latham, Kristie Miller, & Hannah Tierney.
- 2022 **Robust Passage Phenomenology Probably Does Not Explain Future-Bias**, *Synthese* 200(1): 1–23, with Andrew Latham, Kristie Miller, & Hannah Tierney.
- 2021 **Vive La Différence? Structural Diversity as a Challenge for Metanormative Theories**, *Ethics* 131(2): 151–82.
- 2020 **Future Bias in Action: Does the Past Matter More When You Can Affect It?**, *Synthese* 198(12): 11327–49, with Andrew Latham, Kristie Miller, & James Norton.
- 2019 **Normative Uncertainty and Social Choice**, *Mind* 128(512), 1285–1308 (discussion).
- 2019 **Rejecting Supererogationism**, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 100(2): 599–623.
- 2018 **Moral Uncertainty for Deontologists**, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 21(3): 505–20.
- 2018 **Intertheoretic Value Comparison: A Modest Proposal**, *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 15(3): 324–44.
- 2017 **Thank Goodness That’s Newcomb: The Practical Relevance of the Temporal Value Asymmetry**, *Analysis* 77(4): 750–59.
- 2017 **Does a Discount Rate Measure the Costs of Climate Change?**, *Economics & Philosophy* 33(3): 337–65.

Invited Chapters

- forthcoming **Minimal and Expansive Longtermism**, *Essays on Longtermism* (Oxford University Press), with Hilary Greaves.

forthcoming **Longtermism in an Infinite World**, *Essays on Longtermism* (Oxford University Press), with Hayden Wilkinson.

Survey Articles

2024 **Moral Decision-Making Under Uncertainty**, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, with Teruji Thomas & William MacAskill.

2022 **Bias Towards the Future**, *Philosophy Compass*, with Preston Greene, Andrew Latham, Kristie Miller, James Norton, & Hannah Tierney.

Book Reviews

2020 **Normative Externalism** by Brian Weatherson, *Mind* 130(519): 1018–28.

Work In Progress

under review **Characterizing Expected Critical-Set Generalized Utilitarianism**, with Harvey Lederman & Dean Spears

under review **Will Artificial Agents Pursue Power by Default?**

in preparation **Absolutism and Comparativism about Value**

in preparation **Corrigible Artificial Intelligence: A Higher-Order Preference Approach**

Refereed Conference/Workshop Talks (Selected)

March 2025 (upcoming) **Absolutism vs. Comparativism about Value**, *Chapel Hill Normativity Workshop*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Nov 2024 **Share the Sugar: A Paradox for Incomplete Theories of Value**, *PPE Society Meeting*, New Orleans.

Oct 2024 **There are No Morally Fundamental Quantities**, *Philadelphia Normative Philosophy Conference*, University of Pennsylvania.

June 2024 **Deception and Manipulation in Generative AI**, *International Society for Utilitarian Studies*, University College London.

July 2023 **The Principle of Sufficient Reason in Ethics**, *International Society for Utilitarian Studies*, LUISS Guido Carli.

Nov 2022 **Fanaticism and Longtermism**, *PPE Society Meeting*, New Orleans.

Jan 2021 **Average Utilitarianism Implies Solipsistic Egoism**, *APA Eastern Division Meeting (Colloquium Paper)*.

Jan 2020 **Maximizing Expected Choiceworthiness: A Guide for Bounded Agents**, *APA Eastern Division Meeting (Colloquium Paper)*.

July 2019 **Maximizing Expected Choiceworthiness: A Guide for Bounded Agents**, *Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association*, Durham University.

June 2019 **Vive La Différence? Structural Diversity as a Challenge for Metanormative Theories**, *Formal Ethics*, Ghent University.

- July 2018 **Non-Identity, Times Infinity**, *International Society for Utilitarian Studies*, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.
- June 2018 **Can First-Order Stochastic Dominance Constrain Risk Attitudes?**, “*Norms and Normativity*” (4th International Conference on Economic Philosophy), University of Lyon.
- June 2018 **Can First-Order Stochastic Dominance Constrain Risk Attitudes?**, *Foundations of Utility and Risk*, University of York.
- Nov 2017 **Normative Uncertainty and Regress**, “*Hard Cases and Rational Choice*”, University of Bern.
- Nov 2017 **Ideal Theory for Consequentialists**, *Dutch Research School of Philosophy (OZSW) Annual Conference*, Utrecht University.
- Oct 2017 **Normative Uncertainty and Regress**, *REAPP Workshop on Moral and Rational Uncertainty*, University of Reading.
- Sept 2017 **Moral Uncertainty for Deontologists**, *Young Philosophers Lecture Series*, Prindle Institute for Ethics, Depauw University.
- Aug 2017 **Two Regress Problems for Rational Choice Under Normative Uncertainty**, *Philosophy Days 2017*, Uppsala University.
- Aug 2017 **Moral Uncertainty for Deontologists**, *European Congress of Analytic Philosophy*, LMU Munich.
- July 2017 **Moral Uncertainty for Deontologists**, *British Society for Ethical Theory*, University of Bristol.
- June 2017 **Thank Goodness That’s Newcomb**, *International Association for Philosophy of Time*, Gargnano del Garda, Italy.
- Apr 2017 **Intertheoretic Value Comparisons: A Modest Proposal**, *APA Pacific Division Meeting (Symposium Paper)*.
- Jan 2017 **Competitive Debate as a Vehicle for Philosophy Education**, “*Teaching Philosophy across the Pre-College/College Boundary*” (APA Eastern Division Meeting).
- Oct 2016 **Intertheoretic Value Comparisons: A Modest Proposal**, *Virginia Philosophical Association*.
- Mar 2016 **The Relevance of Moral Uncertainty**, *APA Central Division Meeting (Colloquium Paper)*.
- Jan 2016 **Thank Goodness That’s Newcomb**, *Philosophy of Time Society (APA Eastern Division Meeting)*.
- Nov 2015 **A Cure for Infinitarian Paralysis**, *Philosophers’ Cocoon Conference*, University of Tampa.
- Aug 2015 **Rejecting Supererogationism**, *Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress*, University of Colorado.
- June 2015 **The Heritable Wealth Dividend**, *Association for Social and Political Philosophy*, University of Amsterdam.

Invited Colloquium Talks (Selected)

- Dec 2022 **Can Utilitarians be Permissive about Risk?**, *Philosophy Department colloquium*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Oct 2021 **Non-Additive Axiologies in Large Worlds**, *Philosophy Department colloquium*, Kansas State University.
- June 2021 **The Epistemic Challenge to Longtermism**, *Legal Priorities Seminar*, Harvard University.
- April 2021 **Non-Additive Axiologies in Large Worlds**, *Interdisciplinary Centre for Ethics (INCET) research seminar*, Jagiellonian University, Kraków.
- May 2020 **Exceeding Expectations: Stochastic Dominance as the Criterion of Rational Choice**, *Decision Research at Warwick (DR@W) Forum*, University of Warwick.
- Oct 2018 **Exceeding Expectations: Stochastic Dominance as a General Decision Theory**, *Choice Group*, London School of Economics.
- Feb 2017 **Moral Uncertainty for Deontologists**, *Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics*, University of Oxford.

Invited Conference/Workshop Talks (Selected)

- Oct 2024 **Will Artificial Agents Seek Power By Default?**, *"Language, Mind and Ethics in AI" workshop*, University of Texas at Austin.
- March 2024 **Against Anti-Fanaticism**, *Association for Global Priorities Research (APA Pacific Division Meeting)*.
- March 2023 **Expected Value, to a Point: Moral Decision-Making under Background Uncertainty**, *Philosophy Desert Workshop*.
- Dec 2018 **Useful Ignorance: How Extreme Uncertainty Might Save Infinite Axiology**, *"Population Ethics and Uncertainty" workshop*, Institute for Future Studies, Stockholm.
- June 2018 **Vive La Différence? Structural Diversity as a Challenge for Metanormative Theories**, *"Moral Decisions" workshop*, University of Hamburg.
- June 2018 **Metanormative Regress: An Escape Plan**, *"Ethics and Uncertainty" workshop*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Public Lectures

- Jan 2020 **Making Choices Under Moral Uncertainty**, *Effective Altruism Society: Warwick and Warwick PPL Society*, University of Warwick.
- Dec 2019 **The Epistemic Challenge to Longtermism**, *LSESU Effective Altruism, LSESU Philosophy Society, and LSE PPE Society*, London School of Economics.
- Oct 2019 **Can We Predictably Influence the Far Future?**, *Effective Altruism Global*, London.
- July 2018 **Normative Uncertainty and Cause Diversification**, *EA Global x Netherlands*, Utrecht.

- May 2018 **Hedging Our Bets: Is Moral Uncertainty a Reason to Support Multiple Causes?**, *Effective Altruism Groningen*.
- Sept 2017 **The Ethics of Low-Probability Risk**, *Young Philosophers Lecture Series*, Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics, Depauw University.

Awards and Honors

- Oct 2024 **AI Objectives Initiative (\$885,000)**, *Open Philanthropy*.
Co-Principal Investigator (with Brad Knox). Two years of funding for an interdisciplinary project on AI agency and decision-making.
- Sept 2024 **Research/professional development grant (\$278,562)**, *Open Philanthropy*.
Principal investigator. Two years of funding to support research and professional development in the philosophy of artificial intelligence.
- May 2019 **SOPHI Research Support Grant (A\$5000)**, *University of Sydney*.
With Kristie Miller, Preston Greene, Hannah Tierney, Andrew Latham, and James Norton.
- 2016–17 **Dean’s Dissertation Fellowship (\$26,600 plus tuition and fees)**, *University of Maryland*.
One-year fellowship awarded to 0.25% (10 of ~4000) of all graduate students at the University of Maryland annually, based on departmental nominations.
- Apr 2016 **Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award**, *University of Maryland*.
Awarded for teaching performance. Award given annually to ~2% of graduate students at the University of Maryland (80 of ~4000), based on departmental nominations.
- Spring 2015 **Dean’s Fellowship**, *Philosophy Department, University of Maryland*.
One-semester fellowship awarded by the Department of Philosophy.
- Fall 2011 **Moreland Perkins Fellowship**, *Philosophy Department, University of Maryland*.
One-semester fellowship awarded by the Department of Philosophy.

Teaching (Lead Instructor)

- Spring 2026 **Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (PHLB18)**, *University of Toronto Scarborough*.
(upcoming)
- Spring 2026 **Topics in Bioethics (PHLC10)**, *University of Toronto Scarborough*.
(upcoming)
- Fall 2025 **Topics in Political Philosophy (PHLC93)**, *University of Toronto Scarborough*.
(upcoming)
- Trinity Term **Pascalian Risks**, *University of Oxford*.
2022 Graduate seminar in Philosophy.
- Trinity Term **Topics in Global Priorities**, *University of Oxford*.
2019 Graduate seminar in Philosophy. Co-taught with William MacAskill.
- Summer 2017 **The Art of Thinking (PHIL 209Q)**, *University of Maryland*.
18 students. Taught as part of Terp Young Scholars, a program hosted by the University of Maryland that offers courses for college credit to academically talented high school students.

- Summer 2016 **The Art of Thinking (PHIL 209Q)**, *University of Maryland*.
19 students. Taught as part of Terp Young Scholars program (see above).
- Spring 2016 **Political & Social Philosophy (PHIL 245)**, *University of Maryland*.
64 students.
- Fall 2015 **The Nature of Morality (PHIL 408K)**, *University of Maryland*.
23 students.
- Summer 2015 **Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 100)**, *University of Maryland*.
18 students. Fully online.
- Summer 2014 **Time's Arrow (PHIL 308A)**, *University of Maryland*.
20 students. Fully online.
- Spring 2014 **Metaphysics of Mind (PHIL 308X)**, *University of Maryland*.
32 students. Hybrid course (1/3 online).
- Winter 2014 **Philosophy of Time (PHIL 308K)**, *University of Maryland*.
16 students. Fully online.

PhD Supervision

- 2020–21 **Hayden Wilkinson (co-supervisor)**, *Australian National University*.
Thesis: *Infinite Aggregation*.

Undergraduate/Masters Supervisions and Tutorials

- 2020–21 **BPhil (Masters) thesis supervision**, *University of Oxford*.
Thesis: *Can The 'Fanaticism' Issue for Moral Uncertainty Be Solved? If So How?*
- 2020–21 **BPhil (Masters) pre-thesis supervision**, *University of Oxford*.
Area: Normative and Applied Ethics
- 2019–20 **Senior thesis supervision in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) program**, *University of Oxford*.
Thesis: *Are you rationally required to act as though normative nihilism is false, if you believe that it is true?*
- Trinity Term **Undergraduate tutorial**, *University of Oxford*.
2019 Topic: Probability & Decision Theory
- 2018–19 **Senior thesis supervision in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) program**, *University of Oxford*.
Thesis: *The Problem of Cluelessness*
- 2017–18 **Individual tutorial in "Philosophy of a Specific Discipline" Masters program**, *University of Groningen*.
Topic: Normative Uncertainty and Effective Altruism

Service

- 2017–present **Reviewer for *Mind*, *Analysis*, *Utilitas*, *Ethics*, *Synthese*, *Journal of Ethics & Social Philosophy*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Noûs*, *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, *Economics & Philosophy*, *Philosophical Quarterly*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Ergo*, *Analytic Philosophy*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, *American Philosophical Quarterly*, *Social Choice and Welfare*, *Philosophia*.**
- 2019–present **Hiring & Selection: Postdoctoral Research Fellows (Oxford, 2022-23 – external committee member), Director of Special Projects (Forethought Foundation, 2022 – external committee member), Parfit Prize DPhil Scholarship (Oxford, 2019, 2020 & 2021), Operations Assistant (Oxford, 2019), Research Assistants (Oxford, 2019 – committee chair).**
- 2018–2021 **Organizer, Global Priorities Institute Work-in-Progress Colloquium Series, University of Oxford.**
- 2021 **Co-Organizer, Working Group on Social Justice & Longtermism, University of Oxford.**
- 2020 **Co-Organizer, Global Priorities Seminar (speaker series), University of Oxford.**
- Dec 2019 **Organizer, Workshop on “Predicting and Influencing the Far Future”, Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford.**
- 2019 **Organizer, Working & Reading Groups on the Epistemology of Long-Term Prediction, University of Oxford.**
- 2018 **Book manuscript review for Oxford University Press.**
- 2018 **Organizer, Working Group on Infinite Ethics, University of Oxford.**
- 2017–18 **Organizer, PPE Speaker Series, University of Groningen.**
- Jan 2018 **Organizer, “Uncertainty, Disagreement, and Conflict: A Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) Winter School”, University of Groningen.**
- Sept 2017 **Co-organizer, Inaugural Conference of the Centre for Philosophy, Politics and Economics, University of Groningen.**
- 2015–2017 **Faculty Adviser, VegTerps, University of Maryland.**
- 2005–2017 **Teaching philosophy through competitive high school debate.**
- Lecturer in philosophy (2011–2016) and curriculum director (2014–2016) at Victory Briefs Institute (VBI), the largest summer institute for high school Lincoln-Douglas debate.
 - Lincoln-Douglas debate coach (2005-2017), including head coaching positions with St. Louis Park and Hopkins High Schools in Minnesota.
 - Coached national champions in Lincoln-Douglas debate at high school and middle school levels.