

GE FANG

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Washington University in St. Louis | Department of Philosophy

Wilson Hall | One Brookings Drive | St. Louis, MO 63130

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Technology, Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Psychology

AREA OF COMPETENCE

Applied Ethics, Normative Ethics, General Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Action, Philosophy of Social Science, Ancient Philosophy

EDUCATION

Washington University in St. Louis <i>PhD in the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology program</i>	2025
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Stanford University <i>MA in Philosophy</i>	2017
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Tsinghua University (Yao Class) <i>BEng in Computer Science</i>	2012
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Massachusetts Institute of Technology <i>Exchange program in Computer Science</i>	2011
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DISSERTATION SUMMARY

On Expertise Change: The Use and Misuse of Cultural Evolutionary Models

Committee:

Anya Plutynski (Chair), Ron Mallon, Pascal Boyer, Carl Craver, Kent Staley

Abstract:

My dissertation criticizes Peter Richerson, Robert Boyd, and Joseph Henrich's use of population models to explain cumulative cultural change. I argue that the primary utility of their explanatory framework is to explain expertise change during the late Pleistocene, but given what we know about expertise acquisition, their models of social learning at the individual level are overly idealized. More realistic models of expertise acquisition are incompatible with the assumptions of their population models.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Illinois Institute of Technology <i>Horton Sawyer pre-doctoral teaching fellowship in Philosophy</i>	2021-2023
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Google Inc. <i>Software Engineer</i>	2013.1 - 2015.7 <i>Team: Web indexing</i>
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JOURNAL ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

1. Which Culture Cannot Be Invented Alone?
2. Can We Test If Culture Evolves Faster Than Biology?
3. Gaining Expertise in Three Dimensions

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

1. What Lineages are Required for Selection?
2. Norms as Scaffolds for Expertise Development
3. Against Kinetic Models of Cultural Evolution

INVITED ARTICLE IN PREPARATION

1. Scaffolding Expertise with Anya Plutynski, special issue at *Acta Biotheoretica*

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS AND COMMENTARY

1. Commentary on Sharyn Clough's "Peace and Pragmatism". April 2025. *Res Philosophica* Conference at Saint Louis University
2. Culture is not Built For Speed (Poster). November 2024. Philosophy of Science Association.
3. A Focus on Cultural Competences for Understanding Human Cultural Uniqueness. November 2022. Philosophy of Science Association.
4. Segmental Practice and the Evolution of Normative Cognition (Poster) November 2022. Philosophy of Science Association.
5. A Focus on Persistence for Cultural Evolution (Poster). November 2021. Philosophy of Science Association.
6. A Focus on Persistence for Cultural Evolution. November 2021. The Australasian Association for the History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Science

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Main Instructor, Illinois Institute of Technology	2021-2023
* Philosophy of Science * 2	
* Age of Darwin	
* Philosophy of Social Science * 2	
* Philosophy and Skill	
* Philosophy and Human Nature	
Main Instructor, Washington University in St. Louis	2021
* Biomedical Ethics	
Teaching Assistant, Washington University in St. Louis	2021
* Biomedical Ethics (Anya Plutynski)	
* Great Philosophers * 2 (Eric Brown)	
* Mind-Brain-Behavior (David Balota, Steve Petersen, and Jan Duchek)	

SELECTED GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Philosophy of Science

- * Philosophy of Medicine w. Anya Plutynski (2020)
- * Explanations, Models, and the Causal Structure of the World w. Carl Craver (2019)
- * Philosophy of Biology w. Anya Plutynski (2018)

- * Rethinking Psychological Kinds w. Joseph McCaffrey (2018)
- * Scientific Realism w. Anya Plutynski (2017)
- * Scientific Philosophy from Kant to Kuhn and Beyond w. Michael Friedman (2017)
- * Philosophy of Physics: Quantum Mechanics w. Thomas Ryckman (2016)
- * Philosophy of Physics: Space and Time w. Thomas Ryckman (2015)

Science and Scientific Methods

- * Neural Systems (2020)
- * Research Designs and Methods of Psychology (2019)
- * Advanced Cognitive Psychology (2018)
- * Human Evolutionary Psychology (2018)
- * Quantitative Methods in Psychology (2017)

Value Theory & Practical Reason

- * Normative Ethical Theory w. Julia Driver (2018)
- * Proseminar on Error theory w. Julia Driver (2017)
- * Philosophy of Action w. Michael Bratman (2017)
- * Metaethics w. Nadeem Hussain (2016)
- * Topics in Kant's Ethics w. Allen Wood (2016)
- * Aesthetics w. Kendall Walton (2016)

History of Philosophy

- * Aristotle w. Eric Brown (2019)
- * Plato w. Eric Brown (2018)
- * Kant's First Critique w. David Hills (2016)
- * Wittgenstein w. David Hills (2015)
- * British Moralists w. Tamar Shapiro (2015)

SERVICE

Washington University in St. Louis

- * Departmental Social Events Co-Organizers. 2018-2021
- * Colloquium Entertainment Co-Organizer. 2017-2018

REFERENCES

Anya Plutynski (Professor of Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis): aplutyns@wustl.edu

Carl Craver (Professor of Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis): ccraver@wustl.edu

Pascal Boyer (Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology and Psychology, Washington University in St. Louis): pboyer@wustl.edu

Ron Mallon (Professor of Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis): rmallon@wustl.edu

Eric Brown (Professor of Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis; teaching reference):
eabrown@wustl.edu