

Curriculum Vita of John Thomas Roberts, August 2007

Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy
University of North Carolina
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, 1999. Dissertation: *Laws of Nature: Meeting the Empiricist Challenge*.

M.A., Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, 1997.

B.S., Physics (with Highest Honors), Georgia Institute of Technology, 1992.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Fall, 2005-present).

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Texas A&M University (Spring 2005).

Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1999-Spring, 2005).

Visiting Fellow, Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh (2002-2003).

Teaching Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh (1997-99).

Teaching Assistant, Department of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh (1994-96).

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Philosophy of Science Association award for best article by a recent PhD published in the journal *Philosophy of Science*, 2003 (for “Leibniz on Force and Absolute Motion”).

Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship, 2002-3 (awarded by the American Council of Learned Societies).

Jacob K. Javits Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, 1995-1998 (awarded by the United States Department of Education).

Alan Ross Anderson Fellowship, 1993.

University of Pittsburgh, Provost Humanities Fellowship, 1992-1993.

PUBLICATIONS

“A Puzzle about Laws, Symmetries and Measurable Quantities,” forthcoming in *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*.

“Reply to Skow,” forthcoming in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.

“Is Logical Empiricism Committed to the Ideal of Value-Free Science?” in *Value-Free Science: Ideal or Illusion?*, edited by Harold Kincaid, John Dupre, and Allison Wylie (Oxford University Press, 2007).

“Contact with the Nomic: A Challenge for Deniers of Humean Supervenience (Part One),” (with John Earman), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 71(1) (2005).

“Contact with the Nomic: A Challenge for Deniers of Humean Supervenience (Part Two),” (with John Earman), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 71(2) (2005).

“Measurability and Physical Laws,” *Synthese* 144(3) (2005), 433-447.

“Determinism,” in *The Philosophy of Science: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Jessica Pfeifer and Sahotra Sarkar (Routledge, 2005).

“There Are No Laws of the Social Sciences,” in *Contemporary Debates in the Philosophy of Science*, edited by Christopher Read Hitchcock (Blackwell, 2004).

“Leibniz on Force and Absolute Motion,” *Philosophy of Science*, 70 (2003), 553-573.

“*Ceteris Paribus* Lost,” (with John Earman and Sheldon Russell Smith), *Erkenntnis* 57(3) (2002), 281-301.

“Undermining Undermined: Why Humean Supervenience Never Needed to be Debugged (Even if it’s a Necessary Truth),” *Philosophy of Science* 68 (3, supplement) (2001), S98-S108.

“‘Laws of Nature’ as an Indexical Term: A Reinterpretation of the Best-System Analysis,” *Philosophy of Science* 66 3(supplement) (1999), S502-S511.

“*Ceteris Paribus*, There is No Problem of Provisos,” (with John Earman) *Synthese* 118 (1999), 439-478.

“Lewis, Carroll, and Seeing through the Looking Glass,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 76 (1998), 426-438.

BOOK REVIEW

“Mauro Dorato, *The Software of the Universe: An Introduction to the History and Philosophy of Laws of Nature*,” *intudies in the History and Philosophy of Modern Physics*, 2006.

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

A book manuscript (316pp.) entitled *The Law-Governed Universe*.

“The Semantic Novelty of Theoretical Terms.”

“A Semantic Argument for the Supervenience of the Laws of Nature on Sub-Nomic Facts.”

“Sellars, van Fraassen, Layer Cakes, and Scientific Realism.”

“Coping With Severe Test Anxiety: Problems and Prospects for an Error-Statistical Approach to the Testing of High-Level Theories.”

PRESENTATIONS

“Comments on Harman,” Conference on the War on Induction, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, April 2007.

- “Laws, Theories, Measurements, Counterfactuals, and how Those Things are All Related to One Another,” Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Philosophical Society, High point University, high point, NC, February 2007.
- “The Meta-Theoretic Conception of Laws of Nature,” Dartmouth College, July 2006.
- “Coping With Severe Test Anxiety: Problems and Prospects for an Error-Statistical Approach to the Testing of High-Level Theories,” ERROR 06 Conference, Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Blacksburg, VA, June 2006.
- “Comments on Roland,” Annual Meeting of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, Chicago, IL, April 2006.
- “Laws, Counterfactuals, and Measurement,” North Carolina State University, August 2005.
- “Comments on Sickler,” Annual Meeting of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, Chicago, IL, April 2005.
- “Comments on Kronz,” Annual Meeting of the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Durham, NC, February 2005.
- “The Meta-Theoretic Conception of Laws of Nature,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, December 2004.
- “Sellars, van Fraassen, Layer Cakes, and Scientific Realism,” Florida State University, February, 2004.
- “A Puzzle About Symmetries, Laws, and Measurable Quantities,” University of Kansas, December 2003.
- “Comments on Schneider” (a reply to “Are the Intuitions that the Laws of Nature Govern Misleading?” by Susan Schneider), delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, 2002 in Philadelphia.
- “What Interpretation Might Be,” Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh, September 2002.
- “Scientific Images, and Why They’re Good Things to Try to Get; or, Scientific Realism without Convergent Realism,” colloquium paper, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, September 2001.

- “Reliabilist Verificationism and Underdetermination,” colloquium paper, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, April 2001.
- “New and Improved Humean Supervenience,” colloquium paper, Department of History and Philosophy, Montana State University, March 2001.
- “Is Logical Empiricism Committed to the Ideal of Value-Free Science?” presented at the conference *Value-Free Science: Ideal or Illusion?* Center for Science and Human Values, University of Alabama at Birmingham, February 2001.
- “Undermining Undermined: Why Humean Supervenience Never Needed to be Debugged (Even If It’s a Necessary Truth),” presented at the Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia, November 2000.
- “Undermining Undermined,” North Carolina / South Carolina Philosophical Society, Duke University, February 2000.
- “‘Laws of Nature’ as an Indexical Term: A Reinterpretation of Lewis’s Best-System Analysis,” presented at the Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting, Kansas City, Missouri, October 1998.
- “Leibniz’s ‘Newtonianism’,” presented at HOPOS 98 (Second International History of Philosophy of Science Conference), University of Notre Dame, March 1998.

TEACHING RECORD

Undergraduate Courses Taught:

Introduction to Philosophy of Science
Thinking about Time (a First-Year Seminar)
Experience and Reality
Symbolic Logic
Metaphysical Systems
Philosophy of Physics

Mixed (Undergraduate and Graduate) Course Taught:

Philosophy and Physics of Space and Time (co-taught with Professor H. van Dam, Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Graduate Courses Taught:

Philosophy of Science
Seminar on Laws of Nature
Seminar on Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics
The Metaphysics of Time

GRANTS

Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship, 2002-3 (awarded by the American Council of Learned Societies).

Junior Faculty Development Grant, UNC-Chapel Hill (2002).

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

TO DISCIPLINE

Referee for the journals *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *International Studies in Philosophy of Science*, *Nous*, *Philosophy of Science*, *Synthese*.

Chair of session on “The Problem of *A Priori* Knowledge.” (Speaker: Nick Zangwill; Commentator: David Sanford.) Annual Meeting of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 2001.

Chair of session on “A Bayesian Account of Severity.” (Speaker: Prasanta Bandyopadhyay; commentator: Deborah Mayo.) Annual Meeting of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, Chicago, Illinois, May 2000.

Participant, *Philosophy of Experimental Inference: Induction, Reliability, and Error*, an NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers. June 14-July 23, 1999. Director: Deborah G. Mayo.

WITHIN UNC-CHAPEL HILL

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Philosophy: 2005-present..

Member, Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Philosophy: 2003-2004, 2001-2002, 2000-2001.

Member, Placement Committee, Department of Philosophy: 2003-2004.

Member, Undergraduate Committee, Department of Philosophy: 2003-2004, 1999-2000.

Member, Graduate Committee, Department of Philosophy: 2001-2002, 2000-2001.

Member, Hiring Committee, Department of Philosophy: 2001-2002.

Member, Colloquium Committee, Department of Philosophy: 1999-2000.