

Curriculum Vitae
TED PARENT
Oct. 2009

Department of Philosophy-0126
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, VA 24061

parentt@vt.edu
<http://www.unc.edu/~tparent>
(919) 260-4897 [cell]

EMPLOYMENT:

Virginia Tech, Department of Philosophy: Visiting Assistant Professor, Aug. 2009 – present.

Vanderbilt University, Department of Philosophy: Lecturer, Aug. 2008 – Aug. 2009.

EDUCATION:

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: Ph.D. (Philosophy), Aug. 2009.

Dissertation: “Metasemantics: On the Limits of Semantic Theory”

Committee: William G. Lycan (Director), Dorit Bar-On, Thomas Hofweber, Ram Neta,
Keith Simmons

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: M.A. (Philosophy), May 2002.

Masters Thesis: “Introspection and Its Epistemology”

Committee: William G. Lycan (Director), Dorit Bar-On, Douglas C. Long

Indiana University, Bloomington: M.A. (Philosophy), May 2000.

University of Portland: B.A., *maxima cum laude* and Honors Program; (Philosophy and English
with French minor), May 1998.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION:

Philosophy of Language, Epistemology

AREAS OF COMPETENCE:

History of Early Modern Philosophy, History of Analytic Philosophy, Logic, Metaphysics,
Philosophy of Mind

PUBLICATIONS:

“Infallibilism about Self-Knowledge,” *Philosophical Studies*, 133; Apr. 2007. pp. 411-424.

“Quine and Logical Truth,” *Erkenntnis*, 68.1; Jan. 2008. pp. 103-112.

PRESENTATIONS:

“What the Externalist Cannot Know *A Priori*,” to be presented at the Central Division of the *American Philosophical Association*, Feb. 2010.

Comments on Tuomas Manninen’s “An Argument Against Animalism,” presented at the Pacific Division of the *American Philosophical Association*, Apr. 2009.

“What Does the Slow-Switch Argument Show?,” presented at
-Vanderbilt University Philosophy Department Colloquium Series, Oct. 2008.
-University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Oct. 2008.

Comments on Chase Wrenn’s “Practical Success and the Nature of Truth,” presented at the Eastern Division of the *American Philosophical Association*, Dec. 2007.

“On What There Actually Is,” presented at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Sept. 2007.

“Infallibilism about Self-Knowledge,” presented at:
-The Eastern Division Meeting of the *American Philosophical Association*, Dec. 2004.
-The University of Memphis: MidSouth Conference in Philosophy, Feb. 2004.

“Quine and Logical Truth,” presented at:
-The Central Division Meeting of the *American Philosophical Association*, Apr. 2004.
-Reed College: 55th Annual Northwest Philosophy Conference, Oct. 2003.

Comments on Ryan Robinson’s “Tibbles without Tib,” presented at Reed College: 55th Annual Northwest Philosophy Conference, Oct. 2003.

“The Coherence Theory of Subjective Probability,” presented at Indiana University, Mar. 2000.

“The Liar Paradox, T-Sentence Analysis, and Epistemology,” presented at DePauw University, Meeting of the Indiana Philosophical Association, Nov. 1998.

WORKS IN PROGRESS:

“What the Externalist Cannot Know *A Priori*” [under review, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*]

“Ontic Terms and Ontology” [under review, *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*]

“Externalism and ‘Knowing What’ You Think” *Full Draft Available on Request*

“A Neo-Quinean Concern about Teleosemantics” *Full Draft Available on Request*

“Is Modal Realism Unintelligible?”

COURSES PREPARED TO TEACH:

Advanced: Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, Semantic Externalism, Self-Knowledge, Skepticism, Modality and Ontology, Truth, Quine

Intermediate: History of Early Modern Philosophy (Descartes through Kant), History of Analytic Philosophy, Logic and Metatheory, Philosophy of Mind, Metaphysics

Introductory: Philosophy of Religion, Ethics, Bioethics, Intro Philosophy

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: (*Full Responsibility unless otherwise indicated*)

Virginia Tech:

Metaphysics (Writing Intensive) (Senior/Grad Level); Language and Logic [Intro to Arguments]

**For Spring 2010:* Modality and Ontology (Grad Seminar), Modern Logic [Predicate Logic plus Soundness and Completeness], Philosophy of Religion

Vanderbilt University:

Intro Philosophy (Writing Intensive), General Logic [Intro to Arguments]

Duke University:

Symbolic Logic

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill:

Philosophy of Religion, Experience and Reality [Intro M&E], Symbolic Logic, Intro Philosophy

Substitute Instructor (for M. Resnik): Philosophy of Mathematics (Grad Level)

Co-Instructor (with Katherine Dimitriou): Intro Ethics

Supervisor for Independent Study: Epistemology, Symbolic Logic

Teaching Assistant: Logic (S. Munsat), Ethics (G. Sayre-McCord), Bioethics (H. Gert), Intro Philosophy (D. Bar-On; J. Rosenberg)

Undergraduate Research Consultant: Philosophy of Cognitive Science (D. Bar-On)

Indiana University, Bloomington:

Teaching Assistant: Utopias (K. Hanson), Ethics (R. Guldmann).

[Teaching Experience, continued]

University of Portland, Oregon:

Writing Assistant, University of Portland Writing Center.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

Mary Williams Fellowship, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: Aug. 2004 & Sept. 2005

Graduate School Opportunity Grant, June 2004.

Bertha Williams Fellowship, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Jan. 2004.

Fellow, Future Faculty Program, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Aug. 2003.

Kenan Fellowship, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Nov. 2002.

Henry Horace Williams Fellowship, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: Sept. 2000, Jan. 2001, Sept. 2001, Jan. 2002, Jan. 2003, & Sept. 2003.

The Open Fellowship, Indiana University, Bloomington, Aug. 1998.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Research Assistant, for Dorit Bar-On while writing on self-knowledge, Spring 2008.

Referee, 2007 Congress of the Canadian Philosophical Association, Dec. 2006.

Member, Canadian Philosophical Association, Dec. 2006-present.

Chair, Colloquium on Epistemology, North Carolina Philosophical Society, Feb. 2005.

Research Assistant, for Dorit Bar-On while writing a book on truth (with Keith Simmons), Fall 2004.

Chair, Colloquium on “Externalism, Skepticism, and the Recognitional Conception of Self-Knowledge,” by Dorit Bar-On, workshop on Self-Knowledge and the Self, Bigorio, Switzerland, Aug. 1-6, 2004.

Index Compiled for *Speaking My Mind: Expression and Self-Knowledge* by Dorit Bar-On, Oxford University Press, June - July 2004.

Translator, “Les Premières Amours” by Eugène Scribe, commissioned by Paul V. Spade, available at <http://www.paulvincentspade.com/P470/Extras/scribe.htm>, Jun 2000.

Member, American Philosophical Association, Fall 2000 – present.

DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE:

Teaching Assistant Co-ordinator, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, July 2004 – July 2005. Responsible for running teaching workshops, as well as coordinating and advising the department's teaching assistants.

President, Graduate Association of Students in Philosophy, Indiana University, Bloomington, Aug. 1999 – Aug. 2000.

GRADUATE CLASSES TAKEN (* indicates audit)

Philosophy of Language and Mind:

Seminar: Quasi-Realism	Simon Blackburn
Seminar: Concepts	William Lycan
Wittgenstein	Jay Rosenberg
Nonconceptual Content	Brian Cantwell Smith
Philosophy of Language	Dorit Bar-On
Introduction to Cognitive Science	Robert Port
*Seminar: Content	Jesse Prinz
*Seminar: Sellars	Jay Rosenberg
*Contemporary Topics in Philosophy of Language	Dorit Bar-On

Epistemology:

Seminar: Skepticism & Contextualism; Virtue Epistemology	William Lycan
Seminar: Self-Knowledge	Dorit Bar-On
Seminar: Skepticism	Tim O'Connor
Philosophy of Science	Elisabeth Lloyd
Epistemology	Douglas Long
Epistemology and Metaphysics	David Finkelstein
*Seminar: Contemporary Epistemology	Jay Rosenberg
*Seminar: The Regress of Reasons	Ram Neta
*Seminar: Rationality	Ram Neta

Logic:

Logical Theory I	Jon Barwise
Logical Theory II	David McCarty
Seminar: Truth, Rationality, and Circularity	Anil Gupta
Philosophy of Mathematics	Michael Resnik
Decision Theory	Michael Resnik
*Seminar: Truth	Keith Simmons
*Set Theory	Keith Simmons
*Modal Logic	Keith Simmons

[Graduate Courses, continued]

History of Early Modern Philosophy:

British Empiricism	Simon Blackburn
Kant and Phil of Science	Michael Friedman
The Rationalists	Don Garrett
Seminar: Hume	Don Garrett
*Seminar: Kant	Jay Rosenberg

Ethics:

Contemporary Moral Theory	Michelle Moody-Adams
History of Ethics	Paul Eisenberg
*Seminar: Utilitarianism	Susan Wolf
*Seminar: Evolution and Morality	Geoff Sayre-McCord

Other:

Proto-Seminar	Don Garrett and Jay Rosenberg
Qualifying Exam Taken in Epistemology	

LANGUAGES

German (reading only), French

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT:

METASEMANTICS is a wake-up call for semantic theory. It reveals that some questions in semantics *have no adequate answer*. (This is meant as an *epistemic* point that some semantic questions cannot be “settled”—not a metaphysical claim that there is no *fact-of-the-matter*.) *METASEMANTICS* thus serves as a check on our default “optimism” that any well-formed question about meaning can be answered (at least in principle). The resulting “pessimism” is not meant to belittle semantics and its many accomplishments, but rather to understand better the epistemic limitations of human beings. The discussion is technically informed and rigorous in detail, yet its goal is to address “big” questions about the limits of knowledge.

The first chapter argues that relative to certain natural assumptions, a question like “What does ‘Pollux’ denote?” *has no adequate answer*. If an answer is to be non-circular, then any answer ultimately depends on the use of an uninterpreted term—meaning that this term occurs absent an answer to what *it* denotes. This, I argue, makes the answer uninformative in certain crucial respects. The point here vindicates Quine’s thesis of ontological relativity (though not Quine’s behaviorism nor his semantic nihilism).

Chapter Two and Three build on this “pessimism” in considering “ontic terms,” such as ‘exist’, ‘actual’, etc. If Chapter One entails there is no saying what an ontic-idiom’s *extension* is, these chapters show there is no saying what their *intension* is. Any attempt, I claim, will be equivocal. As corollaries, I show that, strictly speaking, a criterion of ontological commitment is impossible—and accordingly, that a univocal statement of Realism about *x* is impossible, for any *x*.

Chapter Four considers truth-conditional semantics, generally speaking. After elaborating Davidson's claim about the "folly" of defining truth, I counter-balance his pessimism by showing that an informative analysis of 'true' is still possible (though only for certain translational purposes).

Finally, Chapter Five evaluates a pessimistic argument concerning *mental* content. I argue that under externalism, *a priori* knowledge of content is impossible, at least for knowing whether a concept is about H₂O versus XYZ. But this limit on the *a priori* should be unsurprising; I argue, moreover, that for other purposes we indeed know *a priori* what we think.

Extended Abstract Available on Request

REFERENCES:

Dorit Bar-On, Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
dbar@email.unc.edu

William G. Lycan, William Rand Kenan Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill, ujanel@email.unc.edu

A. P. Martinich, Roy Allison Vaughan Centennial Professor of Philosophy, University of Texas
at Austin, martinich@mail.utexas.edu

John F. Post, Professor of Philosophy *Emeritus*, Vanderbilt University,
john.f.post@vanderbilt.edu

Keith Simmons, Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
ksimmons@email.unc.edu