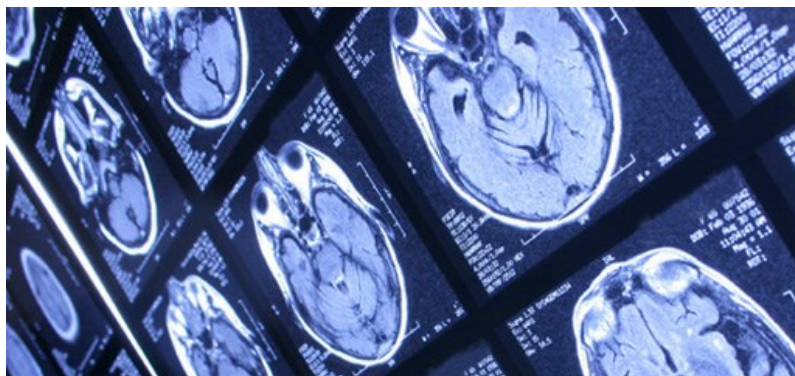


Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind Research Cluster



Throughout the current transformation process, the Philosophy department at Birmingham has continued to build on its strengths in philosophy of mind and cognitive science. As a result, our department has an exciting and internationally recognised group of philosophers (including both staff and students) working together in this field.

Our new appointments **Dr Maja Spener** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/spener-maja.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/spener-maja.aspx)), **Professor Scott Sturgeon** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/sturgeon-scott.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/sturgeon-scott.aspx)) and **Dr Alastair Wilson** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/wilson-alastair.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/wilson-alastair.aspx)) also add epistemology to our areas of expertise. In addition, the Distinguished Research Professors **Paul Boghossian** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/boghossian-paul.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/boghossian-paul.aspx)), **Hartry Field** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/field-hartry.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/field-hartry.aspx)), **Stephen Neale** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/neale-stephen.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/neale-stephen.aspx)), **Susanna Siegel** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/siegel-susanna.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/siegel-susanna.aspx)) and **Ralph Wedgwood** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/wedgwood-ralph.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/wedgwood-ralph.aspx)) are all famous for their work in both philosophy of mind and epistemology. They will take part in the various events organised by this research cluster, and also co-supervise our PG students together with other staff. As a result of all of this, Birmingham is an exciting place to study philosophy of mind and epistemology.

Some research topics of particular interest to the cluster include:

In Philosophy of Mind:

- Philosophy of psychology and psychiatry
- Rationality
- Delusions and other imperfect cognitions
- Phenomenal concepts
- Perception
- Metaphysical questions about consciousness and propositional attitudes
- Normativity of mental states

In Epistemology:

- Epistemology of a priori knowledge (especially in domains such as mathematics and morality)
- Rationality and belief revision
- Normativity in epistemology
- Contextualism
- Introspective knowledge
- Truth in epistemology
- The relevance of metaphysics for epistemology and vice versa

People

Professor Paul Boghossian (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/boghossian-paul.aspx>) is a Distinguished Research Professor at Birmingham and also a Silver Professor of Philosophy at NYU. In philosophy of mind, he has investigated topics such as mental content and its transparency, musical experience, rule following and many others. In Epistemology, he has worked on self-knowledge, a priori knowledge, objections to relativist and constructivist views of knowledge and epistemic reasons.

Professor Lisa Bortolotti (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/bortolotti-lisa.aspx>)'s main research interests are in philosophy of cognitive science and especially in philosophy of psychology and psychiatry. She has worked on theories of belief ascriptions, rationality and delusions. Her current research project investigates epistemic benefits of imperfect cognitions.

Dr Darragh Byrne (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/byrne-darragh.aspx>) is a lecturer in Philosophy. In recent work he has defended a Fregean conception of phenomenal concepts, and investigated whether such concepts are expressed in natural language. In epistemology his research has focussed on self-knowledge.

Dr Justin Clarke-Doane (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/clarke-doane-justin.aspx>) is a recently appointed Birmingham Fellow. His research focuses on epistemological questions surrounding the a priori in domains such as mathematics and morality: for example, questions of undecidability and indeterminacy in mathematics and evolution and debunking arguments in ethics.

Professor Hartry Field (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/field-hartry.aspx>) is a Distinguished Research Professor at Birmingham. He is also University Professor and Silver Professor of Philosophy at NYU. Professor Field has made significant contributions to many debates in epistemology, including ones concerning a priori knowledge in mathematics and the significance of metaphysics in epistemology. He is best known for his work in fictionalism in the philosophy of mathematics.

Professor Yujin Nagasawa (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/nagasawa-yujin.aspx>) has published widely in philosophy of mind on topics such as

phenomenal consciousness, physicalism and dualism, and semantic externalism. His God and Phenomenal Consciousness: A Novel Approach to Knowledge Arguments (Cambridge University Press, 2008) investigated the use of knowledge arguments in both philosophy of mind and philosophy of religion.

Professor Stephen Neale (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/neale-stephen.aspx>) is a Distinguished Research Professor at Birmingham. He also holds the John H. Kornblith Family Chair in the Philosophy of Science and Values at City University New York. In philosophy of mind, he has, for example, investigated conceptual content of judgments and Donald Davidson's views on translation and interpretation. He is generally well known for his work in philosophy of language and linguistics and especially for his contributions to debates about descriptions.

Professor Susanna Siegel (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/siegel-susanna.aspx>) is a Distinguished Research Professor at Birmingham. She is also the Edgar Pierce Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. Her main research interests concern the nature of consciousness, perception, intentionality and belief.

Dr Maja Spener (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/spener-maja.aspx>) is a lecturer in Philosophy. Her main research interests are in philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology and epistemology. Recently she has investigated the nature and extent of introspective knowledge and the proper use of introspective data in philosophical and scientific theorizing about the conscious mind.

Professor Scott Sturgeon (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/sturgeon-scott.aspx>)'s main research interests lie in philosophy of mind and epistemology. He has published widely in these areas on topics such as perception and physicalism, the nature of consciousness, the Gettier problem, truth in epistemology, rational belief revision, and the relation between belief and its degrees.

Dr Mark Walker (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/walker-mark.aspx>) is a lecturer in Philosophy. In philosophy of mind, he has worked on theory of action and the nature of rational deliberation.

Professor Ralph Wedgwood (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/wedgwood-ralph.aspx>) is a Distinguished Research Professor at Birmingham and also a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern California. He has many research interests in both philosophy of mind and epistemology. These include the nature of normativity as such, contextualism, decision theory, the nature of logic and belief and many more.

Dr Alastair Wilson (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/wilson-alastair.aspx>) is a Birmingham Fellow. He has published widely in epistemology on topics such as disagreement, contextualism about chance, the Sleeping Beauty problem and multiverse confirmation.

Postgraduate Study

For postgraduates interested in studying programmes or modules in these areas of philosophy, we offer the following taught MAs:

- **Philosophy MA** ([/postgraduate/courses/taught/phil/philosophy.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/taught/phil/philosophy.aspx))
- **Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science MA** ([/postgraduate/courses/taught/phil/phil-mind-cognitive-sci.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/taught/phil/phil-mind-cognitive-sci.aspx))

Our combined research and taught **Philosophy MRes programme** ([/postgraduate/courses/combined/phil/philosophy.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/combined/phil/philosophy.aspx)) also includes modules in philosophy of mind, philosophy of cognitive science and epistemology, and those wishing to conduct pure research in the field may register for the **Philosophy PhD programme**. (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/research/phil/philosophy.aspx>)

We have a number of postgraduate researchers interested in ethics and philosophy of religion at Birmingham (for more information about their research projects, see our **PG research page** ([/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/research/postgraduateresearch/index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/philosophy/research/postgraduateresearch/index.aspx))). All of our postgraduate students benefit from the academic strengths of our research clusters and are often co-supervised by our Distinguished Research Professors and members of staff from associated clusters across the College of Arts and Law, so that they have access to different perspectives on their research topic. If you are interested in doing postgraduate research in ethics at Birmingham, please feel free to contact our Director of Research Admissions, **Professor Scott Sturgeon** ([/staff/profiles/philosophy/sturgeon-scott.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/sturgeon-scott.aspx)) (s.sturgeon@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:s.sturgeon@bham.ac.uk>)).

Current and Recent Research Projects

Professor Lisa Bortolotti (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/bortolotti-lisa.aspx>)

- The Epistemic Benefits of Imperfect Cognitions (funded by AHRC, 2013-14)
- Moral Responsibility and Psychopathology (funded by Wellcome Trust, 2012-13)
- Rationality and Sanity (funded by Wellcome Trust, 2011)
- Nature of clinical delusions (funded by AHRC and the Department of Education, Employment and the Workplace Relations of the Australian Government, 2009)

Professor Yujin Nagasawa (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/philosophy/nagasawa-yujin.aspx>)

- Towards a Nonphysicalist Monist Solution to the Mystery of Consciousness (with Max Velmans at Goldsmiths, University of London; funded by the John Templeton Foundation, 2009-11)
- Anselmian Perfect-Being Theology and the Cognitive Science of Religion (funded by the Cognition, Religion and Theology Project at the University of Oxford, 2008-09)

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