

CONTINUUM
PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT

BRIAN KEMPLE, PHD

CURRICULUM VITAE

FOUNDER

Continuum Philosophical Insight

RESEARCH FELLOW

Center for the Study of Digital Life

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts 2010
English Literature and Philosophy, Southern Catholic College,
Dawsonville GA, *Summa Cum Laude*

Master of Arts 2012
Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, Houston TX

Philosophiae Doctor 2016
Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, Houston TX
Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition
Director: John Deely
Advisers: John Hittinger (co-director), Mirela Oliva



Languages

Reading: Latin and German
Translation: Medieval Latin

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

In addition to my institutional teaching experience listed below, I have spent many years as a private educator, including tutoring but since 2018 with a focus on individual philosophical education for those who seek to develop the habits of critical reflection. Additionally, I teach courses to small groups of all age groups from high school up through retirement. In all cases, my teaching is oriented towards evoking the right questions and showing how to ask them in the right way.

Adjunct Professor, 2016-17 | Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston MA

Description:

I taught ethics at this regional technological institute. Since most students were engaged in technical programs focused upon finding economical solutions to problems in engineering, programming, or other technical disciplines, this presented a unique challenge: getting the students to think in a radically different way.

Courses taught:

4501 – Ethics: Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Summer 2017

Adjunct Professor, 2013-16 | University of St. Thomas, Houston TX

Description:

I taught a variety of courses at this private institution, including core courses required for every student, in addition to an upper-level course taken by majors. Classes were taught with a semi-Socratic method, incorporating small lectures with heavy discussion, focused around understanding classic and supplementary texts in the Western philosophical tradition.

Courses taught:

3313 – Metaphysics: Fall 2013 | Spring 2014 | Spring 2016

2316 – Medieval Philosophy: Summer 2014 | Spring 2015 | Fall 2015 | Spring 2016

2314 – Ethics: Fall 2014 | Fall 2015

1311 – Phil. of the Person: Summer 2015

4312 – Philosophy of Knowledge: Spring 2015

Instructor, 2011-16 | Our Lady of Walsingham, Houston TX

Description:

I taught weekly courses with regular email correspondence at this small home school co-operative program for upper-middle (7th-8th) and high-school students (9th-12th). These students—generally advanced—were introduced through my courses (as well as others within the program) to a rigorous investigation of critical thinking and the liberal arts, to give them the foundation needed for succeeding in college.

Courses taught:

Introduction to Logic

Grammar and Composition

Intermediate Latin

Introduction to Philosophy

Ethics

PUBLICATIONS

My writing falls into various categories: serious academic publications, both books and articles, intended for advanced audiences who have studied philosophy extensively; lay philosophical publications, intended for those who are familiar with or strongly interested in philosophical thinking; and more casual publications (not listed here), including blog entries and through other digital means of distribution (e.g., social media), which are intended more as an exercise of dialogue than one of pedagogy or scholarship.

Books

Introduction to Philosophical Principles: Logic, Physics, and the Human Person, self-published | Amazon, 2019.

Description:

This short book introduces what I consider to be the most important principles for conducting any systematic philosophical inquiry. These are broken down into three sections: logic, physics, and person; or, the basic encounter with thought, with the world, and the nexus of thought and world.

The Intersection of Semiotics and Phenomenology: Peirce and Heidegger in Dialogue, forthcoming from Mouton De Gruyter's *Semiotics, Communication, and Cognition* series, 2019.

Description:

Many contemporary explanations of conscious human experience, relying either upon neuroscience or appealing to a spiritual soul, fail to provide a complete and coherent theory. These explanations, I argue, fall short because the underlying explanatory constituent for all experience are not entities, such as the brain or a spiritual soul, but rather relation and the unique way in which human beings form relations. This volume brings together insights from the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger and semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce into a new complementary synthesis that opens new doors for understanding all aspects of conscious human experience, not just those that can be quantified, and without appealing to an ineffable spiritual principle.

Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition: The Philosophy of Being as First Known, from Brill's *Gilson Studies* series, September 2017.

Description:

Presents a reading of Thomas Aquinas' claim that "being" is the first object of the human intellect. Blending the insights of both the early Thomistic tradition (c.1380—1637AD) and the Leonine Thomistic revival (1879—present), I examine how this claim of Aquinas has been traditionally understood, and what is lacking in that understanding. While the recent tradition has emphasized the primacy of the real (so-called *ens reale*) in human recognition of the *primum cognitum*, I argue that this misinterprets Aquinas, thereby closing off Thomistic philosophy to the broader perspective needed to face the philosophical challenges of today and propose an alternative interpretation with dramatic epistemological and metaphysical consequences.

Academic Articles

"The Consolation of a Christian" in
International Philosophical Quarterly, 58.4.232, December 2018.

"Elaboration of the Intellectual Sign" in
The American Journal of Semiotics, 34.1-2, Summer 2018.

"The Preeminent Necessity of Prudence" in
Studia Gilsoniana, 6:4, 2017 [\[PDF\]](#).

"Jacques Maritain and *Ens ut Primum Cognitum*" in
Engaging the Times: The Witness of Thomism, Catholic University of America Press, 2017.

"Evaluating Etienne Gilson's Metaphysical Realism" in
Studia Gilsoniana, 4:4, 2015 [\[PDF\]](#).

"Wojtyla: Nature, Person, and Teleology" in
Thomas Aquinas: Teacher of Humanity published by Cambridge Scholars, 2015.

Popular Articles

"The Continuity of Being: C.S. Peirce's Philosophy of Synechism" in
Epoché Monthly Magazine (January 2019) [\[Online\]](#).

“Leaving the Global Village: Our Digital Diaspora” in
Lapsus Lima 5 February 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

“The Acute Obtuse, or Irreplaceable Philosophy” in
Lapsus Lima 16 October 2018 [\[Online\]](#).

“InHuman Places” in
Lapsus Lima, 18 April 2018 [\[Online\]](#).

Reviews

The Knowledge of First Principles in St. Thomas Aquinas by Mary Christine Ugobi-Onyemere (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2015) in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 29.1/2, 2017.

Nature and the Artificial: Aristotelian Reflections on the Operative Imperative by Edward Engelmann (New York: Lexington Books, 2017) forthcoming in *The Review of Metaphysics*.

Referee for

The American Journal of Semiotics 2018—
Studia Gilsoniana 2018—

PRESENTATIONS

“Concept Formation and Artificial Intelligence”

Invited lecture, Aquinas College
Grand Rapids, MI, 19 March 2019

“Interpretation and Traditions: an intersection for semiotics, phenomenology, and Thomism”

Invited Colloquium, Center for Thomistic Studies
University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX, 27 April 2018

“Sophists and Semioticians”

Aquinas Leadership International World Congress
Huntington, NY, 15 July 2017

“Critical Realism and the *Verbum Mentis*”

Center for Thomistic Studies Graduate Discussion Group
Houston, TX, 14 April 2016

“Maritain and Wojtyla on the Disclosure of Subjectivity”

Along Unbeaten Pathways: Jacques Maritain’s Pursuit of Wisdom in Untrammelled Approaches,
American Maritain Association Annual Conference
New York, NY, 25-27 February 2016

“Thomas Aquinas’ Fourth Way”

5th Annual Houston Baptist Philosophy Conference
Houston, TX, 18 September 2015

“Jacques Maritain and *Ens ut Primum Cognitum*”

Maritain Engage, American Maritain Association Annual Conference

San Francisco, CA, 26-28 February 2015

“Does the First Principle of Avicenna have a Quiddity?”
Aquinas and ‘the Arabs’ Annual Fall Workshop
 Houston, TX, 6 September 2014

“Techne, Physis, and Technology: Aristotle and Heidegger”
4th Annual Houston Baptist Philosophy Conference
 Houston, TX, 5 April 2014

“Wojtyla: Nature, Person, and Teleology”
Thomistic Personalism satellite session at the *American Catholic Philosophical Association*
 Indianapolis, IN, 3 November 2013

“Thomas and Wojtyla on the Teleology of Nature and Person”
Thomas Aquinas: Teacher of Humanity – Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas
 Houston, TX, 18 October 2013

RESEARCH

The overall architecture of my philosophical project is twofold: first is to follow what Jacques Maritain called a “Living Thomism”, which he saw as dealing not only with the perennial wisdom of Thomas Aquinas but as engaging the dynamic unfolding of time and the issues contained therein. The second is to embed both semiotics, the study of the action of signs, and what Charles Peirce called “synechism”—the essential continuity of all things in the universe, of a universe without gaps—into a systematic philosophical program.

ONLINE PRESENCE

- <https://semioticthomist.wordpress.com> [Personal blog]
- <https://cp-insight.com/blog/> [Professional blog]
- <https://cs-dl.academia.edu/BrianKemple> [Academia.edu profile]
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/BrianKemple> [LinkedIn profile]
- <https://www.twitter.com/realbriankemple> [Twitter]