

BRENDAN MURDAY

Curriculum Vitae

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Assistant Professor [tenure-track]
Department of Philosophy and Religion
Park 235
Ithaca College
953 Danby Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

EDUCATION:

Syracuse University: Ph.D., 2008.
College of William and Mary: B.A. in Philosophy and Economics, 1999.

PH.D. DISSERTATION:

Two-Dimensionalism and Semantic Content.

Committee: André Gallois (supervisor), Karen Bennett, Mark Heller, Tom McKay, Bob van Gulick, William Ritchie (oral examination chair).

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION:

Metaphysics.
Philosophy of Language.

AREAS OF COMPETENCE:

Epistemology.
Logic.
Philosophy of Mind.

AWARDS:

Syracuse University Fellowship, 1999-2000, 2002-2003.
Philosophy Graduate Student Summer Grant, Syracuse University, 2005.

PRESENTATIONS:

'Actuality and Triply-Indexed Semantics', APA Pacific Division, Vancouver, Spring 2009.
Comments on Robert Howell, 'The Two-Dimensionalist Reductio', APA Central Division, Chicago, 2007.
Comments on Gillian Russell, 'Truth in Virtue of Meaning', Syracuse Workshop on the A Priori, August 20, 2004.
Comments on Philip Ebert, 'Which Way to (A priori) Success?', Syracuse Graduate Philosophy Conference, February 28, 2003.
'Fictionalism and Empty Names', Sunshine State Philosophy Conference, November 3, 2001.
Comments on Bryan Hall, 'The Deep Problem of Physicalism', Syracuse Graduate Philosophy Conference, March 23, 2001.

WORKS UNDER REVIEW:

'Forgiveness and Foreswearing Resentment'.
'A Persistent Descriptivist Reply to an Obstinate Modal Argument'.

WORKS IN PROGRESS:

'Skepticism in the Problem of the Criterion'.
'Locke on Intentionality'.
'The Semantics of Offensive Speech'.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- 2008 - present Assistant Professor, Ithaca College. [tenure-track]
2006 - 2008 Assistant Professor, Ithaca College. [non-TT]
 - *Metaphysics* (S09).
 - *Independent Study: Sense and Direct Reference* (F08)
 - *Philosophy of Language* (S08).
 - *Theories of Knowledge* (S07).
 - *Introduction to Logic*.
 - *Introduction to Philosophy*.
- 2003 - 2004,
2002 (Spring) Teaching Associate, Syracuse University.
 - *Theories of Knowledge and Reality*.
 - *Independent Study: Topics in Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind* (S04).
 Sole responsibility for these courses.
- 2001 (Spring and Fall) Head Teaching Assistant, Syracuse University.
 - *Introduction to Ethics*.
 Responsible for one recitation section (lecture/discussion and grading),
 coordinating the other recitation sections, managing the class listserv,
 proofreading exams, and running review sessions.
- 2000 (Fall) Teaching Assistant, Syracuse University.
 - *Introduction to Ethics*.
 Responsible for two recitation sections (lecture/discussion and grading).
- 1998 - 1999 Teaching Assistant, College of William and Mary.
 - *Economic Analysis of Law*.
 Responsible for grading assignments, exams and papers.
 Office hours (1999 only).
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ACTIVITIES:

- Assessment Committee member, Ithaca College Philosophy and Religion Department, 2008.
Faculty Sponsor, Ithaca College Philosophy Club, 2007-present.
Space Committee member, Ithaca College Philosophy and Religion Department, 2008.
Conference Organization:
 Assistant Organizer, Syracuse Philosophy Annual Workshop / Network: Consciousness, 2005.
 Co-organizer, Syracuse Workshop on the A Priori, 2004.
 Co-organizer, Syracuse Workshop in Metaphysics, 2003.
 Organizer, Syracuse Graduate Philosophy Conference, 2002.
 Assistant Organizer, Metaphysical Mayhem, 2002.
 Assistant Organizer, Metaphysical Mayhem, 2001.
Coordinator, Dissertation Workshop, 2005-2006.
President, Syracuse University Philosophy Graduate Students, 2003-2004.
Member, College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure Committee, 2002-2003.
Referee work for *Dialectica*.
Editorial Assistant for *Conceivability and Possibility*, Tamar Gendler and John Hawthorne, eds.
Member, American Philosophical Association.

GRADUATE COURSES PREPARED TO TEACH:

Metaphysics:

Survey, Language and Methodology, Modality, Constitution, Personal Identity, Free Will, Persistence, Time, Ontology.

Philosophy of Language:

Survey, Names, Descriptions, Propositional Attitudes, Propositions, Truth.

Epistemology:

Survey.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES PREPARED TO TEACH:

Metaphysics, Philosophy of Language, Epistemology, Philosophy of Mind, Logic, Philosophy of Religion, Early Modern, Ancient, Ethics, Critical Thinking, Introduction to Philosophy.

GRADUATE COURSES TAKEN OR AUDITED (*):

Metaphysics and Epistemology:

The A Priori*	(André Gallois).
Time*	(André Gallois).
Possible Worlds*	(Daniel Nolan).
Abstract Entities	(Ted Sider).
Contemporary Epistemology	(William Alston).
Convention and Modality	(Ted Sider).
Selected Topics in Philosophy*	(John Hawthorne).
Metaphysics	(José Benardete).

Philosophy of Language, Logic, and Philosophy of Mind:

Context & Context-Dependence*	(Ishani Maitra).
Fictionalism*	(Tamar Szabó Gendler and Daniel Nolan).
Modal Logic	(Mark Brown).
Propositional Attitudes	(Ted Sider).
Understanding Consciousness	(Bob Van Gulick).
Philosophy of Mathematics	(José Benardete).
Belief	(Tamar Szabó Gendler).
Philosophy of Language	(Ted Sider).
Logic and Language	(Mark Brown).

History:

Rationalism*	(Tom Holden).
British Empiricism	(Tom Holden).
Kant's Critique of Pure Reason	(Fred Beiser).
Early 20 th Century Analytic Phil.	(Dean Zimmerman).
Hellenistic Philosophy	(Bonnie Kent).
Topics in Ancient Philosophy	(John Robertson).

Ethics and Social/Political:

Self-Interest & Political Theory	(Laurence Thomas).
Topics in Moral Philosophy	(Lynne McFall).

REFERENCES:

André Gallois:	Professor of Philosophy, Syracuse University.
Tamar Szabó Gendler:	Professor of Philosophy, Yale University.
Mark Heller:	Professor of Philosophy, Syracuse University.
Ishani Maitra:	Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Rutgers University.
Thomas McKay:	Professor of Philosophy, Syracuse University.

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Dissertation Abstract: *Two-Dimensionalism and Semantic Content*

Standard modal semantics assigns truth to a proposition at a world. *Two-dimensional* semantics assigns truth to a proposition relative to *two* parameters. Depending on the application of the two-dimensional framework, the additional parameter may be the context of utterance, the actual world, or something else entirely. This dissertation offers a general characterization of two-dimensionalism and considers several applications.

The first section concentrates on problems that arise when the domains of the two parameters are not identical. If sentences containing names express singular propositions and some individuals are contingent beings, how do we evaluate those singular propositions at circumstances where the relevant individual fails to exist? Conversely, how does a speaker express propositions about individuals who fail to exist at her context of utterance? The two-dimensional machinery can be used to distinguish between context of utterance and circumstance of evaluation, but we need answers to these questions to develop further two-dimensional semantics.

In the next section, I apply two-dimensionalism to the sentential operator ‘According to the fiction’: ‘According to the fiction, S’ is true with respect to the parameters (actual world, evaluation world) just in case S is true with respect to (fiction, fiction). A principal advantage of this treatment is that we can avoid some of the familiar problems with empty names within a unified treatment of fictional names and ordinary names, and without settling for descriptivism. Part of the development of this view involves the contention that reference-determination for names can be captured within the two-dimensional framework while maintaining that the semantic content of names is directly referential.

The final section offers some critical remarks on two recent applications of two-dimensionalism. First, I contend that a two-dimensionalist treatment of actuality should distinguish the world of the context of utterance from the actual world to make room for the metaphysical view that actuality constitutes a kind of ontological privilege. Second, I contend that no development of the two-dimensional framework will plausibly explain away the necessary a posteriori or the contingent a priori.