Visiting Scholars

Julio De Rizzo

1.26.2023 - 3.3.2023
Faculty Sponsor: Kit Fine

Julio De Rizzo is currently a post-doc/assistant professor at the University of Vienna, Austria. He works mainly on metaphysics and philosophy of logic, with emphasis on explanation and modality. He is also interested in the history of philosophy and physics, in which he started a BA recently. He is originally from Brazil, and is glad to visit NYU and the US for the first time.

Alexander Görlach

8.15.2022 - 8.30.2023
Faculty Sponsor: Kwame Anthony Appiah

Alexander is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, a research associate at the Internet Institute at Oxford University, and a professor of ethics at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany. He teaches democratic theory, and concepts of secularism, pluralism and cosmopolitanism. His interests extend further to narratives of identity, and politics and religion. Alex has been a visiting scholar and fellow to both, Harvard University in the US, and to Cambridge University in the UK. For his PhD in comparative religion he studied and researched at the Pontifical University Gregoriana in Rome, Al-Azhar University in Cairo, and the University of Ankara. He further holds a PhD in linguistics, in the field of language and politics. Alex’ work has been focused on the future of democracy and the liberal world order in the last eight years. Within that field he specifically looks into the rise of China and its implication for democracies in East Asia. He was a visiting scholar to National Taiwan University and City University Hongkong in the academic year 2017-18. His recent publications include “Homo Empathicus: On Scapegoats, Populists & Saving Democracy” (Brookings, 2021). While at NYU by the invitation of Professor Kwame Anthony Appiah Alex pursues a project on “Digital Cosmopolitanism”, inquiring how new technologies are creating an unprecedented global awareness for shared values that connect all of humanity. Alexander was the founder of the debate magazine The European, which he ran from 2009 until 2015 as its editor in chief. Today he is a columnist and op-ed contributor to various media, amongst others The New York Times and Neue Zürcher Zeitung. He appears regularly on TV-programs and radio shows, providing insights into geo-political events.
Bart Jansen

4.1.2023 - 4.1.2024
Faculty Sponsor: Miranda Fricker

Dr Bart Jansen LLM is assistant professor of philosophy of law and ethics at Nyenrode Business University in the Netherlands. He is also an adjunct professor of legal philosophy at Airlangga University in Surabaya, Indonesia, lecturer in sociology of law at the University of Amsterdam and lecturer in jurisprudence at Leiden University (both Dutch). Jansen’s areas of interest include philosophy of law, ontology, political theology, aesthetics, and semiotics.

Jakub Mihálik

9.1.2022 - 6.30.2023
Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers

During my Visiting Scholar period at NYU (September 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), I shall work on a research project in the philosophy of mind, entitled Consciousness & The Meta-Problem of Acquaintance. This project, which is supported by the Fulbright Commission, aims to examine the nature of our acquaintance with the qualitative contents of consciousness in the light of what I describe as the ‘meta-problem of acquaintance’. Inspired by David Chalmers’s ‘meta-problem of consciousness’, this is the challenge of explaining our actual beliefs about conscious acquaintance and its apparent cognitive intimacy. I will first investigate Bertrand Russell’s view that these beliefs result from our ‘acquaintance with acquaintance’, which – in the realm of consciousness – suggests that acquaintance is phenomenally present for us. Should this view prove to be unviable, I will seek a solution to the meta-problem that doesn’t rely on the phenomenal presence of acquaintance.
Emmanuel Ordóñez Angulo

2.17.2023 - 2.15.2024
Faculty Sponsor: Michael Strevens

I’m the Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at Rutgers. I received my Ph.D. from Oxford, where I studied under Timothy Williamson and Michael Martin. I work in epistemology and philosophy of mind, and write occasionally for The New York Review of Books, the Times Literary Supplement, and other venues about cinema and literature. I’m visiting NYU to work on a paper in the epistemology of mathematics under the mentorship of Prof. Michael Strevens. I can be reached at eo2329@nyu.edu, eo351@rutgers.edu, and https://users.ox.ac.uk/~ball5323/

Adriana Renero

9.1.2022 - 8.31.2023
Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers

I am currently an Affiliated Research Scholar in the Philosophy of Mind at the Saul Kripke Center, in the City University of New York, Graduate Center. This year I'm working on Kripke's argument against conceptual materialism and his philosophical exchange with David Lewis in the lectures on the philosophy of mind (1979). I also work on the knowledge argument, auditory consciousness, and introspection.
Katharina Anna Sodoma

3.15.2023 - 4.15.2023
Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers

I am a Post-Doc at the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany, working on a bi-national research project called “How Does it Feel? Interpersonal Understanding and Affective Empathy”. I completed my Ph.D. at the University of Vienna in April 2020 with a thesis on moral relativism and moral progress. My current research focuses on empathy and its many epistemic and interpersonal roles. Recently, I have worked on empathy as an antidote to gaslighting and affective polarization as well as on more foundational questions concerning the structure of empathy. Together with Luke Roelofs, I am planning to work on the relation between simulation as an approach to mindreading and empathy by analyzing how to understand simulation as applied to emotions.

Daniel Sharp

3.15.2023 - 4.15.2023
Faculty Sponsor: Daniel Viehoff

I completed my PhD at NYU in 2022. I am currently a postdoctoral fellow at LMU Munich. While I have very broad philosophical interests, much of my current work focuses on normative issues surrounding migration and citizenship. I’m currently working on normative issues related to the involuntary loss of citizenship and on the normative deficiencies of the current refugee protection regime. I’m also writing about several issues in contemporary egalitarian thought, such as how relational egalitarians should think about obligations to the future and how egalitarians should regard valuable relationships that involve significant forms of asymmetric vulnerability.
Panagiota Theodoni
9.1.2022 - 8.31.2023
Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers

Panagiota Theodoni (Yota) is a Greek physicist with graduate studies in condensed matter physics and a Ph.D. in theoretical and computational neuroscience. Her research has been on photonic crystals, cortical connectivity of primates, and computational neural network models of perceptual decision making, social decision making, learning, episodic memory, and visual conscious perception. Currently, she is working on structure-to-function comparison across species, working memory, social decision making, and distributed neural correlations of conscious perception. During her visit to the NYU Department of Philosophy, she will be working on a large-scale multi-regional neural network model of the primate cortex, simulating the neural activity across cortical areas during switches of contents of consciousness. Yota will be collaborating with members of the Center for Mind, Brain, and Consciousness on issues related to their current projects, including neural correlates of consciousness and theories of consciousness.

Claudia Yau
8.1.2022 - 6.30.2023
Faculty Sponsor: Jessica Moss

I specialize in Ancient Greek philosophy. My main research is on wisdom (sophia) in Plato and Aristotle. I also have paper projects on Aristotle's account of justice and on Sextus Empiricus's system of argumentative modes. Outside of ancient philosophy, I'm interested in social philosophy and Chinese philosophy.
Suzanne Blocks
Faculty Sponsor: Daniel Viehoff

I am Suzanne Bloks, PhD student in the PPE graduate program at Hamburg University. Given my background in philosophy, mathematics and law, I intend to integrate insights from social choice, game theory and constitutional theory in my philosophical research on democracy. My dissertation is a paper-based project concerning questions of democratic inclusion and democratic design in relation to immigration and minority rights. I am approaching these questions from the perspective of civic republicanism but hope to learn more about relational egalitarianism during my stay at NYU.

Rebecca Kerley
Faculty Sponsor: Ned Block

I am interested in philosophy of law and the philosophy of economics, specifically questions concerning vagueness and epistemological questions posed by game theory. In the past, my interests have focused on philosophy of mind/perception, which I remain interested in as well. In particular, I am interested in the mind-body problem and the naive realism/representationalism debate.
Franz Kohwagner  
Faculty Sponsor: Global Exchange Student  
M.A. candidate, Humboldt University Berlin. My primary focus currently lies within existential phenomenology, esp. that of Martin Heidegger, and its analysis of modern life. Two questions about which I am particularly curious are the influence of technology on our lived experience and the sources of normativity and meaning in a secular context. These themes make me also interested in branching out into the work of Nietzsche, Korsgaard, and ancient theories of the good life (both classical and non-Western).

Before embarking on my M.A., I received my B.A. in philosophy, politics, and economics from the University of Oxford, and read philosophy and ancient Greek at LMU Munich.

Liam Ryan  
Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers  
My dissertation is an investigation of the explanatory power of views that take mentality to be fundamental and ubiquitous (specifically, panpsychism and cosmopsychism). I am interested in how theories about human cognition, perception, and mental content (and contemporary debate in these areas) motivate and inform metaphysical views such as panpsychism, physicalism, and cosmophyscism. My research is prompted by three guiding questions: Why do some philosophers try to solve the problem of explaining mentality, at the fundamental level? Are their reasons well-motivated? What does their commitment to fundamental and ubiquitous mentality entail? In answering these questions, I draw upon analysis and argumentation in metaphysics of mind and philosophy of religion.
Valerie Topf  
Faculty Sponsor: Michael Strevens

My name is Valérie G. Topf, I am 30-years-old, French-Israeli and did a BA (Hons) in European Social and Political Studies (in addition to Russian and German Literature) at University College London, completing diplomas at the Kazan Institute of Social Sciences and at the Freie Universität Berlin in the midst, and then did an MA in Philosophy at Columbia University, also volunteering at Rethink, teaching philosophy to members of underprivileged groups outside of a traditional academic context, and at Amnesty International, developing the Human Rights Based Approach to Education for them, during this time. Having gotten so much from education, I wanted to thereupon actually contribute to education, and thus proceeded to teach philosophy, politics, history, international relations, etc. at the high-school and middle-school -also spending some time in the kindergarten- as well as teaching in orphanages across South America and Asia in my holidays. I, nonetheless, missed philosophy dearly -and obsessively thought about the questions of basic equality anyways- and so began my PhD in Philosophy at the FINO Consortium under the wonderful supervision of Ian Carter. The general argument of my thesis is that agents have no epistemic access to an extant/non-extant truth and so our forced agnosticism hereof compels us to turn to constructivism rather than realism/anti-realism; where the constructivist premises all agents can agree upon, I argue, are those based on the perception of sense data; the constructivist reasoning about those premises, I claim, invariably makes use of categories (because, ala Rawls, the scalar properties of sense data appear as the binary property of category membership); and the constructivist conclusions about status that this gives rise to are thus able to ground rights. I use this to realign properties to statuses to rights in relation to sentient, conscious, moral, rational and human beings, in a manner that, I believe, is buttressed by reason, not, dare I say, discrimination. I am spending my final year at NYU as a visiting scholar -kindly hosted by Michael Strevens- as my thesis, clearly, has tentacled into the psychology of concepts, cognitive psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, etc. (oy wey!) and I, frankly, could use all the help I can get to finish a thesis I love very much and with which I want to offer a genuine contribution to the field of basic equality (and, ideally, beyond?).

Johan Utterström  
Faculty Sponsor: ENS

I am a graduate student at the ENS. Before this, I studied economics and philosophy at McGill University and at the University of Tokyo. I am interested in epistemology. Among other things, I want to apply ideas from epistemology to economics. For instance, I want to understand the epistemic properties of different modes of economic exchange and their relation to market conditions (information symmetry…). I am also interested in social epistemology, computer science, information, uncertainty, decision theory, and technology.