

# Raphael Krut-Landau

rkrut@princeton.edu – ex.plicat.io

- Specialist in** Early modern philosophy from Montaigne to Kant
- Competent in** Ancient philosophy, medieval philosophy, political philosophy, philosophy of science
- Appointments** University of Pennsylvania, Department of Philosophy  
Lecturer, March 2015–present
- Education** Ph.D., philosophy, Princeton University, 2017 (thesis defended May 11, degree to be received June 6)  
Visiting scholar, École Normale Supérieure (Rue d’Ulm), Paris, Département de Philosophie, 2013–14  
M.A., philosophy, Princeton University, 2013  
B.A. with honors, philosophy and cognitive science, Johns Hopkins University, 2009
- Publications** “Spinoza on Time.” Forthcoming in the *Blackwell Companion to Spinoza*.
- Courses taught** *Philosophy of Science*. University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2016  
*Philosophy of Social Science*. University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2016  
*Ethics and Language*. University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2015  
*Introduction to Early Modern Philosophy*  
University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2015  
*Topics in Ethics: Sex and Love*  
University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2015  
*Modern Political Thought*, co-taught with Francisco Robles and Qinyuan Lei  
Wagner Youth Correctional Facility, Bordentown, N.J., Spring 2013

**Courses assisted** *Philosophy of Social Science*. Assistant to Prof. Hal Parker  
University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2017  
*Language in its Contexts*. Assistant to Prof. Laura Kalin  
Program in Linguistics, Princeton, Fall 2016  
*Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology*  
Assistant to Prof. Gideon Rosen, Princeton, Spring 2016  
*Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*  
Assistant to Prof. Hendrik Lorenz, Princeton, Spring 2013  
*Philosophy and the Modern Mind*  
Assistant to Prof. Daniel Garber, Princeton, Spring 2012  
*Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology*  
Assistant to Prof. Shamik Dasgupta, Princeton, Fall 2011

**Presentations** *Spinoza's Fear of his Blackness*.  
Canadian Philosophical Association Congress, May 2017  
*Spinoza, Lift Operator: Anagogical Allegory in the 'Ethics'*  
Arts of Spinoza Conference, University of Auckland, May 2017  
*Does Spinoza's 'Ethics' Undermine Itself?*  
Workshop on Early Modern Perception  
Utrecht University, November 2016  
*Does Spinoza's 'Ethics' Undermine Itself?* Princeton, May 2016  
Comments on Siarhei Biareishyk, *Spinoza's Politics of Error*  
Workshop on Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise*  
Columbia University, November 2015  
*Spinoza's Imitation of Scripture*  
Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy  
54th Annual Meeting, Atlanta, October 2015  
*The Medical Subtext of Descartes's First Meditation*  
University of Pennsylvania, September 2015  
*Spinoza's Philosophy of Language*. École Normale Supérieure, Paris, June 2015  
*Spinoza and the Taming of Ambiguity*. Princeton, Feb. 2015  
*Spinoza's Deduction*. Dissertation Seminar, Princeton, Feb. 2015  
*An Automated Theorem Prover that Speaks English*  
Digital Humanities Center, Princeton, Nov. 2014  
*The Influence of Cervantes on Spinoza's 'Ethics'*. Princeton, Nov. 2014  
*The Narrative Structure of Spinoza's 'Ethics'*  
Spinoza workshop, Ghent University, August 2014  
*Spinozistic Semantics*. Bucharest-Princeton Seminar in  
Early Modern Philosophy, Transylvania, July 2014  
*Spinozistic Semantics*. PhilSoc, Princeton, May 2014  
*Spinoza's Modes*. Dissertation Seminar, Princeton, August 2013

*Spinoza the Proto-Romantic*. Dissertation Seminar, Princeton, Feb. 2013  
*Republican Freedom Revised*. Oxford Philosophy Graduate Conference, Oxford, Nov. 2012, with comments from Hilary Greaves  
*Republican Freedom Revised*. Princeton-Humboldt Graduate Philosophy Conference, Humboldt University of Berlin, August 2012  
 Comments on Sebastian Bender, *Counterparts, Counterpart Theory and Possible Worlds in Leibniz*. Princeton-Humboldt Graduate Philosophy Conference, Humboldt University of Berlin, August 2012  
*The Idea of God in Spinoza*. Bucharest-Princeton Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Transylvania, July 2012  
*Republican Freedom Revised*  
 Princeton Workshop in Normative Philosophy, March 2012  
*Kant's Third Analogy*. PhilSoc, Princeton, March 2011  
*Google Tech Talk: Community-Building Tools for Open-Source Projects*, with Asheesh Laroia. Google, Mountain View, Calif., June 2010

**Service** Co-organizer, Princeton-Rutgers Graduate Philosophy Conference, (2011)  
 Founder and contributor, collaboratively written survival guide for Ph.D. students, Princeton Philosophy (2010–present)

**Languages** Proficient in French, Latin, and Python

**Other jobs** Research assistant for Adam Elga (Princeton) and Danny Oppenheimer (UCLA). Software engineer for an experiment in behavioral economics, May 2016–present  
 Software engineer for a short project in the education department Creative Commons, San Francisco, March–June 2010  
 Co-founded a non-profit that aims to strengthen and democratize the Internet by making it easier for people to create open-source software together. Co-raised \$50,000 from Google, Dartmouth, and a startup accelerator fund. Worked on strategy, code, and product design. OpenHatch, Atlanta and Philadelphia, May 2009–May 2010  
 Actor in *Reception*, Annex Theater, Baltimore, March–May 2009  
 Wrote software that interactively explains the physics of turbulence and galaxy collisions. Department of Physics and Astronomy, Johns Hopkins University, Oct. 2008–May 2009

**References** **Daniel Garber**, A. Watson J. Armour III University Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University. dgarber@princeton.edu. 609.258.4307  
**Desmond Hogan**, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University.

deshogan@princeton.edu. 609.258.4295

**Yitzhak Melamed**, Charlotte Bloomberg Professor of Philosophy,  
Johns Hopkins University. ymelame1@jhu.edu. 410.516.0568

**Susan Sauvé Meyer** (teaching reference), Professor of Philosophy,  
University of Pennsylvania. smeyer@phil.upenn.edu. 215.898.6913

**K.C. Tan** (teaching reference), Professor of Philosophy,  
University of Pennsylvania. kctan@sas.upenn.edu. 215.898.6913

**Shamik Dasgupta** (teaching reference), Associate Professor of Philosophy,  
University of California, Berkeley. shamikd@berkeley.edu.

**Citizenship** United States, Ireland

**Dissertation** *Spinoza on Becoming Eternal*

The main idea of my dissertation is that, in portions of the *Ethics*, Spinoza aims to represent how the world looks to someone undergoing a spiritual transformation. Taking this idea as a point of departure, I offer new solutions to three puzzles that have irritated generations of Spinoza scholars.

What is Spinoza's monism? That is, what does it mean for everything to be a "mode" of a single substance (everything, that is, except the substance itself)? That's the first puzzle. The solution can be found once we recognize that, according to Spinoza, the monistic picture is a vision that we arrive at only after undergoing a spiritual transformation. According to the medieval Aristotelians, the quality-substrate relation is partly epistemic (one can perceive a substance by perceiving its qualities), and partly metaphysical (the qualities are ways the substance exists). I show that the content of Spinoza's monism is simply a twofold claim: the one substance produces everything else, and we can perceive the substance by perceiving any of its products. Key to this interpretation is Spinoza's neglected notion of 'involvement', the history of which I trace back through neo-Platonism.

The second puzzle has to do with Spinoza's theory of the passions. This theory entails that if you are angry at a certain time, then it can later come to be the case that you were never angry at all. This strange consequence seems to conflict with an intuitive axiom of temporal logic: if something once had a certain intrinsic property, then it will always have had that property at that time. Seeing this, Jonathan Bennett rejected Spinoza's theory of the passions as incoherent. Bennett did not appreciate, though, that Spinoza does not think that passions are intrinsic properties. I reinforce this new understanding of Spinozistic passions with a novel interpretation of the mind-body problem in Spinoza.

The third puzzle is that Spinoza's ethical arguments contain three worrisome equivocations. Reading Spinoza's *Ethics* by the light of medieval pedagogy shows us exactly why Spinoza equivocates. He believes that the student of Spinozism will sometimes make progress by reading and then reinterpreting certain claims made in the *Ethics*. A piece of evidence for this interpretation is Spinoza's request that his

readers “consider [the mind] as if it were now beginning to understand things under a species of eternity.” Curiously, the literature has paid little attention to this remark. Here Spinoza uses a teaching technique – anagogical allegory – recommended by medieval pedagogues from Dionysius to Nachmanides to Dante.

Seen through the new lens I provide, Spinoza’s *Ethics* is easier to understand, and harder to dismiss.

Supervisor: Daniel Garber