

# Jason Farr

Curriculum Vitae

1601 Argonne Pl. NW, #433

Washington, DC 20009

[jaf301@georgetown.edu](mailto:jaf301@georgetown.edu)

[www.jasonafarr.com](http://www.jasonafarr.com)

## EXPERIENCE

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**Georgetown University, Kennedy Institute for Ethics**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Ethics Lab

*August 2021-Present*

## EDUCATION

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**Georgetown University**

Ph.D. in Philosophy

*August 2015-August 2021*

**Northern Illinois University**

M.A. in Philosophy

*August 2012-May 2015*

**University of Virginia**

B.A. in Political Philosophy, Policy, and Law

*August 2006-May 2009*

## ACADEMIC FOCUS

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**Areas of Specialty:** Metaethics, Ethics of Tech and AI

**Areas of Competency:** Normative Ethics, Political Philosophy, Environmental Ethics, 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Analytic Philosophy, History of Pragmatism

## DISSERTATION

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*Metaethics Is Social*

**Committee Chair:**

Margaret Little ([littlem@georgetown.edu](mailto:littlem@georgetown.edu))

## Committee Members:

Mark Murphy ([Mark.Murphy@georgetown.edu](mailto:Mark.Murphy@georgetown.edu))

Mark Lance ([lancem@georgetown.edu](mailto:lancem@georgetown.edu))

## Dissertation Abstract:

Philosophy is currently in the midst of a social turn. Our community is pouring new energy into fields like social epistemology and social ontology, and across the discipline we have turned our focus toward political and ethical issues involving social roles, social positions, and social justice. For all its momentum and appeal, however, this social turn has yet to make a measurable impact in the subdiscipline of metaethics. Few metaethicists contend with social themes in their work, and those who do so offer significantly attenuated social accounts. In my dissertation, I argue that the inadequacies of these social accounts come with broader theoretical costs to bear. I then build conceptual additions and alternatives to these accounts and show how they can help to avoid the theoretical costs.

Some expressivists have aimed to make sense of the role that a normative perspective plays in generating the evaluative consensus necessary for social coordination. I argue that their narrow focus on normative language and consensus, however, yields an unhelpful and overly simplistic view of this role. What the expressivist needs, I argue, is a theory of how a normative perspective might afford the capacity to engage in social behavior that shapes and maintains *social roles*. Some Kantian constructivists posit that we individually construct our contingent, “practical” identities (like teacher, banker, mother, son) by self-legislating the norms that constitute those identities. I argue that this view is untenable once we recognize that so-called practical identities are actually *social identities*. To construct myself as a teacher is to construct others as students, and vice versa. But this suggests we construct *one another’s* contingent identities in addition to our own, which conflicts with the constructivist thesis. If we give up our commitment to construction, I argue, we can make sense of our practical recognition of social identities without issue.

## PUBLICATIONS

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Lisa Singh, Agorista Polyzou, Yanchen Wang, and Jason Farr, “Social Media Data – Our Ethical Conundrum,” *IEEP Data Engineering Bulletin*, Special Issue on Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Fairness and Artificial Intelligence Systems, Accepted and Forthcoming.

## AWARDS & HONORS

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### Fritz Family Fellowship

May 2020-May 2021

- Awarded an interdisciplinary fellowship at the Georgetown Initiative on Tech and Society, in association with Ethics Lab and the Georgetown University Computer Science department, to study the ethics of conducting social media research with machine-learning algorithms.

### Rafelson Essay Prize

2015

- Awarded to one Northern Illinois University philosophy graduate student per year for outstanding achievement in philosophical essay writing.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- "A Social Account of the Game of Assertion," 2019  
Gateway Graduate Conference: Philosophy in a Social World
- Comments on Yarran Hominh's "Oppressive Social Practices and the Explanation of Individual Action" 2018  
Georgetown University MAP Conference: Understanding Oppression
- "Quasi-Realism and Objectivity" 2015  
Northern Illinois University, Rafelson Colloquium
- "Courses of Action and Consequences" 2014  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Graduate Philosophy Conference
- Comments on Tatyana Kostochka's "Just Another Epistemic Goal: The Value of Truth and the Disengaged Standpoint" 2013  
Northern Illinois University, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Graduate Conference

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Georgetown University

#### *Instructor of Record*

- PHIL135: Introduction to Tech, Ethics, and Society Spring 2022
- PHIL110: Social Media and Democracy Fall 2021
- PHIL109: AI Ethics Spring 2021
- PHIL105: Bioethics Fall 2020
- PHIL148: Meta-Ethics Spring 2020
- PHIL124: Environmental Ethics Fall 2019
- PHIL010: Introduction to Ethics Summer 2018, 2016
- PHIL020: Introduction to Philosophy Summer 2017

#### *Teaching Assistant*

- PHIL 099: Political and Social Thought, Madison Powers Spring 2018
- PHIL 099: Political and Social Thought, Terry Pinkard Fall 2017
- PHIL010: Introduction to Philosophy, Judith Lichtenberg Spring 2017
- PHIL020: Introduction to Philosophy, James Mattingly Fall 2016
- PHIL010 (*Grader/Guest Lecturer*): Introduction to Ethics, James Olsen Spring 2016
- PHIL010: Introduction to Ethics, Nancy Sherman Fall 2015

## ACADEMIC SERVICE

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- Conference Presentation Chair, American Philosophical Association 2021
- Organization Committee, Georgetown MAP Conference: Understanding Oppression 2018
- Volunteer, Central Division Meeting, American Philosophical Association 2014
- Organizer, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Graduate Conference in Philosophy 2013
- Philosophy Graduate Student Advisory Council, *Northern Illinois University* 2013
- Facilitator, Northern Illinois University Bold Futures Workshops 2013

## GRADUATE COURSES TAKEN

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### Georgetown University

<i>Spring 2020</i>	Special Topics in Bioethics (audit)	<i>Spring 2017</i>	Hegel Nicomachean Ethics Pragmatics and Social Reality
<i>Fall 2016</i>	Kant Rawls Ethics Proseminar	<i>Spring 2016</i>	Intermediate Logic (Meta-Logic) Social Epistemology Metaphysics Proseminar
<i>Fall 2015</i>	Epistemology Proseminar Aristotle's Biology Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein		

### Northern Illinois University

<i>Spring 2015</i>	Global Justice (Audit) Metaphysics (Audit) Paradoxes (Audit)	<i>Fall 2014</i>	Disagreement Ethical Theory: Paternalism (Audit) Metaphysics: What Are You? (Audit)
<i>Spring 2014</i>	Philosophy of Logic: Truth Free Will Political Philosophy (Audit)	<i>Fall 2013</i>	Directed Readings: Climate Change and Moral Philosophy Consequentialism Philosophy of Mind: Challenges for Physicalism
<i>Spring 2013</i>	Truth Conditional Pragmatics Practical Reasoning 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Analytic Philosophy	<i>Fall 2012</i>	Intermediate Logic Advanced Ethical Theory Epistemology

University of Virginia

Fall 2011 | Capitalism and Human Good  
Thomas Reid

## OTHER EXPERIENCE

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### Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL

*Graduate Assistant*, Internship Office for Humanities Majors

Aug 2012-May 2015

- Counseled one-on-one with students looking for internships.
- Presented short lectures on internship opportunities in various classes.
- Edited and review student résumés and cover letters.
- Designed and maintain website for College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Internship Offices.
- Managed marketing, including social media, brochures and fliers.

### Nature Camp, Inc.

*Assistant Director*

2011

- Delegated daily tasks and responsibilities for a staff of 24
- Conducted training sessions and organizational meetings

*Instructor/Counselor*

2006-2011

- Designed and taught two-week courses for 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Courses Taught*

- Introduction to Environmental Ethics
- Dendrology: Plant Communities & Migration in the Southern Appalachians
- Introduction to Botany
- Energy and Waste Systems in the United States
- Environmental Effects of Agriculture

### Relayfoods.com

Jan 2010-Feb 2012

(An online grocery service geared toward local foods and sustainability)

*Personal Assistant to COO and President*, Charlottesville, Va

Aug 2011-Feb 2012

- Managed President's schedule and company-related expenditures.
- Wrote and edited emails for President.
- Coordinated meetings and interviews for President and CEO.
- Redesigned and implemented website search queries, product trees, and product categorization for thousands of online products.

*Team Leader*, Richmond, Va

Aug 2010-Aug 2011

- Managed team of 10 in daily operations of relayfoods.com Richmond.
- Oversaw transportation of goods from farms and stores to fulfillment center, sorting of products, and distribution to sites around the city.

- Helped design methods and procedures for operations associates.

*Operations Associate, Charlottesville, Va*

*Jan 2010-Aug 2010*

- Transported goods from farms and stores to fulfillment center and then out to sites around the city.
- Sorted incoming products into outgoing customer bins.
- Helped design and implement sorting and transportation processes for relayfoods.com

## MISCELLANEOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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**Appalachian Trail Thru-Hike**

*Feb 2012-Jul 2012*

- Planned and executed a 2,180 mile solo hike from Georgia to Maine.