



BRIAN KEMPLE, PHD

CURRICULUM VITAE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LYCEUM INSTITUTE

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSULTANT
CONTINUUM PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT

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

Doctorate in Philosophy 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.

Lyceum Institute, 2019— | Online

Description:

The Lyceum Institute is a persistent online platform featuring several educational projects, including a medieval-style *quaestiones disputatae* format, language-learning groups, and regularly-scheduled philosophical seminars. The seminars run for 8 weeks and include a 20-40+ minute recorded lecture, week-long online chat discussions, and a 45-60 minute discussion session conducted via video chat.

Seminars taught:

Summer 2019 – Aquinas' Cosmological Vision

Summer 2019 – Heidegger's Phenomenological Method

Fall 2019 – Retrieving Thomistic Psychology
 Fall 2019 – Semiotics – An Introduction
 Winter 2020 – Introduction to Philosophical Thinking
 Winter 2020 – Thomistic Psychology: Action Theory
 Spring 2020 – Introduction to Thomism
 Spring 2020 – Ethics: Virtue
 Summer 2020 – Heidegger’s Phenomenological Method II
 Summer 2020 – Aquinas’ Cosmological Vision
 Summer 2020 – Ethics: Sex
 Fall 2020 – Semiotics: The Thought and Contributions of John Deely
 Fall 2020 – Thomistic Psychology: Cognitive Life
 Winter 2021 – Metaphysics: Discovery of *Ens inquantum Ens*
 Winter 2021 – Ethics: The Good Life
 Spring 2021 – Semiotics: The *Tractatus de Signis of John Poinset*
 Summer 2021 – Semiotics: An Introduction
 Summer 2021 – Thomistic Psychology: World and Passions
 Fall 2021 – Metaphysics: The Existence, Nature, and Intelligibility of God
 Winter 2022 – Introduction to Philosophical Thinking
 Winter 2022 – Semiotics: Cultural World of the Sign
 Spring 2022 – Introduction to a Living Thomism
 Spring 2022 – Thomistic Psychology: A Retrieval

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

Introduction to Philosophy

Grammar and Composition

Ethics

Intermediate Latin

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

Linguistic Signification: A Classical and Semiotic Course in Grammar & Composition, self-published | Amazon, 2021.

Description:

This book intends to serve one principal end: instructing students, of sufficiently mature mind, how to compose thoughtful and insightful essays in the English language. Accomplishing this rather specific end, however, requires a broad range of study: a study much broader than that comprised by a simple question of “how to write”. Accordingly, this book investigates all the necessary factors of intelligent composition.

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, in 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, in 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

"Signs and Reality: An Advocation for Semiotic Realism" in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 1.1, 2020.

[\[PDF\]](#).

"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 Constitution of Culture: Specifying Objects and Jacques Maritain on the Temporal Order" in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, online 4 August 2021.

[\[Online\]](#).

- “Walking Through the Motion” in
Lapsus Lima, 12 June 2019 [\[Online\]](#).
- “Widening Gyres” in
The Agonist (Summer 2019) [\[Online\]](#).
- “Participation and the Divine” in
Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse, 19 May 2019 [\[Online\]](#).
- “C.S. Peirce on Science and Belief” in
Epoché Monthly Magazine (April 2019) [\[Online\]](#).
- “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 Nature of the Human Person: Metaphysics and Bioethics by Jason T. Eberl (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020) forthcoming in *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*.

Nihilism and Technology (New York: Roman & Littlefield, Ltd., 2018) and *Nihilism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019) both by Nolen Gertz, in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse* 30 June 2020 [\[Online\]](#).

What Love Is: And What It Could Be by Carrie Jenkins (New York: Basic Books, 2017) in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 11 November 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny by Kate Manne (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018) in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 19 June 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

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 *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*.

PRESENTATIONS

“Aquinas: The (Meta)Physics Behind Semiosis”

Invited Lecture, 2022 International Open Seminar on Semiotics:
a Tribute to John Deely on the Fifth Anniversary of His Passing
16 April 2022, Online

[\[YouTube\]](#).

“Augustine: Instituting the Given Sign”

Invited Lecture, 2022 International Open Seminar on Semiotics:
a Tribute to John Deely on the Fifth Anniversary of His Passing
15 January 2022, Online

[\[YouTube\]](#).

“Why You Need Semiotics: The Signs of Meaning”

Invited Lecture, Saint Vincent College
Latrobe, PA, 4 December 2021

Interview:

Preface for the 2022 International Open Seminar on Semiotics
13 October 2021, Online

[\[YouTube\]](#).

“The Tradition of Questioning”

Whose Thomism? Which Tradition?

American Maritain Association Annual Conference
Pittsburgh, PA, 5-7 March 2020

[\[Text online\]](#).

“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

SERVICE

Founder and Executive Editor of *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse* [[Link](#)].

Referee for

The American Journal of Semiotics 2018—
Studia Gilsoniana 2018—

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://lyceuminstitute.academia.edu/BrianKemple> [Academia.edu profile]
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/BrianKemple> [LinkedIn profile]
- <https://www.twitter.com/realbriankemple> [Twitter]