David Miguel Gray

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Phil People Page
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Education

Harvard University, Ph.D. in Philosophy, 2008
Ph.D. Thesis: *What Lies Within: Essays on Phenomenology, Psychology, and Self-Knowledge*.
Advisors: Richard Moran (Chair), Susanna Siegel, Michael Martin, Alex Byrne

Harvard University, M.A. in Philosophy, 2002
M.A. Thesis: *Slow-Switching: Knowledge of Reference and Reference Change*. Advisor: James Pryor

Columbia University, B.A. in Philosophy, minor in Linguistics, 1997
Honors Thesis: *Events, Objects, Tropes, and Explanation*. Advisor: Achille Varzi

Employment

The University of Memphis, Associate Professor of Philosophy, September 2025
Graduate Faculty, Full Member, Department of Philosophy, February 2025—Present
Affiliate, Institute for Intelligent Systems, January 2017—Present

The University of Memphis, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, January 2017—September 2025

Colgate University, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, 2013—2016
Affiliate, Africana and Latin American Studies Program, 2013—2016

Vanderbilt University, Mellon Assistant Professor (non-tenure track), 2010—2013
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry (Secondary Appointment),
Affiliate, African American and Diaspora Studies,
Investigator, Center for Integrative and Cognitive Neuroscience

Texas Tech University, Visiting Assistant Professor, 2009—2010

New College of Florida, Postdoctoral Fellow, 2008—2009

Areas of Specialization

Philosophy of Cognitive Science (Philosophy of Psychology and Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence), Philosophy of Language, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Race and Racism

Areas of Competence

Artificial Intelligence Ethics, Logic, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science (General and Evolutionary Biology), Computational Linguistics

Publications

Journal Articles – Peer Reviewed

Gray, David Miguel. 2024d. "How Quotation and Referential Intentions Modulate the Derogatory Force of Slur Utterances." *Frontiers in Communication* 9 (November). https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1477055.

Gray, David Miguel. 2024c. "Distance Relativism and the Limits of Moral Assessment: Fricker and Williams." Philosophia. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-024-00782-w.

Gray, David Miguel. 2024b. "Doxastic and Epistemic Sources of Offense for Slurring Terms." *Acta Analytica*, September. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12136-024-00609-z.

Gray, David Miguel. 2024a. In Defense of Introspective Affordances. Review of Philosophy and Psychology. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-024-00734-z .

Gray, David Miguel. 2023. Aspiration and Self-Realization: The Ameliorative Projects of Steve Biko. Philosophy of the Social Sciences 53. Sage Journals: 142–162. https://doi.org/10.1177/00483931221150488.

Varga, Somogy, and David Miguel Gray. 2022a. Naturalism, Disease, and Levels of Functional Description. The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy: A Forum for Bioethics and Philosophy of Medicine 47: 482–493. https://doi.org/10.1093/jmp/jhac005.

Gray, David Miguel, and Benjamin Lennertz. 2020. Linguistic Disobedience. Philosopher's Imprint 20: 1-16. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3521354.0020.021.

Gray, David Miguel. 2014b. Counting-ish Creatures and Conceptual Content. Mind 123: 1141–1146. https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzu152.

Gray, David Miguel. 2014a. Failing to Self-Ascribe Thought and Motion: Towards a Three-Factor Account of Passivity Symptoms in Schizophrenia. Schizophrenia Research 152: 28–32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.schres.2013.06.031.

Gray, David Miguel. 2013b. Racial Norms: A Reinterpretation of Du Bois' "The Conservation of Races." The Southern Journal of Philosophy 51: 465–487. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12043.

Gray, David Miguel. 2013a. How Specific Can You Get?: Troubles for Cognitive Phenomenology. *Southwest Philosophy Review* 29: 163–172. https://doi.org/10.5840/swphilreview201329118.

Gray, David Miguel. 2012. HOT: Keeping up Appearances? *Southwest Philosophy Review* 28: 155–163. https://doi.org/10.5840/swphilreview201228116.

Journal Articles – Not Peer Reviewed

Gray, David Miguel. 2022c. Social Ontologies of Race and their Development. *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 60: 4–20. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12481.

Jeffers, Chike, and David Miguel Gray. 2022b. Introduction to Charles Mills's "The Wretched of Middle-Earth: An Orkish Manifesto." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 60: 102–104. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12476.

Edited Journal Issue

Gray, David Miguel, Ed. 2022d. Spindel Conference Proceedings: New Ontologies of Race. *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 60. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12419.

Book Reviews

Gray, David Miguel. 2020. Racial Nonbeing: Symposium on Harfouch's Another Mind-Body Problem: A History of Racial Non-Being. *Syndicate Philosophy*. https://syndicate.network/symposia/philosophy/another-mind-body-problem/#david-miguel-gray.

Public Facing

"Critical Race Theory: What it is and What it isn't", The Conversation. June 30th, 2021. https://theconversation.com/critical-race-theory-what-it-is-and-what-it-isnt-162752 (170+k reads, 12 academic citations-Google Scholar)

"Tennessee's critical race theory ban is a false attempt to defeat a 'fictitious villain.'" The Commercial Appeal. May 5th, 2021.
https://www.commercialappeal.com/story/opinion/2021/05/19/tennessee-leaders-have-turned-critical-race-theory-into-fictitious-villain/5146967001/

"Racial Ontology: A guide for the Perplexed. Part I: General Problems". Video for WiPhi Open Access

"Racial Ontology: A guide for the Perplexed. Part II: Naturalist Accounts of Race". Video for WiPhi Open Access Philosophy.

"Racial Ontology: A guide for the Perplexed. Part IIIA: Socio-historical Accounts of Race: Artifacts and Naturally-based Kinds". Video for WiPhi Open Access Philosophy.

"Racial Ontology: A guide for the Perplexed. Part IIIB: Socio-historical Accounts of Race: Socio-historical theories". http://www.wi-phi.com/

"Failing to Ascribe Thought and Motion: Part I" at Imperfect Cognitions
https://imperfectcognitions.blogspot.com.au/2016/06/failing-to-self-ascribe-thought-and.html

"Failing to Ascribe Thought and Motion: Part II" at Imperfect Cognitions
https://imperfectcognitions.blogspot.com.au/2016/06/failing-to-self-ascribe-thought-and_88.html

Research Appointments and Support

PI, ACCESS Discover allocation CIS251295, "Discovering Syntactic Structure in Large Language Models via Center-Embedding Benchmarks," NSF ACCESS program: Approx. 5,000 NCSA Delta CPU core-hours and 5,000 NCSA DeltaAI H100 GPU-hours on GH200 Grace Hopper nodes, with 96GB H100 GPU memory per superchip. 2025–Present.

Senior Visiting Fellow – Centre for Philosophy and AI Research, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Summer 2025

Presentations

"What Would Count as Evidence of Syntax in LLMs? Center-Embedding Diagnostics and Attractor Interference"
-International Association of Computing and Philosophy, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, July 15, 2026.

"AI in Memphis Panel Discussion"
-Code Crew, Memphis, December 15, 2025

"AI Ethics: An Overview and Issues in Healthcare Education"
-School of Communication and Science Disorders, November 17, 2025

"If we Gain Knowledge from Generative AI, How do the Outputs have to be Produced?"
-Centre for Philosophy and AI Research (PAIR), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Erlangen, Germany, July 25, 2025.

"Doxastic and Epistemic Sources of Offense for Slurring Terms."
-Symposium, Pacific APA, San Francisco, CA, April 16, 2025.

"AI in Memphis Panel Discussion"
-Code Crew, Memphis, December 5, 2024

"Why Eliminating (Some) Guardrails ought to be an End-goal for Ethical AI."
-Global Harwell Forum: Collateral Damage: The Human Cost of Unethical AI. October 19, 2024

"LLMs and the Regulation of Truth-telling in the EU AI Act"
-Institute for Intelligent Systems, The University of Memphis, September 8, 2024

"Digital Citizenship in the Age of AI"
STEM Professional Development series, West TN STEM Hub (https://westtnstemhub.org), Spring 2023
"Conceptual Amelioration in Biko's Emancipatory Theory of Race"
- Department of Philosophy, The University of Memphis, September 8, 2023
"Conceptual Amelioration, Linguistic Disobedience, and the Emancipatory Goals of Normative Theories of Race"
13th Annual Auburn Philosophy Conference: Language & Value, March 16-17, 2023
"Racial Objects"
-Social Ontology and Collective Intentionality, University of Vienna, August 24, 2022
-Social Ontology Conference, Tufts University, August 25, 2018
-Race and Racism, Oxford University, June 28, 2016
-Tanner Workshop on Metaphysics and Epistemology, Boston University, June 29th, 2015
"Amelioration, Descriptivism, and Black Consciousness: Goal-oriented theories of race in Haslanger, Biko, and Du Bois"
-Philosophy of Social Science Round Table, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, April 1, 2022
"Linguistic Disobedience"
-Language: Uses and Misuses. Cave Hill Philosophy Symposium, June 18, 2021
"An Agentive Phenomenology that is a Cognitive Phenomenology"
-Recent Work on Phenomenal Intentionality, Eastern APA, January 8, 2020
"Pluralisms for Pejoratives: Prospects and Problems"
-Tennessee Philosophical Association, November 9th,2019
"Attempts to Appropriate Slurs and Grice's First Maxim of Quality"
-Post-Truth Workshop, German Linguistic Society (DGfS), March 6, 2019
"Linguistic Disobedience"
-Keynote for University of Kansas Undergraduate Philosophy Conference, April 7, 2018
"Linguistic Disobedience: Epithets, Appropriation, and Civil Disobedience"
-Department of Philosophy, The University of Mississippi, November 30th, 2017
-Tennessee Philosophical Association, October 28th, 2017
"Cognitive Architecture and Related Issues"
Fed Ex Institute of Intelligent Systems, The University of Memphis, November 14th, 2017
"Racial Ontology"
-Philosophy Department Brown Bag, Colgate University, November 19th, 2015
"Malcolm X's Political Philosophy"
-Challenges of Modernity Workshop, Colgate University, October 8th, 2015
"Cognitive Phenomenology and the Ascription of Thought"
-Phenomenology of Cognitive Experiences, Dublin, Ireland, November 5-7, 2014
"Cognitive Phenomenology and the Ascription of Thought"
-Department of Philosophy, George Washington University, October 31, 2014
"Racial Norms: A Reinterpretation of Du Bois' 'The Conservation of Races'"
-Dean's Lecture Series in the Humanities, George Washington University, October 31, 2014
-(Symposium) American Philosophical Association Eastern Division—December 27-30, 2012
William James Prize Winner, 2012
-Social Political Workshop, Vanderbilt University – October 14, 2011
"Du Bois and Philosophy"
-Humanities Series, Colgate University – April 11, 2014

"How Specific Can You Get? Troubles for Cognitive Phenomenology"
-Southwestern Philosophical Society – November 10, 2012
"Phenomenology and the Ascription of Thought"
-Centre College – October 25, 2012
" 'Freedom Now' and 'Black Power': Re-Envisioning Black Solidarity in the 21st Century"
-Martin Luther King Day Teach-In, Vanderbilt University – January 16, 2012
"HOT: Keeping up Appearances?"
-American Philosophical Association Pacific Division– April 4, 2012
-Southwestern Philosophical Society – November 19, 2011
"Towards a Three-Factor Account of Monothematic Delusions: How to Characterize Abnormal Experience in Thought Insertion and Alien Control"
-Clinical Brown Bag, Department of Psychology, Vanderbilt University – March 29, 2011
"Slow-Switching and the Self-Ascription of Knowledge"
-Semantics and Philosophy in Europe 4, Ruhr – University of Bochum – September 30, 2011
"Thought Insertion: From Phenomenology to Delusions"
-Oxford University – June 17, 2009
"Cognitive Phenomenology"
-Western Michigan University – December 1, 2007
"Phenomenal Warrant and the Ascription of Belief"
-City University of New York Graduate Center – February 25, 2006
"Thought Insertion, Self-Blindness, and Immunity to Error through Misidentification"
-Mind, Brain, and Behavior Group, Harvard University – March 10, 2005
"Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence"
-Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School, Harvard University – February 3, 2005

Commentaries & Chairing

Comments on Eblings' "The Physicalist's Dilemma and the Burden of Proof"
Tennessee Philosophical Association, November 9th, 2019
Chair of Author Meets Critics Panel "Ron Mallon's *The Construction of Human Kinds*"
-Central Division Meeting of the APA, February 21st, 2018
Chair of Panel "From Freedom Summer to Ferguson: The Ongoing Struggle for Civil Rights"
-Colgate University – October 1, 2014
Comments on Chambliss' "Metacognitive Experiences as Cognitive Phenomenology?"
-Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology – February 8, 2014
Comments on Anderson's "'Why So Serious: An Enquiry on Racist Jokes'"
-American Philosophical Association Central Division – February 18, 2012

Teaching

Bio-Ethics (online)
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2026
Artificial Intelligence and its Ethics
-The University of Memphis – Spring 2026
Analytic Philosophy of Language (Graduate/Undergraduate)
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2025
The Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence (Graduate)
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2024

Introduction to Philosophy
-The University of Memphis – Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2021 (Honors), Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2026
-Colgate University, Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015

Introduction to Ethics — Fall 2023
-The University of Memphis

Elementary Logic — Fall 2023
-The University of Memphis

Artificial Intelligence Ethics (Graduate – Institute of Intelligent Systems) – Fall 2022
-The University of Memphis

Philosophy of Mind
-The University of Memphis (Graduate) – Spring 2021, Spring 2024
-Vanderbilt University (Undergraduate) – Fall 2011

Seminar in Metaphysics: Social and Racial Ontologies
-The University of Memphis (Graduate) – Fall 2020
-Colgate University (Undergraduate) – Fall 2016

Nature, Mind, and Knowledge
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2020, Spring 2026

Philosophy of Film
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2019

Philosophy of Science
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2018
-Vanderbilt University – Fall 2012
-Texas Tech University – Spring 2010

Philosophy of Race and Racism
-The University of Memphis, Spring 2018 (Graduate Seminar)
-The University of Memphis, Spring 2017, Fall 2018
-Colgate University, Spring 2014, Spring 2015
-Vanderbilt University – Spring 2011, Spring 2013 (Graduate Seminar)
-New College of Florida – Fall 2008
-Harvard University – Fall 2004

Intermediate Logic
-The University of Memphis – Fall 2017
-Vanderbilt University – Spring 2012, Spring 2013
-Texas Tech University– Spring 2010, Fall 2009

Racial Ontology
-Colgate University, Fall 2016

Race, Implicit Attitudes, and Racial Cognition (Psychology Department)
-Colgate University, Spring 2015

Topics in African American Philosophy
-Colgate University, Fall 2014

Teaching continued

Challenges of Modernity
-Colgate University, Fall 2014, Fall 2016
Consciousness
-Vanderbilt University – Fall 2012
Philosophy of Language
-Vanderbilt University – Spring 2012
Philosophy of Mind
-Vanderbilt University – Fall 2011
Philosophy of Mind: Mental Phenomena
-Vanderbilt University – Spring 2011
Metaphysics
-Vanderbilt University – Fall 2010
Race, Racism, and Revolution
-Vanderbilt University – Fall 2010
-Queens College – City University New York – Fall 2007
Philosophy of Psychology (Graduate Seminar)
-Texas Tech University – Fall 2009
Self-Knowledge and Introspection (Graduate Seminar)
-Texas Tech University – Fall 2009
Philosophical Theories of Perception
-New College of Florida – Spring 2009
Philosophy of Psychology
-New College of Florida – Spring 2009
Self-Deception and Moral Responsibility
-Harvard University – Spring 2006
Paradoxes and Knowledge
-Harvard University – Spring 2005
Self-Knowledge and Externalism
-Harvard University – Fall 2002

Advising

Dissertation

Current

Rangantha Sitram, Dissertation Prospectus, (Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Psychology),Ph.D Philosophy, Spring 2026 —Present
Wright, Will, Dissertation Prospectus (Philosophy of Mind, Social Organization), Ph.D Philosophy, Summer 2026 – Present.
Simmons, Luke, Comprehensive Exam State, (Mechanisms), Ph.D Philosophy,Spring 2026 – Present.
Elaine Candice Mooney, “TBD”, (Cognitive Psychology, Mental Imagery) M.S. Psychology, Spring 2026—Present

Former

Zachary Auwerda, *The Intersection of Social Groups and the Self*, (Social Ontology), Ph.D. Philosophy, Spring 2021—Fall 2024
Zachariah A. Neemeh, *The Cultural Mind*, (Philosophy of Mind, Cognitive Science) Ph.D. Philosophy, Spring 2019—Spring 2022

Michael Ardoline, *Difference, and Necessity: Dispositionalism, Deleuze, and the Finite Genesis of Transfinite Truths,* (Analytic Metaphysics, Continental Philosophy), Ph.D. Philosophy, Spring 2021, Morton Dissertation Prize (Top Ph.D. in all fields at The University of Memphis)

The University of Memphis Service

University

Member of Masters in Applied AI Planning Committee, Spring 2025—Present
Member of AI for All – AI Minor Planning Committee, Spring 2025—Fall 2025
Senate Committee on Budget and Finance, Fall 2021—Spring 2024
Senate Representative for Artificial Intelligence, TLAC—Spring 2024
Strategic Planning Committee – Goal 1: Aggressively Provide Access – Fall 2023
Organizer, Institute of Intelligent System Cognitive Science Speaker Series: The Ethics of AI, Fall 2021-Spring 2022
University of Memphis Research Council – Taskforce on T&P, Spring 2021—Summer 2021
University of Memphis Research Council, Fall 2020—Summer 2021
Chair, Senate Committee on Research Policies, Summer 2020—Spring 2021
Senate Committee on Research Policies, Fall 2017—Spring 2021

Department

Job Market Advisor, Spring 2017, Fall 2024 - Present
Programming Coordinator, Fall 2017—Spring 2020; Fall 2024 - Present
Ph.D. Research Tool in Logic Coordinator, Spring 2017—Present
Library Liaison for the Philosophy Department Fall 2021—Present
Philosophy Undergraduate Curriculum Revision, Spring 2017—Present
Conference Organizer, Spindel Fall 2021
Pre-Law Advisor, Fall 2019—Summer 2021
Conference Organizer, SIMCO Lecture and Tienson Memorial Conference, Fall 2020
Accounting Risk Assessment Committee, Spring 2020
Bornblum Committee, Spring 2017—2019

Other Academic Service

Occasional Reviewer: Acta Analytica, *Analysis*, Elsevier Press (Psychology), *Ergo, Ethics*, *History of Philosophy Quarterly, Journal of Social Philosophy, Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy, Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, *Philosophical Psychology, Philosophical Studies, Prolegomena, Routledge Press* (Philosophy)*, The Southern Journal of Philosophy*.
Member, Imperfect Cognitions Network 2016—Present
Category Editor, Philosophical Papers (Implicit Bias, Conceptions of Race, Racism) 2012—Present
President, Tennessee Philosophical Association, Fall 2017—Fall 2018
Member, APA Committee on International Cooperation, 2012—2015
Participant, Implicit Bias and Philosophy International Research Project, 2011—2012

Prizes and Fellowships

Senior Visiting Fellow – Centre for Philosophy and AI Research, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Summer 2025
Professional Development Award, The University of Memphis, Fall 2022-Spring 2023
Nomination, Alumni Teaching Award, The University of Memphis, Fall 2021
Faculty Fellow, Marcus Orr Center for the Humanities (College-Wide), Spring 2020

Faculty Research Grant, The University of Memphis Fall 2020-Spring 2021
Summer University Admittance, Cognitive Phenomenology Central European University 2019
NEH Institute Award: African American Struggles for Freedom and Civil Rights 2013
William James Prize, American Philosophical Association 2012
Postdoctoral Fellowship, New College of Florida 2008-2009
Martin Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 2006-2007
Graduate Prize Fellowship, Harvard University, 1999-2006

Organizations

American Philosophical Association
International Association for Computing and Philosophy
Society for the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence
International Social Ontology Society
Tennessee Philosophical Association