

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## STEPHEN JACOBSON

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### *EDUCATION*

University of Michigan, Ph.D., Philosophy, 1989  
University of Delaware, B.A. 1972, M.A.-1974

### *AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION AND COMPETENCE*

(AOS) Epistemology

(AOC) Metaphysics, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science, History of Philosophy (Ancient, Modern, 20th Century), Philosophy of Religion

*DISSERTATION* (Title: *What's Wrong with Reliability Theories of Justification?*)

Committee: Professors Louis E. Loeb (Chair), Lawrence Sklar, Stephen Yablo, Gailann Rickert (Classics)

### *PUBLICATIONS*

"Alston on Iterative Foundationalism and Cartesian Epistemology"  
*Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, March, 1992 (vol. 22., no. 1), pp. 133-144.

"Internalism in Epistemology and the Internalist Regress"  
*Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, December, 1992 (vol. 70, No. 4), pp. 415-424.

"In Defense of Truth and Rationality"  
*Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, December, 1992 (vol. 73, no. 4), pp. 335-346. (Actual acceptance/publication dates, June/October 1993)

"Skepticism, Mitigated Skepticism, and Contextualism," in Keith Lehrer et al. (eds.), *Knowledge, Teaching and Wisdom*, (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996) 195205, Philosophical Studies Series, vol. 67.

"Externalism and Action-Guiding Epistemic Norms," *Synthese*, March, 1997 (vol. 110, no. 3), pp. 381-397

Book Review of: *A Companion to the Philosophers*, Robert L. Arrington, editor, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999, in: *Philosophical Inquiry* 22 (4), Fall 2000:105-108.

"Contextualism and Global Doubts about the World"  
*Synthese*, December, 2001 (vol. 129, no. 3), pp. 381-404.

"Contextualism, Skepticism, and Invariantism",  
*Principia*, December, 2010 (vol. 14, no. 3), pp. 375-391.  
(Actual Acceptance/Publication Dates: June 2011/August 2011)

"Standing on Your Head, Seeing Things Right-Side Up", in Fritz Allhoff et al. (eds.),  
*Yoga—Philosophy for Everyone: Bending Mind and Body*, (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011),  
Chapter 5, 47-57.

“Prashant on the Breath” *Iyengar Yoga Association: Southeast News*, December, 2018.

Reprinted with a new title: “Understanding Breath-o-graphy”, *Yoga Rahasya*, 2019 (Vol. 26, No. 2, Mumbai, India)

“Prashantji on the Mind”, *Yoga Rahasya* 2019 (Vol. 26, No. 4, Mumbai, India)

[*Yoga Rahasya* is a peer-reviewed international journal devoted to the philosophy and practice of Yoga. The foregoing two articles are clarifications and interpretations of the views of Prashant Iyengar regarding the roles of the breath and the mind (respectively) in the practices of asana and pranayama. Prashant Iyengar is the son of BKS Iyengar, and one of the most influential teachers of Yoga in the world today.]

## *IN PROGRESS*

“Intellectual Responsibility and the Social Good”

Musings on Big Questions: Tentative title of a book contracted with Great River Learning (Dubuque, Iowa). Four chapters are completed.

## *TEACHING EXPERIENCE*

Georgia State University, Lecturer in Philosophy (1997/present)

Graduate Epistemology Seminar, Theory of Knowledge Survey, Graduate Metaphysics Seminar, Metaphysics Survey, Philosophy of Language, 19th and 20th Century Philosophy, History of Analytic Philosophy, History of Modern Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy, Philosophical Thinking, Logic and Critical Thinking (including honors sections), Great Questions of Philosophy (including

honors sections), Themes in Indian Philosophy and Religion, Comparative Philosophy: East and West.

Bloomsburg University, Instructor in Philosophy (1996-1997)

Contemporary Moral Problems, Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Symbolic Logic, Critical Thinking

Dartmouth College, Visiting Assistant Professor (Fall, 1994; 1995-96)

Theory of Knowledge, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mind, Introduction to Philosophy, Critical Thinking

University of Vermont, Visiting Assistant Professor (1993-94; Spring, 1995)

Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science, Epistemology, Introduction to Philosophy

Saint Michael's College, Visiting Instructor (Fall, 1994)

Philosophy of Human Nature

Kalamazoo College, Visiting Assistant Professor (1992-93)

20th Century Analytic Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Theory of Knowledge, Logic, Introduction to Philosophy

University of Florida, Visiting Assistant Professor (1989-92)

Philosophy of Science, Graduate Seminar in Epistemology, Introduction to Philosophy, Honors Introduction to Philosophy

University of Michigan, Lecturer and Teaching Assistant

Introduction to Logic, Introduction to Philosophy, Epistemology and Metaphysics

### *RESEARCH INTERESTS*

My research focuses on traditional and contemporary issues in epistemology and draws from my strong interests in the history of philosophy as well as metaphysics, and the philosophies of mind, language, and science. I have given considerable attention to reliability theories of justification. Reliability theories have undeniable virtues. They provide theory- and practice-neutral standards for epistemic evaluations, and they answer the skeptic without compromising the high, truth-linked standards that the skeptic insists are necessary for justification. I am in agreement with many writers that reliability theories acquire these virtues only by sacrificing important

epistemic values; however, I am not in agreement with a number of prominent accounts of the failings of reliability theories, including-Stephen Stich's claim that truth is not a value we should care about, John Pollock's contention that externalist accounts of justification do not capture the action-guiding character of epistemic norms, and Richard Foley's defense of subjective foundationalism. I have criticized these accounts on the grounds that even if they identify principles that reliability theories violate, it is not clear why an adequate epistemology ought to preserve these principles. (My criticisms are contained in several papers listed above: see e.g., "In Defense of Truth and Rationality" and "Externalism and the Regulative Role of Epistemic Norms.") In my view, the problem with reliability theories is that they violate the requirement that justification is determined exclusively by the quality of reasons a person possesses in support of what he/she believes. In defending this view, an issue that requires attention is the significance of philosophical skepticism. The worry is that a reason-based conception of justification of the sort I favor may be thought to involve a demand for a global justification of our beliefs which cannot be satisfied. I am currently exploring recent contextualist responses to skepticism, which concede that the radical doubts of the skeptic are real and unanswerable, but deny that our inability to answer those doubts levels the epistemic distinctions we make in everyday and scientific contexts of inquiry.

### *PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES*

Commentator on David Weberman's "*The Matrix*, Simulation and Postmodernism," Georgia State University Colloquium in Philosophy, November, 2001.

Commentator on Robert Almeder's "The Vacuity of Truth: An Argument Against Correspondence Theories," Georgia State University Colloquium in Philosophy, October, 2000.

Participant, NEH Summer Seminar, "The Foundations of Social Epistemology," June-August 2000, University of Arizona, directed by Alvin Goldman.

"Contextualism and Global Doubts about the World," University of Florida Colloquium in Philosophy, May 18, 1998.

"The Global Examination of Our Knowledge of the World," Eastern Pennsylvania Philosophical Association Meeting, Fall Meeting, October 25, 1997.

"Internalism and Regulative Epistemic Norms," Eastern Pennsylvania Philosophical Association Meeting, Fall Meeting, November 9, 1996.

Commentator on David Christensen's "Diachronic Coherence and Epistemic Impartiality," Dartmouth College/University of Vermont Colloquium in Philosophy, June 28, 1996.

"Externalism and Action-Guiding Epistemic Norms," Sapientia Lecture Series, Dartmouth College, March 6, 1996.

Session Chair, Epistemology Colloquium, Speaker Peter J. Markie, "Degrees of Warrant", The American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Meeting, December 27-30, 1995.

"Skepticism, Mitigated Skepticism, and Contextualism," The American Philosophical Association Pacific Division Meeting, March 29-April 1, 1995.

Commentator on Andrew Payne's "BonJour and the Coherence Hypothesis," The American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting, May 4-7, 1994.

Participant, NEH Summer Institute, "Knowledge, Teaching, and Wisdom: An Historical and Contemporary Reexamination," June 21-July 30, 1993, University of California, Berkeley, directed by Keith Lehrer and Nicholas Smith.

Commentator on Mathias Steup's "Proper and Improper Use of Cognitive Faculties: A Counterexample to Plantinga's Proper Functioning Theory," The American Philosophical Association Pacific Division Meeting, March 24-28, 1993.

"In Defense of Truth and Rationality," Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, & Letters, 97th Annual Meetings, Western Michigan University, March 5-6, 1993.

Participant, NEH Summer Seminar, "Knowledge, Realism and Reflection," June-August 1992, Northwestern University, directed by Michael Williams.

"Alston on Iterative Foundationalism and Cartesian Epistemology", Florida Philosophical Association Meeting, November, 1991.

## *REFERENCES*

Professors Louis E. Loeb, Lawrence Sklar, Frederick Schmitt, Stephen Yablo, Hilary Kornblith, David Christensen

## *DOSSIER AVAILABLE FROM*

Department of Philosophy, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 303024089