

# Selim Berker

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Harvard University, Dept. of Philosophy  
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Cambridge, MA 02138

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**Employment:**

John L. Loeb Associate Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University, 2013–present  
Fellow, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, 2013–2014  
Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University, 2007–2013  
Laurance S. Rockefeller Visiting Faculty Fellow, University Center for Human Values,  
Princeton University, 2009–2010  
Instructor in Philosophy, Harvard University, 2006–2007

**Education:**

Ph.D. in philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2007  
M.A. in physics, Harvard University, 2000 (*admitted as Ph.D. candidate but left to pursue philosophy*)  
A.B. *summa cum laude* in physics, Harvard College, 1998

**Areas of Specialization:**

Ethics, Epistemology

**Areas of Competence:**

Metaphysics, Logic, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Language

**Publications:**

- “Reply to Goldman: Cutting Up the One to Save the Five in Epistemology,” forthcoming in *Episteme*.
- “Does Evolutionary Psychology Show That Normativity Is Mind-Dependent?” to appear in Justin D’Arms and Daniel Jacobson (eds.), *Moral Psychology and Human Agency: Essays on the New Science of Ethics* (Oxford University Press).
- “The Rejection of Epistemic Consequentialism,” *Philosophical Issues* 23 (2013): 363–87.
- “Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” *Philosophical Review* 122 (2013): 337–93.
- “Gupta’s Gambit,” *Philosophical Studies* 152/1 (2011): 17–39.
- “The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 37 (2009): 293–329. [Selected by *The Philosopher’s Annual* as one of the ten best philosophy papers published in 2009.]
- “Luminosity Regained,” *Philosophers’ Imprint* 8/2 (2008): 1–22.
- “Particular Reasons,” *Ethics* 118 (2007): 109–39.

## **Work in Progress:**

“Graphic Coherence”

“A Graph-Theoretic Account of Epistemic Structure”

“Three Approaches to Coherence: Probabilistic, Pluralistic, and Graph-Theoretic”

“The Unity of Grounding, and Its Indispensability for Normative Theorizing”

“Three Mistakes in Normative Combinatorics”

## **Presentations:**

Comments on Michael Smith, Central APA, February 2015 (*expected*)

TBD, Sabanci University, Turkey, May 2014 (*expected*)

“Graphic Coherence,” Epistemology and Ethics Workshop, Fordham University, April 2014 (*expected*)

“Graphic Coherence,” Brown University, March 2014

“Rethinking the Regress Argument,” Radcliffe Fellows Presentation, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, February 2014

“Reply to Goldman: Cutting Up the One to Save the Five in Epistemology,” *Episteme* 10th Anniversary Conference, Costa Rica, January 2014

“Graphing the Coherentist Response to the Regress Problem,” Workshop on Infinite Regress, Vanderbilt University, October 2013

“The Rejection of Epistemic Consequentialism,” Workshop on Aims and Norms: Judgment, University of Southampton, April 2013

“Does Evolutionary Psychology Show That Reasons for Action Are Mind-Dependent?” Université de Montréal, March 2013

“Does Evolutionary Psychology Show That Reasons for Action Are Mind-Dependent?” University of Toronto, February 2013

“The Rejection of Epistemic Consequentialism,” MIT-ing of the Minds Conference, MIT, January 2013

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Ohio State University, September 2012

“The Metaethical Irrelevance of Evolutionary Theory,” Workshop on Moral Psychology and Human Agency, Michigan University, June 2012

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Brandeis University, March 2012

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Cornell University, March 2012

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” University of Pittsburgh, February 2012

“The Rejection of Epistemic Consequentialism,” SOFIA Conference on Epistemic Agency, Huatulco, Mexico, January 2012

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Boston University, December 2011

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” New York University, November 2011

“Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” University of California, Berkeley, September 2011

“The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience,” Center for Neuroscience & Society, University of Pennsylvania, April 2011

“Paul Ziff’s Contributions to Epistemology,” Memorial Session on the Philosophy of Paul

- Ziff, Central APA, April 2011
- “Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” University of Rochester, March 2011
- “Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Workshop on the Rationality of Belief and Desire, UNC-Chapel Hill, February 2011
- “Using the Evolved Mind as a Moral Divining Rod: the Dual-Process Strategy,” Amherst College, December 2010
- “The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience,” Origins of Morality Workshop, Arizona State University, November 2010
- “Using Our Neural Machinery as a Normative Divining Rod: the Dual-Process Strategy,” Conference on Intuitions in Ethics, Humboldt University, Berlin, September 2010
- “Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Workshop on Theoretical and Practical Reasons, Leeds University, June 2010
- “Epistemic Teleology and the Separateness of Propositions,” Fellows Seminar, Princeton’s University Center for Human Values, April 2010
- “The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience,” Human Values Forum, Princeton University, February 2010
- “Can Brain Scans Teach Us about the Nature of Right and Wrong?” Trajectories and Friends Symposium, MIT, October 2009
- Commentary on Elizabeth Harman’s “Is It Reasonable to ‘Rely on Intuitions’ in Ethics?” Fellows Seminar, Princeton’s University Center for Human Values, October 2009
- “The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience,” Fellows Seminar, Princeton’s University Center for Human Values, September 2009
- “Can Normative Conclusions Be Wrung from Neural Bases?” Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder, August 2009
- “Can Normative Conclusions Be Wrung from Neural Bases?” Cognitive Theory and the Arts Seminar, Harvard Humanities Center, February 2009
- “Comments on Gupta’s *Empiricism and Experience*,” Authors Meets Critics Session, Eastern APA, December 2008
- “Can Normative Conclusions Be Wrung from Neural Bases?” Faculty Workshop in Ethics, Harvard’s Safra Center for Ethics, December 2008
- “Neuroscientific Challenges to the Probative Force of Moral Intuitions,” Arché Philosophical Research Center, St. Andrews, October 2008
- “Against Williamson Against Luminosity,” Annual Conference of the Australasian Association for Philosophy (AAP), July 2005
- “Do Particularists Have a Coherent Notion of a Reason for Action?” Australian National University, June 2005
- “Against Williamson Against Luminosity,” Princeton–Rutgers Graduate Student Philosophy Conference, February 2005
- Commentary on Hille Paakkunainen’s “Judgment, Rightness, and Reasons,” Harvard–MIT Graduate Student Philosophy Conference, March 2004
- “Does It Really Matter If I’m a Brain in a Vat?” Independent Activities Period (IAP) Lecture, MIT, January 2002

### **Honors and Fellowships:**

- John L. Loeb Associate Professorship, 2013–present
- Roslyn Abramson Award (for excellence in undergraduate teaching), Harvard University, 2013

ACLS Fellowship, 2013–2014  
 Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Fellowship, 2013–2014  
 Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Fellowship, 2013–2014 (*declined*)  
 National Humanities Center Fellowship, 2013–2014 (*declined*)  
 Donald D. Harrington Faculty Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin, 2010–2011 (*forced to decline because Harvard does not allow two years of leave in a row*)  
 “The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience” selected by *The Philosopher’s Annual* as one of the ten best philosophy papers published in 2009  
 Laurance S. Rockefeller Visiting Faculty Fellowship, Princeton’s University Center for Human Values, 2009–2010  
 Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics Faculty Fellowship, 2009–2010 (*declined*)  
 Graduate Fellowship, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2000–2005  
 Hertz Fellowship, 1998–2000 (*turned down final three years of funding to pursue philosophy*)  
 Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard College, 1997 (*selected as a junior*)  
 John Harvard Scholarship, Harvard College, 1995–1997  
 Detur Book Award, Harvard College, 1995

**Teaching Experience:**

Philosophy 250z: Metaphysical Grounding: Seminar	Spring 2012
Philosophy 301b: First-Year Colloquium	Spring 2012
Philosophy 159: Epistemology	Fall 2012
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Fall 2012
Freshman Seminar 38i: Morality, That Peculiar Institution	Spring 2012
Philosophy 301b: First-Year Colloquium	Spring 2012
Philosophy 173: Metaethics	Fall 2011
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Fall 2011
Philosophy 244: Epistemic Normativity: Seminar	Spring 2011
Philosophy 301b: First-Year Colloquium	Spring 2011
Freshman Seminar 38i: Morality, That Peculiar Institution	Spring 2009
Philosophy 159: Epistemology	Spring 2009
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Spring 2009
Philosophy 173: Metaethics	Fall 2008
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Fall 2008
Freshman Seminar 38i: Morality, That Peculiar Institution	Spring 2008
Philosophy 301b: First-Year Colloquium	Spring 2008
Philosophy 98hf: Tutorial on Sellars’ <i>Empiricism and the Phil. of Mind</i>	Fall 2007
Philosophy 262: Intuitions and Philosophical Methodology: Seminar	Fall 2007
Philosophy 159: Epistemology	Spring 2007
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Spring 2007
Philosophy 173: Metaethics	Fall 2006
Philosophy 311: Moral and Political Workshop	Fall 2006

**Student Supervision:**

Member of Ph.D. committee:  
     Paul Julian, in progress  
     David Langlois, in progress  
     Emily McWilliams, in progress

Oded Na'aman, in progress  
Al Prescott-Couch, in progress  
Zeynep Soysal, in progress  
Aleksy Tarasenko-Struc, in progress  
Craig Nishimoto, "Rescue Duties: A Moderate Account," Fall 2013  
Ryan Doerfler, "Matters of Taste: Personal and Otherwise," Fall 2010  
S. Andrew Schroeder, "Divorcing the Good and the Right," Fall 2009  
Carlos Soto, "Extending and Ending Life in Health Care and Beyond," Spring 2009

Second-year paper supervision:

Shantia Rahimian, "Epistemic Reasons for Action and Two-Dimensional Epistemology,"  
2011–2012  
Aleksy Tarasenko-Struc, "The Constructivist and the Dogmatist: In Search of the  
Foundations of Ethics," 2010–2011  
David Langlois, "The Instrumental Principle and Practical Rationality," 2008–2009  
Colin Chamberlain, "The Significance of Projects," 2007–2008  
Craig Nishimoto, "Does the Justification of Action Require Morality?" 2006–2007

Senior thesis supervision:

Adam Kern, "From the Ground Up: A Contractualist Theory of Moral Inquiry," 2012–  
2013 (*winner of Hoopes Prize*)  
Alexander Loomis, "The Epistemic Status of Basic Empirical Beliefs in Classical  
Foundationalism," 2011–2012  
Jeff Overall, "Moral Justification," 2010–2011  
Zander Li, "Property in Virtual Worlds: A Labor-Based Justification," 2007–2008  
Kelly Heuer, "The Scope of Morality: An Evolutionary Approach," 2006–2007

**Professional Service:**

Article referee for:

*Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (multiple times)  
*Dialectica*  
*Ethics* (multiple times)  
*European Journal of Philosophy* (multiple times)  
*Journal of Moral Philosophy*  
*Mind* (multiple times)  
*Noûs*  
*Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*  
*Philosophical Explorations*  
*Philosophical Psychology*  
*Philosophical Quarterly* (multiple times)  
*Philosophical Studies* (multiple times)  
*Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*  
*Synthese* (multiple times)

Manuscript/book-proposal referee for:

Acumen Publishing  
MIT Press  
Polity

Routledge

**Non-Philosophy Publications:**

Selim Berker, Adam L. Epstein, and Kevin M. Pilgrim, “Remarks on the Period Three Cycles of Quadratic Rational Maps,” *Nonlinearity* 16 (2003): 93–100.