

Tran “Jen” Nguyen
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EDUCATION

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

PhD Philosophy, Expected 2020

Dissertation: Leibniz on Location

Committee: Jeffrey K. McDonough, Alison J. Simmons, Samuel S. Levey

Short Abstract: Commonsense says space determines our place and relatedly, our point of view. Leibniz argues that commonsense puts the cart before the horse twice. First, rather than explaining place in terms of space, Leibniz explains space in terms of place, building space bottom-up from places. Second, Leibniz holds that our point of view determines where we are in space; Ruth is in Paris because she has a Parisian point of view. Leibniz’s claims admittedly sound odd. But I argue they pave the way for a picture that delivers three striking results. First, all it takes to have a place is to have a point of view. Second, souls and more generally, monads have places. Third, there are measurable distances between souls.

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

BA, *summa cum laude*, Philosophy and Mathematics, 2012

AREA OF SPECIALITY

Early Modern Philosophy.

AREA OF COMPETENCE

Metaphysics, Medieval Philosophy, Philosophy of Mind.

PUBLICATIONS

“Leibniz on Place,” *The Leibniz Review* (28) 2018: 43-66.

“Monad” (with Jeffrey K. McDonough), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Rebecca Copenhaver (Routledge), 2017.

AWARDS

Leibniz Society of North America Essay Competition Winner Fall 2019
Awarded for “Leibniz on Place.”

[*Harvard Graduate Student Council Travel Grant*](#) (\$750) Spring 2019

Harvard Philosophy Department Fellowship (\$22,000) Fall 2017

Harvard Bok Center Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for CB31 Spring 2017

Harvard Bok Center Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for Phil 120 Fall 2016

[*USC Renaissance Prize*](#) (\$10,000) 2012

A prize awarded to exemplary students studying two disparate fields

- USC James A. Janie K. Crawford Endowed Scholarship* 2011
For students who demonstrate financial need, extracurricular involvement, and community service
- USC Academic Achievement Award* 2011
“Provides a tuition benefit to students who are pursuing multiple undergraduate degree objectives”
- USC Student Opportunities for Academic Research (SOAR)* 2011
“Funding...for participation as a research assistant in a faculty member’s project”

TALKS

Invited Presentations

- Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy: Infinity and Beyond, University of Turku, June 2019; “Leibnizian Distance: Quantitative, Continuous, Measurable”
- Society for Early Modern Philosophy at Yale, March 2019; “Leibnizian Distance: Quantitative, Continuous, Measurable”
- Berlin-Groningen-Harvard-Toronto Workshop on Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy, Groningen, Netherlands, July 2017; “Leibniz on Place”
- Harvard GSAS Graduate Student Orientation, August 2019; “Things I Wish I Had Known about Harvard Libraries”

Early Modern Philosophy Conferences

- Finnish Hungarian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, University of Helsinki, June 2019; “Leibnizian Distance: Quantitative, Continuous, Measurable”
- Atlantic Canada Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Halifax, Canada, July 2018; “Leibniz on Place”
- Margaret Dauler Wilson Conference, Buffalo, New York, June 2018; “Leibniz on Place”
- Early Modern Saint Louis Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, April 2018; “Leibniz on Place”

Graduate Student Conferences

- Princeton Graduate Conference in the History of Philosophy, May 2019; “Leibnizian Distance: Quantitative, Continuous, Measurable”
- DePaul University Graduate Student Conference, Chicago, Illinois, February 2017; “Leibniz on Place”

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Primary Instructor, Harvard University

PHIL 97: Leibniz	Spring 2019
PHIL 98: Locke	Fall 2018
PHIL 98: Spinoza	Spring 2018

Teaching Fellow, Harvard University

CB31: Saints, Heretics and Atheists	Spring 2017
PHIL120: Continental Rationalism	Fall 2016
PHIL 8: Introduction to Early Modern Philosophy	Spring 2016
PHIL 3: The True and the Good	Fall 2015

SERVICE

Harvard Metaphysics and Epistemology Workshop
Coordinator Spring 2018, Fall 2015

Harvard History of Philosophy Works in Progress
Coordinator 2015-2016

Harvard-Yale History Conference
Co-organizer 2016

Harvard Graduate Student Council
Department Representative 2013-2014, 2016-2017

Summer Research Opportunities Program at Harvard
Graduate Student Mentor Summer 2016

Harvard-MIT Philosophy Graduate Conference
Co-organizer Spring 2015

SUMMER SEMINARS

Creating a Teaching Portfolio
Harvard Bok Center Summer 2019

Libori Summer School: Emile Du Chatelet
University of Paderborn Summer 2017

The Art of Discussion Leading
Harvard Bok Center Summer 2016

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Course	Professor(s)
British Empiricism	Alison Simmons and Jeffrey McDonough
Topics in Early Modern Philosophy: Spinoza	Jeffrey McDonough
Modal Logic	Mark Richard
Philosophy of Language	Mark Richard
Kant's Ethical Theory	Christine Korsgaard
Medieval Philosophy	Jeffrey McDonough
Frege, Russell, Early Wittgenstein	Warren Goldfarb
Metaethics	Selim Berker
Classics of Philosophical Psychology	Susanna Seigel
French in Translation x2	Richard Moran
Introductory Latin 1	Ivy Livingston
Introductory Latin 2	Ivy Livingston
Introductory Latin 3	Ivy Livingston
Beginning French 1	Nicole Mills
Beginning French 2	Nicole Mills
Instructional Styles in Philosophy	Edward Hall

LANGUAGES

Latin (intermediate), French (intermediate), Vietnamese (speaking)

REFERENCES

Jeffrey K. McDonough
Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University
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Alison J. Simmons
Samuel H. Wolcott Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University
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Samuel S. Levey
Professor of Philosophy, Dartmouth University
Samuel.S.Levey@dartmouth.edu

Bernhard Nickel (Teaching Reference)
Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University
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