

Michael J. Olson

Department of Philosophy
Marquette Hall 115
PO Box 1881
Marquette University
Milwaukee WI 53201-1881

(414) 288-6857 📞
michael.olson@marquette.edu ✉
www.michael-olson.com 🌐
ORCID: 0000-0003-3264-1454

Education

Villanova University Ph.D., Philosophy, 2013
Grinnell College B.A., Philosophy and Mathematics, 2003

Academic Appointments

Marquette University, *Teaching Associate Professor* 2023 –
Director, Marquette Core Curriculum 2024 –
Teaching Assistant Professor 2018 – 2023
Macquarie University, *Lecturer* 2014 – 2018
Loyola University Chicago, *Lecturer* 2013 – 2014

Research & Teaching

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Kant • Early Modern Philosophy • History and Philosophy of Science

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Aesthetics • Political Philosophy • Ethics

Publications

ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

forthcoming Michael J. Olson, “Spontaneous Generation and the *Bildungstrieb*.” *Johann Friedrich Blumenbach’s Bildungstrieb (1789): «What is life?» in science, philosophy and politics around 1800*. Eds. Nicolaas Rupke and Gerhard Lauer (Göttinger Universitätsverlag).

- forthcoming Michael J. Olson, "The History of the Humanities and the History of Science in the Early Natural History of the Kangaroo." *The Shaping of the Sciences: Essays in homage to Stephen Gaukroger*. Eds. Charles Wolfe and Anik Waldow (Springer).
- 2024 Jennifer Mensch and Michael J. Olson, Introduction to "Reading Forster, Reading Race: Philosophy, Politics, and Natural History in the German Enlightenment," *Lessing Yearbook*, vol. 51: 75–78.
- 2024 Michael J. Olson, "Slavery and Enthusiasm in the German Enlightenment: The Case of Christoph Meiners." *Lessing Yearbook*, vol. 51: 169–176.
- 2024 Michael J. Olson, "Kant on the Feeling of Health." *Kant and the Feeling of Life: Beauty and Nature in the Critique of Judgment*. Ed. Jennifer Mensch (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2024), 271–292.
- 2024 Michael J. Olson, "Rediscovering Kant as a Reader: The Early Physical Geography Lectures," *Goethe Yearbook*, vol. 31: 127–134.
- 2023 Michael J. Olson, "Scientific Metaphysics and Metaphysical Science: The Demand for Systematicity in Kant's Transition Project." *Metaphysics as a Science in Classical German Philosophy*. Eds. Toby Lovat and Robb Dunphy (London: Routledge, 2023), 167–183.
- 2023 Jennifer Mensch and Michael J. Olson, "How Philosophers Have Influenced the Way You Think about Race," *Futurum: Inspiring the Next Generation*, vol. 21: 12–15.
- 2020 Michael J. Olson, "Early Modern Theories of the Senses" and "Early Modern Conceptions of Embodiment." *Encyclopedia of Early Modern Philosophy and the Sciences*. Eds. Dana Jalobeanu and Charles T. Wolfe (Springer, 2020).
- 2019 Michael J. Olson and Jean-Philippe Deranty, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Digital Distribution." *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, vol. 24, no. 5 (2019), 104–123.
- 2019 Michael J. Olson, "Kant on the Unity of the Activity of Thinking." *Akten des 12. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses: Natur und Freiheit*. Eds. Violetta L. Waibel und Margit Ruffing (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2019), vol. 2, 1099–1108.
- 2018 Michael J. Olson, "On the Significance of the Copernican Revolution: Transcendental Philosophy and the Object of Metaphysics." *Con-Textos Kantianos*, no. 7 (2018), 89–127.
- 2018 Michael J. Olson, "Literature in the German Science of the Soul: Johann Gottlob Krüger's *Dreams*." *History of European Ideas*, vol. 44, no. 5 (2018), 528–542.
- 2016 Michael J. Olson, "Kant on Anatomy and the Status of the Life Sciences." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, vol. 58 (2016), 77–84.

- 2015 Michael J. Olson, "The Camera Obscura and the Soul: On a Tension between the Mechanics of Sensation and the Metaphysics of the Soul." *Intellectual History Review*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2015), 279–291.
- Reprinted in Anik Waldow (ed.), *Sensibility in the Early Modern Era: From Living Machines to Affective Morality* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 25–37.
- 2013 Michael J. Olson, "A Materialist Transcendental: On the Ontology of *Logics of Worlds*." *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2013), 143–159.
- 2012 Michael J. Olson, "Transcendental Arguments, Axiomatic Truth, and the Difficulty of Overcoming Idealism." *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*. Eds. John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 169–190.
- 2011 Michael J. Olson, "Critical Idealism and Transcendental Materialism: A Speculative Analysis of the Second Paralogism." *Cosmos and History*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2011), 49–61.
- 2010 Michael J. Olson, "The Intuition of Simultaneity: *Zugleichsein* and the Constitution of Extensive Magnitudes." *Kant-Studien*, vol. 101, no. 4 (December 2010), 429–444.
- 2009 Michael J. Olson, "Philosophy, Non-Philosophy, and the Axiomatization of Matter." *Philosophy Today*, vol. 53, SPEP Supplement (2009), 257–262.
- 2009 Michael J. Olson, "Kant, Deleuze and Guattari, and the Metaphysics of Objects." *Thinking Between Deleuze and Kant*. Eds. Edward Willatt and Matt Lee (London: Continuum, 2009), 151–170.

REVIEWS

- 2024 Catherine Wilson, *Kant & the Naturalistic Turn of 18th Century Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2022), *Annals of Science*, vol. 81, no. 3: 444–446.
- 2017 Michael J. Olson, "The Metaphysics of the Epigenesis of Reason: On Jennifer Mensch's *Kant's Organicism*." *Philosophy Today*, vol. 61, no. 3 (2017), 793–799.
- 2016 Colin McQuillan, *Immanuel Kant: On the Very Idea of a Critique of Pure Reason* (Northwestern University Press, 2016). *Critique* (2016) goo.gl/lQS9kp.
- 2016 Nicholas Jolley, *Locke's Touchy Subjects: Materialism and Immortality* (Oxford University Press, 2015). *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 94, no. 4 (2016), 838–839.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Jennifer Mensch and Michael J. Olson (eds.), *Generation, Heredity, Race: Key Texts in the History and Philosophy of the German Life Sciences, 1745–1845*

Sebastian Luft (ed.), *Wilhelm Windelband: Transcendental Philosophy, Value Theory, Philosophy of Culture*, trans. Sebastian Luft and Michael Olson (Oxford University Press, under contract)

Grants, Awards, & Fellowships

Marquette University Faculty Mission Integration Fellowship (\$10,000)	2023–2024
Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies Mini-grant (\$300)	2023
Marquette University Participating Faculty Research Award	2022
Western Sydney University Collaborative Research Grant <i>Key Texts in Early German Life Science Debates: Theories of Generation and Race, 1750–1820</i> (\$20,000)	2021–2022
Marquette University Participating Faculty Research Grant <i>From Embryology to Empire: Tracing the Enlightenment Life Sciences</i> (\$2400)	2021
<i>Journal of the History of Philosophy</i> Kristeller-Popkin Travel Fellowship <i>From Embryology to Race in the Eighteenth-Century Life Sciences</i> (\$4000)	2019
Australian Award for University Teaching for Programs that Enhance Student Learning <i>Macquarie University Professional and Community Engagement (PACE)</i>	2017
Macquarie Faculty of Arts Visiting Fellowship Grant “Nature” and “World” in Classical German <i>Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy</i> (\$6000)	2017
Macquarie University CAVE Research Grant <i>Aesthetics and Politics: Research in Progress Workshop</i> (\$2500)	2017
Macquarie University Research Projects Grant <i>Kant and the Metaphysics of Thinking</i> (\$13,000)	2016
Macquarie Faculty of Arts Emerging Scholar	2016
Macquarie University Research Travel Grant <i>Kant, Materialism, and the Unity of Thinking</i> (\$4500)	2015
Runner-up, ISIH Charles Schmitt Prize for “The Camera Obscura and the Soul”	2013

Selected Presentations

- “KANT’S ‘ESSAY ON THE MALADIES OF THE HEAD’ (1764)”
- *The Young Kant* (Northwestern University: May, 2024).

“SLAVERY AND ENTHUSIASM IN THE GERMAN ENLIGHTENMENT”

- *Peace, Violence, and the Highest Good: Kantian Perspectives on Morality and History* (Marquette University: March, 2024).

“TRANSLATING THE PACIFIC: GEORG FORSTER AND THE ORDER OF NATURE IN MEINERS, KANT, AND HERDER” (WITH JENNIFER MENSCH)

- *German Studies Association* (Montreal, QC: October, 2023).

“REPRESENTING FOREIGN CULTURES IN THE AGE OF EXPLORATION: GERMAN NATURAL HISTORY IN WORD AND IMAGE”

- *Classical and Contemporary Themes from the Philosophy of Culture* (Marquette University: February, 2022).

“THE MIRACLE OF FREEDOM: THE CAUSAL CLOSURE OF NATURE IN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY FROM WOLFF TO KANT”

- Indiana Philosophical Association (Bloomington, IN: November, 2021)
- Leuven Kant Conference (Leuven, Belgium: May, 2019).

“SPONTANEOUS GENERATION AND THE *BILDUNGSTRIEB*”

- Blumenbach’s *Bildungstrieb* (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen: October, 2021; online).

“SCIENTIFIC METAPHYSICS AND METAPHYSICAL SCIENCE”

- *Metaphysics as a Science in Classical German Philosophy* (University College Dublin: July, 2021; online).

“TUNA ON KANT AND IMAGINATIVE RESISTANCE”

- Central APA (online: February, 2021)

“KANT AND ‘THE LIMITLESS FIELD OF ONEIRIC TRANSCENDENTAL MEDICINE’”

- Leuven Seminar in Classical German Philosophy (Leuven, Belgium; via Zoom: October, 2020).

“DELIGIORGI ON KANT, MODALITY, AND FREEDOM”

- Leuven Kant Conference (Leuven, Belgium; via Zoom: May, 2020).

“KANT, DOG WHISTLE POLITICS, AND THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY”

- *Natural Histories of Language: Philology, Philosophy, and Evolution* (The University of Sydney: November, 2017).
- Macalester College (St Paul, MN: February, 2017).
- *History and Authority: Political Vocabularies of the Modern Age* (The Australian National University: July, 2016).

“MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF EXPERIENCE: AETHER AND APPERCEPTION IN KANT’S *OPUS POSTUMUM*.”

- The University of Bristol (Bristol, UK: June, 2017).
- *Nature and Science in the Long Eighteenth Century* (The University of Sydney: August, 2016).
- International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science (University of Minnesota: June, 2016).

“LITERATURE IN THE GERMAN SCIENCE OF THE SOUL: JOHANN GOTTLÖB KRÜGER’S *TRÄUME*”

- *Life before Darwin: Nature and Evolution, 1750-1859* (University of Sydney: May, 2017).
- *Natural History and the Life Sciences in the Long Eighteenth Century* (The University of Sydney: August, 2015).

“EARLY MODERN ANTI-MATERIALISM: ON THE VIRTUES OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY”

- University of Melbourne (Melbourne, VIC: December, 2015).
- Australasian Association of Philosophy (Sydney, NSW: May, 2015).

“THE METAPHYSICS OF THE EPIGENESIS OF REASON”

- Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy (University of New South Wales: December, 2015).

“KANT, MATERIALISM, AND THE UNITY OF THE ACTIVITY OF THINKING”

- International Kant Congress (Vienna, Austria: September, 2015).
- The University of Sydney (Sydney, NSW: March, 2015).

“PHYSIOLOGIST OF REASON, PHILOSOPHICAL ANATOMIST, PHILOSOPHER: ON SOME KANTIAN DISTINCTIONS”

- *The Philosophy of Nature in the Era of German Idealism* (The University of Sydney: June, 2015).

“THE CAMERA OBSCURA AND THE NATURE OF THE SOUL: AN EXAMINATION OF EARLY 18TH CENTURY GERMAN METAPHYSICS AND NATURAL SCIENCE”

- Hiram College (May, 2013).
- Scottish Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy (University of Aberdeen, Scotland: April, 2012).

“METAPHYSICS AND SCIENCE IN KANT’S COPERNICAN REVOLUTION”

- International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science (Halifax, NS: June, 2012).
- Young Researchers Conference on Classical German Philosophy, Centrum voor Duits Idealisme (Tilburg University, Netherlands: June, 2011).
- *Repetition and Revolt* (Cornell University: April, 2011).

“A MATERIALIST TRANSCENDENTAL: ON THE ONTOLOGY OF *LOGICS OF WORLDS*”

- Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Montreal, QC: November, 2010).
- Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association (Albuquerque, NM: October, 2010).

“CRITICAL IDEALISM AND TRANSCENDENTAL MATERIALISM: A SPECULATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND PARALOGISM”

- *Form and Genesis* (Cornell University: April, 2010).
- *Real Objects or Material Subjects* (University of Dundee, UK: March, 2010).

“PHILOSOPHY, NON-PHILOSOPHY, AND THE AXIOMATIZATION OF MATTER”

- Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Pittsburgh, PA: October, 2008).
- *Time and Materiality* (Cornell University: April, 2007).

Teaching

COURSES TAUGHT AS INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

Marquette University

PHIL 1001 <i>Foundations in Philosophy</i>	2018–2024
PHIL 2310 <i>Theory of Ethics</i>	2018–2019
PHIL 3650 <i>Early Modern Philosophy</i>	2024
ARSC 1953 <i>Exploring Arts and Sciences</i>	2022
CORE 4929 <i>Service of Faith and Promotion of Justice</i>	2021–2023

Macquarie University

Undergraduate

PHL 131 <i>Mind and World</i>	2017–2018
PHL 132 <i>Happiness, Goodness, Justice</i>	2015
PHL 238 <i>Existentialism</i>	2016
PHL 250 <i>Philosophy of Art and Literature</i>	2015, 2017
PHL 351 <i>Social Philosophy</i>	2015, 2017
PHL 365 <i>Film and Philosophy</i>	2018
PHL 383 <i>Philosophy Capstone</i>	2016–2017

Postgraduate

PHIL 703 <i>Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason</i>	2016
PHIL 703 <i>Aesthetics and Politics</i> (with Jean-Philippe Deranty)	2017
PHIL 703 <i>Descartes</i>	2018
PHIL 704 <i>Early Modern Materialism</i>	2015
FOAR 702 <i>Posthumanism</i> (with colleagues from English)	2016–2017

Loyola University Chicago

PHIL 130 <i>Philosophy and Persons</i>	2013
PHIL 181 <i>Ethics</i>	2014
PHIL 182 <i>Social and Political Philosophy</i>	2013–2014

University of Pennsylvania

PHIL 055 <i>Existentialism</i>	2013
--------------------------------	------

Villanova University

PHI 1050 <i>Introduction to Philosophy</i>	2006–2010
--	-----------

PHI 2190 <i>Freedom</i>	2010
PHI 2710 <i>Theories of Knowledge</i>	2012
PHI 3040 <i>History of Early Modern Philosophy</i>	2010
PHI 4150 <i>Philosophy and Film: Documentaries</i>	2010
ETH 2050 <i>Ethical Traditions and Contemporary Life</i>	2011–2013

POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION

Brendan Burnett (Macquarie University) <i>Sociability and Unsociability in Kant's 'Universal History' Essay (1784)</i>	MRes, 2017
Thomas Corbin (Macquarie University) <i>The Role of Counsel in Thomas Hobbes' Political Thought</i>	MRes, 2016

POSTGRADUATE EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

Kevin McKeivitt (Marquette University) <i>On Søren Kierkegaard's Conception of the Ethical: With Continual Reference to Lévinas</i>	PhD, in progress
Seth Kreeger (Marquette University) "Aquinas' Attribution of Creation to Plato and Aristotle: The Importance of Avicenna"	DQP, 2022
Mark Doepel (University of Notre Dame Australia) <i>The Emergence and Evolution of the Concepts of 'The Author,' 'The Work,' and 'Literary Property,' with Specific Reference to Enlightenment England, 1450-1769</i>	MPhil, 2019

Service & Professional Memberships

CO-EDITOR (with Sebastian Luft and Dalia Nassar), De Gruyter book series <i>New Studies in the History and Historiography of Philosophy</i>	2023–
ORGANIZER, Marquette Philosophy Colloquium	2022–2024
ORGANIZER, Macquarie University Philosophy Seminar Series	2015–2018
MENTOR, Early Career Researcher Mentorship Program, <i>Australasian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy</i> (November, 2017)	2017
ORGANIZER, <i>Aesthetics and Politics: Research in Progress Workshop</i>	2017
ORGANIZER, 'Nature' and 'World' in German Philosophy Workshop	2017
MEMBER, AAP Postgraduate Essay Prize Jury	2015

REFeree: *Analysis* • *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* • Bloomsbury • *Critical Horizons* • *Epoché: a Journal for the History of Philosophy* • *Hypatia: a journal of feminist philosophy* • *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* • *Journal of Transcendental Philosophy* • *Kant-Studien* • North American Kant Society • *Res Philosophica* • *Revista di estetica* • *Symphilosophie: International Journal of Romantic Philosophy* • Taylor and Francis