

WILLIE COSTELLO

Philosophy Department, Stanford University
williec@stanford.edu ◊ 650-557-8899 ◊ williecostello.com
450 Serra Mall Bldg 90, Stanford, CA 94305

EMPLOYMENT

Stanford University, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow & Lecturer, Philosophy Department *September 2015–present*

EDUCATION

University of Toronto, Ph.D. Philosophy *April 2015*

Thesis: “From causes to Forms: The *Phaedo* and the foundations of Platonic metaphysics”

Committee: Rachel Barney (supervisor), Imogen Dickie, Brad Inwood, Jennifer Whiting

Abstract Plato’s metaphysics is distinguished by his belief in Forms. Plato also believed that Forms were causes – viz., the causes of ordinary objects’ features. Philosophers since Aristotle have criticized this claim, arguing that Forms cannot be causes in any legitimate sense, and that their alleged causal role can be performed by other things. Here I show that there is a legitimate sense in which Forms are causes; that this sort of causality is fundamental to what Forms are; and that this understanding of the Forms’ status as causes offers new insights into their other contentious features.

University of Pittsburgh, B.A. Philosophy, B.A. Linguistics *April 2009*

Asian Studies Certificate, Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

Language Skills

Ancient Greek: advanced; German: advanced; French: intermediate; Japanese: intermediate

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION: Ancient Philosophy

AREAS OF COMPETENCE: Metaphysics, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Literature, Philosophy of Technology

BOOK MANUSCRIPT

The causal origins of Plato’s Forms: The natural philosophy of the *Phaedo* and its context

3 of 5 chapters drafted

PUBLICATIONS

“Platonic causes & Platonic mereology” *under journal review*

“Socrates and Plato against the amoralist: Responding to Callicles’ critique” *under journal review*

“The method of hypothesis in the *Phaedo*” *under journal review*

“What moralists in aesthetics must (and yet cannot) prove” *under journal review*

“Coding for respect: A philosophical framework for evaluating the ethics of autonomous machine action”

Co-authored with Michael Skirpan *under review for published conference proceedings*

“The self-predication of Platonic Forms & causes”

“Plato on what can and cannot be perceived”

“Socrates’ self-refutation of the sophistic conception of beauty in the *Hippias Major*”

“What tech can learn from bioethics: The history of respect for patient autonomy & the future of respect for user autonomy”

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

- Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities**, Stanford University *2015–present*
- Robinson Fellowship in Ancient Philosophy**, University of Toronto *2009, 2014*
Annual departmental award for achievement in ancient philosophy
- George Paxton Young Memorial Prize in Philosophy**, University of Toronto *2015*
Annual departmental award for conference presentation
- Ontario Graduate Scholarship**, Province of Ontario *2010–2011, 2011–2012, 2012–2013*
Competitive provincial scholarship for achievement in graduate studies
- School of Graduate Studies Conference Grant Award**, University of Toronto *Fall 2011, Spring 2011*
Competitive university-wide scholarship for conference presentation

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

At Stanford University (all as sole instructor)

- Upper-Level Seminar: Literature & the Moral Imagination (PHIL 194W) *Winter 2018*
- Upper-Level Seminar: Shame, in Antiquity & Today (PHIL 105W/205W) *Fall 2017*
- Introductory Survey: Philosophy & Emerging Technologies (PHIL 29S) *Summer 2017*
- Upper-Level Seminar: Beauty in Ancient Greek Philosophy (PHIL 105C/205C) *Winter 2017*
- Upper-Level Seminar: Plato's Later Metaphysics & Epistemology (PHIL 107B/207B) *Fall 2016*
- Graduate Seminar: Plato's *Phaedo* (PHIL 310) *Winter 2016*
- First-Year Seminar: "Can good people like bad music?" and other questions (PHIL 13N) *Fall 2015*

At University of Toronto (all as sole instructor)

- Introductory Survey: Literature & Philosophy (PHL 388) *Summer 2014, Summer 2015*
- Upper-Level Seminar: Beauty in Ancient Greek Philosophy (PHL 401) *Spring 2015*
- Introductory Survey: Ancient Philosophy (PHL 200) *Summer 2013*
- Essay Clinician, St. George (Main) Campus *Spring 2014, Spring 2015*

Volunteer & Community Teaching

- **Hope House Scholars Program** *Summer 2017*
 - Instructor, "The Character of the Emotions in Philosophy, Literature, and Performance": team-taught a class with two colleagues, in English and theatre studies, at a local residential drug and alcohol treatment facility for women
- **Stanford Humanities Circle (part of Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies)** *Winter 2017, Spring 2017*
 - Instructor, "Philosophy Circle": team-taught a series of after-school philosophy classes for Bay Area high school students

Additional Qualifications & Experience

- **Lead Writing TA, Philosophy Department, University of Toronto** *2014–2015*
 - philosophy dept. liaison for campus-wide Writing Instruction for TAs / Writing Across the Curriculum initiative, which seeks to integrate undergraduate writing instruction with disciplinary teaching
 - assisted instructors with course and assignment design
 - trained philosophy course TAs on how to teach writing skills to undergraduates via tutorial instruction and written feedback
 - coordinated with campus-wide WIT coordinator and philosophy dept. undergraduate chair
 - received 20+ hours of training

- **Teaching Assistants' Training Program Teaching Fundamentals certificate, University of Toronto** 2015
 - participated in a series of interactive workshops designed to introduce graduate students to effective teaching strategies and techniques and broaden our understanding of how undergraduate students learn
 - workshops completed: *Developing Study Skills in Undergraduate Students*; *Mental Health Issues on Campus*; *What Do I Do If I Don't Know the Answer?*; *The Art of Asking Effective Questions*; *Elements of Effective Lesson Planning*; *Instruction Strategies for Developing Students' Critical Reading & Analysis*
- **Enrolment in THE500 Teaching in Higher Education, University of Toronto** Fall 2014
 - seminar for senior PhD candidates who wish to improve their teaching practice by becoming more knowledgeable about the ways in which students learn and about different teaching theories and styles
- **Teaching Workshops & Conferences**
 - 2015 ATXPo (Academic Technology Expo), Stanford, CA October 12, 2015
 - Teaching Workshop in Ancient Philosophy, Delancey, NY September 5–7, 2014

PRESENTED PAPERS

- “Socrates and Plato against the immoralist: Responding to Callicles’ critique” May 21, 2017
Tenth West Coast Plato Workshop (refereed) UC Davis
- “The method of hypothesis throughout the *Phaedo*” November 18, 2016
 2016–2017 *Colloquium Series* (invited) Boston University
- “Platonic causes, in context” July 8, 2016
XI Symposium Platonicum meeting of the Intl. Plato Society (refereed) Universidade de Brasília
- “Forms & the method of hypothesis throughout the *Phaedo*” June 28, 2016
New Perspectives on Plato’s Philosophy (refereed) Universidade Federal do ABC, São Paulo
- “What moralists in aesthetics must (and yet cannot) prove” June 8, 2016
Annual Conference of the European Society of Aesthetics (refereed) University of Barcelona
- “Plato on what can and cannot be perceived” May 20, 2016
British Postgraduate Philosophy Association Masterclass (refereed) University of Cambridge
- “The real disagreement between Socrates and Callicles in Plato’s *Gorgias*” April 20, 2016
III International Congress of Greek Philosophy (refereed) University of Lisbon
- “The theory of causation in the *Phaedo*” April 22, 2015
Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy Workshop (invited) University of Chicago
- “What Socrates is hypothesizing when he hypothesizes ‘Forms’ in the *Phaedo*” April 3, 2015
Greek Reading Group Special Session (invited) Harvard University
- “The *Phaedo* as a series of hypothetical arguments” December 18, 2013
Analysis and Synthesis in Ancient and Medieval Thought (refereed) VU University Amsterdam
- “Forms and the Metaphysics of Explanation in the *Phaedo*” June 30, 2012
Graduate Conference of the Ancient Philosophy & Science Network (invited) Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- “Avoiding the Third Man: A Semantic Argument” May 4, 2013
First Canadian Colloquium for Ancient Philosophy (poster presentation) University of Alberta

- “That Which Completely and Purely Is’: Some Lessons from Plato’s *Sophist*” March 10, 2012
Princeton Ancient Philosophy Graduate Student Conference (refereed) Princeton University
- “Unifying Callicles: Nature and Negative Liberty” July 13, 2011
Graduate Conference of the Ancient Philosophy & Science Network (invited) Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- “Good Luck with That! The Beginnings of Aristotelian Naturalism in *Magna Moralia* II.8” April 16, 2011
Eleventh Annual Independent Meeting of the Ancient Philosophy Society (refereed) Sundance Resort, Utah
- “Two Dogmas of Hedonism: Plato on Pleasure, Perception, and Reality” March 27, 2010
Second Annual Toronto Workshop in Ancient Philosophy (invited) University of Toronto

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Graduate Conference Chair**, University of Toronto 2012–2013
- Graduate Conference Committee**, University of Toronto 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012

REFERENCES

Research

- ◇ **Rachel Barney**
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 University of Toronto
 416-978-8513, rachel.barney@utoronto.ca
- ◇ **Jennifer Whiting**
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 University of Pittsburgh
 412-624-5783, whitingj@pitt.edu
- ◇ **Alan Code**
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 Stanford University
 650-723-2587, acode@stanford.edu
- ◇ **Brad Inwood**
 Professor, Department of Classics
 Yale University
 203-432-0994, brad.inwood@yale.edu
- ◇ **Agnes Callard**
 Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy
 University of Chicago
 773-702-8513, agcallard@uchicago.edu
- ◇ **Jessica Moss**
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 New York University
 212-998-8320, jessica.moss@nyu.edu

Teaching

- ◇ **R. Lanier Anderson**
 Senior Associate Dean, Humanities & Arts
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 Stanford University
 650-723-0764, lanier@stanford.edu
- ◇ **Peter King**
 Professor, Department of Philosophy
 University of Toronto
 416-978-3311, peter.king@utoronto.ca