

L.A. Paul

la.paul@yale.edu

Appointments

2021–. Millstone Family Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Cognitive Science, Yale University.

2021–. Leader of the Self and Society Initiative, Wu Tsai Institute for Human Cognition, Yale University.

2020–. Professor of Psychology (secondary appointment), Yale University.

2018–2020. Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science, Yale University.

2014–2018. Professorial Fellow, Arché Philosophical Research Centre, University of St Andrews.

2016–2018. Eugene Falk Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

2012–2016. Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

2008–2012. Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

2007–2008. Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Arizona.

2001–2007. Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Arizona.

2001–2005. Institute for Advanced Studies Research Fellow, Philosophy, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University.

1999–2001. Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Yale University.

Education

Ph.D., 1999, Philosophy, Princeton University.

M.A., 1996, Philosophy, Princeton University.

M.A., 1993, Philosophy, Antioch University.

B.A., 1990, Biology and Chemistry, Antioch College.

Areas of Specialization: Metaphysics, Philosophy of Mind, Cognitive Science, Epistemology, Philosophy of Science.

Publications

Books

In Progress. *Replacing yourself* (provisional title) Under contract with Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

2020. *Was können wir wissen, bevor wir uns entscheiden?*, German translation of “What you can’t expect when you’re expecting”, with an Afterword by Sascha Benjamin Fink. Reclam Verlag.

2014. *Transformative Experience*. Oxford University Press. Translated into French, Japanese, Arabic.

Reviews: Marcus Arvan, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*; Krister Bykvist, *NDPR*; Krister Bykvist and H. Orri Steffánson, *Economics and Philosophy*, Irena Cronin, *Dialogue*; Rachel McKinnon, *Philosopher’s Magazine*; Richard Pettigrew, *Mind* (Extended Review); *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Symposium, with contributions from Elizabeth Barnes, John Campbell, and Richard Pettigrew; John Schwenkler, *Commonweal*; William Talbot, *Analysis* (Critical Notice); Amia Srinivasan, *Times Literary Supplement*.

2013. *Causation: A User’s Guide*. (With Ned Hall.) Oxford University Press.

Winner of the American Philosophical Association’s Sanders Book Prize for 2014.

Reviews: Raffaella Campaner, *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Max Kistler, *Metascience*, Tim Maudlin, *Philosophy of Science*, Georgie Statham, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.

Articles and Book Chapters

2024. (forthcoming) Das, N. and Paul, L.A. “Transformative Experience” *Oxford Bibliographies in Philosophy*, ed. Dana Bricken.

2024. Yildirim, I. and Paul, L.A. “From task structures to world models: What do LLMs know?” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*.

2024. Zoh, Y., Paul, L.A., and Crockett, M. “How the evaluability bias shapes transformative decisions,” *Synthese*.

2023. De Freitas J, Uğuralp AK, Oğuz-Uğuralp Z, Paul LA, Tenenbaum J, Ullman TD. “Self-orienting in human and machine learning,” *Nature Human Behavior*.

2022. Crockett, M.J. and Paul, L.A., “Distinguishing self-involving from self-serving choices in framing effects,” *Brain and Behavioral Sciences*.

2022. Bloom, P., & Paul, L.A. “Uncomfortable Decisions,” *Experimental Philosophy of Identity and the Self*, eds. Chen, Tobia, and Urmansky. Bloomsbury, 157-167.

2022. "Richard Pettigrew's *Choosing for Changing Selves*," *The Philosophical Review* 131, 230-235.
2022. Cushman & Paul, L.A. "Transformative Experience and Moral Psychology", *Oxford Handbook of Moral Psychology*, eds. John Doris and Manual Vargas, Oxford University Press (UK), 733-742.
2021. Chituc, V., Paul, L.A., & Crockett, M.J. "Evaluating transformative decisions." *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
2021. Ongchoco, JDK, Inchingolo, M., & Paul, L.A. "The lure of the self: How we misattribute our lesser likes to the "other" in perspective-taking and decision-making." *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
2021. "The paradox of empathy", *Episteme* 18(3), 347-366.
2021. "Small experience", *Texte zur Kunst*.
2021. "The first time as tragedy, the second as farce". Response to Barbara Montero's "What Experience Doesn't Teach: Pain-Amnesia and a New Paradigm for Memory Research" for the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 27 (11-12), 145–53.
2021. "Aspiring to be rational", comment for book symposium on Agnes Callard's *Aspiration*, in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 102 (2): 481-485.
2020. Paul, L.A., and Quiggin, J. "Transformative Education" for a special issue on transformation in *Educational Theory* 70(5), 561-79.
2020. "Who will I become?", in *Becoming Someone New: Essays on Transformative Experience, Choice, and Change*, eds. John Schwenkler and Enoch Lambert, Oxford Univ. Press., 16-36.
2020. "Whose Preferences?" *American Journal of Bioethics* 20(8), 65-66, comment on a target article by Emily Walsh, "Cognitive Transformation, Dementia, and the Moral Weight of Advance Directives."
2020. Précis and Replies to Paul Bloom, Krister Bykvist, Jenann Ismael, John McCoy, and Tomer Ullman, Symposium on Transformative Experience, eds. Sara Dellantonio and Achille Varzi, *Rivista Internazionale di Filosofia e Psicologia*, 313-67.
2020. "Transformative Choice and the Non-Identity Problem" (with Nilanjan Das), in *Derek Parfit's Reasons and Persons: An Introduction and Critical Inquiry*, ed. Andrea Sauchelli, Routledge, 187-208.
2019. Kryven, M., Niemi, L., Paul, L.A. , & Tenenbaum, JB. "Choosing the unimaginable: Social psychological factors in seeking transformative experiences." *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
2019. "As Judged by Themselves: Transformative Experiences and Endogenous Preferences" (with Cass R. Sunstein). SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3455421>.

2019. “Modal Prospection” (with Tomer Ullman and John McCoy), *Metaphysics and Cognitive Science*, eds. Alvin Goldman and Brian McLaughlin. Oxford University Press (US), 235-267.
2019. “Effective Altruism and Transformative Values” (with Jeff Sebo), in *Effective Altruism: Philosophical Issues*, eds. Hilary Greaves and Theron Pummer, Oxford Univ. Press (UK), 53-68.
2018. “Real World Problems” (with John Quiggin), *Episteme* 15(3): 363-382.
2018. “De Se Preferences and Empathy for Future Selves”, *Philosophical Perspectives: Philosophy of Mind*, eds. John Hawthorne and Jason Turner, 7-39.
2018. “Transformative Treatments” (With Kieran Healy), *Noûs* 52, 320-335.
2017. “Phenomenal Feel as Process” *Philosophical Issues* (Metaphysics) eds. Jonathan Schaffer and Ernest Sosa, 204-222.
2017. “Objective and Subjective Perspectives.” *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society A*, 180, Part 4, 51-2.
2017. “The Subjectively Enduring Self”, *Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Temporal Experience*, ed. Ian Phillips, Routledge, 262-71.
2016. “Who am I? The immersed first personal view”, In *Power and Limits of Artificial Intelligence* (Mattro, A. M., & Dehaene, S., eds), *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, 106–13.
2016. “A One Category Ontology.” (with a reply by Peter van Inwagen) In *Freedom, Metaphysics, and Method: Themes from van Inwagen*, edited by John A. Keller. Oxford University Press (UK).
2016. “First personal modes of presentation and the structure of empathy.” *Inquiry*. 60 (3):189-207. *Special Issue on the First Person*. With a reply by Josh Dever and Herman Cappelen in the same issue.
2016. “Experience, Metaphysics, and Cognitive Science.” *Companion to Experimental Philosophy*, edited by Justin Sytsma and Wesley Buckwalter. Blackwell (John Wiley and sons), 419-433.
2015. Précis of Transformative Experience and reply to symposiasts Elizabeth Barnes, John Campbell, and Richard Pettigrew. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 760-813.
2015. “Transformative Choice: Discussion and Replies.” *Res Philosophica* 92: 473-545.
2015. “What you Can’t Expect when you’re Expecting.” *Res Philosophica* 92: 149-170.
2014. “Experience and the Arrow.” In *Chance and Temporal Asymmetry*, edited by Alistair Wilson. Oxford University Press, 174–193.
2013. (With Ned Hall.) “Metaphysically Reductive Causation.” *Erkenntnis* 78 (1): 9–41.

2013. "Categorical Priority and Categorical Collapse." *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 87: 89–113.
2013. "Realism about Structure and Kinds." In *The Metaphysics of Science*, edited by Stephen Mumford and Matthew Tugby. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 203–221.
2012. "Building the World from its Fundamental Constituents." *Philosophical Studies* 158: 221–256.
2012. "Metaphysics as Modeling: The Handmaiden's Tale" *Philosophical Studies*, 160: 1–29.
2011. "The Counterfactual Analysis of Causation." In *The Oxford Handbook on Causation*, edited by Helen Beebe, Christopher Hitchcock and Peter Menzies. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2010. "Temporal Experience." *Journal of Philosophy* cvii (7): 333–359. Reprinted in *The Future of the Philosophy of Time*, edited by Adrian Bardon. New York: Routledge (2012).
2010. "Mereological Bundle Theory." In *The Handbook of Mereology*, edited by Hans Burkhardt, Johanna Seibt and Guido Imaguire. Munich: Philosophia Verlag.
2010. "The Puzzles of Material Constitution." *Philosophy Compass* 5: 579–590.
2010. "A New Role for Experimental Work in Metaphysics." *European Review on Philosophy and Psychology* special issue, edited by Joshua Knobe, Tania Lombrozo and Edouard Machery.
2007. "Constitutive Overdetermination." In *Topics in Contemporary Philosophy* vol. 4: Causation and Explanation, edited by Joseph Keim Campbell and Michael O'Rourke. Cambridge: MIT Press.
2006. "In Defense of Essentialism." *Philosophical Perspectives: Metaphysics*, 333-372, edited by John Hawthorne.
2006. "Coincidence as Overlap." *Noûs* 40: 623-659.
2004. "The Context of Essence." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 82 (1), 170-184. Reprinted in *Lewisian Themes*, edited by Frank Jackson and Graham Priest, Oxford University Press 2004.
2003. "Causation and Preemption." (With Ned Hall.) In *Philosophy of Science Today*, 100-130, edited by Peter Clark and Katherine Hawley, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2002. "Logical Parts." *Noûs* 36 (4), 578-596. Reprinted in *Metaphysics Volume v*, edited by Michael Rea, Routledge 2008.
2002. "Limited Realism: Cartwright on Natures and Laws." *Philosophical Books* 43, 244-253.
2001. "Comments on Mellor's Real Time II," *Essays on Time and Related Topics*, edited by L. Nathan Oaklander, Kluwer Academic Publishers.

2000. "Aspect Causation." *Journal of Philosophy* xcvi (4), 235-256. Reprinted in Collins et al., *Causation and Counterfactuals*, MIT Press 2004.

1998. "Keeping Track of the Time: an emended counterfactual analysis of causation." *Analysis* 58 (3), 191-198.

1998. "Problems with Late Preemption." *Analysis* 58 (1), 48–53. 1997.

1998. "The Worm at the Root of the Passions: poetry and sympathy in Mill's utilitarianism." *Utilitas* 10, 83–104.

1997. "Truth Conditions of Tensed Sentence Types." *Synthese* 111, 53–71. Reprinted in L. Nathan Oaklander (ed.), *Philosophy of Time: Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, Routledge 2008.

1994. (with S. C. Bernstein, S.K. Abrams and K. Leckrone) "TP-E14 Chloroisoithiocynatoquinolines as Fluorogenic HPLC Derivatizing Agents for Primary and Secondary Amines." *Journal of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Analysis* 11: (1) 61-69.

Edited Volumes

2005. *The Monist* 88 (4), Advisory Editor, issue on Ordinary Objects.

2004. *Causation and Counterfactuals*. Co-edited with Ned Hall and John Collins, with a coauthored Introduction. MIT Press.

2002. *Philosophy for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Reader*. Associate Editor, New York: Oxford University Press.

Work in Progress

Replacing yourself (provisional title) Under contract with Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

"As Judged by Themselves" with Cass Sunstein.

"Reverse engineering a self" with Tomer Ullman, Julian de Freitas, and Joshua B. Tenenbaum.

"Value by Acquaintance"

"Unlearning' across epistemically transformative events." Ongchoco, J.D.K., Jara-Ettinger, J., & Paul, L.A. (in prep).

Workshops, Conferences, and Events framed on my research

May 2023. Workshop on Transformative Experience and Risk, Stirling, UK.

November 2022. Artissima, a contemporary art fair in Turin themed around *Transformative Experience*.

August 2021. Conference on Intentional Transformative Experiences, University of Bern, Switzerland.

October 2019. Conference on Transformative Experiences: Theoretical and Applied Challenges. Stirling, UK.

June 2018. Workshop on themes related to Transformative Experience, Oslo, Norway.

June 2018. Workshop on Transformative Experience, Gothenburg, Sweden.

May 2018, Workshop on the Categories of Experience, Helsinki, Finland.

May 2017. Workshop on Modal Imagination, Antwerp, Belgium.

April 2017. Pacific APA Pre-conference on Transformative Experience, Seattle, Washington.

November 2016. Analytic Existentialism and Transformative Experience, Istanbul, Turkey.

Fall 2016. LMU Munich workshop on transformative experience, Center of Advanced Studies, Munich.

June 2016. Decision Making and Transformative Experience, St Andrews, Scotland.

June 2016. Society for Philosophy and Psychology Preconference on Transformative Experience and the Self, Austin, TX.

September 2015. Workshop on Preference Capture and Transformative Experience, with responses from Dan Haybron and Julia Staffel, Washington St Louis.

July 2015. Temporal and Causal Experience, Cologne, Germany.

October 2014. Analytic Existentialism and Transformative Experience, Ghent, Belgium.

September 2014. Transformative Experience, Annual *Res Philosophica* Conference, Dept. of Philosophy, Saint Louis University, Missouri.

Selected Honors and Grants

2022. Research Award, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (€65,000) for academic achievement, sponsored by Philosophy, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

2020. Dr. Martin R. Lebowitz and Eve Lewellis Lebowitz Prize for philosophical achievement and contribution (with Agnes Callard). Awarded annually by the Phi Beta Kappa Society and the American Philosophical Association.

2018. Distinguished Philosopher in Residence, Philosophy, NYU Abu Dhabi.

2016-2017. Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant (AUD \$475,000) for work on epistemically feasible choice procedures, 2016-2017. Co-Investigator with John Quiggin.

2014. American Philosophical Association Sanders Book Prize, for *Causation: A User's Guide* (with Ned Hall).

2014-2015. Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship.

2014-2017. John Templeton Foundation Grant, "The Experience Project," \$4.8 million. Co-Principal Investigator with Michael Rea and Samuel Newlands.

2014, March. Distinguished Faculty Visitor, Philosophy, Purdue University.

2011-2012. Fellowship, National Humanities Center.

2011. Visiting Fellowship, Australian National University.

2008. SBS Professorship, University of Arizona. (Declined.)

2005. SBS Professorship, University of Arizona.

Named Lectures and Notable Events

October 2024. Presidential Special Lecture, Society for Neuroscience, Chicago, Illinois.

June 2024. Keynote. 50th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Purdue University, Indiana.

November 2023. Roy Wood Sellars Lecture at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

March 2023. Humboldt invited lecture, International symposium for research award winners in Bamberg, Germany.

March 2022. Alexander Richman M.D. Lecture, The Academy for Medicine and the Humanities, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York City.

April 2021. Commencement Address to the Department of Philosophy's graduating class (philosophy majors), University of Michigan.

September 2020. Harvard Review of Philosophy, Annual Lecture, Harvard University.

January 2020. Edna Ullmann-Margalit Memorial Lecture, Federmann Center for the Study of Rationality, Hebrew University.

October 2019. McManis Lecture, Wheaton College.

May 2019. Barry Taylor and David Lewis Annual Philosophy Lecture, Melbourne University.

April 2018. Distinguished Philosopher-in-Residence Lecture, NYU Abu Dhabi.

September 2017. Killeen Chair Lecture, St Norbert College.

May 2017. Marc Jeannerod Lecture, University of Antwerp.

December 2016. “Who am I? Artificial Intelligence and the Self.” The Power and Limits of Artificial Intelligence, presented to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, The Vatican.

October 2016. Henry and Augusta Sievert Lecture, University of Iowa.

June 2016. Philosophy Public Lecture, University of Aberdeen.

June 2016. Bristol Institute for Research in the Humanities and Arts (BIRTHA) Annual Lecture, Bristol University.

April 2016. Dowd Lecture, Skidmore College.

November 2015. Bar Hillel Lectures, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

March 2014. Distinguished Faculty Lecture, Purdue University.

Selected Media

July 2023, Making Sense (episode 327). “Transformative Experiences: A Conversation with L.A. Paul,” with Sam Harris.

October 2022, Philosophy Bites, discussion of transformative experience, with Nigel Warburton.

August 2020, Interview about transformative experience (discussion with Agnes Callard), *Die Zeit*, by Elisabeth von Thadden.

May 2020, “L.A. Paul on Vampires, Life Choices, and Transformation”, *EconTalk* by Russ Roberts.

January 2020, “Transformative Experiences and our Future Selves”, *Mindscape* (no. 85), by Sean Carroll.

November 2019, interview on Transformative Experience, *New Philosopher* (vol. 26), by Zan Boag.

January 2019, “The Art of Decision-Making”, *The New Yorker*, by Joshua Rothman.

Spring 2018. “The Vampire Problem: A Brilliant Thought Experiment Illustrating the Paradox of Transformative Experience”, *Brainpickings*, by Maria Popova.

Summer 2017. “Transformative suffering”, *LA Review of Books*, Emmanuel Ordóñez Angulo. (August 11, 2017.)

Summer 2017. “A philosopher who studies life changes says our biggest decisions can never be rational.” *Quartz* (August 13, 2017), by Olivia Goldhill.

Spring 2017. "L. A. Paul on 'Transformative Experiences,'" *Rationally Speaking* with Julia Galef.

Spring 2017. Reddit Philosophy "Ask me anything", forum on transformative experience. (April 5th, 2017.)

Spring 2017. The Missing Shade of You. A dance and spoken word performance by the Logos Dance Collective, New York City, March 4th and 5th, 2017.

Fall 2016. The Digital Human, BBC Radio 4, on empathy for future selves.

Spring 2015. "Transformative Experience", *New Books in Philosophy*, Robert Talisse.

Spring 2015. The Philosopher's Zone, ABC Radio National (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) on transformative experience.

November 2014. Philosophy Talk (NPR). Hour-long segment on Transformative Experience.

2014. Cass Sunstein discusses five new books: "Prophets, Psychics and Phools: The Year in Behavioral Science" in Bloomberg View.

2014. "The Big Decisions." New York Times op-ed, David Brooks.

2014. Joshua Rothman explores TE and changes in sensory abilities in "Seeing and Hearing for the First Time, on YouTube" at The New Yorker.

"All the Same." Review of Transformative Experience by Amia Srinivasan in the Times Literary Supplement.

"How Should We Make the Most Important Decisions of Our Lives?" I debate transformative experience with Paul Bloom in Slate.

Oliver Burkeman in The Guardian: "Your friends know more about your life than you do, including when you might die."

"Is it Possible to Reason about having a Child?" Alison Gopnik in The Wall Street Journal.

"The Impossible Decision." Joshua Rothman at The New Yorker.

"This Column will Change your Life." Oliver Burkeman in The Guardian.

"Metaphysical." Interview by Richard Marshall at 3am Magazine.

"Is it Rational to Have a Child? Can Psychology Tell Us?" Tania Lombrozo at Psychology Today.

Conferences Organized

2019. Workshop on Understanding (Spring 2019).

2013–. Ranch M&E Workshop. (Annually.)

2009–2013. Carolina Metaphysics Workshop. (Annually.)

2004–2008. Arizona Ontology Conference. (Annually.)

Other Professional Activity

Yale Taskforce on Artificial Intelligence (YTAI), focused on determining the impact of AI on Yale's research, scholarship and operations and defining a strategic vision for AI at Yale.

Editorial Board, *Open Mind* (Ed. Samuel Gershman).

Delegate of the Press, Philosophy, Oxford University Press (USA), 2022–.

Advisory Board Member, Routledge *New Problems in Philosophy* book series.

Executive Committee, Society for Philosophy and Psychology, 2017–2021.

External committee member for Tyler Brooke-Wilson (MIT).

External committee member for Daniel Villiger (University of Zürich).

External committee member for Marco Inchingolo (Institut Jean-Nicod). PhD awarded 2021.

External committee member for Maria Doulatova (Washington University, St. Louis). PhD awarded 2021.

External committee member for Rebecca Chan (University of Notre Dame), PhD awarded 2017.

External committee member for David Rose (Rutgers University), PhD awarded 2017.

External committee member for Tobias Wilsch (Rutgers University), PhD awarded 2015.

External examiner, Departments of Philosophy at the University of Tasmania, Monash University, and the University of Sydney.

Selection Committee for the Sanders Prize in Metaphysics: 2011, 2014, 2017.

Served as a mentor at the 2015 mentoring workshop at the Society for Women in Philosophy in the UK in York, England.

Editorial Board, *Australian Philosophical Review*.

Editorial Board, *Philosophy and the Mind Sciences*.

Grant and fellowship proposals reviewed for the Australian Research Council, European Science Council, NSF, National Humanities Center, MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

Member, College of Reviewers, Canada Research Chairs Program (2012–).

Chair, Program Committee, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division (2012).

Program Committee, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division (2011–2013).

Program Committee, American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division (2009–2011).