

# Elizabeth Cantalamessa | Curriculum Vitae

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## AOS

Social and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Language, Aesthetics

## AOC

Philosophy of Law, Metaphysics, Disability Studies, History of Philosophy, Ethics, Feminist Philosophy, Philosophy of Science

## Employment

Assistant Professor of Philosophy. St. Bonaventure University; 2024-  
Philosophy Instructor. University of Houston-Downtown; 2015-2024.  
Philosophy Graduate Instructor. University of Miami; 2017-2023.  
Philosophy Instructor. University of Wyoming; 2015-2022.  
Philosophy Instructor. Miami-Dade Community College; 2019.

## Education

PhD Philosophy. University of Miami; 2024.  
Dissertation: Laugh Hard at the Absurdly Evil: Humor as Cultural Technology  
MA Philosophy. University of Wyoming; 2015.  
Thesis: The Limits of Models: Model Schemata in Disability Studies  
BA Philosophy. University of Wyoming; 2012.  
Minor in Disability Studies.

## Publications

Disability Studies, Conceptual Engineering, and Conceptual Activism. *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 2021. Volume 64, Issue 1, Pg. 46-75.

Fair Use, Appropriation Art, and Metalinguistic Negotiation. *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 2020. Volume 60, Issue 2, Pg. 115-129.

A Pragmatist Approach to Aesthetic Disagreement. Forthcoming in *Art and Philosophy*. Edited by Alex King. Oxford Press. Invited.

Rights of the Living Dead: Taylor Swift's Zombie Army. Forthcoming in *Taylor Swift and the Philosophy of Re-recording*. Edited by Brandon Polite. Routledge. Invited.

Humor. Forthcoming in *Introduction to Aesthetics*. Edited by Emmie Malone and Elizabeth Scarbrough. Routledge. Invited.

## Public-Facing Philosophy

**Our One Really Effective Weapon** *Trouble Begins Lecture Series*; 2022.

<https://marktwainstudies.com/tag/elizabeth-cantalamessa/>

**Democracy Should Be Sentimentalist Not Rationalist** *Aeon*; 2021.

<https://aeon.co/democracy-should-be-sentimentalist-not-rationalist/>

**Debating Bon Jovi's Cheesiness Will Enrich Your Conceptual Life** *Psyche*; 2020.

<https://psyche.co/ideas/debating-bon-jovis-cheesiness-will-enrich-your-conceptual-life/>

**Is This *Really* Art? Aesthetic Disagreement and Conceptual Negotiation** *Aesthetics For Birds*; 2018.

<https://aestheticsforbirds.com/2018/12/13/is-this-really-art-aesthetic-disagreement-and-conceptual-negotiation/>

## Teaching Experience

### *Sole Instructor*

**Ancient Philosophy.** University of Houston-Downtown, Spring 2024; in person.

**Contemporary Ethical Issues.** University of Houston-Downtown, Spring 2024; online.

**Meaning of Life.** University of Houston-Downtown, 2021-2024; in person and online.

**Intro to Philosophy.** University of Houston-Downtown, 2015-2023; in person and online.

**Social and Ethical Issues in Computing.** University of Miami, Spring 2023; in person.

**Philosophy of Language.** University of Miami, Fall 2022; in person.

**Modern Philosophy.** University of Miami, Spring 2019, Spring/Fall 2022; in person.

**19<sup>th</sup> Century Philosophy.** University of Miami, Spring 2022; in person.

**Philosophy and Technology.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2022; online.

**Philosophy and Disability.** University of Wyoming, Fall 2021; online.

**Philosophy and Comedy.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2021; online.

**Philosophy and Black Mirror.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2020; online.

**The Philosophy of Rick and Morty.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2019; online.

**Critical Thinking and Ethics.** Miami-Dade College, Spring, Summer 2019 in person.

**Philosophy of Love.** University of Miami, Summer 2018; online.

**Introduction to Philosophy.** University of Miami, 2016-2019; in person.

**Philosophy and Film.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2018; in person.

**Contemporary Moral Issues.** University of Miami, Fall 2018; in person.

**Philosophy of Love.** University of Wyoming, Summer 2017; in person.

**Introduction to Philosophy.** University of Wyoming, 2014-2015; in person. 2021; online.

### *Co-Teacher*

**Existentialism** (with Mark Rowlands). University of Miami, 2018; in person.

### *Teaching Assistant*

**Philosophy of Sex and Love.** University of Wyoming, 2015; in person.

**Introduction to Philosophy.** University of Wyoming, 2013- 2015; in person.

### *Non-Philosophy Instruction*

**Literacy, Dance, Film History and Theory.** The Terry Cooper Center for Creative Arts, Day Habilitation Center for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Laramie WY; 2012-2014.

## Awards and Grants

### *Awards*

**Emerging Scholar,** Mark Twain Circle of America; 2023-2026.

**Cheryl Hayes Travel Award,** American Society for Aesthetics Annual Meeting; 2023.

**Graduate Teaching Award,** University of Miami; 2021.

**Finalist Outstanding Adjunct,** University of Houston-Downtown; 2020, 2021.

**Cheryl Hayes Travel Award,** American Society for Aesthetics; 2021.

**Wyoming Institute for Disabilities Distinguished Alumna,** 2019.

**Outstanding Student Paper Award,** American Society for Aesthetics; 2018.

**Student Travel Award,** American Philosophical Association; 2018.

**GAFAC Travel Award,** University of Miami; 2017-2019.

**Outstanding Graduate Paper Award,** Florida Philosophical Association; 2017.

**Paul P Stock Award,** University of Wyoming; 2015.

### *Grants*

**Teaching Circle Diversity Grant,** University of Houston-Downtown; Spring 2021.

**Ethics and Philosophy Summer Internship,** University of Miami; 2017, 2018.

**Kriloff Travel Grant,** University of Miami; 2017-2019.

**Office of Research and Economic Development Grant,** University of Wyoming; 2014.

### *Fellowships*

**Quarry Farm Fellowship,** Center for Mark Twain Studies; 2022.

**Visiting Fellowship,** ConceptLab University of Oslo; 2020 (Cancelled due to COVID).

**Holmes Fellowship,** University of Miami Philosophy Department; 2016-2017.

**International Study Abroad Scholarship,** University of Wyoming; 2014.

### *Honorariums*

**Quarry Farm Graduate Workshop Honorarium,** Center for Mark Twain Studies; 2022.

**Trouble Begins Lecture Series Honorarium,** Center for Mark Twain Studies; 2022.

**Distinguished Graduate Speaker,** Rocky Mountain Philosophy Conference; 2022.

Invited Graduate Speaker, Southern Aesthetics Workshop at Auburn University; 2021.  
Department of Philosophy Honorarium, University of Wyoming; 2019.

## Presentations

### *Invited*

**Richard Rorty Society Panel**, Pacific APA. 2025 (projected)  
**Panel on Philosophy and the Arts**, Eastern APA. 2024  
**Panel on the Philosophy of Comedy**, Rocky Mountain ASA. 2023  
**Collecting Practices and Aesthetic Value**, ASA Diversity Discord Presentations; 2023  
**Panel on the Philosophy of Celebrity**, Central APA. 2023  
**Commerce and Communitarianism About Aesthetic Value**, Eastern APA; 2023  
**Laughter is the Most Effective Weapon**, Trouble Begins Lecture Series; 2022  
**Humor as Social Technology**, Rocky Mountain Graduate Conference in Philosophy; 2022  
**A Social Theory of Humor**, Steel Center Wed. Afternoon Discussions, Hendrix College; 2021  
**Laugh Hard at the Absurdly Evil: Humor and Normativity**, Southern Aesthetics Workshop; 2021  
**Inverting the Implementation Challenge: Lessons From the Disability Rights Mvmt.**, Arché Workshop on the Implementation Challenge for Conceptual Engineering (Online); 2020  
**Art as Conceptual Engineering**, Arché Philosophical Research Center for Logic (Online); 2020.  
AWG Aesthetics Workgroup, College of Charleston; 2018

### *Refereed*

**The Best Defense is a Good Offense: Mark Twain and the Art of Trolling**. Rocky Mountain ASA; 2024.  
**Panel on Taylor Swift and the Philosophy of Re-Recording**, American Society for Aesthetics Annual. 2023  
**Panel on The Philosophy of Modern Song**, World of Bob Dylan Conference, 2023  
**Panel on Anti-Aesthetic Egalitarianism**, American Society for Aesthetics Eastern Division; 2023  
**Panel on the Fiction/Nonfiction Divide**, British Society for Aesthetics Annual Conference; 2022  
**The Devil and Mark Twain**, The Ninth International Conference on the State of Mark Twain Studies; 2022  
**Humor as Social Technology**, Pacific Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics; 2022  
**Post-Truth Laughter**, Why and How We Give and Ask for Reasons, University of Hradec (Online); 2021  
**Two Pragmatist Approaches to Conceptual Engineering (w Jared Riggs)**. Trad. Entanglements of Pragmatism and Conceptual Engineering (Online); 2021  
**Deadheads and Dylan Fans: On the Goods of Disagreement**. Panel on Social Aesthetics, Pacific Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics (Online); 2021  
**Artistic Innovation and Aesthetic Disagreement**, XXVIII Edition of the SIUCC; 2019. Mountain-Plains Philosophy Conference; 2019. Eastern Division Meeting for the American Society for Aesthetics; 2019  
**Mockumentary as Revisionism**, British Society for Aesthetics: Documentaries and the Fiction/Nonfiction Divide; 2019  
**Conceptual Engineering and Public Institutions: On the Limits of Negotiation**, BPPA Masterclass on Conceptual Engineering; 2019  
**An Inferentialist Approach to Conceptual Engineering (w Jared Riggs)**, 11<sup>th</sup> Barcelona Workshop;

Issues in Conceptual Ethics and Engineering; 2019. Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Brandom; 2019

**Art by Fiat? Copyright, Ontology, and Metalinguistic Negotiation**, Legal Philosophy Workshop, Rutgers; 2018; Annual Meeting of the American Society of Aesthetics; 2018.

**Who is (Really) Disabled? Disability Studies, Verbal Disputes, and Metalinguistic Negotiation**, Workshop on Metaphilosophy with David Chalmers; 2018

**Disability Studies, Conceptual Ethics, and Metalinguistic Negotiation**, Virginia Tech Graduate Conference; 2018. Biannual International Social Ontology Conference; 2018. 4<sup>th</sup> GRS Barcelona; 2018. Purdue Inclusiveness Conference; 2018. Pacific Divisional Meeting of the American Philosophical Association; 2018. Northern Illinois Graduate Conference; 2017

**Perverts and Degenerates: Toward an Ontology of Appropriation Art**, FPA Session at the Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association; 2018. Florida Philosophical Association Annual Meeting; 2017. Texas Tech University Graduate Conference in Aesthetics; 2017

**A Modal Understanding of Authenticity**, The North American Sartre Society Annual Meeting; 2015

**Models for Change: A Mediating Model Analysis of the Social Model of Disability**, SWIP-Midwest Conference; 2015

**Rewriting the Preface Paradox**, New Mexico-Texas Philosophical Society, University of Houston; 2015

**In Search of Utopia: Emancipatory Pedagogy in the Films of Alejandro Jodorowsky** Society for Disability Studies Annual Conference; 2012

### *Volunteer*

**Artistic Innovation and Aesthetic Disagreement**, University of Miami Grad Student Visiting Weekend; 2020.

**Linguistic Activism**, Faculty Research Talk, University of Houston-Downtown; 2019.

**A (More) Optimistic View of Conceptual Engineering**, University of Wyoming Dept. of Philosophy; 2019

**On the Metaontology of Social Kinds**, University of Miami Metaontology Workshop; 2019.

**Model Schemata in Disability Studies**, Lecture for Critical Disability Studies EST550, Colorado State University; 2015.

### Service

Referee for: *Philosophical Studies*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Synthese*, *Inquiry*, *Journal of Social Ontology*, the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*.

Stoic Camp Counselor, University of Wyoming; 2014, 2015, 2022.

Organizer Graduate Conference in Social Philosophy, University of Miami; 2021.

Philosophy Teaching Circle, University of Houston-Downtown; 2021.

Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) University of Miami; 2018-Present.

Program Committee Member, Workshop on Science & Humanism, 2021.

Program Committee Member, Annual Meeting, American Society for Aesthetics (Online); 2020.

PhilPapers Area Editor, "The Concept of Disability."

Digital Annotations Pedagogy Panel, University of Houston-Downtown; 2019.

Graduate Student Representative, University of Miami; 2018-2019.  
Commenter, American Philosophical Association – Eastern Division, 2019.  
Commenter, Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference (RoME); 2015.  
Scientific World Conceptions, University of Vienna; 2015, 2022.  
Commenter, New Mexico-Texas Philosophical Society; 2015.  
Commenter, Western Canadian Philosophical Society Annual Conference; 2014.  
Summer School on Mathematical Philosophy for Female Philosophers, Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy; 2014.

## Dissertation

### Laugh Hard at the Absurdly Evil: Humor as Cultural Technology

Dissertation Committee: Simon Evnine (Chair), Aleksandra Hernandez, Mark Rowlands,  
Amie Thomasson (External)

Humor is weird; Richard Pryor used humor to challenge racist stereotypes, while the neighborhood bully uses derisive laughter to enforce their superiority. Philosophers generally define humor as a psychological response or emotion. However, humor often performs both psychological and communicative functions simultaneously. For example, a caregiver may tease a child that, “if you keep making that face it’ll stick that way” because they are frustrated at the same time their doing so reinforces norms about appropriate behavior. I introduce an alternative model of humor as a discursive tool for negotiating social norms and show how my account captures important cultural dimensions of humor that escape the traditional psychological accounts. I then argue that humor serves as an active component in both perpetuating and challenging oppressive social practices, not just a psychological response to them.

## References

**Amie Thomasson**, Dartmouth College  
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**C. Thi Nguyen**, University of Utah  
Contact: [c.thi.nguyen@utah.edu](mailto:c.thi.nguyen@utah.edu)

**Berit Brogaard**, University of Miami  
Contact: [bx1177@miami.edu](mailto:bx1177@miami.edu)

**Simon Evnine**, University of Miami (Dissertation Chair)  
Contact: [evnine@miami.edu](mailto:evnine@miami.edu)

**Andrew Pavelich**, University of Houston-Downtown (Teaching Reference)  
Contact: [pavelicha@uhd.edu](mailto:pavelicha@uhd.edu)