Ryan Simonelli

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ryansimonelli.com
philpeople.org/profiles/ryan-simonelli

Employment:

Zhejiang University. To begin fall 2026.
Assistant Professor (ZJU100 Young Professor)

Wuhan University. 2024-present.
International Research Fellow in Philosophy.

University of Chicago. 2022-2024.
Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow in the Humanities.

Education:

University of Chicago. PhD, Philosophy. 2015-2022.
Dissertation: *Meaning and the World* (available at ryansimonelli.com/research)
Committee: Michael Kremer (co-chair), Malte Willer (co-chair), Robert Brandom, James Conant, Jason Bridges

University of Pittsburgh. Visiting Scholar. 2019.

New College of Florida. BA, Philosophy. 2010-2014.

Oxford University. Visiting Student. 2013.

Areas of Specialty:

Philosophy of Language, Philosophical Logic, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence

Areas of Competence:

Philosophy of Mind, Epistemology, History of Analytic Philosophy, Indian Buddhist Philosophy

Books:

Blind Understanding: Inferentialism and the Case for AI Sapience (a book about conceptual understanding in current AI systems). Under contract with Springer. To be published in early 2027.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles (preprints available at ryansimonelli.com/research):

"Nominalism as Conceptual Phenomenalism: A Clarification and Defense of a Reading of Sellars." *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*. Forthcoming. A response to Chen Liang's "共相唯名论与现象唯心论(Nominalism about Universals and Idealism about Phenomena)."

"Bringing Bilateralisms Together: A Unified Framework for Inferentialists." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. Forthcoming.
https://doi.org/10.1080/00048402.2026.2706154

"An Act-Based Approach to Assertibles and Instantiables." *Ergo*. 2026.
https://doi.org/10.3998/ergo.9865

"Implication Space Semantics as Bilateral Incompatibility Semantics." *Topoi*. 2026.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-026-10429-y

"Sapience without Sentience: An Inferentialist Approach to LLMs." *Asian Journal of Philosophy*. 2026. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44204-026-00400-4. Lead symposium article, to appear with several response papers.

"In Defense of Immodesty." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*. 2026.
https://doi.org/10.1080/09672559.2026.2652226

"There is a Logical Negation: 'Yes,' 'No,' Both, and Neither." *Australasian Journal of Logic*. 2026. https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/ajl/article/view/9622. A response to Jc Beall's "There is No Logical Negation: True, False, Both, and Neither."

" 'Yes,' 'No,' Neither, and Both." *Synthese*. 2026. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-025-05385-w

"Supposition: No Problem for Bilateralism." *Bulletin of the Section of Logic*. 2025. https://doi.org/10.18778/0138-0680.2025.01. A response to Nils Kurbis's "Supposition: A Problem for Bilateralism."

"A General Schema for Bilateral Proof Rules." *Journal of Philosophical Logic*. 2024.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10992-024-09743-w

"How to be a Hyper-Inferentialist." *Synthese*. 2023. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-023-04382-1

"Why Must Incompatibility Be Symmetric?" *Philosophical Quarterly*. 2023.
https://doi.org/10.1093/pq/pqad078

"Considering the Exceptions: On the Failure of Cumulative Transitivity for Indicative Conditionals." *Synthese*. 2022. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-022-03854-0

"Sellars's Ontological Nominalism." *European Journal of Philosophy*. 2021.
https://doi.org/10.1111/ejop.12729

"The Normative/Agentive Correspondence." *Journal of Transcendental Philosophy* 3 (special issue: "Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Brandom"), no. 1. 2020. https://doi.org/10.1515/jtph-2019-0021

Edited Volumes:

Expressivism about Logic. Special Issue of *Topoi*, edited with Ulf Hlobil. Forthcoming. https://link.springer.com/collections/cfhddgiijh

Chapters in Edited Volumes (preprints available at ryansimonelli.com/research):

"Transcendental Linguistics and Picturing." For *The Sellarsian Mind*, ed. by Jeremy R. Koons. Under contract with Routledge.

"Meaning, Coherence, and Consequence: Rethinking the Philosophical Significance of the Sequent Calculus." For a Festschrift for Michael Kremer.

"Generalized Bilateral Harmony." In the *2023 Logica Yearbook*, ed. Igor Sedlár. College Publications. 2025. https://www.collegepublications.co.uk/logica/?00037

"Sellars's Two Worlds." In *Reading Kant with Sellars*, ed. M. Ranee and L. C. Seiberth. Routledge. 2025. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003336815

Book Reviews:

Review of *Belief, Inference, and the Self-Conscious Mind*, by Eric Marcus. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*. 2024. ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/belief-inference-and-the-self-conscious-mind/

Papers Under Review (drafts available at ryansimonelli.com/research):

"The Consequentiality of Explicitation." Revise and Resubmit at *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.

"Tweety's Revenge: A Problem for Theories of Default Reasoning." Revise and Resubmit at *Thought*.

"On the Definability of Strong Negation in Bilateral Logics."

Book Projects in Progress (some chapter drafts available at ryansimonelli.com/research):

Articulating Meanings: An Inferentialist, Proof-Theoretic Approach (a textbook presenting a formal framework for doing proof-theoretic and inferentialist semantics)

Linguistically Turned (a book for a broad philosophical audience motivating an account of conceptual understanding in terms of mastery of linguistic rules)

Papers in Progress (some drafts and presentations available at ryansimonelli.com/research):

"Does Anything Go? Structural Conservativity on the Pittsburgh and Bochum Plans"

"Properties without Problems"

"Against Conceptual Svabhāva"

"Pragmatic Accounts of Consequence," with Luca Incurvati

"Sellars's Hyper-Inferentialism"

"Sellars's Adverbialism about Content." For *Act-Based Propositions Throughout the History of Philosophy*. Special issue of *Philosophical Topics*, ed. Till Hoeppner. In progress.

Presentations ("*" indicates refereed presentation, all others invited)**:**

*"There Is No Symbol Grounding Problem." September 2026. New York University, Shanghai.

"Pragmatic Accounts of Consequence," with Luca Incurvati. July 2026. Bilateralism in Bochum. Ruhr University, Bochum.

*"Minimal Incoherence and Relevant Consequence for Inferentialists." July 2026. Directions in Relevance Logic 3. Ruhr University, Bochum.

"Sellarsian Sensa without Sellars's Late Dualism." June 2026. How Things Hang Together: An Inferential Conference on Wilfrid Sellars. Zhejiang University.

"Against Conceptual Svabhāva." May 2026. Workshop on Buddhist Metaphysics and Inferentialism. VinUniversity. Hanoi.

"There Is No Symbol Grounding Problem: A Hyper-Inferentialist Perspective." March 2026. New York University, Shanghai.

"Immodest Ambitions: Dummett, McDowell, and Brandom on the Promise of Semantics." January 2026. Philosophical Debates, Seminar Series. Ottawa University.

"Sellars's Hyper-Inferentialism." December 2025. University of Potsdam Colloquium in Theoretical Philosophy. (virtual)

"Do LLMs Make Assertions?" November 2025. AI: New Questions, New Challenges. Wuhan University. www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXjKBzi57OQ

"Sellars's Hyper-Inferentialism." November 2025. The 9th Symposium on Pragmatist Philosophy. Henan University.

"How to Be a Hyper-Inferentialist." November 2025. Zhejiang University.

Presentation on Sellars's "Language, Rules, and Behavior." October 2025. Rules, Functions & Categories – A Workshop on Wilfrid Sellars. Paderborn University.

"Determinate Thought." October 2025. Position as Proposition: New Work on Naming, Inferring and Judging. Berlin (organized by Potsdam University).

*"Sapience without Sentience: An Inferentialist Approach to AI." September 2025. Exploring Reasons, Rationality, and Rationalism. University of Zurich. (hybrid) www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kaOeC9q-EU

"Asserting, Denying, and Challenging: A Framework and a Puzzle." August 2025. XIV Workshop on Philosophical Logic. Buenos Aires.

"Properties without Problems." May 2025. Young Scholar Academic Salon Series. China University of Political Science and Law. www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N4vQFtggwQ

"In Defense of Immodesty." May 2025. Thinking with McDowell: the Third Academic Symposium on 'Phenomenology and the Pittsburgh School.' Fudan University.

"Sapience without Sentience: An Inferentialist Approach to AI." March 2025. National Taiwan University.

"Sapience without Sentience: An Inferentialist Approach to AI." March 2025. Wuhan University. youtube.com/watch?v=nocCJAUencw

*" 'Yes,' 'No,' Neither, and Both." February 2025. The Inaugural Symposium on Logic in the Arab World. Kuwait University.

*"There Is a Logical Negation: 'Yes,' 'No,' Both, and Neither." February 2025. The Florida Philosophical Association Conference. Flagler College.
youtube.com/watch?v=WDV1loXDaHo

"Semantic Norms and Their Worldly Correspondents." December 2024. University of Potsdam Colloquium in Theoretical Philosophy. (virtual)

*"Semantic Norms and Their Worldly Correspondents." November 2024. Beijing International Conference on Normativity. Beijing Normal University.

"The Consequentiality of Explicitation." September 2024. Thought, Reason, Logic. Concordia University.

*""Yes,' 'No,' Neither, and Both: Bilateral Systems for the FDE Family." September 2024. 7th World Congress of Paraconsistency. Universidad Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, Mexico.

"Inferentialism and AI." August 2024. Logic, Methodology of Science, and Its Applications. Emily Harvey Foundation. New York (hybrid).

"Some Thoughts on the General Form of a Linguistic Capacity." June 2024. Conference on James Conant's *The Logical Alien*. University of Patras, Greece.

"Meanings Done Right: An Act-Based Theory of Linguistic Meaning." January 2024. Haverford College.

"An Act-Based Theory of Assertibles and Instantiables." November 2023. University of Potsdam Colloquium in Theoretical Philosophy. (virtual)

*"A General Schema for Bilateral Proof Rules." June 2023. The 36th Annual Logica Conference. Teplá Monastery, Czech Republic.

"Consequence, Coherence, and Consequence Again: Rethinking the Philosophical Significance of the (Classical) Sequent Calculus." May 2023. Retirement conference for Michael Kremer. University of Chicago.

"Sellars's Two Worlds." December 2022. The International Sellars Colloquium. Virtual.

"Sellars's Ontological Nominalism." June 2021. The International Sellars Colloquium. Virtual.

*"Can the Content of Perception Be Conceptual?" June 2019. The Significance of Self-Consciousness – A Workshop with Matthew Boyle. Leipzig University.

*"Discursive Normativity, Agentive Modality, and Perceptual Knowledge." February 2019. Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Brandom. Marquette University.

*"Propositional Acts and Opaque Contexts." July 2017. Logic and Life – A Workshop with Irad Kimhi. Leipzig University.

*"Truth and Being in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*." July 2016. The Activity of Being – A Workshop with Aryeh Kosman. Leipzig University.

*"How to Tell the Skeptic to Get Lost." November 2013. The Florida Philosophical Association Conference. Stetson University.

*"Reformulating the Two Aspects of Justification." November 2012. The Florida Philosophical Association Conference. University of Central Florida.

Comments:

Comments on Jessica Anne Heine's "An Empiricist Account of Semantic Understanding." February 2026. Central APA. Chicago.

Comments on Mathias Haase's "Moral Constitutivism and Another Open Question." March 2025. Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China.

Comments on Markus Gabriel's "The Meaning of 'Existence' and the Contingency of Sense." April 2016. Contemporary European Philosophy Workshop. University of Chicago.

Interviews:

"Inferentialism." *Elucidations Podcast*. To be released.

"A Conversation with Ryan Simonelli." Interview conducted by L. Ralon. *Figure/Ground*, March 4, 2022: figureground.org/a-conversation-with-ryan-simonelli.

Honors and Awards:

Writing residency at the Poor Farm artist residency in rural Wisconsin for *Linguistically Turned*. (2025)

Nominated by the University of Chicago Philosophy Department for the Dean's Dissertation Award (2022)

University of Chicago Graduate Student Essay Prize in Philosophy (for "Considering the Exceptions") (2021)

The Hanna Holborn Gray Dissertation Completion Fellowship (2021)
Awarded to one student in the Humanities Division at the University of Chicago Each Year

The Gerrit and Edith Schipper Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Philosophy Paper in a Four-Year College or University (2012 and 2013), for "Reformulating the Two Aspects of Justification" and "Pointing Out the Skeptic's Mistake," subsequently published in *Florida Philosophical Review* 8, no. 1 (2013) and 9, no. 1 (2014), respectively.

Research Groups and Teams:

Core member of the *Research on Logical Expressivism* (ROLE) working group, a research group led by Robert Brandom and Ulf Hlobil focused on the development of substructural logics in the theoretical framework of inferentialism and logical expressivism (2019-present). (expressivelogic.wixsite.com/role)

Member of the *International Sellars Colloquium*, a monthly research group focused on the philosophy of Wilfrid Sellars, (2021-present). (wilfridsellars.org/isc)

Team member for "Research on the Concepts of Agency and Responsibility from a Constructivist Perspective" (建构主义视阈下的能动性与责任观研究) project. Chinese Social Science Grant, led by Shiwen Zhong, (2024-present).

Courses Taught:

As Sole Instructor (syllabi and handouts available at ryansimonelli.com/teaching):

Frontiers in Philosophy of Language: Inferentialist and Proof-Theoretic Approaches to Meaning. Wuhan University. Spring 2026.

Appearance and Reality: Perspectives Across Philosophical Traditions. University of Chicago. Spring 2024.

Introduction to Logic. University of Chicago. Winter 2023.
Authored textbook, available at: ryansimonelli.com/logic-textbooks

Doing Things with Words: A Venture into Speech Act Theory. University of Chicago. Winter 2023.

Philosophical Perspectives II. University of Chicago (Core curriculum). Winter 2023. Winter 2024.

Philosophy and Science Fiction. University of Chicago. Fall 2022.

Philosophical Perspectives I. University of Chicago (Core curriculum). Fall 2022. Fall 2023.

Consciousness and Language. University of Chicago. Spring 2020.

As Co-Instructor

(Topics in) Philosophy of Language (with Da Fan and Bo Chen). Wuhan University. Spring 2025. (*Taught two weeks on formal theories of truth, and two weeks on theories of properties and relations*)

As Course Assistant:

Elementary Logic (Michael Kremer). University of Chicago. Winter 2021.

Philosophy of Religion (Ben Callard). University of Chicago. Winter 2021.

Varieties of Philosophical Skepticism (James Conant). University of Chicago. Spring 2019.

Consciousness (David Finkelstein). University of Chicago. Fall 2018.

Cognition (Jason Bridges and Chris Kennedy). University of Chicago. Spring 2018.

Formal Logic (Aron Edidin). New College of Florida. Fall 2013.

Thesis Supervision and Committee Service:

B.A. Thesis Supervisor:

Yanxi Wu. Wuhan University. 2026. (on contextualism and belief ascriptions)
Yufei Li. Wuhan University. 2025. (on dynamic theories of epistemic modals)

M.A. Thesis Reader:

Bahareh Izadi. Concordia University. 2026. (on discursivity in Large Language Models)

Professional Service:

Referee:

Asian Journal of Philosophy; *Analysis*; *Australasian Journal of Logic*; *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*; *Ergo*; *Erkenntnis*; *Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy* ($\times 2$); *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*; *Journal of Logic and Computation*; *Journal of Logic, Language, and Information*; *Journal of Philosophical Logic*; *Kriterion*; *Linguistics and Philosophy*; *Logics*; *Open Philosophy*; *Philosophy & Technology*; *Philosophical Studies* ($\times 2$); *Review of Symbolic Logic* ($\times 2$); *Synthese* ($\times 2$); *Theoria*; *Topoi*

Languages:

English (native)

Mandarin Chinese (conversational proficiency; basic reading proficiency)

Popular Philosophy and Public Writing:

To Big Finities and Beyond. A book oriented towards a popular audience on big numbers, using the task of constructing them as motive for developing various ideas in mathematical logic. (in progress)

Talking in Circles: Serious Philosophical Dialogues on the Silliness of Philosophy. An illustrated book of dialogues about overarching philosophical systems that undermine themselves. Self-Published in 2014, available at ryansimonelli.com/talking-in-circles.

"Absolute Irony" (www.ryansimonelli.com/absolute-irony), a blog where I post about philosophy and related fields for a non-academic audience (2014-present).

2nd Place Winner of the 3 Quarks Daily Philosophy Prize, Judged by Huw Price (2014).

References:

Robert Brandom
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Malte Willer
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David Finkelstein (teaching)
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davidf.uchicago@gmail.com