**Chris Byron**

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**Areas of Specialization**

 Social and Political Philosophy, Critical Theory, Marxism

**Areas of Competence**

Modern Philosophy, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion

**Education:**

PhD Philosophy, University of Georgia, Expected Spring 2020
Dissertation: “A New Reading of Marx’s Theory of Exploitation: Assessment and Defense”
Present Committee: Beth Preston (Chair), Melissa Fahmy, Alexander Kaufman, Athanasios Samaras

MA Philosophy, University of North Florida, May 2014

 Thesis: “Critically Approaching Real Capabilities”

 Committee: Hans-Herbert Koegler (Chair), Mitchell Haney, Andrew Buchwalter

BA Philosophy, University of Central Florida, December 2012

 Honors Thesis: “A Marxian Concept of Human Nature in Defense of Alienation”

 Committee: Don Jones (Chair), Bruce Janz, Dwight Kiel

BA Political Science International Studies, University of Central Florida, May 2010

**Awards and Fellowship:**

2019 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, University of Georgia

2019 Joseph Bertram Gittler Dissertation Fellowship, UGA Philosophy Department, Dissertation Completion

**Publications:**

 **Articles:**

(2020) Byron, C, and Jesse Lopes, “Hume, Kant, and Feuerbach: Why the Anthropomorphic Critique Reveals a False Dilemma Between Naturalistic Atheism and Anti-Naturalistic Theism”, *Think*.

(2019) “Why God Is Most Assuredly Evil: Challenging the Evil God Challenge”, *Think*: 18 (51), 35-45.

(2016) “Marx’s Theory of Human Nature and its Relation to Essence and Alienation”, *Science and Society*: 80 (3), 375-394.

(2015) “A Critique of Axel Honneth’s Concept of Reification”, *Logos: A Journal of Modern Society and Culture*: 14 (2-3).

(2014) "Applying Species-Being to the Workplace", *Critique: A Journal of Socialist Theory*: 42 (2), 197-208.

(2014) "A Critique of Sean Sayers' Marxian Theory of Human Nature", *Science and Society*: 78 (2), 241-248.

(2013) "The Normative Force Behind Marx's Theory of Alienation", *Critique: A Journal of Socialist Theory*: 41 (3), 427- 435.

**Book Chapters:**

(2020) “Fifteen Million Merits and Fighting Capitalism: How Can we Resist?” In D. K. Johnson (Ed.), *Black Mirror and Philosophy*. Wiley Blackwell. [Forthcoming]

(2018) “Rust's Anti-Natalism: The Moral Imperative to Opt out of a Raw Deal.” In J. Graham, & T. Sparrow (Eds.), *True Detective and Philosophy* (pp. 42-53). Wiley Blackwell.

(2016) Byron, C., & Wood, N. “Money Gives Power... Well, a Run for its Money - Marx's Observations on why Capital and not Frank, is really in charge of the White House.” In J. E. Hackett (Ed.), *House of Cards and Philosophy*
 (pp. 152-163). Wiley Blackwell.

(2015) Byron, C., Kliman, A., & Freeman, A. “Physicalism and the Exploitation Theory of Profit are Incompatible: A Response to Robert Paul Wolff.” In N. Potts, & A. Kliman (Eds.), *Is Marx's Theory of Profit Right* (pp. 133-141). New York: Lexington Books.

**Book Reviews:**(2018) Review of *Theory as Critique: Essays on Capital*, by Paul Mattick, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2018) Review of *Knowledge and Ideology: The Epistemology of Social and Political Critique*, by Michael Morris, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2017) Review of *Political Freud: A History*, by Eli Zaretsky, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2016) Review of *Hope Without Optimism*, by Terry Eagleton, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2014) Review of *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, by Martha Nussbaum, *Journal of Critical Realism*, 14: pp. 105-108.

(2014) Review of *Dangerous Liaisons: The Marriages and Divorces of Marxism and Feminism*, by Cinzia Arruzza, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2014) Review of *Philosophy for Militants*, by Alain Badiou, *Science and Society*, 7: pp. 130-132.

(2013) Review of *Reification a New Look at an Old Idea*, by Axel Honneth, *Studies in Social & Political Thought*, 21: pp. 60-62.

(2013) Review of *Dialectics of Human Nature in Marx's Philosophy*, by Mehmet Tabak, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

(2013) Review of *Liberalism: A Counter-History*, by Domenico Losurdo, *Marx and Philosophy Review of Books*.

**Non Academic Publications:**

Why are You Voting for Clinton? A Letter to Liberal America, *Counterpunch*, March 23, 2016.

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/03/23/why-are-you-voting-for-clinton-a-letter-to-liberal-america/>

**Under Review:**

Critical Theories Misdevelopment of Marx’s Theory of Ideology – *Historical Materialism*

**Presentations:**

“Distributing Carts Before Horses, or the Presumptions of Distributive Justice.” Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum’s 19th annual conference: Race and Justice, Villanova University, October 10th-12th, 2019.

“Applying Species-Being to the Workplace.” UGA’s 4th Annual Philosophy Graduate Conference, University of Georgia, February 8th, 2014.

“The Normative Force Behind Marx’s Theory of Alienation.” Florida Philosophical Association 59th Annual Conference. Stetson University, November 16, 2013.

“The Normative Force Behind Marx’s Theory of Alienation.” Society of Women's Advancement in Philosophy's Annual Conference. Florida State University, March 29, 2013.

“The Normative Force Behind Marx’s Theory of Alienation.” Third Annual UGA-Graduate Philosophy Student Conference. University of Georgia, March 22, 2013.

**Teaching Experience:**

**Instructor of Record at the University of Georgia**

Spring 2019 Logic and Critical Thinking (2 classes)

Fall 2018 Logic and Critical Thinking (2 classes)

Summer 2018 Introduction to Ethics (1 class)

Fall 2017 Modern Philosophy (2 classes)

Spring 2017 Introduction to Philosophy (2 classes)

Fall 2016 Introduction to Philosophy (2 classes)

Summer 2016 Introduction to Ethics (1 class)

Spring 2016 Logic and Critical Thinking (2 classes)

Fall 2015 Introduction to Ethics (2 classes)

Summer 2015 Logic and Critical Thinking (1 class)

Fall 2014 Logic and Critical Thinking (2 classes)

**Online Instructor**

Fall 2019 Introduction to Philosophy (2 classes) University of North Florida

Fall 2019 Ethics and Society (2classes) Calhoun Community College

**Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Georgia**

Spring 2020 Biomedical Ethics: Writing Coach Instructor: Melissa Fahmy

Spring 2018 Logic and Critical Thinking Instructor: Ava Wright

Spring 2015 Introduction to Philosophy (4 sections) Instructor: Richard Winfield

**Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of North Florida**

Spring 2014 Contemporary Ethical Issues (3 sections) Instructor: Brian Bannon

Fall 2013 Contemporary Ethical Issues (3 sections) Instructor: Mitchell Haney

Spring 2013 Introduction to Philosophy (3 sections) Instructor: Jonathan Matheson

Fall 2012 Introduction to Philosophy (3 sections) Instructor: David Fenner

**Teaching Other:**Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 Participation in UGA’s Writing Intensive Program.

 -A pedagogy program, aimed at personal development in effectiveness as a writing coach for students in my discipline and pedagogical research more broadly.

**Professional Activities:**

Treasurer, UGA Graduate Philosophy Student Association, 2015-2016.

Treasurer, and Co-Organizer of the UGA Sixth Annual Graduate Philosophy Conference, April 16th, 2016.

Chair, Ryan Kemp’s “Kant and the problem of Moral Conversion.” *6th Annual SNAKS Meeting*, University of Georgia, February 20th, 2016.

Chair, Laura Papish, “Self-Deception and the Entrenchment of Evil.” *6th Annual SNAKS Meeting*, University of Georgia, February 20th, 2016.

Chair, Michael Joel Kessler, “Can Kantians Care about Unconscionability.” *6th Annual SNAKS Meeting*, University of Georgia, February 20th, 2016.

Chair, Noel West’s “Revenge, Execution, and Punishment.” *17th Annual Northeast Florida Student Philosophy Conference,* University of North Florida, February 15th, 2014.

Co-Organizer (with The Economic Society) for the presentation: *The Failure of Capitalist Production,* by Andrew Kliman. University of North Florida, April 12 th, 2013.

Chair, Taylor Cyr’s “Divine Sovereignty and Divine Commands.” *16th Annual Northeast Florida Student Philosophy Conference*, University of North Florida, March 2nd, 2013.

**Ethics Bowl**

Judge at: Mid Atlantic Regional Ethics Bowl, University of North Georgia, November 16th, 2019.

Judge at: Mid Atlantic Regional Ethics Bowl, University of North Georgia, November 17th, 2018.

Judge at: Eighteenth Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Competition, Jacksonville, Florida, February 27, 2014.

Participant in: University of Central Florida Ethics Bowl, 2009 & 2010

Placement: 3 out of 10

Participant in: Southeast Regional Ethics Bowl, 2009

Placement: 4 out of 25

Participant in: National Ethics Bowls, 2009

**Graduate Courses Taken:**

**At the University of Georgia:**

Pedagogy of Writing in the Disciplines Lindsey Harding Fall 2019-Spring2020

German for Reading Knowledge Inge DiBella Summer 2017

Deductive Systems Yuri Balashov Fall 2016

Seminar in Epistemology Beth Preston Spring 2016

Environmental Philosophical Melissa Fahmy Fall 2015

Independent Study: Badiou Brad Bassler Fall 2015

Aesthetics Brad Bassler Fall 2015

Seminar in Modern Philosophy Brad Bassler Spring 2015

Seminar in Epistemology Sarah Wright Spring 2015

Philosophy of Technology Beth Preston Spring 2015
Seminar in Ancient Philosophy Edward Halper Fall 2014
Seminar in Philosophy of Mind Beth Preston Fall 2014
Recent Political Thought Alexander Kaufman Fall 2014

**At the University of North Florida:**

Political Philosophy Andrew Buchwalter Fall 2013

Philosophy of Language Hans-Herbert Koegler Fall 2013

Themes and Methods Applied Ethics Mitchell Haney Spring 2013

Critical Theory Hans-Herbert Koegler Spring 2013

19th Century Philosophy Andrew Buchwalter Spring 2013

Ethics Brian Bannon Fall 2012
Themes and Methods in Practical Philosophy Andrew Buchwalter Fall 2012
Social Philosophy Hans-Herbert Koegler Fall 2012

**Dissertation Abstract:**

Since Marx published *Das Kapital*, nearly *everyone* has read his theory of exploitation as arguing that the capitalist class robs the working class of the surplus value or product they produce. Since robbery is wrong, people believe Marx was arguing that capitalism rests on an injustice. However, Marx also says that the capitalist’s acquiring of surplus value is “by no means an injustice.” This seeming contradiction led to an intense debate in Marx scholarship as to whether Marx thought capitalism was just. This debate involves such important commentators as G.A. Cohen, Allen Wood, John Rawls, Robert Tucker, Steven Lukes, Norman Geras, Gary Young, and Ziyad Husami. My dissertation aims to re-orient this debate by showing that the concept of exploitation has been misunderstood. I argue that these authors misinterpreted Marx’s ordered method of analysis and presentation and consequently failed to see that exploitation is about time management, not value creation, and that exploitation is independent of class relations. My argument for this historical misreading is supported by a close analysis of Marx’s recently published economic notebooks, which are absent from the conversation. In reinterpreting the concept of exploitation, I cast light on what Marx really thought about capitalism and its relationship to justice.

My dissertation is organized into seven chapters. The first four chapters are devoted to the critique of existing interpretations. Chapters One and Two explore the academic literature on Marx’s theory of exploitation. In these chapters, I demonstrate that interpreters of Marx unanimously believe that exploitation is about the capitalist class robbing the working class of some surplus they produce, and this robbery relates to the justness of capitalism. Chapters Three to Four are concerned with Marx’s method of analysis and presentation. I explicate this method in the context of Hegel’s philosophy and contemporary Political Economy. Subsequently, I show that Marx scholars have been misled by an erroneous interpretative paradigm, namely Historical Materialism, which caused them to confuse exploitation with the laws of commodity exchange, i.e., with the historically transient normative and judicial framework which capitalism both engenders and operates within.

The last three chapters develop a new interpretation of Marx’s concept of exploitation. In Chapter Five, I argue that exploitation deals with time and not with value. During the working day some our labor is necessary for the reproduction of society. Marx calls this *necessary labor time*. The work after this point goes toward augmenting capital, and Marx calls this *surplus labor time*. This surplus labor timeis a denial of possible free time in the service of capital, not capitalists. In Chapter Six, I then show that Marx believed that capitalist society replaces the earlier powers of priests and deities with capital. Tantamount to Feuerbach’s God, capital dominates us through time management. Capital has acquired this power via fetishization and reification. In a critique of workers’ self-directed enterprises, which contain no capitalists, I show that so long as there is a market for labor power, and reification and fetishization obtain, capital cannot be surmounted. Finally, in Chapter Seven, I demonstrate how my alternative reading of both Marx’s *Das Kapital* and his posthumously published notebooks differs from the classical reading of Marx and the Marx and justice debate.

**References:**

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