

Dr Alex Gregory

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Overview

Area of specialisation: Ethics, especially metaethics, moral psychology, wellbeing
Areas of particular competence: Political, Mind

I have long worked on the role that our desires (wants, preferences) play in explaining our choices, and on the role they might play in justifying our choices. This work culminated in my book, *Desire as Belief* (OUP, 2021), which recent reviews and commentaries have described as “ingenious”, and “impressive”.

I am now turning to a project on the rationality of happiness. This project will address questions such as: When is happiness rational, or fitting? Can the value of happiness make it rational to be happy? What comparisons are relevant when deciding whether to be happy about something? Does irrational happiness have less value?

I also have interests in questions about wellbeing, and about disability. In the longer term I intend to draw together my numerous interests and look at questions about the proper goal of public policy, especially the choice between preference satisfaction and subjective wellbeing.

Posts Held / Education

March 2022 – Present	Associate Professor, University of Southampton
September 2013 – February 2022	Lecturer, University of Southampton
August 2012 – August 2013	Lecturer, University of Reading
September 2011 – August 2012	Teaching Fellow, University of Reading.
October 2007 – February 2011	PhD at University of Reading (no corrections) Supervisors: Jonathan Dancy, Bart Streumer Examiners: Michael Smith, Philip Stratton-Lake
October 2010 – December 2010	Sessional Lecturer at University of Reading
October 2005 – September 2006	MA in Ethics and Political Philosophy, University of Nottingham. Pass with distinction.
October 2002 – July 2005	BA in Philosophy, University of Nottingham. Pass with 1st class honours.

Publications

- 2021 *Desire as Belief: A Study of Desire, Motivation, and Rationality*. Oxford University Press.
 ‘Ingenious’ – *Theoria*
 ‘Impressive’ – *Mind*
 “sophisticated and insightful ... engaging, witty and remarkably clear” – *Journal of Moral Philosophy*
 Review forthcoming in *Ethics*
- 2020 “Disability as Inability” in *The Journal for Ethics and Social Philosophy* 18:1 pp.23-48
- 2019 “Disability and Wellbeing” in Hugh LaFollette (Ed.) *The International Encyclopaedia of Ethics*.
- 2018 “Why do desires rationalize actions?” in *Ergo* 5:40.
- 2017 “Are all normative judgements desire-like?” in *The Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy* 12:1 pp.29-55
- 2017 “Why Verbal Reports of Desire May Mislead” in *Thought* 6 pp.241–249
- 2017 “Might desire be beliefs about normative reasons?” in Deonna, J. and Lauria, F. (eds) *The Nature of Desire*. Oxford University Press. pp.201-217
- 2016 “Reasons as Good Bases” in *Philosophical Studies* 173: 9 pp.2291-2310
- 2016 “Hedonism” in Fletcher, G. (Ed.) *The Routledge Handbook to the Philosophy of Well-Being*. Routledge pp.113-123
- 2014 “A very good reason to reject the buck passing account” in *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 92:2 pp.287-303
- 2013 “The guise of reasons” in *American Philosophical Quarterly* 50:1, pp.63-72
- 2012 “Changing direction on direction of fit” in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 15:5, pp.603-61

Selected work in progress:

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| “Structural Rationality in Desire.” | Under review. |
| “When is happiness fitting?” | Under review. |
| “The Rationality of Hedonic Adaptation” | Full draft. |
| “The Normativity of Fitting Happiness” | Full plan and presentation-ready. |
| And more. | |

Reviews and Talks

Reviews:

- 2015 “Review of Stephen Finlay’s *Confusion of Tongues*” in *Analysis* 75:4 pp.687-689
- 2013 “Review of Feldman, F. *What is this thing called Happiness?*” in *Mind* 122:487 pp.820-823
- 2012 “Review of Reisner, A. and Steglich-Petersen, A. (eds) *Reasons for Belief*” in *Notre-Dame Philosophical Reviews*. <http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/30554-reasons-for-belief/>
- 2009 “Slaves of the Passions? On Schroeder’s New Humeanism” in *Ratio* 22:2 pp. 250-257

Talks:

- “Structural Rationality in Desire”
Tartu (Estonia), December 2022
- “Disability and Adaptation”
Leeds, March 2022
- “When is happiness fitting?”
Southampton, December 2021
KCL, March 2021
Ryerson, October 2020
- “Are Disabilities Bad?”
Bern, December 2018
Southampton, Workshop on Disability and Wellbeing, March 2018
- “Desire and Uncertainty”
Nottingham, October 2018
- “Disability as Inability”
Roehampton University, January 2017
Southampton, Workshop on Disability, May 2016
Cumberland Lodge, LSE away weekend, November 2015
- “Why do desires rationalise actions?”
Luxembourg, Conference on Rational Capacities, November 2016
Berlin, Humboldt Normativity Colloquium, June 2016
St Louis, SLACRR, May 2016
- “Desire as belief vs. Non-Cognitivism”
Antwerp, Conference on Direction of Fit, November 2016
Berlin, Humboldt Normativity Conference, June 2016
Leeds, Center for Ethics and Metaethics, October 2014
- “Desire and Deliberation”
Oslo, European Normativity Network, November 2016
- “Aversion to Second Order Desires”
Reading, MA Masterclass, November 2015
Bogazici, Normativity in Action, May 2015
- “Normative Reasons as Good Bases”
Barcelona, European Normativity Network, November 2014
Oxford, Seminars in Moral Philosophy, October 2014

“Might Desires Be Beliefs About Normative Reasons?”

Geneva, conference on the nature of desire, June 2012

“A Very Good Reason To Reject The Buck Passing Account”

St Louis, SLACRR, May 2012

“A New Direction on Direction of Fit”

Oxford, British Society for Ethical Theory, July 2011

“The Moral Problems”

Manchester, Open Minds Graduate Conference, July 2010

Lund, Reading/Lund Philosophy Conference, June 2010

Teaching

Courses taught in whole:

Political philosophy (first-year course)	2018, 2019
PhD seminar	2017, 2018
Early Modern Philosophy (second-year course)	2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
Happiness and Wellbeing (third-year course)	2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020
Philosophy of Religion (various year groups)	2011, 2013, 2015, 2020
MA Research skills	2015
The Subject of Experience (third-year course)	2010

Courses taught in part:

(1/3) Philosophy of Religion (second-year course)	2016, 2017
(1/4) Ethics in a Complex World (all year groups)	2015, 2018
(1/2) Philosophy of Cognitive Science (third-year course)	2012
Teaching assistant every year 2007-2011, for some combination of: Values and Virtues, Contemporary Political Philosophy, Ethical Intuitionism, Moral Philosophy, Metaphysics and Religion	

PhD supervision:

Present:

Liam Livesley	On track.
Atus Mariqueo-Russell	On track to submit by August 2023.

Past:

St. John Lambert	Passed with no corrections in Summer 2021.
Elizabeth Ventham	Passed with minor corrections in summer 2018.
Will Sharkey	(Second supervisor). Completed in November 2017.

Other:

Numerous BA dissertations, MA essays and dissertations, Personal Tutees
 Examiner for PhD (Birmingham*1, Southampton*1)
 External examiner for MSC by research (Edinburgh*1)

Administration

Director of Programmes	August 2020-August 2023
Impact champion	August 2019 – January 2021 August 2016 – January 2019
Equality and Diversity officer	August 2019 – August 2020 January 2018 – January 2019
Lifelong learning officer	August 2019 – January 2021 August 2017 – January 2019
University Disability Steering Group	January 2018 – January 2020
Faculty Equality and Diversity Committee	January 2018 – August 2019
Faculty New Build Committee	2017 – 2019
Study abroad officer	January – August 2018
Internationalisation officer	January – August 2018 August 2014 – August 2015
Hiring Committee	June 2017
Postgraduate admissions officer	August 2016 – August 2017
Exams officer	August 2011 – August 2015
Outreach officer	August 2014 – January 2015

Other Achievements

Awards:

Nominee for Vice-Chancellors teaching Award	2017
US. nominee for “most engaging lecturer”	2015, 2017
Vice-Chancellors Teaching Award	2015
Fellow of the Higher Education Academy	2015
AHRC Doctoral Award (Full)	2007-2010
AHRC Masters Scheme Award (Full)	2005

Conferences organised:

Fitting and Rational Happiness	2022
With funding from The Aristotelian Society, the Mind Association, and the Southampton Ethics Centre	
Southampton Workshop on Disability	2016, 2018
With funding from The Southampton Ethics Centre	

Humboldt-Southampton Normativity Conference	2017
With funding from The Aristotelian Society, the Mind association, the Analysis trust, and the Southampton Ethics Centre	
British Society for Ethical Theory Conference	2015
Trust and Deception workshop	2010

Service to the Profession:

Reviewer for conferences: BSET, Chapel Hill Normativity Conference, Humboldt-Southampton Normativity Conference, and more	
Reviewer for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada	2023
Co-Author (1/3) on BPA/SWIP guidelines on accessible events	2018
Reviewer for Research Foundation – Flanders	2017
Treasurer for British Society for Ethical Theory	2014-2019
Committee member for British Society for Ethical Theory	2011-2014
Postgraduate Representative for British Society for Ethical Theory	2009-2011

Outreach and other external activities:

Ethical advisor for NHS SHIP8 CCGs Priorities Committee	2016-2019
Lifelong learning day talks, Southampton	2015, 2018
Health Research Authority Research Ethics Committee	2016-2017
“Colouring Reality”, City Art Gallery Southampton	2017
“Is my Genome result just for me?”, Salisbury Hospital	2016
“Egoism”, Philosophy Cafe, John Hansard Art Gallery	2014
“Moral psychology”, <i>Philosophy Now</i> radio show	2012
Talks to younger students at colleges: too numerous to list	2011-Present

Refereeing:

Books: De Gruyter, Oxford University Press, Palgrave Macmillan

Journals: Analysis; Australasian Journal of Philosophy; Canadian Journal of Philosophy; Dialectica; Ergo; Erkenntnis; Ethical Theory and Moral Practice; Ethics; European Journal of Philosophy; Inquiry; International Encyclopedia of Ethics; International Journal of Philosophical Studies; Journal of the American Philosophical Association; The Journal of Ethics; Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy; Journal of Philosophy of Disability; Kriterion; Mind; Mind and Language; Nous; Organon F; Philosophers’ Imprint; Philosophia; Philosophical Explorations; Philosophical Papers; Philosophical Quarterly; Philosophy and Phenomenological Research; Philosophy Compass; Politics, Philosophy & Economics; Ratio; South African Journal of Philosophy; Synthese; Theoria; Thought; Utilitas.

References

On request.