

## CHRISTOPHER P. NOBLE

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### EDUCATION

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**Villanova University.** Ph.D. Philosophy (2016)

**Villanova University.** M.A. Philosophy (2009)

**Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg,** Fulbright Research Fellow (2005-2006)

**Boston College.** B.A., Philosophy, German Studies (2005)

### ACADEMIC INTERESTS & LANGUAGES

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**AOS:** Early Modern Philosophy, History and Philosophy of Science

**AOC:** Classical Chinese Philosophy, Medieval Philosophy, Continental Philosophy, Ethics

**Languages:** English, German (speaking and reading), Latin (reading), French (reading)

### ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

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**Visiting Assistant Professor:** Philosophy, New College of Florida (2018-2019)

**Visiting Assistant Professor:** The Ethics Program, Villanova University (2017-2018)

**Adjunct Professor:** The Ethics Program, Villanova University (Fall 2013-Spring 2017)  
Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies, Rowan University (Fall 2016)  
Department of Philosophy, Villanova University (Fall 2009-Spring 2014)

### DISSERTATION

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#### *The Soul as Spiritual Automaton in Leibniz's Synthetic Natural Philosophy*

In Leibniz's mature philosophy, physical reality results from the perceptual activity of souls, immaterial substances that he characterizes as "spiritual automata." I argue that Leibniz joins the concept of the soul with that of a self-moving machine to capture three of features of their activity: their spontaneous perceptions unfold in an orderly, machine-like fashion; God designs their nature in advance; their perceptual activity does not require conscious self-awareness. This concept helps Leibniz propose a philosophical account of nature that is grounded in immaterial substances and overcomes limitations in competing accounts including Cartesian and Hobbesian mechanism, Spinozism, occasionalism, and Cambridge Platonism.

Committee: Dr. Julie Klein (Director), Dr. Helen Lang †, Dr. Stephen Napier, Dr. Mogens Lærke (CNRS/ENS-Lyon)

## AWARDS & GRANTS

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**Graduate Summer Research Fellow** *Villanova University* (Summer 2015, \$3,000)

- Conducted original archival research at the Leibniz Archiv in Hannover, Germany.

**Fulbright Research Grant.** *U.S. Department of State.* Freiburg, Germany (2005-2006)

- Research topic: “Gadamer’s Hermeneutical Model of Understanding.”

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Peer-Reviewed Articles:

- [3] “Leibniz on the Divine Preformation of Souls and Bodies.” *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science* [Accepted for publication and forthcoming]
- [2] “Self-Moving Machines and the Soul: Leibniz contra Spinoza on the Spiritual Automaton.” *The Leibniz Review* 27 (2017): 65–89.
- [1] “On Analogies in Leibniz’s Philosophy: Scientific Discovery and the Case of the Spiritual Automaton,” in *The Continuing Relevance of Leibniz*, ed. Charles Joshua Horn, special issue, *Quaestiones Disputatae*, 7, no. 2 (Spring 2017): 8-30.

### Peer-Reviewed Book Reviews:

- [2] Review of *Leibniz and the Environment* by Pauline Phemister, Routledge (2016). *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 100, no. 2 (2018): 232-35.
- [1] Review of *Hans-Georg Gadamer: Hermeneutics Between History and Philosophy: The Selected Works of Hans-Georg Gadamer: Volume I* edited by Pol Vandeveld and Arun Iyer, Bloomsbury (2016). *Phenomenological Reviews* <http://reviews.ophen.org/2018/03/05/hans-georg-gadamer-hermeneutics-between-history-and-philosophy/>

### Works in Progress:

“Spiritual Machines and Mechanisms in the Mature Leibniz” [article in preparation].

*Automata and the Soul from Descartes to Kant* [book manuscript in preparation].

## PRESENTATIONS

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### Refereed Conferences & Workshops:

- [18] “Leibniz on the Instincts of Machines of Nature and Souls.” *International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science* (HOPOS), University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands (July 2018)
- [17] “Automata in Spinoza’s Critique of Descartes in the *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*.” Summer School: *Collegium Spinozanum II*, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands (July 2017)

- [16] “Understanding the Past through Past Historiography: The Case of Leibniz.” Summer School: *Understanding the Past Today: Methodology in the History of Philosophy*. University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands, (June 2017)
- [15] “The Spiritual Automaton in Deleuze.” *Theorizing at Rowan Summer Symposium: Deleuze and Guattari, Here and There, Then and Now*, Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ (June 2017)
- [14] “The Soul as Spiritual Automaton in Spinoza and Leibniz.” *New York City Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy*, Fordham University, New York, NY (May 2017)
- [13] “Leibniz, Plastic Natures, and Unknowing Activity in the *Essais de théodicée* ¶403.” *Scottish Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of St. Andrews, St. Andrews, Scotland, (May 2016)
- [12] “On Analogies in Leibniz’s Philosophy: The Case of the Spiritual Automaton.” *The Continuing Relevance of Leibniz*, Franciscan University of Steubenville, Steubenville, OH (April 2016)
- [11] “The Soul as Principle of Individuation in Leibniz.” *Superorganisms, Organisms and Suborganisms as Biological Individuals (First Interdisciplinary Summer School on Individuality in the Life Sciences)*, Siggen, Germany (July 2015)
- [10] “The Soul as Spiritual Automaton: Leibniz’s Natural Philosophy and the Construction of Concepts.” *Leibniz-Scientist, Leibniz-Philosopher*, University of Lampeter, Lampeter, Wales (July 2015)
- [9] “Leibniz’s Critical Appropriation of Hobbesian Materialism.” *Working Group on Contemporary Materialism: Workshop on Transcendental Materialism*, Loyola University Maryland, Baltimore, MD (April 2015)
- [8] “‘Eminent Mechanism’ and the Soul in Leibniz,” *Leibniz Society of North America*, 8th Annual Meeting, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (November 2014)
- [7] “Leibniz’s Synthesis of Causal Powers and the Laws of Nature.” *Rotman Summer Workshop on Causal Powers*, University of Western Ontario, Grand Bend, ON, Canada (July 2014)
- [6] “Is Knowledge Necessary for Action? Leibniz and the Occasionalists.” *Leibniz Society of North America*, 7th Annual Meeting, Yale University, New Haven, CT (October 2013)
- [5] “Living Mechanism in Leibniz.” *Pittsburgh Summer Symposium in Contemporary Philosophy: Schelling and Naturphilosophie*, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA (August 2013)
- [4] “Does it Matter if Deleuze is a ‘Post-Critical’ Philosopher?” *Deleuze Studies*, New Orleans, LA (July 2012)
- [3] “Leibniz’s Seashore: Individuation and Confused Perception in Leibniz and Deleuze.” *International Philosophy Colloquium Evian*, Evian, France (July 2011)
- [2] “Leibniz’s Comments on Spinoza’s Philosophy.” *Leibniz Society of North America*, 4th Annual Meeting, University of Houston, Houston, TX (December 2010)
- [1] “Material Critique and Ideology: Marx and Althusser on Social Transformation.” *Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, Arlington, VA (October 2009)

### Invited Lectures:

- [4] “Leibniz on the Public Morality and Natural Theology of China.” *Ethics for Lunch Lecture Series*, Villanova University, Villanova, PA (November 2017)
- [3] “‘To Condemn Nothing and Profit from Everything Good:’ Leibniz and the History of Philosophy.” *Theorizing at Rowan Lecture Series*, Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ (March 2017)
- [2] “Leibniz and Technology: What Automata, Mills, and Calculators Teach Us About Cognition.” *Colloquium in the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, (October 2015)
- [1] “Leibniz’s Theory of Nature.” Graduate Philosophy Seminar: *The Rationalists* (Dr. Julie Klein), Villanova University, Villanova, PA (April 2015)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### New College of Florida, Philosophy Program

- *Modern Philosophy* (Spring 2019)
- *Comparative History of Philosophy* (Spring 2019)
- *Philosophical and Utopian Literature* (Spring 2019)
- *Medieval Philosophy* (Fall 2018)
- *Classical Chinese Philosophy* (Fall 2018)

### Villanova University, The Ethics Program

- *The Good Life: Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems* (Fall 2013–Spring 2018)  
23 sections in person; 1 section service learning; 2 sections online

### Villanova University, Department of Philosophy

- *Introduction to Philosophy* (Fall 2009–Spring 2014)  
17 sections
- *Logic and Critical Thinking* (Summer 2012)  
1 section

### Rowan University, Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies

- *World Philosophy II* (Fall 2016)  
1 section

### Teaching Assistant: Villanova University, Department of Philosophy

- *Introduction to Philosophy*, Dr. John Immerwahr (Spring 2009), Dr. Sally Scholz (Fall 2008)
- *History of Early Modern Philosophy*, Dr. Julie Klein (Spring 2008)
- *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Dr. Walter Brogan (Fall 2007)
- Villanova Writing Center Tutor (Fall 2006–Spring 2007)

## SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

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Philpapers.org Category Editor: “Leibniz: Philosophy of Science,” (November 2017–)

<https://philpapers.org/browse/leibniz-philosophy-of-science>

**Peer-Review Referee**, *Radical Philosophy Review* (November 2016)

**Judge, Delaware Valley Regional HS Ethics Bowl**, *Villanova University Ethics Program* (2014–17)

- Observed discussion of ethical case studies and posed questions to facilitate further reflection.
- Evaluated teams on their overall presentation and depth of understanding of the ethical issues.

**Graduate Student Representative to Faculty Search Committee**, *Villanova University Department of Philosophy* (2014–15)

- Reviewed all applications for open position AOS: Kant and participated in candidate interviews.
- Acted as liaison between the Philosophy Graduate Student Union and the search committee.

**Graduate Student Faculty Representative**, *Villanova University Department of Philosophy*, (2011–12)

- Represented Philosophy Graduate Student Union preferences at departmental faculty meetings.

**German Reading Group Leader**, *Villanova University Department of Philosophy*, (2008–09, 2012)

- Provided informal instruction in German reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary.
- Facilitated translation practice for graduate students preparing for German language exam.

**Philosophy Graduate Student Union Co-Chair**, *Villanova University Department of Philosophy*, (2007–08)

- Ran monthly meetings of the Philosophy Graduate Student Union.
- Organized 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Villanova Graduate Student Philosophy Conference: *Time, History, Memory*

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**Faculty Participant- Curriculum Development Workshop: *Catholic Social Teaching and Issues of Justice***, *Villanova University Office for Mission and Ministry* (May 2013)

- Participated in week-long faculty development workshop on Catholic Social Teaching.
- Incorporated resources from Catholic Social Teaching into syllabus for *The Good Life*.

**Student Participant- Collegium Phenomenologicum: *The Subject of Politics*** Citta di Castello, Italy (Summer 2009)

- Participated in three-week summer school on Political Philosophy

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Philosophical Association

HOPOS- The International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science

The Leibniz Society of North America

## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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**Dr. Julie Klein**

Associate Professor  
Department of Philosophy  
Villanova University, SAC 175  
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Villanova, PA 19085  
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**Dr. Justin E.H. Smith**

University Professor of Philosophy  
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**Dr. Mogens Lærke**

Chargé de recherche (CR1, HDR) / Senior  
Researcher  
Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique  
(CNRS)  
Institut d'histoire de la pensée classique  
(IHPC, UMR 5037)  
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**Dr. Miriam Wallace**

Professor of English and Gender Studies  
Humanities Division Chair  
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**Dr. Mark Doorley**

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**Dr. Stephen Napier**

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**Dr. John Immerwahr (Teaching)**

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Department of Philosophy  
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