

STEVE COYNE

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor (Limited Term) September 2021 – present
University of Toronto (Mississauga)

EDUCATION

PhD University of Toronto, Philosophy October 2021
Dissertation: “Liberal Theories of Political Authority”
Committee: David Dyzenhaus (chair), Arthur Ripstein, Joseph Heath

MA University of British Columbia, Philosophy August 2011
Thesis: “Semantic Arguments Against Moral Naturalism”
Advisor: Matthew Bedke

BA University of Calgary, Philosophy (Honours) April 2009

BSc University of Calgary, Applied Mathematics April 2009

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Moral and political philosophy, philosophy of law

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Bioethics, business ethics, philosophy of technology, early modern philosophy

HONORS AND AWARDS

Martha Lile Love Teaching Award (Honourable Mention) 2020
Departmental award.

Dean’s Graduate Superior Teaching Award 2018
One awarded per year across the University of Toronto.
Citation:
“Steven Coyne – who was nominated for his exemplary work teaching Issues in Philosophy of Law – is described by students as a caring and welcoming instructor who fosters peer-to-peer discussion and feedback in the classroom. In the words of one student: “Steven created an engaging learning environment, incorporating in-class discussions and group activities.” Another added: “I will never forget the course I took with Steven Coyne – it was the most enjoyable class in my four years at U of T.””

Ontario Graduate Scholarship 2015

PUBLICATIONS

“Coercion and Obligation as Exercises of Authority”. *Jurisprudence*. 2016

PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES

- “Civil Disobedience as Reason-Giving”
Canadian Philosophical Association, Edmonton AB, May 2021
- “Political Authority as Arbitrational Authority”
Western Canadian Philosophical Association, Calgary AB, October 2018
- “Authority and the Problem of Moral Reach”
Canadian Philosophical Association, Toronto ON, May 2017
- “Coercion and Obligation as Exercises of Authority”
Canadian Philosophical Association, Calgary AB, May 2016
World Congress of Philosophy of Law, Washington DC, July 2015
- “Managerial and Arbitrational Authority”
Canadian Philosophical Association, Ottawa ON, May 2015
Western Canadian Philosophical Association, Vancouver BC, October 2014
- “The Open Question Argument: An Argument for Non-Reductive Moral Naturalism?”
Western Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, Lethbridge AB, October 2011
- “Street’s Darwinian Dilemma for Naturalist Theories of Value”
Evolution of Morality and Morality of Evolution Conference, Oxford UK, July 2011
- “Do Referential Intentions Solve Moral Naturalism’s Twin Earth Problem?”
Society for Exact Philosophy Annual Meeting, Winnipeg MB, May 2011

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

As Course Instructor at the University of Toronto

Course	Sessions
Law and Morality (PHL271)	Summer 2020, Summer 2019, Summer 2018 x 2, Summer 2017
Issues in Philosophy of Law (PHL370)	Fall 2021, Winter 2020 x 2, Summer 2017, Summer 2016, Summer 2015
Bioethics (PHL281)	Summer 2021, Summer 2019
Introduction to Ethics (PHLA11)	Fall 2020
Advanced Seminar in Political Philosophy (PHLD78)	Winter 2021
Environmental Ethics (PHL273)	Summer 2020
Topics in Normative Ethics (PHL374)	Fall 2021
Critical Reasoning (PHL239)	Fall 2021

As Tutorial Leader at the University of Toronto

Course	Sessions
Bioethics (PHL281/PHLB09)	Winter 2021, Fall 2020, Winter 2019, Fall 2018, Winter 2017, Fall 2017, Winter 2017, Fall 2016, Winter 2016
Law and Morality (PHL271)	Fall 2020, Fall 2016, Summer 2016, Fall 2015, Summer 2014, Winter 2014

Political Philosophy (PHL265)	Winter 2016, Winter 2015, Fall 2014
Early Modern Philosophy (PHL210)	Fall 2017, Winter 2018 (full year course)
Introduction to Philosophy (PHL101)	Fall 2016, Winter 2017 (full year course)

Additional Teaching Experience

Lead Writing Teaching Assistant for the Philosophy Department at the University of Toronto (2020-21)

Module Developer and Facilitator for the Embedded Ethics Initiative for the Computer Science Department and Schwartz-Reisman Institute at the University of Toronto (2021-present)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Orientation Chair, Graduate Philosophy Students Association (2014)

Treasurer, Graduate Philosophy Students Association (2013 - 2016)

LANGUAGES

English: Fluent (Native)

French: Intermediate

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I argue that liberal theory faces a fundamental problem in accounting for the legitimate authority of the state. On the one hand, legitimate authority entails that the state has a right to the obedience of its citizens – a right that citizens not act on some of the considerations that they find morally important, and that they instead simply do what the state tells them to do. On the other hand, liberalism is committed to respect for autonomy, which entails that citizens have a moral obligation to act on their moral reasons as they understand them. To reconcile the two, liberalism must make sense of how a citizen could see themselves as required to refrain from acting on considerations that they believe to be morally relevant, and instead act on what the law demands of them. I frame a number of the leading theories of authority as attempts to explain how this is possible, including Rawls’s justice as fairness, Raz’s service conception of authority, and Darwall’s second-person standpoint. Ultimately, however, none of these theories appear to satisfactorily resolve the problem. This suggests that liberal states may have to do without political authority.

REFERENCES

Available upon request