

# J. ROBERT THOMPSON

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION  
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY  
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## EDUCATION:

Ph.D. in Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis, December 2004  
Dissertation Title: *Contexts, Intentions, and Content: The role of intentions in human semantic competence*  
Directors: Jesse Prinz and Philip Robbins  
M.A. in Philosophy, Washington University in St. Louis, December 1999  
B.A. in Philosophy, Carleton College, June 1997

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS:

2014-present: Associate Professor, Mississippi State University  
2008-2014: Assistant Professor, Mississippi State University  
2007-2008: Visiting Assistant Professor, Wabash College  
2005-2007: Visiting Assistant Professor, Rice University  
2004-2005: Visiting Assistant Professor, Denison University  
2003-2004: Visiting Lecturer, University of Pennsylvania

## AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION:

Philosophy of Mind and Language  
Philosophy of Cognitive Science

## AREAS OF COMPETENCE:

History of Philosophy (Ancient, Early Modern, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Analytic)  
Philosophy of Science (esp. Psychology and Linguistics)  
Epistemology  
Metaphysics  
Logic  
Applied Ethics

## **PUBLICATIONS:**

### PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS:

- [8] “Believe it or not: On multiplying classes of belief-like states” (forthcoming) in a special issue on “Mind and Folk Psychology”, *Studia Philosophica Estonica*
- [7] “Causing Trouble: Theories of Reference and Theory of Mind” (2016), *Philosophy of Science*, 83, 119-130.
- [6] “Ruling Out Behavior Rules: When theoretical virtues and empirical evidence collide” (2015), *Review of General Psychology*, 19(1), 14-29.
- [5] “Signature Limits in Mindreading Systems” (2014), *Cognitive Science*, 38(7), 1432-1455.
- [4] “Meaning and Mindreading” (2014), *Mind & Language*, 29(2), 167-200.
- [3] “Implicit Mindreading and Embodied Cognition” (2012), *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 11(4), 449-466.
- [2] “Speech Acts and Sub-Sentential Speech” (2011), *Critica*, 43(129), 65-91.
- [1] “Grades of Meaning” (2008), *Synthese* 161(2), 283-308.

### EDITOR-REVIEWED PAPERS:

- [3] “Defending Quine’s Naturalistic Ontology”, in C. Wrenn (ed.), (2008), *Naturalism, Reference and Ontology: Essays in Honor of Roger F Gibson*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Group.
- [2] “Still Relevant: H.P. Grice’s Legacy in Psycholinguistics and the Philosophy of Language” (2007), *Teorema*, 26 (2), 77-109.
- [1] “Reviving Communication and Convention”, in J. Saagua (ed.), (2005), *The Explanation of Human Interpretation*, Lisbon: Colibri Press.

### EDITOR-REVIEWED COMMENTARIES, ENTRIES:

- [3] “Narrative fictions” (2012), *American Journal of Bioethics: Neuroscience*, 3 (4), 84-85.
- [2] “On behalf of the Eliminativist” (2010), *American Journal of Bioethics: Neuroscience*, 1 (4), 39-40.
- [1] “Philosophy of Mind” in L. Cummings (ed.). (2009), *The Pragmatics Encyclopedia*, New York: Routledge, p. 353-354.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

### REFEREED PAPER PRESENTATIONS:

- [8] “Believe it or Not: On multiplying classes of belief-like states”, Mid-South Philosophy Conference, Memphis, TN, February 2014.
- [7] “Picking Perner’s Puzzle to Pieces”, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Atlanta, GA, April 2010.
- [6] “The Role of Intentions in Early Linguistic Development”, Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Pasadena, CA, June 2003.
- [5] “A New Defense of Intention-based Semantics”, Main Program, Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Atlanta, GA, December 2001.
- [4] “Reviving Communication and Convention”, Mind and Action III Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, May 2001.
- [3] “*Absolut* Communication”, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, New Orleans, LA, April 2001.
- [2] “The Citizen as Communicator”, Mid-South Philosophical Association, Memphis, TN, February 2001.
- [1] “Making Sense of Communication and Convention”, Central States Philosophical Association Conference, Lincoln, NE, October 2000.

### REFEREED POSTER PRESENTATIONS:

- [3] “What is a referential intention, that a person may grasp it?”, Future of Social Cognition, Bochum, Germany, June 2014
- [2] “Behavior Rules and the Logical Problem: Striking Back”, Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Providence, RI, June 2013  
\*\*Semifinalist for Poster Prize
- [1] “Do creator’s intentions determine artifact categorization?” (with Lloyd Komatsu, Jeremy Gottlieb, Rebekkah Kerner, and Kevin Lee), American Psychological Society Annual Convention, Washington D.C., May 1997.

INVITED PAPER PRESENTATIONS:

- [10] “The Humanities and Human Nature”, Mississippi State University, recognition as MSU Humanities Teacher of the Year, awarded by Mississippi Humanities Council, November 30, 2015
- [9] “Learning how to Read a Mind”, University of Southern Mississippi, November 13, 2015
- [8] “Abuses of Phylogeny”, Presidential Address, Mississippi Philosophical Association, February 2013
- [7] “Shaping Intentions: A Proper Fit for Early Communication”, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, New Orleans, LA, March 2011
- [6] “Believe it or Not? Explaining why children fail the standard false belief task”, University of Mississippi, March 2009; Mississippi State University, November 2007; Wabash College, March 2007
- [5] “Meaning and Mindreading: The Relationship between Theory of Mind and Semantic Competence”, Rice University Colloquium Series, January 2006
- [4] “Grades of Meaning”, Washington University Colloquium Series, April 2003.
- [3] “Communication without Intentions?”, Presented to the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology Research Group, Washington University, November 2001.
- [2] “Language, Thought, and Logical Form”, Presented to the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology Research Group, Washington University, February 2001.
- [1] “Removing the Distraction of Language: Intention-based Semantics, Models, and the Salvation of Representationalism”, Presented to the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology Research Group, Washington University, October 2000.

INVITED COMMENTS:

- [6] Invited commentator for 2015 Minds Online Conference, Social Cognition Session <http://mindsonline.philosophyofbrains.com/Sessions/session1/>
- [5] “You can point, but don’t touch: Comments on O’Madagain’s ‘Pointing, Demonstratives, and Indexicals: a semantic and developmental hypothesis’” Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, New Orleans, 2015

[4] “Racial terms: Comments on Anderson and Lepore’s ‘What did you call me? Slurs as prohibited words’” *Symposium on The Semantics and Ethics of Racial Language* University of Mississippi, 2013

[3] “Making a Case for P-Conscious Emotions? Comments on Scarantino’s ‘The Case for Unconscious Emotions’” Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Savannah, 2009

[2] “The End of the World as We Know it? Comments on Bongrae Seok’s ‘Folk Psychology and External Attribution’” Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Atlanta, 2007

[1] “Comments on Alastair Norcross’ ‘Rationality, Moral Status, and Marginal Cases’”, Mid-South, Memphis 2004

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE:**

### Leadership:

President, Mississippi Philosophical Association (2012-2013)

Vice President, Mississippi Philosophical Association (2011-2012)

Organized annual meeting of MPA at MSU, October 7-8, 2011

Budget: (roughly) \$4000; 13 speaker sessions

EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY AND ITS CRITICS: SURVEYS, NATURALISM, &  
TRADITION

Secretary, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (2014-present)

### Referee (Journals)

*American Journal of Bioethics: Neuroscience*

*British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*

*Canadian Journal of Philosophy*

*Cognitive Science\**

*dialectica*

*Erkenntnis*

*The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*

*Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*

*Philosophical Psychology\**

*Review of Philosophy and Psychology*

### Referee (Organizations)

Southern Society of Philosophy and Psychology\*

Mississippi Philosophical Association\*

\*multiple reviews

## **UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE :**

Faculty Senator, Robert Holland Faculty Senate (University-level) (2014-present)

Chair, Department Promotion and Tenure Committee (2014-present)

Member, Department Curriculum Committee (2013-present)

Undergraduate Program Coordinator (Philosophy) (Fall 2010-present)

Member, *Phi Beta Kappa* Committee (2008-present)

Member, Application Subcommittee on Students, Enrollment, Admission, and Financial Aid (Fall 2013)

Member, Society of Scholars (2008-present)

Senator, College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Senate (2009-2013)

Member, Mississippi State University Honor Code Council (2009-2011)

Member, Internal Review Committee: Department of Psychology (Spring 2010)

Chair, Search Committee in Moral Psychology (2013-2014)

Reviewer, Henry Family Research Fund Proposals (Spring 2014)

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

American Philosophical Association

Society for Philosophy and Psychology

Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology

## **AWARDS:**

MSU Humanities Teacher of the Year, awarded by Mississippi Humanities Council, 2015

MSU, College of Arts & Sciences, Researcher of the Month (October 2014)

MSU State Pride Award, 2010

Awarded Graduate Student Travel Stipend, Main Program, Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Atlanta, GA, December 2001

Dissertation Fellowship, Washington University, (2001-02)

University Fellowship, Washington University, (1997-98)

Graduated with Distinction on Thesis and in Major, Carleton College (1997)

Inducted into *Phi Beta Kappa* (1997)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

### Graduate Courses:

<i>Theories of Mind and Intentions</i>	Rice University
<i>Meaning and Mental Representation</i>	Rice University
<i>Mind, Language, and Reality</i>	Rice University

### Advanced and Intermediate Undergraduate Courses:

<i>History of Analytic Philosophy</i>	Wabash College
<i>History of Western Philosophy II</i>	MSU
<i>Seminar in History of Philosophy: Pragmatism after Quine</i>	Wabash College
<i>Philosophy of Science</i>	MSU; Wabash College
<i>Nature vs. Nurture: Recent Philosophical and Empirical Theories</i>	Wabash College
<i>Topics in Metaphysics and Epistemology: Skepticism</i>	Wabash College
<i>Philosophical Aspects of Cognitive Science</i>	MSU; Rice University
<i>Philosophy of Mind</i>	University of Pennsylvania; Denison University; Rice University
<i>Philosophy of Language</i>	Rice University
<i>Epistemology</i>	University of Pennsylvania; Denison University
<i>Business Ethics</i>	University of Missouri—St. Louis

### Topical Introductory Courses:

<i>Freshman Seminar: Skepticism about Morality and the External World</i>	University of Pennsylvania
<i>Introduction to Philosophy</i>	MSU; Washington University; Denison University
<i>Problems in Philosophy</i>	Washington University

### Historical Introductory Courses:

<i>Great Philosophers</i>	Washington University
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### Logic and Critical Thinking Courses:

<i>Elementary Symbolic Logic</i>	Wabash College
<i>Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking</i>	Washington University
<i>Introduction to Critical Thinking</i>	Webster University
<i>Introduction to Logic</i>	MSU

**REFERENCES:**

- William Bechtel      Professor of Philosophy, University of California-San Diego
- Richard Grandy      Carolyn and Fred McManis Professor of Philosophy, Rice  
University
- Steven Gross      Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University
- Anthony Lisska      Maria Theresa Barney Chair of Philosophy, Denison University
- William G. Lycan      William Rand Kenan, Jr. Professor of Philosophy, University of  
North Carolina-Chapel Hill
- Jesse Prinz      Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Graduate Center of  
the City University of New York
- Philip Robbins      Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Missouri-  
Columbia