

## HENRY TAYLOR

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**Specialisation:** Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Psychology, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Robotics.  
**Competence:** Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Language.

## EMPLOYMENT

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- Associate Professor. University of Birmingham. 2021-present
- Birmingham Fellow. University of Birmingham. 2017-2021.
- Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. University of Cambridge (2015-2017) and University of Birmingham (2017-2018).

## EDUCATION

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*Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education, University of Birmingham. 2019.*

*PhD Philosophy. University of Durham. 2015.*

*MPhil Philosophy, University of Cambridge. 2011.*

*BA (Hons, First Class) Philosophy, University of Durham. 2010.*

## PUBLICATIONS

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*For pieces single-authored by me, I have listed them without any author names. For the co-authored pieces, I have listed my co-authors after the journal name. Please consult the journal website for full details.*

*H-index: 14*

*i-10 index: 21*

### *Monographs*

- *Natural Kinds and The Science of Perception.* Under contract with *Oxford University Press.*
- *Cultural robotics.* Under contract with *Routledge.* With Masoumeh Mansouri.

### *Journal Papers*

- (2025) Surveys of the scientific community on the existence of extraterrestrial life. *Nature Astronomy.*  
With Peter Vickers (first author), Emma Gardiner, Catherine Gillen, Byron Hyde, Cyrille Jeancolas, Samantha Mitchell Finnigan, Julie Nekola Nováková, Henning Strandin, Ufuk Tasdan and Sean McMahon.
- (2024) Consciousness interpreted: an interpretation of Dennett's view of consciousness. *Philosophical Psychology.*

- (2024) A culture of their own? Culture in robot-robot interaction. *AI and Society*. With Masoumeh Mansouri.
- (2024) Development of a novel methodology for ascertaining scientific opinion and extent of agreement. *PLOS ONE*.  
With Peter Vickers (first author), Ludovica Adamo, Mark Alfano, Cory Clark, Eleonora Cresto, He Cui, Haixin Dang, Finnur Dellsén, Nathalie Dupin, Laura Gradowski, Simon Graf, Aline Guevara, Mark Hallap, Jesse Hamilton, Mariann Hardey, Paula Helm, Asheley Landrum, Neil Levy, Edouard Machery, Sarah Mills, Seán Muller, Joanne Sheppard, Shinod N. K., Matthew Slater, Jacob Stegenga, Henning Strandin, Mike T. Stuart, David Sweet, Ufuk Tasdan, Owen Towler, Dana Tulodziecki, Heidi Tworek, Rebecca Wallbank, Harald Wiltse and Samantha Mitchell Finnigan.
- (2024) Powerful qualities and the metaphysics of properties. *Philosophy Compass*.
- (2023) Does cultural robotics need culture? Conceptual fragmentation and the problems of merging culture with robot design. *International Journal of Social Robotics*. With Masoumeh Mansouri.
- (2023) Compound powerful qualities: properties as compounds of distinct powers and qualities. *Synthese*.
- (2023) Attention as a patchwork concept. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science*.
- (2022) Consciousness as a natural kind and the methodological puzzle of consciousness. *Mind and Language*.
- (2021) A new solution to the regress of pure powers. *Analysis*.
- (2020) Redundancy masking and the identity crowding debate. *Thought*. With Bilge Sayim.
- (2020) Fuzziness in the mind: can perception be unconscious? *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.
- (2020) The relation between subjects and their conscious experiences. *Philosophical Studies*.
- (2019) Letters lost: capturing appearance in peripheral vision reveals a new kind of masking. *Psychological Science*. With Bilge Sayim.
- (2019) Powerful problems for powerful qualities. *Erkenntnis*.
- (2019) Whales, fish and Alaskan Bears: interest-relative taxonomy and kind pluralism in biology. *Synthese*.
- (2019) Modal combinatorialism is consistent with S5. *Thought*.
- (2018) Powerful qualities and pure powers. *Philosophical Studies*.
- (2018) Is panpsychism simple? *Analysis*.
- (2018) Emotions, concepts and the indeterminacy of natural kinds. *Synthese*.
- (2018) Crowding, attention and consciousness: in support of the inference hypothesis. *Mind and Language*. With Bilge Sayim.
- (2018) Attention, psychology and pluralism. *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*.
- (2017) Powerful qualities, phenomenal concepts and the new challenge to physicalism. *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.
- (2017) Conceptual fragmentation and the rise of eliminativism. *European Journal for Philosophy of Science*. With Peter Vickers.
- (2016) Powerful qualities, the conceivability argument and the nature of the physical. *Philosophical Studies*.

- (2015) Against unifying accounts of attention. *Erkenntnis*.
- (2013) Is the grain of vision finer than the grain of attention? Response to Block. *Thought*.
- (2013) Is attention necessary and sufficient for phenomenal consciousness? *Journal of Consciousness Studies*.

#### *Book chapters (peer reviewed)*

- (forthcoming) What is 'culture' in cultural robotics? A framework for understanding culture in human-robot interaction. In: R. Hakli, S. Nyholm, M. Nørskov, S. Nørskov (eds). *Social Robots and Cultural Sustainability*. (Palgrave Macmillan). With Masoumeh Mansouri.
- (2019) A powerful new anomalous monism. In M. Guta (ed). *Ontology and Consciousness*. (Routledge).

#### *Letters and commentaries*

- (forthcoming). Natural kinds and the conscious/unconscious divide. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. With Andrew Bremner.
- (2025) Can an AI system be conscious? *AI and Society*.
- (2024) Cluster kinds and the developmental origins of consciousness. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*. With Andrew Bremner.

#### *Book Reviews*

- (2023) *Movements of the Mind* by Wayne Wu. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*.
- (2019) *Consciousness and Meaning* by Brian Loar. *Philosophy*.
- (2017) *From the Knowledge Argument to Mental Substance: Resurrecting the Mind* by Howard Robinson. *Times Literary Supplement*.
- (2015) *Sensory Integration and the Unity of Consciousness* by David Bennett and Christopher Hill (eds.) *Analysis*.
- (2013) *After Physicalism* by Benedikt Paul Göcke (ed.). *Mind*.

#### *Discussion of my work.*

These papers respond to, or heavily discuss, my work.

- Bayne, T., Frohlich, J., Cusack, R., Moser, J. and Naci, L. 2024. Infants and markers: reply to Taylor and Bremner. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*.
- Coates, A. 2021. Events and the regress of pure powers: Reply to Taylor. *Analysis*.
- Coates, A. 2021. Making sense of powerful qualities. *Synthese*.
- Giannotti, J. 2021. Pure powers are not powerful qualities. *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy*.
- Giannotti, J. 2021. The identity theory of powers revised. *Erkenntnis*.
- Block, N. 2013. Seeing and windows of integration. *Thought*.

#### **FUNDING AWARDS AND INDICATORS OF ESTEEM**

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- Project co-lead for a QR Research and Knowledge Exchange Grant (Enhancing Research Culture). £5,939. Project: *Demystifying Academia: a workshop series for postgraduates and early-career*

*researchers*. This project involves a series of 3 workshops geared toward improving access to theology and philosophy careers for postgraduates and early-career researchers, especially those from under-represented groups.

- Project lead for an AHRC Impact Acceleration Account Grant. £1,988. Project: *Philosophy Smash with Henry!* See below for more details.
- Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship (£100,982) from the Leverhulme Trust and Isaac Newton Trust. 2015-2018.
- Jacobsen Studentship (£8,000) from the Royal Institute of Philosophy. 2014-2015.
- Durham Doctoral Studentship (£35,196), University of Durham. 2011-2014.

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## PHILOSOPHY SMASH WITH HENRY!

I run a project that produces short (max ten minutes) video interviews with philosophers. They can be enjoyed by everyone, but they're designed for use in schools. They're mainly aimed at ages 9-13 (KS2-3) but can be used with older children too. Each one comes with a lesson plan and other materials:

<https://henrytaylorphilosophy.com/philosophy-smash-with-henry/>.

This project is funded by the AHRC (grant number AH/X003388/1) and in partnership with SAPERE P4C, an organisation that provides philosophy resources for schools (<https://www.sapere.org.uk/>).

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## MSc PROGRAMME DESIGN

I co-designed an interdisciplinary MSc called *Philosophy, Mental Health and Psychology* at the University of Birmingham, which launched in 2023. This programme features teaching from the Department of Philosophy and the School of Psychology. For more information, [see here](#).

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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

*(All materials available at: [henrytaylorphilosophy.com/public-outreach/](https://henrytaylorphilosophy.com/public-outreach/))*

### *Public Engagement Articles*

- (2024) Do aliens exist? We studied what scientists really think. *The Conversation*. Co-authored with Peter Vickers and Sean McMahon.
- (2024) Babies and animals can't tell us if they are conscious – but philosophers and scientists are working on an answer. *The Conversation*.
- (2024) Why robots can be culturally insensitive – and how scientists are trying to fix it. *The Conversation*. Co-authored with Masoumeh Mansouri.
- (2021) Sometimes, paying attention means we see the world less clearly. *Psyche/Aeon*.
- (2020) Visual illusion that may help explain consciousness: new study. *The Conversation*. Co-authored with Bilge Sayim.
- (2020) Blindsight: a strange neurological condition that could help us explain consciousness. *The Conversation*.

- (2019) What is a species? The most important concept in all of biology is a complete mystery. *The Conversation*.
- (2019) Microbiology and the species problem: response to Jerry Coyne. *Medium*.

#### *Discussion in the media.*

- (2025) Scientists now say MILLIONS of planets could be teeming with life. *MailOnline*. Article by Jonathan Chadwick, which discusses some of the work by Peter Vickers' team (which includes me) on extraterrestrial life.
- (2025) How studying babies' minds is prompting us to rethink consciousness. *New Scientist*. This is an article by David Robson, that discusses some of my work, amongst others.
- (2025) On her popular science YouTube channel, Sabine Hossenfelder has discussed some work by Peter Vickers' group (of which I am a member) on scientific consensus.

#### *Radio interviews and podcasts*

- (2025) I was a guest for *The RE Podcast*. The episode is called 'The one about AI'.
- (2024) I was a guest on *CapeTalk*, a radio station based on Cape Town.
- (2024) I was a guest on the *Fun Kids Science* podcast for *Fun Kids Radio*.
- (2024) An interview with me about robotics is part of *AI Futures*, a University-wide public engagement project at the University of Birmingham.
- (2023) I was a guest on the *Parker's Pensées* podcast. The episode is called 'The philosophy of mind vs the science of consciousness.'
- (2021) Philosophy and cognitive science. *Free Range Podcast*.
- (2021) I was a guest on the *Voice of Islam* radio station, I spoke about Aristotelian metaphysics and Islamic philosophy.
- (2020) I was a guest on the *Voice of Islam* radio station, I spoke about emotions and ethics.
- (2018) Will we ever be able to apparate? *Fantastic Research*. University of Birmingham podcast.

#### *Public events*

- (forthcoming 2026) I will give a public talk at Winterbourne house and gardens on whether robots are the future.
- (forthcoming 2026) I will be a panellist at a screening and panel discussion of *Ex Machina*, an Alex Garland film about robots, relationships, trust, and the Turing test.
- (2025) I gave a talk about robots to Christopher Whitehead Language College in Worcester.
- (2025) I spoke about robots at the University's *Ten Talks* programme. *Ten Talks* is a prestigious series of short TED-style talks by Birmingham academics.
- (2025) I gave a short talk on robots as part of the University of Birmingham's 125th Anniversary programme of events.
- (2025) *Are robots the future?* This was a public engagement event at Oxfam, in Swansea. Funded by the Royal Institute of Philosophy.
- (2024) *Can AI Fix Our Care Crisis?* This was a panel discussion of the impact of technology on the UK care crisis, held at The Exchange in Birmingham.
- (2024) *Pint of Science*. Pub-based event in Birmingham. Me and my colleague Andrew Bremner (from psychology) chatted about when infants become conscious.

- (2024) *Botbuilders!* This was a family-oriented event, where children built robots out of craft materials. It was based on my work on cultural robotics with Masoumeh Mansouri.
- (2023) *What is Consciousness? Two answers.* This was a public talk for The Philosophers' Yard, which is a philosophy public engagement philosophy organisation based in Birmingham. It took place at The Exchange in central Birmingham.
- (2022) *New Directions in the Science of Consciousness.* University of Birmingham. Public event featuring talks by Davinia Fernández Espejo (Birmingham), Jack Lyons (Glasgow) and Heather Browning (Southampton). Co-organised with Francesco Antilici. Sponsored by the Royal Institute of Philosophy.
- (2016) *What can zombies teach us about consciousness? Public lecture for The Royal Institute of Philosophy. It took place at Darwin College, Cambridge.*

#### *Events in schools*

- (2025). I talked about robots at Christopher Whitehead Language College and Sixth Form in Worcester.
- (2025). I gave a talk on animal rights at a *Philosophy for Schools* event. Several schools local to Birmingham attended.
- (2025) *Philosophy Smash! Philosophy Interviews in the Classroom.* This is part of an online webinar session called *Philosophy in the Classroom*, which is an event that forms part of the *Philosophy Matters* fortnight in March.
- (2025) *Philosophathon.* This is a philosophy-focussed competition for school children (years 9-13). I was a judge.

#### *Press releases, blogposts, and other*

- (2024) My work was featured in the University of Birmingham's *AI Futures* activity booklet. This is an artist-led activity booklet aimed at families, containing lots of fun artificial intelligence based activities.
- (2024) What does it mean for a robot to be cultured? *Imperfect Cognitions* (blogpost).
- (2024) Researchers propose a new way to identify when babies become conscious. Press release for the University of Birmingham.
- (2021) What is the relationship between your conscious mind and yourself? Blogpost for the University of Birmingham.
- (2021) Computational indeterminacy: what is your computer really doing? Blogpost for the *Intercontinental Academia Project*.

### **SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

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#### *Invited*

- (2025). My cultural robot: culture and robot design. University of Swansea.
- (2024). My cultural robot: culture and robot design. University of Cardiff.
- (2024). Should psychiatric kinds be eliminated? *Trauma, Depression, and Psychiatry*. University of Nottingham.

- (2023). Powerful qualities, empowering qualities, and colour. *John Heil @ 80*. University of Durham.
- (2023). Experiences are subjects instantiating properties at times. *The Nature of Conscious Subjects and Their Experiences*. University of Fribourg.
- (2022) The mind's eye: natural kinds and the science of working memory. *Natural Kinds in the Mind*. LSE.
- (2021) Compound powerful qualities. *The Mereology of Potentiality*. University of Durham.
- (2020) Attention: one thing or many? *Neural Oscillations Research Group*. University of Birmingham.
- (2019) Naïve Realism without disjunctivism. University of Oxford.
- (2019) Naïve realism without disjunctivism. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Seminar Series*. Keele University.
- (2019) Peripheral vision, attention and consciousness. Glasgow University.
- (2018) A powerful new anomalous monism. Umeå University.
- (2018) Modal combinatorialism is consistent with S5. *Dubrovnik Metaphysics Conference*.
- (2016) Powerful Qualities and Pure Powers. *Moral Sciences Club*. University of Cambridge.

#### Refereed

- (2025) The problem with honeybees: polymorphisms and the metaphysics of species. *British Society for the Philosophy of Science*. Glasgow University.
- (2022) What is it like to be a baby? Natural kinds and infant consciousness. *Philosophy of Science Association*. University of Pittsburgh.
- (2019) The mystery of the missing letter: resolving the identity crowding debate. *European Society for Philosophy and Psychology*. Athens, Greece.
- (2019) A new visual effect reveals the relation between attention and consciousness. *Joint Session of the Mind Association and the Aristotelian Society*. University of Durham
- (2018) Two notions of kindhood: is disjunctivism inconsistent with psychology? *European Society for Philosophy and Psychology*. Rijeka.
- (2018) Russellian monism without panpsychism *Eastern APA*. Savannah, Georgia. Commentator: Nicholas Rimell.
- (2017) Colour Constancy, Cerebral Achromatopsia and Perception as a Natural Kind. *European Society for Philosophy and Psychology*. University of Hertfordshire.
- (2017) Conscious experiences as Kimian Events. *European Congress of Analytic Philosophy*. LMU Munich.

#### TEACHING

##### Postgraduate researcher supervision (University of Birmingham)

| Date of supervision | Supervisory Contribution | Topic                  |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 2023-present        | 70%                      | Structure and dynamics |
| 2022-present        | 70%                      | Panpsychism            |

|              |     |                                 |
|--------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 2020-present | 70% | Consciousness                   |
| 2020-2025    | 40% | Mereology and time              |
| 2021-present | 20% | Information theory and selfhood |
| 2019-2024    | 20% | Mental health classification    |
| 2022-2023    | 60% | Anxiety                         |
| 2018-2023    | 60% | Metaphysics, modal logic        |
| 2018-2022    | 20% | Colour perception               |
| 2018-2022    | 20% | Perception                      |
| 2019-2021    | 60% | Perception, attention           |

*Teaching (University of Birmingham).*

| <b>Module name</b>                                                                | <b>Module level</b>       | <b>Teaching role</b>         | <b>Dates taught</b>   | <b>Approx. student numbers</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Philosophy of Mind and Language                                                   | Second year undergraduate | Co-convener                  | 2021-2023             | 89                             |
| Philosophy of Mental Health                                                       | Second year undergraduate | Co-convener                  | 2021-2023             | 110                            |
| Science and Nature                                                                | Second year undergraduate | Co-convener                  | 2021-present          | 55                             |
| Fantastic Beasts and how to Understand Them: topics in the philosophy of biology. | Third year undergraduate  | Co-convener                  | 2018-2020, 2021-2022. | 40                             |
| Philosophy of Mind                                                                | MA                        | Co-convener                  | 2019-2020, 2023-2024. | 25                             |
| Problems of Philosophy                                                            | First year undergraduate  | Lecturer and seminar leader. | 2022-2024             | >200                           |
| Philosophy of Language                                                            | MA                        | Convener                     | 2017-2020             | 14                             |



|              |                          |          |           |    |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----|
| Key Readings | First year undergraduate | Convener | 2019-2020 | 80 |
| Metaphysics  | MA                       | Convener | 2017-2019 | 20 |

**Other Teaching:** MA and undergraduate dissertation supervision (University of Birmingham)

#### PHD FUNDING PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Assessor and panellist for Midlands 4 Cities PhD funding applications. 2021-2022.

*Note: Midlands 4 Cities is an organisation that assigns AHRC funding to doctoral students across eight Midlands-based universities.*

#### ADMINISTRATION, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE, AND INDICATORS OF ESTEEM

##### *Learned Societies*

- Programme committee member for *British Society for the Philosophy of Science* (2025-present).
- Steering committee member for *Institute for Ascertaining Scientific Consensus*. This project involves over 80 universities across the world (the PL is Peter Vickers). The goal is to develop a new method for measuring scientific consensus. I am the advisor for the aspects of the project involving (the philosophy of) psychology. (2022-present).
- Fellow of the Intercontinental Academia Project 4 (*Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence*). This is a global network of interdisciplinary researchers, supported by the Institute for Advanced Study (UBIAS) network, focussed on intelligence and AI.
- Fellow of the Higher Education Futures institute (HEFi). 2019-present.
- Visiting Research Fellow, Washington University St Louis (Missouri). 2018.

##### *Admin roles. (University of Birmingham)*

- M4C unit lead. 2024-2025. This involves supporting staff and applicants in applying for PhD funding, and also assessing the applications.
- Programme lead for MSc *Philosophy, Mental Health, and Psychology*. (2023-present).
- Postgraduate Senior Tutor (2018-2020 and 2021-2023).
- Assessment and Progress Lead (2019).

##### *External Examining.*

- External examiner for the University of Oxford (PPE programme). 2025-present.

##### *PhD Examining.*

- External PhD examiner for King's College London, Nottingham University, Western University (Ontario) and Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele.

##### *Conference and Workshop organisation*

- *Consciousness in challenging cases: Toward an interdisciplinary methodology*. Sole organiser. Supported by the *Institute of Advanced Studies*. January 2021. University of Birmingham.
- *Objects and Properties: generating dialogue*. June 2018. University of Cambridge

- *E. J. Lowe memorial conference*. Joint organiser. July 2014. University of Durham.
- *Perceiving the light workshop*. Joint organiser. March 2014. University of Durham.
- *Attention and consciousness*. Joint organiser. June 2013. University of Durham.
- *Concept acquisition and language*. Joint organiser. July 2013. University of Durham.

## REFEREES

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor Tim Crane<br/>Central European University<br/><a href="mailto:timcrane@ceu.edu">timcrane@ceu.edu</a></li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor Peter Vickers<br/>University of Durham<br/><a href="mailto:peter.vickers@durham.ac.uk">peter.vickers@durham.ac.uk</a></li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor David Papineau<br/>King's College London and CUNY<br/><a href="mailto:david.papineau@kcl.ac.uk">david.papineau@kcl.ac.uk</a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor David Pitt<br/>California State University, L.A.<br/><a href="mailto:dpitt@calstatela.edu">dpitt@calstatela.edu</a></li> </ul>   |