

Welcome

Name: Adam Dorsey

PhD: Philosophy

Thesis Title: Community, Solidarity, and Otherness

Thesis Description:

The thesis will address a deficit in the field of deconstructionist ethics surrounding the relationship between otherness and community. I will argue that, although Critchley (2014) makes a compelling case for a Levinasian reading of Derrida, he over-emphasises the singularity of the other, and as a result is unable to provide a theorisation of the relationship between the other and the formation and enhancement of a community. I will examine Critchley's (2014) perspective in order to explore the perception that his Levinasian view is unable to account for the relationship between the other and community. I will address this gap in the current literature by arguing for a pragmatic turn that involves a fusion of Derrida (2009), Levinas (1999), and Dewey (2011). In order to pursue a 'pragmatic deconstructionism', I will conduct a comparative analysis of Derrida (2009), Levinas (1999), and Dewey (2011), so as to identify the strengths and weaknesses, the similarities and differences, as well as potential avenues for the proposed fusion.

Subsequently, I will formulate and critically assess 'pragmatic deconstructionism'. The assessment will allow me to explore how aspects of Dewey's pragmatism, such as the non-teleological concept of ethical and political growth, and the *agonistic* understanding of the relationship between the other and the individuals that form a community, can be seen to address the deficit in Critchley (2014).

In other words, the objective of the thesis is to produce a 'pragmatic deconstructionism' that is sensitive to otherness, whilst demonstrating the sense of solidarity needed for communal formation. In order to realise this objective the thesis will aim to 1) expose Critchley's (2014) Levinasian account, as unable to theorise the relationship between the other and the formation of ethical and political communities. 2) To examine Derrida (2009), Levinas (1999), and Dewey (2011), so as to establish a basis on which to formulate a 'pragmatic deconstructionism'. 3) To demonstrate how a 'pragmatic deconstructionism' is a needed improvement upon Critchley (2014).

Moreover, the thesis will help to combat the marked institutionalisation of subject divisions currently being witnessed in academic philosophy. For instance, whilst Wenman (2013), Critchley (2014), and Bernstein (2010), all provide explorations of *agonism*, deconstructionism, and pragmatism, little attention is paid to the overlap between these strands of thought. Inspired by the reconstructive efforts of Garrison (2016), Neubert (2009), and Reich (2009), the thesis will attempt to draw together these three fields, through the formulation of a 'pragmatic deconstructionism'.

Supervisors and Institution(s): Dr. P. O'Connor, Nottingham Trent University, Dr. E. McCaffrey, Nottingham Trent University & Dr. M. Wenman, University of Birmingham.

Publications (please include full details with page nos. or web links):

- <add bulleted list>

Scholarly / Public Engagement Activities:

year:

- Delivered the paper "*Dewey and Agonism: Reconstructing Democracy for a Conflictual World*" at the 'John Dewey and Critical Philosophies for Critical Political Times' international conference, University College Dublin, 20/10/17.

year:

- <add bulleted list>

Other Research Interests:

- Member of the Friedrich Nietzsche Society (2016-present)
- Critical theory



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- Post-structuralist political thought
- Philosophy of education
- Aesthetics
- War poetry