

# Tadd Ruetenik, Ph.D.

St. Ambrose University  
518 W. Locust St.  
Davenport, IA. 52803

315 Ambrose Hall  
(563) 333-6435

## Academic Positions

Professor of Philosophy (2016—present)  
Chair of the Philosophy Department (2013—2016)  
Associate Professor of Philosophy, St. Ambrose University (2011—)  
Assistant Professor of Philosophy, St. Ambrose University (2007—2011)  
Instructor in Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University (2006—07)  
Adjunct Instructor in Philosophy, Penn State Altoona (2003—06)  
Teaching Assistant, English and Philosophy, Purdue University (1998—2003)  
Teaching Assistant, Department of Philosophy, University of Toledo (1996—1998)

## Teaching and Research Interests

American philosophy, philosophy of religion, American literature, environmental ethics, critical thinking, existentialism

## Languages

English (native)  
Spanish (reading knowledge and speaking competency)  
Portuguese (reading competency)

## Education

Ph.D., philosophy, Purdue University (Philosophy and Literature Program), 2003  
M.A., philosophy, University of Toledo, 1999  
B.A., philosophy, Eastern Michigan University, 1995

## Publications

### BOOKS

*Bodies and Battlefields: Abortion, War, and the Moral Sentiments of Sacrifice.*  
CASCADE Books (2021).

*The Demons of William James: Religious Pragmatism Explores Unusual Mental States.* Palgrave Macmillan (2018).

### BOOK CHAPTERS

“Jane Addams, Expansive Masculinity, and the Fragility of the War Virtues,” in *Oxford Handbook of Jane Addams* (2023).

“Women Mystics and the Men Who Interpret Them: Seigfried’s Critique of William James,” in *Pragmatist Feminism and the Work of Charlene Haddock Seigfried.* Bloomsbury Press, (2022).

“Father Catich and the Clean Cut Christs: Re-Presenting American Values Through Religious Art,” in *Imagining Dewey: Artful Works and Dialogue about Art as*

*Experience*. Brill Press (2020).

“The SNL Impressionist: What Does It Mean to be ‘Spot On,’ and Does It Matter?” in *SNL and Philosophy*. Blackwell (2020).

#### ARTICLES

“Gloria Anzaldúa, Hybrid History, and American Philosophy,” in *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issue in Philosophy*. 20:2 (2021).

“Jonathan Edwards and the Vegan Elect,” in *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory*. 18:3 (2019).

“Victim Blaming and Victim Blaming Shaming,” *Cultura: International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology*. 16:1 (2019).

“Jane Addams, ‘Pragmatic’ Compromise, and Anti-War Pragmatism.” *The Pluralist*. 14:1 (2019).

“Transactionism, Dominionism, and Moral Exceptionalism in Animal Ethics.” *Contemporary Pragmatism*. 13 (2016).

“*Self-Reliance*, Plagiarism, and the Suicide of Imitation.” *Teaching American Literature* 8:1 (2015).

“Violence Hidden: The Unacknowledged Victims of Flesh-Eating Rituals.” *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*. Vol. 22 (2015).

“Beauty, Horror and Tragedy: The Idea of Hell in Jonathan Edwards and William James.” *Philosophy & Theology*. 26:1 (2014).

“Last Call for William James: Pragmatism, Piper, and the Fruits of Psychical Research.” *The Pluralist*. 7:1 (2012).

“Another View of Arthur Dimmesdale: A Profound Lesson in Scapegoating from *The Scarlet Letter*.” *Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*. Vol. 19 (2012).

“The Moral Equivalent of Meat: A Vegetarian Challenge to the American Omnivore.” *Contemporary Pragmatism*. 8:2 (2011).

“The First Church of Christ, Pragmatist: Christian Science and Responsible Optimism.” *Journal of Religion and Health*. 50:3 (2011).

“Animal Liberation or Human Redemption: Speciesism and Racism in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 17:2 (2010).

“Powers of Horror in the Writings of Henry James Senior.” *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 12:1 (2010).

“How am I not Myself? Philosophical Despair in *I □ Huckabees*.” *Film and Philosophy* 14 (2009).

“Does a ‘Cosmic Consciousness’ Exist? Immortality and Ethics in James’ Religious Pragmatism.” *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 42:3 (2006).

“Fruits of Health; Roots of Despair: William James, Medical Materialism and the Evaluation of Religious Belief.” *Journal of Religion and Health* 45:3 (2006).

“Social Meliorism in the Religious Pragmatism of William James.” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 19:3 (2005).

### **Courses Taught**

PHILOSOPHY: Philosophy of Religion; American Philosophy; Peace and Justice Studies; Philosophy and Literature; Philosophy of Sports; Senior Seminar in Philosophy; Comprehensive Pro-Life Ethics; Philosophy of Art; Environmental Ethics; Critical Thinking; Logic; Social and Political Philosophy; Philosophies of Life; Ethics.

ENGLISH: Great American Books; Great Narrative Works; Bible as Literature; Racial Consciousness; Introduction to Fiction; Sports and Literature; English Linguistics; Introduction to Composition; Basic Writing.

### **International Presentations**

Taiyuán, China

“From Puritanism to Pragmatism to Pluralism: A Brief History of American Philosophy” and “Jane Addams and the U.S. Conscience.” International Workshop on Classic Pragmatism. Shanxi University. September 2023.

San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

“Gloria Anzaldúa, Hybrid History, and the American Imagination.” Annual Conference of Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. March 2020.

Zaragosa, Spain

“The Many Faces of Globalism: Gloria Anzaldúa and the *Herida Abierta* of Colonialism.” International Conference for the Study of European Ideas. University of Zaragosa. July 2019.

Bogotá, Colombia

“The City and the Hive: Susanne Langer and William James on Overpopulation and the Nature of Humanity.” Philosophy of the City Conference. La Universidad de la Salle. October 2018.

Beijing, China

“Recent American Pragmatists.” Lectures at Beijing Normal University. May 2018.

Dublin, Ireland

“Demons, Mediums, and Seers: An Unorthodox Introduction to William James.”  
Summer Institute in American Philosophy. University College Dublin. June 2015.

### **Invited Presentations**

“Sports: The Flywheel of the Military Industrial Complex.” Applied Philosophy Lyceum.  
Middle Tennessee State University: September 2022.

“The Psychology of William James and Maine de Biran: Selective Interest and the  
Importance of Habits.” Research Colloquium: Posteriorities of Maine de Biran’s Physio-  
Spiritualism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. University of Regensburg (online): September 2020.

Chair comments on the symposium “Pacifism: For and Against” (Andrew Fiala, Bat-Ami  
Bar On, Robert Holmes). American Philosophical Association (Central). Chicago:  
February 2018.

“YOLO, Hedonism, and the Meaning of Life.” DMACC Arts and Sciences Lecture Series.  
Des Moines Area Community College: November 2013.

“William James and Psychological Research: A Reinstatement of the Vague into  
Epistemology.” Keynote Address: University of Iowa Graduate Philosophy Conference.  
November 2008.

### **Conference Presentations**

“Comments on Todd Lekan’s *William James and the Moral Life: Responsible Self-  
Fashioning*.” Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of American  
Philosophy. Denver: March 2023.

Comments on the session “Brokenness in Science and Metaphysics” (papers by Richard  
Gilmore and Parysa Clair Mostajir) at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for the  
Advancement of American Philosophy. Rollins College, FL: March 2022.

“‘The Violence Against Me Prevailed’: Communal Crisis and the Calling of Ambrose of  
Milan.” St. Ambrose of Milan: Constructing Community. Davenport, IA: April 2018.

“Jane Addams, ‘Pragmatic’ Compromise, and Anti-War Pragmatism.” Annual Meeting  
of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Indianapolis: March 2018.  
(Received the Ila and John Mellow Prize).

“Creationism, Darwinism, and the Pragmatism of William James.” American  
Philosophical Association (Central). Kansas City: March 2017.

“The End of Scapegoating; The End of Sin: A Scandalous Interpretation of John 8:1-11.”  
Colloquium on Violence and Religion. Saint Louis University: July 2015.

“Pets and Pragmatism: In Defense of Moral Exceptionalism.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Grand Rapids, MI: March 2015.

“Victim Blaming and Victim-Blaming Shaming.” Iowa Philosophical Society. Iowa State University: November 2014.

Comments on the session “Pragmatism and Asian Philosophy” (Gregory Isenberg, Charles Munitz). Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Denver: March 2014.

Comments on the session “William James and Habit” (James Hitt, Philip Mack, Sarin Marchetti). American Philosophical Association (Central). Chicago: February 2014.

“Conformity, Consistency, and the Ethics of Emerson's *Self-Reliance*.” American Philosophical Association (Central). Chicago: February 2014.

“Violence, Sacrifice and Meat Eating in the Judeo-Christian Tradition.” Colloquium on Violence and Religion. Northern Iowa University: July 2013.

“Slavery, Justice, and Sacrifice: Understanding Toni Morrison's *Beloved* with Genesis 22.” The St. Ambrose Conference on Bible and Justice. Davenport, IA.: May 2013.

Comments on the session “Traditional Public: Spatial and Cyberspatial” (Gregory Fahy and Kandace Kellett-Riddle) Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. New York: March 2012.

“Can There be Universal Salvation, or Must There be a Hell? William James Between Tragedy and Optimism.” American Philosophical Association (Eastern). Washington, D.C.: December 2011.

“The Book of James: Pragmatism and the Research of Gary Schwartz.” Symposium: In the Footsteps of William James. Chocorua, NH.: August 2010.

“Another View of Arthur Dimmesdale: A Profound Lesson in Scapegoating from *The Scarlet Letter*.” Colloquium on Violence and Religion. Notre Dame University: July 2010.

“The Moral Equivalent of Meat: Violence, Taste and the Psychology of the Omnivore.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Charlotte, NC: March 2010.

“Re-reading William James.” Plenary Panel Presentation. Summer Institute in American Philosophy. University of Oregon: July 2009.

“The Fierceness of God's Mercy: The Art of Jonathan Edwards' Sermons.” Fifth Annual Research Conference: Art as Experience. University of Toledo: April 2008.

“The Moral Equivalent of Meat.” Iowa Philosophical Society. Coe College: October 2007.

“Henry James and William James on Addiction and Social Responsibility.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Columbia, SC.: March 2007.

“Interpretation, Redemption and the Beloved Community: Understanding American Philosophy through the Work of Toni Morrison.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. San Antonio, TX: March 2006.

Comments on James Highland’s “James on Faith and the Diversity of Religious Standpoints.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Bakersfield, CA.: March 2005.

“Another View of Arthur: On The Notion of Scapegoating in *The Scarlet Letter*.” Northeast Regional Conference on Christianity and Literature. St. Joseph’s College (NY): October 2004.

“Powers of Horror in the Writings of Julia Kristeva and Henry James Senior.” International Association for Philosophy and Literature. Syracuse University: May 2004.

“Does a ‘Cosmic Consciousness’ Exist? James and the Reception of Foreign Experiences.” William James’s Philosophy of Mind: A Celebration of the Centennial of William James’s *Does ‘Consciousness’ Exist?* Oklahoma State University: April 2004.

Comments on Megan Mustain’s ‘Freedom as Improvisation: Ralph Ellison and the Jazz Aesthetic.’” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Birmingham, AL: March 2004.

“It Depends on the Liver: William James and William Mallock on the Defense of Religious Belief.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. University of Colorado at Denver: March 2003.

Comments on Shane Ralston’s “Deliberative Democracy as a Matter of Public Spirit: Reconstructing the Dewey-Lippmann Debate.” May 4th Graduate Philosophy Conference. Kent State University: March 2002.

“Disclosing William James: A Tough-Minded Philosopher Copes with Tender-Minded Women Mystics.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Portland, ME: March 2002.

“The Sickness unto Health: Kierkegaard and the Gift of Conversion.” Mideast Conference on Christianity and Literature. The University of Dayton: October 2000.

“Hidden Casualties of War: Repression and Subversion in Freud’s Dream Analysis.” Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture Conference. Binghamton University: April 2000.

“Voices of Unholy Union in *Doctor Faustus*.” Theory and Cultural Studies Symposium:

“Reconfiguring the Two Cultures.” Purdue University: April 2000.

“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry Mob: Jonathan Edwards and the Effects of Revivalist Sermonizing.” May 4th Graduate Philosophy Conference. Kent State University: April 2000.

“Kierkegaard’s Sacrifice of the Ethical.” May 4th Graduate Philosophy Conference. Kent State University: April 1999.

“The Religious Crises of Sartre and James.” Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Marquette University: March 1998.

### **Book Reviews, Encyclopedia Entries, and Online Articles**

“I am an American Philosopher: Tadd Ruetenik,” Interview. Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. [https://american-philosophy.org/i-am-an-american-philosopher-interview-series/i-am-an-american-philosopher-tadd-ruetenik/\(2022\)](https://american-philosophy.org/i-am-an-american-philosopher-interview-series/i-am-an-american-philosopher-tadd-ruetenik/(2022))

Review of *William James: Psychical Research and the Challenge of Modernity*. By Krister Dylan Knapp. *William James Studies* (2020)

“What Norms or Values Define an Excellent Philosophy of Religion?” *www.PhilosophyofReligion.org*. Ed. Wesley J. Wildman. (November 2018)

Review of *Giving Life. Giving Death: Psychoanalysis, Anthropology, Philosophy*. By Lucien Scubla. *Bulletin of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion*. 51 (2017).

Review of *Democracy and Leadership: On Pragmatism and Virtue*. By Eric Thomas Weber. *The Pluralist* 11:2 (2017).

*Comments on William James and Habit*. *William James Studies*. Vol 11 (2015).

Review of *Consistently Pro-Life: The Ethics of Bloodshed in Ancient Christianity*. By Rob Arner. *Toronto Journal of Theology* 27:2 (2011).

“Stephen Olin” and “Emanuel Gerhart.” Entries in *Dictionary of Early American Philosophers*. Ed. John R. Shook. Continuum Press (2011).

“Kierkegaard” and “Scapegoat.” Entries in *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*. Eds. David A. Leeming, Kathryn Madden, and Stanton Marlan. Springer Press (2010).

Review of *Jesus and Philosophy: New Essays*. Editor: Paul K. Moser. *Newsletter of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy* (2009).

Review of *The Meaning of Life*. By Terry Eagleton. *Teaching Philosophy* (2008).

“Christianity” and “Meliorism.” Entries in *Encyclopedia of American Philosophy*. Eds. John Lachs and Robert Talisse. Routledge Press (2008).

Review of *Ghost Hunters: William James and the Search for Scientific Proof of Life after Death*. By Deborah Blum. *Journal of Religion and Health* 46:3 (2007).

Review of *A Good Person in a World Made Better: Albert Eustace Haydon, 1880-1975*. Editors: W. Creighton Peden and John N. Gaston. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 43:1 (2007).

Review of *American Pragmatism: A Religious Genealogy*. By M. Gail Hamner. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 40:4 (2004).

Review of *The Nature of True Virtue: Theology, Psychology and Politics in the Writings of Henry James, Sr., Henry James, Jr., and William James*. By James Duban. *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 16:4 (2002).

Review of *William James on Radical Empiricism and Religion*. By Hunter Brown. *Metaphilosophy* 33:5 (2002).

Review of *The Varieties of Transcendental Experience: A Study in Constructive Postmodernism*. By Donald L. Gelpi. *Interpretation* (2001).

### **Podcasts**

“Dr. Sahar Joakim Interviews Dr. Ruetenik on Demons.” Interviews with Dr. Sahar Joakim Series on YouTube. (March 2, 2021.)

“Demons and Other Unusual Mental States.” Philosophy Bakes Bread Radio Show and Podcast. Ep78 (December 13, 2018)

### **University Committees**

Grievance (2021-2024)

Promotion, Tenure, and Standards (2018-2021)

Center for Teaching Excellence (2009-2012)

Baecke Humanities Fund (2008-2010)

Educational Policies (Fall 2008, replacement position)

### **Professional Membership and Activity**

Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (1998—present):

Coordinator for APA Central sessions, 2014—2018

Member of Program Committee, 2009

Member of Program Committee, 2022

Society of Philosophers in America (2020-present)

Colloquium on Violence and Religion (2010-2022)



William James Society (2014-present)

Secretary (elected), 2021-2023

Coordinator of the APA Central sessions, 2017—2020

Coordinator of the American Academy of Religion sessions, 2023-present

Iowa Philosophical Society

Hosted the 2011 meeting at St. Ambrose University