

# Vanessa de Harven

## *Curriculum Vitae*

University of California, Berkeley  
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### EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley, Ph.D. in Philosophy expected May 2012 (2000–present, with 7 semesters of leave for family and financial reasons)  
Pomona College, B.A. in Philosophy with honors (1987–1991)

### RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

AOS: Ancient Philosophy  
AOC: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Language

### DISSERTATION: “The Coherence of Stoic Ontology”

The elegance of Stoic metaphysics lies in its solution to the central problem facing any physicalist: how to account for immaterial entities. I uncover the unifying principles of Stoic ontology and show how the Stoics can countenance immaterial entities, such as thoughts and mathematical objects, consistently with their strong physicalist commitments. Seen aright, the mode of reality the Stoics called subsistence is no breach of physicalism. Rather, it makes the Stoic ontology principled, coherent and comprehensive.

Dissertation Committee: Klaus Corcilius, Dorothea Frede, A.A. Long

### LANGUAGES

French: fluent  
Spanish: fluent  
Ancient Greek: advanced reading  
Latin: advanced reading  
Italian: reading competence  
German: reading competence

### HONORS AND AWARDS

Graduate Division Travel Grant for Cambridge Classics Conference, UC Berkeley (2010-2011)  
Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley (2009-2010)  
Donald Davidson Travel Grant for Berkeley-London Conference, UC Berkeley (2008, 2010)  
Summer Stipend, Department of Philosophy, UC Berkeley (2007, 2008)  
Summer Language Study Grant, Department of Philosophy, UC Berkeley (2001)  
Ralph W. Church Fellowship, UC Berkeley (2000-2001)  
Departmental Citation in Philosophy, Pomona College (1991)

## PAPERS

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- “A More Sensible Reading of Plato on Knowledge in *Republic V*” (*under review*)
- “Everything is Something: How the Stoics Countenance Creatures of Mythology” (*under review*)
- “Everything is Something: Why The Stoic Ontology is Principled, Coherent and Comprehensive”

## PRESENTATIONS

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- “Everything is Something: How the Stoics Countenance Creatures of Mythology,” Myth and Literature in Ancient Philosophy, Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge (April 16, 2011)
- “Stoicizing with Peter van Inwagen,” UC Berkeley, Department of Philosophy Dissertation Seminar (Feb. 3, 2011)
- “Everything is Something: Why the Stoic Ontology is Principled, Coherent and Comprehensive,” Working Group in Ancient Philosophy, UC Berkeley (October 21, 2010)
- Comments on “Do We Use Demonstratives Intentionally?” by Kalbir Sohi (King’s College) Berkeley-London Conference (May 14, 2010)
- “False pleasures in the *Philebus*,” for Spring Symposium on Plato’s *Philebus* with Verity Harte (April 10, 2010)
- “A New Internalist Defense of Intentional Content, or Why are we all externalists anyway?,” Philosophy of Mind Working Group, King’s College (June 22, 2009)
- Translation of *Nicomachean Ethics*. I.13 for Spring Symposium on Socratic Intellectualism and the Method of Hypothesis with Rachel Barney (Feb. 14, 2009)
- Comments on “Are Individuals Proper Objects of Eros in the Symposium?” by Sasha Souchtchenko (University College London), Berkeley-London Conference (May 10, 2008)
- Guest lecture on *Euthydemus* for Phil. 160, Plato, David Ebrey (Sept. 13, 2007)
- Comments on “Are Plato’s Mathematical Intermediates Knowable?” by Hera Arsen (UC Irvine), Berkeley–Stanford–Davis Graduate Student Conference, April 14, 2007
- Guest lecture on Contextualism for Phil. 122, Theory of Knowledge, Branden Fitelson (May 3, 2003)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Primary Instructor

- Phil. 25A, Ancient Philosophy, UC Berkeley (Summer 2010 & 2011)

### Graduate Student Instructor

- Phil. 138, Philosophy of Society, John Searle (Fall 2010)
- Phil. 7, Existentialism in Literature and Film, Hubert Dreyfus (Fall 2009)
- Phil. 100, Philosophical Methods (Personal Identity), Alva Noë (Spring 2009)
- Phil. 132, Philosophy of Mind, John Searle (Fall 2008)
- Phil. 161, Aristotle, Dorothea Frede (Spring 2008)
- Phil. 160, Plato, David Ebrey (Fall 2007)
- Phil. 122, Theory of Knowledge, Branden Fitelson (Spring 2007)
- Phil. 125, Metaphysics, Branden Fitelson (Fall 2003)
- Phil. 25A, Ancient Philosophy, Andreas Anagnostopoulos (Summer 2003)
- Phil 25B, Modern Philosophy, Hannah Ginsborg (Spring 2003)
- Phil. 25A, Ancient Philosophy, John MacFarlane (Fall 2002)
- Phil. 133, Philosophy of Language, John Searle (Fall 2001)

### PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Head Graduate Student Instructor, Department of Philosophy, UC Berkeley (2010-11)
- Organizer, “Intelligibility, Divinity, and Thought in the Presocratics,” Spring Symposium with Prof. Patricia Curd of Purdue University, UC Berkeley (Feb. 19-20, 2011)
- Founder and Organizer, interdisciplinary Townsend Center Working Group in Ancient Philosophy, UC Berkeley (2002, 2003, 2007, 2010)
- Conference Organizer, Berkeley-London Conference, UC Berkeley (2009)

### OTHER EMPLOYMENT

- General Manager, Evolution Home Furnishings—Responsible for all front-end operations of small chain of home furnishings stores, including sales management and training, as well as back-end operations including human resources, buying and merchandise management (1997–2000, 2003–2006)
- Account Supervisor, Versaggi Biocommunications—Investor relations for biomedical companies (1995–1997)
- Senior Account Executive, Edelman Public Relations Worldwide—Business-to-business public relations (1991–1995)

### COURSEWORK (audited courses indicated by an \*)

#### **Contemporary Philosophy**

- Introduction to Logic (Paolo Mancosu)
- Philosophical Logic\* (John MacFarlane)
- Wittgenstein, *The Blue Book* (Barry Stroud & Hans Sluga)
- Perceptual Knowledge\* (Barry Stroud)
- Foundations of Political Philosophy (Samuel Scheffler)
- Hume (Richard Wollheim)
- Metaphysics: Objects & Properties\* (Geoff Lee)
- Quine (Donald Davidson)
- Theory of Meaning (John MacFarlane)
- Philosophy of Language\* (John Searle)
- Consciousness and Language\* (John Searle)

#### **Ancient Philosophy**

- Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*\* (Dorothea Frede)
- Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (Alan Code)
- Aristotle on Substance (Alan Code)
- Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (Christof Rapp)
- Aristotle’s Project of Investigation into Nature (Andrea Falcon)
- Plato’s *Theaetetus*\* (Dorothea Frede)
- Plato’s *Sophist*\* (Dorothea Frede)
- Plato’s *Phaedo*\* (Alan Code)

#### **Language Courses**

- Plato and Aristotle on Friendship (A.A. Long)
- Aristotle’s *Physics*\* (Alan Code)
- The Greek Workshop (UC Berkeley Classics)
- The Latin Workshop (UC Berkeley Classics)

REFERENCES

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Department of Philosophy  
Universität Hamburg  
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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT: “The Coherence of Stoic Ontology”

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Any thoroughgoing physicalist is challenged to give an account of immaterial entities such as thoughts and mathematical objects. The Stoics, who eagerly affirmed that only bodies exist, crafted an elegant solution to this challenge: not everything that is Something (*ti*) exists. Rather, some things have a derivative mode of reality they call *subsistence*: these entities are non-existent in that they are not themselves solid bodies, but they are nonetheless Something physical because they depend on bodies for their subsistence. My dissertation uncovers the unifying principles of Stoic subsistence, and shows how they can account for thoughts and other immaterial entities without running afoul of their physicalist commitments.

While all commentators agree that the Stoics posited Something as the highest category of being, they have failed to find a coherent physicalist account of Stoic ontology. For instance, (1) a canonical set of *incorporeals* (time, place, void, and what is sayable (*lekton*)) is well attested, but there is little agreement as to what these entities have in common as incorporeals, which makes the category look like an *ad hoc* collection of left-over entities. (2) It is also contentious whether the Stoics recognized other non-existent Somethings besides the incorporeals, namely a third category of Somethings that are *neither corporeal nor incorporeal*. (3) Finally, many commentators take the Stoics to countenance an additional class of *Not-Somethings* between Something and nothing at all, rendering Something incoherent as highest and most comprehensive genus.

I argue first that the Stoics developed a criterion for subsistence that applies to all immaterial Somethings, admitting only objective particulars. Further, I show that the Stoics recognized not just one but two kinds of subsistence: one that defines the *incorporeals* as a class, and the other what is *neither corporeal nor incorporeal*. The incorporeals can all be seen as *body-less*: entities that depend on body without themselves being bodies, much as the flow of traffic depends on cars without being identical to the cars. They are immaterial but still physical; in modern parlance, one might say the Stoics take incorporeals to supervene on bodies.

How such a thesis can apply to the Sayables, or *lekta* (roughly, the meanings of our words) is an especially thorny issue (for the Stoics as for contemporary philosophers of mind). If *lekta* subsist according to rational impressions (*logikai phantasiai*), themselves mental and corporeal, it is not clear how these novel semantic entities get the objectivity they need to do their hefty dialectical duties. How can mind-dependent entities be the propositional content shared in communication, have logical properties and play the role of facts? I argue that the Stoics had on offer a certain doctrine of *meaning as use* that can address these challenges without running afoul of the principle of *body-less* subsistence that unifies the incorporeals as a category. Stoic incorporeals are thus not a mere *ad hoc* collection of left-over entities (as impasse (1) above suggested), but a principled segment of reality.

What is neither corporeal nor incorporeal, which includes mathematical entities and creatures of fiction, is also a principled ontological category. Adducing broad textual evidence, I show that the Stoics recognized a mode of subsistence unique to products of thought, and that they categorized centaurs and points, for example, accordingly. Since the thoughts, texts and illustrations that give rise to such entities are themselves corporeal, the account remains true to their physicalist commitments. This second mode of subsistence, previously unnoticed by commentators, underwrites a comprehensive tripartite ontology, settling problems (2) and (3) above. The result is an elegant, modern-minded ontology with principled responses to problems that continue to engage physicalists today.