

# CONTINUUM

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## PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT

# BRIAN KEMPLE, PHD

## CURRICULUM VITAE

FOUNDER  
[Continuum Philosophical Insight](#)

RESEARCH FELLOW  
[Center for the Study of Digital Life](#)

## EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts 2010  
English Literature and Philosophy, Southern Catholic College,  
Dawsonville GA, *Summa Cum Laude*

Master of Arts 2012  
Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, Houston TX

Philosophiae Doctor 2016  
Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, Houston TX  
*Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition*  
Director: John Deely  
Advisers: John Hittinger (co-director), Mirela Oliva



## Languages

Reading: Latin and German  
Translation: Medieval Latin

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

In addition to my institutional teaching experience listed below, I have spent many years as a private educator, including tutoring but since 2018 with a focus on individual philosophical education for those who seek to develop the habits of critical reflection. Additionally, I teach courses to small groups of all age groups from high school up through retirement. In all cases, my teaching is oriented towards evoking the right questions and showing how to ask them in the right way.

### Lyceum Institute, 2019— | Online

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#### Description:

Among the services provided by Continuum is the Lyceum Institute, an online platform featuring several educational projects, including a medieval-style *quaestiones disputatae* format, language-learning groups, and regularly-scheduled philosophical seminars. The seminars run for 8 weeks and include a 20-40 minute recorded lecture, week-long online chat discussions, and a 45-60 minute discussion session conducted via video chat.

#### Seminars taught:

Summer 2019 – Aquinas' Cosmological Vision  
Summer 2019 – Heidegger's Phenomenological Method

Fall 2019 – Retrieving Thomistic Psychology  
 Fall 2019 – Semiotics – An Introduction  
 Winter 2020 – Introduction to Philosophical Thinking  
 Winter 2020 – Thomistic Psychology: Action Theory  
 Spring 2020 – Introduction to Thomism  
 Spring 2020 – Ethics: Virtue  
 Summer 2020 – Heidegger’s Phenomenological Method II  
 Summer 2020 – Aquinas’ Cosmological Vision  
 Summer 2020 – Ethics: Sex

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### Adjunct Professor, 2016-17 | Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston MA

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**Description:**

I taught ethics at this regional technological institute. Since most students were engaged in technical programs focused upon finding economical solutions to problems in engineering, programming, or other technical disciplines, this presented a unique challenge: getting the students to think in a radically different way.

**Courses taught:**

4501 – Ethics: Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Summer 2017

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### Adjunct Professor, 2013-16 | University of St. Thomas, Houston TX

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**Description:**

I taught a variety of courses at this private institution, including core courses required for every student, in addition to an upper-level course taken by majors. Classes were taught with a semi-Socratic method, incorporating small lectures with heavy discussion, focused around understanding classic and supplementary texts in the Western philosophical tradition.

**Courses taught:**

3313 – Metaphysics: Fall 2013 | Spring 2014 | Spring 2016

2316 – Medieval Philosophy: Summer 2014 | Spring 2015 | Fall 2015 | Spring 2016

2314 – Ethics: Fall 2014 | Fall 2015

1311 – Phil. of the Person: Summer 2015

4312 – Philosophy of Knowledge: Spring 2015

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### Instructor, 2011-16 | Our Lady of Walsingham, Houston TX

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**Description:**

I taught weekly courses with regular email correspondence at this small home school co-operative program for upper-middle (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) and high-school students (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>). These students—generally advanced—were introduced through my courses (as well as others within the program) to a rigorous investigation of critical thinking and the liberal arts, to give them the foundation needed for succeeding in college.

**Courses taught:**

Introduction to Logic

Introduction to Philosophy

Grammar and Composition

Ethics

## PUBLICATIONS

My writing falls into various categories: serious academic publications, both books and articles, intended for advanced audiences who have studied philosophy extensively; lay philosophical publications, intended for those who are familiar with or strongly interested in philosophical thinking; and more casual publications (not listed here), including blog entries and through other digital means of distribution (e.g., social media), which are intended more as an exercise of dialogue than one of pedagogy or scholarship.

### Books

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*Introduction to Philosophical Principles: Logic, Physics, and the Human Person*, self-published | Amazon, 2019.

Description:

This short book introduces what I consider to be the most important principles for conducting any systematic philosophical inquiry. These are broken down into three sections: logic, physics, and person; or, the basic encounter with thought, with the world, and the nexus of thought and world.

*The Intersection of Semiotics and Phenomenology: Peirce and Heidegger in Dialogue*, in Mouton De Gruyter's *Semiotics, Communication, and Cognition* series, 2019.

Description:

Many contemporary explanations of conscious human experience, relying either upon neuroscience or appealing to a spiritual soul, fail to provide a complete and coherent theory. These explanations, I argue, fall short because the underlying explanatory constituent for all experience are not entities, such as the brain or a spiritual soul, but rather relation and the unique way in which human beings form relations. This volume brings together insights from the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger and semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce into a new complementary synthesis that opens new doors for understanding all aspects of conscious human experience, not just those that can be quantified, and without appealing to an ineffable spiritual principle.

*Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition: The Philosophy of Being as First Known*, in Brill's *Gilson Studies* series, September 2017.

Description:

Presents a reading of Thomas Aquinas' claim that "being" is the first object of the human intellect. Blending the insights of both the early Thomistic tradition (c.1380—1637AD) and the Leonine Thomistic revival (1879—present), I examine how this claim of Aquinas has been traditionally understood, and what is lacking in that understanding. While the recent tradition has emphasized the primacy of the real (so-called *ens reale*) in human recognition of the *primum cognitum*, I argue that this misinterprets Aquinas, thereby closing off Thomistic philosophy to the broader perspective needed to face the philosophical challenges of today and propose an alternative interpretation with dramatic epistemological and metaphysical consequences.

## Academic Articles

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“Signs and Reality: An Advocation for Semiotic Realism” in  
*Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 1.1, 2020.

“The Consolation of a Christian” in  
*International Philosophical Quarterly*, 58.4.232, December 2018.

“Elaboration of the Intellectual Sign” in  
*The American Journal of Semiotics*, 34.1-2, Summer 2018.

“The Preeminent Necessity of Prudence” in  
*Studia Gilsoniana*, 6:4, 2017 [\[PDF\]](#).

“Jacques Maritain and *Ens ut Primum Cognitum*” in  
*Engaging the Times: The Witness of Thomism*, Catholic University of America Press, 2017.

“Evaluating Etienne Gilson's Metaphysical Realism” in  
*Studia Gilsoniana*, 4:4, 2015 [\[PDF\]](#).

“Wojtyla: Nature, Person, and Teleology” in  
*Thomas Aquinas: Teacher of Humanity* published by Cambridge Scholars, 2015.

## Popular Articles

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“Walking Through the Motion” in  
*Lapsus Lima*, 12 June 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

“Widening Gyres” in  
*The Agonist* (Summer 2019) [\[Online\]](#).

“Participation and the Divine” in  
*Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 19 May 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

“C.S. Peirce on Science and Belief” in  
*Epoché Monthly Magazine* (April 2019) [\[Online\]](#).

“The Continuity of Being: C.S. Peirce's Philosophy of Synechism” in  
*Epoché Monthly Magazine* (January 2019) [\[Online\]](#).

“Leaving the Global Village: Our Digital Diaspora” in  
*Lapsus Lima*, 5 February 2019 [\[Online\]](#).

“The Acute Obtuse, or Irreplaceable Philosophy” in  
*Lapsus Lima*, 16 October 2018 [\[Online\]](#).

“InHuman Places” in  
*Lapsus Lima*, 18 April 2018 [\[Online\]](#).

## Reviews

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*Nihilism and Technology* (New York: Roman & Littlefield, Ltd., 2018) and *Nihilism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019) both by Nolen Gertz, in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse* 30 June 2020 [[Online](#)].

*What Love Is: And What It Could Be* by Carrie Jenkins (New York: Basic Books, 2017) in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 11 November 2019 [[Online](#)].

*Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* by Kate Manne (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018) in *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse*, 19 June 2019 [[Online](#)].

*The Knowledge of First Principles in St. Thomas Aquinas* by Mary Christine Ugobi-Onyemere (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2015) in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 29.1/2, 2017.

*Nature and the Artificial: Aristotelian Reflections on the Operative Imperative* by Edward Engelmann (New York: Lexington Books, 2017) forthcoming in *The Review of Metaphysics*.

## PRESENTATIONS

“The Tradition of Questioning”

*Whose Thomism? Which Tradition?*

American Maritain Association Annual Conference  
Pittsburgh, PA, 5-7 March 2020

“Concept Formation and Artificial Intelligence”

Invited lecture, Aquinas College

Grand Rapids, MI, 19 March 2019

“Interpretation and Traditions: an intersection for semiotics, phenomenology, and Thomism”

Invited Colloquium, Center for Thomistic Studies

University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX, 27 April 2018

“Sophists and Semioticians”

Aquinas Leadership International World Congress

Huntington, NY, 15 July 2017

“Critical Realism and the *Verbum Mentis*”

Center for Thomistic Studies Graduate Discussion Group

Houston, TX, 14 April 2016

“Maritain and Wojtyla on the Disclosure of Subjectivity”

*Along Unbeaten Pathways: Jacques Maritain's Pursuit of Wisdom in Untrammelled Approaches*,

American Maritain Association Annual Conference

New York, NY, 25-27 February 2016

“Thomas Aquinas' Fourth Way”

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Houston Baptist Philosophy Conference

Houston, TX, 18 September 2015

“Jacques Maritain and *Ens ut Primum Cognitum*”  
*Maritain Engage*, American Maritain Association Annual Conference  
 San Francisco, CA, 26-28 February 2015

“Does the First Principle of Avicenna have a Quiddity?”  
*Aquinas and ‘the Arabs’ Annual Fall Workshop*  
 Houston, TX, 6 September 2014

“Techne, Physis, and Technology: Aristotle and Heidegger”  
*4<sup>th</sup> Annual Houston Baptist Philosophy Conference*  
 Houston, TX, 5 April 2014

“Wojtyla: Nature, Person, and Teleology”  
*Thomistic Personalism* satellite session at the *American Catholic Philosophical Association*  
 Indianapolis, IN, 3 November 2013

“Thomas and Wojtyla on the Teleology of Nature and Person”  
*Thomas Aquinas: Teacher of Humanity* – Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas  
 Houston, TX, 18 October 2013

## SERVICE

Founder and Executive Editor of *Reality: a journal for philosophical discourse* [[Link](#)].

Referee for

*The American Journal of Semiotics* 2018—  
*Studia Gilsoniana* 2018—

## RESEARCH

The overall architecture of my philosophical project is twofold: first is to follow what Jacques Maritain called a “Living Thomism”, which he saw as dealing not only with the perennial wisdom of Thomas Aquinas but as engaging the dynamic unfolding of time and the issues contained therein. The second is to embed both semiotics, the study of the action of signs, and what Charles Peirce called “synechism”—the essential continuity of all things in the universe, of a universe without gaps—into a systematic philosophical program.

## ONLINE PRESENCE

- <https://cp-insight.com/blog/> [Professional blog]
- <https://cs-dl.academia.edu/BrianKemple> [Academia.edu profile]
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/BrianKemple> [LinkedIn profile]
- <https://www.twitter.com/realbriankemple> [Twitter]