

Lewis (Kuizhi) Wang

kwang39@bu.edu | (+1) (217) 819-7198 | lewiswang.net
745 Commonwealth Ave, Room 516, Boston, MA 02215, USA

Areas of Specialization

History of Modern Philosophy (esp. Kant and Hegel), Buddhist Philosophy, Epistemology

Areas of Competence

Aesthetics, Philosophy of Language, Ethics, Political Philosophy, Chinese Philosophy

Education

2019 - 2026 (Expected)	Ph.D. in Philosophy <i>Boston University</i> Dissertation: Towards A Hybrid Reading of Kant's Transcendental Idealism Advisor: Sally Sedgwick
Sept 2024 - Feb 2025	Visiting Student <i>Goethe-Universität Frankfurt</i>
2023 - 2024	Visiting Fellow & Visiting Student Research Collaborator <i>Princeton Project in Philosophy & Religion, Princeton University</i>
2017 - 2019	B.Phil in Philosophy <i>University of Oxford</i>
2013 - 2017	B.A. in Philosophy and Economics <i>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</i> <i>Magna Cum Laude</i>

Publications

Journal Articles

forthcoming	“A Buddhist Case for Ontological Idealism: Two Arguments Against Mind-Independent Existence in Xuanzang's <i>Cheng Weishi Lun</i> ”, <i>Ergo</i>
forthcoming	“Susan Sontag and Our Duties Towards Photographs of Violence and Suffering”, <i>The Journal of Ethics</i>
forthcoming	“The Early Development of Kant's Practical Notion of Belief”, <i>Inquiry</i>
2025	“On the Epistemic Instrumentalist Solution to the Combinatorial Problem”, <i>Synthese</i> 205 (218): 1-15.
2023	“Kant on Propositional Content and Knowledge”, <i>Kant Yearbook</i> 15 (1):175-196.

Book Chapters

forthcoming	“Hegelian Sufficiency and Limitarianism as an Anti-Colonial Theory of Justice” (with Joshua Folkerts), in Bernardo Ferro and Paul Giladi (eds.), <i>Hegel’s Philosophy of Emancipation</i> . London: Routledge.
forthcoming	“On the Secondary Quality Analogy”, in Christoph Horn, Margit Ruffing and Rainer Schäfer (eds), <i>Proceedings of the 14th International Kant Congress: Kant’s Project of Enlightenment</i> . Berlin: De Gruyter
2025	“Hegel’s Justification of Private Property”, in Andrew A. Davis and Sebastian Rand (eds.), <i>New Perspectives on Hegel’s Philosophy of Right</i> , London: Bloomsbury, 37-55.

Book Reviews

forthcoming	Review of Paul Morrow, <i>Seeing Atrocities: Ethics for Visual Encounters with Intolerable Harms</i> , <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i>
forthcoming	Review of Till Hoepfner, <i>Urteil und Anschauung: Kants metaphysische Deduktion der Kategorien</i> , <i>Studi Kantiani</i>
2026	Review of Gabriele Gava, <i>Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics</i> , <i>British Journal for the History of Philosophy</i> 34 (1):182-187.

Works in Progress

Under review	A paper on the role of the Doctrine of Method in the <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
Under review	A paper on Kant’s doctrine of Noumenal Ignorance
In progress	“Kant on Reasons for Belief” (with Marcus Willaschek)
In progress	“Kant on the Inescapability of the Human Standpoint and the Limit of Metaphysics”
In progress	“Hegel’s Implicit Solution to the Problem of Poverty”
In progress	“Argument from Ignorance and Buddhist Epistemological Pragmatism”
In progress	“Kant on Sense and Reference” (with Davide Dalla Rosa)
In progress	“Kant on <i>Sinn</i> and <i>Bedeutung</i> ” (with Christopher Benzenberg)
Invited	“Dharmottara’s Theory of Propositional Content” (<i>Philosophical Topics</i>)
Invited	Comments on Stefanie Grüne’s “Kant on the Relation Between Cognition and Knowledge”

Awards, Grants, and Fellowships

Spring 2025	Bloom Dissertation Fellowship, Boston University
Fall 2025	Dissertation Fellowship, Boston University Center for the Humanities
2024 – 2025	Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship, Boston University
2025	Professional Development Fund Award (for Kant on Language and Cognition Workshop), Boston University
2024	The Helen G. Allen Humanities Award and the Angela J. and James J. Rallis Memorial Award, Boston University Center for the Humanities (\$5500)
2023	Professional Development Grant (for CCEC summer program), Boston University
2021	Graduate Student Organization Travel Grant, Boston University
2021	Summer Research Fellowship, Boston University
2021	Stipendium für Hochschulsommerkurse in Deutschland (Grant for Summer Language Course in Germany), DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service)

2019 – 2020	Dean’s Fellowship, Boston University
2019	Irene H. Chayes Travel Grant, American Society of Aesthetics
2017	Brian Keelan Award in Humanities, China Oxford Scholarship Fund (£7000)
2017	Honorable Mention for Best Undergraduate Student Research, Illinois Program of Research in Humanities Prizes, UIUC
2017	Highest Distinction in Philosophy, UIUC
2016	Lois Shepard Green Award, Department of Philosophy, UIUC
2015	Howard F. Crombie Award, Department of Philosophy, UIUC

Teaching Experience

Primary Instructor, Boston University

Summer 2026	Introduction to Philosophy: Ancient Wisdom on a Good Life
Summer 2024	Introduction to Philosophy: Life and Death
Summer 2022	History of Modern Philosophy

Teaching Fellow/Assistant, Boston University

Summer 2023	Politics and Philosophy
Spring 2023	Existentialism
Fall 2022	Medical Ethics
Summer 2022	Business Ethics
Spring 2022	Great Philosophers
Fall 2021	Politics and Philosophy
Spring 2021	Introduction to Philosophy
Fall 2020	Introduction to Ethics

Selected Presentations

(* = refereed; ^ = invited)

“Kant on Sense and Reference” (with Davide Dalla Rosa)

May 2026 | NYC Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, Fordham University*

Nov 2025 | Frankfurter Kant-Arbeitskreis, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

Feb 2025 | Kant on Language and Cognition Workshop, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

“Kant on the Inescapability of the Human Standpoint and the Limit of Metaphysics”

Apr 2026 | The International Kant Colloquium^

Mar 2026 | Metaphysical Society of America Annual Meeting*

“Can We Know the Existence of Things in Themselves, Prof. Kant?”

Feb 2026 | American Philosophical Association (APA) Central Division Meeting, Chicago*

Jan 2025 | Frankfurter Kant-Arbeitskreis, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

Sep 2022 | UK Kant Society Conference, London*

“Kant on Reasons for Belief” (with Marcus Willaschek)

- Feb 2026 | SGIR Session “Kant’s Ethics of Belief”, APA Central Division Meeting, Chicago
 Oct 2025 | Thinking with Assent: Belief and Ethics of Belief between History and Theory, Collegio Ghislieri, Pavia[^]
- “Kant on *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*” (with Christopher Benzenberg)
 Jul 2025 | Kant Work in Progress Workshop, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt
- “Xuanzang’s Master Argument Against Mind-Independent Existence in *Cheng Weishi Lun*”
 Jul 2025 | Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy Annual Conference, Leiden University*
- “Hegel and the Problem of Poverty”
 Mar 2025 | Graduate Students Work in Progress Workshop, Boston University
 Apr 2022 | British Society for the History of Philosophy Annual Conference*
 Apr 2022 | APA Pacific Division Meeting, Vancouver*
 Nov 2021 | Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference, Online*
- “Kant’s Theory of Reasons for Belief”
 Feb 2025 | California Polytechnic State University
 Jan 2025 | Belief in Kant Workshop, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt[^]
 Dec 2024 | Orientation and Disorientation: Kantian Themes in Analytic Philosophy, Reggio-Emilia*
 Apr 2024 | Princeton Project in Philosophy and Religion Working Group, Princeton University
- “On the Secondary Quality Analogy”
 Sep 2024 | 14th International Kant Congress, Bonn*
 Feb 2024 | APA Central Division Meeting, New Orleans*
- “Hegelian Sufficiency as an Anti-Colonial Theory of Justice” (with Joshua Folkerts)
 Aug 2024 | Emancipation in Hegel’s Metaphysics and Social Theory Conference, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*
- “The Role and Significance of the Doctrine of Method”
 May 2024 | North American Kant Society South Study Group Meeting, Columbia, SC*
 Dec 2022 | Kant Graduate Student Forum, Harvard University[^]
- “Against the Epistemic Instrumentalist Solution to the Combinatorial Problem”
 Jan 2024 | APA Eastern Division Meeting, New York*
- “Susan Sontag and the Moral Impact of Photographs of Violence and Suffering”
 Nov 2023 | American Society of Aesthetics Annual Meeting, Washington D.C.*
 Aug 2023 | Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, Boulder, CO*
 Jun 2021 | European Society of Aesthetics Conference, Online*
- “Hegel’s Developmental Justification of Private Property”
 Oct 2022 | Biennial Conference of the Hegel Society of America, Nashville*
 Jun 2021 | 33rd International Hegel Congress, Online*
- “On the Incoherence of Luck Egalitarianism”
 Jan 2021 | APA Eastern Division Meeting, Online*
 Sept 2020 | Pavia Graduate Conference in Political Philosophy, Online*

“On the Location of Kant’s Refutation of Idealism”
 Jan 2020 | APA Eastern Division Meeting, Philadelphia*
 Nov 2018 | Kant Colloquium, University of Oxford

“Interpretive Method Pluralism”
 Apr 2019 | American Society of Aesthetics Eastern Meeting, Philadelphia*
 Apr 2019 | CUNY Graduate Conference, New York*

“No Duties of Global Distributive Justice: A Kantian Theory”
 Jun 2018 | Brave New World Graduate Conference, University of Manchester*
 Jun 2018 | Kant’s Legal Theory and Global Justice Conference, University of Bayreuth*
 Mar 2018 | Graduate Conference at University of Tennessee Knoxville*

Professional Comments

Jan 2026 | Commentator to Shruta Swarup, “The Motive of Duty, Emotional Motives, and the Kantian Criterion of Summonability”, APA Eastern Division Meeting
 Jan 2025 | Commentator to Bangrui Chen, “Kant, Apperception, and the Unity of Cognition”, APA Eastern Division Meeting
 Dec 2024 | Commentator to Stefanie Grüne, “Kant on the Relation between Cognition and Knowledge”, the Annual Jean-Jacques Rousseau Conference, ECPR Standing Group on Kantian Political Thought
 May 2023 | Commentator to Samantha Matherne, “Beauty and the Life of the Mind in Kant and Hegel”, “Organism and Life: Herder, Kant, Hegel” Workshop, Boston University

Academic Service

2025 - | Referee for *Nous*, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Kantian Review* (x2)
 May 2026 | Co-Organizer (with Jens Timmermann and Giampiero Basile), Boston-Area Kant Colloquium, Boston University
 Mar 2026 | Judge, Harvard College High School Ethics Bowl
 Feb 2026 | Co-Organizer (with Christopher Benzenberg), SGIR Session “Kant’s Ethics of Belief”, APA Central Division Meeting
 Feb 2025 | Co-Organizer (with Davide Dalla Rosa), Kant on Language and Cognition Workshop, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt
 2023 - 2024 | Alumni & Placement Officer, BU Philosophy Graduate Student Association
 May 2023 | Co-Organizer (with Giulia Battistoni), “Organism and Life: Herder, Kant, Hegel” Workshop, Boston University
 Apr 2023 | Co-Organizer, Boston University Graduate Student Philosophy Conference
 Nov 2022 | Co-Organizer (with Joshua Folkerts), Boston Young Hegelian Workshop
 2021 - 2026 | Paper Referee, Boston University Graduate Student Philosophy Conference
 2021 - 2022 | International Student Representative, BU Philosophy Graduate Student Association
 2018 – 2019 | Founding Member and Executive Officer, Philiminality Oxford
 2018 – 2019 | Committee Member, the Jowett Society, University of Oxford
 2018 – 2019 | Committee Member, the Ockham Society, University of Oxford
 2018 | Co-Organizer and Paper Referee, the 22nd Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference

Selected Graduate Coursework

(* = audited)

Modern European Philosophy

- Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (Desmond Hogan, Princeton)*
- Kant: Ethics, Religion, Politics (Andrew Chignell & Jason Yonover, Princeton)*
- Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (Sally Sedgwick, BU)
- Phenomenology (Walter Hopp, BU)
- British Empiricism (Jefferey McDonough, Harvard)*
- Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (Sally Sedgwick, BU)
- Heidegger (Daniel Dahlstrom, BU)
- Nietzsche (Paul Katsafanas, BU)
- Phenomenology (Joseph Shear, Oxford)
- Hegel (Mark Wrathall, Oxford)
- Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (Alexandra Newton, UIUC)

History of Philosophy: Non-Western Western Philosophy

- Buddhist Karma and Causality (Jonathan Gold, Princeton)*
- Classical Indian Thought (Jonathan Gold, Princeton)*
- Buddhist Philosophers and Their Critics (Parimal Patil, Harvard) *
- Buddhist Philosophy (Parimal Patil, Harvard) *
- Buddhist Philosophy (David Eckel, BU)

Theoretical Philosophy

- Recent Epistemology (Thomas Kelly, Princeton)*
- Wittgenstein (Juliet Floyd, BU) *
- Quine (Peter Hylton, BU) *
- Symbolic Logic (Peter Hylton, BU)
- Self-Consciousness, Agency, and Time (Anil Gomes & Jennifer Hornsby, Oxford)
- Experimental Philosophy (Jonathan Livengood, UIUC) *

Ethics, Aesthetics, and Political Philosophy

- Reasons, Value, Rationality, and Metanormativity (Daniel Star, BU)
- Contemporary Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Photography (Daniel Star, BU)
- Philosophy of Love (Daniel Star, BU)
- Luck and Credit (Daniel Star, BU)
- Philosophy and Literature (Stephen Mulhall & Alice Crary, Oxford)
- Aesthetics (Alison Hills, Oxford)
- Population Ethics (Ralf Bader, Oxford)
- Metaethics (Ralf Bader, Oxford)
- Political Philosophy (Cecile Fabre & Thomas Sinclair, Oxford)

Language

Chinese (native, incl. Classical Chinese), English (fluent), German (B2), Sanskrit (intermediate reading)

Dissertation Summary

Dissertation Title: Towards a Hybrid Reading of Kant's Transcendental Idealism

In my dissertation, I propose a novel reading of Kant's transcendental idealism that I call the hybrid reading. Roughly put, transcendental idealism is the doctrine that the objects we can experience, which Kant calls appearances, are in some way mind-dependent, and that we cannot know how things are in themselves. Current interpretations of this doctrine fall into two main camps. Metaphysical readers take transcendental idealism to posit distinct sets of beings that occupy different levels of reality: things in themselves are what are ultimately real, while appearances are less real. Epistemic readers, in contrast, take transcendental idealism to be a doctrine about knowledge. More specifically, they interpret it to amount to the thesis that there are certain a priori conditions under which alone knowledge is possible for us, and we cannot know anything about things that do not conform to those conditions.

My interpretation of Kant's transcendental idealism combines elements from both of these two camps and steers a middle course between them. On one hand, I share the view of metaphysical readers that transcendental idealism offers a description of reality as having a hierarchical structure, in which things in themselves are metaphysically more fundamental than appearances. But this description, on my reading, is not a standpoint-independent truth. Instead, it is something we must think and hold to be true from the human standpoint, which is defined by the conditions of our knowledge, i.e., the categories and space and time. To put it differently, I agree with epistemic readers that things in themselves are not how the world really or ultimately is from "the view from nowhere", but merely what we posit in thought as the objects that make up the mind-independent material reality underlying appearances. I thus read transcendental idealism as primarily concerned with providing a radically anthropocentric metaphysics: while it aims to describe the way the world is, it also regards any human metaphysical endeavor as fundamentally dependent upon and limited by the human conditions for knowledge. In contemporary terms, my hybrid reading takes Kant's transcendental idealism to be a form of meta-metaphysical idealism that concerns specifically the limit of metaphysics as a human enterprise.

This dissertation is organized around four questions that are central to the debate between metaphysical and epistemic readers, which I identify in the Introduction. These questions include whether Kant takes appearances and things in themselves to be two distinct sets of beings, whether he regards things in themselves to be ultimately real independently of any standpoint, whether he allows any knowledge of things in themselves, and whether he takes our empirical objects to be mind-dependent. In Chapter 1, I present the answers to these four interpretive questions by two of the most famous representatives of metaphysical and epistemic readers, namely Karl Ameriks and Henry Allison. Then, in Chapter 2, I show that Kant takes appearances and things in themselves to be two distinct sets of beings by arguing against Allison's view to the contrary. In Chapter 3, I argue against the view of Ameriks and other metaphysical readers that things in themselves are how the world ultimately is from "the view from nowhere". I suggest that, for Kant, we cannot even think about what is ultimately real independently of any standpoint, because our thinking is fundamentally limited by both the sensible and the intellectual conditions for human knowledge. In Chapter 4, I show that Kant forbids us to have any knowledge about things in themselves. I contend, however, that he nevertheless allows us to have some practically justified beliefs, which he names *Glauben*, about things in themselves. Finally, in chapter 5, I argue that Kant holds a robust idealism about appearances. Through a close reading of the B-Deduction, I show that, for Kant, our understanding and its acts are what give our empirical objects or appearances their form.

References

Sally Sedgwick
William Goodwin Aurelio Professor in the Humanities
Boston University
745 Commonwealth Ave, Room 505
Boston, MA, 02215, USA
617-353-6395
ssedgw@bu.edu

Andrew Chignell
Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor in the UCHV
Princeton University
Room 232, 1879 Hall, Princeton University
Princeton, NJ, 08544, USA
609-258-4485
chignell@princeton.edu

Daniel O. Dahlstrom
John R. Silber Professor of Philosophy
Boston University
745 Commonwealth Ave, Room 518
Boston, MA, 02215, USA
617-353-4583
dahlstro@bu.edu

Walter Hopp (Teaching)
Chair and Professor of Philosophy
Boston University
745 Commonwealth Ave, Room 513
Boston, MA, 02215, USA
617-353-3620
hopp@bu.edu

Parimal Patil
Wales Professor of Sanskrit
Professor of Religion and Indian Philosophy
Harvard University
1 Bow Street, 3rd floor
Cambridge, MA, 02138, USA
617-495-2191
ppatil@fas.harvard.edu

Marcus Willaschek
Professor of Modern Philosophy
Goethe University Frankfurt
Norbert-Wollheim-Platz 1
Q5, 2.OG, Raum 2.514
60629 Frankfurt a.M.
(+49) 069/798-32678
willaschek@em.uni-frankfurt.de

Daniel Star
Associate Professor of Philosophy
Boston University
745 Commonwealth Ave, Room 513A
Boston, MA, 02215, USA
dstar@bu.edu