

Umrao Sethi
Curriculum Vitae
www.umraosethi.com
sethi@brandeis.edu

Department of Philosophy
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02453

EMPLOYMENT

National Humanities Center, 2022-2023
William J. Bouwsma Fellowship; NEH Fellowship

Brandeis University, 2019 –
Assistant Professor (tenure-track), Department of Philosophy

Herbert H. Lehman College, City University of New York, 2017 - 2019
Assistant Professor (tenure-track), Department of Philosophy

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of California, Berkeley, 2008 – 2017
Ph.D. in Philosophy, awarded August 11, 2017

Columbia University, 2006-2008
Lab Manager, Memory and Metacognition Lab (PI: Janet Metcalfe)
Researcher, Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Imaging Lab (PI: Edward E. Smith)

Columbia University, 2002-2006
B.A. *summa cum laude*, Psychology (major), Philosophy (minor), May 2006

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Perception
Philosophy of Mind
Metaphysics

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Early Modern Philosophy
Epistemology
Philosophy of Language

JOURNAL ARTICLES

1. Forthcoming. “Defining Sensory Representation.” *Inquiry*.
2. 2023. “Sensible Individuation.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 107: 168-191.
3. 2021. “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception.” *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 99(4): 648-668.
4. 2021. “The Varieties of Instantiation.” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 7(3): 417-37.
5. 2020. “Sensible Over-Determination.” *Philosophical Quarterly*, 70/280: 588-616.
6. 2012. “Conceptual Representations of Perceptual Knowledge.” *Cognitive Neuropsychology*, 29(3): 237-248. (with Smith, E.E., Myers, N., Pantazatos, S., Yanagihara, T., Hirsch, J.)

CHAPTERS IN EDITED VOLUMES

7. Forthcoming. “A (Qualified) Defense of Diaphaneity.” To appear in Farid Masrour & Ori Beck (Eds.), *The Relational View of Perception: New Essays*. Routledge.
8. Forthcoming. “Must Epistemic Values Conflict?” To appear in Miloš Vuletić & Ori Beck (Eds.) *Empirical Reason and Sensory Experience*. Springer.

9. Forthcoming. "Diaphaneity and the Ways Things Appear." To appear in Otavio Bueno & Jan Voshoolz (Eds). *Essays on Markus Gabriel's New Realism*. Synthese Library, Springer.

BOOK REVIEWS

10. 2021. "Conscious Experience: A Logical Inquiry." *Philosophical Review*, 130(4): 609-614.

BOOK PROJECT

Sensibilia: An Account of Sensory Perception and the Sensible World (in progress)

The book is situated at the intersection of the history of philosophy, metaphysics and the philosophy of perception. I argue that a fundamental understanding of properties that traces all the way back to Aristotle fails to make sense of the full range of sensory phenomena. In order to make room for experiences of afterimages, phosphenes and hallucinations that acquaint subjects with instances of sensible qualities like color and shape, we must reject a view on which a property can only be instantiated if there is some thing that can serve as the *bearer* of that property. For there are no suitable physical or mental bearers that possess the colors and shapes that show up in such experiences. I present an alternative metaphysics which derives its key insight from Berkeley's maxim *esse est percipi*. I argue that when it comes to the phenomenon of mind-dependence, qualities depend for their instantiation, not on inhering in a mind, but rather on being *perceived* by a conscious mind. I go on to make use of this reformed metaphysics to develop a version of naïve realism that is able to acknowledge the rich phenomenal character of delusive experiences. I argue that this approach provides a novel solution to several key puzzles in the philosophy of perception. A book proposal and several chapters are currently under review at Oxford University Press.

COMMISSIONED AND UNDER REVIEW

1. "An A Priori Constraint on What Science Can Tell Us about Perception." (co-authored with Peter F. Epstein, under review).
2. "Presentation, Acquaintance, and Phenomenology." To appear in Raja Rosenhagen (Ed.) *Reformed Empiricism and its Prospects*. (due December 2023)
3. "Naïve Realism and Hallucinations." *Philosophy Compass*. (due March 2024)
4. "Existence 'in' the Mind." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 124(3). (due May 2024)
5. "The Problem of Perception." To appear in Devin Curry & Louise Daoust (Eds.) *Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Today*. Routledge. (due August 2024)

GRANTS, AWARDS AND HONORS

National Humanities Center Residential Fellowship, North Carolina, 2022-2023
Humanities-wide, year-long fellowship to support faculty research projects (\$48,000)

Theodore and Jane Norman Fund for Faculty Research and Creative Projects, Brandeis, Spring 2020
Grant to support faculty research (\$3500)

Principal Investigator, "The Sensible World," PSC-CUNY Type-B Research Award, 2017-2018
Research award that provides three credits of course relief and additional research funds (\$6000)

Co-Principal Investigator, "Grounding Sensible Qualities," New Directions in the Study of Mind, Cambridge University, 2016-2017
Year-long grant to study the metaphysics of sensible qualities (£10,000)

TALKS & PRESENTATIONS (*INVITED)

1. * “Existence ‘in’ the Mind”, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, June 2024
2. * TBD, Philosophy Colloquium Series, University of Albany, New York, December 2023
3. * “Mind-Dependence and the Metaphysics of Inherence”, Chapel Hill Colloquium in Philosophy, October 2023
4. * “The Value of Naïve Realism: A Cautionary Tale.” Workshop on Mind and Value, Cornell University, August 2023
5. * “Mind Dependence and the Metaphysics of Inherence”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, University of Rochester, New York, February 2023
6. * “Are ‘Mental Things’ Things?” New England Workshop on Metaphysics 5, Providence, November 2022
7. * “Perceiving Color and Shape” (with Peter Epstein), Eastham Beach Philosophy Workshop, Eastham, September 2022
8. * Mind-Dependence and the Metaphysics of Inherence, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Boston University, September 2022
9. * “What are Qualia Anyway?” A Conference on *The Metaphysics of Sensory Experience*, Bochum, Germany, September 2022
10. * Sensibilia: An Account of Sensory Perception and its Objects”, Vermont Philosophy Workshop, Knoll Farm, Vermont, August 2022
11. * “What are Qualia Anyway?” Pacific APA, Vancouver, April 2022
12. * “Sensible Individuation” Philosophy Colloquium Series, Rice University, April 2022
13. * “Defining Sensory Representation”, Author Meets Critics: Adam Pautz’s *Perception*, Eastern APA, Montreal, January 2022 (held virtually due to COVID)
14. * “Sensible Kinds and Sensible Instances: An Account of Property Individuation”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, October 2021
15. * “Sensible Kinds and Sensible Instances: An Account of Property Individuation”, New Waves in Relationalism, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, May 2021 (held virtually due to COVID)
16. * “Sensible Individuation and Over-Determination”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, University of California, San Diego, March 2021 (held virtually due to COVID)
17. * “Sensible Individuation and Over-Determination”, Online Perception Series organized by Neil Mehta, National University of Singapore, July 2020 (held virtually due to COVID)
18. * “The Varieties of Instantiation”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, New York University, New York, March 2020

19. * “Sensible Individuation and Over-Determination”, The Metaphysics of Property Perception, University of Oxford, February 2020
20. * “Presentation, Acquaintance, and Phenomenology”, Conference on Anil Gupta’s *Conscious Experience: A Logical Inquiry*, Ashoka University, New Delhi, India, February 2020
21. * “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, History meets Contemporary Philosophy of Mind, Eastern APA, Philadelphia, January 2020
22. * “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, Philosophy of Mind Visiting Speakers Series, University of Oxford, June 2019
23. “Sensible Over-Determination”, Fifth Mentoring Workshop for Early-Career Women in Philosophy, Boston University, Boston, June 2019
24. * “The Objects of Perception”, Philosophy Talk Series, University of Warwick, June 2019
25. * “Sensible Over-Determination”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Vassar College, April 2019
26. * “Sensible Over-Determination”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Wellesley College, March 2019
27. * “Sensible Over-Determination”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Brandeis University, February 2019
28. * “The Metaphysics of Perception”, with David Papineau, Prospective Student Visit, CUNY Graduate Center, New York, April 2019
29. * “Sensible Over-Determination”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, City College, CUNY, New York, November 2018
30. * “Sensible Over-Determination”, Cognitive Science Speaker Series, CUNY Graduate Center, New York, November 2018
31. * “The Varieties of Instantiation”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, CUNY Graduate Center, New York, November 2018
32. * “Sensible Individuation”, Cambridge Mind Seminar, University of Cambridge, June 2018
33. * “Sensible Individuation”, Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Congress, Montreal, Canada, June 2018
34. “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, Finnish-Hungarian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, May 2018
35. “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, Fifth Finnish-Hungarian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, May 2018
36. “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, Ninth Scottish Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, May 2018
37. * “How many pink elephants did I just hallucinate?”, Keynote Address, 15th Annual London-Berkeley Conference, University College London, May 2018

38. * “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, NY/NJ Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, New York, April 2018
39. * “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, Annual Research Colloquium, University of Bonn, Germany, November 2017
40. * “Mind-Dependence in Berkeley and the Problem of Perception”, NYU Philosophy of Mind Discussion Group, New York, October 2017
41. “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, European Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Hertfordshire, UK, August 2017
42. * “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, February 2017
43. * “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Williams College, Williamstown, February 2017
44. * “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, Philosophy Colloquium Series, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, February 2017
45. “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, MindGrad 2016, University of Warwick, UK, December 2016
46. “Two Grounds for Sensible Qualities”, Grounding and Consciousness, Birmingham, UK, June 2016
47. “Hallucination Defanged: Perception and the Dual Nature of its Objects”, A Networking and Mentoring Workshop, York, UK, June 2015
48. * “Hallucination Defanged: Perception and the Dual Nature of its Objects”, University of Bonn, Germany, June 2015

OTHER CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

1. Chair, “Disjunctivism, Skepticism, and the Capacity for Perceptual Knowledge.” Pacific APA, San Francisco, April 2023
2. Comments on Colin Marshall’s “Revelatory Perception and Moral Partiality”, Workshop on Mind and Value: Acquaintance. Cornell University, May 2022
3. Comments on Crispin Wright’s “Two Conceptions of Perceptual Justification”, Perceptual Experience and Empirical Reason, Pittsburgh, December 2021
4. Panelist, “How to Get Into Graduate School in Philosophy” Philosophy in an Inclusive Key (PIKSI) Boston, June 2021
5. Chair, “Representation Without Objects: Olfaction and Affordance Semantics” by Clint Hurshman, Pacific APA, March 2021. (held virtually due to COVID)
6. Comments on “Aesthetic Properties Without Perception” by Steve Humbert-Droz, American Society of Aesthetics, Phoenix, AZ, October 2019

7. Comments on “Situation-Dependent Properties” by Susanna Schellenberg, Foundations of Meaning: Pictures, Perception and Consciousness, NYU Abu Dhabi, January 2019
8. Comments on “Contemporary “Essentialism” vs. Aristotelian Essentialism” by Gyula Klima, Philosophies in the Mediterranean: Aristotle’s Metaphysics. Summer School and International Conference, Sicily, September 2018
9. Chair, “Perceptual Particularity and Singular Thoughts”, Pacific APA, Seattle, April 2017.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Graduate

The Metaphysics of Sensory Experience (Spring 2021)
Masters’ Proseminar (Fall 2019, Fall 2021)

Undergraduate

Introduction to Philosophy (Spring 2022)
The Metaphysics of Color (Fall 2021)
Philosophy of Mind (Fall 2020*2)
Philosophy of Perception (Spring 2020, Spring 2021)
Special Topics in the History of Philosophy: Themes from Berkeley (Spring 2020)

LEHMAN COLLEGE, CUNY

Philosophy of Mind (Spring 2018, Spring 2019)
Problems of Philosophy (Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019)
Early Modern Philosophy (Fall 2017, Spring 2019)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Berkeley Connect, 2016-2017
Nature of Mind (Summer 2015, Summer 2013)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Referee, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Mind*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Philosopher’s Imprint*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Journal of the APA*, *Philosophy Compass*, *Analysis*, *Synthese*, *Ergo*, *Erkenntnis*, *Ratio*, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, *American Philosophical Quarterly*, *Multisensory Research*, *Phenomenology and Cognitive Sciences*, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Psychology*.

Referee, North American Summer School for Logic, Language, and Information (held virtually due to COVID), April 2020

Organizer, International Conference “Grounding Sensible Qualities”, New Directions in the Study of Mind Project, Berkeley, June 2017

Organizer, Bi-Weekly Workshop “Grounding Sensible Qualities”, New Directions in the Study of Mind Project, Berkeley, October 2016 - May 2017

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Member, Master’s Faculty Advisory Committee, 2021-2022
Director of Graduate Studies, 2020-2022

Member, Search Committee (Tenure-track Assistant Professor), 2021-2022
Chair, Graduate Admissions Committee, 2020-2022
Member, Search Committee (two-year VAP), Spring 2020
Member, Graduate Admissions Committee, 2019-2020
Member, Colloquium Committee, 2019-2020
Primary MA Advisor: Snowball Deng (2022); Luke Parker Gopnik (2020); Thomas Mattesich (2020)
Secondary MA Advisor: Sebastian Brumfeld Mejia (2022); Ross Pergande (2021); J.D. Wagner (2020);
Yimao Liu (2020)
Undergraduate Thesis Advisor: Jacob Knauer (Spring 2022); Carrie Sheng (2019-2020)
Undergraduate Second Reader: Micah Rothkopf (Spring 2023); Anna Kang (Spring 2023)

LEHMAN COLLEGE, CUNY

Member, Search Committee for the Dean of Arts and Humanities, Lehman College, Spring 2018
Member, Search Committee, Department of Philosophy, Lehman College, Fall 2018
Senior Thesis Advisor: Raquel Calero (Spring 2019); Emmanuella Saforo (Fall 2018)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member of the American Philosophical Association

LANGUAGES

Hindi (native fluency)
Italian (reading and speaking proficiency)
German (basic reading proficiency)