

RESEARCH SUMMARY -- OCTOBER 2014

What follows is an overview of my research to date, one that can provide a way into the body of work available at lisacshapiro.wordpress.com. I conclude with a summary of current and future projects.

Overview

My research focuses on a range of issues in the philosophy of the early modern period (roughly, 1560-1760). My work in the history of philosophy aims to strike a balance between an expertise in the writings and scholarship of a set of pivotal figures and an engagement with a set of questions that continue to inform contemporary philosophical discussion. At the same time, it aims to move both historical scholarship and contemporary discussion forward in two distinct ways: (a) by highlighting long-neglected discussions of the passions (or emotions), in particular with regard to the way the passions figure in our cognitive economy, and (b) by critically considering the relationship between philosophy and its history, including a reconsideration of what sorts of works we take to be philosophical, and so who we identify as philosophers.

With regard to central figures: I am interested in the writings of a number of canonical figures, most centrally, Descartes, Spinoza, and Hume, and more recently Locke, Berkeley, Malebranche and Condillac. I am also engaged in the project (joined by a number of other historians of philosophy) of rehabilitating the writings of women philosophers of the period, including Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, Marie Thiroux D'Arconville, Lucrezia Marinella, Mary Astell and most recently, Gabrielle Suchon. I am also interested in Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway and Emilie du Châtelet. Perhaps most significantly, I have translated and edited the well-regarded *Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes* (Chicago). This interest in early modern women thinkers has led me to explore historiographical issues in philosophy regarding canon formation, philosophical writing, and the framing of philosophical questions more generally.

My work on many of these figures has been shaped by an overriding concern with the question of the nature of the human being. The question is central in the early modern period in at least three ways. First, the reconception of the natural world as akin to a machine, governed exclusively by efficient causes, poses a challenge to understanding how human beings, with their distinctive capacity for thought, fit into this newly conceived natural world. If human beings are wholly natural entities, how can distinctive human capacities -- of thought, of free will -- be accounted for? If these capacities situate human beings partly outside of nature, how is a human being an integrated whole? Second, even if human capacity for thought is to be understood naturalistically, there are two distinctive features of human thought which demand explanation: our particular awareness of our thoughts, or consciousness, and that thoughts represent the world, and in such a way that affords us knowledge of that world. These issues in metaphysics and philosophy of mind should seem familiar. There is, however, a third dimension of the early modern concern with the human being, at that concerns the boundaries of humankind. This question surfaces in more canonical texts, in Descartes's efforts to distinguish humans and animals, in Locke's *Essay* in remarks about monsters, in Hume's recognition of a continuum connecting humans and animals, but it is front and center in discussions about the status of women as full-fledged human beings.

My concern with the nature of the human being is realized in three more narrowly framed areas, each of which I will spell out in more detail: (1) Descartes's conception of human nature, both the metaphysics of his account of the human being, and the moral psychological dimension of the Cartesian human being; (2) early modern philosophy of mind, and in particular the affective dimension of the mental representations of the world; (3) the intersection of sex and/or gender and rationality in the early modern period.

Descartes' Conception of Human Nature: Metaphysics and Moral Psychology

My work on Descartes has taken as its starting point his account of human nature. Philosophical questions concerning this account divide up into three sets of questions: the metaphysical questions, the questions in philosophy of mind and the moral psychological questions. I will discuss the second in more detail below, in conjunction with a more general discussion of my interests in early modern philosophy of mind. I focus on the first and the third in this section. I approach all three sets, however, by attending closely to Descartes' last work, *The Passions of the Soul*.

Methodology. My approach to the *Passions of the Soul* differs slightly from others who have attended to the work. Typically, readers of the passions are focused on a particular issue, and attend to how that issue arises in the *Passions*. More often than not, the issues are moral psychological ones. While I am interested in Descartes's moral psychology, I read the *Passions* as first and foremost a development of Descartes's metaphysics and philosophy of mind. In particular, I take Descartes there to be addressing unresolved tensions in the conception of the human being as a union of mind and body outlined in the earlier works. These tensions come to the fore, and seem to be ultimately acknowledged by Descartes, in his 1643 correspondence with Princess Elisabeth; the work seems to be written in a style similar to the *Principles of Philosophy*, a work dedicated to Elisabeth; and it is Elisabeth who requests he write a treatise on the passions in 1645. I defend this approach in my "The Structure of the *Passions of the Soul*."

This developmental interpretive approach is distinctive in another way. Many scholars take Descartes's system to be well-articulated in his more canonical works, and assume that the *Passions* ought to be read to be largely consistent with that system articulated, working out its implications. What sort of approach to the text one takes depends on how one thinks about the body of work of a canonical thinker. We are accustomed to drawing distinctions between different periods of Leibniz's career, and similarly to a pre-critical Kant and the author of the Critiques (and even note differences in the A and B versions of the *Critique of Pure Reason*). However, it is often assumed that Descartes starts out with a well-considered view that he then repeatedly expounds in his various (but relatively few) published works. While I do think it would be an overstatement to claim that Descartes's views shift radically over the course of his career, I do not think his philosophical position is static. He recognizes the problems his dualism faces in accounting for a human being as a whole and he aims to resolve those problems. In working through how his efforts proceed, and how they succeed and fail, we can, I think, learn a fair bit about the logic of dualism.

Metaphysics. Descartes maintains quite clearly, in both the *Discourse on the Method for Rightly Conducting Reason* and in the *Meditations*, that a human being is a union of mind and body. At the level of common sense, this claim seems uncontroversial: human beings are part of the natural world, and insofar as the natural world is the world of bodies, we are embodied

creatures; human beings also have the capacity for thought. To claim that we humans are unions of mind and body is simply to claim that we are a part of the natural world with the capacity for thought. For Descartes this commonsensical intuition becomes fraught with difficulties insofar as he takes mind and body to be two really distinct substances, or metaphysical entities, each capable of independent existence.

The problem of Descartes' account of human nature breaks down into three distinct parts: the ontological status of the union (ie whether it is a third substance, a mere accidental unity, or something else); the account of causation explaining the interaction of mind and body; and finally, the way body-caused mental states represent the world, or the intentionality of sensations and passions. I will discuss my work on the last of these three issues in my discussion of early modern philosophy of mind.

There has been quite a lot of contemporary discussion on the metaphysical status of the Cartesian human being. In my "*Descartes' Passions of the Soul and the Union of Mind and Body*", I showed how Descartes's metaphysics of the human being develops in *The Passions of the Soul* and defended a new position in the debate, one that claims neither that the human being is an accidental union nor that it constitutes a third Cartesian substance. My view might be called a strong interactionist account, for I do maintain that the union is constituted by the interaction of mind and body. It thus might seem that I hold that the human being is an accidental union of mind and body, for the standard view holds that insofar God could have made the human being otherwise, and insofar as there is no intrinsic association between bodily states and mental states, the details of body-mind interaction are accidental. However, on my reading, the causal relation between body and mind is not left unexplained. Rather, the associations between body and mind are guided by the human good, a good reducible neither to that of the mind nor to that of the body. In this way, body-mind associations form a true union, one that is not merely accidental. This role of the good in constituting the human being is not, however, enough to make it a third Cartesian substance. My argument turns on Descartes' account of the regulation of the passions. In a development from the view articulated in the *Meditations*, Descartes maintains in his later work that we can reform the naturally instituted associations between thoughts and bodily states. This shift, from maintaining that God institutes a fixed set of causal relations between body and mind, to assigning us responsibility for how we take up our bodily responses, affords him a way of avoiding the accidental union he finds so problematic, while at the same time preserving his dualism. The view may in the end run up against some problems, but it is not for want of trying to find a middle position. In the 'Union' article, I fully defend this reading of Descartes and begin to draw out its implications.

At least two aspects of the account I offer of the union demand further explanation: the claims about the human good, in particular what the human good is, and that there is a good of the human body; and the nature of the causal relation between mind and body such that it make sense to say both that mind and body causally interact in virtue of their natural institution and that the natural institution can be reformed.

In "*The Health of the Body-Machine*" I begin to take on the first of these issues. I defend a view that a mechanist is entitled to a minimal sense of a bodily good, one which relies neither on intrinsic final causes (the nature of body) nor an extrinsic purpose (union with the soul, or the purposes of the soul). This good is simply one of structural integrity, or the

preservation of the body-machine as a stable unit of matter in motion. This account of a bodily good plays a central role in my efforts to account for Descartes's claims that the pineal gland is the seat of the soul in "Descartes's Pineal Gland Reconsidered." I further consider how Descartes can integrate an account of a bodily good into a view of the human good in "Descartes on Human Nature and the Human Good."

In a piece that is still in draft, "The Institution of Nature?: Mind-Body Interaction, Causal Necessity and *The Passions of the Soul*", I approach the second question – that of the nature of the causal relation involved in mind-body and body-mind interaction -- by addressing the difference between a law of nature and an institution of nature. While Descartes talks of laws of nature in the physical context, he never does so in the human case, and this is surprising. Most readers of Descartes, based on a reading of the *Meditations*, assume that the natural institution of mind and body consists in a set of causal laws. Yet causal laws of this sort (akin to the rules of impact), for Descartes, are immutable, and in his account of the regulation of the passions he clearly thinks that we can reform this natural institution. Interestingly, as I mentioned above, in the *Passions* Descartes no longer attributes the institution of nature to God. There are two different lines to pursue here. First, I suggest that the model of the causal relations governed by the institution of nature is akin to that in the medieval notion of covenantal causation. Both admit of some species of necessity, but are nevertheless changeable under certain circumstances. Second, the Latin '*institutio*' is aligned with education and training, and reading the institution of nature in this light lends plausibility to the idea that the particular causal connections between body and mind can develop with training.

In a recent piece, "Cartesian Selves," I consider the longstanding question of the Cartesian self. While I note that there is a good textual basis for identifying the 'I' of the *Meditations* with a thinking substance, I also argue that psychological continuity figures importantly in the meditator's remaining the same 'I' over time -- or at least over the course of the meditations themselves. This becomes clear by considering the way in which both memory and conformity to reason actually work within the *Meditations*. The nature of the Cartesian self is thus more complicated than it initially appears to be. I further explore Descartes's view of memory and the epistemic role it actually plays in the *Meditations* in "Memory in the *Meditations*" forthcoming in *Res Philosophica*. I argue that there are two dimensions to validating the meditator's memories. The first works on analogy with innate ideas, but this dimension cannot explain the inaccuracies, or, from another point of view, creative recollections, of the meditator's reports of his prior conclusions. The second appeals to a public or social aspect of memory, which trades on the role that we readers play in meditating along with the narrator of the work.

Ethics and Moral Psychology.

Since my work on Descartes' metaphysics centers on *The Passions of the Soul*, and I develop an interpretation in which the human good plays a central role, it should not be surprising that I am also interested in his ethics. Moreover, since I also draw on his account of the regulation of the passions, it should not be surprising that I am interested in his moral psychology, that is, in his definitions and taxonomy of the passions, in his account of the role the passions play in our moral lives, through their expressions and as motivators to action, and in his account of free will. My engagement with these questions has appeared in a series of articles.

Ethics. My contribution to the *Blackwell Companion to Descartes*, edited by John Carriero and Janet Broughton, "Descartes's Ethics" aims to integrate Descartes's remarks in the *Discourse on the Method*, the *Passions*, and correspondence with Princess Elizabeth and Queen Christina. There I argue that Descartes is best read as offering a Stoic-influenced virtue ethics. I also consider the relation between Descartes's remarks on moral philosophy and his central concern with metaphysics and epistemology. "Descartes on Human Nature and the Human Good" concerns the metaphysical basis of Descartes's conception of the human good.

Moral Psychology. While "Elisabeth, Descartes et la psychologie morale du regret" is largely focused on understanding Elisabeth's objections to Descartes' account of virtue, doing so involves considering Descartes' account of virtue and his associated position that feelings of regret are to be avoided. In "What do the Expressions of the Passions Tell Us?" I consider how Descartes can account for our passionate expressions expressing anything at all. I suggest what I term a human naturalist account for explaining the content of our passionate expressions. In "What are the Passions Doing in the *Meditations*?" I consider the intersection of Descartes' moral psychology, philosophy of mind and metaphysics. I there explore the significance of Descartes' meditator's experiencing a range of emotions for our understanding of Cartesian 'pure thought' and the project of the *Meditations* themselves. Rather than come to any definitive conclusion I aim to clarify the questions the meditator's passions present for Descartes' account of mind.

Free Will. In 'Cartesian Generosity', I offer a detailed account of the very peculiar Cartesian passion of generosity, which Descartes claims is the key to all the virtues. Generosity, for Descartes, consists in the knowledge that we have free will, and the resolution to use that will well. I argue that our awareness of ourselves as freely willing moves us to reflect on our inclinations and to act in accord with reason. I also treat Descartes' notion of free will in "Turn My Will in Completely the Opposite Direction": Radical Doubt and Descartes' Account of Free Will." In this paper I show that Descartes has a conception of will which can embrace both the liberty of indifference and the liberty of spontaneity consistently by making sense of the meditator's denial in the First Meditation of even those ideas that will be revealed to be clear and distinct.

Early Modern Philosophy of Mind: Passions and Representationality

Most recently my work has been focused on questions in the philosophy of mind, broadly speaking, and in particular on early modern accounts of our representation of the world. Much scholarship on this general topic has focused on accounts of sensation and sensory experience to gain insight into early modern positions. This line of approach is completely understandable. Contemporary philosophy of mind takes the distinction between primary and secondary qualities to be central to framing the questions of mental representation, and this distinction first gains sway in the 17th century in accounts of sensation. Nonetheless, my approach has been, once again, slightly different.

My interest in this set of questions began with a narrowly focused question of interpretation concerning the third part of Descartes's account of human nature: how our body-caused thoughts represent the world. In keeping with my general approach to Descartes's account of human nature, I focused on Descartes's treatment of the representationality of the passions. I understand the basic philosophical and interpretive problem to resolve itself as follows: While Descartes does seem to be clear that the passions represent the way things

benefit and harm us, or in general are important to us, he is not clear how they do so. Moreover, it is not clear that his allusions to this representational content of the passions squares with his definition of the passions as referred to (or related to; Fr. *rappor*ter à) the soul. Complicating matters, Alison Simmons, relying on the *Meditations* and *Principles*, has defended reading Descartes as having a bio-functional account of the representationality of sensations. That is, on her account, one that has gained acceptance, sensations represent the benefit and harm of extended things to us. This interpretation of Descartes's account of sensory representation, combined with relatively uncontroversial reading of the passions, raises a further question: How does Descartes distinguish between sensations and the passions?

I began to address these questions by considering Descartes's account of the representationality of the passions on its own. The paper "Descartes on the Representationality of the Passions" is still in draft, and the reading I defend in the current version is not stable. Much turns on the way in which we are to understand the distinction between the three grades of sensation Descartes outlines in the Replies to the Sixth Objections. But this interpretive issue raises a broader philosophical question about object perception. Did Descartes think that we needed to process what we receive in cognition, to actively integrate our sensory experiences, to have an idea of object as having certain properties? Or was he focused instead on how we refer the experiences we are having of objects to the world around us? There is a sense in which Descartes is interested in both questions, and realizing this can, I think, help in trying to make sense of the distinction he seems to want to draw between the content of sensations and passions, properly speaking. It seems that both sensations and passions in some sense *represent* the way things benefit and harm us, and yet we *refer* the former to objects and the properties, and the latter to feelings in us.

In trying to better understand Descartes's view, it became clear to me that Descartes was part of a general trend in the early modern period: to think of sensory experience as essentially affective. I am inclined to think that on this general view, this affective dimension of experience is essential to account for our perception of objects *as objects*. I am currently interested in tracing this trend through the end of the 18th century, both to better understand the position itself and to understand how we moved from a view that holds that all sensations are essentially affective to the view that dominates contemporary discussion. For today, most philosophers, and indeed most people who think about sensation theoretically, take affective states such as pain, pleasure, desire and aversion to be wholly distinct from sensations; these affective states are essentially motivational and without any epistemic role.

This idea -- that the view that affective states play a uniquely motivational role, and sensory states play a uniquely metaphysical one is not a necessary one, and that is worth exploring a philosophical tradition in which emotions play a cognitive role -- formed the basis for the volume of essays I co-edited with Martin Pickavé: *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*. The volume as a whole focuses on the role that thinkers from the medieval period, Renaissance, and early modern period situate emotions as central to our thought processes.

In my contribution to the volume, "How We Experience the World: Passionate Perception in Descartes and Spinoza," I begin clarify a bit of my views on Descartes, and articulate a reading of Spinoza on these issues. I argue that both Descartes and Spinoza acknowledge an essentially affective dimension of sensory experience; for both our cognitive contact with the world begins from the way in which things benefit and harm us. For Descartes, emotions and sensations are both intentional states, though they can still be distinguished as mental states; I argue that they both refer to, or represent, the ways in which things benefit and harm us, they differ in what they present to the cognizer. Spinoza conceives of our experience differently, making imagination the central concept, and I argue that for him, our imagining the objects we do, our perceiving or being aware of the objects we are, is a matter of our affections, or emotions. I further develop this reading of Spinoza in "Spinoza on Imagination and the Affects."

In "Instrumental or Immersed Experience: Pleasure, Pain and Object Perception in Locke," I look at this general question of the affective dimension of experience from the point of view of an empiricist like Locke. I draw out two distinct strands in Locke's account of our simple ideas of experience: an instrumental and an immersed model of experience. The place of pleasure and pain in sensation is key to the distinction between these two models. After showing this equivocation in Locke's account, I consider its implications for his account of object perception, or our ideas of particular substances, and suggest that considering these issues in Locke might afford insight into contemporary discussions of the Binding Problem. I conclude by showing how Berkeley and Condillac resolve this equivocation in Locke and considering why Locke himself might have failed to do so.

In my contribution to the Routledge Companion to 18th Century Philosophy, "Pleasure, Pain and Sense Perception," I outline how I this problem -- that of the affective dimension of sensory experience -- develops from Locke, through Berkeley, Hutcheson, to Condillac and Hume, and ultimately to Bentham, where we find a view much more the current dominant view, one which takes sensations to be representational and inert and emotions to be motivational and nonrepresentational. In this survey, I aiming to get clear on the philosophical reasons for this shift.

This interest in the affective dimension of perception also frames the volume on the history of the concept of pleasure I am editing for the new series *Oxford Philosophical Concepts*. Contributors, who range from scholars of ancient philosophy to those working in contemporary philosophy of mind, have been asked to attend to the cognitive role (broadly conceived) of pleasure rather than its motivational role. I am currently receiving drafts from the contributors, and hope to have the manuscript submitted in Summer 2015.

Women and Rationality in the Early Modern Period

My interest in the women philosophers of the 17th century began from the intersection of my interests in Descartes' philosophy and contemporary feminist thought. In undertaking a new translation (with introduction and annotations) of the correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, I wanted to fill an obvious, and to my mind, somewhat egregious, gap in textual resources, for there was at that time no English translation of the complete correspondence. Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia is one of Descartes' principal correspondents, and it is in his exchange with her that we find not only his clearest engagement with questions of the mind-body interaction and the union of mind

and body but also much of his writing on ethics and political philosophy. Understanding Descartes on these topics thus involves a thorough engagement with this correspondence – both sides of it. Reading Elisabeth’s side of the correspondence helps illuminate Descartes’ own views, but it also shows her to be an astute questioner across areas of philosophy. Focusing on Elisabeth’s letters also reveals her to be developing interesting philosophical positions of her own. While there may be many varieties of feminism, feminist thinkers would all share a commitment to valuing the work of women. Taking Elisabeth seriously as thinker is in keeping with this feminist commitment. My translation of the correspondence, published with University of Chicago Press in their series *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe*, has been well-reviewed (see reviews in *NDPR*, *The Philosophical Review*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Renaissance Quarterly*). It received an Honorable Mention by the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women in the category of translation or teaching edition in 2007. It has been cited not only by philosophers, but also historians and literary scholars.

Princess Elisabeth is hardly alone as a woman in the 17th century engaged in serious philosophical work. While we find very few women on the standard list of canonical figures in the history of philosophy, in recent years, there has been a surge of interest (driven by the research of Eileen O’Neill, Sarah Hutton, Jacqueline Broad, Susan James, Mary Ellen Waithe and others) in rehabilitating the work of women thinkers, along with other long-neglected figures, of the early modern period. My work on Elisabeth has been part of this effort, but I am also interested in the work of Moderata Fonte, Lucrezia Marinella, Marie de Gournay, Anna Maria van Schurman, Mary Astell, Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway, Gabrielle du Suchon, and Emilie du Châtelet, among others. Many of these women are writing in the tradition of the *querelle des femmes* (debate on women), arguing against views that take women as defective human beings, defending women’s nature as rational beings, and arguing for education of women and for the reform of such institutions as marriage. Several are also engaged in the rethinking of the natural world that, in many ways, frames the early modern period, including debates about the nature of causation, perception and human agency. Many are also interesting for their appropriation of Platonism, Skepticism, Stoicism and Epicureanism in their works.

At the request of the volume editor, Eileen O’Neill, I have done some work on Marie-Geneviève Thiroux D’Arconville. D’Arconville has been principally recognized for her translations (and illustrations) of scientific texts -- in chemistry and osteology -- she also was a prolific translator of English literature of her time and the author of two works concerning the passions. My contribution, "L'amour, l'ambition and l'amitié: Marie Thiroux D'Arconville on Passion, Agency and Virtue" develops an interpretation of these two works. At the time it was written, there was little to no secondary literature treating D’Arconville, and even accessing her writings involved a lot of leg work. In 2011, a collection of critical essays on her appeared in French, and an English translation of her writings for the *Other Voice* series is in the works. I am also a co-author with Charlotte Witt for the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry for Feminist History of Philosophy.

The new interest in non-canonical figures has raised some methodological questions for historians of philosophy – of how to conceive of the discipline of philosophy, and so of its history, of how to include previously marginal philosophical figures, of the basis for attending to women thinkers in particular – and I have aimed to be sensitive to this range of

questions. I explore several of them in "The Place of Women in the History of Early Modern Philosophy." There I consider several possible models for thinking about, as the title suggests, the place of women in early modern philosophy. My aim is to find a way of thinking about the history of philosophy that is both acceptable within currently disciplinary norms and will facilitate the continued inclusion of women thinkers in our historical philosophical considerations.

One strategy for bringing more women thinkers in the history of philosophy to the fore is to show them to be engaged in discussions of central philosophical questions. For instance, many are pointing out how early modern women had much to say regarding problems still at the center of metaphysics, (for example, the nature of the human being, causation, among others). However, they also engaged in rich discussions of other topics less at the center of current philosophical discussion. Perhaps reasserting the value of these topics of discussion can help in bringing the work of these women to the fore. To illustrate this, consider a particular case. Perhaps not surprisingly one such topic was education, and in particular the education of women. At the center of these discussions was a debate over the nature of human rationality. Much like some discussions in cognitive psychology today, at issue was a question of whether men and women think differently, or have different capacities for reasoning. We might think to bring into conversation with one another contemporary and 17th century discussions about the tacit assumptions of such claims and efforts to clarify the causes of observed differences between male and female cognitive activity. [I began to do a bit of this in my summer 2012 teaching, looking at 17th century arguments for women's education and at Cordelia Fine's recent *Delusions of Gender*.]

In "The Outward and Inward Beauty of Early Modern Women" I take a different tack, situating the 17th century discussion within another philosophical discussion with a longer history -- the relation between beauty and wisdom. I argue that a set of women writers appropriate Plato and Plotinus in interesting ways in their efforts to defend women as fully rational. In particular, Lucrezia Marinella leverages Plato's discussion of the ladder of desire in the *Symposium* to argue that women are closer to wisdom than men by focusing the argument towards oneself -- relying on an ability to recognize oneself (rather than another (younger male) as beautiful. Mary Astell can be read as making another move in the appropriation, possibly drawing on Plotinus, and considering rationality itself as an inner beauty. Astell and Madeleine de Scudéry disagree on the degree to which the skill at cultivating and maintaining an outer physical beauty are analogous to those required for the cultivation of inner beauty or reason.

A second strategy to sustaining newfound philosophical interest in long neglected figures is demonstrating that they hold philosophically interesting views. While commentators have certainly acknowledged Elisabeth's philosophical astuteness in raising objections to Descartes, the focus has typically been on the insight into Descartes' metaphysics afforded by his responses to these charged objections. However, in her letters, Elisabeth marks herself as a quite sophisticated thinker in her own right. In "Princess Elisabeth and Descartes..." I offer an interpretation of Elisabeth's own philosophical views, and I argue that she is struggling to steer a middle ground between a reductionist materialism and a substance dualism. This article was reprinted in *Feminism and the History of Philosophy*, edited by Genevieve Lloyd. In the Introduction to the Correspondence, in addition to summarizing the argument of that paper, I highlight Elisabeth's commitment to and interest in mechanist

explanations of natural phenomena as well as offer a reading of her letters to Descartes concerning ethics. Elisabeth's ethical views seem to me quite complex and interesting for historians of ethics. I argue that Elisabeth is committed to a virtue ethical framework – she seems to settle on a Stoic virtue ethical approach -- but at the same time she exhibits a skepticism about our ability to achieve the knowledge requisite for virtue. This skeptical position regarding human virtue leads her to reframe the problem of ethics as one of finding a common measure of value amongst individuals with competing interests. Through Elisabeth's letters, then, one can begin to see the connections between the revivals of Stoicism and Skepticism in the early 17th century and the development of contractarian ethical frameworks (such as Hobbes') in the latter part of the century. I continue to think about Elisabeth's moral philosophy in "...la psychologie morale du regret," mentioned above. I am completing a reworking of this introduction into the entry on Princess Elisabeth for the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Current and Future Projects

While I have alluded to my current and future projects above, it will be useful to have them compiled here.

a. *Descartes Through the Passions of the Soul*. I have been working on a book length project in which I lay out an interpretation of Descartes metaphysics and philosophy of mind centred on *The Passions of the Soul*. After providing a defense of my interpretive strategy, I show how the *Passions* contains a development of Descartes' account of the metaphysics of the human being, his account of body-mind causation, and his account of mental representation. At the center of Descartes's account is his conception of the human good.

b. *The affective nature of perceptual experience*. Following on my work on Descartes, I am currently focusing on the shifting treatment of pleasure and pain and other affective states in the early modern period. My contention is that over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries the role of pain and pleasure changes; they are initially integrated into sensory experience, playing an epistemic role, but end up as distinct motivational states without epistemic value. My paper, "Pleasure, Pain and Sense Perception," in the *Routledge Companion to Eighteenth Century Philosophy*, serves as the springboard for future work. I intend to continue to work on Condillac and Hume, I am also editing the volume on pleasure for the Oxford Philosophical Concepts series (series editor, Christia Mercer). In my contribution to that volume, I am arguing that for Malebranche pleasure plays an important role in explaining the distinctive character of human consciousness.

c. *Early Modern Women Philosophers*. Either in a series of articles or, more likely, in a monograph, I would like to explore strategies for weaving women thinkers into early modern philosophy. As this project is currently conceived, I identify a range of central philosophical questions, and show how the positions articulated by women thinkers in response to these questions enriches our understanding of the range of philosophical positions that can be taken up and the connections between them. The questions I am most interested in concern: Causation; the problem of consciousness; rationality, cognitive development and education; and equality and autonomy.