

**Strand Sheldahl-Thomason**  
Curriculum Vitae

Purdue University Fort Wayne  
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**Education:**

- 2018            Ph.D. in Philosophy and Literature from Purdue University
- 2011            M.A. in Philosophy from Boston College
- 2008            B.A. in Philosophy and History from the Robert D. Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon

Dissertation: “Discourse, Documents, and Counter-Discipline: Michel Foucault’s Ethics and the Practice of Writing.”

Dissertation Committee: Daniel W. Smith (Chair), Arkady Plotnitsky, Sandor Goodhart, William McBride, James Bernauer

**Areas of Specialization:**

20<sup>th</sup> Century Continental Philosophy, Philosophy and Literature, Michel Foucault.

**Areas of Competence:**

History of Philosophy, Ethics, Applied Ethics.

**Teaching Experience:**

- 2018-present    Limited Term Lecturer, Purdue University Fort Wayne:  
Ethics (in person and online), Ethics and Animals, Environmental Ethics
- 2019-2020        Adjunct Faculty, Indiana University Kokomo:  
Ethics (online), Critical Thinking (online)
- 2012-2016        Graduate Instructor, Purdue University:  
Introduction to Philosophy, Fundamentals of Speech Communication
- 2011-2017        Graduate Assistant, Purdue University:  
Environmental Ethics (Professor Mark Bernstein)  
Introduction to Philosophy (Professor Michael Jacovides)  
Religions of the West (Professor Thomas Ryba)  
Ethics and Animals (Professor Evan Williams)

**Books:**

2020 *Michel Foucault and the Ethics of Writing*. Under review with Edinburgh University Press.

**Refereed Journal Articles:**

2019 “Foucault and the Use of Exposure: Discipline, Ethics, and Self-Writing.” *Review of Communication*, 19 (3), 225-240.

2016 “Self-Documentation as Counter-Discipline in the Ethical Works of Michel Foucault.” *Sociological Problems (социологически проблеми)*, 48 (3-4), 279-292.

**Book Chapters:**

2020 “Time and the Untimely: Deleuze, Foucault, and the Production of the New.” *Deleuze and Time*. Edited by Rob Luzecky and Daniel W. Smith. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press (Forthcoming).

**Grants and Awards:**

2017 Purdue University Graduate School Summer Research Grant

2016 Promise Grant from Purdue University College of Liberal Arts for research in Paris

Partner University Fund (French American Cultural Exchange) Grant for conference travel

Kneale Award for Theory and Cultural Studies, First Place, Purdue University’s 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Literary Awards Contest

2015 The Department of Philosophy Eric L. Clitheroe Award, Purdue University’s 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Literary Awards Contest

2014 Partner University Fund (French American Cultural Exchange) Summer School Grant

2013 Purdue University Graduate School Summer Research Grant

2003-2006 University of Oregon Dean’s Scholarship

2003 Rotary Club Scholarship

### **Academic Presentations:**

- 2020            “Toward a Foucaultian Environmentalism.” Foucault Circle Annual Meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. (Rescheduled for July 2021)
- “Exposure and Place: Michel Foucault’s Ethics as Environmental Ethics.” Indiana Philosophical Association Spring 2020 Meeting (Rescheduled for April 2021)
- “Toward a Digital Cynicism: Surveillance Capitalism, the Society of Control, and an Ethics of Immanence.” Deleuze and Guattari World Congress 2020 in New Delhi, India. (February 20<sup>th</sup>—Could not attend)
- 2019            “Rethinking the Privacy/Exposure Divide in the Digital Age.” Indiana Philosophical Association Fall 2019 Workshop. (November 9<sup>th</sup>)
- “Reflections on Privacy, or Towards a Genealogy of Privacy.” Indiana University Inter-Campus Philosophy Conference. (March 30<sup>th</sup>)
- 2018            “The Care of the Self as Exposure: Revisiting Michel Foucault’s Ethics.” Indiana Philosophical Association Fall 2018 Meeting. (November 17<sup>th</sup>)
- “Discursive Diversity as a Condition of Discursive Divergence: Michel Foucault and the Ethics of Writing.” 2018 Purdue Linguistics, Literature, and Second Language Studies Conference. (March 4<sup>th</sup>)
- 2016            “Lambros Malafouris and Emmanuel Levinas: Material Engagement and Responsibility (Toward a Levinasian Environmentalism).” The Neighbor and the Stranger: The North American Levinas Society/Société Internationale de Recherche Emmanuel Levinas Conference in Toulouse, France. (July 6<sup>th</sup>)
- 2015            “The Life Aquatic: Madness and Unreason in Zakes Mda’s *The Heart of Redness*.” The Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900. (February 26<sup>th</sup>)
- 2014            “Cinematic Ritual: Film and the Transformation of Aura.” Intellectual Properties: Archive, Canon, Clone, Copy. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature Conference at the University of Minnesota. (September 27<sup>th</sup>)
- 2011            “Can You Repeat That?: Narrative, Repetition, and Continuity of the Self.” The Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities in Honolulu. (January 12<sup>th</sup>)

### **Other Presentation:**

- 2018            Commentator for Jason Lee Byas, “Vindicating Hampton’s Expressive Retributivism as a Theory of Rebuke.” Indiana Philosophical Association Fall 2018 Meeting. (November 16<sup>th</sup>)

## **Research Experience:**

- 2017-2018      Research Assistant for the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Purdue University
- 2016              Research at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (June)
- Research Assistant for Dr. Patrick Kain and Dr. Jeffrey Brower, Human Nature and Human Dignity Project, Purdue University
- 2009-2011      Research Assistant for Dr. James Bernauer, Kraft Family Professor of Philosophy at Boston College

## **Graduate Courses Taken:**

### Ancient Philosophy

- Aristotle's Metaphysics (Boston College, Professor William Wians, Spring 2011)
- Plato's Republic (Boston College, Professor Marina McCoy, Fall 2010)
- Vulnerability and the Greeks (Boston College, Professor Marina McCoy, Fall 2009)

### Continental Philosophy

- Between Foucault and Deleuze (Purdue University, Professor Daniel Smith, Fall 2012)
- Foucault, Deleuze, Lacan, and the Ends of Subjectivity (Purdue University, Professor Arkady Plotnitsky, Fall 2012)
- German Idealist Political Philosophy (Purdue University, Professor Christopher Yeomans, Spring 2012)
- The Concept of Nature (Purdue University, Professor Daniel Smith, Fall 2011)
- Phenomenology (Purdue University, Professor Christopher Yeomans, Fall 2011)
- Michel Foucault (Boston College, Professor James Bernauer, Spring 2011)
- Merleau-Ponty: Flesh and Language (Boston College, Professor Françoise Dastur, Fall 2010)
- Kierkegaard on the Self (Boston College, Professor Jeffrey Hanson, Spring 2010)
- Heidegger and the Question of Truth (Boston College, Professor John Sallis, Fall 2009)

Seminar on Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Part 1 (Boston College, Professor Jeffrey Hanson, Fall 2009)

### Philosophy and Literature

Postcolonial Ecologies (Purdue University, Professor Robert Marzec, Spring 2013)

Romantic Natures (Purdue University, Professor Geraldine Friedman, Spring 2013)

German Theory from Nietzsche to Celan (Purdue University, Professor Adrian Del Caro, Spring 2012)

Philosophy and Literary Theory (Purdue University, Professor Arkady Plotnitsky, Spring 2012)

Ontological and Semantic Theories of Humor (Purdue University, Professor Victor Raskin, Fall 2011)

Readings in French Theory (Boston College, Professor Kevin Newmark, Spring 2010)

### Philosophy and Psychiatry

The Many Sides of Madness: Philosophy of Psychiatry (Purdue University, Professors Daniel Kelly and Daniel Smith, Spring 2013)

Lacan (Boston College, Professors Jeffrey Bloechl and William Richardson, Spring 2010)

### **Graduate Courses Audited:**

Evolution and Externalism: Studies in Philosophy of Mind  
(Purdue University, Professors Daniel Kelly and Daniel Smith, Fall 2014)

Bergson (Purdue University, Professor Daniel Smith, Spring 2014)

Heidegger's *Being and Time* (Purdue University, Professor Calvin Schrag, Spring 2014)

### **Other Graduate Courses:**

Attended the Theoretical Toolkit Summer School: Contemporary French Philosophy and the Analytic Tradition at l'Université de Paris Ouest-Nanterre La Défense (June 23<sup>rd</sup>-June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

### **Committees:**

2018 Organizer of Illuminations Lecture Series at Purdue University

- 2014 Head, Purdue University Biennial Philosophy and Literature Graduate Conference Committee
- 2012 Member, Purdue University Biennial Philosophy and Literature Graduate Conference Committee
- 2009-2011 Member, Boston College Annual Philosophy Graduate Conference Committee

**Extra Training:**

- 2020 Teaching for Student Success: An Evidence-Based Approach. Online pedagogy class offered by Indiana University Kokomo. Completed March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Memberships:**

*Phi Beta Kappa* (Inducted 2008)  
 American Philosophical Association  
 Indiana Philosophical Association

**Languages:**

French, intermediate  
 German, reading knowledge

**Other Activities:**

- 2010-2011 Elected member of the Boston College Philosophy M.A. Student Council

**References:**

Daniel W. Smith  
 Purdue University  
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## Dissertation Summary:

Michel Foucault's wide-ranging body of research challenges modernity's subject-centric philosophies and reorients philosophy along practical rather than theoretical lines. However, the diversity of Foucault's work makes addressing his project as a whole difficult, and in particular it raises the question of how his ethics should be understood in light of his critical-historical works on subjectivity. I focus on a specific ethical practice of the self, writing, to show that Foucault's ethics is relevant *as* ethics in the present, and to show that it offers a response to the problem of our constitution as subjects that Foucault's earlier work raises.

Some scholars of Foucault's ethics hold that all of Foucault's works are histories of the subject, and his so-called ethics should be read in the same way: as an addition to his project of figuring out where we came from. Other scholars hold that through their practices, subjects can open new possibilities for thought, which is what Foucault's ethics asks us to do. I side with the latter scholars, but my work furthers theirs by showing explicitly how the care of the self transforms discourses and institutions as well as subjects. My focus on writing shows that we can appropriate writing techniques that developed as institutional tools of our exposure and training in order to expose and train ourselves differently and orient our thought away from the subject-centric view of modernity.

The first chapter of my dissertation situates my work in relation to the dominant interpretations of Foucault's ethics and points out the shortcomings of these interpretations. I argue that a focus on a particular practice, writing, which appears as a theme in many of Foucault's works, overcomes these shortcomings because it reveals how one and the same practice has shaped our thought and can reshape our thought.

My second chapter argues that writing is an engine of discursive transformation because it contributes new statements that discourses then have to incorporate. According to Foucault, discourses give themselves their rules of formation, which rules are the regularities of statements within them. Therefore when new statements emerge, they alter the rules according to which yet newer statements may be produced.

Chapter 3 looks at this phenomenon in practice. I examine the literary works of Raymond Roussel and the Marquis de Sade, as well as Foucault's books and papers on them. I argue that their writings represent conscious efforts to bring about discursive transformation. They not only provide localized examples of how discourses function, but also demonstrate, albeit in a rudimentary fashion, how an ethics of writing might work.

In chapter 4 I turn to the operation of writing in institutional settings. I show that subjects emerge out of the painstaking recording of bodily capacities as well as medical, legal, and educational histories—in short, the institutional creation of biographies. Furthermore, the subjects that this practice constitutes are led to contribute to their own biographies by producing confessions of their criminal and sexual behaviors. All of this leads to an intense focus on subjectivity as at once the ground of knowledge and a principle of disorder that calls for thorough regulation.

Chapter 5 ties the emphasis on self-writing in Foucault's ethics to the nascent ethics of Foucault's literary interests. I argue that the transformative promise of literature is realized in self-writing that borrows techniques from institutional biographies but inserts them into new, extra-institutional relations. In this way, a tool of discipline is repurposed to open new possibilities for thought. My project mines fresh insights from Foucault's work, and shows how his ethics is an ethics for the present.