

DR. RESHEF AGAM-SEGAL

- **Personal Details**

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- **Education**

2008 D.Phil. (Doctoral studies), University of Oxford, UK
“Cora Diamond’s Moral Philosophy” (Adviser: Dr. Stephen Mulhall)

2002 M.A. Philosophy Department, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
“Paternalism” (Adviser: Prof. Moshe Halbertal)

1995 B.A. Philosophy and Psychology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

- **Areas of Specialization**

Philosophy of Language
Moral Philosophy
Wittgenstein

- **Areas of Competence**

Philosophy of Mind
Philosophy and Literature
Philosophy of Religion

- **Employment History**

2018– Associate professor of philosophy, Department of English, Rhetoric, and Humanistic Studies, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia, USA

2012–2018 Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Department of Psychology and Philosophy, and Department of English, Rhetoric, and Humanistic Studies, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia, USA

2008–2012 Instructor, Department of Philosophy, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, USA

2007–2008 Visiting Scholar, Department of Philosophy, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA

- **Awards, Citations, Honors, Fellowships**

- (a) **Honors and awards**

2018 Jackson-Hope Prize for Excellence in Published Scholarly Work, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia

2002 AVI (Avi Hayishuv – Rothschild) Foundation Doctoral (D.Phil) Scholarship

2001 The ‘Harold R. Abells Philosophy Scholarship Fund’ award for writing an exemplary M.A. seminary paper, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

1998 The ‘Harry Hershon Award’ (2nd place) for literary writing – Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

(b) Fellowships

2004–2007 Fellowship at the Van-Leer Jerusalem Institute Library, Jerusalem, Israel

- **Scientific Publications**

(a) Editorship of Books

Agam-Segal R. & Ashkenazi Y. (eds.), (forthcoming), Murdoch Iris, *Love beyond Selfishness, Imagination beyond Fantasy: Dialogues and Essays on Love, Religion, Art, and Ethics*, Agam-Segal R. & Ashkenazi Y. (trans.), Carmel: Jerusalem, (In Hebrew).

Agam-Segal R. & Dain E. (eds.), (2018), *Wittgenstein's Moral Thought*, Routledge: London. ([link](#))

(b) Refereed Journal Articles

Agam-Segal R. (2019), "Avner Baz on Aspect-Perception and Concepts: a Critique." *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2016), "Which Hurts More, Scorn or Indifference: A Philosophical Reading of Hanoch Levin's 'A Man Standing behind a Seated Woman'." *Alaxon*, (in Hebrew). ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2015), "Aspect-Perception as a Philosophical Method. *Nordic Wittgenstein Review*, 4(1), 93-121. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2014), "When Language Gives Out: Conceptualization and Aspect-Seeing as a Form of Judgment." *Metaphilosophy*, 45(1), 41-68. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2013), "A Splitting 'Mind-Ache': An Anscombean Challenge to Kantian Self-Legislation." *J Philosophical Res*, 38, 41-66. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2012), "Reflecting on Language from 'Sideways-on': Preparatory and Non-Preparatory Aspects-Seeing." *J History of Analytical Philosophy*, 1(6), 1-17. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2012), "Kant's Non-Aristotelian Conception of Morality." *Southwest Philosophy Review*, 28(1), 121-133. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2012), "How to Investigate the Grammar of Aspect-Perception: A Question in Wittgensteinian Method." *Essays in Philosophy*, 13(1), 85-105. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2009), "Contours and Barriers: What Is It to Draw the Limits of Language?" *Philosophy*, 84(4), 549-570. ([link](#))

(c) Chapters in edited volumes

Agam-Segal R. (2019), "Cora Diamond and the Uselessness of Argument," in: *Morality in a Realistic Spirit*, Craig Taylor & Andrew Gleeson (eds.) Routledge: London, 50-67. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2018), "Moral Thought in Wittgenstein: Clarity and Changes of Attitude." in: *Wittgenstein's Moral Thought*, R. Agam-Segal & E. Dain (eds.), Routledge: London, 67-96. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2016), "A Splitting 'Mind-Ache': An Anscombean Challenge to Kantian Self-Legislation," In: *Elizabeth Anscombe* Vol. 3, "Ethics," Roger Teichnam (ed.), Routledge, London. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2013), "Is Self-Legislation Possible? – Kantian Ethics after Anscombe." In *Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, Bacin, S., Ferrarin, A. La Rocca, C., & Ruffing, M. (eds.), de Gruyter: Berlin, 3-14. ([link](#))

(d) Review Articles

Agam-Segal R. (forthcoming), "Wittgenstein and Lacan at the Limit," Maria Balaska, *Philosophical Investigations*.

Agam-Segal R. (2019), "The philosophy of Charles Travis," Collins J. & Dobler T. (eds.), *Notre Dame Philosophical Review*. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2019), "The Later Wittgenstein and Moral Philosophy," Benjamin De Mesel, *Philosophical Investigations*. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2010), "Four Introductory Books in Ethics." *Teaching Philosophy*, 33(4), 399-408. ([link](#))

Agam-Segal R. (2005), "Impartiality and Personal Relations - Distances between Principles and between People," Review of Yotam Ben-Zimman's *Until You Are in his Place – Ethics, Impartiality, and Personal Relations*, *Iyyun*, 54, 223-32. (In Hebrew) ([link](#))

(e) Translations

Agam-Segal R. & Ashkenazi Y. (eds.), (forthcoming), Iris Murdoch, *Love beyond Selfishness, Imagination beyond Fantasy: Dialogues and Essays on Love, Religion, Art, and Ethics*, Agam-Segal R. & Ashkenazi Y. (trans.), Carmel: Jerusalem, (In Hebrew).

(f) Books and Articles in preparation

Agam-Segal R. *The Philosophy of Aspects*

Agam-Segal R. "The Pot Paradox: Dealing with Confusion and the Virtue of Availability"

• Teaching Activities

(a) Undergraduate Courses Taught

Logic and Critical Thinking (ERH-332)
2012-2019, one section a year

Greek and Medieval Philosophy (ERH-212)
2013-2019 – two sections a year

Modern & Contemporary Phil. (ERH-213)
2013-2019 – two sections a year

Philosophy and Literature (ERH-323)
2013-2019 – one section a year

Minds and Machines (Phil. of Mind) (PH-308)
2012-2013, one section a year

Introduction to Ethics (ERH-207)
2008-2013, eight sections a year

Introduction to Ethics in the Medical Sciences
2009-2012, eight sections a year

(b) Research Students

Dylan Davis (undergraduate) – “Skepticism” (spring 2018)
 Eric Farleigh (undergraduate) – “Freedom of the Will” (spring 2019)
 Joshua Wolfe (undergraduate) – “Minds and Machines” (spring 2019)
 Josef Murray (undergraduate) – “Just War, and the Presumption against War” (Summer 2019)

- **Professional Activities**

(a) Positions in Academic Administration

Member of Undergraduate Research Committee – since 2012
 Member of Sigma Tau Delta and extra-curricular activities Committee – 2016-2017
 Member of Distinguished Speaker Committee – 2016-2018
 Member of Faculty Development Committee – 2016-2018
 Member of Assessment and E-portfolio Committee – since 2017
 Member of Academic Schedules Committee – since 2019

(b) Reviewer for the Journals and publishers

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| ❖ Rowman & Littlefield publishers | ❖ <i>Journal for the History of Analytical philosophy</i> |
| ❖ <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> | ❖ <i>Nordic Wittgenstein Review</i> |
| ❖ <i>Journal of Philosophical Research</i> | ❖ <i>Clio: A Journal of Literature, History, and the History of Philosophy</i> |
| ❖ <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> | ❖ <i>Ethical Perspectives</i> |
| ❖ <i>Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews</i> | |
| ❖ <i>Theory and Criticism</i> | |

(c) Membership in Professional Societies

Phi Kappa Phi

- **Lectures and Presentations at Meetings and Invited Seminars**

(a) Seminar Presentations at Universities and Conferences - Invited

- 2019 “On Wittgenstein’s Moral Thought.” Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA
 2016 “Moral Clarity in Wittgenstein”
 The Auburn University Philosophy Society, University of Auburn, Auburn, AL, USA
 2015 “Clarifying Clarification: Wittgenstein on Moral Clarity”
 Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA, USA
 2015 “Clarifying Clarification: Wittgenstein on Moral Clarity”
 The Wittgenstein Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA
 2013 “When Language Gives Out: Conceptualization and Aspect-Seeing”
 a) Wittgenstein Workshop, The New School, New York, NY,
 b) Providence College, Providence RI, USA
 2011 “Aspect Seeing and Our Real Need”
 The Auburn University Philosophy Society, Auburn University, Auburn, AL, USA
 2010 Commentator on R. Long’s “Invisible Hands and Incantations: The Mystification of State Power” and on C. Johnson’s “Women and the Invisible Fist”

- The Molinari Society Symposium – American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Conference, Washington, DC, USA
- 2010 “Secondary Senses: Self-Legislation and Other Figurative Dramas”
48th annual meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society, Pensacola, FL, USA
- 2009 “Understanding and Unifying the Self”
The Auburn University Philosophy Society, Auburn University, Auburn, AL, USA
- 2008 “Drawing the Limits of Moral Language”
The Auburn University Philosophy Society, University of Auburn, Auburn, AL, USA
- 2008 “On Anscombe’s Rejection of Self-Legislation”
The Contemporary Philosophy Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA
- 2008 “Contours and Barriers” –
a) The Wittgenstein Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA;
b) Hebrew University, philosophy department departmental colloquium Jerusalem, Israel
c) Ben-Gurion University of the Negev philosophy department departmental colloquium Beer-Sheva, Israel
- 2006 “Iris Murdoch on (Plato on) Literature and Philosophy”
The Van-Leer Jerusalem Institute, Discussion Forum on Philosophy and Literature

(b) Submitted Presentations

- 2019 “The Pot Paradox: Dealing with Confusion and the Virtue of Availability”
Keeping in Honest: Vulnerable Writing – The 10th annual conference of the Nordic Wittgenstein Society
Uppsala University, Uppsala Sweden 2003 “Utilitarianism and Ambivalence”
The University of Warwick Graduate Conference in Philosophy and Literature
- 2016 “Moral Clarity in Wittgenstein”
7th Regional Wittgenstein Workshop, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, USA
- 2014 “Resoluteness in Philosophy, and in Moral Philosophy”
5th Regional Wittgenstein Workshop, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, USA
- 2013 “The Pot Paradox”
Society for the Study of the History of Analytical Philosophy, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, USA
- 2012 “Aspect-Perception as a Philosophical Method”
73rd meeting of Virginia Philosophical Association, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA
“In Wittgenstein’s Footsteps,” University of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland
- 2011 “Aristotelian and Kantian self-legislation: Kant’s Absolute Conception of Ethics”
a) 49th annual meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society, Pensacola, FL, USA
b) 11th International Conference on Persons, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, USA
- 2011 “When Language Gives Out: Conceptualization and Aspect-Seeing”
Kentucky Philosophical Association, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, USA
- 2010 “Secondary Senses: Self-Legislation and Other Figurative Dramas”
62nd Annual Northwest Philosophy Conference, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon
- 2010 “Why Did Anscombe Reject Self-Legislation?”
American philosophical Association Pacific Division Conference, San Francisco, CA

- 2010 “A Splitting Mind-Ache: The Case of Self-Legislation”
XI International Kant Congress, Pisa, Italy
- 2010 “Secondary Senses: Self-Legislation and Other Figurative Dramas”
48th annual meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society, Pensacola, FL, USA
- 2006 “Hanoch Levin’s Dilemma: Reading Hanoch Levin’s A Man Stands behind a Seated Woman” The Van-Leer Jerusalem Institute, Discussion Forum on Philosophy and Literature.
- 2005 “Critical Reading of Yotam Benziman’s Until You Are in His Place”
The Van-Leer Jerusalem Institute


- **References**

1. Professor Cora Diamond
Kenan Professor of Philosophy Emerita
Philosophy, University of Virginia, 120 Cocke Hall, P.O. Box 400780,
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2. Dr. Stephen Mulhall
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Philosophy, University of Oxford, New College, Oxford OX1 3BN, UK.
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3. Professor Duncan Richter
Charles S. Luck III '55 Institute Professor
English, Rhetoric, & Humanistic Studies, 227 Scott Shipp, Virginia Military Institute,
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- **Synopsis of Research and Research Plans**

I study issues in the philosophy of mind, language, and ethics, predominantly from an analytic philosophy perspective. In the history of philosophy, I published articles on Kant, Elizabeth Anscombe, Wittgenstein, and Cora Diamond.

One focus of my research is a family of experiences which we may call “transformative”—e.g. experiences of the uncanny, of wonder, ‘a-ha!’ moments, and aspect-shifts. Often treated as marginal, my contention is that understanding these phenomena may throw light on central issues in the philosophy of perception, mathematics, ethics, metaphilosophy, and more. This, for one thing, since such experiences reveal that the mind’s relation to the world may not be fixed, or even guaranteed. How our minds make contact with the world, if at all—what forms of judgment, in Kant’s sense, we may employ, what attitude we may adopt—is not always settled or secured.

I approach the matter centrally via a study the phenomena of aspect-perception—as when we suddenly see Robert Jastrow’s duck-rabbit, , as a duck, when previously we only saw it as a rabbit. My main contention is that aspect-perception typically involves bringing a concept to an object apart from any routine of conceptualization. That is, when we thus bring a concept to an object we are not treating the object as routinely conceptualized in this way, but are only letting

ourselves experience—palpably—what it would be like to conceptualize the object in this way. In this sense, aspect-seeing involves a special kind of mind-work, a distinct “form of judgment.”

Aspect-perception and the related matters I mentioned stand at the crossroad of several philosophical issues, which allows me to study these phenomena from a variety of perspectives. These phenomena have a central place in the philosophy of perception, and the philosophy of language insofar as questions about conceptualization are at stake. They are also important to the philosophy of psychology and the philosophy of the social sciences more broadly, inasmuch as difficulties conceptualizing the mind and social phenomena are involved. Mathematical insights also often involve aspect shifts, as does moral thinking. The study of these phenomena and experiences is also central to aesthetics, and the study of metaphors. And finally, understanding these phenomena is also tied to metaphilosophy and to the understanding of philosophical methodology. The study of these phenomena is thus a little explored gateway to philosophy broadly.

I have published several papers about aspect-perception in [*Metaphilosophy*](#), the [*Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy*](#), the [*Nordic Wittgenstein Review*](#), and [*Essays in Philosophy*](#). A paper of mine that examines the connection between aspect-seeing and conceptualization was recently published in [*Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*](#). A paper of mine that ties Wittgenstein’s moral thought to his discussion of aspects was recently published in [*Wittgenstein’s Moral Thought*](#), a volume I co-edited with Prof. Edmund Dain.

Another related focus of my work is moral philosophy. I have developed a reading of Kant’s conception of *self-legislation*, alternative to both mainstream constructivist and realist readings. Prominent constructivist interpreters, like Christine Korsgaard, align Kant’s practical philosophy with Aristotle’s and take the notion of self-legislation to denote a life-long project of determining the organizing principle of our practical life and constituting our own agency. Realist readings of Kant’s practical philosophy tend to identify the source of normativity as external to us. In opposition to both, I argue that describing the sources of moral normativity in Kant requires an irreducible metaphorical language—the language that Kant employs when he describes us as internally split into law-givers and law-receivers: we lay down the law on ourselves, obey it or fail to, and then put ourselves on trial. I discuss this in “A Splitting Mind-Ache: Anscombean Challenge to Kantian Self-Legislation” (in [*The Journal of philosophical Research*](#)), and in “Kant’s Non-Aristotelian Conception of Morality,” (in [*Southwest Philosophy Review*](#)). More recently, I have developed a reading of Wittgenstein’s moral thought that stresses his attention to attitudinal changes in moral thought. I do that in “Moral Thought in Wittgenstein: Clarity and Changes of Attitude” (in [*Wittgenstein’s Moral Thought*](#)). On the reading I propose, attitudinal changes are akin to aspect-shifts, and can be triggered by a special use of language—often apparently assertoric—whose point is to prompt a sort of imaginative involvement with someone or something. So, for instance, when we point out that “Prisoners have mothers too,” or that “We are flesh and blood,” we know we are not giving anyone any new information. Still, this language can bring a shift in someone’s attitude, perhaps in ourselves, and get people to look at things anew. An often neglected aspect of moral thinking is thus clarified.

One general implication which emerges from both strands in my research is that ineliminable figurative thinking and uses of language may sometimes be central to the understanding of at least some issues in ethics and in philosophy more broadly. Figurative thinking is not merely suggestive and thought provoking. It may rather be constitutive of some phenomena: Some phenomena allow themselves to be revealed, so to speak, only in figurative thinking and language—only under the pressure of a certain imaginative involvement.

- Plans for future: Monograph

In the next two years, I hope to finish a draft for a monograph titled *The Philosophy of Aspects*. In this book, I discuss the phenomena of aspects-perception and aspect-shifts, and their philosophical importance in a variety of philosophical areas. The book will be divided into nine chapters:

- **Chapter one** surveys the history of the discussion about aspects, the variety of ways in which thinkers understood this notion, and the variety of ways in which they put it to philosophical use.
- **Chapter two** offers a general synopsis of my own understanding of the logic of aspects. Primarily, it develops an understanding of the experience of aspects in terms of change of attitude, when ‘attitude’ is understood not as a personal psychological inclination, but rather as a basic orientation, frame of mind, or a spirit one adopts towards the world and themselves.
- **Chapter three** is about metaphilosophy. Aspect-perception, I argue can be put to use as a philosophical method. Seeing matters differently or anew can often generate philosophical understanding. In this way, philosophical understanding is the product not only of organized logical inference or factual investigation, but of imaginative and personal involvement.
- **Chapter four** discusses the place of aspect-seeing in the philosophy of perception. I discuss the place of aspect-perception in normal perception, and draw distinctions between kinds of perception—both of non-aspect perception, and of aspect-perception.
- **Chapter five** concentrates on the philosophy of language, and discusses the way in which concepts are involved in perception generally, and in aspect-perception in particular. The discussion allows me to develop an understanding of the linguistic phenomena of metaphors.
- **Chapter six** discusses the place of aspect-perception in the philosophy of mathematics. Understanding the logic of aspect-seeing, I argue, allows us to place mathematical understanding between creation and invention, and carve a philosophical space between mathematical realism and intuitionism.
- **Chapter seven** discusses the importance of aspect-seeing to the philosophy of mind. I argue that our ways of thinking about the mind normally involves viewing it through the medium of concepts that are borrowed from elsewhere. In this way, we normally understand our own relation to ourselves in terms borrowed from our relations with others, and talk accordingly of “self-deception,” “self-control,” “self-legislation,” etc. The logical difficulties and tensions this generates are mitigated when we understand what we do in terms of aspect-seeing.
- **Chapter eight** discusses the place of aspect-perception in aesthetics. Aesthetic experiences often, and at their deepest, involve self-reorientation towards objects. This, I argue, is best understood in terms of aspect-seeing.
- **Chapter nine** discusses the place of aspect-perception in ethics. Similar to aesthetic thinking, achieving true, not merely intellectual, moral understanding requires reorienting oneself towards the world and oneself. This is often achieved in ethics *not* by presenting new information, but by giving oneself and others a new, or renewed, way of looking at matters. Thus, for instance, we may try to influence a cruel prison-guard by telling them “prisoners have mothers too.” We are thereby presumably not giving them new information, but rather forcing on them a different way of looking at prisoners.