

Tim Button

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Areas of teaching and research

Meta(meta)physics, philosophy of mathematics, logic, language

Career

Principal details

- 2016– Senior Lecturer, Cambridge
- 2012–16 University Lecturer, Cambridge
- 2012– Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge (and Director of Studies)
- 2010–12 Research Fellow at St John's College, Cambridge

Additional affiliations

- 2017 Visiting Scholar at NYU, Department of Philosophy
- 2016 Visiting Scholar at UC Irvine, Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science
- 2015 Visiting Fellow at MCMP, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
- 2012 Visiting Scholar at the University of Texas at Austin
- 2008–09 Visiting Fellow at Harvard University (recipient of a Kennedy Scholarship)

Publications

Books

- 2018 *Philosophy and Model Theory*. Co-authored with S. Walsh. With a historical appendix by W. Hodges. Oxford University Press (534 pages)
- 2013 *The Limits of Realism*. Oxford University Press (280 pages)

Papers

- 2018 Wittgenstein on solipsism in the 1930s: Private pains, private languages, and two uses of 'I'. In *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*, 82: 205–29
- 2018 Other minds and God: Russell and Stout on James and Schiller. In M. Baghramian and S. Marchetti (eds.) *Pragmatism and the European Traditions*, Routledge: 86–109
- 2017 Exclusion problems and the cardinality of logical space. *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 46.6: 611–23
- 2017 Grades of discrimination: Indiscernibility, symmetry, and relativity. *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 58.4: 527–53
- 2016 Deflationary metaphysics and ordinary language. *Synthese*.
- 2016 Structure and categoricity: Determinacy of reference and truth-value in the philosophy of mathematics. With S. Walsh. *Philosophia Mathematica* 24.3: 283–307
- 2016 Knot and tonk: Nasty connectives on many-valued truth-tables for classical sentential logic. *Analysis* 76.1: 7–19
- 2016 Brains in vats and model theory. In S. Goldberg (ed.), *The Brain in a Vat*, Cambridge University Press: 131–54
- 2014 The weight of truth: Lessons for minimalists from Russell's Gray's Elegy argument. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 114.3: 261–89
- 2012 Spotty scope and our relation to fictions. *Noûs* 46.2: 243–58
- 2012 The philosophical significance of Tennenbaum's Theorem (with P. Smith). *Philosophia Mathematica* 20.1: 114–21
- 2011 The metamathematics of Putnam's model-theoretic arguments. *Erkenntnis* 74.3: 321–49

- 2010 Dadaism: restrictivism as militant quietism. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 110.3: 387–98
- 2009 SAD computers and two versions of the Church–Turing Thesis. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 60.4: 765–92
- 2009 Hyperloops do not threaten the notion of an effective procedure. *CiE 2009, Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 5635: 68–78
- 2007 Every now and then, no-futurism faces no sceptical problems. *Analysis* 67.4: 325–32
- 2006 Realistic structuralism’s identity crisis: a hybrid solution. *Analysis* 66.3: 216–22
- 2006 There’s no time like the present. *Analysis* 66.2: 130–35

Reviews

- 2017 *Naturalism, Realism, and Normativity*, by H. Putnam, edited by M. de Caro. *Philosophy*
- 2016 *Ontology after Carnap*, by S. Blatti and S. Lapointe (eds.). *NDPR*
- 2014 *Reading Putnam*, by M. Baghramian (ed.). *Mind*, 123.490: 569–75
- 2013 The chair that is used to sit in: *The American Pragmatists*, by C. Misak. *The Times Literary Supplement* 18 October 2013
- 2013 *Truth by Analysis*, by C. McGinn. *Analysis* 73.3: 577–80

Selected research presentations

* = invited conference paper; unmarked = seminar presentation

- 2018 Vienna KGRC; Arché: graduate conference keynote*; MIT, LSE
- 2017 Trinity College Dublin: *The language of ontology**; Glasgow: *The logic of totality**; NYU; Columbia; Harvard Logic Colloquium; LMU München: *Model theory**; Erasmus University Rotterdam*; Royal Institute of Philosophy
- 2016 Uppsala*; Leeds*; UC Irvine
- 2015 Leeds; Durham; Bilkent; Middle East Technical University; Bergen; Nottingham; LMU München; Salzburg; Oxford: Jowett Society
- 2014 Liverpool; Birkbeck; Cambridge: *Metaontology workshop**; The Aristotelian Society; Nottingham; Kent; Tucson: Metaphysics workshop*
- 2013 Helsinki; Stirling; LMU München: *Putnam’s model-theoretic arguments**; Birmingham; Cambridge (HPS)
- 2012 Stanford; Miami; UT Austin

Selected academic prizes & awards

- 2014 Philip Leverhulme Prize for £100,000
- 2009 Two Certificates of Distinction in Teaching (Harvard University)
- 2008–09 Kennedy Scholarship (the Kennedy Memorial Trust)
- 2006–10 Philosophy studentship (Darwin College, Cambridge, suspended whilst at Harvard)
- 2006–10 PhD Funding (AHRC, suspended whilst at Harvard)
- 2004–05 MPhil Funding (AHRB)
- 2005 Matthew Buncombe Prize, shared, for best overall Philosophy MPhil (Cambridge)
- 2004 Schuldham Plate, shared, for best overall undergraduate academic performance in Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge

Open Education Resources

I have released two open source e-books under Creative Commons licenses (see nottub.com for more).

- 2012 *forallx:Cambridge*. I developed P.D. Magnus’s *forallx* quite substantially. I use it to teach introductory logic. The book has been used and adapted in many other institutions.
- 2013 *Metatheory*. This follows on from *forallx:Cambridge*. I use it in my second-year course.

Teaching

Undergraduate lecture courses at Cambridge, 2012–present

- 3rd years Realism & otherwise, 4–8 lectures/seminars, taught ×5
Set theory & philosophy, 8 lectures, taught ×4
- 2nd years Metatheory of truth-functional logic, 4 lectures, taught ×3
Alternative logics, 4 lectures, taught ×3
- 1st years Formal logic, 18–22 lectures, taught ×5

Other teaching at Cambridge

- 2013– PhD supervisor
- 2012– M.Phil supervisor
- 2006– Undergraduate supervisor
- 2006–13 Logic class tutor

Teaching before appointment as a lecturer

- 2011 Birkbeck: co-convened research/grad seminar on philosophy & model theory
- 2011 Lectured Transcendental arguments at Cambridge, 4 lectures
- 2011 Lectured Modal logic at Cambridge (4 lectures)
- 2009–11 Lectured Formal logic at Cambridge (4 lectures, then 6 lectures)
- 2008–09 Harvard: teaching fellow for undergraduate courses on pragmatism and deductive logic

Professional service

Editing and refereeing

- Occasional referee of book manuscripts/proposals for OUP
- *PhilPapers* leaf editor for: *Brains in vats*, *Internal realism*, *The model-theoretic argument*
- Refereeing for various journals: *American Philosophical Quarterly*, *Analysis*, *The Aristotelian Society*, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, *Dialectica*, *Erkenntnis*, *Ergo*, *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy*, *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, *Mind*, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophers' Imprint*, *The Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophia Mathematica*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Review of Symbolic Logic*, *Synthese*, *Theoria*

Conference organisation

- 2014 Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and Mind Association (local organiser)
- 2014 British Society for Philosophy of Science annual conference (local organiser)
- 2014 British Society for Ethical Theory annual conference (local organiser)
- 2012 Cambridge conference on Foundations of mathematics (co-organiser)
- 2008 Graduate conference on philosophy of logic and mathematics (co-organiser)

Education

- 2006–10 PhD in philosophy at Darwin College, Cambridge
Thesis title: *Cats & Vats: Putnam's attacks on metaphysical realism*
Submitted 2.ix.2010, graduated 19.ii.2011
- 2004–05 MPhil in philosophy at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge
First class in all components
- 2001–04 BA in philosophy at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge
First class with distinction (starred first)