

# NGA YIN (AGNES) TAM

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## RESEARCH AREAS

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AOS: Social and Political Philosophy, Ethics (especially practical reason)  
AOC: Applied Ethics, Social Epistemology, Chinese Philosophy

## APPOINTMENTS

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2022-  
2021-2022 **Assistant Professor**, Department of Philosophy, University of Calgary  
**Banting Postdoctoral Fellow**, Research Group on Constitutional Studies, McGill University  
2020-21 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, Social Justice Centre, Concordia University (Montreal)

## EDUCATION

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2020 **PhD**, Philosophy, Queen's University (Kingston)  
**Dissertation**: "Norms, Reasons, and Moral Progress"  
**Summary**: I develop a novel normative theory of group reasoning, called We-reasoning, featuring attitudes of deference, trust, and solidarity. I argue that We-reasoning is a rational way for group agents to form and revise their We-constitutive group norms. I further demonstrate that such partial and conformist We-reasoning, far from obstructing moral progress, actually facilitates it.  
**Committee**: Will Kymlicka (Chair), Jackie Davis, Colin Farrelly, Margaret Moore, Joseph Heath  
2013 **MSc**, Political Theory, London School of Economics and Political Science  
2010 **LLB**, Law, University of Hong Kong  
2009 **Exchange JD**, Law, Tulane University

## PUBLICATIONS

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Forthcoming "Being Popular and Being Just: How Animal Protection Organizations Can be Both", in V. Giroux, A. Pepper, and K. Voigt (eds.), *Ethics of Animal Shelters*, **Oxford University Press** (with Will Kymlicka).  
2021 "A Case for Political Epistemic Trust", in K. Vallier and M. Weber (eds.), *Social Trust*, **Routledge**, 220-41.  
2020 "The Legitimacy of Groups: Toward a We-Reasoning View", *Analyse & Kritik* 42(2): 343-68.  
2020 "Why Moral Reasoning is Insufficient for Moral Progress", *Journal of Political Philosophy* 28(1): 73-96.

## WORKS IN PROGRESS

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- “Solidarity beyond the Barricades” (in preparation)
- “Do Liberals Have to Fear Identity-Expressive Populism?” (in preparation)
- “How Not to Respond to Populism” (in preparation)
- “We-Reasoning: A New Ethic of Joint Interpretation” (in preparation)
- “Social Ontology for Political Philosophy” (in preparation)
- “Institutionalizing We-reasoning: The Role of Parties and Electoral Politics” (in preparation)

## PUBLIC WRITING

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- 2019 “如果良知不夠用，逆權運動該如何走下去?”[The Limits of Conscience: How to Continue Hong Kong’s Anti-Authoritarian Struggle!] *TheStandNews*, July 10 (in Chinese)

## PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCES AND INVITED TALKS

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- Sep 2021 “Solidarity Beyond the Barricades”  
*Workshop on Uses of Solidarity*, MANCEPT
- May 2021 “Do Liberals Have to Fear Identity-Expressive Populism?”  
*Political Theory In/And/As Political Science Workshop*, McGill, Stanford, New York University, and Duke
- Apr 2021 *Political Theory of Populism Workshop*, Concordia University (invited)
- Sep 2020 “Identity-Expressive Populism and its Challenges to Normative Political Theory”  
*Workshop on Alternative Forms of Government*, MANCEPT
- Mar 2019 “The Role for Social Norms in Applied Ethics: A Case Study from Vegan Advocacy”  
(with Will Kymlicka)  
*GRÉEA/CRÉ/Montreal SPCA Workshop* (invited)
- Jun 2018 “The Limits of Epistemic Egalitarianism: Why Different Types of Biases Require Different Remedies”  
*Canadian Philosophical Association Meeting*, Montreal
- Aug 2017 *Summer School of Social Epistemology*, Autonomous University of Madrid
- May 2018 “Making Sense of the Authority of Social Norms”  
*Conference on Normative Power*, Université de Montréal and McGill University (poster)
- Mar 2018 *Philosophy Department Colloquium*, Queen’s University (invited)
- Sep 2016 *Workshop on Political Theory of Social Norms*, MANCEPT

- Apr 2018 “Democratic Accountability or Social Trust”  
*Workshop in Applied Ethics and Public Policy: Social Trust*, Bowling Green State University
- Feb 2017 “Diversity in Philosophy”  
*Equity and Women’s Concerns Committee Event Series*, Queen’s University (invited)
- Nov 2016 “Enabling Moral Progress for Factory Farming: Beyond Contention and Deliberation”  
*Animal Politics: Justice, Power and the State*, International School of Philosophy

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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- 2020 Postdoctoral Fellowship, *Justitia Amplificata*, Goethe University (declined)
- 2018 Dr. H. Martyn Estall Award in Philosophy (award for one grad student each year to attend the Canadian Philosophy Association Conference), Queen’s University
- 2017 A.R.C. Duncan Prize for Excellence in Teaching, Queen’s University
- 2014-2018 Principal’s International Doctoral Award, Queen’s University
- 2014-2018 Queen’s Graduate Award, Queen’s University
- 2014-2018 International Tuition Award, Queen’s University
- 2013-2014 Honorary Fellow, Hong Kong Sir Edward Youde Overseas Fellowship
- 2013 Centre for Animal and Social Justice Scholarship, Sheffield University (declined)
- 2009 Champion, Animal Ethics Essay Competition, Hong Kong SPCA

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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- 2018 **Contributor, GRÉEA, CRÉ and the Montreal SPCA**  
Principal Investigators: Kristin Voigt, Valéry Giroux, and Élise Desaulniers
- Collaborated with a team of moral philosophers in a SSHRC-sponsored project: “Animal Welfare Organisations: Responding to Ethical Challenges”
  - Collected information and testimonies from the Montreal SPCA staff regarding their ethical dilemmas in daily operation
  - Drafted ethical guidelines and policy recommendations for the Montreal SPCA
- 2018 **Researcher, Philosophy, Queen’s University**  
Principal Investigator: Will Kymlicka
- Participated in a field trip to VINE farm sanctuary with researchers from philosophy, cultural studies, and geography to jointly investigate the suitability of animal sanctuaries as sites of experiential learning
- 2011 **Research Assistant, Philosophy, University of Hong Kong**  
Advisors: Chad Hansen, Chris Fraser, and Dan Robins
- Reviewed and edited reading and teaching materials for courses on Chinese Philosophy, including *Early Chinese Political Thought*, *Ethics and Politics: East and West*, and *Philosophy of Zhuangzi*
- 2010 **Research Assistant, Animal Legal Defense Fund (US)**  
Advisor: Matthew Liebman

- Reviewed, translated, and analyzed animal experimentation laws and policies in the People’s Republic of China
- Interviewed officials, scholars, and practitioners in animal science
- Research assistance credited in resulting publication by Bruce Wagman and Matthew Liebman, *A Worldview of Animal Law* (Carolina Academic Press, 2011)

2009      **Research Assistant, Centre for Comparative and Public Law, University of Hong Kong**

Advisor: Amanda Whitfort

- Conducted a comparative review of animal welfare law in Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK, and New Zealand
- Research assistance credited in the resulting publication *Review of Animal Welfare Legislation in Hong Kong 2011*

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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2017      **Teaching Award:** A.R.C. Duncan Prize for Excellence in Teaching, Queen’s University (awarded to one TA in the Department of Philosophy each year)

Spring 2019      **Teaching Fellow, Philosophy, Queen’s University**  
Animals and Society (mid-level undergraduate course)

2014-2017      **Teaching Assistant, Philosophy, Queen’s University**  
Ancient Philosophy (upper-level undergraduate course)  
Environmental Ethics (mid-level undergraduate course)  
Great Works in Philosophy (introductory course)  
Foundations of Philosophy (introductory course; guest lecturer for *Rawls*)

2013-2014      **Teaching Assistant, Philosophy, University of Hong Kong**  
Following the *Dao*: Ways of Life in Chinese Thought (introductory course)  
Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought (introductory course for all HKU undergraduates)

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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2010-2011      **Senior Cruelty Case and Legal Officer, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Asia-Pacific)**

- Investigated animal abuse cases and researched legal grounds for prosecution
- Coordinated and conducted humane education outreach
- Networked with local governments, animal welfare organizations, and activists
- Coordinated media campaigns on animal rights

### ACADEMIC SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES

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Forthcoming      **Workshop Organizer (Chair), Political Theory of Populism**, April 2021, Social Justice Centre (Concordia) and GRIPP (McGill)

2020      **Commentator**, “W.E.B. Du Bois’s Theory of Justice” by Elvira Basevich, Social Justice Theory Workshop, August 2020, Concordia University and Université de Montréal.

2020-            **Referee**, *Constellations* (1x), Ethical Theory and Moral Practice (1x)  
2014-            **Affiliated Research Scholar**, *Animals in Philosophy, Politics, Law and Ethics*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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2017-            Executive Committee Member, Queen's Animal Defense  
May 2012        Invited Speaker, *My Hong Kong Dream*, Hong Kong Civic Education Foundation  
Mar 2012        Invited Speaker, *Animal Ethics*, Hong Kong University Graduate Association College  
Nov 2011        Invited Speaker, *Meatless Monday Series*, University of Hong Kong  
Nov 2011        Invited Speaker, *Life Education Series*, Wai Kiu College

## SELECTED INTERVIEWS

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Mar 2019        Radio Television Hong Kong (co-produced by Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong), *A Legal Journey: Imprint of the Times*, available at [https://www.rthk.hk/tv/dtt31/programme/alegaljourney\\_eng/episode/576099](https://www.rthk.hk/tv/dtt31/programme/alegaljourney_eng/episode/576099) (a docudrama about my struggles as a right of abode fighter and defender of animal rights)

Oct 2011        Hong Kong Lawyer, *Giving Animals a Voice in Hong Kong* (interviewed by Wilda Fong)

Jul 2011        Apple Daily, *The Right of Abode Fighter: Public Opinion Can Change the World* (interviewed by Lai-Sim Lui)

## LANGUAGES

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**English:** Fluent            **Cantonese:** Native            **Mandarin:** Fluent

## REFEREES

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Will Kymlicka (Thesis supervisor), Queen's University  
Position: Canada Research Chair of Political Philosophy  
Email: [kymlicka@queensu.ca](mailto:kymlicka@queensu.ca)

Joseph Heath (Thesis examiner), University of Toronto  
Position: Professor of Philosophy  
Email: [joseph.heath@utoronto.ca](mailto:joseph.heath@utoronto.ca)

Kevin Vallier (Collaborator), Bowling Green State University  
Position: Associate Professor of Philosophy  
Email: [kvallie@bgsu.edu](mailto:kvallie@bgsu.edu)