

# RORY VARRATO

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## EDUCATION

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### **Columbia University**, New York, NY

PhD, Philosophy and Education, 2025

- Dissertation: “Mortal Foresight: Learning to Live through Extinction.” <https://doi.org/10.7916/5txn-sq11>.
- Committee: Drs. Megan Laverty (advisor), David Hansen, Oren Pizmony-Levy, René Arcilla, and Sandra Buechler
- Areas of specialization: Critical Theory, environmental philosophy, philosophy of education, psychoanalysis
- Areas of competence: American studies, existentialism, foundations of education, social and political philosophy

MPhil, Philosophy and Education, 2023

### **Arizona State University**, Tempe, AZ

MA, Political Science, 2014

BA with Honors, History, 2011

### *Additional Training*

### **William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis & Psychology**, New York, NY

Certificate, Licensure-Qualifying Program in Psychoanalysis, expected 2029

### **Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis**, New Haven, CT

Certificate, Psychoanalysis for Scholars Program, 2025

## PUBLICATIONS

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Varrato, Rory. 2024. “Extinction Rebellion: A Great Refusal for the Anthropocene.” In *The Marcusean Mind*, edited by Eduardo Altheman C. Santos, Jina Fast, Nicole Mayberry, and Sid Simpson, 326-345. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003381020-33>.

Varrato, Rory and Michael Dowd. 2024. “Overshoot.” In *Elgar Encyclopedia of Environmental Sociology*, edited by Christine Overdevest, 437-446. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803921044.ch78>.

Hansen, David T., Megan J. Laverty, and Rory Varrato. 2020. “Reimagining Research and Practice at the Crossroads of Philosophy, Teaching, and Teacher Education.” *Teachers College Record* 122, no. 4: 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200401>.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

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Varrato, Rory. “Empathetic Projection: Coetzee, Fromm, and a Learning Theory for Aesthetic Education through Narrative Art.” Journal article manuscript.

Varrato, Rory. “Mortal Foresight: A Wisdom Won from Psychoterrific Illness.” Journal article manuscript.

Morelock, Jeremiah and Rory Varrato, editors (listed alphabetically). *The Frommian Mind*. Edited volume in Routledge’s Philosophical Minds book series, under contract with an expected publication date of Q4 2026.

## AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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Marylou Lionells Psychoanalytic Endowment Fund scholarship, White Institute	2025
Iris Marion Young Award for Best Graduate Student Paper, Radical Philosophy Association (nominated)	2024
Fellowship, American Psychoanalytic Association (mentor: Dr. Leon Hoffman, NYPSI)	2024-2025
Matilda Levy Paper Award on Environmental Sustainability, Center for Sustainable Futures, TC	2024
Environmental Education Paper Award, American Educational Research Association	2024
Provost’s Dissertation Research Award, Teachers College	2023-2024
Tuition Waiver, Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis	2023-2024
National Merit Scholarship, PepsiCo Foundation	2006-2010

## GRANTS

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Travel Grant, Erich Fromm Study Center, International Psychoanalytic University Berlin	2025
Provost's Grant for Conference Presentation, Teachers College	2024, 2023
International Travel Grant, Office of Global Engagement, Teachers College	2024
Travel Grant, Radical Philosophy Association	2024
Travel Grant, American Educational Research Association	2023
Support Grant, Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, U.S. Department of Education	2022
Travel Grant, Arizona State University Graduate and Professional Student Association	2013

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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“Mortal Foresight: A Learning Outcome for Existential Education in the Anthropocene,” presented at the biennial Psychology & the Other Conference. September 19, 2025. Boston, MA.

“Empathetic Introjection: Coetzee, Fromm, and a Learning Theory for Aesthetic Education through Narrative Art,” presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> International Erich Fromm Seminar. September 11, 2025. Tübingen, Germany.

“Mortification as Negentropic Instrument: Toward a Transformative Psychoeducation for Biophilic Socialist Humanism,” accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. April 24, 2025. Denver, CO.

“Mortification as Negentropic Instrument: Toward a Transformative Psychoeducation for Biophilic Socialist Humanism,” presented at the annual meeting of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia. December 6, 2024. Christchurch, New Zealand.

“Extinction Rebellion: A Great Refusal for the Anthropocene,” presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> biennial meeting of the Radical Philosophy Association. October 10, 2024. Salt Lake City, UT.

“Empathetic Introjection: Coetzee, Fromm, and a Learning Theory for Aesthetic Education through Narrative Art,” presented at the inaugural conference of the Erich Fromm Society of North America. September 15, 2024. Spokane, WA.

“Empathetic Introjection: Finding a Frommian Psychagogy in Coetzee’s Jesus Fictions,” presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> Critical Theory Conference of Rome. May 5, 2024. Rome, Italy.

“Extinction Rebellion: A Marcusean ‘Great Refusal’ of the Anthropocene,” presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> Critical Theory Conference of Rome. May 8, 2024. Rome, Italy.

“Irony, Perspective, and Coetzee’s Jesus: Postconventional Morality Passed into Images,” presented at the ‘Orienting a Life: Time and Perspective’ roundtable session of the Philosophical Studies in Education special interest group at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. April 16, 2023. Chicago, IL.

“Mortal Foresight: An Initial Existential Encounter,” presented at the annual meeting of the North Eastern Philosophy of Education Society. October 8, 2022. Villanova, PA.

“Mortal Foresight: Learning to Live Through Extinction: A Proposition for a Proposal,” presented at the annual meeting of the North Eastern Philosophy of Education Society. October 3, 2020. Online.

## INVITED TALKS

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“Earth Day at 50,” panel at the Yale Environmental Sustainability Summit. November 2, 2019. New Haven, CT.

“Love in the Age of Extinction: A Critical Analysis of Intimacy in Film and Television,” departmental talk at the annual meeting of the Film and Education Research Association. March 19, 2018. New York, NY.

“Friendship in the Age of Facebook,” invited talk at TEDx Grandview Avenue. February 23, 2013. Pittsburgh, PA, <https://youtu.be/ZVRbSuY3h9w>.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Kean University**, Department of Political, Social, and Cultural Sciences

*Adjunct Professor*

- Critical Thinking, Spring 2026 (online)
- Intro to Philosophy, Fall 2025, Spring 2026 (online)

**Fordham University**, Department of Philosophy

*Adjunct Professor*

- Philosophy of Human Nature, Fall 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Fall 2018
- Philosophical Ethics, Fall 2025

**Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Society**

*Instructor*

- The Psychoanalytic Social Psychology of Erich Fromm, Fall 2025

**Teachers College, Columbia University**, Department of Arts and Humanities

*Instructor*

- Identity and Ideals: Visions of Human Flourishing: Psychoanalysis and Education, Spring 2025
- Philosophies of Education (co-taught with Professor David Hansen and PhD candidate Sara Hardman), Fall 2019

**Columbia University**, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Center for American Studies

*Lead Teaching Assistant*

- Introduction to American Studies (Professor Roosevelt Montás), Spring 2023

**New York University**, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

*Course Assistant*

- Learning and the Meaning of Life (Professor René Arcilla), Spring 2023, Spring 2022

**Scottsdale Preparatory Academy**, part of Great Hearts Academies

*Teacher*

- Humane Letters: The American Tradition (9<sup>th</sup> grade), 2014-2016
- Economics (10<sup>th</sup> grade), 2015-2016
- U.S. History (6<sup>th</sup> grade), 2014-2015

**Arizona State University**, School of Politics and Global Studies

*Teaching Assistant*

- Political Ideologies (Professor Jack Crittenden), Spring 2014
- Problems of Democracy (Professor Avital Simphony), Fall 2013
- History of Modern Political Philosophy (Professor Terence Ball), Spring 2013
- Government and Politics (Professor Richard Herrera), Fall 2012

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Freedom and Citizenship**, Columbia University, Center for American Studies and Double Discovery Center

*Coordinator*, 2017-2019

- Coordinated summer residential program, trained undergraduate teaching assistants, and managed year-long projects

**Research Assistant**, Teachers College, Columbia University, Program in Philosophy and Education, 2017-2018

- Organized a conference and prepared for publication a special journal issue, *Teachers College Record* 122, no. 4 (2020)

## SERVICE AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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**Professional Service**

- Created a new doctoral field in Philosophical Psychology for the Philosophy and Education Program, TC, 2025
- Chair, Conference Committee, and member, Social Inquiry and Executive Committees, Erich Fromm Society of North America, 2025 – present
- Peer reviewer, American Educational Research Association annual meeting, 2025

- Moderator, October 11<sup>th</sup> parallel session, Radical Philosophy Association conference, 2024
- Chair, September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> sessions, Erich Fromm Society of North America inaugural conference, 2024
- Peer reviewer, North American Association for Philosophy and Education annual meeting, 2024
- Chair, May 5<sup>th</sup> parallel session, 16<sup>th</sup> Critical Theory Conference of Rome, 2024
- Treasurer, Graduate Student Committee, Program in Philosophy and Education, 2017-2018
- Reviewer, Arizona State University Graduate and Professional Student Association travel grant program, 2012-2013

### **Volunteer Experience**

- Coordinator, Rethink, Columbia University, Department of Philosophy, 2016-2017

## **ACTIVISM AND ORGANIZING**

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### **Erich Fromm Society of North America**

- President, nonprofit Erich Fromm Society of North America, Inc. (EIN: TBD), 2026-present

### **Extinction Rebellion NYC**

#### *Co-founder*

- President, nonprofit Extinction Rebellion Organizing Committee, Inc. (EIN: 83-4256856), 2019-2025

## **LANGUAGES**

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### **German**, reading knowledge at CEFR B2

- CUNY Language Reading Program, Levels 1 and 2, Summer 2020

### **Italian**, reading knowledge at CEFR B2, speaking knowledge at CEFR A2

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Educational Research Association

American Philosophical Practitioners Association (Primary Certified in Client Counseling)

American Psychoanalytic Association

Erich Fromm Society of North America

Harry Stack Sullivan Society

John Dewey Society

North American Association for Philosophy & Education

Philosophy of Education Society

Radical Philosophy Association

## REFERENCES

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**Dr. Megan Laverty**

Professor and Director, Program in Philosophy and Education  
Teachers College, Columbia University  
(212) 678-3393  
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**Dr. David Hansen**

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**Dr. Oscar Hills**

Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine  
Education Committee Chair and Faculty, Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis  
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**Dr. René Arcilla**

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