

Jackson LeViness

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AREAS

SPECIALIZATION Philosophy of Science
COMPETENCE Metaphysics and Epistemology

EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Expected Dec. 2026

Ph.D., Philosophy

Dissertation: *Explanatory Aptness and the Stages of Inquiry*

Committee: John T. Roberts (chair), Marc Lange, Matt Kotzen

Abstract. I offer a pragmatic, domain-general solution to the Goldilocks Problem: why some explanations are “just right,” while nearby alternatives are too specific or too abstract. I argue that the apt explanation at a given stage of inquiry is the one that rules out the relevant alternatives while leaving aside detail that does not yet matter for the question at hand. Because this problem concerns explanatory level rather than any particular subject matter, the account applies across explanatory domains: scientific, mathematical, moral, historical, and beyond.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

May 2022

M.A., Philosophy

Thesis: *Toward a Humean Account of Meta-Laws of Nature*

Committee: Marc Lange (chair), John T. Roberts, Jim Pryor

Abstract. Can Lewis’s Best System Account of lawhood be extended to meta-laws: laws about first-order laws? I argue that two central obstacles to such an extension—the threat of trivialization and the apparent weakness of candidate meta-laws—can be addressed by adopting a more pragmatic version of Humeanism and a richer conception of strength.

University of Richmond

May 2020

B.A., Philosophy and Physics

Honors: *summa cum laude*

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- *Explanatory Aptness and Inquiry*. In preparation.
- *The Explanatory Goldilocks Problem*. In preparation.
- *Explanatory Aptness and the Autonomy of the Special Sciences*. In preparation.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Departmental Research Fellowship

Spring 2026

Departmental Research Fellowship

2024–2025

Departmental Research Fellowship

Summer 2024

Departmental Research Fellowship

Summer 2021

Horace Williams Fellowship

2020–2021

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

PHIL 155: Truth and Proof: Introduction to Mathematical Logic

Instructor of Record, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Fall 2026

Summer 2023

Spring 2023

Summer 2022

PHIL 213: Asian Philosophy

Instructor of Record, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Summer 2025

PHIL 134 / RELI 134: Philosophy of Western Religion

Instructor of Record, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Spring 2024

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Instructor of Record, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Fall 2023

PHIL 105: An Introduction to Critical Thinking

Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Fall 2022

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Spring 2022

PHIL 160: An Introduction to Moral Theory

Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Fall 2021

PEDAGOGY

Writing Coach, UNC Writing Center

Aug. 2024–July 2025

Online Course Development Support Program, UNC Summer School

March 2025

REFERENCES

John T. RobertsProfessor of Philosophy
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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Rutgers University
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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
kotzen@email.unc.edu**Carla Merino-Rajme**Assistant Professor of Philosophy
University of Delaware
cmerino@udel.edu**Ram Neta (Teaching Reference)**Professor of Philosophy
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
neta@email.unc.edu