


Dr Pascale Willemsen

Professional Address

Ruhr-University Bochum
Institute for Philosophy II,
Chair for Philosophy of Mind
Center for Mind, Brain, and Cognitive
Evolution
Universitaetsstr. 150
44801 Bochum, Germany

 www.PascaleWillemsen.com

 Pascale.Willemsen@rub.de

Date of Birth: 19 January 1988, née Ruder

Place of Birth: Moers, Germany

Nationality: German

Current Position

Since 04/2018: Assistant Professor, Chair for Philosophy of Mind, Center for Mind, Brain, and Cognitive Evolution, Ruhr-University Bochum
Managing Director and Student Consultant for the Master's Program Cognitive Science

Areas of Specialisation

Philosophy of Moral Psychology, Philosophy of Mind, Metaethics, Experimental Philosophy

Areas of Competence

Ethics, Philosophy of Action

Academic Employment

10/2017 – **Visiting Postdoctoral Researcher**
03/2018 University College London
Department for Experimental Psychology

06/2017 – **Postdoctoral Researcher**
09/2017 Ruhr-University Bochum
Institute for Philosophy II, Chair for Philosophy of Mind

Education

- 01/2014 – 06/2017 **PhD in Philosophy**
Ruhr-University Bochum
Thesis: “Investigating the Role of Causal Responsibility for the Attribution of Moral Responsibility”
Committee: Prof. Albert Newen (first supervisor), Prof. Edouard Machery (second supervisor), Prof. Corinna Mieth, Prof. Tobias Schlicht, Prof. James Wilberding
Grade: summa cum laude (highest possible distinction)
- 09/2015 – 11/2015 **Visiting Fellow**, Yale University
Host: Prof. Joshua Knobe
- 09/2013 **MSc. in Philosophy of Science**
London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London
- 09/2012 **M.A. in Philosophy**
M.A. in Linguistics and Communication Studies
RWTH Aachen University, Aachen
- 08/2010 **B.A. in Philosophy**
B.A. in Linguistics and Communication Studies
RWTH Aachen University, Aachen

Languages

- German:** native language
English: excellent command in spoken and written language
French: basic communication skills

Publications

1. Books

Willemsen, Pascale. “Investigating the Role of Causal Responsibility for the Attribution of Moral Responsibility”, forthcoming with mentis.

2. Peer-Reviewed Research Articles

(* indicates shared first authorship)

- (1) **Willemsen, Pascale**. “The Relevance of Alternative Possibilities for the Attribution of Moral Responsibility”, forthcoming in *Oxford Series in Experimental Philosophy*, Oxford University Press.
- (2) Sytsma, Justin; Bluhm, Roland; **Willemsen, Pascale**; Reuter, Kevin (2018). “Causal Attribution and Corpus Analysis”, in press with *Methodological Advances in Experimental Philosophy*, Bloomsbury Publishing. Preprint: <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/14848/>.

- (3) **Willemsen, Pascale**; Kirfel, Lara. “Recent empirical work on the relationship between causal judgments and norms”, *Philosophy Compass*.
- (4) **Willemsen, Pascale**; Kaspar, Kai; Newen, Albert (2018). “A new look at the attribution of moral responsibility: The underestimated relevance of social roles”, in *Philosophical Psychology*. doi: 10.1080/09515089.2018.1429592
- (5) Wiegmann, Alex; Rutschmann, Ronja; **Willemsen, Pascale*** (2017). “Empirically Investigating the Concept of Lying”, in *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*. doi: 10.1007/s40961.017-0112-z.
- (6) Wiegmann, Alex; **Willemsen, Pascale*** (2017): “How the truth can make a great lie: An empirical investigation of lying by falsely implicating”, in *Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society 2017*, pp. 3516-3521.
- (7) Stephan, Simon; **Willemsen, Pascale**; Gerstenberg, Tobias (2017): Marbles in inaction: Counterfactual simulation and causation by omissions”, in *Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society 2017*, pp. 1132-1137.
- (8) **Willemsen, Pascale** (2016). “Omissions without Expectations – A New Approach to the Things We Failed to Do”, in *Synthese*. doi: 10.1007/s11229-016-1284-9.
- (9) **Willemsen, Pascale**; Reuter, Kevin* (2016). “Is there really an omission effect?”, in *Philosophical Psychology*, 29(8). doi:10.1080/09515089.2016.1225194.
- Viebahn, Emanuel; Wiegmann, Alex; Engelmann, Neele; **Willemsen, Pascale**. “Can you lie by asking a question? An empirical investigation”, under review.

Selected Talks

- 2019 *The Relevance of Alternative Possibilities for Moral Responsibility*
American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting
New York City (USA), **invited talk**
- 2018 *Omission Impossible. Why We Cannot Omit to Perform Impossible Actions*
Experimental and Naturalistic Perspectives on the Philosophy of Law
Ruhr-University Bochum (Germany), **invited talk**
- The Relevance of Alternative Possibilities for Moral Responsibility*
3rd Annual Bochum – Rutgers Workshop
Rutgers University (USA), **keynote talk**
- The Relevance of Alternative Possibilities for Moral Responsibility*
Chiron Workshop 2018, 9th Edition Experimental Moral Philosophy
online workshop, **invited talk**

- 2017 *Alternative Possibilities and Moral Responsibility*
 2nd Bi-annual Workshop of the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany
 November, University of Osnabrueck (Germany), **invited talk**
- Symposium: The Pragmatics of Lying*
 Annual Conference of the European Society of Philosophy and Psychology
 University of Hertfordshire (United Kingdom)
- Are Moral Judgments Grounded in Causal Judgments?*
 Annual Conference of the European Society of Philosophy and Psychology
 University of Hertfordshire (United Kingdom)
- Omissions and Causal Explanations*
 The Experimental Philosophy of Morality and Causation – Perspectives from
 Philosophy, Psychology, and Law
 Ruhr-University Bochum (Germany), organiser
- 2016 *I must although I can't!?: A pragmatically grounded two-level theory of 'ought implies can'*
 Experimental Moral Psychology and Philosophy
 Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (Germany)
- The philosophical trilemma of moral responsibility for omissions – and how to solve it*
 Georg-Elias-Müller-Institut für Psychologie
 Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany), **invited talk**
- Omissions and expectations. Two studies on how moral and causal judgments depend on expectations.*
 Department for Cognitive and Decision Sciences, Causal Cognition Lab
 University College London (United Kingdom), **invited talk**
- Why you can be blamed for the things you did not do*
 Annual Conference of the European Society of Philosophy and Psychology
 August 2016, University of St. Andrews (United Kingdom)
- 2015 *Omissions without Expectations – A New Approach to the Metaphysics of Things We Failed to Do*
 First Conference of the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany
 Ruhr-University Bochum (Germany)
- Is there really an omission bias?*
 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference 2015
 Buffalo State University (USA)

Is there really an omission bias?

Annual Conference of the European Society of Philosophy and Psychology
University of Tartu (Estonia)

2014

Are Omissions on Par with Actions?

6th Conference of Experimental Philosophy Group UK:
Joining Forces of Philosophy and the Empirical Sciences to Tackle Social Injustices
University of Nottingham (United Kingdom)

Why Social Norms Matter for the Attribution of Moral Responsibility

The Moral Domain: Conceptual Issues in Moral Psychology
October, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Teaching and Supervision Experience

Summer

Experimental Philosophy and Questions in Moral Philosophy and Psychology
2019
BA Philosophy, MA Philosophy, MSc. Psychology, and MSc. Cognitive Science,
taught in English, block seminar

Winter

Introduction to Moral Psychology

2018/19

BA Philosophy, MA Philosophy, MSc. Psychology, and MSc. Cognitive Science,
taught in English

Philosophical Thought Experiments and Experimental Philosophy

BA Philosophy, MA Philosophy, and MSc. Cognitive Science, taught in English

Handlungen, Ereignisse, und ihre Erklärungen (Actions, Events, and Their
Explanations)

BA Philosophy, first year, taught in German

Summer

Experiment Philosophy of Responsibility – Perspectives from Ethics, Metaphysics,
and the Law

2018

BA Philosophy, MA Philosophy and MSc. Cognitive Science, and Law, taught in
English

Happiness, Well-Being, and Morality

BA Philosophy, MA Philosophy, MSc Psychology and MSc. Cognitive Science,
taught in English

Moderne Handlungstheorie (Modern Philosophy of Action)

BA Philosophy, taught in German

Summer

Experimental Philosophy of Morality

2017

MA Philosophy and MSc. Cognitive Science, taught in English

Summer

Agency and Moral Responsibility

2014

MA Philosophy and MSc. Cognitive Science, taught in English

I am currently supervising a master's dissertation on experimental philosophy of happiness. More specifically, this thesis empirically investigates the question of how laypeople use the term "happy" and whether the factors contributing to happiness differ between healthy people and people with physical disabilities.

I supervised a bachelor's dissertation in Experimental Philosophy at University College London, focusing on moral and causal responsibility attribution for omissions in medical care.

As an instructor in experimental philosophy, I have supervised over ten experimental studies ran by students as part of their course work.

Committee Work

Since April 2018 Student counsellor for the master's program in Cognitive Science

2014-2016 Member of the Board of the Institute of Philosophy II

2014-2016 Member of the Dissertation Committee of the department

Reviewer for

Cognition

Erkenntnis

Ethical Theory and Moral Practice

Journal of Applied Philosophy

Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology

Grants, Awards, and External Funding

2018 £2,000 for organising the 9th Annual Workshop of the Experimental Philosophy Group UK (together with Lara Kirfel)
Mind Association

£4,000 for organising the 9th Annual Workshop of the Experimental Philosophy Group UK (together with David Shanks and Lara Kirfel)
Experimental Psychology Society

£375 for graduate student travel stipends for the 9th Annual Workshop of the Experimental Philosophy Group UK (together with Lara Kirfel)
Analysis Trust

2017 €19,200 postdoctoral research fellowship for a six-month stay at the University College London (Host: David Lagnado, Causal Cognition Lab)
Research School Plus at Ruhr-University Bochum, German Research Council (DFG)

€2,810 granted for organizing an interdisciplinary workshop on experimental philosophy of morality and causation
Research School Plus at Ruhr-University Bochum, German Research Council (DFG)

2016 €9,555 granted for interdisciplinary empirical research
Leibniz Science Campus

€4,000 granted for a research stay of Karolina Prochownik (PhD student from Krakow University, Poland) at Ruhr-University Bochum
Research School Plus at Ruhr University Bochum, German Research Council (DFG)

€3,260 granted for a research stay Prof. Justin Sytsma (University of Wellington, New Zealand) to Bochum
Research School Plus at Ruhr University Bochum, German Research Council (DFG)

Full PhD Fellowship
Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation

2014 International Realization Budget
€10,000 granted for organizing the first conference of the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany
Research School Plus at Ruhr-University Bochum, German Research Council (DFG)

2014 Full PhD Fellowship
Ruhr-University Bochum

Workshop Organisation

2019 Support of *Experimental Philosophy Conference* as a member of the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany
19 – 21 September 2019, University of Bern

Local Organizer of the *EuroCogSci 2019*
02 – 04 September 2019, Ruhr-University Bochum

2018 Organisation of the 9th workshop of the Experimental Philosophy Group UK
14 – 16 June 2018, at University College London

2017 Organisation of a book symposium on Edouard Machery's book "Philosophy within its proper bounds"
18 December at Ruhr-University Bochum

Organisation of 1-day workshop on *Experimental Philosophy of Morality and Causation—Perspectives from Philosophy, Psychology, and Law*
13 June at Ruhr-University Bochum

2016 Organisation of 1.5-day workshop on *Experimental Philosophy: Methods & New Directions* & 1-day conference on *Empirical Moral Psychology*,
18 – 20 November 2016 at Humboldt-University Berlin

2015 Organisation of the first conference on Experimental Philosophy in Germany, *Investigating the Nature and our Understanding of Causality, Morality, Language, Mind, and Aesthetics*
26 – 28 November 2015, Ruhr-University Bochum

Other Activities and Commitment

Co-founder and member of the scientific board of the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany, together with Albert Newen and Kevin Reuter
<https://sites.google.com/site/xphigroupgermany/home>

Author for Praefaktisch, a German philosophy blog

Philosophical expert and interview partner for Quarks, a German popular scientific tv show:
<https://www1.wdr.de/mediathek/video/sendungen/quarks-und-co/video-organspende--was-hilft-bei-der-entscheidung-100.html>

Academic References

Joshua Knobe

Department of Psychology
Department of Philosophy
Yale University
Joshua.Knobe@yale.edu

Edouard Machery

Center for Philosophy of Science
University of Pittsburgh
machery@pitt.edu

Albert Newen

Institute for Philosophy II
Center of Mind, Brain and Cognitive Evolution
Ruhr University Bochum
Albert.Newen@rub.de

Kevin Reuter

Institute of Philosophy
University of Bern
Kevin.reuter@philo.unibe.ch

Alex Wiegmann

Institute for Philosophy II
Ruhr University Bochum
Alex.Wiegmann@psych.uni-goettingen.de