A wide-ranging attempt to develop a theory of ethical life from a hermeneutic understanding of language.

Dennis J. Schmidt develops a hermeneutic theory of language that forms the starting point for thinking through the concerns of ethical life. Working from texts by Homer, Plato, Kant, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Gadamer, this volume explores some of the ways in which we experience the fringes of language, and highlights the relation of both freedom and history to such experience. The book is also guided by the conviction that such reflections upon the limits of language can open up something decisive for the effort to address the enigmas and challenges of judgment in the realm of ethical life.

Taking seriously Kant’s claim in the Third Critique that aesthetic experience opens up a basis for judging that is other than that found in the language of the concept, Schmidt pursues this claim by addressing the relation of language to poetry, to music, to silence, to script, to sign language, and to painting—those experiences of language which set themselves apart from the concept. Out of the treatment of these experiences of language at its limits, the author argues that we find an opening upon the realm of ethical life that is truly beyond the calculus of good and evil. What results is an experience of radical freedom, an experience that precedes anything like a notion of freedom finding its explanation in the agency of a subject. It is here that we find the contours of what Heidegger once described as “original ethics,” and experience something of the sources of ethical life.

“... Dennis Schmidt is at his best ... an enriching and exhilarating experience.” — Robert Bernasconi, The University of Memphis

Dennis J. Schmidt is Professor of Philosophy, Comparative Literature, and German at The Pennsylvania State University at University Park. He is the author of On Germans and Other Greeks: Tragedy and Ethical Life and The Ubiquity of the Finite: Hegel, Heidegger, and the Entitlements of Philosophy.

A volume in the SUNY series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy
Dennis J. Schmidt, editor

REVOLT, AFFECT, COLLECTIVITY
The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva’s Polis
Tina Chanter and Ewa Płonowska Ziarek, editors

Explores how the concept of revolution permeates and unifies Kristeva's body of work.

These original essays explore how the concept of revolution permeates and unifies Julia Kristeva's body of work by tracing its trajectory from her early engagement with the Tel Quel group, through her preoccupation in the 1980s with abjection, melancholia, and love, to her latest work. Some of the leading voices in Kristeva scholarship examine her reevaluation of the concept of revolt in the context of the changing cultural and political conditions in the West; the questions of the stranger, race, and nation; her reflections on narrative, public spaces, and collectivity in the context of her engagement with Hannah Arendt's work; her development and refinement of the notions of abjection, melancholia, and narcissism in her ongoing interrogation of aesthetics; as well as her contribution to film theory. Focused primarily on Kristeva's newest work—much of it only recently translated into English—this book breaks new ground in Kristeva scholarship.

“The volume as a whole makes clear not only why Kristeva is a continuing resource for feminist thinking about sexual difference, but also how/why she provides a resource for theorizing about difference more generally and what Sara Ahmed calls the ‘politics of strangeness.’ It goes some way toward addressing the lack of critical scholarship on Kristeva’s more recent concerns.” — Emily Zakin, coeditor of Derrida and Feminism: Recasting the Question of Woman

Tina Chanter is Professor of Philosophy at DePaul University and author of several books, including Time, Death, and the Feminine: Levinas with Heidegger. Ewa Płonowska Ziarek is Julian Park Professor of Comparative Literature at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York and editor of Gombrowicz’s Grimaces: Modernism, Gender, Nationality, also published by SUNY Press.

A volume in the SUNY series in Gender Theory
Tina Chanter, editor

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HEGEL AND THE OTHER

A Study of the Phenomenology of Spirit
Philip J. Kain

A new, highly accessible commentary on Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit.

This volume by Philip J. Kain is one of the most accessibly written books on Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit available. Avoiding technical jargon without diluting Hegel's thought, Kain shows the Phenomenology responding to Kant in far more places than are usually recognized. This perspective makes Hegel's text easier to understand. Kain also argues against the traditional understanding of the absolute and touches on Hegel's relation to contemporary feminist and postmodern themes.

“I admire the simplicity of Kain’s style. He is determined to appropriate Hegel’s thought, not his cumbersome syntax. There is no fudging on positions here, nor rhetorical camouflage. The reader gets the impression that Hegel can be understood on his own terms and then used to confront contemporary problems. It is a comprehensive interpretation that makes a major contribution to Hegel studies and to socio-cultural studies, raises important questions in the philosophy of religion, and engages recent and significant scholarship.” — Michael G. Vater, coeditor of Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: New Critical Essays

Philip J. Kain is Professor of Philosophy at Santa Clara University and is the author of Marx and Modern Political Theory: From Hobbes to Contemporary Feminism.

ADAM SMITH

The Theory of Rhetorical Propriety
Stephen J. McKenna

The first book-length treatment of Adam Smith’s rhetorical theory.

Before his famed career as moral philosopher and economist, Adam Smith (1723–1790) was well known for a series of public lectures on rhetoric that he gave in Edinburgh and Glasgow. In this volume, Stephen J. McKenna provides the first book-length treatment of Smith's rhetorical propriety, focusing on his theory of rhetorical propriety—the means by which effective communication is adapted to the variables of subject, audience, speaker or writer, purpose, and moment—and the centrality of this concept to his thought. McKenna shows that Smith's contribution to the theory of rhetorical propriety offers insights into the interdisciplinarity of rhetoric, particularly its relation to ethics, and has practical implications for the ways we conceive of and conduct rhetorical discourse and education today.

“This topic is relevant to the history of rhetorical thought and practice, and in McKenna’s hands, Smith becomes relevant to the study of current rhetorical practices, educational theories, and civic rhetoric/public literacy. An engaging book.” — Lynée Lewis Gaillet, editor of Scottish Rhetoric and Its Influences

Stephen J. McKenna is Associate Professor of English and Media Studies and Director of The Rhetoric Program at The Catholic University of America. He is the coeditor (with Lewis Copeland and Lawrence W. Lamm) of The World’s Great Speeches: 292 Speeches from Pericles to Nelson Mandela, Fourth Enlarged Edition.

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“This exciting and important text, with its impressive group of contributors, is vital to Beauvoir scholarship since it challenges philosophers to integrate a discussion of Beauvoir’s literary works into the traditional discussion of her ethics and feminist philosophy. It makes an invaluable contribution.” — Margaret A. Simons, editor of Simone de Beauvoir’s Philosophical Writings

“The collection strikes a perfect balance between analyzing the novel on its own terms and relating it to ‘real life’ political and cultural issues, as well as to Beauvoir’s nonfiction and the work of Sartre, Husserl, Hegel, and Foucault. It’s a must read for Beauvoir scholars, as well as for the broader community of philosophers who work on existentialism, feminist philosophy, and the relationship of philosophy and literature.” — Shannon Sullivan, author of Living Across and Through Skins: Transactional Bodies, Pragmatism, and Feminism

Sally J. Scholz is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Villanova University and the author of *On de Beauvoir*. Shannon M. Mussett is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Utah Valley State College.

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Leading scholars address Heidegger’s 1924 lecture course, “Basic Concepts of Aristotle’s Philosophy.”

Featuring essays by renowned scholars Michael J. Hyde, Theodore Kisiel, Mark Michalski, Otto Pöggeler, and Nancy S. Struever, this book provides the definitive treatment of Martin Heidegger’s 1924 lecture course, “Basic Concepts of Aristotle’s Philosophy.” A deep and original interview with philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, who attended the lecture course, is also included. Conducted over the course of three years, just prior to his death in 2002, the interview is Gadamer’s last major philosophical statement. By carefully considering this lecture course in the context of Heidegger’s life and work, the contributors compel us to reconsider the history and theory of rhetoric, as well as the history of twentieth-century continental philosophy.

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Daniel M. Gross is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric at The University of Iowa. Ansgar Kemmann is Project Manager of the German Federal Contest “Jugend debattiert” (“Youth debate”) at the Hertie Foundation.

HEIDEGGER AND ARISTOTLE
The Twofoldness of Being
Walter A. Brogan

Interprets Heidegger’s phenomenological reading of Aristotle’s philosophy.

Walter A. Brogan’s long-awaited book exploring Heidegger’s phenomenological reading of Aristotle’s philosophy places particular emphasis on the Physics, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Rhetoric. Controversial and challenging, Heidegger and Aristotle claims that it is Heidegger’s sustained thematic focus and insight that governs his overall reading of Aristotle, namely, that Aristotle, while attempting to remain faithful to the Parmenidean dictum regarding the oneness and unity of being, nevertheless thinks of being as twofold. Brogan offers a careful and detailed analysis of several of the most important of Heidegger’s treatises on Aristotle, including his assertion that Aristotle’s twofoldness of being has been ignored or misread in the traditional substance-oriented readings of Aristotle. This groundbreaking study contributes immensely to the scholarship of a growing community of ancient Greek scholars engaged in phenomenological approaches to the reading and understanding of Aristotle.

“This is, by far, the most extensive study of the ‘dialogue’ between Heidegger and Aristotle, and one that will be consulted as the authoritative study on the topic. It takes giant steps to challenge the usual reading of Aristotle, and does so in a persuasive way, which partisans of the more traditional view will ignore only at their peril.” — Drew A. Hyland, author of Questioning Platonism: Continental Interpretations of Plato

Walter A. Brogan is Professor of Philosophy at Villanova University. He is the coeditor (with James Risser) of American Continental Philosophy: A Reader and the cotranslator (with Peter Warnek) of Martin Heidegger’s Aristotle’s Metaphysics (theta) 1–3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force.

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KANT AND THE CULTURE OF ENLIGHTENMENT
Katerina Deligiorgi

Interprets Kant's conception of enlightenment within the broader philosophical project of his critique of reason.

Katerina Deligiorgi interprets Kant's conception of enlightenment within the broader philosophical project of his critique of reason. Analyzing a broad range of Kant's works, including his Critique of Pure Reason, the Critique of Judgment, his lectures on anthropology and logic, as well as his shorter essays, she identifies the theoretical and practical commitments that show the achievement of rational autonomy as an ongoing project for the realization of a culture of enlightenment. Deligiorgi also considers Kant's ideas in relation to the work of Diderot, Rousseau, Mendelssohn, Reinhold, Hamann, Schiller, and Herder. The perspective opened by this historical dialogue challenges twentieth-century revisionist interpretations of the Enlightenment to show that the "culture of enlightenment" is not simply a fragment of our intellectual history but rather a live project.

"Exactly how the nature and limits of enlightenment as a concept fit into Kant's ethics, political theory, and philosophy of history is a significant topic for Kant scholars. But beyond Kant scholarship the concept of enlightenment is a pervasive theme in postmodern scholarship as a misguided and much debunked social idea. Deligiorgi's interpretation is an excellent rebuttal of postmodern critiques of Kant's view of enlightenment, and she makes a very persuasive case that a proper interpretation of Kant's views has continuing relevance for understanding modern predicaments and concerns."

— Sharon Anderson-Gold, author of Unnecessary Evil: History and Moral Progress in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant

Katerina Deligiorgi teaches philosophy at Anglia Polytechnic University in Cambridge, England.

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 movements and Positions
Clare Carlisle

An accessible and original exploration of the theological and philosophical significance of Kierkegaard's religious thought.

Søren Kierkegaard's proposal of "repetition" as the new category of truth signaled the beginning of existentialist thought, turning philosophical attention from the pursuit of objective knowledge to the movement of becoming that characterizes each individual's life. Focusing on the theme of movement in his 1843 pseudonymous texts Either/Or, Repetition, and Fear and Trembling, Clare Carlisle presents an original and illuminating interpretation of Kierkegaard's religious thought, including newly translated material, that emphasizes equally its philosophical and theological significance. Kierkegaard complained of a lack of movement not only in Hegelian philosophy but also in his own "dreadful still life," and his heroes are those who leap, dance, and make journeys—but what do these movements signify, and how are they accomplished? How can we be true to ourselves, let alone to others if we are continually becoming? Carlisle explores these questions to uncover both the philosophical and the literary coherence of Kierkegaard's notoriously enigmatic authorship.

"This brilliant book represents the very finest contribution to the growing body of contemporary writings on the unusual and elusive corpus of Kierkegaard's early pseudonymous writings. The author brings an extraordinary level of philosophical sophistication and rhetorical flair to this work, and the result is a fascinating book that will appeal to scholars of philosophy and religion in a variety of fields ranging from ethics and literature, to theology and postmodernism. That said, the book is written so clearly, and with such evident passion, that it will appeal to a more popular audience as well—much as Kierkegaard's pseudonymous writings themselves were designed to do." — Louis A. Ruprecht Jr., author of Afterwords: Hellenism, Modernism, and the Myth of Decadence

Clare Carlisle is the Leverhulme Research Fellow at the University of Leeds, England.

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History and Politics in Marx, Benjamin, and Derrida
Matthias Fritsch

Argues for a closer connection between memories of injustice and promises of justice as a means to overcome violence.

Rereading Marx through Walter Benjamin and Jacques Derrida, The Promise of Memory attempts to establish a philosophy of liberation. Matthias Fritsch explores how memories of injustice relate to the promises of justice that democratic societies have inherited from the Enlightenment. Focusing on the Marxist promise for a classless society, since it contains a political promise whose institutionalization led to totalitarian outcomes, Fritsch argues that both memories and promises, if taken by themselves, are one-sided and potentially justify violence if they do not reflect on the implicit relation between them. He examines Benjamin's reinterpretation of Marxism after the disappointment of the Russian and German revolutions and Derrida's "messianic" inheritance of Marx after the breakdown of the Soviet Union. The book also contributes to contemporary political philosophy by relating Marxist social goals and German critical theory to debates about deconstructive ethics and politics.

"The most important feature of this book is its contribution to the philosophy of liberation. In philosophy there is a shortage of literature that focuses on the experience of the victims of history, and Fritsch has done a great service to those of us who are interested in the role of memory in the process of liberation struggles." — Arnold L. Farr, Saint Joseph's University

"The author's rigorous attempt to read the text of Marx in relation to both Benjamin and Derrida is most impressive. This is one of the very few works that has taken Marx seriously as an interlocutor for both Benjamin and Derrida, and which has attempted, in considerable detail, to bind the former's philosophy of history to the messianic politics elaborated by the latter two thinkers. As such, it goes a long way toward advancing our understanding not only of Marx but also of the vexed question of theology in Derrida and Benjamin." — Rebecca Comay, coeditor of Endings: Questions of Memory in Hegel and Heidegger

Matthias Fritsch is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University and cotranslator (with Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei) of Martin Heidegger’s The Phenomenology of Religious Life.

THE ACTIVE LIFE
Miller’s Metaphysics of Democracy
Michael J. McGandy

A sustained reflection on philosopher John William Miller and the metaphysical presuppositions and implications of democracy.

The ancient antagonism between the active and the contemplative lives is taken up in this innovative and wide-ranging examination of John William Miller’s effort to forge a metaphysics of democracy. The Active Life sheds new light on Miller’s actualist philosophy—its scope, its systematic character, and its dialectical form. Michael J. McGandy persuasively sets Miller’s actualism in the context of Hannah Arendt’s understanding of the active life and skillfully presents actualism as a response to Whitman’s challenge to craft a democratic form of metaphysics. McGandy concludes that Miller reveals how the philosophical and the political are inextricably connected, how there is no active life without the contemplative life, and that the contemplative life is founded in the active life.

“The Active Life is a remarkable achievement and a timely contribution to contemporary philosophy. It is, at once, a first-rate introduction to an important but neglected figure in American thought, John William Miller, and a cutting-edge treatment of the intertwined topics of action, symbols, history, and democracy. Miller’s metaphysics of democracy is here articulated in reference to Emerson, Whitman, James, and Dewey; its viability is defended against the influential critiques of Rorty and other contemporary thinkers who are insistent upon severing the link between democracy and metaphysics. A tradition of American thought running (at least) from Royce through Hocking to Miller is, in this finely written study, dramatically extended into the twenty-first century. The salience of this evolving framework to our time and place, including our most pressing political questions, is demonstrated at every turn.” — Vincent M. Colapietro, author of Fateful Shapes of Human Freedom: John William Miller and the Crises of Modernity

Michael J. McGandy is Associate Managing Editor for Norton Professional Books.

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THE BODILY DIMENSION IN THINKING
Daniela Vallega-Neu

An ontology of bodily being featuring Plato, Nietzsche, Scheler, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, and Foucault.

Daniela Vallega-Neu questions the ontological meaning of body and thinking by carefully taking into account how we come to experience thought bodily. She engages six prominent figures of the Western philosophical tradition—Plato, Nietzsche, Scheler, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, and Foucault—and considers how they understand thinking to occur in relation to the body as well as how their thinking is itself bodily. Through a deconstructive and performative reading, she explores how their thinking reveals a bodily dimension that is prior to what classical metaphysics comes to conceive as mind-body duality. Thus, Vallega-Neu uncovers the bodily dimension that sustains their thought and their work. As she contends, the trace of the body in our thought not only exposes the strangers we are to ourselves, but may also lead to a new understanding of how we come to be who we are in relation to the world we live in.

“From the outset it is clear that this book has no intention of revisiting the classical mind/body problem. At issue is ‘thought as a bodily event,’ and in terms of this issue, Vallega-Neu turns to some surprising sources—Plato’s Timaeus and the later work of Heidegger in particular, for a creative analysis of this theme.” — James Risser, editor of Heidegger toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s

Daniela Vallega-Neu is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at California State University at Stanislaus and the author of Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy: An Introduction.

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Dennis J. Schmidt, editor

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DENIAL, NEGATION, AND THE FORCES OF THE NEGATIVE
Freud, Hegel, Lacan, Spitz, and Sophocles
Wilfried Ver Eecke

A comprehensive account of denial viewed not only psychoanalytically but also philosophically.

It is often the case that painful truths emerge first in the form of denial; one needs to create distance from what is painful. In Denial, Negation, and the Forces of the Negative Wilfried Ver Eecke constructs a comprehensive, lucid account of denial’s psychological and philosophical dimensions while using Freud, Hegel, Lacan, Spitz, and Sophocles to help us understand this unavoidable aspect of human existence.

Ver Eecke acknowledges Hegel’s claim that the road to truth is not a path of doubt, but a highway of despair, and argues, via Hegel’s ontology of the person, that denial can be understood as a desiring being’s defense against despair. By examining the role of no-saying in children, Freud’s claims about freedom of the will and its necessary prerequisites, and Sophocles’ Oedipus, Ver Eecke demonstrates the idea that denial is connected with situations in which the self-image of a person is threatened. He concludes with a colleague’s autobiography to highlight the deep, tragic experiences that denial covers, and the enormous psychic work required to overcome profound denial, with the ultimate reward of experiencing oneself as the fulfillment of the promise of life.

“This is the best treatise on denial in the philosophical literature.” — Jon Mills, author of The Unconscious Abyss: Hegel’s Anticipation of Psychoanalysis

“This book relates Freud’s theory of denial and negation to Hegel, Lacan, and Spitz, producing conclusions on the nature of human freedom and wholeness that are both philosophically interesting and practically useful. The last two chapters move the theoretical discussion very much into the realm of practical life and should be useful both to therapists and to individuals.” — Edward Hugh Henderson, coeditor of Captured by the Crucified: The Practical Theology of Austin Farrer

At Georgetown University, Wilfried Ver Eecke is Professor of Philosophy and also teaches courses in psychology and psychoanalysis. He is the coauthor (with Alphonse De Waelhens) of Phenomenology and Lacan on Schizophrenia, after the Decade of the Brain and Saying “No”: Its Meaning in Child Development, Psychoanalysis, Linguistics, and Hegel.

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PHILOSOPHY

THE WIND AND THE SOURCE
In the Shadow of Mont Ventoux
Allen S. Weiss

Explores the role of a significant yet elusive feature of the French landscape in literature, philosophy, and art.

What does it mean to love a landscape? Why do certain authors have a predilection for specific landscapes? Why might one be fascinated by a landscape in which one would never wish to live? How does the lay of the land fashion the form of the poem? How does the wind infuse the breath? In The Wind and the Source, Allen S. Weiss explores the role of a significant yet elusive feature of the French landscape in literature, philosophy, and art: the legendary, mysterious, monolithic Mont Ventoux. This is not a book about picturesque, touristic Provence, but about the manifestation of an extreme limit of the imagination that happens to have Provence as its site, as its fantasyland. Weiss is concerned with the vicissitudes of the desire to write about a landscape, the desire to write in a landscape, and perhaps most curiously, the desire to write against a landscape. This is a book about love of the landscape, and abstraction from it; it is an account of how a mountain became a myth, and how an aesthetic and literary study became a metaphysical quest.

“Allen Weiss’s essay is an antidote to arid scholarship. In a text as deftly at ease with literary giants of different languages and periods, such as Augustine, Petrarch, Mallarmé, and Char, Weiss also defies the boundaries of the genre of literary criticism. He does so by inscribing autobiographical references in his general investigation of the productive elision of Mont Ventoux by poets whose writings are nevertheless paradoxically nourished by this very elusive reference. Moreover, as Weiss makes clear in his preface, the project that we are reading stands for the impossibility of writing a novella about a mountain, and this shift between writing fiction and assessing the impossibility of writing fiction is what makes this essay so original and bold in its range and scope, truly poetic and philosophically profound in and of itself.” — Brigitte Weltman-Aron, author of On Other Grounds: Landscape Gardening and Nationalism in Eighteenth-Century England and France

Troubling Play is a new and illuminating interpretation of Plato’s Parmenides—notoriously the most difficult of the dialogues. Showing that the Parmenides is an inquiry into time and the forms of language, author Kelsey Wood notes that the dialogue’s suggestion of sophistry is intended to provoke the silently observant Socrates. The young Socrates believes that knowing is prior to existence, but Parmenides ultimately shows him that the meaning of intelligible discourse is derived from existence in time. Although we cannot think apart from intelligible forms, nevertheless, any number of modes of intelligibility are possible. This relation of ideals of intelligibility—the forms of logos—to temporal being is a crucial topic of special relevance to philosophers today.

Wood’s detailed methodological analysis ties the Parmenides to other later dialogues such as the Sophist, Theatetus, and Philebus, and also to earlier works such as the Republic and the poem of Parmenides.

“This book demonstrates scholarly competence and clarity of exposition—no mean achievement—given the difficulty and complexity of this Platonic dialogue. Wood shows a grasp of the wider importance of the issues raised and a command of the relevant literature.” — Veronique M. Fotí, author of Vision’s Invisibles: Philosophical Explorations

Kelsey Wood is Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross.

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TROUBLING PLAY
Meaning and Entity in Plato’s Parmenides
Kelsey Wood

Troubling Play is a new and illuminating interpretation of Plato’s Parmenides—notoriously the most difficult of the dialogues. Showing that the Parmenides is an inquiry into time and the forms of language, author Kelsey Wood notes that the dialogue’s suggestion of sophistry is intended to provoke the silently observant Socrates. The young Socrates believes that knowing is prior to existence, but Parmenides ultimately shows him that the meaning of intelligible discourse is derived from existence in time. Although we cannot think apart from intelligible forms, nevertheless, any number of modes of intelligibility are possible. This relation of ideals of intelligibility—the forms of logos—to temporal being is a crucial topic of special relevance to philosophers today.

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Kelsey Wood is Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross.

AUGUST
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Allen S. Weiss teaches in the Departments of Performance Studies and Cinema Studies at New York University. He is the author of many books, including Feast and Folly: Cuisine, Intoxication, and the Poetics of the Sublime, also published by SUNY Press.