BIO

About the Author

My PhD was from the University of Michigan, 1992, with the late and happily remembered Frithjof Bergmann, my first model of an alternative way of doing Philosophy. I then taught for a decade in both graduate and undergraduate programs at SUNY-Stony Brook, and then for twenty-five years at Elon University, halfway between mountains and sea in the Piedmont of North Carolina, where I led a wide range of courses in Philosophy and in Environmental and General Studies. Both for Elon and other institutions I also took students abroad – Costa Rica, Western Australia, British Columbia – and sometimes into the wild as well. At Elon, I was honored both as Teacher of the Year (2002) and Scholar of the Year (2007). I am now an Elon Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Environmental Studies.

I am author of a dozen-plus books and upwards of fifty articles in many areas, especially environmental philosophy, critical and creative thinking, and ethical practice. In environmental philosophy, my early books were *Back to Earth: Tomorrow's Environmentalism* (Temple University Press, 1994) and *An Invitation to Environmental Philosophy* (anthology, Oxford University Press, 1999). A collection of my major professional essays in the area was later published by SUNY Press in 2009 as *The Incompleat Eco-Philosopher: Essays on the Edges of Environmental Ethics.* My 2012 book *Mobilizing the Green Imagination* (New Society Publishers, was described as by New Society as "postcards from beyond the leading edge of today's green thinking" and "audacious, extravagantly hopeful and profoundly inspiring"… and thus a kind of complement to and realization of *Philosophy's Big Chance* as well.

Toward Better Problems (Temple, 1992) was an early monograph for Pragmatic reconstruction in ethics. Interestingly, the editors had some trouble with the title – "How could we want better *problems?* Don't we want solutions?" – which in the end actually reassured me that I was on the right Deweyan/Pragmatic track. Persuaded then, though, that my best route to making a difference in both the

field and in the practice of ethics was to exemplify a pragmatic method in action, I made a project of offering alternative textbooks in the area, many of them attempts to re-imagine the field by modeling a different kind of textbook for it, most notably *A 21st Century Ethical Toolbox,* now in a 5th edition coauthored with Bob Fischer (Oxford University Press, 2023) as well as the shorter *A Practical Companion to Ethics* (5th edition, Oxford, 2020).

In Critical Thinking, my first and most widely-used book is *A Rulebook for Arguments* (Hackett, 6th edition, 2027). Though by now it's a kind of classic, it too was originally (first edition, 1986) an attempt, in part, to change a field, in this case Critical Thinking, or what was then called, usually with condescension, "Informal Logic". I wanted to rescue Critical Thinking from the prejudice that deductive forms (formal logic) are only decent model for good arguments, while for the rest it was considered that the best we might do is avoid the most flagrant mistakes ourselves while oh-so-perceptively sniffing out "fallacies" in others. In fact (I tried to *show*) it's the informal part where both the juice and the crying needs mostly lie.

Since then the field of Critical Thinking has indeed come into its own, and it's clear that we can do far better than that. I'd like to think that *Rulebook* had something to do with this shift, but it's hard to say. Anyway, the essential tasks are different now. *Rulebook* remains a brief and bare-bones argument guide, still almost alone in its niche, but also now concludes with a pointed chapter on public discourse, with themes like "Following Firm Facts", breaking out of echo chambers (which I have to insist that almost all of us need to *work at*), and how to tell genuine theories, scientific for example, from the very different and now rampant "theories", conspiracies for example.

Together with Professor David Morrow, I now offer a companion full-scale textbook to the *Rulebook*: it is *A Workbook for Arguments* (Hackett, 4th edition, forthcoming 2026). With my Elon colleague Stephen Bloch-Schulman, I have also penned *Thinking Through Questions: A Concise Invitation to Critical, Expansive, and Philosophical Inquiry* (Hackett, 2020).

In the pocket handbook line, in 2007 I added two short guides to practical creativity, with Oxford University Press: *Creativity for Critical Thinkers* and *Creative Problem-Solving in Ethics*. A complementary and more radical book for activists, and a very short and relentlessly practical precursor to this one, was *How*

to Re-Imagine the World: A Pocket Handbook for Practical Visionaries (New Society Publishers, 2007).

Jobs for Philosophers (Xlibris, 2004) is my collection of reviews of philosophical books and projects, with the small peculiarity that none of those books and projects actually exist (except the first one, which is *Jobs for Philosophers* itself)… making that book a project of re-imagining Philosophy too, but in an experimental and literary style: as one reviewer put it, as "a manifesto-in-disguise for a kind of Philosophy that does not yet exist but *should*". *Jobs for Philosophers*' title might well also have been this book's but for an inevitable confusion: "Jobs for Philosophers" is also the American Philosophical Association's official listing of teaching positions in the field… thus my appropriation of it for my little collection was an ironic but admittedly impolite way of suggesting that (again) there are other and dramatically different ways of undertaking "jobs" for philosophers.

A persistent pedagogical adventurer, I am author of *Teaching as the Art of Staging: A Scenario-Based College Pedagogy in Action* (Stylus, 2019). At Elon I became renowned for Philosophy of Education classes in which every philosophy was taught using its own favored pedagogy, as well as "Environmental Visions" classes that looked at inventive and affirmative long-term green options, and "Life in the Universe" (students called it "Aliens") co-taught with an equally adventurous astronomer… among others. I continue to lead occasional summer intensives and workshops, and am pleased to be available for virtual discussions with classes using this book.

I am a core member, co-planner, and currently co-builder of Common Ground Ecovillage in central North Carolina, long-standing, on-the-ground work on social and ecological re-invention that also illustrates and informs this book.

Wikipedia's page about me, including a narrative booklist, was mostly accurate on 5/20/26. You can find a regular publication list at https://philosophysbigchance.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/anthony-weston-publication-list-spring-2027.pdf