

## Interests and Publications

<https://blogs.helsinki.fi/erikaruo/about/>

### Areas of Interest

My areas of interest are phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, Husserl) and existentialism (Beauvoir, Sartre, Nietzsche). Currently, I am particularly interested in the possibilities of philosophical thought in our time and alternative forms of philosophical expression. Other themes I have worked on include intersubjectivity, embodiment, temporality, power relationships, gender, and the human–animal relationship.

### Current Research

I am the director of the project HARMAA: Indirect Philosophy as a Form of Resistance – How to Reinforce Individual Agency in a Post-Truth Era. The project deals with the intertwining of deception, self-deception and sense of agency in our time. It also experiments with “indirect philosophy”, that is, non-argumentative or “softly argumentative” forms of philosophy. The results of these experiments are published in our blog.

### Earlier Research

Before this project I have investigated the temporality of despair (project *Despair and Time*), alienation and inclusion in learning philosophy (project *Gender and Philosophy*), the links between androcentrism and anthropocentrism in existentialism (project *Project and Possibility: Beauvoirian Postanthropocentric Existentialism*), intersubjectivity in the reading experience and the possibility of empathising with animals in literature (project *Empathising with the Non-Human Other in Ancient Greek Literature*), and empathising with non-human animals more generally (PhD project).

### The Relevance and Benefits of My Research

Most of my research deals with areas that have not been researched adequately due to implicit biases within philosophy or, more generally, in society, and which are intertwined with different kinds of structures of inequity. My research elucidates such issues at an existential level, hence providing readers a possibility to rethink them through their own experiences.

### Education and Affiliations

The University of Helsinki is my alma mater, where I defended my doctoral dissertation in Theoretical Philosophy in 2011. After working for several years (2015–2022) at the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy at the University of Jyväskylä, and obtaining the title of Docent in Philosophy there (2017), I returned to the University of Helsinki in 2023, this time in the discipline of Practical Philosophy. I have a deep interest in literature and the visual arts, and I have a degree in the visual arts from Art School MAA (1991).

### Other Activities

In addition to doing research and teaching, I have translated philosophical texts from French and English into Finnish. These include several works by Simone de Beauvoir as well as texts by Christine de Pizan, Catharine Macaulay, Olympe de Gouges and Harriet Taylor Mill. Translating a part of Christine’s *The Book of the City of Ladies* was an important inspiration to my ongoing project. From the beginning of 2023, I am the President of the International Simone de Beauvoir Society.

### Publications

#### Books

2023: *Analysing Darkness and Light: Dystopias and Beyond*. Eds Martta Heikkilä, Irina Poleshchuk and Erika Ruonakoski. Brill.

2023: *Sisters of the Brotherhood: Alienation and Inclusion in Learning Philosophy*. Cham: Springer. OA.

2017: *Human and Animal in Ancient Greece: Empathy and Encounter in Classical Literature*. With Tua Korhonen. London: I.B.Tauris.

2011: *Eläimen tuttuus ja vieraus: fenomenologisen empatiateorian uudelleentulkinta ja sen sovellus vieraslajisia eläimiä koskevaan kokemukseen (Familiarity and foreignness of animals: A reinterpretation of the phenomenological theory of empathy and its application to our experience of non-human animals)*. Doctoral dissertation. Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto.

#### Articles (selection)

2023: “Introduction”, with Martta Heikkilä and Irina Poleshchuk, in *Analysing Darkness and Light: Dystopias and Beyond*, eds Martta Heikkilä, Irina Poleshchuk and Erika Ruonakoski. Brill.

2023: “Experiential Shifts in the COVID-19 Pandemic: From the Epochē to Interspace and ‘Normality’”, in *Analysing Darkness and Light: Dystopias and Beyond*, eds Martta Heikkilä, Irina Poleshchuk and Erika Ruonakoski. Brill.

2023: “Epäsuoran filosofian mahdollisuudet: tiennäyttäjänä Søren Kierkegaard ja Christine de Pizan”, *niin & näin*. OA.

2022: “Ajallisuus ja rationaalisuus COVID-19-pandemian vaiheissa: järkytys, välitila ja ‘paluu normaaliin’”, *Ajatus* 79, 73–102.

2022: “Passion and Alienation: Women as Students of Philosophy”, in *Escritos de Filosofia e Educação*, eds Daniel Ribeira de Almeida Chacon, Laurici Vagner Gomes and Magda Guadalupe dos Santos, 237–253. E. Porto Alegre, Editora Fi.

2021: “Margaret A. Simons, Rebel at Heart: Civil Rights Activist, Feminist, Beauvoir Scholar”, *Simone de Beauvoir Studies*, vol. 31 (2020), no. 2 (Sep. 2021), 317–335. Interview with Margaret A. Simons.

2020: “Innocence, Deception, and Incarnate Evil in Agatha Christie’s *They Do It with Mirrors*”, *Literature and Aesthetics*, vol. 30, no. 2, 55–70.

2020: “When Living Is Only Not Dying: Immanence and Animals in Beauvoir’s Discussion of Oppression”, *Simone de Beauvoir Studies*, vol. 31, no. 1 (Dec. 2020), 105–126.

2020: “Ihminen vapaana ja vastuullisena” (The free and responsible human being), *Ihminen kaleidoskoopissa (The human being in a kaleidoscope)*, eds Elisa Aaltola and Vilma Hänninen, 207–223. Helsinki, Gaudeamus.

2020: “Filosofiaa rakastavat naiset: sukupuolen merkitys filosofian opinnoissa” (Women who love philosophy: The relevance of gender in studying philosophy), *niin & näin* 2/2020, 127–128.

- 2018: "Gegenstand und Grenzen der Einföhlung in der Philosophie Edith Steins", Edith Stein Jahrbuch, Band 24, 2018, 193–209. Trans. Konrad Josef Rötzer OCD.
- 2017: "Retranslating The Second Sex into Finnish: Choices, Practices, and Ideas", in *On ne naît pas femme : on le devient: The Life of a Sentence*, eds Bonnie Mann and Martina Ferrari, 331–354. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 2017: "The Object and Limits of Empathy in Stein's Philosophy", in *Celebrating Teresa of Avila and Edith Stein*, 25–38. Helsinki: OCDS Finland.
- 2015: "Interdisciplinarity in The Second Sex: Between Phenomenology and Psychoanalysis", in *Simone de Beauvoir – A Humanist Thinker*, Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS), eds Tove Pettersen and Annlaug Bjørnsøs, 41–56. Leiden: Brill / Rodopi.
- 2012: "Literature as a Means of Communication: A Beauvoirian Interpretation of an Ancient Greek Poem", *Sapere Aude* V. 3, N. 6 (2012), 250–270.
- 2009: "Miten tutkia vieraslajisia eläimiä merleau-pontylaisittain: peilikokeet ja eläinten tietoisuuden tutkimus", *Tiede & edistys* 3/2009, 204–214. Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto. Access in Elektra (Finnish universities only).
- Translations
- 2021: *Miesvaltaa murtaamassa: varhaisten feministien filosofisia kirjoituksia (Breaking down patriarchy: Philosophical writings of early feminists)*. With Laura Lahdensuu and Tuomas Parsio. Ed. Martina Reuter. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- 2011: *Simone de Beauvoir: Moniselitteisyyden etiikka (The ethics of ambiguity)*. Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto.
- 2011: *Simone de Beauvoir: Toinen sukupuoli II: eletty kokemus. (The second sex II: Lived experience)*. With Iina Koskinen and Hanna Lukkari. Helsinki: Tammi.
- 2009: *Toinen sukupuoli I: tosiasiat ja myytit (The second sex I: Facts and myths)*. With Iina Koskinen and Hanna Lukkari. Helsinki: Tammi.
- 2007: *Simone de Beauvoir: Onko Sade poltettava? ja muita esseitä (Must we burn Sade? And other essays)*. Eds Sara Heinämaa and Erika Ruonakoski. Helsinki: WSOY.
- Videos
- Miesvallan murtaajat – keskustelu varhaisista feministeistä Hietsun akatemiassa*, 15 Dec. 2021. With Martina Reuter, Laura Lahdensuu and Erika Ruonakoski, interviewed by Markku Koivusalo.