In the immediate future, I plan to pursue projects in the philosophy of philosophy, epistemology, political philosophy, and applied ethics.

The first three projects build on the positive theory of disagreement that I defend in the dissertation. That view begins by making an important concession to conciliationists who say that disagreement on a matter is reason for both sides to drastically reduce their confidence that they are correct. Persistent and widespread controversy in a domain is a strong indicator that humans on average lack the cognitive capacity for reliable inquiry in the domain. I propose that it can nevertheless be fully rational for disputants from both sides to trust their own faculties and set aside doubts about the correctness of their views. This conclusion is very strongly anti-conciliationist, but it includes a cost, requiring the parties to acknowledge the risk they are taking when they stick with their views.

These ideas have direct consequences for how we should understand philosophical inquiry itself, owing to the massive disagreement (e.g., uncovered by the recent PhilPapers Survey) among professional philosophers about the Big Questions of philosophy. My dissertation takes only a cursory look at the matter; I plan to investigate it in greater depth, with particular focus on gaining insight into why significant philosophical progress is rare.

In the course of motivating my theory of disagreement, I claim that conciliation consists in the adoption of particular second-order attitudes toward one’s first-order credences. Suppose I adopt credence 0.9 in P and you adopt 0.1. As many have noted, we should not understand conciliation as moving to a credence of 0.5 (the average of the two). I argue that we should understand conciliation as coming to agree that there’s some chance 0.9 is the right credence to adopt, some equal chance that 0.1 is the right credence to adopt, and some chance that the right credence is something else altogether. I plan to show how this understanding can help dissolve a number of difficulties for conciliation, including the concern that conciliationism is self-undermining. It also suggests an alternative approach to scoring epistemic rationality that promises to improve upon conventional methods that rely on calibration or Brier scores applied directly to first-order credences.
A third project is to develop the argument in my dissertation for religious toleration into an argument for liberal neutrality, shifting focus from religious disagreement to moral disagreement. Put most generally, this approach takes the following question as a starting point: what terms of cooperation should be adopted by agents who can recognize that they face significant limits in their capacity for determining moral truth—including the truth about what terms of cooperation they should adopt?

Finally, concerning climate change, I plan to develop a comprehensive theory that answers three questions: 1) What does the current generation owe future generations? 2) What current obligations are there between the heirs of historical polluters and the heirs of historical nonpolluters? 3) How should current and future emissions be allocated between nations? My research so far has focused on the first question, arguing that the current generation has obligation to bequeath conditions of life no worse than those which it inherited. This answer yields an approach to the second and third questions. On my proposed theory, each generation is in an asymmetrical partnership with previous and future generations for satisfying obligations of reciprocity. Future generations are unable to impose sanctions or offer incentives for prior generations to satisfy their obligations. Similarly, prior generations are unable to ensure subsequent generations will properly use inherited resources. Thus we should address questions (2) and (3) by determining fair terms for governing this special form of cooperative venture.