



Professor Stefan Sencerz, Ph.D., teaches philosophy at Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi. He specializes in Moral Philosophy, Epistemology, Animal and Environmental Ethics, Philosophy of Religion and Mysticism, and Eastern Philosophy.

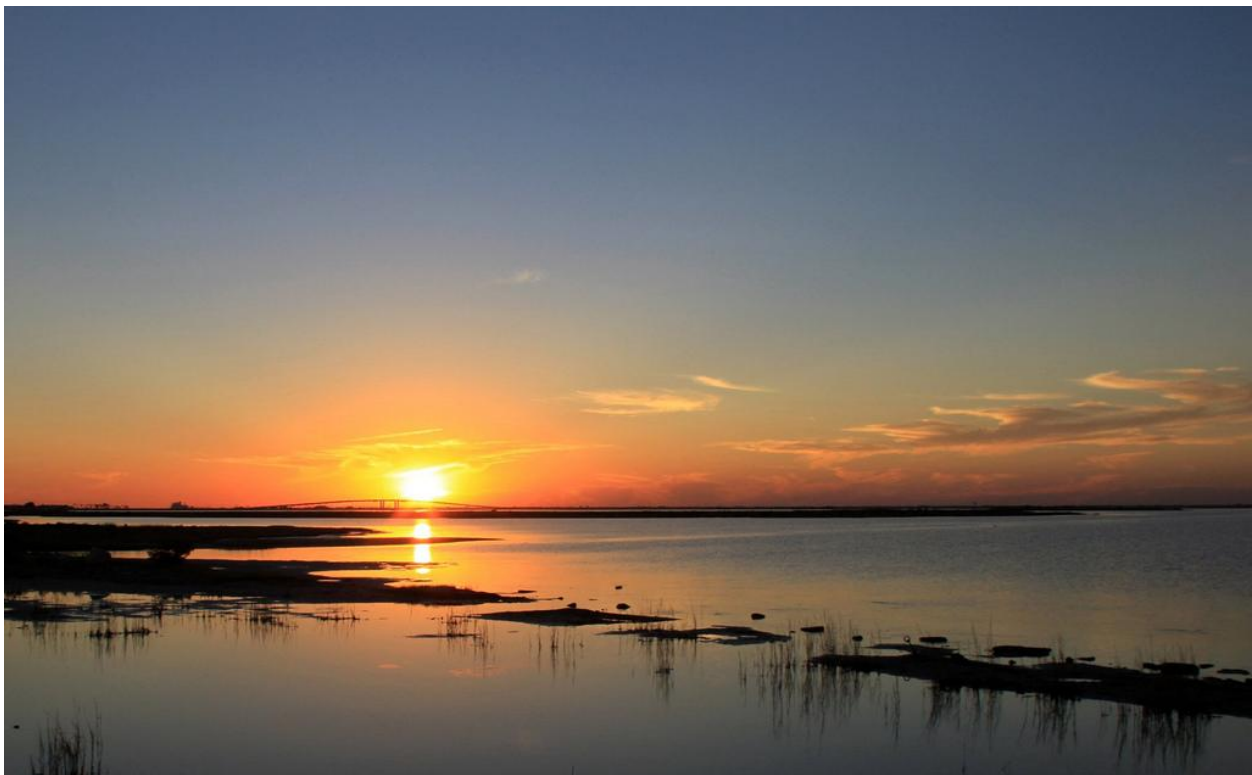
His most recent publications [<https://tamucc.academia.edu/StefanSencerz>] include:

- “Toward Plausible Moderate Hierarchical View About the Moral Standing of Animals”, *Etyka* 61, July 2023
- “This Discrete Charm of *Śūnyatā* (Emptiness) and Zen in The Art of Basketball”, *The Journal for the Study of Religious Experience*, 8:1, Summer 2022, pp. 21-66.
- “Moral Standing of Animals: Arguments from Having a Soul Revisited”, *Journal of Animal Ethics* 12:1, 2022.
- “Catching the Ocean in a Net: Reflections on Teaching Eastern Philosophy”, *SUFI: The Journal of Mystical Philosophy and Practice*, 102 (January 2022).
- “On Angels: Myth and Belief, West and East”, *Classical Wisdom* (In 4 parts, March 31- April 20, 2021).
- “Moral Standing of Animals and Some Problems in Veterinarian Ethics”, *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, Vol 33:1, February 2020, pp. 37-48.
- “Utilitarianism and Replaceability Revisited or Are Animals Expendable?”, *Between the Species*, 14:1, 2011, 81-106

Stefan published numerous refereed poems, short stories, and essays; the following are among his signature pieces:

- “I’ve Been to Auschwitz”. In *Freedom to Speak* (Anthology of National Poetry Slam, Minneapolis 2002, pp. 100-101).
- “Where Am I from”. In *From Page to Stage and Back Again* (Anthology of the National Poetry Slam in Chicago, 2003, pp. 20-21).
- “Ask Me About Silence (a poem for Vincent van Gogh and Thelonious Sphere Monk)” (*di-verse-city: Anthology of the Austin International Poetry Festival*, 2004; a runner-up in the competition for the Christina Sergeevna Award)
- “Eating Ice-Cream, While Reading Aristotle, While Listening to Miles (Revised)” (*High Desert Voices* (Anthology of National Poetry Slam in ABQ, 2005)
- “The Sacred Space (an environmental poem with photos and footnotes)”, *Journal of Critical Animal Studies*, 18:1, February 2021, pp. 100-103.

Professor Sencerz began to study philosophy in 1974, in the just reopened (closed after purges of 1968) Department of Philosophy, at the University of Warsaw. His first term paper, on Buddhist Philosophy, led him to the discovery of meditation.



In 1975 he met an American teacher, Philip Kapleau, began practicing Zen Buddhism with him and became one of the founding members of the first Zen group in Poland.

In the late 70s, Professor Sencerz started to work on his first Ph.D. dissertation, published a few groundbreaking essays on the debate about animal ethics (first extended publications on this topic behind the Iron Curtain), and made several contributions to the seminal 18th volume of *Etyka*, where his work appeared in the company of Joel Feinberg, Peter Singer, Tom Regan, and many other luminaries [<https://etyka.uw.edu.pl/index.php/etyka/issue/view/74>].

During this time, several American Universities invited him for an extended stay. This led him to a “conversation” with special services who asked Sencerz to cooperate. When he politely declined, his passport was revoked for a few years. In November 1983, when his Ph.D. was almost ready for defense, he somehow managed to leave Poland for a visit to Stony Brook. Shortly, he transferred to the University of Rochester to work on a completely different Ph.D. dissertation on moral epistemology and to continue his Zen training at the Rochester Zen Center.

When his close friend had a fallout with Philip Kapleau, in the mid-1980s, Stefan decided he could not continue with his teacher, either. The reaction of the leader of the Polish group convinced him that it would be better for all if he stayed in the United States.

Stefan has been active on the spoken-word scene, establishing the “Ballabajoomba Poetry Slam”, a community-based poetry organization in Corpus Christi, Texas, where he lives. He coached several teams to the national stage and, in 2008, he won a poetry slam for poetry organizers in conjunction with the National Poetry Slam in Madison Wisconsin. He also won several prestigious poetry slams in San Antonio, Austin, Houston, and Chicago. Here are some of his performances:

- “Where Am I Really From?” (2020) <https://youtu.be/2R-417q8GAA>
- “Sacred Space” (2016): <https://youtu.be/J4tjeoNv9oo>
- A (non-slam) performance of a story on the theme of alienation (2020): <https://youtu.be/hxwmfwjQn8g>.

Stefan is also an award-winning photographer of nature and an avid conga drummer who regularly jams with local bands:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=122122130060052035&id=61551561052340.