



# UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

## *Department of Philosophy Newsletter* *Spring 2014, No. 47*

### **From The Chair's Desk**

It has been good being back as Chair this year. It was my tenth, having begun in 2003 and taken a year of research leave in 2012-13.

Deborah Modrak wrote a year ago that our wing of Lattimore Hall hummed with “conversation and even laughter.” This continues, and it goes a long way toward making this a rewarding department to chair. There is an exuberance of youth and philosophical energy in the air. The department is a decade older than it was when I became its chair, but younger on the whole and uncommonly good natured.

While continuing to be a department characterized by abundant philosophical talent, research productivity, and excellence and innovation in teaching, we also seem to now be a department in which organizational ability and initiative are remarkably widely distributed. This is gratifying, and it makes me wonder whether it is not an oddity of our field that it so often styles its chairs as reluctant philosopher kings, and not as Aristotelian statesmen who enjoy facilitating partnership in intellectual flourishing.

The year's most notable events would have to begin with the Humanities Project conference on the interface of metaphysics and philosophy of physics, organized and hosted by Alyssa Ney. This was a major intellectual event both for Rochester philosophy and for the two subfields involved. The fall 2013 schedule also featured a

Central New York Humanities Corridor workshop on Spinoza, organized and hosted by Alison Peterman, and a talk by Christian Miller in conjunction with Bill FitzPatrick's seminar on virtue ethics. Miller's audience was about equal parts philosophers and psychologists, and indicative of a growing conversation between the two fields at the University of Rochester. We look forward to the further growth of such conversations next year with the launch of Alison's co-taught PHL-BCS course on Theory of Perception, and other initiatives.

### **In memoriam**

We regret to announce the passing of *Rolf Eberle*, (02-07-1931 to 03-23-2014), Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Rochester. Born in Aarau, Switzerland, Rolf completed BA, MA, and PhD degrees at UCLA in 1960, 1964, and 1966. He joined the faculty of Philosophy at the University of Rochester in 1967, reached the rank of Professor in 1975, and served as the Department's Acting Chair in fall 1976. Best known for his book, *Nominalistic Systems*, published by Reidel in 1970, his research and teaching were focused in logic and formal semantics. Described by Henry Kyburg in 1974 as “our logical conscience,” Rolf retired in 1991.

We regret to announce the passing of *Rona Glassman Finkelstein* (11-07-1927 to 4-16-2014), a 1964 Philosophy PhD alumna of the University of Rochester. Rona chaired the philosophy department at Delaware State University, and was the founding director of the Delaware Humanities Forum. A longtime resident of Wilmington, she was a tireless champion of human rights and deeply involved in the Jewish community.

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*“Dedicated to the Truth,  
the Half-Truth  
and the Occasional  
Bald-Faced Lie”*

### **2014 Colin and Ailsa Turbayne International Berkeley Essay Competition**

The late Professor and Mrs. Colin Turbayne established a biennial International Berkeley Essay Prize competition in conjunction with the Philosophy Department at the University of Rochester.

The next deadline for submitting papers is November 1, 2014. The winner will be announced March 1, 2015 and will receive a prize of \$2,000. Copies of the winning essays will be sent to the George Berkeley Library Study Center located in Berkeley’s home in Whitehall, Newport, RI. Submissions should be sent to: Chair, Department of Philosophy, University of Rochester, PO Box 270078, Lattimore Hall 532, Rochester, NY 14627-0078 or [padmin@philosophy.rochester.edu](mailto:padmin@philosophy.rochester.edu). Please see our website for details regarding essay specifications.

### **2013-14 Events**

#### **COLLOQUIA SERIES**

Bonnie Steinbock (SUNY Albany)  
Christian Miller (Wake Forest University)  
Jennifer Nagel (University of Toronto)  
Declan Smithies (Ohio State, Visiting MIT 2013-14)  
David Liebesman (Boston University)  
Sara Bernstein (Duke University)

#### **THE HUMANITIES PROJECT**

“Metaphysics for Physics” Workshop  
(Alyssa Ney, coordinator)

#### **MELLON HUMANITIES CORRIDOR PROJECTS**

“Spinoza Workshop”  
(Alison Peterman, coordinator)  
Ethics Group Meeting  
(William FitzPatrick, coordinator)

## FACULTY NEWS

### Earl Conee

Departmental newsletter-reading traditionalists will expect that I will again report having done a usual mix of teaching, research and service in the past academic year. I have and I did.

### Randall Curren

I had a good year. It began the day after commencement weekend in 2013 when I flew to the UK for my first four-week residency at the University of Birmingham. That was fun. I made a trip from there to Evanston, Illinois to speak at a conference on Ancient Greek philosophy and moral education at Northwestern University. After finishing up in Birmingham, I made my way home to Rochester for a day, then on to Los Angeles for Jason Baehr's conference on cultivating the intellectual virtues, where I did an interview with BBC Radio 4 from the Culver City NPR studios, gave an invited talk, and spent an evening celebrating the summer solstice at the Malibu mountain top home of Frank Lloyd Wright's architect grandson, Erik. A Russian pagan priestess led us – half of California's surviving hippies and a few of us who were merely pagan-curious – in ritual chant and movement, as the sun set and full moon rose over the Pacific Ocean. I'm sure I have never been more at one with earth, air, fire, and water. A couple days later, back in Rochester, I had the most fun I have ever had giving a talk. I addressed a packed auditorium of about 250 people in a session on the philosophy and psychology of autonomy, chaired by Rich Ryan, at the Self-determination Theory world congress he and Ed Deci were hosting at the Riverside Convention Center. The room was electric, and that was June. Other months followed.

### Richard Dees

This year, on the teaching front, I have been concentrating on new offerings. I have taught a

new course on Neuroethics in the spring, and I had the opportunity, after a long hiatus, to teach my course on the Philosophy of the American Revolution in the fall. In addition, I have been helping develop new courses in the Division of Medical Humanities and Bioethics at the Medical School, which includes a new course for undergraduates in Clinical Bioethics (and in which I teach a small section on the ethics of transplant donations). So there are a number of new offerings relevant to the Bioethics major that I oversee. The Bioethics major is part of a broader program of Public Health-related majors, which I chair, and which continues to grow rapidly, and we have been working this year to offer a new major in Environmental Health. In addition, I continue to serve as an ethics consultant to numerous committees at the medical school and as a co-chair of the Interdisciplinary Cluster on Health and Human Values.

My research mostly focuses on issues of transplants and harms to the dead, but it took a little turn in a new anthology on the concept of leverage in American culture, to which I have contributed a small piece on the morality of leverage.

### William FitzPatrick

In July I joined the journal *Ethics* as an associate editor. I am supervising four Ph.D. theses in ethics, and continue to serve as undergraduate adviser for the department and to chair the committee to choose the Distinguished Visitor in the Humanities for the college. My research has continued to focus on defending ethical realism against evolutionary debunking arguments, and on developing and defending a form of non-naturalist realism. I gave presentations on these topics this year at the University of Michigan, the Boston Colloquium for Philosophy of Science and the Pacific APA, among others, and have two new publications this spring, and some more forthcoming, in these areas. I'm hoping to make progress on a book project on robust ethical realism this summer.

**Alison Peterman**

This year, I published a paper in Philosophy Compass on Spinoza and physical science. I visited Toronto to give a talk on the common notions, and Munich to discuss Spinoza's account of extension and space. Just a few weeks ago, I enjoyed participating in an Author Meets Critics event on an online forum, the Mod Squad group blog on early modern philosophy. As usual, I had a great time teaching, especially two new classes: a graduate seminar on Leibniz's metaphysics, and a majors seminar on freedom.

**Brett Sherman**

I finished a paper on 'must'  
And started another on trust  
Though my papers I cherish  
I publish or perish  
So hopefully neither will bust

**Edward Wierenga**

Two highlights this year: First, this was my eleventh and final year as chair of Religion and Classics (after previously serving as chair for six years); so I am looking forward to a leave and to working full-time on philosophy of religion. Second, I became an epistemologist, at last, when I read a paper at Oxford on defeat. Afterwards some of the graduate students asked, "Is everyone at Rochester an evidentialist?"

**GRADUATE NEWS**

**Matthew Baddorf**

This year I gave my writing presentation (on epistemic instrumentalism) and wrote a dissertation proposal on the existence and nature of virtue in organizations. I've also worked on a project investigating divine simplicity, taught a writing course on feminist views of science, and sat in on courses in epistemology, virtue ethics, and philosophy of religion. It's been a good year, and I'm looking forward to my final one.

**Matthew Frise**

It's been an exciting year. I won a Dissertation Fellowship for the 2014-2015 academic year from the Philosophy and Theology of Intellectual Humility project at St. Louis University. I regret that this fellowship will take me away from our fantastic department and city, but I look forward to informing St. Louis' philosophers about the eminent plausibility of evidentialism. *Synthese* accepted for publication my paper "Speaking Freely: On Free Will and the Epistemology of Testimony," and *Religious Studies* accepted for publication my paper "What God Only Knows: A Reply to Rob Lovering." I presented papers at the Central APA, the Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Congress, the Alabama Philosophical Society Conference, the Pittsburgh Area Philosophy Colloquium, and the Northwestern/Notre Dame Graduate Epistemology Conference. Last, I've advanced to candidacy. I enjoy working on my dissertation, which is on the epistemology of memory.

**Jannai Shields**

Another year has past, this one seemingly faster than the one before.  
Year two is complete, there remain but a few more.  
Some requirements were met, others remain.  
Things are going well, a sentiment I would not feign.  
I look forward to summer, warm weather to gain.

**Ph.D. Graduate Admissions Fall 2014**

Kyle Blanchette (Western Michigan University)  
Matthew Lamb (Colorado State University)

**M.A. Degrees Awarded 2013-14**

Adrian Arellano  
Matthew Baddorf  
Matthew Frise  
Andrew Greenlee  
Emmett Wilson

## Ph.D. Degrees Awarded 2013-14

Brandon Carey  
“A Counterfactual Approach to Epistemic Possibility”  
(Earl Conee, advisor)

Sommer Hodson  
“A Hybrid View of Personal Identity “  
(Alyssa Ney, advisor)

## UNDERGRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS

### Jay McCrensky (BA 1970)

I teach Introduction to Judaism in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at St Mary's College of Maryland, the honors college of the University of Maryland system. I have now published two books, available from me or on Amazon:

*Receiving Holiness: Understanding Judaism through Kabbalah*, Marketshare Publications, 2013 and *Understanding Evil: Insights from Kabbalah*, Marketshare Publications, 2014. I am just completing a rewrite of *Understanding Evil* and will be happy to share it electronically. It is a philosophical work on theodicy and Kabbalah, as well as an accessible introduction to Kabbalah. It also ventures a kabbalistically based moral philosophy that serves well as a practical guide for applied ethics for medicine, law, business and most other areas of professional ethics. It explores the dialectics between wisdom and intelligence, between compassion and power, and between principles and emotions. I look forward to discussing with anyone interested. Feel free to give me a call at 240-235-6060 or shoot me an email at [jmccrensky@aol.com](mailto:jmccrensky@aol.com).

## GRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS

### Charles E. Cardwell (PhD 1972)

This year I learned from President Obama that community colleges such as Pellissippi State (where I work) are America's Crown Jewels. It didn't come from Obama, but in recognition of ten years of crown-jewel service, I did get a certificate and a \$25 bonus!

I staff more than forty sections of philosophy classes each semester. We have four full-time and eleven part-time faculty (all but one of whom have earned PhDs). I really like being able to give jobs (even if only part-time) to unemployed philosophers. Sadly, there are still lots of them: This year, I found well-qualified people on almost no notice to cover classes for one full-timer whose appointment to teach for a year in China came through barely a week before classes started... and for another who, mid semester, suddenly became ill and unable to meet his classes.

I gave a short paper (“The Garden of Eden and Divine Command Theory”) at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Tennessee Philosophical Association (where I was elected to serve a ninth term as Secretary).

I am looking forward to a month in Scotland this summer (where I will be teaching intro to ethics).

That's pretty much my year.

### Loretta M. Kopelman (PhD 1966)

Hello everyone:

The Washington DC area offers wonderful opportunities for someone interested in bioethics. At the FDA, I serve as a consultant to the Pediatric Ethics Subcommittee of the Pediatric Advisory Committee. We recently evaluated proposals to test Anthrax vaccinations on pediatric populations. At NIH, I serve on the

Ethics Advisory Panel of the Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions. The Bioethics Center of the NIH also holds the Joint Colloquium with the philosophy departments of George Washington and Georgetown University and I enjoy being a member.

It is a pleasure to continue my association with the students and colleagues at Georgetown University. I still teach in the first two years of the medical school's required ethics courses and the Intensive Bioethics Course at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics. I also serve on the Ethics Committee of Inova Fairfax Hospital and on many editorial boards.

Recently I have become involved with the Tahirih Justice Center through my writings on female circumcision and forced marriages, mostly of teen aged girls.

Arthur and I enjoy family, friends, travel and the exploring the DC area. I am also part of an active group of painters. Best wishes.

#### **James Lesher (PhD 1967)**

In September of last year I realized that it has been fifty years since I taught my first philosophy class at the U of R. I have a clear memory of how unprepared I felt to lead one of the discussion sections for Colin Turbayne's intro to philosophy course, and an equally clear sense of how much more I enjoy teaching today than I did then. I think I can say that I now have a better sense of how to generate a useful philosophical discussion, more specifically an appreciation for how success in the classroom is more a matter of creating interest and instilling self-confidence in my students than it is a matter of my imparting some body of information to them. I have to admit that the pleasure I take from teaching stems in large part from the superior quality of the students who have enrolled in my courses on ancient philosophy and my Greek philosophical translation groups. I concede that this is not at all like teaching Introduction to Philosophy to a large group of students, some of whom may not really belong

in a university. But I am enormously grateful to have had the opportunity to teach so many gifted students at Rochester, the University of Maryland, and for the past six years at UNC Chapel Hill. I hope to be able to keep my hand in for a few more years.

#### **Todd Long (PhD 2003)**

This past year I've had two papers accepted for separate collections to be published by Oxford University Press, I've presented papers at two conferences, and I'll be doing a commentary presentation at the Pacific APA in San Diego. I'm also pleased that my work on moral responsibility is getting increasing attention in the journals. This year (my tenth at Cal Poly!) I have applied for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor. Please keep your fingers crossed, as Sigrid and I bought a new house last year: living on California's central coast is a beautiful experience, but it ain't cheap!

Sigrid continues to teach yoga, and she regularly volunteers at our kids' school. Sophie, who is now ten, is a very talented singer and performer. Dylan, almost eight, enjoys Aikido, gymnastics, and, lately, hip-hop classes. Some of my department colleagues and I have a robust wine group. In addition to frequent tastings, we are now making our six vintage (this year it's petite syrah).

#### **Kate Murphy Markie (PhD 1984)**

This is my first posting, but I wanted to share some thoughts with fellow graduates many of whom, like me, will need to look outside Philosophy for employment.

There is life – interesting life – after academic Philosophy. While writing my dissertation in the grim job market of the late 70's (when spousal accommodations were still new and only for the big guns) I went to law school and was hired on graduation as a research attorney for the Missouri Supreme Court (they figured I could research and write). Within a couple of months I was hired as law clerk by Judge Robert T. Donnelly, who loved Rawls and Nozick and was looking for someone to talk to. (He and Bob Holmes and my Philosopher-husband Peter got

me to finish my Ph.D. in 1984, ten years after I started graduate school and two years after my J.D.) After three years at the Court I took a job as appellate attorney for the State Public Defender for another three years, handling criminal appeals (mostly sex offenses and homicides) with three death penalty cases my last year (one of my guys was ultimately released after the witnesses against him recanted - no credit to me although the appeal helped keep him alive). I got hired by the University of Missouri General Counsel's Office in part because of the Ph.D. and have worked there for nearly 27 years. Serendipity.

I wasted a certain amount of emotional energy in the early years fretting because I wasn't an academic. I have missed teaching young people, but used many teaching skills in presentations, oral arguments and in trial. I haven't had time to publish but have written a lot, albeit for small audiences, and appreciated both having deadlines and quick feedback as well as practical results. Over the years I ran into Josh Stulberg who was at Missouri for a couple of years, and used Loretta Kopelman's work when I advised our IRBs. I've been fortunate to have met a variety of people, academic and non-academic, who are friends. I was an intellectual snob in graduate school; I hope I am not now.

Peter and I have two great kids. Liz has taught in the North Kansas City Schools for 6 years and next year will be teaching at the Kaufman Foundation's Charter School in inner city Kansas City (you've heard about it on NPR). Bob graduated from Truman State with a political science degree and now is in the nursing program at Columbia College. Peter is a Curators' Teaching Professor and still publishes a bunch despite teaching overloads and doing a lot of committee work - I don't think he'll ever retire.

Have a great life, inside or outside academic philosophy!

### **Kevin McCain (PhD 2012)**

This year has been a year of "firsts" for me. I completed my first year as a tenure-track Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I also wrote my first monograph, which will be published by

Routledge this spring. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to teaching various philosophy classes, present at a few conferences, and write some philosophy papers.

### **Jeffrie Murphy (PhD 1966)**

My fourth (and surely last) essay collection, *Punishment and the Moral Emotions—Essays in Law, Morality, and Religion*, was published by Oxford University Press. Production on the book was such hell that I am assuming that it was outsourced to a Somali pirate who does book production in his spare time. After much irritating delay, however, it finally turned out OK. In addition to my long-standing muscle disease, I now have two torn rotator cuffs (one in each shoulder), some back problems, and am hobbling around in a fracture boot because of a badly sprained ankle. I am, of course, dealing with these setbacks with the kind of whining self-pity at which the Irish are supremely gifted.

### **Joseph B. ("Josh") Stulberg (PhD 1975)**

Our family members continue to enjoy good health and appear to be thriving in their respective careers and personal lives. We became grandparents, again, in July 2013; our daughter, Gita, whom some classmates may remember as being born just before I graduated, gave birth to her first child, a wonderful son.

In Summer 2012, Harvard Law Professor Emeritus Frank Sander, the long-time Chair of the Editorial Board of a magazine entitled Dispute Resolution, asked me to assume his role; I was obviously honored - and indebted to him for the many ways in which he has supported my professional development. The magazine, 'practitioner-oriented,' is a quarterly publication distributed to the Section's 16,000 members. In the relatively short period of service, I have found the work and role to be rewarding in multiple, mostly unanticipated ways.

Professional Recognitions:

- a. Named by The Ohio State University to be the professorial holder of the *Michael E. Moritz Chair in Alternative Dispute*

*Resolution*, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law (2012 – present).

- b. Awarded *Lifetime Achievement Award* by the American College of Civil Trial Mediators (2013)

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### Richard Dees

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### **Kevin McCain**

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**Joseph B. (“Josh”) Stulberg**

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Philosophy  
P.O. Box 270078, Lattimore Hall 532  
University of Rochester  
Rochester, NY 14627-0078  
(585) 275-4105

[www.rochester.edu/college/PHL](http://www.rochester.edu/college/PHL)  
<https://www.facebook.com/URPhilosophy>  
[phladmin@philosophy.rochester.edu](mailto:phladmin@philosophy.rochester.edu)