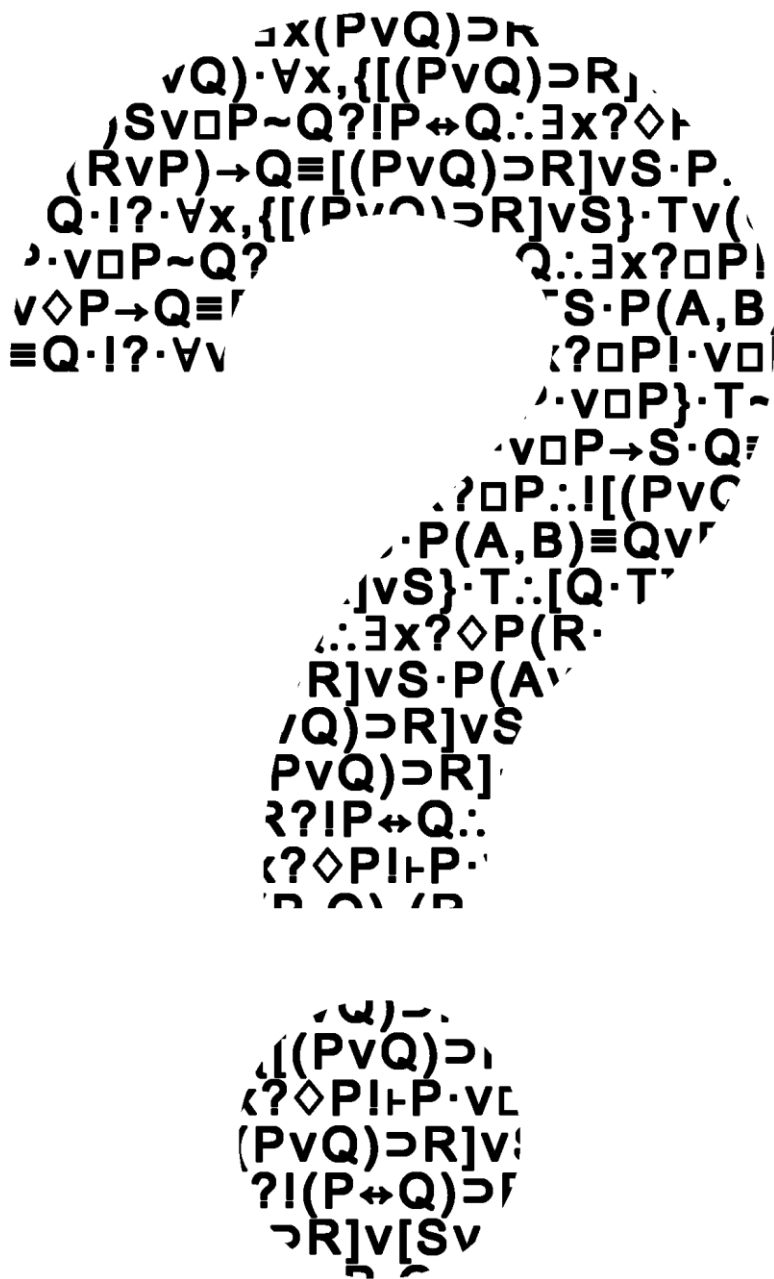


# Noûsletter

# Number 19 - Winter 2011



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## Introduction

### *Letter from the Chair*

I had planned to write this letter a year into my tenure as department chair. Well, it is now one and half years since I became the chair. There is always an unexpected event causing me to miss a deadline. But I shouldn't complain for I find the Chair's job easier than my previous assignment as the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). In my stint as the DGS, I had to deal with the daily demands and concerns of sixty-five graduate students. Now that I am the chair, the number of people that come to me first with their needs and complaints has dropped to twenty-one: eighteen colleagues and three staff members. So far there have been no strikes or threatened job actions. We have even received permission from the administration to add to the ranks of the faculty union with a tenure track search for a specialist in early modern philosophy. That is a branch of philosophy in which we have been shorthanded since Ken Barber's unexpected death in 2008.

Ken was a fixture in the department. One still expects to see him in his office across from the kitchen. Another fixture in the department, the library, has been named for him. The library may still be known to the scheduling office as Park Hall 142, but to us it has become the Barber Library. We had a ceremony dedicating it attended by Ken's widow, his daughter, a ballerina, as well as Dean Munroe Eagles and many colleagues and students. There were a host of speeches. Since I had to suddenly replace him as the

DGS in the summer of 2008, I was quite at a loss about how to handle the job. So at the memorial service I referred to myself as a living memorial to Ken for my ineptitude as DGS reminded everyone of Ken's competence and efficiency.

We also had a planned departure of another fixture in the department, John Corcoran. He had for some time been contributing half of each year to improving the logical rigor of the Florida citizenry. He finally decided the Sunshine State needed him to live there full time in order to fight fallacies and sloppy reasoning. I suspect his local newspaper will be the only one to run letters to the editor that criticize errors in the arguments of politicians with references to Tarski. There was a two day retirement conference in honor of Corcoran last fall that was attended by past and present students and colleagues.

One other colleague has just left us, hopefully for no more than a year or two. An illness has forced Mike McGlone to leave our ranks and return to his home state of California to recover. We will likely replace him with a one year hire in the philosophy of mind, renewing that job or engaging in another short term search until Mike returns.

The only other changes in our ranks were due to promotions. Tom Bittner was tenured last year. Tom could have been tenured in four different departments for his work is so interdisciplinary. His tenure letters came from professors in geography, engineering, and computer science, as well as philosophy. I am now involved in guiding Neil Williams and Ken Ehrenberg through the tenure process. The outcome for

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both is bright given that they have burgeoning international reputations in, respectively, metaphysics and the philosophy of law.

Both Williams and Ehrenberg will be impressing their colleagues with lunchtime philosophy talks this fall. We initiated a new series last semester of Friday talks by department members. We gather every Friday for a talk by a faculty member, graduate student or post-doc. It usually works out that two out of every three talks are by graduate students, who often use the occasion to polish job talks or practice for conference presentations or ready a paper for submission. Attendance has rivaled, if not surpassed our colloquia, although the free lunch pizzas provide an incentive that the colloquia lack. Although the department is not endowed well enough to provide an honorarium for the speaker, we do let the scheduled lecturer choose the pizza toppings! If any chooses anchovies, they lose their chance of being invited back to give another talk. Not only have the talks been quite good, but some of the titles have been rather witty. When Adam Taylor's critique of four-dimensionalism was advertised on hallway flyers with the title of "What Matters to Satisfied Worms", I feared that a biologist might mistakenly attend. I also worried that Neil Williams's talk on dispositions that was entitled "World Superpowers" would mislead a political science professor or student. I tried to come up with a catchy title for my own talk when I filled in for a speaker who cancelled at the last minute, but I fear that my paper title "Perdure and Murder" only rhymed because I mispronounced it.

Witty flyers now abound in the department thanks to the new Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), James Beebe. His most recent bulletin board makeover included pictures of rappers, movies stars, civil rights activists, and politicians with their most famous sayings formalized. So there under Nixon's picture is the formal symbolization for "I am not a crook;" and beneath Kennedy's face is the logical notation for "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."

The previous DUS, Bill Baumer, has now become the DGS. I doubt Bill sees it as a promotion for it involves more work but no raise in pay. Fortunately for us, Bill is the consummate department citizen. In fact, he is the model university citizen, having served on every SUNY committee except the one that hired the last football coach.

James, Bill and I are helped by our indefatigable staff. Many of you may remember Eileen McNamara, the longtime undergraduate administrator. Her graduate counterpart is Liz Felmet, who replaced Judy Wagner when Judy retired after more than forty years of service. Liz has done a great job, befitting someone who won a 2010 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service. We threw Judy a retirement party at Harry's Harbor Place Grille on the Niagara River waterfront. The wittiest speech was delivered by Dick Hull who collected an array of quotes from past graduate students and colleagues and put them together as "charges of high crimes and misdemeanors against one Judy Wagner." I tried hard to get Judy to stay, even promising to fire or force into retirement my more difficult colleagues if she would reconsider. But she didn't budge, though she opined that such dismissals were still a good idea.

Joining Eileen and Liz as the third member of the triumvirate that really runs the department is Theresa Monacelli. Theresa has impressed the department with her work ethic and, above all, her event organizing. Last year she moved the Fall party that welcomes new students from the Park Hall seminar room to the Parkside Lodge in Delaware Park. Her parties are not only graduate student friendly and faculty friendly, but she goes all out providing toys, games and treats for the young children of department members. Needless to say, the location was a far superior introduction to the area than our previous parties in Park Hall. Theresa now has the unenviable job of having to try to outdo herself. So far she has accomplished that by arranging for us to have the banquet following our spring Hourani Lectures at the newly restored Darwin Martin house. Princeton University's Michael Smith will be the lecturer.

There has been an increase of philosophical gatherings outside the classroom. Neil Williams and I started a metaphysics reading group that we facetiously named “The Vienna Circle, Cheektowaga Chapter” (VCCC). We actually meet in downtown Buffalo, not Cheektowaga, but we have no plans to make the name more accurate. Philosophers come from SUNY Fredonia and Niagara to attend the biweekly discussions. Niagara University philosopher Jim Delaney and I have started a bioethics reading group known as PANTC which is an acronym for “Plato’s Academy, North Tonawanda Chapter.” The name is again misleading since we meet downtown in the backroom of JP Bullfeathers. This reading group is open to a few graduate students writing dissertations in bioethics as well as our colleagues at local schools. Sheffield University’s Eric Olson sent us a paper to discuss, and we sent him comments after the meeting. He promised to thank us, so PANTC may be getting its first citation in an academic journal. The Vienna Circle will be discussing a paper by Dean Zimmerman in late November when Dean visits from Rutgers to give a couple of talks. So perhaps the VCCC will soon get its first citation. Dean is speaking to the department and also giving a talk to the new graduate student Christian Philosophy Reading Group. The group’s predecessor, the UB Catholic Philosophy Association, underwent some “reform,” Catherine Nolan’s pun, and emerged as the Christian Philosophy Reading Group with Protestants and Catholics now making up the bulk of the membership.

Well, I better get back to my chair duties so I have something to write about in my chair letter for the Noûsletter next year. Please stay in touch, let us know what you are up to, and join us for a colloquium or end of semester party.

Sincerely,

David B. Hershenov



### *Letter from the Director of Graduate Studies*

Greetings from Philosophy!

Philosophy’s graduate programs move forward with students from the U.S., Europe and Asia. The graduate staff is “new” – Ms. Elizabeth G. Felmet is the graduate administrator; Ms. Judith Wagner – Judy to many of you – enjoys a well-earned retirement.

Program changes over the last two years include the requirement of a qualifying paper by each student in the Ph.D. program to evidence the student’s abilities to pursue the doctorate. These are evaluated by the Philosophy faculty, at least six assessing each “QP”, for cogency, organization, research capabilities and most importantly philosophical analysis, argument and presentation. The “QP” replaced the exams in use for several years. Doctoral program students submit “QP’s” after three semesters of study at UB.

Philosophy graduate students continue to provide important contributions to undergraduate instruction, including assistantships in World Civilization, Introduction to Philosophy, Ethics, Critical Thinking, and Social and Ethical Issues in Medicine, as well as instructors fully responsible for sections of Intro, Ethics, Critical Thinking, and Medical Ethics. They receive very nice evaluations of their classroom performance.

Philosophical interests among both faculty and students continue the long tradition of wide variety in approaches and topics. History, analysis, ontologies, epistemologies, ethics and aesthetics are topics of dissertations and graduate student publications and presentations at various learned society events.

On behalf of Philosophy’s faculty and students, best wishes!

William H. Baumer





## In Remembrance

### *Peter Hewitt Hare (1935-2008)*

Peter H. Hare, philosopher and educator, Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York, died peacefully in his sleep in the early morning hours of Thursday, January 3, 2008 at his home in Guilford, Connecticut. Born in New York City on March 12, 1935, son of the late Jane Perry and Michael Meredith Hare, Peter is survived by his second wife, the poet Susan Howe, a brother Michael, a sister Sarah, his son Clare, daughter Gwen, and grandchildren Danielle and Monty, and numerous friends and students. His first wife Daphne Hare preceded him in death in 1995.

While an undergraduate at Yale University, Peter Hare began his life-long relationship with philosophy, writing a thesis on Alfred North Whitehead as an exemplar of multi-disciplinary integration. After graduating from Yale, he earned his Ph.D. in philosophy at Columbia University where he wrote a dissertation on G.H. Mead's metaphysics.

At the age of 36, Dr. Hare was appointed Full Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department of the State University of New York at Buffalo. His experience working with a heterogeneous group of Marxists, logicians, linguists, and Americanists inspired him to continue the work of bringing together disparate strands of 20th century thought into a unified vision of a modern philosophy department.

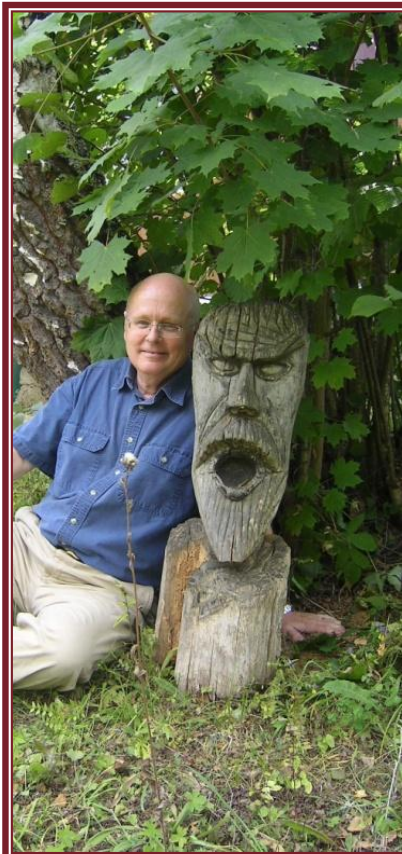
Through his own writings and teachings, Hare left an indelible impact upon the history of American philosophy, helping to draw the works of C.S. Peirce, G.H. Mead, William James, A.N. Whitehead, and John Dewey into internation-

al centrality. As a committed educator, editor, and participant in professional organizations, he never ceased in the work of bringing together disparate stands of philosophy, literature, poetry and art. He was an accomplished photographer, and at his death he was at work photographing the Central Park neighborhood of Buffalo for a publication about the architecture of that area. Many of his works hang on view at the Philosophy Department where he taught for so many years.

Dr. Hare traveled widely in the service of philosophy. Among other posts, he served as President of the New York State Philosophy Association, the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, the Charles Sanders Peirce Society, and the William James Society. He was the recipient of numerous awards and honors for distinguished contributions to the understanding and development of the rich diversity of the American tradition. Since the early 1970s he was co-editor of the *Transactions of the C.S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*. He was editor or co-editor of numerous volumes, and he was author of more than one hundred articles in scholarly journals.

A man of abiding pragmatism, optimism, kindness, enthusiasm, generosity and energy, Dr. Hare will be remembered by students, philosophers, and people of every walk of life, from Poland and Russia, to South America to Buffalo.

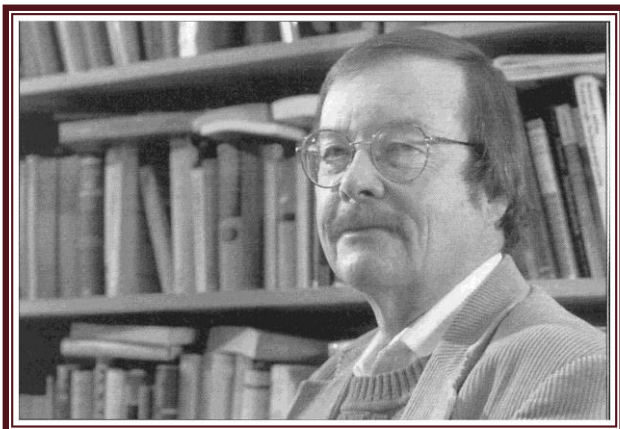
The Philosophy Department is very grateful for all of the framed photography Peter donated. These pictures help keep his memory alive in the department.



### ***Kenneth Barber (1940-2008)***

Kenneth Barber, the long-time Director of Graduate Studies in the Philosophy Department, died unexpectedly and suddenly on May 30 after a brief illness. Ken joined the Department as an Assistant Professor in 1966, after receiving a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Iowa, where he studied with Gustav Bergmann, Edwin Allaire, and Herbert Hochberg. Ken specialized in the Empiricist tradition in early modern philosophy, and instructed many generations of graduate students about his favorite philosophers. He also shepherded many generations of graduate students through the Philosophy Department's graduate program. Ken's most recent term of office as DGS began in 1985, when Peter Hare was chair, and continued, while John Kearns and Carolyn Korsmeyer chaired the Department, until his death. During that time, Ken gave graduate students the information, advice, and guidance that they needed. Ken was a voracious reader of literature as well as philosophy, and an avid collector of modern first editions. A wise and witty presence, Ken Barber made a strong and lasting contribution to the Philosophy Department and its graduate program.

He was also an avid collector of Modern First Edition books. He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Ann W. Herman. Although separated for many years, they remained very close. He is also survived by their children, Lindsey Sara Barber and Eric Matthew Barber and by Andrei K. Barber and Kelly Moore. He is also survived by all of the friends, students and colleagues whose lives he has touched.



### ***Kenneth K. Inada (1924-2011)***

Dr. Kenneth K. Inada, 87, of Buffalo, NY, Henderson, NV, and Honolulu died on March 26, 2011. Born and raised in Honolulu, he graduated from Farrington High School and went on to receive a B.A. from the University of Hawaii, an M.A. from the University of Chicago, and encouraged by the famous Zen scholar, Dr. D. T. Suzuki, he went to Japan where he studied Asian Buddhism at the University of Tokyo (Todai), receiving a Ph.D. in 1960. He was the first U.S. citizen to receive a doctorate from Todai. After serving ten years on the faculty of the Philosophy Department at the University of Hawaii, he was recruited by the Department of Philosophy at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo in 1969, where he remained for the next 28 years, before retiring in 1997 at the rank of SUNY Distinguished Service Professor.

A prolific scholar with numerous publications, Professor Inada was internationally recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities in the field of Buddhism and East-West comparative philosophy. In 1990 he



was the second American in 150 years to receive the Cultural Award from the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Buddhism. The author, editor and translator of numerous books, book chapters, and journal articles, he is noted, in particular, for his distinguished translation and commentary on Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, a seminal work in Western studies of that great Buddhist thinker.

As a long serving editor of the SUNY Press Buddhist Studies Series, Inada oversaw the publication of some 30 critically acclaimed volumes. Professor Inada was

instrumental in turning SUNY Press into the largest, most successful publisher of philosophy books in North America. His distinction on a global scale is underscored by his election as president of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy in 1990; he was the first non-Chinese to be elected to this prestigious society. He also served as president of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy.

At the University at Buffalo Professor Inada is remembered as a kind and gifted teacher and an exemplary university citizen. He served for many years as a member of the University Council on International Studies and Programs, and was one of the principal organizers of the Asian Studies Program and the Japanese Language and Culture Program. He was a mentor to many junior faculty and graduate students in philosophy and Asian Studies.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1943-45 and was wounded in action in France. He served as a member of the famous 442 Infantry Battalion which was deployed to Europe, where he participated in the famous rescue operations of the Lost Battalion consisting mostly of soldiers from Texas. Some 65 years later he was invited to Houston to attend an appreciation gathering organized by the survivors of the Lost Battalion where he was honored as a special guest.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Masako and his son, Ernest.

## Faculty Updates

### *Introducing David Braun*

#### **Patrick and Edna J. Romanell Chair**

**David Braun** received his Ph.D. in philosophy from UCLA in 1987. He taught at University of Rochester from 1989 to 2008, until he joined the UB department in fall 2008 as a Professor of Philosophy and the Patrick and Edna J. Romanell Chair in Philosophy. His main research interests lie in philosophy of language and philosophy of mind. He is currently working on papers on modality and reference failure, and a book

on questions, answers, and knowledge. During his time at UB, he has taught undergraduate courses in symbolic logic, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of language. He has also taught graduate seminars in philosophy of language.



### *Introducing Richard Cohen*

#### **Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Institute of Jewish Thought and Heritage**

**Richard Cohen** (B.A., philosophy, B.A. political science, Penn State; M.A. and Ph.D., philosophy, SUNY at Stony Brook) comes to UB Department of Philosophy after teaching at a variety of universities: The Pennsylvania State University (Scranton campus); Loyola College of Baltimore; Shawnee State University (part



of the Ohio state university system); University of Alabama; and University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he taught for the past fourteen years. In his last two positions Dr. Cohen held named Distinguished Professorships; and in his present position as Full Professor of

Philosophy he is also serving as the Director of the newly formed Institute of Jewish Thought and Heritage at UB. He has also been a visiting professor at Tel Aviv University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel) and John Cabot University (Rome). Dr. Cohen's philosophical work is primarily in the modern and contemporary continental tradition. He has published numerous articles in this broad area, with special focus on Spinoza, Kant, Bergson, Heidegger,



Rosenzweig, Nietzsche and Levinas. He has translated and introduced several books by Levinas, edited several others, and is author of *Elevations: The Height of the Good in Rosenzweig and Levinas* (University of Chicago Press, 1994); *Ethics, Exegesis and Philosophy: Interpretation after Levinas* (Oxford University Press, 2001); and *Levinasian Meditations: Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion* (Duquesne University Press, 2010). He will be on a sabbatical leave, Spring 2012 semester, as a visiting scholar at the University of California Berkeley, to work on two books: one on politics, contrasting Levinas and Spinoza; and the other on a topic which he is not yet prepared to disclose (he assures everyone it is not poetry). Professor Cohen anticipates teaching his own research material in the fall semester of 2012.

### **Kah Kyung Cho – International Education**

The Council on International Studies and Programs has bestowed upon **Kah Kyung Cho** the 2011 award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education. The letter by Dr. David M. Engel, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Chair, Council on International Studies and Programs, announcing the honor states that "This award is a tribute to Professor Cho's many important, longstanding contributions to international education at UB, particularly his efforts to foster strong scholarly ties to Asia and Europe, his distinguished leadership role in many international associations and organizations, his mentorship of countless international students, and his own extensive international research and scholarship." The letter also states that "We are delighted that the university is honoring such a highly deserving member of our faculty with this award. His distinguished service in the international area is truly exceptional and richly merits this recognition."

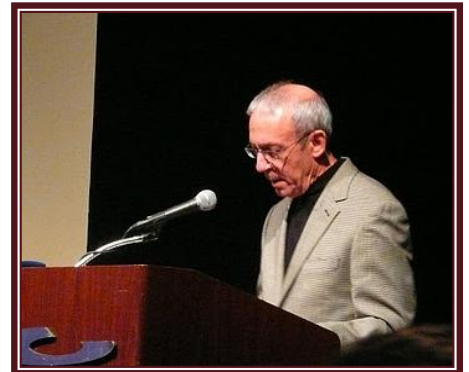
This university-wide award honors faculty and staff who have made exceptional and longstanding contributions to international education at UB in one or more of the following areas:

- promoting international education
- creating novel models/opportunities for study abroad
- directing study abroad programs
- mentoring international students
- attracting international students
- securing grants in support of international education
- developing and organizing international events/activities on campus
- creating international curricula
- developing and teaching new courses with an international focus
- service/achievement with international focus in the broader community

"Professor Cho was nominated for his considerable contributions in nine of the ten areas!"

### **Jorge Gracia – Aquinas Medalist**

The American Catholic Philosophical Association is bestowing the Aquinas Medal on **Jorge Gracia**. The Aquinas Medal is arguably the most prestigious award given to a philosopher working in the area of medieval philosophy or Catholic philosophy. Gracia delivered the Medalist address at the annual ACPA meeting held in late October 2011 at St. Louis University.



The past Aquinas Medal winners are some of the most important philosophers in the field. Gracia will be joining the ranks of Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson, Bernard Lonergan, Joseph Owens, John Wippel, Josef Pieper, Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II), G.E.M. Anscombe, Peter Geach, Anthony Kenny, Michael Dummett and Alasdair MacIntyre.

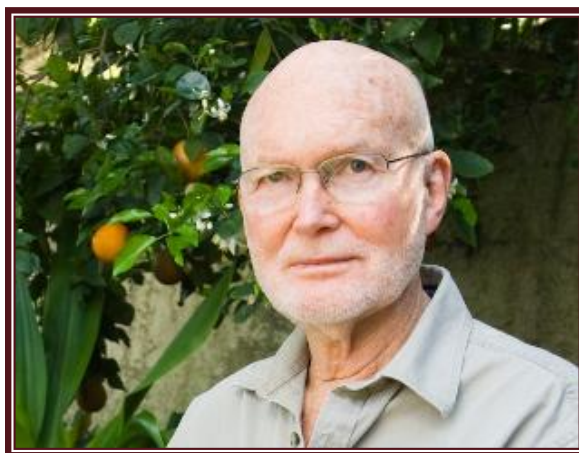
## Retirement of John Corcoran

**John Corcoran** retired from the Department in August 2011. He received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. His first job was in the Linguistics Group at IBM Research Center. Then he was a Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of California (Berkeley) for a year, followed by a four-year Assistant Professorship in Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania, and a one-year Visiting Associate Professorship in Philosophy at the University of Michigan before joining us as Associate Professor in 1969.

John founded the Buffalo Logic Colloquium in 1970 and promoted logic and logic-related activities at UB during his entire career here. He organized four logic conferences including one featuring Alfred Tarski and Hilary Putnam as main speakers and one featuring Alonzo Church. He sponsored Alonzo Church's honorary doctorate from UB.

Over the years a large number of our graduate students satisfied the logic requirement by taking *Introduction to Logic for Advanced Students*, a course John designed for mature, motivated students with little or no previous work in logic.

In addition to several articles and reviews in linguistics, John has many publications in logic: mathematical logic, history of logic, and philosophy of logic. His work has received much recognition. John has been a regular contributor to *Mathematical Reviews* for more than 40 years. He edited the second edition of Alfred Tarski's *Logic, Semantics, Metamathematics*. His 1971 mathematical model of Aristotle's syllogistic is the cornerstone of the almost universally accepted modern interpretation of *Prior Analytics*. He has received a variety of honors, including a Festschrift double issue of the journal *History and Philosophy of Logic* in 1999 and an honorary doctorate from the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain in 2003. In retirement, John plans to keep busy with research in the warmer climate of Florida's west coast.



## Farewell Letter from John Corcoran

Dear Students,

I am saying farewell after more than forty happy years of teaching logic at the University of Buffalo. But this is only a partial farewell. I will no longer be at UB to teach classroom courses or seminars. But nothing else will change. I will continue to be available for independent study. I will continue to write abstracts and articles with people who have taken courses or seminars with me. And I will continue to honor the LogicLifetimeGuarantee™, which is earned by taking one of my logic courses or seminars.

As you know, according to the terms of the LogicLifetimeGuarantee™, I stand behind everything I teach. If you find anything to be unsatisfactory, I am committed to fixing it. If you forget anything, I will remind you. If you have questions, I will answer them or ask more questions. And if you need more detail on any topic we discussed, I will help you to broaden and deepen your knowledge—and maybe write an abstract or article. Stay in touch.

I want to take this opportunity to say something about my intellectual development and to leave you with some advice.

In the four years I was a graduate student, I went to almost every philosophy colloquium. I met several famous philosophers and I asked each one: "What is your one piece of advice for a philosophy graduate student?" Paul Feyerabend was the only one who said

anything memorable. His advice was to find some fundamental problem that could serve as an anchor or focal point for a lifetime of philosophizing. Sometime later I realized that I already had such a problem: What is proof? This question gives rise to a series of epistemic, ontic, linguistic, logical, mathematical, and historical questions that still energize me.

Although I had had creative spurts and productive learning experiences even from childhood, as I look back I feel that for the first 25 years or so of my life I was being hindered by something—it felt like driving with my brakes on, or carrying useless baggage, or slogging through a muddy swamp. What set me free was overcoming my inclination to be loyal to the beliefs I happened to have. *I had been afraid to doubt.* I remember discussing my fear of doubt with two of my high-school pals. But it wasn't until graduate school that I saw how destructive that fear was and overcame it. I now realize the power of creative doubt. I now see that doubt is not to be feared and shunned; stubborn belief is the scary thing.

It was only after working on the problem of proof that I came to discover that doubt is often productive: without the ability to doubt, some kinds of knowledge are made more difficult or even impossible. Doubt is often a prerequisite for knowledge. In order to find a proof of a given proposition—even one believed to be true—it is sometimes useful or even necessary to doubt it.

This is also the case when it is required to determine of a given argumentation whether it is a proof. Are the premises really known to be true? Does the chain of reasoning really show that the conclusion follows from the premises? A crucial property of proofs is their capacity to remove doubt; if one lacks doubt, detection of proof is inhibited. But how can one doubt what one believes or even knows to be true? It seems paradoxical to say that people can doubt propositions they believe or know or believe they know to be true. But mathematicians do this every day, and so do nonmathematicians. Maybe the frequency of creative

doubt in mathematical beliefs was one of the reasons Plato found mathematics so important in philosophical training. In mathematics we often prove propositions that “do not need proof”.

The experience of creating a doubt or having a doubt removed is empowering—like the experience of grasping an ambiguity or detecting an implication or perceiving a non sequitur. Experience of this sort produces self-knowledge and overcomes alienation, especially the debilitating alienation generated by indoctrination or by loyalty-motivated self-deception.

Instead of putting energy and emotion into protecting preconceptions that had been imposed on me from outside, I was free to investigate anything and to follow any path wherever it took me. I could use my time to formulate questions and hypotheses and to deduce consequences from any hypothesis and from the negation of any hypothesis. I became an autonomous member of the community of investigators and thereby became collegial with people that had been ideological enemies. This train of thought pervades my signature piece “Argumentations and logic” and it continues the advice formulated in my two instructional articles: “Critical thinking and pedagogical license” and “Inseparability of logic and ethics”.

As I have related elsewhere, I discussed this theme with Alfred Tarski. He said that the biblical motto “Truth sets one free” was almost exactly backward: a better motto would be “Be free to find truth”. Thinking that I was mysteriously and gratuitously granted belief in *the* truth was a terrible burden.

As you know, my courses were mostly introductory, having no prerequisites and presupposing no previous knowledge. I tried to reconstruct the subject-matter from the ground up. I stressed the priority of self-education over authoritarian indoctrination and the superiority of learning how to think over being told what to think. I tried to assist students to connect with the reality that logic is about: thus they could become autonomous judges of the adequacy of the current state of logic. One of our class mottos was

"Ridicule the ridiculous". I encouraged students to discover and accept their own temperaments: to become autonomous members of the community of investigators. Not every student is ready for freedom and not every institution approves of it.

Over the years I had been fortunate to have benefited from many great institutions and many dedicated students. But I treasure the University of Buffalo and its students above all. As I have said more than once before, after I settled in here at the University of Buffalo, I had a feeling that I had arrived at my academic home: that this is my kind of institution; these are my kind of colleagues; these are my kind of students. There was confidence, dedication, and competence without conceit, affectation, or pretension.

I am grateful to you and all of the talented and energetic students that have made my years at UB so rich. I will miss the Buffalo Logic Colloquium and the fun at the dinners and parties afterward. I will miss seeing you. This above all: To thine own self be true.

Warm regards,  
John Corcoran  
August 2011

#### Acknowledgements:

Stephen Brown, Otávio Bueno, Lynn Corcoran, William Corcoran, William Demopoulos, Thomas Drucker, Idris Hamid, Forest Hansen, David Hershenov, David Hitchcock, Leonard Jacuzzo, Renato Lewin, Samuel Litwin, Hassan Masoud, Joaquin Miller, Frango Nabrasa, Sriram Nambiar, Saci Perêre, Anthony Preus, Stewart Shapiro, Walter Simpson, and others.

### UB Philosophy International

**Kenneth Ehrenberg** writes: "In September 2010 I arrived in Oxford to begin my term as H.L.A. Hart Visiting Fellow in Legal Philosophy at University College, Oxford. It was an outstanding experience in which I formed what promises to be life-long friendships with scholars whose names are already a part

of history, while developing my paper on epistemic contextualism and evidentiary exclusionary rules. The Fellowship itself covered only room and board (in the Harry Potter-like dining halls), so I am extraordinarily thankful to UB and the Philosophy Department for providing the support and time necessary to make the trip possible."

**Jorge Gracia** and David Johnson (UB, Comparative Literature) organized the Ninth Capen Symposium, sponsored by the Samuel P. Capen Chair and the Universidad Catolica Argentina, in Buenos Aires, June 23-31, 2010. The topic was "Painting Borges: The Pictorial Interpretation of Literature/ Pintando a Borges: Pictorial Interpretation of Literature". Among the twenty participants were distinguished philosophers and literati from the United States, Europe, Canada, and Latin America.

**Jorge Gracia** organized and curated an art exhibition on "Painting Borges: A Pictorial Interpretation of His Fictions/Pintando a Borges: Una interpretacion de sus Ficciones," Pabellon de las Bellas Artes. The work of sixteen Argentinean and Cuban artists was exhibited in June 23-July 31, 2010. The exhibition was sponsored by the Samuel P. Capen Chair, UB's Humanities Institute, and the Universidad Catolica Argentina. The exhibition will begin touring the United States in January of 2012, and will continue until December of 2013.

**Jorge Gracia, Jiyuan Yu,** and Jie Liu (Shandong University) organized the Eleventh Capen Symposium, an international conference at Shandong University, in Jinan, June 2-7, 2011. The topic of the conference was "Interpretation of the Philosophical Classics, East and West." Forty philosophers from the West and the East participated. The conference was co-sponsored by the Samuel P. Capen Chair and Shandong University.

**Kah Kyung Cho** was a keynote speaker at the 15th International Colloquy on Heidegger and Eastern Thought, in Portuguese translation by the host as "A Saga de Uma Única: Um Diálogo-Oriente as Crepúsculo", September 22 - 24, 2010, at University



of Unicamp, Brazil. His presentation was entitled "The Saga of 'A Single Fount' in Heidegger's East-West Dialogue." He also gave a keynote lecture, "The Categorical Analysis of Subject and Its Relational Status", at the Phenomenology as A Bridge between Asia and the West Conference, May 23 - 25, 2011, Saint Louis University.

**James Beebe** went on an Asian lecture tour while on sabbatical during the fall of 2010, making presentations at Peking University, Kyoto University, University of Tokyo, East China Normal University (Shanghai), and Sun Yat-sen University (Guangzhou). Dr. Beebe also gave a series of eight lectures on experimental philosophy at Sun Yat-sen University. During the summer of 2010, Dr. Beebe gave lectures at the University of Oxford and the University of Edinburgh.

**John Kearns** gave papers at two European conferences in the summer. The first paper, "Logics of Fact and Fiction, Where Do Possible Worlds Belong?," was given in June at the annual Czech Logica conference held in a former monastery in Hejnice, a small village in the Czech Republic. Participants include graduate students, post-docs, and faculty from many countries. He gave two papers at the second conference, the 14th Congress of Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science, held in July in Nancy, France. One paper was "Why Blame Aristotle? Rational Coherence and the Principle of Contradiction," and the second, delivered at symposium affiliated with the congress, was "Negative Acts and Negative Characters: Declining, Preventing, Refusing, and Failing." The congress had a large international attendance from around the world.

**Kenneth Shockley** has accepted the position of Fulbright Program Advisor for the University at Buffalo. In this position he will support and evaluate applicants for Fulbright student awards and promote Fulbright programs and opportunities at all levels. Fulbright provides grant opportunities, both for students and scholars in the US to travel abroad and for those abroad to come to the US, to advance re-

search and promote intellectual and cultural exchange across national boundaries.

**Jiyuan Yu** has been a Distinguished Visiting Professor and Yangtze Scholar in Shandong University, China, and has been travelling to China in summer in recent years. In 2011, other than giving a number of lectures in several Chinese universities, he, together with Professors Jorge Gracia and Liu Jie, co-organized an international conference entitled "Interpretation East and West" in June 2-6, in Jinan, China. He submitted a paper "Aristotle on the Nature of Metaphysical Interpretation". The Conference was jointly sponsored by Shandong University and the Capen Chair of UB. The UB Department of Philosophy was listed as co-organizer at the Conference brochure. About forty scholars from six countries gave papers at the conference.

**Jiyuan Yu** also attended the 17th International Chinese Philosophy Conference entitled "Intercultural and Philosophic Discourse-Retrospect and Prospect," which took place in Paris, France, July 4-8, 2011. The conference was sponsored by Graduate School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences, French National Research Centre (CNRS). Dr. Yu presented a keynote speech entitled "Transmission and Innovation: The Confucius' Way of Philosophizing" and also a panel paper "Transcendence and the Notion of Heaven in the Analects."

## Current Philosophical Work

### *Applied Ontology*

The Department is the world leader among philosophy departments carrying out research in ontology. **Barry Smith** is responsible for directing much of this research, most recently in collaboration with ontologists recruited to UB's Health Science Faculties and Graduate School of Education. We offer the world's only M.A. and Ph.D. programs with a focus in ontology, and we are currently involved in efforts to create an Advanced Graduate Certificate Program in Ontology to be taught on-line.

In 2010 the Department embarked on a project to create a Mental Functioning Ontology, designed to address the problems raised by the absence of a controlled vocabulary for describing cognitive functioning and affective phenomena, e.g. when comparing data from multiple experiments on affective behavior. The project began with the creation of an Emotion Ontology, which is designed to support the integration of data deriving from different research studies on affective disorders such as schizophrenia, depression and bipolar disorder by providing standard definitions for terms such as 'mood', 'feeling', 'anger', and so forth. As a next step a Memory Ontology will be developed, which will serve similarly as a basis for data integration in studies of memory disorders such as Alzheimers.

All of this work is carried out in conjunction with the UB Departments of Psychiatry and Neurology, and with scientists throughout the world engaged in ontology research in the biomedical domain.

### **Experimental Philosophy**

**James Beebe**, Associate Professor of Philosophy, has become deeply involved in a movement known as 'experimental philosophy.' Experimental philosophers seek to use the experimental methods of the cognitive sciences to shed light on debates within philosophy. Some skeptics contend that 'experimental philosophy' is an oxymoron. If you are doing experiments, they say, you are not doing philosophy. You are doing psychology or some other scientific activity. It is true that the part of experimental philosophy that is devoted to carrying out experiments and performing statistical analyses on the data obtained is primarily a scientific rather than a philosophical activity. However, because the experiments are designed to shed light on debates within philosophy, the experiments themselves grow out of mainstream philosophical debate and their results are injected back into the debate, with an eye to moving the debate forward. This part of experimental philosophy is indeed philosophy—not philosophy as usual perhaps, but philosophy nonetheless. Dr.

Beebe reports that one of the most rewarding aspects of experimental philosophy is that it allows more opportunities for research collaboration between faculty and students. Further information about Dr. Beebe's work in experimental philosophy can be found at <http://eerg.buffalo.edu>.

### **Cyberwarfare**

University at Buffalo military ethicist **Randall R. Dipert**, Ph.D., one of the founders of the National Center for Ontological Research at UB, recently made national headlines on his work on cyber wars. Dipert examined many aspects of this issue in his paper "Ethical Issues of Cyberwarfare," first published on the website of the Consortium for Emerging Technologies, Military Operations and National Security, or CETMONS. He states that cyber attacks are almost entirely unaddressed by traditional morality and laws of war. He also predicts we are facing is a long Cyber Cold War, marked by limited but frequent damage to information systems, while nations, corporations and other agents test these weapons and feel their way toward some sort of equilibrium.

In the academic year 2011-2012 Dipert will be a Senior Fellow in the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis MD. He will take part in videoconferences from Buffalo every week and travel there monthly. A group of Senior and Junior Fellows of the Center will be developing positions on the ethics of cyberwarfare, recommending U.S. policies for engaging in cyberwarfare, and proposing additions to the curriculum at the U.S. Naval Academy. This work is also intimately related to his (and others' at UB) work on applied ontology.

### **ERIE**

**Kenneth Shockley** has been involved for several years in an interdisciplinary program housed in environmental engineering. The program, Ecological Restoration through Interdisciplinary Exchange (ERIE) focuses on the wide range of scientific and humanistic considerations associated with ecological

restoration. Professor Shockley's work on environmental and professional ethics has been a key component of the program, and has been part of undergraduate and graduate programs generated through ERIE, as well as a number of related grant proposals. Among its many activities, ERIE provides funding for Ph.D. students working in one of several disciplines through a National Science Foundation IGERT grant. Currently, two philosophy Ph.D. students are supported through the program.

### ***Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy***

The Department maintains its close ties with the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy, especially through the ongoing work of Professors **James Beebe**, **Kenneth Ehrenberg**, and **Kenneth Shockley** (who sits on the Center's Advisory Council). The Center has hosted a number of events involving legal philosophy and applied ethics organized by professors from Philosophy and attended by many others in the Department and wider University and is very visible on national and international levels. Our ability to contribute intellectually and financially to Baldy events provides a key means of maintaining and cultivating our involvement in a wide range of legal, policy, and philosophical communities.

## **Staff Updates**

### ***Judy Wagner's Retirement***

#### **Speech by Department Chair David Hershenov**

Perhaps I am the wrong person to be speaking at Judy's retirement party—for right after it was declared that I would be the next department chair, Judy announced her impending retirement.

Although it's probably due to self-delusion, I interpreted the timing of Judy's retirement as an expression of her disappointment that she would no longer have me to work with as DGS—Director of Graduate Studies—for I would be leaving that post for the chair position.

I tried to get her to reconsider and stay. I first said, "If you have been here 44 years, then what is another year? It is but a small fraction of your total working days!" But Judy was never very good at math, so that sophisticated statistical argument of mine didn't work.

I thought about offering her a new office since hers has a view of the Flint parking lot, but so does every other office, so my hands were pretty much tied there. I did offer her Jorge Gracia's corner office which has a view not just of the parking lot, but also of the service road. It was to no avail.

I then offered her a new cell phone with unlimited minutes to call Flo, a.k.a. Sandra Smith, to chat about department craziness. Judy said she would accept the phone and plan as a precondition for further negotiations.

I then thought she might stay if I got rid of some of my colleagues who might be bothering her. I said I would make John Corcoran retire this year. She said that wasn't enough. I said that John Corcoran would retire even before the Fall semester was over after teaching a compressed Phi 517 Logic course. She said, "Good, but it still isn't enough to get me to stay." But she did seem to be wavering.

So I thought I was on to something...

I then promised to give Jiyuan Yu, John Kearns, and Ken Ehrenberg an unscheduled leave this fall to get them out of her hair. I quote Judy: "That's even better, but it is still not enough for me to stay."

So I gave Kearns and Shockley the spring off as well. Judy said "That's better, but still not enough."

So I gave James Beebe leave too. I then asked Judy again to stay but she shook her head and said, I quote, "Those guys aren't the only department pains in the butt!"

I then used my trump card and said I would veto the tenure of Bittner, Ehrenberg, Donnelly, Williams and McGlone. Still, no go. She was adamant about retiring.

So that's how we got to where we are today—Judy's gone and the whole department is on leave and no one is getting tenure.

You really appreciate someone when they're no longer around. When Judy retired, we all had to pick up the slack. I learned just what her job entailed and am surprised she didn't retire earlier

I also had to do my job as the DGS for the first time when Judy left. She had known that John Kearns had twisted my arm to take the job—John, my arm still smarts—and so she did most of it to keep me from whining too much or going on the job market.

When I actually had to do my job as the DGS for the first time this summer, I then realized how much power I had as the DGS. I didn't know that I controlled every student's funding and fate.

Judy had a stamp with my signature on it and was making all the decisions who to accept, who to fund, who to pass onto the dissertation stage, who to put on probation, who would teach and T.A., etc. No wonder all the students were always in Judy's office trying to get on her good side. Judy, could I have that stamp back before it is used to get some extra chips at the Seneca Casino?

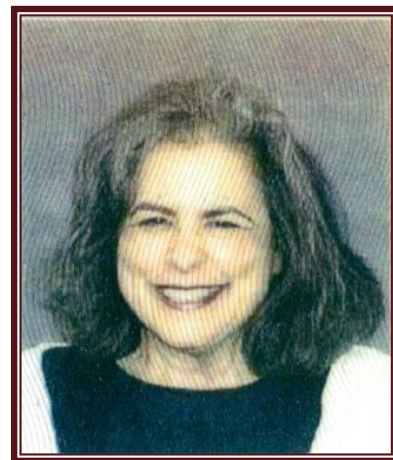
Judy ran the department for probably 44 years... and that was a good thing! Better that she make the decisions than Peter Hare, John Kearns, Carolyn Korsmeyer and myself.

I wish Governor Patterson or President Obama had done what the French President Sarkozy just did and raise the minimum retirement age a few years. Then Judy would still be with us. Instead of retiring at 60, she would have to wait until she was 62.

### ***Theresa Monacelli – Assistant to the Chair***

Theresa joined the department on October 9, 2009. As a 1978 alumna of the University at Buffalo and one who has worked as department administrator in the College of Arts and Sciences for over 15 years, she possesses valued expertise and has an enthusiastic and assiduous dedication to the university community. After completing her BA, she pursued masters studies in Washington, DC at Georgetown University and received her MLS in 1981. Theresa worked for many years in the field of study with specialization in early childhood education for children with physically handicapping conditions as an event planner with numerous national charitable organizations. The four years that Theresa worked with the University Development Office she helped to cultivate endowments, some of which now benefit our department.

Theresa's leadership in conference planning has earned praise from the annual featured guest lecturers and visiting international scholars and from her fellow administrative colleagues throughout the campus for her creativity and effectiveness, who have advised the department that we are truly fortunate to have an administrator with her hospitable management skills and we agree fully with this assessment. In the words of a senior faculty member, "in just a few short years, Theresa has distinguished herself admirably in her dedication and commitment to the Department of Philosophy, CAS, UB and the faculty, staff and students. It is a continuing pleasure to work with her now and we look forward to her service for many years ahead."





**Elizabeth Felmet – Graduate Administrator**

Liz joined the department on September 7, 2011. We are very fortunate to obtain the services of someone as talented, experienced and personable as Liz. She has worked at UB in an administrative capacity for over 32 years. For 16 of those years she served as the assistant to the chair in Art History. There she administered both the graduate and undergraduate programs, and so is familiar with course scheduling, budgetary matters, admissions, conference planning, faculty searches and much else. She has fond memories of working with graduate students and her wish to work closely with them again was a major reason in her transferring to our department.



Liz comes to us highly recommended. We may now be the only department to have a pair of 2010 SUNY Chancellor's Awards winners: Jiyuan Yu was honored for his teaching and Liz was recognized for her work with an award for excellence in classified Service. The awards were bestowed on only 14 people in the entire SUNY system. In her first year of service as the department graduate administrator, Liz has brought many innovative new systems and procedures to create an orderly and pleasant environment for all of us.

**Contact information:**

Theresa can be reached at 716-645-0163, or by emailing [tmonacel@buffalo.edu](mailto:tmonacel@buffalo.edu).

Liz can be reached at 716-645-2970, or by emailing [efelmet@buffalo.edu](mailto:efelmet@buffalo.edu).

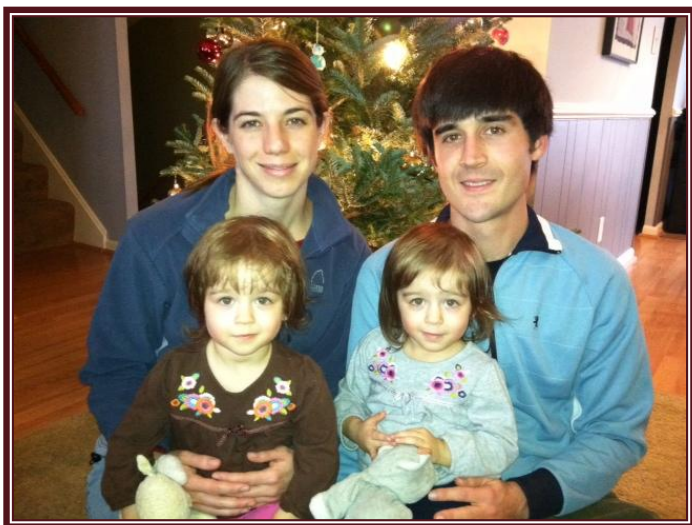
**Family Updates**

**David and Rose Hershenov** are enjoying the newest addition to their family, Jonathan (Jack) Hershenov. He is shown above with his siblings Michael and Alexandra.

Some of **James Lawler's** friends, colleagues, and students may be interested in the following YouTube video entitled "Grandpa's Yankee Doodle" at <http://youtu.be/xOx2lidWMAQ>



This is an early philosophical lesson for his grandson, Dabin Lawler, on how signifiers, when they are reversed and cancel each other out, liberate the mind from the heaviness of meaning, and thereby produce joy. It is still a little early to show Dabin how this idea works out in his latest book, *The God Tube: Uncovering the Hidden Spiritual Message in Pop Culture* (Open Court, 2010).



**Joel and Bekah Potter** are shown here with their beautiful twin daughters, Dora and Sylvia.



**Mark and Susanna Spencer** recently welcomed Lucy Victoria Marie Spencer to their family. She was born on November 28, 2010, and has one sister, Gemma Spencer (currently age 2).

## Student Updates

### ***Publications and Presentations***

**Amanda Hicks** participated in the first International Leibniz Doctoral School in Hanover, Germany, September 21-21, 2011. She presented her dissertation research there, entitled "The Principle of Sufficient Reason, Non-Deductive Inference, and Scientific Representation".

**Matt LaVine** presented the following:

"Truth and Fictional Discourse", at the University of Waterloo's 18th Annual Graduate Conference in Philosophy, on April 1-2, 2011

"A New Semantics for Proper Names" at the University of Western Ontario's 9th Annual Graduate Conference in Philosophy of Mind, Language and Cognitive Science, on May 14-15, 2011

**Joel Potter** had the following papers accepted:

"Arguments from the Priority of Feeling in Contemporary Emotion Theory and Max Scheler's Phenomenology" (accepted in Fall 2011 for publication in *Questiones Disputatae* Fall 2012)

"The Status of Status: Boethian Realism in Abelard", in *Carmina Philosophiae* XVI (Fall 2009)

He also presented the following:

"Arguments from the Priority of Feeling in Contemporary Emotion Theory and Max Scheler's Phenomenology" at the 2011 Annual Conference of Christian Philosophy, Franciscan University of Steubenville, on April 30, 2011

"Meno's Questions Reconsidered", at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy, Fordham University, on October 17, 2010

"Civic Friendships: A Re-interpretation of *Politikei Philei*" at the Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania, on May 2, 2009

**Stephanie Rivera-Berruz** presented the following:

"Wait You Want to do What?: A Critique of Naomi Zack's Eliminativism" at University of Memphis Graduate Student Conference

"Disgust and the Colored Body" at Fordham University Graduate Student Conference

"Lost and Found in Translation: What Latin American Philosophy Can Teach Latin American Feminism" at the Midwest Society for Women in Philosophy

**David Rodriguez** presented the following:

"Three Distinctions about Knowledge and their Relevance to the Toolbox Approach to Cross-Disciplinary Research" at Enhancing Communication in Cross-Disciplinary Research: An International, Solutions-Focused Conference. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the University of Idaho. Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, on September 30-October 2, 2010

"How a Systematic Approach to the Methodology of Epistemology can Contribute to the Systematization of Philosophy" at the Hocking-Cabot Seminar, Southern Illinois University, in Carbondale, Illinois, on July 11-17, 2010

"Cognitive Access and the Epistemology of Scientific Instruments" at the Sixth Annual HAPSAT (History and Philosophy of Science and Technology) Conference, at the University of Toronto, in Toronto, Canada on April 25, 2010

"Is Ordinary Language Relevant for Epistemology?" at the Graduate Student Philosophy Conference: Intersections with the Philosophy of Language, at Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts, on March 5-6, 2010

**Robert Rovetto** presented the following:

"Misidentification and the Self" at the UB Anthropology Graduate Student Association's 1st Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Symposium – Topic: Conflicts in Identity, in April 2011

"The Shape of Shapes: An Ontological Exploration" at CONTEXT '11: The 7th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Modeling and Using Context 2011, in the Shapes 1.0 Workshop, on September 27, 2011

**Mark Spencer** had the following papers published:

"Abelard on Status and their Relation to Universals: A Husserlian Interpretation". *International Philosophical Quarterly* 51:2 (June 2011): 223-240.

"An Ethical Neo-Platonism: Levinas and Bonaventure in Dialogue". *Quaestiones Disputatae* 1:2 (Spring 2011): 226-240.

"A Reexamination of the Hylomorphic Theory of Death." *The Review of Metaphysics* 63:4 (June 2010): 843-870.

"Ethical Subjectivity in Levinas and Thomas Aquinas: Common Ground?". *The Heythrop Journal*. Published Online 2010. Forthcoming in print 2011.

He has also presented:

"Eternal and Historical Kinds", at the APA Central Division Meeting, in Minneapolis, MN, on March 30, 2011

"Eternal and Historical Kinds", at the Creighton Club Annual Meeting, Hobart and William Smith College, in Geneva, NY, on November 13, 2010

"The Cosmic Hierarchy of Lifeforms in Aristotle and Aquinas", at the Annual Aristotle and Aristotelianism Conference: Science and Intellect in the Aristotelian Tradition, at Marquette University, in Milwaukee, WI, on June 30, 2010

"Time as a Stratified Phenomenon: Scotus and the Classical and Modern Views of Time", at the Western New York Regional Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, at Canisius College, in Buffalo, NY, on April 17, 2010

"Ethical Subjectivity in Levinas and Thomas Aquinas: Common Ground?", for the North American Levinas Society, American Academy of Religion, in Montreal, Quebec, on November 8, 2009



**Frederic Tremblay** edited:

Poli, R., C. Scognamiglio, F. Tremblay (eds.), *The Philosophy of Nicolai Hartmann*, Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2011.

Within this, he authored:

"Nicolai Hartmann's Definition of Biological Species," Poli, R., C. Scognamiglio, F. Tremblay (eds.), *The Philosophy of Nicolai Hartmann*, Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2011, pp. 125-140.

He published the following Conference Report:

"Nicolai Hartmann International Conference 2010," in *Philosophical News: Review of Philosophy*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2010, pp. 109-120.

He gave the following presentations:

"Nicolai Hartmann's Influence on the Development of Phylogenetic Systematics," at the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division Meeting, in San Diego, CA, on April 20th, 2011

"Nicolai Hartmann's Influence on the Development of Phylogenetic Systematics," at the Northern New England Philosophical Association Conference, at Saint Anselm College, in Manchester, NH, on October 14-15, 2010

"Species as Process: On Nicolai Hartmann's Definition of Biological Species," at the Nicolai Hartmann International Conference, at La Sapienza University, in Rome, Italy, on July 19-21, 2010

"Absence of Causation, Not Causation by Absence," at the 61st Annual Meeting of the Metaphysical Society of America on "Being and Negation," at Boston University, in Boston, MA, on March 5-6, 2010

"Are Processes Relations? An Unresolved Aporia," at the Sofia International Conference on Ontology 2009: "The Stakes of Contemporary Ontological Thinking," at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, in Sofia, Bulgaria, on June 18-20, 2009

**Friday Lecture Series**

A weekly lecture series inaugurated in the spring of 2011 has been extended throughout the year. The weekly talks should help graduate students prepare for conference presentations and job talks, and to submit papers to journals. The lecture series also exposes department members to the current research interests of the faculty.

**Christian Philosophy Reading Group**

The Christian Philosophy Reading Group, formerly the Catholic Philosophy Group, reformed itself (pun intended) during the spring semester of 2011. This group, which now meets weekly, meets to discuss historical and contemporary Christian philosophy. During the spring of 2011, they read Augustine's *On the Teacher*, Boethius' *The Consolation of Philosophy* and Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*. This semester, they are reading Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*. While the group approaches Christian philosophy from a sympathetic point of view, it is open to people of all beliefs.

**Peter Hare Department Citizenship Award**

**Adam Taylor** is the winner of the first Peter Hare Department Citizenship award. Adam is ever present around the department; perhaps he has a twin or triplets. He regularly attends and participates in the department colloquia and the Hourani lectures. He also came to the working lunches with Fischer and Velleman, and even attended to the Velleman Hourani reading group. He was active in reviving the Christian philosophy reading group this past year. He



participates in the meetings that the Chair holds for the graduate students. He volunteered to come into the teaching philosophy course and talk to the new T.A.s about how to T.A. philosophy of religion (PHI 212) and offer generic advice about avoiding certain pitfalls. A few years ago, he helped organize the graduate Baker conference and also the graduate conference on powers and dispositions, bringing in Mumford as the keynoter. He has been helpful with recruiting three prospective graduate students – Catherine Nolan, Wesley Buckwalker and Chris Buckman, all of whom accepted our offers. He gave a lunchtime philosophy talk this semester despite being very busy. He has participated as a commentator on Mark Spencer's paper at the Creighton Club. He also has delivered a paper and is frequently in the audience at the local chapter of the American Catholic Philosophical Association that meets once a semester at Niagara or Canisius. He responded to a request for volunteers to speak to the undergraduate philosophy club and he stepped up and gave a paper on Unger's Mental Problems of the Many. He has filled in for Dr. Neil Williams as the guest lecturer in Neil's Metaphysics 300 level course. In 2006, he founded the first graduate student philosophy blog for UB grad students (and even better, in 2009, he mothballed it :) In 2009 he founded Philosophy CFP's (<http://philosophycfp.blogspot.com/>) as a service to the philosophical community, a site which has received almost 120,000 hits and has been plugged numerous times on Leiter Reports. He served as treasurer for Graduate Philosophy Group. He participated in the no longer active graduate student ontology reading group.

### ***Romanell Award in Naturalism***

**Justin Donhauser** received the 2010 Romanell award for the work he has done on his ongoing dissertation.

Donhauser is developing a meta-theory of 'emergent entities,' including those found in scientific theories [e.g. atoms, organisms, ecosystems, and solar systems]. His dissertation is (tentatively) titled "Emer-

gence and Explanation: a Scientific Realism with Applications to Environmental Science for Policy." In it, he presents key portions of his view in the form of resolutions to standing critical debates in ecology, environmental policy, and the philosophy thereof. Responding to those issues as a jumping-off point, Donhauser reveals the general nature of emergent entities, their ontological status, and the role our conceptions of them often play in causal explanations and predictions.

### ***IGERT Fellowship Work***

Now in the dissertation-writing phase of his Ph.D. program, **Robert Earle** remains active in the interdisciplinary National Science Foundation fellowship through which his post-graduate education has been (in-part) funded. This program known as Ecosystem Restoration through Interdisciplinary Exchange (or E.R.I.E.) continues to fund graduate students from humanities programs (including Philosophy and American Studies) as well as scientific and engineering Ph.D. programs, and holds many academically rewarding colloquia and special events as well. The program recently held its yearly symposium at which many of the students presented their research. More information about this exciting and ongoing fellowship can be found at [www.erie.buffalo.edu](http://www.erie.buffalo.edu)

### ***Perry Awards for Best Dissertation***

The 2008 Perry Award was given to **Daniel Novotný**. Daniel's thesis is under consideration for publication as a book at Fordham where it was invited by Gyula Klima, a noted scholar of medieval metaphysics and logic. Daniel has a three year postdoc in the Czech republic and is the editor of a journal of medieval philosophy from an analytic perspective. The 2009 Perry Award goes to **Joe Zeccardi**. Joe has an article entitled "Critical Communication revisited," and it appears in the most recent issue of that elite philosophy of aesthetic journal - the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*.

### Daniel D. Novotný's Dissertation Abstract

Francisco Suárez's direct or indirect influence on the seventeenth century can hardly be underestimated. The study concerns one of the most discussed and controversial elements of his philosophy: "beings of reason." Beings of reason are impossible intentional objects, such as (on the usual account) blindness, genus-relation, or square-circle. The first part of the study is structured around a close reading of Suárez's main text on the subject, namely Disputation 54. The second part centers on other texts of the outstanding philosophers of the time. Two theses are defended: First, that Suárez's theory of beings of reason is incoherent and, second, that Suárez stands at the beginning and not at the end of a series of first-rate scholastic philosophers of the Baroque era. These theses are supported by showing that the scholastic philosophers who followed Suárez attempted to improve upon the standard Suarezian account of beings of reason either by (1) modifying it, working out further details, and resolving the objections against it, or (2) coming up with altogether different theories.

### Joseph Zecardi's Dissertation Abstract

Historically, philosophers talk about two different kinds of virtue: ethical virtues that help us do the right thing and live a good life, and intellectual virtues that help us acquire knowledge and true beliefs about the world.

My work argues that we can understand taste in terms of aesthetic virtues, i.e., habituated, multi-track dispositions that help us appreciate beauty and other aesthetic values in art and in nature. In this way, I advocate for a virtue theoretic approach to a cluster of problems in aesthetics, beginning with the classic problem of taste as described by Hume and Kant.

### 2011 Steinberg Essay Prize Winners

The Steinberg Prizes are given each year to the best original works on a philosophical theme by UB un-

dergraduates. Original essays, poems, stories and artwork can qualify.

This year, the first prize was awarded to **Christopher Gugliuzza** for his work "Blood, Guts, Gore, and the Paradox of Horror Aversion: Are We Gluttons for Punishment?" The second prize was awarded to **Matthew Herzog** for "Nietzsche, Art, and Modernity: From Tragedy to Simulation."

### 2011 Whitman Scholarship Winner

The Mary C. Whitman Scholarship is awarded annually to a Philosophy major who will be a senior during the year the scholarship is held. The award is made on the basis of academic excellence. **Matthew Herzog**, the most recent winner of this award, is a senior philosophy major and pursuing minors in Comparative Literature and Sociology. He is currently planning to continue with graduate studies in philosophy.

## People Who Made It Possible

### The Peter Hare Award

**Peter H. Hare**, Ph.D., was a Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus. One could say he is still serving the department posthumously through his generosity towards the department.

Through his writings and teachings, Hare left an indelible impact upon the history of American philosophy, having helped to draw the works of Charles Peirce, George H. Mead, William James, Alfred North Whitehead and John Dewey into central positions in international philosophy.

Hare was the former president of several professional associations, including the New York State Chapter of the American Philosophical Association (1975-77), the Charles Sanders Peirce Society (1976), the William James Society (2006) and, from 1988-90, the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. He had served as the editor of the journal of the Charles Sanders Peirce Society since 1974.

He was very active in the American Philosophical Association where he held several positions, including member of the Board of Officers (1996-99) and ombudsman (1996-99).

Colleagues call him "a man of inextinguishable pragmatism, optimism, kindness, enthusiasm, generosity and energy" and say that he will be remembered "with great affection and respect by students, fellow philosophers and people of every walk of life, from Poland and Russia, to South America to Buffalo."

Hare was born in 1935 in New York City, the son of the late Jane Perry and Michael Meredith Hare and began his life-long relationship with philosophy while an undergraduate at Yale University. His master's degree thesis on Whitehead remains an exemplar of multi-disciplinary integration. He earned a doctorate in philosophy at Columbia University where he specialized in Mead's metaphysics.

He joined the UB philosophy department in 1965, was appointed full professor in 1971 and served as chair from 1971-75 and from 1985-94. That is roughly 15 years which I find very impressive. After a single year of being the chair, I feel I should have a building named after me. Hare was chair for a decade and a half! He worked at UB with a heterogeneous group of Marxists, logicians, linguists and Americanists, which inspired him to bring together disparate strands of 20th-century thought into a unified vision of a modern philosophy department.

Hare traveled widely in service to his field and received many awards and honors for his distinguished contributions to the understanding and development of the rich diversity of the American philosophical tradition, including the Herbert W. Schneider Award from the SAAP, its most distinguished honor.

He was a member of the editorial board of the *American Philosophical Quarterly* (1978-87), the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (1985-2008), and from 1986 to 2008 was editor of the *Frontiers of Philosophy Series* (Prometheus Books).

Former colleague and fellow philosopher Carolyn Korsmeyer noted his dedication to photography. "Many of his works are on permanent exhibition in UB philosophy department," she said, "and at the time of his death he was photographing the Central Park neighborhood of Buffalo for a publication about the architecture of that area."

In 1999 Hare gave two gifts totaling \$1 million to support activities of the department, including a cash gift of \$500,000 to establish the Charles S. Peirce endowed professorship and a \$500,000 bequest to support the Peter and Daphne Hare Fund to help the department meet its ongoing needs. He died suddenly Jan. 3, 2008, at his home in Guilford, Conn. He was 72.

### ***The Hourani Lectures***

The philosophy department is very indebted to **George Hourani** who generosity allowed us to bring in so many talented philosophers as Hourani lecturers—David Velleman, Philip Pettit, John Martin Fischer, Jeff McMahan, Anthony Appiah, Martha Nussbaum, Onora O'Neil and Shelly Kagan—virtually a *Who's Who* in moral philosophy today.

George Hourani was born in 1913 in a suburb of Manchester England to parents who had emigrated from Southern Lebanon; The Houranis were a Greek Orthodox family that converted to Presbyterianism. His father was a successful merchant exporting cotton goods.

George was the 4<sup>th</sup> of six children. One brother, Albert, was a distinguished Oxford scholar of the modern Middle East who published an international best seller *A History of the Arab Peoples*. He trained more mideastern scholars than any one of his generation. The most prestigious book prize in Middle Eastern Studies is named after him. Another brother, Cecil, was an economic adviser to Tunesian President Bourguiba.

George Hourani won a fellowship to study classics at Oxford from 1932-1936. A trip to the Near East in

1934 which led to his first publication, a criticism of French rule of Syria entitled "Syria Under the French Mandate" in the 1938 *Contemporary Review* influenced his decision to continue his graduate studies in Princeton's Department of Oriental Studies in 1937. Princeton, by the way, is where Professor Velleman received his Ph.D. in philosophy.

In a very quick fashion, Hourani he received his Ph.D. in 1939 despite beginning his studies in 1937. The title of his dissertation was '*Arab Navigation in the Indian Ocean in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.*' A teaching position as lecturer at the Government Arab College in Jerusalem followed where he began teaching Classics, logic, and history of philosophy. The Government Arab college, where Hourani taught, represented the highest education institution for Palestinian Arabs during the British mandate.

Around that time he met his wife Celeste 'Lello' Habib, who came from a well-known Catholic Coptic family. In 1940 they were married in Egypt.

In 1948, the British Mandate came to an end, and the Houranis, British citizens moved to England. George spent 1948-49 writing the first draft of his book *Ethical Value* under the guidance of the philosopher J.P. Mabbott – a rather well respected philosopher of the time. The book was published years later by Allen and Ullwin and the University of Michigan.

The book rejected non-naturalism and intuitionism in ethics and was a more or less utilitarian account inspired by utilitarianism.

He was then offered a job as an assistant professor in newly founded Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan in 1950, the school at which our most recent Hourani lecturer, David Velleman, taught for many years. So they both have a Princeton and Michigan connection, and both ended up teaching philosophy in the state of New York.

It was during Hourani's years at Michigan that he began to concentrate on Islamic philosophy. He is responsible for definitive Arabic editions and transla-

tions of Ibn Rushid, better known to philosophers as Averroes—an Islamic philosopher renowned for his commentaries on Aristotle. Hourani also translated and wrote the notes for *Harmony of Religion and Philosophy* by Averroes.

Then George Hourani did what sounds like some very interesting work on the Mu'tazili scholar Ab dal Jabbar. That was an Islamic school of speculative theology that flourished in the cities of Basra and Baghdad during the 8th–10th centuries. It is still adopted by some Muslim scholars and intellectuals today. The adherents of the Mu'tazili school are at odds with other Sunni Muslim scholars because the former believe that human reason can be applied alongside Qur'anic revelations. Because of this belief, Mu'tazilis tend to interpret passages of the on Qur'an in a highly metaphorical manner, a practice frowned upon by traditional, orthodox schools.

From 1964-1970, Hourani served as the associate editor for the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. In January 1967, he delivered a lecture at the Department of philosophy at SUNY Buffalo and was soon afterwards asked to join the department. The President of the University hoped that George's acceptance would also mean the initiation of a Near Eastern studies program which much to George's disappointment, did not materialize.

Soon after arriving at Buffalo, according to one student who eulogized him years later, I quote "he took a constructive and moderating stand during the turmoil of 1969-1970." He was the chair of the department from 1976-1979. He developed a popular seminar in Greek ethics and taught medieval philosophy. In 1971 OUP published his *Islamic Rationalism: The Ethics of Ab dal Jabbar* which are not on the views of Lew Alcinder.

In 1970, the *Society for the Study of Islamic philosophy and Science* was founded and Hourani was its vice president. The society published a series of books entitled "Studies in Islamic Philosophy and Science." In 1968, Hourani was elected president of the *Middle East Studies Association* and delivered the Presiden-



tial address "Palestine as a Question of Ethics" which had considerable impact on its listeners and readers.

In 1979 he was a visiting professor of philosophy at UCLA. In 1980 he was promoted to the rank of distinguished *Professor of Islamic Theology and Philosophy*. A festschrift in his honor was published *Islamic Theology and philosophy* was published in 1984 by SUNY Press.

Recurring heart problems led to his eventual death in 1984. One of his earlier students, who at that time of Hourani's death had himself become a prestigious scholar of Islamic philosophy at Toronto, spoke at the memorial service for George Hourani of "his rationality, fairness and the courage to speak out on sensitive issues. He took students under his wing, inviting them to his home and giving them reassurance during times of distress." George Hourani was memorialized as "uncompromising in his quest for truth, insisting on the highest standard of scholarship, of clarity and thought and the shunning of the sophistical and pretentious.

### ***The Steinberg Award***

Professor **Carol Steinberg Gould** was a philosophy undergraduate student at UB. The Steinberg Prize was started by Carol's parents in her honor and as a way to thank the department for the good education their daughter received at UB.

### ***The Romanell Award***

**Edna Romanell** has made two testamentary gifts with a combined value of nearly \$1.5 million to the University at Buffalo.

With the two gifts – made through revocable trust expectancies – Mrs. Romanell has continued the legacy begun by her late husband, **Patrick Romanell**,



a philosopher and author of several books on critical naturalism.

The first bequest of \$600,000 will provide for continuing support of the Romanell Lecture on Medical Ethics and Philosophy, a series she and her husband established in 1997 with \$50,000 in gifts. Her second bequest of nearly \$900,000 established the Edna and Patrick Romanell Professorship in the Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences.

A former medical social worker, Mrs. Romanell says that she and her husband shared the same thoughts on giving. "If we can afford it, let someone else benefit, too," she says. "You only live so long, and our philosophy was always to let somebody else profit, as well."

Peter Hare, former chairman of the philosophy department, and Tim Madigan, Ph.D. 1999 and M.A. 1998, then a philosophy graduate student, were friends of Romanell, whom Madigan calls "one of the first philosophers to work in medical ethics."

In 1997, Hare invited Romanell to UB to give a lecture on medical ethics. Madigan, now editorial director at the University of Rochester Press, says Romanell later established a lecture series at UB because "he preferred lectureships as a way to get fresh, original ideas across."



Patrick Romanell died of cancer in February 2002, but his generosity continues to benefit the university. Edna Romanell's gifts are part of *The Campaign for UB: Generation to Generation*, which is closing in on its \$250 million goal.

### The Perry Award

**Thomas D. Perry** was born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1924. A graduate of the University at Buffalo's Law School, Dr. Perry served as a legal counselor to Congress and later, Bell Aerospace Corporation. He attended Columbia University, earning a Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1966. Thereafter he taught Philosophy at the University at Buffalo, where he was active in Department activities, including assisting in the development of the University's Philosophy and Law joint degree program.

Dr. Perry was particularly interested in moral reasoning and legal philosophy. He published many works in such distinguished journals as *Ethics*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, and *Analysis*, as well as a book on philosophy, *Moral Autonomy and Reasonableness*. In 1981, he was honored by the Aristotelian Society in Britain, (counterpart to the American Philosophical Association). In his eulogy of Dr. Perry, friend and colleague Dr. Jorge Gracia referred to this as "...an honor that is only rarely accorded a living philosopher." Dr. Perry had two works published posthumously in 1985, *Professional Philosophy: What It Is and Why It Matters*, and the article, "Two Domains of Rights." He died in 1982, at the young age of 58.

### The Whitman Scholarship

Miss **Mary Canfield Whitman** was a lecturer and assistant professor of philosophy at UB. She was born in East Orange, N.J., graduated from Wellesley College and did graduate work at Columbia University. She also taught at Vassar College, Hood College, Frederick, Md., and Packer Collegiate Institute, Brooklyn, before coming to UB. She was a member of the Schola Cantorum and the International Institute of Folk Dancers.

She died at the age of 41, on June 3 of 1956, at her home in Buffalo. The Whitman Scholarship for Philosophy majors, awarded annually based on academic excellence, was instituted in her honor.

### New Students of 2011

**Brendan Cline** (B.A. Rutgers)

Philosophy of Mind, Cognitive Science, Pragmatism, Logic, Philosophy of Sciences, Social/Political Philosophy, Epistemology

**Patrick Kelly** (B.A. Santa Clara University)

Epistemology, American Pragmatism, Philosophy of Mind

**Rasmus Larsen** (B.Sc. University of Stirling, Scotland)

Epistemology, Politics, Ethics

**Jun Woong Park** (B.A. Chung Ang University; M.A. University of Houston)

Moral and Political Philosophy

**Harjeet Parmar** (B.A. University of Maryland)

Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Mind

**Jacob Platt** (B.A. Buffalo State College)

Aesthetics, Applied Ontology, Philosophy of Law, Metaphysical Foundation of Bioethics

**Paul Poenicke** (B.A. Ohio University; M.A. Virginia Polytechnic Institute)

Epistemology, Applied Philosophy

**Brandon Rudroff** (B.A. & M.A. University at Buffalo)

Environmental Ethics & Metaphysics

**Shane Sicienski** (B.A. Penn State)

Philosophy of Language, Argumentation Theory, Logic and Informal Logic, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Mind

**John Stebbins** (B.A. University at Buffalo)

Eastern Philosophy, Existentialism and Phenomenology

**Jared Stepien** (B.A. University of Oklahoma)

Metaphysics, Logic, Philosophy of Religion

**Alexander Stewart** (B.A. Lee University)

History of Philosophy, Social/Political Philosophy, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion

**Mark Thomas** (B.A. Assumption College)  
Spectrum of Philosophy, Phenomenology

**Ryan Undercoffer** (B.A. University at Buffalo)  
Philosophy of Law

## Recent Graduates

### Ph.D. Conferrals

2008

**Timothy Connolly** (Jiyuan Yu)  
*This Moving Being: The Role of Change in Plato*  
Placement: Assistant Prof, University of Pennsylvania, E. Stroudsburg

**Sandro D'Onofrio** (Jorge Gracia)  
*Aquinas as Representationalist: The Ontology of the Species Intelligibilis*  
Placement: Adjunct Lecturer, Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru at the Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya

**Gerol Petruzella** (Jiyuan Yu)  
*External Goods from Socrates to the Stoics*  
Placement: Teaching position Mt. Greylock Regional High School, Williamstown, MA  
Adjunct position Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Philosophy Dept.

2009

**Hitoshi Arima** (Randall Dipert)  
*Observation, Explanation, and Intuition—Two Arguments Against Moral Realism*  
Placement: Assistant Prof. University of Tokyo, Center for Biomedical Ethics and Law  
Now Project Assistant Professor, University of Tokyo, Japan, Center for Biomedical Ethics and Law, Graduate School of Medicine and Visiting Researcher, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan, Kinugasa Research Organization

**Shi Chen** (James Lawler)  
*Practical Necessity in Bernard Williams's Virtue Ethics*

**Leigh Duffy** (James Beebe)  
*Modal Illusions: Making Sense of the Necessary A Posteriori*  
Placement: Adjunct Instructor, Buffalo State College;  
Also in a program to become certified as a yoga instructor

**Misung Jang** (Jiyuan Yu)  
*Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean*  
Placement: Adjunct Faculty, Towson University, MD

**Daniel Novotny** (Jorge Gracia)  
*Beings of Reason: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era*

**Ernesto Rosen-Velasquez** (Jorge Gracia)  
*The Metaphysics of Latino Identity and Its Social and Political Implications*  
Placement: Lecturer, University of Dayton, Ohio

**Laurel Silber-Sweeney** (Kah Kyung Cho)  
*Interfacing Ethics: The Ethical Relation from Kant to Derrida*

**Andrew Spear** (James Beebe)  
*Not by Experience Alone: Toward a Theory of A Priori Justification*  
Placement: Assistant Prof., Grand Valley State Univ., Allendale, MI

**Joseph Zeccardi** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)  
*Arete and Taste: Towards a Virtue-Theoretic Aesthetics*  
Placement: Instructor, Carrington College California, St. Mary's College of California, and National Hispanic University.

2010

**Eric Chelstrom** (Kah-Kyung Cho)  
*Phenomenology and Subjectivity's Relation to Others: A Phenomenological Contribution to Collective Intentionality*  
Placement: Visiting Assistant Prof. at Grand Valley State Univ., Allendale, MI

**Andrea Escobar Plagmann** (David Hershenov)  
*The Metaphysics of Dementia: The Intersection of Personal Identity and Clinical Ethics*

**Steven Halady** (Jorge Gracia)

*The Reality of Race Against Racial Eliminativism*

Placement: Visiting Asst. Professor, Canisius

**Ryan Hartnett** (Neil Williams)

*The Essence of Causation*

Placement: Director of Humanities, Trocaire College,  
Buffalo, NY

**Paul Ott** (Kah-Kyung Cho)

*The Politics of the Present: A Relational Theory Of the  
Self as a Basis for Political Theory*

Placement: Adjunct Teaching, Loyola University  
Chicago IL

**Mingyu Seo** (James Lawler)

*From Critical Realism to Meta-Reality: Roy Bhaskar's  
Philosophical Evolution from West to East*

**Susan L. Smith** (Jorge Gracia)

*The Hidden Assumption: The Conflation of Nature and  
Nurture in the Race Debate*

Placement: Staff Assistant, Humanities Institute  
University at Buffalo

2011

**Mark Niswonger** (Barry Smith)

*Life at its Edges: A New Ontological Look at the Persis-  
tence Conditions for Organisms*

**Joseph Palencik** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)

*Noncognitive Affect: A Study of Mind and Emotion*

Placement: Assistant professor (2-year) at Musk-  
ingum University in New Concord, Ohio.

**Elisa Ruhl Rapaport** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)

*Emotion by Proxy: Some Ethical Considerations in the  
Designation of a Health Care Power of Attorney*

Placement: full-time tenure-track Assistant Professor,  
Philosophy Department, Molloy College, Long Island,  
NY

## M.A. Conferrals

2009

**Marco Dozzi** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)

*Cleaning up the Intentionalism Debate and Kant's  
Ethics: A Tall Order for Morality*

**Alexandra Heaney** (Kenneth Ehrenberg)

*The Misinterpretation of Plato's Critique of Poetry and  
Choosing a Legal Philosophical Theory in Order to  
Effectuate the Interpretation of the Constitution and  
the 1st Amendment*

**Amanda Hicks** (Jorge Gracia)

*What Can 4-Dimensionalists Coherently Say? And  
Kant's Response to the Principle of Sufficient Reason*

**Jennifer Kiefer** (Kenneth Ehrenberg)

*A Comparative Examination of Natural Law and Value  
Pluralism: Evaluating Evaluations*

2010

**Danbee Lee** (Kah-Kyung Cho)

*Life as Theater Experience: To Be Both a Spectator  
and an Actor in One's Life*

**Juneko Robinson** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)

*The Realist (Mis)interpretation of Hobbes Massacres &  
Masquerades: Ambiguity, Art and Ethics in Beauvoir's  
Writings*

**Daniel Tirfagnehu** (Kenneth Ehrenberg)

*ReEducating Oneself in Public Institutions/Notes 2  
Those Who Oppose(d)*

Now studying law at Case Western Reserve.

**Catherine Ullman** (Randall Dipert)

*External Goods: A New Interpretation Flew's Misinter-  
pretation of Locke*

2011

**Kyle Brown** (James Lawler)

*An Echoing in Consciousness: Examining JP Sartre*

**Patricia Diaz-Herrera** (John Kearns)

*On Radical Metamorphoses and Sortal Essentialism*  
Placement: Professor-researcher at the Universidad  
Autonoma de la Ciudad de Mexico.



**Zachary Keebaugh** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)  
*Towards a Strange Intelligent: The Uncanny and Peter de Bolla's Theory of Aesthetic Experience*

**Chin-Yu (Ginny) Lu** (Kah-Kyung Cho)  
*Man in the Age of Technology*

**Ian McCracken** (Randy Dipert)  
*Rethinking Death: Using Reminders of Mortality for Moral Benefit*

**Deacon Newhouse** (Carolyn Korsmeyer)  
*Pragmatist Aesthetics*

**Kristl Laux Nowell** (Barry Smith)  
*A Formal Ontology of Constitution*

**Jessica Otto** (Jorge Gracia)  
*When is Racism Really Racism: An Examination of J. Angelo Corlett's Theory of Racism*

**Mark Phillips** (Kenneth Ehrenberg)  
*Autonomy and Authority*

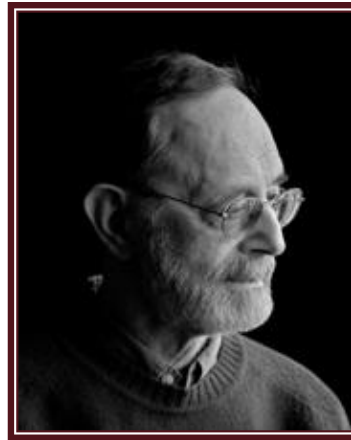
**Anthony Ramnauth** (James Lawler)  
*The Many Masks of the Eternal Recurrence: Schopenhauer's Criticism of Kant's Conception of Ethics*

**Stephanie Rivera Berruz** (Jorge Gracia)  
*On the Possibilities of Interpretation: From Art to Gender*

**Robert Rovetto** (Randall Dipert)  
*The Pattern in Processes: Toward an Ontology of Temporally Extended Entities*

## Alumni Updates

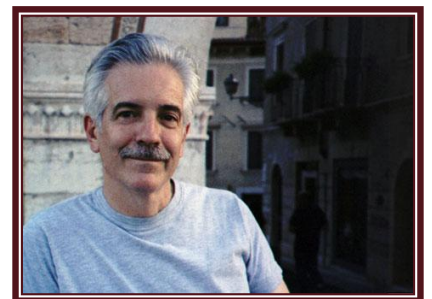
**Arnold Berleant (Ph.D. 1962)** was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Fine Arts by the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) at its 128<sup>th</sup> commencement on June 4, 2011. This award recognized his contributions to the foundational literature in environmental aesthetics, an influential area of environmental thought. Berleant has authored seven books and numerous articles on aesthetics and environmental philosophy, and has edited or co-edited three collections of essays. He is also the founding editor of the international on-line journal, *Contemporary Aesthetics*.



His forthcoming book, *Aesthetics beyond the Arts*, will be published by Ashgate Publishing Ltd. On October 8 he will be a keynote speaker at the conference on Landscapes in Transition at the University of Lisbon, Portugal.

**Robert D'Amico (Ph.D. 1974)**

writes "I recently ended a 12-year tenure as Chair of the Department of Philosophy at University of



Florida. (I do recall Peter Hare at a long ago APA warning me against just such a danger, but once again I failed to follow some good advice.) However boring I fear they may be, here are some recent publications: "Counting as" a Bridge Principle: Against Searle Against Social-Scientific Law,' *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 'Historicism' in *Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of History and Historiography* and 'Disease and the Concept of Supervenience' in *Establishing Medical Reality*."

**Richard R. McGuire (Ph.D. 1974)** writes “I’m serving as Association Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia and teaching in the Department of Media Studies. This fall I’ll be teaching Media Ethics. Best wishes to all alums and faculty.”

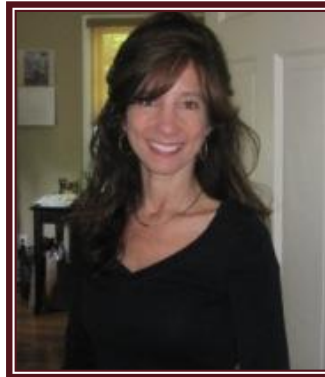


**Dennis Patterson (Ph.D. 1980)** is starting his 3rd year of a five year term in the law department of the European University Institute in Florence. Dennis’ Chair is in Legal Philosophy and Legal Theory. In the last few years, Dennis has published *The New Global Trading Order* (CUP, 2010) (with Ari Afilalo) and the second edition of the Blackwell Companion to Legal Philosophy. Dennis is currently working on a book on law and neuroscience for OUP.

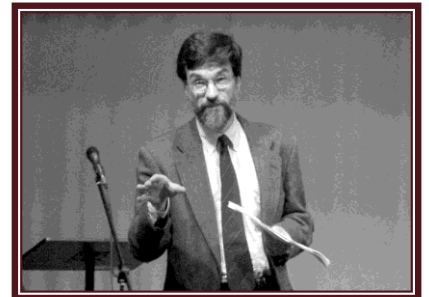


**Emelie Kenney (Ph.D. 1988)** writes “I am now a Professor of Mathematics at Siena College in New York, and I have become interested recently in the history of Polish mathematics and Polish mathematicians, particularly during the Interbellum and World War II. I would very much enjoy hearing about other UB people, especially Eloy Neira and others who were there at UB during the eighties. Best wishes to one and all.”

**Lesley Friedman (Ph.D. 1993)** is currently a full professor and chair of the Philosophy Department at Lynchburg College in Virginia. She is also the John M. Turner Chair in the Humanities. More importantly, she has two beautiful children: PJ (age 11) and Seren (age 6).



**Michael Gorman (Ph.D. 1993)** is Associate Professor of Philosophy at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He was recently involved in a friendly altercation in *Philosophical Studies*.



**Seung-Chong Lee (Ph.D. 1993)** is a professor and a chair of the Department of Philosophy at Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea. He was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Irvine. He co-authored with Newton Garver, *Derrida and Wittgenstein* (Temple University Press, 1994), and translated it into



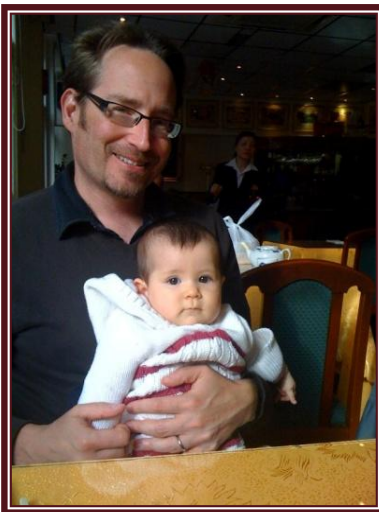
Korean (Minumsa, 1998; 2<sup>nd</sup> expanded edition, Dongyun 2010). His second book, *If Wittgenstein Were Alive* (Munhakwajisungsa, 2002), was chosen as one of the best academic books by the Korean Ministry of Culture. His third book, *Crossing Over Heidegger* (Saengkakuinamu, 2010), won Yonsei Academic Award. He is also the winner of Distinguished Research Achievement Award and Teaching Awards (3 times).

**Michael Berman (Ph.D. 1997)** has co-edited a volume *Heroes, Monsters and Values, Philosophy and SciFi Films of the 1970s* (Cambridge Scholars Press) and published articles in "The Heythrop Journal", "Think", and "The European Legacy" this past year.

He, his wife, Prof. Beatrice Ombuki-Berman, and five year old daughter, Natasha, have just recently welcomed the newest addition to their family, Illiana Kerubo (Jan. '11).



**David Koepsell (Ph.D. 1997)** writes "I am now tenured in the Philosophy section, department of Values and Technology at the Delft University of



Technology in The Netherlands. I am also chair of the University's ethics committee. My latest book, *Innovation and Nanotechnology*, was published in April by Bloomsbury Academic. My wife Vanessa and I had a daughter, Amelia, in November 2010. We live in The Hague."

**Mark Meli (Ph.D. 1997)** is a professor of Cross-Cultural studies in Kansai University, Osaka, Japan. He lives in Kyoto on a mountain, gardening and managing woods. His present research interests are Environmental Philosophy, Ecocritical Cultural Studies, Aesthetics and History of Gardens (East and West), Aesthetics and Culture of food and drink.



**Elizabeth Millán (Ph.D. 1997)** writes "I was promoted to full professor of philosophy at DePaul University in 2010. I was also married in October of 2010 to James D. Brusslan – we are expecting our first child in January 2012. I continue to work on aesthetics, early German Romanticism, and Latin American philosophy. Earlier this year, a volume of the *Goethe Yearbook* that I co-edited on Goethe and German Idealism was published. I am currently



finishing a manuscript, *Alexander von Humboldt: Romantic Critic of Nature*, and co-editing a special volume of *Symposium: The Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy*, on aesthetics and Latin American Thought that will appear in early 2012."



**Timothy J. Madigan (Ph.D. 1999)** is teaching philosophy at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York. He is the author of the recent book *W. K. Clifford and 'The Ethics of Belief'* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2010), based upon his dissertation written under the auspices of Peter H. Hare. He is also the invited keynote speaker at a conference on Clifford's continuing relevance, to be held on December 3, 2011 at the Université Paul Valéry in Montpellier, France.



**John Marmysz (Ph.D. 2001)** was granted tenure at the College of Marin in 2009. He has recently written articles, reviews and encyclopedia entries for *Film and Philosophy*, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, *The Journal of Popular Culture*, and *The Directory of World Cinema*. In 2008, he coedited (with Scott Lukas) *Fear, Cultural Anxiety, and Transformation: Horror, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Films Remade* (Lexington Books), and in 2011 his book *The Path of Philosophy: Truth, Wonder, and Distress* was released by Wadsworth Publishing. Juneko Robinson, John's wife, created original illustrations for *The Path of Philosophy*.

**Roger Worthington (Ph.D. 2001)** has a new honorary position as Associate Professor of Medical Ethics and Law at Bond University, Australia. He continues to have an adjunct position at Yale and to lecture at Keele University, England, where he leads on ethics and law at the School of Medicine. His new book is on Health Policy and Ethics (Radcliffe Publishing), and his current research is on comparative approaches to personal, professional development in medical education.



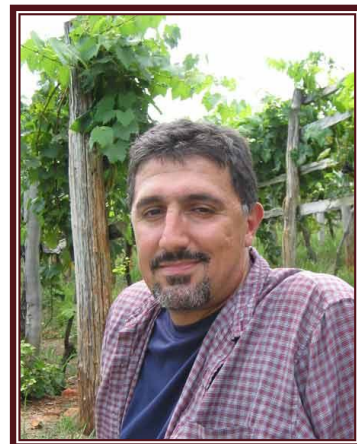
**Jonathan Weidenbaum (Ph.D. 2003)** writes "I recently returned from a three months sabbatical traveling through The People's Republic of China, and earlier this year I participated in a conference in Bangalore, India. I have two articles coming out in books, and continue to teach full-time at Berkeley College."



**James Delaney (Ph.D. 2004)** was given tenure and promoted to Associate Professor at Niagara University.

**Lawrence Torcello (Ph.D. 2006)** writes "I am an assistant professor of philosophy at Rochester Institute of Technology, where I regularly teach courses in ethics and political philosophy. I also serve as the medical ethicist on Rochester General Hospital's ethics committee and ethics review subcommittee.

My current research focuses on value pluralism and political liberalism. My most recent publications are 'The Ethics of Inquiry, Scientific Belief, and Public Discourse,' in *Public Affairs Quarterly* and 'Sophism and Moral Agnosticism, or How to Tell a Relativist from a Pluralist,' in *The Pluralist*."





**Gerol Petruzella (Ph.D. 2008)** will publish his book, *Durable Goods: Pleasure, Wealth and Power in the Virtuous Life*, as part of the *Studies in Theoretical and Applied Ethics* series at Peter Lang Publishers. The book defends a contemporary account of eudaimonia not simply as psychological satisfaction, but as the development of natural capacities as described in ancient Greek moral philosophy. It also offers a critique of traditional interpretations of ancient Greek ethics which minimize the importance of external goods as morally irrelevant, arguing instead that the eudaimonist tradition recognized a necessary role for material prosperity in the virtuous life.



## Interviews

### *Interview with Berit Brogaard*

Berit "Brit" Brogaard is an outstanding alumnus of the Philosophy department at the University at Buffalo. Hailing from the Netherlands, she earned her MA in Philosophy and Linguistics and MD in Neuroscience at the University of Copenhagen. After finishing her PhD in Philosophy and Linguistics at UB in 2000, she taught at R.I.T. (Rochester Institute of Technology) and Southern Illinois University (Edwardsville), before settling into her present post at the University of Missouri Saint Louis. She earned tenure there in 2007, and has since become an affiliate professor in the Department of Psychology at UMSL. She is interviewed by Adam Taylor, fifth year PhD student at UB, who studied with her (Including having her as Master's Thesis Chair) at UMSL from 2005-06.

1. *You've been an extremely productive philosopher since your time at UB according to your C.V. which lists 82 peer reviewed philosophy publications (in excellent journals) since 1999, and a forthcoming monograph with Oxford University Press (Transient Truths 2012). What advice would you give young, early career, philosophers on publication?*

Learn to accept rejections as a natural part of life. Even superstars in our profession get their papers rejected all the time, and they are not afraid to tell people about it. Getting a paper rejected three, five or even ten times is not uncommon. Of course, with experience, rejections become more rare.

Publishing is really essential to a successful career. But publish only in good journals (top 15), good volumes or special issues edited by well known philosophers. It's better to have two publications in *Philosophical Studies* (for example) than 12 publications in journals no one has ever heard of. Don't write reviews until you have tenure. They count for nothing.

When you get rejected (and you will get rejected), learn from the comments and revise your paper in light of them. Even if you think the referee is wrong and misunderstood your thesis, you should still take that into account and revise your paper in light of his or her comments. If he or she didn't understand your thesis, then others might not understand it either. So, you will have to rewrite your paper or reformulate your thesis. Send it to a new journal only once you have gone through that process.

Never send out your papers prematurely. If you can't find superstars willing to give you comments on your papers, use your grad students or junior faculty friends. They can often provide very valuable comments. When you think your paper is done and ready to be sent out, read it one more time.

Finally, pick the right journal for your paper. Look at the kinds of topics the journal has published in the past, the level of technicality of the papers and their structure.

*2. Many of your early publications were co-authored pieces with UB faculty; how important was it for you to work closely with established faculty early in your career?*

Working with faculty gave me a lot of new opportunities and helped people recognize my name. I also learned a lot intellectually from co-authoring papers with faculty. My supervisor Barry Smith sometimes had me revise my papers 25 times! It was tremendously helpful and truly improved my writing. He gave me many useful tips along the way. Some of the most important ones were "Don't introduce concepts or topics until you need them" and "Start your papers with an example or a puzzle to draw the reader in".

*3. What's the single most important piece of career advice you've ever been given?*

Go to as many conferences as you can afford, talk to people, hang out with them. They may not recognize you the first three times they see you but at the

fourth conference, they will think you are one of them.

*4. Is there any one philosopher who has had the most influence on your philosophical worldview?*

I have been enormously influenced by the work of Bertrand Russell, especially "On Denoting". Montague and Kaplan have also had a lot of influence on my work, especially my later work (Transient Truths).

*5. What advice would offer students for sticking to a productive writing schedule?*

Get off the Internet. Check emails, etc., three times a day: Morning, lunch and late evening. Then work on your papers in between.

*6. Favorite Continental philosopher?*

That's a challenge! I would say Brentano but some people don't consider him a continental philosopher in the "true" continental sense. So, I should probably say Simone De Beauvoir. If you read her closely, she has some very wise things to say, specially in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*.

*7. You've been quite interested in women's issues in academia, and in philosophy; do you think the environment for women in philosophy is improving on the whole?*

No. When I went to grad school, there were about 20 percent female philosophers employed in academia. There are still approximately 20 percent female philosophers employed in academia. So, I don't see a change. When you look at volumes, the situation is even worse. Most volumes have fewer than 20 percent women contributors.

*8. How have your philosophical interests matured and evolved since you received your PhD at UB?*

I have a medical degree in neuroscience. When I did my post-doctoral research fellowship at the Centre for Consciousness in Australia, working with David Chalmers, I regained an interest in consciousness and neuroscience. I also have realized the importance of

becoming well known in a few areas. Right now, the areas I consider myself a specialist in are: synesthesia, blindsight, perceptual reports and relativistic semantics (broadly construed).

*9. What, if anything, do you miss about Buffalo?*

I miss my friends there and the professors I worked with, not least the deceased Ken Barber. Oh, and the Coffee Bean.

*10. Duffs or Anchor Bar?*

Duffs on Wednesdays and Fridays. Anchor Bar on Thursdays and Saturdays.

### ***Interview with Tim Campbell***

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Tim Campbell, a graduate of the UB philosophy department, won the Steinberg Prize twice and the Whitman once.

*1. What made you come to UB as an undergraduate?*

I followed my high school sweetheart. This is probably a recipe for disaster, but since UB turned out to be such a great place to study philosophy, I'm glad I made the decision.

*2. Were there any particular philosophy courses or philosophical questions or philosophy faculty members that greatly influenced your decision to pursue philosophy as a career?*

The faculty definitely played a role in fostering my interest in philosophy. Frank Arntzenius once said, truthfully, that the most valuable activity that philosophy professors do is teaching undergraduates. And, in my experience, the faculty members of the UB philosophy department are excellent teachers.

One of the best courses I've ever taken anywhere (including Rutgers) was an advanced seminar in moral philosophy taught by Ken Shockley. The course focused on moral contractualism, and was one of the first philosophy courses I had taken that was run less like a lecture, and more like a reading group. I really enjoyed this format, and Ken did a great job of steer-

ing our discussions without controlling them too much. He also made everything fun and interesting. I had a much stronger desire to continue studying moral philosophy after taking his course.

I also did an independent study with Ken in which I learned an incredible amount of philosophy in a very short time. The paper that I wrote for Ken that semester eventually became my writing sample (after much revision), and I owe a great deal to Ken for helping me improve it in various ways.

I took two amazing courses with Ken Ehrenberg, one on moral responsibility and the other on analytic jurisprudence. Both were incredibly interesting and informative, and Ken was great in both.

Randall Dipert taught a course on the philosophy of war that was quite memorable. At the end of the semester, Dipert said that it was the best undergraduate course that he had ever taught, and he suspected that this was because many of the students had a strong prior interest in the subject matter because of the social, economic, and political importance of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. In my view, however, Dipert was largely responsible for how good the course was, and for the amount of interest that it generated. The philosophy of war and conflict continues to be a big interest of mine, and I am currently doing some research and writing in this area.

David Hershenov had a tremendous influence on me. He taught two fascinating courses in bioethics, and sparked my interest in personal identity theory, which plays a prominent role in my dissertation. I spent a great deal of time discussing philosophy with David. I'm not sure how many professional philosophers are willing to sit around for hours after a seminar and listen to undergraduates try to impress them with half-baked theories and ideas. Fortunately, David had a very high tolerance for inquisitive undergraduates, and this ended up being tremendously beneficial for me. He also provided tons of encouragement and feedback on my written work, and I think this played a huge role in my development as a philosopher.

The UB philosophy department really is outstanding. Anyone who thinks it should be shut down is crazy.

*3. You took a year off after you graduated and went to China. Why did you go there and what was the experience like?*

I wanted to take a break before beginning my graduate work. I had minored in Chinese at UB, and was fascinated with Chinese language and culture. I was hired to teach English to medical students at Dalian Medical University in Dalian and to nurses on a military base in Lüshun, both major port cities in Liaoning Province. Some of my classes had hundreds of students, and my lectures were quite long, but I loved teaching there. For my students, having a foreign teacher was a new and exciting experience, and I think they enjoyed it. There was one other teacher from the United States working with me at DMU. Together we organized some fun activities, such as an English Corner – an informal session in which students and teachers come together to have conversations in English, and play games that encourage speaking. The Corner was popular while I was there, but I'm not sure if it was taken over by anyone after I left China.

For me, the culture shock was pretty minimal. I had already lived in China for a summer and had a good idea of what to expect. Also, my employer and the other administrators at the university went far out of their way to make sure that I was happy and comfortable.

I think I could have done a much better job as a teacher had I been more experienced and properly trained. I also wish that I had had a better idea of how the students would be using the English language in their careers.

I don't know how much demand there will be in China for foreign teachers in the coming decades, but as long as Chinese schools and universities continue to recruit foreign teachers with little or no experience, it will be in their interest to establish better training programs for these teachers, and to recruit

people who specialize in training foreign language teachers. Such programs exist in China, but they aren't as prevalent as they should be.

*4. When your wife left China to join you in New Brunswick, did she undergo a double cultural shock – American culture and then a philosophical sub culture? Perhaps New Jersey made it a triple shock?*

I think there was only one big shock. Adjusting to the philosophical sub culture was not very difficult for Dawn. We had already lived together in China where she had come to tolerate philosophy a bit. Adjusting to American culture was not very difficult for her either. She had already spent a good deal of time in Seattle as part of a U.S.–China student exchange program. She fell in love with this country after her first few weeks in Seattle, but developed an extreme dislike for it after her first few weeks in New Jersey.

*5. What made you decide to attend Rutgers for graduate school? Did that department have any serious rivals or was it a no-brainer to go the PGR's second highest ranked philosophy department?*

It wasn't easy. I was handicapped when making this decision because I didn't have a chance to fly back from China to visit any of the departments that had made offers. Michigan and UNC Chapel Hill were serious rivals. There were several reasons for choosing Rutgers. I wasn't certain that I would continue to specialize in ethics. Michigan and UNC are both great places to do ethics, but Rutgers is outstanding in so many different areas and I thought that if I did eventually decide to switch subfields, Rutgers would be the best place to be. Second, I thought that even if I did continue to specialize in ethics, I would probably end up doing normative and applied ethics, and Rutgers is incredibly strong in these areas. Some think we're one big hire away from being indisputably the best place in the world to study normative and applied ethics. Third, Rutgers is at the center of the philosophical universe. It's close to Princeton, NYU, Columbia, and CUNY, and there's always so much going on between all of these places. They also offered a bigger stipend than the other departments,



and the university is much closer to my parents' home in upstate New York.

Before I made my final decision, I received great advice from UB professors including David Hershenov, Ken Shockley, Ken Ehrenberg, and Randall Dipert. They were all incredibly helpful and supportive.

*6. Which Rutgers professors have had a big impact on your philosophical thinking?*

All of my teachers here, I'd say. But Jeff McMahan and Larry Temkin are the professors I've worked most with, and they've had a very big impact on my philosophical thinking.

Steve Stich may have had the biggest impact, although I haven't worked with him. Stich has greatly influenced my thinking about the role that intuitions should play in theory choice and construction. He convinced me early on in my graduate education that philosophers need to think more about the philosophical implications of the fact that their epistemological, metaphysical, and moral intuitions are all at the mercy of cultural and other environmental influences. We need to think more about how and whether this fact gives us reason to be more skeptical of the content of our own intuitions and how, if at all, we can figure out which of our intuitions are reliable. The philosophy of intuition has become a hot topic in recent years, thanks to the work of Stich and other experimental philosophers. Due to Stich's influence, I spend a lot of time worrying about intuitions, and what to do in light of the fact that I don't know if my own intuitions are guiding me reliably when I do philosophy.

*7. What was your initial reaction to the caliber of the other graduate students at Rutgers? Were some of the more advanced graduate students as impressive or intimidating as the professors?*

Impressive? Yes. I am constantly impressed by our graduate students, and have learned a great deal from interacting with them. In many ways, I feel that I

have learned more from Rutgers graduate students than I have from my professors because the students here interact and discuss philosophy so frequently. In my view, a few students have come through the department in the past six years or so who have rivaled many Rutgers faculty members both in intellect and philosophical creativity. They certainly aren't the norm, though.

Intimidating? Not really. One certainly can feel intimidated around such impressive students. However, the climate here is very hospitable. There is no visible pecking order, and very little competition for funds (and no competition for necessary funds). I haven't met a student here who looks down on others or who acts like a great man or woman. Certainly, there is an air of philosophical intensity here, but also one of friendliness and warmth. Many of our events are geared toward bringing students together and maintaining a close community. Each semester the graduate students here organize a graduate student talk series, a faculty talk series, a department newsletter, several intermural sporting events, many reading groups, and many casual get-togethers. This is a great place to be a graduate student.

*8. Do you attend classes or talks at the other elite philosophy departments in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan area?*

Peter Singer sponsors a great many talks and events at Princeton's Center for Human Values, and I've attended a good number of them. I've also taken or audited classes at Princeton and NYU. Last year I was a preceptor for Singer, which was a lot of fun. There is way too much going on between all of these places to take advantage of and each semester I've had to make some tough choices about what to miss.

*9. What is the thesis of your dissertation that you are writing? Who makes up your committee and what has been their response to your dissertation project?*

My dissertation seeks to explain how metaphysics can constrain the moral domain, and it explores the implications of such constraint. A big chunk of it

defends an epistemological thesis about how we ought to revise our moral beliefs in light of conflicting metaphysical beliefs, and vice versa. Without going too deep into it, the central idea is that while one's metaphysical beliefs can provide epistemic reasons for accepting or rejecting moral claims, the opposite is not true. Moral beliefs do not provide epistemic reasons for revising one's doxastic attitudes about metaphysical claims. And this turns out to have interesting and important implications for meta-, normative, and practical ethics. I defend a novel account of this epistemic asymmetry between metaphysical and moral beliefs, but so far I haven't been able to convince anyone on my committee made up of Jeff McMahan (chair), Larry Temkin, and Dean Zimmerman. I defended my proposal last semester. The project is underway but far from complete.

Jeff, Larry, and Dean are excited about the project, although all three are somewhat skeptical about my epistemological thesis. I'm thinking very hard about how to win them over. I really couldn't ask for a better committee. Each member has given me an incredible amount of feedback and I'm excited about working with all three more closely in the coming months.

*10. You published two articles with Jeff McMahan. How did that come about? On what issues do you and McMahan see "eye to eye" and where do you depart from him in your thinking?*

Actually the second article, forthcoming in *Essays on Animalism*, is an expanded version of the first article that we wrote together. The article was the result of several discussions that Jeff and I had about personal identity and about animalism – the view that each of us is identical to a human animal organism. We saw eye to eye on a number of points and each of us had some original thoughts, so the collaboration just seemed natural. However, we don't see eye to eye on everything. There are several parts of the article that Jeff and I disagreed about. I thought some of the arguments against animalism that he proposed were not as plausible as he thought they were, but of

course I wasn't going to back out of the project for *that* reason. More generally, there are several points on which Jeff and I disagree. For instance, he is a much greater champion of "commonsense" morality and pluralism than I am. Despite our disagreements, I have a great deal of respect for Jeff as a philosopher. I think he is one of the most conscientious normative and applied ethicists, and he is incredibly clear in his thinking and writing.

*11. What non-dissertation philosophical issues interest you? Do you have any idea of what your post-dissertation research project(s) will likely be?*

I will continue to work at the intersection of metaphysics and ethics, but there are several other projects I would like to pursue. I'm currently thinking a lot about the important but widely neglected topic of normative uncertainty. A lot has been written on the question of how we should act when we're uncertain. Yet, surprisingly, very little has been written that addresses the question of how we should act when we know all the relevant non-normative facts but are uncertain about what reasons those facts give us for acting one way or another. A general theory of how one ought to act when one is normatively uncertain seems incredibly important in moral philosophy seeing as how our credence is often divided among so many different competing moral theories and principles.

I'm also thinking about the philosophy of war and, in particular, the extent to which the morality of war can be grounded in the morality of individual self-defense.

*12. The Wall Street Journal wrote about your charitable endeavors. How were you portrayed in the article? Was your charitable work inspired at all by philosophers such as Singer or Unger?*

I did the interview in order to promote Giving What We Can, an international society of people devoted to fighting poverty in the developing world by encouraging others to donate to the most cost-effective charities. Our members pledge to give at least ten

percent of their income over the course of their careers to the organizations they believe will do the most good with it. The Journal's portrayal of our cause was positive, although we were unsatisfied with some of the details of the article. One of my fellow members was quoted in a way that could have led readers to believe that GWWC actually takes donations, when in fact it only encourages people and offers them advice about where to give. The comments that were posted on The Journal's website following the article were mainly positive as well, and this was very encouraging. There is a tendency to conflate our cause with the political goal of wealth equality and redistribution and unfortunately this has turned some off to the idea. After one of our members appeared on Fox News, he received several e-mails from Fox viewers telling him that what he was doing was "un-American". (For the record, Fox was fair to us.) However, this kind of response is uncommon. The majority of people with whom we have interacted support the movement regardless of their political leanings, and many of them want to get involved with the movement on some level. Anyone who is interested in learning more can check us out at:

[www.givingwhatwecan.org](http://www.givingwhatwecan.org) and

[www.givingwhatwecan.org/rutgers](http://www.givingwhatwecan.org/rutgers).

As a student at UB, I was heavily influenced by the work of Peter Singer and Peter Unger. Unger's book, *Living High and Letting Die*, was a real eye-opener for me, and sparked my interests in effective philanthropy and moral psychology. Most of the grad students at Rutgers who are also members of Giving What We Can have been influenced by Singerian or Ungerian arguments and ideas. One graduate student from our department, Mark Lee, has followed Unger's advice. He has quit philosophy and is pursuing a lucrative career in corporate law in order to raise more money for charity. Mark currently attends Harvard Law School.

*13. Does your charitable work mean that the Noûsletter and the UB department should not expect any large donations from you in the near future?*

Well, that all depends. The department's long-term tendency for churning out philanthropic philosophers has yet to be measured. I'll keep my money in a donor advised fund while further data is gathered.

*14. If UB and Harvard offer you tenure track jobs, which one will you take?*

Well, the job market is pretty bad right now, and if it doesn't improve in the next couple of years I might end up taking whatever I can get. Otherwise, I might just follow Mark Lee into corporate law.

### *Interview with Joel Potter*

Joel Potter, a current Ph.D. student in the Philosophy department at the University at Buffalo, grew up with his missionary parents in Papua New Guinea. Born in San Diego, CA, he moved to Kansas City when he was four years old and then to Papua New Guinea when he was eight. Here, he lived at a hospital station in Kudirjip, where his parents were nursing instructors for students from all over Papua New Guinea. He met his future wife, Bekah, at this station, and they started dating when both returned to the United States to pursue their bachelor's degrees at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio. They were married before he began his master's degree at Franciscan University of Steubenville, OH, and now have two beautiful daughters named Dora and Sylvia.

*1. Does your family have an intellectual focus that led you to be interested in philosophy?*

My dad has a background in theology, and my grandpa—a chemist—is an amateur philosopher. So whenever I came back to the States to work for him during the summers, we would talk about philosophy.

*2. Did you need this theoretical perspective in order to deal with your surroundings in Papua New Guinea?*

I don't know if that helped me to adjust to a different culture. I think growing up in a different culture has helped me to think philosophically. Because I grew up with people who thought differently from me, my parents and I had to question the origins of our values: what was important to bring to their work, and what was just a carryover from growing up in the United States.

### *3. Can you give an example?*

Americans care a lot about being on time and take it personally if you're late, but in Papua New Guinea—not many people have watches, for one thing. But even if you have a watch—coming to an event at the right time consists more in considering what the weather's like and various other things. In Papua New Guinea, relationships generally take priority over meeting a schedule or getting a set number of things done. It's more important that you spend time together talking and sharing; you don't insult someone just to get a task done. Americans tend to be very task-oriented. When working together at a hospital, their priorities and the priorities of Papua New Guineans can clash sometimes.

### *4. What experiences there have changed your philosophical thought?*

Well, I think it's shaped the way I think about nature. There are certain experiences I've had hiking in Papua New Guinea where I couldn't see any trace of human beings, and it's just beautiful. I sometimes go back to those experiences and they motivate me to think about what the world is like. Flying over Papua New Guinea is such a different experience from flying over the United States, because when you fly over the United States, everything is measured out in a grid—there are straight lines everywhere. But in Papua New Guinea you fly over virgin forest. You might see the occasional house, but there's an abiding sense that these are places that no one has ever seen before. And there's something very special about that. It's kind of paradoxical, because I've always wanted to go see those places, but I've never wanted anyone else to go see them, if you know what I mean.

I also think that my experiences growing up with Papua New Guineans and having many close friendships with people of a very different background is something that I go back to when I'm trying to understand what it means to live in the United States and what cultural conditions there are that shape the way we view the world. I often ask myself "How would a Papua New Guinean see this?" It shows me how strangely we see things.

### *5. So it's easy for you to think in the mindset of a Papua New Guinean?*

I don't think so! Some sociologists have called missionary kids or children of diplomats "third culture" kids, because they have their own third culture, a culture of being in between. I think being this way has made me interested in work by Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor, who are trying to get behind the modern perspective, either by a historical account or by an investigation of the deep-seated values that make us modern. When I read that kind of work, it helps me figure out this culture and who I am as an American, as well as what's left out, what alternatives there are to the modern viewpoint—which aren't often considered.

### *6. What other philosophers are you interested in?*

I'm writing my dissertation on Plato. I'm arguing that in the *Phaedrus*, Plato has a more favorable view of the emotions and their role in philosophical inquiry than is usually attributed to him.

### *7. Do you find that growing up in a culture that expresses emotions differently helps you to isolate what is really true about the emotions, as opposed to mere cultural connotations?*

I don't know. That's a huge question. Certainly people from different cultures share in certain feelings, but I think Papua New Guineans are generally more emotional—they express their emotions in more pronounced ways at particular times. When someone dies, people wail for weeks. Papua New Guineans can just turn it on: as soon as they come to



a funeral they can just start wailing. That's a situation where people from the West don't really understand how these people are feeling or what it means. I was reminded of this because my mom was diagnosed with cancer this summer, and we skyped with some friends who are Papua New Guinean, and they responded in a much more visibly emotional way than a lot of our American friends would. Sometimes this is much more desirable than people just holding back how they're feelings or being reticent to express their feelings.

*8. What was it like where you lived in Papua New Guinea?*

We lived in the highlands. There's a giant valley down the middle of Papua New Guinea called the Wahgi valley, and it's full of coffee and tea plantations and a lot of people. When the interior of Papua New Guinea was explored by Australian explorers in the 30's they had no idea that there was this huge valley in the middle of Papua New Guinea, or that it was so populated because it was such a fertile and temperate area. Compared to the coast, which is hot and humid, we had 70-80 degree weather, and low humidity because we were a mile high. My family lived on the edge of that valley, and we could see 14,000-ft mountains behind our house. I enjoyed backpacking in those mountains in high school. It's very beautiful.

I grew up speaking Melanesia Pidgin, which is the primary way that people from different tribes communicate to each other. Because individual tribes lived in isolation from each other for such long periods of time, each tribe has a different language. Usually Papua New Guineans know 5 or 6 languages—there are about 700 to 800 different languages in all. The area of PNG is about the size of California, and there were about 5,000,000 people living there when I was there, and probably more now.

*9. Any interesting stories you want to share?*

Soon after we came to PNG, there was a tribal war between a tribe in the mountains and a tribe in the

village next to us. My house was right next to the fence, with the village on the other side, and I was walking up to my house with a friend when we saw a wall of people running towards us. We didn't know what was going on, but they told us that there was a fight so I stayed at my friend's house. People from the village were also hiding at my friend's house, since it was a missionary house; they were afraid that the other tribe would come and get them. When the other tribe came down the mountain they set all the houses in the village on fire. The fighting almost spread onto the hospital station where we were, but not quite. We didn't have school for a couple of days because of that. It was the worst instance of tribal fighting I've ever experienced. It's hard to explain to someone from a different country why tribal fighting happens, but tribal loyalties are much stronger than any national loyalty there, and there is not much of a functioning judicial system or police, so it is a way to deal with differences.

Unfortunately tribal violence has been ramped up since people have automatic weapons now instead of bows and arrows. It can be difficult to give care at a hospital when something like that is going on nearby. What they usually do is stabilize people and transfer them to a hospital that's farther away from the fighting. Otherwise, someone from another tribe could come into the ward and go after them.

That was in 1992, and I haven't heard of a fight like that near Kudjip since. There's still a lot of fighting going on in different areas of Papua New Guinea. It happens more in the highlands than along the coast.

*10. Are you thinking of visiting there again?*

We're trying to go back in December, but ticket prices are really high right now. We really want to. This is just a visit, but I think we would consider volunteering for a year or so, later.

## Recent Events

### 2009 Hourani Lectures – Philip Pettit

The 2009 Hourani lectures were given by Philip Pettit, Laurence S. Rockefeller University Professor of Politics and Human Values, of Princeton University. The lectures, titled "The Conversational Imperative: Communication, Commitment and the Moral Point of View," took place over three days during the second week of November and were very well attended. Pettit argued that on the basis of norms of communication we commit ourselves to networks of mutual respect, networks that, in turn, give reason to adopt norms of morality. The lectures will be published with Wiley Blackwell under the title, *Reconstructing Morality: A Genealogy of Commitment and Respect*.

### 2011 Hourani Lectures – J. David Velleman

The 2011 Hourani lectures were given by J. David Velleman, of New York University. The series, which took place in UB's Center for Tomorrow Ballroom, was entitled "Solitude and Sociality". It included a presentation defending reasonable relativism, another, "Regarding Doing Being Ordinary", about socially constructed action-types, and a final presentation on personhood. All were well-attended.



Photo: Alex McCrossen

### Paul Kurtz Lecture Series Event

**Louise Antony** (U. Mass)  
 "Materialism, Naturalism, and Nihilism"  
 Thursday, October 20

### Tenth Capen Symposium

**Jorge Gracia** and David Gerber (UB History) organized the **Tenth Capen Symposium**, sponsored by the Samuel P. Capen Chair, in Buffalo, October 8, 2010. The topic was "Assimilation: The Social Integration of Ethnic Migrants in Theory and Ideology." Apart from local participants, two distinguished philosophers and two distinguished sociologists participated.

### Departmental Colloquia

#### **Rudolf Luethe** (Koblenz)

"Constancy as a Principle and as a Result in David Hume's Theory of Historical Knowledge"

Thursday, October 13

Sponsored by the National Center for Ontological Research (<http://ncor.us/>)

#### **Peter van Inwagen** (Notre Dame)

"Relational vs. Constituent Ontologies"

Friday, October 21

#### **George Bealer** (Yale)

"Definition"

Friday, October 28

#### **Anjan Chakravartty** (Notre Dame)

"Scientific and Scientistic Arguments"

Thursday, November 3

Sponsored by the National Center for Ontological Research (<http://ncor.us/>)

#### **Mark Alfano** (Institute for Advanced Study, Notre Dame)

"Factitious Virtue"

Thursday, November 11

Sponsored by the Experimental Epistemology Reading Group

#### **Dean Zimmerman** (Rutgers)

"Materialism, Dualism, and 'Simple' Theories of Personal Identity."

Thursday, December 1

## Upcoming Events

### *2012 Hourani Lectures – Michael Smith*

The 2012 Hourani lectures will be presented by Michael Smith, McCosh Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University. Smith has written widely in ethics, moral psychology, philosophy of mind and action, political philosophy and philosophy of law. For the 2012 Hourani Lectures, he will present a series of lectures tentatively titled, "A Constitutivist Theory of Reasons." The department looks forward to what is sure to be a stimulating and thought provoking series of lectures. The lectures are scheduled for the week of April 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> 2012.

### *International Chinese Philosophy*

Dr. Yu is the President-Elect of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy (ISCP, [www.iscp.online.org](http://www.iscp.online.org)). UB Philosophy Department has been chosen to host the 18<sup>th</sup> International Chinese Philosophy Conference in 2013, with Dr. Yu as its convener. The conference is expected to bring about 200 participants to Buffalo from all over the world. The theme of the conference is still in the process of finalizing, but it will focus on the topics of Chinese philosophy which have contemporary philosophical and cultural implications in the West. Your suggestions and support are all deeply appreciated.

### *Departmental Colloquia*

**Jason Stanley** (Rutgers)  
Thursday, March 8  
3:30pm, 141 Park Hall

**Edouard Machery** (Pittsburgh HPS)  
Thursday, March 22  
141 Park Hall

**Richard Feldman** (Rochester)  
Thursday, March 29  
141 Park Hall

**Sandra Lapointe** (McMaster University)  
Thursday, April 19  
3:30 pm, 141 Park Hall

**Randy Dipert** (Buffalo)  
"Reply to David Oderberg: Relations and Structures in Ontology"  
Thursday, April 26  
3:30pm, 141 Park Hall

### *Logic Colloquia*

**Julian Cole** (Buffalo State College)  
"Toward an Institutional Account of the Objectivity, Necessity, and Atemporality of Mathematics"  
Friday, October 14  
4:00pm, 141 Park Hall

**John T. Kearns** (Buffalo)  
"Coherence and Contradiction"  
Friday, November 18  
4:00pm, 141 Park Hall

### *Related Campus Colloquia Events*

**Ned Block** (NYU)  
Wednesday, Sept. 28  
2:00 – 4:00 pm, 280 Park Hall  
Sponsored by UB's Center for Cognitive Science

**Buffalo Workshop on Ethics and Adaptation**  
Saturday, March 10 – Monday March 12

**Werner Ceusters** (UB School of Medicine; Director, Ontology Research Group)  
"Video content, information and (ir)reality"  
3:30pm, 141 Park Hall

**Barry Smith** (Buffalo)  
UB Research Ethics Seminar Series:  
"Ethics, Informatics and Obamacare"  
12:00 pm, January 16  
Scatchard Hall, 2nd floor, D building  
Buffalo General Hospital (near Allen Hospital subway station)

Lunch included - All welcome

**Department of Philosophy**  
**135 Park Hall**  
**Buffalo, NY 14260-4150**

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