

Noûsletter

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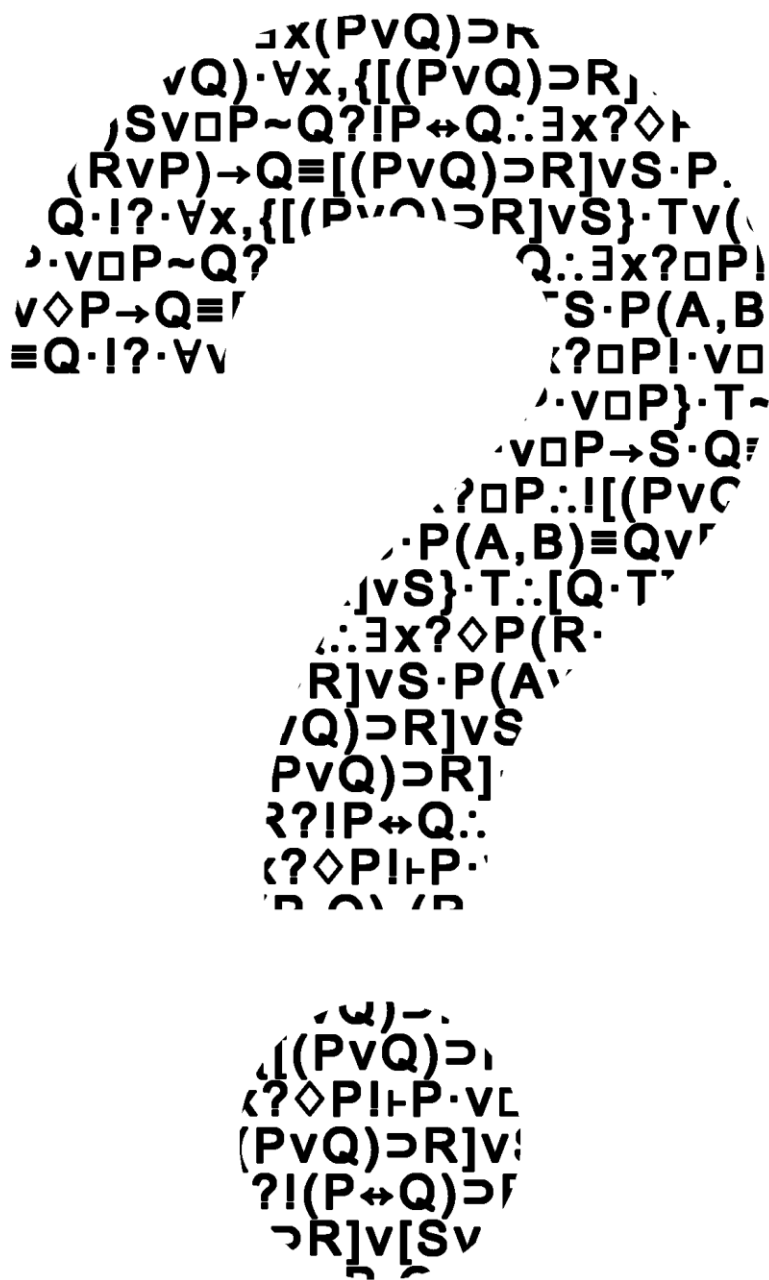


Table of Contents

Letter from the Chair	4	Hare Award for Best Overall Essay	61
Faculty News	7	Hourani Award for Outstanding Essay in Ethics	61
Faculty Updates	4	Patrick and Edna Romanell Award for Outstanding Essay in Naturalism.....	61
Faculty of the Department of Philosophy	4	Perry Award for Best Dissertation.....	61
Faculty Reading Groups.....	9	Steinberg Essay Prize Winners.....	62
Faculty Interview: John Kearns	9	CAS Outstanding Senior Award.....	62
Faculty Interview: Kah Kyung Cho	17	Mary C. Whitman Scholarship.....	62
In Memory of Jiyuan Yu	27	Graduate Student Teaching Award.....	62
Administration News.....	29	Dissertation Fellowships	62
Department News.....	30	Other Noteworthy Student Achievements.....	63
Visiting Assistant Professor: Devlin Russell ...	30	The People Who Make It Possible.....	63
Clinical Lecturer Position Created.....	30	The Peter Hare Award	63
Department Makeover	31	The Hourani Lectures.....	64
Philosophy Department Tea Time.....	31	The Steinberg Award.....	64
Buffalo Philosophical Society	32	The Romanell Award.....	64
UB Graduate Philosophy Conference	32	The Perry Award.....	65
Family Updates	32	The Whitman Scholarship	65
Student Updates	33	Alumni Updates.....	66
New Students of 2016	33	Notes from Our Alumni	66
New Students of 2017	34	Recent Events	68
New Students of 2018	34	2017 Hourani Lecture Series: Julia Driver	68
Graduates of 2016-2017	34	2017 Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture: Massimo Pigliucci.....	68
Graduates of 2017-2018	35	2016 Samuel P. Capen Lecture Series: "Philosophy and Its History"	69
Student Publications.....	35	2017 Samuel P. Capen Lecture Series: "Race and Ethnicity"	69
Student Reading Groups.....	36	Departmental Colloquia 2016-2017	70
Student Interview: Rasmus Larsen	36	Departmental Colloquia 2017-2018	70
Student Interview: Ariane Nomikos	46	Logic Colloquia 2016-2017	71
Student Interview: Brian Donohue	52		
Student Awards	60		
Peter Hare Department Citizenship Award	60		
Hare Award for Outstanding TA/RA	61		

Fifth and Sixth Annual Romanell Conferences on Bioethics and Philosophy of Medicine.....	71
Blameless Buffalo? Annual Conference and Summer Workshop	72
2017 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference	72
Fall Events	72
Fall 2018 Hourani Lecture.....	72
Fall 2018 Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture: Anjan Chakravartty	73
2018 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference.....	73
2018 Central States Philosophical Association Annual Meeting.....	73
2018 UB Graduate Philosophy Conference.....	74
Fall 2018 Department Colloquium.....	74
Fall 2018 Buffalo Logic Colloquium Celebration	74
Donations.....	75

Introduction

Letter from the Chair



Greetings! And welcome to the 23rd edition of the UB Philosophy Department Noûsletter. We have great things in store for you as you read on. I highlight a few of those articles here, along with some news, updates, and congratulations.

First off, despite now entering my third year as Chair of the department, this is the first time I have overseen the entire production of the Noûsletter, and the first time I have written the Chair's letter you are now reading. (For the most picky among you, I will clarify that of course this is the first time I've written this letter, but it's the first time I've written a letter for the Noûsletter!) It has been an interesting experience. I'd like to say that I couldn't have done it without the help of Robert Kelly (aka Bob, or grad student and research assistant extraordinaire if you prefer), but that would be a gross understatement. He's really been the brawn behind this edition, and he did all the heavy lifting. He is owed a big thanks, and I really appreciate the effort he's made. Thanks Bob!

FACULTY AND STAFF

Despite the fact that academics tend to spend decades in the same department, it nevertheless feels like there's a lot of coming and going. Sadly, it's going that seems to be winning the day of late. In fact, after many, many decades in the UB Philosophy department, Professors Cho and Kearns are saying goodbye. Both have made huge contributions to the department over their many years of service (a combined 100 plus years!), and it will be strange to no longer have them around. Sometimes we like to say that someone who has been around so long has become "part of the furniture", but in no way have John and Kah Kyung faded into the

background, and both have outlived numerous changes in the departmental furniture. They will be missed.

We will be honouring Kearns and the Buffalo Logic Colloquium with a special BLC event next month, featuring talks by Ohio State Professor (and 1978 UB PhD alum) Stuart Shapiro and John Kearns himself. The BLC has hosted many of the most decorated logicians of our era, and now pays tribute to UB's longstanding relationship with philosophical logic. If you read on just a little you can find an interview with Kearns.

Meanwhile, work has begun on a volume honouring Professor Kah Kyung Cho. Part history and part tribute, the collection highlights Cho's time at UB and some of the students he has impacted here and beyond. His reach goes well beyond the UB campus, with a particularly strong influence evident in Germany and Korea. There's an interview with Professor Cho just a bit further into the Noûsletter.

But thankfully it's not all goodbyes, and once in a while we get to see some new faces around here. This Fall we were lucky enough to add Donna Smith to our administrative team. Donna joins us as our new Undergraduate Administrator. And though she's new to UB, Donna is no stranger to the SUNY system, having honed her trade at SUNY's Oswego and Potsdam campuses. Donna's experience completes our rockstar administrative triad, joining Senior Staff and Assistant to the Chair LaTonia Lattimore and Graduate Administrator Liz Lesny. I cannot say enough how much I appreciate our administrative team and how lucky we are to have them. Here's hoping we can keep this team together for a long time to come!

POSTERS AND PAINT

Most of the time when there's talk of changes in a department, it concerns personnel. But it's not just the students, faculty and staff that change, even if those are the changes that interest us most. With that in mind I want to share that the department has undergone something of a facelift in the last year. For the thirteen years I've been here (and probably a good many more) we've been welcoming visitors to the

department with peeling green stickers and mauve trim (or was that lilac?). Well, gone is the green, and gone is the lilac. You'll now find sharp steel lettering and cool shades of grey, for what has a much more professional feel. But that's not all: visitors entering the department from the Flint Loop side are now greeted by a huge mural of Raphael's *The School at Athens*. Raphael's painting is littered with great thinkers, but at the heart of the image we find the two juggernauts of ancient philosophy, Plato and Aristotle. In an only slightly abstract representation of their philosophical views, Plato is pointing up to the heavens—the realm of the forms, and Aristotle is depicted as pointing down to the ground, in reference to his naturalism. I encourage you to drop by and see it sometime soon! (And if you should happen to find yourself in the department, you'll see that there are new chairs in the seminar room, but that's a lot less visually stimulating than the mural.)

CONFERENCES

There's never a shortage of conferences or talks going on in the department or in connection with the department (you can keep up to date by visiting our events page here: <http://www.buffalo.edu/cas/philosophy/events.html>). We are very lucky to have a lively department in this respect. And though there are far too many to mention them all here, I want to draw special attention to three recent conferences.

First off is the 2018 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference. Experimental Philosophy (or 'x-phi') is a relatively new branch of philosophy, which isn't something one hears very often in philosophy. What separates the methodologies of x-phi from the rest of philosophy is the reliance on experimental procedures and statistical methods as sources of philosophical information. These are generally experiments using human subjects, testing their responses to particular statements or vignettes. In other words, philosophy has started applying experimental procedures to philosophical questions, and is now able to shed new light on philosophers' claims about common sense.

Professor James Beebe is among the front runners in this new arena. He's also the driving force behind the Buffalo x-phi conference—a conference that's recognised as a top event on the x-phi calendar. 2018 marked the seventh iteration of the conference, and welcomed speakers and attendees from all corners of the world. I'm therefore a little saddened to announce that this will be the last time Buffalo will host the conference. But putting on a conference of this size is a massive task, and James has certainly done more than his share for the x-phi community. He deserves a great deal of credit for the work he has done, and for helping to drive forward this new area of philosophy.

The second conference I'll mention is one that is headed in quite the opposite direction. After a seven-year absence, UB Philosophy hosted an international graduate conference. This year's topic was metaphysics, anchored by keynote speaker Achille Varzi (Columbia University). Varzi is well known for his work across the metaphysical spectrum, but especially for his work on formal ontology. (Seek out his co-authored book on *Holes*—including real holes on the cover!—and you won't be disappointed.) Varzi's talk on the metaphysics of the laws of nature followed four excellent graduate student presentations. Plans are already in the works for next year's UB Philosophy Graduate conference. I'm sure it, too, will be a huge success.

Lastly, I draw attention to a relative newcomer on the UB Philosophy conference scene. For many years now, we've invited a high-profile ethicist to visit UB and give a series of lectures as our George F. Hourani Lecturer. We've had the honour of hosting such major figures as Rae Langton, Michael Smith, John Martin Fischer, and Anthony Appiah. But this year we switched things up a little. Rather than just one speaker, we extended the event to a full Hourani conference format, known as the Nickel City Ethics Conference ('NiCE' for short). A total of nine ethicists were divided across five talks: four presentations with critical commentary, and a keynote address to end the day. Our keynote was USC's Mark Schroeder. It was an excellent conference, and fun to spend a day doing

philosophy at the newly revamped Hotel Henry. It's tough not to enjoy yourself when there's so much great ethical research on offer, and your backdrop is one of America's finest examples of gothic architecture. (There's also something oh-so apropos about doing philosophy in a place that served as an asylum for 100 years.)

CONGRATULATIONS!

I close this letter by extending a series of congratulations. First off, a massive congratulations to Professor James (Jim) Lawler for his fifty—yes, fifty!—years of service to UB. Many of you will have had the pleasure of his instruction over the years, perhaps hearing him lecture on Confucius's thoughts in World Civilization or drawing connections between Nietzsche's corpus and the popular television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. I don't know if there's anyone out there who can match Jim on the applications of 19th century philosophy to contemporary cult media! Kudos Jim—and here's to fifty more!

Next, I want to congratulate some of our faculty on their recently achieving tenure. Professors Lewis Powell and Ryan Muldoon were granted much-deserved tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. A big congratulations to them for what is a huge milestone, and I welcome them to the ranks of increased duty and departmental service!

Lastly, a tipping of the hat in the direction of Professor James Beebe is well overdue. Professor Beebe was recently promoted to the rank of Full Professor. Congratulations James!

Please know that we are always interested in your stories as UB Philosophy Alum, and that we welcome your updates and achievements. If you have anything to send along, please contact the general philosophy department email at phi-philosophy@buffalo.edu. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this edition of the Noûsletter!

Cheers,
Neil E. Williams

Faculty News

Faculty Updates

James Beebe became president of the Central States Philosophical Association in 2017 and will host their annual conference at UB in October 2018. He will also host the final Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference in September 2018, marking the seventh year in a row (see Fall Events on page 72). The *Advances in Experimental Philosophy* book series, for which James is the series editor, put out three more anthologies in 2017 and will put out an anthology on experimental philosophy and aesthetics in November 2018. James spent the Fall of 2017 as a fellow at the UB Humanities Institute, working on skepticism and ideological denialism, as well as Spring of 2018 as a resident fellow at UConn's Humanities Institute, working on the "Humility and Conviction in Public Life" project. James is also the chair of the placement committee for the 2018-2019 year, and plans to, among other things, hold preparatory mock interviews for grad students getting ready to go on the market.

Nic Bommarito's book *Inner Virtue* (OUP), which draws on non-Western sources, empirical work, and memoirs to develop a new theory of virtue and vice, was published in early 2018 as a part of the Oxford Moral Theory book series from Oxford University Press. Nic also has another book, *Buddhism as a Way of Life*, under contract with OUP.

David Braun replaced Neil Williams as Director of Graduate Studies when Neil made the move to department chair in the Fall of 2016.

Kah Kyung Cho, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, retired from the department in 2017 after 60 years of teaching, some 50 of which were served here at UB. He has also created a generous endowed fund for the UB Department of Philosophy, the *Dr. Kah Kyung Cho Excellence Fund*, that will aid the scholarship of undergraduate and graduate students pursuing research in 19th-21st Century Continental European Philosophy and East-West Comparative Philosophy (see the interview with Professor Cho on page 17).

Jorge Gracia, Samuel P. Capen Chair, had a recent issue of the *Inter-American Journal of Philosophy* dedicated to his work. The theme was "Race, Ethnicity, and Latino Identity: A Conversation with Jorge J. E. Gracia." Jorge also had his twentieth authored book, *La Interpretación de la Literatura, el Arte, y la Filosofía* (Tópicos), published in 2016.

David Hershenov was made co-director of the Romanell Center for Clinical Ethics and the Philosophy of Medicine in 2017. He established a number of working groups through the Romanell center, made up of researchers from Buffalo and surrounding universities working on issues in bioethics and philosophy of medicine. David continues to organize numerous workshops, talks, and working dinners in affiliation with the center, in addition to the annual Romanell Conference on Bioethics and Philosophy of Medicine,

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which he ran for the sixth year in a row in July 2018 (see Faculty Reading Groups on page 9 and Recent Events on page 68).

John Kearns retired from the department in 2017 after over 50 years with UB. He continues to work on his book project mapping out the philosophical implications of adopting a speech act framework for thinking about logic (see the interview with Professor Kearns on page 9).

Alex King was interviewed for the APA Blog in February 2018. Alex has two books under contract. *Human Ability and the Limits of Morality* (Routledge) provides an introduction to the principle ‘ought implies can’, and is a part of Routledge’s *Focus on Philosophy* series. *Art and Philosophy* (OUP) is a co-edited (with Christy Mag Uidhir) collection of essays on how art informs philosophers’ views.

Carolyn Korsmeyer retired from the department in the summer of 2016 after almost 40 years at UB. Her book *Things: In Touch with the Past* (OUP), concerning the experience of “genuine” things and how artifacts deliver encounters with the past, is expected to be out in 2018. Professor Korsmeyer also has a co-edited (with Jeanette Bicknell and Jennifer Judkins) anthology on a similar topic in the works entitled, *Ruins, Monuments, and Memorials: Philosophical Perspectives on Artifact and Memory*.

Ryan Muldoon took over as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the 2018-2019 year. Ryan’s recently published book, *Social Contract Theory for a Diverse World: Beyond Tolerance*, has received considerable attention. Gerald Gaus (University of Arizona) named it one of the top five books to read in his interview with 3:AM, Pea Soup invited Ryan to discuss the book and respond to critics, and Ryan was invited to discuss his book on the podcasts New Books in Philosophy and The Economics Detective. Ryan was also featured in the APA’s “Early Career Research Spotlight” interview in 2017. Ryan is also a co-lead investigator (with a UB Professor in the department of Mechanical and

Aerospace Engineering, the SUNY Senior Vice Chancellor of Research and Economic Development, and the SUNY Assistant Provost for Undergraduate and STEM Education) on an NSF-funded grant project which explores methods for effectively generating transformative research questions that address significant societal challenges. Ryan brought on philosophy graduate students **Danielle Limbaugh** (MA 2018) and **Stephen McAndrew** (seventh-year PhD) as research assistants for the project. Most recently, Ryan had his paper, “Diversity Isn’t What Divides Us. Division Is What Divides Us,” which discusses how thinking about faction can help guide practical solutions to combating misinformation, commissioned by *The Knight Foundation* for their series on media and democracy.

Lewis Powell was awarded tenure in 2017 and continues to serve as lead editor of the APA Blog.

Barry Smith was named one of the 50 most influential living philosophers by *The Best Schools* in August 2016, was made a member of the Faculty of 1000 in January 2017, was appointed principle investigator for a \$1.3 million grant (CHAMP) supporting ontology-based research in digital manufacturing in January 2017, was involved in two additional NIH grant projects in 2017 totaling over \$90K, had another *fest-schrift* honoring his work on the occasion of his 65th birthday entitled *Studies in Emergent Order and Organization*, published by Cosmos & Taxis, was invited to deliver the keynote address in June 2018 for the Automated and Connected Vehicle Systems Testing Symposium organized by the Society of Automotive Engineers to discuss the latest automated vehicle programs, and hosted (as director of NCOR) the Industrial Ontologies Foundry workshop in Buffalo in July 2018.

Neil Williams took over as Chair of the department in the fall of 2016 after serving three years as Director of Graduate Studies. Between teaching and running the department, Neil is still managing to complete his book on causal powers and persistence, *The Powers Metaphysic* (OUP), which is expected to be out early in 2019.

Jiyuan Yu, beloved professor, mentor, and friend to many in the department and beyond, passed away on November 3, 2016 in hospice care after a battle with cancer. A memorial service was held in his honor in February 2017, where many of Jiyuan's family, friends, colleagues, and students came together to celebrate the life and legacy that Jiyuan created. Jiyuan has and will be missed dearly by all who knew him (see In Memory of Jiyuan Yu on page 27).

Faculty Reading Groups

Romanell Working Committees/Reading Groups (formerly PANTC). The PANTC reading group on bioethics and philosophy of medicine, co-founded by **David Hershenov** and **Jim Delaney** (Niagara University) in 2013, continues to hold monthly meetings, but has merged with the Romanell Center. The group still discusses issues in bioethics and philosophy of medicine but rotates its monthly meeting topics according to the various working groups associated with the Romanell Center such as the Ontology of Medicine, the Health, Harm, and Well-Being, and the Autonomy, Addiction, and Accountability working groups. The Romanell working groups also host workshops which David Hershenov has dubbed 'The Governor's Lectures', at which Romanell fellows present and give feedback on pre-read works-in-progress over wine and cheese. Some such papers have gone on to be published. Current attendees include **Harvey Berman** (UB, Pharmacology), **Jim Delaney** (Niagara, Philosophy), **Neil Feit** (SUNY Fredonia, Philosophy), **Shane Hemmer** (UB grad, Philosophy), **David Hershenov** (UB, Philosophy), **Rose Hershenov** (UB alum, Philosophy), **John Keller** (Niagara/St. Joseph's, Philosophy), **Robert Kelly** (UB grad, Philosophy), **Stephen Kershner** (SUNY Fredonia, Philosophy), **David Limbaugh** (UB alum, Philosophy), **Yuichi Minemura** (UB alum, Philosophy), **Phil Reed** (Canisius, Philosophy), and **Barry Smith** (UB, Philosophy). The group hosted its sixth conference this July featuring philosophy of medicine big shot Jerry Wakefield as keynote (see more on page 71). Past conference keynotes include

Christopher Boorse, John Lizza, Marya Schechtman, John Fischer, Elseijn Kingma, David Boonin, Don Marquis, and our own Barry Smith.

Blameless Buffalo? Founded by our own **David Hershenov**, along with **John Keller** and **Stephen Kershner**, this group meets monthly to read and discuss philosophical works that deal with questions surrounding free will and moral responsibility. Current attendees include **Luis Chiesa** (UB, Law School), **David Hershenov**, **Robert Kelly**, **Stephen Kershner**, **Danielle Limbaugh** (UB alum, Philosophy), **David Limbaugh**, and **Jonathan Vajda** (UB grad, Philosophy). The group also hosts an annual summer workshop, the most recent of which was in June 2018 (see more on page 72), and notable conference and reading group attendees have included John Fischer, Susan Wolf, and Derk Pereboom.

Faculty Interview: John Kearns

Professor Emeritus **John Kearns** has had a long and successful career at UB that has just recently ended in retirement after 53 years with the department.

Kearns is the author of more than 50



academic journal essays and has published four books: *Using Language: The Structure of Speech Acts* (SUNY), *Reconceiving Experience: A Solution to a Problem Inherited from Descartes* (SUNY), and two textbooks, *Deductive Logic: A Programed Introduction* (New Century) and *The Principles of Deductive Logic* (SUNY). In addition, he served as editor for a series on Logic and Language for SUNY press that produced 12 books from 1985-2000. He has served on and chaired numerous committees throughout his career at UB, for the Philosophy Department as well as the UB Graduate

School and the UB College of Arts and Sciences. Kearns has served as Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Graduate Studies, Associate Chair, and Department Chair for a total of almost two decades, with twelve years as Chair of the department. Leading up to his recent retirement in 2017, Kearns ushered in a new group of graduate students by teaching the first-year writing seminar in the Fall of 2016 as his last course. Kearns is currently trying to finish a book project on the logic of speech acts, *Truth and Commitment: Essays in Illocutionary Logic*.

1. How did you get interested in Philosophy? Did you major in philosophy at Notre Dame and was there an early interest in logic and language?

I did major in philosophy but I just had to major in something—I wasn't like in love with philosophy. It was also a time when logic was starting to take off at Notre Dame. A Polish refugee of the communists after the war was hired at Notre Dame, named Sobociński. He started the *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic*. I thought he spoke pretty crappy English and we all had kind of a hard time understanding him. And when he taught the class he mostly wrote stuff on the board, but he didn't try to explain much. When I was talking to another guy who was a graduate student of his at Notre Dame, he told me that he didn't think there was that much of a problem talking to him and understanding him. So, I don't know if he was romanticizing or if I was too uncomfortable with a foreign accent. He never talked much in class except just to say the things he wrote on the board, but he didn't carry on a conversation about what's important and what's not—it was just this logical system. It was a symbolic logic system and I found it interesting.

When I went to Notre Dame, I got high scores on the SAT in math and so they tried to recruit me into math, but I didn't want to go into math. So, I took some math courses that were recommended, but I didn't consider being a math major and I wasn't thinking about making logic an important part of my life. What I was going to do was go to law school. That was my intention—get my undergraduate degree and go to law school.

But into my undergraduate career a bunch of organizations endowed graduate schools with fellowships in order to get more faculty. Universities were expanding everywhere and they thought it was hard to get faculty, and so they tried to encourage students who had good academic evidence to go to graduate school and go into academic life. I wasn't sure I wanted to do it, but they said, “Well, you know, it doesn't hurt. Apply for the fellowship anyway because even if you got it and didn't go, it'd be a plus for the school.” So, I applied for the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and got it.

2. What made you choose Yale for your graduate education? Were there any lasting impressions of your years in the doctoral department at Yale?

A faculty member I liked in the math department, and who was also interested in philosophy, was very high on Yale. Of course, I'd heard of Yale, but I didn't know anything about graduate programs in philosophy, so I just took his advice and applied for Yale and they took me. So, I got in, not sure I wanted to stay, but then I liked it and I just hung in there and eventually got my degree. But I had been in ROTC as an undergraduate and when I graduated I was commissioned, but I got permission to postpone going in the army. So, I did my graduate work first and, at first, they had indicated that they'd be generous about allowing me time for it, but towards the end they said, “Man, you got to come in.” So, I hustled up and got the degree done in four years. Otherwise it would have been hanging there while I was in the army, which would have been nuts.

But, yeah, that was the main idea for going to Yale. I can't even remember if I applied to other places or not. I may have, but he had sort of given me a really heavy promotion that Yale is the best place to go. So, I took his word for it and they said “okay” and I said “okay.” It was a very exciting time at Yale. I mean, they had Wilfrid Sellars. He was visiting when I came and he was hired eventually soon thereafter. He was, and I still think is, probably the best philosophy class teacher I ever had. The rest of the department was quite good as well. It was quite a switch (more so then

than it is now) to go from the Midwest to an eastern school.

3. What was the topic of your dissertation? Though he wasn't your committee chair, was there any great influence from working with Wilfrid Sellars?

Well, Sellars had an influence by the courses he taught. Usually the people in the community there didn't talk to you about what you were doing while you're doing it; just your advisor was the person you worked with. So, lots of stuff from Sellars has stuck with me, but he wasn't any particular help with the dissertation.

My Polish logic professor at Notre Dame, Sobociński, had been a student of Leśniewski, another Polish logician and philosopher of language, who had published a lot of articles developing his own logical system. I'd gotten interested in philosophy of language mostly from Sellars' courses, since he was the only guy who had taught it, and so I wrote on that topic. The title was, "Leśniewski, Logic, and Language," and it was about Leśniewski and what he did, and how it fits in with some views about language. I followed up on the issues I talked about, but I didn't try to make something like a book out of the dissertation. So, it was a logic focus and a philosophy of language focus. I had a great course on the *Tractatus* with Sellars, and so whatever I knew about philosophy of language I basically got from that course. I took a couple of courses from Sellars, one course where he talked about his own work or his own views about stuff, and the other was the course on the *Tractatus*.

There was also a residence hall for graduate students at Yale called the "Hall of Graduate Studies." My first year I stayed there and, since he was visiting, Sellars stayed there, too. I think he probably regretted it because philosophy students would always try to sit with him when he came to dinner. He was very pleasant and got to know them a little bit that way.

4. You received your PhD in 4 years—at Yale, no less. Many graduate students today (myself included) will find this very impressive considering the current average time to Philosophy PhD is

about 7 years. The data I found shows that this number was roughly the same in the early 60's (7-8 yrs.). Were many philosophers you knew finishing in 4 years, or were you ahead of the curve in this respect? Do you think there are institutional reasons for the average being so high?

Slightly ahead of the curve, not a lot. The guys I knew didn't take a great deal of time on their dissertation. When I came to UB and we hired people who were still working on their dissertation, I was surprised some of them took as much time as they did. That hadn't seemed to be the case with the guys at Yale. They were sort of plowing through it and getting it done.

See, at Yale they didn't have teaching assistants then. Everybody who was funded in some way was expected to take four courses a semester and you were just expected not to take forever to finish. There was a requirement for an exam—"prelims" we called them—and at the end of two years you were expected to take that exam. If you'd been there two years, you would have taken sixteen courses, and you had to finish them and not have taken lots of incompletes. So, getting to that point you are kind of in lockstep and it sort of pushes you on into doing a dissertation.

I suppose some get jobs before they finish and, of course, that is going to slow you down. Most of my friends didn't do that. But I think when you are expected to carry a full schedule and a full schedule is four courses, not three, that has something to do with getting done a little faster. Since we didn't have assistants, some students who were like senior students were invited as a kind of honor to teach a course. I could have taught a course in logic if the army wasn't pushing me to finish. If they had worked with me to do it, I might have said "yes" and that might've slowed me down a little bit.

5. After graduate school you served two years in the U.S. Army—not typically seen on a "Jobs for Philosophy PhDs" brochure. Were you drafted? In what way, if at all, did you find having a PhD in philosophy useful during your military service?

I was in ROTC, so I was commissioned when I graduated. Lucky for me the date of service is the date you're commissioned. So, I was commissioned out of Notre Dame but it was like I was on leave for four years because of going to Yale first for graduate school. But at the end of two years in the army there was a big jump in salary because they figured in those days the ROTC guys only had to go in for two years, and they didn't want to pay them so much. So, they paid the first two years kind of crappy and then after that it went up. So, when I came in I was counted as having been in for four years, so they gave me more money than I would have gotten otherwise. That was a good deal. I also got stationed in France, and that's where I met Jane. Her father was stationed there, too.

I was assigned to intelligence, but when I got to the place in France where I'd been assigned, they said, "We're sorry, but we've got no jobs right now in intelligence, but we see you've been to school a long time and we have a job we can give you that involves schools." We had bases all over France and I was assigned to go to various bases in France and inspect the school, which meant just seeing if the buildings needed paint and stuff like that. The officer in charge said, "Okay, on Monday I want you to go down to the little airfield and there will be a helicopter there. He'll take you through some bases." I'd go get out and look and say, "That needs a little paint there," and so on and write a report when I got back to my office, which was an "odds and ends" office. So, it wasn't terribly military, but I liked it a lot.

While I was there, de Gaulle told the Americans they couldn't stay there any longer, so everybody was closing down. When the major in charge of my office went home, they weren't going to bring a new senior officer in to replace him, so they gave me his job. I got to go on all these inspection trips through France, go to the Loire Valley and so on. I'd go with officers and we would go to some base trying to get there at like eight in the morning, conduct our various inspections, and be done by about noon. And then we would try *not* to get to the next base before night because if you didn't, then you could stay in a hotel. So, we would try to

doddle a little bit on the way to the second place. Sometimes we'd doddle by going into wine chateaus and stuff. So that was fun doing stuff like that. And, of course, I met Jane and we got married there.

6. Between finishing your military service and coming to Buffalo, you spent time in the Psychology department at the University of Illinois as a Research Associate. What was your experience in an interdisciplinary setting like, being in a psychology department as a philosopher?

I'm from Champagne and somebody my mom knew had known a guy there in educational psychology doing some research. I got out of the military in February and I wasn't going to be thinking about a job until the next fall, so I wanted something to do. I got this job in the psychology department where they already had a graduate student in philosophy working. He was conducting research in programmed instruction and the researcher wanted him and I to make a program text that he could then use with undergraduates at Illinois. And so that's what that job was. It was mostly writing and revising elementary logic texts and program texts.

It was not particularly interdisciplinary. I mean, we'd just sit in an office and do stuff. You didn't teach or go talk to people. I worked with a guy named Jack Odell. We would write stuff and show each other and talk about it and make changes. I guess our project director must've asked us to make changes and do things a certain way, and then look at what we did and say it was okay or ask us to change it in some minor way. But we eventually got to a text that he could use for an undergraduate course. He eventually moved from Illinois to Harvard to educational psychology there, but what he ever did with that stuff I've got no idea.

7. What eventually brought you to Buffalo, and to UB in particular? Anything specific or was it just a successful hit on the job search?

Just a job offer. I was applying for jobs at sort of the wrong time of year. But that was a time when the dumbest guy in the world, if he had a PhD or it looked like he was going to get one, could get a job. There

were tons of jobs. It was not like now. It will never be like that again. You couldn't not get a job, you know. There were just more jobs than people. So, there was no such thing as adjuncts. It was a paradise. It was the perfect time for somebody that wanted to do this to do it, and I'd say that will probably never happen again.

8. How did your philosophical interests in illocutionary logic and speech acts arise? What paths did your research take and what major positions did you stake out?

There was a guy here who was hired the same time as me, Lynd Ferguson, and he had gotten his PhD from Northwestern. This stuff had been big there and so he was working on it. Just talking to him sort of got me interested in speech acts, Austin, and Searle and that kind of thing. So, talking to him and reading the stuff that he told me about caught my fancy, you might say. But there had been nobody teaching that kind of thing at Yale; there had been no courses about that stuff. Yale had been a very traditional kind of department—courses in Plato and Aristotle, courses on Aquinas, courses on Kant and Descartes. Just a lot of history, and a little bit of contemporary stuff.

When I went to graduate school, it wasn't understood that your career was heavily focused on research. You know, guys could think of just being a teacher and not having to do research. But that was a change that happened from the time I was at Yale to the time I finished with the army. Everything is switched now and become the "publish or perish" idea. But that had not been the case and nobody told us stuff like that at Yale; nobody told us to expect stuff like that. So, I was kind of taken aback when I found out that's what you had to do.

I was working on some stuff about logic and some stuff about language, but I didn't see, at first, a connection between the two things. I just thought there were two separate things that interested me, but then it just occurred to me. Well, I mean, Searle and Vanderveken put out their book [*Foundations of Illocutionary Logic*], but it's not really a logic book. Searle doesn't really understand logic. A lot of it was Vanderveken's ideas, but

he doesn't really understand it very well either. I didn't think their logic stuff was very insightful. So, it was really somehow seeing the connection myself, seeing that you could find something there—that somebody saw a connection there and it was worth thinking about what kind of connection there is. And then I just started doing this on my own.

9. Was this one of the major trends that started arising in the philosophy of logic and language since you began to work in the field? Did people think of it as kind of fringe or cutting edge to be working on this connection?

Most people in logic don't see the connection even now. It's not a commonly accepted view that there is this important connection, but more people have become interested since that time. But it just seemed to me like, "Oh wow, here are these two things and they've got these important relations and I'd never even thought about it."

I think people probably still think it's weird. In some sense, Searle and Vanderveken thought of their work as a kind of appendix. There's ordinary standard logic, and this was kind of a cute thing that connects logic to their philosophy of language, but they didn't seem to regard it—certainly Searle didn't seem to regard it—as a new area to be explored. It's just pointing out that there is a kind of connection. But it seemed to me that it raises all kinds of new questions and all kinds of new things you can look at. It's very interesting.

10. Your work is part of a field that was originally developed by Searle and Vanderveken. As you developed your own ideas on the topic, was there much philosophical interaction with these pioneers of the field? Were you pretty much in line with their thinking, and focused on development, or were there any major divergences in how you think about illocutionary logic from the way they thought about it?

I didn't see myself as developing what they were doing. I don't know who made it happen but the field of Linguistics every summer has had what they called the "Linguistics Institute." Their idea is that Linguistics

departments tend to be small (when they start anyway) and not well appreciated, and it's hard to keep up with what's going on in other places in linguistics. So, they thought to have this institute and they would have major figures come give lectures for faculty and some graduate students. Faculty would find out what was going on in the field and get to meet the big shots by going to this institute.

At some early point when I was at UB, they had the Linguistics Institute here and Newton Garver got them to invite Searle to be one of the Institute instructors. So, Searle was here that summer [1971] and I attended his lectures. The Linguistics department, particularly, invited people in philosophy to come. I got to meet Searle and talk to him a fair amount there. I tried to convince him that he had some things wrong, but that didn't work. That's when I first got to know him and that sort of gave me more impetus for looking into this field. At that time when he was here for Linguistics Institute he wasn't talking about his stuff with Vanderveken at all. He was just talking about standard speech act theory.

Searle was invited to lecture at UB by different agencies and so he was here a number of times over the years. He's spoken at UB a lot. When cognitive science got started, many of the guys in cognitive science and our language department who had interests in cognitive science had California roots, and so they may have known Searle or known about him and also invited him to speak a lot. After Barry Smith came here, Barry had a great fascination with Searle. (He still sort of does, but now he's pissed off at him because he's kind of blown Barry off.) So, Barry would have conferences and invite him, too. So, hearing and seeing him in person here and talking with him about stuff has mostly been the extent of my interaction with Searle.

11. There is a kind of famous academic history of critical thinking and humanism in Buffalo (and at UB) because of Paul Kurtz and the Center for Inquiry. What is the academic history of logic in Buffalo? Was John Corcoran's founding of the Buffalo

Logic Colloquium (BLC) seminal in bringing attention to the study of logic at Buffalo?

The thing about that was for a while the math department at UB was heavily invested in logic. They hired John Myhill, who was a pretty well-known guy, and they had several other younger people who were interested in logic. Mathematicians either think that logic doesn't belong in math or they think it does, but the department here thought it did and they had a very strong logic program. So, that was more the focus of logic activities on this campus. John, when he came and had his logic background and logic interests, was mostly connecting with the Math department guys.

So, it brought attention to the Math department. I don't know what it did for the philosophy department. But John sort of made philosophy the focus or center somehow. For people interested in logic he had the Logic Colloquium. He brought guys in and he also had a lot of the math guys give talks to the Logic Colloquium. He sponsored a number of logic-related conferences. He made a special effort to get Alonzo Church an honorary degree from UB and was working on the same thing for Tarski but then Tarski died, so he couldn't do it.

12. You have been involved with the BLC for many years, which hosts a series of talks throughout the year here at UB, and have recently been organizing it. How did the BLC start and what has been your involvement and experience in getting it going and keeping it running for so long?

Well, it was John's idea. I helped out with stuff he wanted help with. But he's the one that sort of got it off the ground and made a real effort to bring in people from other places in logic. The Math department didn't do that as much as John did. John was like the spark plug for making logic better known here and getting what was going on here known in other places.

I presented like once a year. When it wound down it was just John and his graduate students. He presented almost every time, but that was later after the Colloquium somewhat changed its character. What

happened was John Myhill died, Nick Goodman, who was in it, stopped being interested in doing that stuff, and Will Lawvere had other interests which he pursued more than strictly logic. When Myhill died and the other math guys sort of petered out, the math department was no longer interested in hiring up-to-date replacements for those guys. So, the rest of the math department must've decided it wasn't that interesting to them and let it go. Now, they don't have a strong math/logic program. They still teach the courses but it's no longer the same.

13. Now that you and John Corcoran are both retired, what are the plans for the future of the BLC? Are there any young logic prodigies you have been pruning to take it over? Perhaps we can convince John Beverley to come back from Northwestern.

I don't know whether the BLC will be around in the next couple of years. The department would have to want that and would have to pay for it, so I'm not sure whether that's going to happen. I've done a bad job of keeping up with John so I'm not sure how his first year at Northwestern went and what he's doing or thinking about doing now. I'm sort of unclear on what's happening to the department—or in the university generally. I mean, now they seem to be going in for what they call “clinical faculty” in academic departments. That's like creating first- and second-class citizens and this seems to be making a mess, I think. I don't know if that's going to be the wave of the future. Everybody talks about the humanities being outdated and nobody is taking their courses, and even in good schools the humanities are scrambling to get students. I imagine that won't continue indefinitely but who knows how long it will continue.

14. In addition to logic, you have spent a career teaching and researching language and speech acts, but do you think your work in this area has at all influenced the way in which you go about communicating with other people in your daily, non-philosophical life?

It's hard to say. I guess it's probably more strictly higher-level and theoretical. It's hard to know how

thinking about speech acts has made me a more effective speaker or a more effective communicator. Possibly it has, but I never gave it much thought, so I can't say, “Oh, yeah that really changed the way I shop and do stuff.” I don't really know.

15. You've been working on a book on illocutionary logic for some time: Truth and Commitment. What's the core idea? Will this be your magnum opus and do you think retirement might finally provide you with the time to finish it?

Right, I've been working on it for a long time—I'm still working on it! It's taken me a lot longer than I expected. Every time I think I've reached a point to go over to a new direction I say, “Oh my God, I screwed up there!” and I've got to go back and fix it. I'm having more time to work on it now since I don't teach. I'm hoping I can get this thing out of the way in a year.

The core idea is just that a speech act framework, or conceptual framework, is larger than the standard kind of conceptual framework for thinking about logic, and it's the appropriate framework to adopt. And once you do that, you see that there's certain topics or certain issues in areas that need to be explored and are worth exploring that otherwise wouldn't be. You wouldn't be asking the right questions if you adopt a kind of narrow perspective that many people in logic adopt. It does relate to cognitive science, but I don't think that it's something that will, except maybe in the extreme long-run, have practical application. It's more just a kind of theoretical inquiry.

Just think about what's happened in philosophy since the advent of Kripke, for example. All this stuff in metaphysics and other areas where people try to use possible worlds and the idea of possible worlds to explain stuff and figure stuff out. My own thought is that that's pretty much crap. I think having a more adequate framework, the kind I'm shooting for, would show the extreme limitations with that kind of approach and the extreme limitations of what you can really accomplish using those techniques.

16. You have a paper called, “Modal Semantics without Possible Worlds.” Are these latter ideas part of that paper?

Yeah, that’s an old paper, but yeah, that’s right. It’s always been my idea that talk about possible worlds is misleading and misguided. The guys who do that have developed some very interesting technical tools for establishing or proving stuff. But you don’t need to put it in that kind of framework to use the stuff that they’ve done that’s good.

17. Fifty-three years is an impressive run. How has the department changed in your time here at UB? What stands out now as strikingly (or perhaps surprisingly) different from when you started?

Well, a lot of things. When I came here, UB was planning to have a really huge philosophy department—something on the order of Toronto. We got up to I think 31 or 32 faculty and then somebody realized, “Hey, that’s not such a good idea, after all.” When UB was a private university, it was quite small and Marvin Farber was the driving-force figure in the philosophy department. He had gotten philosophy to be a central department, and so for the size of a private university we had a big philosophy department. Then the university sort of extrapolated when they wanted to grow. They thought, “Well now we’ve got like 3,000 kids and we’re going to go for 30,000. So, when we get to 30,000, if we’ve got this many philosophers for 3,000 kids, how many are we going to need for 30,000?” But somebody finally told someone else that other schools don’t do that and you don’t really need to have such a big philosophy department. When UB became part of the state system, that was kind of a new idea for the state and they were sort of feeling their way about how to proceed. They had grandiose ambitions for the philosophy department—which were crazy, and so didn’t take place.

Then the department size went down and we’ve had various administrators in the university that had different ideas about academic life in general. There was one provost who thought the academic future was interdepartmental connection—interdisciplinary

research, interdisciplinary courses. So, individual departments weren’t so important and he thought we should mix it up with people in other departments. The faculty sort of pushed back on that. Most of the faculty were more traditionally inclined and they thought individual departments were *not* a bad idea. The next provost took that line and bumped up the size of many academic departments, which had shrunk at UB. We got bumped up, too, but we never got bumped back up to 32. We got bumped up to 20 or 21, and now we’re down again and sinking fast. Now, that’s not just philosophy, it’s other departments as well. So, you know, it’s unclear: Are we a medical, technical school now and that’s our basic mission as a university or is it still a respectable academic institution where people do research that hasn’t got financial payoffs? There seems to be better opportunities in applied fields (like bioethics). I mean, even guys from prestigious schools—Princeton, Harvard, you know, places like that—are scrounging for jobs.

18. What sorts of courses have you taught during your career at UB? Are there any that you especially looked forward to teaching?

Mostly I looked forward to going in and teaching graduate courses, but yeah, philosophy of language and logic are mostly what I’ve been teaching. I do like to teach Early Modern; I like to teach Descartes. I haven’t done that for a long time.

At the undergraduate level, students have become less motivated, which is disappointing. They don’t do what they’re assigned to do, and when they sign up for a course and don’t show up and end up failing, it doesn’t bother them somehow. When I first started teaching, kids may not have liked the courses, but they didn’t do that. A friend of Jane’s who was sitting in on college courses was sitting in on some kind of big lecture course. She said sitting in the back of the room just amazed her because of how many people are shopping online and doing other things, but not listening or paying any attention to what was going on in class. That’s a disheartening feature of modern technology. Cell phones and laptops are a big distractor.

19. For your final teaching duty, you taught the incoming graduate students' first-year writing seminar. Was there any sense that you needed to leave your mark on the newest batch of grad students as you were on your way out of the teaching game?

Well, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the people in the class, but I wasn't thinking anything about making a stand for the future of them or the department or anything like that. But it was a lively class and I had fun doing it. I think it was a good class to end on. Also, I guess I taught an undergraduate logic class that same semester. I enjoyed the graduate one more because graduate students are in your class because they want to be there. That's not the case with undergraduates.

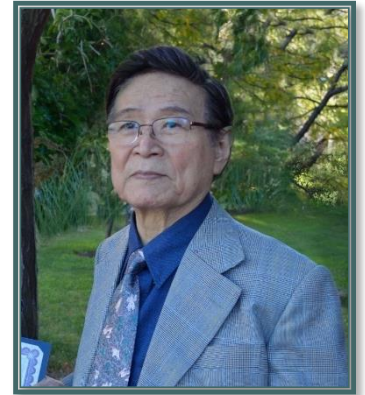
20. Any final words of wisdom for the young philosophers out there who hope to have as long and successful a career as you've had here at UB?

I guess I'd say be sure that this is what you really want to do. It's not promising as just a way to make a living; you have to really want to do it. Then, of course, you don't want to be sucked into areas in philosophy, of doing this or that, when you don't really want to do it because otherwise you can't get a job if you have to put up with that. Do something else. You know, you can get interested in lots of things. If what really interests you at the moment is something you can't make a living doing, then do try to find something else that interests you that you could make a living doing. Also...well, you can't really tell someone to be imaginative or to be a genius. You either are or you aren't.

Faculty Interview: Kah Kyung Cho

Professor Emeritus **Kah Kyung Cho** is SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy, and has been one of the leading voices in phenomenological research, and a pioneer in bridging Asian philosophy with Western thought, throughout his illustrious career. Cho has written six books, appearing in no less than four different languages, published more than 75 articles, and taught at universities all over the world, including Germany, Japan, Korea, and the United

States. Just over 50 years of his extensive teaching career have been spent in some capacity here at SUNY Buffalo. In addition, Cho served on the advisory board for the Research Institute of Phenomenology in Beijing, as well as the editorial boards for *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Husserl Studies*, *Orbis Phaenomenologicus*, and *Phänomenologie, Texte und Kontexte*, totaling more than four decades of service. He is also a past winner of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Cho's legacy is undeniable, and his work has been praised by scholars the world around for many years. In his retirement, Cho has established the Kah Kyung Cho Excellence Fund, an endowment through the UB Department of Philosophy that will aid young scholars focusing their research on 19th-21st Century Continental European Philosophy and East-West Comparative Philosophy. He also plans to finish five—yes, five—projects he is still working on. His dedicated scholarship is unwavering!



1. Tell us a little bit about your upbringing, having come of age through Japanese occupation of Korea, the second world war, and eventually attending Seoul National University during the Korean War. Was philosophy already an interest of yours as an undergraduate in Seoul?

No, philosophy was never any kind of priority. This was a turbulent age [1950-52, during Cho's time at SNU, and the years leading up to it], Japan occupying Korea, and Korean students dispatched to the front line in the name of the Japanese Emperor. There were many casualties. We were gradually prepared as high school boys in all the military drills: handling a gun and so forth. I was not really prepared to become a frontline soldier, and I spoke the Japanese language on purpose—at home, with friends.

Even at the age of five or six, I lived in a Japanese neighborhood. The Japanese neighborhood means something special: they have the Japanese shrine, Japanese worship of their own, and local gardens. So, if I wanted to play with the Japanese boys my age, then I had to be somewhat skilled in their language, you know. Otherwise I wouldn't be treated as an equal. And they were financially better because Japan sent their own people to Korea, mostly as government officials, factory managers, and so forth. So, we Koreans, my father, for instance, who was living in Manchuria, never really liked to mingle with the Japanese. So, for the first fifteen or twenty years, my father was anti-Japanese and did not show up in Seoul, Korea where I lived most of the time.

Now, however, children do play. So, I had to play, and I had to speak their language. And I had sharpened my ear, and so I was able to draw those children from their houses, and their mothers and sisters were willing to let them out with me because I spoke good Japanese. That was when I was six, seven, and eight years old.

During that time, I had developed not only language skills, but also knowing how the Japanese think. And I actually applied for admission into a Japanese Imperial airplane factory, which was never allowed to any Korean. Even bicycles were not allowed to be made by the Koreans. But I spoke good Japanese and even told jokes. Some of the Japanese teachers were fencing masters and black belts, and one of the black belt teachers liked me most among the boys in the fencing exercises. So, toward the end of WWII, about April or March, I applied; I sent my submission to Yokohama Aeronautic Engineering Factory, which was highest by the Japanese standard (almost equal to the Wildcat and other American engineered airplanes). Then, I received the surprising answer that I was admitted, and I was the only one from Korea. But then—I was about seventeen—the war ended a few days later because the American's dropped two atomic bombs, and so I could no longer cross the border line, and so I stayed in Korea.

I had these kinds of small experiences with the Japanese people and culture, and I spoke and read Japanese literature long after Korea surrendered, and long after Korea was separated from Japan. And so, when I became a Fulbright scholar, first invited by San Francisco, and then by schools on the East Coast, like Yale and Harvard and so on, I was invited to speak about the war experience, and my Japanese language skills qualified me to be an exchange scholar between the Japanese and Korean governments.

So, it was only later in life that I developed my interest in philosophy. Before that, life was more about airplanes and WWII and stuff like this. Maybe two or three years after the cessation of hostilities was when I got interested in philosophy, for example, during my trips to Yale, Harvard, and other East Coast universities. They had their own German connections, too. Lots of Yale University people were exchange scholars between Germany and America. And for this reason, I was often gradually invited by American universities, by professors or departments whose heads or members had connections with German philosophy people. That was the start of philosophy. When I was closer to twenty I began showing an active interest in philosophy, speaking and presenting papers and so forth.

2. Backing up just a little bit, when you were doing your undergraduate work at Seoul National University, it was during the middle of the Korean War, and Seoul was a city that was taken over back-and-forth by the opposing forces. What was the experience like living and doing your studies there during that time? I've heard you have an incredible story about leaving Seoul. Would you mind sharing it?

Okay, the Japanese government in Seoul had a four-star general usually, and they had a mansion like the White House that was very luxurious, and he had the role of entirely re-structuring Korean education. So, among the first important things he said he would do was that he would *Europeanize* Korean education, rather than *Americanize* it. Europeanization meant language first: German, French, Latin, and so on. Latin not

as frequently, but German and French were assigned two years in school. So, when we went to college, the first two years we spent there like mad learning German and French. That's not entirely philosophy, but on some rare occasions some of the textbooks were about philosophy, but only marginally so. We can just say that the new education system was half Japanese-oriented, which, since they were admirers of Germany, Italy, and so forth, meant that they stimulated Korean students to pick up language first. So, before I developed my active interest in philosophy, I was really more of a linguist.

Anyhow, South Korea was invaded by North Korea in 1950, and the United Nations assembled to back America in stopping the communists from coming further south, and so the North Koreans were stopped in the middle. Still, many North Koreans, of course, were able to speak the South Korean language, and infiltrated South Korea language and hijacked many South Koreans. Many were just shot to death on the street in massive numbers, and I was almost one of them; I could have easily died within three or four weeks of the beginning of the war. The North Koreans occupied a South Korean army hospital where wounded South Korean soldiers and South Korean police were housed. They were just taken and thrown out on the street and shot to death, and they were left so that the people would become afraid of the North Koreans.

So, I wanted to take refuge in Japan if that was at all possible. But Japan did not like Koreans coming to study in Japan, and Korean currency had no value. You could have had a stack of Korean bills, but you could not cross the Korea/Japan border. And I had known already at that time about one of my closest friends who had used all his money and crossed the border, but was immediately surrounded, arrested by the Japanese police, and sent back the very same day. I knew that from Seoul to Pusan [now 'Busan'] was about 250 miles and that it was infested with guerilla combatants on both sides. Also, American planes were constantly circling around above. The distance between the university and the railroad station was about an hour

walk, and from the railroad station you could go a certain distance and you could hear the roaring of rifles, and the North Koreans the South Koreans fighting. And if you walked maybe 10 or 20 more days you could finally reach Pusan in the southernmost tip of South Korea. From there you could illegally cross the ocean and go to Japan. Only very few people succeeded in doing so. Maybe if South Korean politicians had a Japanese politician or influential people they knew, they could make a phone call and allow their own friends or students to cross to Japan, and at least stay in Japan until the crisis was over. But staying in Japan forever, even acquiring Japanese citizenship and then studying for four or five years, and even getting a job—these were totally out of the question. But I wanted to cross anyway.

Okay, backing up a bit to the story of leaving Seoul. We were not coeducational at that time. Japanese universities were 100% boys first. But Korea, because of liberation by American soldiers, went more quickly. So, there was *one* girl student who was admitted to Seoul National University, and there was this funny relationship between her and me that spelled humor, and danger, and fate. Her last name was Kim, and she spoke French. She would come in to our classroom, and then if she spotted me, would come close to where I was because I would speak French some in class, and she enjoyed listening to me because I could pronounce the French well. But that was it. There was no love relationship as that would have been immediately scoffed at or the boys would have considered that as very unusual. There was no opportunity for lunch for women; only water was available. There was no toilet for women. When she came from her lodging to the meal center at the university around eight o'clock in the morning until five o'clock in the evening when she had to return to her lodging, she did not speak a word, or eat or drink, or anything. It was such a secluded society, you know.

But she liked my good English and French. And one day in the summer I went to the library where I had found that in the middle of the heat of the Korean

summer, there was an air-conditioned room managed by the Japanese, and there we could read English and French and some German. And she decided to come see me there, and very politely asked me whether I could come to the library on one Saturday and provide her with instruction for a couple of hours. I agreed and did that two or three times.

Then, one day I decided I wanted to try to leave Seoul, and I had to go alone because I thought that it might be a hinderance to have her with me. She was slower and not very athletic, and I knew I could run faster without her and evade any approaching North Korean soldiers (or even South Korean soldiers, for that matter) if necessary. So, I told her—I think it was about August 1st or 2nd—I have to cross the ocean and go to Japan, because I have to study in another country—in Korea it is hopeless. I said even if the Japanese police kicked me out twice, I would go back twice again. So, I went to say goodbye the day before, and told her that perhaps if she was healthy and could make it to the station, we could see each other again to say goodbye. But my departure was not to be.

Suddenly, at a famous crossroad between Seoul University and the railroad station, we were surrounded by North Koreans. They were picking up all the young people—those about late teens to early twenties—people who were physically fit to be forced into labor in a factory. We were all arrested, and then 7:30 in the evening came, and then 8 o'clock in the morning. Some of the people, very few of them, were released after their ID was checked, and we were all wondering who those people were. But Miss Kim was sharp-thinking and she immediately followed a humbly-clothed laborer who had been released outside, and then (as I learned later on) she tapped his shoulder and gave him a small amount of money and said, "Please can I borrow your ID card that you have received from the soldier?" He said, "No, no, this is a matter of life or death. I cannot do that." So, she stole it from him and came back to where I was and gave the ID to me. I quickly understood what I needed to do and showed this ID to the North Korean soldiers, and they thought

I was permitted to go out. So, I was freed from the North Koreans in this way, and then I went and returned the ID to the laborer.

Later that day we could not go anywhere because of the night curfew, and North Korean soldier and "cooperators"—South Koreans who cooperated opportunistically—were everywhere. So, the following day Miss Kim and I said we would meet at the intersection of a very small tram car at about 7:30. I saw the tram car coming and it was completely filled with people. They could not touch the floor because people were so packed together. You could not even enter the door and instead had to go through the window. People would just be pushed up through the window and they would not come down to touch the tram floor because it was so full. I suppose it could seat about forty people, and about 80 people were crammed in there. And then they could not come out of the door because nobody could move or anything even when the destination had been reached, and so they would be pulled out of the window. But I met Miss Kim there; she was there smiling and we started day one of our escape from Seoul.

By the second day from when we started, already our shoe bottoms and socks were worn off. Then, one morning an American jet came flying by so low that Kim's hair was swept back. Instinctively, I just waved to the American plane. You know, I didn't wear a North Korean or South Korean uniform—not anything even close to a soldier uniform. I had the student uniform and I had no guns or weapons in my hand, and Kim also had a food container or something like that. She was scared because the plane was coming so close and her hair was flying back, and I was waving and she didn't understand and thought I was crazy. But that plane made one circle around the hill and he knew that I could not be a North Korean soldier carrying ammunition. You see, he could have pushed the button. I had a rucksack and, to him, it could have contained bullets or food for North Korean soldiers.

We continued walking, although Miss Kim was sick and vomiting, and we walked twenty-two days. It could have been only a few days trip from where the American plane saw us to Pusan, but we had to walk around avoiding munition sites, or groups of North Korean soldiers, or whatever. Finally, we neared Pusan at the southernmost tip of South Korea and reached Gyeongju on the eastern coast. It was still under South Korean occupation—the South Korean police were there, and some of the dispatched American soldiers. I remember M company of the 21st infantry. These were the first unit from General MacArthur's troops stationed in Japan who were immediately sent to Gyeongju. The really well-equipped, well-trained soldiers were not there; they were in Europe mostly or in America, but not in Korea. So, these were unequipped soldiers who were not a real match for the North Korean soldiers.

When we came to the South Korean MPs, they patted us down and examined us, and peeled off the bottom of our shoes to see if there was a spy letter and so forth. I was safe because I had student's clothes. But the South Korean police took Miss Kim's collar and there was a letter inside. She didn't know that one of her friends in the medical school whose parents were also living in Pusan put it there. Her friend knew Kim was going to Pusan with me but couldn't go, and so she wrote a letter to her parents and hid it in the collar. There was already cooperation from the side of South Korean civilians, so when the policeman ripped the collar open and pulled out the letter and started reading, his eyes became very angry. It said that all the South Koreans were welcoming North Korea, and that North Korean soldiers were "gentleman-like" and "they do not treat us harshly" and that the North Koreans had "freed us from South Korean soldiers." Kim was punished for the letter even though she didn't know it was in there or what it said. The police tied Kim up by her legs and tied her arms to a bar, and she spent the whole night with no water, no food, no pillow, and her skin was scarred from being tied long after she went on to finish college.

MacArthur's 21st division soldiers were not trained for combat; they didn't have tanks, and they didn't have the huge 50 caliber shells. So, the first night we had to sleep among South Korean soldiers in a very humble, ill-equipped Korean farmer's house. A few miles to one side of the farm house was one of the headquarters of the North Korean soldiers who had come down as far as Pusan at the night through the mountains. They were the most well-trained communist soldiers in the entire world. They worked with the Chinese were training soldiers, sending arms and so forth. They came to this mountain at the end of August, when you don't have any fruits or corn in Korea except persimmon. The North Korea soldiers were starving and didn't eat any rice for many weeks, and so they would secretly come down near the farm house to the persimmon trees and pluck a few of them to eat. But the South Korean soldiers would hear this, and so they would sneak up and shoot the North Korean soldiers in the trees. The South Korean MP soldiers gave me and Miss Kim a grenade each and said, "You cannot leave here alive. You would be dead anyway. If you are a patriotic South Korean, then you will at least kill a few of them. Pull the pin and kill the guy in the tree and kill yourself at the same time, and then your name and your family will at least be honored." A South Korean soldier gave Miss Kim a grenade and pulled the pin—but then he yelled at her to throw it away. It turned out they were just testing us! At any rate, that was our first night in Gyeongju. The next morning, I didn't know what to do. Both sides were trying to hurt us.

Now, KATUSA was the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army, and they were not the regular Korean soldiers. Police and GIs went to Korean high schools and the teenagers were forcibly pulled out and given formal uniforms to wear as soldiers. But they didn't speak English and the regular Korean soldiers couldn't speak English, and so they needed someone for translation and interpretation. The soldiers we were with knew that we were students, and the next morning an American soldier came to our Korean soldiers' commander and told him he had to fill their troop with some of these high school boys because half

of their troop was already gone. So, some high school boys were forcefully brought into that unit. But they didn't understand American commands, and therefore I, who looked like a student, had a student ID, and spoke good English, was assigned there as the translator. But more than this, they equipped me with a pistol, a rifle, and a uniform, and so I became an involuntary South Korean soldier.

Kim was eventually sent to Pusan because they had made a phone call in the meantime and found out her father was there. That was really lucky. But when she went on the train about halfway there, the train started going in a different direction! So, she had to jump down from the train, and in the dark night had to walk alone in order to get back to her home. While she was walking, somebody started calling from behind her in Korean, and it was her father's employee. He told her that her father and mother had died because of all of these dangerous things happening in Korea, and so they never dreamed that any South Korean refugees like their daughter would be released.

I was only released because I was more useful as an interpreter. While I was an interpreter, the Chinese had intervened. The United States and the United Nations had pushed the North Koreans a little farther north; but that was only temporary. The Chinese were coming farther down and were stronger and more well-equipped. So, I was an interpreter for that division for less than one week. The company commander, First Lieutenant Thomas Sheehan, thought it looked like a long, prolonged war, and he showed me the Stars and Stripes military newspaper that said Seoul National University was partially open in Pusan and asked if it was my school. When I told him it was, he summoned an American soldier under his command and packed a whole jeep with food and some clothes and said, "You did great work for our soldiers; for American and Korean soldiers as well. I'll have this driver take you in the jeep to Pusan and you can go there and apply with the South Korean students going to study in Europe."

Sheehan was a very well-read man, sometimes spending 6-10 hours reading library books when there was no combat, and he spoke with me a lot about philosophy. He wrote me a letter of recommendation for my application. I still have that letter, though now it's all brown. Sheehan's letter, which boasted that I "served with distinction [the] front line Infantry Company...much of which [was] spent under fire," and that my "unfaltering courage, determination, and ability...made possible...more effective operations," served a pivotal role in getting me to Heidelberg to study. So, my life as a college student was certainly full of tragedy and sorrow, yet in the midst of such misfortune, God still opened a door for me!

3. That is truly an amazing story—thank you for sharing it with us. When you left Gyeongju, is this when you went to Germany to study?

Well, I actually studied for a half year more in South Korea. The actual brick-and-mortar building of Seoul National University was in Seoul, occupied by North Korean soldiers. The small school in Pusan was just a plain, wooden house serving as a temporary location of the university. We had only one professor in philosophy because many of the other professors from the university in Seoul were unable to cross the front line and had to stay on the western coast. So, I was studying there in Pusan and then this letter came from the German Foreign Minister addressed to the South Korean Foreign Minister. The German minister's letter said the Korean minister to Paris came to see him and described to him how dreary the situation was for students to finish in South Korea, and that they had decided to contribute four stipends from the German government. They were for physics, chemistry, mathematics, and I can't remember the last one, but there was no philosophy. At any rate, four students would be given one year of stipend. You might think what happened next was good, and that it all worked out...but nothing is so easy.

The South Korean government is full of corrupt officials, in the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of War. They said, "What?! In this

war where our parents are dying, our brothers and sister are dying in their homes, you are luxurious enough to go to Germany and get a scholarship and study in Germany?! No, no, we are not going to issue the passport." Government officials were saying this. I mean, you even had to have some cash, at least \$50 or \$100, if you wanted to cross to Japan, let alone get to Germany. Then you have to pay for a hotel, for lunch, and so forth. But nothing, not even a single cent, was given to us. At least I had some toothpaste. I did end up getting accepted for the scholarship. Some of the other people who got the scholarships had family in some small industries, maybe the shoe industry, and could get something like \$50 or \$200 from the black market, but I only had about \$10 or \$15.

We were all sent to Germany and landed in Frankfurt, but we all went in four different directions—Heidelberg, Bonn, and so forth. We later found out that Korea had established a small consulate in Bonn, Germany. The boss of the Korean consulate found our telephone numbers and called us to say they were celebrating Christmas, and invited us to come over and have dinner together in Bonn for Christmas. So, about four months after landing in Germany, we all met in Bonn and had Christmas dinner there with the Korean consulate. That's where I found that the three other students who received the stipend were doing much better than me. They were in university dormitories, but I was foolish and didn't know the university could occasionally have that luxury. I was staying at some type of expensive lodging for elderly people that the university had put me in, and had stayed there for about three months. My stipend was \$60 per month and I used \$50 of that for the lodging, and so I only had \$10 of pocket money left to use for the street car from the lodging to the university.

After learning this in Bonn about my three other friends, I decided immediately after coming back to my university to tell them I wanted to move to the dormitory like the three other students on stipend. They were very shocked because they were well-paid by me with the \$50 per month, but they decided to just

reduce my payment to about \$35. But I was still unsatisfied, and so I stayed one more month with them and then moved out. After two more years, my scholarship ran out, and so I went to work in a rubber and floor-paving factory to help me pay the tuition, and altogether I spent four years there and earned my PhD in 1957.

When I returned to South Korea in 1958, I applied for a U.S. State Department Scholarship and was accepted to Yale as a Fulbright Scholar. I must have called about 80 telephone directories trying to track down Captain Sheehan to thank him for his help. His children eventually wrote back to me that he had died in the meantime.

4. So, you earned your PhD at Heidelberg University (even if at a higher rate than the other scholarship winners!) Was this where you first became interested in phenomenology or had you already learned about it?

Correct, my PhD was at Heidelberg. I arrived in Heidelberg in 1952 and finished in 1957. No, I hadn't known about phenomenology before this. I was traveling to Bonn and Hamburg, and maybe one or two other universities, and I found that those universities had specialists who were doing phenomenology. So, I didn't really study phenomenology in Germany, but after buying a few copies of books those specialists had written or that they had recommended, I came back to Seoul and started reading about it. Then, the American Embassy in Seoul gave me a more profuse stipend. The German state money was skimpy, but the American state money was more abundant. It was about \$300 per month in New Haven and Washington, and only \$60 in Germany—five times the pay.

My dissertation at Heidelberg was not on phenomenology. It was more Asian and European philosophy, about 50-50. Even though my PhD in Germany was not 100% on phenomenology, I met two or three very influential German professors who were known as experts on phenomenology. They later invited me after I finished my PhD and went to Seoul, especially this

professor of German phenomenology in Bonn, to come back to Germany to the international phenomenology conference. They invited me, a Korean, as the chief speaker.

5. Was this professor that invited you to Germany to give the keynote address someone who was involved on your dissertation? Your committee was pretty star-studded, including Karl Löwith and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Any interesting insider stories?

The professor that invited me was the chairperson of the philosophy department at the University of Bonn, but he was not on my committee. The dissertation committee was run by Karl Löwith. He has a very complicated and interesting story. I can recall some bits of it. During WWI, he volunteered as a German soldier—Löwith is Jewish. But at the age of eighteen or nineteen, he went as a German soldier on the front line between Germany and Italy. He was shot, and one of his lungs collapsed, and I remember it left him always slumped down to one side. Anyhow, he fought with Germany, and then later Hitler came to power. Hitler had decided that any German who had Jewish blood would be exempted from being able to become a German soldier. But since Löwith had served in the first world war as a German soldier, and had been shot, they thought he should serve in the second world war as one, and they would ignore the fact that he had Jewish blood.

Löwith was also in Munich as a student during WWI, when he was about nineteen or twenty, and Heidegger was very close by. Twice a week, maybe Tuesdays and Thursdays, I think, at 8:30 in the morning, he would go to Heidegger's house. Heidegger had a habit of eating a very early breakfast, and he would often eat breakfast together with Löwith, who was then becoming his young disciple. So, here was Heidegger and a German Jew eating breakfast together, and people suspected Heidegger of having prejudice against Jewish people. But when Hitler's dictatorship became much harsher, then Heidegger, even though up to then they had eaten breakfast together and maybe slept in the same room

with Löwith, decided to pretend not to know him at all. If he treated Löwith too well, then the Nazi's would treat Heidegger very badly. That was what he was afraid of.

When WWI was approaching, Hitler's party decided that Heidegger would become the president of Freiburg University. Löwith, my teacher, was writing a book at that time, and German officials were deciding whether that book should or shouldn't be sold in the German market. Heidegger said that it shouldn't be because he was Jewish. You see, a teacher who had loved his own excellent, distinguish student so much, with whom he had spent so much time together, suddenly changed his heart just like Hitler had changed his heart. That was the ugliness of those circumstances.

So, Löwith had to leave Germany. They promised to give him a decent position as professor at Munich University and so on. But that turned out to be a false promise, and when Löwith showed up, he was arrested and was kicked out of Germany. He went to Italy, but still he was attached to his old teacher, and he sent a book on Nietzsche he wrote to Heidegger with a greeting that said something like, "My teacher, I dedicate this to you." Heidegger didn't open that book and threw it into the fire. Gadamer heard about that and gave the message to Löwith, and so he knew how meanly he was treating him even after he left Germany. He had gone to Italy, but then Italy became fascist, too, and so Löwith left again and went as far away as he could go: to Japan. Germany, Italy, and Japan were fascist countries, and now Löwith had been in all of them, unwillingly, trying to *escape* fascism.

In 1945, when the war ended, it was Gadamer who wrote a letter to Löwith, who was then in South America. He said they had petitioned the German government where the University of Heidelberg was located that Löwith had given decent, patriotic service to Germany, and that he should be called back and restored to his old position. So, Gadamer had helped his old friend to become restored as a German professor.

6. As a student, you met with Heidegger once after you had done some work interpreting his works. What was that like? Were you nervous to meet such a prominent scholar who you had written about?

I did not really work with Heidegger, but just visited him that time, which was in January of 1957. But what I had written about Heidegger was liked by him so much that he spoke about it, saying that what I had written was, in his mind, very correct, and that I had an unbiased mind and was very fair.

Heidegger gave me more time than anybody else. My own teacher and his two other professors went to America, and on the way back they made a detour to meet Heidegger in Germany. At that point, they had found out that Heidegger had read my interpretation of him and had considered it a fair and correct interpretation. So, I was not nervous because he was very welcoming to me. I also had Gadamer, Löwith, and other famous German scholars on my side, and I had interpreted Heidegger's work in such a way that he had liked it.

7. After you earned your PhD, you went back to Seoul to become a professor. What took you back to Seoul?

That's where my wife was. And my home, my father, and everybody. It was very different from when I was first there as a student.

8. So, when you finished your PhD in 1957, you started working mostly on phenomenology. But your views and approach were influenced by your Eastern background, which differed from what might be called 'standard' phenomenology of the time. How do these two areas of your work relate?

They are inseparable. My unique philosophical position was being situated between East and West (I am not just for Heidegger!). I even altered Heidegger's views about how serious Daoism, Lao Tzu, and other Asian philosophies and philosophers should be taken. It is now pretty well recognized internationally that I did not just reinterpret Heidegger, but rather made Western philosophers give more serious respect to

Eastern philosophies like Daoism—maybe even more than some Daoists do! Professor Karsten Harries, a long-time and now retired professor at Yale, wrote in a review of my 1987 book *Bewußtsein und Natursein: Phänomenologischer West-Ost Diwan* that:

“As a Korean who, while deeply committed to Taoism, yet also demonstrates an extraordinary command of the phenomenological tradition...Cho is in a singular position to accomplish what he has set out to do. I only hope that the author's unusual placement between the Korean, the German, and the American philosophical communities will not prevent this thoughtful book from receiving the attention it deserves. Committed to a phenomenological approach, yet keenly aware of the shortcomings of traditional phenomenology, Professor Cho has a unique contribution to make to its further development.”

My treatment of Heidegger's philosophy, my treatment of Husserl's philosophy, and having to distinguish who is right between them are similarly interrelated. Heidegger has learned from me more than directly from Husserl himself. When somebody says that I am one of the many philosophers who are phenomenologists, the reason they will say that is it because I have developed Asian philosophy in such a way that Asian philosophy becomes more profoundly understandable because of my phenomenology and my reading of certain European scholars. This is my East-West comparative philosophy.

9. Can you tell me a little something about phenomenological ethnomethodology?

Let's ignore the first half and it may help. Maybe ten or twenty years ago, people didn't use the expression 'ethnomethodology' because they didn't understand it and it was not well defined. But now, so many people have tried to write or publish something resembling it. If you got rid of ethnomethodology, then there would only be one universal phenomenology. Germans do phenomenology, the French do it, some South Americans, and some Asians do it. But they do not do it all the same. For instance, this is oversimplified, but you

can say that Asians are waking up, and do not just repeat what they have picked up from the college or their dissertation. That would be mere imitation of famous phenomenologists. Instead of trying to repeat others, it is more uniquely Korean, for instance, or more uniquely Japanese, and not something that is more broadly applicable to all people. The same thing can be said of Japanese people, Korean people, and Chinese people. Now, I can say something totally different about Chinese phenomenology because Chinese people use their own Chinese script or characters, and it depends on the first or second or third generation Chinese scholars who have opened up the Chinese way of thinking about phenomenology. Now, doing that, we no longer just try to imitate but instead have our own ethnicity-based, unique way of doing phenomenology.

For example, so far, Japanese scholars doing phenomenology have been immediately recognized by European scholars. Let's say there are ten approaches; but now, the Japanese people go another way, and no longer just follow the popular Japanese way. You see, when I and my friend in Japan write on the same topic, of *feeling* say, we find quite different approaches not tried by the Japanese or by the Chinese. The Chinese can be criticized for basing their argument on the Chinese character. I think there are many problems with using Chinese characters so heavily. Even when you take, for example, money, or the way water or fire reacts, something that is universally applicable, our own way of thinking determines our habit of defining things in terms of our narrow confines. In any case, this idea of phenomenological method being non-universal, of it being influenced by ethnicity, is the basis of phenomenological ethnomethodology.

10. What eventually brought you to Buffalo from Seoul? Was Marvin Farber part of the draw?

Marvin Farber became a very big star and a very important figure in phenomenology. He was not only a phenomenologist, and had contributed to that field, but he also created the journal *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (PPR). That journal made him

famous and made Buffalo famous. So, yes, Farber was someone who was very influential in my coming to Buffalo, in more than one way.

Farber had a very interesting story. He learned philosophy first at Buffalo before going to Harvard. Before he came here to teach he also spent time in Vienna, and there is a lot of language there. When he was chair of the department of philosophy at Buffalo, he had a small philosophy department, and did not have people that were as famous and productive as the people at Yale and Harvard. But Farber was very ambitious and always wanted to do everything bigger and better. By around 1970, the largest philosophy department was here in Buffalo with around forty-one professors. University of Toronto had one more, but at two different campuses. He became President of the American Philosophical Association. He even made me chair of the Eastern division of the APA. He even left Buffalo for a few years from around 1961-1964 to become the chair of the philosophy department at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He expanded their department to become very large as well.

While Farber was at Penn was the time I spent in the U.S., mostly at Yale, as a Fulbright scholar, and these years marked a turning point in my career. As I left Korea for America, my teacher told me that while I was at Yale, I could probably go to Pennsylvania, and that I should go and say hello to Professor Farber because he had met him a year ago on the same trip. In the early spring of 1962, Yale organized a bus tour for Fulbright scholars that took us through New York to Washington D.C., and we stopped for lunch during the trip at the University of Pennsylvania. I suddenly remembered that Farber, this Professor widely known as the editor of PPR who my teacher told me to see, was teaching there. I asked around for where his office was and someone pointed me to his door. When I approached, his door was wide open and I saw this dignified elderly gentleman sitting behind a large desk, and he had his legs up, spread across the table. I told him I had received my PhD in Germany, and who my teacher was. But as soon as I had introduced myself,

he asked me point blank, “What do you think of Heidegger?” I don’t know what impression it left on him, but my honest and straightforward answer just slipped out of my mouth. Unbeknownst to me, this brief encounter and my answer to him set the course of my life for the foreseeable future.

Some years later, in the summer of 1967, I was moving to Buffalo to extend my stay in the U.S. as a Fulbright scholar for one more year. When I wrote to Farber, who had been serving as the President of the APA and had moved back to Buffalo from Penn, he seemed to show an exceptional interest in my visit. Though he knew I would only be in Buffalo for a year, he set me up with an office space, and entrusted me with some editorial work on his journal, PPR. A year passed quickly, and as I was packing my books Farber tried to stop me. In a serious tone he asked me to reconsider going back to Korea because of the danger of war. He mentioned he had to think about his retirement soon, and that it would be desirable for me to stay in Buffalo to teach.

I explained to him that the Fulbright program required me to return to my home institution and teach at least double the number of years I spent in the U.S. I also thought that Buffalo was too famous and rich a school for me, anyhow. During the next year while I was back in Seoul, I received no less than thirteen letters from Farber. He was insistent and even wrote to the President of Seoul National University asking for my release. He implied that I was needed more urgently in Buffalo and could also do more productive work in my field by living in the U.S. Eventually, I was allowed to leave Seoul after only that one year and moved to Buffalo! I still have those letters somewhere.

So, I became professor at Seoul National University because of Farber, and I became one of the additional members who were added onto the University at Buffalo because of Farber.

11. Any projects you’re hoping to finish up with your well-deserved time off since retirement?

I still have maybe four or five books to finish in my retirement. I have to get rid of my house as well, that I have been living in since 1974. It’s a very good house, and the area is very good. But that is also something I have to do. If I can sell that house, then I will stay at my daughter’s house in Cincinnati. I will try to write my books there, but I am getting lazier and lazier!

In Memory of Jiyuan Yu

In the late Fall of 2016, the Philosophy Department was extremely saddened by the news that long-time colleague, mentor, and friend to many in the department, Professor **Jiyuan Yu**, had lost his battle with cancer. Jiyuan passed away on Thursday, November 3, 2016 in hospice care in Buffalo at the age of 52. He is survived by his wife Yajie Zhang, son Norman Yu, mother Youqing Zhao, and three brothers. A memorial service was held on Friday, February 3, 2017 at the UB Center for the Arts, where Jiyuan’s family, friends, and current and former colleagues and students from the UB Philosophy Department, the UB Confucius Institute, and beyond, came together to celebrate Jiyuan’s life and work.



Jiyuan had been a member of the Philosophy Department at UB since 1997, and Director of the UB Confucius Institute since 2013. He had an international reputation for his work in ancient Greek philosophy, classical Chinese philosophy, and comparative philosophy.

Jiyuan was born in Zhuji, Zhejiang, China, on July 5 1964. Entering academics early, Jiyuan attended the highly competitive Shandong University in 1979 at the age of 15. According to Jiyuan, his high school instructors decided he should study philosophy, though at the time he knew little of the field. While at Shandong,

however, he discovered his calling, winning an award his senior year for an essay on Plato. From 1983-86, he worked towards a master's degree at Renmin University in China, studying with the scholar of Greek philosophy, MIAO Litian. From 1986-89 he stayed on at the RUC Department of Western Philosophy, serving as both graduate student and professor. He continued his studies abroad at Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa in Italy, before receiving his doctorate from University of Guelph in Canada in 1994. From 1994-1997, he conducted post-doctoral research at Oxford University in the U.K. as a member of Wolfson College and the Institute for Chinese Studies.

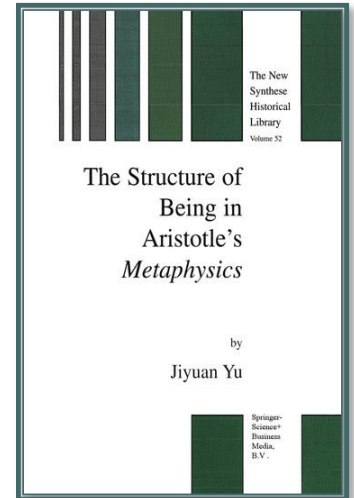
During his time at UB, Jiyuan rose to the rank of Full Professor, and was awarded both SUNY's Exceptional Scholar Award and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. He remained with the UB Philosophy Department until his passing, drawn by the intellectual freedom afforded by his position and UB's collaborative atmosphere, resulting in many fruitful joint projects with SUNY faculty. Jiyuan's inclination towards collaboration is perhaps best evidenced by his role as UB's Confucius Studies Director, where he was greatly successful in achieving the institute's aim of building a cultural bridge between China and the Western New York Region. He also served as president of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy, and held a visiting post as Changjiang Professor at Shandong University in Jinan, China.



Throughout his academic life, Jiyuan was an indefatigable scholar, publishing 10 books and 74 articles. While his early-career work focused mainly on ancient Greek philosophy, his later work attempted to juxtapose texts from the ancient Greek and classical Chinese traditions, with the goal of gaining new insights from comparative study. His scholarship frequently

triangulated insights from Greek and Chinese texts with contemporary philosophy as practiced in the English-speaking world, and combined a deep familiarity with technical aspects of classical texts with an emphasis on the richness of the philosophy they contained. His books written in English include: *The Ethics of Confucius and Aristotle: Mirrors of Virtue* (2009); *The Structure of Being in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (2003); *The Blackwell Dictionary of Philosophy* (co-authored with Nick Bunnin, 2004); and *A Dictionary of Western Philosophy* (co-authored with Nick Bunnin, 2001). His books in Chinese include: *Aristotle's Ethics* (2011); *Plato's Republic* (2009); and *Plato and Aristotle* (co-authored with Shizhang Tian, 1992). Jiyuan also worked with MIAO Litian on a Chinese translation of the complete works of Aristotle, providing one of the first Chinese translations of Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics* (1991); he also translated Gadamer's *Dialogue and Dialectic* (1991). His prodigious output and creativity will no doubt prove of lasting importance in discussions of Ancient Greek, Chinese, and Comparative Philosophy.

In addition to his prolific research achievements, Jiyuan was an inspiring and popular instructor at UB, drawing students regardless of discipline with his uplifting attitude and effortless ability to make philosophical topics compelling and relevant to their daily lives. His courses often emphasized thinking critically about human flourishing, providing a format in which he could guide students on a path of self-discovery through works of philosophy. His love for ancient philosophy inspired two decades of students at UB, and number of his former PhD students continue his work in the research and teaching of Greek and Chinese philosophy at universities around the world. At the time of his death, he was working on a project that would



bring together Daoism, Stoicism, and disease, focusing on the practical appeal of both philosophies for dealing with trauma. “What is important,” Jiyuan would tell his students in summary of the ancient ideal, “is not to live, but to live well, and to live well means to live happily.”

Professor Yu will be missed by all those who have had the pleasure of his company.



Administration News

The summer 2016 letter described the transformation the department went through with our administrative staff. Each administrative position saw a change in staff as we lost our Undergraduate Administrator, Patty Hahn, to a job change to the NYS thruway authority, and two long-time department staff members to retirement. Our graduate administrator for five years, Liz Felmet, transferred to the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Studies Program (IDS) as part of a phased retirement, and our Senior Staff and Assistant to the Chair for seven years, Theresa Monacelli, retired after over 20 years with the university. Since then, the department has acquired some new friendly faces in these administrative positions.

The department struggled a bit at first to replace Patty Hahn as Undergraduate Administrator, even hiring one of our own graduate students, Robert Kelly, for a short stint to help with administrative duties. The

department eventually lucked out and found **Tori Brady**, who came to us in Spring of 2017. Before coming to UB, Tori worked full-time for Heritage Christian Services, a human services agency serving developmentally challenged adults. The Undergraduate Program benefited greatly from having Tori at the helm. She has close to ten years of experience at Canisius College as the Administrative Associate for the Office of Multicultural Programs, and so was a vital addition to our staff. Unfortunately, Tori’s brief stint with us ended in May 2018 when she made the move to UB’s Crofts Hall to work in Human Resources. We wish Tori all the best!



We welcomed our new Undergraduate Administrator, Donna Smith, in September 2018.

After Liz Felmet’s retirement, Wendy Zitzka came to us from the Department of Psychology staff to serve as our Graduate Administrator during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years. Wendy transferred to the same position in the Department of Geography in the Spring of 2017.

The Spring of 2017 saw the arrival of our current Graduate Administrator, **Elizabeth Lesny**. Liz came to us from the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, where she served as Graduate Administrator for the Department of Computer Science and Engineering for twelve years. Before her position as Graduate Administrator for CSE, Liz served four years working with and overseeing graduate enrollment at UB in both the Graduate School and the Office of the Provost, as well as working as Program Aid in the School of Management. Needless to say, we were quite lucky to have acquired someone



with so much experience and familiarity with the ins and outs of managing graduate student affairs, and typically in much higher volume, too! Liz is a joy to have around the department. She works very hard to make sure the graduate students' needs are taken care of quickly and effectively, going out of her way to make things as easy on them as possible. And we are still waiting for the day that someone spots Liz in the department *without* a big, bright smile on her face!

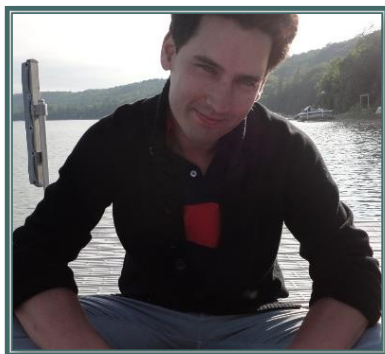
LaTonia Lattimore joined the department in the Fall of 2016 as our new Senior Staff and Assistant to the Chair. We were elated to have been able to add a familiar face in LaTonia. LaTonia came to us from the Accounts Payable staff at the UB Foundation office where she had worked with the philosophy department on numerous occasions, helping us to manage our many expenditures that go through UBF. LaTonia's wealth of knowledge and experience, her kindheartedness, and her dedication to the faculty and students has been such a delightful addition to the department. It's rare to find someone who is both so good at their job and also brings such an uplifting attitude to work. We are fortunate to have found that with LaTonia.



Department News

Visiting Assistant Professor: Devlin Russell

For the 2017-2018 academic year, the department was pleased to welcome **Devlin Russell** as Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Devlin received his PhD from the University of Toronto in 2016. His main research is in ethics and the philosophy of action,



with an emphasis on the nature of intention. Devlin taught four undergraduate courses in value theory: *Introduction to Ethics* (Fall 2017), *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art* (Fall 2017), *Contemporary Moral Problems* (Spring 2018), and *Environmental Ethics* (Spring 2018). Devlin also taught a graduate seminar in Spring of 2018, *Intention*, surveying the major positions and debates surrounding the nature of intention and intentional action, and led an independent study on practical reason during the previous semester with graduate student **Botan Dolan** (fourth-year PhD). Devlin was an active member of the department during his time with us, attending our department colloquia and lunchtime talks, the law school colloquia on free will, department tea time, and graduate student reading group meetings. Devlin and his fiancé Gabriela were married in June 2018 and we wish Devlin the best of luck in his future endeavors, academic and otherwise!

Clinical Lecturer Position Created

Starting in the Fall of 2019, the department will see the introduction of a new Teaching Clinical Assistant Professor position, which will have an applied ethics teaching focus and carry a 4/4 load covering *Environmental Ethics*, *Professional Ethics*, *Biomedical Ethics*, *Contemporary Moral Problems*, and some first-year undergraduate courses under UB's recently adopted curriculum ("UB Seminars").

Our hiring committee (Professors David Braun, Alex King, Lewis Powell, Barry Smith, and committee chair David Hershenov) will conduct a search starting in 2019, combing through many highly qualified candidates' applications, and bring in the top prospects to do a teaching demonstration during the summer before making their final decision. The Clinical Lecturer position will be year-to-year and renewable, and we hope that it will bring further attention to our growing strength in applied ethics, especially in conjunction with the newly revived Romanell Center for Clinical Ethics and Philosophy of Medicine.

Department Makeover

The department underwent somewhat of a facelift during the 2017-2018 year, which included both a new color scheme in the hallways and the addition of a large mural on the wall outside of the main office (pictures embedded). The office doors and some of the main walls in the department were given new paint jobs, adding a perse trim in the place of the old teal-green. We may not have lost the industrial office look that UB is so fond of, but let's be honest, who doesn't



love a new paint job? What's more, we have the new mural to bring some added flavor to the department's look. Our chair **Neil Williams** showed his craft skills, putting up the wall-sized mural of Raphael's painting, "The School of Athens," which now greets everyone who comes into Park Hall from the Flint Loop entrance. Neil says he'll give philosophy a few more

years before he decides if he wants to leave us to start his own wallpapering show on the DIY Network.

In addition to the department color scheme and the beautiful new mural, the Graduate Philosophy Association used some of its remaining 2017-2018 funds to revitalize the department "grad lounge" with a brand-new coffee table and rug, some board games, and a coffee station (pictures embedded). The GPA hopes that the new set-up will help to create a more inviting environment in the grad lounge as a way of promoting and strengthening the sense of community among the graduate body.



Philosophy Department Tea Time

Alex King continues to hold the weekly 'tea time' during the semester, where graduate students and faculty come together in a relaxed environment to enjoy

baked goods and an assortment of tea options while they chat, joke, discuss current events, share stories, and, on occasion, talk philosophy. Alex's past "tea lackey", graduate student **John Beverley**, has since moved to Northwestern, and so graduate student **Angela Menditto** (fourth-year PhD) has taken over in assisting tea time organization.

Buffalo Philosophical Society

The last issue described the efforts of graduate students **Robert Kelly** (fifth-year PhD) and **David Limbaugh** (PhD 2018) in revitalizing the undergraduate philosophy club, the Buffalo Philosophical Society, which has held meetings once or twice a month since the Fall of 2015. During the meetings, undergraduates and graduates convene to discuss various philosophical topics over pizza. Robert and David sought to provide a space where young people could come together to do—and to learn to do—philosophy. Robert and David ultimately wanted the undergraduates to eventually take over organization of the club and begin a tradition of maintaining a strong undergraduate philosophy community, centered partly around the club, and passing the torch down year after year. MA student **Danielle Limbaugh** took over Robert's position as co-organizer during the 2017-2018 year. She and David led another successful year of meetings and successfully organized the transition of leadership to two outstanding undergraduate philosophy majors for the current 2018-2019 year: **Gianna Florentino** and **Justin Sadowski**. Gianna also serves as the 2018-2019 College Ambassador for the College of Arts and Sciences.

UB Graduate Student Philosophy Conference

With the help of some departmental funding, the Graduate Philosophy Association will hold its inaugural graduate philosophy conference in Fall 2018. The GPA members have been discussing their desire to hold a grad conference for a number of years now, and they are happy that this Fall semester will finally put one in

the books. Much of the credit for really taking the initiative on getting the project going during the 2017-2018 year was owed to the eager spirits of then-first-year PhD students **Eric Merrell** and **Jonathan Vajda**, and first-year MA student **SeongSoo Park**. Still, they have received invaluable assistance from some more senior GPA members, fourth-year PhD students **Botan Dolan** and **Francesco Franda**, and fifth-year PhD student **Shane Hemmer**. The GPA and the conference organizers look forward to a wonderful first conference, and hope to continue this tradition well into the future. Of course, thanks is owed to Neil Williams and the philosophy department, as well as the UB Graduate Student Association and the Graduate Philosophy Association, who have all sponsored the event. See the page 72 of the "Fall Events" section for more details about the conference itself.

Family Updates

Graduate student **J. Neil Otte** (seventh-year PhD) and his partner, **Tarah Lee Theoret**, welcomed their first child, Wyatt Theoret Otte, on May 23rd, 2017. Presently, Neil is writing a dissertation on the ontology of moral psychology, and Tarah is the Director of Community Engagement for NetGalley and Bookish. The family is doing well after a busy first year.



Graduate students **David Limbaugh** and **Danielle Limbaugh** were married on October 29, 2016 at Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown Buffalo. Much of the philosophy department attended, and we took over the dance floor at the reception! Professor Hershenov subsequently dubbed graduate student Robert Kelly 'Crazy Legs Kelly' for his moves on the dance floor. David defended in September 2018 and began a post doc in ontology with Barry Smith starting the Fall 2018. Danielle completed the MA program in Spring 2018 and started the PhD program in philosophy at Cornell in Fall 2018. They made the move to Ithaca, NY in early August, but we expect many visits as they won't be far away!



in the festivities and made sure that Uriah and Carissa had UB Philosophy support on their special day!



Professor **Ryan Muldoon** and his wife **Sarah** (Assistant Professor, UB Department of Mathematics) welcomed their first child, Ava, on June 27, 2016.

Student Updates

New Students of 2016

Ph.D. Program

Federico Borsotti (MA University of Milan)

Philosophy of Language, Metaphysics, Logic, Epistemology

Ta-Yuan (Scott) Luan (BA Chang Gung University, Taiwan; MA National Central University, Taiwan)

Theory of Artifacts, Ontology, Philosophy of Law

Joshua Merlo (BA Franciscan University Steubenville)

Aquinas, Leibniz, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Religion

Athanasios Spiliotakaras (MScR University of Edinburgh; BA University of Athens)

Hegel, German Idealism, Marx, Lukacs, Adorno, Aesthetics, Critical Theory



Graduate student **Uriah Burke** (fourth-year PhD) and his fiancé **Carissa Tobe** were married on June 2, 2018 at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Glandorf, Ohio. Graduate student **Eric Merrell** made the trip to Ohio to partake



M.A. Program

Danielle Limbaugh (*BA/JD University at Buffalo*)
Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Law, Ethics, Metaphysics

Connor McMahon (*BA Rochester Institute of Technology*)
Philosophy of Language, Epistemology

New Students of 2017Ph.D. Program

Alexander Anderson (*BA/MA Franciscan University of Steubenville*)
Philosophy of Science, Political Philosophy, History of Philosophy, and Metaphysics

Daniel Kelly (*BA/MA/EdM University at Buffalo*)
Kant, History of Philosophy, Metaphysics

Eric Merrell (*BA Juniata College*)
Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, Kant

Bhavya Gopal Sharma (*MA Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India; MA Central European University, Hungary*)
Consciousness, Eastern Philosophy, Advaita Vedanta, Buddhism, Ethics, Mysticism

Jonathan Vajda (*BA Central Michigan University; MA Westminster Theological Seminary; MA Western Michigan University*)
Early Modern, Metaphysics, Ethics

M.A. Program

Hajhosseini Faegheh (*BA University of Tehran*)
History of Philosophy, Existentialism (Heidegger), German Idealism, Religious Studies

Seong Soo Park (*BA/MA Sungkyunkwan University*)
Philosophy of Language, Logic, Metaethics, Metaphysics

New Students of 2018Ph.D. Program

Carter Benson (*BA University at Buffalo*)
Epistemology, Ethics, Metaphilosophy

Austin Liebers (*BA St. Lawrence University*)
Philosophy of Language

M.A. Program

Ram Batta (*BS, Chemistry, Union College; MBA, Healthcare Management, Union College*)
Bioethics, Eastern Philosophy, Nature of Suffering

Zihe Luo

Graduates of 2016-2017Ph.D. Conferrals

Brendan Cline
Valuing a Normatively Inert World

Thomas Gezella
Education for Adults: Levinas and the Philosophy of Education

Michael Gifford
Exploring Realism and Truth

Rasmus Rosenberg Larsen
Pathologizing Evil: A Critique of Modern Psychopathy Research

Deacon Newhouse
Everyday Aesthetics: A Deweyan Ecological Perspective

M.A. Conferrals

John Beverley

Jamie Ranney

Emma Siuciak

Graduates of 2017-2018

Ph.D. Conferrals

Jon Houston

Going Over the Dark Places: A Philosophical Model of Fitness-Maximizing, Highly Interconnected Systems in Highly Dynamic Environments

David Limbaugh (Sept. 2018)

The Flexibility of Reality: An Essay on Modality, Representation, and Powers

Yuichi Minemura

A Metaphysical Analysis of the Contemporary Brain Death Controversies

Michael Moran

Rethinking Aristotle's Theory of Friendship in the Internet Age

M.A. Conferrals

Danielle Limbaugh

Angela Menditto

Seong Soo Park

Student Publications

Francesco Franda had his co-authored ontology paper, "SNOMED CT Standard Ontology Based on the Ontology for General Medical Science," accepted for publication in *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making*. The paper was co-authored with Shaker El-Sapagh, Farman Ali, and Kyung-Sup Kwak, and will appear in a Fall 2018 issue of the journal.

Robert Kelly co-authored a paper with fellow grad student David Limbaugh entitled, "Libet and Freedom

in a Mind-Haunted World," which appeared in the journal *American Journal of Bioethics-Neuroscience* [Vol. 9, Issue 1 – March 2018]. Robert also co-authored a commentary with Professor Barry Smith entitled, "Comments on: Untimely Meditations on the Relation between Self and Non-Self," which will appear in the anthology *Paolo Bozzi's Experimental Phenomenology* [I. Bianchi & R. Davies (eds.), Routledge, 2019].

David Limbaugh had his Romanell Conference paper "The Harm of Medical Disorder as Harm in the Damage Sense" accepted to the journal *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* [Forthcoming 2018]. David also co-authored "Libet and Freedom in a Mind-Haunted World" with Robert Kelly [AJOB-Neuroscience, March 2018].

Jake Monaghan has been very busy (and very successful) the last two years, with five papers either published or forthcoming. Jake's paper from UConn's Political Violence Workshop, "The Special Moral Obligations of Law Enforcement," appeared in *Journal of Political Philosophy* [Vol. 25, Issue 2 – March 2017], and his paper "Killing in Self-Defense: The Case for Biocentric Individualism" appeared in the journal *Environmental Values* [Vol. 27, Issue 2 – April 2018]. Jake also had his paper "On Enforcing Unjust Laws in a Just Society" accepted to the journal *Philosophical Quarterly* [Forthcoming 2018], and his paper "Biological Ties and Biological Accounts of Moral Status" accepted to *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* [Forthcoming 2018]. Finally(!), Jake's experimental philosophy paper, "Epistemic Closure in Folk Epistemology," co-authored with Professor James Beebe, appeared in *Oxford Studies in Experimental Epistemology, Vol. 2* [J. Knobe, T. Lombrozo, and S. Nichols (eds.), OUP, 2018].

Ariane Nomikos had her paper "Place Matters" accepted to *Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism* [Vol. 76, Issue 4 – Fall 2018].

Paul Poenicke co-authored a paper with Michel Croce (Edinburgh) entitled, "Testing What's at Stake: Defending Stakes Effects for Testimony," which appeared in the journal *Teorema* [Vol. 36, Issue 3 – Fall 2017].

Student Reading Groups

The **History of Early Modern Philosophy** (or “HEMP”) reading group begins its inaugural year in Fall 2018. Graduate student **Angela Menditto** (fourth-year PhD) is the founder and co-organizer and was motivated to start the group because of her research in the history of philosophy, especially her work on the philosophy of mathematics in the early modern philosophers. Graduate student **Josh Merlo** (fourth-year PhD), who works on Leibniz’s metaphysics and philosophy of religion, is co-organizing the group with Angela. The group will start with monthly meetings and plans to meet at off-campus locations to discuss important works in the history of early modern. Topics will range widely and vary according to group membership and interest. The HEMP reading group looks forward to a great first year!

The **Marxist Reading Group** was started by Professor **Richard Cohen** in 2013, who has moved to the Department of Jewish Thought. Professor Cohen still takes part in co-organizing the reading group, but the group is primarily run by graduate students. **Thanos Spiliotakaras** (third-year PhD) and **Russell Gilbert** (UB undergrad, philosophy) are the current student organizers of the reading group. Past student organizers were UB alums Chris Buckman, Tony Fay, and Tom Gezella. Presently, the group meets every three weeks to discuss Marxist philosophy in general, but with emphasis on classic texts. Tests from Marx and Engels have been a primary focus, but other texts covered include works from Rosa Luxemburg, Georg Lukacs, and the Frankfurt School, including Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin and Marcuse, and others. The group has brought speakers out, including Loren Goldner in 2015.

Student Interview: Rasmus Rosenberg Larsen

Rasmus Rosenberg Larsen received both his MA and his PhD in Philosophy from UB, defending his dissertation in June 2017. His research focuses primarily on the philosophy of medicine, with a particular

emphasis on psychopathy and other personality disorders. He approaches these issues from both an ethical as well as a formal and applied ontological perspective, while also incorporating his

background in continental philosophy through the application of Kierkegaard’s work on human psychology. As a graduate student at UB, Rasmus published two papers on Kierkegaard, won three department-wide awards (two for best paper, one for citizenship), was awarded two dissertation fellowships, and accumulated over \$15,000 in other research grants and scholarships. Rasmus is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Forensic Science Program at the University of Toronto, Mississauga, where he has taught classes on the Philosophy of Art, Forensic Psychopathology, and the Psychology of Evil.



1. How did your interest in philosophy first arise? You studied philosophy as an undergraduate, but at Copenhagen Business School which, from my search of their website, only seems to have “BSc in Business Administration and Philosophy” as their listed majors related to philosophy. What was it like studying philosophy at a business school? Did you enter CBS already interested in philosophy or did this interest arise there?

My entry into philosophy is both strange and comically accidental. I entered the BSc program in 2008 at the Copenhagen Business School with the intention of getting a degree that could propel my business career. As you might remember, in 2007-2008 the world was hit by one of the biggest financial crises in history. Many people lost their jobs and entrepreneurs were literally bankrupt from one day to the other. Regrettably, I was among the less fortunate in this turn of events. Since 2003 I had been averagely successful

with a couple of start-up projects and was at the time the crisis hit running three different companies. These assets evaporated when clients stopped paying and suppliers couldn't deliver. So, when I applied for the program in 'business administration and philosophy', it was more an erratic reach than a well-planned life decision. When I think back, I guess I just needed to turn the soil, and an education seemed like a clever choice.

Was I interested in philosophy before I entered the program? Not at all! To qualify this first you have to understand my background. I don't think I'm insulting anyone when I say that I come from a very non-philosophical part of Denmark, for the lack of a better euphemism. Even though education is free in Denmark, it was relatively rare that people from my town and generation went to university; it was high school at most or some trade school, say, masonry or carpentry. As a teenager we didn't engage with intellectual material of any sort. We went fishing and played soccer as kids, and when we got older we drank and loitered on the weekends. Book clubs and philosophical conversations were as rare as ethnic food sections, if you know what I mean. This background meant that when I entered university in 2008 – aged 27 – I had absolutely no clue what the subject philosophy was about, let alone the meaning of the word. I didn't even know who Socrates was. Never heard his name! University was therefore a cultural and a personal tremor to me. I vividly remember my first philosophy lecture. It was on Plato's dialogue Parmenides. I was, to put it mildly, profoundly confused. The only thing I knew about the text in front of me was that it was old. So here I was sitting in a class with 19-year-old freshmen, who, different from myself, could actually have a sensible discussion on Plato, feeling more ignorant than ever before. It must have been quite a sight.

Aside from the uncomfortable feeling of ignorance and inadequacy, philosophy did trigger my curiosity. I couldn't believe that there was this immense world of ideas out there that had completely escaped my attention. Very soon, philosophy became close to the only

thing that occupied my mind. I was reading well beyond the assigned material, and I never wasted a chance for philosophical exchanges. That is, as a recently bankrupt adult and newly admitted student, I naturally had bills and rent to pay; and therefore, also a full-time job to attend to. Not everything in my life could be about philosophy. So, in order to keep my job, I would skip the classes I found tiresome such as "business history" or "strategic aspects of economy", and only show up for the philosophy classes. I literally dodged the office where I was working as a sales executive, faking some business meeting in the city, and biked over to the university 5-10 minutes away. When class ended a couple of hours later I would return to the office as if nothing particular had happened. After a while my employer caught on to me, and I cut a deal for a good part-time position supplemented with a scholarship from the Danish government. This more balanced approach made it possible for me to graduate with reasonable grades. I think my college-days were fairly different from what most people experience.

Having said this, the program at CBS was, and is today, still rather popular. The program mixes interesting philosophical topics with practical affairs, such as, business aesthetics and business ethics, and also contextualizes the history of philosophy in relation to the economic development. For example, it's difficult to make proper sense of Søren Kierkegaard or Karl Marx without also understanding the different socio-economic backgrounds they came from. Kierkegaard was a spoiled brat with the luxury of contemplating, say, authenticity, when smoking Venezuelan pipe tobacco and sipping dark coffee with loads of sugar at posh cafés, where the young Marx was immediately encouraged to look outwards at the systematic suppression of a feudalistic workforce pushed involuntarily into a capitalistic rat race. Their idea of ethics is radically different, and one way to make sense of this is to see it in a socio-economic scope.

2. There is a common (but false) belief that philosophy is a dead-end career choice. So, I am always curious about the kind of support young people

receive from their families when they inform them that they plan to pursue a graduate degree in philosophy. Was your family supportive of your choice or did you face some reluctance?

As I mentioned, I come from a rather non-intellectual background, so on a fundamental level I think it was difficult for my family to even conceptualize what I was doing. But they truly supported the idea of ‘getting a degree’, whatever job opportunities I was pursuing. I eventually became the first in my entire family tree to receive a Ph.D., so that alone speaks to how ‘graduate school’ was something very foreign to my family. On the other hand, my move from Denmark to Buffalo must have seemed peculiar to people around me, though, my friends and family never showed anything but support for this life-decision. My older brother especially was very understanding. We were actually running a business together when I moved to the US, and he just took it all on his shoulders without a peep. I often think about that with a mixed conscience.

3. What was it that drew you to UB’s philosophy program, some 4,000 miles away from home, after you finished your B.A.? Were there particular faculty members you really wanted to work with or was it something else about the program?

It’s perhaps a bit embarrassing to admit, but what drew me to Buffalo was the vicinity to Toronto and New York City. Geographically, that is. A couple of my friends from Denmark had recently moved to Toronto and NYC respectively, so I literally looked at the map and found Buffalo approximately in between. Not really the story of an engaged, aspiring student, but it’s the bare fact. You see, I actually never planned for a career in philosophy. I think I had some vague idea that I would become a writer after graduate school, and if that didn’t work out, I would simply go back to my uncannily normal life as a salesman. It was indeed a nonchalant, and in retrospect an extremely privileged, approach to it all, but to me it was about the adventure, and less about becoming an academic. My

path into philosophy had already taken me away from the capitalistic treadmill, and I was now living a long-standing dream of moving to America thanks to this accidental turn of events back in 2007-2008.

I actually often think about my application to UB. I think it included a decent paper on Husserl, as well as some undistinguished letters from mostly unknown Danish philosophers. And my GRE score was terrible. Eventually, UB was the only Ph.D. program that accepted me. If they haven’t given me this break, god knows what I would’ve been doing today. I’m so incredibly grateful of the faculty that it’s difficult for me to verbalize!

4. If I’m not mistaken, you started out at UB working in the continental tradition, focusing a lot on Kierkegaard and existentialism, before eventually shifting gears to doing work (and a dissertation) that falls more squarely in the analytic tradition. Tell us about your early interests in Kierkegaard and continental philosophy.

That’s correct. For most of my grad studies I identified as a ‘continental philosopher’. Today, I just call myself a ‘philosopher’. Initially, I found in Kierkegaard the personification of what I thought was a ‘true’ philosopher. It was certainly an idolization of some sort. Kierkegaard rejected the establishment – aka orthodox Christianity and Hegelianism – and in doing so he was so awfully polemical that it is both fascinating and humorous to read. He despised all sorts of authority, viewing various knowledge-paradigms as mere social constructions built on little less than ignorance. Especially the institution of organized intellectualism, that is, academia, was to him a cruel joke. So, when Kierkegaard says that a professor is a mere “thinker without a paradox,” we should read it as mockery. Most professors were sophists in Kierkegaard’s eyes.

Aside from the abundance of provocations, Kierkegaard was engaged with what I saw as ‘real’ issues, questions such as, why do many people have faith in a god? What is ‘the self’? How can you know what is

right and wrong? Why do we feel despair and anxiety? Even though I have shelved Kierkegaard for now, I still think these are some of the most interesting questions, not only in philosophy, but to life in general. And Kierkegaard's incredible corpus seemed like an almost infinite source for approaching these questions.

It should be mentioned that I still find myself returning to the lessons I drew from Kierkegaard's writings, particularly his insights on human psychology. For example, I think Kierkegaard was right in pointing out that one can never posit a value judgment without it also having an element of radical belief. To Kierkegaard, all value judgments are purely subjective, so there's no external facts one can rely on. Normativity is simply a system that builds on faith. And if you follow a paradigm of normative rules, say, deontology, utilitarianism, Christendom – pick your favorite – without also realizing and admitting to yourself that this is, indeed, a self-imposed belief, then you're simply being ignorant at best or self-deceiving at worst. This is why the concept of 'faith' was so important to Kierkegaard. Not because it was a central aspect of Christianity, but because he thought it was an inescapable human condition. There's a reason why many compare Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

5. When your research was still focused on continental philosophy you worked a lot with Professor Cho, who has just recently retired after a long and successful career. What was your experience like working with Cho? I've heard from other students that he has tons of great stories. Is that true?

Yes, I worked a lot with Master Cho. He was my mentor, dear friend, and intellectual hero throughout my graduate studies. And he does, indeed, have a lot of stories. Aside from his academic achievements, which speaks for itself, his life is so rich on experiences that it's hard to wrap your head around. Born in 1927, he grew up in Korea, which at that time was occupied by the Japanese Empire. This meant forced labor and poor access to food, let alone education – especially when WWII started. After the war, tensions grew

between the North and the South as the peninsula was divided between the West and the Soviet. Cho and his wife managed to escape the hardship of the North, migrating across the newly established border settling down in Seoul. He attended the Seoul National University with the dream of becoming an aero engineer. However, the war had brought many sanctions to Asia, and aero engineering was among the banned subjects at universities throughout the region. So, as he often jokes, he picked another equally "airy" subject, namely, philosophy.

After Cho finished his undergraduate studies, he was admitted into the Ph.D. program at the prestigious Heidelberg University in Germany, moving from one war torn country to another. It must have been quite a challenge for a young Korean man to migrate to the epicenter of European tensions. But Cho is a remarkable man, "feeling at home almost anywhere," as he has often told me. Though, I can't help thinking that he must have had to deal with profound racism and social pessimism every single day. Nevertheless, he managed to finish his degree with distinction, which made the famous and late UB professor, Marvin Farber, personally head-hunt Cho for the position in Buffalo.

At Heidelberg, Cho studied under Karl Löwith and Hans-Georg Gadamer, the former ending up being his dissertation advisor. He also met Martin Heidegger on several occasions. These acquaintances are enough to make most contemporary 'continental' students dizzy, and I haven't even mentioned his connections and stories about Jürgen Habermas, Peter Sloterdijk, Ludwig Landgrebe, and the likes. I can highly recommend reading Cho's article "The Way of Philosophy as Paideia," where he muses on the relationship between Löwith, Gadamer, and Heidegger, which he was fortunate to experience first-hand. Today, not many people are alive to tell this story.

6. Speaking of continental vs. analytic philosophy, I have never quite understood what exactly is supposed to be the difference. For a while, I just settled on it coming down to obscure prose containing

difficult-to-parse arguments vs. straightforward arguments with clearly defined terms. I fear this is very naïve. Could you clear up this distinction for me?

I don't think it's wrong to trivialize the distinction between 'continental' and 'analytic' philosophy. To me it's also an odd aspect of contemporary philosophy. To paraphrase my friend and fellow student at UB, Harjeet Parmar, who was one of the first to open my eyes on this issue: "There are only good and bad philosophers." Meaning, either you do philosophy or you don't. Whether you seek your inspiration from 'continental' or 'analytic' thinkers – or both – is rather irrelevant. Further, where you might be able to define 'analytic' philosophy with a decent amount of precession, I don't think there's any clearly demarcated philosophical paradigm that can be labelled 'continental'. Actually, most so-called 'continental' philosophers today seem to agree on this. Perhaps the term 'continental' was invented by early 'analytic' thinkers to position themselves in the greater philosophical gamut. Either way, I tend to agree with the philosopher, Dan Zahavi, that it is a rather obscure distinction with unfortunate, non-trivial ramifications for philosophy as a whole. In my view, it pushes some students to spend time on debating which "side" is in the right, instead of engaging with the philosophical problems on their own terms.

Having said that, I think there are traceable patterns in the different interests and approaches we find in various philosophical paradigms. But this doesn't only boil down to a bifurcated split ala 'continental' vs. 'analytic' philosophy. It's much more diverse and detailed than this. However, one stereotypical way in which we might speak of 'continental' philosophy is when it's used synonymously with 'phenomenology', a methodological approach initially parsed out by Edmund Husserl, which heavily influenced European philosophy for the better part of the 20th century. With the risk of here simplifying things, one might think of phenomenology as a radical break with Cartesian philosophy, the idea that all philosophical problems are purely

rational, computational problems. To put it in mundane terms, phenomenologists think that there's an important way in which our subjective condition – for example, that we have a body or a particular predicament – influences the way we think, where a purely Cartesian approach ignores these concerns and just thinks about whatever issue is rationally conceived. For example, in ethics the phenomenological approach is primarily occupied with discussing the foundations, namely, how and why ethics appears as a genuine subjective concern, where the analytic ethics often discuss concrete moral intuitions. But to a phenomenologist, intuitions are not to be trusted for their face value; intuitions are never free of one's condition or prejudice; there's no such thing as a truly rational consideration of a moral situation. Therefore, one can easily see how so-called 'continental' and 'analytic' philosophers often clash on a philosophical issue. To me, however, the problem is that once you've genuinely studied the two approaches, the difference between them collapses, or better, it synthesizes. When I do work in value theory, I borrow from both sides of the "gulf", choosing whatever I find the most convincing argument. Most of the times both sides have interesting perspectives.

7. What was it that ultimately turned you to the dark side of analytic philosophy? I know you ended up doing a dissertation with Barry Smith (who claims to not really do philosophy) on psychopathology from the perspective of the ontology of medicine. Did Barry or his courses have any influence on your change to a more formal, analytic topic and method?

Barry is probably the one that has had the largest influence on my short time in philosophy. I find myself reluctantly agreeing with almost everything he says. It can be quite frustrating at times actually. I often joke among friends that Barry ruined philosophy for me. I came into philosophy fascinated by the many speculative aspects we find in our field, and Barry unapologetically forced me to think scientifically, which consequently leaves out many of said speculative aspects.

He did this in such a convincing manner that I find speculation significantly less appealing now, that is, I'm no longer fascinated by philosophical issues and explanations that can never be falsified or in any systematic, empirical way substantiated. Do people have a soul? I'm not sure I care much. Are there moral facts? Go fish! Of course, I'm partly joking, but I have become more pragmatic in my philosophical approach, that is, carefully orienting my work in such a way that it can be empirically relevant.

Barry's intellectual influence on me was actually long coming. Though my very first class at UB was one of Barry's ontology courses, it wasn't necessarily love at first sight, so to speak. In class, he asked the students to raise their hand if they had done work on ontology. I raised my hand and told him I wrote my bachelor thesis on Heidegger's notion of ontology. Barry just smiled and said "that is not ontology," while he casually moved on to the next student. I was fuming and taken back by what I interpreted as arrogant behavior. Later that semester, Barry asked me if I wanted to do work with him and his group, and I answered that I wasn't done "flirting with continental philosophy." I didn't return to formal ontology until 4 years later. And as I later found out, Barry is certainly not arrogant! If anything, he's wholeheartedly genuine and honest. There's a big difference in my book.

8. In your dissertation, you critique the existing research methods and concepts used to investigate the clinical term 'psychopathy' and try to suggest a better way to think about and empirically investigate this issue, grounded (at least partly) in the use of formal ontology as a way to understand the core psychological and biomedical entities surrounding psychopathology in general. Can you tell us more about your dissertation so I can better understand what exactly I just said?

Actually, that's a pretty good recap of what I broadly intended to do in my dissertation. Whether I succeeded is another story. As I recently told my advisor from Denmark, René Rosfort, if I had to write my

dissertation again, I would change everything. I guess that's a good thing. It could mean that I've become more insightful. Of course, it could also mean that I'm just confused.

More specifically, I wrote my dissertation on the concept of 'psychopathy', that is, a personality disorder that psychiatrists associate with antisocial behavior and cunning personality traits; in short, so-called 'psychopaths' are pathologically evil persons. My dissertation was largely critical of prevailing research efforts, however, attempting to improve one paradigm of scientific theories. I still have a lot of work to do, but I belong to the group of researchers who think that psychopathy is a state of affective abnormality, that is, it's a condition of having a diminished disposition to process emotions. If it turns out that emotions are central to moral psychology, one can easily see why such a condition – at least in theory – may incapacitate such a person's social and moral propensities.

9. As someone writing a dissertation on the nature of addiction, I can easily sympathize with the difficulty you surely faced getting into, not only a huge empirical literature, but the murky waters of the mental health literature in particular. I think we've both used the phrase "It's just a mess" in conversation. What central problems with this literature stick out to you? Have you developed any strategies for more effectively dealing with (or sidestepping) them?

Mental health research is certainly a difficult field to get into. Perhaps even more difficult than many other sciences. This is in part because of the elusive nature of measuring human psychology. On a more practical level, though, one of the first challenges philosophy students meet is to comprehend how empirical psychological and psychiatric research functions; understanding the process of moving from theory to hypothesis to research design to results analysis. And then how these results inform or revise aforementioned research theory and hypothesis. There are an incredible number of practical limitations that scientists must

deal with when conducting their research. I think this way of formalizing a theoretical issue, say, a theory of addiction, to then materializing it into a research paradigm that can actually corroborate or falsify said hypothesis is something we philosophers, in a very lavish manner, often circumvent in our abstract workings. Philosophers like to speculate, think big thoughts, but only few of these ideas are actually testable in a scientifically sound way. So, the first hurdle as a philosophy student is to learn how to think in this limited practical way.

To answer your question whether there's a central problem in the literature that sticks out. This is difficult to say, because I'm sure that it varies depending on the topic. But one rather large issue that I frequently encounter is the lack of shared semantics. In some subfields it can be rather profound. However, take mental health research in general. Here, researchers actually don't agree on fundamental terms such as 'disorder', 'disease', or 'etiology'. For example, many psychiatrists use 'disorder' and 'disease' synonymously, and sometimes what is called a 'disorder' is also called a 'syndrome', but not yet 'disease'. And then you have researchers who don't think 'etiology' applies to syndromes. While these are just some examples, one can easily imagine how the lack of shared semantics migrates – sometimes overtly and sometimes covertly – into the research, making it incredibly difficult to aggregate knowledge across the many disciplines that make up mental health research. It took me some years to realize that this fundamental perplexity was manifest in the field.

The next question might be how students should deal with this semantic problem? Well, ideally, we should try to solve it. This is, for example, what Barry Smith and Werner Ceusters have sought to do with their work. They have made a reference ontology consisting of a hierarchical network of various semantic terms, their definitions, and relations, which researchers and practitioners can use when conveying, conducting, and communicating about research and treatment efforts. While this work is essential for the improvement

of mental health research, it is not something that works as a quick fix. Because if you take this semantic vocabulary and apply it in your research, chances are that reviewers will throw you a fit because they don't understand what the heck you're saying. See, reviewers are used to the contemporary terminology – with all its good and bad sides – not the formal ontological semantics. This is unfortunate, but it's nevertheless the reality we are dealing with. What I've tried to do, then, is to promote the work of Barry and Werner in my practical workings, while remaining as semantically neutral in my formal writings. For example, I rarely use the terms 'disorder' or 'disease' except in trivial sentences. Instead, I use generic terms such as 'condition', or instead of 'syndrome' I write a 'suite of signs and symptoms'. This certainly doesn't solve the problem, but as a young researcher you need to find ways to be both ambitious on the behalf of scientific improvement and practical in terms of your own career. You have to get published; therefore, you need to cover your bases!

10. In my work on addiction, I've been able to utilize resources like UB's Research Institute on Addictions at the medical campus. Outside of the Romanell reading group, were there any useful resources at UB (e.g. institutes, departments, faculty) for your work in psychopathology?

I must confess that I was never really good at utilizing facilities and offerings from UB. Perhaps it was because I was early to realize that only few researchers had novel, interesting things to say about my topic. What I did instead was to contact the various professors around the world that had written interesting books and articles on the issue. They ended up being extremely helpful, and I'm actually collaborating with some of them today. But I think there's a lesson in here: students should not be afraid of reaching out to researchers, even though they're not from their home institution. It's my impression that scientists in general are more than happy to assist students that are interested in their work.

11. Working on something like psychopathology and mental health surely prompts questions of practical significance from your audiences. You're no stranger to practical philosophy, having done a number of columns, editorials, and radio interviews for the public discussing various social and political issues. Are there any key practical implications of your work on psychopathology and what role do you think the philosopher should have in public life?

I have been somewhat active in the public debate in my home country, Denmark, but mostly on political issues. Aside from all the fairytale stories we hear about Denmark, it can also be a rather unwelcoming place. There's plenty of bigotry and racism, and especially Muslims are subject to systematic marginalization. I tried to speak to these issues, calling out racist politicians and right-wing bigots for what they were when they employed their sophisticated euphemist language. However, a couple of years ago I had to put these activities on pause. I literally pulled the plug. I realized that it was not ideal if you wanted to write a dissertation. It simply took up too much of my time and energy.

However, I do think that philosophers have an important role to play in the public parlor game. But only if you have something interesting and important to say, that is. There's plenty of noise out there, and the public doesn't need another philosopher or intellectual to throw more wrenches into the machinery. Therefore, I'm not sure that I have much to contribute in relation to the public awareness of mental health. There are plenty of important issues, don't get me wrong, I just don't think I'm the right person to be saying them, at least not at this point. If I ever get back into the public debate it will probably be as a gadfly in the face of bigotry and racism. It's one of the most unfortunate, damaging sides of human nature.

12. Your work in ontology and philosophy of medicine and psychiatry has also brought you into the world of interdisciplinary research, especially now that you have landed a sweet gig as a Visiting

Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Forensic Science at the University of Toronto (congrats!). What has this interdisciplinary experience been like? Do you think it's an important thing for all philosophers to try to get some experience with or just something that sometimes befalls those with the appropriate research interests?

If there's one thing that philosophers are generally good at, it must be that they can read. They are trained to consume huge amounts of literature while also contextualizing its meaning between historical epochs and philosophical domains. It therefore seems straightforward to suggest that philosophers have the kind of basic abilities needed to become good interdisciplinary scholars. Of course, not all philosophical topics span between disciplines, but I think students have something to gain if they force themselves to think broader instead of deeper. For example, what do students know about human nature? Well, maybe they've read Aristotle's take on the thinking animal, or perhaps Heidegger's analysis of *dasein*. But I think students are better off if they also read what contemporary biological anthropologists have to say. Maybe read Jonathan Marks or Robert Sapolsky. I'm not saying these are the writers. I'm just saying that I think philosophy students should aim higher; they should deploy their unique abilities to move outside their own comfort zone.

Speaking to my own experience with interdisciplinary work, it was certainly difficult and hard to begin with. You're venturing into unfamiliar territory, and that itself is an uncomfortable step to take. However, it's also a matter of fact that I would never have gotten the job in Toronto if I had not decided to take this step three-four years ago. It is not because of my philosophical achievements that I'm in Toronto, it's mostly because my resume has qualities that goes beyond philosophical issues, namely, Forensic Psychology.

13. Tell us more about your Toronto gig. How did it come about and what has the first year there been like?

It was actually my wife that got offered a tenure-track position at the University of Toronto, Mississauga. We then inquired about the prospects for a spousal hire, which unfortunately is not that common anymore. Instead, the Dean's office was able to set up two interviews, namely, in the Philosophy Department and Forensic Science Program. The Philosophy Department was at that time searching for a lecturer that could fill out a demand in a wide array of philosophical topics. The Forensic Science Program was in desperate need of a lecturer in Forensic Psychology. As it turns out, I have competency in a fairly broad spectrum of philosophical disciplines, given my interest in both continental and analytic philosophy. And I had also just finished my dissertation on a "hot topic" in Forensic Psychology. So, luck would have it that I was somewhat of an ideal candidate for a rather peculiar mix of skills. Long story short, I was eventually offered the job.

One of the more interesting aspects of this position is that the Forensic Science Program lets me develop my own courses. For instance, my course, Forensic Psychopathology, deals with mental health issues in context of gathering evidence for the courts. This essentially boils down to establishing what various mental illnesses can tell us about a perpetrator. For example, how do we assess a person with a mental illness? What is the scientific validity behind such an assessment? Can we make behavior predictions about people assessed with a given illness? And what can be done to help individuals who are mentally ill? Being a philosopher by training, I draw heavily on philosophy of science to answer and substantiate some of these questions; an approach that is new to most students, but nevertheless something that they find interesting.

I've also developed a course titled The Psychology of Evil: Psychopaths, Genocides, and Moral Disengagement. This course is basically an exercise in interdisciplinary research coupled with philosophy on human nature. We look at classic psychological studies on evil, for example, those by Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo, and discuss eminent philosophical texts

such as Hannah Arendt's Eichmann, as well as various philosophical and psychological articles on violence and suppression.

It's been very rewarding and interesting to work at such a renowned institution as University of Toronto. But it's also been intimidating and stressful at times. Keeping up with the teachings is one thing, another is to get your work through peer-review, while staying ahead with conferences and all that. I've heard from the junior faculty that it takes a couple of years before you start to get on top of things. That sounds about right to me.

14. These days, it's wonderful to land any job at all after completing your PhD, and you've been able to snag a great one at Toronto. Any advice or recommendations you can give to the current or incoming graduate students about how to successfully navigate the program? What does your "Top 3 Priorities" list for philosophy graduate students at Buffalo look like?

That's a very good question, but also a hard one to answer. I don't think there's one golden rule to follow, though there are indeed better ways to do it. Unfortunately, one can be extremely prepared and straight as an arrow, but you also need a fair share of luck! Philosophy is extremely competitive, and the field is truly struggling with fundamental problems such as too many candidates fighting for the same few jobs, not to mention the lack of journal reviewers capable of handling the abundance of journal submissions. Naturally, one has to be a good student with good connections to land the top jobs in the field, but being born under a lucky star also helps a great deal.

Having said this, which is all too trivial and familiar to most grad students, I think one of the biggest dangers for students coming out of UB is a mixture of defeatism and unreasonable expectations. Never think your degree and letters aren't good enough. They are! And never think that only the best institutions are the only jobs worthwhile. They're not! What matters is that you

“do your homework,” so to speak; work hard on your dissertation, try to get published, and attend conferences. The network that follows from these activities will be enough to get you your first job. And when you do get your first job, you’ll have to continue the hard work for years to come. Don’t expect it to be all downhill when you stand with your diploma in your hand on graduation day, or your first ‘Visiting Assistant Professor gig’. This is just the beginning of your apprenticeship; be prepared for a long, bumpy ride after graduation.

15. On a similar note, is there anything you would have done differently or that you wish you would have known going into graduate school?

Honestly, I’m not sure I would do anything significantly different. This is not meant as a lame ‘no regrets’ syllogism. I just truly enjoyed my graduate years, and I would do it all over again in a heartbeat. The friends I made in Buffalo and the experiences I got from the Department makes me a very grateful man. To me, doing a Ph.D. was never motivated by career incentives or serious philosophical endeavors. It was about personal development and adventures. I know this sound like a nauseating cliché. But as far as I’m concerned, I got paid to read what I wanted, have hours of discussions with intelligent people, and manage to have fun in between. I even met my wife! What more do you want?

I guess what I’m trying to say, again, is that there’s no one “golden way” to do your degree. If you work hard and engage with your fellow students and the faculty in a sincere, friendly, and open-minded way, then I think you have most bases covered. But for Pete’s sake, make sure to read them books and articles; there’s no excuse for that!

16. What’s ahead for you in terms of research? Do you have any new projects in the making or are you perhaps tidying up the dissertation to be published in part(s) or whole?

I’m currently working on several projects, and perhaps one too many. The first year I was preparing parts of my dissertation for journal submissions. While I got a lot of rejections to begin with, it seems like I’m finally breaking through with one article in press and another in a revision-process. The peer-review aspect of publishing is a time-consuming process. Now you’re warned!

Aside from this, I’ve been working with a friend and former fellow UB student, David Sackris, on issues in value theory, particularly aesthetics. We have this grandiose idea of writing a book on a sentimentalist value theory. But first we are trying to get some of these ideas through peer-review. Once that happens we will begin our book project.

Then I’ve also been working with a person familiar to the ontology-peeps, Janna Hastings, concerning a methodological project on how to integrate data and knowledge in the mental health sciences. We recently presented at a conference in NYC; and an outline-article of our project is currently in review. We are very optimistic about it and hopefully we can one day prepare a grant application – maybe in collaboration with people at UB.

Lastly, I’ve started a project together with a neuroscientist and a criminologist from the Vancouver region. We are working on a number of articles that are generally critical about fundamental aspects in the psychopathy literature. Where researchers have always assumed that so-called ‘psychopaths’ are suffering from a discrete mental condition, today’s accumulated evidence seems to suggest that this may not be the case; or at least that the phenomenon is much more complex than first assumed. This is much along the general lines of my dissertation. Fortunately, it’s also an issue that is enjoying increased attention in Forensic Psychology.

Student Interview: Ariane Nomikos

Ariane Nomikos

entered the PhD program in 2012 after receiving her BA's at Fordham University in New York City. Her research primarily focuses on aesthetics, with an emphasis on issues in environmental aesthetics and the aesthetics of place—i.e. the *matter*ing of geographical spaces to individuals or groups of people. Ariane will be the last graduate student to receive her PhD under the advisement of Carolyn Korsmeyer, who recently retired. Ariane has been successful on a number of different fronts as a graduate student, including publishing some of her work on the aesthetics of place, winning a university-wide teaching award, and most recently being awarded a \$6,000 dissertation fellowship.



1. When did your interests in philosophy first arise? I recall that you were on the debate team as an undergraduate at Fordham, but were you also a philosophy major there? As philosophy can be seen as essentially an argumentative enterprise, did debate have any influence on your interests in doing philosophy?

Yes, I was on the policy debate team at Fordham, and I also majored in philosophy. I majored in classics as well. It's funny actually—as a senior in high school I thought I would go on to college and major in biochemistry. At least that's what I recall checking off as one of my intended majors when taking the SATs. Go figure!

Anyway, my time on the debate team was absolutely transformative, and it was largely because of debate that I majored in philosophy. But it wasn't so much the emphasis on argumentation that did me in. (I would have probably pursued law if that was the case.) Don't get me wrong—my appreciation of a good argument is

what got me debating in the first place. But it was my interest in the relationship between theory and praxis (in the context of better world-making) that turned me into a philosophy major. Debate exposed me to the power and potential of philosophical ideas, and allowed me to explore the relationship between the concrete and the abstract in a way that I was not yet familiar with. I was (perhaps somewhat naïvely) convinced that more philosophy would translate to better policy and a better world! Debate also exposed me to different people and perspectives, and in doing so gave me a means to self-knowledge. I learned more about myself in relation to myself and to the world around me while exploring philosophical ideas in debate contexts than I could have ever imagined going in. And I guess that's what turned me into a philosopher. As for classics, I was probably always interested in classics—some of my first books growing up were these big, colorful, kid versions of the Iliad and the Odyssey in (modern) Greek!

2. What brought you out of the city and over to Buffalo to pursue your graduate degree? Was there something about or someone in our program that drew you to it?

Well, I was pretty sure I wanted to go to grad school after college. But I wasn't sure if I wanted to go to grad school to study philosophy or classics. Both paths being equally lucrative, it wasn't obvious to me what I should do. So I took some time off, did some research, worked in retail, and decided that the life of a philosophy graduate student—not that I *really* knew what that entailed now that I think of it—was the life for me! That said, I wasn't quite sure what kind of philosophy I wanted to do so I applied to programs whose faculty had diverse research interests. UB had one such program, and I was accepted, so here I am!

3. Given the all-too-common (but false) belief that philosophy is a dead-end career choice, what was your family's reaction to your decision to pursue a graduate degree in philosophy? Were they more supportive or reluctant?

I consider myself lucky on this front. My family has been extremely supportive from the start. Especially my mom. Come to think of it, sometimes I think she would have been disappointed if I chose otherwise! In many ways, my mom did not have the privilege of pursuing that which she was passionate about as a way of life when she was my age. I like to think that this drove her to ensure that I would never feel such limitations. I am extremely thankful for that, amongst other things.

4. At the risk of winding up on the blogosphere for my insensitivities (though, as your office mate of three years, I know you know me better than that!), I'm curious to hear about your experience coming into and navigating a standardly male-dominated philosophy program. Is this the kind of thing that stood out and was/is frequently on your radar or was/is it more like having been from NYC—a difference, but not one that you really thought about or noticed?

I have been reflecting on my graduate school experience a lot lately, and there is more to say than I think I have the time, space, and energy for at the moment. Being a woman in a standardly male-dominated field like philosophy means existing in an environment (no matter how warm, welcoming, and accepting that environment tries to be) in which you are constantly reminded that you are different—that you are the exception rather than the norm—by just looking around. And I suspect this goes for being a person of color in philosophy, or queer, or having a disability, or...as well. (Incidentally, I recently attended a workshop for graduate student women in philosophy, and after the first day, one woman remarked that “being around so many women, you almost forget you’re doing philosophy!”) It also means being extra critical of your mistakes, weaknesses, and limitations because they appear to count in favor of the interpretation that “maybe you’re just not cut out for this.” It means constantly trying to fit the mold of what counts as the typical philosophy graduate student and often failing. (At the same workshop, another woman remarked on her

decision to wear pants instead of a dress by noting that she “cannot help but feel the need to dress in more typically masculine attire in order to be taken seriously at conferences, even when there’s only women at those conferences.”) In many ways, this lack of representation makes developing a voice in the field especially difficult, and it exacerbates the imposter syndrome we all feel as graduate students.

So yes, being a woman in philosophy is something that is on my radar in ways that being from NYC is not. That said, it wasn’t always the kind of thing that stood out to me, but not because I somehow failed to realize that I was often the only woman in a room. It’s just that this experience wasn’t unfamiliar to me. In some ways, my years in debate prepared me for it. But only in some. Like philosophy, intercollegiate policy debate has been a historically white, male enterprise with the norms to match (though there has been a notable shift in the debate world within the last decade, largely due to the subversion of those norms from within, and for anyone interested in learning more, I highly recommend the Radiolab episode “Debatable”). So coming in, I already knew what it felt like to not be taken as seriously simply in virtue of the fact that I was a woman. And I knew what it felt like to be judged by standards that my male counterparts were not. Funny enough, after a recent conversation with a student who described coming to UB as her first time “living in a big city,” being from NYC is also a difference that is now on my radar in a way that it previously was not—I would have never described Buffalo as “a big city,” and I think about this quite often now. Then again, I have been thinking about the way the places we come from shape us, our experiences, and our worldviews a lot lately.

5. Again, trigger warning for asking too many questions to a female philosopher about being a female in philosophy. There is a real representation problem for women in philosophy, though, and so I think it's important to know what draws women into being majors and graduate students in philosophy programs, as well as what keeps them there or,

perhaps most importantly, what might turn them away. What are your thoughts about this?

I don't know what draws women, specifically, into being philosophy majors. Chances are, the answer to this isn't much different from what draws men into being majors. As for what might turn women and other minorities away from philosophy, I have more thoughts that I can properly articulate at the moment. So instead, I direct the reader to my previous answer for a small preview, and to the following remarks by Paul C. Taylor on how philosophers can do better (*Note: Taylor is responding to a series of events that took place late last year at an aesthetics conference, and his comments are specific to race and to the field of aesthetics—though they apply, mutatis mutandis, to gender and to philosophy more generally. His full post, titled “The ASA at 75: ‘Splaining and Safaris” can be found on the *Aesthetics for Birds* blog.*):

“How can we do better? We can accept that diversity is not enough, that inclusion is pointless and painful without transformation. This transformation must be both personal and organizational. On the personal level, each of us, or some critical mass of us, must accept that the clever (white, preferably British) “philosophy boy” no longer represents the only model for intellectual engagement, and we must internalize and model the shift in norms that come with this recognition. On the organizational level, we have to go beyond the “add color and stir” model of inclusive institutional change. This model can lead to probing studies of previously ignored subjects, but that's not much of a bargain for the people being probed.”

6. Your current research and your dissertation are on the aesthetics of place. What is the aesthetics of place? Given their interests, did you come to this area of research through a mixture of influence from Dr. Korsmeyer's work in aesthetics and Dr. Shockley's work in environmental ethics?

To answer your first question: sort of. And I say that largely because there isn't something like an “aesthetics of place” in the same way that there is something like an “aesthetics of music” or even an “aesthetics of food” within philosophical aesthetics, at least within the analytic tradition. My dissertation does some work towards filling this gap (or at least towards defining some parameters for future work aimed at filling this gap). I adopt a concept of place common amongst humanistic and cultural geographers according to which ‘place’ denotes a geographical region to which some individual or group bears meaningful relations, a site of human significance, a physical location that *matters*. This *matter*ing (of places to people), I contend, is largely an aesthetic phenomenon. Throughout the dissertation I draw from the more established fields of everyday aesthetics and environmental aesthetics, as well as from discussions in geography and environmental ethics, to uncover and analyze the aesthetic dimensions of the places we occupy—both familiar and unfamiliar. I then extend this analysis to issues relating to the phenomenon of climate change, thus illustrating the importance of employing aesthetic considerations in areas where they are presently given short shrift, like environmental policy.

To answer your second question: yes, especially my dissertation which is ultimately a blend of the ideas I first started developing in the courses I took with Carolyn and Ken. It was in Carolyn's final aesthetics seminar that I first became interested in everyday aesthetics, and it was during my year-long independent study with Ken that I began to seriously think about what climate change meant to human populations.

7. Speaking of Dr. Korsmeyer, as far as I know you are her last doctor student and nearing the end of your dissertation. Tell us more about your dissertation and what your experience has been like working with someone as established and talented as Korsmeyer?

Getting to work with Carolyn has been a real treat! Carolyn became interested in my work and provided me with the intellectual affirmation that I needed to stay motivated right when I needed it the most. My first year of graduate school was rough, and I may have just left grad school if it wasn't for her support during my second year. She can challenge you without overwhelming you, critique your ideas without discouraging them, and be understanding while also holding you accountable. She has really helped make the grueling dissertation process more bearable. Quite frankly, I'm honored that she agreed to stay on as my advisor and head my committee—I had not even begun working on my topical when she announced her impending retirement! Since I've already said a bit about my dissertation in answering your previous question, and since I'm going to touch upon it again below, I'll spare you the repetition here.

8. Your paper "Place Matters," which you presented at the American Society for Aesthetics meeting in Summer of 2016, was recently accepted for publication (Fall 2018) in the Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism (congrats!). What do you argue in the paper? Is this a chapter from the dissertation?

Thanks! It is less a chapter of the dissertation and more an amalgamation of parts of its different chapters. The publication came out of a much longer paper I wrote for my independent study with Ken before he left. It also served as the basis for my topical, and thus represents something of a synopsis of my dissertation. In the paper I claim that global climate change poses an existential threat to people's everyday living environments, engendering nonmaterial losses that threaten people's subjective well-being and overall mental health. Unfortunately, these nonmaterial losses are underappreciated, if not altogether overlooked. As such, my paper aims to counter this tendency by exploring the relationship between people and place in a way that sheds light on the nonmaterial threat that climate change presents. While I do not think that finding adequate compensation for the nonmaterial losses is likely, I argue that sensitivity to the

aesthetic texture of everyday life can provide a source of aesthetic consolation that can make the challenges of climate change easier to manage.

9. Having come out the other side successfully now, what was your experience with the process of trying to get published in relation to how you viewed it as a newer graduate student with just a gleaming hope for success? Do you have other projects in the works you hope to send out soon (besides all your chapters, of course!)?

It definitely was not as bad as I expected, but I know I'm only saying this because I was lucky enough to have my work accepted the first time around. I don't say this to gloat—trust me, I am fully aware that this just means the worst is yet to come! I say it, instead, as a way of encouraging anyone who is still reading and who, like me, just sat on a number of possible publications out of what I can only describe as fear: fear of the uncomfortable vulnerability that comes with putting your work out there for others to pick at and possibly reject. Sure, rejection is shitty. But so is regret (especially if your ideas get scooped)!

As for other works in progress, there are two papers I hope to send out by the end of the year. One is a dissertation chapter in which I carve out space for the sublime within everyday aesthetics. The other is inspired by a recent paper by José Medina entitled "Cosmopolitan Ignorance and 'Not Knowing Your Place'" and concerns the aesthetic dimension of our epistemic relations to the places we inhabit. While obviously related to my dissertation research, this isn't part of the dissertation at the moment.

10. I recall a conversation we had once about the relationship between your interests in aesthetics of place and tragedies like the loss of one's home, especially in the case of island nations, due to extreme weather disasters and rising sea levels related to climate change. Can you spell out this connection a bit more? Have you continued to research or write on this important issue?

I have—in fact, this is precisely the issue I deal with in “Place Matters,” but with a focus on the climate change related changes currently underway in Arctic regions rather than small island nations (though similar dynamics are at play in such places as well). There, the connection goes something like this: People’s everyday living environments—the places that sustain their ways of life and daily routines—have a *familiar* aesthetic character. This aesthetic familiarity is comforting, and it plays an important role in providing people with a sense of order and continuity which, in turn, plays an important role in maintaining the low levels of anxiety associated with subjective well-being. So, threats to the aesthetic familiarity of people’s everyday living environments, to their homely places, are also threats to their subjective well-being. Climate change challenges people’s assumptions regarding the continued existence of their familiar places, comforts, and ways of life, and it threatens their well-being. Throughout the Canadian North, for instance, changes in the quality, extent, and thickness of the sea ice, as well as in the local and regional weather patterns, plant growth, and wildlife migration, have caused disruptions to the hunting, fishing, trapping, and foraging practices, and site-specific recreational activities that are fundamental to the ways of life of those living in the region. As a result, these people are experiencing an obvious *material* loss of place: they are literally losing chunks of the land that is their home. But they are also experiencing a profound *nonmaterial* loss of familiarity, and all that it supports that is nothing short of tragic. With the material loss of place comes the nonmaterial loss of the meanings, histories, and identities embodied within that place, and this inevitability gives them a tragic dimension.

11. Having both Korsmeyer and Shockley here at UB surely did a lot to keep significant attention on issues in both aesthetics and environmental philosophy in our graduate program. With Shockley now at Colorado State University and Korsmeyer recently retired, do you think this has been a hard hit to the emphasis on these areas in our program?

I do think our department has taken a hit as a result of their departures, and I don’t think either of them can be replaced—both with respect to their scholarly contributions, as well as their roles as teachers, mentors, and colleagues. That said, I think the hit to environmental philosophy has been a bit harder, and I say this only because we still have Alex King. Alex also has research interests in aesthetics, is currently active in aesthetics circles, and has a promising career ahead of her. I am pretty confident that, sooner or later, people with research interests in aesthetics will be coming to UB to work with her. (I mean, I was talking to someone at an aesthetics conference about a year ago who, upon learning that I was from UB, proceeded to tell me that I should consider working with Alex King.) As for our department’s environmental philosophy cred, hopefully the university lets us acquire someone to fill the gap Ken left behind. I’m confident that the demand for courses in environmental philosophy (especially environmental ethics) will only increase.

12. Shifting gears a bit, you were one of the few select recipients of the 2017 Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching Award, a university-wide award given out by the UB Graduate School. Was this a cash award or did the graduate school think a sufficient payment for shaping young minds was a handshake and lunch? Can you divulge any of your secrets for effective teaching?

Alas, there was no cash involved. But they did give me a fancy certificate at an awards ceremony along with that handshake and lunch. As for effective teaching strategies, I don’t really have any secrets to divulge. Nothing I do in the classroom is a secret, or even unheard of, and my own teaching style—still very much under development—owes a lot to the different teaching styles I have observed as both a student, and a TA. Here at UB alone, I have TAed for at least three different professors, and I have observed at least six different professors in undergraduate contexts. This has provided me with a good baseline for what does and doesn’t work. Still, a lot of it comes down to trial and

error—trying new things, hoping for the best, and learning from the worst.

One thing I try to do is strike a balance between being friendly yet authoritative, serious but also a little silly when needed. So, I will call you out for being on your phone, but I will also call myself out for making a spelling mistake or not knowing how to pronounce a word. This seems to have worked in my favor. Another thing I try to do is encourage active participation by reminding students, from the start, that they can learn from each other just as much as they can learn from me, and that I can learn from them as well. For example, I have taught biomedical ethics and environmental ethics to a bunch of biomedical and environmental science majors who often know more about the science and technologies being discussed in class than I do. I tell them this on the first day, and I encourage them to share this knowledge with the rest of the class throughout the semester. This has worked to facilitate participation better in some classes than others, which is fine because student participation isn't the only thing I'm after. When I remind students that I can learn from them, and that they can learn from each other, I'm also trying to illustrate a degree of epistemic humility and a commitment to epistemic equality. Maybe I have some secrets after all!

13. Speaking of secret tactics, and being closer to the end than many of us slackers, what have been the most effective strategies for you in writing your dissertation? Do you approach it much differently than single paper projects? Also, what preparatory techniques did you take (or, looking back, wish you would have taken) that helped push the process along?

I definitely wouldn't call any of you slackers, especially not you Bob! As for effective writing strategies: I tend to work best when I have an extended period of time in which I do not have to worry about much more than writing, and a non-negotiable deadline in sight. I don't think this is the most sustainable approach—life just isn't going to permit you to drop everything and

dedicate all your time to writing—and so I hesitate to recommend it. I will recommend breaking up the dissertation project into smaller chunks, and tackling them one at a time. A piecemeal approach is key if you want to avoid feeling like you are constantly overwhelmed but getting nowhere. That said, I've learned that surviving your dissertation—and grad school more generally—is as much about effectively managing your stress as it is about cultivating effective writing habits. Making exercise a part of my daily routine and forcing myself to get to bed at a reasonable hour has helped me a lot on this front. I also find cooking and painting with Bob Ross therapeutic.

As for preparatory techniques I wish I would have taken: Sometimes I wish I would have structured my dissertation differently—as a series of stand-alone papers clustered around a central theme rather than a monograph-style project. This would have given me smaller, more tangible goals from the start, and I think it would have made it easier to publish while dissertating. That said, it is important to keep in mind that some topics are more conducive to this series-of-stand-alone-papers strategy than others.

14. Any ballpark range for a defense date in sight?

Sometime in the spring.

15. Of course, we have a new batch of graduate students entering the program this fall, and so the road is just beginning for them. Any sage advice you'd like to pass on for successfully navigating graduate school, and perhaps our program in particular? Any crucial prioritization scheme you recommend? Select studying (or napping) spots on campus?

- (1) You'll probably never know as much as you'd like to know about a particular topic. That doesn't mean you can't have something interesting to say about it.
- (2) Try to get a general idea of what you want to write a dissertation on (and who you want to

work with) as early as you can, and always keep this idea present in your mind. You'd be surprised when and where insight strikes and crucial connections are made.

- (3) Treat your seminar papers like potential publications. All of them. Whether you plan on working in the field or not. Make this known to your professors, so that they may instruct you appropriately. Ask for feedback, take it seriously, and revise accordingly. Then, try to publish those papers. Unfortunately, if you want to be competitive on the job market, you're going to need a publication or two. The last thing you want to be doing is scurrying to get a publication while dissertating and trying to compile your job market materials.
- (4) You should study/write wherever you feel most comfortable and least tempted to do something else. The first floor of the law library (O'Brien) holds a special place in my heart. I particularly enjoyed doing my logic homework there in the mornings. Lockwood also has some study nooks I've enjoyed, but it is almost impossible to snag one of those during finals. Lockwood can also get a bit dreary.
- (5) You should just nap at home, and by that I mean you should make sure to get enough sleep so that you don't need to nap while on campus. It isn't fun, and it gets cold, and the surfaces are hard, and you're probably going to still be tired afterwards anyway. I speak from experience, having spent many nights on campus my first year.

17. Given that you are nearing the end of your graduate career, what is next for you? Do you plan to go on the market this coming year or perhaps have other plans in the works?

Finishing and defending my dissertation is next. I plan to go on the job market in 2019, possibly in the spring, definitely in the fall.

Student Interview: Brian Donohue

Brian Donohue is in his sixth year in the PhD program, having come to UB in 2013 after completing a BA and MA at Franciscan University of Steubenville. Brian's research interests started in ancient philosophy, especially issues surrounding Aristotle's metaphysics and ethics. Building off of his research in the systematic metaphysics of Aristotle, Brian added applied ontology to his repertoire, and has since been working on a dissertation on the ontology of deontic entities. Brian somehow did not find the ordinary stresses of graduate school to be challenging enough, and so he also works as an ontologist at CUBRC, a local ontology firm with connections to UB through our own Barry Smith. This, of course, is in addition to having two kids while in graduate school, publishing papers, and adjuncting at various colleges around Buffalo. It is hard to find a graduate student with less on their plate, let alone one who has handled it all as well as Brian has.



1. Ok, starting with some basics, what first got you interested in philosophy? You have both a B.A. and an M.A. in philosophy from Franciscan University of Steubenville, so is this where it began or did you have philosophical interests before entering college?

During my junior year of high school, I had stumbled upon a book entitled "Philosophy 101 by Socrates," which was really just Plato's Apology (Socrates' trial and defense of philosophy) appended with a fairly accessible commentary on the main themes of the work. Looking back, I can't say to what extent I actually understood what I'd read, but nonetheless I was captivated by Plato's portrait of Socrates: devoted to a life of inquiry and virtue, willing to confront the assumptions du jour, unflinching in the face of Athenian

hostility, and even unafraid of death. This was an extraordinary person, and he piqued my interest in these “ultimate questions”: how should we live? what do we know?

When I arrived at Franciscan, I seized the opportunity to pick up where I’d left off. My first semester I enrolled in an introductory course, where we worked through sizable chunks of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, and others. It was taught by a bright, dynamic adjunct professor, who by some miracle managed to keep a class of 40 undergraduates fully engaged at 8 in the morning. By the end of that course, it was a done deal. I had experienced what is shared by most, if not all, philosophy majors: I was hooked, bitten by the philosophy bug. From there, I majored in philosophy, with a particular interest in historical philosophy, and theology, which in the context of a Catholic university meant delving into an intellectual tradition which not only dialogued with, but also produced some of Western history’s best philosophical minds. I wrapped up my Bachelor’s with a thesis on the evolution of the concept of ‘personhood’.

I stayed on for an M.A. in philosophy for much the same reason: I was captivated by philosophy, the professors were engaging, and I seemed to be doing a pretty decent job in my coursework. (The other factor being that my then-girlfriend had another year left in her Bachelor’s.)

2. Was a Ph.D. in philosophy the plan from your earliest days as an undergraduate philosophy major at Steubenville or did your trajectory shift along the way? What did you your parents think of the decision to pursue philosophy in graduate school? Were they pretty supportive or mostly worried about you having bleak career prospects?

Not. At. All. Entering college, I didn’t have any clear idea about what I was going to “do” with my philosophy degree—and if I’m being completely honest, I didn’t reflect very much on that question. I had some vague notion that I might be able to write or teach one

day. I felt some inclination toward some form of service or non-profit work. Like many philosophy students, the possibility of law school crossed my mind.

Looking back, I can’t say with any certainty why I didn’t worry more about how I was going to make a career out of a philosophy degree. Perhaps I was naïvely optimistic. Perhaps thinking about it was too stressful to dwell on for very long. Perhaps I was simply too immersed in the rush and rhythm of academic life to step back and reflect on brutally practical questions... like how I was going to avoid homelessness or starvation.

My parents were not terribly invested in my future career path, but I do vividly recall a conversation I had with my advisor and mentor at Franciscan, Jonathan Sanford, who asked me what I was planning on doing when I completed my B.A. He was the first person to warn me about the dire chances of getting a decent job in academia as a philosopher—any tenure-track position, not just a coveted research position. When I transitioned into my M.A., those types of conversations with professors became more frequent. Somehow, though daunted, I still managed to convince myself to pursue a Ph.D.

And I have to confess—this strikes me now as an extremely strange and ironically irrational decision to make. Psychologically, I must have had the profile of a gambling addict.

3. From what I can tell, there seems to be a significant number of Steubenville students who have come through our graduate program—perhaps at least one every year. Is there a connection between the two schools that I’m unaware of? Paul Symington did his Ph.D. at UB and Pat Lee did his M.A. at Niagara university and has been invited to speak at UB by the Romanell Center a number of times. Perhaps they feel indebted to the Buffalo-Niagara area and are sending us their top recruits?

Personally, I came to UB fleeing the oppressive smog of rust-belt Ohio through 300 miles of abandoned sewers, emerging into daylight through a grate in Founders Plaza. So, my guess is that's where all the other Frannies came from.

There's definitely a relationship between the two departments. On the one hand, several of the philosophy faculty at Franciscan have some connection to UB. Besides Symington, there is Jonathan Sanford, mentioned just above, who is an alumnus of UB's philosophy program, though he's recently taken an administrative position at Dallas. Both Symington and Sanford wrote their dissertations under Jorge Gracia. Franciscan also has John Crosby, who used to be a colleague of Barry Smith's at the International Academy of Philosophy in Lichtenstein. And as you mentioned, more recently David Hershenov's bioethics reading groups and conferences have featured Franciscan faculty working in the world of Catholic bioethics, especially bioethicist Pat Lee and biologist Derek Doroski.

On the other, there are several successful UB alumni with roots at Franciscan: Mark Spencer, Joel Potter, Catherine Nolan, to name a few. And the underlying reason for that, I think, is that Franciscan is very supportive of its philosophy department. The school only enrolls about 2,000 undergraduates, but when I was there, there were roughly 150 philosophy majors (most with a second major in a more practical field). Why? One reason, I think, is the central role philosophy plays in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Consequently, Catholic academia is one place where philosophy continues to be viewed as important, and even as a foundation for other disciplines. Another reason, I think, is that the faculty at Franciscan are far more focused on teaching—on engaging with students, however much of a challenge or pain that may be at times—than on “research projects”. I can't say any of them are publishing groundbreaking work in top-tier analytic journals, but they certainly have a way of instilling a love of philosophy in their students.

4. What made you ultimately decide on UB for your Ph.D.? Was there someone here you knew you wanted to work with or something about our program that drew you in?

That's a great question. I guess a couple reasons. I knew about the ties between Franciscan and Buffalo, so Buffalo was already on my radar. I had been familiar with some of Jiyuan Yu's and Jorge Gracia's work in the history of philosophy from my time at Franciscan, learning under some of their former students. My other main interest was ethics, and UB seemed like it had a lot to offer there. Buffalo was also close to my stomping grounds in Rochester, NY, where most of my family still lives. From a more practical angle, UB was one of the two schools I applied to which actually accepted me! And they offered a better financial package, so...

5. Though your research focus has shifted, which we'll talk about below, you were originally working a lot on Aristotle and, if I'm remembering right, even ended up drafting a significant portion of a dissertation project on Aristotle. What questions was this early research addressing in particular?

That's right—I had an incomplete draft of a dissertation on Aristotle's ethics I was working on under the direction of the late, great Jiyuan Yu. That project was about a concept at the heart of Aristotle's ethical theory, but which gets comparatively little attention: to kalon, translated variously as “the beautiful,” “the fine,” or “the noble.” Aristotle claims repeatedly that what it means to act virtuously is to act “for the sake of to kalon.” The problem is that nobody knows what this means. There are only a handful of articles on the topic, and only one book, which is really more focused on riffing on Aristotle's terminology than investigating what Aristotle himself meant. There is no consensus among scholars, not even a prevailing view. Some think it's an aesthetic property of actions. Some think it's synonymous with to agathon, “the good.” Some think it's roughly equivalent to “moral value” (a reading which is hopelessly anachronistic). And so on.

So, my goal in that project was to try to understand what to kalon is in Aristotle's ethical system, what role it plays, and how that might impact our understanding of his ethical theory more generally. And that is really the impetus behind this project: that, as Elizabeth Anscombe and Alasdair MacIntyre have famously argued, Aristotle's approach to ethics is so fundamentally different from the way we understand ethics today. And my inkling was that this notion of to kalon would help shed light on how and why that is.

I worked on this project for just over a year. I'd tracked down every passage where Aristotle ever used "kalon." I'd poured over parallel passages from Plato. I'd even started digging into other ancient Greek sources and medieval commentaries on Aristotle. I had about 150 pages written. I had even taught myself Greek. But the project was never finished for a variety of reasons. It's still sitting on a hard drive somewhere, and so I could return to it someday, but who knows.

6. Working on Aristotle at UB, you of course had the privilege of working closely with the beloved Jiyuan Yu. Of the remaining active graduate students, you are probably the one who was closest with Dr. Yu. Tell us about your experience working with him. Any fond memories of Dr. Yu you'd like to share?

I have many fond memories of working with Jiyuan. Kind, generous, critical, supportive, absolutely dedicated to his students. His research—inspiring. His mid-lecture anecdotes—legendary.

When I heard the news of his diagnosis, I immediately approached him to express my sympathies, to thank him for his help thus far, and to assure him that I would find an advisor who could take me on to finish the project. Before I could finish saying any of that, he stopped me, and told me pointedly that he refused to drop me as an advisee. He would continue to advise me. And in fact, he would continue to write and review articles, and he would continue to teach, even multiple courses.

Throughout his battle with cancer, through rounds of chemotherapy, he never stopped giving generously to his students. This was a man, I thought, who not only taught the virtues, but lived them. There were a million ways he might've spent the last several months of his life. But—like Socrates, I suppose—he spent them in inquiry and virtue.

7. As I mentioned, you ultimately shifted your research focus and started working in ontology. What (or perhaps who) is responsible for this shift? Were your internships at CUBRC, a local company with strong ties to ontological research, more of a motivation for or a result of your shift towards focusing primarily on ontology?

There were a lot of factors which led me to change course in my graduate work late in the game. Barry's research in applied ontology certainly played a role. I first learned about it in a course in ontology engineering with Barry Smith my first semester at UB. Taking that course opened the door to summer internships with a local company, CUBRC (originally, Calspan-University at Buffalo Research Center), a research and development contractor with the government. One internship focused on the development of an ontology for use with data about geopolitical disputes. Another focused on the development of ontology-based middleware to help humans and computers understand each other. All the while, my Plan A was to keep writing on Aristotle and pursue a career in academia, with ontology engineering as a Plan B.

Somewhere along the way, my attitude toward a career in academic philosophy began to shift—setting aside the slim chances of having a career in academic philosophy in the first place. Part of it was the feeling that participation in academic philosophy, at least as currently practiced, would mean "buying into" a certain predominant conception of what philosophy is and how one does it: that writing philosophy is "research" (i.e. contributions to a growing body of real knowledge), that debating an idea is a matter of

“testing” our “intuitions” about thought “experiments” (i.e. reporting our gut reactions to wild examples), and that theories carry more or less “explanatory power.” Much of this picture of philosophy is, I think, an attempt to dress up philosophy as a scientific or science-like activity, which strikes me as, well, ridiculous. But whether or not that is the right way to understand philosophy as an activity, it seemed to me that success in mainstream academic philosophy effectively required adopting this same understanding—or at least, behaving like I did. After all, philosophy is communal. Norms, expectations, and other people set the agenda. The theories, -isms, and assumptions currently in vogue highly constrain everybody’s questions and methods. Incidentally, this is one reason I find the history of philosophy so valuable: it gives us diverse perspectives on perennial questions.

All that to say, the prospect of trying to do philosophy under those particular constraints seemed more and more unappealing to me. I was working on Aristotle—which to many philosophers meant I was working on history instead of “real philosophy.” About the same time, Jiyuan’s health was in decline. When he passed, I had to decide how I was going to proceed in my graduate studies. That’s when I was offered a full-time job working with CUBRC, and the idea of applying my training in philosophy to problems in ontology seemed like a promising way forward.

8. Clearly there is a fundamental connection between Aristotle and formal ontology, but the type of work you do now must be pretty radically different from what you were doing in your first couple of years at UB. First, tell us what exactly formal ontology is. Second, how has being an ontologist transformed the way your research is conducted? Some might wonder (especially if they’ve been to one of Barry’s talks), are you still doing philosophy? Has your experience working in the history of philosophy maintained any influence?

Traditionally in philosophy, ontology is understood as a study of being (on or ontos in Greek), or of which

beings exist, or of which fundamental kinds of beings there are. But the term “ontology” has more recently been co-opted to refer to a formal representation of what exists. Such representations or models of reality can serve a number of useful roles, especially to help machines fuse, process, and reason over information. Philosophical approaches to questions of being are relevant here, insofar as theories of universals, fundamental categories, persistence, etc., affect how one represents the world. Essentially, philosophy can provide a kind of theoretical underpinning for this practical endeavor.

Surprisingly, Aristotle is still relevant! This has a lot to do with the influence of Aristotle’s metaphysics on Barry’s work in Basic Formal Ontology (BFO). BFO is a small, top-level ontology which aims to represent the highest categories or “genera” of entity—entities that endure through time vs. those which occur over time, those which are independent existents vs. those which exist only in virtue of some form of ontological dependence, and so forth. Although it adds much that isn’t found in Aristotle’s metaphysics, BFO still draws inspiration from traditional Aristotelian notions of, e.g., substance and accident.

9. On a similar note, despite Barry’s having made ontology such a huge deal at UB and within our program, I wonder if there is still any sense in which you feel like you have transitioned to working “outside” of philosophy (even if you often still do philosophy). For instance, you work at an ontologically-minded government contractor and are involved in many ontology conferences where many (perhaps most) people are non-philosophers. What has this experience been like both in terms of how “traditional” philosophers view your work but also in terms of how you think your future prospects have been shaped (improved?) by working “outside” the traditional discipline?

It can be a bit of an odd position to be in. My dissertation is still pretty heavily philosophical in content, though with the goal of applying the theoretical

account to address problems in data science. A lot of my day-to-day work at CUBRC is essentially the application of a philosophical framework to build up formal representations of specific domains of interest (most recently, an article I published on an ontological representation of cybersecurity systems), but it has definitely also challenged me to develop a more practical skill set. In that context, you don't just have to be technically correct; you have to make it work, to actually contribute to the practical goal: information fusion within or across domains, a better analysis of the data, and so forth. And if you want to collaborate with others, then philosophical theories won't get you very far. You really have to start getting comfortable with the way ontologies will be used by software developers and data analysts.

Now that I'm working full-time at CUBRC, I certainly feel more disconnected from the world of academia—certainly more than when I was still taking seminars or teaching undergrads. And for me, that's been something of a breath of fresh air (and not just because I now actually make a living wage, ha!). Using these skills I cultivated in my study of philosophy—but outside the classroom, as it were—has been very fulfilling.

10. In your dissertation you are working on the ontology of deontic entities. Can you tell us more about your project? What's the overarching thesis? Are there any interesting practical upshots to your work?

Sure! The topic is the ontology or nature of “deontic entities”—i.e. entities like obligation, permission, authority, norms, and so forth—specifically those which emerge because of social institutions, convention, agreement, etc. Over the last few decades, there's been a decent amount of ink spilled over social ontology generally. John Searle has his famous theory that social reality is “constructed” out of things like collective intentional states and status-functions imposed on physical objects or processes. His work briefly touches on the emergence of specifically social deontic

reality—my social obligations, rights, and such—and he argues that these are, in every case, agential powers. Long before Searle, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the German phenomenologist Reinach argued that these entities are *sui generis*, similar in some respects to entities like numbers or propositions, except that they exist within time. A few others, including our own Barry Smith, have weighed in on this topic.

So, my dissertation is really an engagement with those views—drawing from some, criticizing others. At base, my view is that, first, we need to draw a more careful distinction between the questions of what deontic entities are and what grounds them. To the first question, I suggest there is no uniform answer; different deontic entities need to be categorized in different ways. To be obligated, for example, is to be the subject of a certain kind of persistent directive content, whereas to have authority is to be the bearer of a certain kind of social role. To the second question, I argue that social-deontic reality is ultimately grounded in collections of agents' dispositions to monitor for compliance with certain behaviors, and to sanction those who fail to comply.

Ultimately, I hope this will have a practical application. Applied ontologists working in many different domains need a way to represent deontic reality. Just think of the representation of patient rights in the medical domain, chains of command in the defense domain, or legal information in the law domain. What I hope my dissertation provides, then, is a more generic, more philosophical account of social-deontic categories, which could then serve as a starting-point for integrated domain-level representations of these kinds of entity.

11. Have you or do you plan to publish any of your chapters?

There's a portion of a chapter which was presented at the International Conference on Biomedical Ontologies (ICBO), and published in their proceedings. (Small

potatoes, but I can't argue with a new line on the ole CV.) But otherwise, my main focus has been on finishing the dissertation. I'd likely need some time to recover before even thinking about reworking portions into publishable material. And I've got a lot of other things on my plate, so...

12. You're working on your dissertation, you're teaching, you're working at CUBRC, and you and Hannah are raising two young kids. Needless to say, you have a lot on your plate, but you seem to be handling it all very well. What are your strategies for juggling grad school, home life, and all the rest, especially while dissertating with the job market looming near?

Grad school by itself is a lot to juggle, and I can't say I always struck a good life-work balance—despite your claim that I have my life together, ha!

I admit, that balance is something I'm still figuring out how to achieve. But one lesson I think I've learned is the importance of making time for activities that will build you back up when things are crazy—something that will enhance physical and emotional well-being. It can be surprisingly easy to let that slide, or to work all day, and then just collapse in a pool of stress with Netflix and a beer (or two, or three, or...). But there's no balance there. Going walking, hiking, biking. Reading some literature instead of a journal article. Being okay with just doing nothing for 15 minutes. Spending time with people (who aren't just going to talk about philosophy!). And though my two lil'uns definitely add more work, they add so much joy. And when your kids want to spend an hour playing trains or watching Winnie the Pooh, it forces you to take a break from being absorbed in work, school, and the rest.

13. Speaking of the job market, do you plan to pursue a philosophy job in academia or has ontology opened some other doors that might take you off the standard path?

That's an easy one—I don't plan on pursuing a job in academia right now. I've been at CUBRC for about two years now, and I'm really happy there.

14. Suppose you end up outside of academia. What, if anything, would you miss most? I've personally seen you leading the undergraduates in the philosophy club meetings and been to a number of your talks, and you have a unique knack for teaching. Perhaps this would be towards the top of the list?

That would definitely be at the top of my list. Some of my fondest memories in grad school have been working with undergrads in the classroom—at UB and D'Youville, teaching medical ethics, logic, history of philosophy, and philosophy of religion. Yeah, grading can be tedious, and engaging undergrads can be a challenge, but it's something I've found incredibly rewarding. To discuss with them, to pick their brains, to try to help them see some topic or position in a new light—I've found if you make that connection, more often than not you'll find students who are bright, creative, reflective, and passionate. And as much as I am in favor of some practical training in university courses, isn't that what we need more of? Reflection on what matters?

Since I've started at CUBRC, I've been able to keep doing some teaching on the side (though thankfully I'm not teaching very much this semester). And I hope that maybe that a little teaching could still be a part of my future. Vibrant, engaging teachers were so crucial in stirring up my interest in philosophical topics, and so I'd like to hope my students have found my classes worthwhile.

15. A few years ago you took part in a fun and interesting debate our department held on whether the soul exists as part of an effort to promote philosophy on campus. You were arguing the affirmative. I'm curious, what role has your faith played in your philosophical career? According to the Chalmers study from 2014 on philosophers' beliefs, less than 15% of philosophers described themselves as

theists. Have you found it at all difficult being a theist in philosophy?

I actually was arguing against the soul's existence, not because I personally endorsed my own arguments, but just to put on a good debate... at least I hope! There, my goal was just to present some standard, fairly accessible naturalistic arguments against a soul—at least, of a Cartesian-like soul, the much-maligned ghost that inhabits a meat machine and mysteriously violates the closure of physical laws.

As for being a theist in philosophy—yeah, I'd say that's presented its challenges. There's definitely a social dimension to this, especially the temptation to feel sheepish for having beliefs others might find ridiculous, irrational, or even repulsive. Then again, I think, philosophers should probably just accept that other people will probably find their beliefs ridiculous: philosophers who deny that you're an enduring physical being, that you have free will, that there's such a thing as an objective universal morality, that you know much of anything, and so forth.

Then there's the obvious intellectual dimension to being a religious philosopher: you want your religious beliefs to be reasonable, defensible. One way to do this would be to try to make room for religious belief within mainstream philosophy. I take this to be the strategy of Plantinga, van Inwagen, Wolterstorff, and others who used the tools, the language, the style, and some of the presuppositions of analytic philosophy to broach traditional religious topics. But for my part, I don't find the analytic framework particularly attractive for addressing religious topics. If the question is how to philosophically approach the topic of God—not one being among others, but the absolute, transcendent Being, the Good and source of beings—I'll take Plato over Plantinga any day.

The other dominant approach I've seen is, essentially, philosophers retreating from mainstream analytic philosophy and taking refuge in a minority or niche group—Thomism or Christian personalism, for

example. I understand the appeal here: a community of like-minded religious philosophers, who share a general worldview, backed by a rich philosophical tradition. If I were planning on doing philosophy on religious topics, I'd probably find myself engaging more with minority groups like these.

Earlier in my time studying philosophy, I used to worry more about whether I could ground all my religious beliefs in rationality. But more recently, I've become convinced that some of the most important things in life, including religious belief and practice, have very little to do with reason—not in the sense that they're irrational, but arational. Take, for example, the importance of sympathy. I don't know if there's any good argument for why somebody should have an attitude of sympathy toward others. (And I don't mean why it would be prudential or advantageous to do so.) I don't know if a heartless person is "being less rational" than a compassionate one. Nor am I optimistic that a callous person could be reasoned into a sympathetic outlook. It seems to me to have much more to do with perspective, experience, one's fundamental way of seeing the world, self-examination, and cultivation of virtuous habits and right feelings and attitudes.

16. Religious debates aside, graduate school presents enough struggles on its own. Do you have any general advice for newer and incoming students about how to survive graduate school in philosophy? What would be top on your list of priorities?

It's tempting to treat grad school as something which should dominate your life, to be in "work mode" all the time, to be plagued by a kind of persistent anxiety about performing well, to feel guilty for taking time for self-care. It's all understandable—we want to be excellent, to succeed at publishing, to be a competitive candidate. The specter of joblessness or perpetual ad-juncting obviously looms large.

But needless to say, that's not super healthy. Again, there's no balance there. So, I think it's a matter of

learning how to approach the stress of grad school in a healthier, more functional way: learning to approach grad school a part of your life, rather than something that absorbs your whole life, to have a life outside philosophy or the department. And I definitely recommend any stressed grad student consider taking advantage of mental health services at UB like counseling and stress management.

I suppose what this comes down to is the idea that can get into a grad student's head, that feeling that everything is riding on succeeding in academic philosophy, on succeeding on the philosophy job market. It can be liberating to realize (or remember) that—well, philosophy grad students are intelligent and capable, and can apply their skills outside philosophy, rather than feeling their only way forward is to compete for scarce faculty positions. There are other job opportunities out there. If you can do a PhD in philosophy, then you have what it takes to learn a little programming, or basics of statistical analysis (or ontology for that matter).

17. Relatedly, is there anything you wish you would have done differently or wish you would have known going into graduate school?

I certainly wish that I had been more playful going into grad school. The process of applying to grad school, and picking a grad school if you get accepted, can be difficult, especially if you're already busy with full-time school or work. Heading into grad school, I had a fairly vague idea of how I was going to proceed—not much of a concrete plan. And certainly, plans change. You might enter grad school thinking you have your dissertation idea all worked out, and end up writing on something completely different. But in general, I wish I'd tried to work out some of those concrete details earlier. The more concrete plans you have early on, the easier it is, I think, to pick the right seminars, to make the right connections, to start writing on the right topics. By the time the dissertation rolls around, you'll already have an orientation toward a set of questions and issues that interest you. (Then again, I changed a lot over grad school, so what do I know!)

Student Awards

Peter Hare Department Citizenship Award

The annual Peter Hare Department Citizenship award (see “The People Who Make It Possible” on page 63 for more about donors) is given to a student who both participates in departmental events, committees and associations, and who stands out as a helpful and industrious student.

The citizenship award for the 2016-2017 year was given to two equally deserving students who were present and active at all department events and meetings, and served students and faculty alike in their various capacities within the department.

Robert Kelly (fifth-year PhD) co-founded the undergraduate philosophy club in the fall of 2015 (with fellow grad student David Limbaugh; see “Buffalo Philosophical Society” on page 32), which he helped run through the spring of 2018. During the 2016-2017 year, he gave two talks at the undergrad club meetings, one talk at the department's Friday Lunchtime talk series, and presented at the department's Blameless Buffalo? summer conference on free will and responsibility in both the 2016 and 2017 summers. Robert also co-organized the Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference with James Beebe in 2015, 2016, and 2017, served on multiple Graduate Philosophy Association Committees, attended the faculty-led readings groups on free will/responsibility and bioethics/philosophy of medicine, worked with David Hershenov to help raise attendance in undergraduate philosophy courses, worked with Neil Williams building a depository of stock materials for online courses to be used perennially, briefly worked in the staff office during a vacancy in the summer of 2016, and represented the philosophy department in two interdisciplinary settings: enrolled in a graduate seminar in psychology (Spring 2017) on animal models of psychological disorders and was a volunteer research associate at the Research Institute on Addictions (Fall 2016 to Spring 2018). Robert took over as President of the

Graduate Philosophy Association for Justin Murray starting in the fall of 2017.

Justin Murray (fifth-year PhD) served on the Graduate Philosophy Association from Fall 2015 through Spring of 2018. During that time, in addition to the duties of the various offices held (Secretary, Treasurer, and President), he implemented new record-keeping methods for the club finances, clarifying past-year's spending as well as providing a template and procedures for future treasurers. As President, he was the student liaison for prospective students and co-organized the Prospective Student Weekend in 2017, with Alex King. Also, in assistance with Prof. King, Justin began pre-organization for the Graduate Student Conference, which is to be held in Fall 2018. Justin served on the Placement Committee where he worked with Lewis Powell to update the placement statistics for the department with the Academic Placement Data Analysis Project and the American Philosophical Association's Jobs for Philosophers site. He aided the Gender & Diversity Committee in updating the climate survey. Justin provided administrative support to Jorge Gracia for the Capen Lecture series in 2015, 2016, and 2017, coordinating with speakers and providing marketing support. In March of 2015's "Debate on the Soul," as well as the Brown Box Lecture series in 2017, Justin gave presentations. The Meta-Ethics, the Phenomenological, and the Minorities and Philosophy reading groups all counted Justin as a member and contributor. Justin can be regularly found in department talks and colloquia. As ABD, Justin looks forward to continuing to be an active contributor to the department.

Hare Award for Outstanding TA/RA

The annual Hare Award for Outstanding TA/RA is given to a graduate student who demonstrates exceptional dedication to students and faculty throughout the year in their capacity as Research or Teaching Assistant.

Robert Kelly won this award for the 2016-2017 year. He worked very hard as Ryan Muldoon's TA for

Contemporary Moral Problems in Fall 2016, guiding students through the material and preparing them for their written essays in seemingly never-ending office hours, and even ending up with a number of office hour "regulars." Robert also helped out by lecturing for Ryan when he was away for both Contemporary Moral Problems and his upper division Political Philosophy course. Robert taught a section of Bioethics for his assignment in Spring 2017.

Hare Award for Best Overall Essay

Danielle Limbaugh (MA 2018) won this award for the 2016-2017 year for her paper, "John Stuart Mill on Geometry: The Problem of Hypotheses Relating to Non-Existing Objects."

Hourani Award for Outstanding Essay in Ethics

Robert Kelly & **David Limbaugh** (co-authors) and **Jake Monaghan** (sixth-year PhD) tied for this award for the 2016-2017 year. Robert and David's paper was entitled, "Implicit Racial Bias and the Intrinsicity Claim," and Jake's paper was entitled, "The Limits of Procedural Justification."

Patrick and Edna Romanell Award for Outstanding Essay in Naturalism

Shane Sicienski (PhD 2016) won this award for the 2015-2016 year.

Rasmus Larson (PhD 2017) won this award for the 2016-2017 year for his paper, "The Posited Self: The Non-Theistic Foundation in Kierkegaard's Writings." See the interview with Rasmus on page 36.

Perry Award for Best Dissertation

Shane Sicienski won the 2016 Perry Award for Best Dissertation for his doctoral thesis entitled, "The Syntax and Semantics of Names."

Brendan Cline won the 2017 Perry Award for Best Dissertation for his doctoral thesis entitled, "Embracing a World without Value."

Steinberg Essay Prize Winners

The Steinberg Prizes are given each year to the best original works on a philosophical theme by UB undergraduates. Original essays, poems, stories and artwork can qualify. There is a first- and a second-place winner, and awards are presented at an end-of-the-year reception for the philosophy undergraduates. Recipients are awarded a cash prize and commemorating certificate.

The 2017 Steinberg awards went to first-place winner **Michael Fiorica**, whose paper was entitled, "Depression: Symptoms May Include Akrasia?" and second-place winner **Evan Murphy**, whose paper was entitled, "'What Exactly Do You Lose When You Lose Yourself': Zhuangzi's Notion of the Subject."

The 2018 Steinberg awards went to first-place winner **Michael Fiorica**, making Michael a three-time winner (one second place and two first places), whose paper was entitled, "The Symptom as Alief," and second-place winner **Bennett Ferguson**, whose paper was entitled, "Hanslick's Conception of a Musical Subject."

CAS Outstanding Senior Award

The College of Arts and Sciences recognizes exactly one student from each department as outstanding senior for achievements during their senior year. Recipients are awarded a cash prize and a medal commemorating the accomplishment.

Outstanding senior for the 2017-2018 year was philosophy undergraduate **Michael Fiorica**. Michael was accepted to and will join the PhD program in Philosophy at USC in the Fall 2018 where he will pursue his research interests in the philosophy of psychiatry.

Mary C. Whitman Scholarship

The Mary C. Whitman Scholarship is awarded annually to an undergraduate philosophy major who will be a senior during the year the scholarship is held. The award, which is generally in the \$3,500-4,500 range, is made on the basis of academic excellence and the recipient is eligible to participate in the Philosophy Honors Program and to enroll in a graduate philosophy course during the year of the scholarship.

The 2018-2019 Whitman Scholarship was awarded to two outstanding undergraduates, **Russell Guilbault** and **Skyler Vitko-Woods**, who received \$5,000 each for their 2018-2019 senior year.

Graduate Student Teaching Award

Ariane Nomikos (seventh-year PhD) was awarded the university-wide Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching award for the 2016-2017 year. Ariane taught Biomedical Ethics in Fall 2016 and Environmental Ethics in Spring 2017. Ariane's dedication to her students, passion for philosophy, and skill and effectiveness in teaching made her the obvious choice for the review board. In fact, Ariane was invited by the board to be on the selection committee as the graduate student representative for the 2018 awards cycle, an honor asked of only a single winner from the previous year. Ariane is currently finishing her dissertation on the aesthetics of place with Professor Carolyn Korsmeyer. Congrats Ariane! See Ariane's student interview on page 46.

Dissertation Fellowships

Brendan Cline (PhD 2017) was awarded a \$6,000 College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Fellowship from UB for the 2016-2017 year.

Jake Monaghan was awarded a Humane Studies Fellowship for both the 2017-2018 year and the upcoming 2018-2019 year to support work on his dissertation.

Ariane Nomikos was awarded a \$6,000 College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Fellowship from UB for the 2017-2018 year.

Other Noteworthy Student Achievements

Francesco Franda presented his paper, "Organizations: An Ontological Approach," at *ENSO V: The Fifth Conference of the European Network on Social Ontology*, which was held at Lund University in Sweden in August 2017. ENSO is a huge three-day conference featuring some of the biggest names in social ontology.

Robert Kelly had his paper, "Addiction Is Not a Brain Disease," accepted for presentation in the poster session at the upcoming 2019 Eastern APA.

Danielle Limbaugh accepted a fellowship offer in the PhD program at Cornell University starting in Fall 2018.

David Limbaugh was awarded a two-year postdoc (Fall 2018 to Fall 2020), working with the intelligence community under the guidance of Barry Smith. David defended his dissertation in September 2018.

Jake Monaghan presented a paper in both the 2017 Central APA colloquium and the 2018 Central APA colloquium. The papers were titled, "The Limits of Procedural Justification" (2017) and "Informed Consent and the State" (2018).

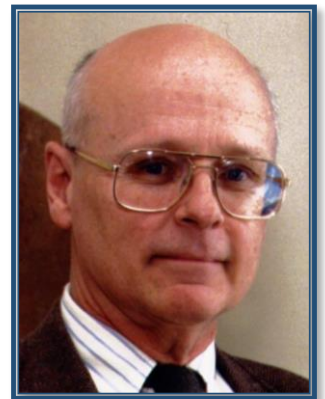
Ariane Nomikos was accepted to participate in a workshop held at Princeton University on June 26-29, 2018 entitled, "Athena in Action: A Networking and Mentorship Workshop for Graduate Student Women in Philosophy." The selection process was competitive, with upwards of 140 applicants and all expenses paid for those selected. The workshop featured seven paper sessions and mentoring sessions from faculty advising participants on publishing, dissertation writing, and other topics. Ariane also presented her paper, "Ambiguous Places: A Case for the Everyday Sublime," in the poster session at the 2018 Eastern APA.

Jonathan Vajda had his paper, "George Berkeley's Concrete General Ideas and the Problem of Universals," accepted for presentation in the *International Berkeley Society Session* at the upcoming 2019 Eastern APA. Jonathan was a first-year PhD during the 2017-2018 year when he applied to the 2019 Eastern APA. He's off to a great start!

The People Who Make It Possible

The Peter Hare Award

Peter H. Hare, Ph.D., was a Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at UB. 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.



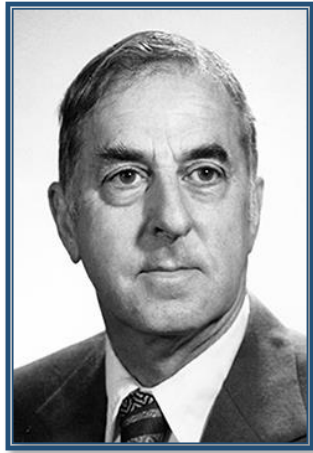
Hare was born in 1935 in New York City, the son of the late Jane Perry and Michael Meredith Hare and began his life-long relationship with philosophy while an undergraduate at Yale University. His master's degree thesis on Whitehead remains an exemplar of multi-disciplinary integration. He earned a doctorate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

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

George Hourani was born in 1913 in a suburb of Manchester, England to parents who had emigrated from Southern Lebanon. He won a fellowship to study classics at Oxford from 1932-1936. A trip to the Near East in 1934 influenced his decision to continue his graduate studies in Princeton's Department of Oriental Studies in 1937. Hourani received his PhD in 1939.



A teaching position as lecturer at the Government Arab College in Jerusalem followed, and he began teaching Classics, logic, and history of philosophy. 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. It was during Hourani's years at Michigan that he began to concentrate on Islamic philosophy. He is responsible for definitive Arabic editions and translations 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. In January 1967, Hourani delivered a lecture at the Department of Philosophy at UB and was soon afterwards asked to join the department. He was the chair of the UB Philosophy department from 1976-1979. He developed a popular seminar in Greek ethics and taught medieval philosophy.

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, *Islamic Theology and Philosophy*, was published in 1984 by SUNY Press.

Recurring heart problems led to Hourani's death in 1984. The philosophy department is very indebted to his generous endowment, which has allowed us to bring in 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.

The Steinberg Award

The Steinberg Award was instituted by Charles Eliot Steinberg in memory of his father, **Samuel Steinberg**, an avid and devoted scholar of philosophy. Steinberg endowed the UB Philosophy Department in particular as a gesture of appreciation for the excellent education his daughter, now Professor Carol Steinberg Gould, received during her studies here.

The Romanell Award

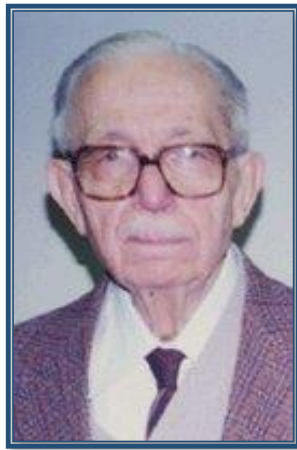
Edna Romanell has made two testamentary gifts with a combined value of nearly \$1.5 million to the University at Buffalo. With these gifts—made through revocable trust expectancies—Mrs. Romanell has continued the legacy begun by her late husband, **Patrick Romanell**, a philosopher and author of several books on critical naturalism.

The first bequest of \$600,000 provides continuing support for the Romanell Lecture on Medical Ethics and Philosophy, a series she and her husband established in 1997 with a gift of \$50,000. 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, PhD 1999 and MA 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 an editor of *Philosophy Now* and Chair of the Philosophy Department at St. John Fisher College, 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 PhD 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 articles in distinguished journals such 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

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. Before coming to UB, she also taught at Vassar College, Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, and Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn. 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.

Alumni Updates

Notes from our Alumni

Jason Adsit (PhD 2002), was recently selected by unanimous vote from a national search to serve as the seventh President of Mount Saint Mary College. Jason had previously served as Dean of the School of Arts, Sciences, and Education, as well as Director of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program, at D'Youville College in Buffalo. Before that, Jason served as Associate Provost for Academic Administration at the University of Rochester, the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center at SUNY Buffalo, and Assistant Dean for Institutional Research and Assessment at Johns Hopkins University.



Stephanie Rivera Berruz (PhD 2014), Assistant Professor of Philosophy at William Patterson University in New Jersey, won the 2017 Career Enhancement Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. Stephanie was the only philosopher out of 30 fellowship winners. In addition, Stephanie's recent research in the philosophy of race and Latin American philosophy has produced the co-edited volume *Comparative Studies in Asian and Latin American Philosophies: Cross-Cultural Theories and Methodologies* (Bloomsbury, 2018). She was recently invited back to UB by Jorge Gracia to give a Capen Lecture.



Brendan Cline (PhD 2017) took a position as Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Grand Valley State University after completing his dissertation on metaethics and moral psychology in Spring 2017. In the summer of 2018, Brendan left Michigan to head for Massachusetts to start his position as Florence Levy Kay Fellow in Philosophy and Neuroscience at Brandeis University. At Brandeis, Brendan will continue to develop his research on issues at the intersection of metaethics and moral psychology, including the evolution of morality, the relationship between normative judgment and motivation, and the semantics of normative thought and discourse.



Justin Donhauser (PhD 2015) has accepted a junior faculty position at Bowling Green State University starting in Fall 2018. Justin just finished a two-year post-doc at the Rotman Institute at Western Ontario University working on their Geo-Functions Project. At Bowling Green, Justin has developed parts of their new Data Science PhD program, and will teach various courses in philosophy and data science. Since the last (2016) issue, Justin has written twelve articles that are either published or forthcoming.



William Duncan (PhD 2014), an ontology student of Barry Smith's, was recently appointed Associate Director of the Clinical Data Network at Roswell Park

Cancer Institute, the first dedicated medical facility for cancer treatment and research in the United States. He is responsible for development of data resources for Roswell clinical scientists, for extraction of research data from the Roswell electronic medical record system, and for the development of semantic technologies to integrate and query data from multiple sources. William has been instrumental in the development of the Oral Health and Disease Ontology and the Antibody Ontology and also serves as Assistant Professor of Oncology.



Peter Koch (PhD 2016), a fellow of the Romanell Center, recently completed a two-year stint as a Clinical Ethics fellow at the Baylor College of Medicine and Houston Methodist Hospital in Spring 2018. After his post doc, Pete accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Villanova in Philadelphia, PA. His research focuses on patient welfare, patient harm, the metaphysics of death, and ethical issues surrounding brain death in the clinical setting. Pete is also assisting in the development of a Clinical Ethics Consultation service for hospitals in the greater Philadelphia area and continues his work as a Medical Ethics Consultant at the VA Hospital in Buffalo, NY.



Rasmus Rosenberg Larsen (PhD 2017), one of Professor Cho's last doctoral students, accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Forensic Science at the University of Toronto, Mississauga. Rasmus completed his dissertation on the ontology of psychopathy, with a special focus on using ontology to formulate better research methods for understanding and empirically

investigating this phenomenon. See the interview with Rasmus on page 36.

Seung-Chong Lee (PhD 1993), a professor of the Department of Philosophy at Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea, recently published two books in Korean. One is a Korean translation of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (Acanet, 2016) with translator's introduction and expansive running commentaries. The other is *From East Asian Thoughts* (Dongneok, 2018). Professor Xianglong Zhang of the Department of Philosophy at Sun Yat-sen University, Zhuhai, China, an alumnus of UB Philosophy, wrote the following blurb: "Seung-Chong Lee's writings present an enlightening deconstruction of deeply rooted metaphysical trends that have bewitched philosophical minds for a long time. His lucid and sometimes formalized arguments are powerful and lethal, and his ability to bring eastern and western (including scientific) thought together to form a chorus that exceeds any side's solo-singing is simply marvelous." Lee was awarded a distinguished service prize, a distinguished academic achievements prize, and four teaching awards.



Meghan Raehl (PhD 2016), who completed her PhD under the supervision of James Beebe, has recently become Director and Lead Faculty of the Center for Teaching Excellence at the International Institute for Innovative Instruction, a division of Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio, where Meghan also teaches courses in philosophy and religion. Her research focuses on Metaphysics, Philosophy of



Technology, and Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Learning Theories. Meghan has published on the relationship between personal identity and cognitive extension vis-a-vie biotechnical enhancements and is currently researching inclusive instructional strategies and transnational teaching excellence.

Selja Seppala, a former post doc under Barry Smith from 2012 to 2016, has recently been working as Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Governance, Risk, and Compliance Technology Center (GRCTC) at the University College Cork in Ireland. Selja's interdisciplinary research focuses on definitions in dictionaries, technical manuals, and ontologies, and in the automation of definition production, editing, and checking. Her work aims to lay the groundwork for creating computer-assisted natural language definition writing tools leveraging ontological data.



Recent Events

2017 Hourani Lecture Series: Julia Driver

Julia Driver is Professor of Philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis, and taught previously at Dartmouth College and Brooklyn College, CUNY. Driver's research is primarily focused on normative ethics and moral psychology,



but she also works in metaethics and the history of sentimentalism (especially David Hume), as well as having interests in the metaphysics of causation and

value. Driver has written three books, *Uneasy Virtue* (Cambridge 2001), *Ethics: The Fundamentals* (Blackwell 2006), and *Consequentialism* (Routledge 2012), has published numerous articles, and has received a number of fellowships and awards for her work.

Professor Driver's lectures focused on her work on moral attitudes and emotions. Her first lecture, which focused on attitudes like those that P. F. Strawson called the 'reactive attitudes' regarding moral responsibility, was titled, "Wrongs, Blame, and Forgiveness." The second lecture, which maintained its focus on other-directed attitudes, honed in on the particular and intriguing attitude *schadenfreude*. "Schadenfreude" also aptly served as the title of the lecture. The third and final lecture turned inward to focus on the nature of a particular self-directed moral attitude, and was (also aptly) titled, "Regret."

Nearly every faculty member and graduate student was in attendance for each lecture, leading to a lively and wonderfully informative Q&A. There were so many questions, with so much discussion, that Professor Barry Smith was only able to spell out two of his five objections. It remains unknown how worrisome the other three objections are. In addition to the lectures, Professor Driver put in a ton of overtime, attending numerous lunches and dinners with small groups of graduate students and faculty throughout her visit, as well as the final larger dinner following her last talk. Faculty and graduate students alike agreed that Professor Driver was a pleasure to spend time with, and we'd love to have her back any time!

2017 Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture: Massimo Pigliucci

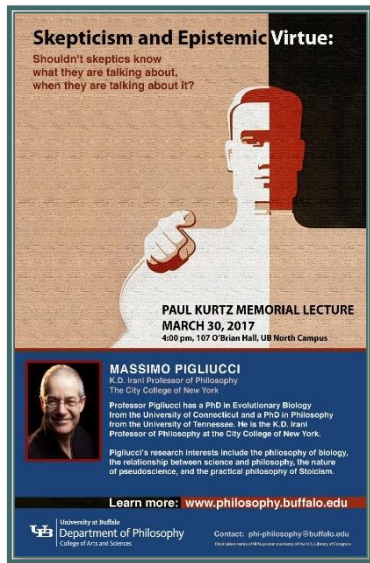
In March 2017, the department was pleased to welcome **Massimo Pigliucci**, the K.D. Irani Professor of Philosophy at the City College of New York, to give the Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture. Pigliucci has a PhD in both evolutionary biology and philosophy, and focuses his research on issues in philosophy of biology, philosophy of science, especially the nature of

pseudoscience and the relationship between science and philosophy as disciplines, and Stoicism. He was elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and has engaged in a number of public outreach efforts (articles, blogs, podcasts, etc.) in an attempt to encourage and facilitate critical thinking about philosophy and science in the public sphere.

Pigliucci's lecture was entitled, "Skepticism and Epistemic Virtue: Shouldn't Skeptics Know What They are Talking about, When They are Talking about It?" Pigliucci discuss what it meant to be epistemically virtuous and what it takes to truly say one *knows* about a given subject. Understanding these important questions, Pigliucci argued, can, among other things, help to clarify the distinction between science and pseudoscience, especially as it is instantiated in ordinary conversations between people.

2016 Samuel P. Capen Lecture Series: "Philosophy and Its History"

The 2016 Capen Lecture series featured three days of lectures from **Christia Mercer**, Gustave M. Berne Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University. Mercer's lectures were held on October 17-19, 2016, and were grouped under the heading, "Agency and Suffering: Women Then and Now." Her individual



lectures were titled as follows:

Lecture 1: "Meditating on Truth: How Women Changed the Course of Philosophy 1300-1600 and Laid the Groundwork for Descartes' Meditations"

Lecture 2: "Early Modern Women, Suffering and Agency: The Case of Anne Conway (1631-79)"

Lecture 3: "Race, Gender, and Suffering in the Prison Industrial Complex."

Audio from Mercer's lectures can be found here: <https://www.buffalo.edu/capenchair/events/lectures/christia-mercer.html>. The 2016 lecture series also included the following single-day lectures:

Thomas Sullivan (University of St. Thomas)
"Philosophy Unshackled"
September 27, 2016

Russell Panier (William Mitchell College of Law)
"Burying the Philosophical Past"
September 27, 2016

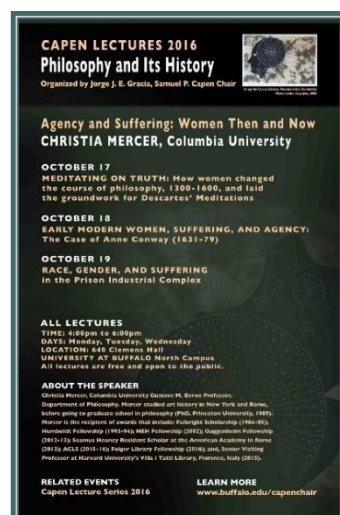
Barry Smith (University at Buffalo)
"Philosophome: The Future of the History of Philosophy"
October 4, 2016

Carlos Alberto Sanchez (San Jose State University)
"Mexican Philosophy and the Trope of Authenticity"
November 1, 2016

Robert Gooding-Williams (Columbia University)
"History of African American Political Thought and Antiracist Critical Theory"
November 15, 2016

2017 Samuel P. Capen Lecture Series: "Race and Ethnicity"

The 2017 Capen Lecture series featured two days of lectures from **José Medina**, Walter Dill Scott Professor of Philosophy at Northwestern University. Medina's



lectures were held on September 26-27, 2018, and were titled as follows:

Lecture 1: "Taking Responsibility for Racial Violence: Shooting the Racial Imagination"

Lecture 2: "Racist Propaganda and Epistemic Activism"

Audio from Medina's lectures can be found here: https://www.buffalo.edu/capenchair/events/lectures.html#title_837264591. The 2017 lecture series also included the following single-day lectures:

Meena Krishnamurthy (University of Michigan)
"White Blindness"
September 28, 2017

Stephanie Rivera Berruz (William Paterson University)
"Writing Latinos into Philosophical History"
October 11, 2017

Departmental Colloquia 2016-2017

Neil Sinhababu (National University of Singapore)
"Humean Nature: The Wreckage of Time and the Persistence of Things"
September 29, 2016

Tom Hurka (University of Toronto)
"The Intrinsic Values of Knowledge and Achievement"
October 20, 2016

Brian Epstein (Tufts University)
Title: "A Framework for Social Ontology"
November 10, 2016

Alison Simmons (Harvard University)
"Descartes and the Modern Mind"
November 11, 2016

Paul Audi (University of Rochester)
"An Argument that Tropes Can Change"
December 1, 2016

Tuomas Tahko (University of Helsinki)
"Where Do You Get Your Protein? (Or: Biochemical Realization)"
February 16, 2017

Joshua Knobe (Yale University)
"Norms and Normativity"
February 23, 2017

Departmental Colloquia 2017-2018

Meena Krishnamurthy (University of Michigan)
"White Blindness"
September 28, 2017

Matthew Slater (Bucknell University of Rostock)
"Realism and Understanding: The Challenge from Pluralism"
October 19, 2017

Terence Cuneo (University of Vermont)
"Thomas Reid on Agent Causation"
November 2, 2017

Nick Zangwill (University of Hull)
"Moral Dependence and Supervenience"
November 30, 2017

John Greco (Saint Louis University)
"Intellectual Humility and Contemporary Epistemology: A Critique of Epistemic Individualism, Evidentialism and Internalism"
February 1, 2018

Charles Goodman (SUNY Binghamton)
"How Emotions Deceive: Śāntideva's Moral Psychology Today"
March 1, 2018

Janice Dowell (Syracuse University)
"The Linguistic Case for Expressivism Reconsidered"
April 5, 2018

Karen Bennett (Cornell University)

"Kinds of Kinds"

April 19, 2018

Pamela Hieronymi (UCLA)

"I'll Bet You Think this Blame Is About You"

May 3, 2018

Logic Colloquia 2016-2017

John Beverley (Graduate, University at Buffalo)

"Consequential Commands: A Defense of Imperative Inference"

November 3, 2016

Thomas Bittner (University at Buffalo)

"Formal Ontology of Space, Time, and Physical Entities in Classical Mechanics"

November 17, 2016

Matt LaVine (SUNY Potsdam)

"The History of Logic (and Ethics)"

March 2, 2017

Julian Cole (Buffalo State University)

"Institutions and Abstract Objects"

March 9, 2017

John Corcoran (University at Buffalo)

"Sentence, Proposition, Judgment, Statement, and Fact: Speaking about the Written English Used in Logic"

April 27, 2017

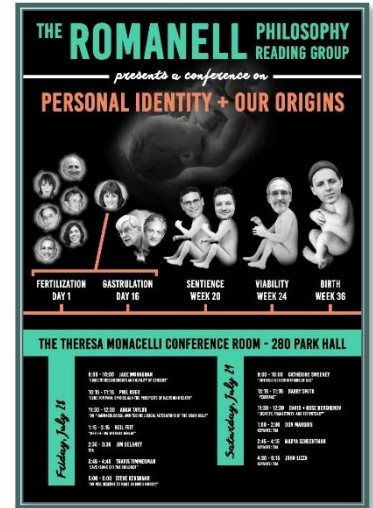
Fifth and Sixth Annual Romanell (formerly 'PANTC') Conferences on Bioethics and Philosophy of Medicine

The long-standing PANTC Conference has recently been subsumed under the newly revamped Romanell Center for Clinical Ethics and the Philosophy of Medicine. The Romanell Center, now co-directed by Professor David Hershenov, a founding PANTC member,

hosted its fifth and sixth annual summer conferences in 2017 and 2018, respectively. Conference presenters regularly include faculty and graduate student members of the center, including philosophers and clinicians from the Buffalo-Niagara area, as well as invited researchers in philosophy of medicine and clinical ethics from the surrounding WNY area.

The fifth annual Romanell Conference was held on July 28-29, 2017. The conference topic was "Personal Identity and Our Origins," and featured keynote addresses from **Don Marquis** (University of Kansas), **Marya Schechtman** (University of Illinois, Chicago), and **John Lizza** (Kutztown University). Other conference speakers included UB faculty members **David Hershenov** and **Barry Smith**, UB alums **Rose Hershenov**, **Catherine Sweeney**, and **Adam Taylor**, and UB graduate student **Jake Monaghan**.

The sixth annual Romanell Conference was held on July 26-28, 2018. Each day of the conference addressed a different topic and featured its own corresponding mini debate. The first day topic was "The Metaphysical Foundations of Bioethics," which saw UB graduate student **Shane Hemmer** debate UB alum **Adam Taylor** on the compatibility of bioethics and four-dimensionalism. The second day topic was "Bioethics and Clinical Ethics," which included a debate between **Don Marquis** and **Patrick**



Lee on defending the pro-life position. Finally, the third day topic was “Philosophy of Medicine,” which included a debate between UB graduate student **David Limbaugh** and Fredonia Professor **Neil Feit** over Jerome Wakefield’s harmful dysfunction account of disease. The third day of the conference also featured the keynote address from **Jerome Wakefield** (NYU) on the nature of addiction. Other conference speakers included UB faculty members **Harvey Berman** (UB Med School), **David Hershenov** and **Barry Smith**, UB alums **Jelena Krgovic** and **Adam Taylor**, and UB graduate student **Robert Kelly**.

Blameless Buffalo? Conference and Workshop

The Blameless Buffalo? Reading group held its annual summer conferences on May 20, 2017. The Blameless Buffalo? members (unofficially) renamed the room where the conference was located, which has served as the locale for both the Blameless Buffalo? and the Romanell (formerly ‘PANTC’) reading group conferences for many years, the ‘Theresa Monacelli Conference Room’ in memory of our former assistant to the chair. Theresa was vital over the years in organizing both summer conferences and making sure everyone was fed and that everything was cleaned up. These duties fell on co-founder of both reading groups, David Hershenov, who kept everyone fed and everything cleaned, but complained much more than Theresa.

Conference presenters included Blameless Buffalo? members **Yishai Cohen** (Southern Maine) **David Hershenov**, **Robert Kelly**, **Steve Kershner**, and **David Limbaugh**. As long-standing graduate members of the group, Kelly and Limbaugh were named conference co-keynoters, and conference presenters and attendees participated in a trivia about them during the lunch. The winner received autographed copies of their first publications. However, Kelly’s publication was a co-authored chapter in an anthology, and so his autograph won’t be worth as much in the years to come.

The summer of 2018 saw a slight change in format for the Blameless Buffalo? gathering. Due to some of the regular members having taken on extra duties or having moved farther away from Buffalo, rather than a conference, a handful of the remaining members held a smaller, pre-read workshop. Group members **John Keller**, **Robert Kelly**, and **Steve Kershner** workshopped papers, and the format allowed for longer and more detailed discussions. Due to lighter attendance, there was also more food to go around.

2017 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference

James Beebe, assisted by graduate student **Robert Kelly**, held the sixth *Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference* on August 18-19, 2017 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in downtown Buffalo. In addition to 18 paper presentations, the conference featured a keynote address, “The Intuitive Power and Limits of Scientific Explanations,” from **Tania Lombrozo**, Professor of Psychology at Princeton University. Lombrozo’s work focuses on learning, reasoning, and decision-making, and she runs the Concepts and Cognition Lab at Princeton.

2017 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference

Keynote Speaker:
Tania Lombrozo
Associate Professor of Psychology
University of California, Berkeley

Keynote Address:
"The Intuitive Power and Limits of Scientific Explanations"

Sponsored By:
University at Buffalo
Department of Philosophy
College of Arts and Sciences
The George F. Hourani Memorial Fund
The Peter Hare Memorial Fund
The Marvin Farber Memorial Fund

Location:
Embassy Suites Hotel
200 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY
August 18th & 19th, 2017
9:00 am - 7:00 pm

Conference Program and Details:
<https://philievents.org/event/show/30426>

Organized by:
James Beebe & Robert Kelly

University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

Fall Events

Fall 2018 Hourani Lecture

The 2018 Hourani Conference, organized by Professors **Nic Bommarito**, **Alexandra King**, and **Lewis Powell**, with the help of fourth-year PhD student

Angela Menditto, takes place on November 2-3 this Fall. This year the organizers are trying a new method, consisting in a single conference-style day of invited presentations with commentators, which will end with the Hourani keynote address. The second day will consist in more informal socializing with conference participants at events such as a banquet and a sight-seeing outing. The list of speakers for the November 2018 Hourani Lecture is as follows.

Hourani Keynote Lecture:
Mark Schroeder (USC)



Presenters/Respondents:

Hallie **Liberto**

(UMD)/**Tom Dougherty** (Cambridge)

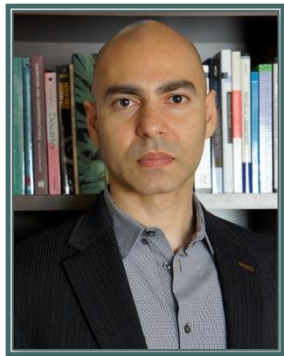
Barry Maguire (Stanford)/**David Sobel** (Syracuse)

Justin Snedegar (St. Andrews)/**Jonathan Way** (Southampton)

Vida Yao (Rice)/**Macalaster Bell** (Bryn Mawr)

Fall 2018 Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture: Anjan Chakravartty

The 2018 Paul Kurtz Memorial Lecture (Thursday, October 18) features **Anjan Chakravartty**, and includes a working brunch with department members the next day (Friday, October 19). Chakravartty is the Ap-pignani Foundation Chair for the Study of Atheism, Humanism, and Secular Ethics at the University of Miami. His research focuses on the metaphysics and epistemology of science, and in particular, issues surrounding scientific realism vs. antirealism and the nature of dispositions, causation, laws of nature, and natural kinds. He was recently featured on an episode of the New Books in Philosophy podcast discussing his recent book *Scientific Ontology* (OUP). The time and location



of the lecture and working brunch are to be determined. Please check the events page of the UB Philosophy Department website for up-to-date details of upcoming events.

2018 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference

This Fall, **James Beebe** hosts the seventh and final *Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference* (Friday, September 21 and Saturday, September 22). The conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in downtown Buffalo. Details about the full conference program can be found on the department website.

In addition to 21 paper presentations, this year's conference features a keynote address from **Shaun Nichols**, Sherwin Scott Chair and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Arizona. Nichols work spans a wide array of topics, and is considered one of the co-founders of the experimental philosophy movement. He has authored three books, edited or co-edited eight volumes, and has authored more than 120 articles.



2018 Central States Philosophical Association Annual Meeting

This Fall, **James Beebe**, CSPA President, also hosts the *Central States Philosophical Association Annual Meeting* (Friday, October 26 and Saturday, October 27). The conference will feature **Michael Lynch** (University of Connecticut) as the keynote speaker. Lynch's



research focuses on truth, democracy, public discourse, and the ethics of technology, and he is the author or editor of seven books.

2018 UB Graduate Philosophy Conference

Our Graduate Philosophy Association, generously sponsored by our own Philosophy Department and UB's Graduate Student Association, hosts its inaugural *Graduate Philosophy Conference* on Saturday, October 6, 2018. The conference theme is metaphysics and it will feature four graduate student paper presentations and a keynote address from **Achille Varzi** (Columbia). The conference organizers are graduate students **Botan Dolun**, **Francesco Franda**, **Shane Hemmer**, **Eric Merrill**, and **SeeongSoo Park**. The time and location of the talk are TBD. Please refer back to the events page of the UB Philosophy Department website for up-to-date details of upcoming events.



Fall 2018 Departmental Colloquia

Michael Moehler (PPE, Virginia Tech)
"Diversity, Stability, and Social Contract Theory"
September 13, 2018

Gillian Russell (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)
"Speech Acts and Speaking Up"
September 27, 2018

For information about the rest of the Fall 2018 Colloquia, please refer back to the department website for up-to-date details.

Fall 2018 Co-Sponsored Talks

Dedong Wei (Columbia Confucius Institute)
"Humanism and Rationality: The Natures of Chinese Chan"
September 14, 2018

Paul Harris (Graduate School of Education, Harvard)
"Asking Questions: Trusting what You're Told"
September 28, 2018

Sara Brill (Fairfield University)
Just Theory Talk
"Unlivable Life: Aristotle after Agamben"
October 4, 2018

Tamar Rudovsky (Ohio State University)
"Atomistic Conceptions of Time: al- Ghazâlî, Maimonides and Husserl"
October 11, 2018

Kate Mann (Cornell University)
UB Gender Institute Lecture Series on Misogyny
"On Misogyny and 'Himpathy'"
October 25, 2018
(Professor Mann to hold a two-hour masterclass on misogyny focusing on her book *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* on October 26 open to all UB grad students and faculty by RSVP.)

Fall 2018 Buffalo Logic Colloquium Celebration

The Buffalo Logic Celebration (Thursday, November 29) marks the retirement of Professor **John Kearns** (see his faculty interview on page 9) and his long-time commitment to the department and the Buffalo Logic Colloquium.

Tentative schedule:
-2:00-3:30pm, Talk by Stewart Shapiro
-3:30-4:00pm, Coffee break
-4:00-5:30pm, Talk by John Kearns
-6:30pm, Dinner

The event also honors the history of the long-running Buffalo Logic Colloquium itself, and recognizes Professor **Stewart Shapiro** (Ohio State) as a Distinguished UB Philosophy Alum. Please refer to the department website for up-to-date details.

Donations

If you would like to donate to the Department of Philosophy, please visit our website and look for the “Support the Department” link: <http://philosophy.buffalo.edu>

Or, for more information on how you can give back to UB, please contact the College of Arts and Sciences Office of Development by emailing casdev@buffalo.edu or calling (716) 645-0850.

Your contributions help to maintain our outstanding programs and are much appreciated



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