

50th Anniversary
Edition!

News from the Chair

What an exciting year it has been! We were up for our regular 5 year program review last fall, and an external reviewer was engaged to assist with the process of identifying strengths and areas for improvement. We were gratified to hear that the hard work we do day in and day out is paying off. The reviewer noted, **for instance, that “Much of the work being done here is innovative and instructive, and the department has developed strong and often unique offerings...”** In reference to the Religious Studies program he **stated that “the requirements and expectations of the Religious Studies**

program are a model of what a religious studies curriculum should be. This covers both the diversity of religious belief ... as well as critical thinking about Religions, in courses like Philosophy of Religion and sociological studies **of religious phenomena.”**

In the fall, long-term faculty member Dr. Frank Hoffman announced his intention to retire in January. We were almost immediately approved for several new hires in Asian Philosophy. Thanks to long hours logged in by my colleagues, especially search committee members Matt Pierlott, Dean Johnson, and Cassie

Striblen, the searches came to a successful conclusion. In addition, one of our long term adjunct faculty members was converted to a tenure track position. This brings us to 13 permanent faculty in the department this fall (up from 7 only five years ago)!

We are also very excited to be celebrating our 50th Anniversary as a department, and I would like to thank Dr. George Claghorn for bringing this to our attention. Inside you will find a number of events planned to mark this celebration, and we hope that you can join us for some or all!

Philosophy Department

Faculty and Staff

Anderson Hall, 610-436-2841

Dr. Dan Forbes 332 A

Dr. Steven James 332 D

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Dr. Rob Main 336

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Dr. Matthew Pierlott 332 D

Dr. Ruth Porritt 108B

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PHILOSOPHY AT WEST CHESTER 1966-2016

Founder of Philosophy Department, Dr. George Claghorn, reflects on our history

The history of the West Chester University Department of Philosophy is one of success, and has been from the beginning. The decade of the 1960s is recorded in memory as one of tumult, but for West Chester it was a time of **unparalleled growth. In 1960, the term, “Teachers,” was dropped from our title, and we became “West Chester State College.”** The emphasis shifted to liberal arts. Yet, there was one glaring deficiency: the curriculum lacked Philosophy! President Earl F. Sykes and Dean Kenneth Slagle determined to correct this situation. So, in 1966, they established the Department of Philosophy. The year 2016, will be the Fiftieth Anniversary of our founding. As we prepare to celebrate that milestone, it is fitting to evaluate our progress, so far.

Once the department was begun, everyone joined, full speed, in the effort to build it. By 1970, incredible progress had been made. From zero, a complete roster of courses and a major had been developed. A complement of Philosophy professors was added, which grew to eight full-time (Banyacski, Claghorn, Croddy, Platt, Riukas, Streveler, Struckmeyer, and Williams). Teachers had celebrity status, teaching the refreshing, new topics. Enrollments soared as enthusiastic students filled the classes. Library resources were rapidly acquired, with works of all the chief philosophers, and other standard references.

The crowning achievement of the first four years came in 1970, with state approval for our Master of Arts program. This was the first, and is still the only such, degree in all the institutions of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It immediately attracted students, from far and wide. A number of those initial master-recipients went on directly to receive their Ph. D. degrees, and commence careers in college teaching.

A question often asked about our subject is, –What can one do with a degree in Philosophy?! The answer I always give is, –Everything!! A few samples of the occupations our graduates entered will prove the validity of this statement:

*Hon. James P. MacElree II, Judge, Court of Common Pleas, West Chester (BA _70)

*James Lutz, Executive Director, Red Rose Transit, Lancaster (MA _76)

Michael Duff, J.D., Harvard, Professor, Wyoming School of Law (BA _91)

Dana Skaddan, M.B.A., Harvard, Corporate Manager (BA _80)

Grace Fala, Ph. D., Professor, Juniata College (MA _88)

*Paul Sanborn, Public School Principal (MA _72)

*William Cannon, former editor, *Motor Age* magazine (BA _81)

Louis Alamia, M.D., Army Physician (BA _72)

John Zwierzyna, Curator, Pennsylvania State Museum, Harrisburg (MA _81).



Emeritus Professor George Claghorn with Rev. Beverly Wenrich (BA, 1979) in 2012.

Of the above, Paul Sanborn initiated securing state certification for Philosophy, as a subject in Pennsylvania secondary schools. A host of other Philosophy graduates serve faithfully and effectively in careers, such as: law, teaching, ministry, business, and various other fields.

Over the years since 1970, more professors joined the Philosophy faculty ranks (Hipple, Porritt, Woolfrey, Hoffman, Schroepfer, Pierlott, Forbes, and now, Striblen). Early on, six members of the original staff won faculty fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Two of them were awarded three fellowships each. The faculty were in demand at Philosophy meetings, to deliver papers on the local, state, national, and international levels.

Dr. Platt's Jerusalem address was reprinted by UNESCO in Paris, in multiple languages, for world-wide distribution. Every one of the WCU Philosophy professors regarded their position, not simply as –a job, but rather, as a –dedication, which they avidly pursued.

On the student side, the number of courses offered continually increased, as did the list of Philosophy majors. This was the more remarkable, because many had no acquaintance at all with Philosophy until they took their first introductory **course in college. Students caught the –philosophy bug, an unmistakable excitement on discovering the world of ideas.** The young people sensed their profound influence, and had a vision of the splendid opportunities they offered.

The department took sure strides forward. Nationally-known philosophers were welcomed to the campus, including a number of presidents of the American Philosophical Association. A chapter of the national Philosophy honor society, Phi Sigma Tau, was chartered on our campus. This provided recognition for student academic pace-setters. Every year, a new class was inducted, in an impressive ceremony, memorable for all concerned.

In 1980, a Philosophy Advisory Board was formed, to promote the cause of West Chester Philosophy. This distinguished **group of volunteers, community leaders, was intensely interested in the department's activities and direction. In addition** to the members asterisked above, they included: Lois Harshaw Barker, Vice President and CEO of the Hay Group, Philadelphia (BA Phil. UP); Rabbi Mac Portal (BA __82), and Rev. Earl Trent, Jr., both of West Chester; Timothy Keltz, Database Administrator, GPU Service Corp., Reading (MA __76); Reginald Regis, President of Eastern Futures, Inc. of Wayne (MA __92); and John J. Scully, Vice President, Roy F. Weston, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA (BA __74). **The enterprise could be called a –think tank. The members gave freely of their time and thought. They were a tremendous encouragement, and were deeply appreciated.**

In 1990, West Chester University was accepted for membership in the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium. This was a major advance, to become a partner with a select group of area universities and colleges, in a lively, cultural enterprise. West Chester immediately gained higher academic standing, in the eyes of the public. Faculty and students found doors open to many new, intercollegiate opportunities. The Consortium brought famous philosophers to the campus. The ongoing experience has proved to be enriching to all.

In the 1980s, a Friends of Philosophy was organized, appealing to alumni and other interested persons, to support Philosophy scholarships. The aim was to help needy students, and attract new graduate students. We followed the model of football and music scholarships, which are underwritten by faithful graduates. The project made a good start, with a number of responses. Dana Skaddan gave the major donation, to date, of \$10,000.

Also, during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, we issued a series of Philosophy Newsletters. They chronicled Philosophy graduates by classes, honors awarded, sketches of outstanding alumni, and activities of all who reported. These newsletters met with favor, and are still kept as references.

* * *

An accounting is due on events in my life, since then. From 1966 to 1996, I was re-elected Chair of Philosophy, possibly a WCU record. Then in 1996, I returned to full-time teaching. Two years later, my book on Jonathan Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings, Vol. 16*, of an edition of twenty-six, was published by the Yale University Press. I spoke at events commemorating the tercentenary of Edwards' birth, in 2003, at Miami, Washington, and Princeton.

In 2004, I retired and now live in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. In December, 2009, friends gave a party to mark my ninetieth birthday.

I look back on my forty-one years at West Chester University with boundless appreciation. I wish to express my unceasing gratitude to the faculty colleagues of the Philosophy Department. Their steadfast loyalty, absolute dependability, and unremitting efforts made all the wonderful accomplishments a reality.

Name after name, picture after picture, flash through my mind, of West Chester University friends. Every one was so helpful. My hearty thanks to all! I salute, also, each of our Philosophy graduates. You are a select group of superb individuals! We are proud of you and hold you in highest esteem. Do continue to keep in touch. It will be a great pleasure to hear **from you or have you visit, any time. I wish YOU the best that life can hold, and God's richest blessing!**

—George S. Claghorn (Reprinted from 2010 newsletter)

Please join us as we celebrate!

Philosophy Past...

Please join us as we celebrate the history of our department on Friday, October 9 from 4-5:30 PM in Phillips Autograph Library, led by our own Dr. Fred Struckmeyer. He will share important events in the department's history, pictures, and invite stories and anecdotes from the audience. Refreshments will be served.



Philosophy Present...

In early February we will be inviting alumni to share their experiences as we focus on the value of a Philosophy degree. We will fold our annual Career Day into this event as we are confident that our majors and minors can both learn from and be inspired by our amazing alumni! Please watch for dates and times on our website and contact Dr. Schroepfer if you would be willing to participate.

Philosophy Future...

What are the current trends in Philosophy as a discipline? How are Philosophy departments evolving? Plans are underway for an exciting speaker to lead our reflections on where we are headed in the 21st century. Look for details on the website for this spring event.

Other notable events (watch website for place and time):

- ◆ November 2-3, 2015 Ruby Sales, Human rights advocate and founder of SpiritHouse Project

- ◆ November 4-5, 2015 Colloquium on Revolutionary Nonviolence featuring:
 - Michele Alexander, Associate Professor of Law, Ohio State
 - Ruby Sales, Human Rights advocate and founder of SpiritHouse Project
 - Paul Bermanzohn, MD. Dr. Bermanzohn is one of the survivors of the Nov 3, 1979 Greensboro Massacre. In 1979 he worked for the African Liberation support Committee; was an active community organizer and a member of the Carolina Brown Lung Association. He is the son of two Holocaust survivors.

 - Abby Fuller, Associate Professor of Sociology, Manchester University
 - Mark Lance, Professor of Peace and Justice, Georgetown University
 - **Matt Meyer, Multicultural Coordinator for the NYC Board of Education's Alternative High Schools & Programs**

 - Elavie Ndura, Professor of Education, George Mason University, Fairfax Campus

 - **Simona Sharoni, Professor, Gender and Women's Studies, SUNY Plattsburgh**

 - Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, Senior Lecturer, African American & Religious Studies, Univ. of Florida
 - Janjira Sombatpoonsiri, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand
 - Hakim Mohandas Amani Williams, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies & Education, Gettysburg College

- ◆ Spring, 2016 International Arendt Circle Conference

New Faculty!

Dr. Rob Main

Robert Main joins the faculty of West Chester University this fall as Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Rob received his BA from the University of Washington (2004) and his Ph.D. in philosophy from Temple University (2010). He has taught at a wide variety of institutions, from research universities to liberal arts colleges and fine-art schools, and has been an adjunct instructor at West Chester since 2009. Rob teaches classes on existentialism, the philosophy of language and the history of philosophy, as well as special topics courses that bring traditional philosophy to bear on popular culture. His current



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Dr. Joshua Mason

Joshua Mason joins the faculty at West Chester University this fall as an Assistant Professor with a focus on Asian philosophy. He specializes in Chinese philosophy and ethics, and he has professional interests in hermeneutics and political philosophy. Josh received his PhD in 2014 from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and spent the past year working at Kennesaw State University. His dissertation, **“Justice and Harmony as Complementary Ideals,”** covers ground from ancient Greek metaphysics to contemporary social policy in China. Building on this foundation, his upcoming projects develop a hermeneutic ethics incorporating traditional Chinese concepts.



Josh was born and raised in Petaluma, California. In his spare time, he practices martial arts and writes silly poems.

Dr. Jea Sophia Oh

Jea Sophia Oh joins the faculty of West Chester University this fall as Assistant Professor of Philosophy. **Jea Sophia’s** research and teaching interests include Asian Philosophy, Comparative Ethics, Religion and Ecology, and Postcolonial Studies. Her research is highly interdisciplinary and cross-



cultural: alternative intersections of Western philosophy/theology and (East) Asian philosophy/spirituality, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Donghak, etc. Her interests extend also to ecofeminism, postcolonial theories and postmodern thought. Her book, *A Postcolonial Theology of Life: Planetarity East and West* (Upland: Sopher Press, December 2011), is the first approach to bridge postcolonialism and ecological ethics with the use of Asian spirituality as the philosophical underpinning for the argument that all forms of *Life* are sacred. She has presented and published numerous articles on various topics related to Asian Philosophy, Religion and Ecology, Women and Gender Studies, nationally and internationally. Jea Sophia holds her Ph.D. from Drew University. **In addition to her Drew Ph.D., Jea Sophia’s** postgraduate work includes S.T.M. from Yale University Divinity School, and M.Phil. from Drew University. She previously taught courses in Religion and Philosophy at Montclair State University, Drew University, and Union Theological Seminary in NYC.

Welcome To
THE TEAM

News from current department members

Ruth Porritt

For the 16th International Conference on Ethics Across the Curriculum Dr. Porritt gave a presentation on the use of personal advance directives in order to prevent self-deception and rationalization. Normally we think of advance directives as giving instructions to surrogate decision-makers in specific future conditions, but Dr. Porritt proposed these new kinds of personal advance directives to give **instructions to the individual's future self**. For example, you could write a well-reasoned decision about when to stop driving cars in order to protect yourself as well as others from harm. Dangerous driving by elderly citizens has become a significant public health problem in the U.S. Although the **individual's advance directive to**

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Joan Woolfrey

Having been on sabbatical this **past spring, it's hard to remember** what happened before then. I do **know that Matt's and my newest grant proposal did not get funded and the Women's & Gender Studies program is still not a department** (although that is still a possibility). My sabbatical has been productive, resulting in the submission of two articles for publication, and the completion, submission and acceptance of an article for the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<http://www.iep.utm.edu>) on Olympe de Gouges (1748-1793), who was a rabble-rouser during the French Revolution and, while not a philosopher in any strict sense, deserves attention for her morally astute analysis of gender roles, civic virtue, and ques-

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Matt Pierlott

Dr. Matthew Pierlott had a pleasant year teaching PHI180: Introduction to Ethics courses, which he loves to offer, as well as a section of PHI 422/522: Philosophy of Science. In addition, he instructed the Honors Capstone courses for the Honors College in both Fall and Spring. In Spring, he was appointed the Assistant Director of the Honors College and is working to further develop their assessment plans, help in curricular modifications and expansion and to broaden faculty opportunities within the Honors College.

Dr. Pierlott was happy to chair the search committee this year, looking for two additional hires in the area of Asian Philosophy. What a success! He and the committee are so happy to welcome Jea and Josh to

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Dan Forbes

Last year Dr. Forbes taught sections of Introduction to Ethics, History of Ancient Philosophy, and History of Modern Philosophy. In addition, last fall he taught the Philosophy Department's Graduate Proseminar, a course that introduces new graduate students to the challenges of graduate-level academic work. The class focused on works by Plato, Descartes, Berkeley, and Hume. Students in the course also worked on their choice of individual projects relevant to professional academic work, including projects on presenting scholarly work, organizing course syllabi and developing assignments, and practicing teaching in the classroom. One of the highlights of the course (for Dr. Forbes, anyway) was a lively **discussion of Angela Davis's Are Prisons Obsolete?** There was some

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Cassie Striblen

This past year was Dr. Striblen's fifth at West Chester (my, how time flies!) She successfully submitted her application for tenure and promotion and will be Associate Professor in the fall. She taught Political Philosophy, Logic, Symbolic Logic, and Introduction to Philosophy this year. She is particularly proud of the fact that three students in her Political Philosophy course presented papers from the class at the IAPRS conference this spring. For her own part, she attended the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology conference in New Orleans, giving a commentary on the moral agency of non-human animals. She attended a workshop in Atlanta for infusing "sustainability" across the curriculum and she co-facilitated a workshop on conflict management "Help Increase the Peace." Currently she is working on two papers, one in-

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Larry Udell

Dr. Udell has been busy developing a **team for WCU's first ever entry into** the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. Hundreds of students in teams across the United States and Canada compete in 10 Regional Ethics competitions each fall. The teams argue and defend their moral assessment of some of the most troubling and complex ethical issues facing society today. Questions address a wide array of topics in business and professional ethics, in personal relationships, and in social and political affairs. The competition focuses on selected cases developed by APPE ethics faculty, researchers, and professionals; covering a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to, business, engineering, journalism, law, medicine, and social work. In the competitions students demonstrate their ability to (1) un-

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Simon Ruchti

This semester, Simon Ruchti served as the respondent for Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium's panel on **Queer Philosophy**. Dr. Ruchti was also recognized for her teaching by WCU's Honor's College. She is currently working on an anthology for **Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies** courses and finalizing an article for *Feminist Formations* on providing feminist advisors to campus fraternities.

Dean Johnson

Dr. Dean Johnson and the Peace and Conflict Studies program had a wonderful year. In October, Dr. Johnson attended the Peace and Justice Studies Association conference where he presented as a part of a panel for a recently published book: *Teaching Peace Through Popular Culture* (Information Age Publishing, 2015). Johnson's chapter is "Using Film to Illustrate Theories of Violence and Nonviolence." Johnson consulted with student organizers in the Black Friday Coalition who raised awareness about racial justice both on and off campus. Ewuare X. Osayande, Tina Chiarelli-Helminiak, and Johnson led members of the coalition and other students in nonviolence trainings in the fall. He also took students in Washington, DC in November to

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Steven James

Steven James spent the past year settling into the community at WCU and designing three new courses. In the fall, he taught two sections of Intro (PHI 101) and a new combination undergraduate/graduate course on material that is loosely connected to his research – core philosophical topics concerning memory. In the spring, in addition to his two intro sections, he taught graduate epistemology with a special emphasis on contemporary analytic epistemology. He also designed and taught an undergraduate level critical thinking course that is a mix of traditional philosophical topics (e.g. informal logic and fallacies of belief) and recent psychological work about cognitive biases.

This spring, Dr. James became WCU's representative on the board of directors for the Greater Philadelphia Phi-

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Meet our Excellent Adjunct Team!

Ethics Instructors:

Margaret Betz, PhD Temple University.

Patrick Denehy, PhD (ABD) Temple University

Kate Eltringham, PhD (ABD) Villanova.

Jina Fast, PhD Temple University

Ed Pollitt, MA WCU. Ed also developed a course for us on Animal Ethics.

Barb Tournier, MBe (Bioethics) University of Pennsylvania. Barb is our expert in Medical Ethics.

Religious Studies Instructors:

Nicholas DiDonato, PhD (ABD) Boston University

Kipp Gilmore-Clough, PhD Temple University

Eduardo Hernandez, PhD student Temple University.

Peace and Conflict Studies Instructors:

David Headman, MTS Harvard Divinity School

Rebecca Subar, MPA Harvard University

Paul Harris, MA University of Essex (UK). Paul teaches *Creating Meaning and Introduction to Philosophy*

Charlotte Moore, MA WCU, currently enrolled in Temple University's PhD in Religion Program. Charlotte teaches *Introduction to Ethics, Religion in the U.S., Religions of the West*, and developed a course for us on *New Religious Movements*.

John Zak, PhD (ABD) Catholic University of America. John teaches *Introduction to Philosophy*.

Alumni News

Paul Sanborn, MA 1972 I am the third to graduate from WCU with a MA in Philosophy.

I am also the guy who went to Harrisburg (PDE in the late 1970's) to successfully argue that Philosophy should be included in the comprehensive social studies certification for secondary educators, and shortly thereafter, that Philosophy should be maintained as a graduate major at West Chester University and the faculty at WCU should not be laid off due to budget cuts. Both victories convinced Dr. George Claghorn to award me the Medallion of Great Honor (as seen in the Wizard of Oz) and a Hero of the Soviet Union ribbon, or something of that nature.

I have just completed my forty-seventh year of service to the Department of the Navy (Russian Intelligence Analyst)

and the schools of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I am presently Director of Curriculum at Devon Prep School, Devon, PA. My undergrad work was under the direction of Fr. McFadden OSA at Villanova in Russian Area Studies and Marxist-Leninist theory. My final project at WCU was an analysis of Communist Ideology in light of 20th century natural philosophical advances (invalidating the Newtonian Mechanistic Universe model in effect when Marx-Engels developed their system of thought) (restricted). I have since earned another three masters in areas associated with my professional career: MBA in accounting, MEd in Educational Leadership and an MA in Military Intelligence (you should see the hood for that degree-camo, eastern woodlands).

In addition, my youngest son graduated from WCU with a BA in Philosophy with honors. He is presently a manager with PECO

handling underground (sewer) electric cable service repairs. Talk about pragmatic application of a liberal arts education! Once your pragmatist comes on board, get my son to be a classroom presenter on that topic.

Stephen Lahey, BA 1986 I congratulate you on 50 years of philosophy at WCU (and WCSC)! Thank you for helping to make the anniversary memorable.

My news is that I am now Chair of my department at UNL, have published a translation of John Wyclif's Trialogus with Cambridge Univ. Press in 2013, and am working on a study of the Reception of Wyclif's Philosophy at Charles University up **to the time of Jan Hus. Also, I'm Associate Priest at St. Matthew's Episcopal church, and learning how to paint watercolors.**

Best to you all, Stephen Lahey, Happold Professor of Religious Studies, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, University of Nebraska Lincoln NE 68588-0337 USA

Pete Moyer, BA 1990 I graduated in 1990 and I really enjoyed my time at WCU. We live in Virginia by the ocean and the Back Bay Wild Life Refuge. Currently I am VP of Sales for a global company based out of Tel Aviv Israel. We manufacture Fuel Management Systems for Gas Stations and Oil Companies. I also have a passion to help college students find work with something they love to do and not just a job. I speak at colleges in Virginia on a regular basis. In 2012-2013 I was the District Governor for Toastmasters International in Virginia. I was responsible for more than 2400 members and 120 clubs. We run speaking competitions and two conferences with top notch speakers every year. I am married and have two daughters. One is in college studying Aeronautics at Liberty University. The other one is in high school at the Advanced Technology Academy and is a seeded tennis

player in the Beach District.

If you ever need a speaker to help **college students "never go a day in their life without a job" or to speak on global marketing challenges don't hesitate to contact me. I have some great entertaining content. Who would have thought all this from a Philosophy graduate.**



Mike Duff, BA 1991. I have been designated "Centennial Distinguished Professor of Law" here at the University of Wyoming for the period 2014-2017.

Dr. Michael S. Jones (MA, 1995), who is an associate professor of philosophy at Liberty University, reports that he has had an unusually productive year. Back in 2000 he was awarded a Fulbright grant to research his doctoral dissertation on the Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga at Babes-Bolyai University in Romania. In 2014 he received his second Fulbright. This has enabled him to spend the 2014-15 academic year teaching and researching at the University of Bucharest, which has **Romania's flagship philosophy program.** His teaching has included two courses that reflect his time at WCU.

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The first was a course on Philosophy of Religion that strongly reflects the influence of WCU's Dr. Frank Hoffman, and the second was a course on Religious Issues in Ethics that was informed in part by former WCU Philosophy Department chair Dr. Thomas Platt's course on Advanced Ethics.

In addition to his teaching, Dr. Jones has been translating one of **Lucian Blaga's books into English** with the hope of having it published in America. It would be the **first of Blaga's many books of philosophy** to appear in English. He has also spoken at several other universities, at various research organizations, and in several churches, and he has published several minor articles. His speaking and publications have **ranged from Blaga's philosophy** to issues in epistemology, ethics, philosophy of religion, and philosophical theology.

Dr. Jones testifies that this has been one of his most productive years since finishing his PhD in 2004. He **therefore encourages West Chester's students and faculty to consider applying for a Fulbright grant!**



Fulbright Scholar Michael Jones

Henry Haefner, MA 2000. I am a volunteer for family and in our church. I teach 4th grade religion. I have a book, regarding some special occurrences that I have experienced in my life, soon

to be published. I am also soon to submit items for a second book of reflections on life and living.

Henry (Rick) Poce, MA 2001. I received my MA Philosophy in 2001 and am currently an Asst. Dean at the Malvern Preparatory School. I also teach courses in Social Justice, Philosophy, and World Religions.

I completed another MA in Religious Studies in 2005 and am currently a doctoral candidate at Creighton University's Ed.D. program in Leadership. I hopefully will begin my dissertation in January, 2016 and will hopefully concentrate on the relationship between empathy and service.

Tom Sparrow, MA 2004. I've been busy the last few years, but lately I've been rehired at Slippery Rock University (hopefully tenure-track next year); gave invited lectures in Russia and at Purdue this year, and presented a paper in Oxford. I also published a new book with Open Humanities Press, *Plastic Bodies: Rebuilding Sensation After Phenomenology* (with a foreword by Catherine Malabou).

Matt Brown, BA 2005. Congratulations to the department! Here's a quick update on my recent activities. I've been playing fiddle since I was four years old, and I played dozens of times in and around Chester County while growing up there. I am now a professional musician who teaches fiddle, banjo, and guitar six days a week at the [Old Town School of Folk Music](#) in Chicago. The Old Town School is the largest independent community

music school in the country, with 6,000-7,500 students of all ages coming through our doors each week. In April, I took a trip to Murfreesboro and Nashville, Tennessee. I had a residency at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, played for a contra dance in Nashville, and then had the transformative experience of making my first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday, April 11th. I was invited by Opry member and clawhammer banjo player Mike Snider to join his band onstage for a medley of fiddle tunes. My friend and musical collaborator, Dr. Gregory Reish, made a short backstage [video of my fiddle solo](#) in front of an audience of 4,000+ at Opryland. That experience was such a profound one that I am now slated to return to Nashville in August to record my next album there, a duo recording with Dr. Reish, a fantastic guitarist whose day job is directing the [Center for Popular Music](#) at MTSU.

Cristina Utti, MA 2005. I am a writer and assistant editor for *Reflections* magazine, and just became editor for *City Key* magazine this past week. I am also writing a novel and will graduate from Rosemont College this fall with an MFA in Creative Writing.

It's so good to hear the Philosophy Department has grown.

Donovan Irvan, MA 2009. I am currently a doctoral candidate (ABD) at Purdue University and was recently awarded a Bilsland Dissertation Fellowship to finish my dissertation, "Being and Literature: The Disclosure of Place in Modernity." The dissertation puts literary Modernism (1865-1970) into a critical dialogue with Modern philosophy (1640-1820) in order to argue for the ontological primacy of place over the cogito, or

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human subject. Place, as the ekstatic unity of space and time, provides a new ontological starting point for philosophical investigations into epistemology and metaphysics beyond the humanist framework. The ontological role of place is found through a philosophical understanding of literary Modernism's refutations of the metaphysics developed in Modern philosophy. My dissertation is being directed by Daniel W. Smith in Purdue's Philosophy Department. Last summer (2014), I was awarded a Partner University Fund scholarship to study analytic and French philosophy at the University of Paris X in Nanterre in a seminar organized and co-taught by Elie Durning and Jean-Michel Salanskis. I

Kevin Bloomquist, BA 2012. When we last spoke I believe I was in the midst of program visits hoping to embark on grad work toward a PhD. I was met by very open and welcoming faculty during my visits to UT and a couple of the UC campuses. The meetings were very encouraging and productive but didn't yield immediate acceptance into their respective programs. However, during the waiting period between the application and notice period I was offered a position out of the blue that has turned out to be yet another fun detour in my already unconventional career arc. The position of-

ferred was for a burgeoning wine importer/distributor *The Artisan's Cellar* here in West Chester. We work with a number of importers out of Manhattan so for a period of time my job consisted of regular trips between NY and Philadelphia meeting with vigneron, tasting wine with sommelier and restaurateurs, and deciding what we were going to bring in to Philadelphia. It was a grueling and arduous assignment but someone had to take this horrible burden for the company so I **"selflessly" offered to jump on the proverbial grenade.** Part of the business model, though, was to grow into an unconventional **"winery" here in WC where we would work with these importers to bring in un-bottled wine from our French and Italian producers to do the cellar work here.** So, a little over a year or so ago I was promoted to Operations Manager and tasked with creating our facility, our lab, and educating myself (by whatever means available) on **how it should be run. I've spent much of that time traveling back and forth to Napa, apprenticing with winemakers, and working with industry professionals to develop the unconventional skill set necessary for this particular endeavor.**

The year or so was challenging in the best way and the first wines

should be released to restaurants in the next week or two. This current **"plateau" offered a little relief and some time to get away so I am recently returned from a beautiful and refreshing trip to Colombia where (among so many other profoundly stunning and humbling places) I had the chance to visit the former home now museum of Fernando Gonzalez Otreparte.**

My time at WCU is never far from my mind and its value continues to ripple and compound as the thoughts and years pass. I am currently living in Fishtown and commuting to the winery here in West Chester. Thanks to services like Audible and Blinklist I've been able to maintain the value of what would otherwise be 2+ hrs of lost commute time keeping up with some philosophical "reading". My interest in graduate study hasn't wavered though. If anything it has grown in the interim and I've been entertaining the idea of reinvigorating the pursuit with the next application cycle.

Dan Dalmonte, BA 2010, MA 2013. I just finished my first year at Temple. It was hard, but I survived. I am working on a preliminary examination now on Kant's third antinomy and the different interpretations of transcendental idealism: the two-aspects view, associated with Henry Allison, and the two-worlds view, the primary proponent from whom I am drawing is Karl Ameriks.

New Alumni!

B.A. in Religious Studies

Jessica Dunn

M.A. in Philosophy

Robert Devall
Beverly Littlewood
Holly Meneses
Matthew Owen

B.A. in Philosophy

Ed Berry
Dylan Breger
Steve DeMaria
Kevin Desir
Michael Jones
Brigitta Kiessling
Dylan Weiant

Minors

4 in Applied Ethics
17 in Peace & Conflict Studies
9 in Philosophy
2 in Religious Studies



Department News 2014-2015

Dr. Frank Hoffman Retires

Philosophy Department Asian Specialist Dr. Frank Hoffman retired this past January. Among other things, Dr. Hoffman was active in APSCUF and in the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium (GPPC) during his many years at West Chester. We wish him the very best in retirement!

Dr. Tim Golden Accepts New Position

Dr. Golden will be joining the faculty of Walla Walla University in Washington state effective this fall. We wish him all the best as he sets out on this new endeavor!

Graduate Student Philosophy Conference

The 10th Annual Graduate Student Philosophy Conference was held on February 28, in Phillips Autograph Library. The keynote speaker was Dr. Kas Saghafi, Associate Professor of Philosophy at **the University of Memphis**. He spoke on **“The Phantasm of ‘Dying Alive.’”** Papers were presented by students from the University of Memphis, Columbia University, Gallaudet University, and our own West Chester University.



Graduate Student Conference organizer Matt Rupert welcoming attendees.



Keynote speaker Dr. Kas Saghafi



Dr. Forbes engaged in conversation.

Faculty News (cont'd)

(Porritt, Continued from page 6)

himself does not need to be legally binding, it establishes lines of accountability to friends, family members and physicians who are then empowered to remind the individual that he pre-planned a good decision for himself. If you **would like a sample “Advance Directive for Automobile Driving”** then email Dr. Porritt and she will send you one.

On Friday, February 13th, Dr. Porritt gave a poetry reading with Kim Bridgford, Kristine Ervin and Peggy Gwynn for The Regional Center for Women in the Arts. **“Overlooked” provides an imagined back-story for a real 1892 Valentine that is unsigned and was mailed to Delaware Drive in Sharon Hill, PA, with no return address. It is an homage for the sculptor Martha Cornwell [1869-1955], who created the bronze Water Boy for the New Century Fountain in West Chester, PA. (See image below) The sculpture was installed in the 1890’s but was stolen during a blizzard in 1958 and never recovered. The granite block remains at the original site, which is on High Street just north of Virginia Avenue.**

Dr. Porritt continues to volunteer **with the Bryn Mawr Rehab’s Art Ability Committee.** The 19th Annual Exhibition included 444 artists from 28 states and 4 countries.



(Woolfrey, Continued from page 6)

tions of selfhood which influenced later feminist theorists and others. The article should be posting within the next month or so. I am also working on a book proposal (and the summer is not over!) that combines my interests in philosophy with my work on the Intellectual Roots of Western Feminism class **that I teach for the Women’s & Gender Studies program every fall.**

In July, I participated in the Social Philosophy conference I go to every year. I was a member of the program committee this past year, and am chairing that committee for the coming year. The paper I presented this year continued my work on hope as a virtue investigating the **“primacy of hope.”**

I’m looking forward to stepping back into graduate coordinator duties, and getting back in the classroom. And I’m eager to start spending time again with my delightful colleagues, and to meeting the new folks who were hired in my absence.

(Continued from page 5)

research focuses on previously unpublished work by C.S. Peirce as a foundation for studying the metaphysics of culture. He presents and publishes regularly both in the United States and internationally on topics including pragmatism, environmental philosophy and theories of the self.

Rob was born and raised in El-lensburg, Washington and currently lives with his wife and stepson in rural Chester county.

experience a national day of mourning and recognition sponsored by the SpiritHouse Project for those who had died as the result of extrajudicial killings since 2007. Johnson opened the event inviting white people to the movement. In January Dr. Johnson was a panel member as a part of the campus Martin Luther King, Jr. annual events. The end of the year saw the publication of several works by Dr. Johnson: "The Problem of Good Intentions and Achieving Shalom," Messenger: A Magazine of the Church of the Brethren (March 2015); "Teaching Tactic: Legacy and Our Common Ground," ARTS: The Arts in Religious and Theological Studies. Vol. 26 No. 2 (April, 2015); "Henry Giroux, Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education," Review, Teaching Theology & Religion, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning In Theology and Religion (March, 2015); "The Problem of Whiteness in the Occupy Movement" in What Comes After Occupy? The Regional Politics of Resistance, ed. Todd Comer (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015); and "On Being White and Teaching Race, Religion and Theology," Blog Contributor, "Race Matters in the Classroom," Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion (September 18, 2014). Johnson will spend his summer continuing his work and writing. He is helping to organize and lead "Somebody Touched Me" a Community Formation in Philadelphia sponsored by the SpiritHouse Project and Cookman Beloved Community Baptist Church. The event will bring together grassroots organizers and nonprofit leaders to address issues of racial justice and systemic oppression. Johnson will also be speaking at a luncheon about whiteness and the church as well as leading an anti-racism workshop (with his partner Melissa) in Tampa, FL as a part of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference.

(Udell, Continued from page 6)

derstand the facts of the case, (2) articulate the ethical principles involved in the case, (3) present an effective argument on how the case should be resolved, and (4) respond effectively to challenges put forth by the opposing team as well as the panel of expert judges. He has also **continued his work on John Rawls's** account of full employment with several trips to the Rawls Library in Brattleboro, and over Spring Break this year spent an evening with Mardy Rawls, the widow of the famous philosopher. He promises that his long-awaited paper on full employment will be finished this summer.

(Striblen,, Continued from page 6)

volving "collective akrasia" and the other involving Hannah Arendt and what should constitute "full-time" employment. On a personal note, she is enjoying taking salsa classes and spending quality time with her new terrier, Tate.

(James, Continued from page 7)

osophy Consortium (GPPC). He was also privileged to twice travel to Canada to participate in professional conferences. In April, he travelled to Vancouver to give comments on a symposium paper **about the definition of 'the physical' at the Pacific Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association.** In May, he travelled to **Toronto to give his paper "Causal and Epistemic Theories of Remembering" at the annual meeting of the Society for Exact Philosophy.**

(Pierlott, Continued from page 6)

the department.

Finally, Dr. Pierlott is working this summer on a few papers for conference and journal submission, as he is trying to refocus on his research agenda. Two papers will focus on aspects of freedom and agency and another will be a revision of an earlier working **paper of his on Heraclitus' theory of opposites.**

(Forbes. Continued from page 6)

significant disagreement among the students about how to answer that question! The experience was eye-opening for all.

Dr. Forbes recently wrote a review of the book *Un-Willing* by Eva Brann. Brann traces the evolution of the concept of will through the history of philosophy, ultimately arguing that we should replace the concept of a "pushing" faculty of volition with "unwilling," the reflective capacity to be drawn by loving interest. If you are looking for challenging and broadening philosophical reading, Dr. Forbes enthusiastically recommends checking Brann's book out.

Update from former department member **Dr. Steve Croddy.**

“After trying a variety of approaches to organizing my life in retirement, I have returned to a program which is approximately the one I followed when I was engaged in professional research. Every day I read/study for 5 hours. I am currently studying Heidegger's *De l'essence de la liberte' humaine* (On the essence of human liberty), Adorno's *Notes sur la literature*, and a discussion between Daniel Barenboim and Patrice Che'reau on *Tristan und Isolde*. I agree with Cicero and Montaigne that a person is truly themselves only when they are alone, reading and reflecting. To this end, in addition to my daily program, I spend four days each month in the serenity of an ancient village approximately 2 hours from where I live. I hope that many of you are having similar experiences. Steve Croddy. stcroddy@aol.com”

2015 Award Winners

Claghorn Prize:
Matt Rupert



I received my Bachelor's degree in Cinema & Photography from Southern Illinois University. After moving to Philadelphia, I began working on TV and commercials. Not finding this as satisfying as I had planned, I began to search for more fulfillment. I enrolled in the graduate Liberal Studies program at Villanova University. Unsure what I wanted to study, I began taking a variety of courses. After taking two Philosophy classes, it became very clear that this was where my passion lay. I applied and was accepted into West Chester University's philosophy program. My main areas of interest are political economy, political philosophy, critical theory, epistemology, ethics, and the good life. Since joining the graduate Philosophy department, I have had the honor of participating on a panel discussion on revolutionary political formation at the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs annual conference. During the spring 2015 semester, I was awarded a graduate assistantship where my chief responsibility was organizing the 10th Annual West Chester Graduate Philosophy Conference. After completing my Master's thesis, I intend on pursuing a Doctorate degree in philosophy.

Streveler Research
Prize: Jessica Dunn



In Lars O. Ericsson's article, "Charge Against Prostitution: An Attempt at Philosophical Assessment" (1980), he adds a philosophical voice to the contemporary conversation on prostitution. He formulates a critical analysis of prostitution as "an undesirable social phenomenon that ought to be eradicated" (Ericsson, 1980, 336). Ericsson responds to the main charges against prostitution such as the sentimentalist, the paternalist, the Marxist, and the feminist charge. Ericsson analyzes these charges and comes to the conclusion that society's hostile, hypocritical, and corrective attitude towards sexual promiscuity is the primary reason for the negative view of prostitution as a deviant profession. However, Ericsson fails to acknowledge gender inequality and as a result, perpetuates the male paradigm of oppression. This omission offers a skewed philosophical account of women as professionals. While it seems like Ericsson attempts to liberate women and their career choices, he fails to account for the oppression of women as a social group. Through his defense of prostitution, Ericsson's argument upholds gender stereotypes that reduce women solely to services that benefit men. Juxtaposing complementary and competing arguments from philosophers John Stuart Mill and John Rawls as well as feminist writers Marilyn Frye and Marion Young, I argue that Ericsson overlooks prostitution as oppressive and therefore, personally contributes to the historical and systemic oppression of females.

Thank you!

Heartfelt thanks go out to all those who have contributed over the years to these two funds. Our recognition of these individuals is made possible by your very generous support! To date, we have been able to award 20 excellent students with prizes from the Claghorn fund and the Streveler Research fund. If you would like to make a contribution to either of these, please contact Helen Schroepfer at 610-436-1004.

Alumni Challenge—can you name these individuals?





Check our website for further information on the following annual events:

Graduate Student Philosophy Conference— An annual spring conference hosted by our graduate philosophy students.

GPPC— The Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium offers a wide array of lectures and conferences each year.

IAPRS— The Interdisciplinary Association for Philosophy and Religious Studies hosts an annual spring conference. Papers by alumni are welcome at this conference! Please check our website for more information as we will post the call for papers.

Career Workshop—This coming spring we will again be conducting a career workshop for our current students. We would like to set up a panel of alumni to discuss their own varied career paths, tips for successful interviews, and other suggestions for our students as they look toward their future. If you would like to participate in this panel discussion, please contact Helen Schroepfer at hschroepfer@wcupa.edu or at 610-436-1004.



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