

Philosophy

FALL 2017



CHAIR'S LETTER

Elizabeth Anderson

Dear Friends of Michigan Philosophy,

Greetings! I would like to share with you some highlights from the 2016-17 academic year.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Our faculty continues to change. **Larry Sklar** retired at the end of 2016. We wish him well. A generous gift from Professor Emeritus **Donald Munro**, one of the world's experts in Chinese Philosophy, enabled Philosophy and Asian Languages and Cultures to undertake a search for a new faculty member in that field. We are thrilled that **Sonya Özbey** accepted a joint position in our Departments.

Several colleagues won honors this year. **Laura Ruetsche** is now the **Louis Loeb** Collegiate Professor. One of the great things about becoming a Collegiate Professor is that one can choose one's title—provided that the name refers to someone who once taught at University of Michigan. We are delighted that Laura chose to commemorate Louis in this way. **Tad Schmaltz** won an ACLS Fellowship for his project, *Early Modern Metaphysics and the Material World: Suárez, Descartes, Spinoza*. He is also Labex TransferS professeur invité at Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris) for this project. **Gordon Belot** was appointed Benjamin Meaker Visiting Professor at the Institute of Advanced Study, Bristol University. **Dan Jacobson** won a Michigan Humanities Award to complete his book, *Reconstructing J. S. Mill*.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Many events contributed to the intellectual life of the Department last year. Our regular colloquium speakers included Luvell Anderson (U Memphis), Akeel Bilgrami (Columbia), Rüdiger Bittner (U Bielefeld), Rachel Briggs (Stanford), Carol Rovane (Columbia), and **Neil Mehta** (UM PhD '12; Yale-NUS). Our Tanner Lecturer was Radhika Coomaraswamy, who has served in several leadership

positions at the UN and in Sri Lanka. As one of the world's leading human rights advocates, she argued that humanistic traditions recognizing human rights existed across the world, predating the Enlightenment. David Kennedy and Samuel Moyn, both of Harvard Law School, and Steven Ratner (UM Law) commented on the Tanner Symposium the next day. The Program in Ancient Philosophy brought out David Charles (Yale) and Julia Annas (Arizona). Philosophy co-sponsored visits by Alison Wylie and Sharyn Clough with the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, as part of the Feminist Science Studies series. **Dan Jacobson** hosted Charles C. W. Cooke (editor of *National Review Online*) as the inaugural Freedom and Flourishing lecturer. We held a conference of our alumni which included **Karen Bennett** (UM PhD '00; Cornell), **Nate Charlow** (UM PhD '11; Toronto), **Connie Rosati** (UM PhD '89; Arizona), **Nishi Shah** (UM PhD '01; Amherst) and **Holly Smith** (UM PhD '72; Rutgers). It was wonderful to welcome them back.

Our graduate students organized several important events. The Spring Colloquium was on Theory, Practice and the Contemporary Experience of Gender. It featured Mari Mikkola (Humboldt), Elizabeth Barnes (UVA), Robin Dembroff (Princeton), Charlotte Witt (U New Hampshire), and Ásta Sveinsdóttir (San Francisco State), with **Elise Woodard**, **Caroline Perry**, **Zoë Johnson-King**, **Kevin Craven**, and **Cat Saint-Croix** commenting. **Ian Fishback** organized a



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panel, "What Do We Owe Our Veterans?" with speakers Cheyney Ryan (Oxford), Mike Robillard (Oxford), Robert Underwood (Oxford PhD student) and David Reese (Georgetown PhD student). Ryan was a conscientious objector of the Vietnam war; the others, including Ian, are veterans of Afghanistan and/or Iraq. **Mara Bollard** coordinated an American Association of Philosophy Teachers workshop on teaching and learning, which included David Concepción (Ball State), Alida Liberman (U Indianapolis), Adam Thompson (U Nebraska) and John Koolage (EMU).

We are proud to sponsor many extracurricular workshops and reading groups that have speakers. The Aesthetics Discussion Group invited Anthony Rudd (St. Olaf) and Alon Chasid (Bar Ilan U). The Ethics Discussion Group welcomed Eric Campbell (U Maryland) and Neil Shinhababu (National University of Singapore). Simon Huttegger (UC Irvine) and Anubav Vasudevan (Chicago) spoke at the Foundations of Belief and Decision Making Workshop. The Foundations of Modern Physics Workshop brought out Yann Benétreau-Dupin (Pittsburgh), Katrin Heitmann (Argonne National Laboratory), Katie Freese (UM Physics) and Chris Smeenk (Western Ontario). UM's Minorities and Philosophy chapter sponsored talks by Eva Kittay (Stony Brook), Harun Küçük (UPenn) and Andrew Moon (Notre Dame). The Mind and Moral Psychology group had Bryce Huebner (Georgetown), Muhammad Ali Khalidi (York U) and Robert Hopkins (NYU). Cian Dorr (NYU), Daniel Nolan (Notre Dame), **Chip Sebens** (UM PhD '15; UCSD), Noel Swanson (Delaware), and Nic Teh (Notre Dame) addressed the Philosophy of Science workshop.

Our faculty invited several special guests to their classes. Chris Lebron, Michael Pardo, and Zoltan Szabo visited graduate seminars taught by **Meena Krishnamurthy**, **Sarah Moss**, and **Rich Thomason**, respectively. We were especially excited to invite special guests to address our undergraduates. Emily Woodcock of Clean Water Action visited **Maria Lasonen-Aarnio's** Environmental Ethics class. Dennis Kamalick, philosopher and special investigator of police misconduct in Chicago, spoke to my Introduction to Political Philosophy class about justice in policing. **Dave Baker** brought out two speakers to his Science Fiction and Philosophy class. Science fiction writer Nancy Kress discussed her Nebula and Hugo award-winning story "Beggars in Spain." Ted Chiang (author of the story adapted into the film *Arrival*) discussed his story "Liking What You See." Finally, Fred Keller, founder and Chair of Cascade Engineering (a certified B Corporation), delivered our Ferrando Family Lecture to our Philosophy, Politics, and Economics students. He offered an inspiring account of social entrepreneurship involving his own and numerous other businesses in the Grand Rapids area.

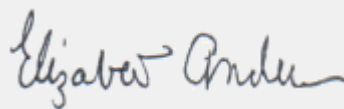
APPRECIATION FOR OUR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

All of these events, which so deeply enrich the lives of our undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty, are made possible by the extraordinary generosity of the Philosophy Department's alumni and friends. Donations also make possible numerous other activities. With the help of the **Louis Loeb** Fund for the History of Philosophy, **Victor Caston** has been able to hire a graduate student to assist in his editing of *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*. The Ilene Goldman Block Memorial Fund in Philosophy supported Zainab Bhindarwala's internship with documentarian Eileen Jerrett in Iceland, which she reports on below. The Block Fund and PPE Fund jointly supported undergraduate travel to conferences, including to the annual PPE conference in North Carolina, and a meeting on HeForShe at the U.N. The Tanner Library Fund supports librarian services, undergraduate assistants, and book purchases for Tanner Philosophy Library. Other funds support graduate student editing of the *Philosopher's Annual*, as well as Ethics Bowl—ethics debating clubs coached by our graduate students—in several local high schools, many serving disadvantaged students. Even this list does not cover all the wonderful things we are able to do with your donations.

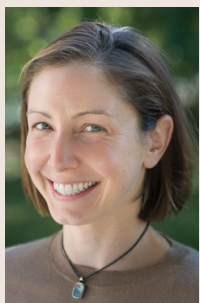
There is more than one way you can help the Philosophy Department. As always, we welcome your donations. In addition, we welcome any leads you may have about internship and job opportunities for our philosophy and PPE students. Please tell me any information you have about internships by sending an email to phil-chair@umich.edu. LSA has opened its Opportunity Hub, through which students can apply for internships and financial support to enable them to take advantage of them. The Philosophy Department is eager to partner with LSA in supporting our students on internships.

We thank you for your generosity and thoughtfulness in helping us enrich the life of the Philosophy Department in so many ways. We acknowledge those who donated to the Department in 2016-17 at the end of this newsletter. If you would like to donate this year, you may do so through our website at lsa.umich.edu/philosophy/. To all who have given or are soon to give, you have our deepest gratitude.

Cheers,



Elizabeth Anderson
John Dewey Distinguished University Professor
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor
Chair, Philosophy



GRADUATE REPORT

Sarah Moss,
Associate Professor,
Director of Graduate Studies

As Director of Graduate Studies, I have the pleasure of reporting on the many accomplishments of our graduate students over the past academic year (2016-17)—including prizes and fellowships won, papers presented and published, and many significant events organized on behalf of our local philosophy community and beyond.

Beginning with awards, **Sara Aronowitz** and **Zoë Johnson-King** both won highly competitive Rackham Pre-Doctoral Fellowships for AY 2017-18. **Filipa Melo Lopes** will be spending this coming academic year at the University of Michigan Institute of Humanities. **Eduardo Martinez** was awarded an Adam Smith Fellowship which will take him to George Mason University for several events over the course of the coming academic year. **Zoë Johnson-King** was awarded a Visiting Research Fellowship at Brown University earlier this spring. **Mercy Corredor** was awarded a Certificate of Merit in recognition of her outstanding performance in Catharine MacKinnon's Sex Equality course at the University of Michigan Law School, an award which was given to just one of the seventy-three students in the class. Within our department, **Zoë Johnson-King** was awarded the Stevenson Prize for excellence in a dissertation dossier. **Mara Bollard** won the Dewey Prize for her outstanding teaching. **Johann Hariman** was awarded the Cornwell Prize for intellectual curiosity and exceptional promise of original and creative work. **Sara Aronowitz** was awarded the Weinberg Summer Dissertation Fellowship, and further Weinberg Summer Fellowships were awarded to **Mercy Corredor**, **Ian Fishback**, **Shai Madjar**, and **Jonathan Sarnoff**.

In addition to awarding the Pre-Doctoral Fellowships noted above, Rackham has recognized many of our students this year as deserving support for their summer research and for their travel to workshops and conferences. **Filipa Melo Lopes** was awarded an IRWG/Rackham Community of Scholars summer fellowship for her research. **Cat Saint-Croix** was awarded a Summer Lipschutz Fellowship, which recognizes Rackham students who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly achievement and a sense of social responsibility and service. **Elise Woodard** was given a Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant to participate in the 2017 European Summer School in

Logic, Language, and Information. **Nick Serafin** won a Rackham Summer Award. Over the past academic year, Rackham travel grants were awarded to eleven of our students: **Mara Bollard**, **Ian Fishback**, **Johann Hariman**, **Jesse Holloway**, **Josh Hunt**, **Zoë Johnson-King**, **Sydney Keough**, **Eduardo Martinez**, **Filipa Melo Lopes**, **Cat Saint-Croix**, and **Patrick Shirreff**.

Our graduate students have presented papers at a wide variety of conferences over the past year. **Mara Bollard** presented "Is There Such a Thing as Genuinely Moral Disgust?" at the Omaha Workshop in the Philosophy of Emotion at the University of Nebraska in April and at the International Society for Research on Emotion Biennial conference in July. **Mercy Corredor** presented "Education and Violence: Primers for Abolitionism" at the University of Michigan's Anthro-History Program Annual Symposium in May. **Ian Fishback** delivered "Moral Injury in the Iraq War" at the International Society of Military Ethics, "What Is Important about Liability?" and "Torture as a War Crime" at the University of Delaware, "The Toll of Policies, Strategies, and Tactics in OEF/OIF" as a part of *Coming Home: Dialogues on the Moral, Psychological, and Spiritual Impacts of War* at George Mason University, and finally, "Military Consequences: Strategic Issues" as part of *The Strategic Consequences of the U.S. Use of Torture* at the Harvard University's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. **Johann Hariman** delivered "Spinoza on Power, Extension and Self-Destruction" at the Franco-American Graduate Student Workshop at ENS de Lyon in June. **Jesse Holloway** presented "Continuum-Many Interacting Worlds" at the International Summer School in Philosophy of Physics in Saig, Germany. **Josh Hunt** presented "Symmetry and Degeneracy in the Hydrogen Atom" at the Philosophy of Logic, Mathematics, and Physics Graduate Student Conference at the University of Western Ontario. **Zoë Johnson-King** presented "Accidentally Doing the Right Thing" at the Great Plains Philosophy Symposium, at the USC-UCLA Graduate Conference, and at the Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress. **Zoë Johnson-King** also presented "Don't Know, Don't Care" at Mount Saint Mary's University and at the Women In Philosophy In the Chicago Area (WIPHICA) speaker series, as well as "Assessment for Learning" at the Central APA, "Higher-Order Uncertainty" at the International Formal Ethics Conference at the University of York, and finally, "We Can Have Our Buck and Pass It, Too," at the Vancouver Summer Philosophy Conference. **Eduardo Martinez** presented "Stable Property Clusters and their Grounds" at the 2016 Philosophy of Science Association Meeting. **Caroline Perry** presented "Pedophilia and the Legal Implications of 'Significant Volitional Impairment'" at the North American Society for Social Philosophy's annual conference. **Cat Saint-Croix** presented her paper

“Immodesty and Evaluative Uncertainty” at the Fifth Reasoning Club Conference at the University of Turin, and she also presented “Evidential Disparity and Epistemic Harm” at the Penn-Rutgers-Princeton Social Epistemology Workshop at the University of Pennsylvania. **Nick Serafin** delivered “Equality, Identity, and Immutability” at the inaugural Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Conference in New Orleans.

In addition to presenting at conferences, our students have also been publishing their research. **Ian Fishback**’s paper “Necessity and Institutions in Self-Defense and War” appeared in Christian Coons and Michael Weber, eds., *The Ethics of Self-Defense*, published by Oxford University Press in 2016. His paper “The Absolute In-Practice Right Against Torture” appeared in the February/March 2017 issue of *Philosophy Now*. **Johann Hariman** co-authored “What is an Ersatz Part?” with Kristie Miller, which will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Grazer Philosophische Studien*. **Eduardo Martinez**’s paper “Stable Property Clusters and their Grounds” will appear in the December 2017 issue of *Philosophy of Science*.

In addition to making their mark on the profession through their research, our graduate students are also engaged in remarkable professional service. **Zoë Johnson-King** will be serving on the APA’s Graduate Student Council from July 2017 to June 2019. **Sara Aronowitz**, **Mara Bollard**, and **Sydney Keough** organized a number of events for the Mind and Moral Psychology Working Group over the past year. Last November, **Ian Fishback** organized a lecture on “What Do We Owe Our Veterans?” at the Rackham Graduate School. In January, **Mara Bollard** organized the American Association of Philosophy Teachers workshop on teaching and learning in philosophy. **Zoë Johnson-King**, **Cat Saint-Croix**, **Caroline Perry**, **Kevin Craven**, and **Annette Bryson** organized our Department’s Spring Colloquium on Theory, Practice, and the Contemporary Experience of Gender. **Josh Hunt** organized an April workshop on the Foundations of Cosmology in his role as the organizer of the Foundations of Modern Physics reading group. In May, **Zoë Johnson-King** and **Daniel Drucker** organized the inaugural Michigan Philosophy Alumni Conference. **Elise Woodard** and **Alvaro Sottill de Aguinaga** organized the Princeton-Michigan Metanormativity Workshop in August 2017. In addition to conferences, published papers were also organized and promoted by **Boris Babic**, **Caroline Perry**, and **Joe Shin**, as they served as the graduate student editors of the *Philosopher’s Annual* over the past year.

Perhaps most meaningfully, our students have been making immense contributions in the development and implementation of outreach programs on behalf of our discipline as a whole. Over the summer, **Elise Woodard** became the Director of Minorities and Philosophy, an international collection of students that aims to examine and address issues of minority participation in academic philosophy. **Sara Aronowitz**, **Filipa Melo Lopes**, and **Cat Saint-Croix** were last year’s organizers of the University of Michigan’s MAP chapter, which hosts talks and discussions of non-Western philosophy and issues related to race, gender, disability and other social distinctions. **Cat Saint-Croix**, **Filipa Melo Lopes**, **Elise Woodard**, and **Joe Shin** organized COMPASS at Michigan, a new workshop for students considering graduate school in Philosophy. The inaugural Michigan COMPASS workshop took place in September 2017, when students from a diversity of backgrounds were brought to Ann Arbor for a weekend of philosophical discussion, networking, and mentoring. **Ian Fishback** was interviewed by Hi-Phi Nation’s Barry Lam as part of “Episode 3: The Morality of War” in February 2017, encouraging a wide audience of listeners to think philosophically about moral issues raised by warfare.

Making strides in our discipline’s outreach to younger students, many Michigan graduate students continue in their dedication to organizing outreach events in cooperation with A2Ethics, a local nonprofit organization promoting ethics and philosophy initiatives in local communities. **Zoë Johnson-King**, **Caroline Perry**, and **Kevin Craven** were the lead organizers of the 2017 Michigan High School Ethics Bowl, which featured thirteen teams from eight different Michigan high schools discussing applied ethics case studies. Coaches for the February 2017 Ethics Bowl also included **Mercy Corredor**, **Alice Kelley**, **Brendan Mooney**, **Chris Nicholson**, **Lingxi Chenyang**, **Francesca Bunkenborg**, and **Umer Shaikh**. In May, **Caroline Perry**, **Eduardo Martinez**, and **Brendan Mooney** organized an ethics symposium which featured nine high school student presentations on ethically challenging topics. Finally, special recognition goes to **Caroline Perry** and her team of students from Wayne Memorial High School, which won the Michigan High School Ethics Bowl and claimed the Spirit Award at the National Ethics Bowl in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

On behalf of the faculty at Michigan, I would like to say that we are truly inspired by the work that our graduate students have done on behalf of the profession over the past year, and we are looking forward to appreciating many more of their great accomplishments in the year ahead!



UNDERGRADUATE REPORT

David Baker,
Associate Professor,
Director of Undergraduate
Studies

In Winter 2017, **Sarah Buss** passed on to me the mantle of Director of Undergraduate Studies. Let me begin by thanking Sarah (as I've done in person more than once) for leaving our undergraduate program in such excellent shape. The boundless creativity and energy she brought to the table shows in the numerous innovations she began that persist today—from our peer advising program to our continuing efforts to connect alumni with our majors and faculty. The major and the minors are thriving, and our enrollment has grown considerably this Fall semester. I chalk all of this up to Sarah's tireless efforts; I can only hope to do half as well in the coming years!

As a 2003 graduate of Michigan Philosophy, guiding the undergraduate program that nurtured me is a sobering job, and reaching out to my fellow alumni with news about the philosophy students who've followed them is a sentimental task. Let me extend a special hello to those of you whom I last saw a decade and a half ago, in a classroom in Angell Hall.

Perhaps some of you reading this have shared with me the experience of working on the editorial staff of Michigan's undergraduate philosophy journal, *Meteorite*. The life cycle of an undergraduate journal is a fascinating thing to observe, as I've learned in my nine years as the *Meteorite* faculty advisor. A gung-ho group of talented philosophy students band together, issue a call for papers, blaze through hundreds of pages of submissions to select out the best, set to laying out the new issue...

And then, typically, real life sets in. The best-qualified student editors are typically juniors and seniors with tough courses to complete, honors theses to write, and ultimately a Bachelor's degree to finish before the spring is done.

Yet sometimes magic can happen. In 2013, an editorial staff led by editor-in-chief Seth Wolin published professional-quality issue of *Meteorite*, the first one to appear in six years. Now a new *Meteorite* team has come together, with what looks to me like a recipe for success.

For one thing, the new editorial staff started early, beginning their work this spring rather than organizing in the fall. The staff is large and diverse, including many students earlier in the program who hope to carry on the torch once the seniors have graduated. I expect to have good news for you this time next year about the accomplishments of the new *Meteorite* staff: Andrew Beddow, Melvin Bouboulis, Aaruran Chandrasekhar, Brittani Chew, Benjamin Chiang, Brandon Eelbode, Colton Karpman, Anay Katyal, Jesse Kozler, Eun Young Park, Joseph Wisniewski, and Ashley Woonton. Let's wish them luck!

This year's undergraduate news also intersects with the national news. It will hardly be news to the informed alum that the 2016-17 academic year coincided with a significant amount of political upheaval, both nationwide and on college campuses. Our students were eager to discuss the rapidly changing national climate with philosophical reason and rigor. In our first-year seminar courses, small cohorts of students explored all sides of the attendant issues of ethics, political philosophy and epistemology. The seminar course, Philosophy 196, which brings a group of twenty first-years into a small classroom with a faculty member, was ideally suited for discussing these contentious topics.

During the Fall semester, **Dan Jacobson** led a seminar on the 2016 election, examining the political process through three different lenses. First, Dan's students looked at the election process itself, examining the analysis of campaign strategy and the science of polling. Next, they studied the issues through a political lens, situating the candidates' positions relative to historical norms and in the context of their strategies. Finally, they did some ethics, evaluating the candidates' stances along the axis of right and wrong.

Then in the Winter term, **Derrick Darby** took on the topic of contemporary activism and social justice movements with a course on Black Lives Matter. Through readings from TaNehisi Coates and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, the students examined this movement in the voice of today's black leaders, as well as placing it in the context of Martin Luther King Jr.'s thought. Students also conducted their own original research in this seminar, which they presented to their peers in the closing weeks of the semester.

The public sphere in America is likely to remain a place of moral controversy, and where there is moral controversy, there is need for philosophical ethics. In the coming year, our department will continue to present our undergraduates with courses relevant to the issues they're grappling with (for example, **Sarah Moss's** upcoming course on Race and Knowledge).

In another inspiring example of the spirit of real-world engagement that is guiding Michigan Philosophy's undergraduates, one of our majors, Salim Makki, was given the chance to meet Pope Francis thanks to his skills as an essayist. Salim, a walk-on defensive lineman on the UM football team, entered his essay in a competition held by football coach Jim Harbaugh, to select two players to sit near the Pope as he gave an address in the Vatican.

"After receiving the message today to be considered for the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet His Holiness Pope Francis," Salim wrote in his essay, "I knew I had to jump on it. I am a devout Muslim but my grandmother was a Christian and I have had the fortune of having the values of both religions instilled in me. Growing up my father taught me the importance of coexistence in religions and respecting the beliefs of others. Last semester, I intentionally enrolled in the course "The History of Jesus" to advance my knowledge of Jesus Christ in order to relate with my teammates and coaches.

"His Holiness Pope Francis is sincerely one of my heroes. In a time where Muslims have been scrutinized and wrongly identified with violence, Pope Francis has defended Islam and stated that not all Muslims are violent. His Holiness has continued his support of Islam by washing the feet of Syrian Muslim refugees and calling for mutual respect during the holy month of Ramadan. A true hero defends and helps the hopeless, and that's why Pope Francis is a hero."

Salim and fellow player Grant Newsome joined Pope Francis on the steps of the Vatican this April 26.

A few changes are underway in undergraduate studies, although all are at an early stage. We are introducing several new classes, including introductory-level courses in ancient and modern philosophy, that will count toward the history requirement of our major. We hope to attract more students whose desire to study philosophy arises from an interest in reading the timeless classics.

We've also begun work on an internship network that will connect philosophy students with potential employers, and with alumni in their areas of career interest. The College of Literature, Science and the Arts's new Opportunity Hub office is assisting us in this effort, which will begin with an event this academic year for students interested in careers in medical ethics. We are also at work crafting our program to be more hospitable to transfer students, a diverse portion of Michigan's student body that includes many non-traditional students.

This year, five students were awarded honors for their senior theses:

Heather Buja (advised by **Elizabeth Anderson**),
"Profits Over Students: Education Markets in Segregated & Impoverished Contexts"

Domenic DiGiovine (advised by **Derrick Darby**),
"Looking Forward: The Role of Personal Responsibility in Healthcare Prioritization"

Yuchen Liang (advised by **Laura Ruetsche**),
"Phronesis and Virtue of Character: The Making of Morally Right Goals in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics"

Ryan Mak (advised by **Peter Railton**) "Having Trumped the Wall: A Theory of our Special Obligations to Admitted Refugees"

Kaleb TerBush (advised by **Dan Jacobson**)
"Vegetarianism and Moral Intuitions"

The Haller Term Prize for best overall scholarship in philosophy courses during a semester went to Ryan Mak, who earned A-range grades in four 400-level philosophy courses in a single term. Ryan was also honored with the Sidney Fine teaching award for his work in the Academic Success Program, tutoring UM student athletes.

The Frankena Prize for the major graduating with the highest distinction was awarded to Heather Buja, whose advisor **Elizabeth Anderson** recommended Heather as "the whole package of everything one would want to see in a great philosophy student."



William K. Frankena



Research Report CARTESIAN DUALISM AND THE "BEAST MACHINE"

**Tad Schmaltz,
Professor**

"The essential point of Cartesianism, and as it were the touchstone, which serves you and other members of your party to recognize faithful followers of your great master: this is the doctrine of automata, which makes pure machines of all animals in denying all sensation and thought. With the doctrine, it is impossible not to be a Cartesian, and without it, it is impossible to be one. This point alone contains or supposes all the principles and all the foundations of the sect. One can think in this way, only if one has the true and clear ideas of body and mind, and has penetrated the demonstration that is between these two species of being. There is here the spirit and the sap, if I dare to express myself thus, of pure Cartesianism." (Gabriel Daniel, SJ, Suite du voyage du monde ... touchant la connaissance des bêtes, 1693)

In his *Traité de l'homme*, which remained unpublished during his lifetime, Descartes opens with an account of a human being, considered simply as an animal body, in terms of "nothing other than a statue or machine of earth, which God forms with the explicit intention of making it as much as possible like us" (AT XI.120). This text stops short of explicitly endorsing what later became known as the doctrine of the "beast-machine," according to which non-human animals are, in contrast to human beings, mere mechanisms entirely devoid of sensation and feeling. Indeed, although this work promises additional sections on the human soul and its relation to the human body, these are now lost, or perhaps were never written. Nonetheless, after Descartes's death in 1650, this doctrine came to be associated with *L'Homme* as well as with Cartesianism itself.

In the passage above, the French Jesuit Gabriel Daniel makes the stronger claim that the doctrine of the beast-machine (or in his terms, "the doctrine of automata") is a defining feature of early modern Cartesianism. However, it is significant that Descartes himself questioned the possibility of apodictic certainty regarding this doctrine. In correspondence toward the end of his life, he concedes that "though I regard it as established that we cannot prove there is any thought in animals, I do not think that it can be proved that there is none, since the human mind does not reach into their hearts" (AT V.276-77). All that can be said on this matter, Descartes concludes, is that it is probable that the beasts have no sensory thought. These remarks support the comment of one commentator that the doctrine of the beast-machine "is not absolutely required by the foundations of the philosophy of Descartes."ⁱ

We find a similar view on this issue in the work of Descartes's later French follower, Pierre-Sylvain Regis. In his *Système de philosophie* (1690), published just prior to the text that includes the opening passage from Daniel, Regis emphasizes that he can provide no demonstrative argument that the beasts lack a soul. To be sure, Regis also indicates—in line with Descartes's own position—that we can be certain that non-human animals do not have any kind of "material soul,"

since the very notion of such a soul is incoherent (*Système*, Phy, VII-2, avert, II.506). Even so, contrary to the suggestion in Daniel, it seems that certainty concerning the doctrine of the beast-machine is not a central feature of Cartesianism.

In fact, it is best to understand Daniel's emphasis on the doctrine of the beast-machine as a reflection not of some insight into the essence of Cartesianism, but rather of the history of the reception of this doctrine. The doctrine itself was re-introduced in the first public appearance of *L'Homme*, in the 1662 Latin translation by the Dutch professor Florentius Schuyt. In his preface to this translation, Schuyt offers a prolonged defense of the doctrine of the beast-machine, highlighting the fact that Descartes has been able "to ruin this dangerous opinion" according to which "the Mind, which is incorporeal and incorruptible, has a great affinity to the soul of the beasts." It is significant in light of later debate over this issue that Schuyt cites Augustine as a primary source for the Cartesian view that there is nothing similar to human sensory thought in non-human animals.

After the publication of Schuyt's edition, the doctrine of the beast-machine was exported to France through the French translation of Schuyt's preface that Claude Clerselier included in his 1664 edition of *L'Homme*. In his own preface to this edition, Clerselier picked up on Schuyt's suggestion of a connection between Augustine and Descartes, emphasizing in particular Descartes's endorsement of the Augustinian result that "the human soul is of a spiritual nature, and is really distinct from that of body." Clerselier's preface thus emphasizes Descartes's embrace of a kind of Augustinian spiritualism that, as Schuyt's preface indicates, has as its flip side the doctrine of the beast-machine.

The attempt to use the beast-machine doctrine as a theological shield has its source in Descartes himself. For Descartes noted at one point in a letter to Regius (on whom more below) that scholastic critics who follow Aristotle in attributing a corporeal and mortal soul to the beasts allow "the easiest slide to the opinion of those who maintain that the human soul is corporeal and mortal," whereas his own view that the human soul differs in kind from any mere configuration of matter "opens the easiest route to demonstrating its non-materiality and immortality" (AT III.503). Thus it is Cartesianism, more than the traditional Aristotelianism of the scholastics, that is in accord with religious faith. What is missing here, however, is Clerselier's appeal to the authority of Augustine. Indeed, Descartes arguably had little interest in linking his views to those of Augustine.ⁱⁱ It is striking that Augustine also is virtually absent from Clerselier's earlier writings. It is only after the condemnations of Descartes on religious grounds in Louvain (1662) and Rome (1663), and after the encounter with Schuyt's preface on the beast-machine, that Clerselier felt the need to invoke Augustine in defense of Cartesianism. Of course, for a long time Augustine had provided an alternative for those dissatisfied with the grand Thomistic synthesis of Aristotelian natural philosophy and Christian theology. Yet the history of the reception of the doctrine of the beast-machine reveals that the emergence of Augustino-Cartesianism was hardly inevitable.

Among early modern critics of Cartesianism, there was resistance both to this doctrine and to the insinuation that

incompetently plagiarizing his unpublished *L'Homme* (there is that text again!), and concluding that “I am obliged to disown [Regius’s] work entirely” (AT IXB.19). What is curious is that in such a short period of time we go from Regius, the trusted Cartesian disciple, to Regius, the despised Cartesian outcast.

The main reason for this shift is indicated not by Descartes’s charge of plagiarism (which Regius vigorously denied), but rather by the claim in his preface that Regius went astray in denying “certain truths of metaphysics on which all physics must be founded” (AT IXB.19). The reference here is to the fact that in a draft of his *Fundamenta physices*—the work that prompted Descartes’s denunciation—Regius disputes several features of Descartes’s metaphysics, including the claim that reason can demonstrate that mind and body are distinct substances. Regius’s contention is that only Christian revelation can preclude the possibility that the human mind is a mode of body. When in a 1645 letter Descartes reacted with “astonishment and grief” to this skepticism concerning dualism, Regius attempted to placate his former promoter by excising this section from the published version of his *Fundamenta* (1646). However, matters had gone too far for such gestures to have any effect. Even in the sanitized version of Regius’s text, Descartes could see only a dangerous repudiation of his view that physics must be founded on secure metaphysical foundations that include his demonstration of dualism; thus the renunciation of Regius in his preface.

We can make sense of Regius’s own doubts concerning dualism in terms of the medical context of his thought. Though Regius purports to accept by faith that our mind can survive its separation from body, he nonetheless thinks that insofar as it united to a human body, all of the thoughts of this mind are “organic” in the sense that they depend on bodily organs. But if, as in medicine, the consideration of the human mind is restricted to a consideration of it as united to a body, there can be no basis for the conclusion that this mind can exist apart from body. As far as medicine is concerned, then, our mind may well be essentially dependent on the human body and thus be, in Cartesian terms, a mere modification of it.

A further consideration here is that there was some distaste within early modern Dutch medicine for unnecessary metaphysical speculation. As Regius himself reports in his final letter to Descartes, several of his friends “are persuaded that you have greatly discredited your philosophy by publishing your metaphysics,” since “you promise nothing but what is clear, certain and evident; but to judge by this beginning, they claim that there is nothing but what is obscure and uncertain” (AT IV.255). Regius then suggests that he is doing Descartes a favor in offering a version of Cartesian natural philosophy that jettisons Descartes’s own unnecessary and questionable metaphysical prolegomena. From Regius’s perspective, it is difficult to see how a consideration of the obscure theological issue of the immateriality and immortality of the human soul could be of any use in the defense of the empirical adequacy of mechanistic physiology.

Soon after Descartes’s death, Clerselier called out Regius in print for his lack of fidelity to Descartes, exhorting him to return to the Cartesian fold by embracing Descartes’s own

demonstration of the immateriality of the human soul. As Clerselier saw it, Regius was a rebel against the Cartesian cause. Indeed, if dualism serves as the definitive “touchstone” of Cartesianism, Regius can be ruled out as a Cartesian from the start. However, it is important to recognize that there is another side to the story of Regius’s relation to Cartesianism. For instance, there is a 1653 reference from the Rotterdam physician James de Back to “the most learned *H. Regius*, Professor of Physick in the University of *Utrecht*, and a notable follower of *de Cartes*.” Though he undoubtedly was aware of Descartes’s public repudiation of his fellow Dutchman Regius, De Back was concerned here with Descartes’s controversial view that the motion of the heart consists in the diastole, a view that Regius developed in an original way. In this medical context such physiological issues would be more to the point in determining an ideological connection to Cartesianism than the issue of the demonstrability of mind-body dualism. With respect to the former, Regius did indeed adhere—and was recognized as adhering—to a distinctively Cartesian line. In fact, Regius was at the center of a network of Dutch Cartesian physicians and medical professors who owed their training in mechanistic physiology either directly or indirectly to him.

Insofar as Regius is properly considered as a member of a branch of early modern Cartesianism, we have some confirmation of the observation that “there was hardly a doctrine, view, or argument that was advanced by everyone thought, and rightly thought, to be a Cartesian.”ⁱⁱⁱ But perhaps this is a problem only if one follows Daniel in thinking that there must be some essentialist core to “pure Cartesianism,” endorsement of which is required for admission to the Cartesian club. Another perspective is provided by David Hull’s clever and instructive attempt to understand the nature of the conceptual system “Darwinism” in terms of a Darwinian analysis of biological species. According to this analysis, there is no expectation that there will be a specific set of phenotypic traits that all and only members of a particular biological species possess throughout time. A species is rather a population likely marked by considerable phenotypic plasticity. What unites the diverse members of a species is only a particular historical origin and line of descent. It is similarly the case, Hull claims, with respect to Darwinism as a conceptual entity.^{iv} What I am suggesting here, in a preliminary way, is that the history of early modern receptions of Descartes indicates that we also should view Cartesianism as akin to an evolving historical species, one diverse enough to include the views even of a critic of doctrinaire Cartesian dualism such as Regius.

i Jean-Luc Guichet, “Les ambiguïtés de la querelle de l’âme des bêtes dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle: l’exemple du *Discours de la connaissance des bêtes d’Ignace Pardies*,” in *Animal et animalité dans la philosophie de la Renaissance et de l’Age Classique*, edited by T. Gontier (Louvain-la-Neuve: Editions de l’Institut, 2005), 61.

ii As I argue in *Early Modern Cartesianisms: Dutch and French Constructions* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 122-27; my conclusion there is that “if we are looking for the source of an explicit Augustino-Cartesianism, it seems difficult to find it in Descartes himself” (126).

iii From Thomas Lennon and Patricia Easton’s editorial introduction to *The Cartesian Empiricism of François Bayle* (New York: Garland, 1992), 1.

iv David L. Hull, “Darwinism as Historical Entity: A Historiographical Proposal,” in *The Darwinian Heritage*, edited by D. Kohn and M. J. Kotter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 773-812.



Course Report

INTRO TO ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

Sara Aronowitz,
Graduate Student

Why do we sleep? Or rather, why would God make us such that we need to sleep? The medieval Islamic philosopher Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali argues that sleep, and dreaming, gives us a hint as to the limits of our ability to see the world as it really is through the use of reason and the senses. If we never slept, we would always experience the perceptual world and it would be unthinkable that the actual world might be different from what we see. But when we sleep, and experience the temporary, flawed world of dreams, we viscerally understand, even as children, that our sense can deceive us. Likewise for reasoning—in dreams, a thought can seem to make perfect sense, but when we wake up and examine it, it may neither be sensible nor even a full thought. For Al-Ghazali, this temporary fallibility is a gift that is essential for true knowledge.

This past Winter semester, I taught the first Islamic philosophy course ever offered by our department. This was an introductory-level course that focused on questions of knowledge and authority from the 10th century to the present. How can we come to know about God? Can education make anyone into a religious expert such as a *mujtahid*, or is it a matter of natural inclination or character? Alternately, should we do away with the idea of religious expertise and hierarchy altogether? Is there a limit to the application of reason—is religion an alternate mode of understanding to science, or an extension of the same project? What does a just religious institution look like, and what kind of knowledge should it produce?

In the first half of the course, we looked at these questions through the work of classic Arabic philosophers, such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd. For these thinkers, knowledge is mainly a personal achievement, based on sound reasoning, empirical demonstration or sometimes a relationship with God. The second half of the course, where we turned to Modern and Contemporary Islamic philosophy, brought in a social element to these questions. For instance, Seyyed Jamal Al-Afghani asks about the place of Islamic thought in a Colonial world, and Leila Ahmed draws out changes in the social meaning of wearing hijab that change the ethical and political dimensions of the practice. We also looked at these themes of knowledge under social power through literature and film, including the Egyptian director

Daoud Abdel Sayed's film *Al-Kit Kat* (1991), which follows a blind Sheikh as he muddles his way through morally grey situations in his downtrodden Cairo neighborhood built on the ruins of a Western factory. In the film, moral dilemmas and the way they are colored by political and economic realities is brought to life in a way that goes beyond what one can read about in a philosophical work.

We also hosted two guest speakers as part of the course, who gave talks on themes in Islamic philosophy that were open to the public. Professor Muhammad Ali Khalidi (York University) led a discussion of Al-Ghazali's *The Rescuer from Error*, which he has translated. Professor Harun Küçük (University of Pennsylvania) gave a talk about Ibrahim Müteferrika (1674?-1745), a convert to Islam who ran the first large-scale printing press, and used arguments from Al-Ghazali to argue for the freedom of science from religion. This is immensely surprising—Al-Ghazali himself was arguing for a kind of anti-Rationalism in philosophy, where the authority of reason should be limited, and Müteferrika turns his arguments on their head to support a rationalistic view of science.

For our final class, we visited Hatcher Library's special collection of Islamic manuscripts. Archivist Evyn Kropf walked us through some of the highlights of the collection, from early works on the law, to an intriguing collection of handwritten copies of philosophical excerpts from 1930s Egypt. This collection is the subject of ongoing research to determine the author and original context; the manuscripts include everything from Al-Farabi to the 20th century French philosopher Henri Bergson, and seems to have a blend of Sunni and Shia sources unusual for Egypt of that period.



I was lucky enough to have a group of tremendously engaged students for this course, who brought their own knowledge and personal experiences into the classroom to pull this collection of texts together into the beginnings of a real understanding of the rich tradition of Islamic philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY, FILM, AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



Zainab Bhindarwala, Undergraduate Student

How does philosophy relate to the real world? This is a question I have grappled with since I started my undergraduate career and decided to study philosophy. My internship with Eileen Jerrett at Wilma's Wish Productions has made it abundantly clear to me that philosophy can be applied in various contexts. From politics to filmmaking, these last nine months have taught me that a philosophical mindset is a useful tool.

I started working with Eileen in October with the expectation that I would work on the social media and development aspects of Wilma's Wish Productions. Rather, I found myself immersed in a movement that spans the globe and has inspired thousands to think more deeply about the philosophy behind civic engagement and government at the most basic level—its constitution. Iceland's constitutional reform process is a social and political movement, but at its core it is a movement based on the philosophy of how a government ought to interact with its people.

Eileen is currently in the midst of production for a documentary about this inspiring movement in Iceland. I have been privy to meetings and brainstorming sessions about how to move the constitutional draft forward in Iceland and what can be done on an international scale to draw the media's attention to this historic moment in time. I have had the privilege of applying the skills that I learned in my philosophy classes to the Icelandic movement. In particular, my training in philosophy has helped me articulate the enormous impact this movement can have on democracies around the world. While writing grant applications, I have learned how to take an abstract vision and quantify it into a concrete idea with goals, a budget, and a timeline.

A truly amazing part of this experience has been the timing of this internship. During the contentious presidential election happening here in the United States, like many other Americans, my faith in democracy was slowly weakening. However, writing about the grassroots movement in Iceland and seeing the international support that Iceland has garnered for its constitution gave me a sense of hope. If a small group of citizens in Iceland could inspire such powerful change in their nation, then maybe the entire world wasn't completely doomed. Iceland was my beacon of hope in a truly desolate time.

Further solidifying my belief in the strength of ordinary citizens were the two people's gatherings that I attended

during my time with Wilma's Wish Productions. The first gathering in Iceland showed me the absolute commitment and faith that many had for this movement. I was intrigued to meet the different people that had devoted countless hours of their time to pursue this common goal. Ordinary citizens came together and rewrote their nation's constitution despite countless obstacles that fell in their path.

I traveled to San Francisco for the second people's gathering and witnessed the birth of an upcoming project that Wilma's Wish Productions is now working to develop. I have had the opportunity to influence this project and add my own input. This is not something I thought I would be able to do in an internship, and this in itself is extraordinary.

This second people's gathering also enabled me to learn more about what participatory democracy really means and why it's important. As I reached out to hundreds of activist organizations in the Bay Area in order to invite them to this event, I had to truly understand the driving forces behind the entire movement. In doing so I dived deeper into the reasons that I myself felt so connected to this movement, and I found that the philosophy behind the original campaign to rewrite the constitution, the making of the film, and the current attempts in Iceland to pass the constitutional draft into law all follow basic principles that I myself strive to achieve in my future career as a civil rights attorney.

This understanding allowed me to engage further with Iceland's movement and pour this newfound passion into my work with Eileen. From working on the development of this upcoming project to the production of Eileen's film, I have used my learned philosophical mindset every step of the way. The step-by-step thought process that I learned in my Logic class helped me as I pieced together multiple moving parts in coherent and concise phrases for Wilma's Wish Productions' social media. The emphasis on looking at various points of view that I learned in my Law and Philosophy class shone through as I wrote grant applications that fully addressed any potential challenges or weaknesses in our proposal. And my Political Philosophy class taught me to think more critically of different forms of governance and gave me the tools to understand exactly how Iceland's model is different from the rest of the world.

This internship experience demonstrated that philosophy is integral to the world's functions. Governments, politicians, and even filmmakers benefit from a philosophical point of view. Philosophy relates to the real world simply by being the very foundation that the world rotates on. If not for a strong philosophy, there would be no constitutional reform movement in Iceland, no documentaries about such inspiring efforts, and no way for an undergraduate student to have a hand in shaping the future of democracy as we know it. This internship has taught me a great deal and enabled me to apply what I have learned in my classes to the real world. And for this, I am grateful.



Alumni Report

A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Eleni Manis, Ph.D '09

In 2013, I had a conversation with a local elected official that would change the course of my career. At the time, I was an assistant professor of philosophy at Franklin & Marshall College, where I taught the political philosophy curriculum and did research related to justice in democracies. The official was the comptroller of Nassau County, New York, a municipality burdened by deep-rooted corruption. The comptroller's office is a fiscal watchdog agency charged with overseeing Nassau's \$3 billion budget. It monitors the county's financial health and audits the financial records of government agencies and outside contractors to promote the efficient and honest deployment of taxpayer dollars. My future boss described his plan to clean up Nassau government. Did I want to take on real world problems of government accountability? Yes—yes, I did. I would work in the Nassau comptroller's office for the next four years.

The comptroller's office sees the county's problems through a financial lens. This report begins with a brief summary of Nassau's financial situation before introducing three of its most systemic problems. Corruption is both costly to taxpayers and unjust, and as a consequence, Nassau's key financial problems are also problems of justice. I compare the political philosopher's approach and the Comptroller's financial and political approach to these problems.

My aim is to investigate whether my subject matter expertise as a political philosopher aided my work in the field of public service. We all agree that the study of philosophy develops useful analytical, argumentative, and writing skills that can be used in any number of industries. Beyond that, I think philosophers are inclined to doubt the professional relevance of specific philosophical knowledge outside of academia. In this sense, philosophy stands apart from other academic fields. Chemists routinely employ their subject matter expertise at work in pharmaceutical companies and other industries. Historians do historical research in museums and other non-university settings. We know that at least some normative ethics work occurs outside of philosophy departments: for example, ethicists serve on hospital boards. In this report, I will consider whether my knowledge of normative theories of justice aided my work in government.

Rich, Broke Nassau County

Nassau County is one of the richest, most heavily taxed counties in the nation, but its government is drowning in debt. Census data puts Nassau's median income at over \$99,000. Property taxes, split between municipal government and school districts, are high: Nassau is 2nd among 3000+ counties for average property taxes paid and in the top 5% for property taxes as a share of home value. Nonetheless,

Nassau government expenses consistently outstrip its revenues. In response, New York State has imposed an oversight board on Nassau government since 2011 to try to force the county to cut costs and to end practices such as borrowing to cover operating expenses. The county administration has resisted these efforts. In August, the state control board projected that Nassau would end 2017 with a \$53 million deficit.

Nassau's Property Assessment Problem

Property tax refunds generate Nassau's biggest financial problem. After his 2009 election, County Executive Ed Mangano overhauled Nassau's property assessment system in collaboration with tax firms that profit when residents challenge the assessed values of their homes or businesses. This new system encouraged appeals. Consequently, the tax firms earned hundreds of millions of dollars and donated a grateful \$330K to Mangano. However, this has come at the expense of local taxpayers. New York State law obligates Nassau to refund 100% of overpaid property taxes, including taxes paid to schools. As a consequence, individual property owners' tax savings have come at a \$300 million cost to Nassau taxpayers. Successful commercial appeals alone cost taxpayers \$80 million per year—8% of Nassau's \$3 billion budget.

In 1999, the US Justice Department sued Nassau County on the grounds that its antiquated property assessment system burdened black and Hispanic homeowners with disproportionately high property taxes. In response, the assessment system was reformed to increase taxes on higher valued properties and to lower taxes on lower-valued properties. Mangano's subsequent property tax "reform" undid these efforts. Property tax appeals are a zero sum game: when some property owners lower their taxes, other taxpayers are forced to make up the difference. *Newsday*, Long Island's daily newspaper, reports that Mangano's system shifted \$1.7 billion of taxes over 7 years, disproportionately burdening the owners of lower-valued properties. Thus, Mangano's assessment system not only generated a large financial burden, it also reintroduced an injustice.

Political philosophers considering solutions to this problem will entertain reframing Nassau's entire assessment system. Policies can be completely rewritten to introduce a systematic solution that ends discrimination in property taxes. A just solution will also acknowledge and address an underlying contributor to this problem: Nassau's longstanding, exceptionally high level of residential racial segregation.

The Comptroller's power to effect systematic change was far more limited. Indeed, while County Executive Mangano is in office, no public official can change the tax assessment system. Instead, the Comptroller and other elected officials helped homeowners appeal their property assessments. Some held tax appeal seminars at local libraries, focusing their efforts in low-income neighborhoods. The Comptroller made and publicized a video on property tax appeals. These constituent-oriented efforts served a political purpose. However, they also raised the profile of the tax assessment

system in the public eye. Nassau elects a new county executive in 2017, and every candidate has something to say about Nassau's property tax problem.

Crooked Contracting Practices

Under Nassau's "pay to play" system, contractors win government contracts after making fat campaign donations. It's impossible to put an exact figure on the cost of contracting corruption, but newsworthy cases suggest that much of Nassau's budget is earmarked for political friends. For example, executives of one firm contributed \$1 million to Nassau political campaigns over 15 years. Over the past five years, the firm has received over \$50 million in contracts from Nassau County. That's a decent return on investment, paid for by local taxpayers.

For political philosophers, this problem calls for system-wide change. An adequate solution will end corruption and stop politically connected vendors from hoarding contracting opportunities. Back in Nassau, we heard calls for this kind of systemic change—from political candidates. "Nassau must establish fair and open competition for government contracts." "Nassau must ban big campaign donations from contractors." In practice, most public officials' power to affect change is far more limited. In the comptroller's office, we had the power to investigate contractors' financial records and to pay or withhold payment on work performed. The office stepped in to audit contractors whose performance was reputed to be subpar or whose accounting practices raised suspicion. On rare occasions, the Comptroller even issued stop-payment orders on approved contracts. We also pursued a constituent-oriented effort. I organized a contracting conference to connect small business owners with government agencies and big contract holders. When a firm wins a large government contract, it often splits the work among several subcontractors. We could not end opportunity hoarding by politically connected vendors, but we were in a position to increase subcontracting opportunities for at least some small business owners.

Patronage Jobs Impede Change

Political hiring is big business in Nassau. County taxpayers foot a \$26.6 million bill for more than 2,000 part-time and seasonal employees, a category loaded with patronage jobs. Most patronage hiring is controlled by Nassau County's Republican machine, which has dominated county government for the past four decades. In fairness to Republicans, members of the Nassau GOP are not united by Republican ideals. The Nassau GOP is powered by patronage. It rewards its members' political labor with high-paying jobs in the County, the Town of Oyster Bay and the Town of Hempstead.

Patronage generates an army of employees whose jobs depend on Republican dominance in Nassau and its towns. These employees and their families vote Republican in local elections. Their influence is magnified by low voter turnout—just 20% in non-Presidential elections. Nassau government is undoubtedly broke, mismanaged, and corrupt. Nevertheless, this mediocre status quo is sheltered from change by the county's extensive patronage system.

Philosophers, I present you with a classic collective action problem. Patronage employees enjoy a concentrated benefit, the cost of which is spread out over a huge tax base (Nassau's population exceeds 1.3 million). For any taxpayer, it is cheaper to pay for patronage than to organize against it. Consequently, it is neither surprising that the problem has persisted, nor surprising that elected officials have faced little public pressure to dismantle the patronage system.

To the Original Question

My subject matter expertise as a political philosopher shaped the problems I saw in Nassau County. It made systematic problems of justice evident as I surveyed the political landscape. It also led me to envision system-level solutions, and to justify those solutions using impartial reasons that all residents could ideally accept.

At the same time, it would be disingenuous of me to suggest that political philosophers' methods informed the work I did on a daily basis in the comptroller's office. The comptroller's office has little use for systematic solutions: it lacks power to implement them. We pulled the levers within our reach. The office's stated reasons for its actions also departed from model of public reason. We were not moved by impartial reasons of justice. To the contrary, we proudly promoted efforts to help particular groups in the population. Efforts to make the contracting process more inclusive were justified in terms of their benefit to local business owners. Efforts to encourage tax appeals were justified in terms of their value to overtaxed property owners. I am still convinced of the power of public reason. However, when I hear a political candidate propose an attractive tax or contracting policy, my new instinct is to ask "Which constituent groups are affected? How are the benefits and burdens shared among them?"

This fall, I began an MPA program—master of public administration and public policy—at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. At Wagner, I study microeconomics, statistics, management, and public policy. I have also sought to make more use of my subject matter expertise in political philosophy, and was recently hired as a research assistant by Professor Atul Pokharel, an urban planning and policy expert at NYU. Pokharel's work establishes that perceived fairness is a key condition of continued cooperation in the maintenance of Nepalese canals, a shared community resource. I got the job because my work as a philosopher focused on distributive justice in democracies, work that drew heavily on the "justice as fairness" tradition established by John Rawls. I am acquiring new policy-related skills and employing my expertise as a political philosopher, a precedent I aim to build on going forward.

BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION

Richard McDonough

University of Michigan Philosophers: Roy Wood Sellars (1880-1973) and Wilfrid Sellars (1912-1989)

Chair's note: University of Michigan celebrates its bicentennial in 2017. The Department of Philosophy is pleased to join the celebration by commemorating two distinguished philosophers associated with our history. Many thanks to Richard McDonough for this commemoration!

Roy Wood Sellars

One unique part of the distinguished history of the Department of Philosophy at University of Michigan is the father-son pair, Roy Wood Sellars and Wilfrid Sellars. Roy entered University of Michigan in 1899 where he studied arts and the sciences. He received his B.A. in 1903 and went on to the *Hartford Theological Seminary*, where he studied New Testament Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. He also studied at University of Wisconsin before taking a brief appointment at University of Chicago in 1906. He spent a year studying in Europe where he had discussions with Henri Bergson, Hans Driesch, and Wilhelm Windelband. Roy earned his Ph.D. in philosophy at University of Michigan in 1908-09 and later became a member of the permanent faculty where he remained for the rest of his illustrious 40-year career.

Roy belonged to a generation of systematic philosophers who believed the philosopher should be knowledgeable in the history of philosophy, the sciences, and the ethical and political issues of the day. His philosophical goal was to replace mythopoetic thinking with scientifically based reason. In his first book (1916), *Critical Realism*, he defended a version of "critical" or "referential" realism, which he saw as the view of common sense when that is uncorrupted by philosophical subtleties. This is the view that one looks "through" ones sensations at objects in the real world. In his (1922) *Evolutionary Naturalism*, he defended a naturalized version of emergent evolution that eschewed Bergson's mysterious *élan vital*. Although Lloyd Morgan's (1923) *Emergent Evolution* is more well-known, Roy published the first version of emergent materialism. Roy generally opposed dualisms, especially in value theory, where his general aim was to integrate values into the world of the natural sciences. In politics, Roy was a socialist, but not in the mould of the "utopian socialists" or the Marxists. Roy rejected the dialectic of hate and counter-hate and argued for a gradual reform of institutions through rational persuasion and democratic processes. Towards this end, Roy became the primary author of the *Humanist Manifesto I* (1933). Sellars' *Manifesto I* outlined

a new *secular religion* that replaces the old attempts to found religion on supernatural revelation, fear, or helplessness by a religious faith grounded in human reason and social co-operation. Roy published about 16 books (depending on how one counts), about 100 articles, and numerous book reviews and shorter pieces. Roy watched patiently as other philosophers became well known for views that he had initiated, e.g., his "double-knowledge" view that human beings possess two entirely different modes of knowledge of a single reality may have been the first version of the "mind-brain" identity theory. Although Roy was known as one of the major philosophers of his day, William Frankena of University of Michigan stated that he may have been one of the most important.

Wilfrid Stalker Sellars

Wilfrid Sellars was born in Ann Arbor in 1912, received his BA from University of Michigan in 1933, earned a second BA in Oxford's Philosophy, Politics, and Economics program, and MAs at University of Buffalo and Oxford. He did not complete a doctoral degree. He taught at University of Iowa, University of Minnesota, and Yale University before settling down at University of Pittsburgh in 1963, where he spent the rest of his highly distinguished career.

Wilfrid Sellars carried on many of his father's philosophical views (allowing for variations due to differences in the vernacular of the two eras). Like his father, he emphasized a strong grounding in the sciences and the history of philosophy. Wilfrid saw philosophy as aiming at a "synoptic" view of how things, in the broadest sense of the term, hang together. Following in his father's "naturalist" footsteps, Wilfrid aimed to unify the common sense world of mind and values (which he called the "manifest image") with the world of the natural sciences (which he called the "scientific image"). In pursuing this project, Wilfrid fused elements of American pragmatism with aspects of British and American "analytical philosophy," Austrian and German logical positivism and a naturalized version of a Kantian transcendental idealism.

Wilfrid was a magnificent teacher. One student at University of Pittsburgh recalls how, at the end of Wilfrid's semester on epistemology, in which every word in the course appeared to have been carefully planned in advance and delivered precisely on time, Wilfrid, checking his watch, and noting that he had finished the class a few minutes early, casually remarked to the class: "Well, 5 minutes early this semester ... Any questions?" In 1971 Wilfrid offered a course on Kant in a large classroom in the Cathedral of Learning. The room was packed with people stuffed into every available space, some standing, others sitting on the floor, some perched in the windows. It is hard to recall a single question the entire semester by an audience drinking in Wilfrid's every word. Anyone who has had the privilege of taking a course with Wilfrid knows that such stories are not exaggerations.

In both private and public, Wilfrid was always modest and unassuming—always respectful of others, never ruffled, always entirely in control of the material. He never strayed into histrionics or self-promotion. He felt no need to do so. His work spoke for itself, but one also felt that self-promotion simply held no attraction for him.

Wilfrid's written work is challenging. He is rumoured to have said, "I revise my papers until only I can understand them, and then I revise them once more." Although his writings are meticulously constructed, they have an austere quality that readers may find difficult. It can seem that once he has fought through to a formulation with which he is satisfied, he has no need to explain the long paths he traversed to reach it (paths the student might find useful).

In Roy and Wilfrid Sellars, one finds a pair of remarkable University of Michigan philosophers. Each has had an incalculable influence both on the profession and several generations of fortunate students. We shall not see their like again.

Additional information and a comprehensive bibliography on Roy Sellars can be found in Richard McDonough's "Roy Wood Sellars (1880-1973)" *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* URL: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/sella-rw/>. Additional information on Wilfrid Sellars can be found at Eric Rubenstein. "Wilfrid Sellars: Philosophy of Mind," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. URL: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/sellars/>; William DeVries. 2011. "Wilfrid Sellars," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sellars/>; Michael Wolf and Randall Kroons. "Wilfrid Sellars," *Oxford Bibliographies*. URL: <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396577/obo-9780195396577-0134.xml>; Wilfrid Sellars. 1975. "Autobiographical Reflections" URL: <http://www.ditext.com/sellars/ar.html>

Richard McDonough received his B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh (1971) and his M.A. (1974) and Ph.D. (1975) from Cornell University. He studied informally with **Richard Brandt** in the early 1970's. He has taught at various universities in the United States, Singapore, and Malaysia. He has published two books, edited a special edition of *Idealistic Studies* on Wittgenstein and Cognitive Science, and about 80 articles and 11 book reviews or critical notices in the areas of philosophy, psychology, and linguistics. He resides in Singapore and can be contacted at rmm249@cornell.edu

Recent Graduates



Annette Bryson defended her dissertation – *Non-Inflationary Realism about Morality: Language, Metaphysics, and Truth* – under the supervision of **Sarah Buss** and **Allan Gibbard**. Annette explored the relationships between Allan Gibbard's mature quasi-realist expressivism and (i) three non-naturalistic varieties of "non-inflationary realism" and (ii) moral fictionalism. Annette has accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at Notre Dame.



Daniel Drucker defended his dissertation – *Attitudes Beyond Belief: A Theory of Rational Non-Doxastic Attitude Formation and Evaluation* – under the supervision of **Eric Swanson**. Daniel explored a normative theory of non-doxastic attitudes like desire, hatred, and admiration. Daniel has accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico)



Patrick Shirreff defended his dissertation – *What We Can Do With Words: Essays on the Relationship Between Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Theorizing* – under the supervision of **Brian Weatherson**. Patrick explored philosophical implications of linguists' accounts of ordinary language use.



Nina Windgätter defended her dissertation – *Socially Constructive Social Contract: The Need for Coalitions in Corrective Justice* – under the supervision of **Elizabeth Anderson**. Nina argued that the enterprise of corrective justice requires answering questions about what is unjust and how we ought to set and pursue corrective justice goals. Nina has accepted a position as Lecturer at the University of New Hampshire.

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