

# PhiloNews

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## ΦΙΛΟΝΟΥΣ

Philosophy Department Newsletter, December 2007



### From the Chair

by Andrew Bailey

So 2007 bites the dust. The exams are all done, the grades are all in, and we are all heaving a sigh of relief and bracing ourselves for next year. The latest round of our old friend Integrated Planning has come around again, and revealed growth across the board from last year to this: more undergraduate enrolments, more majors, more grad students, and a higher student/faculty ratio (up nearly 25% since 2004).

Meanwhile, yet more change in the front office. We advertised a full-time Graduate Secretary position and, after looking at and interviewing various candidates, we hired our very own Pam Speers for the position. This created a vacancy for the Department Secretary position—now re-tooled to focus on undergraduate and front office affairs—and we have hired Janet Thackray for the post.

Both these staff changes are extremely positive. Pam, because of her experience and her personal qualities, will be a splendid Graduate Secretary (in fact, she already is). Janet, who will be starting January 2<sup>nd</sup>, comes to us from the Office of Open Learning and so is used to dealing with stress, students and stringent deadlines. Welcome Janet!

We will also be welcoming a new faculty member in January. Dr. Stefan Linquist, hired at the start of this year, is being dragged away from his post-doctoral research fellowship in biohumanities at the sub-tropical University of Queensland to join us here in the ice and snow. Stefan wrote his PhD at Duke and is a philosopher of science with broad interests in evolutionary biology, ecology, the history and philosophy of psychology and the study of animal minds. He is also co-founder of a non-profit public marine aquarium on Vancouver Island.

Stefan's timing is good, because as of Fall 2008 we will be moving from being 'officially' on a normal 3-2 load to being 'officially' a department with a normal 2-2 load, in recognition of—and encouragement for—our collective research productivity.

Happy holidays to you all, and best wishes for a happy and productive 2008!

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### Faculty Research

Each issue of *PhiloNews* we will feature the recent research activities of four of our faculty.

#### Andrew Bailey

My work these days is mostly on phenomenal consciousness and embodied cognition (and sometimes the overlap between the two). This year I published a paper on "Representation and a Science of Consciousness" in the *Journal of Consciousness*

*Studies* (which was also printed in a book called *The Concepts of Consciousness: Integrating An Emerging Science*, ed. J. Scott Jordan and Dawn McBride, Imprint Academic) and another called “Qualia and the Argument from Illusion” in *Acta Analytica*. Both papers defend the (rather old fashioned, but what’s old is new again!) view of consciousness as being a property of a special medium of mental representation rather than an aspect of the content of those representations. I also wrote a (biased) invited entry for consciousness for an online encyclopedia called *The Language of Science*. I am presently completing a paper on zombies and epiphenomenalism, and my doctoral student Brad Richards and I together wrote a paper called “Phenomenology and Intentionality” which is currently under review. On the embodied cognition front I published a critical notice of David Morris’s book *The Sense of Space in Dialogue*, which has led to a fruitful to-and-fro discussion, and I am working on a paper on consciousness and the embodied self. In 2007 I gave papers at Guelph, Las Vegas, Ryerson, Honolulu, and Wellington, New Zealand. A large two-volume collection of social and political philosophy, of which I am a co-editor with Samantha Brennan, Will Kymlicka, Clark Wolf and Jacob Levy, will appear next year, as will a short introductory text on the Philosophy of Mind I prepared for OUP Canada. And for about the past year I have been stuck 1/3 of the way through an edition of William James’ *Pragmatism* and *The Meaning of Truth* I am doing for Broadview Press; perhaps this year I’ll do another 1/3!

### **Jay Lampert**

I am getting close to finishing a book called *Simultaneity and Delay*. This book develops relations between these two concepts and their implications for a philosophy of time in general. I use Husserl, Bergson, and Deleuze in this work, but I also discuss the role these concepts play across the history of philosophy, from Plato and Aristotle, to Kant and Hegel, to Heidegger and Derrida. There are also chapters on simultaneity and delay in physics and cognitive science, and in painting and music. Out of this research, I published a paper last year on Husserl and Derrida (*New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Enquiry*). Another article will come out this year on some political implications of these topics in Deleuze and Balibar (in a book of articles called *Deleuze and History*, University of Edinburgh Press). I presented a paper on Simultaneity in Kant, Heidegger and Deleuze at Marquette University last year, and will present a new paper at Villanova University in February. At a conference on Deleuze last year at the University of South Carolina, I presented a paper (unrelated to the research above) on Deleuze’s discussion of the difference between Chess and Go. In a panel symposium on my previous book, *Deleuze and Guattari’s Philosophy of History*, held last October at the Canadian Society for Continental Philosophy in McMaster University, I responded to three commentators. My response and all three commentaries will be published in *Symposium, the Canadian Journal for Continental Philosophy*. Last spring, I presented a paper on Hegel concerning teleology and violence, at a conference on Hegel at York University. This Fall, I taught a graduate course on Hegel’s Logic, both at the University of Guelph and at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh; in October, I brought all the Guelph students down to Pittsburgh for a Hegel workshop.

### **Patricia Sheridan**

I have had several papers published in the past year. Most recently, in October of this year, “The Metaphysical Morality of Francis Hutcheson: A Consideration of Hutcheson’s Critique of Moral Fitness Theory” in *Sophia* and “Parental affection and self-interest: Mandeville, Hutcheson and the question of natural benevolence” in *History of Philosophy Quarterly*. I am currently under contract with Continuum Press to write a general introductory book on the philosophy of John Locke. I expect this to be completed by the Summer of 2008. I am also currently writing a paper on Hobbes’s theory of political resistance. This Fall, I gave a public lecture to Guelph Third Age Learning on “Scepticism and the Rise of Modern Science” and I will be giving another public lecture at the Guelph Public Library in January, entitled “Philosophy and the Witchcraze.”

### **Karen Wendling**

My research is on egalitarianism and its implications. My recent work has focused on families and feminism. In “Education in a Pluralistic Society: Implications of the *Ross* Decision” (*Responsibility for Children*, ed. Samantha Brennan and Robert Noggle, Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2007), I examine some philosophical questions left unanswered by the Supreme Court of Canada’s 1996 ruling in *Ross v. New Brunswick School District No. 15*. In “Inequality in the Hobbesian Family” and “Inequality in the Lockean Family,” I examine Hobbes’ and Locke’s arguments for inequality in the family, and I argue that the inequality of children remains a problem for egalitarian theories—not only for Hobbes and Locke, but for contemporary liberalism. In “A Taxonomy of Feminist Theories” (*Dialogue*, forthcoming), I argue that the proliferation of feminist theories requires a modification of Alison Jaggar’s famous classification, and I propose an alternative classification. In “Radical Feminism and Violence against Women” (presented at the Canadian Society for Women in Philosophy meetings in October 2007), I defend what I consider to be a more accurate and sympathetic account of radical feminism than exists in the feminist philosophical literature.

## Undergraduate Matters

by Patricia Sheridan

The Undergraduate committee is currently working on refreshing our calendar. We are rewriting many of our long-standing course descriptions and rethinking course prerequisites. This is a fairly large undertaking that we expect will be done by early in the new year. We have also been working with the Philosophy Club, and have had two successful 'Meet the Profs' nights. We've also asked Emily Bingeman, the undergraduate member of our committee, to think of some ideas for Philosophy Department posters. Emily's artistic background has paid off, and she has provided us with two excellent posters that you will hopefully be seeing around the department very soon. (One is on the final page of this newsletter.)

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## Graduate Affairs

by Omid Payrow Shabani

Since the last *PhiloNews* we had our department visited by two OCGS consultants who produced a very positive review of our PhD program. They met with faculty, staff, and graduate students and were impressed their professionalism, the level of their productivity and their cordiality. We drafted a response to their review as is required and will wait until their next meeting early next year for OCGS to approve our stand-alone PhD program.

In other news, we had two FOEs: Ileana Szymanski successfully defended her doctoral thesis entitled, "The Idea of Sense-perception as Alteration in Aristotle's *De Anima* II.5" on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> and Chris Parson also successfully passed the Final Oral Examination of his MA thesis entitled, "Technology, Communication, and Western Pluralistic Democracies."

Cherilyn Keall presented a paper entitled, "Philosophy, Teaching, and the Art of Living: A Conversation with Douglas Anderson and John Russon" as part of a book panel that she organized at the Western Canadian Philosophical Association's meeting in Saskatoon in October. Also, Jing Long presented "Does Everyone Have the Duty to Act in the Public Interest?" at the 57<sup>th</sup> Political Studies Association (PSA) Annual Conference (University of Bath, UK, April 11–13, 2007).

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## Letter from the PGSA

by Adam Schneider, PGSA President

This past year the Philosophy Graduate Students Association (PGSA) has been very active in improving student life in your department and the university at large. As many of you know, we have had a very successful bake sale this past November and a well received book sale last winter, both of which we intend to improve and repeat in the coming term. What you may not know is that the PGSA has begun a few student run initiatives that will be invaluable to current and future students. We have started work on a mentorship program so that new and prospective students will have peer resources to answer questions and help them through the mysteries of academic studies. We already have weekly walks on Thursdays at 3pm, Johnston Green that are open to the university community where people come together for friendship and collaboration. This is one of the many interdisciplinary activities planned for this year, others include but are not limited to ice skating, pub and game nights. Our membership is also working with local schools to assess the viability of a philosophy outreach program to help educate the youth and promote philosophical reflection and inquisition. Another exciting project we are working on is a spring conference and associated journal. Some of our members sit on various positions throughout the political structures in our university and the national student movement, and as such the PGSA is becoming a forum for student politics. Soon we will welcome students from other departments who are curious about how our association works and how to build one in their home department. As the PGSA continues to work for students we encourage you all to take part in our programs and activities. Please feel free to contact [guelphpgsa@gmail.com](mailto:guelphpgsa@gmail.com) for further information. We wish you all joy and success in the coming year!

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## Philosophy Goes Public!

By Karyn Freedman

This fall the External Relations Committee pursued a number of options for raising the public profile of the Philosophy Department. One of our exciting new initiatives is a regular lecture series at the Guelph Public Library called 'Philosophy Goes Public'. This series has been organized with the help of Andrea Curtis, the Program Coordinator for the Library. Our hope is to have at least one public lecture a term. Our inaugural lecture, by Professor Patricia Sheridan, will be on Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m., at the Library's main branch downtown (100 Norfolk Street). Professor Sheridan's talk is titled **Philosophy and the Witchcraze**. We are also exploring the possibility of an annual named lecture series (modeled after the 'Ryle Lectures' at Trent, for instance). The idea here is to have a world-class philosopher visit the department for a few days and give, say, three public lectures, which would draw the attention of the wider intellectual and academic communities at the University of Guelph and at neighboring universities. This event might replace the Tri-University's Proemial lecture that has traditionally marked the start of the academic year. We are looking into the possibility of getting some stable funding for this initiative, possibly through an endowment. Stay tuned!

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