

- Department of Philosophy -

Newsletter Number 57

Spring 2024



- letter from the chair's desk -

Dear friends,

This year has been a busy and exciting one for our department. We were authorized to search for two new senior colleagues, and so the spring semester was full of fascinating job talks and collegial events, reminding us all how much we enjoy each other's company and conversation. Other highlights from the year include Cailin O'Connor's talk as part of the Humanities Center speakers series, and a visit from Fatema Amijee, who met with students to discuss her paper on feminism and Islam and gave us a wonderful talk about the principle of sufficient reason.

We also gathered to celebrate the career of our colleague Rich Feldman, who is retiring this year. Rich's family, friends, former colleagues and students, and members of the administration joined us to thank Rich for 49 years of devoted service to the university, the department, the profession, and especially to his students, and to honor his rich (pun intended) philosophical legacy. We are very glad that Rich will continue to be an integral part of our philosophical community as a professor emeritus.

My colleagues and I remain ever-impressed by our outstanding students, including our graduate students, majors, and those who pass through a course or two. I am proud of the community that our current graduate students have created, especially their respectful and supportive philosophical exchanges and the care they take in their work with undergraduate students. I am also proud that, as so often, philosophers have been at the center of campus conversations about justice, from professor Bill FitzPatrick's leadership of the university's Ethical Investment Advisory Committee, to graduate student representative Zee Click's work organizing and amplifying student voices, to philosophy major Hannah Witkin's tireless commitment to decarceration, peace, and humanitarian aid.

One of the most gratifying parts of being chair is feeling the impact on and support of our wider community. We are very grateful for your interest.

Wishing you a wonderful summer!

Yours,
Alison

departmental highlights

ROCHESTER EDUCATION JUSTICE INITIATIVE

By Sarah Mammen



Just beyond the brick-and-mortar walls, classes of incarcerated students are navigating their own unique set of academic aspirations and challenges across a broad range of humanities and STEM subjects. The Rochester Education Justice Initiative (REJI) program has provided an opportunity to pursue higher education for people incarcerated in the greater Western New York area and support community reintegration post-release. And from professors to students, the Philosophy Department at the University of Rochester has become embedded in this function.

Currently operating out of three sites including Attica, Groveland, and Wyoming correctional facilities, students enrolled in the program advance toward an Associate's degree through Genessee Community College. With related expenses like textbooks and tuition covered by REJI, students interested in participating must have a high school diploma or equivalent certification to be eligible and be accepted through a similar admissions process as those admitted to the program outside of prison. Starting this year, students at the Attica correctional facility may also choose to pursue a Bachelor's degree from the University of Rochester—the inception of this program securing Rochester's spot among the only six R1 universities to offer a Bachelor's degree to incarcerated people.

The range of courses taught from the University of Rochester and Genessee Community College's curricula try to operate as similarly as possible to how they might in an on-campus setting. Each course holds one, 3-hour class per week at the facility, usually in the evening, and students have limited access to their instructors outside of these hours. Students and educators in the program face certain challenges, including the lack of access to technology to complete assignments, limited extra-help opportunities, study

disruptions related to the prison environment, and limited materials and confiscations. With educators spanning many disciplines working creatively to teach their courses within the guidelines of each correctional facility, REJI's instructors maintain the content, format, and rigor level for incarcerated students as would be imposed upon a student taking such courses outside of prison, and their students remain steadfast in their pursuit of education.

Despite these key differences, when in the classroom, instructors find that classes feel much like they do on campus. Chair of Philosophy Alison Peterman, who directs REJI's BA program at Attica and teaches philosophy there, shares that students in the program are "eager, engaged, and insightful," as any other more typical student would be. She shares her experience further, saying, "One of the best parts of teaching philosophy is watching students learn from each other while they discuss deep, hard, and beautiful questions - questions that many people think about but don't get a chance to grapple with in a systematic way and as a shared project with others. Our students at Attica, Groveland, and Wyoming really embrace this project together, and they flourish in a classroom environment where everyone values each other's interests, insights, and perspectives. The impact of that in such a dehumanizing and difficult environment reminds us how humanizing this kind of inquiry is for all of us."

Tessa Brunnenmeyer, one of two philosophy PhD candidates teaching with the program, co-teaches a writing practicum and shares her experience witnessing growth in her students through REJI. She says, "We're seeing growth in their writing and academic performance, and they're seeing growth in their own academic performance, so I think it's been a good confidence boost for students, that they feel like some



body cares, they feel like somebody values their insights. They're really smart, interesting people, but they're not usually given that credit, so I think that that's something that we've gotten to provide in a really cool way." The other PhD student teaching with REJI, Harry Golborn, taught the notoriously challenging course, symbolic logic, at Groveland this past semester. He shares that the most impactful part of his own experience was being able to watch his students apply the tools they acquired in his class to other contexts and classes.

After their release from incarceration, students may elect to complete their degrees on campus, bringing their unique perspectives along with them and enhancing the campus community. Among these participants is Darrick Sides, who took philosophy classes both inside and outside of prison, and highlights the interactive and open-ended aspects of the program, saying, "The ability to learn something and really go against the grain of what you've been learning is so great ... In the classroom, each culture is allowed to live and pave the way to have their traditions, their customs, and understanding and respecting that- I think they give you a greater understanding about life." He also emphasizes the assistance of re-entry support the program provides, saying, "All the professors are at your disposal while you're in there, and when you get out, they're willing to help you make the transition or help you in any way. And it ain't even gotta be school related ... There's gonna be times where we may need somebody to talk to you or somebody that can guide us in the right direction. I think that's what's important."

Another community member, Jesse Johnston, who participated in a similar program through Cornell's prison education program recently completed his Master's degree in philosophy from the University and has been teaching with REJI at Groveland correctional facility. Johnston emphasizes the uniqueness of the REJI program's approach to building community and the care demonstrated by its instructors, saying, "Coming home to nothing and having that community that's like 'Hey, we know you. We don't care. Come over here. You're with us.' That fellowship means a lot ... That is something that is very unique to REJI."

Post-release from incarceration, students have access to an invaluable support net of people and resources that may not have been accessible otherwise. Through the Justice Scholars program, REJI provides a wide breadth of aid, including technology and training, on-campus study spaces, employment opportunities, and stipends to cover the expenses of continuing education. All of these support measures are designed to assist and empower returning community members, especially in their continuance of higher education, and allow for the University to take an active role in contributing to the decarceration of its surrounding region. In line with the University's *Meliora* values, REJI will hopefully further expand in its mission of recognizing all students based on their commitment to academic excellence and curiosity.

• faculty news •

Paul Audi

It's a such a beautiful late April day as I write this that it could easily pass for early May! I had the pleasure of team-teaching with Alison again this fall, and I tremendously enjoyed our seminar on the principle of sufficient reason. It spawned some research ideas, including some thoughts about how indeterministic grounding might work. But before I write that up, I have some higher-priority projects going on laws, time, and humor (each in its own right, though perhaps one day I'll attempt to formulate laws of comic timing...and perhaps one day even follow them).

I would not have expected to say this, but a highlight of the year was spending time with my delightful colleagues during our (unending) work running two senior searches. Now, I'm pretty sure we're supposed to hate each other, or at least be sick of seeing each other, by the end of even one search. But especially after so many years of seeing too little of one another, I enjoyed seeing everyone so much. It's an exciting time for our department, and I have never felt prouder to work among such terrific colleagues and students.

Earl Conee

For years my departmental newsletter entry has consisted very largely of my reporting that I have engaged in the usual combination of teaching, research, and service, with something referring to the entry itself in there somewhere.

This year's entry is no exception.

Randall Curren

Fall 2023 was, remarkably, the first semester of my academic career in which I was pretty much all and only a philosophy professor, not also chairing the department or also actively being incrementally a professor somewhere else. How cool has it been to have a great office at a safe distance from the department office, you ask? Way cool. And I love having our department service dog Abby guard me while I work. I did get away now and then as usual, with talks at a conference in Mundelein, IL in October, Magdalen College, Oxford (UK) in January, Harvard and conferences in Boston and Salt Lake City in March, an Earth Day event for the Ethics Center and Sustainability Institute at Ohio State University in April, and at the Centre for Ethics at the University of Toronto to April 30th and May 1. A highlight of the year was being a Philosophy Capstone Guest Scholar at Franklin & Marshall College, Nov. 30-Dec. 1.

Richard Dees

I continue working on projects related on the ethical limits of newborn screening and on the role that meaning and pleasure have in constituting a life worth living and a good life. I am also teaching a new course in Global Health Ethics and I am reviving some courses I have not had the chance to teach in a while on Neuroethics and on the Philosophical Foundations of the American Revolution.



Richard Feldman

Having almost completed 50 years as a faculty member, with 49 of those years here at Rochester, I've finally decided to retire. I've been fortunate during those years to have served in a variety of roles and to have worked with so many people who I've admired and learned from. I'm grateful to all my colleagues over the years. We've worked together to strengthen our department and you've made me a better philosopher.

As I said at a recent celebration of my retirement, there's nothing about my career that has been more meaningful to me than working with graduate students and seeing the impact our former students are having on our discipline. At recent conferences, I've seen you present papers or heard others discussing your work. That has been an enormously satisfying experience and I'm grateful to all the students I've worked with for helping me to learn, challenging my ideas, and making it fun to think about philosophy.

Thank you.

William FitzPatrick

This academic year I published work on 'ardent moral realism' (for a new Oxford Handbook of Moral Realism), morality and evolution, and the trolley problem (for a new collection on the topic from CUP), and gave a talk on the epistemic role of emotionally-laden experience within metaphysically grounded ethical realism (for a conference in Lisbon). My fall seminar revolved largely around a forthcoming book by David Copp (with OUP) on naturalistic metaethics, with a fun and productive visit from Copp near the end. Two Ph.D. advisees are finishing up very interesting and rich dissertations this year (Zach Barber on the roles of mindfulness in the virtues, and Michael Carrick on theories of welfare for non-human animals), and I'm also advising an undergraduate Honors Thesis by Rachel Whitmoyer, on the distinctive bioethical issues confronting EMT's. This year has also seen increased activity for the Ethical Investment Advisory Committee, which I chair—particularly in connection with questions about investments and the current violence in Gaza and Israel. The EIAC website has more information on our work for those who are interested, and we will be presenting a recommendation to the Investment Committee of the Board of Trustees in May, which has already received a strong endorsement from the Faculty Senate, and which will also be posted to the site if it is accepted.

Jens Kipper

I may have been working on too many things at once—at least it feels like I have more ongoing projects than functioning brain cells. Among other things, I am still trying to write a textbook on the philosophy of AI. I did manage to complete (and publish) some papers. With Zeynep and Arc Kocurek (Cornell), we've written a paper on the problem of logical omniscience. A well-known philosopher once said to me that that's a strange problem to have. But really, the problem is that common accounts of belief have the undesired feature that believers are construed as logically omniscient. In our paper, we criticize a recent proposal that claims that the problem can be solved if we model belief as sensitive to questions. We then propose a new account that understands belief as a certain kind of disposition which, just like other dispositions, is sensitive to circumstances or normal conditions. We think that this kind of account can capture all types of logical ignorance.

With David Wolpert (Santa Fe Institute), we wrote a paper about the so-called 'epistemic arrow of time', which is constituted by the apparent fact that we have more knowledge, and knowledge of a different type, of the future than of the past. Most people don't find this particularly surprising. But it isn't easy to square with the fact that the fundamental physical laws are time-symmetric. David and I relate the epistemic arrow of time to the second law of thermodynamics, which states that the entropy in a closed system always increases. We argue that there is a certain type of memory system, exemplified by footprints on a beach, impact craters, and human memories, that exploits the second law, in the following sense: whenever there is a process that creates new information, global entropy must be larger on the side of this event on which the information exists. This means that knowledge based on such information can only be of the past.

Mark Povich

It's been a very exciting year. My book manuscript with OUP was accepted and will be coming out this summer. The book was a winner of one of this year's inaugural Faculty Open Access Publishing grants, so it will be published open access and free to all. Several papers I mentioned being under review last year have been accepted as well. I have a few more currently under review, and I'm confident about a couple of them. The others, not so much. Teaching also went really well this year. Every time I teach, I feel that I get better at explaining (and understanding!) difficult topics, like the debate between Kim and Davidson on anomalous monism. This year I also ticked something off my bucket list: I went to see Punxsutawney Phil. It was everything I dreamed of. The day after, I had lunch with him. (I was sitting at a table; he was in a small, transparent enclosure.)

I developed a new(ish) theory of the a priori. I gave a bunch of talks, many of which defended the metalinguistic construal of mathematical propositions. And I heard many (many!) amazing talks in the department during the Spring semester.

Rosa Terlazzo

Things are finally starting to feel normal again after the pandemic! Which means, of course, that we're all doing more things than a person could possibly do, but not nearly as many as we want to. Some highlights of the year have included giving a keynote at a conference in Zurich, and getting to spend a semester thinking about how to live well under oppression with our wonderful graduate students. I'm looking forward to a summer of travel to Finland, Australia, and Slovenia, and to continuing to work on a set of papers in which I grapple with the question of how to parent well in an unjust world.



Zeynep Soysal

Last year I forgot to submit a piece for the newsletter, but (and probably because) it was one of the most eventful and wonderful years with the birth of our darling daughter Lara. This year was also pretty eventful. I continued a project on the epistemic roles of opinion journalism that I had started during my Humanities Center Fellowship in Spring 2023. Ellise Moon joined this project, which thanks to her now has a corpus analysis component. I started a new project on potentialism about set theory, which was a topic I last worked on in my early years of graduate school. Jens and

graduate news

23/24 Master's Degrees Awarded:

Thomas Blake

Kevin Gausselin

Jacob Morris

2023 Payne First Year Outstanding Essay

Harry Golborn, "Knowledge: A Matter of Time Against Moral Inheritance"

2023 Outstanding Essay Award

Xinlu Li, "Prichard's Epistemic Value T-Monism and Trivial Truths Problem"

2023/24 Outstanding TA of the Year Award:

Kevin Gausselin

Ashley Labodda

Having just completed my first year in the PhD program, I am astonished how fast the academic year has gone. I am pleased to say that I have loved my time in the department so far and have found it to be one of the most friendly, supportive, and intellectually stimulating places. I look forward to the rest of my time among such kind and smart faculty and fellow graduate students! I am also amazed at the number of opportunities I have had this year both within and outside of the department. This academic year, I was able to attend two conferences (and technically a third in which my co-author attended on our behalf) in which I presented papers within epistemology, biomedical ethics, and moral psychology. In particular, I was grateful for the opportunity to present further developments on my master's thesis titled "Concerning Morality: Human Dispositions and Propensities for Altruism and Social Cooperation" at the Wisconsin Philosophical Association Meeting. Within the department, there has been no shortage of talks and interesting courses. Aside from various colloquia, there have been ample talks from graduate students within the department on their current projects. I have appreciated these opportunities to hear about and engage with a variety of philosophical topics both within and outside of my interests. As this year ends, I look forward to continuing several projects in both biomedical ethics and metaethics in the coming year.

Kevin Gausselin

Dissertation writing is finally underway for me! I've been having a lot of fun thinking about evidence possession with Rich. Highlights of the year include presenting on evidence possession at Western Michigan University's graduate conference and at a meeting of the Ohio Philosophical Association. I also really enjoyed sitting in Earl's seminar on skepticism and Jens and Zeynep's seminar on the a priori, and reading some Williamson (and then meeting him at colloquium!). And I had a blast participating in the prestigious Golborn Gradtalk series. My thanks to Harry for making the series happen! I look forward to more dissertation writing and philosophical adventures to come.

Harry Golborn

COVID took a lot away from us, something we don't always remember is how much social tradition or community we lost the habit of. A few people this year really deserve special thanks for their efforts to correct that, so I thought I'd take the moment to mention a few. Firstly, thanks to Zee our thoroughly overburdened grad rep, who is always keeping things together in the background, supporting other's efforts and advocating for us in ways we don't always hear about. Thanks to Ashley who went above and beyond dealing with visiting speakers especially with the onset of job talks, connecting grad students into the events, and, like Mary's room, supplying us

Congratulations to Rebecca Sanaeikia for being awarded the University of Rochester Meliora Digital and Interdisciplinary Fellowship in the digital humanities. This prestigious, highly competitive fellowship will allow her to learn more about the technologies available for advanced study of the humanities and to collaborate with other graduate students engaged in similar explorations.

Congratulations to Kevin Gausselin for being awarded the Dean's Dissertation Fellowship for 2024-2025.

He was recognized for this award "based on his outstanding past accomplishments as well as his promise as a researcher and educator."

Congratulations to Honors Thesis student Rachel Whitmoyer, whose work in Philosophy and as an EMT is featured on UR's News Center: <https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/emergency-care-ethical-dilemmas-600902/>

The Philosophy Department warmly welcomes incoming graduate students:

Shadi Avani (Iran)
Juan Cadile (Argentina)
Adam DeDobbelaere (US)
Xiaoying Liu (China)
Evan Lopes (US)
Yun-Cheng Wang (Taiwan)

with the heretofore unknown phenomenal experience of grape jelly meatballs. Thanks to Ellise who took on social rep duties, organizing much needed casual nights out for the grad students. Thanks also to Xinlu for hosting powerpoint night! Thanks to Rosa who started RationaliTea, which lets anyone in our community stick their heads in to say hello and I'm sorry that I've been too busy to stay for the whole of one yet! I wanted to say a very personal thank you to Rafa, Nick, Kevin and Vincent, our first four GRADTALKS speakers. Volunteering yourselves helped start us off on, I hope, a tradition of finding more ways for our grads to share their research and ideas, practice public speaking and build our community. Thanks to everyone who attended those talks in person and by zoom for making them a success. Thanks to Cheryl, who as always weaves together all that we do in the background to make sure things go off without a hitch, and Alison our chair, for supporting things like GRADTALKS with the funding we get for receptions. Finally, thank you all, for being awesome.

Xinlu Li

I've really enjoyed my time in our department, from the grad office chats to seminar room discussions and even those fun outings to local restaurants. Academically, I'm happy to share that I passed the primary area exam (in Ethics, of course) and received the Adam Smith Fellowship for 2023-2024. I'm gearing up for the writing seminar presentation this Fall and starting to prepare my thesis proposal during the upcoming summer. Reflecting on the past few years, I spent a lot of time on coursework (honestly, I would say it is the best part of my life as a student), and I think I would like to spend more time on my research. As I shift more of my focus toward research, I feel like I'm transitioning from being a student to becoming an independent researcher. If you have any tips or advice for navigating this phase, I'd love to hear from you!

Carl Reynolds

I have treasured the opportunity to return to academia this past fall, part time, to work on a Masters. The students are so clever and the professors I've had the opportunity to learn from have been spectacular! The members of the department are so friendly and welcoming; I feel so lucky to be a part of this community.

Rebecca Sanaeikia

This year has been an absolute journey of exciting developments for me! I am truly honored to have been awarded the digital humanities fellowship. While I am certainly proud of this achievement, I am even more grateful for the incredible opportunity it has provided. Additionally, I have had the privilege of publishing a book review in a prestigious journal, as well as two articles on the websites of The American Journal of Bioethics and Synapsis, which has been an invaluable learning experience.

Expanding my academic horizons by obtaining a graduate certificate in gender studies has also been incredibly rewarding, allowing me to explore interdisciplinary approaches to my area of research. However, the most meaningful milestone this year has been my engagement without a doubt!!!

Looking ahead, I am full of excitement as I anticipate starting work on my dissertation, a challenge I am enthusiastically ready to take on!!

Vincent Tanzil

I'm glad that I have completed my Teaching Seminar with Jens in the Philosophy of AI course that I TA-ed. It was my first U.S. university-setting lecture and I'm glad that it went well (from my perspective, of course. At least I didn't receive any complaint from the students about it unlike my grading). I'm also delighted to present at Grad-Talk 'Social Construction and Grounding'. I'm grateful for everyone who made that talk possible and the insightful discussions on this very early draft. By the time this newsletter is published I should be finished with my Writing Seminar and I hope to have the proposal for dissertation submitted in Fall 2024. My son, a local Rochesterian, is two-years old already. Time flies pretty fast!

- graduate alumni news -

Jackie Augustine, PhD 2010

A weird little blurb on all the ways the department continues to impact my life: My son Prashanta (UR '19) graduated Yale Law School and is now working in New York City. My son Henry (UR '26) is part of Meliora Scholars, balancing his physics and math double major with work in linguistics and aesthetics. Will Sophie be the next Augustine to roam Lattimore Hall? This is her junior year of high school, so I guess you'll have to wait until the next newsletter to find out. I remain unpublished in ways that "count," but I'm on year seven of a biweekly newspaper column about philosophy-in-action (not to be confused with philosophy inaction, which would be decidedly less exciting to write about). Adjuncting continues, but my ongoing (unpaid) vocation is as founder and Executive Director of BluePrint Geneva. This year, we secured over \$1million for air quality, food security, and active recreation projects that had historically (and unjustly) been directed primarily to white, wealthy communities, which Geneva is neither. All of this is to say that what's right in theory must work in practice.

**Charles Cardwell,
PhD 1972**

Splitting firewood is good for the body and soul. I've been doing a fair amount of that since I was promoted to Emeritus Faculty and signed a post-retirement contract to teach three classes a year. I continue to serve as Secretary/Webmaster for the Tennessee Philosophical Association and provided commentary for a paper at the 2023 Meetings.

**Eileen Daly-Boas,
MA 2000 and
forever ABD**

Hello from Rush Rhees Library! I'm still the Philosophy librarian here at UR. Last summer, I was one of the recipients of the Rochester Regional Library Council's All-Star Award, which was a nice accolade. I've been learning a lot about Large Language Models and AI Chatbots – as are many librarians right now. My favorite thing to do is to work with faculty and students, and it looks like I'll get to keep doing that for a while. For any alumni, if you'd like access to some online library materials, you can do so by signing up with the Alumni association: <https://rax.rochester.edu/s/1676/21/home.aspx?%20gid=2&pgid=61>

**Loretta Kopelman,
PhD 1966**

Pediatrics, the flagship journal of the American Pediatric Association, published a consensus statement by 17 of us, all of whom have written on clinical and ethical or legal concerns in pediatric decision-making. Our article, "Pediatric Decision-making: Consensus Recommendations," appeared in September 2023 and grew out of two conferences held the previous year. Topics we discussed therein included the importance but limitations of parental autonomy, the duties parents and clinicians have to their pediatric patients, the respect due to children and some of the benefits and limitations of shared-decision-making. Along with two other members of the group, I wrote a paper considering the impact of these consensus statements on neonatal decision-making in medicine. In this article we focused on how three topics impacted neonatal decision-making policy; namely, legal and policy issues, rapid technological advances and the unique emotional burdens faced by parents and clinicians when providing neonatal medical care. This paper will appear in the spring 2024 issue of the journal, *The Perspective of Biology and Medicine*.

The past year, I was one of 16 people interviewed about my perspective on the founding of bioethics as part of an oral history project conducted by the Berman Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

Best wishes, Loretta

**Matthew Lamb,
PhD 2021**

Greetings from Virginia. This past year has been surprisingly friendly to me. My time at W&L as a visitor is ending this academic year, but I've been lucky in finding an instructor position at Bridgewater College. I haven't found an elusive tenure track position, but I'm quite grateful for finding a position that is meant to be long term and with benefits (not to mention, I won't need to move across multiple states!). On the research front, I published a paper in *The Journal of Ethics* this past Fall and now have a forthcoming paper in *The Journal of Value Inquiry*. I am looking forward to starting this upcoming academic year teaching at Bridgewater and hopeful that I'll still manage to keep up with research.

**James Hunter Leshner,
PhD 1967**

I have completed work on *Philosophy in Literature Ancient and Modern*, twenty essays on philosophical aspects of literary works from the Homeric poems to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

I have begun work on *Saphêneia: Clarity, Certainty, and Truth from Homer to Aristotle*. Forms of the adjective *saphês* ('clear, sure, true') appear throughout early Greek poetry and philosophy. The adverbial form *sapha* appears often in the Homeric poems, the noun phrase *saphês* plays a central role in Xenophanes' famous comment on the limits of human knowledge (fragment B 34), and both the noun *saphêneia* and the adjective *saphês* appear in the simile of the divided line in Plato's *Republic* and in Aristotle's distinction between things clear to us and things clear in themselves.

**Jonathan Matheson,
PhD 2010**

This year I became the director of the Florida Blue Center for Ethics here at the University of North Florida. This shift means a little less teaching and research, and more organization and programming. It has been a lot of fun. This last year I also published *Why It's OK not to Think for Yourself*, and since its publication I have had the opportunity to engage a wide variety of audiences on the arguments and issues discussed in it. On a personal note, my daughter (who was born my first year in the PhD



program) is headed off to college this coming fall. This has been a very vivid reminder of the passage of time.

**Gary H. Merrill,
PhD 1974**

This past year my “intellectual” activity has been minimal. I’m content to watch the consequences of my work on formal ontologies in science, in the 2007-2011 period, being carried on and extended by younger researchers who are taking it further than I ever could. This is being played out primarily in the scientific journals now, and has largely escaped the sphere of academic philosophy.

Quite recently I had a nice email exchange with Arthur Fine about the realist/anti-realist dispute in philosophy and how the dogmatism in that has at times affected people’s careers and the awarding of research grants (in both philosophy and the sciences). Scary stuff. I’m happy to have helped with that problem, at least in biomedicine.

I continue to be astonished at the number of references to my now ancient 1982 paper “The Model-Theoretic Argument

Against Realism,” which seems to have achieved some kind of discipline-crossing cult status (including physical education, music, art, psychology, ...). I think this is a brilliant illustration that the number of citations to a work has little to do with its true significance or influence. Sometimes you just need to find a paper to add to your references in order to show your breadth of knowledge, eh? For most of my professional life I felt that the paper was quite trivial, and still do – but people seem to like to read into it all kinds of things that I’m pretty sure I didn’t put there.

Otherwise, this year I committed to putting the tuba playing on hold in order to become a competent euphonium player. I’m almost there, but may deviate from that since I just got asked to join a local jazz band as their bass trombone – and bass trombone is definitely my spirit instrument.

**James Van Cleve,
PhD 1974**

I am working on two papers that I hope will be bibliography items by this time next year: one on good and bad philosophical uses of the term ‘qua’ and another on debates about whether perceptual contents are sparse or rich. I will be spending next fall at my old stomping ground, Brown University.

bibliography

Randall Curren

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William FitzPatrick

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Kevin Gausselin

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Loretta Kopelman, PhD 1966

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Matthew Lamb, PhD 2021

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James Hunter Lesher, PhD 1967

'Knowledge and Presence in Early Greek Thought' in R. Hahn and A. Herda, eds, 'Knowledge' in Archaic Greece (Hellenic Studies Series / Harvard University Press), forthcoming.

Jens Kipper

Forthcoming. *Idle Questions* (with Alexander Kocurek, Zeynep Soysal). *The Journal of Philosophy*. 2024. *Memory Systems, the Epistemic Arrow of Time, and the Second Law* (with David Wolpert). *Entropy* 26(2).

Eric Mack, PhD 1973

Finally, my "Two Demands upon Luck Egalitarianism" has come out in *Social Philosophy and Policy* (December 2023).

My "John Locke and Just Price: A Commentary on 'Venditio'" appeared in *Locke Studies* 24 (April 2024).

My revised version of the entry "John Locke" will soon be appearing in the 2nd Edition of *The Routledge Companion to Social and Political Philosophy*.

In April I directed a colloquium on "Anarchy, State, and Utopia: Fifty Years After."

In August, I'll be presenting a paper on "Nozick on the Separateness of Person: A Reconstruction" at a conference at VPI and;

This coming September I will be co-teaching a week-long "Summer School" in Switzerland for graduate students and junior faculty on Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*.

Jonathan Matheson, PhD 2010

Why it's OK not to Think for Yourself. (2023) Routledge.

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"Disagreement and Higher-Order Evidence." In *Routledge Companion to Evidence*. Eds. M. Larson-Aarnio and C. Littlejohn. Routledge. (2024) 256-272.

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Mark Povich

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Povich, Mark. (2023). "A Scheme Foiled: A Critique of Baron's Account of Extra-mathematical Explanation," *Mind*, 132(526), 479–492. <https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzac019>.

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Rebecca Sanaeikia

Sanaeikia, R. (2024). Book review: *Banning Transgender Conversion Practices: A Legal and Policy Analysis*. *Medical Law International*, 24(1), 90–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09685332231193957>

Zeynep Soysal

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(2023). An Algorithmic Impossible-Worlds Model of Belief and Knowledge. *The Review of Symbolic Logic*. DOI: 10.1017/S1755020323000059.

(2023). A Metalinguistic and Computational Approach to the Problem of Mathematical Omniscience. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 106, 455–474.

Peter van Inwagen, PhD 1969

My long post-Rochester career (PhD 1969) is winding down. These will probably be my last four books:

Being: A Study in Ontology, Oxford, December 2023

Metaphysics (fifth edition), Routledge, March 2024

Do Numbers Exist?: A Debate About Abstract Objects (with William Lane Craig), Routledge, April 2024

The Abstract and the Concrete: Further Studies in Ontology, Oxford, publication date May 7th, 2024



This Year's Events:

Presented with the Center for Language Sciences And the Philosophy Department

Timothy Williamson (University of Oxford)
"Collective Imagining"

Presented with the Humanities Center And the Philosophy Department

Cailin O'Connor (University of California, Irvine)
"Curation and Misinformation"

Presented with The Warner School of Education And the Philosophy Department

Winston Thompson (Ohio State University)
"On Race as a Subject of Instruction"

Presented with the Philosophy Department And the Goergen Institute for Data Science

Sina Fazelpour (Northeastern University)
"The Ethics of Machine Learning"

2023/24

Colloquium Series:

*Professor David Copp
(University of California, Davis)*

"Two Defenses of Normative Pluralism"

*Professor Fatema Amjeeb
(University of British Columbia, Canada)*

"A Spinozist Foundation for Hume's Dictum"

*Professor Justin Clarke-Doane
(Columbia University)*

"What Could it Mean to say that There is One True Logic?"

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