



Philosophy

Department Newsletter

University of Colorado at Boulder



Letter from the Chair

David Boonin

The following remarks were adapted from the welcoming address given at the Department's May 2008 Commencement ceremony.

As Chair of the Philosophy Department, it is my privilege to open and close our annual Commencement ceremony, and my burden to try to answer the question "What good is philosophy?" while doing so. Last year was my first Commencement as chair, and I tried to answer the question by giving an argument. That, I thought, is what philosophers are supposed to do.

But when I was trying to talk to people at the reception afterwards, I kept getting interrupted by various colleagues of mine, all of whom wanted to tell me about the great objections they had already come up with: "Here's why one of your premises is flawed." "Here's why your argument structure is unsound." "Here's a fatal counterexample." I was in the middle of congratulating a proud parent on how well her son had done in our program when a colleague burst in just so he could tell me that my argument entailed that terrorism is good. The proud parent suddenly seemed a little less proud.

I think I learned my lesson last year: don't offer arguments. Or, at least, don't offer arguments when my colleagues are in the room. So in addressing the question of what good philosophy is at our ceremony this past spring, I didn't offer an argument. Instead, I simply described and discussed an experience I had a few years ago.

Here is the experience: a few years ago, I was reading an article that defended a



David Boonin, Department Chair

certain position about the controversy over slave reparations. The reparations debate is about whether or not the United States government today has some sort of special obligation to the current generation of black Americans in virtue of wrongs that were committed in the past against previous generations of Africans and African-Americans. I don't want to politicize my remarks here, so I won't say which side the article was taking. I'll just say that it was the side that always struck me as clearly the wrong side.

The article seemed to contain an argument, but the argument didn't seem very good. Still, the basic idea behind the argument seemed kind of interesting, so over the next few weeks I found myself tinkering with it: wondering what would happen if some of the premises were modified, if supplemental assumptions were brought in, and so on. Eventually, I found that I had constructed a new version of the argument. It contained five premises and the conclusion about slave reparations that I felt sure was mistaken.

I looked at this new argument and I

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Faculty Activities

2007-08

Dominic Bailey enjoyed his first year in Colorado, where the climate, and not having to teach to a centuries-old curriculum, suit him well. He taught courses on ancient epistemology and Plato; finished the revisions of his article "Excavating *Dissoi Logoi* 4," to appear in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*; and continued work on a paper identifying a deep inconsistency in Plato's metaphysics, and another paper on the Third Man Argument. In February he attended the 13th Annual Arizona Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy, where he presented a critical response to Carl Huffman's views on mathematics in Plato's *Republic*.

David Barnett published a paper in *Noûs*, arguing that some influential intuitions about the mind (e.g., that it is impossible to explain how

thought: well, either one of the premises is false, or there's a flaw in the move from the premises to the conclusion. First, I went through each premise. They each seemed right to me. Then, I went through the reasoning from the premises to the conclusion. That seemed right to me, too. Since I felt confident that the conclusion was wrong, I was sure that I was simply overlooking some flaw in the argument, so I went through both processes again and then a third time.

And now we come to the part of my experience that I want to focus on for a moment. The first step at this point was doubt. Very slowly, an unwelcome thought began to creep into my mind: maybe I've been wrong about slave reparations all along. The second step was resistance. I like to think of myself as a pretty smart guy, and so I thought: that's ridiculous. I can't be wrong. The argument must be wrong. This was followed by a long and frustrating period of oscillating back and forth between doubt and resistance. Eventually, after numerous attempts to poke a hole in the argument had failed, resistance finally gave way to a feeling of resignation: alright already, enough; I was wrong, I was wrong. I give up.

At this point, I expected to feel the sting of bitter defeat. I had engaged in a long and difficult debate with myself, and I had lost. And in many segments of society, changing your mind about something really is viewed as an embarrassment you are supposed to feel bad about. In presidential campaigns,

for example, just about the worst thing you can say about your opponent is that he used to think one thing and now he thinks something else. It's supposed to be a sign of weakness, failure, lack of integrity.

But when I changed my mind about slave reparations, I didn't feel that way at all. It's difficult to describe, but I felt a kind of tightly-focused euphoria. I found this surprising, and so I tried to reflect on what it was about the process of changing my mind that gave rise to this unexpectedly agreeable sensation. And what I realized was this: prior to subjecting my view about slave reparations to this kind of sustained, rational scrutiny – prior, that is, to really thinking about the issue philosophically – I *thought* I had an opinion about slave reparations, but I really didn't. There was an opinion about slave reparations residing in me. But I didn't really *have* the opinion. The opinion had me. It was telling me what to think, rather than the other way around. When I came to change my mind about slave reparations, though, I didn't experience my conversion as simply trading one opinion for another. Instead, I experienced it as my taking charge of something that had been taking charge of me. In a word, it was liberating.

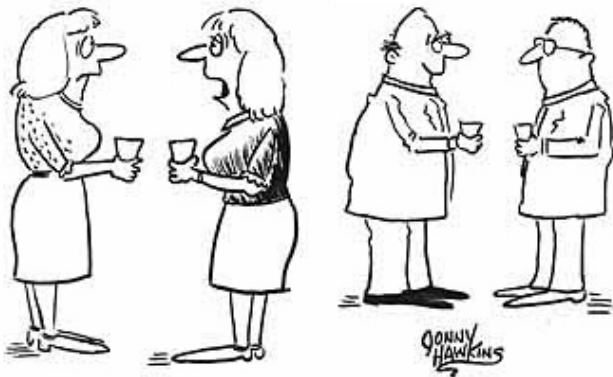
And so when someone asks me what philosophy is good for, I can now tell them that one thing that philosophy is good for is this: it enables people to have – and to take pleasure in having – a deeply and uniquely rewarding kind of experience that too many people are unwilling to permit themselves to have. There is a kind of underappreciated beauty in the process of critical self-reflection that gives rise to this experience. And as I helped to hand out the diplomas to this year's graduates, I took pride in the thought that so many people had gathered, and so happily, to honor this process and to celebrate its being successfully passed on to a new generation. □

consciousness arises from the interaction of neurons) stem from a more fundamental intuition: that it is impossible for conscious beings to be composed of other things. He published a paper in *Analysis* refuting Chalmers and Hájek's claim that Ramsey + Moore = God. He had papers accepted for publication in *Mind*, the *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Studies*, and the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. In the Spring of 2008, he was a Visiting Assistant Professor at NYU.

David Boonin's book *The Problem of Punishment* was published this past spring by Cambridge University Press. He gave invited talks at a few universities and published a paper on a paradox about future generations that has puzzled him for a long time. In addition to continuing his work as department chair, David plans to spend the 2008-09 academic year working on a book on applied ethics and race, and trying to come to terms with the fact that his older child is starting high school while his younger child is starting elementary school.

Eric Chwang completed his first full year in Boulder. His paper about the right to withdraw from research is forthcoming in *Bioethics*. He also presented material on mandatory HPV vaccination at the American Society for Bioethics and the Humanities conference in the fall, material on research with prisoners at a symposium at CU Boulder in the spring, and material on freedom and autonomy at the annual philosophy conference in Bled, Slovenia this past summer. This past year he also achieved—and continues to maintain—pro status in Nintendo Wii Sports bowling.

Carol Cleland published two papers in philosophy of biology, one in an anthology on astrobiology and one in a philosophy of biology journal. She has a long essay forthcoming in the Blackwell *Companion to the Philosophy of*



"Vince prides himself on his open mind, and you'd be surprised at some of the things that crawl into it."

Interview with Carol Cleland

Professor Cleland specializes in philosophy of science. Over the summer, she spoke with David Boonin about her life and work.

David Boonin: I understand that you'll be on sabbatical and research leave for the 2008-09 year.

Carol Cleland: Oh, it's wonderful. I love teaching, but it's hard to finish a big project while teaching.

David: And you're going to be working on a book with the tentative title, *The Quest for a Universal Theory of Life: Searching for Life as We Don't Know It*. How did you come to be working on this project?

Carol: When I first started working in philosophy of biology and astrobiology, I was invited to participate in a workshop on life sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Most of the participants were scientists. When it was my turn to speak, I talked about the nature and limitations of definition – how definitions are really about language, meaning, and concepts. I argued that it is a mistake to try to answer the question "What is life?" by giving a definition. What scientists want to know is what life really is. They aren't very interested in analyzing our concept of life. Basically, I said that if life is a natural kind then attempts to define it are misguided, and if life is not a natural kind then attempts to define it are scientifically uninteresting.

The scientists blew up! They all had pet definitions of life, and there I was telling them that they were wasting their time. But one very well-known planetary scientist, Chris Chyba, liked my argument. He had an MA in history and philosophy of science in addition to a PhD in astronomy and could appreciate the points I was making. Chris and I subsequently co-authored an article on why the scientific project of defining life is fundamentally mistaken. This paper is now considered a classic and has changed the minds of many scientists. I've been told that NASA no longer designs its life detection

equipment around a specific definition of life. So in the end it was very nice.

David: If we can't define life, then should NASA give up on trying to find life elsewhere in the universe?

Carol: No. And this is part of what my book's about – that's why it's called *The Quest for a Universal Theory of Life*. What I am trying to do is provide a substitute for the definitional approach. After my paper with Chris came out, I was invited to give talks on defining life, and at the end of each talk a scientist inevitably said something like, "Fine and dandy, now you've got us all depressed. What do you expect us to do? Should we just give up and not look for



extraterrestrial life?" It was a good question, and I struggled to find a good answer.

I turned to the history of science to understand how "what is" questions have been successfully answered in the past. It quickly became clear that the best answers are provided in the context of a well-accepted scientific theory.

But this didn't solve my problem, because we really don't have an adequately general theory of life. The only life we are familiar with is Earth life, and there are good reasons for believing that it represents a sample of one. I was faced with a proverbial chicken-or-the-egg problem: you can't formulate a general theory of life without examples of unfamiliar forms of life, but you can't recognize unfamiliar forms of life if you lack an adequately general theory of life. I began to appreciate why NASA was so enamored with definitions of life!

David: I'm assuming that this isn't the end of the story.

Carol: That's right. The answer that I finally came up with is to look for *anomalies*. Thomas Kuhn argued that anomalies are the driving force behind theory change. A good example is Newtonian physics and the perturbations in the orbit of Mercury, the closest planet to our sun. Initially, Mercury's deviation from the orbit predicted by Newton's theory didn't worry anyone very much. The optical resolution of early

History and Historiography and a paper forthcoming in *Synthese*. She has two books under contract with Cambridge University Press: an anthology co-edited with Mark Bedau titled *The Nature of Life*, and a monograph titled *The Quest for a Universal Theory of Life*. She was invited to participate in the Gordon Conference on the origin of life, the Oberlin Conference on philosophy of science, the NESCent conference on new directions in the theory of evolution, and the Biosphere-2 conference on ethical issues in astrobiology. She also presented a paper at the AbSciCon conference on astrobiology.

John Fisher continues to collaborate with Ned Hettinger (Boulder Ph.D. circa 1985, now a Professor at the College of Charleston) on a book on environmental aesthetics. They hope to finish it this millennium. At a Fall 2007 aesthetics convention, Fisher defended the counter-intuitive view that all wild animals are beautiful, in a paper titled "Species and the Aesthetic Value of Wild Animals." In the Spring he commented on papers on the sublime in nature at the Pacific APA. He also published "Performing Nature," on the aesthetic appreciation of nature, and "Is it Worth It?" on ethically evaluating environmental art. He also wrote the entries on "Music and Song" and "Technology and Art" for Blackwell's *Companion to Aesthetics*.

Graeme Forbes gave three lectures in early April at the Institut für Philosophie, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt. Two were on time, modality, and vagueness; the third was in philosophy of language, titled "Psychological Attitude Verbs: A Unified Account." He gave "Psychological Attitude Verbs" again two weeks later, at a workshop on intentionality at Yale University. The talk got its third outing as a keynote address at the Society for Exact Philosophy, in Laramie, Wyoming, in May. Also in May, his critical notice of Kit Fine's selected papers, "Modality and Tense,"

telescopes was poor, astronomers were just beginning to chart the solar system, and most of the orbits they observed deviated from Newton's theory to some extent. As the years went by, many of these early problems were explained away in terms of gravitational influences from other bodies in the solar system.

But Mercury's orbit proved resistant. Astronomers began worrying more about it. Lots of solutions were proposed: Maybe Mercury was being affected by another planet between it and the sun? Maybe the sun's mass was lopsided and this distorted Mercury's orbit...?

By the beginning of the twentieth century Mercury's orbit was considered a serious unsolved problem in astronomy. Einstein actually designed his theory of general relativity with the orbit of Mercury in mind, because he knew there was another explanation that no one wanted to talk about: maybe Newton's theory was wrong. And as we now know, Einstein was right.

The point is, what you want to look for is a puzzle that has resisted efforts to explain it within the context of our accepted scientific beliefs.

David: What would be an example of an anomaly in the context of life?

Carol: Well, one really provocative example is desert varnish: the large black and reddish-brown streaks that you see running down cliffs in desert regions. It's found in deserts all over the world. Scientists have been studying it for a hundred years and they still can't agree on whether it is biological or nonbiological.

Varnish coatings bear an uncanny resemblance to stromatolites, which are microbial mats that were common on the early Earth and are still found today in Shark's Bay, Australia. I have a hunk of a 2.8 billion-year-old fossilized stromatolite in my office. The dark color of desert varnish is produced by manganese, which also suggests biology. Some varieties of bacteria extract manganese from their environment and concentrate it.

But when biologists analyze varnish coatings they don't find much in the way of living bacteria or intact biomolecules like proteins and nucleic acids – just bits and pieces of stuff. This suggests that it is

nonbiological. So geochemists have tried to explain it in terms of nonbiological processes. But they haven't been able to come up with a good explanation for the high concentrations of manganese.

So desert varnish represents a genuine anomaly from the standpoint of our current understanding of life. The reason that this is so interesting is that desert varnish might just represent a completely unfamiliar form of microbial life. Maybe we don't have to go to Mars to find alien life!



Desert varnish

David: On the approach that you reject, where somebody would come up with the definition of life, we would just look at the desert varnish and say, does it fit the definition or not? But on your approach we can't do that. So what should we be doing?

Carol: We should be studying desert varnish with the attitude that we really don't know what it is. The fact that it has resisted standard biological and nonbiological explanations for so long suggests that a new approach might be more productive. I'm actually working with a bunch of scientists on this possibility. Last month I spent a couple of days in the Mojave Desert with some NASA scientists collecting samples of desert varnish for further analysis. We are going to take a very close look at these samples and see what we can find.

But even if desert varnish ends up being nonbiological, the basic strategy of looking for anomalies is the right one. The mid 1970s Viking experiments are a good example. NASA designed them around a metabolic definition of life based closely on familiar Earth microbes. The basic idea was to scoop up some Martian soil, expose it to a radioactively labeled nutrient solution, and

appeared in the *Philosophical Review*.

Bob Hanna continued to teach many clever and nice CU students, and ran three weekly discussion groups on (1) Cognition, Content, & Consciousness, (2) Free Will, and (3) the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy. He continued to do research on Kant, the history of analytic philosophy, and the philosophy of mind. In connection with those topics, he published seven papers and finished the final version of a book, co-authored with former student Michelle Maiese, *Embodied Minds in Action*, to be published by Oxford in 2009. And somewhat pathetically, he continued to enjoy the weather for its own sake. During 2008-09, he will be a visiting professor at Cambridge University.

Chris Heathwood completed a couple of papers on the topic of welfare—one on whether desire-based theories of welfare are compatible with self-sacrifice, and another in which he defends his own theory of welfare. In *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*, he published an argument against the view that value can be explained in terms of what we ought to desire. He gave a few talks in various venues, including our undergraduate philosophy club, about how the morality of abortion depends upon the nature of personal identity. And he gave a talk at Oxford University on whether desires ever provide reasons for action. He was surprised by the extent to which the Oxford academic environment has been co-opted from Harry Potter movies.

Michael Huemer had some papers accepted for publication, including "In Defence of Repugnance" for *Mind*, "A Paradox for Weak Deontology" for *Utilitas*, a chapter on the state for a forthcoming textbook, and an article on drug legalization for *The Philosopher's Magazine*. His paper criticizing appeals to ontological parsimony in philosophy is to appear in the *Philosophical Quarterly*, and his

look for the release of metabolic by-products. But when the experiments were run on Mars, they got baffling results that they couldn't explain in terms of either biological or nonbiological processes.

The official conclusion is that NASA didn't find life. The results didn't fit the agreed upon definition, so it couldn't be life.

But some of the results strongly suggested life, whereas others seemed inconsistent with it. To this day, no one has been able to fully explain the anomalous results of those experiments. But there is little interest in figuring out what produced them because NASA believes that it couldn't have been life. I'm not saying that it was life. That's an open question. The point I'm making is that definitions blind you to alternative possibilities.

David: It sounds like your book has a lot of science in it as well as philosophy. Who is it primarily aimed at?

Carol: Well, the book is intended for an audience of philosophers *and* scientists. I am trying to achieve what some consider unachievable: a truly interdisciplinary book that will inform philosophers about cutting edge scientific work on life, and scientists about pertinent philosophical work. Because the book is directed at such different audiences, it should also be accessible to the educated layperson.

David: You were more in metaphysics in the early stages of your career. How did you come to be a philosopher of science?

Carol: I didn't discover philosophy until my

junior year. I started in physics but hated the labs. I tried other sciences. By the time I graduated, I had taken many advanced physics courses; I had two years of chemistry, including organic; two and a half years of geology; and a year of biology. By the end, I had a lot of philosophy courses too.

I decided that I wanted to be a philosopher, and ended up in the PhD program at Brown University. I was interested in philosophy of science and logic, and they had faculty working in these areas, but they left the year that I entered. I was married to a biologist at another college in the area. So I decided to stay and do metaphysics.

CU hired me in 1986 as a metaphysician working on causation. Then in the late nineties, a team of NASA scientists found fossilized microbial life in a meteorite from Mars. The discovery set off a storm of controversy. CU has one of the largest space science programs in the country, and they decided to hold a panel discussion. And they thought that it would be good to have a philosopher on the panel. I got a call from the Vice Chancellor of Research, and the rest is history. A year later I was invited to participate in NASA's new Institute of Astrobiology.

David: You mentioned that you started out studying the sciences. What got you interested in philosophy?

Carol: Quantum mechanics. The theory of quantum mechanics violates our ordinary conceptions about space and time, materiality and causation. I found it utterly perplexing and nobody in physics wanted to talk about it. They just wanted to solve problems with it. But when

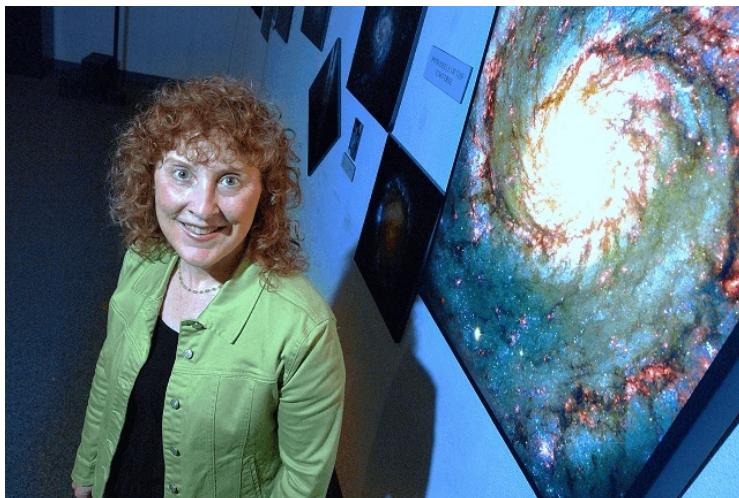
I took a course in philosophy of science, everybody wanted to talk about it. It was part of the curriculum. Articles had been written about it. I thought I'd died and gone to heaven.

David: Have you encountered resistance when interacting with scientists – scientists either questioning the value of philosophy in

theory of inductive logic will appear in the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. His *Ethical Intuitionism* came out in paperback and is the subject of a forthcoming symposium in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. This fall, he singlehandedly assumed editorship of the newsletter now before you, a burden that would crush any normal man. He cannot be blamed for its lateness.

Alison Jaggar's anthology, *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, was published in 2008. In May 2007, she gave the keynote address at the Seminario Internacional Política e Feminismo in Brazil. In September, she spoke on comparing John Rawls' ideal theory with Iris Marion Young's critical theory, at the conference on Feminist Ethics and Social Theory. In November, she gave a keynote address for the UK Society for Women in Philosophy. Alison also gave colloquia at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil; Washington University; Marquette University; the University of Miami; and the University of Nevada at Reno. In May 2008, she taught graduate seminars on global gender justice at the University of Oslo and organized an international workshop in Oslo on the same topic. Her students Peter Higgins and Audra King received their Ph.D.'s, and Alison finished a four-year term as Director of Graduate Studies.

Dan Kaufman taught at the University of Michigan in the spring. He gave talks at Michigan, Chicago, Ohio State, and Cornell. He finished two papers on Descartes' theory of material substance. He worked on a chapter on identity for the Blackwell *Guide to Locke's Essay* and a chapter on the real distinction argument for the Cambridge *Critical Guide to Descartes' Meditations*. He is now editing the *Companion to 17th-Century Philosophy*. He published "Locke on Individuation and the Corpuscular Basis of Kinds" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, "The Resurrection of the Same Body



Carol Cleland (left), universe (right)

general or questioning whether they in particular have anything to learn?

Carol: Initially there was skepticism. The key to my success has been mastering the science. Because I had a good background, I was able to pick it up fairly quickly. Scientists are sometimes shocked by how much I know. One scientist told me that I knew more science than he did about areas outside of his specialization. I was really flattered. And I enjoy learning the science. The most important thing is not to make too many technical mistakes.

It is also important that I don't just tell them what they already know. They want to learn something from what I have to say, and they love arguing with me. It can be exhausting. Of course, there are always a few jerks who think that a philosopher has no business mucking around in science. But they are surprisingly rare. It's a bit annoying that scientists don't take similar care in learning the philosophy. I sometimes have to repeat philosophical points over and over.

David: In your experience, is there much interaction between philosophers of science and practicing scientists these days?

Carol: I think there is a division among philosophers of science between those who know a lot of philosophy but not much science, and those who know a lot of science but not much philosophy. A good philosopher of science needs to be well educated in both.

There is a long tradition of this in philosophy of physics. But it is not so strong in other areas. Most philosophers of biology are working on issues in evolutionary biology that are not very central to biology anymore. The hot new areas are molecular biology and microbiology. Work in microbiology is revolutionizing our concept of life on Earth, yet hardly any philosophers of biology are paying attention to it. This needs to change if philosophy of biology is to stay relevant.

David: Are philosophers of science doing much to educate scientists in other areas about philosophical developments?

Carol: I have been impressed by how eager scientists are to talk with me about fundamental issues in science. They want to know

what a philosopher thinks. I haven't seen the same kind of enthusiasm on the part of philosophers of science about connecting with scientists. I attend a lot of science conferences, and I rarely run into another philosopher.

David: For a number of years, you have been leading CHPS, the Center for the History and Philosophy of Science. What do you hope to achieve there?

Carol: My goal is to encourage interdisciplinary discussions among scientists, historians, and philosophers. I want them to learn from each other. CHPS runs an outside speaker series, a yearly conference in history and philosophy of science, and a series of informal "coffee talks." The coffee talks provide a venue for scientists, philosophers, and historians at CU to get together and discuss issues of mutual interest.

The biggest problem is getting philosophers to attend the talks of scientists and scientists to attend the talks of philosophers. Another problem is getting speakers to make their talks accessible to non-specialists from other disciplines.

David: Do you have a sense that progress being made in getting the two sides to interact?

Carol: I think it's getting better. I sometimes get on the phone with colleagues in different disciplines and say, "I think you will be interested in this talk, I hope you show up," and they often show up and really enjoy it.

Last year we invited a philosopher of science from another university to give a talk on climate models. We advertised the talk to NCAR as well as science departments at CU. We ended up with a large audience that included philosophers and climatologists. The discussion became lively and continued for some time after the talk. The speaker said that she had never participated in such a great interdisciplinary dialogue. She particularly loved interacting with the climatologists. I believe that she made arrangements to keep in touch with some of them. It was the ideal.

David: Well, you can't do better than the ideal, so maybe that's the ideal place to stop. Thanks.

Carol: You're very welcome. □

and the Ontological Status of Organisms" in *Contemporary Perspectives on Early Modern Philosophy*, and "Descartes on Composites, Incomplete Substances, and Kinds of Unity" in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*. Best of all, he recorded *The Album of the Century*, vol. 1, soon to be available on iTunes.

Kathrin Koslicki completed *The Structure of Objects*, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2008. She presented parts of her book at colloquia at four universities, and a chapter of the book was discussed at the Arizona Ontology Conference. She also published "Towards a Neo-Aristotelian Mereology" in *Dialectica*, plus a review of Henry Laycock's *Words Without Objects* in the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*. Her "Natural Kinds and Natural Kind Terms" will appear in *Philosophy Compass*. Last fall, she began working on two new research projects, one concerning the nature of metaphysical dependence, the other concerning singular terms and reference.

Mitzi Lee gave a talk at Indiana University on Epistemology and Metaphysics in Plato's *Theaetetus*, participated in the West Coast Plato workshop on the *Theaetetus*, and wrote a chapter on Plato's *Theaetetus* for the *Oxford Handbook of Plato*. She also wrote "The Antecedents of Ancient Scepticism in Early Greek Philosophy" for the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Greek Scepticism*. In the spring,



Department Honors Memory of Former Colleagues

The Philosophy Department fondly remembers two of its former colleagues who passed away during the past year.



Morris Judd

Communist Party?” and “Have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?” He refused to answer these two questions on the grounds that they were irrelevant to his teaching evaluation. He was subsequently fired. Morris Judd bore this injustice with uncommon dignity and grace. It was fifty years before the university officially apologized for its conduct in his case, but he never for a moment lost his fond connection with our Department or our profession. Indeed, shortly before he died this spring, we proudly accepted a gift from him of a number of books for our library.

The other is Hazel Barnes. Hazel Barnes arrived at CU in 1953, just two years after Morris Judd was fired, and she enjoyed a remarkable thirty-three year career teaching in two other departments on campus before settling into Philosophy. She was best known for her groundbreaking translation into English of Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness*, and for her spirited defense over many years of an existentialist approach to philosophy and to life. But she was also an accomplished scholar on a wide range of additional subjects, including work in classics and in literature. On top of all of that, she was widely recognized as among the university’s very best teachers. In 1991, the University established the Hazel Barnes Prize for teaching and research, the single most important and prestigious faculty award on campus, and she was delighted when, a few years ago, the Department renamed one of its seminar rooms the Hazel Barnes room. One of the most distinguished scholars this university has seen, she was also by all accounts a remarkably down to earth person: someone who loved Greek drama and German opera, but who enjoyed dime-store American mystery novels with just as much relish. Both professionally and personally, she was greatly appreciated and completely irreplaceable. □



Hazel Barnes

she gave the first graduate seminar at CU on Stoicism in living memory.

Claudia Mills presented a paper on Ethics and Mental Illness at the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics at San Antonio, and she commented on a paper on filial duties at the Pacific APA, as well as participating in a panel on K-12 philosophy. She contributed a paper titled “Bearing, Begetting, and Babies” to an edited collection on reproductive ethics forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Bradley Monton delivered a paper critiquing metaphysicians who appeal to false physical theories to support metaphysical theses, at Bas van Fraassen’s retirement conference at Princeton. In the fall, he gave a talk at Notre Dame about how inferences to design are affected by the supposition that the universe is spatially infinite. The book he’s been working on takes issue with various bad arguments against intelligent design in the literature. Though an atheist, he argues that it is legitimate to think of intelligent design as a science and that arguments for intelligent design are more plausible than they’re typically given credit for. He also argues that in some ways it’s good for intelligent design to be taught in public school. His “Time Travel Without Causal Loops” appeared in the *Philosophical Quarterly*. For more, see bradleymonton.com.

Wes Morrision gave a paper, “What if God Commanded Something Terrible?” at UT-San Antonio. He published “The Moral Obligations of Reasonable Non-Believers: A Special Problem for Divine Command Metaethics” in the *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion*. He gave a lecture on “Why Nobody Needs to Fear Spending Eternity in Hell” in the department’s Think! series. He can’t quite decide whether to advertise the fact that he was elected to the Executive Committee of the Society of Christian Philosophers.

RoME Conference

The first Rocky Mountain Ethics (RoME) Congress took place at CU, August 8-10, 2008. Alastair Norcross and Ben Hale were the organizers, ably assisted by Duncan Purves. RoME was advertised as “an international conference geared to offer the highest quality, highest altitude discussion of ethics, broadly conceived,” and it more than lived up to its billing. Fred Feldman, Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, and Bonnie Steinbock were the keynote speakers. From over 160 submissions, 42 were selected for the main program, with each paper having an assigned commentator. The \$500 prize for best paper by a young (untenured) ethicist went to Brad Skow (MIT) for “Preferentism and the Paradox of Desire.” In a first for a philosophy conference, RoME also featured two poster sessions, with fourteen papers presented in a less formal format.

Seventy-five philosophers from other institutions joined twenty-six CU faculty and graduate students on the program, with many others in attendance. Participants came from all over the U.S. and even from such exotic foreign locations as England, Turkey, Finland, Israel, and Colorado Springs. Wisdom and hedons flowed freely. Disagreements abounded, theories were dissected, and philosophical friendships were forged in the crucible of what some have called “the best damn ethics conference, nay, the best damn philosophy conference, ever.” Planning is well under way for the second RoME Congress, to be held at CU (of course) from August 6th to the 9th, 2009. Anyone who misses it will regret it for the rest of their lives. □

Welcome to Our Newest Faculty Member: Ajume Wingo

This year, the philosophy department welcomes its newest member, Dr. Ajume H. Wingo. Ajume is a member of the Nso people of the northwest province of Cameroon. His family has played a central role in the governance of Nso since its inception in the 9th century A.D.



As a child, Ajume was exposed to a diverse world of stories, proverbs, languages, and religions. Everyday life in his home city of Kumbo provided a *paideia* of tolerance. Adorned by a cathedral, a mosque, and indigenous spiritual houses, Kumbo exemplified peaceful coexistence among different faiths.

Ajume spent two years at the University of Yaounde before obtaining his BA in philosophy from UC Berkeley. He went on to earn his MA and PhD at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Ajume's research has explored the role of non-rational phenomena in establishing and sustaining liberal democratic states. His *Veil Politics in Liberal Democratic States* (Cambridge University Press, 2003) discusses the pivotal roles played by symbols, rituals, and ceremonies in motivating the polity. Ajume has published widely on political freedom, civic education, political aesthetics, and democratic politics. He is particularly interested in applying philosophical analysis to practical problems involved in liberalizing African and Middle Eastern societies.

Before coming to Boulder, Ajume was associate professor of philosophy at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a senior fellow at the Center for Democracy and Development.

Ajume is currently working on a book manuscript, *The Citizen of Africa* (in collaboration with Michael Kruse). Drawing on his experiences and those of other Africans, he seeks to inspire young Africans to see themselves not as the playthings of fortune but as masters of their fate, capable of transforming their dismal circumstances into better lives for all Africans.

The fire to the pistons of Ajume's life is supplied by his love for Africa and its people. He loves to travel and enjoys jogging in the wee hours of the morning. Ajume is first and foremost a philosopher who enjoys intellectual inquiry as a form of play and as an aesthetic endeavor. □

Alastair Norcross published “Off Her Trolley? Frances Kamm and the Metaphysics of Morality” and “Varieties of Hedonism in Feldman's *Pleasure and the Good Life*” in *Utilitas*, and “Animal Experimentation” in *The Oxford Handbook of Bioethics*. He presented “Two Dogmas of Deontology: Aggregation, Rights, and the Separateness of Persons” at the Social Philosophy and Policy Center conference and made six other conference presentations. He gave the Seymour Riklin Memorial lecture at Wayne State University on the ethics of cloning. He organized the Bled conference on Social and Political Philosophy in June, and, with Ben Hale, the first Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress. Most importantly, he, Diana, and David all ran the 2008 Bolder Boulder. His time was beaten by only one six year old girl, and only one seventy-three year old woman. He also became admirably acquainted with the excellent local beer.

Graham Oddie, currently Associate Dean for Humanities and the Arts, continued his involvement in the graduate program, advising three doctoral students. His student Ken Daley was awarded a Ph.D. last summer and then landed a job at Southern Methodist University. Graham published two papers with his student Dan Demetriou, on the nature and defects of fictionalism about value. He gave a talk at the London School of Economics in September on truthlikeness, and a talk at the annual conference of the Australasian Association of Philosophy, arguing that contrary to a common misconception, pain is not such a bad thing after all. In July he was invited to Davidson College in North Carolina to take part in their a symposium on his book, *Value, Reality, and Desire*.

Robert Pasnau has edited *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy* and continues—when not having fun with his kids—to work

Graduate Student Accomplishments, 2007-08

CU has a nationally ranked graduate program in philosophy. Our students distinguish themselves in many ways – winning awards and fellowships, presenting their work at conferences, organizing their own conferences, publishing academic articles, and taking academic posts around the country.

In the last year, four of our students won university-wide awards or fellowships:

- Barrett Emerick won a Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Award for 2007-08.
- Peter Higgins won a Thomas Edwin Devaney Dissertation Fellowship for 2007-08.
- Mary Krizan won an Emerson/Lowe dissertation fellowship for 2008-09.
- Jason Wyckoff won a Thomas Edwin Devaney Dissertation Fellowship for 2008-09.

In 2007-08, many of our students presented their work at academic conferences:

- Kendy Hess presented “The Modern Corporation as Moral Agent” to the North American Society for Social Philosophy in 2008, winning the award for best graduate student submission.
- Barrett Emerick presented “Reparations through Respect in Interpersonal Discourse” at the 2007 Feminist Ethics and Social Theory conference.
- Barrett Emerick and Cory Aragon presented “Men Teaching Feminism” at the 2007 CUNY Feminist Pedagogy Conference.
- Peter Higgins presented “A Partial Method for Constructing Just Immigration Policies” at the Feminist Ethics and Social Theory conference in 2007, and “A Principle for Constructing Just Immigration Policies” to the North American Society for Social Philosophy in 2008.
- Pamela Lomelino presented “Expanding Relational Autonomy to Respect Cross Cultural Differences” to the North American Society for Social Philosophy in 2008.
- Cindy Scheopner presented “Mormon Metaphysics and the Politics of Poly-

amy” at the Uehiro CrossCurrents Philosophy Conference in Hawaii in 2008. She was co-winner of the Most Innovative Paper award (which included a cash prize and a lei).

- Jason Wyckoff presented “Race, Reference, and Reality” at the Eastern APA in 2007, and at the Mountain-Plains Philosophy Conference in 2007.

Our graduate students organize the annual Rocky Mountain Philosophy Conference at CU, which invites talks by graduate students from across the nation, with commentaries by CU graduate students. Last spring, Barrett Emerick organized the RMPC. The keynote address was given by Prof. Philip Pettit of Princeton University.

Our students continue to publish work in nationally recognized journals:

- Peter Higgins, who graduated with a PhD in 2008, published “Open Borders and the Right to Immigration” in *Human Rights Review*, this summer.
- Cindy Scheopner (MA 2008) published “Transubstantiation in Aquinas and Ockham” in *NEXT: Emerging Voices in Religious Studies Scholarship*.
- Jason Wyckoff’s “Reasons, Motivations, and Obligations” appears in the *Southern Journal of Philosophy* this fall.

Four PhD students graduated recently and are at their first teaching posts after CU:

- Peter Higgins has a visiting assistant professor position at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.
- Audra King is now a tenure-track assistant professor at Central Connecticut State University.
- Jonathan Peeters is now teaching in a multi-year instructor position at Ithaca College.
- Tait Szabo is now a tenure-track assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin Colleges at Washington County.

We also congratulate Devon Belcher (PhD 2005), who started this fall as Assistant Professor at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, after three years as an instructor at CU. □

on a big book on how medieval philosophy turned into modern philosophy.

Rob Rupert’s book *Cognitive Systems and the Extended Mind* was accepted by Oxford University Press. His “Component Forces, Ceteris Paribus Laws, and the Nature of Special-Science Properties” appeared in *Noûs*. He had a paper on concept acquisition published in a special issue of *Cognitive Systems Research*. His review essay “Causal Theories of Mental Content” appeared in *Philosophy Compass*. He spoke at a variety of venues, including the Central and Pacific APA meetings, and he is helping plan next year’s Central APA meeting. Last fall, he received the Provost’s Faculty Achievement Award.

Michael Tooley’s debate with Alvin Plantinga, *Knowledge of God*, was published by Blackwell in April. He gave presentations at the University of Colorado, Texas Tech, the American Philosophical Association meeting, the University of West Virginia, the meeting of the Society for Exact Philosophy, and Wheaton College, on topics ranging from the philosophy of time, to abortion, to the existence of God. He recently completed work for a debate volume on abortion for Oxford University Press (co-authored with Alison Jaggar, Philip Devine, and Celia Wolf-Devine), and is now finishing a book on causation for Oxford.

Michael Zimmerman had his essay about trans/posthumanism accepted by *Cosmos and History: A Journal of Social and Natural Philosophy*. He was invited to give talks at three different universities in Taiwan in May. Getting around the island was a cinch on the 180 mph (!) bullet train! Michael has also been busy running the Center for Humanities and the Arts, and enjoyed working with colleague Brad Monton in the 2007-08 CHA seminar on “Faith, Reason, Doubt.” □

Philosophy Prizes

The Philosophy Department has three annual prizes for students. This year's winners:

Jentzsch Prize: Congratulations to **Kristin Demetriou** for winning the 2008 Jentzsch Prize, awarded to the graduate student who submits the best paper, as judged by an anonymous faculty committee. Kristin's paper, "The Soft-Line Solution to Pereboom's Four-Case Argument" defends compatibilism against a famous recent argument by Derk Pereboom. Pereboom argues that determinism undermines free will in the same way that manipulation, say by malicious neuroscientists, would. Kristin argues that Pereboom's cases require both that the manipulators control the agent's behavior and that the agent herself does as well, which is impossible. Kristin's presented her paper in the philosophy department colloquium series this fall.

Eaton Award: Congratulations to **Penny Heiple**, winner of the Eaton Award for Undergraduate Excellence, awarded annually to the best graduating philosophy major. Penny had the highest grade point average among her peers and has consistently been recognized as among the best students in her classes. In addition to her exemplary performance on class assignments, her professors remarked upon the deep engagement with philosophical ideas revealed by her insightful discussions with her professors about numerous philosophical issues. One of her professors has reported learning more from Penny than he taught her. Since graduating, Penny has started her own book-keeping business. She describes her education in philosophy as the most useful education she ever received, because it taught her how to analyze deep issues that affect how we live.

Stahl Prize: Congratulations to **Gustavo Oliveira**, winner of the Stahl Prize, awarded annually in recognition of graduate students who have brought the discipline of philosophy to bear on crucial social problems. Gustavo worked tirelessly to help organize this past February's symposium, Research on Prisoners and Other Vulnerable Populations. The faculty organizer of that conference writes of Gustavo, "He's an amazing person, his energy is unbelievable, and his practical knowledge is unbeatable." Gustavo also volunteers for Boulder's alternative book store, Left Hand Books, and for Students for Peace and Justice, which helped organize such events as "How Would a Real Patriot Act?", "Iraq Body Count," and "Art for Peace Sake." He is working to reestablish the student group Campus Greens, as well as reactivating the Green Party of Boulder County. And he finds time to engage in "guerilla theater" as well! □

Faculty Awards

Three members of the Philosophy Department faculty received honors from the University this past year:

Alison Jaggar was named a College Professor of Distinction, a title extended by the University to "scholars and artists of national and international distinction who are also recognized by their College peers as teachers and colleagues of exceptional talent."

Professor Jaggar, who holds a joint appointment with Women and Gender Studies, was honored for her entire body of scholarly work, and especially her pioneering research in the area of feminist philosophy.



Alison Jaggar (with distinction)

David Boonin won a Kayden Book Prize for his book *The Problem of Punishment*, which was published by Cambridge University Press earlier this year. The book explores various attempts to justify the moral permissibility of legal punishment, argues that none of them are successful, and concludes that the practice should be abolished. As part of the award, the Book Prize will help to sponsor an author-meets-critics symposium on the book on April 4, 2009 that will feature George Sher (Rice), John Martin Fischer (UC Riverside) and Stephen Kershnar (SUNY Fredonia).

Michael Huemer won a Provost Faculty Achievement Award, along with a \$1,000 research grant, for his book *Ethical Intuitionism*, which was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2005. The book defends the view that there are objective moral truths, that we know some of these truths through a kind of immediate, intellectual awareness, or "intuition," and that our knowledge of moral truths gives us reasons for action independent of our desires. □



Michael Huemer (having an intuition)

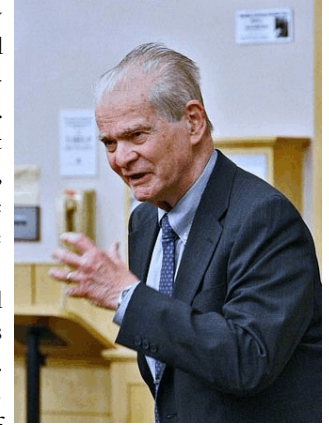
Philosophy Graduation, 2008

The spring graduation ceremony was held on May 9, 2008. The department honored the two students receiving a Doctorate of Philosophy, ten students receiving Master of Arts degrees, and 37 Bachelor of Arts graduates, including some students who completed their degrees in August. The department acknowledged three BA students who graduated with honors, and three who graduated with distinction, for their outstanding work.

Department Chair David Boonin presided over the Philosophy graduation ceremony.

The graduation address was given by Professor Emeritus Leonard Boonin. Professor Boonin did his undergraduate work at the City College of New York and received a J.S.D. from New York University School of Law. While practicing law he

earned an M.A. in philosophy from the New School for Social Research and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Columbia University. It was at Columbia that he met his wife of almost 50 years, Harriet, who was doing graduate work in Political Science. He has held a Fulbright Fellowship to Oxford as well as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship to study at Harvard. He taught at CU from 1970 to 1996, primarily in the areas of philosophy of law, ethics and political philosophy. The Boonins have three children, David, Jonathan, and Rachel, and five amazing grandchildren.



Leonard Boonin

Undergraduate Advisor Sheralee Brindell, and, the Honors Advisor Robert Rupert made presentations of the undergraduate degrees. Alison Jaggar, Director of Graduate Studies, made presentations of the graduate degrees. Awards were presented to the winners of departmental prizes. Gustavo Oliveira was given the Stahl Prize of Community Service, Kristen Demetriou was awarded the Jentzsch Prize for the outstanding graduate student paper, and Penny Heiple was given the Eaton Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Achievement.

The opening and processional music was provided by Kevin Garry and Margarita Sallee. The formal ceremony was followed by a reception in the University Memorial Center. □



Newly minted philosophers

Philosophy Department Graduates

Bachelor of Arts

Jeffrey Barberio
Lisa Bubes
Austin Corry
Dafna Gozani, *magna cum laude*
Jacob Eastwood
Ashley Elmblad
Adam Feldman
Katherine Freer
Tamara Gaedtke
Jacob Gould
Sean Griffin
Jason Griffith
Eric Hansen, *magna cum laude*
Natalie Hansen
Penny Heiple
Andrei Hetman
David Hollander
Gregory Johnson
Scott Keeney

Ryan Kieffer
Sara Klingenstein, *with distinction*
Cotton Koehler
Crystal Le
Chell Mann
Lisa Mason
Christian Nelsen, *cum laude*
Kevin Nelson
David Reed
Colin Reynold
Benjamin Steinbook
Ian Stevens
Andrew Taber
Spencer Unger
Matthew Varnell
Jacqueline Victor
Walker Williams
Meredith Wilson

Master of Arts

Blake Andrews
Corwin Aragon
Adam Betz
Martin Eyestone
Daniel Feuer
Shane Gronholz
Brett Hackett
Derek Kern
Cynthia Scheopner
Anthony Smith

Doctorate of Philosophy

Peter Higgins
Audra King

Support the Philosophy Department

Philosophy is one of the most vibrant and engaged departments in the university. Help us continue with these efforts by making a tax-deductible donation. The items mentioned here are just a few of the many possibilities. For more information, contact the Department Chair, David Boonin, at 303-492-6964, or David.Boonin@Colorado.edu.

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