

the department of

PHILOSOPHY

university of alberta
2015 - 2016

a message from the Chair

The past year has seen the Philosophy Department consolidate its recent growth and continue to define its newer, enhanced research profile reflecting the expertise of our Canada Research Chairs as well as our increased strength in the history of philosophy.

On the consolidation front, the big news is that our colleagues **Neil Dalal** and **Howard Nye** were both tenured and promoted to Associate Professor. Neil and Howard have really made a difference to our program over the past six years, which is why their achieving this milestone is cause for celebration. At the same time, however, this good news is tempered by the fact that there are no more assistant professors in the Philosophy Department; we are all 'tenured-in', for perhaps the first time in our history. This makes hiring a new

tenure-track colleague a priority for us in the next couple of years, something we must pursue despite the challenging fiscal circumstances facing the University.

The *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, the top journal for historians of western philosophy, arrived in the Department this year when I was named Editor for a five-year term, taking over from Steve Nadler at the University of Wisconsin. The *JHP* Editorial Office is still in Madison, Wisconsin, but is slated to move to Edmonton on July 1 when I appoint a new Managing Editor to run the business side of the *JHP*. This continues our Department's tradition of sustaining major academic journals. The *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* and *Apeiron* were both founded and first housed at the University of Alberta; **Ingo Brigandt** and **Amy Schmitter** still serve the

DON'T MISS THE **2016 ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE** WITH **JENNIFER WELCHMAN**

ATTACK OF THE HYBRID SWARM?

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2016 • MORE INFORMATION ON PAGE 3



Chair's MESSAGE

continued...

CJP as Executive Editors. *Symposium: The Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* is also based in our Department, under the editorship of **Marie-Eve Morin**.

Our students always make us proud, and last year was no exception. Congratulations to **Hassan Masoud** and **Andy Ball**, who won 2015 Graduate Student Teaching Awards from the Faculty of Arts; both have since completed our doctoral program. Congratulations as well to Philosophy major **Thomas Mathieu**, who was awarded a \$5000 Undergraduate Research Stipend for his project, "How Do We Recognize That the Medium Is the Message?," ably directed by Ph.D. candidate **Hande Tuna**. Thomas presented his research last fall at a session of the Western Canadian Philosophical Association in Saskatoon. The Department awarded the 2015 *Isaak Kornelsen Memorial Prize* for the best undergraduate paper to **Trevor Breen** for "The Experience of the Saturated Phenomenon," written for Marie-Eve Morin's reading course on phenomenology (which enrolled 8 students, making it, in effect, an advanced seminar – and noted here because Marie-Eve taught it extra-to-load). The 2015 *Anna Kessler Memorial Prize* for the best graduate student essay went to **Vlad Dukic** for his paper, "Scotus on Individuating Difference and the Foundations of Knowledge," written for my seminar on Scotus, Ockham, and Buridan.

We depend for so much of what we do on our office staff, who keep the whole operation running smoothly. Our thanks for another great year to **Joanne McKinnon**, **Elizabeth French**, **Gail Mathew**, **Diane McKen**, **Santhi Thomas**, and **Lex Bos**. Also, for the second year in a row, a member of our office staff won the Faculty of Arts Outstanding Staff Award, given annually to the staff member "who has distinguished himself/herself as providing outstanding administrative or techni-



cal service to the Faculty": **Diane McKen**, Undergraduate Advisor to Linguistics and Philosophy, received this singular honour in 2015. Congratulations to **Diane!**

We have two conferences coming up. Our graduate students are hosting their fourth annual conference on the theme, "Dependencies and Differences," May 6-8, 2016 in the Philosophy Department (details [here](#)). Second, it is our turn to host the annual conference of the Western Canadian Philosophical Association, which will take place in Edmonton, October 28-30, 2016. **Howard Nye** is in charge of local arrangements. Please check our [website](#) in the coming months for updates on the WCPA, one of the best regional conferences in the profession!

Last, but not least, we hope to see everyone at the Department's **Annual Public Lecture**, this year featuring **Jenny Welchman** on "Attack of the Hybrid Swarm: Species Conservation in the Anthropocene," with a reception to follow in the Heritage Lounge of Athabasca Hall (*further event details on opposite page*). **Everyone is welcome to attend the lecture and reception afterward.** ⚡

Jack Zupko, Ph.D

PROFESSOR AND CHAIR

zupko@ualberta.ca

ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE IN PHILOSOPHY

ATTACK OF THE HYBRID SWARM

species conservation in the anthropocene

WITH
JENNIFER WELCHMAN

Thanks to climate change and habitat disruption, wild species are on the move all over North America. As they invade other species' territories, some are finding new reproductive partners. When hybrid offspring thrive, how should we respond? Should we try to eradicate hybrids to preserve pure species? Should we view 'coywolves,' 'bob-o-lynx,' 'sparred owls,' and 'pizzly bears' as threats to North American biodiversity or evolutionary adaptations that merit our protection?

MARCH 24, 2016

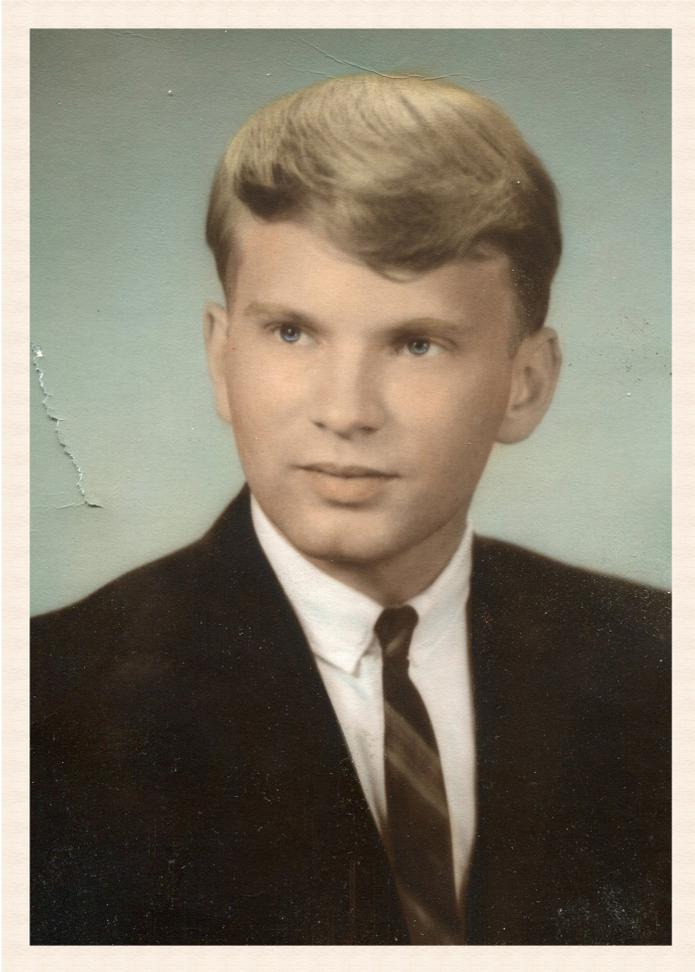
LECTURE FROM 15:30 TO 17:00 IN CSC B10

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN THE Heritage Lounge, ATH 227

Jennifer Welchman is a Professor of Philosophy, University of Alberta. In addition to her work in the history of moral philosophy (Dewey's Ethical Thought (1995), The Practice of Virtue (2006)), she has published extensively on environmental ethics and is a founding member of the recently formed Canadian Society for Environmental Philosophy. She is currently working on a book project, "The Ethics of Environmental Stewardship."

FACULTY

profiles



{JEFF PELLETIER}

and joint professorship in Philosophy and Linguistics. He moved back to the University of Alberta in 2010, and has been teaching in Philosophy part-time.

He was an Executive Editor of The Canadian Journal of Philosophy from 1977-85 and Co-Editor of Linguistics and Philosophy from 1988-93. As well he was the editor of two book series: Kluwer's Studies in Linguistics and Philosophy (1988-2006) and New Directions in Cognitive Science (Oxford). He has also been an associate editor or on the editorial boards of numerous journals in Philosophy, Linguistics, and Computer Science.

In 1990-91 he was the Luce Chair in Cognitive Science at the University of Rochester and in 1992-94 the President of the Society for Exact Philosophy. In 2005 he was named a "Pioneer of Computing in Canada" by IBM Canada, and was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 2009.

He is author or co-author of some 120 articles in these areas, and as well is the author or (co-)editor of 13 books. He is currently trying to complete, with co-author Allen Hazen, an "intermediate logic for linguists" textbook for Cambridge UP. ⚡

Jeff came to the Department of Philosophy at the U of A in 1971, having just graduated from UCLA. After a few years, he started taking Linguistics classes at UA, and received a MSc from them in 1978. He followed this with work in Computing Science, resulting in a MSc in 1983. This led to a split appointment between Philosophy and Computing science, which he held until 2003, when he moved to Simon Fraser University to take up a Tier-1 Canada Research Chair in Cognitive Science,

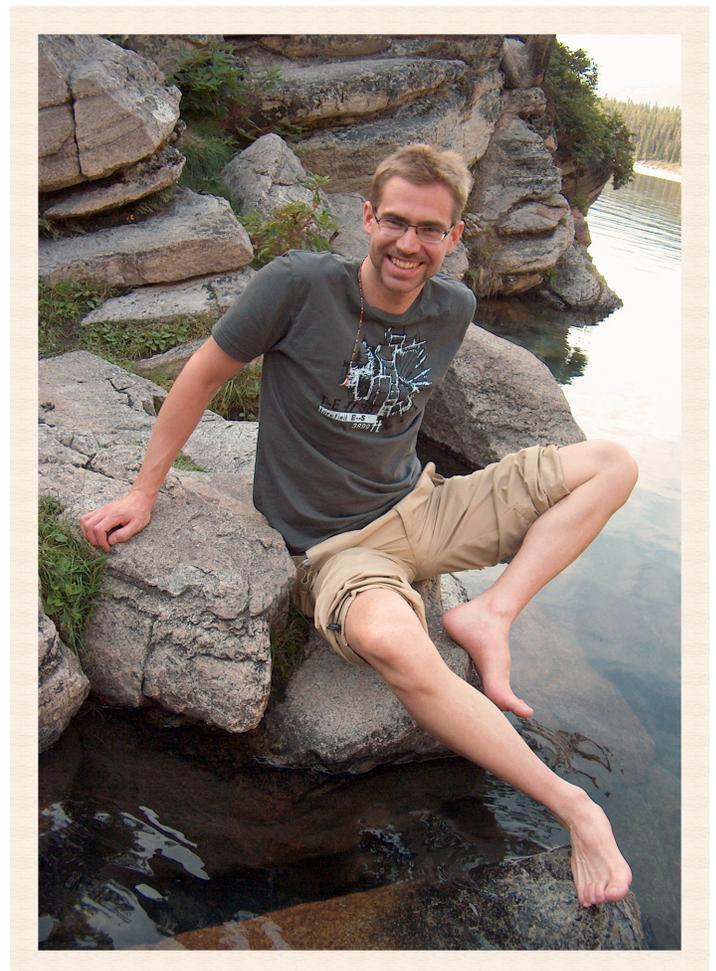
{INGO BRIGANDT}

Upon finishing his PhD in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh in 2006, Ingo Brigandt joined the University of Alberta. In 2014, he was appointed a Canada Research Chair in Philosophy of Biology. And since last July, as the Associate Chair (Graduate Studies) he has also been running the Department's graduate program.

Ingo's research investigates cases of biological theorizing and practice, while connecting this with general topics in philosophy of science, including conceptual change, reduction and integration, explanation, natural kinds, naturalism, and the nature of science. He also interacts with biologists, historians of science, and science educators. Ingo's ongoing Canada Research Chair project concerns the role of standards, aims, and values in biology, where in addition to epistemic aims and values (e.g., the aim of explaining the evolutionary origin of novel structures) he also pays attention to social and environmental aims. He currently investigates mathematical modelling in systems biology, with an eye on how different investigative and representational aims influence modelling, and how mathematical model based explanation differs from mechanistic explanation (which has hitherto been the focus in the philosophy of molecular biology). Ingo's other current research is an instance of what has recently been called 'conceptual engineering' or 'conceptual ethics', i.e., what concepts philosophers should be using (as opposed to articulating philosophers'

current conception by means of conceptual analysis). While using his earlier idea that we can understand how biologists improve their concepts in terms of epistemic aims, Ingo is now looking at concepts of sex/gender, race, and sexual orientation, which also have to answer to social-political aims.

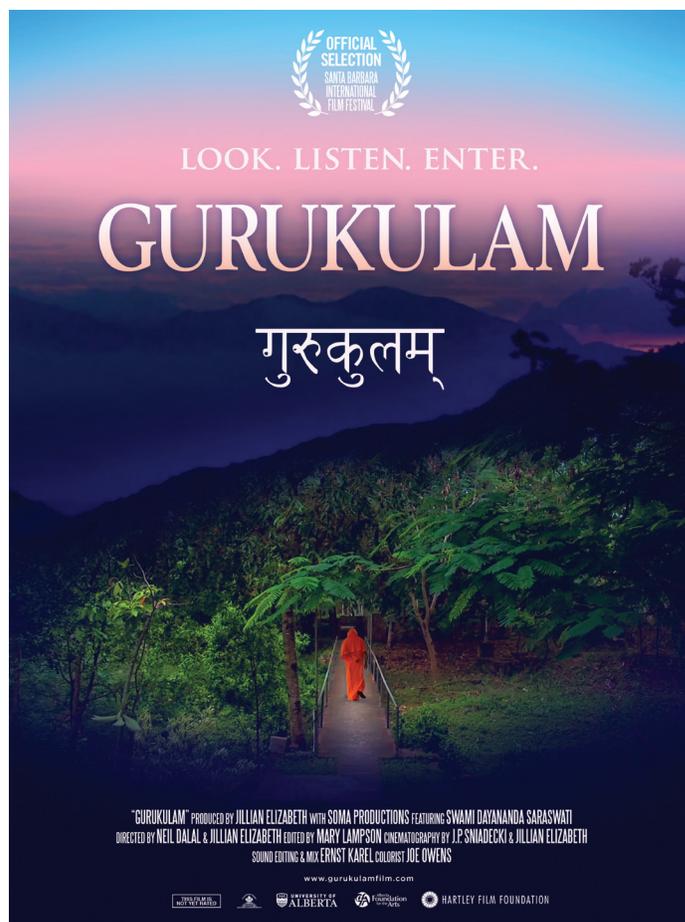
Ingo is among the team of Executive Editors editing the Canadian Journal of Philosophy, and an Associate Editor of the Journal of Experimental Zoology Part B: Molecular and Developmental Evolution. Stay tuned for his next graduate seminar on Conceptual Analysis, Intuitions, and Experimental Philosophy in Winter 2017. ⚡





Gurukulam

Neil Dalal and his partner, Jillian Elizabeth, co-directed a feature length documentary film titled *Gurukulam*. *Gurukulam* explores the classical Indian philosophical tradition of Advaita Vedanta through one of its contemporary lineages in Tamil Nadu, India. The film employs sensorial and non-verbal ethnographic methods to capture the intersections of Advaita (non-dual) philosophy with ritual praxis and embodiment. By interweaving Advaita Vedanta's philosophical and religious world-view, the film demonstrates the ways oral/textual knowledge is engaged through listening and encoded in individuals and religious culture. *Gurukulam* premiered at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and had its New York premiere at The Rubin Museum of Art. It played to a sold out audience at Edmonton's Metro Cinema, and recently screened at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. This spring, LA distributor Matson Films will theatrically release the film in the US. The educational release will follow, along with a multiplatform international video-on-demand release. ⚡



WANTED:

curious kids

Eurekamp is a summer camp that challenges, supports, and encourages youth in **grades 1 through 9** to engage with their world philosophically. Based on the Philosophy for Children program which started in the 1970's and is widely recognized as educationally and pedagogically beneficial, our diverse team of students, educators, social workers, philosophers and mindful community members deliver engaging active programming specially designed to raise philosophical questions for participants. Whether it's a wide game

of capture the flag being used to prompt a discussion about whether games should be fair; or



a crafting activity that problematizes the idea that anything can

be art, our programming covers a wide range of philosophical issues and leaves campers embedded in dialogue with each other.

Now in our 8th year, we welcomed nearly 300 students to the University campus last year between July and August. We hope to eclipse these numbers this year - **registration is now open!** - and we are always looking for new ways to expand and improve our programming.

You can see literally thousands of photos posted to our [Facebook page](#) from last year to see what we have done so far... ⚡

For more information on programming or to register your children, visit

eurekamp.ca

Looking to experience a day in the life of a camp volunteer?

Interested in sending a youth in financial need to camp this summer?

email us! phil4c@ualberta.ca



2015 2016 colloquium series

This year, as usual, our colloquium series was lively and included speakers in a variety of areas...

{environmental ethics, epistemology, logic, medieval philosophy, metaphysics, modern philosophy, and phenomenology}

and from a variety of locations. Some of our speakers were local Edmonton-area folks (e.g., from our own department or from Concordia University of Edmonton, across town); some came from Calgary (in continuation of our annual Calgary exchange); others came from elsewhere in Canada (e.g., British Columbia) and yet others from the US. Marie-Eve Morin hosted several of these speakers as part of

her “Philosophy Colloquium: Series in Phenomenology”; Katalin Bimbo hosted one of our speakers in logic; and Kathrin Koslicki hosted several of our speakers as part of her “2015/2016 Current Research in Epistemology and Metaphysics” Speaker Series which is funded through her CRC research stipend. Kathrin’s speaker series this year took up themes discussed in a seminar she taught in the Fall 2015 for our advanced undergraduate and graduate students whose focus was on **Social Ontology**, a vibrant and emerging field within metaphysics.

The Philosophy Department’s colloquium series will conclude this year with our Annual Public Lecture in Philosophy (*more details on page 3*).



LIVING ARCHIVES

2015 saw the completion of the five-year project, **Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada**, led by Professor Rob Wilson. One of just ten projects funded through the Community-University Research Alliance program of SSHRC in 2010, *Living Archives* provided a perspective on eugenics in Western Canada centred on the narratives of survivors of Alberta's eugenic era and the contemporary significance of eugenics today. Involving contributions from over 80 people, the project's outcomes include the extensive website, a documentary film *Surviving Eugenics* (2015), and a range of articles and books by team members.

Short biographies of many of the participants in the project, including students, junior scholars, and eugenics survivors, can be found at the project website. The site is built around 12 tools for learning about eugenics in Canada and elsewhere, and we welcome your feedback on the accessibility and informativeness of the site, once you've had a chance to explore it.

The housing of the project in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Alberta had special significance, given the fact that the founding chair of the Department, John MacEachran, was also the chair of Alberta's Eugenics board from 1928 until 1965,

signing over 3500 sterilization orders in that capacity. Following a 1998 internal committee report, the Department undertook to raise awareness of the history of eugenics and its significance.

Living Archives can be seen as part of that undertaking, and we hope that the site, film, and academic articles and books continue to be drawn on by students, scholars, and members of the general public for some years to come. ⚡

visit the website:
eugenicsarchive.ca



Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Project

THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF SOCRATES

An Interdisciplinary Course Incorporating Blended and Project-Based Learning



Last year, Kathrin Koslicki received a TLEF grant, together with two co-applicants, Jana Grekul (Associate Professor, Sociology; Director, Arts Pedagogy Research and Innovation Laboratory (APRIL)) and Laura Servage (PhD Candidate, Educational Policy Studies; Research Coordinator, APRIL). This grant supports the development of a new undergraduate course in philosophy, which is now called Phil 233: “The Trial and Execution of Socrates.” This course is innovative through its unique combination of *interdisciplinary*, *blended* and *project-based* approaches to teaching and learning: (i) it brings together an interdisciplinary group of experts who contributed a series of video-recorded guest-lectures; (ii) it utilizes a blended or “flipped” format in which recorded content is made available to students outside of the classroom, thereby freeing up classroom time for cognitively sophisticated non-lecture-based learning activities; (iii) it applies the insights of project-based learning by asking students to participate in a *mock-trial of Socrates* at the end of the semester, in which we bring to bear the course’s historical content on pressing challenges facing citizens of democratic societies today.

In connection with her TLEF project, Kathrin organized an interdisciplinary workshop on the trial and execution of Socrates, which took place on May 5, 2015, at the Art Gallery of Alberta. This one-day workshop, made possible through a Dialogue Grant from the University of Alberta's Kule Institute for Advanced Study

(KIAS) and the generous support of Concordia University of Edmonton, provided a unique opportunity to debate both questions of scholarship surrounding Socrates’ death as well as innovations in pedagogy that can be brought to bear on this subject matter. Guest speakers from the U of A’s Departments of Philosophy, History & Classics, and Political Science as well as from Concordia’s Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies contributed presentations in their areas of expertise (e.g., the historical background leading up to Socrates’ trial; Athenian democracy and law; Greek attitudes towards morality, politics and religion; as well as Greek homosexuality). In addition, experts in pedagogy from the Arts Pedagogy Research Innovation Laboratory (APRIL), the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Rutherford Library commented on how new pedagogies, such as blended and project-based learning, can help facilitate the creation of innovative and interdisciplinary connections between research and teaching. The results of this event will be incorporated into a Special Issue of the journal, *Museion: Journal of the Classical Association of Canada*, guest-co-edited by John Harris (History & Classics) and Kathrin Koslicki. This proposed volume intends to explore Socrates’ trial and execution from an interdisciplinary point of view. An informed evaluation of whether the Athenians were justified in their condemnation of Socrates requires not only an examination of Socrates’ alleged philosophical position, but also an appreciation of his historical, political and cultural milieu. To this end, Kathrin is aiming to collect essays from scholars working in a variety of disciplines, who can contribute to an interdisciplinary examination of Socrates’ trial and execution. ⚡

More information concerning this volume and a Call for Papers is available here:

<http://philevents.org/event/show/20994>

congratulations

ARE IN ORDER...

Andrew Ball and **Hassan Masoud** were both awarded **Graduate Student Teaching Awards** from the Faculty of Arts for 2015.

Catherine Clune-Taylor has been offered and has accepted a three-year postdoc at Princeton. She'll be a **Postdoctoral Research Associate** in the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Marie-Eve Morin co-edited the **Nancy Dictionary** (Edinburgh University Press) and has a translation of *Ego Sum* by Jean-Luc Nancy coming out in May with Fordham UP (more info [here](#)).

Yasemin Sari was awarded a **five-month DAAD post-doctoral research grant** at the Exzellenz-cluster "Normativity and Freedom" of the Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany.

NEW BOOK ALERT



ACQUAINTANCE, KNOWLEDGE, AND LOGIC:
New Essays on Bertrand Russell's The Problems of Philosophy
 Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2015
 Edited by Donovan Wishon and **Bernard Linsky**

Bertrand Russell's little book, *The Problems of Philosophy*, will be familiar to students at the University of Alberta as a text in our Introduction to Philosophy and Epistemology courses. It is now just past the 100th anniversary of publication in a series of cheap popular texts in different academic subjects in 1912 that Russell informally called his "shilling shocker." This new collection of essays addresses a number of issues in the philosophy of mind and epistemology where Russell's views are having a mild resurgence, such as the notion of knowledge by acquaintance and even the sense data with which the book begins in the familiar example of the table that appears differently from different perspectives. The papers were given originally at a conference at the University of Mississippi that my co-editor Donovan Wishon organized in 2012. (To my surprise the conference poster used a photograph containing both Russell and the "Ole Miss"

professor William Faulkner, who were together in Stockholm in 1950 to receive their successive Nobel Prizes for Literature at the same ceremony.) For my part of the introduction to the volume I had great fun reading through Bertrand Russell's daily letters to his lover Lady Ottoline Morrell, as he described his progress on the book. One day he reported that "between lunch and tea I wrote a whole chapter (11 pages) on the limits of philosophical knowledge." Other chapters, such as the familiar last chapter on "The Value of Philosophy," took as long as a week! Russell wrote so fluidly and elegantly that *The Problems of Philosophy* is a delight to read, and I hope that our volume will encourage philosophers to take it seriously and perhaps continue to use it as a textbook in their courses.



other news, events, and projects

2015 “Artifacts and Metaphysical Explanation” Workshop

As part of her CRC research program in neo-Aristotelian metaphysics, Kathrin Koslicki organized a workshop focused on the theme, “Artifacts and Metaphysical Explanation,” which took place at the Banff Centre on May 17-20, 2015. In addition to Kathrin, participants from our department included Phil Corkum and Jack Zupko, along with graduate students Ka Ho Lam and Ozkan Ozcevik. Other participating scholars came from the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria. The workshop brought together members of the “Canadian Metaphysics Collaborative,” a collaborative research team in metaphysics that Kathrin founded in 2015. This workshop was partially supported through a Connections Grant from the University of Alberta’s Killam Research Fund; a Dialogue Grant from the University of Alberta’s Kule Institute for Advanced Study (KIAS); and in-kind support from the Department of Philosophy which generously contributed a Research Assistant for this project.

For more information on the Canadian Metaphysics Collaborative, visit the website:

<https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/cmcc/about-us>

Coffee & Philosophy

Hassan Masoud is leading weekly guided discussions on the subject of Rationality and Life Skills at the Stanley A. Milner Library until March 9, 2016. Can correct reasoning enhance your ability to make good choices or ethical decisions? How can you know if your reasoning is sound? Join the group on Wednesdays between 12:10 and 1:00PM.

2017 Hylomorphism Conference

Kathrin Koslicki is organizing the 2017 Hylomorphism Conference, which will take place at the Banff Centre, May 11-14, 2017. This conference will examine the interpretation and significance of Aristotle’s doctrine of hylomorphism, according to which entities that fall under its scope are compounds of matter (hylē) and form (morphē). This conference will bring together researchers working in a variety of sub-disciplines of Philosophy, which are impacted by the doctrine of hylomorphism. More information about the 2017 Hylomorphism conference, including the Call for Papers is available here:

<http://philevents.org/event/show/20994>

<https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/cmcc/upcoming/hylomorphism>



Continental Realism and Its Discontents

Marie-Eve Morin organized a two-day workshop on April 10-11, 2015 as part of her SSHRC Insight grant project "Turning Back the Speculative Turn: Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jean-Luc Nancy at the Limits of Phenomenology". Participants included Lee Braver (University of South Florida), G. Anthony Bruno (University of Toronto, Scarborough), Rick Elmore (Appalachian State University), Peter Gratton (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Sean McGrath (Memorial University of Newfoundland), David Morris (Concordia University) and Ted Toadvine (University of Oregon) as well as six graduate students and recent graduates from the Department: Vladimir Dukic, Luke McNulty, Charles Rodger, Yasemin Sari, Paul Showler, and Jay Worthy.

The University of Alberta's Department of Philosophy hosted the first organizational meeting of the Canadian Society for Environmental Philosophy / Société Canadienne de Philosophie Environnementale in October 2015.

The Canadian Society for Environmental Philosophy/Société canadienne de philosophie environnementale (CSEP/SCEP) has been established to foster education and research into philosophical issues arising from our relationship to the natural world. A network for dialogue and collaboration, the CSEP/SCPE aims to foster discussion of Canadian and global environmental issues in all their philosophical dimensions; including (but not limited to) aesthetic, ethical, metaphysical, ontological, phenomenological, social and political, scientific, and spiritual. The CSEP/SCEP will hold its first annual meeting in conjunction with the Western Canadian Philosophical Association, in Edmonton, October 28-30, 2016.

For more information please visit the Society's (preliminary) website:

<https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/csep-scpe/>

Dalal and Nye Granted Tenure

Two members of the department, Neil Dalal and Howard Nye, were granted tenure this past fall and promoted from the rank of Assistant Professor to the rank of Associate Professor.

Neil Dalal holds a joint appointment in Philosophy and Religious Studies. His work explores the intersection of Indian philosophy and religious praxis in classical yoga philosophies and their Sanskrit commentarial traditions. Neil is co-director of the documentary film *Gurukulam*, and co-editor of *Asian Perspectives on Animal Ethics: Rethinking the Nonhuman*. His current research analyzes early medieval debates in Advaita Vedanta over meditative and contemplative practices, and how they employ textual knowledge, memory, and visualization to understand consciousness.

Howard Nye works primarily in the areas of normative ethics, practical ethics, and metaethics, and has related interests in political philosophy, the philosophy of mind, and decision theory. His recent publications include "Well-Being, Self-Regarding Reasons, and Morality" (in *Thought*), "Directly Plausible Principles" (in the *Palgrave Handbook of Philosophical Methods*), and "The Wrong Kind of Reasons" (forthcoming in the *Routledge Handbook of Metaethics*). Much of Howard's current research seeks to challenge the common assumption that life is less of a benefit to beings who lack the intellectual abilities of typical human adults.



feeling generous?

If you are interested in donating to the Department of Philosophy, or would simply like more information about donating or department activities, please contact:

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