



# INTERSECTIONS

## Greetings! News from the Chair

It was a hot entry into summer here in the Delaware Valley. But there's been very little time to ease the pace. The minute grades were in, the permanent faculty all headed in to a day long Department Retreat where we strategized our mission and identity and the next five years. We're thrilled that Dr. Cassie Striblen (p. 7) joins our faculty in the fall and, while she couldn't be with us at the retreat, she participated in spirit and over email.

Immediately after the retreat, work on the NSF grant began in earnest for Matthew Pierlott and myself. We held "Working Group Sessions" where we mined the expertise of our colleagues in the physical

sciences (including CAS Dean Lori Vermeulen, a chemist!) for the best ways to implement the discipline-specific ethics training modules that we intend to build on-line in the virtual world *Second Life*. Our goal is to have the first versions beta-testing within six months.

Looking back over the past year, the Department has been creating a very visible presence on campus and off. Last September, several of us participated in an Americans United for Separation of Church and State Symposium (Bucks County Chapter) along with other academics, lawyers and religion experts from around the region.

Highlights of the year on campus included the 5th

Annual WCU Graduate Student Philosophy Conference (p. 2) and the PASSHE IAPRS conference we hosted here in April (p. 2). Dr. Joseph Margolis (Temple University) honored us with a lecture for our *Ideas That Matter* lecture series, also, in April (p. 3).

The student-run Philosophical Society started what we all hope is a new tradition this year: faculty discussion panels (p. 8) which drew pleasing-sized crowds and pleased the faculty involved who engaged in friendly and wide-ranging discussions of the scheduled topic.

We're proud of the accomplishments of our students over the past year. Includ-

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Philosophy Major Receives 2010 College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Student Award



Amy Marvin (B.A. '10) was nominated by the De-

partment for and received one of the two 2010 College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Student Awards. Amy left a wonderful lasting impression on every instructor who had her in class, her quiet demeanor a sure sign of

deep waters. With a degree in both Philosophy and Women's Studies, she's taking a year off from school before applying to graduate programs and we eagerly await the opportunity to write those letters of recommendation!

### Highlights in this issue:

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Current permanent faculty at the welcome dinner for new hire Dr. Cassie Striblen in June: (from l.) Cassie Striblen, Joan Woolfrey, Helen Schroepfer, Matthew Pierlott, Frank Hoffman and Dan Forbes. (Ruth Porritt is not pictured.)

# WCU's 5th Annual Grad Student Philosophy Conference

On January 23, 2010, West Chester University hosted its 5th annual student-run philosophy conference in Philips Memorial Hall. The theme of this year's conference was Art, Ethics & Democracy. The keynote speaker for the event was Lesley University's emeritus professor, George Hein, Ph.D.

Part of the value of this student-run event is that it is reflective of the interests of those graduate students responsible for its organization. This year's primary conference organizer, Gabrielle Aruta, an MA Applied Ethics student at WCU and docent at the Barnes Foundation approached Dr. Hein due to his prestigious interdisciplinary publishing record in John Dewey scholarship and transformative pedagogy in the museum studies profession. In

addition, Dr. Hein has long been a member of the Barnes Foundation's curatorial advisory committee. His keynote address was entitled, "Aesthetics and Politics (or Thought and Action): Dewey and Barnes."

The conference program featured presentations from three current West Chester graduate students, Katrina Dix, Corinne Lecourieux and Gabrielle Aruta, along with one recent department alum, Donovan Irven (Martin) (MA '09).

Other conference participants came from schools such as UPenn, Villanova, NYU, UArts, and the New School, which provided fruitful dialogue, debate and sparked new friendships.



*Join us in January 2011 for the 6th Annual Graduate Student Conference. Planning is underway!*

# PASSHE Interdisciplinary Association for Philosophy and Religious Studies (IAPRS) Conference held at WCU

**The conference next year will be held at California University, and we would love to see some of our alumni there!**



IAPRS held its annual conference at West Chester on April 16-17. Serving as president of the organization in 2009-2010, Dr. Helen Schroepfer took charge of organizing and hosting the event. The conference brings together philosophy and religious studies students, faculty and alumni from the schools in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. The keynote speaker, Dr. Lanei Rodemeyer from Duquesne University, presented her work on "Living In—and Out—of Time (A Phenomenological Description)." The paper focused on her current work revolving around Husserlian Phenomenology and feminist/gender philosophy of the body. Conference papers were presented by 5 faculty, 13 undergraduates, 4 graduate

students and 2 alumni. West Chester's Amy Marvin won one of the conference's undergraduate prizes for her paper on "Subjectivity, Temporality & Recognition."

Other WCU presenters included Dr. Dan Forbes, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, whose paper was titled, "Shifting the Burden of Proof: An Examination of Moore's Response to Skepticism"; then-graduate student Eli Bonner (now-MA '10), who gave a paper entitled "Putting Marxist Epistemology to Work: the Case for Radical Egalitarianism"; current graduate students Katrina Dix, Holly Metzler, and Harvey Greer, whose papers were, respectively, "Overabundance & Curiosity in Foucault: Postmodern Confusion, the Aesthetics of Existence, and Care of the Self," "Overcoming Difference: Hick's Pluralism versus Newbigin's Dialogue," and "God or Not: A Thematic Analysis of Sartre & Kierkegaard."

Undergraduate presenters besides Ms. Marvin included graduating

senior and Philosophy Club President Timothy Burke (BA, Religious Studies, '10), who presented on "The Roots of Transcendentalism: Ralph Waldo Emerson & Indian Philosophy"; Michael Weaver (also BA '10, and a Club officer) who discussed "Why I Can't Believe"; and Megan McCormick, whose paper was titled "A Joyous Non-Sequitur."



*Dr. Lanei Rodemeyer (l.), Husserl scholar at Duquesne, keynote speaker for the 2010 IAPRS conference, jokes with Dr. Stephen Sullivan of Edinboro University.*

# Dr. Ruth Porritt

## Anna Murray Douglass Circle Award

## Philosophy Department Faculty, 1969

This year during the Dr. Patricia Grasty Gaines Multicultural Leadership Awards dinner on March 31, 2010, one of three Anna Murray Douglass Circle Awards was presented to our very own Ruth Porritt. She shares this award with Richeleen Dashield, Director of Social Equity and Grace Kelly, Advisor to the WCU Gospel Choir. According to the Frederick Douglass Institute: "This award is to draw attention to the partnership of leading women in the WCU community who improve the quality of our lives." And, indeed Ruth does that—every day!



Image from *The Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress: Anna Murray Douglass, My Mother as I Recall Her*, by Rosetta Douglass Sprague (Series: Family Papers)



From the WCU Special Collections archives: 1969 Serpentine Yearbook: first row l. to r.: Profs. Kapunan, Platt, Caputo, Riukas; 2d row: Struckmeyer, Banyacski; top row: Williams, Claghorn and Meyer.

## 2010 *Ideas that Matter* guest lecturer: Dr. Joseph Margolis, Temple University

Dr. Margolis, Laura H. Carnell Professor of Philosophy at Temple University, joined us this spring for our second annual lecture for our lecture series *Ideas That Matter*. Dr. Margolis is the author of nearly forty books, and has published widely in many areas, including philosophy of art, philosophy of mind, ethics, and pragmatism. Critical of the idea of universal ethical principles, he is known for his defense of "robust relativism." His most recent books include *The Arts and the Definition of the Human* (Stanford, 2009); *On Aesthetics: An Unforgiving Introduction* (Wadsworth, 2009); *Pragmatism's Advantage: American and European Philosophy at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Stanford, 2010); *The Cultural Space of the Arts and the Infelicities of Reductionism* (Columbia, 2010).

We originally contacted Dr. Margolis because we needed an able adjunct for our Introduction to Meaning course (PHI330). He recommended one of his students, Robert Main, who joined us in the fall as a part-time adjunct while finishing his dissertation under Dr. Margolis's guidance. Robert arranged for Dr. Margolis to give the lecture in early April, and subsequently successfully defended his dissertation. (Congratulations, Dr. Main!)



Dr. Margolis graced us for lunch on April 14th and several faculty and graduate students gathered at Spence's (a favorite downtown restaurant). In Philips Auto-graph Library, he charmed the gathered crowd and provoked thoughtful discussion with his talk "Enabling Constraints

on the Legitimation of Moral Norms," written for the occasion. The talk was videotaped and the text will be available this fall once our graduate assistants have had time to transcribe. Check our website often for updates.

Also, connect with us via our  
Facebook page:  
Philosophy@West Chester.

Send your email address and  
other news to Rose at  
rsykes@wcupa.edu for future  
mailings. Or call us anytime!



# George S. Claghorn, Ph.D., Turns 90 and Recalls Our History

## *A Success Story*

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**The history of the West Chester University Department of Philosophy is one of success, and has been from the beginning. The decade of the 1960s is recorded in memory as one of tumult, but for West Chester it was a time of unparalleled growth. In 1960, the term, “Teachers,” was dropped from our title, and we became “West Chester State College.”** The emphasis shifted to liberal arts. Yet, there was one glaring deficiency: the curriculum lacked Philosophy! President Earl F. Sykes and Dean Kenneth Slagle determined to correct this situation. So, in 1966, they established the Department of Philosophy. The year 2016, will be the Fiftieth Anniversary of our founding. As we prepare to celebrate that milestone, it is fitting to evaluate our progress, so far.

Once the department was begun, everyone joined, full speed, in the effort to build it. By 1970, incredible progress had been made. From zero, a complete roster of courses and a major had been developed. A complement of Philosophy professors was added, which grew to eight full-time (Banyacski, Claghorn, Croddy, Platt, Riukas, Streveler, Struckmeyer, and Williams). Teachers had celebrity status, teaching the refreshing, new topics. Enrollments soared as enthusiastic students filled the classes. Library resources were rapidly acquired, with works of all the chief philosophers, and other standard references. .

The crowning achievement of the first four years came in 1970, with state approval for our Master of Arts program. This was the first, and is still the only such, degree in all the institutions of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It immediately attracted students, from far and wide. A number of those initial master-recipients went on directly to receive their Ph. D. degrees, and commence careers in college teaching.

A question often asked about our subject is, “What can one do with a degree in Philosophy?” The answer I always give is, “Everything!” A few samples of the occupations our graduates entered will prove the validity of this statement:

\*Hon. James P. MacElree II, Judge, Court of Common Pleas, West Chester (BA ‘70)

\*James Lutz, Executive Director, Red Rose Transit, Lancaster (MA ‘76)

Michael Duff, J.D., Harvard, Professor, Wyoming School of Law (BA ‘91)

Dana Skaddan, M.B.A., Harvard, Corporate Manager (BA ‘80)

Grace Fala, Ph. D., Professor, Juniata College (MA ‘88)

\*Paul Sanborn, Public School Principal (MA ‘72)

\*William Cannon, former editor, *Motor Age* magazine (BA ‘81)

Louis Alamia, M.D., Army Physician (BA ‘72)

John Zwierzyna, Curator, Pennsylvania State Museum, Harrisburg (MA ‘81).

Of the above, Paul Sanborn initiated securing state certification for Philosophy, as a subject in Pennsylvania secondary schools. A host of other Philosophy graduates serve faithfully and effectively in careers, such as: law, teaching, ministry, business, and various other fields.

Over the years since 1970, more professors joined the Philosophy faculty ranks (Hipple, Porritt, Woolfrey, Hoffman, Schroepfer, Pierlott, Forbes, and now, Striblen). Early on, six members of the original staff won faculty fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Two of them were awarded three fellowships each. The faculty were in demand at Philosophy meetings, to deliver papers on the local, state, national, and international levels.

Dr. Platt’s Jerusalem address was reprinted by UNESCO in Paris, in multiple languages, for world-wide distribution. Every one of the WCU Philosophy professors regarded their position, not simply as “a job,” but rather, as a “dedication,” which they avidly pursued.

On the student side, the number of courses offered continually increased, as did the list of Philosophy majors. This was the more remarkable, because many had no acquaintance at all with Philosophy until they took their first introductory course in college. Students caught the “philosophy bug,” an unmistakable excitement on discovering the world of ideas. The young people sensed their profound influence, and had a vision of the splendid opportunities they offered.

The department took sure strides forward. Nationally-known philosophers were welcomed to the campus, including a number of presidents of the American Philosophical Association. A chapter of the national Philosophy honor society, Phi Sigma Tau, was chartered on our campus. This provided recognition for student academic pace-setters. Every year, a new class was inducted, in an impressive ceremony, memorable for all concerned.

In 1980, a Philosophy Advisory Board was formed, to promote the cause of West Chester Philosophy. This distinguished group of volunteers, community leaders, was intensely interested in the department’s activities and direction. In addition to the members asterisked above, they included: Lois Harshaw Barker, Vice President and CEO of the Hay Group, Philadelphia (BA Phil. UP); Rabbi Mac Portal (BA ‘82), and Rev. Earl Trent, Jr., both of West Chester; Timothy Keltz, Database Administrator, GPU Service Corp., Reading (MA ‘76); Reginald Regis, President of Eastern Futures, Inc. of Wayne (MA ‘92); and John J. Scully, Vice President, Roy F. Weston, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA (BA ‘74). The enterprise could be called a “think tank.” The members gave freely of their time and thought.

*(Continued on page 5)*

*“Once the department was begun, everyone joined, full speed, in the effort to build it.”*

**—George S. Claghorn**



*Old Main (from West Chester University's Digitalized Postcard Collection, available through the Library's Special Collections portal)*

## George Claghorn, con't

*(Continued from page 4)*

They were a tremendous encouragement, and were deeply appreciated.

In 1990, West Chester University was accepted for membership in the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium. This was a major advance, to become a partner with a select group of area universities and colleges, in a lively, cultural enterprise. West Chester immediately gained higher academic standing, in the eyes of the public. Faculty and students found doors open to many new, intercollegiate opportunities. The Consortium brought famous philosophers to the campus. The ongoing experience has proved to be enriching to all.

In the 1980s, a "Friends of Philosophy" was organized, appealing to alumni and other interested persons, to support Philosophy scholarships. The aim was to help needy students, and attract new graduate students. We followed the model of football and music scholarships, which are underwritten by faithful graduates. The project made a good start, with

a number of responses. Dana Skaddan gave the major donation, to date, of \$10,000.

Also, during the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, we issued a series of Philosophy Newsletters. They chronicled Philosophy graduates by classes, honors awarded, sketches of outstanding alumni, and activities of all who reported. These newsletters met with favor, and are still kept as references.

\* \* \*

An accounting is due on events in my life, "since then." From 1966 to 1996, I was re-elected Chair of Philosophy, possibly a WCU record. Then in 1996, I returned to full-time teaching. Two years later, my book on Jonathan Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings, Vol. 16*, of an edition of twenty-six, was published by the Yale University Press. I spoke at events commemorating the tercentenary of Edwards' birth, in 2003, at Miami, Washington, and Princeton.

In 2004, I retired and now live in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. In December, 2009, friends gave a party to mark my ninetieth

birthday.

I look back on my forty-one years at West Chester University with boundless appreciation. I wish to express my unceasing gratitude to the faculty colleagues of the Philosophy Department. Their steadfast loyalty, absolute dependability, and unremitting efforts made all the wonderful accomplishments a reality.

Name after name, picture after picture, flash through my mind, of West Chester University friends. Every one was so helpful. My hearty thanks to all! I salute, also, each of our Philosophy graduates. You are a select group of superb individuals! We are proud of you and hold you in highest esteem. Do continue to keep in touch. It will be a great pleasure to hear from you or have you visit, any time. I wish YOU the best that life can hold, and God's richest blessing!

—George S. Claghorn

# Frederick R. Struckmeyer, Professor Emeritus

## *Philosophy in Prison*

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About four years ago, I learned through a *60 Minutes* program that Bard College, near New York City, was offering college classes to state prison inmates.

Then in early 2008, I found out from Brian O'Neill of WCU's Criminal Justice Department that Villanova was doing the same thing at Graterford State Prison, near Collegeville. It turned out that Joe Betz, a Villanova philosopher whom I had known for some years through our mutual interest in Central America, actively taught in the program. I soon applied, was made a Villanova adjunct, and had my first chance to teach this past spring. It was quite an experience.

Just getting into the prison is the hardest part (for a nonoffender like me, anyway). One expects certain bureaucratic delays but things got a little ridiculous this semester. For instance, the prison twice mislaid a "background clearance" form I submitted. And I heard inconsistent messages about things like the orientation visit, getting recognized via my ID card (the machine first said I didn't exist, then gave a different "invalid" reply). But once the man at the front gate starting

calling me by my first name, I knew things would be OK. This took some weeks, however. One time I showed up and all classes had unaccountably been canceled for the week.

Despite all the snafus, the experience of getting to know the men (about 30 of them) in my class made any difficulties getting in more than worthwhile. I taught the "Forgiveness and Revenge" class which I had initially given at WCU in 2006, and it was very well received.

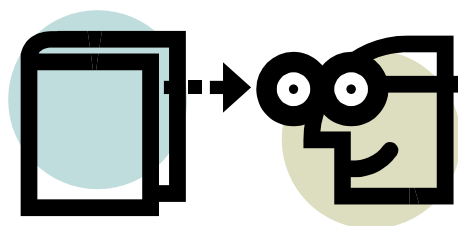
In their out-of-class papers the men sometimes shared stories of their lives. A large number of these men are lifers, destined to be behind bars permanently. I had one student who had been there close to 30 years, after committing a crime at 17. Pennsylvania is a very punitive state, though as I have told WCU students, the US in general has been much more willing to impose harsh sentencing than was the case in the 1960s and 1970s.

I must say that I became attached to the men, some more than others. I had two students who could have done graduate work in philosophy. A few lacked basic writing skills. But their motivation level

was high, they consistently expressed appreciation that outsiders were coming into the prison to teach, and they eagerly participated in class discussion. We did not have a dull session during the entire semester.

I had already been interested in prisoner issues before having this experience at Graterford, having volunteered at George Hill Prison (near Cheyney University) for a number of years. But these last few months have reinforced my belief that we need to end what has been called the Prison Industrial Complex, a system of frequently "cruel and unusual" punishment which is enormously costly and which in many cases falls short of the justice in which we claim to believe.

—Fred Struckmeyer



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## Retired Professor W. Stephen Croddy

Dr. Croddy sent this update in May: "To be intellectually engaged continues to be one of my primary goals. In an effort to achieve this priority I am studying Nietzsche along with Camus. For understanding the former I am finding *Nietzsche et la Philosophie* by Gilles Deleuze and *Frederic Nietzsche* by Lou Andreas-Salome to be particularly helpful. After having read *L'Envers et l'Endroit* and *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, I am profiting from reading two studies of Camus by Arnaud Corbic, *Camus: L'Absurde, la Revolte, l'Amour* and *Camus et l'Homme sans Dieu*.

"As the above remarks suggest, I have left the analytic tradition of Anglo/American philosophy with its emphasis

on constructing and clarifying systems of thought. Instead I am studying the interpretation of philosophy as the pursuit of a certain way of life. In order to better understand this view, I am reading Pierre Hadot, for example his *La Philosophie comme Maniere de Vivre*.

"While I am grateful for my work in the analytic tradition, at this stage in my life my studies in this more humanistic concept of philosophy are especially rewarding.

"I hope that everyone else is finding philosophy to be equally satisfying."

Dr. Croddy welcomes your emails at [steroddy@aol.com](mailto:steroddy@aol.com).



Albert Camus, 1951 (Henri Cartier-Bresson—Magnum Photos)



## Paul A. Streveler, Professor Emeritus

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Concerning Dr. Paul Streveler's recent activities—amongst those “suitable for print” [his words]—he has been working closely with former student Stephen E. Lahey (BA '86; Ph.D. in Medieval Studies, University of Connecticut, '96), Assistant Professor of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, on a translation of a treatise by John Wyclif (c.1330-1384) titled *de Ideis* (on Ideas). Dr. Lahey has himself authored two books on Wyclif: *Philosophy and Politics in the Thought of John Wyclif*, Cambridge 2003, in which he thanks Dr. Streveler for introducing him to medieval thought; and *John Wyclif*, in the series *Great Medieval Thinkers*, Ox-

ford 2008, in which he expresses indebtedness for access to Dr. Streveler's scholarship.

Dr. Streveler continues to review books for *Choice*, a division of the American Library Association; most recently, a review of *In Pursuit of the Good: Intellect and Action in Aristotle's Ethics* by Eric Salem (Phila., Paul Dry Books, 2010).

He is also currently helping another former student (Harry Armstrong (BA '87, MA, '89) build a tree house for his daughters. And, so far, says Paul, “the structure is still standing!”

***“I believe that in the end truth  
will conquer.”***

**— John Wyclif**

## Thomas W. Platt, Professor Emeritus

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Dr. Platt reports to us that he attended the Eastern Division meeting of the APA last December and produced one book review which will appear in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* next year. He continues to serve as mentor of an Education for Ministry adult theological education group at Holy Trinity Church in West Chester. In addition, he spends much of his time attending concerts, plays and operas or just playing games with his grandchildren. Next spring, he says, “I may do a course for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Widener.” And, he also shares membership on the ethics committee for the Neighborhood Visiting Nurses Association of the Neighborhood Health Agencies, Inc. of West Chester, with Dr. Woolfrey, which meets quarterly.



## News, con't

*(Continued from page 1)*

ing Amy Marvin (see pg. 1) and three students listed in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges (Timothy Burke, Amy Marvin, and Honors College student and philosophy major, Alexandra Perez).

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, were active at conferences here and elsewhere, including the group Dr. Hoffman organized for the Mid-Atlantic Region Association for Asian Studies last November at Villanova.

Planning continues for a Buddhist Ethics Symposium (February 11-12, 2011—mark those calendars!) co-sponsored by the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium to be held at WCU, and we hope many of you can attend.

I personally hope you will enjoy two revived features in this newsletter: Alumni News and List of Graduates.

# Current Faculty

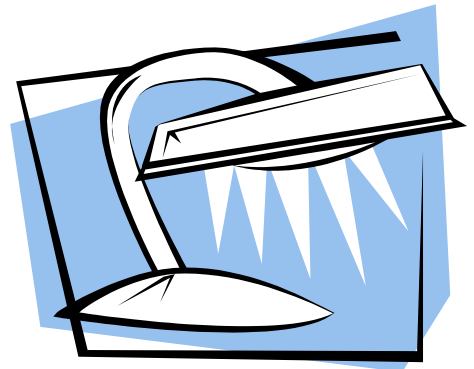
## Daniel Forbes

Dr. Dan Forbes was a busy fellow, as usual. He developed and taught a new graduate-level course, PHI 525 Epistemology, this past spring, where among other things he introduced students to the joys (and pains) of reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. He particularly enjoyed participating in the panel organized by the Philosophical Society on "Conceptions and Proofs of God." Dr. Forbes' recent research has been diverse. He presented two academic papers locally. At the IAPRS Conference this past spring he presented a paper on G. E. Moore's critique of skepticism, and for a Philosophy Forum colloquium talk, Dr. Forbes discussed his pedagogical approach to teaching Plato's dialogue *Euthyphro*. Finally, he wrote an article on the "aesthetic of evil"—the phenomenon of movie villains like Darth Vader looking "cool"—for a forthcoming interdisciplinary anthology on evil and popular culture edited by former adjunct Jamey Heit.

## Frank Hoffman

Dr. Frank J. Hoffman attended three one-week conferences in China last summer (2009). He was a participant at the Beijing University Department of Philosophy Conference, "Science, Philosophy, and Belief," sponsored by the Templeton Foundation, June 18-21. He delivered a keynote lecture, "Introducing Early Indian Pali Buddhist Texts," at the 4th Annual Young Buddhologists Symposium, Chinese University of Hong Kong, June 30-July 4. At the 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Union of Anthropology and Ethnology, July 27-31, in Yunnan University, Kunming, Dr. Hoffman presented a paper, "Commerce of Ideas in a Dai Lue Religious System." While traveling the country, he also gave lectures at Shandong University, Xiamen University, University of Hong Kong, Royal Asiatic Society's Shanghai Branch, and Wuhan University. In mid-August, he

gave a week of service to mentor college student leaders sponsored by Rotary Club of Shanghai and Hua Qiao Foundation. In the fall, Dr. Hoffman presented a paper at Villanova University, "Interreligious Dialogue," on a panel with WCU graduate and undergraduate students at the Mid-Atlantic Region Association for Asian Studies Conference. He serves as Associate Director of Ethnic Studies and is currently working on his fourth book.



## Cassie Striblen

Dr. Striblen joins us this fall from Doane College in Crete, Nebraska. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Cincinnati in 2007, and will teach introduction to philosophy, introduction to logic, and a graduate course on Hannah Arendt in the fall. Her area of specialization is social and political philosophy with an emphasis on group responsibility. During this past year, Dr. Striblen wrote a book review for *Choice* and another for the *APA Newsletter on Feminism*. She also composed an article on Virginia Held for the *Encyclopedia of Global Justice*, forth-

coming from Springer. In August, Dr. Striblen will present a paper titled "From Individuals to Groups: A 'Narrative' Social Ontology" at the Seventh International Conference on Collective Intentionality in Basel, Switzerland.

Aside from philosophy, Dr. Striblen is an aspiring artisan baker, beekeeper, and is a former US Peace Corps volunteer. We are delighted that Dr. Striblen is joining us and are looking forward to a long and happy collaboration with her.

**West Chester University  
Philosophy Department's  
Newest Hire!**

**Dr. Cassie Striblen**



# Current Faculty, con't

## Joan Woolfrey

As an administrator these days, along with the NSF grant, Dr. Woolfrey's work has centered on curriculum issues such as designing (with H. Schroepfer) a new recommended Gen Ed course, PH1100 Creating Meaning (an Intro to Existentialism); updating and revising the Peace & Conflict Studies Program curriculum; and shepherding through a new undergraduate Applied Ethics minor proposal—currently awaiting approval at the PASSHE level.

As she did last July, she'll be giving a paper at the North American Society for Social Philosophy—this year in Toronto. This year's topic: virtue ethics and racial profiling.

## Matthew Pierlott

In September, Dr. Pierlott spoke at the Church-State Symposium held by Americans United, Bucks County Chapter, along with other WCU Philosophy faculty (including Woolfrey and Schroepfer) and other academics, lawyers, and clergy. He presented natural law theorist Michael Pakaluk's argument against same-sex marriage, demonstrating how this argument actually threatens a healthy separation between church and state. Developing his analysis, Matt presented a formal paper, "Same Gender-Sex and the Common Good," on Pakaluk's view of the common good and its relation to heteronormativity at the 2nd Global Conference: Good Sex, Bad Sex - Sex

Law, Crime and Ethics in Prague in May. Pierlott also presented a paper on the ethics of bluffing in business negotiations, entitled "Business Bluffing Apologetics," at the 36th Conference on Value Inquiry, held at SIU-Carbondale in April.

Matt continues to explore philosophical issues in and through popular culture, including a contribution in the soon-to-be-published *Fashion and Philosophy* (Blackwell 2010), and two chapters in a forthcoming text, *PhiloSeussical Investigations*.

## Helen Schroepfer

Recently tenured and promoted, Dr. Schroepfer's most recent work, "Hospitality: Agency, Ethics and Gender," will be published in the anthology *Feminism and Hospitality: Gender in the Host/Guest Relationship*, ed. M. Hamington, forthcoming from Lexington Books this year. In addition, she and Dr. Karin Gedge (WCU History Department) received a University grant for a pilot project entitled "Documenting Diversity:

Local Religious Perspectives in Oral History." This project aims to document the rich variety of religious histories in southeast Pennsylvania. The goal of the initial project is to refine interview questions and explore various recording media, work which will position them to apply for external funding for a more extensive oral history project.

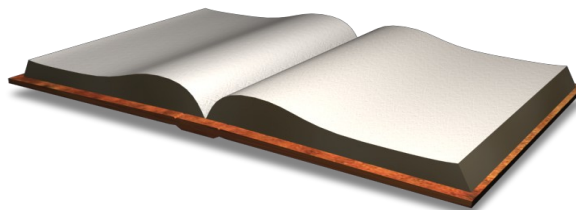
Meanwhile, she is compiling material for

a resource for teaching religious studies which will be published on-line by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology in the fall. Dr. Schroepfer's contribution will focus on women and religion, research that dovetails nicely with her new course offering, Women and Religion.

## Ruth Porritt

Two of Dr. Porritt's conference presentations this year focused on ethics education. At the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Arts and Humanities she discussed sadness and grief as ethically valuable emotions. For the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual International Conference on College Teaching and Learning she gave a paper on how ethics students design their own

non-profit organizations using Anne Firth Murray's *Paradigm Found* (2006) as a blueprint.



# WCU Philosophical Society organizes two faculty panel discussions in 2009-10

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## *Greetings, Alumni!*

The 2009-10 school year was an exciting year to be a part of the WCU Philosophy Department and serve as the President of the WCU Philosophical Society. The club worked hard this year on building camaraderie between the students, and between students and professors; we hosted a couple of exciting events to encourage those connections, and both were a lot of fun as well as educational, and attracted a large crowd of students each time. The

first, in December, was entitled “What Is Consciousness?” and the second, in March, focused on “Conceptions and Proofs of God.” In addition, the club held regular meetings, with meeting time split between planning and business, and conversation of philosophical topics.

On a personal note, I am happy to be able to continue on in the department as a graduate student, beginning this fall. As you all know, the WCU Philosophy Department is a unique and vibrant de-

partment, with dedicated professors and eager students. Being a part of it now or ever is an honor, and I look forward to spending more time within the hallowed halls of Main Hall and growing with the department.

—Timothy J. Burke (BA ‘10)  
Out-going President  
In-coming grad student



*Society President Timothy Burke (far l.) moderates as (from l.) Drs. Frank Hoffman, Matthew Pierlott, Joan Wolfrey, Helen Schroepfer and Dan Forbes ruminates on “Conceptions and Proofs of God.”*

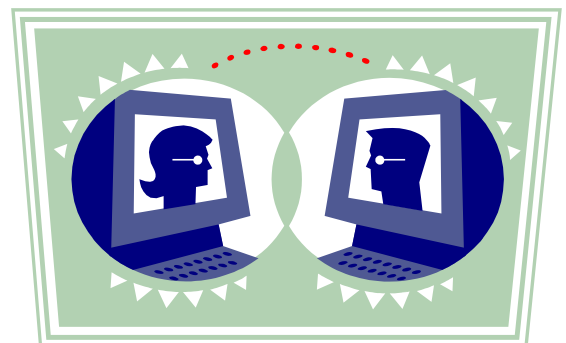
## West Chester hosts second videoconference!

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Dr. Larry Udell, long-time adjunct, organized a second videoconference this past term, paralleling his graduate seminar in Karl Marx. He connected with Professors Elizabeth Anderson (University of Michigan), David Schweickart (Loyola Chicago) and Geoff Harcourt (Cambridge) to discuss the philosophy and economics of Karl Marx.

The video can be found by linking

through the Department website at: [wcupa.edu/\\_ACADEMICS/sch\\_cas.ph/](http://wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas.ph/) (you may need to install Silverlight—it’s a safe installation!).



# Alumni News

**Paul Sanborn** (MA '72), I retired from the PA Public School System in 1999, before the politicians switched the pension multiplier for their own benefit and those educators who retired after 2002. At the time I was too young to sit at home and mildew, so I went to the high school from which I graduated, Devon Prep, and obtained a position with them. In the eleven years since, I have worked as the librarian with a half-time (16 periods per week) teaching load. Nice work if you can get it. Unfortunately the day I reported, in August, I was asked to be the coach of the Academic Challenge Team, which competes *a la* "college bowl" with other high schools in Chester County. Okay. Then two of the coaches at Devon quit and I was asked to be the head coach of men's cross country, indoor track and spring track and field. Eventually the school administration remembered I was a contract intelligence analyst for the Navy on Eastern European affairs, so I

was given two sections of AP European History to teach. . . . Then I developed a seminar for seniors on Vietnam and mid-century United States. As pressures built, educationally, financially and otherwise at Devon, someone remembered I was a retired administrator. I was made Director of Curriculum and Instruction. . . . Finally we are now in the process of self-review for Middle States re-accreditation. I am responsible to the headmaster for the entire process. Thank God I retired when I did. I never would have been able to handle all these tasks at Devon with a fulltime administrative job at some local district. In my spare time I continue to run/race, work at the Freedoms Foundation, every so often visit Washington to handle a contract and attend to my family of a wife, two dogs, two sons (youngest WCU undergrad philosophy grad 1990's), two daughters-in-law and four grandchildren. Never get a philosophy degree! Look what it does to you! . . .

**Sylvia Haviland** (MA '79) wrote and successfully defended her thesis on Bishop George Berkeley [1685-1753] entitled Ideas without Illusion: Sense Without Matter. During the 1980's and 1990's Sylvia taught introductory philosophy courses for the department, which she remembers as "a wonderful experience." One of her colleagues during that time, Ruth Porritt, arranged for Sylvia to visit campus on May 4, 2010, so that Sylvia could meet people who joined the department after her retirement. We appreciate all that Sylvia has



Sylvia Haviland pages through her own MA thesis in the Chair's office during her visit in May.

contributed to the department over the years.

**Marilynn Lawrence** (MA '04) Web Content Writer, Vanguard Investment Group, Media, PA.

**Beverly Hawkins** (BA '88, MA '92) I received a University of Pennsylvania Alumni Achievement Award at my 35th reunion in May, much to my surprise. It was given to me at the Dental School where I graduated in 1975 from the Department of Oral Hygiene.

I work in private practice 3 long days a week. I also have my musical instrument

workshop and was in Illinois for a week in July studying under a French Clarinet Maker in a Master Class. I am Editor-in-Chief for *Current Practice* with BC Decker publishers and I am currently co-authoring the revision of a book on "visual thinking" originally published in 1986.

**Michael S. Jones, Ph.D.** (MA '95) Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Liberty University in Virginia. Awarded Liberty University School of Religion award for

**Check out our website for periodic updates of Alumni News**

[http://www.wcupa.edu/\\_ACADEMICS/SCH\\_CAS.PHI/alumni.asp](http://www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/SCH_CAS.PHI/alumni.asp)

Creativity in Teaching (2010). Presented "Does Cognitive Humility Lead to Religious Tolerance: Thoughts on Craig and Quinn" at the 2010 Society for Philosophy of Religion conference in Claremont, CA. Published "Culture and Interreligious Understanding according to the Romanian Philosopher Lucian Blaga" in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 45:1 (2010), 97-112.

**Amy Abrams** (BA '02) is back in school, enrolled in WCU's MS Higher

Education Counseling program which she expects to complete by Spring '12.

**Cristina Utti** (MA '05) has been teaching English for the Philadelphia School District and tutoring for the Juvenile Justice Center's group homes while raising five children.

**Anthony Biduck** (BA '03) Currently I am living in the San Francisco Bay area with my wife. We run a yoga company

together called Urban Yogis. I earned an MA in Philosophy from the New School for Social Research in NYC, and now, the bulk of my time is spent teaching courses online. I adjunct for a variety of universities, and I teach the following courses: Ethics, Philosophy of Human Conduct, Philosophy and Religion, Aesthetics, Logic and Critical Thinking.

**Samantha Noll** (BA '08) is in the Ph.D.

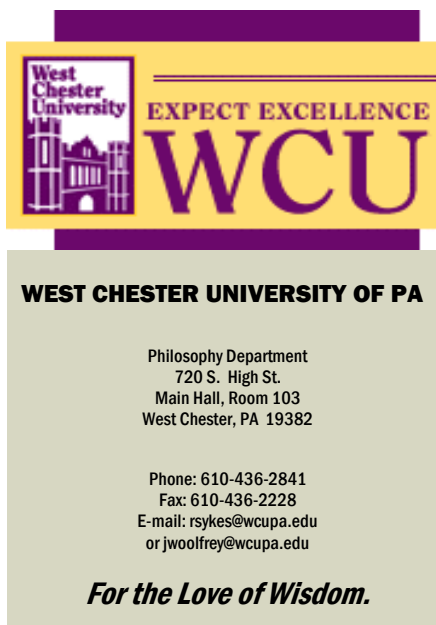
program in Philosophy at Michigan State University and is having a blast as a teaching assistant.

**Larry Tamaccio** (BA '08) is attending Quinnipiac University School of Law in Hamden, CT.

**Brian T. Jones** (BA '07, MA '09) is pursuing a Doctorate (PsyA.D.) in Clinical Psychoanalysis at the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis.



***You're All Invited in February!!*** WCU's Philosophy Department is hosting the **Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium Colloquium on Buddhist Ethics**—David Loy (Xavier College), Xin Park (American University) and Charles Johnson (University of Washington) are headliners! February 12 & 13, 2011. Contact Joan Woolfrey at [jwoolfrey@wcupa.edu](mailto:jwoolfrey@wcupa.edu) or Frank Hoffman at [fhoffman@wcupa.edu](mailto:fhoffman@wcupa.edu) for details.



## Philosophy Graduates: 2008-09 and 2009-10

### Graduates from 2008

#### B.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Katrina Dix
- ~ Noah Zinter
- ~ Ashley Manta
- ~ Mehdi Essmidi
- ~ Hans Kocher
- ~ Samantha Noll
- ~ Laurence Tamaccio, Jr.
- ~ Anthony Worman

#### B.A. in Religious Studies

- ~ Kathryn Murray
- ~ Nathaniel Craig

#### M.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Edward Pollitt, III
- ~ Geoffrey Gould

### Graduates from 2009

#### B.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Sean Gallaher
- ~ James Gofus
- ~ Andrea Hilton
- ~ Derek Krzywicki
- ~ Daniel Levin
- ~ John Uetz

#### B.A. in Religious Studies

- ~ John Commiskey, III
- ~ Ryan Forney
- ~ Zachary Brown

#### M.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Brian T. Jones
- ~ Donovan (Irven) Martin
- ~ Anthony M. White

#### M.A. in Philosophy: Applied Ethics

- ~ Stephen Skilton, Jr.
- ~ Brian (Ploskina) Pakpour

### Graduates from 2010 (to date)

#### B.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Christopher Bopp
- ~ David (D.J.) Cunningham
- ~ Kevin Doyle
- ~ Brian Lieb
- ~ Alexandra Perez
- ~ Nynoshka Poobalan
- ~ Kari Sheridan
- ~ Michael Weaver
- ~ Jacob Young

#### B.A. in Religious Studies

- ~ Timothy J. Burke
- ~ Dan P. Dalmonte
- ~ Jane Mahoney

#### M.A. in Philosophy

- ~ Eli Bonner
- ~ J. Alex Charles