PHILOSOPHY NEWSLETTER

Rutgers Launched New Lectures in Philosophy Series

This past semester marked the inauguration of the Rutgers Lectures in Philosophy, a lecture series organized by the Rutgers Philosophy Department and Oxford University Press. The series is designed to rival other famous lecture series such as the John Locke Lectures at Oxford and the Tanner Lectures at Princeton. Each year a world-renowned philosopher will give a series of public lectures at Rutgers, hold workshops with our faculty and graduate students, and participate in small discussions of his or her work with our undergraduate philosophy majors and minors. Afterwards, the public lectures will be collected into a book, edited, and then published by Oxford University Press. *(continue reading on page 2)*

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Kit Fine Presents New Work on Vagueness

The series' inaugural speaker was Kit Fine, Silver Professor of Philosophy and Mathematics at New York University. Over the past 40 years, Fine's revolutionary work in the philosophy of language, metaphysics, logic, and philosophy of mathematics has had a tremendous influence on philosophers across the globe.

In his lecture series, Fine presented his new work on the topic of *vagueness*. Vagueness arises from the fact that many of our words and concepts, both trivial (e.g., 'bald') and important (e.g., 'person'),

exhibit indeterminacy in their application conditions. For example, if one lines up a series of men according to the amount hair on their head, one can say that those at the start are clearly *bald* and those at the end are clearly not *bald*. However, it seems to be indeterminate whether those in the middle are bald or not bald. Likewise, though it is often clear that something is a person, there are borderline cases (e.g., at the start of life and at the end of life) where it can seem indeterminate whether something is a person or not.

Over the course of the three-day series, Fine presented a new theory of vagueness, illustrating how it avoids the well-known problems confronting other theories and provides intriguing resolutions to other prominent philosophical questions.

Fine set the stage in his first lecture by introducing the problem of vagueness and reviewing the pitfalls of alternative theories. In his next lecture, he explained the core details of his new theory. A key innovation of the theory is its *globalism*: in contrast to decades of work by other theorists, Fine argued that the vagueness of a concept does not consist in its having particular "borderline" cases but instead consists in its exhibiting indeterminacy when applied to *a range of cases*. In his third and final lecture, Fine illustrated the appeal of his new theory by showing how it could be applied to provide innovative answers to puzzles in the theories of knowledge and personal identity.

All in all, the new lecture series was a hit, attracting a large and diverse audience of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates. We look forward to continuing this exciting new tradition with next year's visitor, Sir Richard Sorabji of Oxford University!

UPCOMING SPEAKERS IN THE RUTGERS LECTURES IN PHILOSOPHY SERIES

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sir Richard Sorabji (Oxford)	Robert Stalker (MIT)	Jeff McMahan (Oxford)	Béatrice Longuenesse (NYU)	Martha C. Nussbaum (U of Chicago)

Celebrating 1766-2016 RUTGERS 250

Throughout this past year, Rutgers celebrated the 250th anniversary of its founding! The yearlong celebration featured hundreds of events hosted by departments and organizations across the Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick campuses. Our own department participated in the celebration by hosting its own event: "A Day of Revolutionary Thinking in Philosophy." The event featured three guest-speakers, all former Rutgers undergraduates whose revolutionary ideas have led them to prominent careers in philosophy.

Sarah-Jane Leslie RC'02 opened the day with a talk entitled "Cultures of Genius and Academic Gender Gaps." Currently the Class of 1943 Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University, Leslie has become well-known for her research on how we categorize and generalize information about our world. Discussions of Leslie's work have appeared in the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Economist*, and she has been interviewed by NPR, WHYY, and CBC Radio. In her talk, Leslie strove to break down illusions about the underlying causes of gender gaps in educational and career choices. Leslie's research team's intriguing studies provide strong support for her "Field-specific Ability Beliefs Hypothesis," according to which greater gender gaps will be found in disciplines that place more emphasis on raw talent. The explanation for this important finding, Leslie argued, lies in the fact that raw brilliance, or *genius*, is a trait culturally associated with men much more than women. Leslie went on to discuss the pedagogical problems associated with emphasizing genius over hard-work and to explore the way in which pervasive beliefs about the role of innate brilliance have served to build and reinforce gender gaps in a wide-range of disciplines, including disciplines outside the STEM fields. Her spirited talk ended with a stirring call for faculty and students alike to combat the stereotypes implicit in our beliefs about innate brilliance and to promote cultures of achievement rather than raw genius.

Next, in a talk entitled "Meanings, Concepts, and Natural Kinds: What Were People Thinking?", Paul Pietroski RC'86 challenged received wisdom about how our words get their meanings. In particular, Pietroski argued that Hilary Putnam and Noam Chomsky's opposed externalist and internalist theories of meaning overgeneralize from particular cases. A proper account of meaning, Pietroski suggested, must recognize the widespread *polysemy* in our language use. Natural affinities among concepts explain how one and the same word acquires a polysemous meaning such that it can be used by speakers to express distinct but naturally related concepts in different contexts.

Finally, Robin Jeshion DC'86 closed out the day with a timely discussion of slurs in a talk entitled "The Social Dimensions of Slurs." In her talk, Jeshion offered a new *hybrid expressivist* account of how slurring terms work. In giving a more illuminating theory of slurs, including the social dimension of slurs, Jeshion hoped to provide her audience with the knowledge and tools needed to better combat the negative yet powerful effects the use of slurs has on our society.

Special acknowledgments are owed to Peter Klein, Trip Mcrossin, and Mercedes Diaz for their dedicated work in organizing the event and also to Matt Menchaca and Meenal Paul, our two undergraduate philosophy majors who introduced and welcomed our speakers.

Meet Our New Faculty: Interview with Alex Guerrero

In Fall 2016, a brilliant philosopher, Alex Guerrero, joined our department! Alex received his PhD from the NYU Philosophy Department in 2012 and a JD from the NYU School of Law in 2008. He has published important papers in political philosophy, moral philosophy, legal philosophy, and social epistemology. In fact, you can check out his free online course on legal and political philosophy here: http://www.alexguerrero.org/.

Q: Why did you choose to become a philosopher?
I have been thinking about the role of the State ever since learning, when I was still a child, that my grandfather had been executed by a firing squad after a show trial in the early years of the Cuban Revolution. I spent much of my time in college teaching in prison and organizing prison education programs in a variety of correctional facilities. I found this work personally very moving and rewarding, but it seemed that it was working far too much just on the back end of things--the social and legal and political forces that were producing the situation of racialized mass incarceration (among many other problems) were complex and remained unaddressed by the work I was doing. Philosophy (in tandem with law) afforded a chance to step back and to consider the fundamental problems and to begin offering possible solutions. There need to be the people in society who look at the largely unquestioned features of our social and political world and ask: why are things like this? Should they be like this? How might things be made better? Philosophers aren't the only people who do this, but, since Socrates and Plato, and continuing now with people like Angela Davis, K. Anthony Appiah, Sally Haslanger, and Jason Brennan (just to name a very few), they are among the people who do this.

Q: If you were stranded on a desert island, what philosophy book would you want to have with you?
Plato's Republic.

Q: Of the articles you've published, which is your favorite and why?
I think my favorite is "Against Elections: The Lottocratic Alternative," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (2014). It's my favorite because it's part of a larger project that I really believe in, but which I wasn't sure would be taken at all seriously by philosophers.

Q: What is the most exciting part of being at Rutgers?
That's a hard question to answer! I guess I'll go with: the students. The graduate students are a wonderful, exceptionally talented, dynamic group, and I know that many of them will go on to have some of the great philosophical ideas of the 21st century. And the undergraduates have been wonderful to work with so far, with a great deal of talent coupled with very little sense of entitlement. It is also exciting to think of bringing a first-rate philosophical education to one of the country's most diverse institutions of higher public education.

Q: Can you briefly explain some of the key ideas/themes in your work and why these ideas/themes are important?
I work in legal, moral, and political philosophy, as well as in areas of epistemology that relate to those three areas. I've worked on a number of different topics and like to think of myself as interested in everything. That said, one theme that unites much of my work is a concern with the interaction between our epistemic flaws and limitations, on the one hand, and our moral and political ideals, on the other.

We have false beliefs about morality; we regularly find ourselves uncertain about which of several options we morally ought to (or are required to) perform; we don't know what our elected representatives are doing or which political leaders to support; we don't know enough about important legal and political issues; we are ignorant of the laws that apply to us; we don't know which policies would be best (or even which would be good); and we are broadly ignorant with respect to most domains of knowledge and, as a result, are heavily dependent on experts of various kinds. I see these as basic facts about the human condition, at least in its modern guise, so that the response to them—and to the significant problems that arise because of them—cannot just be for us to work harder, ignore them, and hope that they disappear or self-correct. Much of my work aims to get clearer on the precise nature of the problems produced by this ignorance and these epistemic limitations, and to consider what responses make moral (and other kinds of) sense. One of the central projects coming out of this work is to argue for using lotteries, rather than elections, to choose our political representatives and to build institutions around randomly-selected citizens so that these lottery-selected bodies would exhibit epistemic (and other) virtues to a greater extent than systems of electoral representative government.

Metaphysical Mayhem (August 8th-12th, 2016)

Mayhem broke out in New Brunswick as metaphysicians from across the continent gathered for the biennial Metaphysical Mayhem workshop. Fifteen stellar graduate students from other institutions were invited to join Rutgers- and NYC-based graduate students for a five-day spin through recent work in metaphysics. Faculty speakers (Boris Kment, Ross Cameron, Jonathan Schaffer, Amie Thomasson, and Ted Sider) engaged students with talks on set-theoretic and semantic paradoxes, second-order quantification and ontological commitment, grounding, ontological disputes and metalinguistic negotiation, and theoretical equivalence. In addition to the faculty talks, the workshop also provided an opportunity for visiting graduate students to present some of their own work. Topics included the nature of time and space, persistence, parthood, grounding, chance, causation, necessity, and possibility.

Conferences Review

The Second Workshop for Graduate Student Women in Philosophy (August 16th-19th, 2016)

Rutgers Professors Elisabeth Camp and Jill North joined Princeton's Elizabeth Harman in hosting "Athena in Action: A Networking and Mentoring Workshop for Graduate Student Women in Philosophy" at Princeton.

Harman explained that "the goal of the workshop is to improve the experiences of graduate student women in philosophy, to help them stay in philosophy and thrive in the field."

The 36 graduate students attendees, who came from universities across the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, were given opportunities to discuss each other's papers and receive advice from the dozen women who served as mentors.

This year's workshop was the second in a series of three workshops. The third is scheduled for June 2018.

Faculty Updates

Frances Egan named first Caroline Herschel Visiting Professor

The Ruhr University-Bochum (RUB) in Germany has launched the Caroline Herschel program, which makes it possible to invite excellent researchers from abroad to RUB. Our very own Professor Frances Egan was invited to visit as the first Caroline Herschel guest professor during Fall 2016.

A conference in honor of Stephen Stich

In early October, the Hang Seng Centre for Cognitive Studies at the University of Sheffield held a conference entitled"Philosophy Meets Cognitive Science: In Honour of Stephen Stich" to celebrate Professor Stich's work in philosophy of mind and cognitive science. During the one-day conference, four Sheffield PhD students gave talks on the interface between philosophy and psychology. Stich himself wrapped up the event with a talk on the relevance of empirical research to moral theory.

Peter Kivy's book wins national prize

On November 19, 2016, Emeritus Professor Peter Kivy's book *De Gustibus: Arguing About Taste and Why We Do It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) was awarded the American Society for Aesthetics' 2016 Outstanding Monograph Prize.

Conferences Review

First Bochum-Rutgers Workshop (October 14th-15th, 2016)

The first Bochum-Rutgers Workshop, co-organized by Rutgers Professor Brian McLaughlin and Ruhr University Bochum (RUB)'s Albert Newen, took place in NY/NJ area this October. The topic for this year is recent developments in philosophy of mind and language. A group of professors and graduate students from RUB came together to discuss philosophical issues related to concept acquisition, developmental psychology, and social perception. Our Professors Frances Egan, Robert Matthews, Brian McLaughlin, Susanna Schellenberg; graduate students Simon Goldstein, Sam Carter; and recent PhD E.J. Green were among the conference's presenters. The next Bochum-Rutgers workshop is scheduled for 2017 and will be held at RUB.

Eastern Regional Conference of the Society of Christian Philosophers (October 20th-22nd, 2016)

Over 75 people arrived on campus for the 2016 Eastern Regional Conference of the Society of Christian Philosophers, a major annual event which changes location every year. This year the Rutgers Center for the Philosophy of Religion was honored to host the three-day event. Focused on Pascal's Wager and the issues involved in acquiring and maintaining faith, the event featured 37 presentations from accepted participants and 4 keynote addresses from Dan Garber, Alan Hájek, Laurie Paul and Lara Buchak. Garber unveiled the complex history behind Pascal's original wager argument, while Hájek discussed the underlying decision-theoretic problems facing contemporary formulations of the argument. Paul raised questions about the rationality of acquiring faith, including its connection to other transformative experiences, while Buchak explored how commitment and community play a role in the rationality of maintaining faith in the face of counterevidence.

Monism Conference (October 10th-11th, 2016)

Our own Distinguished Professor Jonathan Schaffer hosted a two-day workshop on *monism*. The *monism* vs. *pluralism* debate concerns the relationship between the universe as a whole and its various parts: is the cosmos a mere aggregate or heap, dependent on its parts for its existence and nature? Or is the cosmos an integrated whole whose parts' nature and existence depend on their connection to the rest? Philosophers' interest in this perennial topic has surged in recent years, in large part due to a series of influential articles written by Jonathan himself. Eight guest-speakers brought the discussion alive once more with talks investigating the history of the topic, Jonathan's contemporary defense of monism, the unexplored monistic ideas of Eastern thinkers, and the wider significance of the monist-pluralist debate.

Faculty Updates

A conference on Alvin Goldman's work

In early September, the College of William & Mary hosted a conference on the theme of Alvin Goldman's book *Epistemology and Cognition* on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of its publication. Alvin gave a lecture at this conference, as did Rutgers Professor of Philosophy Susanna Schellenberg and recent Rutgers PhD Lisa Miracchi (University of Pennsylvania)

A book on Professor Alvin Goldman's work, *Goldman and His Critics*, co-edited by Brian McLaughlin and Hilary Kornblith (Wiley-Blackwell) was published in October. It includes 16 chapters devoted to various aspects of Alvin Goldman's research, including epistemology, philosophy of mind, cognitive science, and metaphysics. Each chapter is accompanied by a response from Alvin. Rutgers contributors include Ernest Sosa, Jonathan Schaffer, and Brian McLaughlin.

Professor Larry S. Temkin was invited to give a series of five lectures in China in March, 2016. He presented four lectures at Jilin University in Changchun, and one lecture at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Professor Temkin also spent 18 days at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in June, 2016, where he gave a talk to the Law and Philosophy Workshop off the Law School, a special two week seminar on his work on equality for a select group of graduate students from around the world, and the capstone lecture at an international conference on The Value of Equality sponsored by the Center for Moral and Political Philosophy.

Undergrads join Faculty and Grad Students at the Women in Philosophy Dinner

As usual, the Climate Committee hosted its annual Women in Philosophy Dinner during the Fall semester. The dinner is open to all undergraduates with an interest in philosophy but serves especially to give female undergraduates an opportunity to meet the female faculty and graduate students.

During the two-dinner event, faculty and graduate students shared their experiences as women in philosophy and offered guidance to undergraduates who are interested in applying to philosophy graduate school and pursuing philosophy as a career. Student attendees were invited to sign up for the department's mentoring program for women in philosophy.

Special thanks are owed to Denise Dykstra and Carolina Flores, who organized the event!

Faculty Updates

Brian McLaughlin co-edited a new anthology, *Philosophy: Mind,* which has just been published in the Philosophy Series of Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks.

Holly M. Smith has two new publications:
—"Tracing Cases of Culpable Ignorance," in Rik Peels, ed., *Moral and Social Perspectives on Ignorance* (Routledge Press, 2016).
— Review of Michael Zimmerman, Ignorance and Morality (Oxford University Press, 2014), in *Mind*, Vol. 125, 935-942.

Larry Temkin has two new publications:
—"A Few Concerns about Bioethics," *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* (2016), 272-287

—"On Nature and Structure of Self-Interest, Morality, and Practical Reasoning," *Theoria* 82 (2016), 128-47.

Activities Highlights

Rutgers Philosophers for Effective Altruism

(article written by Tyler John)

Effective altruism is an international social movement spearheaded and sustained in a major way by philosophers. The movement's credo is a simple one: if you are going to make a difference, make it count – as much as you possibly can. Effective altruists use randomized controlled trials and social science to determine the most effective ways of making a difference in the world, and then they put their findings into action.

This year members of our department were excited to form our own effective altruism reading and working group. In our biweekly meetings, we discuss papers relating to effective altruism and plan actions to increase the viability of effective altruism and improve the world. Our main project for this semester took the form of organizing an international, interdepartmental fundraiser for a highly-effective and well-respected nonprofit, the Against Malaria Foundation. Twenty-five philosophy departments took part in our two-week fundraiser, and together we raised $57,226 for life-saving, insecticide-treated mosquito nets. Our donations will be enough to provide 35,000 people with protection from potentially malaria-inducing mosquito bites – that's 70 entire villages!

Rutgers Philosophers for Effective Altruism can be reached for comments and inquiries at rutgers.philosophers@gmail.com .

Undergrad Corner

Rutgers Philosophy Club Hosts Two Interdisciplinary Panels

The Rutgers University Philosophy Club is a Rutgers-funded student organization which aims to introduce philosophy to the Rutgers undergraduate students. During Fall 2016, the Philosophy Club held two interdisciplinary panels, one on food ethics and the other on the philosophy of social justice.

Organized in collaboration with the Rutgers VEG Society, the panel on food ethics featured Gary Francione (School of Law, Rutgers), Anne Barnhill (Perclman School of Medicine, UPenn), and Janice Fine (School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers). The panelists discussed issues in animal rights, food policy, and food's role in lifestyle.

The panel on the philosophy of social justice was organized in cooperation with the Center for Social Justice and LBGT Communities. The speakers included our own Professor Howard McGary and graduate students David Black and Jimmy Goodrich, along with Edward Ramsamy (Africana Studies Department) and Gwendolyn Beetham (Women and Gender Studies Department). The topics discussed included the politics of social justice, feminism, egalitarianism, and activism from theory to practice.

Undergrad Updates

Nathan Ades (senior, philosophy and political science double-major) published his paper "Justified Prevention" in *Fresh Philosophy*, the undergraduate philosophy journal of the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium. Nathan originally wrote the paper for his "Ethics of War & Conflict" class at Rutgers.

Noah Gordon (senior, philosophy and information technology & informatics double-major) published his paper "Craig on the Mind-Independence of Temporal Becoming" in *Dialogue,* the journal of the international undergraduate philosophy honors society Phi Sigma Tau. Noah originally wrote the paper for his "Philosophy of Cosmology" class at Rutgers.

Alyssa Delal Kocak (senior, philosophy and communication double-major) was named a 2016 Wells H. Keddie Scholar in recognition of her work to raise awareness on the human rights violations committed by Turkey against the Kurds. Alyssa created a documentary examining her family's experiences under Turkish rule during the 1920s and 1970s. The documentary was screened at the Journalism and Media Studies Department's Annual Undergraduates Showcase and at the Campus Movie Festival.

Alex Lin (senior, philosophy and biology double-major) published two papers this fall. Alex's "Rethinking Irreversibly and Its Implications on Determining Death" was published by the Neuroethics Blog, and his "Search for Consciousness: A Neuroimaging Approach" was published by *TuftScope: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Health, Ethics, and Policy*, a peer-reviewed undergraduate journal run by the students of Tufts University.

Graduate Life

Meet the First-Years!

The news bureau tracked down the department's nine first-year PhD students to find out a bit more about them. We asked them to answer the following questions:

1) Where did you receive your degree(s) before coming to Rutgers?
2) What areas of philosophy are you interested in?
3) If you were stranded on a desert island, what philosophy paper or book would you most like to have with you?
4) What are your non-philosophical interests or hobbies?

Denise Dykstra

1) B.A. in Philosophy, B.S. in Mathematics, and B.C.S. in Computer Science, Calvin College
2) Metaphysics, Epistemology, Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Science
3) Antony Eagle's *Philosophy of Probability*
4) Drinking coffee, playing card/ board games, reading

Chris Fruge

1) M.A. in Philosophy, University of Houston; A.B. in Social Studies and Philosophy, Harvard University
2) Early Modern, Metaphysics, Ethics
3) If I were actually stranded on an island, I'd want a copy of Nagel's *Mortal Questions*.
4) Comedy, board games, various net-based sports

Carolina Flores

1) MMathPhil (Mathematics and Philosophy), Oxford University
2) Philosophy of Mind, Early Modern, Epistemology, Moral Psychology
3) Davidson's *Essays on Actions and Events*
4) Dark humor, hedonism, and acting silly

Ting-An Lin

1) M. A. in Philosophy, Texas Tech University; B.S. in Life Science, National Taiwan University
2) Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Epistemology, and Metaphysics
3) Maybe Heidegger's *Being and Time*
4) Reading, writing, singing, playing piano, drinking coffee

Adam Gibbons

1) M.A. in Consciousness and Embodiment and B.A. in Philosophy, University College Dublin.
2) Metaphilosophy, X-Phi, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Epistemology, and Philosophy of Language.
3) *Mind in Life,* by Evan Thompson.
4) I really enjoy martial arts, and have done so since I was a young child. Besides that, I enjoy listening to music, playing poker, and -- most of all -- spending time with my family and friends

Tyler John

1) B.A. in Philosophy from Cedarville University. Following that, I spent two years as a fellow in the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center, Department of Bioethics.
2) Moral and political philosophy, especially aggregation, resource allocation, antispeciesist political theory, and disability.
3) Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
4) Racquet sports, board games, bass guitar, crushing the kyriarchy

Graduate Life

Meet the First-Years! (continued)

Josh Tarzia

1) B.A. in Philosophy, Mathematics, and Cognitive Science, Rutgers University
2) Most/all areas. Usually with a naturalistic/pragmatist bent and an aim towards "big picture" or "meta-" issues (e.g., metaontology, metaphilosophy).
3) Some sort of general math/science/arts/history/humanities reference book. (I guess an encyclopedia?)
4) Worrying, feeling uncomfortable, being irreverent

Ezra Rubenstein

1) BPhil and MMathPhil (Mathematics and Philosophy), Oxford University
2) All areas - but especially Metaphysics, Philosophy of Mind, and Philosophy of Science
3) Maybe Russell's *History of Western Philosophy*. I'd finally find the time to get through it and it'd give me a little bit of everything (at least from one half of philosophy). When I was done with it I could burn it to keep warm.
4) Watching and playing football. Running. Drawing and painting. Writing. Films, especially confusing ones. Art in general. But really, there are no 'non-philosophical hobbies'

Christopher Willard-Kyle

1) MPhil, Oxford; BA in Philosophy, Westmont College
2) Epistemology, Ethics, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Religion
3) *The Consolation of Philosophy* would be appropriate, but I'm not sure it's really that consoling. Maybe Achille Varzi's poem in *Analysis*, "The Naming of Facts."
4) Science fiction, board games, tennis, and self-deception about the playoff chances of San Diego sports teams

Graduate Updates

Recent Publications

Ben Bronner, "The Total Artificial Heart and the Dilemma of Deactivation," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 26:4 (2016)

Sam Carter, "Probability Judgements about Indicative Conditionals," *Logic Journal of IGPL* 24:4 (2016)

Sam Carter, "The Dynamics of Loose Talk," *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung* 21 (2016)

Eddy Keming Chen, "Our Fundamental Physical Space: An Essay on the Metaphysics of the Wave Function," *The Journal of Philosophy* (forthcoming)

Georgi Gardiner, "The Burden of Proof and Statistical Evidence," *Routledge Handbook of Applied Epistemology*, eds. David Coady and James Chase (forthcoming).

Simon Goldstein and Bob Beddor, "Believing Epistemic Contradictions," *The Review of Symbolic Logic* (forthcoming)

Tyler John et. al, "How to Allocate Scarce Health Care Resources without Discriminating Against People with Disabilities,"*Economics in Philosophy* (2016).

Recent Presentations

Laura Callahan

"Explaining Moral Testimony: A Different Appeal to Understanding," presented at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association (July 2016)

Sam Carter

1. "The Dynamics of Loose Talk," University of Edinburgh
2. "Vagueness without Sorites Susceptability," 1st Rutgers-Bochum Conference, Rutgers
3. "Probability Judgements about Conditionals," Hampshire College
4. "Solving Frege's Puzzle," UMass-Amherst
5. "Disjunction and Distributivity," w/ Simon Goldstein, Conditionals at the Crossroads, University of Konstanz

A Letter from the Chair

Dear Rutgers Philosophy Community,

It has been another amazing few months for the Rutgers Philosophy Department. Our undergraduates continue to be extraordinarily active in their classes, with the Philosophy Club, running our undergraduate journal, Arête, and so on. Our graduate students continue to participate in national and international conferences, to publish in top journals, and to be the lifeblood of our Department on countless fronts. Likewise, our faculty members continue to serve as keynote speakers worldwide, to rack up national and international awards and recognition, and to publish cutting edge work that is the subject of conference papers, journal articles, and graduate seminars around the globe.

Last Fall, I had the distinct honor of representing Rutgers University and the Philosophy Department as part of an International Forum Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Renmin School of Philosophy, in China. You will be pleased to know that the presenter of my talk started out by noting that I was Chair of the world's top Philosophy Department—until, glancing around the room, he recognized that representatives of Oxford and Princeton were also in the room! Not wishing to offend, he quickly turned to me and asked whether *I* thought that Rutgers was the first, second, or third best Department in the world. I declined to answer his question. But *you* all know what I think!

This Fall's departmental highlights included *A Day of Revolutionary Thinking in Philosophy*, a one day conference that was part of the celebration of Rutgers's 250 Anniversary. The conference was headlined by three of our many distinguished Philosophy alumni who have gone on to make their own marks in our profession: Sarah-Jane Leslie, Class of 1943 Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University (RC '02); Paul Pietroski, Professor of Philosophy and Linguistics, University of Maryland (RC '86); and Robin Jeshion, Professor of Philosophy, University of Southern California (DC '86). Unsurprisingly, our former undergraduate majors did us proud!

Another highlight of the Fall was the successful launch of the Rutgers Lectures in Philosophy Series. The Series aims to annually bring to Rutgers some of world's leading philosophers to present a series of three original lectures that will be subsequently published in a special book series by Oxford University Press. Our first speaker in the Series

Graduate Updates

Recent Presentations (continued)

Eddy Keming Chen

1. "An Intrinsic Formulation of Quantum Mechanics: Progress in the Nominalistic Program," Bristol Center for Science and Philosophy

2. "Being Indifferent Towards the Past: Some Puzzles," University of Bristol

Simon Goldstein

1. "Generalized Update Semantics"
   - PhLing Talk, Northwestern University
   - Northern Illinois Graduate Conference

2. "Disjunction and Distributivity," w/Sam Carter, Conditionals at the Crossroads, University of Konstanz

3. "Conditional Excluded Middle and Might Conditionals," Conditionals at the Crossroads, University of Konstanz

4. "A Dynamic Theory of Vagueness," 1st Rutgers-Bochum Workshop, Rutgers

Beth Henzel

1. "A Theory of Counterfactuals for Torts," Sixth Annual Yale Law School Doctoral Scholarship Conference

2. "Constructive 'Consent': A Problematic Fiction," Charles Widger School of Law, Villanova University

Tyler John

"First-come, First-served?" w/ Joseph Millum, the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities (Oct. 2016)

Christopher Willard-Kyle

"Relinquishing Divine Knowledge"
- Society of Christian Philosophers: Eastern Regional Conference, Rutgers
- Christian-Muslim Dialogue Workshop, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

A Letter from the Chair (continued from previous page)

was Kit Fine (NYU), who delivered three stimulating lectures on Vagueness, held a workshop with our graduate students and faculty, and had a special lunch meeting with our undergraduates. Future speakers in the Series include: Sir Richard Sorabji (Oxford University, Fall 2017), Robert Stalnaker (MIT, Fall 2018), Jeff McMahan (Oxford University, Fall 2019), Béatrice Longuenesse (NYU, Fall 2020) and Martha C. Nussbaum (The University of Chicago, Fall 2021).

On the fundraising front, last Spring's Fundraiser honoring Peter Klein and others to benefit graduate and undergraduates students netted contributions totaling $19,656. In addition, the Class of 1970, spearheaded by Robert McGarvey, generously contributed $12,000 to sustain the Class of 1970 Lecture Series, which is totally run by undergraduates. Best of all, the Philosophy Department received an anonymous donation of $50,000 to be used for the benefit of our graduate students. To everyone who contributed in these ways, the undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty express our deep appreciation.

Unfortunately, I have some sad news to pass along. Derek Parfit, a regular Rutgers Visiting Professor since 2005, passed away, unexpectedly, on Jan. 1. Derek was one of the world's great philosophers, and he deeply touched the lives of many Rutgers graduates, undergraduates, and faculty. For many of us, Derek was a philosophical inspiration, for some he was an unsurpassed mentor, and for a lucky few, he was an irreplaceable friend. He will be sorely missed. Someone else who will be sorely missed is Bob Matthews. Bob, who has been a fixture at Rutgers since 1974, is retiring at the end of June after 43 years of invaluable contributions to our Department. On behalf of the entire Rutgers community, I wish Bob all the best in his retirement, and hope that he will frequently return to the Department for many years to come.

Let me end this message on a cheerier note. The Rutgers Philosophy Department couldn't be the world-class Department that it is without the strong support of the Rutgers Administration. Over the past year and a half I had the honor of serving on a Rutgers Taskforce on the Humanities. One of the upshots to come out of that Committee was a renewed, and firm, commitment from President Barchi, Chancellor Dick Edwards, Dean of SAS Peter March, and Dean of the Humanities Jimmy Swenson to provide the Philosophy Department with the support that it needs to remain one of the world's greatest philosophy departments. This will involve an ambitious hiring program of numerous new faculty members at the senior level to offset recent and future faculty losses, as well as increased support for our graduate students and undergraduates. So, thanks to President Barchi, Chancellor Edwards, Dean March, and Dean Swenson, the future of the Rutgers Philosophy Department remains bright.

Wishing the entire Rutgers Philosophy Community a happy, healthy, and safe 2017.

Go Rutgers! And Go Rutgers Philosophy!

Tony S. Tanke

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Editors: Ting-An Lin, Christopher Hauser
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