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New Newsletter Format

I hope you enjoy reading about recent happenings in the department in our new, more “newslettery” format. (Now with pictures! And color! And columns!) Any constructive criticism of layout and design should be directed to the department’s crack team of graphic designers (i.e., M. Haug).

From the Department Chair

Greetings! It’s my pleasure to take the reins of producing this newsletter, as the incoming department chair. Thanks to Josh Gert for his excellent leadership as chair for the past three years. And what years they’ve been! To paraphrase a famous movie line (applied to the pandemic instead of organized crime): “Just when we thought we were out, the delta variant pulled us back in!”

Through the mighty efforts of our faculty, staff, and students we’ve been able to continue offering a first-class philosophical education – whether online, over Zoom, and now, back in person on William & Mary’s beautiful campus. It hasn’t always been easy, but we are grateful for the lessons we’ve learned, the resilience we’ve built, and the silver linings (small and large) that the global pandemic has brought.

The department graduated thirty-three majors in either Fall 2020 or Spring or Summer 2021, and I was pleased to read

many of their names as they walked across the stage on May 23, 2021, in Zable Stadium. (Thanks to Josh and the rest of the faculty for recording messages for the virtual departmental ceremony broadcast that weekend!)

That May ceremony doesn’t mark the end of the commencement festivities this year, as we will welcome Spring 2020 graduates to campus for a belated, in-person commencement celebration during Homecoming Weekend, Oct. 7-10, 2021.

Thank you immensely for your generous contributions to the department in the past year, especially the many donations that were made in memory of Alan Fuchs!

We hope that you have weathered the pandemic as well as possible, and we grieve with those of you who have suffered losses. With hope and optimism for brighter days ahead,

-Matt Haug

Diverse Philosophies Club

The Diverse Philosophies Club is open to all students at W&M and is dedicated to discussing valuable ideas in philosophy, with a special emphasis on underrepresented work, new perspectives, and diverse authorship. The Club allows students to pursue their philosophical interests wherever they may take them, including areas beyond the scope of classes typically offered at the College.

The Club met virtually throughout the pandemic, and hosted the 11th Undergraduate Philosophy Conference on April 17th-18th, 2021. Six students presented their work, and the best paper award went to Ibrahim Hansu for his paper, "Dissolving the Combination Problem for Panpsychism." The runner-up was Emily Li for her paper "An Examination of the Theory of Alienation & Existentialist Conception of the Solution to Alienation."

The Club's student co-facilitators for 2021-22 are Gaelan DiPaola and Jake Wasinger. The faculty advisors are Laura Guerrero and Philip Swenson.

Student News - Scholarship and Essay Award Winners



Yuan Dong



Neal Going

The **Jennifer Bosanko Memorial Scholarship Fund** was established by family and friends in memory of Jennifer, who was a philosophy major at William & Mary and a member of the class of 2009. The Bosanko Scholarships support students who, like Jen, demonstrate intellectual curiosity, industriousness, and a well-rounded approach to taking on the world.

In 2020, the Bosanko Scholarships were awarded to **Yuan Dong** and **Neal Going**. Yuan graduated in Spring 2021, double majoring in philosophy and mathematics. She is enrolled in the PhD program in philosophy at Duke University this fall. Neal also graduated in Spring 2021 with a double major in philosophy and gender, sexuality, and women's studies. He is currently Training Coordinator at The Trevor Project and plans to apply to JD programs next fall.

The 2021 Bosanko scholarship(s) will be awarded later this fall.

Jerry Miller Essay Award

The Miller Award is given to a graduating senior philosophy major who, in the judgment of the faculty of the Department of Philosophy, presents the best essay in an annual competition.

In Spring 2021, the Miller Award was won by **Jake Beardsley** for their essay, "Gender Identity as Narrative." In the paper, Jake argues that gender identity is best understood as a mental narrative which organizes a person's memories of the past and expectations for the future.

Jake claims that this account serves the same needs as folk concepts of gender identity while avoiding certain conceptual problems that these folk concepts face (such as vicious circularity).



Jake Beardsley

Jake also argues against some existing accounts of gender identity (such as Jennifer McKittrick's dispositional account and Katharine Jenkins's norm-relative account) as being inadequate for transgender political projects and defends their own account of gender identity by drawing on Theodore Bach's account of genders as historical lineages.



New Undergraduate Philosophy Journal: *Structure*

W&M philosophy students launched a new journal, *Structure*, devoted to issues in metaphysics and ontology. The first issue was co-edited by Jake Beardsley and Jared Jones and features five articles from students from a number of institutions. Submissions were blind-reviewed by a team of undergrads from W&M. You can read the first issue [here!](#)



In Memorium: David H. Jones

David H. Jones, age 89, of Independence, MO passed away on October 6, 2020. David was born December 25, 1930, in Independence to Rachel and Leon Jones. He grew up in Winslow, Arizona, where he finished high school in 1949.

David and Virginia Ann Lipoma of Independence married in 1953. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War, 1951-1954, and then attended the University of Kansas City (now UMKC) where he earned a B.A. in philosophy and religion in 1958.

After earning M.A. and PhD degrees in philosophy from Harvard

David taught at the University of Kansas (1962-67) and at William & Mary (1967-96). He was department chair at W&M in the late 1980s.

A dedicated secular humanist, David's main teaching and research interests were in ethics, social and political philosophy, and philosophy of law.

During the 1980s, he developed a deep interest in holocaust studies and the prevention of genocide, including teaching a course on moral responsibility in the holocaust at William & Mary for a number of years. He also published a book and several professional articles on

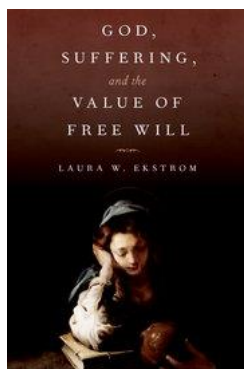


those subjects. In 2001 he gave an invited lecture at an international conference on genocide in Vienna, Austria.

In retirement, he was an active teacher at UMKC, both as an adjunct lecturer in philosophy and as a volunteer instructor in SPARK, the continuing education program of Elderhostel. David is survived by his sister, Jacqueline Hertz, of Winslow, AZ.

Recent Faculty Books

In *God, Suffering, and the Value of Free Will* (Oxford University Press, 2021), **Laura Ekstrom** takes a new look at the issue of God's existence by examining it against the reality of human suffering, bringing to the fore contentious presuppositions concerning agency and value at the core of the matter.



The book argues that, in light of the enormous amount of pain and suffering in the world, much of which seems unfair, unearned, and pointless, it is reasonable to conclude that God does not exist.

Advance praise for the book:

"... quite simply the best and most comprehensive anti-theistic treatment of the problem of evil that I have encountered." (Michael Rea, University of Notre Dame)

In *Why It's Okay to Ignore Politics* (Routledge, 2020), **Christopher Freiman** argues that you are under no obligation to be politically active. Freiman addresses new objections to political abstention as well as old chestnuts ("But what if everyone stopped voting?").

He also synthesizes recent empirical work showing how our political motivations distort our choices and reasoning. Because participating is not

an effective way to do good, Freiman argues that we actually have a moral duty to *disengage* from politics and instead take direct action to make the world a better place.

Advance praise for the book:

"This is a terrific book addressing something of interest to a lot of people. It's clear, fast-paced, compellingly-argued, and delightfully contrarian." (Michael Huemer, University of Colorado, Boulder)



Recent Faculty Papers

- **M. Victoria Costa**, "Education for Civic Virtue or Patriotism?" *Journal of Social Philosophy*
- **Timothy Costelloe**, "Shining Bits of Metal': Money, Property, and the Imagination in Hume's Political Economy," *Social Philosophy and Policy*
- **Paul S. Davies**, "Darwinizing Debunking Arguments," *Ratio*
- **Joshua Gert**, "Adverbialism and Objects," *Philosophical Studies*
- **Jonah Goldwater**, "Paraphrase, Categories, and Ontology," *Analytic Philosophy*
- **Aaron Griffith**, "Presentism, Truthmaking, and the Nature of Truth," *Analytic Philosophy*
- **Laura Guerrero**, "Don't Stop Believing: An Argument Against Buddhist Skepticism," *Comparative Philosophy*
- **Matthew Haug**, "Trait Self-Control, Inhibition, and Executive Functions: Rethinking some Traditional Assumptions," *Neuroethics*
- **Noah Lemos**, "What Is Basic Intrinsic Value?" *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*
- **Philip Swenson**, "Equal Moral Opportunity: A Solution to the Problem of Moral Luck," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*
- **Christopher Tucker**, "The Dual Scale Model of Weighing Reasons," *Nous*
- **Chad Vance**, "Justifying Subsistence Emissions: An Appeal to Causal Impotence," *Journal of Value Inquiry*



Send us your updates!

We're always interested in the latest news from our alumni (from the Olde Guard to the Young). Submit your updates online via [this form](#), or send them to philosophy@wm.edu, and we'll post them on our website or include them in a future newsletter.

Support Philosophy

Contributions from alumni greatly enhance the intellectual life of the department. Click [here](#) to donate to the Philosophy Department's General Expendable Fund, which supports faculty research, student activities (like the Undergraduate Conference), and events like those listed at the right.

Alumni News

- **Marvi Ali ('17)** earned a JD and an MA in sustainability from Wake Forest in May 2020 and passed the Virginia Bar Exam last fall.
- **Ben Glass ('80)** celebrated 25 years of running his own law firm in 2020 and has written several books, the most recent of which is *Play Left Fullback: How Challenging the Status Quo Will Help America's Solo and Small Firm Lawyers Build Better Practices, Be Heroes to their Families, and Restore America's Trust in Lawyers* (Amplify, 2020).
- **Michael P. Hodges ('63)** has taught philosophy at Vanderbilt for five decades and still enjoys discussions with John Lachs, with whom he wrote his thesis at W&M.
- **David Macauley ('84)** is associate professor of Philosophy and Environmental Studies at Penn State, Brandywine. He recently co-edited (with Luke Fischer) *The Seasons: Philosophical, Literary, and Environmental Perspectives* (SUNY Press, 2021).
- **Gregory Pence ('70)** published two books: *Overcoming Addiction* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020) and *Pandemic Bioethics* (Broadview, 2021).
- **Emily Schultz ('12)** started as an associate at Robinson Bradshaw in Chapel Hill, NC and adopted a puppy on New Year's Day.
- **Joseph Campagna ('55)**, age 87, of Reston, VA, died peacefully, surrounded by his loving wife, Juliana, family, and friends, on April 29, 2021. For a full obituary, click [here](#).

Upcoming Department Events

- On September 10, the department will hold its biannual **student/faculty BBQ and volleyball game**.
- **Anand Vaidya** (San Jose State) will give a talk titled "Resisting the Allure of Illusionism" on **Friday, Oct. 1, at 4:00 p.m.** via Zoom.
- The Department will host an **alumni open house** on **Saturday, Oct. 9, at 10:00 a.m.**, as part of Homecoming and Reunion Weekend. The open house will be in the department Common Room/Library in James Blair Hall. We hope to see you there!
- **Jin Park** (American Univ.) will give a talk titled "Philosophy and Power: East-West Encounter in the Formation of Modern East Asian Buddhist Philosophy" on **Friday, Oct. 29, at 3:30 p.m.** via Zoom.
- In Fall 2022, the department will host a conference on [Metaethics and Theism](#) (postponed from Fall 2020). As always, we are grateful for all of your generous donations, especially those of Teresa Thompson ('67) and Michael Foradas ('78), which fund our conferences, workshops, and speakers.



Alumni Newsletter September 2021



W&M

Philosophy

P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795
(757) 221-2716 phone
(757) 221-2712 fax
www.wm.edu/philosophy
philosophy@wm.edu