

Philosophy Exchange

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chair's Letter	1
Graduate Director	1
Undergraduate News	2
Graduate News	2
Undergraduate Spotlight	2
Faculty News	3
Faculty and Grad Spotlights	3
Milestones	4
Events	4

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to our readers! This is the inaugural issue of the Philosophy Department's new biannual newsletter. Our goal is to keep in touch with you, our former students, by letting you know some of the things we are doing. We will tell you about our recent graduates, about books that faculty have published, about lectures that faculty or graduate students have given in various parts of the world, about the undergraduate philosophy club, and the like. Please let us know if we have forgotten anything.

We have launched our departmental Facebook page where you can follow departmental events and, we hope, one another. New plans for the fall include a "Food for Thought" event for our students, which will

involve pizza as well as a debate on a topic of philosophical interest.

On behalf of the department, I wish you the best of luck and happy philosophical reflections!

David Copp, Chair



Graduate Director Elaine Landry

Graduate student interests range from Logic to Philosophy of Language, from Philosophy of Biology to Philosophy of Mathematics, from Cognitive Science to

Ethics, and from Ancient to Contemporary Philosophy. These interests are reflected in a broad range of courses, invited speakers and visitors, and in weekly workshops and

research groups.



Undergraduate News

PHILOSOPHY CLUB

2010 marked the rebirth of the undergraduate Philosophy Club. At the helm are senior [Tommy Dombrowski](#) and junior [Theo Galanakis](#). The club meets weekly in 227 Wellman. Events have included a book club on Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, a talk by Professor G.J. Matthey, and a presentation by

graduate student Robbie Hirsch on "Consistency and Possible Worlds." Follow the club at <http://ucdphilosophyclub.wordpress.com/>

ESSAY CONTEST

The winter of 2011 marked the rebirth of the annual essay contest. Congratulations to winner [Kristopher Baumgartner](#) who earned \$100 for his prize-winning paper "The Dualist Confusion."

Honorable mention and a \$25 gift certificate went to [Travis Kirk](#) for his paper "A Defense of the Possibility of Scientific Laws in Biology."

[Brian Moen](#) presented "A Philosophical Evaluation of The Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission Case" at the 22nd Undergraduate Research Conference in April. David Copp was Brian's faculty sponsor.

"Whether you are a major looking for class advice or just someone who wants to learn more about philosophy, the club is a great way to meet and discuss with others interested in the subject."

*Theo Galanakis,
Class of '12*

"If someone is truly hungry and you don't provide food or money or anything, that's a massive loss. The way to internalize that is to think how much it stinks to be hungry."

*Vadim Keyser, PhD
candidate*

Graduate News

[Christopher Buckels](#) presented "Sensible Particulars in Plato's Phaedo" at the 2011 Fourth Annual West Coast Plato Workshop, at Lewis and Clark College in Portland. The workshop was started four years ago by Professor Jan Szaif (UC Davis) and Prof. Rachana Kamtekar (University of Arizona) at Davis and has been going strong ever since, attracting top scholars from across North

America. [Matt Leonard](#) presented "Burge's Contextual Theory of Truth and the Super-Liar Paradox" at the Logica conference in Hejnice, Czech Republic in June. He also gave the paper in March at Arizona State University and Georgia State University. [Vadim Keyser](#) was interviewed on KTXV (ABC) Sacramento on Feb. 25 on the ethics of panhandling. He noted that many of us make the

mistake of questioning how a person got into a bad situation. Instead, people should think about a cat stuck in a tree. "You're not gonna go to the bottom of the tree and go 'well, I wonder how that cat got up there. Is it because it has some kind of cat psychological disorder?' What we really should be doing is calling the fireman."

Undergraduate Spotlight: Justin Gold

Justin Gold, a double major in philosophy and political science, was appointed 2010-11 Student Assistant to the Chancellor. Justin spent the spring of 2010 interning for congressman Brad Sherman through the UC Davis Washington Program. He served as ASUCD Senator in 2009-

2010, and is active in the Theta Xi Fraternity and the Davis Honors Challenge. Additionally, Justin served on the Campus Union and Recreation board. In 2010, he co-founded The Pantry which provides free food and toiletries to UC Davis students. He was nominated for the 2011

Winslow Outstanding Senior Award for his achievements. Justin graduated this spring.



Faculty News

James Griesemer has been awarded the Herbert A. Young Society Dean's Fellowship for 2011-2014. He gave several papers during the year, including "Scaffolding Development and Culture" at Konrad Lorenz Institute Workshops in Austria and Berlin, July 2010. Cody Gilmore was an invited speaker in February at a workshop on "Temporal Existence and Persistence in Spacetime" in Bonn, Germany. Marina Oshana's book, *The Importance of How We See Ourselves*:

Self-Identity and Responsible Agency, was published in 2010. She also presented papers at the Université de Paris V and in Sweden. G.J. Matthey finished his 34th year of teaching at UC Davis! He participated in the *UC Davis Magazine* article on happiness. Roberta Millstein presented "Darwin's Explanation of Races by Means of Sexual Selection" in Montréal last November, and a paper at the Taiwan Conference on Philosophy of Economics and Biology in March. David Copp gave papers on issues in metaethics and ethics in Paris, Sweden, Switzerland,

and at Cornell and North Carolina. In May 2011, he gave three papers in Brazil. Elaine Landry was invited to present papers on structural realism, and the philosophy of science, at international conferences in Berkeley, in France, and at Notre Dame. She also founded the Philosophy of Mathematics Association. Paul Teller had five papers appear this academic year, including "Robots, Action, and the 'Essential Indexical'" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.



Faculty Spotlight: Adam Sennet



Born and raised in Toronto, Adam completed his undergraduate degree at McGill and his PhD at Rutgers. Adam's research in graduate school focused on issues in the

philosophy of language concerning linguistic structure and context sensitivity. Continuing this work has led to interesting areas, both conceptual and geographical. He gave lectures on linguistic structure in Argentina in March, conditionals and probabilities in June in Australia, and will discuss presuppositions in Beijing in August. Adam describes the opportunity to travel and present work

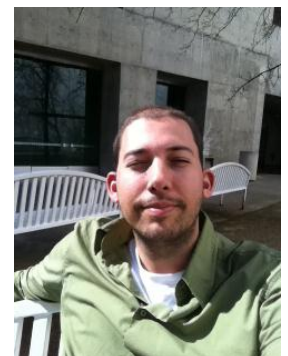
to diverse audiences as invaluable. "I've been profoundly lucky to work in the presence of remarkably intelligent and supportive colleagues at Davis and in the profession at large." The feeling is mutual! In his spare time, Adam enjoys playing guitar a bit too loudly, traveling a bit too much, attending his colleague's seminars, and wasting time playing video games.

Graduate Spotlight: Bert Baumgaertner

Bert hails from Waterloo, Ontario. He earned his BA in philosophy at Wilfrid Laurier University, where he sought to understand the mind by looking at natural language. Bert's dissertation focuses on what we can learn about the mind from a computational and information-theoretical

framework, particularly by looking at vagueness and categorization. He also applies this perspective to issues in philosophical methodology. This summer (2011) Bert has an internship at Rutgers with Matthew Stone, working on an NSF funded project "Collaborative Reference

in Open Domains." Bert will spend the fall 2011 at the Institute for Logic, Language, and Computation in Amsterdam under the guidance of Frank Veltman. Bert loves cooking, especially BBQing, and snowboarding is his second favorite pastime.



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We're on the Web!
[http://www-
philosophy.ucdavis.edu](http://www-philosophy.ucdavis.edu)

2010-11 visiting scholar Norbert
Anwander from Humboldt
University, Berlin.



Support Philosophy

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Your gift can be used for the
enhancement of programs
such as Phil Club, colloquia
and conferences, and
scholarships.

MILESTONES

[Jonathan Dorsey](#) and [Nate Smith](#) defended their dissertations in the spring. Jonathan will begin a visiting position in the philosophy department at Texas Tech University this fall. Congratulations, Dr. Dorsey! Way to go, Dr. Smith! [Jerry Dworkin](#) is retiring after 15 years at UC Davis. [Michael Glanzberg](#) is taking up a position in the philosophy department at Northwestern this fall.

Ten seniors were recognized for their academic achievements at a festive undergraduate reception in June. Citations were made in recognition of outstanding accomplishment in philosophy, and for honors on the basis of cumulative grade point average. Congratulations to [Carlos Aguilar](#), Department Citation and Honors; [Luke Baldwin-Brown](#), Department Citation and Honors; [Alexander Carlin](#), Honors; [Polly Dallas](#), Honors; [Rebecca Dinkel](#), Honors; [Thomas Dombrowski](#), Department Citation and Honors; [Victoria Hamscho](#), Department Citation and Honors; [Andre Lee](#), Department Citation and Honors; [Cory Randolph](#), Department Citation and Honors; and [Michael Saenz](#), Honors.

YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY:

Famous philosophy majors include filmmaker Woody Allen, actor Harrison Ford, billionaire financier George Soros, economist Herbert Simon, NFL quarterback John Elway, novelist Iris Murdoch, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., conservative commentator Pat Buchanan, actor-comedian-musician Steve Martin, and martial-arts expert Bruce Lee.

ALUMNI NEWS

We want to know what our alumni have been doing since leaving UC Davis. Let's share your news! Contact Professor Marina Oshana, moshana@ucdavis.edu

Events

COLLOQUIA

Our 2010-11 colloquia series spanned history of philosophy, philosophy of language, philosophy of science, metaphysics, mathematics, and ethics. Speakers included Frank Lewis (USC), Yuri Balashov (University of Georgia), David McNaughton (Florida State), and Andrea Woody (University of Washington). 2011-12 promises to be just as interesting. Join us! For more information, go to <http://philosophy.ucdavis.edu/collsked.html>

CONFERENCES

In 2011-12 the department will host a conference on self-government and a conference in honor of Jerry Dworkin. Check our webpage for updates. <http://philosophy.ucdavis.edu/index.html>

RESEARCH GROUPS

The Davis Group in Ethics and Related Subjects ([DaGERS](#)) meets weekly. Graduate students and visitors such as Coleen MacNamara (UC Riverside) and Steven Finlay (USC) provide the material for lively discussion. [The](#)

[Griesemer/Millstein Lab](#) meets weekly to discuss topics in the history and philosophy of biology and the philosophy of science. The Lab is a venue for mentoring, collaboration, feedback on works in progress, practice talks, and shared exploration of topics of common interest.

