

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

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DUQUESNE GRADUATE PHILOSOPHY NEWS

Spring 2011 • Volume 4, Issue 1

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Fulbright Scholar Louis Butler (left) and Dr. Patrick Miller, the teacher who inspired him to major in philosophy, sharing a lighter moment with a stuffed toy raccoon, an animal that Dr. Miller says serves as a reminder of Aristotelian philosophy's roots in biology.

Louis Butler, who earned his bachelor's degree in 2011, received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Munich. He will use the scholarship to follow a program of study he designed with a professor at the University of Munich, which focuses on the thinking of the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus and the 19th-century German philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and G.W.F. Hegel. Since his freshman year he has worked closely with Dr. Patrick Miller.



The Philosophy Department welcomes the **Rev. Brian Cronin, C.S.Sp.**, as a visiting associate professor. Fr. Cronin received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston College

and has taught for numerous years at the Spiritan Mission Seminary in Arusha, Tanzania. His primary scholarly work has involved the philosophy of Bernard Lonergan. In addition to teaching classes in the Philosophy Department, he will also serve as our liaison to the Spiritan Mission Seminary in Arusha.



The department continues its collaboration with the Spiritan Missionary Seminary in Arusha, Tanzania.

Kathy Weber, a graduate teaching assistant, will be teaching full time in its undergraduate program this upcoming academic year.

In conjunction with the initiative for teaching in Tanzania and Kenya, we are continuing our **African Book Project**, for which we will accept donations either of money or books. Donations will be sent to our African partners in order to support their libraries. This summer we are sending 12 boxes of donated textbooks.

We welcome any news from alumni. Let us know what you have been doing by contacting Joan Thompson, thompson@duq.edu.

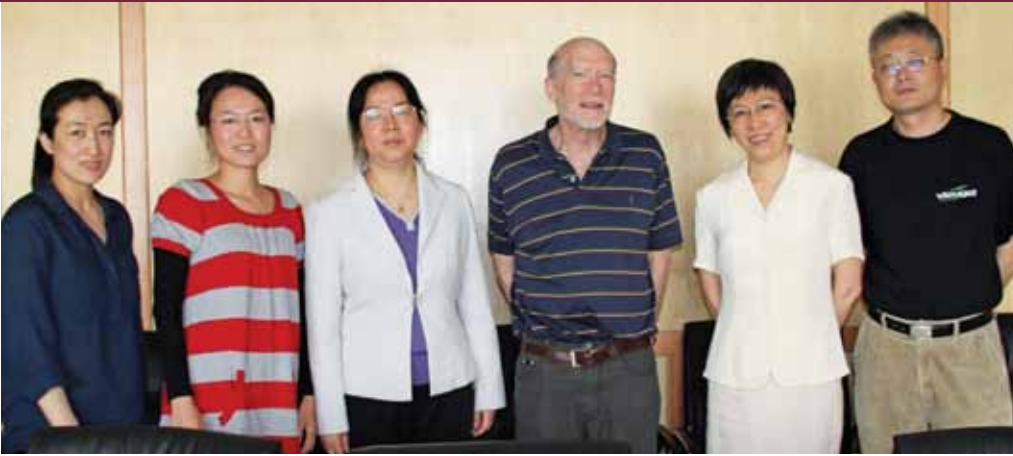
Visit www.duq.edu/philosophy for the latest information about the Philosophy Department.

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SCHOLAR'S LOG

Dr. Tom Rockmore's Asian Journeys



Tom Rockmore at the Chinese Academy of Social Science with, from left, Wang Ge, Yuan Junya, Ou Yangin, Wei Xiaping and Liu Wenxuan.

Since 2005, every spring semester **Dr. Tom Rockmore** has taught graduate courses in Continental Philosophy, with particular emphasis on German Idealism and Marx, at the Institute for Foreign Philosophy at the University of Beijing. Fulbright Scholarships funded two of his trips.

Dr. Rockmore finds the Chinese graduate students to be well prepared, both in English and philosophy, generally. Many have a keen interest in doing further graduate and postgraduate studies abroad, often in the United States. Duquesne University has welcomed three graduate and postgraduate students from China in the last few years: Dr. Zhu Liping (Chongqing University), Yuan Junya (Beijing University) and Dr. Yang Ying (Huaqiao University). Each of them has worked with Dr. Rockmore on their research.

Chinese students appreciate Dr. Rockmore's work and welcome the opportunity to learn Western philosophy, especially Continental

philosophy. In China, Marxism is still the official ideology, and the students, who come from diverse backgrounds, have all faced some restrictions imposed by the government at one time or another. Generally, however, those in the foreign philosophy department are exempt from such restrictions.

In addition to his teaching and directing, Dr. Rockmore lectures both in Beijing and in other Asian universities a variety of philosophical topics. He has given presentations at:

- Beijing Normal University,
- Beijing Ren Min University
- Xiaotong University in Xian,
- Ho Chi Minh Political Academy in Hanoi
- The Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, and Law at the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences of Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku,
- The Marxist School at the University of Beijing,
- The Department of Philosophy at Henan University,
- The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing,
- Shanghai Academy of Sciences

He foresees teaching several more spring semesters in Beijing.

Note: The Philosophy Department is in the process of formalizing an exchange agreement with the University of Beijing.

FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Michael Harrington gave a lecture entitled "Plato's Chora and the Philosophy of Wilderness," at Beijing University in May.

Tom Rockmore published his latest monograph, *Before and After 9/11: A Philosophical Examination of Globalization, Terror, and History*, with Continuum Press in April.

George Yancy has received a book contract for his upcoming monograph, *Look a White!: Philosophical Essays on Whiteness*, with Temple University Press.

Dan Selcer won a NEH Teaching Development Fellowship for 2011–2012. The project is titled Atomic Thought: Philosophy and Science in the 17th Century.

Jennifer Bates received a College NEH award to host a conference on Hegel's *Logic* in the upcoming fall semester. The event, which is scheduled for Oct. 28, 2011, will coincide with her concurrent teaching of a graduate course on the text. Panel participants will be Jay Lampert (University of Guelph), John Russon (University of

Guelph), David Morris (Concordia University) and Tom Rockmore.

Ron Polansky will be the Philosophy Department's interim chair, replacing James Swindal who will serve as acting dean of the McNulty College for the upcoming academic year.

Fred Evans is the author of "Voices of Democracy: Citizenship and Public Art (Millennium Park)," which will be published in *Outrage! Art, Controversy, and Society*, eds. Andrea Ritivoi and Judith Schachter (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

Lanei Rodemeyer was the keynote speaker for the Interdisciplinary Association for Philosophy and Religious Studies (IAPRS) conference at West Chester University of Pennsylvania in April 2010. Her talk was titled, "Living In—and Out—of Time (a Phenomenological Description)."

Patrick Miller presented "Crosswise Christ," a series of posts on *The Immanent Frame*, a blog sponsored by the Social Science Research Council.

Visit www.duq.edu/philosophy for the latest

Spring Dissertation Defenses

Jonathan Mounts in April defended his thesis, "The Salvation of the Damned within the Periphery." He is a self-employed engineer at Mounts Engineering and Surveying. Dr. Harrington directed.

Frank Scalabrino defended his thesis in April. It is titled, "Non-Being and Memory: A Critique of Pure Difference in Derrida and Deleuze." Recently, he has been teaching in the Kent State University system. Dr. Selcer directed.

Grant Julin defended his dissertation, "Kierkegaard's Ethics of Repetition: A Reexamining of the Ethical in the 1843 Authorship" in May. He is in a tenure track position at St. Francis University. Dr. Ron Polansky directed.

Awards

Our graduate student teaching award has recently been named the Charles J. Dougherty Philosophy Graduate Student Teaching Award. Dr. Dougherty, the president of Duquesne University, has graciously given his name to the award, for which a 2011 recipient will be announced in the fall.

Other News

Becky Vartadbeian presented a paper titled "Fugitive Ontology: Alain Badiou's Excrescent Set" at Yale University's School of Architecture in March. She was a participant in Fugitive Geographies, the School of Architecture's interdisciplinary graduate symposium. In addition to architects, the symposium drew geographers and historians as well as literary and media scholars for a day of discussion of the status of the fugitive. More information, including abstracts for each of the papers, can be seen at www.fugitivegeographies.com.

Nathan Eckstrand co-edited with **Christopher Yates** a work titled *Philosophy and the Return of Violence* (Continuum, 2011).

We are pleased to be in the third year of the Ronald M. Polansky Graduate Student Scholarship awards. Recipients for summer 2011 are listed below along with the countries in which they will study.

Nathan Eckstrand (France)	Boram Jeong (France)
Fred Erdman (Germany)	Matt Lovett (Germany)
Jacob Greenstine (Germany)	Kelsey Ward (Germany)
Zach Hamm (France)	Natalie Wilbur (Germany)

Contributions to the Polansky Fund can be made directly to the department: c/o Chair of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, Duquesne University, 600 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15282.

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

Seven students majoring in philosophy received bachelors degrees at the spring 2011 commencement: **Corey Bisbal**, **Louis Butler**, **Ben Cahill**, **Patrick Caruso**, **David Rombold**, **Tim Rothhaar** and **Alek Schrenk**.

SCHOLARS-IN-RESIDENCE

Dr. Richard Rojcewicz has been appointed a scholar-in-residence in the Philosophy Department. His most recent publications include two translations of Heidegger's works—*Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy* (Indiana 2007), and *Phenomenological Interpretation of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research* (Indiana 2008)—and a monograph, *The Gods and Technology: A Reading of Heidegger* (SUNY 2006).



Dr. Yang Ying has arrived for the 2011 calendar year from the Huaqiao University's Philosophy and Social Development Institute in Fujian Province, China. He plans to research Marxism with Dr. Tom Rockmore. His wife and eight-year-old son are residing with him during his stay.

Habip Türker, who originally came to Duquesne from Mardin Artkulu University in Turkey, will return for a year to continue his research on phenomenology and aesthetics, in conjunction with the Silverman Center.

Simon Truwant, from the University of Leuven in Netherlands, will be carrying out graduate research on Heidegger, particularly the ramifications of his debate with Ernst Cassirer.

SILVERMAN PHENOMENOLOGY CENTER

Next year's Phenomenology Symposium is titled "Phenomenology and Its Critics." Speakers will be Bruno Bosteels (Cornell), Claire Colebrook (Penn State), Len Lawlor (Penn State) and Paola Marrati (Johns Hopkins). Details will be available at www.duq.edu/phenomenology.

Jeff McCurry, the director of the Center, will be teaching a Basic Philosophical Question course in the fall of 2011 at the Allegheny County Jail, part of the Judicium Learning Community. Plans are underway to offer more philosophy courses at the jail.

ALUMNI NEWS

In Their Own Words



TED KISIEL

I received an MA in June 1961 and a Ph.D. in Philosophy in June 1962, both awarded by Duquesne U., so that you'll find both my master's thesis (on Heidegger's notion of crisis) and my Ph.D. dissertation (on Heidegger's notion of Ereignis, under Bernard Boelen, on file in your library.

I came into graduate philosophy from a job as nuclear engineer at Westinghouse Atomic Power Division in McKeesport, Pa. I

made the switch after "shopping" through night courses in various humanities at Duquesne since 1953. I studied with Boelen, who turned me on to philosophy with his existentialistic rendering of Heidegger, as well as with visiting professors from Louvain like Franciscan Fr. Leo van Breda, head of the Husserl Archive there.

I began my graduate program in January 1958 with the Rev. Henry J. Koren making me take undergraduate courses in scholastic philosophy in order to catch up. That first year I also met Vincent Vycinas, fresh from studying at Freiburg under Eugen Fink and finalizing his doctoral dissertation on Heidegger's *Earth and Gods*,

(published under this title by Nijhoff in 1970), which I studied intensely in those years as a way of reading up on Heidegger in English.

In addition to Boelen, I took courses in Continental philosophy from the young Al Lingis, fresh from his Ph.D. from Louvain, who made a home in one of the tenement houses on the Bluff facing the Hill District. I also recall being inspired in a course in Early Medieval Philosophy by a very dedicated Mike Strasser, who was instrumental in getting Dorothy Day to come to campus one semester.

My Duquesne years were an exciting, and of course life-changing, time for me.

In the fall term the Philosophy Department will host our fiftieth anniversary as a doctoral degree-granting department. The first phase of the commemoration will take place on Friday, September 9. **Jeffrey Van Davis** will present a documentary film he recently completed on Heidegger, titled *Nur noch ein Gott kann uns retten* (Only A God Can Save Us). Both **Tom Rockmore** and **Ted Kisiel**, appear in the film, and after the presentation they will join Davis in a discussion about the film and the philosophy of Heidegger.

Peter Puccetti, died in February, in Pittsburgh, at age 91. He taught medieval philosophy in our department for nearly 40 years. A link to his obituary in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* can be found at www.duq.edu/philosophy.