**ALUMNI NEWS (CONT.)**

*(Tognazzini cont.)* will be teaching two courses in the William & Mary summer study abroad program in Cambridge, England.

**Jessica Christie Ludescher** (Ph.D., 2007) has just been tenured and promoted to Associate Professor of Business Ethics at Seattle University where she holds a joint appointment in the departments of Management and Philosophy. She does interdisciplinary research, with a focus on sustainability. In the past year, she published a paper entitled “Cartesian Virtue Promises and Challenges of the Catholic Contribution to Sustainability” in the Journal of Catholic Social Thought. In her capacity on the Advisory Board to The Center for Business Ethics, she initiated, planned and produced two public forums at Seattle University. The forums were entitled “Living Proof: Developing the Bullitt Center” and “Corporate Political Spending: Disclosure / Disunity / Dystopia?” The Bullitt Center is the greatest commercial office building in the world, located just blocks from Seattle University. Most recently, she published an Op Ed in the Seattle Times on “Citizens United: Disclosing Corporate Political Spending.” This year, she also helped to found the undergraduate Business Ethics club, brought the Northwest Regional Ethics Bowl to SU, and coached the SU Ethics Team. Jessica has been in an executive mentorship program with Business School advisory board members for the past five years.

**Rico Vitz** (Ph.D., 2006) is Associate Professor at Azusa Pacific University. He recently published an edited volume, *Turning East: Contemporary Philosophers and the Ancient Christian Faith*, to which he also contributed a paper (St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2012). He also published an article on David Hume’s religious psychology in *The Modern Schoolman* (July/October 2011) and has several works forthcoming, including a monograph on Descartes, *Reforming the Art of Living: Nature, Virtue, and Religion in Descartes’s Philosophy* (Springer) and a co-edited volume on the ethics of belief, *Ethics of Belief: Individual and Social* (Oxford).

**Joshua Rust** (Ph.D., 2005) was recently promoted to Associate Professor at Stetson University, FL.

**Matthew Talbert** (Ph.D., 2005) has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at West Virginia University.

**Chris Yeomans** (Ph.D., 2005) is currently an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Purdue University. His book, *Freedom and Reflection: Hegel and the Logic of Agency*, came out from Oxford University Press in 2011 and has been nominated for the 2013 APA Book Prize. Chris will have a Purdue Faculty Fellowship for 2013-2014 to study modern German history.

**Chris Campolo** (Ph.D., 2003) is Chair of the Philosophy Department and teaches in the Classics Program and the Medical Humanities Program at Hendrix College in Arkansas. He is also editor of Heron Tree, an online poetry journal (herontree.com).

**Andrew Eshleman** (Ph.D., 1998) is Chair of the philosophy department at the University of Portland. Most recently, his work has focused on the way accounts of responsibility and freedom often focus on cases of blameworthiness and what we might learn about those topics if we instead shift attention to cases where an agent acts in an exemplary and thus praiseworthy fashion. He presented “Praiseworthiness and Phronetic-Enhanced Freedom” at the Pacific Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association earlier this year.

**Andrew Light** (Ph.D., 1996) is Professor of Philosophy and Public Policy, and Director of the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at George Mason University (GMU), and Senior Fellow and Director of International Climate Policy at the Center for American Progress (CAP) in Washington, D.C. At GMU he leads a group of philosophers applying philosophical tools to public policy research. His own academic work focuses primarily on environmental ethics. In the last year he has presented a dozen papers at various conferences and workshops, including invited presentations at Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, and Stanford, as well as delivering the Weston Lecture at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Recent papers include “Finding a Future for Environmental Ethics,” The Ethics Forum (2013) and “The Death of Restoration?” in Ethical Adaptation to Climate Change (MIT, 2012). At CAP, Andrew leads a team of policy analysts working primarily on climate finance, mitigation of short-lived climate pollutants, and climate negotiations between the U.S., India and China. In the past year he has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives on the EPA budget, led CAP’s delegation to the UN climate negotiations, and organized a “Track II” negotiation in New Delhi on U.S.-India climate and clean energy cooperation. Recent reports include 40x35: A Zero Carbon Target for the World’s Largest Economies (2013).
FROM OUR FACULTY... Group Minds on Ringworld

In the year 2000, let's suppose, humanity completes its greatest construction project ever: Ringworld, a habitable surface as wide as a planet but spanning an entire planetary orbit -- a ring around a neighboring star with 10,000,000,000,000,000 square kilometers of living space. A big place!

Earthly nations send colonists. Once on Ringworld, the colonists form independent nations, free of Earthly control. These nations grow and spread. For sociological reasons, let's suppose, Ringworld nations function best with populations near 100,000,000. Once a nation grows much larger than that, it tends either to fission or to stagnate. Now, what type of nation will be well represented on the surface of Ringworld after ten thousand years?

Although it could play out in various ways, the most straightforward answer seems to be nations that grow fast, then fission, then repeatedly grow again and fission again. Mobility to unpopulated parts of Ringworld, away from competitors, might also be favored. Also, we might expect the most evolutionarily successful nations to have intergenerationally stable developmental resources -- that is, to be such that their fission products tend to develop the same traits that the founding parent nations had, i.e., the very traits that made those parents evolutionarily successful. Otherwise, after a few generations, those nations' fission-produced offspring nations will be outcompeted. We might further imagine that the most successful nations employ eugenics: Their governments select a range of DNA strands containing especially desirable traits, which then serve as the genetic basis of the next generation of their citizens, and the governments that do so with the best eye to maximizing their nations' eventual descendant nations, and that do so stably over the generations, are eventually the nations that are best represented on the Ringworld surface.

We might imagine, too, that as the Ringworld surface becomes more crowded, aggression starts to pay. In response, the competing nations develop protective physical borders, grown using nanotechnology and difficult to penetrate without permission. Nations might also strictly limit immigration as contrary to their eugenic plans. If nations are somewhat mobile -- and we might imagine that gravity (or centrifugal inertia) is light and fusion power plentiful -- they might best compete with each other by moving toward opportunities and away from threats, bringing their citizenry and physical defensive borders along with them. Eventually, these defensive borders might gain appendage-like functionality -- e.g., offensive weaponry and the ability to harvest minerals and sources of power. Once this happens, the majority of individual citizens might become largely sedentary, communicating via radio and microwave signals. And once sedentary, size-reduction might be selected for, to reduce the energetic costs of nation-scale movement, and transmission of essential nutrients between citizens might be achieved by purely mechanical means. Furthermore, once freed of the demands of individual mobility and individual-level reproduction, citizens might start to specialize ever more narrowly in tasks that serve the reproductive interests of the nation -- or at least the nations whose citizens develop in that direction might in the long run outcompete the nations whose citizens do not.

Over time, as individual citizens think and become increasingly specialized, and as the membrane around the nation becomes more functional and more effectively protective of the interior, the overall physical structure of the nation might start to look increasingly like that of what we would call an individual organism that reproduces by fission.

Nations -- at least the evolutionarily most successful ones -- will presumably engage in social intercourse among each other, both cooperatively and competitively. Possibly, some of these nations will evolve such that no single individual citizen is responsible for between-nation communication but rather the communicative efforts arise in a complex way from the citizenry as a whole. If individual citizens become sufficiently small and specialized, and if they learn to communicate with each other non-linguistically (e.g., by direct brain-to-brain stimulation), then it might eventually become the case that no individual citizen can even understand the linguistic communications emitted by her own nation.

A million years passes, during which Earth loses communication with Ringworld. Social pressures on Ringworld favor increasingly sophisticated forms of communication between nations, including the emergence of nation-level art, poetry, song, history, and philosophy -- none of which is comprehensible to the individual citizens of the species of nation that eventually conquers the rest. After these million years, visitors from Earth arrive, and they decide that conscious experience is primarily to be found at the level of nations, not at the level of individual citizens.

Question: At what point in this process did the nations first have nation-level conscious experience?

[Originally posted on The Self Aware Mind (http://selfawaremind.blogspot.com), October 24, 2012]

**Eric Scheringer** (Ph.D., UC Berkeley) has been with the UCR Philosophy Department since 1997. Most of his research explores connections between empirical psychology and philosophy of mind, especially the nature of belief, the accuracy of our judgments about our stream of conscious experience, and the tenous relationship between philosophical ethics and actual moral behavior. He is co-author, with psychologist Russell T. Hartley, of Describing Inner Experience? Proponent Meets Skeptic (2007). He maintains a secondary interest in classical Chinese philosophy.
2012-2013 PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIA

Each year, the department hosts a series of colloquia on various topics in philosophy. This year, our guest speakers included:

October 17th: Matthew McGrath
(Professor of Philosophy, University of Missouri-Columbia)
Interests: metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind.
Title: “Pragmatic Encroachment.”

November 14th: Charles Young
(Professor of Philosophy, Claremont Graduate University)
Interests: ancient Greek philosophy, especially Plato's and Aristotle's ethics.
Title: “Anéntic’s Problem with Justice.”

January 16th: Harry Frankfurt
(Emretius Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University)
Interests: history of modern philosophy, agency, philosophical psychology, ethics, freedom of the will, moral responsibility, care, love, and truth.
Title: “Volitional Rationality and the Necessities of Love.”

April 24th: Sam Rickless
(Professor of Philosophy, UC San Diego)
Interests: early modern philosophy (especially Locke, Berkeley, and Hume), ancient philosophy, ethics, and constitutional law.
Title: “So Close, Yet So Far: Why Solutions to the Closeness Problem for the Doctrine of Double Effect Fall Short.”

May 8th: Aaron James
(Associate Professor of Philosophy, UC Irvine)
Interests: ethics (especially rationalism and the foundations of moral and practical judgment) and political philosophy (especially Rawls’s constructive method).
Title: “Fortshe and Fairness in Global Economic Life.”

In addition to its colloquia, the department also annually hosts the Bernd Magnus Lecture Series. The series was established in 2009 in honor of Emeritus Professor Bernd Magnus, who was well-known for his work on Nietzsche. Past lecturers have been given by Madamame Clark (2009), Robert Pippin (2010), John Richardson (2011), and Brian Latner (2012).

On April 17th, R. Lanier Anderson (Associate Professor of Philosophy, Stanford University) delivered the fifth Bernd Magnus Lecture. Professor Anderson's research has focused on the history of late modern philosophy, with a concentration on Kant and those 19th-century philosophers, including Nietzsche, whom he influenced.

In his presentation, “What is Nietzschean Self?” he drew upon resources from Nietzsche’s moral psychology to develop a conception of the self that splits the difference between the robust Kantian conception and the view of the self as just a bundle of drives.

Also, in April, the guest speakers at the Workshop in Ancient Ethics and Moral Psychology included Marta Jiménez (Emory University), Nady Thaler (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Corinne Garner (Wellesley College), Casey Perrin (UC Irvine), and Matthew Strehl (University of Montana).

2013 APA PACIFIC DIVISION MEETING

A number of our faculty and (current and former) graduate students attended this year’s APA Pacific Division Meeting in San Francisco. Participants included:

Mark Wrathall—presented his paper, “Autonomy, Authenticity, and the Self,” in a symposium on Heidegger. He also chaired the Dewey Lecture for this year’s speaker, Hubert Dreyfus.


Andrews Reath—served as commentator on Tamar Shahar’s “From Passion to Action.”

Howard Wertstein—newest book, The Significance of Religious Experience, was featured in an Author-Meets-Critics session.

John Fischer—chaired a session on Templeton Grant funding and presented this year’s Presidential Address, “The Path of Life.”

Peter Graham—provided critique in an Author-Meets-Critics session on “The Epistemological Spectrum” by David K. Henderson and Terry Horgan.

Megan Stotts—presented her paper, “Conventions, Precedents, and Beliefs: A Lesson from Lewis and Millikan.”

Zachary Bachman—chaired a symposium on compatibilism.

Philip Swenson—presented his paper, “Ability, Forbearance, and Explanatory Dependence.”

Ben Mitchell Yellin—presented “Two Interpretations of Contractualist Moral Agency.”

Felipe Leu—presented “From Modal Skepticism to Modular Empiricism.”
JAYNE GAYLES RETIRES

The UCR Philosophy Department recently hosted a retirement celebration for Jayne Gayles, who retired after 14 years of service to the Campus. Jayne started as a part-time assistant to Dr. Keith Griffin of the Economics Department in 1999. She was promoted to Administrative Assistant III and worked in Economics for several more years.

After a short stint in the Graduate School of Education as a Payroll/Personnel Specialist, she transferred to Philosophy in 2007 as the Management Service Officer (department administrator). Jayne leaves the department at the end of June 2013.

Over 60 friends, family, and co-workers attended the casino themed Retirement Celebration held on June 5th. Jayne was presented with gifts from the Philosophy faculty, students, and staff. Department Chair Andrews Reath, Dr. John Fischer, and several others addressed the gathering, commending Jayne for her warmth, integrity, and dedication to the department. After retirement, Jayne will work part-time for the Immortality Project with John Fischer.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MOST RECENT PHDS!

- 2013
  - JASON GRAY
  - JOHN RAMSEY
  - SAMANTHA MATHERNE

- 2012
  - DANIEL JUSTIN COATES
  - BEN MITCHELL-YELLIN
  - JASON CHANG
  - CHRISTOPHER SCOTT SEVIER
  - JOSHUA HOLLOWELL

UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

We are understandably proud of our undergraduate program! This year, we had 186 Philosophy and 62 Philosophy/Law & Society enrolled in the majors. Two outstanding examples of undergraduate success include:

Melissa Mikall is a current recipient of the CHASS Dean’s Scholarship. In addition to her work with the Albrighton & Schumate law firm, she also interns with Pacific Justice Institute and will attend UC Irvine’s summer Pre-Law program. Melissa is a University Honors student and she serves as an editor for the UC Honor’s journal, Audeamus. In the future she hopes to conduct research in bio-medical ethics under the guidance of Dr. Agnieszka Jaworska.

Michael Rocha graduates this June with a B.A. in Philosophy and a minor in Religious Studies. He has recently been accepted as a candidate for the Priesthood for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Stockton, CA. In preparation for his ordination, Michael will begin graduate work in Theology at St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, CA.

COMING SOON!

- New graduate students will be joining us Fall 2013: Taylor Cyr, Maxwell McCoy, Micaela Quintana, Sam Richards, and Carlos Ruiz.
- UCR will host the Pacific Study Group of the North American Kant Society Conference in November. Robert Adams will be the keynote speaker and he will also present at a colloquium here in the department.
- Alexander Nehamas is scheduled to give the Bernd Magnus Lecture in January 2014.
- Brian Leiter will speak at a colloquium in February 2014.
- John Fischer’s midpoint conference for the Immortality Project takes place in Spring 2014.
Film Review: “The Sunset Limited” (TV 2011). Written by Cormac McCarthy; Directed by Tommy Lee Jones.

White, a melancholic professor, attempts to end his life by jumping in front of a subway train, the Sunset Limited. Black, a religious ex-convict, catches him before he can make his suicidal leap. Black takes White back to his apartment and asks him what has brought him to this point. So begins “The Sunset Limited”, a dramatic and poetic narrative addressing the question: Is life worth living? For White, the answer is no.

White: “If people could see the world for what it truly is, see their lives for what they truly are without dreams and illusions, I don’t believe they could offer the first reason why they should not elect to die as soon as possible.”

Black disagrees. For him, White’s world is dark because he perceives it as such.

Black: “The light is all around you but you don’t see nothing but shadow. And you’re the one causing it. It’s you. You’re the shadow! That’s the point.”

Though easily viewed as a debate between Atheism and Christianity, the film is more richly viewed as the drama of one man attempting to save the life of another suffering from suicidal depression. White’s desire for death is motivated by hopelessness. Hopelessness born out of a sense of life’s absurdity. Absurdity born from a need for meaning and an inability to find any. For White, life has no purpose, meaning, or joy. It is ugly, without value, and will never get better. Black, though invoking God and faith as sources of meaning and value, isn’t attempting to convert White. He’s buying time. If he can keep White long enough maybe he won’t kill himself. Maybe, with enough time, he can find words that will reach White’s heart.

Black: “I look for the words, Professor. I look for the words because I believe that the words is the way to your heart.”

The film is beautifully written, and wonderfully acted, with arguments delivered in words that at times come across as poetry. The portrayal of one person’s concern for another’s well-being, of love for a stranger, even when that love is unwanted, is sincere and sympathetic. Highly recommended.

--Gerardo Rangel Sanchez, Undergraduate Academic Advisor and Graduate Assistant, Department of Philosophy