

The Owl

The St. Olaf Philosophy Department's Newsletter • February 2016

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A Greeting and Introduction to the Department from Charles Taliaferro



Greetings from the Chair!

Our spectacularly beyond-wonderful news this time is the tenure and promotion of three of our members: Professors **Arthur Cunningham**, **Mike Fuerstein**, and **Danny Muñoz-Hutchinson** (see page 3 for news of our Triple Crown). If you visit, come see us in our new location! In early January, the Department of Philosophy moved to the first floor of Bunrock Commons while Holland Hall is being renovated for 18 months. We had a fun farewell brunch-party in December in Holland Hall where majors competed for memorabilia. **Jason Marsh** and **Corliss Swain** have done a brilliant job in shaping our place in the new Holland Hall. We hope you can visit us for the Belgum lectures in April (see page 5).

We hope that all who read this have lives full of the love of wisdom.

If you are alumni be sure to let us know what you are up to!
We post news on our website:
<http://wp.stolaf.edu/philosophy/>

Please send an update to Sue Newland (newlands@stolaf.edu).

Charles Taliaferro, Chair of the Department of Philosophy



Phi Sigma Tau Spring Events

page 2

Interim Abroad

Page 3

Faculty News

page 4

Eunice Belgum Memorial Lectures

page 4

Philosophy Department New Location

page 4

Contact Information

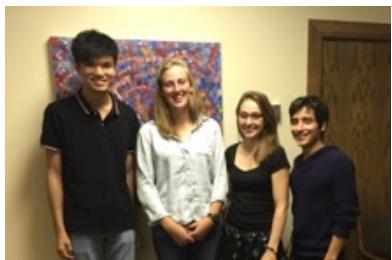
page 4

Donation Request

page 5

Phi Sigma Tau Spring Events

Phi Sigma Tau is excited to be continuing the academic year with several colloquia this spring! This spring, student colloquia will take place on March 10, April 14 and



Left to right: Zhaoqi Hu '17, Meredith Varie '16, Annika Beck '17, Pedro Monque '16

May 5. We expect to have presentations and discussions on social epistemology, bioethics, and ancient philosophy. Last fall and interim we hosted three student colloquia: **Kate Villa** '16 on ethics, **Nick Squires** '16 on epistemology, and **Frances Lentz** '16 on bioethics. Additionally, we organized a public lecture and discussion by Professor **Anthony Rudd**.

Rudd entitled "On the Value of Art: Plato, Kierkegaard and Iris Murdoch." Phi Sigma Tau also

raised funds to sponsor a Colombian participant's scholarship to attend the **Empoderando a Latinoamérica** program facilitated by two PST members, **Pedro Monque** '16 and **Maggie Schenk** '16 during January 2016.

Every St. Olaf student who loves philosophy is welcome! If interested contact Meredith at: varie@stolaf.edu



Interim Abroad



Annika Beck '17

Annika was in Moscow and St. Petersburg studying theater, some of which addressed themes of totalitarianism, the artistic process, romance, and attachment.

Nathan Detweiler '16

During the month of January I was working with an organization that does peace-building work in South Africa. In one of the most violent societies in the world, it was an honor to work with an organization that has a tremendous impact on the lives of high school students in townships. The highlight of my work was developing a fifty-page curriculum for a peer mediation workshop. The internship really solidified many of my vocational aspirations and I cannot wait to graduate and see what the future holds for me!



Pedro Monque '16

Professor Corliss Swain and I developed a CURI project together last summer. We revised and improved the Peace Agency Workshop for **Empoderando a Latinoamerica**, a youth empowerment course that I've been a part of for the last two years. This interim I saw the Peace Agency Workshop in action at the course. I had both the pleasure of seeing my co-facilitators use the curriculum, which they praised for its clarity and depth, and of co-facilitating the workshop myself. I also co-facilitated each of the other four workshops of the course. I'm also happy to announce that I got hired by **Empoderando Juventudes**, the NGO that runs **Empoderando a Latinoamerica**, and will be working for them for a year, starting this fall. To learn more about this project that aims to combine philosophy and social action, contact me at monque@stolaf.edu or visit the website www.empoderandoalatinoamerica.org



FACULTY NEWS

Professor Jeanine Grenberg was a critic of Patrick Frierson's recent book *Kant's Empirical Psychology* in the meeting of the North American Kant Society at the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in January. She will also be the keynote speaker at the Wisconsin Philosophical Society in April, and will speak about Kantian Epistemic Humility.

Professor Gordon Marino has been appointed a member of the Committee on Public Philosophy on the American Philosophical Association's board of officers for a three-year term starting July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019.

Professor Danny Muñoz-Hutchinson presented a paper at the APA meeting in Washington DC entitled "Consciousness and Contemplation in Plotinus." In February he attended, for the second year in a row, the Posse Plus Retreat. This is an annual retreat led by the Posse foundation and hosted by St Olaf's Posse1 and Posse2 scholars, which this year was organized around the theme "Sticks and Stones: Language, Labels, and Triggers."

Professor Mike Fuerstein had a paper accepted for publication in *Social Theory and Practice*, titled "Democratic Experiments: An Affect-Based Interpretation and Defense," and presented a paper titled "New Prospects for Organizational Democracy?" with Julie Battilana (Harvard Business School) at the Society for Progress meeting in London.

Professor Anthony Rudd gave a paper at the Eastern Division of the APA in Washington DC on January 6th arguing that Kierkegaard did not (contrary to the view of Steve Evans a distinguished Kierkegaard scholar and former member of this department) claim that moral obligations depended on divine commands; and that such a view would be incompatible with Kierkegaard's essentially Platonic account of ethical value.

Professor Charles Taliaferro gave talks this fall at Middlebury College, Manchester University (UK), the University of London (where there was a book launch for his co-edited *Ashgate Research Companion for Theological Anthropology*), taught a one day course on Star Wars with Bailey Wheelock '15 at the University of Minnesota, and in April will be giving a lecture on Platonism at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität in Münster, Germany.

His edited anthology, *Environmental Ethics: Contemporary Perspectives* was published in February. He co-authored entries on fallacies with **Kate Villa** '16, and three chapters in two books with **Meredith Varie** '16. In May, his co-authored book, *Contemporary Philosophical Theology* will be published by Routledge.

A Philosophical Triple Crown!

It was Professor Grenberg who had the wit to describe the events in our department this February as a Triple Crown, the traditional name for the rare, but brilliant winning of three prestigious events. We are delighted to announce our own Triple Crown with the tenure and promotion of three of us: Arthur Cunningham, Michael Fuerstein, and Danny Munoz-Hutchinson! Arthur joined the department in 2008, whereas Mike and Danny came in 2011. Philosophy has been practiced and taught at St. Olaf College from the beginning, though the Department dates from 1949 when it became independent from the Department of Religion. In our 67 years, we have not had the opportunity to tenure and promote three department members in the same year. This victory stands in sharp contrast to the last time two members of our Department came up for tenure the same year (1984) and both were denied. Looking forward, it is with confidence and delight that we have secured a stable, outstanding set of young, energized professors dedicated to offering our students the very best we have to give.



Arthur Cunningham



Danny Muñoz-Hutchinson



Mike Fuerstein



The artwork of Annika Beck, '17

Our New Space

We moved into our temporary offices at the beginning of January. These are located on the first floor of Buntrock Commons, and will be here until the summer of 2017. Please come by and visit us any time.

As you can see from the photos below, it is really quite comfortable!

Annika Beck '17 loaned some of her artwork to the department. This is what she said about it: "If I Have Fun, Do I Get an F? Challenging traditional course goals, I approached my series as a product of curious fun. Constantly asking: "Is this fun?" I created works that demand attention, not necessarily praise."



The Commons room



The Philosophy suite

Future Events

Eunice Belgum Memorial Lectures

The 37th Eunice Belgum Memorial Lectures will be delivered on April 4th and 5th by John Cooper, Henry Putnam University Professor at Princeton University. His lecture series is titled *Ancient Philosophies as a Way of Life*.

Professor Cooper has edited and translated the complete works of Plato as well as *Seneca's Moral and Political Essays*. He is the author of several books, including *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle*; *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory*; *Knowledge, Nature, and the Good: Essays on Ancient Philosophy and Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus*.



More details regarding the Belgum Lecture series can be found on the philosophy department's web site at: <http://wp.stolaf.edu/philosophy/eunice-belgium-memorial-lectures-podcasts/>

Check out these Resources from the St. Olaf Philosophy Department!

To stay connected and receive regular updates on activities, check out the St. Olaf Philosophy Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/St-Olaf-Philosophy-565288890180412/?ref=h>

Learn more about the department and the major on the Philosophy Department's web site: <http://wp.stolaf.edu/philosophy/>

Check out stories from St. Olaf Alumni to discover how Philosophy students have used their college training to make the world a better place at: <http://wp.stolaf.edu/philosophy/alumni-profiles/>

In Memoriam

Many alumni and current students who have attended the Eunice Belgum Memorial Lectures in the past will recall the presence of a highly supportive member of the Belgum family: Dorothy Belgum Knight. She took an active role in supporting the series and remained deeply committed to the legacy of Eunice. It is with deep sadness that we mourn her passing on November 4, 2015.

A Call for Help

For nearly 40 years the Belgum family have financially supported the **Eunice Belgum Memorial Lecture** series via an endowment fund. However the endowment, which the Belgum family generously provided, is no longer sufficient to cover the ever-rising costs of these lectures.

In order to continue the lecture series in its current format, the endowment needs to grow by about \$40,000. This is where you, our dear philosophy alumni, come in. Would you be willing to donate ‘to the cause’? Any amount would be gratefully accepted.

Please attach the slip below to your check

Thanking you in advance,

Charles Taliaferro,
Chair, Philosophy department



Donation to Eunice Belgum Memorial Endowment Fund

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount of Donation: \$_____

Please make checks payable to ‘St. Olaf College’, and send to Development Office, St. Olaf College. 1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield, MN 55057.

Thank you.