

DEPARTMENT OF
PHILOSOPHY
AT THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON



MAY 2023

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

It has been a long time since the last Philosophy Newsletter! I'm writing this just as classes end at the end of my first year as chair. As I talk to students in my Philosophy of Law class about their final papers, I'm reminded of how far we come every term, and how many places we go together over the years in Philosophy. I have to say that I have been invigorated by the journey so far.

Our students certainly travel to the far reaches of philosophy as they engage in research with our outstanding faculty. Students continue to write in depth on traditional topics, like Heidegger and Sartre on freedom; on topics of urgent contemporary moral and political concern like the right to access abortion, or whether justice is better served by shifting from a system of retributivism to one that treats crime as a matter of public health; and on very concretely practical questions like how we would decide whether Charleston would be better protected from rising sea-levels by seawall or by salt marshes. Being able to see the variety and excellence of scholarship that our faculty help students to produce has been inspiring.

And our faculty continue to take their work around the world as well as to bring philosophical work to the College community. Christian Coseru, Sheridan Hough, Ewan Kingston and Larry Krasnoff gave talks in South Korea, Denmark, New Zealand, and Germany. At the beginning of year, Manuel Fasko came to Charleston from the University of Basel, Switzerland so that he and Deborah Boyle could explore philosophy written by underrepresented philosophers of the 17th-18th centuries.

Professor Fasko brought a number of us along for the ride when he gave the department's inaugural Vanished Voices lecture on Mary Shepherd's account of the relationship between self and mind. Students were able to join Professors Boyle and Fasko in their seminar "Vanished Voices in the History of Philosophy" in the Spring when we were all joined by Dr. Christia Mercer from Columbia University, who gave the second installment of the Vanished Voices lecture series.

The long tradition of aesthetics and philosophy of art at the College is still running strong. This year CofC hosted The Southern Aesthetics Workshop which brought 35 scholars to campus to discuss 12 works in progress on topics ranging from Buddhist approaches to experiencing horror to trying to figure out what "atmosphere" is in atmospheric paintings. The Aesthetics WorkGroup, had its 100th event this year (!!) since its founding in 2011. We heard public talks about the aesthetic value of "third spaces" (cafes, bars and pubs) and the ontological and legal status of Taylor Swift's re-recordings of her back catalog ("Taylor's Versions"). Next year we'll have a talk on neo-stoicism and emotional expression in early modern French music and an event on the aesthetics of BBQ at John Lewis BBQ. Contemporary aesthetics definitely keeps you on your toes, and everybody is welcome to join in (follow us on Instagram, Twitter or Facebook to keep up)!

Finally, as we think about our future travel together, it is good to remember those who accompanied us, helped us, mentored us along the way and made the trip a joy. We will miss Richard Nunan, whose absence we still feel after two years, and Marty Perlmutter even as we forge ahead on this road they did so much to prepare for us.

- Dr. Jonathan Neufeld

Remembering Marty Perlmutter

DR. LARRY KRASNOFF

Martin Perlmutter, former professor of philosophy and director of Jewish Studies at the College of Charleston, died January 16, 2023, a few months short of his eightieth birthday. Marty was a widely known and much-loved figure on campus and in the Charleston community. He had been ill with leukemia for ten years, but with the help of advanced medical treatments, had been living an active life until the last few months.

Marty came to the College in 1979, from the University of Texas at Austin. Born and raised in New York City, he earned his B.A. from the City University of New York and his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois. His main philosophical interests were in bioethics and philosophy of religion.

He served as chair of the department from 1983 to 1991, significantly raising the profile of the department within the institution and the profession. Under his initiative, the

department started a program and a major in religious studies, which eventually became an independent department. He also helped start a program in Jewish Studies, and became its director in 1991. He eventually gave up his appointment in Philosophy, but continued to teach philosophy courses until his retirement in 2019.

"Marty devoted his life to serving the academic and the Jewish communities, and to building institutions that made those communities stronger and richer."



Photo Credit: College of Charleston/Provided

It was in Jewish Studies that Marty achieved the remarkable institutional successes that built his legacy. He sponsored public events that attracted wide community audiences, such as Sunday brunch lectures, panel discussions with the local rabbis from the three main branches of Judaism, and the Hanukkah celebration in Marion Square – all of which continue today. With community support, he raised a significant endowment for Jewish Studies. He created a non-profit corporation to purchase the site of what was once a dry cleaning shop, and built what is now the Jewish Studies Center. He recruited significantly larger numbers of Jewish students to the College and sponsored a thriving Hillel chapter. Under his supervision, Jewish Studies grew into an independent academic unit with its own faculty lines, a major, and a minor. The kosher/vegan dining facility in the Jewish Center is now the Dr. Martin Perlmutter Dining Hall. But everyone knows it as “Marty’s Place.”

Marty devoted his life to serving the academic and the Jewish communities, and to building institutions that made those communities stronger and richer. Everyone in those communities seemed to know Marty, his wife Jeri, his four children, and eventually his eleven grandchildren. He made everyone part of his family, and he never stopped enjoying making his family bigger. The force of his personality and the institutions he built will long endure in the memories and the lives of everyone who came to know him, and they will enrich generations of students and faculty who have not even yet arrived on our campus.



Photo Credit: College of Charleston/Provided

When I first came to the college, Marty had the office across the hall from mine. He was always so warm and kind. When my daughter was born, I decided to have her in my office with me in the afternoons, so she could nap and I could work. The plan didn't last long, because she rarely napped, and often cried. I would apologize profusely to Marty for the noise, and he would reassure me with a big smile, saying "I love hearing children in the building!" He really meant it, and I was grateful for his understanding and support.

- DR. DEBORAH BOYLE



PHOTO CREDIT: PRISCILLA THOMAS

Experiential Learning in Philosophy

MEET VERO SALIB & CURTIS TEEGAN

The Department of Philosophy has several students who participate in experiential learning ventures. This includes but is not limited to unpaid internships as editorial assistants for philosophical scholarly publications or clerks at law firms, traveling to present research findings at an academic conference, pursuing community activism projects, or learning about the foundations of philosophy while studying abroad.

These types of ventures enrich their knowledge, build their vocational and academic experience, and help them reach their potential. In the previous six years, the Department of Philosophy has had twenty-four students participate in these experiential learning endeavors, which is approximately ten percent of students who majored or minored in Philosophy during those years.

Current Philosophy major, Vero Salib, reflects on their internship as an editorial assistant for *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* (JAAC), "Being the JAAC book review assistant has given me the opportunity to explore a variety of different philosophical books related to aesthetics and delve into all my favorite things about art! The mechanics of JAAC has helped me learn a lot about how to be patient and effective in my research, as well as how to best manage my time."

Another student, Philosophy major, Curtis Teegardin, is interning as a copy editor for the *Journal of the History of Philosophy* as well as for JAAC. He highlights the importance of gaining vocational experience with this internship, "I'm most excited to refine my copy-editing skills in addition to reading philosophical works from numerous publications. This internship will aid me in both my post-graduation endeavors and ending my college career on a high note. I am so beyond grateful to Dr. Neufeld and Dr. Boyle for giving me the opportunity to get exposure in publishing since it is a notoriously hard industry to get into."

Students at the collegiate level are experiencing formative years that will influence important decisions about their future careers and personal endeavors. It is crucial that students have access to opportunities that can help guide their scholarly and professional focus as well as expand their horizons on what is possible for their future. Experiential learning opportunities are one of those tools, and it is a goal of the department to expand these opportunities and make them more accessible to current and future majors and minors.



Vanished Voices

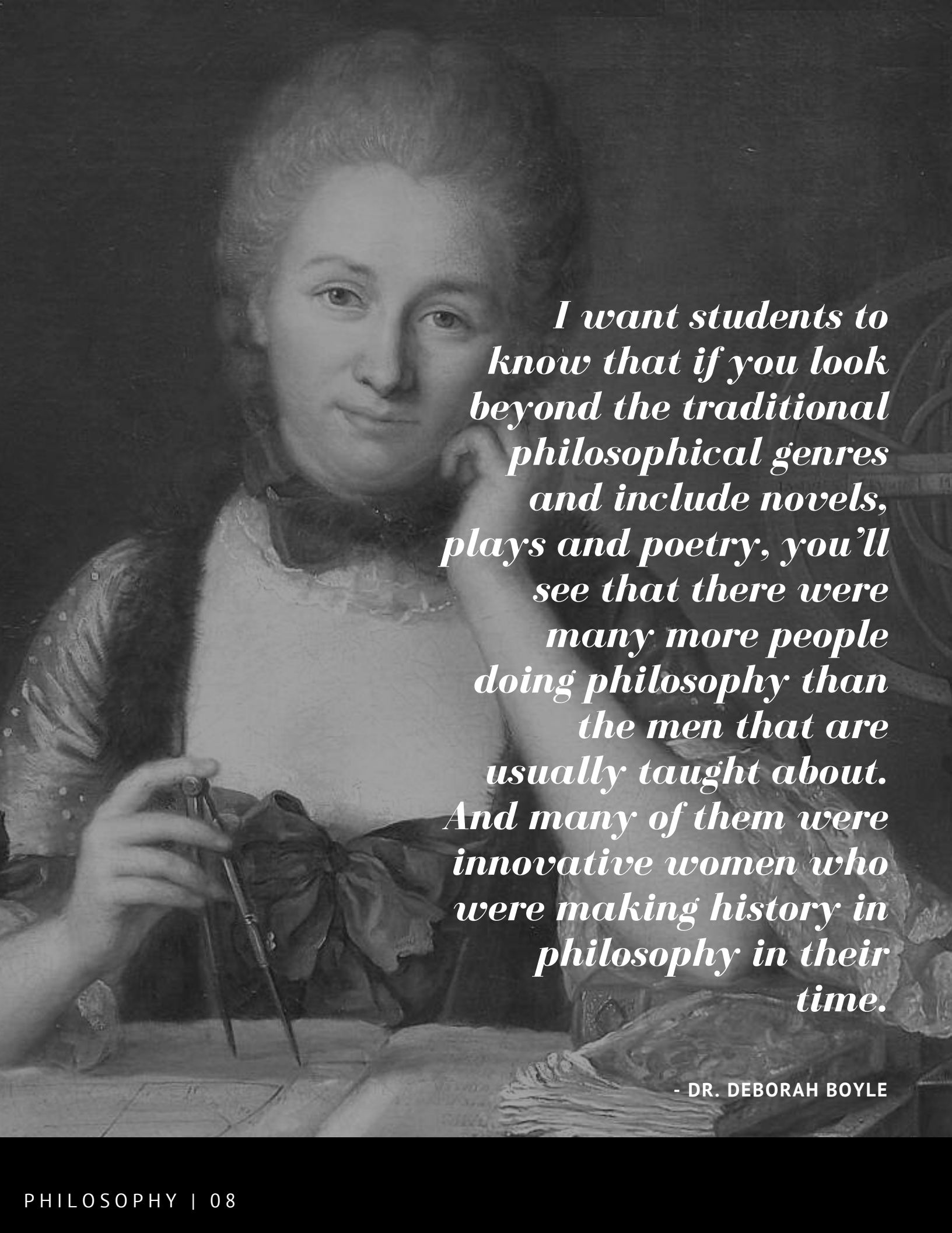
NEW LECTURE SERIES LAUNCHED BY THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Philosophy has launched an exciting new lecture series this academic year: **Vanished Voices**. The inspiration for this new series is described by **Dr. Deborah Boyle**, a trailblazer in the field of women and philosophy, "I want students to know that if you look beyond the traditional philosophical genres and include novels, plays and poetry, you'll see that there were many more people doing philosophy than the men that are usually taught about. And many of them were innovative women who were making history in philosophy in their time."

Dr. Boyle's professional work has sought to illuminate the marginalized voices in the field of philosophy. From her 2018 book *The Well-Ordered Universe: The Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish* to her recently released *Mary Shepherd: A Guide*, Dr. Boyle has been recontextualizing philosophical history that has often silenced important thinkers.

"It is an excellent initiative by the College of Charleston to support and engage in this cutting-edge endeavor of correcting how we look at the past - and, in doing so, ultimately contribute to a more equitable future."

This academic year, the Vanished Voices Lecture Series held two talks. The first took place in the fall, entitled "**The Complicate Being Self: Mary Shepherd and the Difference Between Self and Mind**," and was presented by the department's visiting assistant professor, **Dr. Manuel Fasko**. . Reflecting on his guest lecture and the importance of this series, he says, "It was a pleasure and honor to open the 'Vanished Voices Lecture Series' at College of Charleston, which was well attended by faculty and students alike. It is great to see that College of Charleston is participating and



I want students to know that if you look beyond the traditional philosophical genres and include novels, plays and poetry, you'll see that there were many more people doing philosophy than the men that are usually taught about. And many of them were innovative women who were making history in philosophy in their time.

- DR. DEBORAH BOYLE

promoting the effort to right this wrong. Female thinkers have been part of philosophy since its inception. Their contributions were systematically neglected and ignored from the 19th century onwards, when philosophy became the university subject it is today. It has only been relatively recently that scholars have started to recover these vanished voices and incorporate them in their research and teaching. This is an effort that is ongoing. Thus, it is an excellent initiative by the College of Charleston to support and engage in this cutting-edge endeavor of correcting how we look at the past – and, in doing so, ultimately contribute to a more equitable future.”

The second guest lecture, “**Demons, Doubts, and the Struggles of Knowing**,” was presented by **Dr. Christia Mercer**, Gustave M. Berne Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University. Professor Mercer suggested that, while the contributions of early modern women philosophers to the development of modern thought is now widely acknowledged, late medieval women’s influence has yet to be reckoned with. In a wide ranging, and art-filled (!) talk, Professor Mercer showed how Teresa of Ávila’s arguments about achieving clear and distinct ideas influence Descartes and how philosophers need to be more sensitive to a variety of ways philosophy has been done throughout history.

Planning has already begun on the next Vanished Voices Lecture that will be held in Fall 2023 at the college. The focus will be on the African philosopher **Anton Wilhelm Amo** who was active in northern Europe in the 18th Century. Amo taught at the University of Halle, then at the University of Jena before an increasingly racist culture forced him to

leave. In that time he wrote two philosophical books whose significance has only recently been re-recognized. Berlin initiated a decolonization campaign and in 2020 renamed the street, Mohrenstraße, to Anton-Wilhelm-Amo-Straße in Amo’s honor. This guest lecture will be a collaborative event with the Department of German at the College.

In addition to the lecture series, Dr. Boyle crafted a special topics course with visiting professor, Dr. Manuel Fasko, this spring – Recovering Vanished Voices: Women Philosophers of the 17th-19th Centuries. The course confronts the established androcentric narrative of the history of philosophy and draws from works by women philosophers such as Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673), Anne Conway (1631-1679), Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648–95), Mary Astell (1666–1731), Emilie du Châtelet (1706–1749), Mary Shepherd (1777–1847), Sojourner Truth (c.1797–1883), or Constance Naden (1858-1889). Studying these thinkers will lead to discussions on their contributions to well-known philosophical problems such as the mind-body-problem or raise new questions, such as the role of women in philosophy or society more generally. The course aims for students to become a part of the effort to let these previously vanished voices be heard, thereby changing the way we look at the past, and, in doing so, ultimately shaping the future.

We look forward to sharing this valuable and ongoing work in the history of philosophy!

Supporting the Vanished Voices Lecture Series is Vital to:

- establishing a lecture series fund to host guest speakers focusing on marginalized philosophers throughout history
- supporting and sharing the excitement of new and expanding philosophical history with the CofC campus and Charleston communities



Make a
Gift Here





Photo Credit: Priscilla Thomas

Alumni Spotlight

DR. JAVIER GOMEZ-LAVIN

It was as a philosophy major at CofC that I began to foster and develop an interdisciplinary set of skills: from a careful attention to the structure of the arguments that frame pressing issues in today's world, to learning how to bring cutting-edge neuroscientific research to bear on thorny puzzles at the heart of our understanding of our own minds.

Philosophy is a discipline that encourages and teaches students to think well, broadly, and creatively, helping students forge new paths when tackling the kinds of problems posed by our changing technological and social landscapes. It's a focus on those skills and questions that we've brought into the ground floor as we've developed our inaugural BA in AI program, housed within the Philosophy Department here at Purdue where I am now an Assistant Professor.

We hope to prepare students to solve the unique challenges posed by the proliferation of artificial intelligence in our day to day lives by equipping students with the critical thinking skills central to a good philosophical education and allowing them to develop a mastery of these technologies by featuring them across all of our courses, such as our Introduction to Philosophy through Videogames course that I launched this past Fall semester.

Intro to Philosophy Through Videogames

Course Description:

This course assumes that had Socrates been a gamer, his famous line about the value of examining our lives might have gone something more like this: "The unexamined game is not worth playing!" As a course that explores philosophy through video games, it will achieve some of its learning objectives by looking at and analyzing video games that demonstrate, portray, or represent neatly the philosophical questions and problems being addressed. The basic structure of the course will be for students to read selections from the history of philosophy to identify and understand a fundamental philosophical problem. Then, when we meet in class, we will be watching walkthroughs, or gameplays, of these video games to facilitate our discussion of the readings and to better visualize the philosophical problems at hand. To

reduce cost to students beyond the required textbook, the walkthroughs, or gameplays, will be accessed on YouTube and other free access gaming platforms. But of course, this is a philosophy course with video games. Thus, students will occasionally be required to actively play certain video games in class! When active learning through in-class gaming is required, every effort will be made to provide free access to the games for all registered students in the class. And of course, students are welcome to play the games at their leisure if they have access to them – but the required reading will always be prerequisite to playing the games!

In this class, we will be examining some of the most classic topics in philosophy: (a) What is knowledge? (b) Do we have knowledge of the external world? (c) Do we have free will (and what would that look like?)? (d) Is there good reason to believe in the existence of God? (e) What is a right or good action? And, since this is a class with video games, we will even ask what the value of games at all is!



Our Suffering Was In Tents: Reflections on a Year Outside

DR. SHERIDAN HOUGH

Remember the pandemic adage ‘ventilation is our salvation?’ In the fall of 2021 I took this advice very much to heart and opted for a classroom tent located in the courtyard of the School of Science and Mathematics building. At first glance our tent was so cheerful, a wedding or a party about to begin: hey, where are the canapes and champagne? But, no. No hors d’oeuvres, just that oppressive August heat that Charleston does so well. Let me state for the record that I am not an outdoorsy gal, and I like to wear proper professorial attire—the tent, however, said otherwise. Mud was a constant issue, so for the first time ever (ever!) I lectured in running shoes. And—we all adjusted, to the weather, and to the challenge of hearing and being heard in a space not protected from the moods of the environment, from riding lawn mowers, leaf blowers, wood chippers, and every kind of engine noise. Clothing was an issue. August punished us with insects and heat, and January brought that humid cold that sets up home in the bones. One student showed up for class wearing a fringed halter-top—very fetching, but not a great choice in 54 degree weather. When class ended I asked her why that outfit: “I’m from Hawai’i,” she explained. (Another student shared one of her own layers, a thick sweatshirt, so she was fine.)

We also had visitors. Many were welcome—the curious student or parent or neighbor who just wanted to get the latest news on Plato or Descartes—and one morning when President Hsu made a surprise tent appearance; his pep talk was great, and I got a T-shirt as a souvenir. Other visits were not so nice: the dog walkers not respecting our invisible walls, and on one occasion a rat. Yes, a large wharf rat walked up the brick path behind me as my students screamed and pointed—I was confident that it wasn’t Aristotle eliciting their reaction. Our rat was having a leisurely stroll, and wound up at the feet of a student sitting on a bench in the courtyard, headphones on, oblivious to what was happening. “Professor Hough, do something!” Like what? Tackle the rat? (Okay, so I was wearing the right shoes for that job.) No need: the student looked down, the rat looked up, some manner of interspecies communication occurred, and off our rat scampered into the street. Then there was the visit from the Fire Department—I got to the tent and found it roped off with yellow tape that said ‘hazardous materials’—not sure why that choice of tape, but it did feel like a crime scene. My students came up with C.S.I.-like theories about what might have happened in our space. As it turns out, it wasn’t what had gone down in the

tent, but the fact that the tent itself might go down—it wasn’t properly installed, and it had to be refitted. It was. We survived.

Introduction to Philosophy, and the Philosophy of Sex and Gender, all of it conducted without any techne whatsoever: no slide presentations, no amplification, nothing but our voices, our minds, and the commitment to be very present to each other. “Think of Plato’s Academy—sitting outdoors, exchanging ideas, and focusing on the conversation—we are doing this in classic style!” I said, hoping to cheer them up. No cheer necessary!—the classes went well, and our strange setting created a unique pedagogical experience.

There is an unsung heroine in this story: my lectern. I was willing to do without all the usual classroom amenities, but I did want something for my books and lecture notes (yes, the wind blew them all over the place more than once). Shelly Brew, who works in the SSM Dean’s office, was so helpful to me during my year outdoors, and arranged for a lectern to be delivered. It was a humble wooden stand, just right for doing philosophy in the wilderness. And there it sat, from August 2021 to May 2022, patiently waiting for us to arrive each day. Eventually the lectern grew lichen, which only added to its charm. Then I began to worry: that lectern is just sitting out there in the courtyard, where anyone can take it or deface it—it was vulnerable to the elements and of course to the unhappier elements of human nature. I will confess that I became a bit superstitious about it, and was always relieved to see it sitting in its usual place. On our very last day in tent-class, the lectern was there to send us off in grand style. The moment needed some kind of marker, and that’s what I did. Once the last student had left the tent, I turned the lectern over and signed it: my name, the dates, and my thanks for its stalwart companionship. (If you use a lectern, be sure to say hello if you ever wind up with mine).

My tent year was extraordinary, so let me revise my title. Our suffering was not in tents: our time together with philosophy was intense, just as it should always be.





SURF Grant Recipient: Katherine Highfill

With a rising ocean, and changes in rainfall on the horizon, what will best protect communities from natural disasters? Built infrastructure like seawalls, or living features like oyster reefs, or some combination of the two? Furthermore, how do diverse communities go about deciding this question?

Last year, Biology major, Katherine Highfill, in mentorship with Philosophy professor and environmental ethicist Ewan Kingston, pursued these questions with funding from a SURF grant. This richly interdisciplinary research demonstrates the reach and relevance of contemporary philosophy.

Their joint project, "Seawalls or Salt Marshes?: The Political Epistemology of Nature-Based Solutions," examined local expert perspectives on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) proposals to build a seawall around part of the Charleston Peninsula, and researched the extent of debates about green vs gray infrastructure for climate adaptation have made their way into U.S. courts.

The idea for this project came about from the debate between green and grey infrastructure that also happened to be playing out within the City of Charleston as the city was in process of creating climate change adaptation plans. Katherine elaborates on the personal significance of this, "This topic is important to me because it doesn't only impact the people of Charleston, but also people all around the world. It has changed the way I look at resiliency and how I approach environmental/social issues." This intrigue paired with a mentorship with Prof. Kingston led to the creation of their research project.

Highfill interviewed 9 experts and began initial coding of the data using thematic analysis. In addition, they conducted document analysis, primarily on the USACE Feasibility Study of April 2022. For researching the extent of these arguments in the U.S. courts, they analyzed 57 of the most relevant cases about climate change adaptation in

***"It has changed
the way I look
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the Sabin Center Climate Change Case Chart and found that none contained explicit disputes about green vs gray infrastructure.

Though the project is ongoing, it has already helped cultivate new contacts for the pair for potential future research, or the aesthetic assessment tools of the USACE since this project provided them with significant insight into USACE's planning and to green infrastructure in particular. USACE is a major player in environmental and resilience policy and exploring a case study of this depth gave them a better appreciation for the internal structure of this organization. Thanks to this project, Highfill now has firsthand experience in qualitative research. They learned about different approaches to coding, and the potential dynamic interaction between document analysis, quantitative survey data, and in-depth interviews. Reflecting on how far this project has come, Highfill notes, "I hope people look at our project and realize the sheer amount of planning and coordination that goes into climate adaptation projects. There are so many different considerations that range from policy constraints, public input, environmental concerns, etc. Climate adaptation requires an interdisciplinary approach that stretches across multiple organizations and levels of government. There will be agreement and disagreement, but I hope that people can see past that and recognize how Charleston has created a great network of individuals to grow with the project."

Highfill and Prof. Kingston's research was presented in a poster at CofC's Expo 23 on the 13th of April. Following that, they plan to co-author a case study for a climate or environmental policy journal that looks at USACE Seawall proposals in three cities: Norfolk, Charleston, and Miami. Each city has taken a different approach, informed by its particular politics and biogeography. The case study will then zoom in and discuss in depth the case of Charleston, with a focus on how the green vs gray infrastructure debate has played out here. Previously, they presented the negative findings about green and gray infrastructure in climate change adaptation litigation in a brainstorming session for the workshop "The Political and Legal Philosophy of Climate Change Litigation" held as an online workshop hosted by the University of Louvain.

Scholarships like the SURF grant are crucial to student research endeavors. Highfill points out that, "Having scholarship money has allowed me to focus my time and effort on researching sea level rise and climate adaptation. Without the constraints of semester deadlines and off-campus work schedules, I gained the confidence to explore new questions and utilize my own creativity in ways I could not have imagined."

For students considering pursuing a SURF grant for their research in the future, Katherine advises, "For anyone looking to do research with a philosophy faculty member, the biggest thing I recommend is going to office hours. Having a one-on-one conversation about topics you're interested in and asking questions about their research will help immensely. Looking at their past research projects and publications is a great way to spark conversation and talk about potential research questions. Don't be afraid to directly email a faculty member or speak to them in person about your interest in research."

Summer Undergraduate Research with Faculty (SURF)

SURF Grants provide funding to cover student research expenses for projects carried out during the summer. Maximum award amount is \$6500.00.

All SURF forms and reports are available [here](#).

General Guidelines By Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities:

It is imperative that applicants read and follow the guidelines for each specific grant and follow them carefully. All components of the application should be typed, and it is recommended that applicants have their faculty mentor review their application prior to submission. Additionally, the mentor should assist applicants in preparing the budget.

It is recommended that applicants review the PDF, [From One Undergraduate Researcher to Another: A Handy Guide to Working with Humanities & Social Science Professors](#).

SURF grant application deadline is in February of every spring semester.

Student Opportunities Fund Launch

As you can see from Verina's, Curtis's, Javi's and Kat's incredibly diverse philosophical stories, students at the collegiate level are experiencing formative years that will influence important decisions about their future careers and personal endeavors. It is crucial that students have access to opportunities that can help guide their scholarly and professional focus as well as expand their horizons on what is possible for their future. Experiential learning opportunities (ELOs) are one of those tools.

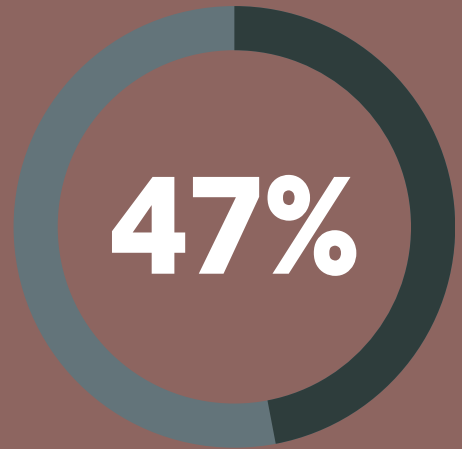
This can include participation in research, an internship, a study abroad program, or a community-based project.

ELOs should not be limited to individuals with disposable funds who are able to pay for expenses related to such pursuits. Scholarship funding can create a way for less financially secure students to access previously unattainable endeavors. This is why the Department of Philosophy has launched a new scholarship resource, the **Philosophy Student Opportunities Fund** (PSOF), to assist its majors and minors in pursuing ELOs. The department is actively fundraising to endow the PSOF. Any gift to the fund will contribute to students' promising futures.

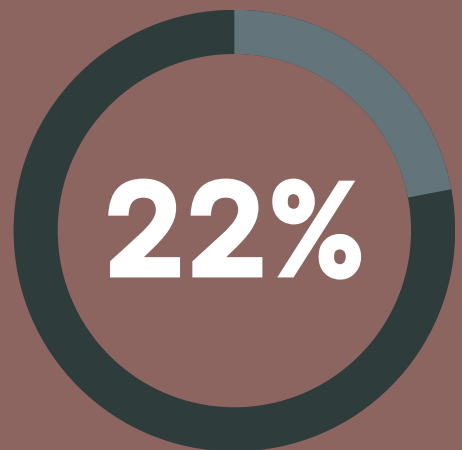
Without the encouragement that these scholarships provided, I don't think I would have sought out other opportunities in philosophy like presenting at undergraduate humanities conferences, conducting research on the impact of philosophy in the College's history, or participating in exciting conversations on aesthetics

- Patrick Wohlscheid
Philosophy Major '22

Most In Need: Low-Income Students



Students working more than 15 hours a week had a grade average of C or lower



Low-income working learners complete a degree within 6 years compared to high-income worker learners, 37%

STUDY CONDUCTED BY GEORGETOWN
UNIVERSITY'S CENTER ON EDUCATION AND THE
WORKFORCE

DC Semester Program for Democracy, Culture, & the Arts

While Washington, DC, is the center of the federal government and its agencies, it is also home to a thriving and diverse arts community. As a political and cultural center of the country and the world, DC has a wide array of non-profit arts organizations, arts advocacy groups, advocacy and other non-governmental groups that partner with the arts, and non-profit media and communications organizations. DC thus provides a number of opportunities for students in the Liberal Arts to gain valuable experience utilizing their training in a variety of cultural organizations.

DCSP's unique focus on Democracy, Culture and the Arts allows students to be more engaged in their education. By combining a DC-focused seminar, independent research, and a full-time internship built around the same topic, students' experiential learning is fully integrated with their academic work in a way that enriches both.

DCSP is run out of the Philosophy department but is open to all majors. The mandatory seminar on Democracy, Culture and the Arts is a part of majors in Arts Management, Philosophy, Political Science, and African American Studies as is the internship.

Curriculum



DCSP 350: DC Seminar on Democracy, Culture and the Arts (3 credits)



DCSP 395: DC Internship or Internship in Home Department (6 credits)



DCSP 399 (Optional): DC Independent Study or Independent Study in Home Department (3 Credits)



In the DC Semester Program, CofC students get a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity not just to learn about how culture and the arts connect to our democracy - they get to make that connection themselves in internships, field trips, and other high impact learning experiences. This is their chance to spend a semester on the cutting-edge of the humanities and social sciences today.

Dr. Matthew Cressler, Co-Director of the DCSP

Faculty News

PROFESSIONAL UPDATES & ACHIEVEMENTS



Deborah Boyle

Deborah Boyle's abridged, modern edition of Margaret Cavendish's *Philosophical Letters* was published by Hackett Publishing in July 2021, and her book *Mary Shepherd: A Guide*

just came out in January 2023 (Oxford University Press). Professor Boyle has recently started researching the philosophical views of a Scottish novelist and theorist, Elizabeth Hamilton (1756–1816). In the past two years, she has published one article on why her novel *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers* is also a philosophical text, and another article on Hamilton's account of sympathy and selfishness. Professor Boyle is currently working on a paper on Hamilton's views on race. In July 2020, she became editor of the *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (the first woman editor in the journal's 60-year history).



Christian Coseru

Christian Coseru's recent work since 2022 includes an article in *Analysis*, "Can Global Antirealism withstand the Enactivist Challenge," a chapter in the *Routledge*

Handbook on the Philosophy of Meditation, "Consciousness, Content, and Cognitive Attenuation: A Neurophenomenological Perspective," and another chapter, "Consciousness, Physicalism, and the Problem of Mental Causation." Professor Coseru has also edited a volume, *Reasons and Empty Persons: Mind, Metaphysics, and Morality: Essays in Honor of Mark Siderits* and is working on a second monograph on epistemic feelings, tentatively titled *Sense, Self-Awareness, and Subjectivity*. Finally, his introduction to Buddhist philosophy of mind, titled *Moments of Consciousness* is under contract with OUP.



Todd Grantham

Todd Grantham is serving a three year term as a "Faculty Fellow" for the Honors College. In this role, he is particularly enjoying teaching a new course on the theme of

human nature. The course examines the idea of human nature from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (anthropology, psychology, evolutionary biology, and philosophy). It's a fun way to explore a perennial philosophical topic alongside some fascinating empirical work. He is also working on a new paper about scientific realism in the historical sciences, such as paleontology.



Manuel Fasko

Dr. Manuel Fasko is from the University of Basel (Switzerland) and is currently holding a position as visiting research professor at the college until the end of summer in 2023

(funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation). He is here to work with Prof. Deborah Boyle – a world-renowned expert on the Scottish philosopher Mary Shepherd (1777–1847) – on his research project on Shepherd's metaphysics (of the mind). While here, he is doing research on this project with aim of getting a book proposal ready and to teach a course per semester.

In the fall of 2022, Dr. Fasko taught Phil 101, which he considered a great pleasure and an enriching cross-cultural experience. This spring he is co-teaching a course on Women philosophers with Dr. Deborah Boyle called "Recovering Vanished Voices". This course ties in with the currently ongoing efforts at the philosophy department to further the cause of Early Modern canon expansion – another cornerstone of which is the new "Vanishing Voices" speaker series; which, he had the honor of opening last semester with a talk on Mary Shepherd's understanding of the difference between self and mind.

He is grateful to the department for all the support he has received and is excited to be here in such an intellectually stimulating and vibrant community of philosophers and students of philosophy.



Scott Hemmenway

Scott Hemmenway is primarily interested in the philosophy of Plato, especially the literary and political dimensions of his dialogues. Before joining the faculty at the

College of Charleston, he had a 29-year career as a tenured professor at a small liberal arts college in the Midwest.

He also enjoys teaching courses in Ancient Greek for the Classics Department, sailing in Charleston Harbor, and playing in two music ensembles: cello in the College of Charleston Orchestra and viola da gamba in the renaissance consort Charles Towne Musicke.



Sheridan Hough

After the 2015 publication of *Kierkegaard's Dancing Tax Collector: Faith, Finitude and Silence*, Sheridan Hough has continued writing in a number of genres. Her play,

Time Sensitive, received its premier in a staged reading this spring at C of C. Meanwhile, Professor Hough continues to broaden her philosophical writing on Kierkegaard. Her chapter "Kierkegaard, Confucius, and the Intersubjective Dance" will appear in the edited volume *Selfhood, Otherness, and Cultivation: Phenomenology and Chinese Philosophy*. Professor Hough continues to deliver lectures around the world. In the Fall of 2022, she delivered an invited lecture at the Søren Kierkegaard Centre Annual Conference at Copenhagen entitled "What is the Happiest Life? Some Observations from Quidam, Johannes de silentio, and a Sixteen-Year-Old Girl (Me)"; she also participated in a panel at the American Academy of Religion Conference ("When Whiteness is God': A Conversation Between Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling and Toni Morrison's Beloved.")



Thomas Nadelhoffer

Since 2020, Thomas Nadelhoffer has published ten articles, seven book chapters, and has been included in two edited volumes.

In Fall 2021, Professor Nadelhoffer launched the Agency and Responsibility Research Group (ARRG)—a group of philosophers and psychologists from around the world who meet online using Zoom for publicly accessible talks, round-table discussions, and workshops. ARRG also has a group blog, a YouTube page, and a Twitter page. He created all of these online platforms for ARRG and is solely responsible for organizing and hosting all of the events. ARRG has already hosted several talks by some of the leading researchers in the field: Cory Clark (University of Pennsylvania), John Martin Fischer (UC Riverside), Christian List (LMU Munich), Dana Nelkin (UC San Diego), Derk Pereboom (Cornell), and Carolina Sartorio (Rutgers). Professor Nadelhoffer is committed to making this a vehicle for connecting undergraduates, graduate students, junior and senior researchers, and the public more generally.

In Fall 2022, he attained full professor at College of Charleston.

In Spring 2023, Professor Nadelhoffer organized the first Moral Psychology Research Group (MPRG) virtual conference. The MPRG consists of a group of humanists and scientists from universities across the U.S. and Canada. It was created to foster collaborative interdisciplinary research on morality in the mind, brain, and behavior. On March 3rd and 4th, the MPRG will host an online conference that aims to bring together leading junior and senior philosophers and psychologists to share their research with MPRG group members and with the public.



Ewan Kingston

Ewan Kingston was invited to talk at The Climate Crisis and the Ethics of Flying in October 2022. You can view Professor Kingston's talk here: YouTube

He also had a critical review essay published in the fall of 2022, "Innovation, Deep Decarbonization and Ethics." You can read the essay here: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21550085.2022.2132797>.



Larry Krasnoff

Larry Krasnoff is on sabbatical in 2022-23, completing a book manuscript tentatively titled *Normativity and Practical Justification: A History*. In October 2022, he presented a

paper, "The Many Ends of Natural Law," at a conference on Kant's lectures on political philosophy (Naturrecht Feyerabend), at the University of Groningen, Netherlands. The essay is to appear in a volume on those lectures, from Cambridge University Press.



Jonathan Neufeld

Jonathan Neufeld has been working on a project entitled "Aesthetic Disobedience." This began with an article with that title published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art*

Criticism, and has expanded in recent talks at the ASA, APA, Boston University, and the Smithsonian. "Aesthetic Civil Disobedience" asks what distinctive role art and aesthetic expression might play in acts of civil disobedience and "Aesthetic Public Reasons" argues that deliberative democrats should make room for aesthetic contributions to political deliberation. He has been a Trustee and is currently the chair of the finance committee at the American Society for Aesthetics. This spring, he was startled to discover that, since 2011, he has hosted 100 Aesthetics WorkGroup events, including two conferences, at CofC.

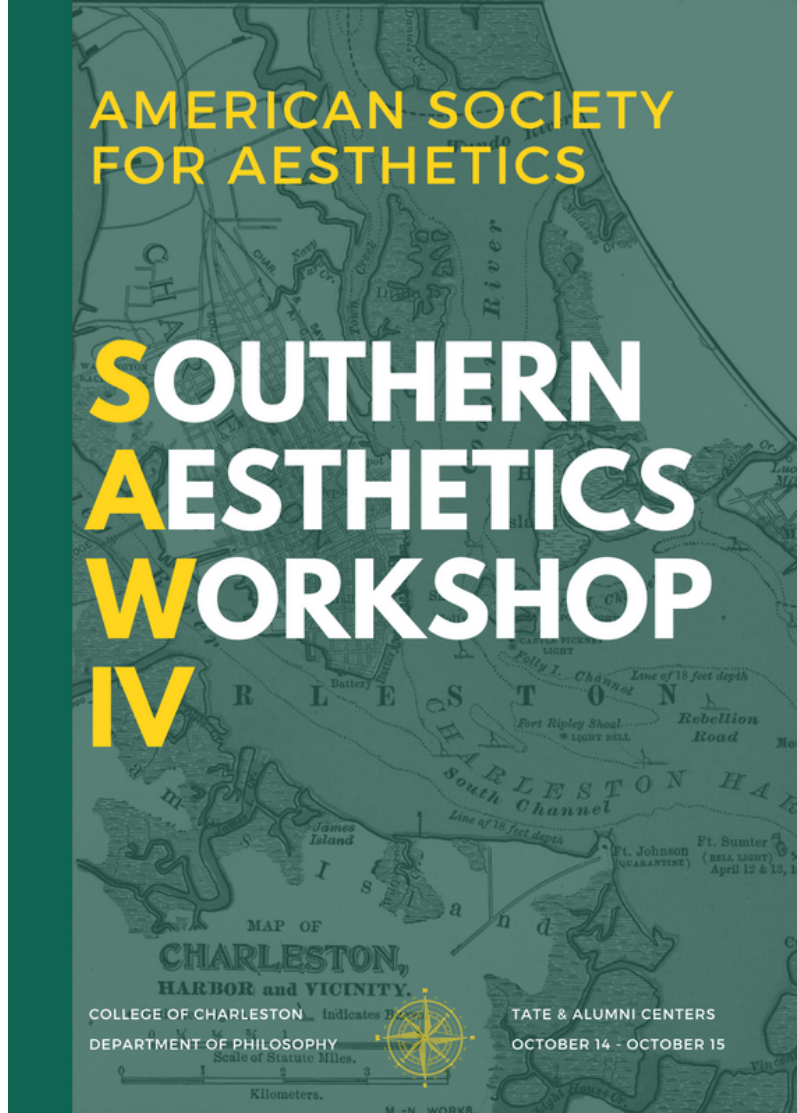
SAW IV

SOUTHERN AESTHETICS WORKSHOP COMES TO CHARLESTON

The Aesthetics WorkGroup, along with the Department of Philosophy, hosted the Fourth Annual Southern Aesthetics Workshop, affectionately known as "SAW IV!!!" (this is to be said in a mock-menacing horror movie announcer voice) the weekend of October 14-15 in 2022.

SAW IV brought an extraordinary group of 35 scholars together to talk about a variety of topics in aesthetics. Twelve scholars—from graduate students to full professors—presented their works in progress on wide range of topics, including reimagining beauty through fat vanity projects, atmosphere in painting, lingering aesthetic effects, interpretation, marriage in film, cringe, aesthetic motivations, the aesthetics of food, the Rothko Chapel, aesthetic reactive attitudes, and Buddhist approaches to experiencing horror films. Marcus Amaker, the first Poet Laureate of Charleston, was the keynote speaker.

Each presentation had two commentators, so discussion was lively. Participants came from Auburn; CoFC; Florida International University; Furman; Georgetown; the Universities of Georgia, Louisville, South Carolina, South Florida and Texas; and Warren Wilson College. Students in Jonathan Neufeld's Aesthetics class read three papers in advance and came to the conference to meet the authors. As a perfect end to a weekend of aesthetics, visitors enjoyed the opening of Charleston oyster season at Bowens Island!



ICYMI: AWG Lectures 22-23

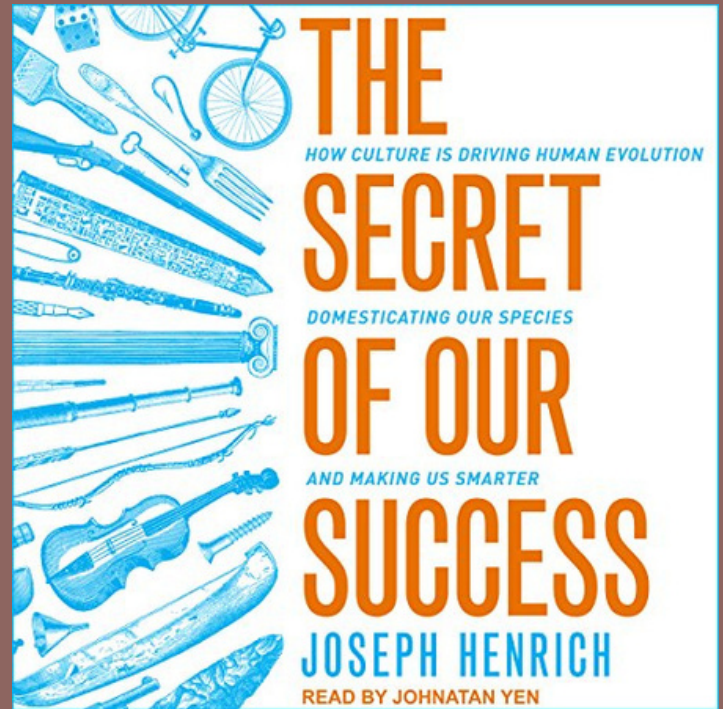
Taylor Swift & The Philosophy of Re-Recording
In 2019, Taylor Swift began producing near-duplicate re-recordings of her first six studio albums. One question these so-called "Taylor's Versions" raise is whether they count as mere instances of the original albums, similar to how my copy of Emma and yours are instances of the same novel; or whether they are instead distinct from the originals, similar to how the many film and television adaptations of Emma are distinct works of art based on the same story? Polite suggested that Taylor's Versions are distinct from the original albums and explored what this tells us about the nature of recorded music.

Aesthetics of Cafes, Bars, and Pubs

Aaron Meskin presented his first installment of what he describes as an "aesthetics of going out." In particular, he talked about the significance of the aesthetic dimensions of the places where we go out, with a special emphasis on so-called "third places" such as cafes, bars and pubs. Meskin suggested that the aesthetic aspects of these places have been unjustifiably neglected and that the contribution of such places to human flourishing is dependent, at least in part, on their aesthetic character.

Joseph Henrich, Human Nature, and The Secret of our Success

This spring, Todd Grantham gave a lecture on campus entitled "Joseph Henrich, Human Nature, and The Secret of our Success." Historically, human nature has been understood as the "essence" of human kind: a set of properties shared by all and only humans. But from an evolutionary point of view, it is highly unlikely that our species has an essence in this sense. This realization has led many researchers to abandon the idea of human nature all together. Grantham examined whether Henrich's theory can provide a more promising way to conceptualize human nature. [As a side note: he recommends Henrich's Secret of our Success (2016) to philosophy alumni. It offers a rich and interdisciplinary account of human nature, grounded in theories of gene-culture co-evolution.]




Fall 2023 Course Highlights

THERE IS STILL TIME TO ENROLL!

PHIL 201 | FALL 2023

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

CRN 10408 | TR 1:40-2:55
PROF. JENNIFER BAKER



In this course, students will read (in translation) from the works of Plato, Aristotle, Epictetus, Seneca, and Galen. We study the Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Epicurean accounts of moral psychology, epistemology, ethical theory, politics and justice. We end with Platonic metaphysics. Students are expected to engage with the ideas of ancient philosophers philosophically, identifying flaws and ideas for improvement in arguments we reconstruct.

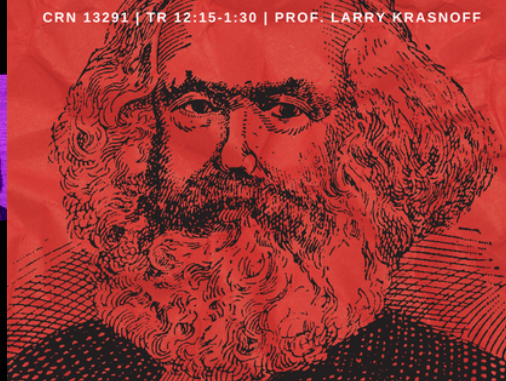
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PHILOSOPHY 252 | FALL 2023

MARXISM

CRN 13291 | TR 12:15-1:30 | PROF. LARRY KRASNOFF

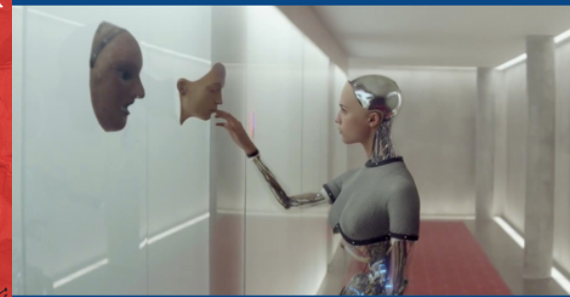


A STUDY OF THE MARXIST INTELLECTUAL TRADITION, STARTING WITH ITS ANTECEDENTS, PROCEEDING ON TO MARX'S OWN WRITINGS, AND FINISHING WITH THE WORK OF HIS SUCCESSORS. OUR MAIN TASK WILL BE TO IDENTIFY THE ESSENTIAL THEORETICAL FEATURES OF MARX'S ANALYSIS OF CAPITALISM, SO THAT WE CAN FAIRLY EVALUATE ITS PRACTICAL VALUE BOTH IN ITS TIME AND IN OURS.

PHIL 330

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

CRN 13293 | TR 10:50 - 12:05 | PROF. CHRISTIAN COSERU



Rocks probably don't have minds, but research shows that plants are at least sentient. Do animals have minds? Do computers? In virtue of what does something have a mind? What is the mind? Our main concern in this course is the nature of mind, and the relation between our mind and the physical world. We will reflect on whether having a mind is just a matter of having a brain, on the nature of mental states such as sensations, thoughts, and desires, on the connection between mental states and behavior, and on the nature and character of consciousness.

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