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Philosophy/PPL News

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Faculty, Students and Administrators Gather to Dedicate the New John Arthur Café



Department faculty, current and former students, friends and University administrators including President Lois B. DeFleur joined professors Steve Scalet and Christopher Knapp at the official opening and dedication of the John Arthur Café in the Fine Arts Building on October 3, 2009.

The newly refurbished café honors the memory of the longtime department member, beloved teacher and founder of the program in philosophy, politics and law, who died in 2007. John's legendary dedication to his students and the pleasure he took in philosophical argument over a cup of coffee inspired his wife Amy Shapiro's vision for the unique memorial. "One of the many things I miss so much about John was the constant conversation we had," she says. "Students, too, will doubtless remember the sheer joy that John took in discussing philosophy. It was not just a job, but a vocation. John loved to go to the Triple Cities' finer dining establishments (e.g., Danny's Diner, the Green Owl and Pancho's Pit) and carefully work through arguments with student and colleague alike. The true memorial to John will not be the café, not even the inexpensive coffee, but the careful and honest conversations that go on there."

A successful fundraising effort attracted contributions large and small from hundreds of alumni and faculty, friends, family and acquaintances from around the world, and national and international schools and corporations. The Binghamton University Class of 2009 honored John with a large contribution.

The refurbishing of the existing café included the construction of a new outdoor seating area, which instantly became a popular central-campus spot for relaxing, studying, socializing — and, we trust, arguing.

From the Chair

“We hope that your philosophical education has remained with you and invite you to keep in touch with your former professors, teaching assistants and classmates.”

Welcome to this year’s edition of the Binghamton University Philosophy Department’s newsletter. It’s been an eventful year, when the department’s many activities — in graduate and undergraduate education, scholarly research, participation in interdisciplinary programs across the University and outreach into the broader community — have met with many successes despite the continuing demands to do more with fewer resources.

As a new chair, I’ve been consistently impressed — and occasionally astonished — as I’ve learned more about the full range of responsibilities and challenges that the department, its faculty, staff and students take on in the course of a single academic year. I’ve been struck by the commitment to excellence in education and research, the sense of dedication to the craft of philosophical thinking, teaching and writing, and the remarkable range of interests and talents that unite us.

Perhaps most of all, however, I’ve been struck by the countless instances of personal dedication that make the department’s work possible: the professor multi-tasking with her research article, her doctoral student, her lectures, conferences, committees and professional societies, and who still finds the extra hour to sit with an undergraduate who needs help structuring an argument; the PhD student in the midst of an original dissertation, who still can fill an exam book with handwritten comments that will help a student to do better next time; the administrative assistant skipping lunch once again so that a friendly and helpful face will greet new students who need help and direction . . . and, of course, all those undergraduates who find that no matter how hard and occasionally frustrating philosophy can be, its rewards — the joy of rigorous and unfettered thinking — accompany them for the rest of their lives.

We hope that your philosophical education has remained with you and invite you to keep in touch with your former professors, teaching assistants and classmates. And we hope you enjoy this year’s Philosophy Newsletter.

Visit our website at philosophy.binghamton.edu for updated information on all manner of news and events.

Max Pensky
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Scalet Announces Move to University of Baltimore

Associate Professor Steven Scalet has announced that he has accepted a new position at the University of Baltimore beginning in January 2010.

Since his arrival at Binghamton in 2000, Scalet has been one of the department's most popular and productive members. With research and teaching specializations in social and political philosophy, philosophy and economics, and business ethics, Scalet immediately became a central figure both in the department and in the program in philosophy, politics and law.

Scalet is a widely published author, having produced influential articles on the political philosopher John Rawls and political liberalism; on the work of philosopher and Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen; on famines, poverty and property rights; on the global impact of corporate social responsibility rating agencies; and on the public responsibilities of the philosopher, among other topics. As a public speaker outside of academia, Scalet has lectured widely on corporate social responsibility and the institutions of democratic governance in his role as speaker for the New York Council for the Humanities. With the late John Arthur, Scalet was the editor of the eighth edition of *Morality and Moral Controversies*, one of the most widely used philosophy textbooks in the world. His own textbook for business ethics, *Markets, Ethics, and Business Ethics*, is set to appear with publisher Prentice Hall.

Scalet's extraordinary personal dedication to the PPL program and its students underlies much of the program's dramatic success over the past several years. Following the illness and death of PPL's founder and long-time director John Arthur in 2007, Scalet became PPL's second director, and was successful not only in shepherding the program through a difficult transition but in broadening the range

of PPL's programs and activities and overseeing growth in PPL's curricular offerings and faculty. He also reintroduced and re-energized the PPL in Britain program, which he personally led in 2008, and will lead again in the fall semester before his departure for the University of Baltimore. The program flourished under Scalet's teaching and leadership, for which he was recognized with the State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2004, as well as the Binghamton University Council/Foundation Award for Excellence in Service in 2007.

At the University of Baltimore Scalet has been tapped to lead a comprehensive effort to rebuild the Philosophy Department and to reestablish that institution's commitment to philosophy as a core component of its educational mission. In addition, Scalet will join Baltimore's Hoffberger Center for Professional Ethics.

"I've been honored to be a part of Binghamton University," Scalet says. "The Philosophy

Department and PPL program have a great tradition of excellence. I have been touched these past 10 years by dedicated students and skilled colleagues, and I will always be thankful for all the good relationships during my time here. I take with me great memories and great friendships. To all the students in my classes over these years, I want to offer my gratitude for the countless debates and laughs and intellectual exchanges and challenges that have kept me

young and always re-energized me with great optimism about each new generation. Thank you."

While his presence will be sorely missed by students and faculty, we wish Steve, Debby and Sophia great success and happiness in their new home in Baltimore. The Department and PPL have been deeply fortunate to have Steve as a colleague.



Associate Professor Steven Scalet

Professor and Former Chair Bat-Ami Bar On Named First Director of New Institute

A yearlong intensive effort spearheaded by Bat-Ami Bar On, professor of philosophy and women's studies, has led to the opening of Binghamton University's own advanced humanities center. The Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH), with offices in Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, officially opened during the fall semester 2009, with Prof. Bar On as its founding director.

Like comparable centers in other colleges and universities, the IASH is dedicated to providing scholars with space, resources and collaborative partnerships to assist them in their humanities research. The institute supports faculty fellows who receive release time from their teaching duties, graduate fellows researching humanities dissertations, and visiting fellows who want to spend time on campus during their research leaves. In addition, the IASH organizes and conducts a number of research collaboratives, year-long interdisciplinary projects in which Binghamton faculty work together on a yearly theme, organizing discussion groups, workshops and conferences, and hosting invited speakers.

In its inaugural year, the IASH has now named its first class of faculty and graduate student fellows, including Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Judaic Studies Randy Friedman and philosophy doctoral student Lewis Trelawney-Cassidy.

Next year promises even more exciting developments, including the opening of IASH's new home, a thorough renovation of the former faculty lounge at the base of the Library Tower, which will include a fellow's lounge, office space and a dedicated IASH lecture room.

We wish the institute and its founding director great success in the years to come! For information on the IASH and its full range of programs, activities and services, visit the IASH website at www2.binghamton.edu/iash.



Professor Bat-Ami Bar On

IASH

Knapp Recognized with Statewide Teaching Award

Associate Professor and PPL Director Christopher Knapp has received a Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching for 2009-10. This award is a SUNY-wide recognition, honoring faculty who have amassed a particularly outstanding record in innovative, dedicated and skilled teaching at all levels. The highly competitive award is made on the basis of extensive documentation, including peer and student evaluations, detailed recommendations based on classroom observation and a detailed statement of one's philosophy of teaching.

Prof. Knapp joins several other members of the department who have been awarded the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. A formal award ceremony, where Knapp and other winners will be recognized by Interim University President C. Peter Magrath, will take place at the beginning of the 2010 fall semester. Congratulations!



Associate Professor and PPL Director Christopher Knapp

2009-10 Graduate Student Achievements

Fuat Gürsözlü, Selin Gürsözlü and Shay Welch received their PhD degrees this year. Fuat's dissertation, "The Problem of Peaceful Political Action within Democratic Politics," received the Distinguished Dissertation Award. Fuat has also been awarded the University's Graduate Award for Excellence in Research. Selin's thesis, "Virtues and Flourishing under Oppression," has earned her a postdoctoral position as Catherine of Siena Fellow at the Ethics Program at Villanova University beginning fall 2010. Welch's thesis is titled "Social Freedom: Choice, Consent, Commitment, and Trust." Welch will also participate in the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University this coming year.

Congratulations to **Lewis Trelawny-Cassity**, winner of this year's Graduate Student Award for Excellence in Research. **Jessie Payson** has been appointed as a graduate assistant for the Philosophy in an Inclusive Key Summer Institute at Penn State University's Rock Ethics Institute; she is also winner of the Best Graduate Student Paper prize, from the Association for Feminist Ethics and Social Theory. **Jess Kyle** has received the Best Graduate Student Paper Award, sponsored by the North American Society for Social Philosophy; **Sean Johnston** received an honorable mention.

We say goodbye to two students who are on their way to new programs: **Alejandro Arango** moves to the PhD program in philosophy at Vanderbilt University, where he will continue thesis research in the philosophy of perception. **Juan Santos Castro** moves to the PhD program in philosophy at the University of Alberta. We wish both of them all the best!

Faculty Notes

Jeffner Allen has completed her long-term trans-disciplinary work in eco-philosophy, *Between Coral Reefs*. She also published a pair of essays based on the project: "Proverbial Wisdom and Planetarity: Re-imagining Coral Reef Communities," appeared in *Literature, Language and Culture: Creating Global Communities*, edited by Michael Barry; and "Reef Aesthetics: Amphibious Zones, Rubbish Remains," edited by Zeng Fanren, in English with Chinese translation.

Bat-Ami Bar On is the inaugural director of Binghamton University's new Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (see story above). Prof. Bar On spent the academic year on leave as she has overseen the institute's successful launch. Her publications for the academic year include "Thinking between Democracy and Violence," in *Dancing With Iris: The Philosophy of Iris Marion Young* (Oxford University Press); "Normativity, Feminism, Politics," in *Feminist Ethics and Social and Political Philosophy: Theorizing the Non-Ideal*, edited by Lisa Tessman (Springer); and "War/Terror/Politics," in *War Against Terror* (Manchester University Press). She is working on a new book on the relation between democracy and violence, *Fragile Politics: Violence at the Margin of Democracy*.

Eric Dietrich is the co-author (with Tara Fox) of "The Allure of the Serial Killer," which will appear in *Serial Killers and Philosophy*, edited by Sarah Waller. He had two other publications during the past year.

Randy Friedman had a proposal for a new minor in religious studies approved by Binghamton University that will go into effect this fall. Housed in the Philosophy Department and jointly overseen by the department and the Judaic Studies Department, the minor will bring together faculty from academic departments and programs across campus to offer a curriculum emphasizing the global and interdisciplinary nature of the study of religions. Several of Friedman's essays on figures in modern Judaic thought, such as Franz Rosenzweig, Martin

Buber and Emmanuel Levinas, are set to appear in a variety of academic journals in both philosophy and religious studies.

Charles Goodman will spend this fall semester on sabbatical studying at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, India. He will be working on a new translation of a much-loved text of Tibetan Buddhism, *The Compendium on Training*, by Shantideva; teaching courses on the nature of modern scientific understanding to the institute's resident monks; and traveling to important religious and archaeological sites in the Upper Pradesh region and elsewhere. Goodman's 2009-10 publications include an entry on ethics in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and book chapters on aspects of Buddhism in the *Blackwell Companion to Religion and Science* and Oxford University Press's *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings*.

Anna Gotlib finishes her first year as the director of the Pell honors program. She is the author of "Stories from the margins: Immigrant patients, health care, and narrative medicine," in *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*, and has several essays in progress or forthcoming, including "On the Borderlands: Chronic Pain as Crisis of Identity," set to appear in *Dimensions of Pain* (University of Uppsala Press), and "Of Bodies and Selves: Toward a Bioethics of Embodiment," forthcoming in *Hypatia*.

Robert Guay concludes a term as acting director of undergraduate studies and will assume the directorship of graduate studies in the fall. Publications for 2009-10 include: "Genealogy and Irony," in the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*; "Nietzsche, Contingency, and the Vacuity of Politics," in *Nietzsche, Nihilism, and the Philosophy of the Future* (Continuum); and "Genealogy as Immanent Critique: Working from the Inside," in Alison Stone ed., *Edinburgh Critical History of Philosophy, vol. 4, The Nineteenth Century*. Guay's ongoing scholarly research on the work of Friedrich

Nietzsche also includes several works in progress, including a co-edited volume, *Key Concepts: Nietzsche*, with Blackwell Publishing, and an essay, "Order of Rank," forthcoming, in *The Oxford Handbook on Nietzsche*.

Christopher Knapp assumed the directorship of the PPL program this academic year after finishing a term as director of undergraduate studies. This year Knapp is the author of "Tragedies without Commons," forthcoming, in *Public Affairs Quarterly*; and "Materialism and Economics," in *Ethics, Place & Environment*. An ongoing book project is on Henry David Thoreau, reading the author of *Walden* with the rigorous tools of analytic philosophy and identifying a Thoreauvian account of prudential value. Knapp's teaching was recognized this year with the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching (see story above).

Max Pensky is finishing his first year as department chair. Among his publications for the 2009-10 academic year are "Critical Theory and World Politics," in *Ethics and World Politics* (Oxford); "Three Kinds of Ruin: Heidegger, Benjamin, Sebald," forthcoming, in *Polygrafi*; and "Contributions to a Theory of Storms: Historical Knowing and Historical Progress in Kant and Benjamin," in *The Philosophical Forum*.

Tony Preus continues to wear many hats as distinguished professor of philosophy, master of College-in-the-Woods and secretary of the Society of Ancient Greek Philosophy. This year Preus contributed the entry on Aristotle to the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*, and published a revised and expanded version of his *Historical Dictionary of Ancient Greek Philosophy* (under the title *The A to Z of Ancient Greek Philosophy*).

Tony Reeves joined the department as visiting assistant professor, with a specialization in the philosophy of law and moral and political philosophy. Reeves received his PhD in philosophy from Boston

University in 2009. Over the course of the year he offered numerous courses in the philosophy of law and social and political philosophy, including core courses in the PPL program. Despite a heavy teaching load, Reeves was a productive research scholar this past year as well, publishing "Do Judges Have an Obligation to Enforce the Law?: Moral Responsibility and Adjudication," in *Law and Philosophy*; and preparing other manuscripts on aspects of the philosophy of law and jurisprudence. Reeves returns to the department for the 2010-11 academic year.

Steve Scalet is leaving Binghamton University after 10 years as assistant professor, associate professor and director of the program in philosophy, politics and law (see story above).

Lisa Tessman ends her term as director of graduate studies at the end of this academic year. Under her directorship of the graduate program in social, political, ethical and legal philosophy (SPEL), the program grew considerably, expanded its programs and course offerings, and produced numerous new PhDs in philosophy, with an excellent placement record in academic positions. In 2009-10 Prof. Tessman published an anthology, *Feminist Ethics and Social and Political Philosophy: Theorizing the Non-Ideal* (Springer); "Against the Whiteness of Ethics: Dilemmatizing as a Critical Approach," in *The Center Must Not Hold: White Women Philosophers on the Whiteness of Philosophy*, ed. George Yancy (Lexington Books); and "Idealizing Morality," in *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*.

Melissa Zinkin spent the spring semester as visiting fellow at the Department of Philosophy at Princeton. While there she attended seminars and workshops, gave numerous papers in Europe and America, and prepared a number of manuscripts for publication, including articles on Kant. On her return to the department this fall, Prof. Zinkin assumes the post of director of undergraduate studies.

For Bioethicist Russell Powell '99, Philosophy Gets Practical at Oxford's Uehiro Center

When Russell Powell graduated with his philosophy degree from Binghamton in 1999, the biotech revolution was already in full swing — but the ethical, legal and political consequences of new biotechnologies had a lot of catching up to do. Bioethics, as a philosophical subfield distinct from other related fields such as medical ethics, confronts the range of ethical controversies that arise as new technologies upend prevailing normative views on the most fundamental matters of human existence: What is the difference between the human and the non-human, between human and animal, human and machine, organic and inorganic life? How do advances in genetic technologies expand our control over the biological basis of human character and society? And, what new ethical rules ought to govern — and possibly restrict — our technological interventions into the human genome? What is normal and abnormal, ill and healthy, desirable and undesirable, in human existence? How do law, politics and hard science interact in generating new ethical controversies, and how ought they to interact? Is human evolution a process that is, or must be, free of conscious technological intervention? Or do humans have a responsibility to use their scientific capacities to improve their condition?

Over the past decade, a host of universities and research institutes worldwide have set up bioethics centers and programs devoted to address this extraordinary range of questions and challenges, and this trend has established bioethics as one of the most high-profile and influential fields of philosophical research to have emerged in recent memory. The set of skills and specializations needed to participate at the cutting edge of bioethics research is formidable, however: Bioethicists require not only a solid foundation in philosophical reasoning and advanced training in normative theory such as ethics, normative ethics and metaethics, but also a deep familiarity with the

relevant scientific and technological developments in fields as diverse as cell biology, neurology, genetics, cognitive science and evolutionary theory. Moreover, since bioethics works in close partnership with the study of the legal aspects of the regulation and oversight of new biomedical technologies, bioethicists must also have mastery of the relevant domains of domestic and international law.

Russell Powell's post-Binghamton trajectory illustrates this well. Following his graduation with a BA in philosophy *summa cum laude* in 1999, Powell enrolled in NYU law school, which awarded him the J.D. in 2002. After working as an attorney specializing in complex product liability litigation at the New York office of the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom LLP, Powell completed his graduate study at Duke University, where he received both an MS in biology and a PhD in philosophy in 2009.

“Dillon’s lectures in existentialism made philosophy seem like the sexiest profession in the world — which says a lot, given that I was 19 years old at the time!”

Prior to his move to Oxford, Powell was Greenwall postdoctoral fellow at Johns Hopkins University and visiting assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy, and senior research scholar at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University.

At Oxford, Powell is currently Arts and Humanities Research Council Fellow at the Uehiro Centre

for Practical Ethics, as well as a member of the faculty of philosophy; he is also James Martin Research Fellow in the Program on Ethics of the New Biosciences in the 21st Century School, and Research Associate for the Oxford Centre for Neuroethics. One of the world's premiere bioethics centers, Oxford's Uehiro Centre is an ideal venue for Powell to pursue his ongoing research on theoretical and practical problems in biological and biomedical science, especially the evolutionary dimensions of emerging biotechnologies and human nature.

Logically enough, the project includes analyzing both the medical and the normative dimensions of synthetic biology: the technological creation of new forms of life and their components.

Together with Duke philosopher Allen Buchanan, Powell will present some of his findings and views on the normative dimensions of synthetic biology to the U.S. Presidential Commission on Bioethics in Washington, D.C., later this year. And he is soon to be on the move again. In 2011, he will take a leave from Oxford as a visiting fellow at the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research in Vienna, where he will explore the intersection of genes, culture and cognition, with an emphasis on the evolutionary and normative implications of classical and emerging medical technologies.

For Powell, undergraduate study in philosophy at Binghamton was the spark that ignited this remarkable peripatetic life as a bioethicist. "My decision to pursue a career in philosophy was influenced by two key individuals in the Philosophy Department at Binghamton," he says. "As a freshman, I was lured into the discipline by the spectacular, literally awe-inspiring lectures of the late M.C. Dillon. Dillon's lectures in existentialism made philosophy seem like the sexiest profession in the world — which says a lot, given that I was 19 years old at the time! Nowadays, when I am



overloaded with work, commitments and deadlines, and philosophy begins to feel more like a job than a journey, I think back to Dillon's lectures and their impact on me, and I remember why I chose the contemplative life."

In addition to Dillon's legendary lectures in existentialism, Powell points to Eric Dietrich as a formative influence. "While Dillon got me hooked on the general subject matter of philosophy," he recalls, "it was Eric Dietrich whose science-oriented seminars propelled me toward a career in the philosophy of biology. I read some of my first Stephen Jay Gould with Eric, and the impact was obvious: I wrote my entire doctoral thesis on Gouldian themes in the history of life. I am also of the suspicion that my obsession with fossil hunting can similarly be traced to his influence! Eric was an extraordinary teacher and mentor, and I am not sure that I would have pursued a life in philosophy had it not been for his rigorous intellectual engagement and indefatigable encouragement."

Journalist, Reporter, Editor, Author and Blogger Andrew Bast '00 Finds Plenty of Uses for a “Useless” Degree

Writing in the April 6, 2010, issue of *Newsweek Magazine*, Andrew Bast '00 makes “The Case for a Useless Degree,” the classical liberal arts majors that conventional wisdom so often urges undergraduates to avoid: comparative literature, religious studies — and philosophy.

“Computer science, accounting, marketing — the purpose of many majors is self-evident,” Bast writes. “They lead to well-paid jobs and clear-cut career paths. (One hopes, at least.) But comparative literature, classics, and philosophy — according to the new conventional wisdom — offer no clear trajectory. . . . It’s true that studying the humanities will surely elicit snide comment from your uncle like, ‘All that studying so you’ll be able to ask, you want fries with that?’ You should tell your uncle to shove it. Majoring in the liberal arts is still the best use of your college tuition. A degree in history or religion or languages can be anything you want it to be.”

Bast speaks from experience. After receiving his Binghamton philosophy degree, Bast recalls, he headed to New York, “to chase down a job — any job, really! — that involved writing in some way, shape or form. Just days after graduation I found myself on Wall Street, working for a business magazine, at the height of the dotcom boom. But unlike most people who hung on for the next paycheck, my boss (who was all about the money) actually paid me too much of it. So much that I socked away a bunch in savings and promptly quit to write a novel. And write a novel I did. Too bad it was terrible.”

But the experience itself opened doors. Hooked on the writing life, Bast next took a job at Random House, rising through the ranks of its children’s books division until he was its managing editor. And he kept at the writing, beginning to publish pieces

of freelance journalism in *The New York Times* and other city papers.

An extended period of world travel with his new wife was eye opening. He decided to devote himself to international affairs, and realized that he could combine his passion for world politics with his devotion to writing. He once again left a well-paying job and returned to school, receiving a master’s degree in international relations from the City University of New York Graduate Center. His master’s thesis, on the *Army Field Manual on Stability Operations*, argued against the idea that soldiers can readily be employed as effective state-builders. Focusing on the concept of failed states, he studied international law, the United Nations and revolutions, researching case studies on the International Monetary Fund, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan.

“Majoring in the liberal arts is still the best use of your college tuition. A degree in history or religion or languages can be anything you want it to be.”

The chance to combine international relations and journalism wasn’t long in coming. “Who knew,” writes Bast, “but during that summer I actually landed an internship at *Newsweek*, which led to a reporter position, and now I am articles editor, editing two pages in the front of the magazine known as InternationalList, which presents five big-idea international stories to readers every week.

I've written some five dozen pieces for the various editions of the magazine and the website on everything from Shakira to Sri Lanka



— mostly I focus on foreign stories, especially the war in Afghanistan and international nuclear power industry.” Bast wrote an online column on international politics for *World Politics Review*, and has traveled widely, filing stories from four continents. Not bad for a useless degree.

Bast regards his philosophy degree as a cornerstone of his versatile career path. “I truly believe that having a solid foundational knowledge is far superior to specialized knowledge,” he writes, “mainly because the former is far harder to come by than the latter. For instance, on a new task at *Newsweek*, I now have to work in HTML and use Photoshop. Certainly courses I could have taken. But those kinds of skills — call me crazy — I want to pick up when I need them. Whereas the skills that I acquired by spending semesters with Plato and Aristotle or Descartes, Hume and Kant really taught me the power of contemplative thinking. How to take a question (and one that often is simply unanswerable, at that!) and approach it rigorously, dissect it and examine it, and then respond to it in an intelligent and intellectually responsible way, well, no computer application (nor Facebook, nor Blackberry, nor Twitter feed) will ever even come close to doing that. Trust me, I know. My Blackberry is flashing in front of me.”

Bast has just finished writing his new novel, a murder mystery featuring a globetrotting young journalist ensnared in geopolitical intrigue.

We Would Love to Hear from You!

The Philosophy Department is always delighted to hear from its former students, whether philosophy or PPL majors, graduate students, or just a veteran of one of our courses. What have you done with (or about?) your philosophical studies? What have your philosophical studies done with (or to?) you? Please send us your stories. E-mail them to Max Pensky, Philosophy Department chair, at mpensky@binghamton.edu. Thanks!

The Alumni Career Network

The **Alumni Career Network** is a searchable database of Binghamton alumni who have volunteered to be contacted by current students and alumni regarding career information. There are 47 philosophy majors and 48 philosophy, politics and law (PPL) (or law and society, which is what PPL used to be) majors who are part of this network. If you are a current philosophy or PPL major, consider using the network to identify alumni who have volunteered their services. They can be identified by profession, employer, location, major or graduate institution. If you are a philosophy or PPL alumnus/a, consider becoming part of the Alumni Career Network. To use the network, go to <https://www.bconnectalumni.binghamton.edu>.

If you want to contact the alumni office directly, send e-mail to alumni@binghamton.edu or call 607-777-2431.

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Money Matters

Interested in lending your support? You can!

Binghamton's Philosophy Department sponsors several special funds that are used to pay for departmental events and activities. They're an excellent way to express your support.

The Philosophy General Fund supports the department in a full range of activities, helping us bring speakers to campus, helping us sponsor workshops and small conferences and helping with the travel costs as faculty and graduate students deliver papers at national and international conferences.

The M.C. Dillon Memorial Fund commemorates the department's legendary teacher Martin (Mike) Dillon, and honors his extraordinary commitment to undergraduate education by funding annual awards to the department's top students. The Dillon Fund also provides financial help for undergraduates to attend philosophy conferences, including undergraduate conferences where they can present their own work and meet philosophy majors from other universities.

The Leon Goldstein Scholarship Fund in Philosophy funds a scholarship for a graduate student in philosophy.

Secure, online credit card gifts may be made at www.giving.binghamton.edu. Select "Other, please specify" from the account drop-down menu, and then type either "Philosophy, Account #10794"; "Martin Dillon Memorial Fund, Account #20322"; or "Leon J. Goldstein Scholarship in Philosophy, Account #20361" in the space provided. If you would prefer to send a check, please make it payable to "Binghamton University Foundation" using the printable gift form at www.giving.binghamton.edu/giving/PrintableGiftPage.pdf.

Harpur College and Binghamton University also would greatly appreciate your generosity; you can support either of these areas by selecting the appropriate Binghamton Fund designation when making your donation. You can also contact the Harpur College development officer, Lisa Court, at 607-777-4277 or lcourt@binghamton.edu. She will be happy to discuss gift opportunities with you.