



TORONTO PHILOSOPHY NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CHAIR

With this second issue of *Toronto Philosophy News*, we continue our undertaking to maintain contact with all those people, both in and out of the academy, who have received degrees in Philosophy here at the University of Toronto. The Chair of the Philosophy Department, Wayne Sumner, is taking a year's break from his administrative duties, while I act in his place. Wayne returns to complete the last two years of his five-year term in the next academic year. As the articles herein contained illustrate, the Department continues to be a vibrant centre of philosophical activity. James Brown and André Gombay, our Associate Chairs in charge, respectively, of the Undergraduate and the Graduate Programmes report on the current state of these divisions of the Department.

In addition to the many Philosophical Forum discussions organized by our graduate students, the various philosophy area sub-groups of Departmental faculty sponsored several talks since the beginning of the current term by itinerate specialists, to wit: W. Krajewski on *Explanation and False Belief*; Janusz Kuczynski on *Universalism*; Alan Stairs on *Quantum Mechanics*, Sally Haslanger on *Pragmatic Paradoxes*; John Corcoran on

The Founding of Logic, and Gerry Allwein on *Kripke and Linear Logic*. The Department has also co-sponsored a conference on Rationality and Democracy with the University of Montreal's Philosophy Department, Philosophy and Law Day with the Faculty of Law, and a conference on Perception with Scarborough College.

Our monthly Colloquium Speakers have been G.A. Cohen, Judith Shklar, Donald Davidson, Martha Nussbaum, and Robert Pippin. Descriptions of the talks by Cohen and Shklar are given below. Readers of *TPN* who wish to receive lists of upcoming Colloquium talks should request to be kept up to date. Colloquia are usually held at 4:00 on Thursdays and are followed by receptions.

Toronto Philosophy News still being in its infancy, we invite suggestions from its readers about material you would like to see included. In this newsletter we begin what we anticipate as a series of interviews with U. of T. philosophers (this time Ian Hacking) and descriptions of the state of the "sub-disciplines." Any other ideas for regular features will be useful. In addition we welcome news from philosophy alumni/ae. We would, for instance, like to publish such things as recollections of philosophy at the U. of T., ideas on the part of alumni/ae about directions for

philosophy in the future, suggestions about ways to relate Departmental research and teaching to the world outside of the academy, or reflections on how philosophy has influenced your life and work after your graduation from University.

Frank Cunningham

NEW STAFF

Our newest member of the academic staff is Professor Peter Apostoli. A native of Vancouver where he pursued studies at UBC, Peter was a visiting professor at the University of Manchester before joining the Department. His principal area of research is logical theory, and he is currently working on completeness problems in n -ary modal logic and partial recursive set theory.

Meanwhile in our support staff, we are pleased that Suzanne Puckering has joined us as our Business Officer. Suzanne is not the first in her family to help keep the U. of T. running. From 1919 her grandfather, George Ross, worked as a carpenter for the Hart House stage, while great uncle "Sandy" Ross maintained the Hart House Swimming Pool. Suzanne's uncle, George, and father, Hector Ross, worked as lab assistants from 1927 and 1928 in the Departments, respectively, of Anatomy in Medical Science, and

Metallurgy in Engineering.

HUMBOLT FELLOWSHIPS

Congratulations to Cheryl Misak and David Dyzenhaus, who have just been named as recipients of Alexander von Humbolt Foundation Fellowships. Five hundred of these prestigious awards are offered worldwide and in all disciplines to study with specified scholars in Germany for a period of one year. It is a noteworthy tribute to David and Cheryl that they each received these awards, which will take them to Germany during the 1992-93 academic year. Cheryl will be studying with Jurgen Habermas, David with Winfried Brugger (a professor of law in Heidelberg). They will be living in Heidelberg during the tenure of the award.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

In spite of a shrinking staff and a growing student body, our undergraduate programme continues to flourish. Including all the college based courses over three campuses, we offer almost 200 courses each year; some are full year, but most are a single semester long. The total enrolment (in one semester equivalents) is in the neighbourhood of eight thousand. The growing interest in philosophy seems to be everywhere in the curriculum: traditional courses in the history of philosophy from Plato to Descartes to Hegel continue to draw heavily, and so do the core courses in ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology. However, by far the most popular continue to be the logic courses and a variety of offerings in applied ethics. Bioethics and philosophy of law, in

particular, have proven to be great favourites in recent years. Whether students have an eye to a career in medicine or law, or are there out of pure interest, their enthusiasm for these courses is unbounded and their appetites insatiable. Environmental ethics is another area with enormous potential. The only thing that holds its growth back is our present inability to staff additional sections, something we hope to do in the future. Those who teach any of the logic courses (beginning logic, modal logic, metalogic, philosophy of mathematics, etc.) continue to be pleased and amazed at the very strong interest shown in their subject.

One recent innovation is proving to be a success. Three years ago the Department started a monthly speaker series, the Colloquium, and we created a new course for advanced specialists and majors to go along with it. Before any particular visiting speaker comes the group reads and discusses some representative works; they attend the talk (sometimes joining the dinner party after), and later meet to discuss the presentation. It's an excellent way for our brightest young lights to get well and truly acquainted with the best contemporary work being done in philosophy.

Speaking of our bright lights, every year about 50 specialists, another 50 majors, and a comparable number of minors graduate. Many go on to the best graduate schools in the world (including our own). They often win major scholarships, including the very prestigious Mellon Fellowships. Last year we won one, and two the year before. (By comparison, the whole University of Toronto was awarded four that year, which is pretty good, and Yale University won two over all disciplines.) As you might imagine, we're pretty pleased.

James Robert Brown
undergraduate coordinator

GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Four-hundred-and-fifty-seven.

Question. What are these: 'Citizens and dependents'; 'Leibniz: modality and ontology'; 'Unearthing Aristotle's dramatics'; 'The complexity of automated reasoning'; 'Heidegger and science'?

Answer. Written in gold, they are titles of big tomes ranged behind me in the lower right-hand corner of shelves extending across a large room -- the latest PhDs in the department. The wall is almost covered, we must soon turn the corner. As I look at them, the bindings are mostly austere blue or black, with some red interspersed. They go back a long time, almost a century -- the first came in 1903, *The ethical and religious theories of Bishop Butler*. And now the number stands at 457, a prime as it happens. In four years or so we shall reach the half-millennium, doubtless the most PhDs written in a single English-speaking department of philosophy.

To what toil do these shelves bear witness? Of what scholarship are they the repository? What increase in the world's wisdom have they wrought? I often find myself thinking about this, and thinking too of the men and women whose words are behind me on the wall. Many must have gone on to careers in law, finance or industry; but for the most part I am sure, they chose to spend their lives in the calm groves of academe. In fact I know this, since some have achieved fame and, anyhow, members of the profession keep track of one another. They teach far and wide across the continent, from British Columbia or Oregon to Maine or Newfoundland; from Edmonton to North Carolina; across the oceans too, in Ghana or Nigeria. A melancholy thought is that so few of them are women -- less than one-seventh overall.

In the past decade that ratio has improved to one-quarter, so there is hope of making the profession less confined to one gender; but hardly room for complacency. And even less room for complacency on the score of making the profession more representative of the cultural diversity of our discipline.

Why should Toronto have the largest graduate philosophy department in the English-speaking world? and how does it work in its day-to-day operations? In the next issue I shall write about this, and especially about Joyce Wright, who runs that province with such calm and efficiency.

André Gombay
graduate coordinator

CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The University of Toronto Philosophy Department has a long tradition of strength in continental philosophy.

In the twentieth century, a division has emerged between two approaches to philosophy. Analytic philosophy, as exemplified in the work of Rudolph Carnap and W.V. Quine, grows out of the tradition of British Empiricism. Continental philosophy grows out of the work of G.W.F. Hegel and his critics, including Marx, Nietzsche, and Sartre. Traditionally, continental philosophy has been concerned with questions about culture, politics, art, and the meaning of human existence. These concerns have often been expressed in terms of the relationships among thought, values, language, social context, and contingency.

Although continental philosophy attracts considerable interest, both among students and

those in other academic disciplines, the U. of T. department is one of the few places in the English speaking world where a sizable number of philosophers actively pursue research and teaching in this area. In addition to more than a dozen faculty working in continental philosophy, the department regularly invites prominent speakers from other institutions. Recent speakers include Charles Taylor, Gianni Vattimo, Robert Bernasconi and Drucilla Cornell.

Recently, research in the analytic and continental traditions has begun to converge. For instance, Hans Georg Gadamer and Donald Davidson, though starting from very different perspectives, have reached similar conclusions about language and incommensurability. Toronto's diverse department makes it a particularly fertile ground for such an exchange of ideas.

Amy Mullin

TORONTO STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

Beginning this year, the Department of Philosophy, in conjunction with the University of Toronto Press, begins publishing a series of books, the first two of which have just appeared: Norman Swartz, *Beyond Experience: Metaphysical Theories and Philosophical Constraints* and Pascal Engel, *The Norm of Truth: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Logic*. Shortly to appear in the series will be: *Fackenheim: German Philosophy and Jewish Thought*, edited by Graeme Nicholson and Louis Greenspan, and Claire Armon-Jones, *Varieties of Affect*. The series is edited by James Brown and Calvin Normore, who would welcome notes from philosophy alumni/ae calling attention to noteworthy manuscripts or work in progress. Enclosed is a flyer describing

the series and including order forms.

JUDITH SHKLAR

On October 17, Judith Shklar, John Cowles Professor of Government at Harvard University, presented a colloquium on *Loyalty and Obligation*. Professor Shklar began by drawing a conceptual map on which loyalty, allegiance, fidelity, commitment, and obligation received their distinct places. Loyalty, seen as essentially affective, was contrasted with rationally-based obligation. Possible conflicts are many, but the talk focussed on cases in which a country "betrayed" its citizens by an unjust act or violated their trust and expectations. Ancient Greeks, unjustly ostracized or exiled, are readily seen to have been freed of obligations to the country that so exiled them. But the difficult and very interesting cases presented were the modern "internal" exiles like Dreyfus - the most famous political scandal of France in the 1890's - and the Japanese interned in North America during WWII. Here the claim is more controversial: they too were under no obligation to their country, and irrationally, out of loyalty, Dreyfus rejoined the French and the majority of the interned American Japanese of age to fight joined the American army.

Judith Baker

G.A. COHEN

On September 25, our Colloquium speaker was G.A. Cohen, of All Souls College, Oxford. No stranger to our Department, Professor Cohen was our Simon Lecturer in 1985. Speaking in University College, Professor Cohen addressed the topic *Rawls and Incentives*. In his famous *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls includes in his principles of justice that such things

as wealth and liberty are to be equally distributed unless unequal distribution is to everyone's advantage. Many, including Rawls himself, have urged that this principle justifies inequalities in order to provide incentives to the talented. In his talk Cohen deployed the fine-grained style of argumentation for which he is well known to challenge the claim that inequalities thus motivated could ever be just (even if provision of incentives to the talented may sometimes be defended by other considerations than justice, analogously to the way one may be obliged to pay off a kidnapper). Cohen's talk thus combined interrogation of a central issue of the political philosophy of justice with a current debate in actual political arenas. It sparked a lively discussion on the part of the overflow audience.

Frank Cunningham

IAN HACKING: AN INTERVIEW

by R.B. De Sousa



Ian Hacking

Ian Hacking joined the Department in 1982, cross appointed as Director of the Institute for History and

Philosophy of Science. He was appointed University Professor in 1991. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Sciences. His most recent books are *Representing and Intervening* (1983) and *The Taming of Chance* (1990).

Toronto Philosophy News: *How did you get into philosophy?*

Ian Hacking: I was a mathematics and physics student at the University of British Columbia, rather younger than most of my contemporaries, if that makes any sense, and I fell under the sway of deep concerns about Being, the Yin and the Yang, and so on. At the same time I was working for the Mobil Oil Company and then the Shell Oil Company in Alberta. I applied for something called a Commonwealth Exhibition at Trinity College Cambridge, which they rotated among countries of the Commonwealth, and it was Canada's chance. I won the Commonwealth, and I went to Cambridge to study Moral Sciences, between the ages of twenty and twenty-two. I had a bizarre education, from a great teacher - Casimir Lewy - which consisted almost entirely of reading Frege, Russell, and Moore. I think that was a wonderful education - for me, not for some other people who had the same education and became very narrow, in my opinion. But having learned how to do something seriously, I became able, I hope, to do lots of other things seriously. It would be terrible to have that be THE system of education everywhere, but it's always nice that there is some place where it's the system of education, where you don't have to fuss around with a general curriculum. As a consequence, I have become widely regarded as being all over the shop.

TPN: *You may be all over the shop, but do you take philosophy outside the shop? Is philosophy, for you, also a guide to life?*

IH: Well, I live my life by being a philosopher. I think that probably I would live my life better if I were to take more cognizance of my philosophy. But I don't really want to get into details about that.

TPN: *Let's get back to philosophy then. When you look at the history of philosophy, as both a philosopher and a historian of science and philosophy, what's the big idea that has most captivated you?*

IH: The two people who clearly most influenced me are Michel Foucault and Ludwig Wittgenstein. I've also enjoyed playing with my friend Leibniz, but I regard that as a different kind of activity. But apart from one piece for the *New York Review*, I've never written about Wittgenstein. And although I've written a couple of articles about Foucault, and had been asked, right at the beginning of the Foucault industry, to write a massive and wonderful book about him, what happened was that I took the whole huge manuscript and threw it in the dustbin outside building 90 at Stanford. All the graduate students stood around and said, "We can each have a chapter and do a thesis."

TPN: *Why did you do that?*

IH: Oh, it was getting scholastic and convoluted. I preferred to use some ideas that I had gotten from Wittgenstein and Foucault in the work that I myself do rather than getting into saying what they did.

TPN: *So you've remained largely silent about the people who most influenced you, and you chose to write, instead, about other people.*

IH: Or other ideas.

TPN: *But when you look at your own work, what would you most like other people to take from your work? What are the ideas that you'd like other people to read you for?*

IH: I'm good at starting things. Aside from Richard Braithwaite, I was the first person to do probability and statistics in the modern vein. That was

a very rewarding experience for me. There I was, gone back patriotically to UBC. I wrote this book about statistics, and although I had a good publisher - Cambridge University Press - I was nobody in that world. But within weeks of that book appearing, I had some of the most serious, detailed letters that I've ever received in my life from the major figures in the field. They were delighted that a philosopher took them seriously and expressed some of their own conceptual worries, as they said, better than they had been able to do. So that was a very good introduction to the learned world. This book arrives on someone's desk...

TPN: *And they actually read it!*

IH: They read it, and they sit down and write to say you got some things right and you got some things wrong, but my goodness it's nice to have somebody think about these things in that way.

TPN: *What else did you start?*

IH: Well, Renford Bambrough in Cambridge used to say that the fact that so many books about Foucault are sold in the Cambridge bookstores is solely due to Ian Hacking. And David Hoy, who edited one of the early Foucault anthologies, used to say I should get royalties... Actually I got interested in Foucault thanks to André Gombay. We were walking through the African Veldt, and he said I've got this book which I think you will like. It was a (not very good) English translation of *Madness and Civilization*, and I learned a tremendous amount.

And again, learning from other people, I started the enthusiasm for experiment in the philosophy of science. My friend Francis Everett and I used to go walking in the Stanford hills - or running, sometimes, he does Marathons though he doesn't look it. He's the person who's planning the only experimental test of the theory of gravity. It's called Gravity Probe II. You put a gyroscope up in space and see what happens, and

the predictions are very different depending what the laws of gravity are. After the shuttle disaster, who knows when that will actually fly. But anyway, Francis had written a very interesting book about Maxwell; and he and I started talking about experiments. It happened that *Representing and Intervening* came out just a little bit before everybody else's books on experiments except for Bruno Latour's *Laboratory Life*. Francis and I wrote a joint paper, and no journal would take it. They said: Who cares about experiments? This was only in about 1980! Still some people must have wanted to hear about experiments, because the whole thing took off and now there are probably more people writing about experiments than are writing about theories.

TPN: *And what are you in the process of starting these days?*

IH: I think I'm starting something by trying to become genuinely knowledgeable about topics like child abuse and multiple personality. Those few philosophers who do think about these things don't know the science. They don't do what is necessary. On Friday, I'm going to the Ninth International Congress on multiple personality. I've got a full three day schedule of talking to all the experts. They know that I'm now a seditious influence, but they'll talk.

TPN: *And why not? They're surely not so modest as to think they won't influence you... Do you often do this sort of "field research"?*

IH: Well, I wrote a piece for the London Review a while back on Oliver Sacks's *Seeing Voices*. I spent about three months researching that. I was helped by a graduate student, Trish Glazebrook, and a friend of hers, but I had to learn it all from scratch, going to deaf bars in town, getting to know quite a few deaf people.

TPN: *Can you tell me a little about how you work?*

IH: I'm an early morning person. I aphorized early in life that the pessimists were the people who got up bad in the morning but knew they were going to be terrific by 10 o'clock at night, and the optimists were the people like me who knew it was going to be terrible at 10 o'clock at night. I never do anything intellectual late at night.

TPN: *How early do you get up?*

IH: About six. I reckon I probably don't have a good thought after nine.

TPN: *So by nine, you feel you can get on with your professor's chores, knowing you've already done the day's serious work.*

IH: That's for sure. In fact, if I don't do something early in the morning, I feel bad about myself.

TPN: *I can't do it, but I get the impression that people who work early in the morning seem happier...*

IH: I'm not all that happy. I have periods of black depression. And they're usually produced by times when everything has gone just absolutely superbly, when I've really managed to say what I wanted to say. I wrote a very short piece about Michael Ayers's new study of Locke for the *London Review of Books*. I think I addressed about fifteen major questions in the course of 2218 words. And I was totally drained after it. Though that was a very minor thing.

TPN: *In a relatively popular medium. Lots of people would like to do that, I think, but not everyone can do it.*

IH: Yes, I feel it's enormously important to write these popular pieces that are read by lots of people, because they teach people about things they hadn't thought about.

Undoubtedly, it's enormously classicist. People who read those sort of intellectual weeklies are getting their kicks that way. But I still think it's worth doing. I got fired by the *New York Review*, by the way. I think there was a phase when Bob Silvers, the editor, thought philosophers had very

interesting things to say, but lately they seem to have decided otherwise. And besides, the piece I had sent them was probably rather weak. And Bob Silvers and I are still friends.

TPN: *Can you tell whether you enjoy writing more or less than reading?*

IH: I think I'm a bad reader and a bad writer, in an odd way. I read very selectively. I have to be deeply interested in a question, and then I can read voraciously. *Nature's* review of *The Taming of Chance* said: "He seems to have read everything." "Seems" is right, but I did have a maniacal obsession with trying to understand something that I think is fundamental to the whole of Western civilization, the fact that we've become *chancy*. I wanted to understand this from scratch, so just like I went to the deaf bars, I read these unbelievably dull statisticians. And I found just the right vignettes, scattered here and

there. Likewise, I'm a bad systematic writer, though what saves me from disaster is that I'm quite a good critic. I put in a million terrible jokes when I first write, but I'm blessed with the ability to leave only one in. I rewrite thousands of times. But I think my writing got a little worse with the computer, and I've gone back to writing with typewriter and pen. (See over there? My beautiful genuine Waterman pens.) But with a typewriter, I type the same paragraph over and over, hour after hour, like Flaubert. I'm a pathological writer.

TPN: *Why can't you do that on a computer?*

IH: I spend too much time, on a computer, making things look pretty. I can move a sentence, and press a button and it all comes out looking terribly definitive, but for me it's better to rewrite the whole paragraph.

TPN: *So do you give a messy copy to*

the secretary?

IH: No; at the last stage I transfer it all to the computer. That's because the last time I had a secretary was when I was at the at Princeton Institute. And that was wonderful, because everybody else had a computer, and there were all those tenured secretaries with nothing to do so they did it all for me!

TPN: *You didn't actually answer my question about the pleasure or pain of writing.*

IH: It's got its highs and its lows. I like to pick up things from what other people write, and twist them around.

TPN: *How do you mean?*

IH: Well, I mentioned the piece on Locke I did; in the first paragraph, I managed to say, "But Locke... Locke plods." You get the allusion? It's Swift: "But Celia, Celia Celia sh...". It's the play aspect of writing. I enjoy that.