



# TORONTO PHILOSOPHY NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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## From The Acting Chair

In recent years it has been the practice in the Department to produce two newsletters a year, one in November and a second in April or May. At about the time we began thinking about the content for the November issue, we heard that Cliff Webb had died. Knowing that news of his death would interest many who receive the newsletter, I decided to delay publication until I could prepare an obituary. Although I had known Cliff for thirty years, I still wanted to examine what the archives of the University held regarding his career here. To my great surprise I discovered that Cliff had been the first person to rank Canadian universities for Maclean's Magazine. In my obituary I have included a description of his article. In recent years Maclean's has resumed its rankings and has caused a great deal of anguish amongst university administrators by doing so. It was nice to see that Cliff all by himself had also been able to stir the pot, as the distressed letters in a subsequent issue proved. As the reader will see I have frankly discussed Cliff's unfortunate addiction to alcohol and its tragic consequences for him. I think it is important that those who knew him, but perhaps did not then know of this affliction, take this fact into account in judging him. It explains why his early promise was never fulfilled. By the time I had completed my short account of his life the new year was nearly upon us.

Another late autumn event produced a splendid article for this newsletter. Acting on a suggestion of Ontario's Premier, Bob Rae, the University of Toronto decided to award an honorary degree to Sir Isaiah Berlin, one of Rae's teachers at Oxford during his period there as a Rhodes scholarship. Sir Isaiah, who is eighty-five, attended the

ceremony, but he asked that his speech be read for him. His talk, which is reprinted in full here, is vintage Berlin, restating in skeletal form the argument he first advanced in *Two Concepts of Liberty*, his very influential inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 31 October 1958. On the morning after the degree ceremony, *The Globe and Mail* devoted nearly a full page to Berlin and the ceremony and to his speech which was printed nearly in full. Unfortunately, Sir Isaiah was too frail to undertake any other meetings; this greatly disappointed members of both this Department and Political Science, many of whom had fond memories of an earlier visit a quarter century ago.

Our newest faculty member, Laura Shanner, whose speciality is bio-ethics, was invited to tour Russia, Belarus and Lithuania as part of a delegation to learn about the state of medical ethics in these countries. When she got back, full of information gathered on the trip, it occurred to me that many readers of the newsletter would welcome a chance to read a first-hand account of what she saw there. Her article is packed with information about health care in these countries, and she suggests ways in which people here can help. I am grateful to her for providing such an interesting and detailed description of her trip; she proves to be an excellent reporter.

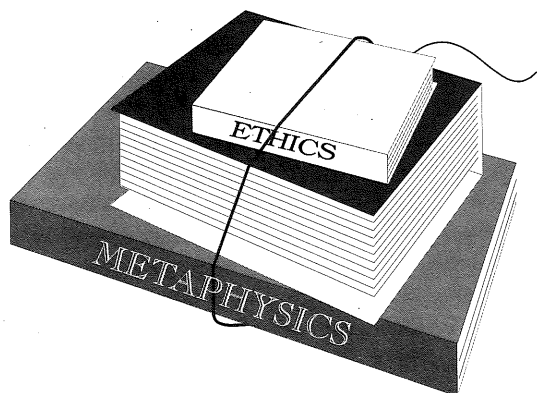
Frank Cunningham reports a piece of very welcome news in "Philosophy in the High Schools". Efforts to interest the Ministry of Education in this matter go back a very long way. During the whole period that I chaired the Department (1969-74) the organization of Ontario Philosophy Department Chairs took this as its principal project. At that time we succeeded in getting a pilot course taught in a collegiate in Hamilton that admitted only grade 13 students. But despite its success, no action was taken in the Ministry. Since then others have tried and failed, and there were probably

earlier attempts than those in which I had a part. Now Frank and his committee have succeeded, and he and the others are determined to make it work. The whole profession owes them a vote of thanks.

This year we have made one tenure-stream appointment at Erindale College. Joseph Heath, who earned his B.A. at McGill University and is just finishing his Ph.D. at Northwestern University, specializes in ethics, social and political philosophy, and the philosophy of Kant; his other teaching interests include rational choice theory, epistemology, and post-Kantian German philosophy. He will join us this fall, but if he is awarded a post-doctoral fellowship, he will teach only one course his first year. We are all very happy that he has accepted our offer and we look forward to working with him. A future newsletter will introduce him more fully.

Because so much of our news was generated so late in the first term, we decided to publish only one expanded newsletter this year. Perhaps Mark Thornton, who will be taking over as our new Chair next summer for a five-year term, will be able to resume the usual schedule during his first year. I have promised to provide an updated version of a piece I wrote for the very first newsletter, to wit, an account of the activities of our retired members. My greatly reduced workload this autumn (I retire this summer) should permit me time to carry out that pleasant task. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues, and especially Barry Brown and Ronnie de Sousa and to the administrative staff for their tireless support during this year. It has made my job much easier and more fun than it otherwise would have been. Readers of the newsletter and I have Suzanne Puckering, the Department's Business Officer, to thank for the many hours she spends putting it together. Something that takes only minutes to read requires what seems like endless hours to prepare.

# Philosophy in the High Schools



By the end of this calendar year, the Ontario Ministry of Education will publish a Guideline for a course in Philosophy. Taught at the senior level, this Ontario Academic Credit (OAC) course of 110 hours will be offered in any schools where there is sufficient demand and appropriate teaching resources.

The Guideline for the course was developed by a committee struck by the Ministry, which included both secondary school and university teachers of philosophy. Guidelines include descriptions of learning outcomes for a course, prescribed course contents (with some flexibility), considerations for planning to aid teachers in the design of a course, and prescriptions and recommendations about modes of evaluation and allotment of marks.

The learning outcomes of the new Philosophy course emphasize critical thinking skills as well as knowledge of main topics and historical areas of philosophy. Non-Western philosophy and attention to things like gender or ethnic biases are also included. Modes of instruction, reflected in allotment of marks, should include both written work and classroom discussion.

As to content, the course is divided into three segments: an introduction (10% of time allocation), an overview of the areas of philosophy (60%) and exploration of some topic in depth (30%). The exploration component provides

latitude for special focuses.

The overview is divided into seven topic areas (each defined in the Guideline): 1.

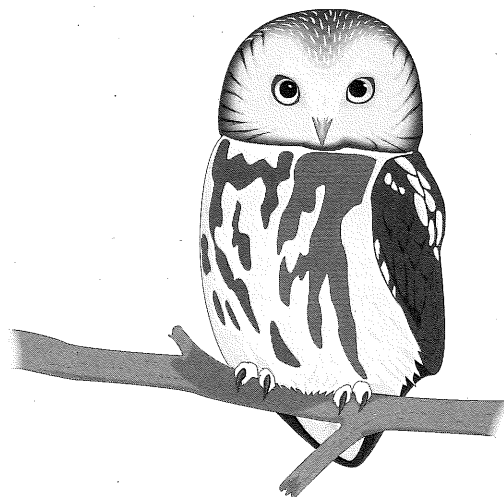
Philosophy of Human Nature; 2. Ethics; 3. Social and Political Philosophy; 4. Epistemology; 5. Logic and Philosophy of Science; 6. Aesthetics; and 7. Metaphysics. Of these four must be addressed, and among the four must be at least one of the first three areas listed.

The course is not yet what is called a "teachable subject," so there will not normally be courses in the Schools of Education (though some such Schools will offer courses on occasion) and principals will have discretion over who teaches it. Ontario university philosophers will, however, be working with the schools to help marshal these courses, for example by making University resources available to secondary school teachers and by discussing readings, teaching approaches and the like with them.

The course resulted from the efforts of the Ontario Secondary School Philosophy Project, a committee struck by the Chairs of Ontario Departments of Philosophy in 1986 and composed of university and secondary school teachers of philosophy from all regions of the Province. Co-chaired by Frank Cunningham of this Department and Ian Winchester, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (though now Ian has moved to the University of Calgary as Dean of its Faculty of Education), the work of this committee received much public support and found a sympathetic hearing within both the civil service and the governmental sides of the Ministry. The result was a success that had eluded two earlier attempts by Ontario philosophers in the three preceding decades.

The course is being grouped with History and Contemporary Studies; however, its Guideline is separate from this or any other subject. Hence, while it might appropriately be taught by someone with a background in history or social science, it might also find instructors whose primary teaching is in other areas, for instance science and mathematics, religion, or art and literature. A strength of the Guideline is that it allows for such diversity while still mandating a common core.

It is anticipated that many of the teachers of this course will be former university students of philosophy, no doubt including some Ontario recipients of Toronto Philosophy News. Such people may discuss the feasibility of teaching the course with appropriate officials in their schools. They are also urged to contact the Chair of a university department of philosophy in their vicinity. The Ontario Secondary School Philosophy Project is attempting to compile a list of philosophically trained



high school teachers. If you are or know of such a person, could you please drop a note to Frank Cunningham in this Department.

# Clifford Wellington Webb

## (1925 - 1994)



Cliff Webb died sometime early in November of 1994; the exact date is unknown because he died alone in his apartment and his body was only discovered later. An autopsy revealed that the cause of his death was a massive heart attack; there was no evidence that he had moved after he collapsed onto the floor, so it seems likely the attack was instantly fatal.

Clifford Wellington Webb was born on 21 May 1925 within the walls of historic Fort Wellington in Prescott, Ontario, and was educated in the public schools there. On his eighteenth birthday he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and served in a communications unit stationed on the Alcan Highway. After his discharge, he worked for a year at an isolated repeater station in the Yukon. In his essay ranking Canadian universities, which will be discussed below, he allowed himself a "personal note": "When I was hired at the University of Toronto in 1955, I was granted a salary that was \$500 a year less than what I had received as a repeater attendant (a kind of glorified telegraph

operator) nine years before, in 1946-47, in the Yukon."

In the autumn of 1947 he enrolled in the University of Western Ontario as a student of journalism. During his first year he decided that there was too little intellectual challenge in journalism—at least in the academic study of it—so he changed his area of concentration to English literature in second year. In the course of that year the University established a new programme in English and Philosophy, one of whose first takers was Cliff in his third year. At the end of that year he decided that philosophy was his subject, so in fourth year he enrolled in the philosophy programme. From this account of his undergraduate years, it is obvious that the University of Western Ontario allowed its students much more freedom of choice than did the University of Toronto in the late 1940s. Cliff was awarded an honours B.A. in 1951, and he immediately registered as a graduate student in philosophy at his alma mater. After being awarded a Master of Arts degree in 1952, he entered the workforce as a junior civil servant employed by the

Queen's Printer in Ottawa. He was the only native English speaker on the staff, so he was occasionally obliged to compose letters to English speakers who had complained of their treatment by the Queen's Printer. Otherwise he found the work unchallenging. After only a few months on the job he decided that he wanted to return to philosophy, so he applied to the University of Toronto for admission to the Ph.D. programme.

His passage through the programme was much faster than was usual at the time, or any subsequent time for that matter: he began in the autumn of 1953 and he defended his dissertation on 29 October 1956. Thomas A. Goudge supervised his thesis, *Space and Time in the Philosophies of Kant and Bergson*. As was then customary, about half of the faculty of the graduate department were voting members on his oral examination committee. No doubt most of them were also interested in seeing their newest colleague in action, for on the strength of his first two years as a graduate student, Fulton Anderson, who was then Head, had appointed Cliff a Lecturer in the Department in 1955, an appointment that was renewed on an annual basis until he was promoted to Assistant Professor in 1959. On 1 July 1965 (the date on which the University of Toronto first formally recognized tenure) he was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor. Up to this point in his career he had shown a good deal of promise: two papers had appeared in the *Journal of Philosophy*, then as now one of the best journals in philosophy.

Early in 1966 he resurrected his journalistic career by accepting an offer from *The Globe and Mail* to write occasional articles on higher education. The first of these, "The Ph.D. Octopus Tightens its Grip", appeared on 17 February 1966; the last, "Is Waste Keeping College Costs High?", was published 17 April 1969. In between there were seventeen others, nearly all of which came out in the years 1966 and 1967. These were opinion pieces, and Cliff's opinions were often idiosyncratic and nearly always controversial. To cite but one example: in "Do Gentle Academics Need a Tough Union?", published on 3 January 1967, his answer was an unequivocal "yes":

If professors are to improve their lot, and if brilliant young men are to be retained, they must insist on the following:

All university teaching staff not holding administrative posts of department chairmanship or higher should be compelled to belong to the association throughout the province. This would mean that no one could teach, for example, in any of Ontario's universities, unless he were certified by the association.

All salaries of university teaching staff should be published annually. This would do away with unfairness and the anomalies of salaries which exist among teachers of equal qualities, ability and rank.

Minimum salary standards for all ranks throughout the province should be established. This would do away with the absurd situation in which universities lose excellent scholars because in some particular year they received less money from the provincial government than they had expected. For a beginning, the association might well insist that full professors should receive \$20,000, associate professors \$15,000, assistant professors \$10,000 and lecturers \$8,000.

The practice of employing graduate students as instructors, demonstrators and teaching fellows should cease immediately. Graduate student's should get their financial support in the form of scholarships. They should get their

teaching experience in a planned course of teacher training in graduate school.

The provincial association should have the right to set minimum qualifications necessary for university teaching, and also minimum standards of teaching conditions.

Until these things are accepted, professors will be unable to ensure that they will do good teaching. It may be that they will have to adopt the techniques, including mass resignations, which secondary school teachers have had to adopt. This would admittedly be unfortunate, but until they accept the possibility of these things, professors can only blame themselves as conditions become worse.

This was strong medicine, and, as it happened, much too strong for his fellow faculty members to swallow. Each Ontario university instead formed its own faculty association; these associations did form an Ontario-wide organization, but the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations has none of the powers that Cliff argued it should have. When it came to reforming the universities Cliff tended to be on the radical side of the political spectrum.

The editors of Maclean's Magazine must have read this series of articles with a great deal of interest. Cliff's willingness to take controversial stands in public led them to engage him to rank Canada's universities and colleges for a special issue of the magazine. This seems to be the first time that Maclean's ranked Canada's institutions of higher learning; many years later they revived the idea and began to publish rankings on an annual basis, but these are elaborate affairs involving the judgment of many people. For their first attempt they turned the entire job over to Cliff Webb. The issue for November 1967 has a section on higher education, and central to it is "A Consumer's Report on Canada's Top Universities: Bricks and Mortarboards do not a University Make. It's Scholars and the Quality of Their Scholarship. Here's How You Can Tell the Best of Canada's 50 Universities from the Rest" by C. Wellington Webb. The cover announces "Our Top 20 Colleges: an Expert's Ranking". In eighteen months or so Cliff had emerged as an "expert" on Canada's system of higher education; it was quite an accomplishment.

Cliff used the "star" categories made familiar by restaurant and movie critics, for ranking the top twenty universities—the other 30 or so universities were bereft of stars, indeed, they were not even mentioned by name. At the top, all alone, was the University of Toronto with a halo of five stars; it did not seem to bother the editors of the magazine that the person offering this judgment was employed by that institution. Indeed, they stressed his affiliation: "Dr. Webb, an associate professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto, has spent several years researching the problems facing modern universities and has published a number of critical articles on the subject. He prepared this report and the academic rankings in the chart on the opposite page in consultation with graduate students specializing in education." Four stars are given to just three universities, all in Quebec: The University of Montreal, McGill, and Laval; Queen's, The University of British Columbia, The University of Alberta, and his alma mater The University of Western Ontario, rated three stars; and so on, ending with York University, then in its infancy.

In ranking Canada's universities he used five criteria which "educators recognize ... for evaluating the general excellence of a university: graduate offerings, library holdings,

science facilities, wealth, and prestige staff." These characteristics of universities are, of course, interrelated, "and it would be unwise to assume that any one is the most important or that any of them is an infallible guide to quality, but taken together, they represent a rough measurement of the relative strengths of the university." In his essay he goes on to elaborate on these criteria and to apply them to generate a ranking of the top twenty.

Cliff's rankings and his vignettes justifying his decision in each case are all crowded on to one page of the magazine. Reading them today one fact sticks out, namely, that at the end of each of the vignettes Cliff records the establishments to which the students of that university go to drink. To anyone who knew Cliff in later life this fact will jump out, because with each passing year his addiction to alcohol became more painfully evident. Until about 1960 this was not a problem, but in that year he began to drink and found himself addicted to it. From time to time he would announce that he was going to seek treatment, but he never did. It is fair to say that alcohol ruined his life. Before he became addicted he showed considerable promise as a philosopher, some of which had been demonstrated in his publications, and he had a reputation as an excellent teacher, especially amongst the graduate students and advanced undergraduates in the Department. That such a gifted person should fall victim to alcoholism saddened all who knew him in earlier years when his promise seemed so bright.

Alcohol also played havoc in his private life. It destroyed his marriage: his wife, Nelly, left him and moved away from Toronto, taking their three children with her. Most of those who had been his friends also abandoned him, again because his behaviour was so unpredictable and, at times, violent. Increasingly deserted by everyone, he turned even more to alcohol for solace; he remained drunk for longer and longer periods of time. By the late 1970s and early 1980s there were serious problems with his teaching: he often missed classes altogether and occasionally turned up too intoxicated to teach. A succession of chairmen dealt with this growing problem. When told his conduct was unacceptable, he would promise to mend his ways, but he never acted on his promises. On one occasion treatment was arranged by the chairman of the Department and a taxi engaged to take Cliff from the Department offices to the clinic, but as soon as he was left alone in the taxi, he asked the driver to let him out and he departed to carry on his old ways. When matters had reached the intolerable stage, and all other options were less attractive, he opted for early retirement.

Even during the years when addiction to alcohol tended to dominate his life, he still managed to write philosophical articles for publication. "Spatio-temporal Objects" (1971) and "Could Space be Time-like?" (1977) both appeared in *The Journal of Philosophy*, and "Hegel's Reasoning" (1978) and "Some Logical Difficulties in Kant's Transcendental Idealism" (1980) both came out in *Idealistic Studies*. Metaphysical concepts, especially "time" and "space", fascinated him; his articles concerning them are packed with very closely reasoned analysis of proposed answers to some of the questions raised by these concepts. What set him apart from many who find metaphysical questions fascinating was the unsentimental

logical way in which he attempted to answer them. He held no brief for speculative metaphysics.

After his retirement members of the Department had only occasional contact with him. My last telephone conversation with him occurred during the summer of 1994; he called me to arrange to have someone sign his passport photograph. After making those arrangements, I asked him how he was and what he was doing. He was sober and in a good mood, and he replied that he was well, and had returned to his "first love, journalism". With a few others he was working on a new magazine, *Independence*, with an intended readership from among those who owned small-businesses; his contribution was a terminal essay in each issue. At the time we talked only one issue had been published, but he and others were working on a second. As with all such ventures, there were money troubles, but Cliff felt sure that they would be overcome. He told me that he would tell me more about it when he came to have the photograph signed. Although our appointment was scheduled for only an hour or so after our conversation, he did not appear.

## BIOETHICS IN RUSSIA, BELARUS AND LITHUANIA

In late October, I traveled to three countries of the former Soviet Union with a 12-member, multi-national People to People delegation to visit philosophy departments, health care facilities, medical schools, research institutions, and government health ministries. In addition to a first-hand exposure to medical ethics in Russia, Belarus and Lithuania, I have come back feeling overwhelmed and enormously grateful for the blessings of my comfortable North American home. Before highlighting bioethics issues, a word about their context is in order.

The political and economic landscapes in the Commonwealth of Independent States are complex and at times frightening; after the trip, the war in Chechnya has further destabilized both the Russian rouble and Boris Yeltsin's political base. Moscow and St. Petersburg are fascinating mixes of extravagant tsarist art and architecture, foreboding brick buildings, and dingy apartment towers. Moscow's subway is famous for its art and chandeliers, but the city above remains predominantly grey. While stores are fairly well stocked now, most residents find it difficult to pay the equivalent of \$1/lb for meat on a \$30 monthly salary. Several of us on the trip agreed that the region seems to be rushing headlong into a market economy without much awareness or preparation for the dangers and abuses of such structures; one colleague made analogies to F. Scott Fitzgerald's description of the U.S. economy in the 1920s. The mafia often seems to be running things: we dickered for same-day tickets from a gun-toting young man at the Bolshoi ballet, and I lost a roll of film to a Belarussian border guard who decided he didn't want his discussions with truck drivers to be photographed. Moscow's famous GUM department store is being taken over by Estee Lauder, Benetton, and other international chains. Several old-fashioned shops remain, however, in which you line up to get the attention of the salesperson behind the counter and ask for what you want, then line up to pay for your purchases, then line up yet again to pick up your parcels. Inadvertently, I received a humbling education into the difficulties faced by immigrants, illiterate persons, and others who cannot communicate in the local language.

Belarus is the most desperate of the three nations because it received the majority of Chernobyl's fallout (contaminating about 1/4 of the land in this agrarian nation), and has little history as an independent government. Minsk, the capital city, had only



11 buildings standing after WWII; the city is now filled with poorly constructed, ugly, grey, Stalinist-era concrete buildings. Several key leaders in the Belarussian medical schools and the Academy of Science seemed almost paralyzed by new responsibilities and limited resources; in many of our meetings, discussions of ethics bogged down in literal pleas to send English-language science journals and other basic research materials. (If you would like to make contributions, addresses are at the end of the article). Finances are so tight, in fact, that the President decreed that the central heating system linking all homes and offices in Minsk would not be turned on until the temperature dropped to 2 degrees C; some hospitals and a few tourist hotels have their own generators and heating systems, and were the only warm, dry places in town during a rainy, 4 degree October week. Almost everyone we met in Russia and Belarus expressed concern about expensive or frequently unavailable basic necessities such as books, journals, antibiotics, syringes, tampons, contraceptives, food, electricity, and heat; there was broad consensus that life was easier under the Soviet regime, but nobody we spoke with voiced a desire to go back to a Soviet-style structure.

Lithuania seemed like a breath of fresh air after Russia and Belarus. It is the wealthiest and most stable of the three countries we visited, and displays a strong sense of community



Smolney Cathedral, St. Petersburg

and ethnic tradition. Several of us noted that Lithuania has many houses and cottages, not just ugly apartment buildings. Vilnius and Kaunas seemed much more like western European cities, with modern glass and steel architecture mixed in with traditional styles, huge suburban groceries stocked as well as any Loblaws, and the first abundant supply of fresh produce we had seen on the trip. As with the other countries, Lithuania seems to be struggling with a collective post-traumatic shock syndrome after the Nazi occupation of WWII, the KGB, and Russian soldiers. We visited the cemetery plots of those who died defending the media tower when Russian tanks rolled down the main streets in 1991, and in perhaps the most chilling experience I've ever had, toured the offices and blood-stained prison that the KGB used in Vilnius until 1990. A brand new national bioethics committee is establishing its priorities and setting to work in developing health policy and education goals.

I was deeply impressed by the optimism and commitment of many of our hosts in all three nations as they cope with current difficulties, design new health care delivery and insurance systems (and, indeed, entirely new governments and economies), and attempt to develop rigorous bioethics

education. I am delighted to report that our most enthusiastic hosts were often young and female, although few women have made it to the top levels of administration in medicine, government, or philosophy.

There are far too many details of interest to recount here, but I'll offer a few highlights and key observations:

**Bioethics education** is limited; most medical schools offer a term or so of ethics, but this is often dominated by psychology and lessons in bedside manner. Several colleagues (addresses below) are eager for correspondence and would deeply appreciate any contributions of texts, articles, teaching materials, etc. A few of the younger professors are especially keen to catch up on western bioethics and philosophy of medicine, and recognize the importance of addressing these issues in medical education and social contexts.

**Abortion:** The abortion rate is extremely high in eastern Europe, due primarily to harsh economic conditions and social uncertainty combined with the unavailability of contraceptives. We were told in many locations that the death rate now exceeds the birth rate. St. Petersburg's Ott Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the best ob/gyn hospital in Russia and once one of the best in the world, used to have 6000 births annually; in 1993, the number of births was closer to 2000. Although abortions are very common, they are not accepted casually or considered morally neutral. A bioethics professor at the St. Petersburg medical school informed us that the North American debate between fetal and women's rights is simply not an issue in Russia; the first challenge for bioethicists there was to encourage clinicians to give post-surgical analgesics to "those bad girls" who had had an abortion. The Soviets looked favourably upon producing more soldiers and workers; while the Soviet structure has collapsed, many public attitudes have not. One of the first tasks for the brand-new Ethics Committee of the Lithuanian Ministry of Health is to establish recommendations for reconciling the perceived need for abortions with the expectations of the Vatican in a predominantly Roman Catholic nation.

**Prenatal diagnosis:** The abortion rate is especially high when illness or deformity is a risk. For example, the genetics department of the Ott Institute performed over 200 tests for cystic fibrosis in 1993; of 84 positive results, all 84 pregnancies were terminated. Concerns about genetic defects are particularly acute in Belarus, which received the majority of nuclear fallout from Chernobyl. We were reassured that the abortion decision rests entirely with the woman, although doctors are likely to advocate having one. My impression is that the counselling is directive but not coercive; decisions in favor of abortion seem to be a common response to harsh practical realities. Patients are also more likely there than here to view the doctor as an authority.

**Euthanasia:** Most of the clinicians we met claimed that all patients receive treatment, and none are abandoned. They often expressed a belief that the "right to die" movement in Europe and North America is based on financial concerns, and asserted a strong affirmation of the value of an individual's life. We heard from several sources that a key research goal in Russia is to bring dead individuals back to life -- reversing brain death is the research focus of the Institute of Reanimation in Moscow. In contrast, several philosophers in Moscow discussed distinctions in the western bioethics literature on euthanasia such as active/passive and voluntary/nonvoluntary. They pointed out that many clinicians may be telling us what



Street in "old" Vilnius



they believed we wanted to hear, or may feel judged; the philosophers' clinical experience (confirmed by a physician/translator in Belarus) is that patients are not only frequently allowed to die but are sometimes given lethal injections or are smothered -- this is especially true for seriously ill newborns. There is little understanding of the problems of long-term life support because of the limited availability of respirators; a "right to die" may therefore have very different cultural and practical contexts.

**AIDS:** Russia conducted massive, non-voluntary HIV screening from 1987 to 1993; approximately 200,000,000 tests were run, or roughly enough to test the entire population once. Only 825 cases of AIDS have been identified. The director of Moscow's AIDS Research and Treatment Centre claims that a Russian form of AZT works better than western versions, but the data seem too limited to justify such a conclusion. Very little money has been directed to AIDS education or prevention, and little is available to the treatment hospital; most money has gone into testing. The Parliament recently passed a bill (awaiting Yeltsin's signature or veto) that would require all visitors to Russia to undergo an HIV test; concerns have been raised about driving away needed visitors and foreign assistance, of the coercive nature of the tests, of rampant false positives, and of the limited supply of clean syringes that may make the test itself a risky undertaking.

**Research** seems to follow a different paradigm in Russia than in the west, which may account for some of the confusion in obtaining data and research results. Their methodology is dominated by attempting an intervention and then describing the results, rather than establishing control groups and doing comparative studies. In some places our questions about ethical issues in research were answered with a curt, "we do not do experimentation!", leading us to wonder whether we had encountered a subtlety of translation (as research, experimentation, and vivisection have different contexts in English) or whether we had hit upon a cultural construction that rejects intentionally subjecting some people to interventions known to be useless for their condition.



Street in Minsk

Several philosophers and colleagues would be delighted to establish correspondence with us, really need support in developing new curriculum, and would welcome any donations of readings, teaching materials, journals, or other supplies. If you have any questions about specific needs, please feel free to contact me.

**In Russia:** **Katya Dvoretkaia**, Dept. of Philosophy, Medical University, L. Tolstoy St. 7/8, 197089 St. Petersburg, Russia. Katya is a young philosopher with wonderful energy and enthusiasm who needs teaching materials and western philosophy and bioethics texts.

**Raisa Korotkikh**, MD, Chief, Unit of Biomedical Ethics, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, Vorontsova Pole St., 12, 103064 Moscow, Russia. Phone: (095) 917-71-89 Fax: (095) 916-03-98. Raisa was introduced to us at a large meeting

of Philosophy professors as "the godmother of Russian bioethics".

**Pavel Tichtchenko**, MD, PhD, Dept. of Ethics of Science, Volkhonka 14, 119842 Moscow, Russia. Pavel is a member of the Russian National Committee on Bioethics (RNCB) who met with Georgetown's Robert Veatch in 1988. During our visit, he coordinated a discussion session with about 20 philosophers working in medical ethics in Moscow; he is a central contact person for the region.

**Irinia V. Silujanova**, PhD, Institute of Cheloveck, Russian Academy of Science, Volkhonka 14, Moscow 119842, Russia. ("Cheloveck" means "human being"). **Helena V. Brizgalina**, Dept. of Philosophy, Moscow State University, Lenin Hills, 117234 Moscow, Russia. Irinia and Helena are both young philosophers connected with Pavel Tichtchenko's working group, and both specifically requested teaching materials for bioethics.

**In Lithuania:** **E. Laurenitis**, MD (director) and **Toma Birmondienė** (attorney), Medical Ethics Committee, Lithuanian Ministry of Health, Sedimino 27, 2682 Vilnius, Lithuania. Phone: 320-2-224601 fax: 320-2-421982 This national level committee was formed only two weeks before our visit. They would especially appreciate copies of bioethics reports from governmental commissions, study groups, etc.

**In Belarus:** In addition to bioethics and philosophy materials, the institutions in Belarus also requested scientific materials, and especially English-language journals. Please contact:

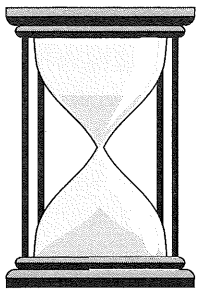
**Alexander V. Rutskiy**, Rector, Belarussian State Institute for Medical Advanced Studies, 220714 Minsk, Brovka Str 3, Republic of Belarus. tel: (0172) 322-485 fax: 322-533. **Elviza Fonotova** and **Larisa Kosharskay** are two of the bioethics professors here who would appreciate materials and support.

**Valeri N. Gourine**, MD, Director, Institute of Physiology, Belarus Academy of Sciences, Skorina str. 28, Minsk, 220725, Republic of Belarus. tel: (0172) 39-54-61 Fax: 39-47-73. Chief needs are medical and scientific rather than philosophical.

**Alexei I. Kubarko**, MD, Rector, Minsk Medical Institute, 83 Dzerzhinskogo Prosp., Minsk, 220116, Republic of Belarus. tel: (0172) 71-94-24 fax: 72-61-97

# SPEECH BY SIR ISALAH BERLIN

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." With these words Dickens began his famous novel *A Tale of Two Cities*. But this cannot, alas, be said about our own terrible century. Men have for millennia destroyed each other, but the deeds of Attila the Hun, Ghenghis Khan, Napoleon (who introduced mass killings in war), even the Armenian massacres, pale into insignificance before the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, the oppression, torture, murder, which can be laid at the doors of Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao, Pol Pot and the systematic falsification of information which prevented knowledge of these horrors for years these are unparalleled. They were not natural disasters, but preventable human crimes, and whatever those who believe in historical determinism may



think they could have been averted. I speak with particular feeling, for I am a very old man, and I have lived through almost the entire century. My life has been peaceful and secure, and I feel almost ashamed of this, in view of what has happened to so many other human beings. I am not a historian, and so I cannot speak with authority on the causes of these horrors. Yet perhaps I can try. They were, in my view, not caused by the ordinary negative human

sentiments, as Spinoza called them fear, greed, tribal hatreds, jealousy, love for power though of course these have played their wicked part. They have been, in our time, caused by ideas. Or rather, one particular idea. It is paradoxical that Karl Marx, who played down the importance of ideas in comparison with impersonal social and economic forces, should, by his writings, have caused the transformation of the twentieth century, both in the direction of what he wanted and, by reaction, against it. The German poet Heine, in one of his famous writings, told us not to underestimate the quiet philosopher sitting in his study; if Kant had not undone theology, he declared, Robespierre might not have cut off the head of the King of France. He predicted that the armed disciples of the German philosophers Fichte, Schelling and the other fathers of German nationalism would one day destroy the great monuments of Western Europe in a wave of fanatical destruction before which the French Revolution would seem child's play. This may have been unfair to the German metaphysicians, yet Heine's central idea seem to me valid: in a debased form, the Nazi ideology did have roots in German anti-Enlightenment thought. There are men who will kill and maim with a tranquil conscience under the influence of the words and writings of some of those who are certain that they know how perfection can be reached. Let me explain. If you are truly convinced that there is some solution to all human problems, that one can conceive an ideal society which men can reach if only they do what is necessary to attain it, then you and your followers must believe that no price can be too high to pay in order to open the gates of such a paradise. Only the stupid and malevolent will resist once certain simple truths are put to them those who resist must be persuaded if they cannot be

persuaded, laws must be passed to restrain them if that does not work, then coercion, if need be violence, will inevitably have to be used if necessary, terror, slaughter. Lenin believed this after reading *Das Kapital*, and consistently taught that if a just, peaceful, happy, free, virtuous society could be created by the means he advocated, then the end justified any methods that needed to be used, literally any. The root conviction which underlies this is that the central questions of human life, individual or social, have one true answer which can be discovered, all other answers being false; that once it is discovered, it can and must be implemented, and those who have found it are the leaders whose word is law. The idea that to all genuine questions there can be only one true answer is a very old philosophical notion the great Athenian philosophers, Jews and Christians, the thinkers of the Renaissance and the Paris of Louis XIV, the French radical reformers of the eighteenth century, the revolutionaries of the nineteenth however much they differed about what the answer was or how to discover it (and bloody wars were fought over this), they were all convinced that they knew the answer, and that only human vice and stupidity could obstruct its realisation.

This is the idea of which I spoke, and what I wish to tell you is that it is false. Not only because the solutions given by different schools of social thought differ, and none can be demonstrated by rational methods but for an even deeper reason. The central values by which most men have lived, in a great many lands at a great many times these values, almost if not entirely universal, are not always harmonious with each other. Some are, some are not. Men have always craved for liberty, security, equality, happiness, justice, knowledge and so on. But complete liberty is not compatible with complete equality if men are wholly free, the wolves would be free to eat the sheep. Perfect equality means that human liberties must be restrained so that the ablest and the most gifted are not permitted to advance beyond those who would inevitably lose if there were competition. Security, and indeed freedoms, cannot be preserved if freedom to subvert them is permitted.

Indeed, not everyone seeks security or peace, otherwise some would not have sought glory in battle or in dangerous sports. Justice has always been a human ideal, but it is not fully compatible with mercy. Creative imagination and spontaneity, splendid in themselves, cannot be fully reconciled with the need for planning, organisation, careful and responsible calculation. Knowledge, the pursuit of truth the noblest of aims cannot be fully reconciled with the happiness or the freedom that men desire, for even if I know that I have some incurable disease this will not make me happier or freer. I must always choose: between peace and excitement, or knowledge





and blissful ignorance. And so on.

So what is to be done to restrain the champions, sometimes fanatical, of one or other of these values, each of whom tends to trample upon the rest, as the great tyrants of the twentieth century have trampled on the life, liberty and human rights of millions, because their eyes were fixed upon some ultimate golden future? I am afraid I have no dramatic answer to offer: only that if these ultimate human values by which we live are to be pursued, then compromises, trade-offs, arrangements, have to be made if the worst is not to happen. So much liberty for so much equality, so much individual self-expression for so much security, so much justice for so much compassion. My point is that some values clash: the ends pursued by human beings are all generated by our common nature, but their pursuit has to be to some degree controlled liberty and the pursuit of happiness, I repeat, may not be fully compatible with each other, nor are liberty, equality and fraternity. So we must weigh and measure, bargain, compromise, and prevent the crushing of one form of life by its rivals. I know only too well that this is not a flag under which idealistic and enthusiastic young men and women may wish to march it seems too tame, too reasonable, too



bourgeois, it does not engage the generous emotions. But you must believe me, one cannot have everything one wants not only in practice, but even in theory. The denial of this, the search for a single, over-arching ideal because it is the one and only true end for humanity, invariably leads to coercion. And then to destruction, blood eggs are broken, but the omelette is not in sight, there is only an infinite number of eggs, human lives, ready for the breaking: and in the end the passionate idealists forget the omelette, and just go on breaking eggs.

I am glad to note that towards the end of my long life some realisation of this is beginning to dawn. Rationality, tolerance, rare enough in human history, are not despised liberal democracy, despite everything, despite the greatest modern scourge of fanatical, fundamentalist nationalism, is spreading: great tyrannies are in ruins, or will be even in China the day is not too distant. I am glad that you to whom I speak will see the twenty first century, which I feel sure can only be a better time for mankind than my terrible century has been. I congratulate you on your good fortune: I regret that I shall not see this brighter future, which I am convinced is coming. With all the gloom I have been spreading, I am glad to end on an optimistic note. There really are good reasons to think that it is justified.

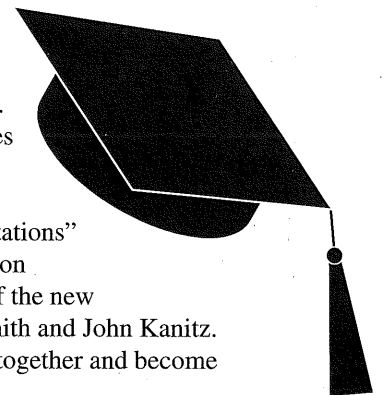
## Notes from the Graduate Department

"When a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight," said Dr. Johnson, "it concentrates his mind wonderfully." The annual litany of funding reductions, and the extreme scarcity of any support money beyond the fourth year, seem to have had a similar effect upon our graduate students. Thesis completions in the past couple of years have accelerated to a furious pace. In just the last two years, two dozen dissertations have been successfully defended. They have pushed back the boundaries of knowledge (well, of speculation anyway) on an astonishing variety of topics. If you wanted to browse the latest in our field, you would be welcome to come into the graduate office and sit down for a good read. (You can't take theses away, though: too great a risk of someone stealing the movie rights.) Traditionalists will find work on many historical topics (Abelard, Aquinas, Boethius, Heraclitus, Heidegger, Leibniz, Russell . . . ); the more adventurous could read about Colour Theory, Action Theory, Intercultural Understanding, Content and Supervenience in the Philosophy of Mind, Universal Semantics, the Politics of Epistemology, Consequentialism, Moral Character, Narrative Constraints, Emotional Expression, and the Aesthetics of Sex. Or you might be lured by exotic titles like "The Very Idea of a Normal Child," or "Memories of Truth, Habits of Following" (that last a highly technical work on logical theory, in case you didn't guess), or even "Swampman of La Mancha and Other Tales."

The author of that last thesis, far from being booted out of the profession for excessive levity, is one of several recent graduates now enjoying a postdoctoral fellowship, with a tenure-stream job kept warm for her to go to when that ends. About half a dozen others have tenurable jobs, three others have post-docs, and several have teaching employment but not tenure track jobs. The dark side of the picture is that, unfortunately, we have too many people on the job market (some 30 at the moment!) vying for very few jobs.

Applicants, however, are not to be dissuaded. We received about 250 applications (for 20 places) in each of the last two years. So far this year both the numbers and the quality seem to be keeping steady. Our graduate students keep improving, though the monetary value of the support we can give them does not.

Among the things that have been improving are the technological resources available to our students. I couldn't quite remember the exact wording of that quotation from Dr. Johnson. So I searched for "quotations" in gopher space, and then tried our newly installed World Wide Web facility to explore various quotation databases. I found the exact quotation in just a few minutes. These facilities are available on all four of the new computers installed on the 10th floor for the use of graduate students, through the generosity of Jay Smith and John Kanitz. Most students, however, manage to keep an iron grip on the temptation to give up their dissertations altogether and become Internet Surfing Bums instead.



Ronald de Sousa, Graduate Coordinator

# Upcoming Events!

## Philosophy Book Launch!!

Thursday, March 9th, 215 Huron Street 10th Floor Lounge, 4:00 - 6:00 P.M.

The authors this year (and their books) are:

Judith Baker, *Group Rights* (University of Toronto Press) 1994.

Lloyd Gerson, *Plotinus, Arguments of the Philosophers* (Routledge) 1994.

Ian Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of memory*, (Princeton University Press) 1995.

Mark Kingwell, *A Civil Tongue: Justice, Dialogue, and the Politics of Pluralism*, (Pennsylvania State University Press) 1995.

Elmar Kremer ed., *The Great Arnauld and Some of his Philosophical Correspondence*, (University of Toronto Press) 1994.

Jordan Howard Sobel, *Taking Chances: Essays on Rational Choice* (Cambridge University Press) 1994.

Paul Thompson ed., *Issues in Evolutionary Ethics* (Albany State University of New York Press) 1994.

Department of Philosophy  
University of Toronto

presents

JEROME S. SIMON MEMORIAL  
LECTURES

David Kaplan  
U.C.L.A.

Tuesday, March 28th

7:30 p.m.

Wednesday & Thursday

March 29th & 30th

4:10 p.m.

Alumni Hall, Victoria College

91 Charles Street West

All Welcome Free Admission

The Department of Philosophy and  
Holy Blossom Temple

presents

THE CITY: WALLS WITHIN

David Elazar

8:00 p.m.

Monday May 1 at Holy Blossom Temple

1950 Bathurst Street

Drucilla Cornell

8:00 p.m.

Tuesday May 2 at University of Toronto

George Ignatieff Theatre, Trinity College

15 Devonshire Place

Call 978-3311 for further details

## COLLOQUIUM SPRING 1995

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1995

PROF. JOHN COOPER

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1995

PROF. HELEN LONGINO

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA