

# AGORA

Newsletter of the Department of Philosophy

## COMING AND GOING

The Department welcomes four new faces this year while Julie Wilson departs  
Page 5

## PHILOSOPHY TODAY

Watch this year's talks by Barbara Montero, Jesse Prinz, Brie Gertler, and Dorit Bar-On on iTunesU!  
Page 4

## ALUMNI UPDATES

Find out who graduated, who's engaged, and who's going to law school (and where)!  
Pages 6-7

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# Musical Chairs

By H. Scott Hestevold

**W**hen Norvin Richards retired from the Department two years ago, he chided me (more than once!), "Now you're the geezer." Having joined UA's faculty in 1978 immediately after earning my doctorate, I cannot deny my status as geezer.

From time to time, as geezers do, I contemplate retirement. On one such occasion last fall, I also contemplated the amount of time that I had been investing in the administration of the Department and realized that I missed life as a full-time philosopher and teacher of philosophy. I did not want spend the rest of my career as a department chair.

In mid-April, with the end of our search for a new professor in sight, I announced that I would leave the chairmanship August 15 at the end of my eighth year as chair. Several days later, as white smoke curled upward from Clark Hall, the Dean reported that he had accepted the Department's recommendation to appoint Dr. Richard Richards as the next chair. The two of us have been

working closely to ensure a seamless transition, and I am confident that the Department will flourish under Richard's leadership. For our older alumni, this is an appropriate time to reflect on how much the Department has changed in just eight years.



After eight years as Department Chair, Scott steps down.

## Temporary Instructors

In 2007, the Department had two temporary instructors -- a one-year instructor and a three-year instructor. Today we have three full-time instructors on three-year appointments. By offering our instructors three-year contracts, the Dean has allowed us to attract a larger and stronger pool of applicants. Though instructors are full-time teachers for whom there are no research expectations, most of our instructors publish nonetheless.

## Tenure-Track Faculty

Within the past eight years, the Department has filed seven petitions to conduct searches for new assistant professors. The Dean granted six of these petitions. We conducted three searches to replace faculty who resigned or retired; and we completed

KEEP READING MUSICAL CHAIRS ON PAGE 5

## FACULTY NEWS



**Dr. Torin Alter**  
Professor

This year *Consciousness in the Physical World*, which Dr. Alter co-edited with Yujin Nagasawa of Birmingham University, finally appeared on Oxford University Press

(insert happy emoji here). Two of our (now graduated) students, Mitchel Dykstra and Tyler Brockett, kept Dr. Alter sane by helping him with the index. Dr. Alter gave presentations at the Pacific Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association and at the University of Rochester. His paper “The structure and dynamics argument” was accepted by *Noûs*, though he is continues to polish the final draft. Dr. Alter completely rewrote his overview piece on the knowledge argument for the second edition of the Blackwell Companion to Consciousness. And Dr. Alter, Julie Wilson, and Rebecca Kerley drafted about three quarters of a paper on how we taught deductive logic to a blind student last year. Dr. Alter reports that his table tennis game continues to improve “but at a pitifully slow rate.”



**Dr. Seth Bordner**  
Assistant Professor

Dr. Bordner remained productive despite sleeping very little since the arrival of Avery last June. He had two papers accepted for publication: the long-running, “If

We Stop Thinking About Berkeley’s Problem of Continuity, Will It Still Exist?” (*Journal of the History of Philosophy*) — spoiler: no! —, and “‘All-Things-Considered,’ ‘Better-Than,’ and Sports Rankings” (*Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*). In

February, he delivered “Rethinking Character and Responsibility in Hume” at the South Central Society for Eighteenth Century Studies and traveled to Wales in September to present at the International Association for Philosophy of Sport’s annual conference. He continues to work on several papers dealing variously with Plato, Hume, and Berkeley.



**Dr. Kenneth Ehrenberg**  
Assistant Professor

Dr. Ehrenberg capped off an eventful year by delivering the final draft of his book *The Functions of Law* to his editor at Oxford University Press. During the past year *McGill Law Journal* published his paper “Less Evidence, Better Knowledge,” he came out with a chapter titled “Law’s Artifactual Nature: How Legal Institutions Generate Normativity” in the edited volume *Reasons and Intentions in Law and Practical Agency* published by Cambridge University Press, and in January he traveled to Antwerp for the final oral defense of a Ph.D. student on whose dissertation committee he had served as a core member. The summer was a busy one for presentations for Dr. Ehrenberg. He was invited to speak at the Krakow Workshops in Legal Philosophy’s roundtable on the Metaphilosophy of Analytic Legal Philosophy at Jagiellonian University where he delivered a paper entitled “Ontology and Reason Giving in Law.” He was also asked to speak at two of the Edinburgh Legal Theory Research Group’s Spring Workshops. At the one on Methodology of Legal Philosophy, he delivered a paper titled “Law as Artifact: Function and Method,” and at the one on Perspectives on Legal Authority he delivered a paper titled “Legal Authority: Metaphysics

and Legitimacy.” Then at the end of July he attended the 27th World Congress of Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy (IVR) hosted by Georgetown Law School in Washington, DC. There he co-organized a special workshop on Artifacts or Practices? An Ontology to Explain Law’s Normative Power where he delivered a paper titled “Law is an Institution, an Artifact, and a Practice.”



**Dr. H. Scott Hestevold**  
Professor

Last Fall, Dr. Hestevold taught Philosophy of Religion, and a subset of those students organized a reading group that met with Dr. Hestevold through the spring semester. Dr. Hestevold’s essay on “Should You Not Study Philosophy?” was published in the electronic edition of *Philosophy for the Curious* (edited by Koshor Vaidya; available from Amazon). Dr. Hestevold is anticipating his sabbatical leave in Spring 2016 when he will have time to think uninterruptedly about space and time.



**Dr. Justin Klocksiem**  
Instructor

Dr. Klocksiem spent the past year doing the things he loves. He taught several courses in introductory philosophy, ethics, and bio-medical ethics. When not in the classroom, he devoted time to the pursuit of several long-term research interests, including work on some structural and metaphysical issues surrounding ethical properties such as goodness and better-ness, and a defense of a desire-satisfaction theory of well-being. Last, but not least, Dr.

## FACULTY NEWS

Klockslem's family was (and is) happy and healthy. His younger son, Virgil, turned one and learned to walk, while the older son, Emmett, turned three and is learning to ride a bike. They are both keeping Justin and Caroline on their toes and in top physical condition.



**Dr. Rekha Nath**  
Assistant Professor

This past spring, Dr. Nath taught a new service-learning seminar, "Social Justice in Practice," and the 25 enrolled students worked with local community organizations. She published two papers ("On the Scope and Grounds of Social equality" in an Oxford collection on social equality that was published in January 2015, and an article, "Against Institutional Luck Egalitarianism" which was published

in August 2014 in the Journal of *Ethics & Social Philosophy*. Dr. Nath's book review of George Sher's Equality for Inegalitarians was published last month. In December 2014, Dr. Nath gave a talk at The University of Connecticut, as a part of their Philosophy Department's Injustice League. She also decided that her pug, Scout, needed some company, and they have welcomed into our household a kitten, Iggy. Both animals recently celebrated their first birthdays.



**Dr. Stuart Rachels**  
Associate Professor

Dr. Rachels published both the 8th edition of his co-authored *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* and the 7th edition of his co-edited *The Right Thing to Do*. He continues to work on a book, *The Best I Saw in Chess*, the manuscript of which is now more than 1,000 pages.



**Dr. Richard Richards**  
Professor

Dr. Richards is currently putting the final touches on his second book with Cambridge University Press titled, *Biological Classification: A Philosophical Introduction*. He is also writing a chapter on "The Logical Structure of Valuation" for the *Cambridge Handbook on Evolutionary Ethics*. In July he gave

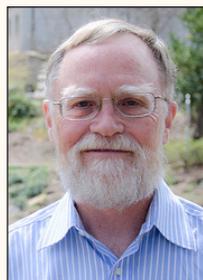
a talk in Montreal for the International Society of the History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology. On August 16, Dr. Richards began his first year as chair of the Department of Philosophy.

## FACULTY EMERITI



**Dr. Max Hocutt**  
Professor Emeritus

Dr. Hocutt continues to serve as a popular instructor for UA's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. On the heels of his well-received course on Greek Philosophy, he will be teaching Philosophy for Beginners, featuring "short lectures on large topics."



**Dr. Norvin Richards**  
Professor Emeritus

Dr. Richards wrote "Parental Love" for an Oxford handbook on philosophical questions about love, and he presented "Helping your child have a good life" at a conference in Sheffield. He has finished revising "Helping your child" for an issue of the *Journal*

of *Applied Philosophy* devoted to the conference. In addition, he co-presented two cases concerning extremely premature babies at the 3rd International Conference on Pediatrics, a conference at which he also served as moderator. Finally, he and Janet enjoyed one trip to Patagonia and another to the Amazon, Machu Picchu and the Galapagos.



**Dr. Chase Wrenn**  
Associate Professor

2014-15 was a big year for Dr. Wrenn. His book, *Truth*, came out on Polity Press. He organized the third Southeastern Epistemology Conference, which UA hosted, and he presented papers at the Truth Pluralism and Logical Pluralism conference at the University of Connecticut and at the annual meeting of the Southern Society for Philosophy and

Psychology in New Orleans.



### Does Thinking Interfere with Doing?

**Barbara Gail Montero**  
CUNY Graduate Center

### Does the Mind Extend Beyond the Body?

**Brie Gertler**  
University of Virginia



# Philosophy TODAY

### The Moral Self

**Jesse Prinz**  
CUNY Graduate Center

Watch all these talks and more on UA's iTunesU channel!



### The Origins of Meaning

**Dorit Bar-On**  
University of Connecticut



CONTINUED FROM PAGE I

two searches to fill new tenure-track lines for specialists in the history of philosophy and in philosophy of cognitive science. In early August, the dean granted the sixth petition, giving us permission to search during 2015-16 for a philosopher of medicine. Six searches within eight years will increase the permanent faculty from seven to ten -- more than 40%.

#### Students Served, Majors, and Minors

By adding more philosophers to the faculty, the Department has been able to teach more students: the number of students taught annually has increased by 66% since 2007. When hiring new philosophers, the Department's standards have been high with respect to both research and teaching potential. (The philosopher actively engaged in research is not only a well-informed teacher but is likely to have passion for the discipline that is infectious in the classroom.) By building a stronger faculty, we have significantly increased the number of majors and minors: marking a 27% increase since 2007, we have close to seventy majors; our one-hundred minors reflect an increase of 300%. During my early years at UA in the late 1970s, the Department was lucky to produce one graduate/year; now, the Department averages eighteen graduates/year. Many of these graduates are outstanding students who also complete a second or third major.

As I leave the chairmanship, words of thanks are in order. My thanks to Dorothy Bazemore for her secretarial assistance during the first half of my chairmanship and to Julianne Wilson for her assistance during the second. I thank Robert Olin, Dean the College of Arts and Sciences: Dean Olin understands what philosophers do and has consistently offered us the College's support and encouragement over the past eight years. Finally, I am grateful to my colleagues for their support and their many efforts that have, for eight years, made the work of the chair relatively easy. Indeed, serving as chair for such a group philosophers has been an honor.

## want to give back?

The Department of Philosophy is grateful to friends and alumni who support our mission.

Anonymously, two philosophers have made donations to the Department's student-award funds.

If you would like to join these supporters of philosophy, please visit our website:

**philosophy.ua.edu**



**For Alumni**



**Giving**

There are suggested levels of giving from The Anselm Level ("That amount than which the Department hath not yet conceived") to The Existentialist Level ("Struggling with angst, I nonetheless support the Department's efforts").

For additional information, contact Richard Richards (rrichard@ua.edu).

# NEW ARRIVALS



**Dr. Benjamin Kozuch**  
Assistant Professor

A long and winding path led Dr. Kozuch to The University of Alabama. After earning an undergraduate English degree at Penn State, Dr. Kozuch moved to New Orleans to work as a

freelance musician, playing bass in anything from cajun to rock to jazz bands. A love of learning led him to pursue a doctorate in Philosophy and Cognitive Science at the University of Arizona, where he also worked as an instructor for the past two years. His research sits at the intersection of the philosophy and neuroscience of consciousness, much of it aimed at using neuroscientific data to evaluate philosophical theories of consciousness. A paper he recently published in *Philosophical Studies* uses brain lesion data to argue against higher-order theories of consciousness. His work has also appeared in *Mind and Language* and *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. Living in Arizona gave Benjamin a passion for endurance mountain biking, something he plans to continue on the somewhat tamer trails that Alabama offers.



**Dr. Adam Arico**  
Instructor

Dr. Arico earned his doctorate in Philosophy, with a minor in Cognitive Science, in 2013 from the University of Arizona. His research interests include philosophy of mind (especially consciousness studies), philosophy of psychology, and cognitive science, as well as moral psychology, metaethics, and philosophy of psychiatry. Dr. Arico is also active in the recently emerging methodology of experimental philosophy, where his work focuses on issues surrounding folk psychology, moral perception, and group mentality. His work can be found in anthologies and such journals as *Analysis*,

*Mind & Language*, *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, and *Philosophical Psychology*. When Dr. Arico joins UA in the Fall of 2015, he will be teaching introductory ethics and critical thinking, where his students undoubtedly will hear a great deal about his absolute loyalty to and unwavering love of the St. Louis Cardinals.



**Tim Butzer**  
Instructor

Tim Butzer joins the department from the University of California Santa Barbara. He expects to receive his degree in September of 2015. Mr. Butzer received a masters in philosophy from Miami University (Ohio). His research focuses on the epistemology of perception and related issues in the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of perception. In particular, he is interested in how contemporary models in the cognitive sciences can illuminate the conditions that must be met for perceptual knowledge. He is currently working on several papers for publication,

including a paper discussing the implications of cases of blindsight — a condition in which subjects are capable of making reliable “guesses” about objects in a blind portion of their visual field — for contemporary epistemological theories. In 2014, Mr. Butzer was awarded the Paul Weinpahl Award for Teaching Excellence for his contributions to the University of California Santa Barbara philosophy department. In his first year at UA, he will be teaching introductory philosophy and introductory ethics.



**Amber Walker**  
Administrative Assistant

Amber began working at the University of Alabama in September of 2014, just shortly after she returned home to Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She joined the Department of Philosophy in August 2015. Amber first began her administrative career in home and auto insurance, soon learning that she had a passion for business administration. In 2009, life took her to Seoul, South Korea. While abroad in Korea she began her college journey toward receiving an Associate's degree in business administration. She completed her degree in 2013 while living in North Pole, Alaska. Soon after graduating, she welcomed her son, Ezriah, into her family.

## ALUMNI NOTES

**Brett Talley** (2004) has worked for two years on Capitol Hill for Senator Rob Portman. He will be returning to Alabama to join the office of the Attorney General. Brett writes, “Leaving is certainly bitter sweet. I’ve had the opportunity to work with amazing people and for a guy who’s in it for the right reasons, and I’ve made real friends in the process. You can’t ask for anything more than that.”

**Ben Hohman** (2006) finished with high distinction his masters in theological studies at Boston College School of Theology in Ministry. This fall, he will begin doctoral studies at Boston College, continuing his focus on philosophical theology and systematics. He has had an essay accepted for publication in *Heythrop Journal*.

**Chris Nicholson** (2010) has completed his second year of graduate work in philosophy at the University of Michigan. (He earned his law degree from Yale in 2013.)

**Will Schildnecht** (2010) served two years for Teach for America before entering Berkeley’s law school. He finished law school this past spring and has accepted an offer from Davis Polk & Wardwell in NYC (the law firm for which he was in intern in Summer 20145).

**Erik Hestevold** (2011), with degrees in art and philosophy, continues to paint and will enter UA’s graduate program in marketing this fall.

**Josh Quick** (2011) is a Graduate Research Assistant in Indiana University’s Learning Sciences Program.

**Jon Thompson** (2011) will begin the doctoral program in philosophy at King’s College London this fall. He plans to focus on the religious epistemology of one or two figures in the Modern period.

**Kaiya Arroyo** (2013) has completed her second year of law school at the University of Pennsylvania. During the summer of 2014, she served as an intern with Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP in New York.

**Ross Boone** (2013) will serve as Senior Managing Editor for the *Public Contract Law Journal* for 2015-16. Ross writes, “I look forward to working with the rest of the editorial board and the American Bar Association to publish quality articles and notes on government procurement policy.”

**Amanda Buxton** (2013) is engaged and has finished her second year of law school at Emory.



**Hannah White** (2012) is currently a photographer and conceptual artist living in Atlanta and showing artwork in galleries around the city. Her artwork explores the roles of visual signifiers within mass visual culture. She recently completed an internship at the High Museum of Art, and also received the Jean Ellen Jones Art Education Award. In December of 2015 she will complete a degree in art education from Georgia State University, and will receive certification to teach art.

**Madaline Hargrove** (2013) completed Vanderbilt’s Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner program in August. As a WHNP, she will be joining an OB/GYN clinic affiliated with St. Vincent’s Hospital in Birmingham, a clinic that provides care “for obstetric and gynecological patients of all ages and walks of life.” Madaline writes, “My last assignment at Vanderbilt was an ethics case study; and every day, I am still thankful for my philosophy major. We have to make moral decisions for and with people all day every day.”

**Austin Lafferty** (2013) enjoyed teaching English to 4th and 5th graders in rural China. To make a little extra money, he took a temporary job in Hong Kong with what he calls a branding agency. Austin was just supposed to correct copy, for a few weeks. Naturally, the employers quickly realized what they had in him, and offered him a permanent job

doing much more. He enjoys the work’s creative aspects, enjoys the people he is with, enjoys Hong Kong, and enjoys being a young man who makes a living wage in a big city. Austin does not picture this as his life’s work and doesn’t know what will come next, but sees it as a very good ride for a year or two.

**Anthony Rivera-Rodriguez** (2013) spent a year brewing beer in Birmingham and then accepted a job offer in San Diego before pursuing the MSc at the London School of Economics.

**Ellen Coogan** (2014) is a first-year law student at Washington University (St. Louis) law school.

## ALUMNI NOTES

**Voni Cook** (2014) is now living in North Carolina, preparing for graduate work in archival studies.

**Jonathan Eagerton** (2014) spent the first half of his summer as the legal intern in the Shelby County Public Defender's Office. During the second half, he served as a legal intern for the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Alabama.

**Brian Hoff** (2014), as was reported a year ago, joined Teach for America and is now a mathematics teacher at Ann Richards Middle School in Dallas.

**Zach McCann** (2014) is beginning the Masters in Public Administration program at UA, concentrating on policy management, aiming to work with non-profits helping to expand health care access in rural areas.



*Unfortunately, after more than four years as the Department's administrative secretary, Julianne Wilson's last day at UA was July 31. With a master's degree in education and years of teaching experience (both in the US and Ecuador), Ms. Wilson joined the philosophers in March 2011 while her partner pursued his doctorate with a McNair Fellowship. Our only staff member, Ms. Wilson quickly took charge of the day-to-day operations of the office and her innovations have benefitted faculty and students alike. She has been much beloved by our majors and minors for her advice, her encouragement, and her assistance negotiating campus bureaucracy. Recognizing her ability, A&S Dean Robert Olin tapped Ms. Wilson for a significant leadership position in CASSA – the College of Arts and Sciences Staff Assembly. For Ms. Wilson, the future is bright: her partner finished his doctorate, and they have both accepted teaching posts at Heritage University in Yakima, WA. Ms. Wilson will be serving as a full-time instructor of education.*

### THIS YEAR'S GRADUATES

**Kelsey Curtis** (2015) will be a first-year law student at Harvard this fall.

**Mitchell Dykstra** (2015) married in July and will be working as a legal assistant in Birmingham.

**Hannah Darby** (2015) will be a first-year law student at UA.

**Stephen Greene** (2015) will be a first-year law student at Ole Miss.

**Alexandra Harris** (2015) will be a first-year graduate student in public health at Columbia University.

**J.T. Lewis** (2015) will be a first-year law student at UA.

**Ben Lucy** (2015) is a law clerk/intern for Daniel Pruet, Attorney at Law. For the coming year, he will also be making music, playing Tuscaloosa and also regional gigs with his band, "Nettie Quill." The University of Virginia has awarded Ben the prestigious Dillard Scholarship, allowing him to begin law school in Fall 2016 with full tuition paid. Ben is also applying to the MBA program at UVA's Darden School of Business.

**Matt O'Brien** (2015) graduated with a double-major in philosophy and economics and with a masters in applied economics. He is an analyst for a major international shipping firm, working on sales analytics and strategy.

**Evan Richtmeyer** (2015) has completed his Teach for America training and will be a 10th grade English teacher at Fairley High School in Memphis.

**Lauren Riley** (2015) will be a first-year law student at the College of William and Mary.

**Jordan Sherell** (2015) will be teaching English in Bali while contemplating graduate programs in philosophy.

**Damon Stanley** (2015) will be writing code for a software company in Florida.

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## PHILOSOPHY TODAY

**October 20, 2015**

Sahotra Sarkar  
*University of Texas*

**November 17, 2015**

Alyssa Ney  
*UC-San Diego*

**March 1, 2016**

Andrei Marmor  
*Cornell University*

**April 7, 2016**

William FitzPatrick  
*University of Rochester*

# Got a great logic puzzle?

## Send it to us!

# Win a Department T-shirt!

Send your puzzles to [seth.bordner@ua.edu](mailto:seth.bordner@ua.edu). We'll print the best one in the next issue of AGORA. The winner will also receive an official Department of Philosophy T-shirt.