

The Dialectic

Classics & Philosophy Newsletter
Volume 9, Issue 1

Philosophy & Humanities, UTA
Fall, 2006

Dear Philosophers and Classicists,

Once again we gather together to embrace that most glamorous of academic endeavors, philosophy. Here's looking forward to another great fall semester full of new faces, new classes, and new energy. We welcome back our grizzled veterans and introduce our new recruits to the never-ending search for Truth and Beauty. Good luck to us all and have a great semester!

Thomas O'Mara
President
Philosophy Club at UT Arlington

p.s. Special thanks to Bill Baldwin, Mitch Hodge, Jason Peeler, and Meredith Schroeder for their contributions to this issue of the newsletter.

Homerathon Continues to Amaze

On Wednesday, 29 March 2006, the University Classics Club's annual recitation of Homer's *Odyssey* began at precisely 7 a.m. Every year, those who are so inspired join Odysseus on his journey, finding his poor wife courted by uncouth men, his proud son's life threatened, and his magnificent kingdom on the edge of destruction. Participants in the reading, as well as observers, follow Odysseus through misery, adventure, action, passion, love, torture, and ultimately joy.



Professor Chiasson Gives It His All

This year's Homerathon opened with Professor Charles Chiasson's praying to the muse for inspiration in his eloquent Greek. It included readers of all ages and readings in several languages. Even though we all had to take a short intermission in order to move the Homerathon to the Palo Duro lounge when rain threatened, the ode to Odysseus continued with thriving vigor. Later in the day, we moved back outside where we finished the rest of the celebration with burning excitement.

Festivities ended shortly after 10 p.m. Those who stayed to hear the last bits of Odysseus's tale rejoiced to the gods for his happy return home. The University Classics Club thanks all those who participated in the readings and those who were the captive audience. We had an amazing turnout and can hardly wait to see all of you in 2007!

Classics Professor Wins 2005 Gildersleeve Prize

That awe-inspiring Associate Professor of Classical Studies, Charles Chiasson, has won the 2005 Gildersleeve Prize for his article, "Myth, Ritual, and Authorial Control in Herodotus' Story of Cleobis and Biton (*Hist.* 1.31)."

This prestigious award is given annually for the best article published in the *American Journal of Philology* during the preceding year. Professor Chiasson's article appears in volume 126, number 1, pages 41-64, of *AJP*. The *American Journal of Philology*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, is an internationally renowned journal. Just to publish in it is already to compete successfully with the best classicists and philologists in the world. To be awarded the Gildersleeve is an honor of the first rank.

Dr. Chiasson deserves our hearty congratulations, together with mass quantities of chocolate. Way to go Charlie!

Professor Reeder Lectures in Colombia

UT Arlington philosophy Professor Harry Reeder co-taught a doctoral seminar this summer at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Bogota, Colombia, with the title "Meaning: Its Linguistic and Extra-Linguistic Forms." The

seminar was based upon seven of his English-language publications which were translated into Spanish for the occasion. There were 15 students attending — each of them professors at Colombian universities, with Maestría, which is a degree a bit above an American thesis M.A., most with published books and articles. Five full professors, with doctorates and who teach at three major universities in Colombia, participated in the course, as well.

In addition to co-teaching the doctoral seminar, Professor Reeder presented seven public lectures on phenomenology at three universities: one each at two very old universities in Bogota, Universidad Santo Tomás and Universidad del Rosario (the latter was founded in 1653, three years after the death of René Descartes), and five at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. He added, "There is a great deal of interest in American and European philosophy, especially phenomenology, in Latin America. I found a vibrant and interesting intellectual community eager to have dealings with UT Arlington."

Long-time Secretary Billie Hughes Retires

31 years was long enough for Billie Hughes, former Philosophy Department senior secretary and friend to us all. She had worked for the department since its very inception, faithfully and diligently. Every faculty member, department head, and student in the department has been graced by her presence in some way or other since 1975. We are all indebted to her in our own way; her calming demeanor on the most hectic days will always be remembered fondly by those of us who had the privilege of working with her.

With no immediate plans aside from shutting off the alarm clock, Billie said that she will begin her first summer off in decades by doing whatever she wants whenever wants. She and her husband Mike currently have no big travel plans or lavish expenditures looming on the horizon — though there are always possibilities.



Billie Hughes tells us, "Thanks for the memories!"

At her lavish retirement bash, last May, Billie reminisced with friends, colleagues and well-wishers. Tales of the original office in University Hall, the little house on Kerby Street, and all of the denizens of the department who have come and gone filled the conversational spaces between bites of cookies and cake.

Mitch Hodge's Irish Eyes are Smilin'!

UT Arlington Philosophy and Classical Studies alumnus, Mitch Hodge, defended in July his Graduate Humanities Master's thesis entitled *What Myths Reveal About How Humans Think: A Cognitive Approach to Myth*. Hodge is hoping to do further research in this area at the Institute for Cognition and Culture in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where he has been accepted for work on his Ph.D. Founded in September 2004, the Institute of Cognition and Culture is one of the world's first centers for research in the cognitive science of culture and offers a unique program of doctoral research that crosses traditional disciplinary divisions. Way to go, Mitch!

Lectures a plenty Philosophy Lecture Series

The Philosophy Club at UT Arlington and the Department of Philosophy and Humanities sponsored two Philosophy Lecture Series lectures last spring. On 10 February 2006, Martha Nussbaum, Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, spoke on "Radical Evil in Liberal Democracies. Held as part of the College of Liberal Arts' *Festival of Ideas*, Professor Nussbaum's lecture drew attendees from across colleges and disciplines.

On 3 March 2006, Professor Jerrold Levinson of the University of Maryland spoke on "Why There are No Tropes." Evidently, there are no tropes, although much of the academic community is under the impression that tropes do indeed exist. What's with that? (A trope, as they conceive it, is a "particularized quality.")

Phi Sigma Tau Student Colloquia

Phi Sigma Tau held its first-ever dual lecture presentation on 29 April 2006, when Micah Adams and Jason Peeler presented work based on their respective senior theses: Micah spoke on "Consciousness According to Sartre: Non-Thetic Consciousness Reconsidered," and Jason spoke on "The Role of Emotion in Cognition: Furthering a Representational Reconciliation."

The ever-generous Professor Denny Bradshaw hosted the colloquia at his home. After the colloquia, members of the Texas Mu chapter of *Phi Sigma Tau*, the International Honor Society in Philosophy, retired to the Blue Danube restaurant in Arlington to hold their annual New Initiates Dinner.

Awards Galore

Aaron May Wins Feinberg Award

Each year a committee of our esteemed professors searches the ranks of undergraduate Philosophy majors, seeking that one student on whom to bestow the prestigious Joel Feinberg Award. This award for Outstanding UT Arlington Philosophy Major is named in honor of Joel Feinberg who at the time of his death in 2004 was Emeritus Regents Professor of Philosophy at The University of Arizona. He was a past president of The American Philosophical Association, in addition to being a preeminent moral, social political and legal philosopher.



Aaron May totally demolishes the competition

This year's recipient of the venerable award was none other than our own Aaron May. We applaud his efforts and congratulate his hard work. He is equally deserving of both our esteem and the \$200.00 offered by the Department of Philosophy and Humanities.

Thomas O'Mara Win Sellars Prize

Each spring, current UTA philosophy majors are invited to submit papers in competition for the Wilfrid Sellars Prize. The author of the winning paper receives a cash prize of \$200. The prize is named in honor of Wilfrid Sellars (1912-1989). His classic 1956 essay "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" played a major role in the postwar rejection of the ever-evil Cartesianism.

Fifty years later, in the spring of 2006, senior Philosophy major Thomas O'Mara (1982-2056?) submitted some of his own work, which includes significant contributions from every philosophy class he has taken, with aspirations of philosophical stardom. His paper, "Euthanasia: A Deontological Approach," was derived from some of his earlier work in the Biomedical Ethics course taken the previous fall semester (Phil 3319). The paper played a major role in his earning an 'A' in that course and later in Thomas's scamming the additional \$200.

Those Adventurous Classicists

The Classical Studies Program's annual spring fling, *Adventures in Antiquity*, was held on 23 March 2006 in the Sixth-Floor Parlor of UT Arlington's Central Library. This year's featured speaker, Dr. Nancy Serwint from Arizona State University, delivered an illustrated talk entitled, "Gender Issues in Ancient Cyprus: The Evolution of Aphrodite," demonstrating the cultural cross-pollination that took place between Greece and older Near Eastern civilizations on the island of Cyprus.

A second cause for celebration was the announcement of the winner of the Douglas Britt Carvey student essay competition, to wit, graduating Philosophy major Micah Adams, for his paper "The Boon of Asclepius: Re-Evaluating Socrates' Final Words in the *Phaedo*." In the interest of corporal as well as intellectual sustenance, the University Classics Club provided a Homeric feast of refreshments.

Jason Peeler Treks to Florida

Then current UTA Philosophy major and present first year M.A. Humanities student Jason Peeler took a trip to the University of North Florida during spring break after his paper, "The Role of Emotion in Cognition: Furthering a Representational Reconciliation," was accepted via blind review for their 10th Annual Undergraduate Student Philosophy Conference. He responded to the call for papers while thinking one could do worse than to spend a couple of days in Jacksonville over spring break. Yet, he saw little of the outside world during his visit. Whisked away upon his arrival on a Friday afternoon, he was immediately immersed in philosophical activity while stopping only for sustenance.

Jason originally worked on his project as a term paper for Philosophy of Mind and received some generally positive remarks from the presiding Dr. Denny Bradshaw. Encouraged by these remarks, Jason ran with the momentum, submitting his paper in response to the appropriate call for papers while the project blossomed into a senior thesis under the supervision of Dr. Charles Nussbaum. The Philosophy Department and the Dean of Liberal Arts provided moral and financial (travel) support, enabling young Peeler to showcase his philosophical abilities.

Feeling grateful...nostalgic...generous?

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<http://www.uta.edu/philosophy/contact.php> .

Also be sure to send your alumni news to cstigall@uta.edu.