Greetings!
The past year has been an eventful one for the department, and we'd like to update you on some developments and activities. As always, we would also very much like to hear from you, and would be happy to share alumni information in future newsletters. (See the last page for current updates.) Please send any email to william.fitzpatrick@vt.edu.

For more information about the department, please visit us on the web at: www.phil.vt.edu

New Hires
The department made two new tenure track appointments last spring, after conducting full international searches over the fall and winter. Both successful candidates came from the University of California at San Diego. Anne Margaret Baxley, who completed her Ph.D. in 2000, had been teaching at the University of California at Irvine, and specializes in Kant, the history of ethics and ethical theory. Laura Perini, who works in the philosophy of science, has a Masters in biology from the University of California at Los Angeles, and will defend her dissertation for a philosophy Ph.D. at UCSD in December. (See below for more on Anne Margaret and Laura.)

Promotions
Mark Gifford has been promoted to associate professor. Jim Klugge and Harlan Miller have both been promoted to professor.

Departures:
Eric Watkins has left Virginia Tech to join the department of philosophy at the University of California at San Diego. He is much missed.

Master’s Program
Our Master of Arts Program has maintained its outstanding national ranking in the Philosophical Gourmet report (available at: http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/gourmet/), and continues to attract excellent graduate students. It is currently ranked as the second best Master’s program in philosophy. Last spring, our graduates were placed in very fine Ph.D. programs at the University of Maryland, the University of Virginia, Syracuse University, and SUNY Binghamton, and they were accepted in many other high quality programs as well, including those at the University of Massachusetts, Georgetown, Loyola-Chicago, Purdue, Fordham, Utah, Bowling Green and Tulane. One graduate went on to the University of Mississippi Law School, but soon missed philosophy enough to submit a paper for the Pacific APA meetings, which has been accepted. He is now putting together applications to joint philosophy and law programs.

Ph.D. Program?
Since the last newsletter, the university has installed both a new president—Charles Steiger—and a new Provost—Mark McNamee. Our new president has defined his vision for the university with a challenge to advance Virginia Tech into the list of top 30 research universities in the nation over the next several years. The realization of that goal will involve many coordinated efforts across the university, including the development of a range of Ph.D. programs in the humanities. Given the philosophy department’s outstanding ranking for its Master’s program, we believe we are very well positioned to lead this effort, and have already begun deliberations about a possible transition to a Ph.D. program in philosophy. There are many factors to consider in this process. Such a transition would require a significant expansion of the department, which would involve several expensive new faculty lines. But there are positive signs down the road, and we will keep you updated about where things stand in future newsletters.

Annual Spring Conferences
The department continues its tradition of organizing and hosting philosophical conferences each year, attracting speakers and visitors from across the country and abroad. The papers delivered at these conferences are often then published in a book, or sometimes in a special issue of a journal. Some recent events:

Objects and Artifacts: A Topic in the Philosophy of Technology (Fall, 2001). This truly international conference, organized by Joe Pitt and held at the Hotel Roanoke Conference Center, featured several speakers from Delft University of Technology and Eindhoven Technic-1 University (both in the Netherlands), as well as from MIT and the University of South Carolina. Its purpose was to examine philosophical questions surrounding the nature of artifacts, particularly in connection with the idea of technology. Topics included (among others) the nature of functions associated with artifacts, normativity, mereology, and modeling in engineering design.

Caring About Nature: Brown Farm and Uncle John’s Mountain (Spring, 2001). How and why do we care about nature? What are the connections and tensions between these values and other things we value? Can it be argued that one ought to care, and if so, how? The conference, organized by Harlan Miller, focused on such

Henry Bauer is editing the Journal of Scientific Exploration, and took his annual "research trip" to Loch Ness in September. He has published two books this year. Fatal Attractions: The Troubles with Science (New York: Paraview Press 2001) discusses the nature of science, its impact on and role in society, and common misconceptions about science. Science or Pseudoscience: Magnetic Healing, Psychic Phenomena, and Other Heterodoxes (Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2001) compares and contrasts research practices in natural science, social science, and "anomalistics" (the study of things the mainstream ignores, such as UFOs and psychic phenomena). Bauer re-examines such cases as N-rays and cold fusion, and the criteria used to classify these things as "pathological science". He argues for a distinction not between science and pseudoscience, but between honest knowledge-seeking and dogmatic "knowledge"-peddling.

Anne Margaret Baxley joined the faculty this fall. She received her Ph.D. from UCSD in December 2000 and spent Winter and Spring 2001 at UC Irvine, where she taught courses in 19th century German philosophy, contemporary moral issues, feminist perspectives on moral and political theory, and ethical theory. Her main interests lie in the history of ethics, ethical theory, and Kant, especially Kant's ethics. She has published two articles on Kant’s account of virtue (in the Proceeding from the Kant Congress 2000 and Kant-Studien). Recently, she is working on a paper on Kant’s moral psychology and how it compares to Aristotle’s as well as a paper on Kant and the moral significance of beauty, which she will present at a meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics in Spring of 2002. Anne Margaret has also taken over the administration of the undergraduate Philosophy Club.

Ben Bradley has joined us for a third year as visiting assistant professor. His work is primarily in ethics, especially on problems in value theory surrounding the notion of intrinsic value, and on issues concerning consequentialism. He has recently been working on formulating an improved deprivation account of the evil of death that provides a satisfactory response to Epicurean arguments that death is not bad for the one who dies. He presented some of this work at the Bellingham Summer Philosophy Conference at Western Washington University. Recent published articles include "The Value of Endangered Species" (The Journal of Value Inquiry, 2001) and "Is Intrinsic Value Conditional?" (Philosophical Studies, forthcoming).

Richard Burian has just started a two-year term as director of Graduate Studies for the Department. He has maintained a full docket of commitments in history and philosophy of biology, plus some work in theoretical biology. He recently completed a term as President (1999-2001) of the International Society of History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology, though his duties as the Society’s past president will continue until July 2003. Since July 2000, he has given seven talks in four conferences and at three university campuses—a recent example being "Reconceiving Animals and Their Evolution: On Some Consequences of questions, with a particular reference to two natural places. One of these, Brown Farm, is a former working farm now owned by the town of Blacksburg, and some participants directly addressed the debate about how that land should be used: soccer fields or nature park? One highlight of the conference was a full trip to Brown Farm, led by a local nature guide, enabling participants to see and to think more concretely about what is at issue in the various debates they discussed.


Awards and Honors

Jim Klagge: 2001 ODK Alfred C. Payne Award for Leadership and Service to the Greater Blacksburg Community.

What We’ve Been Up To

Roger Ariew has completed his term as department head and is now on an NEH fellowship, working on a project entitled “Descartes’s First Critics.” He is also editing, with Daniel Garber, The Reception of Descartes in Seventeenth-Century England, a 12 volume series of primary sources for Thoemmes Press.
New Research on the Modularity of Development and Evolution" (Ohio University, Athens, OH). In addition, he spent a week at the Max-Planck-Institute for History of Science (Berlin), working with F. L. Holmes (Yale), Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (Max-Planck-Institute), and Sahota Sarkar (University of Texas, Austin) to plan a series of two or three conferences. The conferences will concern historical and epistemological issues raised by the use of model organisms in biology, and will be held at the Max-Planck-Institute summer 2003 – summer 2005. He has published several articles in the past year, and his teaching is divided between Philosophy and STS, including among other things a graduate seminar on the formation of genetics.

**William FitzPatrick** works in moral philosophy, especially on questions concerning the foundations of ethics and the nature of practical rationality. He is also interested in issues that arise in the intersection of moral philosophy with metaphysics and the philosophy of biology, such as whether natural function-related norms have any relevance to a plausible ethical naturalism. Recent articles include "Ethical Concerns Over Testing on Human Subjects" (Human and Ecological Risk Assessment, Vol. 7, No. 6, 2001), and (with Eric Watkins) "O’Neill and Korsgaard on the Construction of Normativity" (The Journal of Value Inquiry, Vol. 36, No. 2-3, 2002). He also gave a paper entitled "Curing About Nature: Tastes, Values and Reasons" at the last spring conference (see above).

**Mark Gifford** recently published "Dramatic Dialectic in Republic I" (in Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy). This is a lengthy study of Plato's use of literary techniques borrowed from the Greek tragic stage in the construction of his philosophical dialogues. Mark was an invited speaker at the 13th International Conference on Greek Philosophy in Rhodes, Greece on the theme "The Philosophy of Communication", where he read a paper entitled "Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Wisdom in Plato's Phaedrus".

He was also invited to give talks at the University of Texas, Trinity University, SUNY Albany, and at the North Carolina Philosophical Association. Mark is also Secretary of the Virginia Philosophical Association this year.

**Marjorie Grene**, together with David Depew of the University of Iowa, has been writing a book on the relations between biology and philosophy at various times and places. This is for a Cambridge series on "the evolution of modern philosophy." The manuscript should be completed early in 2002. She is also translating Henri Le Gueder's book on Geoffrey St. Hilaire, which contains a number of primary sources, including the published text of the famous 1830 debate between Cuvier and Geoffroy. A book that she translated from the German, The Mechanization of the Heart: Harvey, Descartes and their Successors, by Thomas Fuchs, will be published shortly by the University of Rochester Press. Marjorie remains active with students, teaching an independent study for several students last spring on Sartre's Being and Nothingness, and giving a lecture to the undergraduate philosophy club this fall on existentialism.

**Valerie Hardcastle** is the current Director of the Science and Technology Studies (STS) program. She is also one of the senior project members for a 5-year million dollar grant from the McDonnell foundation for work in "neurophilosophy"—using brain studies to help answer traditional questions in the philosophy of mind. (This is the largest grant ever given in the humanities.) Her particular focus will be on the structure of neuroscientific theories and how they differ from theories in other branches of science, and how this should affect what we do with data in neuroscience. Val has just completing a book entitled Constructing Selves (MIT Press) and is nearing completion on co-authored book with Eric Dietrich (who was a visiting professor for the department last spring) on the surprising relationship between the problem of explaining consciousness and other problems in metaphysics.

**Jim Klagge** has received the 2001 ODK Alfreid C. Payne Award for Leadership and Service to the Greater Blacksburg Community. He has stepped down as chair of the school board after 3 years, but continues as a school board representative. Cambridge University Press has just published Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy, a collection of 9 papers deriving from the 1999 Spring conference that Jim organized. Last April, Jim gave a talk to the Philosophy Club on "The Philosophy of Tattooing and Body Piercing."

**Michael Kruse** has joined us for a fourth year as visiting assistant professor. His work is in the philosophy of science and the foundations of statistical inference, with a focus on the reliability of scientific methods in making accurate predictions. His recent publications include: "Invariance, Symmetry and Rationality" (Synthese, 2000), "Beyond Bayesiamism" (Philosophy of Science, 1999), and "Variation and the Accuracy of Prediction" (The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, 1997).

**Sangwon Lee** is a visiting scholar from the Interdisciplinary Program in History and Philosophy of Science, Graduate School, College of Natural Sciences, Seoul National University. He has a fellowship from the Korea Research Foundation (the Korean counterpart of the NEH). Sangwon is working particularly on theories pertaining to scientific instruments.

**Deborah Mayo** was recently a guest on "No Dogs or Philosophers Allowed", a philosophy television show directed to college and high school students. The focus of the 4-person forum was on methods of science. NDOPA airs on public television stations and the PhilosophyChannel, a new web-based source for philosophical media, and is shown at numerous universities and high schools. In the past year Deborah has published several articles on error statistics and theory testing, and given numerous talks, particularly on the topic of practical philosophy of science. These include a presentation to NASA, at the
Langley Research Center, on "Severe Tests: Concepts and Some Applications," and a seminar (with Arist Spanos, from Tech's Economics Department) at the National Security Agency on "Petrihem Induction and Self-Correcting Methodology." The goal of the NSA project is to develop a new system for finding patterns in data and achieving reliable inductive inference, based on C.S. Peirce's logic. Deborah has also been elected the Second Vice President of the Division of Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science UIHPS/ILMPS.

Rosa Mayorga joined the faculty in August, 2000. Her interests are mainly in Metaphysics, Ethics, and History of Philosophy, especially Medieval philosophy and the work of Charles Sanders Peirce. She is also interested in the use of technology to aid in the teaching of philosophy. Rosa devoted most of the previous year to the development of a synchronous multi-media distance course in ethics for undergraduates at Virginia Tech, which she conducted last spring from the University of Miami. Currently, she is teaching three courses on campus at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She was awarded a "Women and Minority Scholars Lecture Series" grant from the Office of the Associate Provost in September, which will be used to fund a colloquium by Professor Susan Hackett (University of Miami) in the spring.

Harlan Miller continues work on electro-logic and ethical questions concerning animals and nature. He organized the department's 2001 Spring Conference "Brown Farm and Uncle John's Mountains: Caring About Nature," which was the first of our conferences ever to include a field trip. He continues to operate the Society for the Study of Ethics & Animals. After a serious bicycle accident in mid-May, he had a series of medical adventures, the most striking being a craniotomy to relieve a subdural hematoma. He is now fully recovered, or claims to be, and is the only member of the department with a skull reinforced with titanium.

The rest of us, he enjoys pointing out, are just boneheads.

Laura Perini joined the faculty this fall, after completing graduate work at UCSD. Laura is particularly interested in the role of visual representations in science. Her research is focused on answering questions about the nature of figures as representations and the epistemic roles they play in scientific research.

Joe Pitt is currently head of the department. Joe traveled extensively over the past year. He was an invited participant at the Notre Dame spring colloquium in History and Philosophy of Science. In May he presented "Working the Natural/Artificial" distinction to the Tools Symposium at the University of Idaho where he was also a member of the wrap-up panel. In June he attended a workshop on Issues in STS at Graz, Austria, where he presented a paper, "The Dilemma of Case Studies, "Towards a Herdmanian Philosophy of Science" and participated in a panel on pedagogical issues in STS. July found him in Aberdeen Scotland at the 12th International Conference of the Society for Philosophy and Technology where he presented "Against Meaning" and was the respondent at a Session entitled "Joseph Pitt's Philosophy of Technology." He also organized the departmental annual conference "Objects and Artifacts: An Issue in the Philosophy of Technology," which was held at the Hotel Roanoke. The dogs are still big.

In Memoriam

We are very sad to report the passing of Mary Holland Cannella, class of 1977, in February of 2001. She leaves behind a husband and three children, and is sorely missed.

Many Thanks for Your Donations:

The Philosophy Department is grateful for the generous donations you have made through the Virginia Tech Foundation. Your support contributes in a very direct way to both the intellectual and social life of the department. In particular, it enables us to continue our tradition of hosting regular conferences and colloquia, which is vital both to our functioning as a recognized center of active philosophical research and to the broader education of our students. Some recent contributors we'd like to acknowledge:

George Adams ('78)
Thomas Adams ('75)
David Davis ('74)
Regina DelValle ('75)
Dale Jones ('71)
Paul Krummacher ('72)
Patricia Warner ('79)
Betty Williams.